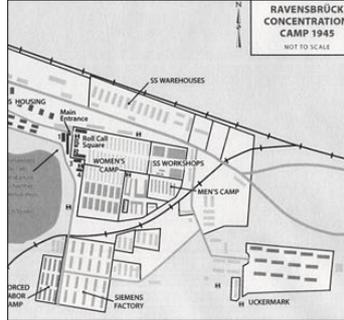


The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum
ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CAMPS AND GHETTOS, 1933-1945

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VOLUME II

Ghettos in German-Occupied Eastern Europe

Part B

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SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

PART A

List of Maps	xxiii
Preface	xxv
Introduction by Christopher R. Browning	xxvii
Acknowledgments	xli
Editor's Introduction	xlili
Reader's Guide	xlix

SECTION I: INCORPORATED EASTERN TERRITORIES 1

ZICHENAU REGION (REGIERUNGSBEZIRK
ZICHENAU) 3

WARTHEGAU REGION (REICHSGAU
WARTHELAND) 33

EASTERN UPPER SILESIA REGION
(OST-OBERSCHLESIEIN) 131

SECTION II: PROTECTORATE OF BOHEMIA AND MORAVIA (PROTEKTORAT BÖHMEN UND MÄHREN) 177

SECTION III: GENERAL GOVERNMENT (GENERALGOUVERNEMENT) 185

RADOM REGION (DISTRIKT RADOM) 187

WARSAW REGION (DISTRIKT
WARSCHAU) 357

KRAKÓW REGION (DISTRIKT
KRAKAU) 475

LUBLIN REGION (DISTRIKT LUBLIN) 603

EASTERN GALICIA REGION (DISTRIKT
GALIZIEN) 743

SECTION IV: BIAŁYSTOK REGION (DISTRIKT BIAŁYSTOK) 855

PART B

SECTION V: REICH COMMISSARIAT OSTLAND (REICHSKOMMISSARIAT OSTLAND) 989

ESTONIA AND LATVIA REGIONS
(GENERALKOMMISSARIAT ESTLAND
UND GENERALKOMMISSARIAT
LETTLAND) 991

LITHUANIA REGION
(GENERALKOMMISSARIAT LITAUEN) 1031

WEISSRUTHENIEN REGION
(GENERALKOMMISSARIAT
WEISSRUTHENIEN) 1159

SECTION VI: REICH COMMISSARIAT UKRAINE (REICHSKOMMISSARIAT UKRAINE) 1313

VOLHYNIA AND PODOLIA REGION
(GENERALKOMMISSARIAT
WOLHYNIEN UND PODOLIEN) 1315

ZHYTOMYR REGION
(GENERALKOMMISSARIAT SHITOMIR) 1509

KIEV REGION (GENERALKOMMISSARIAT
KIEW) 1583

NIKOLAEV AND DNEPROPETROVSK
REGIONS (GENERALKOMMISSARIATE
NIKOLAJEW UND
DNJEPROPETROWSK) 1613

SECTION VII: REGIONS OF THE USSR UNDER GERMAN MILITARY OCCUPATION 1637

EASTERN BELORUSSIA REGION 1639

EASTERN UKRAINE AND CRIMEA
REGION 1755

OCCUPIED RUSSIAN TERRITORY 1781

VI SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

**SECTION VIII:
GERMAN-OCCUPIED GREECE 1841**

List of Abbreviations	1849
List of Contributors	1865
About the Editor	1871
Names Index	1873
Places Index	1917
Organizations and Enterprises Index	1951

CONTENTS

PART A

List of maps	xxiii	Konin	63
Preface	xxv	Kowale Pańskie	65
Introduction by Christopher R. Browning	xxvii	Koźminek	66
Acknowledgments	xlii	Krośniewice	68
Editor's Introduction	xliii	Kutno	69
Reader's Guide	xlix	Łask	72
		Łęczyca	74
		Łódź	75
SECTION I:		Lutomiersk	82
INCORPORATED EASTERN		Lututów	83
TERRITORIES	1	Osjaków	85
		Ozorków	86
ZICHENAU REGION		Pabianice	88
(REGIERUNGSBEZIRK ZICHENAU)	3	Pajęczno	90
Ciechanów	10	Piątek	92
Czerwińsk nad Wisłą	12	Piotrków Kujawski	93
Drobin	13	Poddębice	94
Maków Mazowiecki	15	Praszka	96
Mława	17	Przedecz	97
Nowe Miasto	19	Radziejów	98
Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki	20	Rzgów	99
Płock	22	Sanniki	100
Płońsk	24	Sieradz	101
Sierpc	27	Służewo	103
Strzegowo	28	Sompolno	104
Wyszogród	29	Stryków	106
		Szadek	107
WARTHEGAU REGION (REICHSGAU		Tuliszków	108
WARTHELAND)	33	Turek	109
Bełchatów	41	Uniejów	110
Brześć Kujawski	43	Warta	111
Brzeziny	44	Widawa	113
Bugaj	47	Wieluń	114
Chocz	48	Wieruszów	115
Ciechocinek	48	Władysławów	117
Dąbie nad Nerem	50	Włocławek	118
Dobra	51	Zagórz	120
Gąbin	52	Zduńska Wola	121
Gostynin	54	Zelów	124
Grabów	56	Zgierz	127
Grodzic	57	Złoczew	128
Izbica Kujawska	59	Żychlin	129
Kalisz	60		
Koło	62		

VIII CONTENTS

EASTERN UPPER SILESIA REGION (OST-OBERSCHLESISIEN)

	131		
Andrychów	139	Garbatka-Letnisko	220
Będzin	140	Gielniów	221
Bielsko-Biała	143	Głowaczów	223
Chrzanów	146	Gniewoszów	224
Czeladź	148	Ilża	226
Dąbrowa Górnicza	149	Inowódz	227
Jaworzno	152	Iwaniska	228
Kłobuck	153	Janowiec nad Wisłą	230
Modrzejów	155	Jedlińsk	231
Olkusz	157	Jedlnia Kościelna	233
Sławków	160	Jędrzejów	234
Sosnowiec	162	Kamieńsk	236
Strzemieszyce	166	Kielce	237
Sucha	167	Klimontów	240
Szczakowa	169	Klwów	241
Trzebinia	170	Koluszki	242
Wadowice	172	Koniecpol	244
Zawiercie	174	Końskie	245

SECTION II: PROTECTORATE OF BOHEMIA AND MORAVIA (PROTEKTORAT BÖHMEN UND MÄHREN)

	177		
Terezín	179	Kozienice	249

SECTION III: GENERAL GOVERNMENT (GENERALGOUVERNEMENT)

RADOM REGION (DISTRIKT RADOM)

	185		
	187		
Będków	195	Kunów	251
Białaczów	195	Łagów	252
Biała Rawska	197	Lipsko	254
Białobrzegi	199	Magnuszew	255
Bliżyn	200	Małogoszcz	256
Bodzentyn	202	Mariampol	257
Bogoria	203	Mniszew	258
Busko-Zdrój [Busko]	205	Mstów	259
Chęciny	207	Nowe Miasto nad Pilicą	260
Chmielnik	209	Nowy Korczyn	261
Ciepielów	211	Odrzywół	263
Ćmielów	213	Opatów	264
Częstochowa	214	Opoczno	266
Denków	217	Osiek	268
Drzewica	218	Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski	269
Finlej	220	Ożarów	271
		Pacanów	273
		Paradyż	275
		Pińczów	276
		Pionki	278
		Piotrków Trybunalski	279
		Połaniec	283
		Przedbórz	284
		Przyglów and Włodzimierzów	286
		Przysucha	287
		Radom	289
		Radomsko	293
		Radoszyce	295

CONTENTS IX

Raków	297	Grójec	376
Rawa Mazowiecka	298	Jadów	379
Ryczywół	300	Jeziorna	380
Sandomierz	301	Jeżów	381
Sędziszów	303	Kałużyn	382
Sieciechów	305	Karczew	385
Siemno	305	Kiernozia	386
Skaryszew	307	Kolbiel	387
Skarżysko-Kamienna	308	Kosów Lacki	389
Skórkowice	311	Łaskarzew	392
Skrzynno	312	Łatowicz	393
Słupia Nowa	313	Legionowo	394
Sobków	315	Łochów	396
Solec nad Wisłą	315	Łomianki	399
Starachowice-Wierzbnik	317	Łosice	400
Staszów	318	Łowicz	402
Stopnica	321	Łyszkowice	404
Stromiec	323	Miłosna	405
Suchedniów	324	Mińsk Mazowiecki	406
Sulejów	325	Mogielnica	408
Szczekociny	327	Mordy	410
Szydłów	329	Mrozy	412
Szydłowiec	330	Okuniew	413
Tarłów	333	Otwock	414
Tomaszów Mazowiecki	335	Parysów	418
Ujazd	338	Piaseczno	419
Wierzbica	339	Pruszków	421
Wiślica	340	Pustelnik	422
Włoszczowa	342	Radzymin	423
Wodzisław	344	Rembertów	425
Wolanów	346	Sarnaki	426
Wolbórz	347	Siedlce	428
Wyśmierzyce	348	Siennica	432
Żarki	348	Skierniewice	434
Żarnów	350	Sobienie Jeziory	436
Zawichost	352	Sobolew	438
Zwoleń	354	Sochaczew	440
WARSAW REGION (DISTRIKT WARSCHAU)	357	Sokołów Podlaski	442
Błędów	364	Stanisławów	446
Błonie	364	Sterdyń	446
Bolimów	366	Stoczek Łukowski	448
Dobre	367	Stoczek Węgrowski	449
Falenica	368	Tarczyn	451
Głowno	370	Tłuszcz	452
Góra Kalwaria	373	Warka	454
Grodzisk Mazowiecki	375	Warsaw	456
		Wawer	460
		Węgrów	462

X CONTENTS

Włochy	465	Proszowice	552
Wołomin	467	Pruchnik	554
Żelechów	469	Przemysł	555
Żyrardów	471	Przeworsk	558
KRAKÓW REGION (DISTRIKT KRAKAU)	475	Rabka	559
Baranów Sandomierski	482	Radomyśl Wielki	561
Biecz	483	Ropczyce	563
Bircza	484	Rymanów	564
Białowa	485	Rzepiennik Strzyżewski	565
Bobowa	486	Rzeszów	567
Bochnia	488	Sanok	569
Brzesko	491	Sędziszów Małopolski	571
Brzostek	492	Sieniawa	572
Brzozów	493	Skawina	574
Czudec	495	Ślomniki	576
Dąbrowa Tarnowska	496	Sokołów Małopolski	577
Dębica	498	Stary Sącz	579
Dobromil	500	Strzyżów	580
Dukla	501	Tarnobrzeg	582
Działoszyce	503	Tarnów	584
Fryszak	505	Tuchów	587
Głogów Małopolski	506	Tyczyn	588
Gorlice	508	Ustrzyki Dolne	590
Grybów	510	Wieliczka	591
Jasienica Rosielna	512	Wielopole Skrzyńskie	594
Jasło	513	Wolbrom	595
Jawornik Polski	515	Żabno	596
Jedlicze	517	Zakliczyn	598
Jodłowa	518	Żmigród Nowy	599
Kalwaria Zebrzydowska	519	LUBLIN REGION (DISTRIKT LUBLIN)	603
Kańczuga	521	Baranów nad Wieprzem	611
Kołaczyce	522	Bełżyce	612
Kolbuszowa	523	Biała Podlaska	615
Korczyna	525	Biłgoraj	619
Kraków	527	Bychawa	621
Krosno	531	Chełm	623
Łańcut	533	Chodel	626
Lesko	535	Cieszanów	628
Leżajsk	537	Dubienka	630
Limanowa	538	Grabowiec	632
Miechów	540	Hrubieszów	634
Niebylec	542	Irena (Dęblin-Irena)	636
Nowy Sącz	543	Izbica (nad Wieprzem)	639
Nowy Targ	546	Janów Podlaski	643
Olpiny	548	Kazimierz Dolny	645
Pilica	548	Kock	647
Pilzno	550	Komarów	650

CONTENTS XI

Komarówka Podlaska	652	Chodorów	769
Końskowola	654	Czortków	770
Konstantynów	657	Dolina	773
Kraśnik	659	Drohobycz	774
Krasnystaw	662	Gródek Jagielloński	777
Kurów	665	Gwoździec	779
Łęczna	667	Horodenka	780
Łomazy	670	Janów Lwowski	781
Lubartów	672	Jaryczów Nowy	783
Lublin	675	Jaworów	784
Łuków	678	Jezierzany	786
Markuszów	682	Kałuż	788
Międzyrzec Podlaski	684	Kamionka Strumiłowa	789
Opole	688	Kołomyja	790
Ostrów	691	Komarńo	793
Parczew	693	Kopczyńce	795
Piaski Luterskie	696	Kosów	797
Puławy	699	Kozowa	798
Radzyń Podlaski	701	Lubaczów	800
Rejowiec	703	Lwów	802
Rossosz	706	Mikołajów	805
Ryki	708	Mikulicze	806
Sławatycze	710	Mościska	807
Szczebrzeszyn	713	Mosty Wielkie	808
Tarnogród	715	Nadwórna	810
Tomaszów Lubelski	718	Narajów	812
Tyszowce	720	Podhajce	813
Uchanie	722	Przemysław	815
Urzędów	723	Radziechów	817
Wąwolnica	726	Rawa Ruska	818
Wisznice	728	Rohatyn	821
Włodawa	730	Rudki	823
Zaklików	733	Sambor	824
Zamość	735	Skałat	826
Zwierzyniec	739	Śniatyn	828
		Sokal	829
EASTERN GALICIA REGION		Stanisławów	831
(DISTRIKT GALIZIEN)	743	Stryj	834
Bóbrka	750	Tarnopol	836
Bolechów	751	Tłumacz	839
Borszczów	753	Tłuste	841
Borysław	755	Trembowła	843
Brody	757	Tyśmienica	845
Brzeżany	759	Zbaraż	846
Buczacz	761	Zborów	848
Bukaczowce	765	Złoczów	849
Bursztyn	766	Żółkiew	852
Busk	768	Żurawno	853

XII CONTENTS

SECTION IV: BIAŁYSTOK REGION (DISTRIKT BIAŁYSTOK)

855

Augustów	864
Białystok	866
Bielsk Podlaski	871
Boćki	873
Brańsk	874
Ciechanowiec	876
Czyżewo	877
Dąbrowa Białostocka	880
Drohiczyn	881
Druskieniki	883
Goniądz	885
Grajewo	887
Gródek Białostocki	889
Grodno	890
Grodzisk	893
Indura	894
Janów Sokółski	896
Jasionówka	897
Jedwabne	899
Jeziory	902
Kamieniec Litewski	904
Kamionka	906
Kleszczele	907
Knyszyn	909
Krynki	911
Krzemienica Kościelna	913
Kuźnica Białostocka	914
Łapy	916
Łomża	917
Łunna	920
Marcinkańce	922
Michałow	924
Milejczyce	926
Narew	927
Nurzec	929
Orla	929
Ostryna	931
Piaski	933
Piątnica	935
Porozów	936
Porzecze	938
Prużana	939
Radziłów	943
Rajgród	944

Różana	946
Siemiatycze	949
Skidel	952
Śniadowo	953
Sokółka	955
Sokoły	957
Sopoćkinie	959
Stawiski	961
Suchowola	963
Świsłocz	966
Szczuczyn	968
Trzcianne	970
Wasilków	972
Wolkowysk	974
Wolpa	976
Wysokie Litewskie	978
Wysokie Mazowieckie	980
Zabłudów	981
Zambrów	984
Zelwa	986

PART B SECTION V: REICH COMMISSARIAT OSTLAND (REICHSKOMMISSARIAT OSTLAND)

989

ESTONIA AND LATVIA REGIONS (GENERALKOMMISSARIAT ESTLAND UND GENERALKOMMISSARIAT LETTLAND)

991

Tartu	998
Aglona	999
Aizpute	999
Balvi	1000
Bauska	1000
Daugavpils	1001
Dobele	1003
Gostini	1004
Gulbene	1004
Jaunjelgava	1005
Jēkabpils	1006
Jelgava	1006
Kārsava	1008
Krustpils	1009
Kuldiga	1010
Liepāja	1011
Lūdza	1014

Madona	1016	Kiemieliszki	1072
Preiji	1016	Krakės	1074
Rēzekne	1018	Kražiai	1075
Rīga	1019	Krekenava	1076
Saldus	1023	Kretinga	1077
Silene	1023	Krewo	1078
Valdemarpils	1024	Kudirkos Naumiestis	1079
Varakļāni	1024	Kupiškis	1080
Ventspils	1025	Kuršēnai	1081
Vījaka	1027	Kvėdarna	1082
Vīļāni	1027	Kybartai	1083
Višķi	1028	Lazdijai	1084
Zilupe	1028	Linkuva	1086
		Lygumai	1087
		Łyntupy	1087
LITHUANIA REGION		Marijampolė	1088
(GENERALKOMMISSARIAT LITAUEN)	1031	Mažeikiai	1090
Akmenė	1038	Mejszagofa	1091
Alsėdžiai	1038	Merkinė	1091
Alytus	1039	Michaliszki	1092
Anykščiai	1040	Naumiestis	1094
Ariogala	1041	Nowe Świėciany	1095
Babtai	1042	Obeliai	1096
Batakliai	1043	Onuškis	1096
Biržai	1044	Ostrowiec	1097
Butrimonys	1045	Oszmiana	1098
Bystrzyca	1047	Pajūris	1100
Darbėnai	1048	Pakruojis	1101
Darsūniškis	1049	Palanga	1101
Daugieliszki	1049	Panevėžys	1102
Dukszty	1050	Pasvalys	1103
Dusetos	1051	Pašvitinys	1104
Eržvilkas	1051	Plungė	1105
Gargždai	1052	Podbrodzie	1106
Garliava	1053	Prienai	1107
Gudogaj	1054	Pumpėnai	1108
Hoduciszki	1055	Radviliskis	1108
Holszany	1056	Raseiniai	1109
Ignalino	1058	Rietavas	1110
Jonava	1059	Rokiškis	1111
Joniškėlis	1061	Rudamina	1112
Joniškis	1061	Rumšiškės	1113
Jurbarkas	1062	Šakiai	1114
Kaišiadorys	1064	Salakas	1114
Kaltinėnai	1065	Seda	1115
Kamajai	1065	Šeduva	1116
Kaunas	1066	Seinijai	1116
Kėdainiai	1070	Semeliškės	1117
Kelmė	1071		

XIV CONTENTS

Seredžius	1118	Druja	1180
Šiauliai	1118	Dukora	1182
Šiluva	1122	Duniłowicze	1183
Širvintos	1122	Dworzec	1185
Smorgonie	1123	Dzerzhinsk	1186
Soly	1124	Dziewieniszki	1188
Subačius	1125	Dzisna	1189
Švėkšna	1126	Głębokie	1190
Šwięciany	1127	Gródek Wileński	1193
Šwir	1129	Grozovo	1195
Tauragė	1130	Hermanowicze	1195
Telšiai	1131	Horodyszcze	1196
Troki	1132	Horodziej	1197
Ukmergė	1133	Ilja	1199
Utena	1135	Iwacewicze	1200
Užpaliai	1136	Iwieniec	1202
Užventis	1137	Iwje	1204
Vabalninkas	1138	Jeremicze	1206
Vainutas	1138	Kleck	1207
Vendžiogala	1139	Kobylnik	1209
Viduklė	1140	Kopyl'	1211
Viekšniai	1141	Korelicze	1212
Vievis	1142	Kosów Poleski	1214
Vilkaviškis	1142	Koziany	1216
Vilkija	1144	Krasne	1217
Virbalis	1145	Krzywicze	1219
Vyžuonos	1146	Lachowicze	1220
Widze	1146	Lebiedziew	1221
Wilno	1148	Lenin	1222
Worniany	1152	Lenino	1224
Ylakiai	1153	Leśna	1225
Žagarė	1153	Lida	1225
Žapyškis	1155	Lubcz	1228
Žiezmariai	1156	Łužki	1231
Župrany	1157	Miadziół Nowy	1231
		Minsk	1233
		Miory	1237
		Mir	1239
		Mołczadź	1241
		Mołodeczno	1243
		Nieśwież	1244
		Nowa Mysz	1246
		Nowogródek	1247
		Nowy Świerżeń	1251
		Opsa	1252
		Ostroshtskii Gorodok	1253
		Parafjanów	1254
		Pleshchenitsy	1255
WEISSRUTHENIEN REGION (GENERALKOMMISSARIAT WEISSRUTHENIEN)	1159		
Baranowicze	1166		
Begoml'	1168		
Brasław	1169		
Budslaw	1171		
Byteń	1172		
Chocieńczyce	1174		
Dereczyn	1175		
Dokszycze	1177		
Dołhinów	1179		

Dashev	1524	Zhitomir	1579
Dzerzhinsk	1525	Zhornishche	1581
Dzhulinka	1526		
Gaisin	1527	KIEV REGION	
Ianov	1528	(GENERALKOMMISSARIAT	
Ianushpol'	1529	KIEV)	1583
Iarun'	1530	Belaia Tserkov'	1590
Il'intsy	1530	Boguslav	1590
Iurovichi	1531	Buki	1591
Kalinovka	1532	Cherkassy	1592
Kazatin	1534	Chernobyl'	1593
Khmel'nik	1535	Fastov	1593
Khodorkov	1537	Gorodishche	1594
Korosten'	1537	Kobeliaki	1595
Korostyshev	1538	Korsun' Shevchenkovskii	1595
Lel'chitsy	1539	Kremenchug	1596
Lipovets	1541	Lokhvitsa	1597
Litin	1542	Man'kovka	1598
Liubar	1544	Ol'shana	1598
Miropol'	1545	Piatigory	1599
Monasteryshche	1546	Piriatin	1600
Mozyr'	1547	Shpola	1601
Narodichi	1549	Skvira	1602
Nemirov	1550	Smela	1603
Novaia Priluka	1551	Sokolovka	1604
Novograd-Volynskii	1552	Tal'noe	1604
Olevsk	1553	Tarashcha	1605
Oratov	1555	Uman'	1606
Pavlovichi	1556	Zen'kov	1608
Petrikov	1556	Zhashkov	1609
Piatka	1558	Zolotonosha	1610
Pikov	1558	Zvenigorodka	1611
Pliskov	1559		
Pogrebishche	1561	NIKOLAEV AND DNEPROPETROVSK	
Radomyshl'	1562	REGIONS (GENERALKOMMISSARIATE	
Rechitsa	1563	NIKOLAJEW UND	
Rogachov	1565	DNJEPROPETROWSK)	1613
Ruzhin	1566	Aleksandrovka	1619
Samgorodok	1567	Bobrinets	1619
Sobolevka	1569	Dobrovelichkovka	1621
Strizhavka	1569	Fraidorf	1621
Teplik	1570	Ingulets	1622
Ternovka	1572	Kamenka	1623
Tsibulev	1573	Kamenka-Shevchenkovskaia	1623
Ulanov	1574	Kherson	1624
Vcheraishe	1575	Malaia Viska	1626
Vinnitsa	1576	Nikolaev	1627
Voronovitsa	1577	Novaia Odessa	1629

XVIII CONTENTS

Novaia Praga	1629	Klichev	1682
Novomoskovsk	1630	Klimovichi	1682
Novovitebskoe	1631	Kokhanovo	1684
Novozlatopol'	1631	Kolyshki	1684
Pavlograd	1632	Kopys'	1685
Pervomaisk	1633	Korma	1686
Zlatopol'	1634	Kostiukovichi	1688

SECTION VII: REGIONS OF THE USSR UNDER GERMAN MILITARY OCCUPATION

1637

EASTERN BELORUSSIA REGION

1639

Baran'	1645	Krubki	1692
Batsevichi	1645	Kublichy	1694
Belynichi	1645	Lapichi	1695
Berezino	1646	Lenino	1696
Beshenkovichi	1647	Lepel'	1696
Bobruisk	1649	Liady	1697
Bobynichi	1651	Liozno	1699
Bogushevichi	1651	Lipen'	1701
Borisov	1651	Liuban'	1701
Borovukha 1-IA	1653	Mar'ina Gorka	1702
Buda-Koshelevo	1654	Mogilev	1703
Bykhov	1656	Mstislavl'	1706
Chashniki	1657	Naprasnovka	1708
Chausy	1659	Obchuga	1708
Chechersk	1660	Obol'	1709
Cherikov	1662	Obol'tsy	1709
Cherven'	1663	Orsha	1709
Daraganovo	1664	Osipovichi	1712
Dobrush	1665	Ostrovno	1713
Dribin	1666	Osveia	1714
Drissa	1667	Ozarichi	1714
Dubrovno	1668	Parichi	1715
Elizovo	1669	Polotsk	1718
Ezerishche	1670	Propoisk	1719
Glusk	1670	Pukhovichi	1720
Gomel' (Gomel' Oblast')	1672	Riasno	1721
Gomel' (Vitebsk Oblast')	1675	Rogachev	1722
Gorki	1675	Rossasno	1724
Gorodets	1676	Rossony	1724
Gorodok	1676	Senno	1725
Grodzianka	1678	Shchedrin	1726
Ianovichi	1679	Shepelevichi	1728
Kholopenichi	1680	Shklov	1729
Khotimsk	1681	Shumilino	1731
		Sirotno	1732
		Slavnoe	1732

Sloboda	1733	Gusino	1792
Smoliany	1734	Il'ino	1793
Starye Dorogi	1734	Kagal'nitskaia	1795
Streshin	1736	Kaluga	1795
Tal'ka	1737	Karachev	1796
Tolochin	1738	Khislavichi	1797
Trudy	1739	Kletnia	1799
Ukhvala	1739	Klimovo	1800
Ulla	1740	Klintsy	1800
Ushachi	1740	Krasnyi	1801
Uvarovichi	1742	Liubavichi	1802
Vetka	1743	Loknia	1804
Vetrino	1744	Mglin	1804
Vitebsk	1745	Mikulino	1805
Volyntsy	1748	Monastyrshchina	1806
Voronichi	1748	Nal'chik	1807
Zembin	1749	Nevel'	1808
Zhlobin	1750	Novozybkov	1809
Zhuravichi	1752	Opochka	1810
		Petrovichi	1811
		Pochep	1813
		Pochinok	1813
		Pskov	1814
		Pustoshka	1815
		Roslavl'	1815
		Rudnia	1816
		Rzhev	1819
		Sebezh	1819
		Shumiachi	1820
		Smolensk	1820
		Sol'tsy	1824
		Staraia Russa	1825
		Starodub	1826
		Stodolishche	1827
		Surazh	1827
		Sviatsk	1828
		Sychevka	1828
		Tatarsk	1829
		Toropets	1830
		Unecha	1832
		Usviaty	1833
		Velike Luki	1833
		Velizh	1834
		Vyritsa	1836
		Yessentuki	1837
		Zakharino	1838
		Zlynka	1839
EASTERN UKRAINE AND CRIMEA			
REGION	1755		
Akhtyrka	1761		
Alushta	1761		
Artemovsk	1762		
Belopol'e	1763		
Bogodukhov	1764		
Borzna	1764		
Dmitrovka	1765		
Dzhankoi	1765		
Gorodnia	1766		
Khar'kov	1767		
Korop	1771		
Kramatorsk	1771		
Priluki	1772		
Semenovka	1773		
Shchors	1774		
Stalino	1775		
Voikovshtadt	1777		
Yalta	1777		
Yenakievo	1779		
OCCUPIED RUSSIAN TERRITORY	1781		
Bezhanitsy	1789		
Demidov	1789		
Dmitriev-L'govskii	1790		
Dukhovshchina	1791		
Elista	1791		

XX CONTENTS

**SECTION VIII:
GERMAN-OCCUPIED GREECE 1841**

Thessalonikē	1844
List of Abbreviations	1849
List of Contributors	1865
About the Editor	1871
Names Index	1873
Places Index	1917
Organizations and Enterprises Index	1951

LIST OF MAPS

Ghettos in German-Occupied Eastern Europe 1939–1945	iii	Ghettos in the Lithuania Region 1941–1943	1037
Ghettos in the Zichenau Region 1940–1942	9	Ghettos in the Weissruthenien Region 1941–1943	1165
Ghettos in the Warthegau Region 1940–1942	40	Ghettos in the Volhynia and Podolia Region 1941–1942	1321
Ghettos in the Eastern Upper Silesia Region 1941–1943	138	Ghettos in the Zhytomyr Region 1941–1942	1514
Ghettos in the Radom Region 1939–1943	194	Ghettos in the Kiev Region 1941–1942	1589
Ghettos in the Warsaw Region 1940–1943	363	Ghettos in the Nikolaev and Dnepropetrovsk Regions 1941–1942	1618
Ghettos in the Kraków Region 1939–1943	481	Ghettos in the Eastern Belorussia Region 1941–1942	1644
Ghettos in the Lublin Region 1940–1943	610	Ghettos in Eastern Ukraine and Crimea Region under German Military Administration 1941–1942	1760
Ghettos in the Eastern Galicia Region 1941–1943	749	Ghettos in Occupied Russian Territory (North) 1941–1942	1787
Ghettos in the Białystok Region 1941–1943	863	Ghettos in Occupied Russian Territory (South) 1942–1943	1788
Ghettos in the Latvia and Estonia Regions 1941–1943	997		



SECTION V

REICH KOMMISSARIAT OSTLAND (REICHSKOMMISSARIAT OSTLAND)

In July 1941, less than a month after the German invasion of the Soviet Union, Hitler ordered the establishment of a civil administration to administer much of the occupied western regions of the Soviet Union. These territories, subordinated to Alfred Rosenberg as head of the Reichsministerium für die besetzten Ostgebiete (Reich Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories, RMO), were divided between two Reichskommissariate, Ostland and Ukraine.

Reichskommissariat Ostland, ruled by Reichskommissar Hinrich Lohse, was set up in August 1941 when much of its constituent territory was handed over from military to civil administration. The territory of Reichskommissariat Ostland consisted of four Generalkommissariate: Weissruthenien, Litauen, Lettland, and Estland, each governed by a Generalkommissar.

Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien was made up mainly of the former Polish Nowogródek and parts of the Wilno and Poleskie województwa, together with part of the pre-1939 Soviet Minsk oblast'. Generalkommissariat Litauen consisted of the Lithuanian SSR, which included the city of Vilnius (Wilno) as the capital after occupation of the region by Soviet forces in 1939–1940. In April 1942, a strip of territory east of Vilnius was added from Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien to Generalkommissariat Litauen. Pre-war Latvia made up Generalkommissariat Lettland, whereas Generalkommissariat Estland consisted of the territory of the Estonian SSR as of 1940–1941, just prior to the German invasion. These last two Generalkommissariate have been combined for convenience in this volume, as Generalkommissariat Estland contained only one ghetto site.



ESTONIA AND LATVIA REGIONS



Latvian civilians drag a Jew through a street in Riga, July 1941, as a member of the German police looks on.
USHMM WS #69737, COURTESY OF BERNHARD PRESS

ESTONIA AND LATVIA REGIONS (GENERALKOMMISSARIAT ESTLAND UND GENERALKOMMISSARIAT LETTLAND)

Pre-1940: Latvia and Estonia and parts of RSFSR; 1940–1941: Latvian SSR, Estonian SSR, and parts of RSFSR; 1941–1944: Generalkommissariate Lettland und Estland, Reichskommissariat Ostland; post-1991: Republic of Latvia, Republic of Estonia, and parts of Russian Federation

The German authorities established around 29 ghettos in Generalkommissariat Lettland and 1 ghetto in Generalkommissariat Estland. Of these, 6 were established in what became, under the German civil administration, Gebiet Libau (Liepāja); 8 in Gebiet Mitau (Jelgava); 12 in Gebiet Dünaburg (Daugavpils, also known as the Lettgallen region); 2 in Gebiet Riga-Land; and 1 in Riga. Ghettoization began in these regions in July 1941 and was effectively completed in late October 1941, when the Riga ghetto was sealed, although the remnant ghetto in Liepāja was not established until July 1942. From the end of 1941 until late 1943, most of the remaining Jews in Latvia were located in Riga, Daugavpils, and Liepāja, where the three largest ghettos existed. The more than 20 ghettos and temporary holding camps established for Jews in a number of smaller Latvian towns in the summer of 1941 were almost all liquidated by December 1941, with the exception of the Lūdza ghetto, where the last inmates were killed in the spring of 1942. Effectively, these sites were destruction ghettos, serving mainly to concentrate the Jewish population in preparation for a killing Aktion. In Estonia, only Tartu has been included here as a “ghetto,” but one of the camps for Jews in Tallinn is also referred to as a ghetto in one source.

According to the 1935 census, there were 93,479 Jews living in Latvia, comprising 4.79 percent of the population. Almost two thirds of the Jews lived in the three largest cities of Riga (43,762), Daugavpils (11,106), and Liepāja (7,379). The 1934 census in Estonia recorded 4,434 Jews, only 0.4 percent

of the country’s total population. Almost half of the Estonian Jews, 2,203, lived in Tallinn and another 920 in Tartu, while only 1.7 percent of all Jews in Estonia lived in the countryside.

Latvia and Estonia were occupied by the Soviet Union in the summer of 1940. Under Soviet rule, thousands of people were deported to the Soviet interior, most of them in June 1941, just before the German invasion. Files exist on at least 1,771 Jews (and there were many others without files), who were among more than 9,900 people deported from Latvia in 1940–1941, demonstrating that there was a disproportionately high number of Jews among the Soviet deportees. At least 400 Jews (10 percent of the entire Jewish population) were among those deported by the Soviets from Estonia.

Following the German invasion on June 22, 1941, a large proportion of the Estonian Jews and a smaller fraction of Latvian Jews were evacuated, fled in time, or were recruited into the Red Army. For Latvia, it is estimated that approximately 15,000 Jews (about 18 percent) reached the unoccupied areas of the Soviet Union, but hundreds more lost their lives due to bombing or military operations.¹ Detailed demographic records on Liepāja indicate that of around 7,140 Jews in the city on June 22, 1941, some 6,500 remained at the start of the German occupation one week later. From Estonia, which was occupied a few weeks after Latvia, roughly two thirds of the remaining Jewish population managed to flee, leaving only around 1,000 Jews behind.

In Latvia, the arrival of German forces in late June and early July 1941 was accompanied by the rapid establishment of a local Latvian administration and Latvian Self-Defense forces, recruited from former Latvian reservists (Aizsārgi) and other volunteers. These interim organizations played an important role in the implementation of a wide range of anti-Jewish regulations and measures, including the ghettoization and mass murder of the Jews in a number of Latvian towns.

Initially, Latvia came under German military administration, run mainly by the offices of the military commandants (Ortskommandanturen) based in the towns. However, from the start, units of Einsatzgruppe A played a major role in security matters, especially the arrest and shooting of Jews. Latvia was transferred to a German civil administration in two stages. On July 16, 1941, the provinces of Kurzeme and Zemgale in the west came under civil administration, followed by the remainder of Gk Lettland on September 1. Since the murder of the Jews in the provinces was already completed in some regions in the months of July and August, all that remained for



A group of Jewish women wearing yellow stars walk on a street in Riga, September 1941.

USHMM WS #73962, COURTESY OF APMO AND LVVA

the German civil administrators there was to register and confiscate Jewish property.

In the first weeks of occupation, Einsatzgruppe A, supported by SS, Order Police, and Wehrmacht units, conducted a number of killing Aktions in Latvia directed against suspected Communists and the Jewish leadership or “intellectuals.” For example, in the first half of July 1941, Sonderkommando 1b shot 1,150 male Jews in Daugavpils before handing over responsibility to Einsatzkommando 3.² In Riga, hundreds of Jewish men and suspected Communists were arrested and shot by the German Security Police together with the Latvian Auxiliary Security Police (Arājs Kommando, named after its leader Viktors Arājs) during the summer of 1941, reaching a total of at least 4,000 Jews and 1,000 Communists by September.³ However, outside the main cities, the shooting of Jewish women and children, as well as men, had commenced in Latvia already in July.

In these initial weeks, the German military administration issued orders for Jews to wear yellow stars.⁴ Jews were strictly forbidden to leave their places of residence without an official permit, to engage in any form of trade, to attend the market, or to use the sidewalk. Local authorities imposed further restrictions. For example, in Jelgava, regulations were issued in early July dismissing all Jews from their employment; forbidding them to attend cinemas, public parks, or museums; and requiring Jews to vacate certain designated streets.⁵ In Varakļāni, large posters announced that Jews were forbidden to associate with non-Jews, could not be treated by non-Jewish doctors, and were forbidden to employ non-Jewish servants.⁶ Jewish stores were closed down; Jewish men were beaten, humiliated, and arrested; and Jewish homes were looted. Some synagogues in Riga and elsewhere were burned shortly after the start of the German occupation.

Forced labor for Jews was also imposed quickly in most towns, often organized with the assistance of a Jewish Council (Judenrat). Jews were employed mainly in rubble clearance, construction work, street cleaning and other public projects



Group portrait of German and Latvian SS taken at the Latvian military school in Riga, ca. 1942. The officers numbered 3 and 4 are Viktors Arājs, commander of Sonderkommando Arājs, and Dr. Rudolf Lange, his superior, who implemented the “Final Solution” in Latvia.
USHMM WS #95452, COURTESY OF STA. HAMBURG



The burning of the Great Synagogue of Riga, July 1941.
USHMM WS #69738, COURTESY OF BERNHARD PRESS

in the towns, or sometimes agricultural work. In Krustpils, local farmers could rent Jews as day laborers. In Preiļi and Valdemarpils, groups of Jews were put to work digging peat outside the town.

Most of the smaller ghettos and holding camps in Latvia were established in July and August of 1941. A variety of different sites were used as “ghettos” in Latvia. Many were established in synagogues, in schools, in fire stations, or in the poorer sections of town. The ghetto in Daugavpils was established in an old military fortress; a barracks constructed during the Napoleonic period. The lower of its two floors had served as a stable previously, and living conditions there were abysmal.⁷ In some cases, prisons were used to confine the male Jews before they were shot, while the women and children were held in a designated part of town. In Jaunjelgava, the Jews were held in a ghetto composed of one or two synagogue buildings, with the men held separately from the women.

Only in a few places is the process of ghettoization in Latvia well documented. In Lūdza, the German military administration ordered the establishment of a ghetto in mid-July in connection with the registration of Jews for work. Several streets were designated as the ghetto, and the head of the Latvian auxiliary police, Riekstiņš, ordered the Jews to move in by 10:00 p.m. on July 20. The Jews were allowed to take with them some clothing, bedding materials, cutlery, crockery, and other household items.⁸ The apartments abandoned by the Jews were confiscated by the German authorities, but after their resettlement, some Jews were allowed to return home to collect remaining items. The ghetto in Lūdza was not surrounded by a fence, but around its perimeter signs were posted bearing a six-pointed star and the inscription “Jews, [entrance] forbidden!”⁹ The ghetto in Varakļāni was also unfenced, but Jews were prohibited from leaving; the ghetto in Viļāni was surrounded with barbed wire. In many places, Latvian Self-Defense units guarded the ghettos.

The Jews confined within the small, improvised regional ghettos suffered from severe overcrowding. This was especially the case where additional Jews were brought in from neighboring villages, such as in Kārsava, where 18 to 20 people had to

share a single room. In Lūdza the Jews received a ration of 300 grams (10.6 ounces) of bread, but in most ghettos they suffered from hunger, having little or nothing to eat. In the Ventspils, Viļāni, and other regional ghettos (as later in the Riga ghetto), Jewish women were sexually assaulted by the Latvian guards.

The elimination of entire Jewish communities began in Latvia very soon after the start of the German occupation. The Jews of Dobeles were all murdered by July 13, 1941. In Silene, on July 22, the Latvian Self-Defense force rounded up all the Jews and put them in a large synagogue. After about one week, all the Jews were taken out on the pretext of being resettled to the Braślav ghetto and were shot in pits nearby. Many of the short-lived ghettos were liquidated in August 1941.

The German Security Police (Einsatzgruppe A) played a key role in organizing many of the *Aktionen*, sometimes assisted by men of the *Arājs Kommando* based in Riga, who traveled to the mass shootings in distinctive blue buses. However, eyewitness descriptions from survivors and other local inhabitants also stress the key role played by local Latvian officials and the Self-Defense forces, which sometimes acted with little assistance from outside. In Kārsava, for example, the local Latvian auxiliary police actively participated in shooting the Jews without the presence of the *Arājs Kommando*. In some places, the Jews were killed in a series of *Aktionen* over several days or weeks. Around Daugavpils, the Jews from surrounding towns were concentrated in the Daugavpils ghetto, rather than being shot on the spot. Ghettos were not always set up. In Cēsis, many of the Jews were arrested and held in the prison before being transported out to Lake Ninieris, where they were murdered. Investigative sources indicate that men of the *Arājs Kommando* arrived to carry out the shooting, but local auxiliary policemen conducted the arrests and some actively participated in the massacre.¹⁰

In Riga, 29,602 Latvian Jews were enclosed in a ghetto on orders of *Gebietskommissar* Wittrock by October 25, 1941.¹¹ The large ghetto existed for only just over one month, as Higher SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) Jeckeln, who arrived from Ukraine in November, had instructions to “make room” for Jewish deportees from the Reich in the ghetto. In two large-scale *Aktionen* on November 30 and December 8, 1941, more than 24,000 Latvian Jews from the Riga ghetto were murdered by German and Latvian police. In the first *Aktion*, Jeckeln relied mainly on the forces of the Order Police and Latvian auxiliaries. The civil administration also complained about the lack of prior consultation, which had, for example, wrecked their plans for an orderly collection of Jewish property.¹² Between December 1941 and November 1942, more than 22,000 German, Austrian, and Czech Jews were deported to Riga. Some were killed on arrival at the end of November 1941, but at this time their immediate murder had not been intended by the Nazi leadership in Berlin. Most of the Central European Jews were put into the Riga ghetto, where they soon outnumbered the few Latvian Jewish survivors.

The Central European Jews initially established their own groups, reflecting their cities of origin, but soon a centralized Jewish Council was organized with social and labor depart-



The Higher SS and Police Leader Ostland, Friedrich Jeckeln, responsible for numerous *Aktionen* against Jews in the Riga ghetto and surrounding territories, stands in the dock during his Soviet trial, which convened in Riga. The original caption reads, “View of the bench of the accused at a trial connected with the crimes of the fascist invaders on the territory of the Baltic republic, 1946.”

USHMM WS #79152. COURTESY OF RGAKFD

ments, a prison, and a police unit. About 2,000 elderly and sick Jews from the ghetto were killed in a further *Aktion* in March 1942, but thereafter conditions stabilized, primarily due to the Germans’ need for labor in Riga. Additional Jews were even brought in from Lithuania. Some Jews were transferred to the Salaspils camp where conditions were horrendous, but many worked at labor sites in Riga outside the ghetto, even staying there overnight, under somewhat better conditions. There were also very few deaths in the Liepāja ghetto between July 1942 and March 1943, after the Jewish population there had been reduced to 1,050 after another *Aktion* in December 1941.¹³ In 1943, responsibility for the Riga ghetto was transferred to the SS, and the remaining labor outposts of the Riga ghetto were converted into subcamps of the Kaiserswald concentration camp. However, this transition still took some time to realize in practice. After the Jews were removed from the Riga ghetto, some being transferred ultimately to concentration camps in the Reich where a number survived, the ghetto area was used to accommodate Russian refugees who had fled from the combat zone to the east.

Jewish resistance in the smaller ghettos consisted mainly of individual acts of defiance. In Jelgava, the Jewish pharmacist took poison; and in Viļāni, two Jews armed with shovels killed a Latvian guard, as he participated in the killing of Jews inside the ghetto. Some of the Lūdza Jews managed to flee while on work details outside the ghetto. A number of Jews managed to survive on the “Aryan side,” usually with the help of Latvian acquaintances. The Jewish Police in Riga, composed of Latvian Jews, was very active in organizing armed resistance inside the ghetto, which resulted in the arrest and murder of the entire force in late October 1942, when the Germans uncovered details of their activities. In Višķi, at the time of the roundup to transfer them to the Daugavpils ghetto, some Jews hid in cellars, attics, and barns; most were soon



Jews walk along a street in the Riga ghetto parallel to the barbed-wire fence, 1941–1942.

USHMM WS #61533, COURTESY OF STA. HAMBURG

discovered and shot on the spot. Subsequently a number of Jews attempted to escape from the Daugavpils ghetto to join the Soviet partisans in the nearby Belorussian forests in the latter stages of the occupation.

In Aglona, the clergyman Dr. Aloizij Brok saved a Jewish woman who had converted to Catholicism and delivered a sermon titled “Thou Shalt Not Kill” on Christmas Eve in 1941. For his pains, he was arrested twice and ultimately perished in the Neuengamme concentration camp in 1943.

In Estonia the Holocaust was implemented somewhat differently than in Latvia. Due to the small number of Jews, formal ghettos were not created. Only in Tartu were the Jews concentrated separately from other arrested suspects in two houses, creating a form of ghetto for a short time before they were transferred to the Tartu concentration camp prior to their murder.

In Pärnu, Jewish women and children were placed first in the concentration camp at the “Betty Barn” until the end of October 1941, when they were transferred briefly to the town’s synagogue before being murdered there by members of the Omakaitse (Estonian Self-Defense force). According to one source, the children were killed by giving them hot chocolate laced with poison. Between July 12 and December 12, 1941, the Estonian Self-Defense troops killed a total of 494 people in Pärnu, of whom 140 were Jews.¹⁴

In the capital, Tallinn, Jews were concentrated in the former sanatorium known as Harku. Files in the Estonian State Archives describe this facility as a camp in September 1941 and as a ghetto in October, but most historians refer to it as part of the Estonian system of prisons and improvised concentration camps.¹⁵

In Estonia, during the first weeks and months of the occupation, most of the Jews were soon arrested, mainly by the Estonian Self-Defense force or by the Estonian Security Police, acting under the direction of Einsatzgruppe A, and were shot by those units shortly afterwards. Male Jews were

generally killed first. In Tallinn and Pärnu, female Jews, children, and elderly men were kept alive a little longer, with the women being exploited for forced labor. A unique feature of the genocide here is that arrest reports and even some interrogation records were prepared by the Estonian security forces for more than 400 of the victims, which provide a very detailed picture of who they were and the circumstances of their arrest and murder. By February 1942, the German and Estonian security forces had arrested and shot 963 Jews in Estonia.¹⁶

SOURCES Among the secondary works dealing with the fate of the Jews in the ghettos of Latvia, the following are to be recommended: Andrej Angrick and Peter Klein, *Die Endlösung im Ghetto Riga. Ausbeutung und Vernichtung 1941–44* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2006); Rabbi Menakhem Barkagan, ed., *Unichtozbenie evreev v Latvii 1941–1945: Tsikl leksii* (Riga: SHAMIR, 2007), now also available in English as *Extermination of the Jews in Latvia, 1941–1945* (Riga: Society “Shamir,” 2008); Boris Vol’kovich et al., *Kholokost v Latgalii* (Daugavpils, 2003); Wolfgang Curilla, *Die deutsche Ordnungspolizei und der Holocaust im Baltikum und in Weissrussland 1941–1944* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2006); Andrew Ezergailis, *The Holocaust in Latvia 1941–1944: The Missing Center* (Riga: Historical Institute of Latvia; Washington, DC: Published in association with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 1996); Raul Hilberg, *Die Vernichtung der europäischen Juden*, 3 vols. (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1982); and Max Kaufmann, *Churban Lettland: Die Vernichtung der Juden Lettlands* (Konstanz: Hartung-Gorre, 1999).

For Estonia, the following publications are of particular use: Anton Weiss-Wendt, *Murder without Hatred: Estonians and the Holocaust* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2009); T. Hijo, M. Maripuu, and I. Paalve, eds., *Estonia 1940–1945: Reports of the Estonian International Commission for the Investigation of Crimes against Humanity* (Tallinn: Estonian Foundation for the Investigation of Crimes against Humanity, 2006); and Ruth Bettina Birn, *Sicherheitspolizei in Estland 1941–1944: Eine Studie zur Kollaboration im Osten* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2006).

Useful reference works include: Il’ja Al’tmann, *Opfer des Hasses: Der Holocaust in der UdSSR 1941–1945* (Zurich: Gleichen, 2008); *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1968–1979); Dov Levin, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Latvia and Estonia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1988); Wolfgang Scheffler and Diana Schulle, eds., *Buch der Erinnerung: Die ins Baltikum deportierten deutschen, österreichischen und tschechoslowakischen Juden* (Munich: Saur, 2003); 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 collections of testimonies and other primary sources can be found in the following publications: Ilya Ehrenburg and Vasily Grossman, *The Complete Black Book of Russian Jewry* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2002); Joshua Rubenstein and Ilya Altman, eds., *The Unknown Black Book: The Holocaust in the German-Occupied Soviet Territories* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press in association with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2007); Rima Dulkinienė and Kerry Keys, eds., *With a Needle in the Heart: Memoirs of Former Prisoners of Ghettos and Concentration Camps*

(Vilnius: Garnelis, 2003); and Peter Klein, ed., *Die Einsatzgruppen in der besetzten Sowjetunion 1941/42* (Berlin: Hentrich, 1997).

Significant published survivor memoirs include Frida Michelson, *I Survived Rumbuli* (New York: Holocaust Publications, 1979); Sydney Iwens, *How Dark the Heavens. 1400 Days in the Grip of Nazi Terror* (New York: Shengold, 1990); and Gertrude Schneider, *Journey into Terror: Story of the Riga Ghetto* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2001).

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: BA-BL; BA-DH; BA-L; BA-MA; BLH; GARF; IfZ; LG-Hamb; LVVA; NARA; RGVA; USHMM; VHF; WL; YIVO; and YVA.

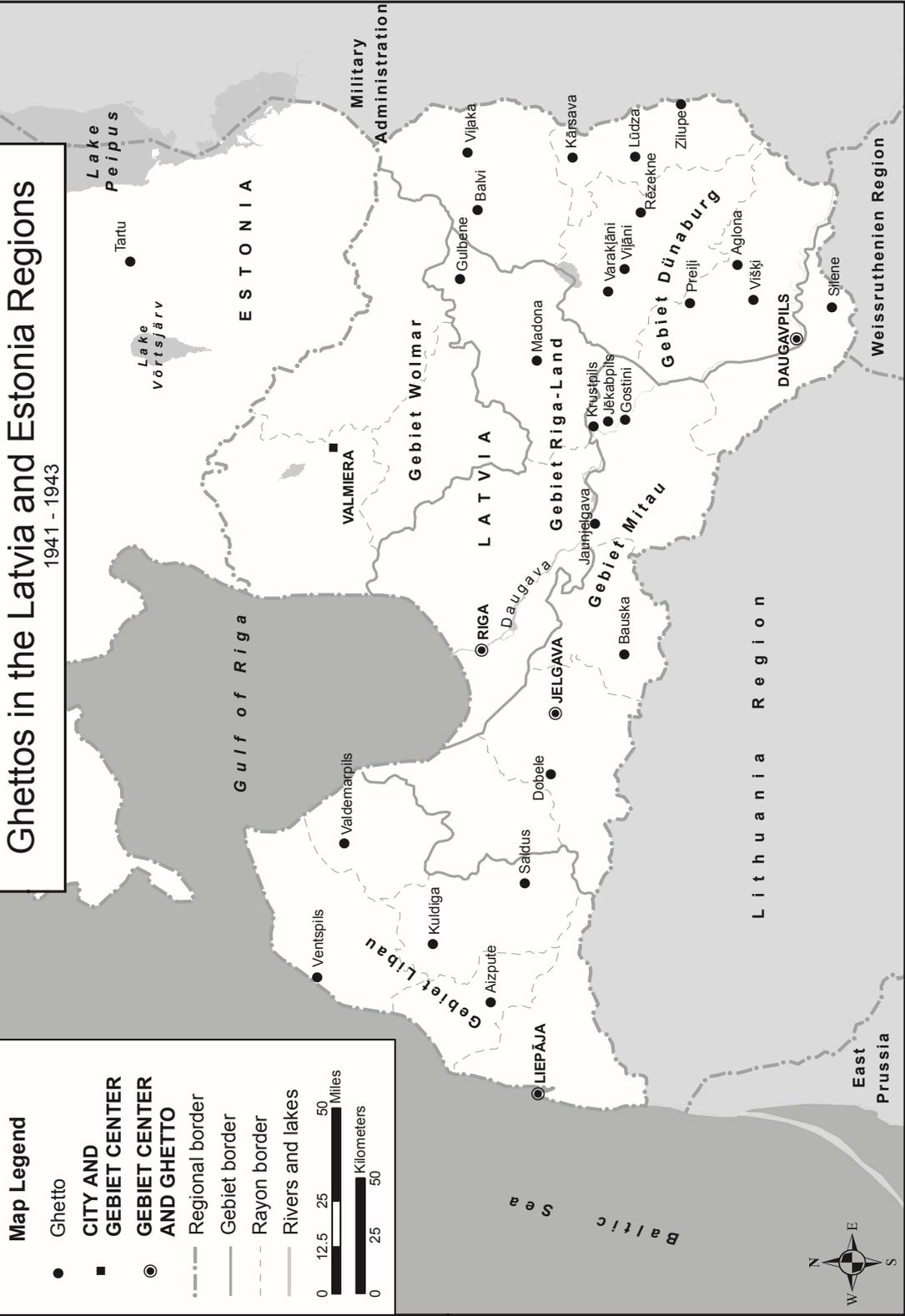
Martin Dean

NOTES

1. Barkagan, *Extermination of the Jews in Latvia*, pp. 38–39.
2. NARA, RG-242, T-175, reel 233, fr. 2721528–2721530, Ereignismeldung UdSSR no. 24, July 16, 1941.
3. N-Doc., 180-L, report by Stahlecker on activities of EGA up to October 15, 1941 (original in GARF).
4. LVVA, P1026-1-3, p. 141, Befehlshaber des Rückwärtigen Heeresgebietes Nord, order of July 24, 1941, on the marking of the Jewish population.
5. *Nacionālā Zemgale*, issues of July 2 and 8, 1941, as cited by Ezerģailis, *The Holocaust in Latvia*, pp. 158–159.
6. Michelson, *I Survived Rumbuli*, pp. 34–36.
7. Iwens, *How Dark the Heavens*, p. 46.
8. Vol'kovich et al., *Kholokost v Latgalii*, p. 40; LVVA, P132-30-23, pp. 15–16.
9. Vol'kovich et al., *Kholokost v Latgalii*, p. 34.
10. Barkagan, *Extermination of the Jews in Latvia*, pp. 136–138.
11. LVVA, P69-1a-19, p. 8.
12. NARA, T-459, reel 21, fr. 145–146, Gebietskommissar an HSSPF, December 13, 1941; fr. 147, Gebietskommissar an HSSPF, December 11, 1941; fr. 149–150, Vermerk Riga, December 11, 1941; fr. 163, an den Reichskommissar, December 4, 1941. See also Angrick and Klein, *Die Endlösung im Ghetto Riga*, pp. 138–184.
13. BA-BL, R 92/1157, folder 1, report of March 10, 1943.
14. According to the report of the Commander of the Security Police and the SD, July 1, 1942, in the Pernau area 177 Jews were killed. See GARF, 7021-97-881.
15. Birn, *Sicherheitspolizei in Estland*, pp. 159–160, Weiss-Wendt, *Murder without Hatred*, p. 132, uses only the term “concentration camp.”
16. Weiss-Wendt, *Murder without Hatred*, pp. 131, 152–187.

Ghettos in the Latvia and Estonia Regions

1941 - 1943



Map Legend

- Ghetto
 - CITY AND GEBIET CENTER AND GHETTO
 - ⊙ GEBIET CENTER AND GHETTO
 - - - Regional border
 - Gebiet border
 - - - Rayon border
 - Rivers and lakes
- 0 12.5 25 50 Miles
0 25 50 Kilometers

Borders as of 1942

ESTONIA REGION (GENERALKOMMISSARIAT ESTLAND)

TARTU

Pre-1940: Tartu, city and district center, Estonia; 1940–1941: Estonian SSR; 1941–1944: Dorpat, center, Kreis and Gebiet Dorpat, Generalkommissariat Estland; post-1991: Tartu, city and district center, Republic of Estonia

Tartu, Estonia's second-largest city, is located 185 kilometers (115 miles) south of Tallinn. According to the 1934 population census, 920 Jews were living in the city. German armed forces captured the city on July 11–12, 1941, three weeks after their invasion of the USSR on June 22. During that time, the vast majority of the Jewish population was able to evacuate; it was mainly the sick and elderly and some of their relatives (about 50 people) who remained in Tartu at the start of the German occupation.

At first, German Feldkommandantur 817 controlled the city, which was headed by Oberst Hans Gosebruch. In December 1941, authority in Estonia was transferred to a German civilian administration, and from mid-December 1941 onward, Tartu was governed by Kreisleiter Menen.

On July 12, 1941, Major Friedrich Kurg, the head of the Estonian nationalist "Forest Brothers" movement in southern Estonia, ordered the arrest of all the Jews in the city. Initially the Jews were herded into the synagogue on Turu Street. Soon, however, the military authorities decided to start using the synagogue as a makeshift prisoner-of-war (POW) camp, and the Jews were moved to two other houses. According to post-war testimony of the former Estonian officer Ants (Hans) Laats, who in the summer and fall of 1941 was the duty officer at the concentration camp in Tartu: "They brought the Jews

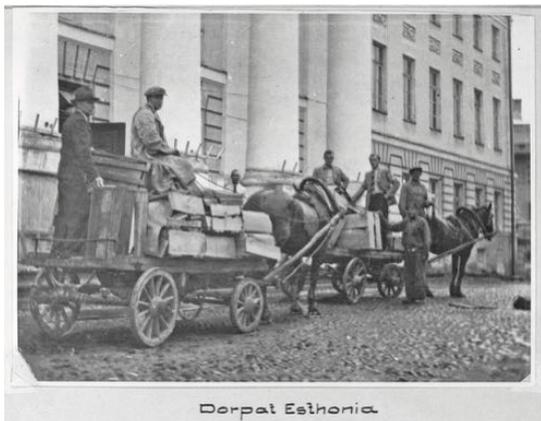
into a small house on Aleksandra Street. The prisoners remained under guard for some time. Some Jewish families also were kept in a separate house on Parga Street.¹ In effect, these two houses formed a temporary or destruction ghetto for a few weeks.² Periodically Jews from the houses were taken out in groups and transferred to the Tartu concentration camp, which was located on Vystavochnaia Ploshchad', where they were held from the end of August 1941 in the so-called Kuperjanov Barracks. From this location, the Jews were then taken out and shot in an antitank ditch, usually only a few days after their arrival. Jewish men were shot first, followed by the women and children. In total, more than 50 Jews were killed in this manner in the summer of 1941.³ In addition to the Jews, Gypsies, Communists, and Soviet POWs were also murdered in a similar manner in Tartu. Some of the victims were buried alive.

Isidor Lewin, a Jew from Tartu, found refuge in a monastery, thanks to the help of the university professor Dr. Otto Messing, and managed to survive the German occupation. Dr. Messing has been recognized as Righteous Among the Nations by Yad Vashem.

SOURCES Publications concerning the murder of the Jews of Tartu under German occupation include Dov Levin, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Latvia and Estonia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1988), pp. 341–359; M. Maripuu, "Execution of Estonian Jews in Local Detention Institutions in 1941–1942," in T. Hijo, M. Maripuu, and I. Paalve, eds., *Estonia 1940–1945: Reports of the Estonian International Commission for the Investigation of Crimes against Humanity* (Tallinn: Estonian Foundation for the Investigation of Crimes against Humanity, 2006), p. 652. Anton Weiss-Wendt, *Murder without Hatred: Estonians and the Holocaust* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2009), pp. 190–208, includes details about the arrest of individual Jews in Tartu and a description of the Tartu concentration camp, mainly from the trial of Iukhan Iuriste, Karl Linnas, and Ervin Viks in 1962.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: BA-BL (R 58/217 and 218); ERA (R-60/2/139 and 200); GARF (7021-97-881); USHMM (RG-06.026); and YVA (M.31 [Otto Messing]).

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Members of Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg cart away confiscated books in Tartu, Estonia, 1941–1943. The Offenbach Archival Depot annotated this photograph as part of its effort to document Jewish cultural property looted by the Nazis.

USHMM WS #30522, COURTESY OF YVA

NOTES

1. Trial of Iukhan Iuriste, Karl Linnas, and Ervin Viks in Tartu, January 16–20, 1962, in the city of Tallinn, p. 25 (see USHMM, RG-06.026). The house on Aleksandra Street was a school building; see Jakob Kaplan, *Report: Some Days in the Life of a Tartu Jew* (Tartu: Tartu Ülikooli Kirjastus, 2002), p. 13.

2. BA-BL, R 58/218, Ereignismeldung UdSSR no. 111, October 12, 1941.

3. Ibid., R 58/217, Ereignismeldung UdSSR no. 88, September 19, 1941. According to the report for the period July 1941–June 30, 1942, by the Commander of the Security Police and SD (KdS) in Estonia, 53 Jews were killed in Tartu in July 1941; see GARF, 7021-97-881.

LATVIA REGION (GENERALKOMMISSARIAT LETTLAND)

AGLONA

Pre-1940: Aglona, village, Daugavpils aprinka, Latgale regions, Latvia; 1940–1941: Latvian SSR; 1941–1944: Kreis and Gebiet Dünaburg, Generalkommissariat Lettland; post-1991: Latgale regions, Republic of Latvia

Aglona is located 40 kilometers (25 miles) northeast of the city of Daugavpils. The 1935 census recorded 57 Jewish inhabitants, 20 percent of the total population.

German armed forces occupied the village on June 28, 1941, one week after their invasion of the USSR on June 22.

A few days after the occupation, all the Jews were herded into a school, which became a temporary ghetto for them. Sometime later, the Jews were driven towards a lake, where they were shot in a forest. Latvian policemen carried out the shooting, while a German officer, according to the recollections of witnesses, recorded it on film; 56 people were shot.¹

In the village of Somerseta (now part of Aglona), the synagogue was burned, the Jews were herded into a large building, and gold was demanded of them. Before the shooting, a small group of Jews was forced to go to the small river, and they were made to carry stones from one place to another for no purpose. A policeman tore one old man's beard, demanding that he perform the task more quickly. A few days later, local residents who came to the building into which the Jews had been moved saw that the walls were splashed with blood.

One Jewish woman, who had converted to Catholicism, was saved owing to the intervention of the dean of the Aglona Basilica, a doctor of theology and holder of the Order of Three Stars, Aloizij Brok. On Christmas Eve 1941, Dr. Brok delivered a sermon titled "Thou Shalt Not Kill." And though the priest named no names, everyone understood quite well that the sermon was directed against the murder of the innocent Jews of Aglona, against the extermination of the Jews. On December 30, 1941, Dr. Brok was arrested and placed in the Central Prison in Riga for three months. Hundreds of inhabitants of Latgale placed their signatures on a letter to the German commandant in Daugavpils requesting the dean's release. Friends advised him not to return to Aglona, but the priest argued that he could not abandon the school or the monastery and church in Aglona. In January 1942, there was a fire in the high school, and on his return, Dr. Brok organized the restoration efforts. Not everyone in Aglona was pleased by his actions. In May 1942 he was arrested again, and in 1943 he perished in the Neuengamme concentration camp.

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jews of Aglona during the Holocaust can be found in the following publications: Iosif Rochko, "Kholokost v Latgalii," in B. Vol'kovich et al., eds., *Kholokost v Latgalii. Sbornik statei* (Daugavpils: Daugavpilskaia evreiskaia obshchina, 2003), pp. 420–421; and Iosif Rochko, "Aglona," in Rabbi Menakhem Barkagan, ed., *Unichtozhenie evreev v Latvii 1941–1945: Tsikl lektsii* (Riga: SHAMIR, 2007), pp. 279–283.

Documentation regarding the murder of the Jews of Aglona can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-93-94); LVA; and YVA.

Alexander Kruglov
trans. Kathleen Luft

NOTE

1. GARF, 7021-93-94, p. 11.

AIZPUTE

Pre-1940: Aizpute (Yiddish: Haznpoth), town and capital, Aizpute aprinka, Kurzeme regions, Latvia; 1940–1941: Latvian SSR; 1941–1945: Hasenpoth, Kreis center, Gebiet Libau, Generalkommissariat Lettland; post-1991: Aizpute, Kurzeme regions, Republic of Latvia

Aizpute is located 150 kilometers (93 miles) west-southwest of Riga. According to the 1935 census, a total of 534 Jews resided in Aizpute.

Units of the German Army Group North captured the town on June 28, 1941, just six days after the invasion of the Soviet Union. In this short period, only a part of the Jewish population managed to escape into the interior of the Soviet Union. At the start of the German occupation, more than 400 Jews were still in the town.

On July 24, 1941, the Germans carried out the first anti-Jewish Aktion in Aizpute, in which 39 Jews and two Latvian women were taken to the woods near the local Jewish cemetery and shot.¹ This killing Aktion was in all likelihood carried out by members of the Libau SD detachment under the supervision of Erhard Grauel.

Very little information is available on the living conditions of the Jews in Aizpute during the summer and early fall of 1941. According to historian Ilya Altman, at some time after the first Aktion, the remaining Jews may have been isolated in a ghetto, located in the poorest area of the town. The Jews faced various forms of physical abuse, looting, and humiliations at the hands of the Latvian guards. In addition, all the property of the Jews was confiscated, and they were forced to perform physically demanding work.

Forces of the German Security Police outpost (Sicherheitsspolizei-Aussenstelle) in Libau under the command of SS-Untersturmführer Wolfgang Kügler arrived in Aizpute on October 27, 1941, to shoot the remaining Jews there in collaboration with Latvian auxiliary police forces.² Available sources indicate that the Jews of Aizpute had been gathered in the synagogue by the Latvian police on the day prior to the Aktion. To mislead them, the Jews had been informed that they would be transferred to another place and were permitted to take some hand luggage with them. The Latvian police ordered local truck drivers to transport the Jews (men, women,

VOLUME II: PART B

1000 ESTONIA AND LATVIA REGIONS

and children) and their belongings to the killing site located in a forest approximately 3.5 kilometers (2 miles) outside the town, near the railway station at Kalvene, where the execution squad waited. The Latvian policemen involved in this Aktion wore Aizsārgi uniforms or civilian clothes. The Aktion lasted until late afternoon, and in total more than 300 Jews were shot. After the killing, a sign marked *judenrein* (cleansed of Jews) was posted at the town's limits.³

SOURCES The existence of a ghetto in Aizpute is mentioned in Ilya Altman, *Zbertvy nenavisti: Kholokost v SSSR 1941–1945 gg.* (Moscow: Fond Kovcheg, 2002), p. 91.

Information on the fate of the Jewish community of Aizpute during the Holocaust can be found in the following publications: "Aizpute," in Dov Levin, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Latvia and Estonia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1988), pp. 54–59; "Aizpute," in *Rossiiskaia evreiskaia Entsiklopediia* (Moscow: Rossiiskaia Akademiia Estestvennykh Nauk, Nauchnyi fond "Evreiskaia Entsiklopediia," "Epos," 2000), 4:28–29; Andrew Ezergailis, *The Holocaust in Latvia 1941–1944: The Missing Center* (Riga: Historical Institute of Latvia; Washington, DC: Published in association with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 1996), pp. 297–298; and "Aizpute," in Rabbi Menakhem Barkagan, ed., *Unichtozbenie evreev v Latvii 1941–1945: Tsikl leksii* (Riga: SHAMIR, 2007), pp. 106–107.

Documentation on the murder of the Jews of Aizpute can be found in the following archives: BA-L; GARF (7021-9-2390); LVVA (P83-1-26); USHMM; and YVA.

Alexander Kruglov
trans. Katrin Reichelt

NOTES

1. See the records of the Aizpute Local Commission, July 16, 1945, published in *My obviniaem* (Riga, 1967), p. 135.
2. Ibid.
3. LVVA, P83-1-26, report of the Sicherheitspolizei Aussenstelle Libau, November 3, 1941, to the SS- und Polizeistandortführer, SS-Obersturmbannführer Dr. Dietrich. See also *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 36 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006), Lfd. Nr. 760a, pp. 193–194; and *DDR-Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 2 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2002), Lfd. Nr. 1046a, pp. 343–344. According to the files of the Aizpute Local Commission from July 16, 1945, approximately 600 individuals were killed; this number is probably too high.

BALVI

Pre-1940: Balvi (Yiddish: Bularvai), town, Abrene aprinka, Latgale regions, Latvia; 1940–1941: Latvian SSR; 1941–1944: Kreis Abrene, Gebiet Dünaburg, Generalkommissariat Lettland; post-1991: Latgale regions, Republic of Latvia

Balvi is located about 146 kilometers (91 miles) north-northeast of Daugavpils. According to the 1935 census, there were 379 Jews living in Balvi (19 percent of the town's total population).

German armed forces occupied the town on July 4, 1941, two weeks after their invasion of the USSR on June 22. During that time, a small number of Jews succeeded in evacuating to the interior of the USSR, and as a result, around 300 Jews remained in the town at the start of the German occupation.

Several days after the town was occupied, all the Jews remaining under the occupation, as well as several hundred Jewish refugees from Riga and Lithuania, were isolated in an improvised form of ghetto. According to some sources, the "Gypsy quarter" of the town was designated to serve as the ghetto. Iosif Rochko's article, published in *Unichtozbenie evreev v Latvii 1941–1945*, notes that several places in the town were designated as holding areas for Jews. He adds that the Jewish women were kept in the jail, where the Germans and their accomplices raped the young girls. *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life* also refers to a ghetto in Balvi.

In the ghetto, the Jews were subjected to systematic mockery, beating, and robbery by the Latvian Self-Defense force. The Latvian police also murdered a number of Jews. The Jews spent about one month in the ghetto.

On August 8 or 9, 1941, the ghetto was liquidated; all the Jews were shot in a forest about 6 kilometers (4 miles) from town on the road to Gulbene. The shooting was carried out by a detachment of the Arājs Kommando that had come from Riga and by local police. The Soviet Extraordinary State Commission (ChGK) found seven graves at this spot containing 920 corpses. Of these, 252 were the bodies of children. If these figures are accurate, then probably some non-Jews were buried here as well.

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jewish community of Balvi during the Holocaust can be found in these publications: "Balvi," in Dov Levin, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Latvia and Estonia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1988), pp. 69–71; "Balvi," 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. 83; "Balvi," in *Rossiiskaia evreiskaia Entsiklopediia* (Moscow: Rossiiskaia Akademiia Estestvennykh Nauk, Nauchnyi fond "Evreiskaia Entsiklopediia," "Epos," 2000), 4:76; and Iosif Rochko, "Balvy," in Rabbi Menakhem Barkagan, ed., *Unichtozbenie evreev v Latvii 1941–1945: Tsikl leksii* (Riga: SHAMIR, 2007), pp. 274–276.

Documentation on the murder of the Jews of Balvi can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-93-93); LVA; and YVA.

Alexander Kruglov
trans. Kathleen Luft

BAUSKA

Pre-1940: Bauska (Yiddish: Boisk), town and capital, Bauska aprinka, Zemgale regions, Latvia; 1940–1941: Latvian SSR; 1941–1944: Bausk, Kreis Bausk, Gebiet Mitau, Generalkommissariat Lettland; post-1991: Bauska, Zemgale regions, Republic of Latvia

Bauska is located 66 kilometers (41 miles) south of Riga, the Latvian capital, and 20 kilometers (12.4 miles) from the Lithuanian border. According to the 1935 census, Bauska had a Jewish population of 778, comprising 16 percent of the total. These figures were approximately the same in the summer of 1941.

German armed forces occupied the town on June 28, 1941, one week after their invasion of the USSR on June 22. During that time, a small number of Jews managed to evacuate to the interior of the USSR, and as a result, about 700 Jews remained in the town at the start of the occupation.

On July 2, 1941, a squad of Germans shot 10 members of the Red Army, 5 Latvians, and 5 Jews in Bauska, near the bridge across the Memel River.

According to the account compiled by historian Rita Bogdanova, on July 4, 1941, the Jews were ordered to register, and on July 9 they were dismissed from their jobs and were forbidden to live in certain parts of town. They were given 48 hours to leave the neighborhoods that were declared off limits and to move to the edge of town, establishing a form of open ghetto. On July 24, they were prohibited from leaving the ghetto to purchase food at the town market. The area set aside for the Jews contained mainly the elderly, women, and children; the men were used for various kinds of work in the town or on peasants' farms. In mid-July, 56 Jewish males, including nine boys between the ages of 8 and 15, were sterilized in Bauska's outpatient clinic. Then they all were shot with the exception of Izrail' Toik, who managed to escape and hide.

In the ghetto, the Jews were subjected to systematic humiliation, beating, and robbery by the Latvian security force. The Jews spent about one month in the ghetto. In mid- or late August 1941, the ghetto was liquidated: all the remaining Jews were shot in a forest 8 kilometers (5 miles) from town. The shooting was carried out by a detachment of the Arājs Kommando, which had come from Riga, and by local policemen.

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jewish community of Bauska during the Holocaust can be found in these publications: "Bauska," in Dov Levin, ed., *Pinkas ba-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Latvia and Estonia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1988), pp. 63–69; "Bauska," 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. 92; "Bauska," in *Rossiiskaia Evreiskaia Entsiklopediia* (Moscow: Rossiiskaia Akademiia Estestvennykh Nauk, Nauchnyi fond "Evreiskaia Entsiklopediia," "Epos," 2000), 4:88–89; Rita Bogdanova, "Bauska," in Rabbi Menakhem Barkagan, ed., *Unichtozhenie evreev v Latvii 1941–1945: Tsikl lektsii* (Riga: SHAMIR, 2007), pp. 130–133; and Andrew Ezergailis, *The Holocaust in Latvia 1941–1944: The Missing Center* (Riga: Historical Institute of Latvia; Washington, DC: Published in association with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 1996), p. 212.

Documentation on the murder of the Jews of Bauska can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-93-2391); LVA; and YVA.

Alexander Kruglov and Martin Dean
trans. Kathleen Luft

DAUGAVPILS

Pre-1940: Daugavpils (Yiddish: Dvinsk), city, Latgale regions, Latvia; 1940–1941: Latvian SSR; 1941–1944: Dünaburg, Kreis and Gebiet center, Generalkommissariat Lettland; post-1991: Daugavpils, Latgale regions, Republic of Latvia

Daugavpils is located about 230 kilometers (143 miles) southeast of Riga. Following severe damage and evacuations during World War I, in 1935 there were 11,106 Jews living in the city (about 25 percent of the total population).

The Wehrmacht and a detachment of Einsatzgruppe A occupied Daugavpils on June 26, 1941. Much of the local population, including many Jews, fled before the German advance. By July 3, Latvians had organized a city administration and a local police force. By July 7, Latvian Self-Defense units and the German police had arrested 1,125 Jews (mostly male). In the Einsatzgruppen report dated July 16, 1941, the commander of Einsatzgruppe A, Dr. Walther Stahlecker, noted that his units had already killed 1,150 Jews in Daugavpils.¹

By mid-July 1941, the German authorities had decided to create a ghetto, and on July 31, the Daugavpils ghetto was enclosed.² It is not possible to reconstruct exactly who was responsible for this decision. However, the fact that the ghetto was set up in July 1941, before the establishment of a civil administration, indicates that it probably emerged from consultations between the Security Police and the military administration. The ghetto was intended not only for the Jews of Daugavpils; the Germans also brought in an unknown number of Jews from the surrounding area, including the towns of Rēzekne, Subate, and Kraslava. In addition, a number of Lithuanian Jews who had fled before the advancing German troops ended up in the Daugavpils ghetto.³ The commander of Einsatzkommando 2, Rudolf Batz, based in Riga, had established a branch office of the Security Police in Daugavpils under Günther Tabbert by the end of August 1941. He was also responsible for the ghetto.

As Sidney Iwens described it: "[O]ur ghetto was actually the old fortress, on the 'other' (western) side of the Daugava. It was several kilometers northwest of the city, next to the steel railroad bridge. . . . A massive semicircular structure of concrete and stone, it touched the river at one end, completed a half circle and reached the river again at the other end. The building was very long, more than half a kilometer [a third of a mile], and actually consisted of a series of two-story structures, all connected but with separate entrances. The walls of the buildings were thick and had no windows facing out, except for a few in the hallways."⁴ The building had been constructed as a barracks during the Napoleonic period. The downstairs floors had been used as stables for the horses, while the upper floors comprised living space for the soldiers. After the establishment of the ghetto, the Jews rapidly had to move into any available space they could find, as there was terrible overcrowding. As Paula Frankel-Saltzman recalled: "people lay on top of one another and it was choking. We

1002 ESTONIA AND LATVIA REGIONS

barely found a spot to put father down on a bare piece of earth.”⁵

The everyday running of the ghetto rested in the hands of the Latvian mayor of Daugavpils, an individual named Saube. With regard to the “Jewish area,” Saube cooperated closely with the Latvian police officer Roberts Blūzmanis, who directed the process of ghettoization.⁶ On July 27, 1941, Blūzmanis informed his superior, Saube, about the steps he had taken for the establishment of the ghetto, which included the deployment of guards for its isolation and the organization of forced labor for the Jews. On July 30, 1941, Blūzmanis ordered that a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was to take care of daily affairs inside the ghetto and had to carry out the instructions of the city administration and the police. The Jewish Council also established three departments—for political leadership, economic management, and health. The delivery of goods into the ghetto was the responsibility of the Latvian mayor. In addition, the Jewish Council had to register the Jews in the ghetto and organize the so-called cash fund. The implementation of forced labor was also the responsibility of the Jewish Council, closely supervised by the local police authorities. The ghetto administration had to apply for all goods, materials, or equipment necessary for the maintenance of the ghetto or its inmates. An interim ghetto police force was established, commanded by Pasternak, which kept order inside the ghetto.

An unknown number of workshops existed in the Daugavpils ghetto, but no details are available on the amount and type of goods they produced. The mayor of Daugavpils ordered that 80 percent of the profits from these workshops be diverted into the ghetto’s “cash fund,” and the remaining 20 percent was to be paid to needy families inside the ghetto. The financial resources of the cash fund were used to buy goods for the ghetto, mostly food and clothing. A number of Jews, especially skilled craftsmen, worked outside the ghetto, primarily for the Wehrmacht. A normal working day lasted eight hours plus the time taken commuting.⁷ The precise infrastructure of the Daugavpils ghetto has not been clearly documented. Presumably there was no sewage system, which might have offered a possible escape route.

Most of the inhabitants of the Daugavpils ghetto were killed within a short period of time in several smaller Aktions and one main shooting Aktion. When the ghetto was enclosed at the end of July 1941, it held approximately 11,000 people, a mixture of Jews from the city of Daugavpils, Jews from the surrounding towns, and Jewish refugees who had become trapped. A list of the inhabitants of the Daugavpils ghetto, dated December 5, 1941, gives the names and dates of birth of 962 Jews who were then still alive.⁸

The first two shooting Aktions took place in the period from late July to mid-August at Pogulianka, about 3 kilometers (1.9 miles) from Daugavpils.⁹ Some Jews resisted, but in vain. Latvian auxiliary police guarded the victims on the way to the mass graves. The Security Police, under Tabbert’s leadership, did the shooting. The precise number of victims is unknown, but estimates range from 800 to 3,000.

Another, larger massacre took place on two days between August 15 and August 20, 1941. The Security Police, under Tabbert’s direction, conducted selections and divided the ghetto inmates into two groups, one of workers for the Wehrmacht and the civilian administration, and the second made up of the unemployed, who were held overnight before being marched to Pogulianka and shot. The number of victims is estimated at 3,000. In addition, 400 children from the ghetto orphanage were killed that August, along with the institution’s staff.

Between November 7 and November 9, all of the Jews not needed as laborers for the German administration were shot, on the orders of the Security Police. The Daugavpils police, including the Latvian auxiliary forces, were not sufficient for this task, so a detachment of the Latvian auxiliary police unit (Arājs Kommando) commanded by Viktors Arājs, which conducted a large part of the killing of Jews in Nazi-occupied Latvia, was sent to Daugavpils to assist. The German Security Police and Latvian auxiliaries killed between 3,000 and 6,000 Jews on this occasion, again at Pogulianka.

Following that large massacre, there were just under 1,000 Jews remaining. In late November or early December 1941, a typhus epidemic began, and the Germans quarantined the ghetto, aside from a few hundred Jews whom they allowed to live and work outside. Roughly half the remaining inhabitants died.

The Security Police, assisted by members of the Arājs Kommando, cleared the ghetto of its inhabitants on May 17, 1942. About 500 Jews were brought on trucks to Pogulianka, where they were shot. Another 350 to 400 remained in Daugavpils, mostly those who had previously worked outside the ghetto. After the liquidation, many tried to flee to join the partisans in the Belorussian forests, especially those near Brasław. Many escapees were arrested or had to return to Daugavpils. Some Jews in the ghetto managed to acquire weapons.

The final clearing of the remnant of the ghetto took place in October 1943. A group of Jews put up armed resistance, but to little avail. A few dozen escaped. Most were either killed or sent to Riga. From there they were sent to the Kaiserwald camp and some on to the Stutthof concentration camp. A few artisans were allowed to remain in Daugavpils.¹⁰ It is not possible to say how many Jews survived the Daugavpils ghetto, but it is clear that the death rate was very high, exceeding 90 percent.

In comparison with other ghettos, forced labor did not play a key role in keeping the Jews alive. Within 10 months of its establishment, the Daugavpils ghetto was cleared, whereas other large ghettos in Latvia and Lithuania survived three years.

SOURCES Contemporary documentation about the history of the ghetto is incomplete. Only the transfer of the Jews into the ghetto can be reconstructed from the surviving orders of the Latvian mayor of Daugavpils. There is some material on the main killing Aktions, mainly as a result of postwar West German investigations. The remaining fragmentary picture of life inside the ghetto has to be reconstructed from survivor testimonies.

An important source of original testimonies is the yizkor book *L’zeker Kehilat Dvinsk* (Haifa: Hativat Benayim “Kiah,”

1974), which can be supplemented by Sidney Iwens's "reconstructed diary," *How Dark the Heavens. 1400 Days in the Grip of Nazi Terror* (New York: Shengold, 1990). In addition, there is a useful article on "Daugavpils" in Dov Levin, ed., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Latvia and Estonia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1988), pp. 83–106. Another published firsthand account now available in English is Paula Frankel-Zaltzman's memoir, originally published in Yiddish in 1947, *Haftling (Prisoner) No. 94771* (Montreal: Concordia University, 2003). Finally, the recent Russian publication *Daugavpilsskaia evreiskaia obshchina, Evrei v Daugavpils: I storicheskiye ocherki* (Daugavpils: Daugavpilsskaia evreiskaia obshchina, 1993) also contains some information on the ghetto.

Records of the Latvian police in Daugavpils can be found in LVVA. Captured German documentation on the Nazi occupation of Latvia can be found at NARA (RG-242), the originals of which are now located at BA-BL. The most important German postwar investigation with regard to Daugavpils is that against Günther Tabbert conducted by the State Prosecutor in Dortmund (45 Ks 1/68). There are also a number of testimonies from survivors to be found at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem (YVA) and at the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw (AŽIH, 301/81 and 1408).

Katrin Reichelt

NOTES

1. NARA, RG-242, T-175, reel 233, fr. 2721528–2721530.
2. AŽIH, 301/81, testimony of Ela Wowski, states that the Jews of Daugavpils were moved into the ghetto on July 26, 1941, and that Jews from the surrounding towns were brought in a while later.
3. Iwens, *How Dark the Heavens*, p. 47.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 46.
5. Frankel-Zaltzman, *Haftling (Prisoner) No. 94771*, p. 21.
6. Indictment (Anklage) against Günther Hugo Friedrich Tabbert (born August 21, 1916, in Berlin), LG-Dort 1968–1969, 45 Ks 1/68.
7. LVVA, Police Records Daugavpils, P1398-1-23, pp. 5–6.
8. *Ibid.*, P6962-21-26, pp. 1–18.
9. Iwens, *How Dark the Heavens*, p. 50, dates this Aktion as August 1 and cites 2,000 victims.
10. *Ibid.*; and Indictment against Günther Hugo Friedrich Tabbert.

DOBELE

Pre-1940: Dobele, town, Jelgava aprinka, Zemgale regions, Latvia; 1940–1941: Latvian SSR; 1941–1944: Dubeln, Kreis and Gebiet Mitau, Generalkommissariat Lettland; post-1991: Dobele, Zemgale regions, Republic of Latvia

Dobele is located 62 kilometers (39 miles) southwest of Riga. According to the 1935 census, 72 Jews resided in Dobele (2.9 percent of the total population).¹ German armed forces entered Dobele at the beginning of July 1941, most likely on July 3. Initially the town was under the jurisdiction of a German military administration, but before long authority was trans-

ferred to a civil government, based in Jelgava. The town was probably too small for the establishment of a German local government. As in many other small towns of Nazi-occupied Latvia, the local administration of Dobele was in the hands of Latvian police and civilian authorities, who followed German orders and directives. The first measures against the local Jews came right after the German troops entered the town. Jews were abused on the streets, and the local synagogue was burned.

On July 4, 1941, the head of the Third Dobele District of the Jelgava Police, a man named Markevičs, issued Order No. 9, which required all the Jews of Dobele to gather at the local elementary school on the edge of town by midnight on July 5, 1941.² The order, which went to every Jewish household in town, stated that the purpose of the assembly was to identify and send Jews to various work assignments. In addition, it specified that the Jews would be allowed to take with them a total of 1,000 rubles and food for three days for each person. Most of the Dobele Jewish population obeyed this order. Those Jews who did not report to the school building were forced out of their houses by the Latvian auxiliary police. A total of 48 Jews were registered at the gathering point: 18 men, 17 women, and 13 children. After they were collected in the building, they were organized into groups of 10 to 15 people and sent on work assignments. Their tasks included cleaning the local railroad station and working on the farm of Miervaldis Beitlers, a member of the Latvian Self-Defense force. The Dobele Jews were held in the school building for more than one week and were required to perform various kinds of physically demanding work.

After about 10 days, the Jews were taken by truck to the Lielbērzi Forest, about 5.5 kilometers (3.4 miles) from Dobele, and killed there. A witness, Alberts Tamsons, remembered that on July 12 or 13, 1941, at about 10:00 a.m., he saw three trucks loaded with Jews and guarded by German and Latvian police leave the town of Dobele. The convoy went in the direction of Saldus. In each truck, he recalled, were about 24 Jews. The trucks went to the Lielbērzi Forest, where a short time later shots were heard. Most likely, policemen from the Jelgava police district conducted this mass shooting. Most of the Jews who had been detained in the school building were killed in this manner.³ According to the account compiled by Rita Bogdanova, 10 of the Jews who had been doing farmwork were killed separately. A truck came to the farmstead, and the Latvians and Germans on the truck took the Jews' passports, made them form a column, 2 abreast, and marched them into the "Pakaishkii Forest" 1.5 kilometers (1 mile) away. The Jewish men were forced to dig a pit; then all the Jews were shot. After burying them, the team on the truck returned to Dobele.

SOURCES The fate of the Jews of Dobele during the Holocaust is mentioned in the following publications: Rita Bogdanova, "Dobele," in Rabbi Menakhem Barkagan, ed., *Unichtozhenie evreev v Latvii 1941–1945: Tsikl lektsii* (Riga: SHAMIR, 2007), pp. 120–122; Andrew Ezergailis, *The Holocaust in Latvia 1941–1944: The Missing Center* (Riga: Historical Institute of Latvia; Washington, DC: Published in association with the

1004 ESTONIA AND LATVIA REGIONS

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 1996), p. 237; and Dov Levin, ed., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Latvia and Estonia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1988), pp. 106–108.

Information on the fate of the Jews of Dobele during the Nazi occupation of the town can be found in the files of the ChGK in LVVA (P132-30-22, p. 11).

Katrin Reichelt

NOTES

1. Ezergailis, *The Holocaust in Latvia 1941–1944*, p. 237.
2. LVVA, P132-30-22, p. 11.
3. Ibid.

GOSTINI

Pre-1940: Gostini (Yiddish: Dankere), town, Daugavpils aprinka, Latgale regions, Latvia; 1940–1941: Latvian SSR; 1941–1944: Trentelberg, Kreis and Gebiet Dünaburg, Generalkommissariat Lettland; post-1991: Gostini, Zemgale regions, Republic of Latvia

Gostini is located 94 kilometers (58 miles) northwest of Daugavpils. In 1920, the Jewish population was 544 (out of a total population of 878). Until 1933, it was known as Glazmanka. In that year it received its urban status and was renamed Gostini. In 1935, 504 Jews (54 percent of the total) were living in Gostini.

German armed forces occupied the town on June 28, 1941, just under a week after the German invasion of the Soviet Union on June 22. Some Jews were able to evacuate. Around 250 Jews remained in Gostini at the start of the German occupation.

Immediately after the retreat of the Red Army, Latvian nationalists organized a “Self-Defense” detachment made up of 18 men. It was headed by Peteris Reinfelds, the principal of the local school. He was assisted by Janis Vinters, the chief of police. At the start of July 1941, members of the Self-Defense detachment herded all the Jews into the market square, confiscated all their valuables, and then drove them into two synagogues (with the men separated from the women). After one person from each family was allowed to return home and gather only basic items and goods for his family, the Jews were resettled into a separate quarter of town, which served as a ghetto. The ghetto was guarded by armed members of the Self-Defense detachment.

The ghetto quarter, which included the synagogues, was located on Bol’shaia Street, near the bridge across the Aiviekste River. The head of the ghetto was V. Krastin’sh, who was proclaimed the “Jewish commandant.” The Jews lived in the ghetto for just over two weeks. From the ghetto, the Jews were taken out regularly to perform agricultural labor, and some of them were sent to the neighboring town of Pliavinias to clear away ruins.

On July 31, 1941, the ghetto was liquidated. All the Jews were taken to the Kakish marshes, about 10 kilometers (6 miles)

from the town. There they were shot by a detachment of the Arājs Kommando that had come from Riga and by members of the local Self-Defense detachment. According to Soviet Extraordinary State Commission (ChGK) documents, 242 persons were shot, or 60 families. On that same day, Jews from Krustpils and Pliavinias also were murdered.

After the shooting, local residents buried the corpses. Some of the valuables confiscated from the Jews were taken by the head of the Arājs Kommando group, and other items were stolen by members of the local Self-Defense force. The remaining movable property of the Jews collected during the shooting and recovered from the Jews’ homes was stored in four or five houses.

Only two of Gostini’s Jews are known to have survived the mass shooting: the Lat brothers, both teenagers. One brother, Motke, hid in Gostini in the home of a married couple, A. and B. Purvin’sh, and in the home of L. Ginter. However, in November 1942, he was caught by the Jekabpils police. He subsequently died in the Riga Central Prison on April 26, 1943. The other brother, Menke, managed to survive, despite being beaten and left for dead. He received help from K. Vitolin’sh of Odzene, who took him into his own home and hid him until the end of the German occupation.

In the period 1944–1946, 18 former members of the Self-Defense detachment were sentenced for their role in the murder of the Jews: 4 of them, including Peteris Reinfelds, were sentenced to death; 10 were sentenced to 20 years in prison; and 4 received prison sentences of 15 years.

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jews of Gostini in the Holocaust can be found in the following publications: “Gostini,” in Dov Levin, ed., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Latvia and Estonia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1988), pp. 75–76; G. Smirin and M. Meler, eds., “Pamiati evreev Dankere,” *Lekbaim* (Moscow), no. 10 (2002): 19–25; and “Gostini,” in Rabbi Menakhem Barkagan, ed., *Unichtozhenie evreev v Latvii 1941–1945: Tsikl leksii* (Riga: SHAMIR, 2007), pp. 269–271.

Documentation regarding the murder of the Jews of Gostini can be found in these archives: GARF (7021-93-2401 to 2403); and LVA (1986-1-17630, pp. 22, 58; 1986-1-28840, pp. 13–14; 1986-1-45050, vol. 7, p. 106).

Alexander Kruglov
trans. Steven Seegel

GULBENE

Pre-1940: Gulbene, town, Madona aprinka, Vidzeme regions, Latvia; 1940–1941: Latvian SSR; 1941–1944: Schwanenburg, Kreis Modohn, Gebiet Wolmar, Generalkommissariat Lettland; post-1991: Gulbene, Vidzeme regions, Republic of Latvia

According to the 1935 census, there were 84 Jews living in Gulbene (2.2 percent of the total population). Gulbene is approximately 166 kilometers (103 miles) east of Riga.

German armed forces occupied the town on July 3, 1941, 12 days after their invasion of the USSR on June 22. During that time, only a few of the town's Jews managed to evacuate to the interior of the USSR. The Jews who remained in the town, as well as the Jewish refugees (more than 150 people in all), were rounded up at some time in July and imprisoned on an estate within the town. Subsequently they were transferred into sheds on the grounds of the Gulbene railroad station. This incarceration can be viewed as a temporary ghetto. The Jews remained in the ghetto until August 9, 1941, when they were taken away in two railroad cars to a former Latvian army shooting range in the village of Litene. There they were shot by a detachment of the Arājs Kommando. Several dozen Jews from the Litene civil parish were shot along with them.¹

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jewish community of Gulbene during the Holocaust can be found in these publications: "Gulbene," in Dov Levin, ed., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Latvia and Estonia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1988), pp. 74–75; Rita Bogdanova, "Gulbene," in Rabbi Menakhem Barkagan, ed., *Extermination of the Jews in Latvia, 1941–1945* (Riga: Society "Shamir," 2008), p. 144; "Gulbene," in *Rossiiskaia Evreiskaia Entsiklopediia* (Moscow: Rossiiskaia Akademiia Estestvennykh Nauk, Nauchnyi fond "Evreiskaia Entsiklopediia," "Epos," 2000), 4:360; and A. Urtāns, "Ebreju slepkavošana Madonas apriņķī," in *Latvijas Vēsturnieku komisijas Raksti. 23. sējums* (Riga, 2008), pp. 103–105.

Documentation on the murder of the Jews of Gulbene can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-93-2428 to 2430); LVA; and YVA.

Alexander Kruglov
trans. Kathleen Luft

NOTE

1. A. Urtāns, "Ebreju slepkavošana Madonas apriņķī," pp. 103–105.

JAUNJELGAVA

Pre-1940: Jaunjelgava (Yiddish: Nairi), town, Jēkabpils aprinka, Zemgale reģions, Latvia; 1940–1941: Latvian SSR; 1941–1944: Friedrichstadt, Kreis Jakobstadt, Gebiet Mitau, Generalkommisariat Lettland; post-1991: Jaunjelgava, Riga reģions, Republic of Latvia

Jaunjelgava is located 80 kilometers (50 miles) southeast of Riga, on the left bank of the Daugava River. The census of 1930 showed that there were 619 Jews living in Jaunjelgava. By 1935, the Jewish community had declined to 561 people, comprising about one quarter of the total population.

German armed forces occupied the town at the end of June 1941, less than one week after their invasion of the USSR on June 22. During that time, only a small part of the Jewish population succeeded in evacuating to the interior of the

USSR. Slightly more than 500 Jews remained in the town at the start of the German occupation.

According to the account compiled by Rita Bogdanova, in early July, all the Jews were registered, evicted from their homes, and confined within a "ghetto" composed of one or two synagogues, with the men held separately from the women. There they suffered from hunger and were severely abused by the Latvians. Jews were also obliged to display a yellow patch on their clothing. The men were led out under guard to work on reinforcing the banks of the Daugava River, and the women were taken out to clean the apartments of the German officers. On July 11, 10 kilometers (6 miles) from Jaunjelgava, more than 80 Jews and 20 Soviet activists were shot.¹

The other Jews remained in the synagogue ghetto for almost one month. On August 2, 1941, the ghetto was liquidated.² On that day, 7 kilometers (4.4 miles) from the town, near the Totanskoe cemetery, 350 Jews of Jaunjelgava were shot. Later in August, in a forest in the direction of Bauska, 50 more Jews conveyed there in horse-drawn carts were shot. The mass executions were carried out by a detachment of the Arājs Kommando that had come from Riga and by members of the local Self-Defense detachment and police force. The Self-Defense company in Jaunjelgava was commanded at that time by Andrejs Ikaunieks, and the head of the police precinct was Oskars Balodis. In total, more than 500 Jews were killed in Jaunjelgava in July and August 1941.³

After the war, 5 former members of the Self-Defense detachment were sentenced to execution by shooting for participation in the murder of the Jews of Jaunjelgava in the summer of 1941, and 42 other perpetrators received prison terms of various lengths.⁴

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jewish community of Jaunjelgava during the Holocaust can be found in these publications: "Jaunjelgava," in Dov Levin, ed., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Latvia and Estonia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1988), pp. 140–145; "Jaunjelgava," 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. 569; Uldis Lasmanis, "Nairi pilsētas ebreju kopienas gals (holokausta Jaunjelgavā)," in *Latvijas Vēsturnieku komisijas Raksti, 12. sējums* (Riga, 2004), pp. 278–357; and Rita Bogdanova, "Jaunjelgava," in Rabbi Menakhem Barkagan, ed., *Unichtozbenie evreev v Latvii 1941–1945: Tsikl leksiū* (Riga: SHAMIR, 2007), pp. 134–136.

Documentation on the murder of the Jews of Jaunjelgava can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-93-2400); LVVA; and YVA.

Alexander Kruglov
trans. Kathleen Luft

NOTES

1. Lasmanis, "Nairi pilsētas," pp. 315–316.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 319, 321. A different date (August 7, 1941) is given on the memorial at the site of the massacre.

1006 ESTONIA AND LATVIA REGIONS

3. Ibid., pp. 335–338 (list of names of Jewish victims). According to ChGK materials, 565 Jews in total were killed (GARF, 7021-93-2400, pp. 257–258).

4. Lasmanis, “Nairi pilsētas,” pp. 331–332.

JĒKABPILS

Pre-1940: Jēkabpils, town and capital, Jēkabpils aprinka, Zemgale reģions, Latvia; 1940–1941: Latvian SSR; 1941–1944: Jakobstadt, capital, Kreis Jakobstadt, Gebiet Mitau, Generalkommissariat Lettland; post-1991: Jēkabpils, Zemgale reģions, Republic of Latvia

Jēkabpils is located on the Riga-Daugavpils highway, about 120 kilometers (75 miles) southeast of Riga. According to the 1935 census, there were 793 Jews living in Jēkabpils, representing 14 percent of the town’s population. By mid-1941, the number of Jews had declined slightly.

German armed forces occupied the town on June 29, 1941, one week after Germany’s invasion of the USSR on June 22. During that time, some of the town’s Jews managed to evacuate to the interior of the USSR. Around 400 to 500 Jews remained in the town at the start of the German occupation.

Soon after the German troops invaded the town, all the Jews were isolated in the synagogues, which, in the view of some historians, served as a makeshift ghetto. There the Jews were subjected to systematic insults, beatings, and robbery by the Latvian guards. The Latvian police also carried out a number of killings of Jews. All the belongings of the Jews were confiscated, and each day they were assigned to perform various types of hard physical labor.

The Jews remained in the synagogues until September 12, 1941. On that day, all the Jews, about 470 people,¹ were shot in a peat bog near the village of Kūkas, 12 kilometers (7.5 miles) east of the town, on the road to Rēzekne. A detachment of the Arājs Kommando, along with local police, carried out the mass killing.

SOURCES The term “ghetto” is used to describe the confinement of the Jews in Jēkabpils by Il’ia Al’tman, *Zhertvy ne-navisti: Kholokost v SSSR, 1941–1945 gg.* (Moscow, 2002), p. 91. “Ekabpils,” in *Rossiiskaia Evreiskaia Entsiklopediia* (Moscow: Rossiiskaia Akademiia Estestvennykh Nauk, Nauchnyi fond “Evreiskaia Entsiklopediia,” “Epos,” 2000), 4:427, dates the mass shooting of the Jews on September 12, 1941. Rita Bogdanova, “Ekabpils,” in Rabbi Menakhem Barkagan, ed., *Unichtozhenie evreev v Latvii 1941–1945: Tsikl leksii* (Riga: SHAMIR, 2007), pp. 136–137, gives the figure of 418 Jews murdered in Jēkabpils. Additional information on the fate of the Jewish community of Jēkabpils during the Holocaust can be found in Dov Levin, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopedia of Jewish Communities: Latvia and Estonia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1988), pp. 145–149; 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. 570–571.

Documentation on the murder of the Jews of Jēkabpils can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-93-2400); LVVA; and YVA.

Alexander Kruglov
trans. Kathleen Luft

NOTE

1. GARF, 7021-93-2400, p. 28 (reverse side).

JELGAVA

Pre-1940: Jelgava (Yiddish: Mitai), town and capital, Jelgava aprinka, Zemgale reģions, Latvia; 1940–1941: Latvian SSR; 1941–1944: center, Kreis and Gebiet Mitau, Generalkommissariat Lettland; post-1991: Zemgale reģions, Republic of Latvia

Jelgava is a major railway hub located in central Latvia, about 41 kilometers (25.5 miles) southwest of Riga. According to the 1935 census, Jelgava had 2,039 Jewish inhabitants, 6 percent of the town’s total population.



Road sign for Mitau (Jelgava), Latvia, proclaiming that the town is “Jew-free, moving in by Jews forbidden,” 1941–1944.

USHMM WS #58925, COURTESY OF STADTAN, SIGNATURE E39 NR. 699/1

German armed forces occupied Jelgava on June 29, 1941, one week after their invasion of the USSR on June 22. During that time, only a small part of the Jewish community managed to evacuate to the interior of the USSR, and more than 1,500 Jews remained in Jelgava at the start of the German occupation.

Under the leadership of Mārtiņš Vagulāns, who organized the local branch of the Latvian SD, which was subordinated to Einsatzgruppe A commanded by Walter Stahlecker, a series of anti-Jewish measures were introduced in Jelgava, announced by Vagulāns in the newspaper *Nacionālā Zemgale*. On July 1, 1941, Jews were forbidden to own, manage, or be employed in stores that sold food products, and from July 3, all stores were forbidden to sell anything to Jews. The July 2 issue of *Nacionālā Zemgale* announced that all Jews had to be dismissed from their employment and that Jewish citizens living in certain designated districts and streets had to vacate their residences and places of employment by 6:00 P.M. on July 5. Jews were also forbidden to go to theaters, cinemas, public parks, and museums. Then on July 8, Vagulāns ordered that all Jews were to be assembled, temporarily employed on public works, and registered.¹

As a result of these orders, between July 6 and July 18, most of the remaining Jews in Jelgava were placed in several vacant houses, which served as a “ghetto” or concentration point. The Jews were left without food and water in this ghetto for at least one week. Jewish men were separated from their families and made to perform forced labor. The Jelgava SD also took measures to try to prevent the widespread looting of properties vacated by the Jews. Under guard, Red Army prisoners of war (POWs) from a POW camp set up nearby were forced to search the Jews’ previous residences and confiscate valuables. One night some Jews were moved into the Jelgava synagogue, which then was blown up, killing the people inside.

On August 1, a further article in *Nacionālā Zemgale* announced that all Jews living in Jelgava town and district had to leave by noon on August 2 and that those not complying would be punished in accordance with the laws of war. Since the Jews were already concentrated and were under guard, this announcement reflected their ongoing destruction.²

The majority of Jelgava’s Jews were shot in a series of Aktions at a former shooting range of the 3rd Jelgava Infantry Regiment of the Latvian army, just outside the town, which in the view of historian Andrew Ezergailis probably took place mostly at the end of July or the beginning of August. The Jews were taken there in open trucks, about 50 people per truck. The shootings were carried out by Latvian policemen, headed by Vagulāns, and a detachment of Einsatzkommando 2 (the detachment was commanded by SS-Sturmscharführer Alfred Becu). The Latvians brought the Jewish victims to the killing site, where German and Latvian police awaited them. A squad of 10 men did the shooting, while the rest guarded the Jews and sealed off the area from curious onlookers. Strong Jewish men were selected to dig the ditches. The vic-

tims were ordered to strip off their clothes and hand over any valuables in their possession. Then they were brought in groups of 5 to the ditch and shot. On at least one occasion the Latvians carried out the shooting. During and after the bloody massacres, some of the German murderers and the Latvian police drank alcohol to calm their nerves.³ To avoid being murdered by the Germans, the pharmacist Gitta Rosenberg and her six-year-old daughter Atidah killed themselves by taking poison.

According to the activity report of Einsatzgruppe A for the first half of August 1941, “pogroms” in Jelgava had resulted in the elimination of all 1,550 Jews in the town.⁴ On August 15, Jelgava was declared to have been completely cleansed of Jews.⁵ The last 21 Jews reportedly in the town just before this date were sent to Daugavpils by way of Ilūkste on the orders of Gebietskommissar Freiherr von Medem.⁶ In early September 1941, in a further Aktion conducted at the



Portrait of Feiga (Fanny) and Herman Hersberg, ca. 1935. Both perished in the Jelgava ghetto.

USHMM WS #19650, COURTESY OF SIA IZRAILEWITSCH HERTSBERG

1008 ESTONIA AND LATVIA REGIONS

psychiatric hospital in Jelgava, 52 mentally ill Jews were selected and shot.⁷

In August 1944, the Red Army recaptured Jelgava from the Germans. After World War II, there was no significant Jewish presence in the town.

SOURCES The existence of a “ghetto” in Jelgava is mentioned by Il’ia Al’tman, *Zbertvy nenavisti: Kholokost v SSSR 1941–1945 gg.* (Moscow: Fond Kovcheg, 2002), p. 91. The most detailed account of the events in Jelgava is by Andrew Ezergailis, *The Holocaust in Latvia 1941–1944: The Missing Center* (Riga: Historical Institute of Latvia; Washington, DC: Published in association with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 1996), pp. 156–162, which refers to a concentration camp rather than a ghetto as the assembly point for the Jews but provides no description of its location and the conditions there. The main source used by Ezergailis is the Latvian newspaper *Nacionālā Zemgale* from July and August 1941, of which Mārtiņš Vagulāns was both publisher and editor. Vagulāns was dismissed from his positions as head of the Jelgava SD and with *Nacionālā Zemgale* for reasons unknown on August 16, 1941.

Additional information on the fate of the Jewish community of Jelgava during the Holocaust can be found in these publications: “Jelgava,” in Dov Levin, ed., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopedia of Jewish Communities: Latvia and Estonia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1988), pp. 149–159; 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. 571–572; “Elgava,” in *Rossiiskaia Evreiskaia Entsiklopediia* (Moscow: Rossiiskaia Akademiia Estestvennykh Nauk, Nauchnyi fond “Evreiskaia Entsiklopediia,” “Epos,” 2000), 4:429; and Rita Bogdanova, “Elgava,” in Rabbi Menakhem Barkagan, ed., *Unichtozhenie evreev v Latvii 1941–1945: Tsikl leksii* (Riga: SHAMIR, 2007), pp. 127–130.

Documentation on the murder of the Jews of Jelgava can be found in the following archives: BA-BL (R 58/216–17); BA-L (B162/2620–37); GARF (7021–93–2405); LVVA; USHMM; and YVA.

Alexander Kruglov and Martin Dean
trans. Kathleen Luft

NOTES

1. *Nacionālā Zemgale*, July 2 and 8, 1941, as cited by Ezergailis, *The Holocaust in Latvia*, pp. 158–159, also listing those streets from which Jews were forced to move.

2. *Nacionālā Zemgale*, August 1, 1941, as cited in *ibid.*, p. 161.

3. See Verdict of LG-Kö, July 8, 1968 (24 Ks 1/68), against Adelt und Becu, published in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 30 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2004), Lfd. Nr. 686.

4. Activity and situation report of the Einsatzgruppen no. 2 (reporting period July 29 to August 14, 1941), in Peter Klein, ed., *Die Einsatzgruppen in der besetzten Sowjetunion 1941/42* (Berlin: Hentrich, 1997), here p. 145.

5. *Nacionālā Zemgale*, August 15, 1941, as cited in Ezergailis, *The Holocaust in Latvia*, p. 161.

6. See report of the Gebietskommissar in Jelgava (Mitau), August 12, 1941, in Wolfgang Benz, Konrad Kwiet, and Jür-

gen Matthäus, eds., *Einsatz im “Reichskommissariat Ostland”: Dokumente zum Völkermord im Baltikum und in Weissrussland 1941–44* (Berlin: Metropol, 1998), p. 87.

7. BA-BL, R 58/217, Ereignismeldung UdSSR no. 96, September 27, 1941.

KĀRSAVA

Pre-1940: Kārsava (Yiddish: Korsove), village, Lūdza aprinka, Latgale regions, Latvia; 1940–1941: Karsava (Russian: Korsovka), Latvian SSR; 1941–1944: Kreslau, Kreis Ludsen, Gebiet Dünaburg, Generalkommissariat Lettland; post-1990: Kārsava, Latgale regions, Republic of Latvia

Kārsava is located 126 kilometers (78 miles) northeast of Daugavpils. In 1935, a total of 785 Jews resided in Kārsava, comprising 42 percent of the total population.

German armed forces occupied Kārsava on July 3, 1941. A number of local Jews managed to escape the German invaders by fleeing into the Soviet interior. However, some Jewish refugees from Lithuania and other parts of Latvia became trapped in Kārsava owing to the speed of the German advance. Upon arrival, German forces established a military administration (Ortskommandantur) in Kārsava. In August 1941, a civil administration assumed authority in the region. Kārsava became part of Gebietskommissariat Dünaburg. As in many other small towns and villages, the local authorities in Kārsava were recruited from the local population. While they remained under the supervision of the German authorities and the German Security Police, the local authorities and the Latvian auxiliary police (also known as the Latvian Self-Defense force, or the Aizsārgi) conducted most of the anti-Jewish measures on their own initiative. Einsatzkommando 3 of Einsatzgruppe A, which followed the German troops and liquidated Jews and Communists in parts of Latvia, was active in the Daugavpils area between July 13 and August 21, 1941. According to German sources, Einsatzkommando 3, assisted by the “Rollkommando Hamann,” was involved in the murder of more than 9,000 Jewish men, women, and children during this period, but it is not clear whether this figure includes the Jews of Kārsava.¹

On the arrival of German forces in Kārsava, they immediately took measures against the Jewish population. A large number of Jews were arrested and taken to the Kārsava prison, where they were interrogated and accused of supporting the Soviet regime. Most of the incarcerated Jews, about 25 people, were shot shortly afterwards. Around this time, local Latvian auxiliary policemen, operating in conjunction with the German armed forces, entered Jewish houses and looted their property. The Jews were beaten, arrested, or shot on the spot. A witness remembered an incident when three Latvian auxiliary policemen by the names of Veināns, Troics, and Kapca looted the house of the family of Eli Volf. The Latvians shot him and his family, including the children, aged between 6 and 17 years.² The Jewish population of Kārsava was forced to endure many restrictions in public life, including a ban on

using the sidewalk, the compulsory wearing of patches bearing the Star of David on their outer clothes, and limitations on the purchase of groceries in the shops.³

At some time in July 1941, the Jews of Kārsava, together with refugees from nearby places, were ordered to settle into a ghetto, which was located in the poorest area of town, the section between Telegrafo, Mayo, Kluchewa, and Sporta Streets. It is not known exactly how many Jews were confined within the ghetto, but it was probably more than 400 people, including some from surrounding areas. The ghetto was very crowded; in many cases, there were 18 to 20 people living in a single room. The ghetto area was guarded by members of the local Latvian auxiliary police. Those ghetto residents able to work were assigned to details that carried out the most physically demanding and dirtiest work in the town. They had to work every day without any payment. While at work, these Jews were subjected to various kinds of abuse and mistreatment.

According to a German military report, part of the Latvian Self-Defense force in Kārsava was arrested by the German military authorities and dismissed for having enriched themselves with the property of Jews who had been shot. In Kārsava, a new Self-Defense force was then recruited by the local commander after consultation with the mayor and the district commander of the Self-Defense.⁴

On August 20 or 21, 1941, more than four weeks after the establishment of the Kārsava ghetto, the Germans organized its liquidation. The remaining Jews were taken to a forest located some 4 kilometers (2.5 miles) from Kārsava, close to the Naudaskalns Hill, and shot. Local inhabitants state that the preparations for the killing Aktion, such as the digging of the pit by Soviet prisoners of war (POWs), started on August 18.⁵ On the morning of the Aktion, the ghetto was surrounded by policemen and members of the Latvian Self-Defense detachment. The Jews were chased out of their houses in the ghetto. They were permitted to take with them only a few items needed for their daily care and were escorted in groups of 40 to 60 to the place where they were killed, with those unable to walk being transported in carts. Around 10 Latvian and German policemen conducted the shooting. One of the leaders of the Aktion was the head of the Lūdza auxiliary police, Kārlis Riekstiņš, and another was Stomberg, a German official with the Lūdza military administration. The following members of the Kārsava auxiliary police participated in the killing: Alfrēds Zālītis, Jānis Pukītis, Grāve (a member of the Kārsava Criminal Police), and the head of the Kārsava auxiliary police, Dudārs. There is no evidence that members of the infamous Latvian shooting squad, the Arājs Kommando, took part. At the killing site, the victims were ordered to undress. Next, they were lined up in groups and shot, with the men being shot first.⁶ Altogether, at least 350 Jews, men, women, and children, were killed on that day. In May 1944, the German police ordered the opening of the mass graves, and the remains were burned, as the Nazis sought to eradicate all evidence of their massacres.⁷ Several Jews managed to escape the Aktion and survived with the aid of local residents.

SOURCES Published sources include the following: Boris Vol'kovich et al., *Kholokost v Latgalii* (Daugavpils, 2003); and Iosif Rochko, "Karsava," in Rabbi Menakhem Barkagan, ed., *Unichtozhenie evreev v Latvii 1941–1945: Tsikl lektzii* (Riga: SHAMIR, 2007), pp. 248–250. The ghetto in Kārsava 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. 599.

Information about the fate of the Jews of Kārsava can also be found in the following archives: LVVA (P132-30-23); NARA (N-Doc. NOKW-2150); and YVA.

Katrin Reichelt

NOTES

1. *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 32 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2004), Lfd. Nr. 708, pp. 234–235.
2. LVVA, P132-30-23, p. 20.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 20–21.
4. N-Doc., NOKW-2150, as cited by Andrew Ezergailis, *The Holocaust in Latvia 1941–1944: The Missing Center* (Riga: Historical Institute of Latvia; Washington, DC: Published in association with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 1996), pp. 281–282.
5. LVVA, P132-30-23, p. 21.
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Ibid.*, p. 22.

KRUSTPILS

Pre-1940: Krustpils (Yiddish: Kreitzberg), town, Latgale regions, Latvia; 1940–1941: Latvian SSR; 1941–1944: Kreuzburg, Kreis Jakobstadt (Jēkabpils), Gebiet Mitau, Generalkommissariat Lettland; post-1991: Krustpils, Zemgale regions, Republic of Latvia

Krustpils is located roughly 140 kilometers (87 miles) southeast of Riga, just across the Daugava River opposite the town of Jēkabpils. In 1935, the number of Jews living in Krustpils stood at 1,043 (28 percent of the total population). In the summer of 1941, the Jewish population declined further, as some Jews were deported by the Soviets just before the German invasion, and several hundred more fled with the Red Army into the Soviet Union before the German advance, so that only about 400 Jews remained at the start of the German occupation.

German troops occupied Krustpils by June 29, 1941, and soon established a local Latvian administration there. Mārtiņš Oskars Vētra was appointed mayor, and Chief of Police Kārlis Balodis was placed in charge of the town's security forces, which consisted of local police and civilian volunteers. Balodis appears to have been subordinated to the Jēkabpils police, who in turn coordinated their Aktions with SD officers from Einsatzkommando 2, based in Mitau.¹

The first arrests of Jews began on July 4 and continued until July 12, when Balodis and Vētra ordered the Jews to assemble in the market square, ostensibly to weed the sugar

1010 ESTONIA AND LATVIA REGIONS

beet fields.² There police chief Balodis read a statement condemning the Jews for their alleged role in aiding the Soviet occupation. After this announcement, the Jews were interned in a slaughterhouse adjacent to the Jewish cemetery and guarded by the Latvian police and militia. A week later, nearly 400 Jews were transferred to a closed ghetto located at 182 Riga Street, in the Jewish elementary school. Other Jews were housed at a sugar refinery and a manor house located 4 kilometers (2.5 miles) outside the town. At both locations, Jews were subjected to beatings and robberies, and Jewish women were sexually harassed by Alberts Gajevskis, the warden of the ghetto.³ The inmates were also forced to supply daily labor quotas for road construction work. Local farmers also could rent the prisoners for day labor, signing them out by receipt. During this period, two executions that claimed the lives of 25 Jews also were conducted by the local police at a gravel pit in the woods on the edge of town. A Jewish woman and her infant were killed at the Jewish cemetery.

On August 1, 1941, the ghetto was liquidated by a unit of the Arājs Kommando of Latvian police dispatched by bus from Riga. The approximately 400 victims were assembled in the ghetto and led to a prepared execution site in a peat bog 6 kilometers (3.7 miles) outside the town, to which other Jews were also brought from Jēkabpils, Gostini, and nearby villages. Some of the Jews of Krustpils escaped execution because they were working on farms in the region or fled during the chaos of the liquidation. Directed by the Jēkabpils police chief, the Krustpils police scoured the surrounding region in the days after the Aktion in a largely successful attempt to round up these fugitives. Once apprehended, these people were shot on the spot. Among the victims were 4 teenage boys and 1 girl, Beila Bella Veide, found hiding on a farm at the nearby village of Maksini, as well as 4 Jews in the town of Piejuti. The police then demanded that the farmer who had hidden the Jews bring their belongings to the Krustpils police station under threat of reprisal.⁴

After the war, 23 former members of the Krustpils police were prosecuted for their role in the extermination of the town's Jews; 6 of the defendants were executed, while the remaining received sentences ranging from 10 to 25 years in prison. After the war, the Krustpils Jewish community was not reconstituted. The novel *City by the River* by the Latvian émigré writer Gunārs Janovskis', serialized in 1990–1991 in the Latvian newspaper *Laiks*, is a moving testament to the events in Krustpils during the summer of 1941.

SOURCES Information regarding the fate of the Krustpils Jews can be found 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. 682; Dzintar Ērglis, "A Few Episodes of the Holocaust in Krustpils: A Microcosm of the Holocaust in Occupied Latvia," in Andris Caune, ed., *The Hidden and Forbidden History of Latvia under Soviet and Nazi Occupations 1940–1991* (Riga: University of Riga, 2005), pp. 175–187; Andrew Ezergailis, *The Holocaust in Latvia 1941–1944: The Missing Center* (Riga: Historical Institute of Riga,

1996); and Iosif Rochko, "Krustpils," in Rabbi Menakhem Barkagan, ed., *Unichtozhenie evreev v Latvii 1941–1945: Tsikli leksii* (Riga: SHAMIR, 2007), pp. 261–269.

Documentation concerning the murder of the Jews of Krustpils can be found in the following archives: BA-L; GARF; LVA (e.g., 1986-1-1666, 3927, 45050, and 45124); LVVA (e.g., 1308-12-13042 and 13044); USHMM (RG-18.002M, reel 25); and YVA.

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trans. Steven Seegel and Kathleen Luft

NOTES

1. *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 30 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2004), Lfd. Nr. 686, p. 115.
2. LVA, 1986-1-45050, vol. 4, p. 63, as cited by Ērglis, "A Few Episodes," p. 177.
3. *Ibid.*, vol. 11, p. 132, testimony of Oļegs Kalniņš, as cited by Ērglis, "A Few Episodes," p. 178.
4. *Ibid.*, 1986-1-45124, vol. 1, p. 23, and interviews with local inhabitants conducted by Ērglis in 2000, as cited in "A Few Episodes," pp. 178–179.

KULDIGA

Pre-1940: Kuldiga, town and center; Kuldiga aprinka, Kurzeme regions, Latvia; 1940–1941: Latvian SSR; 1941–1945: Goldingen, Kreis center; Gebiet Libau, Generalkommissariat Lettland; post-1991: Kuldiga, Kurzeme regions, Republic of Latvia

Kuldiga is located on the left bank of the Venta River about 80 kilometers (50 miles) northeast of Liepāja. According to the 1930 census, there were 730 Jews living in the town. By 1935, the Jewish population had declined to 646, or 9 percent of the town's total population.

German armed forces occupied the town on July 1, 1941, nine days after their invasion of the USSR on June 22. During the interim, some of the Jews managed to evacuate, so that around 600 remained in Kuldiga at the start of the German occupation.

Immediately after the retreat of the Red Army, Latvian activists started to torture Jews and murder them. The surviving Jews were conscripted into hard labor, evicted from their homes, and concentrated in the synagogue, which functioned as a temporary ghetto for them. Latvians stole the Jews' houses and belongings.

The Jews stayed in the synagogue until they were shot by Latvian police. Most of the Jewish men were shot first, then the women and children. According to the account of Rita Bogdanova, the Jews were killed in at least three different locations in the surrounding forests. One such site was near the town, in the direction of Ventpils, in the Padures Forest. Eyewitnesses reported that Jews were brought in trucks from Kuldiga that went back and forth at least four times, and more than 300 people were shot in a day. Before the start of the Aktion, the members of the Kuldiga Self-Defense force and their leaders were issued weapons and ammunition for a "special



Pre-war view of the front of the Kuldiga (Goldingen) Synagogue.
USHMM WS #72113, COURTESY OF YVA

operation.” Along with SD men, the previous evening a large subunit (40 to 50 men) of the Arājs Kommando arrived in Kuldiga in blue buses; their commander was Feliks Dibietis. This subunit was assigned to kill the Jews, while the local members of the Self-Defense force were to act as guards. Viktors Arājs himself also came to the town.

In each of the trucks, which carried mainly Jewish women, children, and the elderly, there were several guards. The Jews were told that they were being transferred, so everything initially went smoothly. But when the trucks drove into the woods and the Jews got out, panic broke out because it became clear what would take place. Several people were shot on the spot, near the trucks. The Jews were forced to undress and, 10 to 15 at a time, they were made to walk to pits prepared in advance. The group of shooters—numbering approximately 10 or 15—was replaced from time to time, and on Arājs’s instructions, they also included several members of the local Self-Defense force. They fired rifle volleys. The Aktion was directed by Arājs and Dibietis, who finished off the wounded with their pistols. The local Self-Defense forces covered the pits with earth.

After this Aktion, two young Jewish girls who had been wounded came out of the forest to Kuldiga and went to the Self-Defense headquarters; they said they saw no sense in living, as all their loved ones had been shot. Both were placed

under arrest, then taken back to the forest and shot the next morning.

Another place where Jews were shot was the Kalnamuižas Forest, near the Riezhupe River. More of Kuldiga’s Jews were shot here by local members of the Self-Defense force. The exact number is unknown. The Soviet Extraordinary State Commission (ChGK) report mentions 600 victims, but this figure more likely represents the total number of Kuldiga’s Jews who were murdered.

In a forest about 6 kilometers (3.7 miles) from Kuldiga (about 200 meters [656 feet] from the Kuldiga-Aizpute road), 24 Jewish men from Kuldiga were killed. First, in the morning, 1 of 10 armed members of the Self-Defense force brought 6 Jews there in a truck, made them dig a pit, and then shot and buried them. In the evening of the same day, 18 more Jews were brought by truck and, as before, were made to dig a pit. After about 15 minutes, they were shot and buried. Killed in this Aktion were several Jewish specialists who had been allowed to live after the Aktions in which the Jews of Kuldiga were murdered in the Padures and Kalnamuižas Forests.

A few escaped Jews found hiding places with local farmers. Jewish property was divided among the Latvians, and the holy scrolls were placed in the town archives.

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jews of Kuldiga in the Holocaust can be found in these publications: Rita Bogdanova, “Kuldiga,” in Rabbi Menakhem Barkagan, ed., *Unichtozhenie evreev v Latvii 1941–1945: Tsikl leksii* (Riga: SHAMIR, 2007), pp. 111–113; “Kuldiga,” in Dov Levin, ed., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Latvia and Estonia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1988), pp. 217–221; and “Kuldiga,” 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. 689.

Documentation regarding the murder of Kuldiga’s Jews can be found in this archive: GARF (7021-93-2415).

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LIEPĀJA

Pre-1940: Liepāja, city and center; Liepāja aprinka and Kurzeme reģions, Latvia; 1940–1941: Liepaia, Latvian SSR; 1941–1945: Libau, Kreis and Gebiet center, Generalkommisariat Lettland; post-1991: Liepāja, Kurzeme reģions, Republic of Latvia

Liepāja is located 195 kilometers (121 miles) west-southwest of Riga on the Baltic Sea. In 1935, there were 7,379 Jews living in Liepāja, comprising 13.4 percent of the population. By June 1941, the Jewish population had declined to an estimated 7,140, due to emigration and the birth deficit of an aging population. About 6,500 Jews remained in the city when the Germans took it on June 29, 1941.

The 291st Infantry Division that captured Liepāja was accompanied by part of Einsatzkommando 1a of Walter



Liepāja native Jacob Gamper was among 2,800 Jews massacred between December 15 and 17, 1941, by Latvian and German gunmen. USHMM WS #ID5598, COURTESY OF JACOB GAMPER

Stahlecker's Einsatzgruppe A. Sporadic killings of Jews by SS and soldiers began on the first day. The occupiers promptly recruited a Latvian Self-Defense force (later renamed "auxiliary police") to perform police duties and arrest Jews and Communists. The prisoners were placed in the Women's Prison for interrogation and eventual execution. No pogroms occurred, but some isolated looting took place, along with evictions, beatings, and arrests, usually perpetrated by Self-Defense men. Mass executions started on July 4, when Einsatzkommando 1a, assisted by naval personnel, shot 47 Jews and 5 Latvian Communists. These murders continued almost daily after Einsatzkommando 1a had been reinforced by part of Einsatzkommando 2.

On July 14, the Einsatzkommandos departed, leaving behind SS-Untersturmführer Wolfgang Kügler as SD and Security Police Chief, with a staff of more than 20 men. Liepāja had a large naval base, and so the German navy took charge of the city. Now began a period in which the SD, the naval authorities, and the Latvian auxiliaries (including the notorious Latvian SD Kommando under Viktors Arājs) joined forces in an escalating killing campaign. In isolated shootings and in mass executions, they murdered nearly 5,500 Jews by the end of 1941.

For the first year of the German occupation, Jews continued to live in apartments scattered throughout the city, but under increasingly crowded conditions, as they were evicted

from the choicer apartments and forced to double up or triple up with other families. Bombs, shells, and fires during the siege of Liepāja had made a disproportionate number of Jews homeless, further adding to the overcrowding. At last Polizeistandortführer Fritz Dietrich ordered the establishment of a ghetto for the remaining 832 Jews on July 1, 1942. It comprised a single block bounded by Darza, Apshu, Kungu, and Barenu Streets and was enclosed with barbed wire.

The commandant of the ghetto was Meister der Schutzpolizei Franz Kerscher, a remarkably humane official who occasionally revealed his feelings by expressions such as "Thank God" and "most unfortunately." There were no selections during the 15-month existence of the ghetto, but the SD executed several dozen Jews for minor infractions. The 13 babies born in the ghetto were left unharmed while the ghetto existed.¹ This pause in killing is confirmed by official figures that reported 809 Jews in Kurzeme on March 10, 1943,² only slightly fewer than the initial 832 on July 1, 1942. The Judenrat members—businessman Zalman Israelit and lawyer Menash Kaganski—were on good terms with Kerscher and generally managed to arrange lenient treatment of offenders. They sometimes bribed him with items such as fur coats, jewelry, or gold coins (contributed by residents), but apparently Kerscher often passed part, or all, of the bribe on to his superiors to buy their acquiescence.³ The Judenrat enjoyed the respect and trust of the ghetto residents.

Food rations for Jews were woefully inadequate: one half of the skimpy daily ration of the non-Jewish civilian population (1,030 calories per day in 1942). But food was available on the black market, as Latvian farmers were productive enough to have some left even after meeting the stiff delivery quotas imposed by the German administration. Nearly all Jews worked outside the ghetto and thus had opportunities to barter any remaining belongings for food, which they were able to smuggle into the ghetto under the lax search practices established by Kerscher. Wages were shamefully low. Though the employers of Jews had to remit Jews' wages at the pay scale of non-Jews to the Gebietskommissar, only a small fraction of this money was paid out to the Jewish workers. For piecework, this fraction was 25 percent.⁴

The ghetto was guarded by 10 rifle-armed Latvian policemen, 4 of whom patrolled the fence during each shift. The residents were required to be in the ghetto 7:00 P.M. to 5:00 A.M. (all day Sundays and holidays) and in their rooms 10:00 P.M. to 5:00 A.M.⁵ There was a library, a drama club, and a small synagogue located within the ghetto. A few concerts were held, including recitals of satirical songs mocking the Nazis, and there were occasional volleyball games. Classes were organized for children.⁶ A few radios had been smuggled into the ghetto, enabling the residents to listen to foreign broadcasts. There was no armed resistance in the ghetto and no escape attempts until the very end. Consequently there were no crises that might have brought the few ghetto policemen into conflict with the other residents. In 1943, Jews working at Security Police headquarters (HQ) managed to smuggle a number of handguns into the ghetto. They were found by a Latvian

guard, but the ghetto suffered no reprisals. On one occasion the ghetto police imprisoned two ghetto residents who had stolen groceries from the ghetto store. Subsequently both were seized by the SD and executed.⁷

From October 22, 1942, to March 1943, 160 Jews from the Riga ghetto—originally from Lithuania, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Austria, and Germany—were in Liepāja to work in the local sugar factory and were housed in the Liepāja ghetto. From them the Liepāja Jews learned about the Rumbula massacres of November–December 1941.

Three Jews from a work detail in Paplaka managed to escape in April 1944 and found shelter with a brave Latvian couple in Liepāja, Roberts and Anna Sedols, who had already hidden eight other escapees from the Liepāja ghetto and provided them with food and guns. Unfortunately Roberts Sedols was killed during an air raid on March 10, 1945, but all his wards survived until the Soviets reoccupied Liepāja after the armistice of May 9, 1945. One of the Jews in hiding, Kalman Linkimer, left a diary covering the entire German occupation period.

Despite the protests of Kerscher and the Gebietskommissar,⁸ the ghetto was closed on October 8, 1943, and the approximately 800 prisoners were taken to the Kaiserwald camp in Riga. Conditions were dismal, causing 1 survivor to say that life in the Liepāja ghetto “was paradise in comparison.”⁹ Older people and women with children were selected soon after arrival. Most mothers and children under 12 were sent to the Auschwitz concentration camp on November 3, 1943, for gassing, whereas older people were killed locally. A number of the younger people were assigned to work in outlying *Kasernierungen* (barracks) such as the Reichsbahn or the German General Electric Company (AEG), where conditions were more tolerable. When the Red Army approached Riga in the summer of 1944, an additional selection was carried out, and these prisoners were sent to the Stutthof concentration camp near Danzig in several transports, from August 8 to October 1, 1944.

A number of prisoners were assigned to satellite camps, some of which maintained bearable conditions. However, others stayed in Stutthof or were transferred to other concentration camps (e.g., Buchenwald, Bergen-Belsen, Stolp, and Polte-Magdeburg), and many died due to the increasingly brutal conditions, especially on death marches in early 1945. The Stutthof prisoners were put on barges on April 25, 1945, and towed westward for a week without food. After the tugs abandoned the barges, Norwegian prisoners managed to navigate them to a beach at Neustadt in Holstein, where those Jews who had not perished during the voyage staggered ashore. They were greeted by German navy men who shot or drowned more than 50 of the Jews, including 8 from Liepāja—as it turned out, only a few hours before liberation by British troops.¹⁰ By this cruel quirk of fate, navy sailors had once again become the nemesis of Liepāja Jews, nearly finishing the job their navy comrades had begun in 1941.

Eight other Liepāja Jews died in the Neustadt concentration camp after liberation. Only 175 Liepāja Jews survived the war, including 33 who had been hidden by Latvians.

The names and vital statistics of more than 95 percent of Liepāja Jews have been recovered, permitting some quantitative demographic inferences.¹¹ The killings of 1941 initially targeted men only, but then extended to elderly people and finally to women with children and other unskilled or non-essential people. But the ratio of men to women dropped steadily: June 14, 1941 (0.81), January 1, 1942 (0.57), August 9, 1944 (0.44), May 9, 1945 (0.38). In contrast to Riga, where this ratio was about 10:1 after the Rumbula massacres, indicating a policy of sparing male workers, the trend in Liepāja was to spare women, and this preferential survival of women continued even after deportation to Riga and Stutthof, when physical endurance became increasingly important, in addition to passing the cruel selection criteria of the SS.

The combined effect of endurance and selection is seen in the following table, which shows the surviving fraction (on December 31, 1945) as a function of age.

<i>Age in 1941</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Men</i>
0–4	0.0%	0.0%
5–9	1.8%	0.0%
10–14	4.7%	2.3%
15–19	11.3%	1.0%
20–24	7.8%	0.8%
25–29	3.4%	0.8%
30–34	1.3%	1.4%
35–39	0.9%	0.5%
40–44	1.7%	0.2%
45–49	1.0%	0.0%
50–54	0.4%	0.0%

Young women who had been 10 to 24 years old in 1941 had the best chance of survival. Among men, the 10- to 14-year cohort did best, but nearly all other age groups had survival fractions of less than 1 percent, reaching zero at 45 years and older.

Some of the murderers got their deserved punishment. The Liepāja SS and Police Chief, Fritz Dietrich, was hanged in Landsberg prison in 1948. Wolfgang Kügler, head of the Liepāja SD, committed suicide in a West German jail on December 2, 1959. Several other members of the Liepāja SD were tried in Hannover in 1969–1971, but got off lightly. Strott—by then a retired hotel director—got only a 7-year prison term; and Grauel, Reiche, Kuketta, Fahrbach, and Rosenstock, 1.5 to 6 years.¹² Erich Handke, who was tried separately by the Hannover court, died after serving 8 months of his 8-year sentence.¹³ Hans Baumgartner, who was tried in East Berlin, was sentenced to death.

The arch-murderer Viktors Arājs was apprehended in 1975 and sentenced to life imprisonment but died in 1986. The Soviets tried 356 members of the Arājs Kommando, most of whom got 10 to 25 years in the Gulag or the death penalty. They also tried a number of Latvian auxiliary police, but given the arbitrariness of Soviet justice, some sentences may have been too lenient and others too harsh. About 20 Liepāja auxiliary

1014 ESTONIA AND LATVIA REGIONS

policemen were tried as members of the 20th Latvian Schutzmannschaft Battalion in the 1970s, but although many of the defendants apparently participated in the 1941 Aktions, the indictment focused less on individual guilt than on membership in the battalion.

SOURCES Among works by historians, the most comprehensive account of Nazi actions in Liepāja is Andrew Ezergailis, *The Holocaust in Latvia 1941–1944: The Missing Center* (Riga: Historical Institute of Latvia; Washington, DC: Published in association with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 1996), pp. 286–298. Another excellent account, primarily from the victims’ perspective, is Dov Levin, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Latvia and Estonia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1988), pp. 180–186; an English translation by Shalom Bronstein is available on the Web at www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/pinkas_latvia/lat_00170.html. Events in the first months of the occupation, with emphasis on the role of the German navy, are described in greater detail in Margers Vestermanis, “Ortskommandantur Libau. Zwei Monate deutscher Besatzung im Sommer 1941,” in Hannes Heer and Klaus Naumann, eds., *Vernichtungskrieg: Verbrechen der Wehrmacht 1941–1944* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 1995), pp. 241–261; and Heinz-Ludger Borgert, “Die Kriegsmarine und das Unternehmen ‘Barbarossa,’” *Mitteilungen aus dem Bundesarchiv* (1999): 52–66. Eyewitness accounts of executions along with pictures of the Skede executions have been published by Ernst Klee, Willi Dressen, and Volker Reiss, *The Good Old Days: The Holocaust as Seen by Its Perpetrators and Bystanders* (New York: Konecky & Konecky, 1997), pp. 126–135. Among survivor accounts, the most detailed one is Solomon Feigerson, *Tragediia liepayskikh evreev* (Riga, 2002); but three additional accounts are found in Gertrude Schneider, *Muted Voices* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1987)—chapters by George D. Schwab, Aaron Vesterman, and Shoshana Kahn. Reminiscences of pre-war Liepāja are included in the yizkor book *A Town Named Libau* (Tel Aviv: Libauers’ Committee of Israel, 1982) (see www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/libau.html). Names of some 7,000 victims and survivors (along with Ezergailis’s Liepāja chapter and an English version of Feigerson’s memoir) are contained in Edward Anders and Juris Dubrovskis, *Jews in Liepaja, Latvia 1941–45* (Burlingame: Anders Press, 2001). An up-to-date version of the database, with at least 7,142 names, is available at www.liepajajews.org. The methodology of this project is described in Edward Anders and Juris Dubrovskis, “Who Died in the Holocaust? Recovering Names from Official Records,” *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 17:1 (Spring 2003): 114–138. Also of note is Kalman Linkimer, *Nineteen Months in a Cellar: How 11 Jews Eluded Hitler’s Henchmen: The Diary of Kalman Linkimer (1913–1988)* (Riga: Jewish Community of Riga, 2008).

The most important sources are the LVVA, Riga and the Museum and Documentation Center “Jews in Latvia,” Riga. The AMS has partial records on Liepāja Jews deported to Stutthof in July–October 1944, as well as transport lists to other camps. USHMM has microfilms of documents from LVVA and AMS. YVA has many survivor memoirs. BA-BL has a number of documents of the German civil administration Ostland that are not available in the LVVA, and BA-L

has records of the Grauel investigation as well as documents on several cases that did not come to trial.

Edward Anders

NOTES

1. Rachel Katsev Schneider, communication to Ella Barkan, May 2000.
2. BA-BL, R 92/1157, folio 1, report of March 10, 1943.
3. Fanny Lebovits, personal communication, 2002.
4. LVVA, P83-1-118, p. 1.
5. Ibid., Wachtvorschrift für die Ghetto-Wache, P83-118-1, pp. 3–9.
6. Schwab, “The Destruction of a Family,” in Schneider, *Muted Voices*.
7. Ibid.; Solomon Feigerson, “The Tragic Fate of Liepaja Jews,” in Anders and Dubrovskis, *Jews in Liepaja, Latvia 1941–45*.
8. BA-BL, R 92/1158, folio 1, p. 132.
9. Schwab, “The Destruction of a Family.”
10. AMS, “List of Jews killed at Neustadt by German Army 2.5.45,” May 1945 (Z-V-36); Jeffrey Lowenson, personal communication, 2002.
11. Edward Anders and Juris Dubrovskis, “Jews of Liepaja, Latvia 1941–1945” (unpub. database; a Web version is available at www.liepajajews.org).
12. LG-Hann, Verdict in the case against Grauel and others (2 Ks 3/68), October 14, 1971, in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 36 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006), Lfd. Nr. 760a.
13. Arnold Engel, personal communication, 2002.

LŪDZA

Pre-1940: Lūdza (Yiddish: Lutsin), town, aprinka center, Latgale regions, Latvia; 1940–1941: Latvian SSR; 1941–1944: Ludsen, Kreis center, Gebiet Dünaburg, Generalkommissariat Lettland; post-1991: Lūdza, Latgale regions, Republic of Latvia

Lūdza is located 107 kilometers (66.5 miles) northeast of Daugavpils. In 1935, there were 1,518 Jews living in the town (27.4 percent of the total population). In 1938, a large fire destroyed nearly all Jewish stores and many houses.

Units of German Army Group North entered Lūdza on July 3, 1941, after a heavy bombardment. On the first day of occupation, Westerhausen, the commander of the German forces in the town, ordered the establishment of a Latvian auxiliary police (Self-Defense) force. As in many other smaller towns in occupied Latvia, the German army and police in Lūdza had to rely on the assistance of local inhabitants serving in auxiliary formations to carry out many of the anti-Jewish Aktions. These units operated under German orders, but with a considerable degree of independence. The Latvian Pēteris Grīnvalds was the initial commander who organized the local Latvian Self-Defense unit in Lūdza. He held this post for only some 10 days, but during that period he recruited a

group of volunteers from various occupations and professions. His successor as head of the unit was Kārlis Riekstiņš.

During the first days of German occupation, the authorities rounded up and imprisoned a number of Jews, especially refugees from Lithuania and other parts of Latvia. Most of the prisoners were held in the local jail, which was directed by a Latvian named Kuprovskis, where they were beaten and starved.¹ Survivors testified that on July 10 and 11, 1941, a local commission consisting of members of the Latvian Self-Defense and the German military was established to decide the fate of the prisoners held in the Lūdza jail.² Some of the Jews were released, but during the night of July 14–15, about 150 of the prisoners were taken out and shot near the brick factory. Prior to the shooting, the prisoners were interrogated and tortured, as they were accused of having collaborated with the Soviet authorities.³

In the middle of July 1941, the head of the Latvian auxiliary police, Riekstiņš, received orders from the German military administration to establish a ghetto in Lūdza and to register all Jews able to work. A part of the city between the Latgales, Kostel'naia, Krišjāņa Barona, and Ventspils Streets was designated as the ghetto area. Riekstiņš ordered the Jewish population of Lūdza to move into the ghetto by 10:00 p.m. on July 20. The Jews were allowed to take with them some clothing, bedding materials, cutlery, crockery, and other household items. The following members of the Latvian auxiliary police assisted the German military administration in establishing the ghetto: P. Kovalevskis, Zavars, Samuševs, Ivan Cheksters, Francs Kreištāns, Aleksandrs Pavlovskis, Michails Sluders, Runcāns, and Aleksandrs Bolševičs. A Latvian by the name of Viktors Ladusāns was appointed to be in charge of the ghetto.⁴ The apartments abandoned by the Jews were confiscated by the German authorities. A short time after their resettlement, some Jews were allowed to return to their apartments to collect remaining items, which had not been looted in the interim. The synagogue in Lūdza was also scoured for any valuable religious items, which were either stolen by looters or confiscated by the German authorities.

The ghetto in Lūdza was not surrounded by a fence. Around its perimeter, the local authorities posted signs bearing a six-pointed star and the inscription "Jews, [entrance] forbidden!" The ghetto was very overcrowded, with several families forced to share each apartment. As Jews moved into the ghetto, there was a scramble to obtain a place to stay, as many Jews already living in the ghetto area were reluctant to share their limited space with others.⁵ Shortly after the resettlement, the German authorities set up a Jewish Council (Judenrat). Available documentation unfortunately does not name its members or their responsibilities. A provisional grocery shop was opened in the ghetto, which distributed food only on the basis of ration cards. The average daily ration of bread was 300 grams (10.6 ounces) per person. Some Jews were able to barter remaining valuables for extra food with the local inhabitants when they left the ghetto each day for work. Even before the establishment of the ghetto, Jews were forced to

wear patches bearing the Jewish Star on their outer clothing. They were forbidden to walk on the pavement. To avoid using the sidewalks, small temporary wooden bridges were built for the Jews to use when they left the ghetto to go to their workplaces.⁶ Altogether approximately 1,000 Jews resided in the Lūdza ghetto.⁷ The Jews were forced to conduct various kinds of physically demanding work, such as cleaning the streets and washing cars at the military and town administration. A group of 40 Jewish women worked in the local hospital as cleaning staff. The ghetto residents were terrorized on a daily basis by members of the Latvian police, who beat and robbed them. Sometimes, young girls were taken from the ghetto to participate in drunken orgies. Many of them never returned.⁸

In August, authority over the region was transferred from the German military to a civil administration subordinated to the Gebietskommissar in Daugavpils. The first major shooting Aktion took place on August 17, 1941, approximately three weeks after the establishment of the Lūdza ghetto.⁹ German and Latvian police arrived at the ghetto early in the morning. The Jews were gathered into one column, as if they were to be marched to work. Approximately 830 people, men, women, and children, were escorted in the direction of Zvirgzdene to Lake Cirma, some 6 kilometers (3.7 miles) outside the town, where they were shot.¹⁰ One witness stated that one third of the victims of this Aktion were children.¹¹ At the shooting site, the Jews had to undress and hand over any valuables in their possession. The shootings were conducted by Latvian auxiliary police and members of the Aizsārgi (inter-war civil defense units, reconstituted in the summer of 1941). A German by the name of Bruno Sauer is mentioned as having participated actively in the killing Aktion.¹² There is no evidence that personnel from the notorious Arājs Kommando detachment took part in these shootings. The Jews were shot in groups.¹³ Witnesses recall three German officers being present at the killing site. They did not participate in the shooting but took photographs of the Aktion. As the first victims were undressing, these officers ordered that three Jewish girls be freed, and they walked them back to the ghetto.¹⁴ The bodies of the victims were buried in a single mass grave, some 5 meters wide, 65 meters long, and 2 meters deep (16 by 213 by 6.6 feet).¹⁵

Following this Aktion, around 300 Jews remained in the ghetto. They worked in the local hospital, and some performed skilled labor. The German security forces organized another mass shooting on August 27, 1941, again near Lake Cirma. Estimates of the number of victims vary from 40 up to 180 people.¹⁶ Of the approximately 200 Jews that then remained, most were sent in two groups to Daugavpils and Rēzekne.¹⁷ According to Iosif Rochko, there was a further mass shooting on November 13, 1941, near the village of Kotani. The last residents of the Lūdza ghetto were killed in April or May 1942 in the Garbarovski Forest near the town.¹⁸

When the Red Army reached Lūdza on July 23, 1944, the only Jews still alive were a few who had successfully remained in hiding. Some residents of the ghetto managed to flee from

1016 ESTONIA AND LATVIA REGIONS

work details outside the ghetto. They joined Soviet partisan units active in eastern Latvia or went into hiding. The total number of Jews killed in Lūdza is not known precisely. The Soviet Extraordinary State Commission (ChGK) estimated that about 1,726 Jews were killed in Lūdza and its environs altogether. Of these, probably about 1,200 were from the town itself.¹⁹

SOURCES Published sources include Aaron Shneer, “Gibel’ evreev Ludzy: Dokumental’no-pristrastnoe povestvovanie,” in Boris Vol’kovich et al., *Kholokost v Latgalii* (Daugavpils, 2003), pp. 32–53; 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. 761–762; Max Kaufmann, *Churbn Lettland: Die Vernichtung der Juden Lettlands* (Konstanz: Hartung-Gorre, 1999), p. 291; and Iosif Rochko, “Ludza,” in Rabbi Menakhem Barkagan, ed., *Unichtozbenie evreev v Latvii 1941–1945: Tsikl leksii* (Riga: SHAMIR, 2007), pp. 218–222.

Information on the fate of the Jews of Lūdza during the German occupation can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-93-114); LVVA (P132-30-23); USHMM (RG-18.002M, reel 29; and RG-22.002M, reel 21); and YVA (M-33/1036, pp. 5–127; and VD-713 [interview with S. Abramson, 1995]).

Katrin Reichelt

NOTES

1. Vol’kovich et al., *Kholokost v Latgalii*, p. 32.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., p. 33.
4. Ibid., p. 40; LVVA, P132-30-23, pp. 15–16. This source mentions Pavels Kovalevskis as the deputy commandant in charge of the ghetto.
5. Vol’kovich et al., *Kholokost v Latgalii*, p. 34.
6. LVVA, P132-30-23, p. 15.
7. Vol’kovich et al., *Kholokost v Latgalii*, p. 37.
8. Ibid., pp. 38–39.
9. Ibid., pp. 41 ff.; and LVVA, P132-30-23, pp. 15 ff.
10. Vol’kovich et al., *Kholokost v Latgalii*, pp. 38–39. The files of the ChGK estimate the number of victims at 750–800.
11. Vol’kovich et al., *Kholokost v Latgalii*, p. 43.
12. Ibid., p. 40.
13. LVVA, P132-30-23, p. 15.
14. Vol’kovich et al., *Kholokost v Latgalii*, p. 42.
15. LVVA, P132-30-23, p. 25.
16. Ibid., pp. 16, 24.
17. Vol’kovich et al., *Kholokost v Latgalii*, p. 45; Kaufmann, *Churbn Lettland*, p. 291, indicates that many of the Jews from Lūdza were murdered on the way during the march to the Daugavpils ghetto.
18. LVVA, P132-30-23, p. 24.
19. Ibid., pp. 14, 24.

MADONA

Pre-1940: Madona, town and center, Madona aprinka, Vidzeme regions, Latvia; 1940–1941: Latvian SSR; 1941–1944: Modohn,

Kreis center, Gebiet Wolmar (Valmiera), Generalkommissariat Lettland; post-1991: Madona, Vidzeme regions, Republic of Latvia

According to the 1935 census, there were 115 Jews living in Madona (4.9 percent of all the town’s inhabitants). Madona is approximately 130 kilometers (81 miles) east of Riga.

German armed forces occupied the town on July 2, 1941, 11 days after their invasion of the USSR on June 22. During that time, only a few Jews managed to evacuate to the interior of the USSR. By July 9, 1941, all the remaining Jews in the town were arrested and placed in several barracks at the edge of town. These barracks served as the ghetto, and the Jews of the neighboring villages were also confined there in mid-July and late July 1941. There were approximately 150 people in the ghetto. It was liquidated on August 8, 1941, when the Jews were transported in groups to the forest near the village of Lazdona and shot there by a detachment of the Arājs Kommando.

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jewish community of Madona during the Holocaust can be found in these publications: “Madona,” in Dov Levin, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Latvia and Estonia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1988), p. 188; “Madona,” 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); A. Urtāns, “Ebreju slepkavošana Madonas apriņķī,” in *Latvijas Vēsturnieku komisijas Raksti. 23. sējums* (Riga, 2008), pp. 101–103; and Rita Bogdanova, “Madona,” in Rabbi Menakhem Barkagan, ed., *Extermination of the Jews in Latvia, 1941–1945* (Riga: Society “Shamir,” 2008), p. 145.

Documentation on the murder of the Jews of Madona can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-93-2428 to 2430); LVA; and YVA.

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PREIĻI

Pre-1940: Preiļi (Yiddish: Priāl), town, Daugavpils aprinka, Latgale regions, Latvia; 1940–1941: Latvian SSR; 1941–1944: Prely, Kreis and Gebiet Dünaburg, Generalkommissariat Lettland; post-1991: Preiļi, Latgale regions, Republic of Latvia

Preiļi is located 204 kilometers (127 miles) southeast of Riga and 55 kilometers (34 miles) north of Daugavpils. According to the 1935 census, there were 847 Jews living in Preiļi, constituting 51 percent of the town’s population. German armed forces occupied the town on June 28, 1941, approximately one week after their invasion of the USSR on June 22. In the interim, part of Preiļi’s Jewish community had managed to evacuate to the eastern regions of the Soviet Union. Approximately 800 Jews remained in the town at the start of the German occupation, including some refugees from other towns in Latvia and Lithuania.

Immediately following the German invasion, Latvian “activists,” who had set up a local administration and police force, began to persecute the Jews. The Preiļi synagogue was damaged, and a curfew for the local Jews was announced. Jews were now forced to perform various kinds of physically demanding labor, such as digging peat and cleaning the streets. On July 19, 1941, Jews were ordered to wear a yellow Star of David, with a diameter of 12 centimeters (about 5 inches) on their outer garments: the male Jews, on the upper back, on the chest, and above the left knee, and the female Jews, on the upper back and on the chest. In addition, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) with three members was established; it was responsible for the implementation of all orders concerning the Jewish population.¹

On July 27, 1941, the first Aktion took place. On this day, security forces including Latvian policemen rounded up at least 250 Jews, living on certain streets that were believed to be among the wealthiest, and confined them within the synagogue on Brīvības (Sondorskaia) Street, where approximately 60 men guarded them. Some people say that the Jews were told they would be sent to Palestine; others say that they were informed they would be sent away to work. From the synagogue, they were escorted to a place beyond the local Jewish cemetery, where they were killed in two groups: first the men, and later the women and children.²

Information regarding the establishment of a ghetto in Preiļi is sparse and somewhat contradictory. According to the diary of Sheina Gram, a 15-year-old Jewish girl from Preiļi, on July 31, 1941, the Jews received information that they would soon be moved into a ghetto. She recorded that Jewish girls were being sent to clean freed-up Jewish apartments for those who had been killing them. Then, on August 3, 1941, she wrote that “people are moving into the ghetto.”³ It seems that the initial aim was to clear certain streets of Jews, while others were permitted to stay put, presumably with the relocated Jews being moved in together with them. Jews appear to have continued to reside on Zālias, Livāni, and Brīvības Streets for a few more days.

A group of Jews continued to work digging peat outside the town. On August 5, 1941, a group of men in the “Self-Defense” force gathered in the office of the peat works. Next door, in a small barn, were 22 Jews; 4 Jews were led out to be shot, but they started to run. The perpetrators opened fire, killing 3, but 1 managed to hide. Then the other Jews were led out in pairs and were shot at the edge of the field.

The improvised ghetto in Preiļi existed for only about one week. Some sources state that the liquidation Aktion took place during the night of August 6–7, 1941, when approximately 400 people were killed. A group of eight Latvian auxiliary policemen identified as responsible for the killing were arrested by the People’s Commissariat of Internal Affairs (NKVD) after the arrival of the Soviet army. According to the records of the Soviet trial proceedings, each of those arrested pleaded guilty.⁴

According to another version of events, compiled by Iosif Rochko, on August 9, 1941, a group of armed men came to

town from Livāni and arrested 50 to 100 Jews. Then they shot them in a meadow behind the Jewish cemetery. Since the last entry in her diary is dated August 8, Gram was probably among these victims. Then on August 10, the perpetrators began driving the Jews living on Zālias, Livāni, and Brīvības Streets out of their homes. These Jews, numbering up to 600 people, were placed in the synagogue on Brīvības Street. The next day they were driven on foot to the same meadow and shot. The mass shooting was conducted in several pits at once.

By August 11, 1941, the ghetto had been liquidated, as all the Jews had been rounded up and shot behind the Jewish cemetery. A few Jews managed to evade the roundups, but over the ensuing weeks and months, Latvian policemen continued to hunt them down in hiding in the surrounding forests and villages. One group of Jews hid in a ditch in the forest with the assistance of a local non-Jew, but after a while they were denounced by other Latvians and were also captured and killed.

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jewish community of Preiļi during the Holocaust can be found in the following publications: “Preiļi,” in Dov Levin, ed., *Pinkas ba-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Latvia and Estonia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1988), pp. 207–209; “Golos Sheiny Gram. Dnevnik 15-letnei devochki iz mesteckha Preili. 22 iunija–8 avgusta 1941,” in I. Altman and Sh. Krakovskii, eds., *Neizvestnaia Chernaia kniga. Svidetel'stva ochevidtsev o katastrofe sovetskikh evreev (1941–1944)* (Jerusalem and Moscow, 1993), pp. 325–332 (available in English as Joshua Rubenstein and Ilya Altman, eds., *The Unknown Black Book: The Holocaust in the German-Occupied Soviet Territories* [Bloomington: Indiana University Press in association with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2007]); I. Rochko, “Eto bylo v Preili,” in *Evrei v Daugavpils: Istoricheskie ocherki: Kniga chetvertaia (Daugavpils, 2005)*, pp. 197–214; Iosif Rochko, “Preili,” in Rabbi Menakhem Barkagan, ed., *Unichtozhenie evreev v Latvii 1941–1945: Tsikl lektsii* (Riga: SHAMIR, 2007), pp. 236–248; and Max Kaufmann, *Churbn Lettland: Die Vernichtung der Juden Lettlands* (Konstanz: Hartung-Gorre, 1999), pp. 293–294.

Documentation regarding the murder of the Jews of Preiļi can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-93-94 and 8114-1-966); LVA; LVVA (P132-30-14); and YVA.

Alexander Kruglov
trans. Kathleen Luft

NOTES

1. “Golos Sheiny Gram,” pp. 327–328.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 328–329 (entry for July 27, 1941); statement of Pēteris Prokulis, in LVVA, P132-30-14, p. 25. The witness counted 450 victims during this Aktion. Another witness, Bronislavs Klaušs, stated that the Aktion was supervised by a police unit from Daugavpils under a man named Juris and his deputy Saulics, the head of the Preiļi county police.
3. “Golos Sheiny Gram,” pp. 329, 331 (entries for July 31 and August 3, 1941).
4. LVVA, P132-30-14, p. 25.

RĒZEKNE

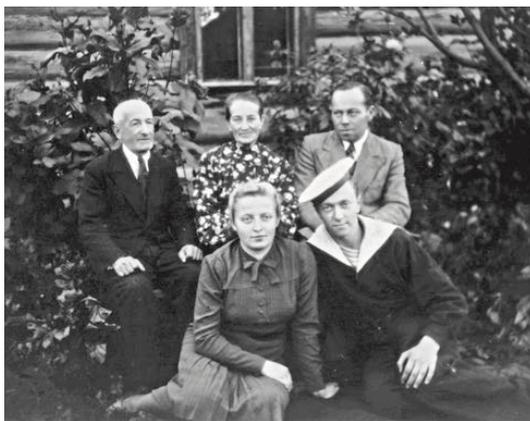
Pre-1940: Rēzekne (Yiddish: Rezbitsa), town and aprinka center, Latgale regions, Latvia; 1940–1941: Latvian SSR; 1941–1944: Rositten, Kreis center, Gebiet Dünaburg, Generalkommissariat Lettland; post-1991: Rēzekne, Latgale regions, Republic of Latvia

Rēzekne is located 242 kilometers (150 miles) east-southeast of Riga. In 1935, 3,342 Jews resided in Rēzekne, constituting 25.9 percent of the town's population. In the days just prior to the outbreak of war on June 22, 1941, hundreds of refugees from other parts of Latvia and from Lithuania passed through the town. A large segment of the local Jewish population also fled eastward, attempting to escape the German invaders.

Units of the German armed forces entered Rēzekne on July 3, 1941. During the first weeks of the occupation, a German military administration controlled the town. On August 1, Ortskommandantur II 339 was based there. Later in August 1941, a German civil government was established, and Rēzekne became part of Gebiet Dünaburg, headed by Gebietskommissar Friedrich Schwung.

Units of the German Security Police (Einsatzkommando 1b) also entered Rēzekne in early July and ordered the establishment of a Latvian Self-Defense force. Local volunteers formed an auxiliary police detachment. A local man by the name of Mačs was appointed head of the town's police force. Under his supervision, an auxiliary police force of 120 men, aided by 30 policemen sent from Riga, controlled affairs in Rēzekne.¹

Anti-Jewish measures were introduced during the first days of the German occupation. Just one day after the arrival of the German military, the Jewish men of Rēzekne were or-



Postwar portrait of Jadwiga Arcichovska (née Matusievich) [seated, foreground], who with her mother Anna [seated, background] and brother Jan protected their Jewish neighbors Haim and Yakov Izraelit from 1941 to 1944 in Rēzekne. Jadwiga, Anna, and Jan were recognized by Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations in 1989. USHMM WS #57636, COURTESY OF JFR

dered to gather on the market square, and around 1,400 people showed up. More than 10 young men were shot; the victims included Boruch Weksler, Mitya Manteifl, and Morduch Gassel. The other male Jews were arrested and placed in the town prison.²

The pursuit and murder of Jews continued during the following week. Many of the victims were shot at the Jewish cemetery. Their apartments and valuables were looted. Most of the booty was turned over to the town administration.³ Erich Ehrlinger, the head of Einsatzkommando 1b, arrived in Rēzekne shortly after July 13, 1941.⁴ He and the men of Einsatzkommando 1b initiated the first systematic killing of Jews, namely, the shooting of those Jews under arrest. Following the initial shootings, and the burning of two synagogues, a large-scale Aktion occurred on July 15, 1941, in Leshchinskii Park, in which 120 people were shot.

The killing of the Rēzekne Jews included those Jewish refugees who had remained in the town or were trapped there during the invasion. Police continued to arrest Jews, taking them to the prison and then carrying out regular mass shootings. A witness by the name of Naum Shakayev, a Soviet activist, later testified that he was arrested in early August 1941 and saw several thousand Jews being held in the Rēzekne prison.⁵ The victims were marched to the banks of the river on the edge of the town, where they were shot and buried in mass graves. The number of separate killing Aktions in Rēzekne remains unknown.

Several witnesses stated that in the first two weeks of August 1941 shots were heard frequently from the Jewish cemetery of Rēzekne. One witness estimated the number of people killed at the Jewish cemetery at 2,500.⁶ Additional evidence of mass shootings comes from the war records of Landesschützen Battalion 868, which was based in Rēzekne in early August. The war records mention the killing of 200 Jews and Communists by the Latvian Self-Defense force on August 1, 1941. It also describes another major Aktion involving the killing of several hundred Jews by the Latvian Self-Defense unit on August 5, 1941.⁷

A further major Aktion took place on August 23, 1941, in the Ančupāni Hills, located 6 kilometers (3.7 miles) from Rēzekne. The precise number of victims of this Aktion is not known; Soviet authorities estimated several thousand.⁸ The massacres continued almost daily. The mass arrests led to overcrowding in the local jail, and the Germans used another building to hold prisoners: the so-called arrest house on Zamkova Street. There is also some documentation that indicates that members of the infamous Arājs Kommando visited Rēzekne and carried out mass shootings later in 1941.⁹

Some witnesses recall that a Jewish ghetto was also established on Zamkova Street, possibly referring to the prison overflow.¹⁰ Other sources note that all the Jewish women and children were permitted to live temporarily only in certain designated apartments.¹¹ The witness Jāzeps Pinka, a Latvian prison guard who also worked as a truck driver, provided some information on the Rēzekne ghetto. Pinka recalled that it was located on Pozharnaia Street or on Pleikšņu Street. He also

stated that the ghetto inmates were taken away in four trucks and brought to the Ančupāni Hills. There they were forced to strip to their underwear and to line up, facing the pits. Moments later they were shot.¹² Pinka recalled, in addition, the involvement of policemen only from Malta in this Aktion. However, the major Aktion to kill the Rēzekne Jews took place in late September 1941, and this event can probably be viewed as the liquidation of the Rēzekne ghetto. The total number of Jews murdered in Rēzekne remains unknown but was probably in excess of 3,000 people. Based on a postwar investigation, Soviet authorities estimated the number of Jews and Communists killed at 11,000, a figure that included 1,000 children.¹³ In all likelihood, these figures are too high.

One survivor of the Rēzekne ghetto managed to escape from it on September 24, 1941, and was baptized the following day. Both his parents remained in the ghetto and were shot shortly afterwards at the end of September 1941.¹⁴ In October 1941, Latvian militia men discovered 12 other Jews in Rēzekne who had been baptized by a Russian priest. All 12 Jews were shot, and the priest was dismissed from his position.

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jews of Rēzekne during the Holocaust can be found in these publications: Boris Vol'kovich et al., *Kholokost v Latgalii* (Daugavpils, 2003); Andrew Ezergailis, *The Holocaust in Latvia 1941–1944: The Missing Center* (Riga: Historical Institute of Latvia; Washington, DC: Published in association with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 1996), pp. 280–285; Iosif Rochko, “Rezekne,” in Rabbi Menakhem Barkagan, ed., *Unichtozhenie evreev v Latvii 1941–1945: Tsikl lektsii* (Riga: SHAMIR, 2007), pp. 210–218; Joshua Rubenstein and Ilya Altman, eds., *The Unknown Black Book: The Holocaust in the German-Occupied Soviet Territories* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press in association with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2007), pp. 328–330; and Dov Levin, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Latvia and Estonia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1988), pp. 233–242.

Information on the murder of the Jews of Rēzekne during the German occupation can be found in the following archives: GARF (e.g., 7021-93-28 to 30; and 8114-1-966); LVVA (e.g., P6676-4-1); NARA (T-175, reel 233; and NOKW-2150); USHMM (RG-18.002M; and RG-22.002M, reels 21 and 22); and YVA.

Katrin Reichelt

NOTES

1. NARA, T-175, reel 233, fr. 2721557, Ereignismeldung UdSSR no. 26, July 18, 1941.
2. Rubenstein and Altman, *The Unknown Black Book*, p. 329.
3. LVVA, P6676-4-1, p. 189.
4. NARA, T-175, reel 233, fr. 2721556, Ereignismeldung UdSSR no. 26, July 18, 1941.
5. Deposition of Naum Shakayev (or Shalayev), October 12, 1976, New York District Court, in the case against Boleslavs Maikovskis, as cited in Ezergailis, *The Holocaust in Latvia*, p. 283.
6. LVVA, P132-30-25, p. 3.
7. NARA, RG-238, T-1119 (N-Docs.), NOKW-2150.

8. LVVA, P132-30-25.

9. Ezergailis, *The Holocaust in Latvia*, pp. 191–192.

10. LVVA, P132-30-25, p. 5.

11. Rubenstein and Altman, *The Unknown Black Book*, p. 330.

12. Deposition of Jāzeps Pinka, Riga, May 16, 1981 (and October 4, 1976), New York District Court, in the case against Boleslavs Maikovskis, as cited by Ezergailis, *The Holocaust in Latvia*, pp. 283–284.

13. LVVA, P132-30-25, p. 5.

14. Leonid Koval, ed., *Knīga spasēniia* (Ūrmala: Golfstrim, 1993), 2:349, testimony of Mikhail Varushkin.

RIGA

Pre-1940: Riga, city, center of Vidzeme regions, and capital, Latvian Republic; 1940–1941: Latvian SSR; 1941–1944: Gebiet center and capital, Generalkommissariat Lettland; post-1991: capital, Republic of Latvia

Riga is located 476 kilometers (296 miles) north-northwest of Minsk. In 1935, the Jewish population of Riga was 43,672, comprising 11.2 percent of the population.

On July 1, 1941, German troops reached Latvia's capital, accompanied by elements of Einsatzgruppe A. Discussions about the ghettoization of Riga's Jews started in July.

Although the concentration of Jews in ghettos accorded with general guidelines on the treatment of Jews, a shortage of labor was the main reason for the ghetto's creation. The first documented mention of a ghetto in Riga is in an internal letter of the Labor Section of the Army Economic Department, dated July 21, 1941. This noted that discussions between the German army and the Security Police (SD) had already taken place.¹ The decision to establish a ghetto in Riga came quickly, and all involved parties—the Wehrmacht, the Security Police, and the civil administration—agreed on the need to concentrate and isolate the Jewish population.



View of the Riga ghetto fence with a sign posted in German and Latvian, 1941–1943.

USHMM WS #28041, COURTESY OF JOSEPH LEVY



Detail of the image on page 1019, which reads, "Persons who cross the fence or who make the attempt to contact the inmates of the ghetto through the fence will be shot without warning."
USHMM WS #28041A, COURTESY OF EMMI LOWENSTERN

At the beginning of August the German Security Police designated the residential area of Riga that was to become the ghetto. It consisted of a working-class section on the edge of the city, the so-called Moscow suburb, whose mixed population already included about 1,700 Jews. Soon Riga's other Jews received notices that they had to leave their apartments and resettle inside the ghetto. On August 12, 1941, a "Resettlement Office," with a staff of 10, started to register the newly relocated Jews inside the ghetto. To make room for them, about 10,000 non-Jewish people had to leave the Moscow suburb, while 29,602 Latvian Jews were forcibly moved into the ghetto area. This total comprised 8,212 men, 15,738 women, and 5,652 children under the age of 14.²

Some circles of Riga's Jewish community welcomed the creation of the ghetto, believing it offered some protection against the arbitrary confiscations and arrests by the Latvian police and Self-Defense forces. In any case, the process of resettlement into the ghetto was extremely difficult, because of the burden of forced labor, restrictions on the use of public transport, and the limited housing options available. Moreover, the Riga city administration demanded of the Jewish community that it cover the expenses incurred by non-Jews who had to move out of the ghetto area: "The Jews themselves have to organize the moving process with their own resources, and they are not allowed to use horses and express couriers for that purpose. In addition, they must respond to the requests of the 'Resettlement Office' to provide Jewish laborers for non-Jews who lack the financial means to organize their removal from the planned Jewish area."³

Immediately after the announcement of the planned resettlement, an illicit trade emerged in accommodation for those newly arrived in the ghetto. The Latvian and Russian inhabitants who left the ghetto area tried to make money from those Jews seeking housing in the narrowly confined space. Also, some Jewish agents earned a lot of money acting as mediators for the procurement of apartments in the ghetto,

usually for large extended families.⁴ The German authorities planned for only 4 square meters (43 square feet) per person for those living in the Riga ghetto.⁵ The ghetto also contained 24 grocery stores, two workshops, four schools, three kindergartens, and one nursing home, which were established to meet the needs of this new community.⁶ The only hospital in the Riga ghetto was the former women's hospital "Linās Hazedek," under the direction of Professor Vladimir Miinc.

The Jewish Council consisted of seven members and included the following departments: social life, finance, delivery and distribution of food, the supply of other goods for daily needs, the housing office, the health department, the labor department, the clothing department, and the internal ghetto police. No evidence has been found of a fire brigade inside the ghetto. Due to the constant disputes among the inmates of the ghetto, an internal law office within the Jewish Council was also necessary.

The inmates of the Riga ghetto received 175 grams (6 ounces) of meat, 100 grams (3.5 ounces) of butter, and 200 grams (7 ounces) of sugar per person each week. Under these harsh conditions with very limited food and forced labor, the inhabitants of the ghetto tried to organize a relatively normal life, which included the observance of Jewish religious holidays and the performance of theater shows.

The decree officially establishing the ghetto was published by the Gebietskommissar and mayor of Riga, Hugo Wittrock, on October 23, 1941, two days before the Riga ghetto was enclosed beginning at 6:00 p.m.⁷ Work crews acted quickly and surrounded it with a double barbed-wire fence, which was guarded by members of the 20th Latvian Police Battalion. With the establishment of a civil administration in Latvia, Wittrock assumed responsibility for the Riga ghetto, especially the considerable costs necessary for maintaining its infrastructure.

The Riga ghetto in this form and with these inhabitants was not intended to exist for very long. The Germans had already decided to kill most of Latvia's Jews, and thus the establishment of the ghetto to contain them was viewed only as a temporary measure from the start. (In the summer and fall of 1941, prior to the official establishment of the ghetto, a large but unknown number of male Latvian Jews had already been killed in shooting Aktions carried out primarily by Einsatzgruppe A with the assistance of the Latvian auxiliary police under the command of Viktors Arājs.) On the orders of the Higher SS and Police Leader Ostland, Friedrich Jeckeln, almost half of the ghetto inhabitants, more than 11,000 people, were murdered on November 30, 1941, by units of the German Order Police in Rumbula in a wooded area about 10 kilometers (6 miles) from the ghetto. Jeckeln and his staff planned this mass killing. The Jews residing at those addresses selected for the Aktion received instructions to gather at the ghetto's central square early in the morning; from there they were escorted to the killing site.

During this Aktion a rather unexpected incident happened. By this time the deportations of Jews from Germany

to the Riga ghetto had already commenced. The first transport of 1,000 Berlin Jews arrived in Riga on the morning of November 30, 1941. Jeckeln decided to kill these individuals together with the Latvian Jews on his own authority, without orders from Berlin. Dr. Rudolf Lange, the head of the Security Police in Latvia, refused to participate in the killing of German Jews without a specific order from the Reich Security Main Office (RSHA), and he withdrew his men from the Aktion. The first part of the extermination of the inmates of the Riga ghetto therefore took place solely under Jeckeln's direction. The Order Police carried out the shooting without the support of the Security Police.

The second Aktion aimed at killing most of the remainder of the Riga ghetto Jews, followed on December 8, 1941, again at the Rumbula forest site. This time no German Jews were among the victims, and the Security Police actively participated in the massacre. The victims of this shooting numbered more than 14,000 people, and the total number of Latvian Jews killed in these two Aktions was at least 25,500. Those spared were mostly men and some younger women who were healthy enough to work and had been moved to a separate part of the ghetto on the evening of December 7, just before the second Aktion.

After the killing of most of the Riga Jews, the remaining area of the ghetto gradually filled up with foreign Jews, whom the Germans transferred from the transit camp of Jumpravmuiza. About 22,000 German, Austrian, and Czech Jews arrived from the late fall of 1941 until mid-1942. Jews from Bonn, Würzburg, Münster, Hamburg, Dortmund, Leipzig, Hannover, Prague, Vienna, and other places were deported to Riga. The German Jews named the streets where they lived in the ghetto after the places or cities they had been deported from. The Nazi authorities strictly forbade any contact between the foreign and Latvian Jews. However, there were some contacts, especially between the Latvian and the German and Austrian Jews. Many of the Latvian Jews spoke German fluently and assisted the German-speaking Jews in obtaining food (most had lost their families in the Rumbula mass killings shortly after their arrival).

The mostly German-speaking Jews had to adjust quickly to the strange and partially hostile environment of the Riga ghetto and to organize their living conditions in the apartments vacated by Latvian Jews after they were killed. The deported Jews soon established their own Jewish Council to represent their interests. In some cases, these representatives had already been elected during the three days of travel in the deportation trains. First, the Jews organized their own groups dependent on the location they were deported from, but soon a centralized internal ghetto administration was established with a social department, a labor department, a prison, and a police unit. There was no Jewish administration for the distribution of apartments. According to the recollections of survivors, the German police allocated the space where each deportation group had to reside.

In the winter of 1941 and summer of 1942, the Security Police demanded a number of young Jewish men to build the

barracks of the concentration camp in Salaspils, a camp planned to hold Soviet prisoners of war (POWs), located about 13 kilometers (8 miles) from Riga. The first group of men who were ordered to Salaspils left on December 22, 1941. The survivors of this labor detachment came back to the ghetto as living skeletons, because the food rations were very meager, and they had to spend the nights in half-built barracks without windows in the winter. It is not known exactly how many died, as many exhausted Jews were returned to the ghetto to be replaced by new healthy recruits.

After the decision was made to include German Jews in the killing operations in the spring of 1942, the Germans initiated further Aktions against the Riga ghetto. The systematic selection of German Jews was directed against those unable to work. First, on March 15, 1942, elderly people in the Riga ghetto were selected for "easy work at a fishing company," which, however, did not exist. On March 26, 1942, a similar Aktion took place at the Jumpravmuiza camp. This Aktion resulted in the deaths of some 2,000 people. On February 8, 222 male and 137 female Jews were deported from Kaunas (Lithuania) to the Riga ghetto, because of the shortage of labor in occupied Latvia.

The ghetto police initially consisted of 42 Latvian Jewish men who mostly tried to act in the interests of the ghetto inmates. They were in charge of both ghetto parts even after the liquidation of most Latvian Jews. At the beginning of 1942, with the help of the police, a resistance movement in the Latvian part of the ghetto was established. People from all strata of society in this part of the ghetto were involved, including the former chief of the financial department of the Jewish Council. They organized the smuggling of parts of weapons into the ghetto, where they were reassembled. This was possible, as numerous Jews worked for the Wehrmacht sorting weapons. The resistance movement had prepared a bunker, where they stored food, guns, and ammunition sufficient for a couple of months. They were betrayed under mysterious circumstances, and the German Security Police uncovered their activities. On October 29, 1942, all the members of the ghetto police were summoned to the so-called Blechplatz and were shot by German Security Police.⁸

Throughout its three years of existence, the Riga ghetto was a constantly changing entity. For example, the borders of the ghetto changed so often that its precise outline at a certain time can no longer be determined. There were reasons for this. Beside the radical change of the ghetto's initial function from one of isolation to that of a deportation camp, frequent shooting Aktions also reduced the ghetto population, causing the area of the ghetto to be reduced on several occasions.⁹

Most of the workplaces for Jews were located outside the ghetto, in many cases quite some distance away. To exploit their labor to the maximum, many companies kept the Jews overnight at the work sites for several weeks, to avoid the long march to and from the ghetto every day. In this way many Jews spent most of their working time outside the Riga ghetto. These conditions contradicted the aim of the Germans to isolate the Jews and made it possible for Jews to contact the



Members of Police Battalion 22 stand guard outside the army vehicle repair installation (Heereskraftfahrzeugpark, HKP), one of the Riga ghetto's "quarantining sites" (labor camps), which subsequently became a subcamp of the Riga-Kaiserwald concentration camp, 1941–1943. USHMM WS #61537, COURTESY OF STA. HAMBURG

local population and obtain some extra food—or even to escape. On May 1, 1942, Latvian Generalkommissar Otto Drechsler complained that the establishment of many small labor sites for Jews would undermine the purpose of having a ghetto, and he demanded that the companies or military institutions return the working Jews every day by 8:00 P.M.¹⁰ However, this order was never fully implemented.

At the same time, the authorities needed the ghetto to remain as a functioning urban area, including the maintenance of gas and electricity facilities. The Gebietskommissar was responsible for these issues, and he repeatedly sent non-Jewish mechanics into the ghetto to conduct this work.¹¹ In this way, a number of non-Jews received permission to enter the ghetto and gained an impression of living conditions there.

The liquidation of the Riga ghetto occurred incrementally. On July 8, 1943, Heinrich Himmler issued a secret order to the Riga Gebietskommissar that all Jews had to be confined within concentration camps containing "not less than 1,000 people."¹² This measure removed responsibility for the

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CAMPS AND GHETTOS, 1933–1945



Jewish forced laborers arrive by truck at the Luftwaffe field clothing depot on Moscow Street in Riga, 1942. USHMM WS #97377, COURTESY OF YVA

11,701 Jews in Riga from the Gebietskommissar.¹³ Now the German Security Police was solely responsible for the concentration and exploitation of Jews in Latvia. In the fall of 1943, the Jews of the Riga ghetto were gradually transferred to the authority of the Kaiserwald concentration camp, which had 23 subcamps, mostly composed of work sites, where the Jewish workers were still needed. On November 2, 1943, 2,268 Jews from the Riga ghetto were deported to the Auschwitz concentration camp; then the last ghetto inmates, about 4,000 Jews, were transferred to Kaiserwald. This means that about 5,500 Riga ghetto Jews who were working outside the ghetto were also transferred to the authority of the Kaiserwald camp.

SOURCES Among the many publications available on the Riga ghetto, the work of Andrej Angrick and Peter Klein, *Die "Endlösung" im Ghetto Riga. Ausbeutung und Vernichtung 1941–44* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2006), is especially useful, as it includes a survey of the main postwar investigations, as well as an extensive bibliography and list of archival sources. Gertrude Schneider's *Journey into Terror: Story of the Riga Ghetto* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2001) is an important account written by a survivor. Editors Wolfgang Scheffler and Diana Schulle, in their *Buch der Erinnerung: Die ins Baltikum deportierten deutschen, österreichischen und tschechoslowakischen Juden* (Munich: Saur, 2003), document the Jews deported to Riga from countries to the west.

Documentary information on the German occupation of Riga and the ghetto can be found in the following archives: BA-BL (e.g., R 92); BA-L (e.g., 207 AR-Z 7/59); BA-MA; GARF; LG-Hamb; LVA; LVVA (e.g., R69-1a-19); NARA (T-459); RGVA; USHMM; VHF; WL; and YVA.

Katrin Reichelt and Martin Dean

NOTES

1. Internal note of the Labor Section of the Economic Department, Occupied Latvia, July 21, 1941, NARA, T-459, reel 19, frame (fr.) 555-56.

2. LVVA, P69-1a-19, p. 22.

3. Order of Riga Gebietskommissar, September 11, 1941, NARA, T-459, reel 33, fr. 395.
4. Unpub. MSS by Mr. Rivosh, "Nachalo kontsa," p. 18 (in the possession of Katrin Reichelt).
5. NARA, T-459, reel 33, fr. 394.
6. *Ibid.*, fr. 395.
7. LVVA, P69-1a-19, p. 8.
8. Gertrude Schneider, "The Riga Ghetto, 1941–1943" (Ph.D. diss., City University of New York, 1973), p. 140.
9. NARA, T-459, reel 3, fr. 671-672.
10. *Ibid.*, reel 21, fr. 404.
11. Some telephone cables ran through the Riga ghetto, which required regular repair; see *ibid.*, fr. 166.
12. *Ibid.*, reel 23, fr. 410.
13. *Ibid.*, fr. 408.

SALDUS

Pre-1940: Saldus (Yiddish: Froienburg), town, Kuldīga aprinka, Kurzeme regions, Latvia; 1940–1941: Latvian SSR; 1941–1945: Frauenburg, Gebiet Libau, Generalkommissariat Lettland; post-1991: Saldus, Kurzeme regions, Republic of Latvia

Saldus is located 105 kilometers (66 miles) west-southwest of Riga. In 1935, there were 329 Jews living in the town, comprising 7.5 percent of the total population.

By July 1, 1941, German armed forces had occupied the town, and a Latvian "Self-Defense" force had been established in Saldus. In the days following the German invasion, part of the Jewish population was able to evacuate, but more than 200 Jews remained at the start of the occupation.

The first arrests of Jews took place on July 4 or 5, 1941. The leaders of the local Jewish community and several dozen other Jewish males were taken into custody and were shot by the Self-Defense force just outside Saldus, in the Veides Forest, at the old Jewish cemetery. Several days after these killings, Latvian nationalists arrested the remaining Jews of Saldus and held them in the police jail and the synagogue, which served as a temporary ghetto. Meanwhile, Latvians looted the homes and stole the belongings of the Jews. The Jews remained confined in prison and in the synagogue ghetto until Latvian policemen shot them in late July or August 1941.

The date when the mass murders took place is not precisely known, as the available sources give conflicting information. The most likely date, however, appears to be sometime in late July 1941; in the trials of several former members of the Self-Defense force, reference is made to the shooting of 150 to 200 Jews (57 families) in the Ulpes Forest, near Lake Baltezers, 4 kilometers (2.5 miles) outside Saldus. Other sources give a maximum number of 242 Jews shot.

Local members of the Self-Defense force participated in the murders, escorting and guarding the victims as they went to their deaths in several trucks that left town at night. The actual shooting, however, was carried out by an unidentified team of men, either from Jelgava or from Liepāja. The latter

is more likely, as the towns and villages of the western part of Kurzeme (e.g., Kuldīga, Saldus, Skrunda) lay within the area of activity of the Libau SD. After the murder of the Jews, the synagogue was looted and burned.

SOURCES For information on the fate of the Jews of Saldus in the Holocaust, see these publications: "Saldus," in Dov Levin, ed., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Latvia and Estonia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1988), pp. 196–197; "Saldus," 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. 1122; and Rita Bogdanova, "Saldus," in Rabbi Menakhem Barkagan, ed., *Unichtozbenie evreev v Latvii 1941–1945: Tsikl lektzii* (Riga: SHAMIR, 2007), pp. 113–114.

Documentation regarding the murder of the Jews of Saldus can be found in these archives: GARF (7021-93-2415); LVA; and LVVA.

Alexander Kruglov
trans. Steven Seegel

SILENE

Pre-1940: Silene, village, Daugavpils aprinka, Latgale regions, Latvia; 1940–1941: Latvian SSR; 1941–1944: Gebiet Dünaburg, Generalkommissariat Lettland; post-1991: Latgale regions, Republic of Latvia

Silene is located about 21 kilometers (13 miles) southeast of Daugavpils. Until the mid-1930s the village was known as Borovka. According to the 1935 population census, there were 189 Jews living in Silene, or 18.5 percent of the total population.

On June 26, 1941, German armed forces occupied the town. Local Latvian nationalists immediately organized a "Self-Defense" detachment, which carried out the first Aktions targeting Jews and Soviet activists. In Silene, the Self-Defense detachment was headed by the senior policeman Alfred Timbergs, the elder of the administrative unit (volost'), Karlis Antin'sh, and the commandant Eric Priekulis. On July 22, 1941, this detachment, assisted by Latvian policemen from Riga and Ilūkste, arrested all the Jews and put them in a large synagogue, which, in effect, became a temporary ghetto. On several occasions, the Jews were brought out of the synagogue to drink water. On the way to the well, they had to pass large white signs that said the Jews would be transferred to the Brasław ghetto in Belorussia. Jewish homes were looted. The Jews remained in the synagogue-ghetto for about one week. On or around July 28, 1941, all the Jews were taken out on the pretext of being resettled to Brasław. They were allowed to take up to 15 kilograms (33 pounds) of luggage each. Fifteen horses with carts were driven up to the synagogue, but the peasants were reluctant to transport the Jews and invented all sorts of excuses: a lame horse, a missing wheel. Only the children and old people rode in the carts. The remainder were driven on foot to a site near Smilga Lake, 3 or 4 kilometers (about 2 to 2.5 miles) from Silene, where they were shot

by the Self-Defense detachment. After the shooting, local non-Jewish residents dug four large pits and buried the victims there. In total, there were 186 Jewish victims (32 families). The property and belongings of the murdered Jews were divided among the perpetrators.

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jews of Silene during the Holocaust can be found in these publications: “Silene,” in Dov Levin, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Latvia and Estonia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1988), p. 195; G. Smirin and M. Meler, “Borovka v Latvii,” *Lekhaim* (Moscow), no. 10 (2001): 114; Iosif Rochko, “Unichtozhenie evreev v Ilukstskom uезде letom 1941 goda,” in *Evrei v Daugavpils: Istoricheskie ocherki: Kniga chetvertaia* (Daugavpils, 2005), pp. 174–196; and Iosif Rochko, “Silene,” in Rabbi Menakhem Barkagan, ed., *Unichtozhenie evreev v Latvii 1941–1945: Tsikl leksii* (Riga: SHAMIR, 2007), pp. 158–162.

Documentation regarding the murder of the Jews of Silene can be found in these archives: GARF (7021-93-111, pp. 346–347); and TsAFSB (4-5-535, p. 122).

Alexander Kruglov
trans. Steven Seegel

VALDEMARPILS

Pre-1940: Valdemarpils, town, Talsi apriņķa, Kurzeme reģions, Latvia; 1940–1941: Latvian SSR; 1941–1944: Sassmacken, Kreis Talsen, Gebiet Libau, Generalkommissariat Lettland; post-1991: Valdemarpils, Kurzeme reģions, Republic of Latvia

Valdemarpils is located 101 kilometers (63 miles) west-northwest of Riga. Until 1926, the town was known as Sasmaka. According to the 1935 census, there were 159 Jews living in Valdemarpils (14 percent of the total population). The Jewish community of this town was one of the oldest in Latvia.

German armed forces occupied the town on July 3, 1941, 12 days after their invasion of the USSR on June 22. During that time, only a small part of the Jewish community managed to evacuate to the interior of the USSR.

A few days after the town was occupied, the remaining Jews were required to register, and the names of 112 people were recorded on the lists. These lists, however, were incomplete, as they did not include children under the age of 18 months. On July 10, 1941, on the orders of the town authorities, 56 Jews who were fit for work were sent to dig peat 5 kilometers (3.1 miles) from town. On July 19, Jewish property was ordered to be confiscated. The Jews were allowed to keep only the bare essentials, food for two weeks, and 500 rubles per family. On July 21, at the order of the head of the Talsi district, the remaining Jews, about 70 in number, were concentrated in five houses that belonged to Jews. These houses, which constituted the Jewish ghetto, were guarded by members of a Self-Defense detachment. On the night of July 26, the Jews in this ghetto were shot in a forest clearing near the road from Jaunciems to Kaltene. On the night of August 7, 1941, the Jews who were being used to dig peat were also shot.

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jewish community of Valdemarpils during the Holocaust can be found in the following publications: “Valdemarpils,” in Dov Levin, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Latvia and Estonia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1988), pp. 109–110; “Valdemarpils,” 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. 1372; “Valdemarpils,” in *Rossiiskaia Evreiskaia Entsiklopediia* (Moscow: Rossiiskaia Akademiia Estestvennykh Nauk, Nauchnyi fond “Evreiskaia Entsiklopediia,” “Epos,” 2000), 4:202; and Rita Bogdanova, “Valdemarpils,” in Rabbi Menakhem Barkagan, ed., *Unichtozhenie evreev v Latvii 1941–1945: Tsikl leksii* (Riga: SHAMIR, 2007), pp. 116–117.

Documentation regarding the murder of the Jews of Valdemarpils can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-93-130); LVA (e.g., 1986-1-5323); and YVA. Additional archival and published sources can be found in the important article by E. Prokopovičs and A. Jēkabsons, “Talsu apriņķa Valdemārpils pilsētas ebreju iznīcināšana 1941. gada vasarā,” in *Holokausta izpēte Latvijā. Starptautisko konferenču materiāli, 2003. gada 12.–13. jūnijs, 24. oktobris, Rīga, un 2002.–2003. gada pētījumi par holokaustu Latvijā* (Riga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2004), pp. 255–277.

Alexander Kruglov
trans. Kathleen Luft

VARAKĻĀNI

Pre-1940: Varakļāni (Yiddish: Varkliani), town, Rēzekne apriņķa, Latgale reģions, Latvia; 1940–1941: Varakļāni/Varakliany, Latvian SSR; 1941–1944: Weraklani, Kreis Rositten, Gebiet Dünaburg, Generalkommissariat Lettland; post-1991: Varakļāni, Latgale reģions, Republic of Latvia

Varakļāni is located about 200 kilometers (124 miles) east-southeast of Riga. According to the 1935 census, a total of 952 Jews resided in Varakļāni, comprising 57 percent of the town's inhabitants.

German armed forces occupied the town on July 1, 1941, 10 days after their invasion of the Soviet Union on June 22. During that time, more than 200 Jews had managed to evacuate eastward. Approximately 700 Jews remained in Varakļāni at the start of the German occupation, including some refugees from places further to the west. After the arrival of German troops, a number of anti-Jewish measures were introduced in Varakļāni. Local Latvians showed the German soldiers where Jewish families lived, and Jewish houses were looted. Large posters announced that Jews were forbidden to associate with non-Jews, could not be treated by non-Jewish doctors, and were forbidden to employ non-Jewish servants. Jews could buy food only in specially designated stores that were poorly supplied. Every day the German authorities rounded up some Jews and organized work details to clean streets and public places. In addition, the victims were insulted and humiliated.¹

On July 15, 1941, a rumor spread that all the refugees who had come to Varakļāni would be allowed to return home, but

the local authorities refused to grant them safe passage. As a result, many of the refugees attempted to return home on their own initiative, usually disguised as non-Jews.

At some time in mid-July 1941, probably after July 15, all the Jews were concentrated in a ghetto in the impoverished “Neustadt” suburb, near the Jewish cemetery. The ghetto was not fenced, but Jews were prohibited from leaving and were not allowed to communicate with non-Jews. In the ghetto, the Jews were subjected to systematic humiliation, beating, and robbery by the Latvian guards. Those Jews able to work were sent out daily for forced labor. All Jewish property was confiscated. The Latvian police also conducted a number of killings of members of the Jewish population.

The Jews stayed in the ghetto for only two or three weeks. On August 4, 1941, the ghetto was liquidated; all the Jews were herded into the building of the consumers’ cooperative at the market square. Some were forced into the basement, and some were in the yard, fenced in on all sides. Blue buses and green army trucks arrived, carrying men in green uniforms. Panic broke out in the yard. The Jews had been told to bring along necessary items, including valuables, as they were to be transferred to another place. All these items were confiscated.

Some 20 to 30 Jews, mainly young, healthy males, were put into each truck. On arrival at their destination, the Jews were pushed out of the trucks, led to a ditch, and shot. Several hours later, more victims were brought. The women, children, and elderly were shot in the evening. They were driven on foot towards the Jewish cemetery; only a few, who were feeble, rode in carts. Rabbi Leizer Grodskii in particular was mistreated. His beard was tied to a horse’s tail, and he was dragged along to the shooting site, while the thugs whistled and whooped. Some witnesses said that local residents were forced to watch the shooting; others claimed that the curious came of their own accord. Thus more than 500 of the town’s Jews were shot at the cemetery.² The shooting was carried out by a detachment of the Arājs Kommando, sent from Riga, and by the local Latvian police. At the same time 20 local Gypsies were also murdered and thrown into an adjacent pit. The next day, August 5, peasants from surrounding villages were forced to come to the cemetery to fill in the pits.

Two Jews managed to escape the roundup and hid with the help of farmers in the village of Ludane. After several months, their hiding places were discovered, and when they tried to escape, they drowned in the surrounding marshes. Several young Jewish women were temporarily saved by converting to Christianity, but they were later arrested by Latvian police and subsequently executed. Before their retreat in the summer of 1944, the German authorities ordered local farmers to burn the corpses of the murdered Jews to destroy the evidence of the crimes.

SOURCES The ghetto in Varakļāni is mentioned in the following publications: “Varakliani,” in Dov Levin, ed., *Pinkas ba-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Latvia and Estonia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1988), pp. 112–116; “Varakliani,”

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. 1374–1375; “Varakliani,” in *Rossiiskaia Evreiskaia Entsiklopediia* (Moscow: Rossiiskaia Akademiia Estestvennykh Nauk, Nauchnyi fond “Evreiskaia Entsiklopediia,” “Epos,” 2000), 4:205. Additional information on the fate of the Jews of Varakļāni during the Holocaust can be found in Iosif Rochko, “Varakliany,” in Rabbi Menakhem Barkagan, ed., *Unichtozhenie evreev v Latvii 1941–1945: Tsikl lektsiu* (Riga: SHAMIR, 2007), pp. 228–234; and Frida Michelson, *I Survived Rumbuli* (New York: Holocaust Library, 1979).

Documentation on the murder of the Jews of Varakļāni can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-93); LVVA; and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Michelson, *I Survived Rumbuli*, pp. 34–36.
2. According to the “summary of the activities of the Rēzekne county police, July 20, 1942” (Varakļāni), 680 Jews and 20 Gypsies were shot at the 5th Police Precinct; see *Ne zabyvai Audrini!* (Riga, 1968), pp. 95, 119.

VENTSPILS

Pre-1940: Ventspils (Yiddish: Vindoi), town and aprinka center, Kurzeme regions, Latvia; 1940–1941: center, Kurzeme district, Latvian SSR; 1941–1945: Windau, Kreis center, Gebiet Libau, Generalkommissariat Lettland; post-1991: Ventspils, Kurzeme regions, Republic of Latvia

Ventspils is located 163 kilometers (101 miles) west-northwest of Riga. According to the 1930 census, there were 1,275 Jews living in Ventspils. By 1935 that number had declined to 1,246, almost 8 percent of the town’s population.

German armed forces entered Ventspils, a port town on the Baltic Sea, on July 1, 1941, nine days after their invasion of the USSR on June 22. Within this time, some of the Jews of Ventspils managed to evacuate, but more than 1,000 remained in the town and the surrounding district at the start of the German occupation.

At the end of June 1941, once the Soviet forces had retreated but before the Germans had arrived, a Latvian Self-Defense unit was formed in Ventspils. This unit wore former Latvian army uniforms or civilian clothing with white—later red-and-white—armbands. A former Latvian officer, Kandars, actively recruited men for the unit. The Latvian Self-Defense unit was established ostensibly to maintain order and prevent looting until the arrival of the German army.

In July 1941, Ventspils was governed by a German military administration. In August, authority was transferred to the German civil administration. Ventspils became part of Gebiet Libau under Gebietskommissar Landrat Dr. Alnor and SS- und Polizeigebietsführer Leutnant der Polizei Auschrat.

By July 8, 1941, Latvian Lieutenant Colonel Kārlis Lobe had arrived from Liepāja and with his deputy, Adolfs Jāsūms, assumed authority over the Self-Defense unit in Ventspils. Almost immediately, Lobe issued Order No. 1, calling for the arrest of all Jews between the ages of 16 and 60 in the Ventspils area. All items of value in their possession were to be confiscated and turned over to the town of Ventspils. In addition, Communists were also subject to arrest, and a note on the document indicates that a number were taken into custody on July 14, 1941.¹ The first shootings of those arrested by Latvian Self-Defense men took place on July 12 (five victims), with more being shot on July 15, 1941.²

SS-Obersturmführer Erhard Grauel arrived in Ventspils from Liepāja with a detachment of Einsatzkommando 2 on or around July 16, 1941. He had orders from Einsatzgruppe A to carry out special “cleansing” Aktions in the Ventspils and Kuldīga areas over the following days. Immediately on his arrival, Grauel went to the military commandant and informed him of his mission. The commandant briefed Grauel on the situation in the town and reported that the Latvian Self-Defense forces had been conducting arrests and carrying out shootings. Grauel next met with the head of the Latvian Self-Defense force, Lobe, and briefed him on his task. Lobe gave Grauel his assessment of the situation in Ventspils and told him that the shootings had started already, but the number of individuals shot so far was negligible. Further, Lobe reported that Jews had been arrested and charged with collaborating with the enemy and that on orders from Riga these Jews were to be liquidated. Grauel assigned 17 or 18 men of the Einsatzkommando to conduct the shootings. Working with the Latvian Self-Defense force, they shot several hundred male Jews in at least three separate Aktions in the Kazīniu Forest, 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) south of the town, near a Latvian army barracks and training area. About seven or eight non-Jewish Soviet activists were shot at the same site. During the first joint Aktion, a squad of German SS marksmen first demonstrated to the Latvian Self-Defense unit how to conduct the shooting. Thereafter, Latvian auxiliaries shot the remaining victims under German supervision.³

At some date in mid-July 1941, the remaining Jews of Ventspils (mostly elderly people, women, and children) were isolated in two dilapidated buildings near the Venta River in what is described by local Latvian witnesses as a ghetto.⁴ The local Fascist Latvian leader Kandars was appointed commandant of the ghetto. The Jews were not permitted to leave the ghetto and were obliged to wear the Star of David and to perform forced labor.⁵ Bearded Jews were forcibly shaven, and Jewish women were sexually assaulted. Their houses and property were looted by Latvians or sold for the benefit of the local administration. Some of the furniture was subsequently stored in the synagogue, which had probably been used initially to imprison some of the male Jews before they were shot.

Aktions on a smaller scale continued throughout July and August. In September and early October 1941, the Ventspils ghetto was liquidated, probably with the participation of the Arājs Kommando. First, the elderly people were shot (67 indi-

viduals on September 2 and 183 individuals on September 26, 1941: a total of 250 victims),⁶ and at some date between October 3 and 17, 1941, the women and children (another 533 victims) were killed.⁷ By late October, a sign had appeared on the road between Kuldīga and Ventspils, announcing that Ventspils had been “cleansed of Jews” (*judenrein*).

Altogether, between July and October 1941 more than 1,000 Jews from Ventspils and the surrounding area were killed.⁸

SOURCES The ghetto in Ventspils is mentioned in the following publications: “Ventspils,” in Dov Levin, ed., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Latvia and Estonia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1988), pp. 123–128; 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. 1386; and Rita Bogdanova, “Ventspils,” in Rabbi Menakhem Barkagan, ed., *Umichtozhenie evreev v Latvii 1941–1945: Tsikl leksii* (Riga: SHAMIR, 2007), pp. 107–111. The verdict against Grauel, which includes descriptions of the July mass shootings in Ventspils, has been published in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 36 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006), Lfd. Nr. 760a.

Information on the fate of the Jews of Ventspils during the German occupation can be found in the following archives: BA-L; GARF (7021-93-2393); LVVA (R83-1-21); USHMM (RG-22.002M, reel 21); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. D. Sprogis, “Oshchipannyi ‘sokol,’” *Sovetskaia Latvija* (Riga), March 22, 1969. After the war, Lobe went into hiding in Sweden, where he later became the leader of the Latvian nationalistic organization “Daugavas Vanāgi” (Falcons of Daugava).

2. Ē. Avotiņš, J. Dzirkalis, and V. Petersons, *Daugavas Vanāgi: Who Are They?* (Riga, 1963), p. 78.

3. LG-Hann, Verdict of October 14, 1971, against Grauel and others (Sta. Hannover 2 Ks 3/68), in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 36, Lfd. Nr. 760a. According to the statements of the Latvian witnesses and the former members of the Self-Defense unit, on one of these days between 200 and 300 people were killed, and altogether in mid-July up to 700 victims were shot.

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 172, 174, citing testimony of Latvian Self-Defense members Sar. and Lie.

5. The decree ordering that Jews be marked was published in the local newspaper; see *Ventas Bals*, no. 3, July 11, 1941. On July 24, 1941, the commander of the Rear Area, Army Group North, issued uniform instructions on the wearing of the yellow star in the area under his command; see LVVA, R1026-1-3, p. 141.

6. See the war records of the SS- und Polizeistandortführer Libau, entries for September 22 and 26, 1941, in LVVA, R83-1-21.

7. Bericht des SS- und Polizeistandortführers Libau, October 18, 1941, in LG-Hann, Verdict of October 14, 1971, against Grauel and others (2 Ks 3/68), Sta. Hannover.

8. According to materials from GARF, 7021-93-2393, approximately 3,000 Jews allegedly were shot in the town of Ventspils (2,000 Ventspils residents and 1,000 people from the surrounding area). This number is probably much too high.

VILĀKA

Pre-1940: Viļaka (Yiddish: Viliaki), town, Abrene aprinka, Latgale reģions, Latvia; 1940–1941: Latvian SSR; 1941–1944: Marienhausen, Kreis Abrene, Gebiet Dünaburg, Generalkommissariat Lettland; post-1991: Viļaka, Latgale reģions, Republic of Latvia

Viļaka is located about 25 kilometers (15.5 miles) northeast of Balvi. According to the 1935 census, there were 465 Jews living in Viļaka (29 percent of the total population).

German armed forces occupied the settlement on July 4, 1941, two weeks after their invasion of the USSR on June 22. During that time, a small number of Jews managed to evacuate to the interior of the USSR, although many were turned back at the former Soviet border. As a result, around 400 Jews remained in Viļaka at the start of the occupation.

A few days after the occupation began, all the Jews were isolated in a ghetto, for which the poorest quarter of town was allocated, bounded by Liepnenskaia and Balvskaia Streets. The Jews were allowed to go out on the street between 4:00 and 6:00 p.m.; those who violated this rule were beaten with a truncheon. In the ghetto, the Jews were subjected to systematic humiliation, beating, and robbery by the Latvian security force. The Latvian police also carried out a number of murders of Jews.

The Jews spent about one month in the ghetto. In the second week of August 1941 (either on August 8 or August 11, according to different sources), the ghetto was liquidated; all the Jews were shot in a forest near the village of Kazukalna. The shooting was carried out by a detachment of the Arājs Kommando, which had come from Riga, and by local policemen. A small group of Jews who found shelter with local peasants were subsequently found and also killed. Shortly before their retreat, the Germans burned the bodies of the Jews.

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jewish community of Viļaka during the Holocaust can be found in these publications: “Viliaka,” in Dov Levin, ed., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Latvia and Estonia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1988), pp. 119–121; Rabbi Menakhem Barkagan, ed., *Unichtozbenie evreev v Latvii 1941–1945: Tsikl lektsii* (Riga: SHAMIR, 2007), pp. 250–251; “Vilaka,” 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. 1396; “Viliaka,” in *Rossiiskaia Evreiskaia Entsiklopediia* (Moscow: Rossiiskaia Akademiia Estestvennykh Nauk, Nauchnyi fond “Evreiskaia Entsiklopediia,” “Epos,” 2000), 4:252–253. There is also a testimony by the former political prisoner A. Liede given on November 12, 1944, published in *My obviniaem* (Riga, 1967), pp. 108–111.

Documentation on the murder of the Jews of Viļaka can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-93-93); LVVA; and YVA.

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VILĀNI

Pre-1940: Viļāni (Yiddish: Vilon), town, Rēzekne aprinka, Latgale reģions, Latvia; 1940–1941: Viļāni (Russian: Vilani), Latvian SSR; 1941–1944: Welonen, Kreis Rositten, Gebiet Dünaburg, Generalkommissariat Lettland; post-1991: Viļāni, Latgale reģions, Republic of Latvia

Viļāni is located 180 kilometers (112 miles) south-southeast of Riga. According to the census of 1935, there were 396 Jews living in Viļāni, accounting for 30 percent of the total population.

German armed forces occupied the town on July 2, 1941, 10 days after their invasion of the USSR on June 22. During that time, a small number of Jews managed to evacuate to the interior of the USSR, and as a result, around 390 Jews remained in the town at the start of the German occupation.

On July 3, 1941, the Jews were ordered to appear for registration, and when they returned, they found that their homes had been robbed by the Germans, led by their officers. The next day, the local police continued the looting.

A few days after the occupation of the town, all the Jews were isolated in a ghetto, which consisted of the Russian high school building. The Jews, both men and women, were required to perform forced labor. In the ghetto, the Latvian police subjected the Jews to systematic humiliation, rape, beatings, and robbery. The Latvian police also killed a number of Jews. In response, 2 Jews killed one of the Latvian guards with shovels. The Jews remained in the ghetto surrounded by barbed wire for about one month. On August 4, 1941, the ghetto was liquidated, and all the Jews were shot near the Jewish cemetery. A detachment of the Arājs Kommando, which had come from Riga, carried out the shooting with the help of local policemen. The total number of victims was 390.¹ At the end of 1941, a number of Gypsy families were murdered near the pits where the Jews perished. Before their retreat, the Germans opened the pits and burned the corpses to hide their crimes.

Of the very few Jewish survivors, the Barkan family was aided by the local priest, who hid them in the home of one of his parishioners. Another Jew, Leib Luban, was hidden by a local farmer.

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jewish community of Viļāni during the Holocaust can be found in these publications: “Vilani,” in Dov Levin, ed., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Latvia and Estonia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1988), pp. 117–119; “Vilani,” 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. 1396; “Vilani,” in *Rossiiskaia Evreiskaia Entsiklopediia* (Moscow: Rossiiskaia Akademiia Estestvennykh Nauk, Nauchnyi fond “Evreiskaia

1028 ESTONIA AND LATVIA REGIONS

Entsiklopediia,” “Epos,” 2000), 4:253; and Iosif Rochko, “Viliany,” in Rabbi Menakhem Barkagan, ed., *Unichtozbenie evreev v Latvii 1941–1945: Tsikl leksii* (Riga: SHAMIR, 2007), pp. 271–274.

Documentation regarding the murder of the Jews of Viļāni can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-93-45, 47); LVA; and YVA.

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NOTE

1. See “Obzor deiatel’nosti Rezeknenskoj uezdnoj politsii po sostoiianiiu na 20 iiulia 1942 g. (III. politseiskii uchastok),” in *Ne zabyvai Audrini!* (Riga, 1968), pp. 95, 119. Police Precinct (uchastok) III consisted of Viļāni and the volosti (administrative subdivisions) of Galeny, Sakstagals, and Gaigalava.

VIŠKI

Pre-1940: Viški, village, Daugavpils aprinka, Latgale regions, Latvia; 1940–1941: Latvian SSR; 1941–1944: Viski, Kreis and Gebiet Dünaburg, Generalkommissariat Lettland; post-1991: Viški, Latgale regions, Republic of Latvia

Viški is located 26 kilometers (16 miles) northeast of Daugavpils. According to the 1935 census, there were 423 Jews living in Viški (56 percent of the total population).

German armed forces occupied the village on June 27, 1941, five days after their invasion of the USSR on June 22. In the interim, several dozen Jews managed to evacuate to the interior of the USSR, and as a result, about 380 Jews remained in Viški at the start of the German occupation.

Soon after the village was occupied, all the Jews were herded into the building of the fire station, which served as a temporary collection ghetto for them. One day, probably in early July, the Jews were escorted to a forest near the village of Ostrovo, where machine guns were already in place. Minutes before the shooting was about to begin, a vehicle appeared, and a German officer unexpectedly called off the Aktion. From the fire station, the Jews were briefly allowed to return home, to collect their valuables and prepare for evacuation to Daugavpils.¹ Most did not believe they were going to their deaths, but some attempted to hide in cellars, attics, barns, and haystacks, and the cemetery. The majority of these people were soon discovered and shot on the spot. On July 11, 12, and 23, 1941, 374 Jews were deported to Daugavpils, and five Jews were killed in the village.² Following the deportation of the Jews, white leaflets were posted on the Jewish houses, warning that entering them was prohibited. The Jews’ belongings were taken primarily by those who took an active part in the shootings. After the war, the vacant Jewish houses were sold off to needy neighbors whose homes had burned during the war.

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jewish community of Viški during the Holocaust can be found in these publications: “Viski,” in Dov Levin, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia*

of Jewish Communities: Latvia and Estonia (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1988), pp. 122–123; Rabbi Menakhem Barkagan, ed., *Unichtozbenie evreev v Latvii 1941–1945: Tsikl leksii* (Riga: SHAMIR, 2007), pp. 251–257; and I. Rochko, “Kholokost v Latgalii,” in Boris Vol’kovich et al., eds., *Kholokost v Latgalii: Sbornik statei* (Daugavpils: Daugavpilsskaia evreiskaia obshchina, 2003), p. 419.

Documentation on the murder of the Jews of Viški can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-93-94); LVA; Museum of Jews in Latvia (file B-785); and YVA.

Alexander Kruglov
trans. Kathleen Luft

NOTES

1. “Viški,” Museum of Jews in Latvia, in Riga, file B-785.
2. GARF, 7021-93-94, pp. 317–318, 340.

ZILUPE

Pre-1940: Zilupe (Yiddish: Rozinovsk), town, Lūdza aprinka, Latgale regions, Latvia; 1940–1941: Latvian SSR; 1941–1944: Rosinhof, Kreis Ludsen, Gebiet Dünaburg, Generalkommissariat Lettland; post-1991: Zilupe, Latgale regions, Republic of Latvia

Zilupe is located 114 kilometers (71 miles) northeast of Daugavpils. According to the 1935 census, there were 471 Jews living in the town (30 percent of the total population).

On July 6, 1941, two weeks after the German invasion of the USSR, German armed forces occupied Zilupe. Some Jews were able to evacuate to other parts of the Soviet Union. Around 400 Jews remained in the town at the start of the occupation. The German military administration (Ortskommandantur) required that the Jews be registered. At night they were allowed to stay in their homes, but each morning they had to report to the Ortskommandantur.

Sometime in late July or early August 1941, all the Jews of Zilupe were isolated in a ghetto, in the poorest part of the town. Confined within this ghetto were 150 to 200 Jews, including some refugees from Lithuania and other towns in Latvia who had failed to get across the Russian border in time. Jews in the ghetto were subjected to systematic robbery, assault, and human degradation by the Latvian security force. The Latvian policemen also carried out a series of murders against the Jews. For example, at the start of August 1941, 17 Jews were shot.¹

The ghetto for the Jewish population existed for about one month. On August 24, 1941, the ghetto was liquidated. Local police herded the Jews, carrying their belongings, into the market square. They were informed of their impending transfer to Lūdza and, in groups of 15 to 20, were escorted in that direction. Those who could not walk were taken by truck. All the Jews were shot in a forest about 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) outside the town, near the village of Zabolotskie. David Deutsch resisted the murderers and was beaten viciously before being buried half alive. Along with the Jews, 24 Soviet prisoners of war (POWs) were executed. The killings were carried out by a

detachment of the Arājs Kommando, which had come from Riga, and by local policemen. In May 1944, the corpses were exhumed and burned.²

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jewish community of Zilupe during the Holocaust can be found in the following publications: “Zilupe,” in Dov Levin, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Latvia and Estonia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1988), pp. 128–130; “Zilupe,” in Rabbi Menakhem Barkagan, ed., *Unichtozhenie evreev v Latvii 1941–1945: Tsikl leksii* (Riga: SHAMIR, 2007), pp. 283–287; “Zilupe,” in *Rossiiskaia Evreiskaia Entsiklopediia* (Moscow: Rossiiskaia Akademiia Estestvennykh Nauk, Nauchnyi fond

“Evreiskaia Entsiklopediia,” “Epos,” 2000), 4:484; and Max Kaufmann, *Churban Lettland: Die Vernichtung der Juden Lettlands* (Konstanz: Hartung-Gorre, 1999), p. 289.

Documentation on the murder of the Jews of Zilupe can be found in these archives: GARF (7021-93-114); LVA; and YVA.

Alexander Kruglov
trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. GARF, 7021-93-114, p. 115.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 16, 93–94.



LITHUANIA REGION



"The Main Gate" of the Kaunas ghetto; pen-and-ink drawing by survivor Esther Lurie, 1943.
USHMM WS #73488, COURTESY OF SARA MILO

LITHUANIA REGION (GENERALKOMMISSARIAT LITAUEN)

Pre-1939: Lithuania and parts of Poland; 1940–1941: Lithuanian SSR and parts of the Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Generalkommissariat Litauen, including part of the initial territory of Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien (transferred on April 1, 1942), Reichskommissariat Ostland; post-1991: Republic of Lithuania and part of Hrodna voblasts', Republic of Belarus

The German and local Lithuanian authorities established around 115 ghettos in Generalkommissariat Litauen. Of these, 38 were established in what became under the German civil administration, Gebiet Schaulen-Land; 25 in Gebiet Kauen-Land; and 22 in the area of Gebiet Ponewesch-Land, which was not formally split off from Gebiet Schaulen-Land until November 1941. In Gebiet Wilna-Land, as it existed initially in August 1941, there were 15 ghettos; another 15 ghettos, holding around 7,000 Jews, were added, however, when a strip of territory was included from Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien in April 1942.

Ghettoization began within a few days of the occupation in these regions and was effectively completed by the end of September 1941, when a remnant ghetto was formed in Świeciany. The more than 80 ghettos and temporary holding camps established for Jews in a number of smaller Lithuanian towns and villages in the summer of 1941 were almost all liquidated within a few weeks or months by November 1941. The Telšiai ghetto outlasted most other short-lived ghettos by a few weeks, with the last inmates being shot at the end of December 1941. Effectively these sites were destruction ghettos, serving the purpose of concentrating the Jewish population prior to the killing Aktions. By January 1, 1942, the Germans and their Lithuanian collaborators had murdered more than 150,000 Jews in the territory of Generalkommissariat Litauen.

Many of the smaller temporary ghettos in Lithuania were established in synagogues, prayer houses, farm buildings, or barracks or on a few streets in the poorer section of town. The ghetto in Kaišiadorys, for example, consisted of a large grain storage building, where Jews from the town and other places nearby were held for two weeks under appalling living conditions.

From the end of 1941 until late 1943, most of the remaining Jews in Lithuania (ca. 43,000 people) were confined within the three main ghettos of Wilno, Kaunas, and Šiauliai. The only other ghetto that continued to exist until 1943 was the Świeciany ghetto. However, some of the 15 ghettos added from Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien in April 1942, including those of Oszmiana, Michaliszki, and Soly, survived for another year. These ghettos were subordinated administratively to the Wilno ghetto and gradually consolidated in the fall of 1942. The Germans liquidated them in March and April of 1943, with some of the inmates being transferred to the Wilno ghetto or to labor camps in Lithuania, while several thousand were murdered at Ponary.

Including Jewish refugees from Poland who arrived following the September Campaign of 1939, more than 200,000 Jews

were residing in Lithuania on the eve of the German occupation of the country in late June 1941. The Soviet deportation of people from Lithuania in 1940–1941 was blamed by many Lithuanians on the Jews, even though a considerable proportion of those deported were themselves Jewish. Following the German invasion, more than 8,000 Jews managed to flee into the interior of the Soviet Union, but many were turned back at the Latvian border or were overtaken by the rapid German advance. Some Jews fleeing on the roads were killed by Lithuanian partisan units, which were patrolling in search of Red Army stragglers.

In Lithuania, the arrival of German forces in late June 1941 was accompanied by the rapid establishment of a local Lithuanian administration and police forces, supported by the partisan units (often recruited from former Lithuanian riflemen's organizations [Šaulys]) that had formed on the Soviets' retreat. These interim organizations played an important role in the implementation of a wide range of anti-Jewish regulations and measures, including the ghettoization and mass murder of Jews in a number of Lithuanian towns.

Initially, Lithuania came under the German military administration, run mainly by the offices of the military commanders (Ortskommandanturen and Feldkommandanturen) based in the towns. However, from the start, units of Einsatzgruppe A (German Security Police) played a major role in security matters, especially the arrest and shooting of Jews. During the summer, authority was transferred to a German civil administration, headed by Generalkommissar Theodor Adrian von Renteln, which completed the process of ghettoization together with the local Lithuanian administration and police, subordinated to the German Gebietskommissare and the Kreischefs.

In the first weeks of occupation, Einsatzgruppe A, supported by SS, Order Police, Wehrmacht units, and Lithuanian auxiliaries, conducted a number of killing Aktions in Lithuania directed mainly against suspected Communists and adult male Jews accused of having supported Soviet rule.

At this time, orders were issued for Jews to wear yellow stars. Jews were strictly forbidden to leave their places of residence without an official permit, to engage in any form of business, to attend the market, or to use the sidewalk. Local authorities imposed additional restrictions that varied somewhat from place to place. Jewish stores were closed down; Jewish men were beaten, humiliated, and arrested; and Jewish homes were looted. Some synagogues were burned down shortly after the start of the German occupation.

Forced labor for Jews was also imposed quickly in most towns, often organized with the assistance of a Jewish Council (Judenrat). Jews were employed mainly on clearing rubble,



Mid-1930s portrait of Theodor Adrian von Renteln, Gebietskommissar Litauen.

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)

construction work, cleaning streets, and other public projects in the towns; sometimes they worked in agriculture or other labor outside the towns, such as road repairs and digging peat. In some places, local farmers could rent Jews as day laborers.

The process of ghettoization in Lithuania is relatively well documented in each of the four separate subdivisions (Gebiete). The earliest improvised ghettos were reportedly established at the end of June or early July 1941 as, for example, in Vyžuonos and Palanga. Planning for a ghetto in the city of Kaunas began in early July, and on August 7, orders were issued for the resettlement of Jews into ghettos in Kreis Kauen by August 15, the date set for closing the Kaunas ghetto. The same order also included instructions for the establishment of small units of Jewish Police (5 to 15 people) and Jewish Councils (of about 12 people) to manage the internal affairs of the ghettos.¹ In Garliava, in mid-August 1941, local policemen and partisans forced the Jews of the town and neighboring villages into the local synagogue, where they were confined for around two weeks in an improvised ghetto. The local chief of police then requested instructions from his superiors as to what should happen with

the imprisoned Jews, as there were problems feeding them and no more suitable accommodations were available.²

Throughout Gebiet Kauen-Land, ghettos were set up somewhat sporadically over the period from mid-July until mid-September, when the ghetto in Lazdijai was established. This was also among the last ghettos to be liquidated in early November 1941. A number of ghettos in the area were liquidated in quick succession in early September 1941, including those in Vilkaviškis, Butrimonys, Alytus, and Merkinė. This intense wave of killings was coordinated by Einsatzkommando 3, assisted by Lithuanian policemen. As throughout Lithuania, however, the destruction often took place via a series of Aktions spread over several weeks. In Jonava, for example, 497 Jewish men and 55 Jewish women were shot on August 14, and only then were the remaining Jews, mostly women, children, and the elderly, confined to a remnant ghetto for two more



A map that accompanied a secret undated report on the mass murder of Jews by Einsatzgruppe A, submitted into evidence by US and British prosecution teams at the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg. The map is titled "Jewish Executions Carried Out by Einsatzgruppe A," stamped "Secret Reich Matter," and indicates that the Einsatzgruppe murdered 136,421 Jews in Lithuania. The Kauen (Kaunas) and Schaulen (Šiauliai) ghettos are also indicated.

USHMM WS #03550, COURTESY OF NARA



Jews move into the Kaunas ghetto, August 1941.
USHMM WS #1094, COURTESY OF GEORGE KADISH/ZVI KADUSHIN

weeks before they were shot in early September. Some ghettos, such as that in Krak s, were also used as collection points for Jews from a number of surrounding places, although in the case of Marijampol  the designation of the cavalry barracks as a “ghetto” was deliberately intended as a ruse to allay Jewish fears shortly before their destruction. The Jews from Kalvarija were brought here just two days before they were shot.

In Kreis Schaulen, the local Lithuanian authorities, in coordination with the German military commandant’s office (Feldkommandantur), ordered on July 23 that all Jews should be moved into a locally established ghetto by August 15. Jews were also given until July 25 to wear the Star of David on their clothing.³ The implementation of ghettoization, however, was delayed in most places until the German civil administration took over in August. In Jurbarkas, according to postwar testimony by the former chief of the police, “after the first shootings in June, mass arrests were carried out by . . . the police. The arrested Jewish men were transferred to two ghettos on Dariaus and Gireno Streets.”⁴ Another local policeman described conditions in one of the Jurbarkas ghettos: “The Jews with their children and the elderly were placed in the ghetto, which was a building surrounded by barbed wire. . . . There the Jews lived under prison conditions. The diet was poor, consisting of cabbage soup and a little bread. They were driven to work under guard and had to clean rubbish from the houses and the streets and do other disgusting and difficult work, with food being scarce.”⁵

In mid-August 1941, Gebietskommissar Schaulen-Land Hans Gewecke ordered the establishment of Jewish ghettos in the larger towns of the Gebiet.⁶ Subsequent local orders for Kreis Schaulen instructed that all Jews and half-Jews had to reside in ghettos and were obliged to be available for forced labor. All of their possessions were to be inventoried, including those items already in the hands of non-Jews. By August 30, all the Jews had to reside in enclosed ghettos, especially in Radviliškis, Joniškis, and  agar . The Jews could only take with them some clothes, household equipment, and up to 200 Reichsmark (RM) per family.⁷

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CAMPS AND GHETTOS, 1933–1945

In August 1941, the Gebietskommissar Wilna-Land, Horst Wulff, also issued various instructions relating to the imminent confinement of Jews within ghettos. These were then passed down to the Kreischefs at the local level. On August 19–20, Wulff visited the Traken, Schwentschionys, and Wilna Kreise. Shortly thereafter, new restrictions were imposed on the purchase of food by Jews.⁸ Then instructions were issued for Jews to be clearly segregated from non-Jews and for the locations of ghettos to be determined by September 5, 1941. Detailed instructions regarding the confiscation of all Jewish property soon followed.⁹ Pursuant to these orders, the Jews of Gebiet Wilna-Land were concentrated in more than 10 short-lived ghettos, established mostly between late August and late September 1941.

On September 19, Wulff again urged the Kreischefs to isolate all Jews who were not yet residing in segregated districts. The Jews were to be placed behind barbed wire and guarded, and only those with a certificate from the German police would be permitted to leave the ghettos to go to work.



Mid-1930s portrait of Hans Gewecke, Gebietskommissar Schaulen.
USHMM/ PHOTOGRAPHED FROM ERNST KIENAST (ED.), *DER DEUTSCHE REICHSTAG 1936: III. WAHLPERIODE NACH DEM 30. JANUAR 1933; MIT ZULISTIMMUNG DES HERRN REICHSTAGSPRÄSIDENTEN* (BERLIN: R. V. DECKER'S VERLAG, G. SCHENCK, 1936)

However, this final push to concentrate and isolate all Jews, accompanied by the seizure of their property, only served as a cover for the murder of nearly all the Jews of the Gebiet living outside the Wilno ghetto. The Jews of Kreis Wilna were then murdered at several different sites on September 20–22. Prior ghettoization could only be documented for the Jews of Mejszagola.¹⁰ The concentration and murder of Jews at the Veliučionys estate near Nowa Wilejka (Naujoji Vilnia), where some Jews resisted and a few managed to escape, occurred so rapidly (within a few days) that it is not possible to use the term *ghetto* for this killing site. In Kreis Traken, the Jews of Žiezmariai had already been ghettoized and murdered in the second half of August. Then the remaining Jews of the Kreis were concentrated in at least four ghettos before being murdered at two separate sites at the end of September 1941.

In Kreis Schwentschionys, temporary ghettos were set up in a number of towns by early September, in preparation for the transfer of the Jews to a site of concentration in Nowe Świeciany at the end of September. Here several thousand Jews were crammed into an overcrowded barracks at a military camp (or shooting range) also known as the Poligon transit camp. Then on or around October 9, 1941, most of the Jews of the Kreis were shot, apart from a few hundred (mainly craftsmen and their families) preserved in the Świeciany ghetto.

In what was subsequently to become Gebiet Ponewesch-Land, ghettoization mainly took place during July and August. In the area around Rokiškis the town authorities confined all the Jews in two separate ghettos in early July. They put the Jewish men into Count Przeździecki's stone stables, and the women and children up to the age of eight were moved to the Antanašė estate, between Rokiškis and Obeliai. Other Jews from the surrounding area were also brought to these two rural ghettos prior to their destruction. The men were shot first on August 15–16 and the women and children on around August 25.¹¹

In contrast to most other regions, ghettoization in Lithuania was a very short-lived and improvised process that ran parallel to, and became an integral part of, the program of mass killing in the second half of 1941. Many of the makeshift places of confinement can hardly be described as ghettos, as they resembled more labor camps, prisons, or staging areas for the Jews, just prior to the mass shootings. However, the extensive use of the term *ghetto* to describe many of these camps in the orders of the German and Lithuanian administration, as well as in the testimonies of survivors and bystanders, necessitates the inclusion of many such improvised sites from Lithuania in this volume. Some, such as that in Ylakai, are described in the immediate postwar Soviet Extraordinary State Commission (ChGK) reports as “ghettos.”¹² Nonetheless, a number of similar sites have not been included, either because the period of incarceration was too short (less than 10 days), the descriptions indicated a labor or other type of camp, or there was simply insufficient information to establish that a ghetto existed. A few questionable cases have been included, which help to demonstrate the difficulties in making such decisions.

The Jews confined within the small, improvised regional ghettos suffered from severe overcrowding, inadequate food

and clothing, unsanitary conditions, and often exposure to the elements. Little information is available concerning the existence of Jewish Councils or a Jewish Police in the smaller ghettos, but in some cases such structures are known to have existed. Jews in a number of short-lived ghettos continued to be exploited for forced labor and were subjected to beatings, robbery, and extortion. In the Mejszagola, Vainutas, Šakiai, and other ghettos, Jewish women were sexually assaulted by the guards.

Einsatzgruppe A played a key role in organizing many of the Aktions, assisted by Lithuanian auxiliary forces. Prominent among the latter were the so-called Lithuanian Ypatingas Burys (special troops), which murdered tens of thousands of Jews at the Ponary killing site, and also the Rollkommando Hamann subordinated to Einsatzkommando 3, commanded by Karl Jäger. However, eyewitness descriptions from survivors also stress the key role played by local Lithuanian officials and partisan forces.

Jewish resistance in the smaller destruction ghettos consisted mainly of individual acts of defiance. Some Jews managed to escape from the ghettos when Lithuanian policemen turned a blind eye. Jews sometimes received warnings of forthcoming Aktions. However, hiding among the Lithuanian population was not easy, and despite selfless aid from individual Lithuanians, better chances of survival were offered by fleeing to other ghettos in Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien in the fall of 1941. Jews from the ghettos in Holszany and Oszmiana even managed to get transferred to Wołożyn and Mołodeczno, respectively, at the time these ghettos were transferred to Generalkommissariat Litauen in April 1942, as the Jews greatly feared coming under Lithuanian control. In 1942–1943, a number of Jews managed to escape from the Kaunas and Wilno ghettos, as well as from other ghettos and camps in Gebiet Wilna-Land, to join the Soviet partisans in the Belorussian forests.

In Wilno, 40,000 Jews were enclosed within two separate ghettos on September 6–7, 1941. These Jews were assaulted in a series of Aktions during the fall, including the liquidation of the small ghetto. At this time, there were around 17,500 “working Jews” in the Kaunas ghetto, following a similar series of Aktions there, and about 5,500 in the two sections of the Šiauliai ghetto.

From 1942 until the summer of 1943, there was a period of comparative quiet in these three main ghettos, as the Germans were in need of the labor they provided. The Kaunas and Wilno ghettos supplied labor to a number of German offices, including work at construction sites and some labor camps outside the ghetto. Conditions in these three larger ghettos resembled those in other large ghettos, such as Warsaw, Białystok, or Riga. The Jewish Councils ran a number of separate departments, including housing, food supply, health, and welfare to organize the ghettos' internal affairs. There were cultural activities, such as theater plays and concerts, the observance of religious holidays, and attempts to ameliorate conditions through smuggling and welfare efforts. Despite inevitable conflicts of interest between the Jewish Councils, the Jewish Police, and the various resistance movements, efforts at cooperation were at times attempted.

Resistance and flight to the partisans were strongest in the Wilno ghetto from the spring of 1943, following the murder in Ponary of several thousand Jews from the nearby smaller ghettos in early April. However, German fears of resistance getting out of hand in Wilno probably led to the liquidation of that ghetto in August and September 1943, with thousands of Jews being sent to the Vaivara camps in Estonia. At this time, responsibility for the Kaunas ghetto was transferred to the SS, and it was converted into a concentration camp. Its remaining labor outposts became subcamps of the Kauen main concentration camp, as was also the remnant of the Šiauliai ghetto. A few thousand survivors of the main Lithuanian ghettos ultimately entered the German concentration camp system from Kaunas and the camps in Estonia during the German retreat in 1944.

SOURCES Secondary works dealing with the fate of the Jews in the ghettos of Lithuania include: Yitzhak Arad, *Ghetto in Flames: The Struggle and Destruction of the Jews in Vilna in the Holocaust* (New York: Holocaust Library, 1982); Arūnas Bubnys, “Mažieji Lietuvos žydų getai ir laikinos izoliavimo stovyklos 1941–1943 metais,” in *The Year Book of Lithuanian History, 1999* (Vilnius: Metai, 2000), pp. 151–179; Wolfgang Curilla, *Die deutsche Ordnungspolizei und der Holocaust im Baltikum und in Weisrussland 1941–1944* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2006); Christoph Dieckmann, *Deutsche Besatzungspolitik in Litauen 1941–1944*, 2 vols. (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2011); Christoph Dieckmann and Saulius Suziedelis, *Persecution of Jews in Lithuania: Murders and Other Crimes Carried out during the First Days of the Nazi-Soviet War* (Vilnius: Margi rastai, 2006); Alfonsas Eidintas, *Jews, Lithuanians and the Holocaust* (Vilnius: Versus Aureus, 2003); Irena Guzenberg et al., eds., *The Ghettos of Osłomyany, Svir, Švenčionys Regions: Lists of Prisoners, 1942* (Vilnius: Valstybinis Vilniaus Gaono žydu muziejus, 2009); Irena Guzenberg and Jevgenija Sedova, eds., *The Šiauliai Ghetto: Lists of Prisoners, 1942* (Vilnius: Valstybinis Vilniaus Gaono žydu muziejus, 2002); and U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, ed., *Hidden History of the Kovno Ghetto* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1998).

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Relevant collections of testimonies and other primary sources include: B. Baranauskas and K. Ruksenas, *Documents Acuse* (Vilnius: Gintaras, 1970); B. Baranauskas and E. Rozauskas, eds., *Masinės žudynės Lietuvoje (1941–1944): Dokumentu rinkinys*, vol. 1 (Vilnius: Leidykla “Mintis,” 1965); B. Baranauskas and E. Rozauskas, eds., *Masinės žudynės Lietuvoje (1941–1944): Dokumentu rinkinys*, vol. 2 (Vilnius: Leidykla “Mintis,” 1973); Wolfgang Benz, Konrad Kwiet, and Jürgen

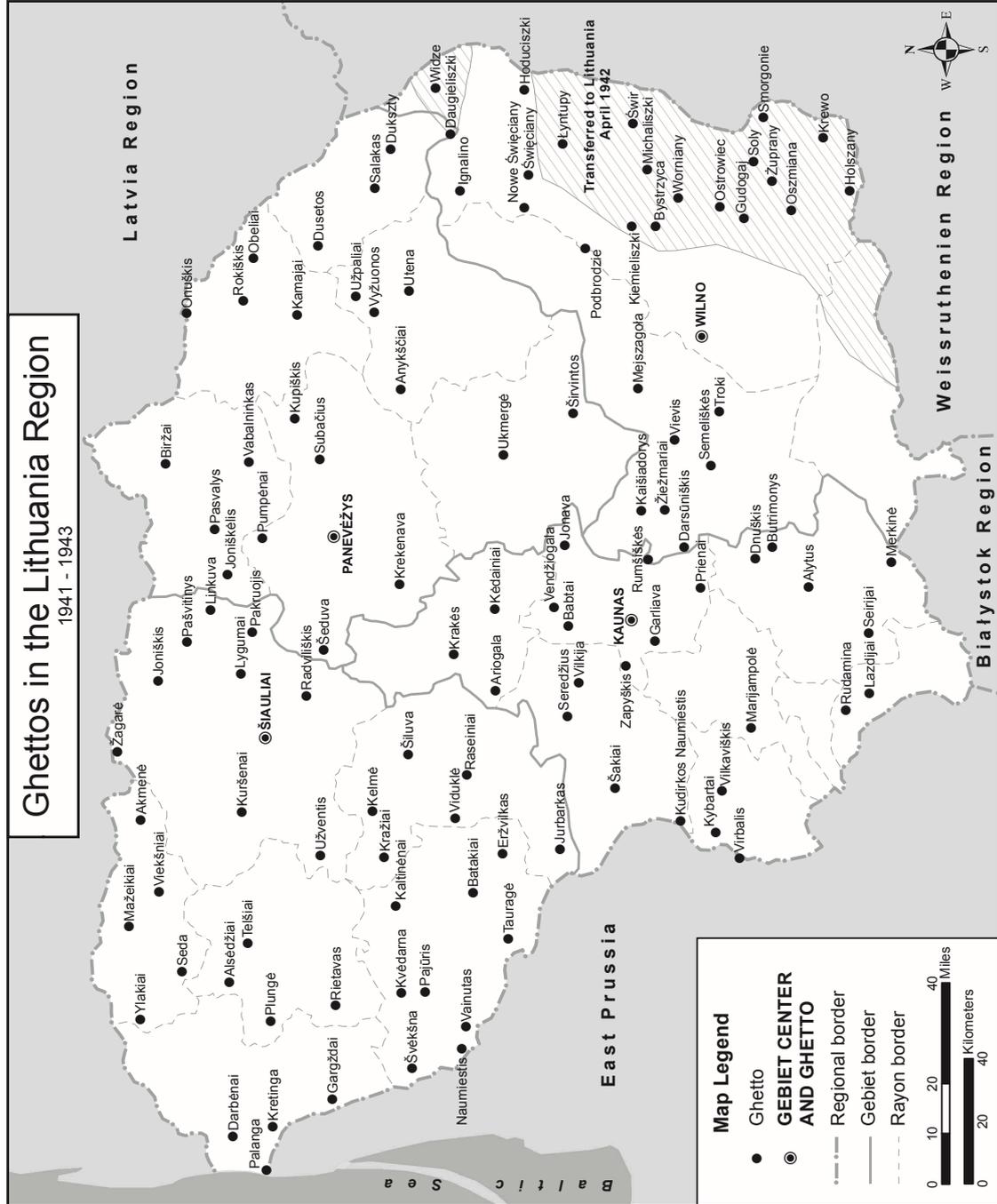
Matthäus, eds., *Einsatz im “Reichskommissariat Ostland”: Dokumente zum Völkermord im Baltikum und in Weisrussland 1941–1944* (Berlin: Metropol, 1998); Rima Dulkinienė and Kerry Keys, eds., *With a Needle in the Heart: Memoirs of Former Prisoners of Ghettos and Concentration Camps* (Vilnius: Garnelis, 2003); Ilya Ehrenburg and Vasily Grossman, *The Complete Black Book of Russian Jewry* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2002); Peter Klein, ed., *Die Einsatzgruppen in der besetzten Sowjetunion 1941/42* (Berlin: Hentrich, 1997); Herman Kruk, *The Last Days of the Jerusalem of Lithuania: Chronicles from the Vilna Ghetto and the Camps, 1939–1944* (New Haven, CT: YIVO, 2002); Josef Levinson, ed., *The Shoah (Holocaust) in Lithuania* (Vilnius: Vilna Gaon Jewish State Museum, 2006); Joshua Rubenstein and Ilya Altman, eds., *The Unknown Black Book: The Holocaust in the German-Occupied Soviet Territories* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press in association with USHMM, 2007); and Avraham Tory, *Surviving the Holocaust: The Kovno Ghetto Diary* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990).

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: BA-BL; BA-L; BA-MA; BLH; FVA; GARF; IfZ; LCVA; LVVA; LYA; MA; NARA; RGVA; USHMM; VHF; YIVO; and YVA.

Martin Dean

NOTES

1. LCVA, R 1534-1-193, p. 40, letter from chief of Batai Police, August 11, 1941.
2. Ibid., R 683-2-2, pp. 8, 76, Garliava police chief enquiries, August 20 and 28, 1941, as cited by Dieckmann, *Deutsche Besatzungspolitik*, section F.1.2.5.
3. LCVA, R 1099-1-1, p. 41, Kreischef in Šiauliai, Order no. 6, July 23, 1941.
4. LYA, B.14142/3, pp. 47–48, interrogation of Mykolas Levickas, November 24, 1948.
5. Ibid., B.16816, pp. 69–70, confrontation of P. Kairaitis with witness J. Keturauskas, June 21, 1948. The date on which the ghettos were established is not clear from these testimonies.
6. LCVA, R 1753-3-4, pp. 36–37, order of Gebietskommissar Schaulen-Land, August 14, 1941.
7. Ibid., R 1099-1-1, pp. 130, 134, 149, 156, correspondence of Kreischef in Šiauliai, August 1941, as cited by Dieckmann, *Deutsche Besatzungspolitik*, section F.1.2.2.
8. LCVA, R 691-1-20, p. 76, letter of Kalendra to Kreischefs, August 21, 1941; Baranauskas and Rozauskas, *Masinės žudynės*, vol. 1, pp. 107–108.
9. LCVA, R 685-5-4, pp. 4, 9, letters of Gebietskommissar Wulff to Kalendra, August 23 and 28, 1941, as cited by Dieckmann, *Deutsche Besatzungspolitik*, section F.1.2.6.
10. YVA, M-1/E/1689 (USHMM, RG-68.095), testimony of David Rudnik.
11. M. Bakalczuk-Felin, ed., *Yisker-bukh fun Rakishok un umgegnit* (Johannesburg: Rakisher Landsmanshaft of Johannesburg, 1952), pp. 383–390; RGVA, 500-1-25, pp. 111–112, report of Einsatzkommando 3 (Jäger report), December 1, 1941; USHMM, RG-50.473*0100, testimony of Elena Zalogaite, born 1928.
12. GARF, 7021-94-423, pp. 28–35.



Borders as of 1942

AKMENĖ

Pre-1940: Akmenė (Yiddish: Akmian), town, Mažeikiai apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Akmenė/Akmiane, uезд center, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Okmian, Kreis Moscheiken, Gebiet Schaulen-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Akmenė, rajonas center, Šiauliai apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Akmenė is located 50 kilometers (31 miles) west-northwest of Šiauliai. As of 1940, there were 25 to 30 Jewish families, or about 100 Jews, living in Akmenė.

On June 26, 1941, German armed forces captured the town. Lithuanian nationalist collaborators immediately arrested all the Jewish men and put them into the town's prison. On July 5–6, 1941, one of the few Germans present selected three Jews: the brothers Yosef and Faroush Yosselevich and a man named Shmidt. Assisted by 15 local Lithuanians, the Germans took these men out and shot them. The other Jewish men remained in the prison until early August. From available sources, it is not completely clear whether the Jewish women and children were imprisoned together with the men in July or rounded up only in early August.

On August 4, 1941, all the Jews of Akmenė were transported to three large grain silos on the banks of the Venta River near Mažeikiai. The escorting forces immediately took the men to the pits in the forest close to the Jewish cemetery, where German security forces and Lithuanian auxiliaries under the command of Lieutenant Vitkauskas shot them together with the Jewish men from Mažeikiai and other nearby towns.¹ According to one account, the three rabbis from Akmenė, Mažeikiai, and Vieškėnai donned their prayer shawls and phylacteries (tefillin) just prior to being shot. Kalman Maggid, the rabbi of Vekshne (Vieškėnai), called out to the Jews not to show any signs of sadness to the Germans: "We must sanctify G-d. That is the loftiest, the holiest goal of a Jew. We must die as Jews, as holy people, as the members of G-d's people."²

The Jewish women and children from Akmenė were imprisoned together with the Jewish women and children of Mažeikiai and the surrounding area in the grain silos. On August 9, 1941, the Germans and their Lithuanian collaborators shot all these prisoners at the same site as the men.

SOURCES The following published sources contain information on the destruction of the Jews of Akmenė: *Yabadut Lita: Lithuanian Jewry*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust 1941–1945* (Tel Aviv: Association of Former Lithuanians in Israel, 1984), p. 240; Rabbi Ephraim Oshry, *The Annihilation of Lithuania Jewry* (New York: Judaica Press, 1995), p. 178; "Akmene," in Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ba-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), p. 155.

Relevant testimonies can be found in the following archives: LYA (e.g., 3377-55-111) and YVA (e.g., M-1/E/1637—Tzvi Rosenbaum testimony).

Alexander Kruglov and Martin Dean
trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. LYA, 3377-55-111, pp. 75–76, testimony of accused J., November 21, 1944. J. was present at the shootings of Jews in Mažeikiai in August 1941 and subsequently served in the police battalion led by Impulevicius.

2. As quoted by Oshry, *The Annihilation of Lithuania Jewry*, p. 178.

ALSĖDŽIAI

Pre-1940: Alsėdžiai (Yiddish: Alsbad), town, Telšiai apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Alsėdžiai/Ol'siadi, Tel'sbiai uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Alsedziai, Kreis Telsche, Gebiet Schaulen-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Alsėdžiai, Plungė rajonas, Telšiai apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Alsėdžiai is located 13 kilometers (8 miles) west-northwest of Telšiai. According to the 1923 census, there were 199 Jews (19 percent of all inhabitants) living in the town. By June 1941, emigration had slightly decreased the number of Jews in Alsėdžiai.

German armed forces occupied the town on June 25, 1941. Immediately thereafter, Lithuanian nationalists formed a local administration and a police force, which soon introduced a series of anti-Jewish measures. For example, all Jews were registered; their valuables were confiscated; and they were forbidden to appear in public places or to associate in any way with non-Jewish Lithuanians. According to Jewish survivor Feiga Fishkin, within only a couple of days of the Germans' arrival, they told all the Jews to evacuate their houses and move into a ghetto, which consisted of just one street. Around 50 families lived together on this one street, with 3 or 4 families forced to share a house.¹

Pinkas ba-kebilot reports the establishment of a temporary ghetto on July 5, 1941, when all the Jews were forced to move into the synagogue, the bathhouse, and two other houses. There was a roll call every morning at which the male Jews were subjected to humiliation and beatings by local antisemites. After the roll call, the Jewish men were assigned to various types of forced labor, such as weeding parks and cleaning latrines.

After only a few days in the ghetto, the Jews of Alsėdžiai were moved to the Viešvenai and Rainiai camps near Telšiai. Jews from other towns and villages of the Telšiai district were also placed in these camps. On July 15 and 16, 1941, all the Jewish men from these camps were taken out to be shot, while the women and children were transferred to the Geruliai camp. In late August 1941, about 400 young women were selected in the camp and moved to the Telšiai ghetto; Lithuanian police shot all the remaining women and children.

On December 24, 1941, 30 women and children from the Telšiai ghetto were shot at the home of the priest Dumbrasukas in Alsėdžiai as a symbolic reprisal against him, as in late June or early July of 1941 he had intervened to prevent the murder of the town's Jews. Dumbrasukas also helped to save the Torah scrolls from the Bet Midrash and subsequently returned

them to the family of Reb Yosef Ber Factor, the ritual slaughterer of Alsėdžiai, who managed to survive the German occupation by hiding with a Lithuanian farmer.

SOURCES Information regarding the persecution and murder of the Jews of Alsėdžiai can be found in the following publications: B. Baranauskas and E. Rozauskas, eds., *Masinės žudynes Lietuvoje (1941–1944): Dokumentu rinkinys*, vol. 2 (Vilnius: Leidykla “Mintis,” 1973), p. 408; “Alsėdžiai,” in Shalom Bronstein, ed., *Yabadut Lita: Lithuanian Jewry*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust 1941–1945* (Tel Aviv: Association of Former Lithuanians in Israel, 1984); and “Alsėdžiai,” in Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 144–145.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: VHF (# 29324); and YVA.

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trans. Kathleen Luft

NOTE

1. VHF, # 29324, testimony of Feiga Fishkin.

ALYTUS

Pre-1940: Alytus (Yiddish: Olite), town, apskritis center, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Alytus/Olita, uезд center, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Olita, Kreis center, Gebiet Kauen-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Alytus, rajonas and apskritis center, Republic of Lithuania

Alytus is located 56 kilometers (35 miles) south of Kaunas. In 1939, the Jewish population of the town was about 1,730, including a number of Jewish refugees from the Suwałki Region, which was annexed by Germany in 1939.¹

German armed forces attacked the town on June 22, 1941. During the fighting, which lasted until June 24, 214 residences and 160 other buildings were destroyed by German bombardment.² A number of Jews died in the bombing and under the ruins, but on June 23, after two members of the Wehrmacht had been found killed near a mill, German soldiers shot the first civilians: 42 people, some of whom were Jews.³

Immediately after the occupation of the town, Lithuanian nationalist activists established local authorities. The commandant of the town (later the mayor) was Major of the General Staff Juozas Ivaškauskas, and the head of the district was Captain Stepas Maliauskas. The head of the district police was Air Force Captain Antanas Audronis; the chief of the Lithuanian Security Police was Lieutenant of the Reserve Pranas Zenkevičius; and the head of the Lithuanian Criminal Police was Alfonsas Nykštaitis. At their disposal for the guarantee of order and security in the town of Alytus in July 1941 were 50 policemen and 100 Lithuanian partisans.⁴ The newly created Lithuanian institutions were subordinated at first to the German military commandant (Hauptmann von der Marwitz); after August 5, when authority in Lithuania

was transferred to a German civil administration, the Gebietskommissar Kauen-Land, SA-Oberführer Arnold Lentzen, assumed command.

According to Rabbi Ephraim Oshry, several prominent Jewish citizens, including Dr. Abramovich and Rav Levin, were arrested soon after the occupation; they were forced to work until near exhaustion, and then some were killed. On June 25, 1941, several hundred Jews were taken to Suwałki by Lithuanian nationalists for forced labor and killed. Other instances of violence occurred before the creation of the ghetto in Alytus—including the destruction of a synagogue after hundreds of Jews had been forced inside.

On July 1, 1941, the town mayor ordered the organization, as of July 5, of forced labor for Jewish males aged between 16 and 55 and Jewish females between 16 and 45.⁵ The forced labor consisted of clearing the streets of rubble created by the bombardments.

On July 12, a series of new restrictions applying to Jews was announced: as of July 14, they had to wear a yellow Star of David on their clothing; they could not use the sidewalks; they were subject to a curfew between 8:00 P.M. and 6:00 A.M.; they could shop only after 11:00 A.M.; they were prohibited from trading with non-Jews, while other Lithuanians were forbidden to sell food to the Jews; Jews also could not use the services of non-Jewish hired workers; and they were forbidden to swim in certain parts of the Memel River, to move from one place to another, or even to speak Yiddish on the telephone. They had to hand over radios, bicycles, and motorcycles, and they could not appear in public places in groups of more than two people.⁶ On July 14, 1941, the German military commandant's office established a daily food ration for the Jews: 875 grams (3 ounces) of bread per week, 100 grams (3.5 ounces) of flour, and 75 grams (2.6 ounces) of groats.⁷

At the same time that these restrictions went into effect, the Lithuanian policemen and Lithuanian partisans began arresting and shooting Communists and Jews. In the entire Alytus district, before July 16, 1941, 82 Communists were shot, 389 arrests were made, and 345 more people were under investigation.⁸ As a result of denunciations, in the town of Alytus alone, before the end of August 1941, 36 Communists, 9 members of the Red Army, and “a large number of Jews” were arrested.⁹

In late July and early August 1941, all the Jews of Alytus were placed in a ghetto, for which several streets in the poorest part of town were allocated. The ghetto contained between 1,300 and 1,500 people, including Jews from the surrounding area. Responsibility for maintaining order in the ghetto was assigned to the Jewish Council (Judenrat), which had three members (the lawyers Halperin and Salansky, as well as Kopl Nemunaitzky).¹⁰ Information regarding living conditions in the ghetto remains scant, as very few of its inmates survived.

The liquidation of the ghetto in Alytus was carried out in several phases. First, on August 13, 1941, 617 men and 100 women were shot. From August 13 to August 31, 233 more Jews were shot, mainly people who were forced to come to Alytus

from neighboring localities. On September 9, 1941, the liquidation of the ghetto was completed: 1,279 people were shot (287 men, 640 women, and 352 children).¹¹ The victims also included Jews from nearby localities, around 1,000 in number, who not long before this Aktion had been forcibly driven into the town and were held for a short time in the yard of the prison.¹² The shootings were carried out in the Vidzgiris Forest by a detachment of Einsatzkommando 3, assisted by the Lithuanian Security Police under the leadership of Zenkevičius and 20 Lithuanian partisans led by Jonas Borevičius. Also participating in the last mass shooting was a Lithuanian platoon under the leadership of Air Force Lieutenant Bronius Norkus, which was subordinated to Einsatzkommando 3.¹³

Among the few Jews from Alytus who survived were some who received help from local Lithuanians. For example, two Lithuanians hid the Jewish girls Belkin and Chayah Kaplan throughout the occupation period. Another Lithuanian woman was imprisoned for helping Jews, as was a Lithuanian peasant, who was arrested and tortured for assisting Jews.¹⁴

SOURCES Information about the murder of the Jews in Alytus can be found in the following publications: B. Baranauskas and E. Rozauskas, eds., *Masinės žudynes Lietuvoje (1941–1944): Dokumentu rinkinys*, vol. 2 (Vilnius: Leidykla “Mintis,” 1973); Shalom Bronstein, ed., *Yabadut Lita: Lithuanian Jewry*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust 1941–1945* (Tel Aviv: Association of Former Lithuanians in Israel, 1984); “Alytus,” in Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 140–143; and Inayet Erdin, *Deutsche Okkupationspolitik in Litauen 1941–1944 am Beispiel des Ortes Alytus* (Norderstedt: Books on Demand, 2006).

Documentation regarding the destruction of the Jews in Alytus can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-94-3); LCVA (R1436-1-29 and 38, R660-2-231); RGVA (500-1-25); USHMM; and YVA.

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trans. Kathleen Luft

NOTES

1. “Alytus,” in Levin and Rosin, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Lithuania*, p. 140.
2. LCVA, R 1436-1-29, p. 58.
3. Baranauskas and Rozauskas, *Masinės žudynes Lietuvoje*, vol. 2, p. 389.
4. LCVA, R 1436-1-29, p. 14.
5. See *ibid.*, R 1436-1-38, p. 115, order of the mayor of Alytus, July 1, 1941.
6. See *ibid.*, p. 17, order of the chief of the Alytus district, July 12, 1941.
7. See *ibid.*, pp. 18, 33, 126, orders of Ortskommandantur II/352, July 14, 1941, for the civilian population and civil authorities.
8. *Ibid.*, R 1436-1-29, p. 69, report from Alytus, July 16, 1941, to the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Provisional Government of Lithuania.
9. See short summary of the activity of the “self-defense force” in Alytus, August 31, 1941, *ibid.*, R660-2-231, pp. 1–2.

10. “Alytus,” in Levin and Rosin, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Lithuania*, p. 142.

11. Report of Einsatzkommando 3, December 1, 1941, RGVA, 500-1-25, pp. 109–117, published in Baranauskas and Rozauskas, *Masinės žudynes Lietuvoje*, vol. 2, pp. 131–140; B. Baranauskas and K. Ruksenas, *Documents Accuse* (Vilnius: Gintaras, 1970), pp. 231–241.

12. See the testimony of the former chief of the Lithuanian Criminal Police in Alytus, Alfonsas Nykštaitis, on June 28–29, 1960, published in Josef Levinson, ed., *The Shoab (Holocaust) in Lithuania* (Vilnius: Vilna Gaon Jewish State Museum, 2006), pp. 116–120.

13. See testimony of Nykštaitis, June 28–29, 1960, *ibid.*; and testimony of Borevičius, July 4, 1960, and April 21, 1961, published in Baranauskas and Rozauskas, *Masinės žudynes Lietuvoje*, vol. 2, pp. 67–73.

14. “Alytus,” in Levin and Rosin, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Lithuania*, pp. 142–143.

ANYKŠČIAI

Pre-1940: Anykščiai (Yiddish: Aniksbt), town, Panevėžys apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Anykščiai/Aniksčbiai, Utena uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Onikschtien, Kreis Utena, Gebiet Ponewesch-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Anykščiai, rajonas center, Utena apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Anykščiai is located 101 kilometers (63 miles) northeast of Kaunas in the Svėtė River Valley. The Jewish population in 1940 was about 2,000.

On the first day of the German invasion (June 22, 1941), a young Jewish girl was raped near Anykščiai and murdered by local peasants. On June 24, the Soviet forces abandoned the town, leaving it without any local authority. German forces of Army Group North captured the town on June 26, 1941. In the first days following the German invasion, numerous refugees arrived in Anykščiai from Lithuanian territories to the west. On the arrival of German forces, Lithuanian nationalist partisans rounded up a number of Jews, including many refugees, and locked them up. Over the following days, the Lithuanian partisans beat and abused them, killing dozens of Jews, alleging that they were Communists. Then the remaining imprisoned Jews were either sent to Utena or released and sent back to their hometowns.¹

In these first weeks, gangs of Lithuanians also broke into Jewish houses, which had been marked with the word *Jew*, plundering Jewish property and raping Jewish girls. After two weeks, the Jews were forced to abandon their homes and move into the Bet Midrash and its courtyard (the Shulhof Square). The people were squeezed together in a very confined area, and soon many decided to leave town, seeking shelter with peasant acquaintances in the surrounding area. However, most were recaptured by the Lithuanian partisans and forced to return. The German authorities imposed forced labor on the Jewish men, and the Lithuanian guards beat them as they went out to work.

In mid-July 1941, the local Jews were sent to an improvised open-air camp in the forest near some summer houses for a couple of weeks. From here, local farmers collected them daily for agricultural forced labor. At the end of July, the authorities sent the Jews back to the town, together with other Jews from the surrounding villages. On July 28, 1941, the Germans and their Lithuanian collaborators selected a group consisting mainly of Jewish men and took them to the sand hill known as Hare's Hill a short way outside the town. Some of the Jews were forced to dig a pit, while the others, including the rabbi of Anykščiai, Rabbi Kalman Yitzhak Kadesh-witz, had to do exercises to tire themselves out (reducing the chances of any resistance or escape). Then the Germans and their collaborators shot the Jewish men, throwing the bodies into the pit and burying them, including some who were only wounded.

The remaining Jews, mainly women and children, were subsequently imprisoned in an improvised and overcrowded ghetto in the town. The Jews were starving and begged the local inhabitants for food. On August 29, 1941, Lithuanian units under German authority shot the remaining 1,500 Jews of Anykščiai about 1 kilometer (0.6 mile) outside the town. Local Lithuanian nationalist activists (partisans) who participated in the mass murders also took the best houses in Anykščiai and other items of Jewish property for themselves.²

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jewish community of Anykščiai during the Holocaust can be found in these publications: Joe Woolf, "Anyksciai," in *The Holocaust in 21 Lithuanian Towns*, available at www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/lithuania3/lit3; Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 151–155; Rabbi Ephraim Oshry, *The Annihilation of Lithuania Jewry* (New York: Judaica Press, 1995), pp. 181–184; and Rimantas Vanagas, *Nenusigrėžk nuo savęs: Gyvieji tiltai* (Vilnius: Vyturys, 1995), pp. 45–52.

Documentation on the murder of the Jews of Anykščiai can be found in the following archives: GARF; LYA; USHMM (RG-50.473*0022 and *0056); and YVA.

Martin Dean

NOTES

1. Testimony of V. Butenas, June 7, 1951, published in B. Baranauskas and E. Rozauskas, eds., *Masinės žudynės Lietuvoje (1941–1944): Dokumentu rinkinys*, vol. 2 (Vilnius: Leidykla "Mintis," 1973), pp. 310–311.

2. Vanagas, *Nenusigrėžk nuo savęs*, pp. 47–48; USHMM, RG-50.473*0022 (oral history interview with Ona Balaisiene, April 20, 1998); and RG-50.473*0056 (oral history interview with Jonas Uzdonas, August 16, 2000).

ARIOGALA

Pre-1940: Ariogala (Yiddish: Eyragala or Ragala), town, Raseiniai apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Eiragola, Kaunas uėzd, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Ariogala, Kreis Kedabneh,

Gebiet Kauen-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Raseiniai rajonas, Kaunas apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Ariogala is located 48 kilometers (30 miles) northwest of Kaunas. According to the census of 1923, there were 456 Jews (38 percent of the total population) living in Ariogala.¹ Emigration in the 1930s slightly reduced the Jewish population.

German armed forces occupied the town as early as June 23, 1941. Immediately after the town's occupation, Lithuanian nationalists set up a local administration and a police force, which soon introduced a series of anti-Jewish measures. The Jews were used for various types of forced labor, during which the local antisemites subjected them to humiliations and beatings. Arrests and killing of Jews began, especially targeting those who had collaborated with the Soviet authorities in the period 1940–1941.

On July 30, 1941, a detachment of Einsatzkommando 3 shot 27 Jews and 11 Lithuanian Communists in Ariogala.² The remaining Jews were herded into a ghetto, and their property was stolen by Lithuanians. According to local witness Juozas Palšauskas, who was 18 years old in 1941, the ghetto existed for about one month. It was guarded by Lithuanian auxiliaries known as "white-strippers" for the armbands they wore. The Jews were not allowed to leave the ghetto or to have contacts with non-Jews, but Palšauskas recalls a local woman named Švelnienė, who brought food to the Jews in the ghetto.³

In about mid-August 1941, hundreds of Jews from Josvainiai also were brought into the Ariogala ghetto, escorted by Lithuanian collaborators.⁴ A few days later, all the Jewish men (more than 200) were arrested in the ghetto, along with 80 Jewish women, who were suspected of collaboration with the Soviet authority in 1940–1941 and of "communist activity."⁵ These men and women were placed in the synagogue and were the first in line to be shot. The shooting took place on August 30, 1941, and all the remaining Jews in the town were shot along with them. German records indicate that in total 662 people were shot: 207 men, 260 women, and 195 children. The shooting was carried out by members of the 3rd Company of the 1st (13th) Lithuanian Police Battalion, assisted by members of the local Lithuanian police.⁶

Some details of the mass shooting are given by the witness Palšauskas. Before they were taken away, the Jews were told that they would be transported to Palestine. They were taken out of the town on trucks escorted by only one German and about 30 Lithuanian collaborators. However, when the trucks turned into the forest, the Jews realized their fate, and there was a great uproar. Local Lithuanians were requisitioned to dig one or two large pits to form the mass grave. At the killing site, the Jews were made to undress down to their underwear. Then men were shot first, followed by the women and children. Two of the Jews attempted to escape, but both were chased down and killed. Those who were only wounded by the initial shots were finished off by machine guns fired into the pit. After the Aktion, the local collaborators involved celebrated for the rest of the day, drinking, singing, and firing off their

1042 LITHUANIA REGION

weapons. The property of the Jews was auctioned off the next day in Ariogala. Palšauskas says that he forbade his mother to buy any of the property, as he was still affected badly from witnessing the mass shooting.⁷

For participation in the murder of the Jews in Ariogala, as well as in other towns and villages of Lithuania (especially in Kaunas in July and October 1941), eight former policemen from the 3rd Company were sentenced to death in a trial held in Kaunas from September 27 to October 4, 1962.

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jewish community of Ariogala during the Holocaust can be found in these publications: “Ariogala,” in Shalom Bronstein, ed., *Yabadut Lita: Lithuanian Jewry*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust 1941–1945* (Tel Aviv: Association of Former Lithuanians in Israel, 1984); “Ariogala,” in Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 135–138; 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. 54.

Documentation regarding the murder of the Jews of Ariogala can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-94-427); LCVA (R 683-2-2); LYA; RGVA (500-1-25); USHMM (RG-50.473*0114); and YVA.

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trans. Kathleen Luft

NOTES

1. “Ariogala,” in Levin and Rosin, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Lithuania*, p. 135.
2. RGVA, 500-1-25, report of Einsatzkommando 3, December 1, 1941.
3. USHMM, RG-50.473*0114, testimony of Juozas Palšauskas, a Lithuanian resident of Ariogala, 2005.
4. Ibid.; LCVA, R 683-2-2, p. 30, report of police precinct in Joscvainiai, August 14, 1941.
5. See report of police chief of Kedainiai district, August 17, 1941, in B. Baranauskas and E. Rozauskas, eds., *Masinės žudynės Lietuvoje (1941–1944): Dokumentu rinkinys*, vol. 2 (Vilnius: Leidykla “Mintis,” 1973), pp. 138–139.
6. RGVA, 500-1-25, report of Einsatzkommando 3, December 1, 1941.
7. USHMM, RG-50.473*0114.

BABTAI

Pre-1940: Babtai (Yiddish: Bobt), town, Kaunas apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Kaunas uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Kreis Schaken, Gebiet Kauen-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Kaunas rajonas and apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Babtai is located about 27 kilometers (17 miles) north-northwest of Kaunas. According to the 1923 population census, there were 153 Jews living in Babtai, comprising 20 percent of the total population. Owing to the migration of Jews away from

the town in the 1920s and 1930s, the number of Jews had declined by June 1941.

Advance units of German Army Group North occupied Babtai on June 24–25, 1941. Immediately after the start of the occupation, the pre-1940 Lithuanian administration and police forces were restored. Justinas Janušauskas returned as head of the rural district, and Kazys Trebunivičius was appointed chief of police. A “partisan” squad commanded by Stanislovas Aniulis was organized from former riflemen (Šaulys), which took orders from the new Lithuanian administration.

During the first days of the occupation, a number of Russian citizens accused of being active Communists or Communist sympathizers were arrested, and several of them were shot. On July 17, 1941, a further Aktion took place. A detachment of Einsatzkommando 3 arrested and shot eight people, including six Jews, whom they also accused of being Communist activists.¹

Largely on their own initiative, the new Lithuanian authorities introduced a series of anti-Jewish measures. Jews were marked with the Star of David; were impressed into different forms of forced labor; and were subjected to robbery, assault, and humiliation by the local Lithuanian partisans. Jews were also forbidden to appear in public spaces or to have any relations with non-Jewish Lithuanians. On August 7, 1941, the head of the Kaunas District issued an order calling for the resettlement of Jews into ghettos by August 15. The same order also included instructions for the establishment of small Jewish police forces (5 to 15 people) and Jewish Councils (of 12 people) to manage the internal affairs of the ghettos. On August 11, the chief of the Babtai Rural Police reported that there were 93 Jews residing in the town.² A few days later, on secret instructions from V. Reivytyis, 34 adult Jews were rounded up and incarcerated in the synagogues of Babtai. A number of male Jews from the nearby town of Vendžiogala, who had been arrested by Lithuanian activists while praying, were also brought to Babtai on carts and imprisoned in the synagogues.³

Apart from the above-mentioned order for the establishment of ghettos, the available sources do not otherwise refer to the imprisonment of the Jews in the Babtai synagogues as a ghetto; and it appears that not all of the Babtai Jews were confined together there. The initial aim of the arrests may have been rather that of hostage taking, as by August 25 the Jews had paid 9,000 rubles in response to a demand for “contributions.”⁴

At the end of August 1941, local partisans and Lithuanian police from the area rounded up the Jews in Babtai and also those remaining in Vendžiogala and escorted them to a site in the Babtai Forest about 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) outside the town, near the Nevėžis River. On the morning of the Aktion, several dozen local men had been requisitioned to dig a ditch about 50 meters long, 1 meter wide, and 2 meters deep (164 by 3.3 by 6.6 feet) at the killing site. Two trucks carrying about 50 soldiers of the Lithuanian 3rd Company (1st Battalion) also arrived under the command of officers B. Norkus,

J. Barzda, and A. Dagys. The Jews were made to undress down to their underwear and were forced to go to the edge of the ditch, where the soldiers shot them in the back in groups. All the soldiers of the 3rd Company who arrived took turns shooting. Some women who refused to undress were separated from the rest and tortured before being shot. After the mass shooting, local people divided the clothes and more valuable items among themselves.⁵ According to the report of Karl Jäger, 83 Jews (20 men, 41 women, and 22 children) from Babtai together with 252 Jews (42 men, 113 women, and 97 children) from Vendžiogala (in total, 335 people) were shot.⁶ Very few Jews managed to escape from the roundup and survive to the end of the occupation.

For taking part in the murder of the Jews in Babtai and in other places in Lithuania, the Soviet authorities sentenced to death eight former policemen of the 3rd Company, following their trial in Kaunas in 1962. The mass grave for the Jews of Babtai is located about 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) outside the town on the right side of the road, in the direction of Memel, on the bank of the Nevėžis River. A memorial with an inscription in Hebrew has been placed to mark the site.

SOURCES Information on the persecution and murder of the Jews of Babtai during the Holocaust can be found in the following publications: Shalom Bronstein, ed., *Yabadut Lita: Lithuanian Jewry*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust 1941–1945* (Tel Aviv: Association of Former Lithuanians in Israel, 1984); “Babtai,” in Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 160 ff.; and Arūnas Bubnys, “The Holocaust in the Lithuanian Province in 1941: The Kaunas District,” in D. Gaunt, P.A. Levine, and L. Palosuo, eds., *Collaboration and Resistance during the Holocaust: Belarus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2004), pp. 299–301.

Documentation on the fate of the Jews of Babtai during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: GARF; LCVA (R 1534-1-190 and 193, R 683-2-2); LYA (K 1-58-47337/3); RGVA (500-1-25); USHMM; and YVA (M-1/Q-1198/57).

Alexander Kruglov and Martin Dean
trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. RGVA, 500-1-25, p. 110, report of Einsatzkommando 3, December 1, 1941.
2. LCVA, R 1534-1-193, p. 40, letter by the chief of Babtai Rural Police to the Kaunas District governor, August 11, 1941.
3. Ibid., R 683-2-2, pp. 20–89, reports by the chiefs of police stations to the Police Department. Sources differ on the number of Jews sent to Babtai from Vendžiogala: from 30 up to about 100.
4. Ibid., R 1534-1-190, p. 6, letter by the chief of Babtai Rural District to the Kaunas District governor, August 25, 1941.
5. LYA, K 1-58-47337/3, vol. 1, pp. 157–161, minutes of the interrogation of P. Matiukas, October 2, 1961.
6. RGVA, 500-1-25, p. 113, report of Einsatzkommando 3, December 1, 1941.

BATAKIAI

Pre-1940: Batakiai (Yiddish: Batok), village, Tauragė apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Taurage uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Botocken, Kreis Tauroggen, Gebiet Schaulen-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Batakiai, Tauragė rajonas and apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Batakiai is located 19 kilometers (12 miles) northeast of Tauragė. According to the 1923 census, there were 88 Jews living in the village. In 1940, the Jewish community consisted of about 10 families. In the nearby village of Skaudvilė (Yiddish: Shkudvil), there were 1,017 Jews in 1923 and, according to one estimate, almost 2,000 Jews out of a total population of 2,800 in June 1941.¹

German forces occupied the villages of Batakiai and Skaudvilė on June 22, 1941, the first day of their invasion of the USSR. Consequently, very few Jews were able to flee in time. As the German forces passed through Skaudvilė, many Jews sought shelter in the surrounding countryside. On their return home a few days later, some found their houses had been looted.

A German military commandant was based in Skaudvilė and a Lithuanian local administration was soon established there. Lithuanian partisans wearing white armbands, under the command of a man named Liepa in Skaudvilė, appeared on the streets acting as an auxiliary police force. One Jew, named Abromson, had managed to flee from Skaudvilė with the Soviets; a few days after the occupation, his remaining property was confiscated and taken away by truck on the orders of German officials.²

On July 16, 1941, an announcement was posted in Skaudvilė, signed by the German commandant and the partisan leader Liepa, which ordered all men over the age of 14 to appear at the horse market. Here the Lithuanians were separated from the Jews, and all the Jewish men, including Rabbi Rubinstein, were told that they were being sent on a labor assignment to the nearby village of Pužai. Nachum Levy was fortunate that his father instructed him to remain at home on this day, although he was over 14 years of age.³

About 300 Jewish men were escorted out of Skaudvilė on foot by a large group of Lithuanian partisans brandishing whips. In Pužai, they were joined in a storage building by small groups of men brought there from Batakiai and Upyna. Within three days, all the men gathered there were taken into the Pužai Forest and shot by a unit of German SS with machine guns, assisted by the Lithuanian partisans.

In Batakiai, the remaining Jewish women, children, and elderly persons were moved into barracks near the railroad line. Construction of the barracks was still incomplete, and many of them lacked a roof. A few days after the mass shooting, more than 100 horse-drawn wagons arrived in Skaudvilė and loaded up the remaining Jews of the town, together with much of their property. Tearful Jewish women gave a few of their more expensive items to neighbors they thought they

could trust, “asking not to be forgotten, and, if an opportunity should arise, to be helped in the future.”⁴

The Jewish women, children, and old people from Skaudvilė, together with those from Upyna, were then crowded into three dilapidated barracks with the Bataikai Jews. Guarded by armed Lithuanian police, the Jews stayed in these barracks for about two months. Able-bodied women and adolescents were sent out every day to perform various kinds of work on Lithuanian farms in the vicinity. Conditions in the camp were filthy, and the Jews suffered from hunger. Nachum Levy recalls foraging for food: “During the day I would creep out to the neighboring villages and buy foodstuffs in exchange for clothing items and personal trinkets. I would set out with a few other boys, and we would barter with the locals. Another possibility was to buy food from the Lithuanian peasants who would bring farming products to the camp in horse wagons and sell them for money.”⁵

On September 15, 1941,⁶ this Jewish ghetto/camp was liquidated by shooting all of the prisoners, probably some 800 people, in the woods not far from Bataikai. The terrified and half-starved victims were forced to dig the grave and remove their clothing before they were shot. The shooting was carried out by members of the Lithuanian police and eight Gestapo officials from the Grenzpolizeiposten Laugszargen (Lauksargiai), headed by Kriminalsekretär Schwarz. Initially Schwarz suggested to SS-Hauptsturmführer Hans-Joachim Böhme, the head of the Tilsit Gestapo, that the barracks should be blown up along with the women and children inside, but this plan was rejected because the blasts could have damaged the nearby railroad station.⁷

After the war a number of Lithuanian partisans from Tauragė were tried by the Soviet authorities for their participation in the mass shooting of Jews in Bataikai. The massacre in Bataikai is mentioned also in the records of the trial conducted of Bernhard Fischer Schweder, Hans-Joachim Böhme, and a number of other defendants in Ulm in 1958 and in another German trial conducted against a member of the Lithuanian auxiliary forces in Frankfurt am Main in 1972.

SOURCES Information regarding the fate of the Jewish communities of Bataikai and Skaudvilė during the Holocaust can be found in these publications: Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 169–171, 695–698; Josef Levinson, ed., *The Shoab (Holocaust) in Lithuania* (Vilnius: Vilna Gaon Jewish State Museum, 2006), pp. 130–135; Rabbi Ephraim Oshry, *The Annihilation of Lithuania Jewry* (New York: Judaica Press, 1995), p. 253; Alfonsas Eidintas, *Jews, Lithuanians and the Holocaust* (Vilnius: Versus Aureus, 2003), p. 279; Urteil des Landgericht Ulm (Ks 2/57) v. 29.8.1958 gegen Böhme u.a., in *KZ-Verbrechen vor Deutschen Gerichten. Bd. II, Einsatzkommando Tilsit. Der Prozess zu Ulm* (Frankfurt/Main, 1966) and *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 15 (Amsterdam: University of Amsterdam Press, 1976), Lfd. Nr. 465; Urteil des Landgericht Frankfurt/Main (4 Ks 2/71) v. 27.4.1972 gegen Juozas Sta., in *JuNS-V*, vol. 37 (Amsterdam: University of Amsterdam Press, 2007), Lfd. Nr. 773; and

Nachum Levy, “How I Survived the Holocaust,” available at stetlinks.jewishgen.org.

Documentation on the persecution and murder of the Jews of Bataikai can be found in these archives: BA-L (e.g., B 162/14080); GARF (7021-94-429); LCVA; LYA (3377-55-2); MA (A.401); USHMM (RG-02.184); VHF (# 3247); and YVA (e.g., O-71/10 and 11).

Alexander Kruglov and Martin Dean
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NOTES

1. “Everything Began in This Way,” in Levinson, *The Shoab*, p. 135.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 130.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 131–132; and Levy, “How I Survived the Holocaust.”
4. “Everything Began in This Way,” p. 134.
5. Levy, “How I Survived the Holocaust.”
6. This date is given by Oshry, *The Annihilation*, p. 253, and is corroborated by Levy, “How I Survived the Holocaust,” who escaped from the Bataikai camp on the eve of the Aktion. Other sources, e.g., Levin and Rosin, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Lithuania*, date the killing in August. Estimates for the number of victims vary between 300 and 1,800.
7. *JuNS-V*, vol. 15, Lfd. Nr. 465, pp. 215–216. A more precise description of the mass grave site can be found in *JuNS-V*, vol. 37, Lfd. Nr. 773, p. 213. See also, MA, A.401, testimony of Yoseph Ben-Yaakov, who managed to escape from the killing site.

BIRŽAI

Pre-1940: Biržai (Yiddish: Birzb), town, Panevėžys apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Biržai/Birzbai, uезд center, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Birsen, Kreis center, Gebiet Ponevesch-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Biržai, rajonas center, Panevėžys apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Biržai is located 94 kilometers (58 miles) east-northeast of Šiauliai. In 1934, there were about 3,000 Jews in the town, making up just over one third of the population.

German troops captured Biržai on June 26, 1941. Immediately, Lithuanian nationalist activists formed a town administration and a local auxiliary police force, commanded by a man named Ignatavicius. A series of anti-Jewish measures were promptly imposed. They ordered the Jews to wear yellow Stars of David and forbade them to use the sidewalk. Jewish houses were marked with the letter *Ж*. Jews were dismissed from their jobs, and the authorities compelled them to perform forced labor in the course of which the Lithuanian overseers taunted and beat them.¹ The killing of individual Jews began immediately. Among the first victims was the rabbi, Rav Yehuda Leib Bernstein, who was shot by local Lithuanian antisemites who bore a personal grudge, as he had once reported them for breaking the windows in the synagogue. The community managed at some risk to bury him in the Jewish cemetery.

On July 26, 1941, the town authorities ordered all the Jews to move into a ghetto, for which purpose they had designated several small streets in the vicinity of the synagogue. Any Lithuanians living in this area were also forced to move out, exchanging houses with Jews who moved in. Barbed wire surrounded the area, and armed Lithuanian policemen guarded it. A lack of resources caused widespread hunger in the ghetto.

The Biržai ghetto existed for only about two weeks. On August 4, 1941, a group of about 500 Jewish men were sent out of the ghetto with spades, while the women, children, and elderly were locked up in the synagogue, guarded by Lithuanian auxiliary police (wearing white armbands). The men dug a ditch more than 30 meters long and 2 meters wide (98.4 by 6.6 feet), which took them three days. Then on August 8, German forces of Einsatzkommando 3, assisted by Lithuanian auxiliaries, surrounded the ghetto. The Jews were told that they would be sent to Palestine and were ordered to assemble. The men were marched out to the ditches first and were beaten and cursed on the way. Dr. Levin, a local physician, refused to go and was shot on the spot. They were taken to the ditches in the Astravas Forest, about 3 kilometers (1.9 miles) outside the town.²

About one hour later, the women and children were marched off in the same direction, waving good-bye to local acquaintances. At this time the sound of shooting could already be heard in the distance. Jews from the hospital were taken to the killing site on trucks.³ At the ditch the Jews were made to undress and then shot in the graves in groups of 10, piled up on top of each other. Some of the Jews had their gold teeth ripped out of their mouths. The murderers drank heavily during the Aktion.⁴ In total about 2,400 Jews (720 men, 780 women, and 900 children) were murdered. Several days later about 90 Lithuanians were shot into the same mass grave for alleged collaboration with the Soviets.⁵ After the Aktion, local Lithuanians looted property from the empty ghetto, handing only the most valuable items on to the Germans. In September 1941, Einsatzgruppe A reported that Kreis Birsen was “cleansed of Jews” (*judenrein*).⁶

One Jewish girl, Helena Nosova, is known to have escaped from the murder Aktion and survived with the aid of local Lithuanians until the arrival of the Red Army. After the war, Jewish survivors and returnees to Biržai placed a memorial at the site of the mass killing.

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jews of Biržai during the Holocaust can be found in the following publications: Henry Tabakin, *Only Two Remained* (Cleveland, OH: Private Edition, 1973); B. Baranauskas and E. Rozauskas, ed., *Masinės žudynės Lietuvoje (1941–1944) Dokumentų rinkinys*, vol. 2 (Vilnius: “Mintis,” 1973), pp. 115–118; Rabbi Ephraim Oshry, *The Annihilation of Lithuania Jewry* (New York: Judaica Press, 1995), pp. 184–186; Arūnas Bubnys, “Mazieji Lietuvos Zydu Getai Ir Laikinos Izoliavivimo Stovykyklos 1941–1943 Metais,” in *The Year Book of Lithuanian History, 1999* (Vilnius: Metai, 2000), pp. 151–179, on p. 178; and Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 172–178 (an

English translation of the article on Birzh [Biržai] by Yosef Rosin can also be found via jewishgen.org).

Documentation on the murder of the Jews of Biržai can be found in the following archives: BA-BL (R 58/217) LYA (K 1-46-1294); TsGAMORF (335/5136/151, pp. 36–37); USHMM (RG-50.473*0099); and YVA.

Alexander Kruglov and Martin Dean
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NOTES

1. USHMM, RG-50.473*0099, testimony of Regina Drevinskiene.
2. TsGAMORF, 335/5136/151, pp. 36–37.
3. USHMM, RG-50.473*0099.
4. TsGAMORF, 335/5136/151, pp. 36–37.
5. *Ibid.*
6. BA-BL, R 58/217, Ereignismeldung UdSSR no. 88, September 19, 1941. In this report Biržai is misspelled as Perzai, but it is correctly spelled in the Tätigkeits- und Lagebericht no. 5, for the second half of September; see Peter Klein, ed., *Die Einsatzgruppen in der besetzten Sowjetunion 1941/42* (Berlin: Hentrich, 1997), p. 203.

BUTRIMONYS

Pre-1940: Butrimonys (Yiddish: Butrimants), town, Alytus apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Eysbiskkes uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Kreis Olita, Gebiet Kauen-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Alytus rajonas and apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Butrimonys is located 69 kilometers (43 miles) south-southeast of Kaunas. In 1934, there were 948 Jews living in Butrimonys.

On June 23, 1941, the day after the start of the German invasion, Soviet forces abandoned Butrimonys, and units of the Wehrmacht seized the town. Immediately after the occupation began, Lithuanian nationalists established a town administration, and a militia or local police force was formed, composed of about 40 Lithuanians who were antisemitic. This force is also described in some sources as Lithuanian partisans. In Butrimonys, they were commanded by Leonardas Kasperiuonas.¹

The provisional Lithuanian administration in Butrimonys quickly implemented a series of anti-Jewish measures. Jews were marked with yellow stars, and special signs were put up on their houses. Jews were ordered to perform humiliating forced labor tasks without pay, such as cleaning toilets. The local partisans robbed and assaulted them. During the first two weeks, the partisans evicted all the Jews from the large houses on the market square and sent them to the side alleys. Many Jews were afraid even to go out on the street, as the Lithuanians and Germans could arrest or shoot them on the slightest pretext. Jews were not permitted to leave town except with special police permits, and non-Jews were forbidden to allow Jews into their homes or trade with them. According to one account, Jews in Butrimonys were not even permitted to wear shoes.²

On June 30, 1941, Lithuanian policemen carried out the first Aktion in Butrimonys. They arrested all remaining Communists and Soviet officials and imprisoned them. Shortly afterwards, the policemen released some of those who had been arrested. The remaining individuals, five Jewish men who worked as teachers and one Jewish woman, were taken to Alytus with a group of prisoners of war. On the way there, the Lithuanians murdered the Jewish woman and one of the teachers. All the others were shot in Alytus.³ Sometime later, another six Jews were escorted to Alytus and shot.

During two separate Aktions on August 12 and August 22, 1941, 217 Jews from Butrimonys (including 32 women) were escorted to Alytus and shot there.⁴ On their arrival in Alytus, some of the Jews were instructed by the Lithuanian police to write letters to their families asking them to send money, clothes, and food. In Butrimonys, a local Lithuanian named Vaitkevicius, among others, tried to use some of these letters to trick Jews into giving him the items, knowing full well that the intended recipients were dead. Riva Losanskaya recalls, however, that she learned from other neighbors that her father had already been murdered.

The Lithuanian police also exploited Jewish girls sexually. Pranas Senavaitis received permission from his boss, Kasperiuonas, to “put to work” Asya, a 20-year-old Jewish girl of exceptional beauty. He continued periodic sexual relations with her until mid-November, when he shot her himself. Other Jewish women, handpicked by Kasperiuonas for his “harem,” were also among the few Jews temporarily spared from the mass shooting on September 9, 1941, along with the “leader of the ghetto,” Izhak Miliunsky, his wife, and a few others.⁵

At the end of August, about 70 Jews from the nearby village of Punia were brought into Butrimonys and given temporary shelter. On the morning of Friday, August 29, 1941, the Lithuanian authorities again ordered all the Jews to assemble in the marketplace.⁶ They conducted a further selection, choosing all the men (old and young) and some young children and younger women. Then they sent them to Alytus, where they were murdered. After the selection, they ordered the remaining Jews—the women and children—to leave their houses all over town and move into two streets, Tatarshe and Klidze. Those who lived outside this area moved in hurriedly, clutching their remaining bundles of belongings. This became the ghetto, which was guarded by the Lithuanian police. In the meantime, local Lithuanians, including a priest, helped themselves to confiscated Jewish furniture that had been put into storage near the synagogue.⁷

Over the next few days, more Jews from the villages of Stakliškes and Birštonas were forcibly resettled into the temporary ghetto in Butrimonys.⁸ In the ghetto, the Jews now had no illusion as to their fate. Local Polish and Lithuanian neighbors offered to take their possessions into safekeeping, expecting that few, if any, would survive. On September 4, 1941, news arrived of the shooting of the remaining Jews of Jieznas (a few kilometers to the northwest) on the previous

day. Over the next few days, as many as 80 Jews managed to leave the ghetto as some Lithuanian police turned a blind eye, being more intent on securing Jewish property. Most who left went into hiding with local peasants, although only a small proportion of them managed to survive until the end of the occupation.⁹

On September 6–8, 1941, some of the residents of Butrimonys and others from neighboring farms, under the direction of local authorities, dug two pits near the village of Klydzionys, about 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) from town. Then, on September 9, a church holiday, a detachment of German Security Police from Einsatzkommando 3, along with Lithuanian police, liquidated the ghetto. The Lithuanian police, assisted by local residents, rounded up the Jews and escorted them in a long column out of town. The Jews, shuffling to their deaths, were weak from hunger and trembling with fear. As the guard remained lax, Riva Losanskaya and her mother managed to escape into the forest just as the column was approaching its final destination. At the pits some Jews tore up their money, while others threw their clothes to peasants they knew in the watching crowd, to prevent the murderers from benefiting from their crime.¹⁰ According to the Jäger report, on that day the Germans and their collaborators shot 740 Jews, including 67 men, 370 women, and 303 children.¹¹ Over the following weeks, Lithuanian policemen shot the few Jews (about 10 or 20) who remained.¹²

After the liquidation Aktion, the Lithuanian police continued to hunt down those Jews who had gone into hiding with local peasants, punishing also those non-Jews who concealed Jews. After one Polish family who hid Jews, the Golembowskis, was betrayed in 1942 by a greedy and vengeful relative, leading the Lithuanian police to arrest and kill the family’s head, many other Jews were then turned out by their anxious protectors.¹³

In July 1944, the Red Army drove the Germans from the area. Shortly after the war, the few Jews who had survived locally, together with others who had returned from the Soviet interior, erected two memorials next to the mass graves, dedicated to the memory of the murdered Jews of the town. However, these monuments soon fell into disrepair, as no Jews remained in Butrimonys to look after them.

In 1961, the criminal affairs board of the Supreme Court of the Lithuanian SSR sentenced to death three former policemen, K. Stoškus, A. Jauneika, and I. Steponkavicius, who in 1941 had participated in the extermination of the Jews in Butrimonys. Kasperiuonas/Kasperkis settled in Canada after the war. He died in Edmonton on April 18, 1974.

SOURCES Information about the elimination of the Jews in Butrimonys can be found in these publications: Shalom Bronstein, ed., *Yabadut Lita: Lithuanian Jewry*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust 1941–1945* (Tel Aviv: Association of Former Lithuanians in Israel, 1984); N. Cohen, “The Destruction of the Jews of Butrimonys as Described in a Farewell Letter from a Local Jew,” *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 4:3 (1989): 357–375; Kh. Shneiderovich, “Dokument,” in *Narod tvoi* (Jerusalem, 1991);

“Butrimonys,” in Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ba-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), p. 163; Arūnas Bubnys, “Mažieji Lietuvos žydų getai ir laikinos izoliaviavimo stovyklos 1941–1943 metais,” in *The Year Book of Lithuanian History, 1999* (Vilnius: Metai, 2000), pp. 151–179, on pp. 172–173; and Alfonsas Eidintas, *Jews, Lithuanians and the Holocaust* (Vilnius: Versus Aureus, 2003), pp. 297–298. There is also a relevant article titled “Dovanos Is Kanados” in *Svyturys* magazine (October 1962).

Published eyewitness testimonies can be found in the following books: 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. 214–215; Laurence Rees, *The Nazis—A Warning from History* (New York: New Press, 1997), pp. 182–186; and Olga Zabludoff and Lily Poritz Miller, eds., *If I Forget Thee . . . The Destruction of the Shtetl Butrimantz* (Washington, DC: Remembrance Books, 1998), which also contains a list of the names of those who perished, together with some photographs.

Documents dealing with the persecution and murder of the Jews in Butrimonys can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-94-3); LYA (3377-55-92); RGVA (500-1-25); USHMM (Acc.2003.249.1); VHF; and YVA (e.g., M-33; E-146-2-8; O-33/1563).

Alexander Kruglov and Martin Dean
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NOTES

1. YVA, E-146-2-8; an annotated English translation of this document has been published by Cohen, “The Destruction of the Jews of Butrimonys,” pp. 357–375.

2. Ibid.; Zabludoff and Miller, *If I Forget Thee*, pp. 24–26; Dulkinienė and Keys, *With a Needle in the Heart*, pp. 214–215.

3. “Esi zabudu . . .” *Dokumental’naia povest’ o gibeli Butrimonisa, evreiskogo mestecbka v Litve* (Jerusalem, 1985), p. 37; Shneiderovich, “Dokument,” p. 122.

4. Shneiderovich, “Dokument,” pp. 123–124.

5. LYA, 3377-55-92; Zabludoff and Miller, *If I Forget Thee*, pp. 33, 49, 84; YVA, E-146-2-8.

6. Zabludoff and Miller, *If I Forget Thee*, p. 40.

7. YVA, E-146-2-8; Zabludoff and Miller, *If I Forget Thee*, pp. 40–42.

8. “Esi zabudu . . .” *Dokumental’naia povest’*, p. 54 (August 29, 1941); Shneiderovich, “Dokument,” p. 122 (August 8, 1941).

9. YVA, E-146-2-8; Zabludoff and Miller, *If I Forget Thee*, p. 42.

10. Rees, *The Nazis—A Warning from History*, pp. 183–186.

11. RGVA, 500-1-25, p. 113, report of Einsatzkommando No. 3 (Jäger report), December 1, 1941; B. Baranauskas and E. Rozauskas, eds., *Masinės žudynes Lietuvoje (1941–1944): Dokumentu rinkinys*, vol. 1 (Vilnius: Leidykla “Mintis,” 1965), p. 135; B. Baranauskas and K. Ruksenas, *Documents Accuse* (Vilnius: Gintaras, 1970), p. 236.

12. Shneiderovich, “Dokument,” pp. 130–131; LYA, 3377-55-92.

13. Zabludoff and Miller, *If I Forget Thee*, pp. 75–81, 88.

BYSTRZYCA

Pre-1939: Bystrzyca (Yiddish: Bistrits), village, Wilno województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Bystritsa, Ostrovets raion, Vileika oblast’, Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Bystrzyca, initially Rayon Swir, Gebiet Wilejka, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien, then from April 1, 1942, Kreis Swir, Gebiet Wilna-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Bystrzyca, Astravets raen, Hrodna voblasts’, Republic of Belarus

Bystrzyca is located 38 kilometers (24 miles) east-northeast of Wilno. In 1919, the Jewish population of the village was 154 (23 families).

German armed forces occupied the village on June 24, 1941. In the summer of 1941, a German military commandant’s office (Ortskommandantur) governed Bystrzyca. In September 1941, authority was transferred to a German civil administration. Initially, Bystrzyca was part of Gebiet Wilejka in Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien.

In the summer and fall of 1941, the German authorities introduced a series of anti-Jewish measures in Bystrzyca: Jews were prohibited from leaving the limits of the village or from using the sidewalks; they were obliged to wear a yellow patch; and Jewish property, including agricultural land, was confiscated. The German authorities ordered the establishment of a Jewish Council (Judenrat).

According to survivor Saul Katz, who arrived in Bystrzyca during the summer of 1941, a ghetto was set up in the village within a few months, probably in the fall of 1941. The Jews lived in overcrowded conditions, with no running water. Each day a number of Jews were taken out of the ghetto to perform manual forced labor, mainly in agriculture, working land previously owned by Jews. The ghetto was only lightly guarded by a couple of local policemen, and the Jews managed to obtain some food by bartering their possessions with other local inhabitants. Katz received the impression that the Judenrat did its best to protect the Bystrzyca Jews but that it discriminated against newcomers. He left the ghetto during the winter of 1941–1942.¹

Soon after the establishment of the ghetto, the German authorities imposed a fine of 50,000 rubles on the village’s Jews. Subsequently the Germans demanded the surrender of all valuables, boots, and furs. Over time they also took furniture, bed linens, and whatever jewelry remained. The local policemen assigned as overseers constantly beat the Jewish laborers and displayed great cruelty. Groups of young Jews were sent to labor camps in Ostrowiec, about 25 kilometers (15.5 miles) distant; in the Lithuanian town of Vievis, about 150 kilometers (93 miles) away; and in other locations. A few of these people escaped into the forests, but most of the others were murdered when the camps were liquidated.

On April 1, 1942, the region including Bystrzyca was officially transferred from Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien to Generalkommissariat Litauen and became part of Gebiet Wilna-Land, headed by Gebietskommissar Horst Wulff. Among the restrictions imposed officially on the Jews living

in the ghettos in this region was a curfew from 7:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m., compulsory labor, and a prohibition on any personal or economic contacts with non-Jews.² According to the results of a census conducted by the Germans in May 1942, there were 194 Jews living in the Bystrzyca ghetto at that time.³

On October 27, 1942, the head of the Judenrat in Wilno, Jacob Gens, reported that the Germans had liquidated the ghettos in Bystrzyca and Kiemieliński during the previous week. He regretted that no Jewish Police from the Vilna ghetto had been present, as “all the Jews were shot there without any distinction.”⁴ The list of victims prepared by the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission (ChGK) includes 153 names.⁵ The mass shooting probably was carried out by a detachment of German Security Police from Wilno, assisted by the local police.

Some Jews evaded the roundup and found refuge with local farmers; of these, eight are known to have survived until the Red Army liberated Bystrzyca in the summer of 1944.

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jewish community of Bystrzyca during the Holocaust can be found in the following publications: “Bystrzyca,” 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. 175–176; Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), p. 98; and Irena Guzenberg et al., eds., *The Ghettos of Osbmyany, Svir, Švenčionys Regions: Lists of Prisoners, 1942* (Vilnius: Valstybinis Vilniaus Gaono žydu muziejus, 2009), pp. 115–116, 414, 640.

Documentation regarding the murder of the Jews of Bystrzyca can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-89-11); MA (D.1357); VHF (e.g., # 43006); and YVA.

Alexander Kruglov and Martin Dean
trans. Kathleen Luft

NOTES

1. VHF, # 43006, testimony of Saul Katz.
2. Anordnung Betr.: Ghettoisierung der Juden, issued by Gebietskommissar Wilna-Land, May 13, 1942, reproduced in Guzenberg et al., *The Ghettos of Osbmyany, Svir, Švenčionys Regions*, p. 130.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 115, 640.
4. See Jacob Gens’s words at the meeting of the Judenrat in Wilno on October 27, 1942, MA, D.1357, published in I. Arad, ed., *Unichtozhenie evreev SSSR v gody nemetskoj okkupatsii (1941–1944): Sbornik dokumentov i materialov* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1991), p. 254.
5. GARF, 7021-89-11, pp. 10–13.

DARBĖNAI

Pre-1940: Darbėnai (Yiddish: Dorbian), town, Kretinga apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Darbėnai/Darbenai, Kretinga uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Dorbianen, Kreis Kröttingen, Gebiet Schaulen-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Darbėnai, Kretinga rajonas, Klaipėda apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CAMPS AND GHETTOS, 1933–1945

Darbėnai is located 133 kilometers (83 miles) west of Šiauliai, near the Baltic coast. On the eve of the German invasion, there were around 700 Jews living in Darbėnai.

On June 23, 1941, German forces occupied the town. On the same day, Lithuanian nationalists seized control of the local administration and formed a militia. Both these organizations later were subordinated to Hans Gewecke, the Gebietskommissar Schaulen-Land. Shortly after the Germans arrived, a fire broke out, and the Lithuanians blamed it on the Jews. In the ensuing chaos, Darbėnai’s rabbi was beaten to death. After order was restored, the local administration introduced a series of anti-Jewish measures: Jews were required to perform forced labor and to wear the Star of David. The Jews were constantly beaten and harassed by local antisemites who also stole their property.

On June 29, the local Lithuanian militia rounded up 144 Jewish males aged 16 and older and shot them in the nearby woods. The remaining women and children were confined on the grounds of the old synagogue with little food or water and under hot and unsanitary conditions, guarded by members of the militia. On August 15, 1941, the chief of police in Darbėnai reported that he was holding 400 Jewish women and children in his “ghetto” and sought authority to hire contract policemen to guard it.¹

This improvised ghetto was liquidated during the course of two further Aktions conducted during August and September. On August 24, 300 women and children were shot in the woods on the edge of town. On September 22 (Rosh Hashanah), the remaining prisoners were shot at the same site.² According to the testimony of a Jewish survivor, R.A. Šateliene, the local police (militia) played an active role in the Rosh Hashanah massacre.

When the Soviet authorities exhumed the mass graves in November 1944 following the German retreat, they found iron bars and wooden clubs that had been used to murder the Jews. Two memorials mark the site where the Jews of Darbėnai were murdered. The site is located on the edge of the forest, about 100 meters (328 feet) from the road, in the direction of Lazdininkai.

SOURCES Additional information on the fate of the Jews of Darbėnai during the Holocaust can be found in the following publications: *Hitleriniai Žudikai Kretingoje* (Vilnius, 1960), pp. 36–40; and “Darbenai,” in Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), p. 209.

Documents dealing with the persecution and murder of the Jews of Darbėnai can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-94-422); LCVA (R 1665-2-36); and YVA.

Alexander Kruglov
trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. LCVA, R 1665-2-36, report of the chief of police in Darbėnai, August 15, 1941.
2. B. Baranauskas and E. Rozauskas, eds., *Masinės žudynės Lietuvoje (1941–1944): Dokumentu rinkinys*, vol. 2 (Vilnius: Leidykla “Mintis,” 1973), p. 395.

DARSŪNIŠKIS

Pre-1940: Darsūniškis (Yiddish: Darsunishok), village, Trakai apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Darsūniškis/Darsunishkis, Trakai uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Darsunishkis, Kreis Traken, Gebiet Wilna-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Darsūniškis, Kaišiadorys rajonas, Kaunas apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Darsūniškis is located 77 kilometers (48 miles) west-southwest of Wilno. According to the 1923 census, 120 Jews were living in Darsūniškis (14.7 percent of the total population). By June 1941, as a result of out-migration in the 1930s, the Jewish population had decreased significantly.

German armed forces occupied the village on June 24, 1941. Immediately afterwards, Lithuanian nationalists formed a local administration and police force, which agitated against the Jewish population and implemented a series of anti-Jewish measures. Valuable items were confiscated from the Jews, and the Jews were prohibited from engaging in trade or other relations with non-Jews.

On August 7, 1941, the head of the Kaunas district ordered all Jews to be moved into ghettos by August 15.¹ Possibly in compliance with this order, or perhaps before this, all the Jews from Darsūniškis and neighboring villages, including those of Kruonis (Yiddish: Karon) and Pakuonis (Yiddish: Pakun), were resettled into a ghetto. The Jews were required to perform forced labor and were severely beaten by the Lithuanian guards.²

On August 15, 1941, the first killings took place; dozens of Jewish men were shot in the nearby Komenduliai Forest.³ On August 28, 1941, the ghetto was liquidated. On that day, Einsatzkommando 3 shot 99 prisoners: 10 men, 69 women, and 20 children.⁴ The killings were carried out in the Jewish cemetery in Darsūniškis. Some of the victims were reportedly buried alive. In 1991, a monument was placed at the site of the shooting.

SOURCES Information on the elimination of the Jews in Darsūniškis can be found in the following publications: Shalom Bronstein, ed., *Yabadut Lita: Lithuanian Jewry*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust 1941–1945* (Tel Aviv: Association of Former Lithuanians in Israel, 1984); and “Darsuniskis,” in Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 212–214. The ghetto in Darsūniškis 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. 295; and *Rossiiskaia evreiskaia entsiklopediia*, vol. 4 (Moscow: Rossiiskaia akademiia estestvennykh nauk, Nauchnyi fond “Evreiskaia entsiklopediia,” “Epos,” 2000), p. 368.

Alexander Kruglov
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NOTES

1. B. Baranauskas and E. Rozauskas, eds., *Masinės žudynės Lietuvoje (1941–1944): Dokumentu rinkinys*, vol. 2 (Vilnius: Leidykla “Mintis,” 1973), pp. 290–291.

2. “Darsuniskis,” in Levin and Rosin, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Lithuania*, pp. 213–214.

3. Ibid.

4. RGVA, 500-1-25, report of Einsatzkommando 3, December 1, 1941.

DAUGIELISZKI

Pre-1939: Daugieliszki (Yiddish: Daugelishok), village, Wilno województwo, Poland; 1939–1940: Novye Dovgelishki, Vileika oblast’, Belorussian SSR; 1940–1941: Naujasis Daugėliškis, Sventsiany uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Daugielishki, Kreis Schwentschionys, Gebiet Wilna-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Naujasis Daugėliškis, Ignalina rajonas, Utena apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Daugieliszki, composed of two parts, new and old Daugieliszki, is located about 98 kilometers (61 miles) northeast of Wilno. In 1930, there were 175 Jews living in Daugieliszki, out of a total population of 350.

On the outbreak of war in September 1939, the Jews organized a self-defense force, which protected Jewish homes from being looted by hostile Christian peasants, until the arrival of the Red Army in the second half of the month.¹ Daugieliszki was initially part of the Belorussian SSR, but in 1940 it was transferred to the Lithuanian SSR.

Following the German invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941, a few Jews fled with the Soviet forces. Others, especially the elderly, remained behind, not wanting to abandon their property. In the area, a Lithuanian partisan squad was formed, which soon started arresting suspected Communists, Komsomol members, and Soviet activists. According to Soviet postwar investigations, the Lithuanian partisans escorted 16 of the arrested Jews a few kilometers outside the village in the direction of Ignalino and then shot them. The yizkor book reports that among those shot were the parents of some of the younger Jews, who had fled with the Soviets.² In charge of the Lithuanian activists in Daugieliszki was Kazimierz Ziber.

The remaining Jews were then placed into a small ghetto in Daugieliszki.³ Very little is known about conditions in the ghetto, as no survivor accounts have been located. At the end of September, probably on September 27, 1941, the local police and former Lithuanian partisans, all under the command of Juozas Reinsys, assembled the Jews from the Daugieliszki ghetto and escorted them to an overcrowded barracks at the military camp (firing range), also known as the Poligon transit camp, located 1.6 kilometers (1 mile) outside Nowe Święciany.

The Jews were held in the Poligon camp for more than a week under atrocious conditions, together with thousands of Jews brought there from other places in the region. Disease broke out due to the overcrowding, and the Jews were forced to surrender their remaining valuables, supposedly as a ransom to save their lives.⁴ Then on October 7–8, 1941, most of the Jews assembled in the Poligon camp were shot a short distance away in ditches prepared in the Baranower Forest.

The mass shooting was conducted by the German Security Police and the men of the Ypatingas Burys Lithuanian killing squad, assisted by 120 local Lithuanian policemen and former partisans. According to the report of Karl Jäger, the commander of Einsatzkommando 3, the 3,726 Jewish victims included 1,169 men, 1,840 women, and 717 children.⁵ Other sources, however, indicate that as many as 6,000 to 8,000 people may have been killed at the site.⁶

During the war, the Jewish houses in Daugieliszki were burned down, leaving almost no trace of the village. Several Jews from Daugieliszki served with distinction in the Red Army and the Soviet partisans, including a few who died in battle.

SOURCES Relevant publications include Shimon Kanc, ed., *Sefer zikaron le-esrim ve-sbalosh kehillot she-nebrevu be-ezor Svintian* (Tel Aviv: Former Residents of Svintian in Israel and the U.S., 1965), pp. 1170–1184; Arūnas Bubnys, “The Fate of the Jews in the Švenčionys, Oshmyany and Svir Regions (1941–1943),” in Irena Guzenberg et al., eds., *The Ghettos of Oshtmyany, Svir, Švenčionys Regions: Lists of Prisoners, 1942* (Vilnius: Valstybinis Vilniaus Gaono žydu muziejus, 2009), pp. 83–118, here pp. 99–100; and Christoph Dieckmann, “Deutsche Besatzungspolitik in Litauen 1941–1944” (Ph.D. diss., Universität Freiburg, 2002), section F.1.2.6. The ghetto in Daugieliszki is mentioned also in: Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), p. 154; 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. 298.

Documentation regarding the murder of the Jews of Daugieliszki can be found in the following archives: LCVA; LYA (K 1-58-34823/3 and K 1-58-886/3); and RGVA (500-1-25).

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NOTES

1. Kanc, *Sefer zikaron . . . Svintian*, pp. 1170, 1184.
2. LYA, K 1-58-34823/3, pp. 16 and verso, interrogation of D. Kuricka, May 12, 1945, as cited by Bubnys, “The Fate,” p. 99; Kanc, *Sefer zikaron . . . Svintian*, pp. 1172, 1184. This source indicates 18 victims.
3. Kanc, *Sefer zikaron . . . Svintian*, p. 1172.
4. “Poligon in Yor 1941,” in *ibid.*, p. 5.
5. RGVA, 500-1-25, p. 114, report of Einsatzkommando 3, December 1, 1941. This report gives October 9, 1941, as the date of the killing, but some other sources indicate it occurred on October 7–8, 1941.
6. Kanc, *Sefer zikaron . . . Svintian*, p. 1376, gives the figure of 8,000 victims at the Poligon camp. Dieckmann, “Deutsche Besatzungspolitik,” uses the phrase “at least 5,000.”

DUKSZTY

Pre-1939: Duksztzy (Yiddish: Duksbt), village, Wilno województwo, Poland; 1939–1940: Dūkštas, Zarasai apskritis, Lithuania SSR; 1940–1941: Dūkštas/Duksbtas, Zarasai uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Dukschtzy, Kreis Ossersee, Gebiet Ponewesch-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Dūkštas, Ignalina rajonas, Utena apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CAMPS AND GHETTOS, 1933–1945

Duksztzy is located about 115 kilometers (72 miles) northeast of Wilno. Around 650 Jews were living in Duksztzy on the outbreak of World War II, comprising two thirds of the population. Between September 1939 and June 1941, the inhabitants of the village witnessed two regime changes, as the region was first transferred from Polish to Lithuanian control in the fall of 1939, then came under Soviet rule in June 1940.

Following the German invasion of the Soviet Union, in late June 1941, the Soviet authorities soon abandoned the village, and local Lithuanians began to plunder Jewish shops. German armed forces occupied Duksztzy in early July 1941. A German commandant was officially in charge, but in practice local Lithuanians, led by Antoni Umbras, the former owner of a bakery and a restaurant, seized control of local affairs. A few days after the Germans' arrival, the Lithuanians began to terrorize the Jews, murdering a number of them brutally in public. Large “contributions” were also demanded from the Jewish community, which soon exhausted nearly all its financial reserves.

At the end of August, the Jews were driven from their homes into two separate ghettos, being allowed to take with them only a very limited amount of their property. The more propertied Jews were put in a ghetto on the peninsula in Disner Lake, known as “Ostrov”; the rest were placed in the Jewish bathhouse and surrounding houses, known as “Azshutoviner.” The Jews were completely isolated, and any contact with non-Jews was punishable by death. However, the Jews received help from some local inhabitants of Russian nationality, who brought food to them in the ghettos by various means. Every day men and women from the ghettos were escorted on foot several kilometers outside the village to work on the railway line.¹

In early September, all the remaining Jews, with the exception of a few craftsmen, such as cobblers, were removed from the ghettos and incarcerated on the Antonove estate, about 3 kilometers (2 miles) outside of Duksztzy. Here they were accommodated more or less in an open field, exposed to the wind and rain for nearly three weeks. They continued to be taken every day to the same work. The Lithuanian guards closely watched the Jewish workers, but some were still able to barter their remaining possessions for food with non-Jews, bribing the guards if necessary to bring it to their families on the Antonove estate. Living conditions for the craftsmen still in the village were somewhat less harsh.

On the evening of September 21, 1941, 16 Lithuanians arrived at the Antonove estate and informed the Jews that they would be moved to better conditions. The sick and small children were put on carts, and the remaining Jews were driven on foot, all to the north in the direction of Zarasai, without a specific destination being disclosed. After a Lithuanian guard murdered a newborn baby who was crying on one of the carts, one Jew attacked the guard, trying to strangle him. However, he was soon overpowered and shot by three other guards.

In the Degutsh Forest, about halfway to Zarasai, the Jews of Duksztzy arrived at a collection point for the Jews from several places in the region. On the morning of September 22, the Germans and their Lithuanian collaborators separated the children from their parents in a field with machine guns

set up in each of the corners. From the description of a local forester, who observed events from a distance, the Jews were all shot as they attempted to run, mowed down by the machine guns. The craftsmen and their families from Dukszty were probably also included in the “last march” of the Dukszty Jews. At the end of the war, only one surviving Jewish family returned to live in the village.²

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jewish population of Dukszty during the Holocaust can be found in these publications: Shimon Kanc, ed., *Sefer zikaron le-esrim ve-shalosh ke-bilot sbe-nebrevu be-ezor Svintzian* (Tel Aviv: Former Residents of Svintzian in Israel and the U.S., 1965), pp. 1328–1334; and Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), p. 182.

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NOTES

1. Kanc, *Sefer zikaron*, p. 1330.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 1331–1334.

DUSETOS

Pre-1940: Dusetos (Yiddish: Dusiat), town, Zarasai apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Zarasai uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Kreis Ossersee, Gebiet Ponewesch-Land, Generalkommisariat Litauen; post-1991: Zarasai rajonas, Utena apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Dusetos is located 126 kilometers (78 miles) north-northeast of Wilno, on the Svėtė River not far from Lake Dusetos, for which the town was named. According to the 1923 census, 704 Jews were living in the town. As a result of out-migration in the 1920s and 1930s, the number of Jews in the town decreased significantly, to around 500 by 1939.

After Lithuania was annexed by the USSR in 1940, a Soviet regime was imposed. Private property was nationalized. Workers in various fields were organized into cooperatives (*artels*). The language of instruction in Jewish schools was changed from Hebrew to Yiddish. Zionist groups were disbanded, and Hebrew-language books were banished from the library.¹

When the German army invaded the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, a number of Jews fled from Dusetos into the Russian interior, alongside the retreating Red Army. Others, however, did not make it and were forced to return. Armed Lithuanian activists seized control of the town even before the arrival of the Germans. They greeted the advancing German troops with shouts of joy and white flowers on June 25, 1941. The Lithuanian activists established a local administration and police force. Local antisemites subjected the Jews to robbery, assault, and other forms of public denigration. Jews were also prohibited from walking in public places or having any relations with local non-Jews.

In early July 1941, all the Jews were driven out of their homes into an improvised ghetto “beyond the bridge.” They

were crammed into a number of houses from which the non-Jews had been evacuated, and there was great overcrowding. Each family was allocated one loaf of bread per day, and no one was permitted to leave the ghetto. This soon resulted in severe hunger among the Jews. Some were able to sneak out undetected and gather a few vegetables from the gardens of their former homes or from local Lithuanians to whom they had given property for safekeeping. Others, however, were not so lucky and were shot by the Lithuanian guards as they tried to cross the bridge or flee to the forest. The inmates of the ghetto suffered greatly at the hands of their Lithuanian captors. The vacated Jewish houses and property were seized by Lithuanians from the town and its vicinity. Over the course of several weeks, with little direct German supervision, the Lithuanian activists chased Jews with beatings and subjected them to forced labor in the town and on the farms.²

On August 26, 1941, the ghetto was liquidated. On that day, forces of Einsatzkommando 3, assisted by the Lithuanian police, escorted the Jews of Dusetos—the elderly and children on wagons and the others on foot—to the woods near the village of Diagučiai, a few kilometers to the southeast of Dusetos. There the Germans and their collaborators shot them, together with the Jews of Zarasai, and buried them in a long ditch, which had been dug by the Jewish victims themselves. A monument stands today at the site of the shootings. After the war, one of the local Lithuanian collaborators, Kuzmis, was tried and sentenced by the Soviet authorities.³

SOURCES Information about the persecution and murder of the Jews in Dusetos can be found in the following publications: Sara Weiss-Slep, ed., *Ayara Hayeta B’Lita; Dusiat B’Rei Hazibronot* (Tel Aviv: Society of Former Residents of Dusiat, 1969) (translations of part of this yizkor book are available at jewishgen.org); and Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 204–207.

Documentation on the murder of the Jews of Dusetos can be found in the following archives: BA-BL (R 70 SU/15); LYA; USHMM (RG-50.473*0028-29); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Weiss-Slep, *Ayara Hayeta B’Lita; Dusiat*, p. 207.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 207, 320, 359–360.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 207, 359–360; USHMM, RG-50.473*0029, testimony of Jonas Baura; BA-BL, R 70 SU/15, Jägerbericht, December 1, 1941.

ERŽVILKAS

Pre-1940: Eržvilkas (Yiddish: Erzhvilik), town, Tauragė apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Eržvilkas/Erzhvilkas, Tauragė uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Erschwilki, Kreis Tauruggen, Gebiet Schaulen-Land, Generalkommisariat Litauen; post-1991:

Eržvilkas, Jurbarkas rajonas, Tauragė apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Eržvilkas is located 83 kilometers (52 miles) north-northwest of Kaunas. According to the 1923 census, Eržvilkas had a Jewish community of 222. Emigration in the 1930s reduced the Jewish population, and in mid-1941 there were only around 150 Jews living in Eržvilkas.

German forces occupied the small town on June 23, 1941. Many Jews fled the town at the time of the invasion. On their return a few days later, most found that their homes had been robbed. Immediately after the capture of Eržvilkas, Lithuanian nationalists formed a local administration and a partisan detachment. The new authorities introduced a number of anti-Jewish measures. All the Jews' valuables were confiscated. They were assigned to perform various types of forced labor, and they were subjected to humiliation and beatings by local antisemites. Jews were forbidden to appear in public places and to maintain relationships of any kind with other Lithuanians.

According to Alan Goldstein, a Jewish child survivor, shortly after the Germans arrived, all the Jews were herded initially into the synagogue and were told to pack their things. The Jews were then resettled to another street where the baths were located. Here about four houses were converted into a ghetto. Goldstein remembers the presence of the Germans in the town but recalls that it was the Lithuanian police who did all the dirty work.¹

The ghetto was liquidated in mid-September 1941. The Jews were instructed to prepare for a three-day journey and were then taken out to the Griblauskis Forest, where they were shot. Goldstein's family received a tip-off from the wife of the chief of the Lithuanian police and were able to flee into the countryside in time.² There were 22 Jews from Eržvilkas who survived, hidden by Lithuanians.

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jewish community of Eržvilkas during the Holocaust can be found in these publications: Shalom Bronstein, ed., *Yabadut Lita: Lithuanian Jewry*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust 1941–1945* (Tel Aviv: Association of Former Lithuanians in Israel, 1984); Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 157–158; 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. 368–369; and Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), p. 195.

Documentation regarding the murder of the Jews of Eržvilkas can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-94-427); LCVA; LYA; VHF (# 44072); and YVA.

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trans. Kathleen Luft

NOTES

1. VHF, # 44072, testimony of Alan Goldstein, born 1935.
2. Ibid.

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CAMPS AND GHETTOS, 1933–1945

GARGŽDAI

Pre-1940: Gargždai (Yiddish: Gorzd), town, Kretinga apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Gargždai/Gargzbdai, Kretinga uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Garsden, Kreis Kröttingen, Gebiet Schaulen-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Gargždai, Klaipeda rajonas and apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

The town of Gargždai is located roughly 200 kilometers (124 miles) northwest of Kaunas.

In 1939, Gargždai's Jewish community experienced a downturn when Germany annexed the Memel district, cutting off the town's strong economic ties with that region. As a result, some Jews, mostly younger members of the community, migrated to Kaunas in search of work, and the population declined from the 1923 figure of 1,049. On the eve of the German invasion in 1941, the community's population was estimated to be about 500, including some refugees from the neighboring Memel district.

German troops of the 61st Infantry Division captured Gargždai on June 22, 1941, following a brief but fierce battle with resisting People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs (NKVD) troops, which resulted in much of the town catching fire. Over the following 24 hours, men of the German Grenzpolizei (Border Police) in Memel, assisted by German customs officials, rounded up much of the town's population and selected out the male Jews, together with a few non-Jews suspected of being Communists. The other non-Jews were released, but the Jewish women and children were confined to a barn 300 meters (328 yards) east of the town. At this time, Lithuanian nationalists formed a local administration and established a militia or "partisan" force. It appears that the Lithuanian auxiliaries did play some role in the arrest of the Jews. Both groups of Jews were then held captive for another day with little food and water.¹

These arrests were conducted on instructions from the State Police office (Stapostelle) in Tilsit, commanded by SS-Hauptsturmführer Hans-Joachim Böhme, which had received authorization from the Reich Security Main Office (RSHA) in Berlin on June 23 and 24 to conduct "pacification Aktions" against Jews and Communists inside a 25-kilometer-wide (15.5-mile-wide) strip of occupied Lithuania.

On June 24, 1941, a German detachment of the Stapostelle Tilsit, led by Böhme and reinforced by about 25 men of the Schutzpolizei from the Memel district, arrived in Gargždai in a number of vehicles. The male Jews were then escorted to an antitank ditch and forced to broaden and deepen it. Once they had completed this task, they were led in groups to the edge of the ditch and shot by members of the Schutzpolizei operating under Böhme's command. Some of the German policemen from the Memel area even knew the victims personally. One Jew called out to his former friend and neighbor, "Gustav, aim well!" After the shooting, some German policemen moved among the bodies, delivering the final blow to any survivors. After all 201 prisoners (including one woman, the wife of a Soviet commissar) had been shot,

the unit was distributed a ration of schnapps and retired to eat lunch.²

After the mass shooting, the surviving women and children were imprisoned in empty storehouses on the Aneliškiai Manor. This “ghetto” existed for slightly more than two months, during which time the adult women were required to work on forced labor projects. The children were so hungry that they had to pull up grass to eat.

At the beginning of August 1941, local Lithuanian officials in the Kretinga district met with Gestapo officials to discuss the situation of the remaining Jews. Gestapo official Behrendt recommended that the Lithuanians should murder the Jewish women and children, as they could not perform useful work and were “useless mouths.” The Lithuanians wanted to obtain approval from the Lithuanian administration in Kaunas. After the chief of police in Kaunas replied that the decision was to be left to the local officials, plans were made for the Lithuanian forces to kill the remaining women and children in September 1941.³

The ghetto was liquidated between September 14 and 16, when the Lithuanian police and partisans wearing white armbands convoyed the remaining 200 women and children to the Vėžaitinė Forest, 11 kilometers (7 miles) outside the town, and shot them there. Some sources mention that the Lithuanians were drunk during the Aktion and that some of the victims, probably the children, were bludgeoned to death. According to the account in the yizkor book, the children were shot first and then the women two days later. The Aktion was conducted by Lithuanians under the command of Ildefonsas Lukauskas. In the postwar evidence of Bronnius Salyklis, no mention is made of Germans being present. Only one prisoner, Rachel Yomi, survived the mass shooting and was later hidden by a Lithuanian family. Following the liquidation of the ghetto, the Jewish cemetery was destroyed, along with the Jewish homes. The empty lots were used as farmland by residents of Gargždai.⁴

After the war, the Jewish community was not reconstituted in the town, and only a memorial to the victims remains to mark their former existence. On August 29, 1958, a court in Ulm, Germany, sentenced eight men to various terms of imprisonment for their participation in the murder of the Jews in Gargždai and other similar Aktions in the region during the summer of 1941. On February 5, 1963, a court in Dortmund, Germany, sentenced another former official of the Stapo Tilsit, Wilhelm B.W. Gerke, to three years and six months in prison for participating in the anti-Jewish Aktions on the Lithuanian border between June and September 1941.

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jewish community of Gargždai during the Holocaust can be found in the following publications: Y. Alperovitz, ed., *Sefer Gorzd (Lita); ayara be-bayeba u-be-bilayona* (Tel Aviv: Gorzd Society, 1980); “Gargzdai,” in *Yabadut Lita: Lithuanian Jewry*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust 1941–1945* (Tel Aviv: Association of Former Lithuanians in Israel, 1984); Rabbi Ephraim Oshry, *The Annihilation of Lithuanian Jewry* (New York: Judaica Press, 1995), pp. 194–196; and “Gargzdai,” Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas*

ba-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 187–191.

Publications on the murder of the male Jews of Gargždai on June 24, 1941, include Jochen Tauber, “Garsden, 24. Juni 1941,” *Annaberger Annalen*, no. 5 (1997): 117–134; Jürgen Matthäus, “Jenseits der Grenze: Die ersten Massenerschießungen von Juden in Litauen (Juni–August 1941),” *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft*, no. 44 (1996): 101–117; Konrad Kwiet, “Rehearsing for Murder: The Beginning of the Final Solution in Lithuania in June 1941,” *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 12:1 (Spring 1998): 3–26; and *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1976–2010), vol. 15, Lfd. Nr. 465, and vol. 19, Lfd. Nr. 547.

Documentation on the murder of the Jews of Gargždai can be found in the following archives: BA-L (B 162/2582-2615 and 14079-80); GARF (7021-94-422); RGVA (500-1-758); VHF (# 2514); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. *JuNS-V*, vol. 15 (1976), Lfd. Nr. 465, pp. 53–61, 210–211, and vol. 19, (1978) Lfd. Nr. 547, p. 13.
2. RGVA, 500-1-758, p. 2; *JuNS-V*, vol. 15, Lfd. Nr. 465, pp. 53–61.
3. *JuNS-V*, vol. 15, Lfd. Nr. 465, pp. 200–201.
4. Alperovitz, *Sefer Gorzd (Lita)*, English section, p. 38.

GARLIAVA

Pre-1940: Garliava (Yiddish: Gudleva), town, Kaunas apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Kaunas uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Godlewo, Kreis Kauen, Gebiet Kauen-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Garliava, Kaunas rajonas and apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Garliava was originally located a few kilometers south of the city of Kaunas; later it was incorporated into the city as a suburb. According to the 1923 census, there were 311 Jews living there. Owing to the migration of a number of Jews abroad in the years before World War II, the Jewish population declined.

German armed forces occupied the city on June 24, 1941. Immediately afterwards, three Lithuanian partisan units were formed in the Garliava area, and they recruited approximately 120 men. Lithuanian nationalists formed a local administration and police force, which implemented a series of anti-Jewish measures. Jews were marked with the Star of David and were ordered to perform compulsory labor. They were also subjected to lootings and beatings by local antisemites and were prohibited from walking on the sidewalks or having any relations with the other Lithuanians.

On August 7, 1941, the Kaunas District governor issued an order calling for the resettlement of Jews into ghettos by August 15.¹ The Jews were also registered, and on August 12, 1941, the head of the Garliava Rural District reported to the Kaunas District governor that there were 285 Jews there.² Shortly after this, in mid-August 1941, local policemen and

partisans forced the Jews of Garliava and neighboring villages into the local synagogue, where they were confined for about two weeks in a form of “synagogue ghetto.” Almost nothing is known about the conditions for the Jews in the synagogue, but clearly the sleeping and living arrangements were appalling.

On the morning of the liquidation Aktion, policemen and partisans drove several dozen Jewish men to a site close to the village of Rinkunai (just to the east of Garliava) and ordered them to dig a trench. When the Jews realized its purpose, they refused to carry out the work. The policemen then brought a group of Lithuanians from Garliava, who dug a ditch 60 meters long by 2 meters wide and 1.5 meters deep (197 by 7 by 5 feet).³

Men of the 3rd Company of the 1st (13th) Lithuanian Police Battalion arrived in Garliava in trucks on that day under the command of officers B. Norkus, J. Barzda, and A. Dagus. Local policemen and partisans drove the Jews out of the synagogue and escorted them to the prepared trench. The Jews were forced to surrender their possessions and remove their clothes and shoes. The Jewish men were shot first. They were lined up on the edge of the trench and shot from behind at a distance of several meters.⁴ The mass shooting started in the afternoon and was completed by nightfall. By torchlight, men of the 3rd Company finished off some of the Jews who had only been wounded. Afterwards they returned to Garliava and drank alcohol in a pub before leaving for their barracks.⁵

According to the report of Karl Jäger, who was in charge of Einsatzkommando 3, the 247 Jews of Garliava (73 men, 113 women, and 61 children) were shot on a day between August 28 and September 2, 1941.⁶ The witnesses do not mention the presence of any Germans, and it appears that the shootings were carried out by local policemen, partisans, and the men of the 3rd Company.

For their participation in the murder of the Jews in Garliava and other places in Lithuania, eight former policemen of the 3rd Company were sentenced to life in prison after court proceedings in Kaunas from September 27 to October 4, 1962.⁷

SOURCES Information on the extermination of the Jews in Garliava can be found in the following publications: Arūnas Bubnys, “The Holocaust in the Lithuanian Province in 1941: The Kaunas District,” in D. Gaunt, P.A. Levine, and L. Palosuo, eds., *Collaboration and Resistance during the Holocaust: Belarus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2004), pp. 283–312, here pp. 301–303; and Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 185–186.

Documentation on the fate of the Jews of Garliava during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: LCVA (R 1534-1-193); LYA (K 1-58-47337/3); RGVA (500-1-25); and YVA (O-3/3217 and 3239).

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NOTES

1. B. Baranauskas and E. Rozauskas, eds., *Masinės žudynės Lietuvoje (1941–1944): Dokumentu rinkinys*, vol. 1 (Vilnius: Leidykla “Mintis,” 1965), pp. 290–291.

2. LCVA, R 1534-1-193, p. 17, letter by the head of Garliava Rural District to the Kaunas District governor, August 12, 1941.

3. LYA, K 1-58-47337/3, vol. 8, pp. 26–28, interrogation of J. Ivanauskas, March 20, 1962.

4. *Ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 36–38, interrogation of J. Vosyius, April 10, 1961.

5. *Ibid.*, pp. 310–315, interrogation of J. Palubinskas, October 12, 1961.

6. RGVA, 500-1-25, p. 113, report of Einsatzkommando 3, December 1, 1941 (the report spells it as Carliava).

7. *Sovetskaia Litva* (Vilnius), October 4, 1962.

GUDOGAJ

Pre-1939: Gudogaj, village, Wilno województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Gudogaj, Vileika oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Gudogaj, initially Rayon Aschmena, Gebiet Wilejka, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien, then from April 1, 1942, Kreis Aschmena, Gebiet Wilna-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Gudagai, Astravets raen, Hrodno voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Gudogaj is located about 45 kilometers (28 miles) east-southeast of Wilno. Very little information is available regarding the fate of the Jewish population in Gudogaj during the Holocaust. However, evidence of a ghetto there exists in the form of a census of Jews and Jewish laborers conducted by the Arbeitsamt (labor office) for Gebiet Wilna-Land in October 1942. According to this report, there were 104 Jewish men, women, and children at that time in the Gudogaj ghetto, of which 64 were deployed for labor tasks there.¹ The nature of this small ghetto may have been such that it was more of a labor camp, like the remnant ghetto in nearby Ostrowiec, but it appears also to have included the families of the workers.

Jewish survivor Julius Bastowski also mentions the existence of a ghetto in Gudogaj. He reports that the Jews were required to perform forced labor and that he observed trains passing through Gudogaj, which had a small railway station. The trains were packed with people jammed tightly together. The trains came from the southeast and were headed for Wilno. People on the trains were dying, and corpses were thrown out from the trains. Bastowski and parts of his family were assisted in obtaining false papers, and he managed to survive until the arrival of the Red Army in 1944.²

In October 1942, the German authorities in Generalkommissariat Litauen ordered the liquidation of the small ghettos in the region to the east of Wilno, concentrating their inhabitants in four ghettos: Oszmiana, Święciany, Michaliszki, and Soly. According to the diary of Kazimierz Sakowicz, Hirsh Berkowski, a Jew from Gudogaj, was among those murdered at Paneriai in April 1943.³ Presumably some of the Jews from Gudogaj were transferred to Oszmiana in the fall of 1942 or thereafter and shared the fate of the Jews in the other ghettos of the region, some of whom were sent to Paneriai to be shot

at the time of the Oszmiana ghetto's liquidation in late March and early April 1943.⁴

SOURCES The existence of a ghetto in Gudogaj is mentioned in the following publication: Wolfgang Curilla, *Die deutsche Ordnungspolizei und der Holocaust im Baltikum und in Weissrussland 1941–1944* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2006), p. 325 (spelled here as Gugadei).

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: LCVA (R 626-1-211); and VHF (# 1804, Julius Bastowski).

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NOTES

1. LCVA, R 626-1-211, p. 18, list of ghettos in Kreis Aschmena, October 1942.

2. VHF, # 1804, testimony of Julius Bastowski. Unfortunately this testimony is difficult to understand, so some reliance has been placed on the notes prepared by VHF indexers.

3. Kazimierz Sakowicz, *Ponary Diary, 1941–1943: A By-stander's Account of Mass Murder* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005), p. 79.

4. Yitzhak Arad, *Ghetto in Flames: The Struggle and Destruction of the Jews in Vilna in the Holocaust* (New York: Holocaust Library, 1982), pp. 359–362. Shalom Cholawsky, *The Jews of Bielorrussia during World War II* (Amsterdam: Harwood, 1998), p. 231, also mentions the murder of the Jews from “Gudagei” together with those from the Oszmiana ghetto but dates this erroneously in May 1943.

HODUCISZKI

Pre-1939: Hoduciszki (Yiddish: Haydutsishok), village, Wilno województwo, Poland; 1939–1940: Godutishki, Vileika oblast; Belorussian SSR; 1940–1941: Adutiškis/Adutishkis, Svencionys uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Hoduciszki, Kreis Schwentschionys, Gebiet Wilna-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Adutiškis, Švenčionys rajonas, Vilnius apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Hoduciszki is located 97 kilometers (60 miles) east-northeast of Wilno. In 1921, there were 875 Jews living in Hoduciszki. By mid-1941, this number had probably declined somewhat.

Following the German invasion of the Soviet Union, in late June 1941, a number of Jews attempted to flee from Hoduciszki, but they were prevented from escaping by Lithuanian collaborators of the Nazis. German armed forces occupied the village on July 1–2, 1941. As soon as the Germans arrived, the Lithuanian militia murdered around 200 Jews. A number of Jews from nearby villages also fled towards Hoduciszki, but some of these people were intercepted and killed.

In July 1941, a German military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur) governed the village. At this time a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established in Hoduciszki, which was required to provide a number of Jews daily for forced labor. In addition, the German authorities required Jews to wear markings bearing the Star of David and banned them from going outside the village limits.

In August 1941, authority was transferred to a German civil administration. Hoduciszki became part of Gebiet Wilna-Land within Generalkommissariat Litauen. On August 15, 1941, the German authorities established a ghetto in Hoduciszki. This timing roughly coincided with an order issued by Gebietskommissar Horst Wulff, on August 18, 1941, for the marking of the Jews and their confinement within ghettos and another order, issued by the police chief in Święciany, in mid-August, preparing for the transfer of the Jews of the Święciany subdistrict to the barracks near Nowe Święciany, about 10 kilometers (6 miles) northwest of Święciany, and the confiscation of their property.¹ The Jews of Hoduciszki were ordered to vacate their homes within two hours and were resettled into the run-down houses on Vidzių Street. Local Lithuanians then plundered the vacated Jewish houses. The overcrowding in the Hoduciszki ghetto was unbearable. Lithuanian policemen guarded its entrance.²

The village of Stojaciszki, located about 4 kilometers (2.5 miles) from Hoduciszki, was also subject to German regulations issued in Hoduciszki, which the Polish village elder passed on. The Jewish inhabitants in Stojaciszki became increasingly nervous by August 1941, as refugees from massacres elsewhere in Lithuania began to arrive there. On September 19, two policemen arrived from Hoduciszki to register all Jewish property. Then on September 26, four armed Lithuanian civilians informed the Jewish representative, Yisroel Gantovnik, that the Jews would all have to move to Nowe Święciany.³ Apparently, the roughly 300 Jews from Stojaciszki were then brought briefly into the Hoduciszki ghetto at the end of September.

In late September 1941, the German authorities liquidated the Hoduciszki ghetto. The Jews were assembled, and the bulk of them (probably around 1,000 people) were escorted to Nowe Święciany. The sick and elderly Jews were placed on about 50 carts that were provided, and the rest of the Jews had to walk the roughly 40 kilometers (25 miles) on foot, guarded by Lithuanian policemen. A number of skilled craftsmen and their families were left behind in Hoduciszki at this time. On arrival in Nowe Święciany, the Jews were placed in an overcrowded barracks at a military camp (or shooting range) also known as the Poligon transit camp, located about 1.8 kilometers (1 mile) outside the town. During their brief stay in the barracks, the Jews suffered from hunger, thirst, abuse, and murder at the hands of the guards. Then, on or around October 9, 1941, the Jews from Hoduciszki were shot along with many other Jews from the region, who also had been assembled in these barracks.

A number of Jews managed to escape at the time of the roundup, during the transfer from Hoduciszki to Nowe Święciany, or possibly also from among the skilled workers that remained in Hoduciszki thereafter. On October 14, 1941, the head of Kreis Schwentschionys reported that the police in Hoduciszki had shot 19 Jews who had tried to escape.⁴ Some of the Jews who escaped successfully from the Hoduciszki ghetto subsequently joined the anti-Nazi partisans, while others ended up in various camps and ghettos. Only a small

number managed to survive until the Red Army drove the Germans from the area in 1944.

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jewish population of Hoduciszki during the Holocaust can be found in the following publications: “Hoduciszki,” 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. 277–280; “Adutishkis,” in *Rossiiskaia Evreiskaia Entsiklopediia*, vol. 4 (Moscow: Rossiiskaia Akademiia Estestvennykh Nauk, Nauchnyi fond “Evreiskaia Entsiklopediia,” “Epos,” 2000), p. 27; and Arūnas Bubnys, “The Fate of the Jews in the Švenčionys, Oshmyany and Svir Regions (1941–1943),” in Irena Guzenberg et al., eds., *The Gbetos of Oshmyany, Svir, Švenčionys Regions: Lists of Prisoners, 1942* (Vilnius: Valstybinis Vilniaus Gaono žydu muziejus, 2009), pp. 83–118, here p. 104.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŽIH; GARF (7021-94-435); LCVA (e.g., R 685-5-4, R 1548-1-3); LYA (K 1-8-194); and YVA (e.g., O-71/169.1).

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NOTES

1. LCVA, R 685-5-4, p. 1, order of Gebietskommissar Wilna-Land, August 18, 1941; and LYA, K 1-8-194, p. 280, protocol of B. Gruzdyš—both as cited by Bubnys, “The Fate of the Jews,” pp. 88–89.

2. Bubnys, “The Fate of the Jews,” p. 104; Spector and Freundlich, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Bialystok, Nowogrodek*, pp. 277–280.

3. YVA, O-71/169.1, pp. 253–272, testimony of Zalman Yofe (born 1907), recorded by L. Koniuchovsky in April 1948, as cited by Christoph Dieckmann, “Deutsche Besatzungspolitik in Litauen 1941–1944” (Ph.D. diss., Universität Freiburg, 2002), section F.1.2.6.

4. LCVA, R 1548-1-3, p. 522, letter by head of Kreis Schwentschionys to Gebietskommissar Wilna-Land, October 14, 1941, as cited by Bubnys, “The Fate of the Jews,” p. 104.

HOLSZANY

Pre-1939: Holszany (Yiddish: Olsban), village, Wilno województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Gol'sbany, Osbmiany raion, Vileika oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Holschany, initially Rayon Aschmena, Gebiet Wilejka, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien, then from April 1, 1942, Kreis Aschmena, Gebiet Wilna-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Hal'sbany, Asbmiany raen, Hrodna voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Holszany is located 70 kilometers (44 miles) southeast of Wilno. In 1921, there were about 800 Jews living in Holszany.¹

German soldiers on motorcycles occupied the village on June 26, 1941, four days after their invasion of the USSR. A group of Jews tried to flee with the retreating Soviet forces, but the internal Soviet border with the Belorussian SSR remained closed, and most had to turn back. As soon as the Germans arrived, local peasants from the surrounding villages

came to Holszany and started to loot the Soviet shops. German troops passing through also robbed Jewish homes and vandalized the synagogue, beating up a rabbi from another town whom they caught there.²

In the summer of 1941, a German military administration was in charge of the region. In September 1941, authority was transferred to a German civil administration. Holszany was part of Rayon Aschmena, which initially was included in Gebiet Wilejka within Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien. From April 1, 1942, until the occupation ended in early June 1944, Holszany was part of Gebiet Wilna-Land, within Generalkommissariat Litauen.

Upon the Germans' arrival, local non-Jews, mostly Polish, were recruited to form an auxiliary police force, initially headed by a brutal antisemite named Gan, which implemented the Germans' anti-Jewish measures. One policeman, named Petrusevich, was subsequently shot by the Germans for raping young Jewish girls.³

As recalled by survivor Selma Dunn, the Jews were required to make yellow patches in the form of a Star of David, which she embroidered onto the front and back of her clothing.⁴ In addition, Jews were not permitted to use the sidewalks, and they were banned from having any relations with non-Jews. From the start, the local police drove Jewish men, women, and youths to perform forced labor, which included the humiliating job of removing the grass from between the cobblestones on the streets. Other tasks included road repairs, felling trees, harvesting potatoes, and clearing snow in winter.

The Germans also established a Jewish Council (Judenrat), headed by Rabbi Reuven Chadash, which registered the Jews and had to ensure that all the German demands and regulations were met. It also took over the task of assigning Jews to forced labor. To assist it in collecting items such as linen, clothing, and soap, which German officials in Oszmiana requested, the Judenrat recruited a unit of Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) from among the Jewish youths. If the Jews could not find the required items, they purchased them illegally from non-Jews, as the Germans threatened to kill a number of Jews if their demands were not met.⁵

At the end of the summer or in the fall of 1941, probably around September, the *wójt* (local administrator) in Holszany passed on to the Judenrat German orders for the Jews to move into a ghetto.⁶ Dunn recalls that the Jews were forced into the houses around the synagogue, from which non-Jews were evicted. The Jews were permitted to take with them only what they could carry in their hands. Her family shared a small house with another family. The ghetto was surrounded by a barbed-wire fence and was guarded by the local police.⁷

By the fall of 1941, a number of refugees from the massacres in Lithuania had arrived in Holszany, and some local Jews understood the likely fate that awaited them. For example, some Holszany Jews who had moved to Oszmiana were executed there in November 1941, on the orders of the head of the Gendarmerie, for not being properly registered.⁸ The repeated German demands quickly impoverished the Jews; eventually they could no longer celebrate the Sabbath with a

special meal. The Jews, however, received some moral support from the local Polish Catholic priest, Chamski, who spoke out in his sermons against the murders of the Jews.⁹ In the winter of 1941–1942, the Jews were also required to surrender their fur items of clothing for the use of the German army. The Jews were able to sneak through the wire and barter their remaining possessions with local non-Jews for food, as some of the local policemen occasionally turned a blind eye.

On April 1, 1942, the Germans transferred a strip of territory including most of Rayon Aschmena from Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien to Gebiet Wilna-Land. At the same time, Lithuanians came in and took over the local administration and local police. Knowing the fate of the majority of the Jews in Lithuania, the Holszany Jews feared for their lives. It was probably around this time that Rabbi Reuven Chadash took a group of around 150 Jews to the ghetto in Wołozyn, which remained within Gebiet Wilejka in Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien, although the precise details of this transfer remain unknown. Unfortunately the Holszany Jews in Wołozyn were nearly all murdered in a brutal Aktion there on May 10, 1942.¹⁰

On May 13, 1942, the Gebietskommissar Wilna-Land, Horst Wulff, issued instructions concerning the ghettoization of the Jews, which stressed that if any Jews left the ghetto illegally, stern reprisals would be taken against those Jews who remained.¹¹ Despite the desire to escape, most Jews were concerned not to give the Germans any reason to liquidate the ghetto.

In the summer of 1942, around 200 young people from Holszany were sent to various forced labor camps, especially to the camp in Žiežmariai in Lithuania. Dunn was in the second transport to Žiežmariai, where she joined her sister, only about two weeks after the first transport left.¹² According to Nechama Schneider, also sent to Žiežmariai, the transfer took place in trucks, and she spent one night on her way in the Oszmiana synagogue, where Jews from other ghettos were probably added to the transport.¹³

At the end of August 1942, according to a German Labor Office census, there were 450 Jews remaining in the Holszany ghetto, of whom 210 (133 men and 77 women) were assigned to specific labor tasks. Among the various labor assignments, there were 31 Jews performing forestry work, 15 men employed at the sawmill, 25 working on an estate, 24 cleaning the streets, 20 craftsmen, and 6 Jewish policemen.¹⁴

The ghetto was liquidated in October 1942, when the remaining Jews in the Holszany ghetto were resettled to the Oszmiana ghetto, which now came under the administration of the Wilno ghetto, where the Judenrat was headed by Jacob Gens.¹⁵ When the Oszmiana ghetto was liquidated in late March and early April 1943, the Jews of Holszany shared the fate of all the Jews collected there. Those Jews deemed unfit for work were deported to Ponary and shot, while those able to work were moved to various labor camps in Lithuania.¹⁶

Of the roughly 800 Jews living in pre-war Holszany, only about 30 are known to have survived, mostly from among the

youths sent to the Žiežmariai camp. After the village was liberated in 1944, several Jewish families returned, but by the 1950s they had moved to Poland and then from there to Israel or the United States.

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jewish community of Holszany during the Holocaust can be found in these publications: Shepsl Kaplan, “In di yorn fun der deytsher yidn-oytsrotung,” in *Lebn un umkum fun Olshan* (Tel Aviv: Former Residents of Olshan in Israel, 1965), pp. 169–190; M. Gelbart, ed., *Sefer zikaron le-kabilat Oshmana* (Tel Aviv: Oshmaner Organization in Israel and Oshmaner Society in the USA, 1969); “Gol’shany,” in *Rossiiskaia Evreiskaia Entsiklopediia*, vol. 4 (Moscow: Rossiiskaia Akademii Estestvennykh Nauk, Nauchnyi fond “Evreiskaia Entsiklopediia,” “Epos,” 2000), p. 323; 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. 523; and “Holszany,” 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. 283–286.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŽIH (301/3626); GARF (7021-89-12); LCVA (e.g., R 626-1-211); VHF (e.g., # 6073, 13915, 28552, and 45832); and YVA.

Martin Dean and Alexander Kruglov
trans. Kathleen Luft

NOTES

1. Spector and Freundlich, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Bialystok, Nowogrodek*, p. 283.
2. Kaplan, “In di yorn,” pp. 170–171.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 173.
4. VHF, # 28552, testimony of Selma Dunn.
5. *Ibid.*; Kaplan, “In di yorn,” pp. 171–176; VHF, # 13915, testimony of Rita York.
6. AŽIH, 301/3626, testimony of Idel Kozłowski, dates it around two months after the arrival of the Germans.
7. VHF, # 28552.
8. Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), p. 563. This volume, however, does not include an entry for the Holszany ghetto.
9. Kaplan, “In di yorn,” pp. 175–177.
10. Eliezer Leoni, ed., *Wolozin: The Book of the City and of the Ets Hayyim Yeshiva* (Tel Aviv: Wolozhin Landsleit Associations, 1970), p. 537.
11. Anordnung Betr.: Ghettoisierung der Juden, issued by Gebietskommissar Wilna-Land, May 13, 1942, reproduced in Irena Guzenberg et al., eds., *The Ghettos of Osmyany, Svir, Švenčionys Regions: Lists of Prisoners, 1942* (Vilnius: Valstybinis Vilniaus Gaono žydu muziejus, 2009), p. 130.
12. VHF, # 28552.
13. *Ibid.*, # 45832, testimony of Nechama Schneider.
14. LCVA, R 626-1-211, pp. 18, 28, list of ghettos in Kreis Aschmena, n.d., and list of Jews working in the Holszany ghetto, August 28, 1942.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 18, list of ghettos in Kreis Aschmena, n.d., includes the comment that by October 31, 1942, the smaller

ghettos had been liquidated and the Jews accommodated in the Oschmiana ghetto.

16. Specter and Freundlich, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Bialystok, Nowogrodek*, pp. 285–286; and Kaplan, “In di yorn,” pp. 186–190.

IGNALINO

Pre-1939: Ignalino (Yiddish: Ignaline), village, Wilno województwo, Poland; 1939–1940: Ignalina, Švenčionys apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Ignalina/Ignalino, Svetsiansky uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Ignalina, Kreis Schwentschionys, Gebiet Wilna-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: rajonas center, Utena apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Ignalino is located 84 kilometers (52 miles) north-northeast of Wilno. In 1925, there were 593 Jews living in Ignalino out of a total population of 773. On the outbreak of war in 1939, there were approximately 800 Jews residing there.¹

Between September 1939 and June 1941, the inhabitants of Ignalino witnessed two regime changes, as the region was first transferred from Polish to Lithuanian control in the fall of 1939, then came under Soviet rule in June 1940. At the start of the German invasion in June 1941, very few Jews managed to flee the village. German armed forces occupied the town at the end of June.

In the first days of the German-Soviet war, a Lithuanian partisan squad of 20 to 30 men, headed by Jonas Liutkevičius, was formed in the area, which subsequently became an auxiliary police unit. The Lithuanian partisans, who wore white armbands, participated in the widespread plunder of Jewish property. The partisans also soon started to arrest Communists and Jews. Most of those arrested were taken into the forest near Lake Ilgio, where they were shot and buried. According to the research of Arūnas Bubnys, based on Soviet trial records, the partisans shot 14 Red Army soldiers and 26 Communist activists in late June 1941, then another group of 30 men and women, most of them Jews, in the first or second week of July. Soviet postwar exhumations uncovered four mass graves, containing the bodies of 32 civilians and 25 soldiers. During July 1941, in the area around Ignalino, a group of 10 Jewish men, women, and children was murdered in the village of Maksimons and another 10 between the lakes of Mekšrinis and Pelėdinis.²

In early July 1941, units of the German army passed through the village, humiliating the Jews; but they soon moved on to the east. According to the recollections of Jewish survivor Tevye Solomyak, a new Lithuanian local administration, headed by Izidorius Tijūlenis, assisted by police chief Vladas Žilėnas and other partisans, administered Ignalino on behalf of the Germans. The new authorities issued a series of anti-Jewish regulations. Jews were ordered to wear yellow patches, they were prohibited from using the sidewalks or having any contacts with non-Jews, and they were confined to the village. Within a few weeks a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was appointed, which included Dovid Soloveytsik, Ele Gilin-

sky, Gershon Kideshman, and Ruven Kagan among its members.³ The Jews were also required to perform forced labor, including especially degrading tasks during which they were beaten by the Lithuanian guards.

In August 1941, authority in the region was officially transferred to the German civil administration, and Ignalino became part of Gebiet Wilna-Land, within Generalkommissariat Litauen. On August 18, 1941, Gebietskommissar Horst Wulff issued an order for the confinement of Jews within ghettos; another order, issued by the police chief in Świeciany, in mid-August, instructed the local authorities to prepare for the transfer of the Jews of the Świeciany subdistrict to the barracks near Nowe Świeciany, about 10 kilometers (6 miles) northwest of Świeciany, and for the confiscation of their property.⁴

According to the research of Christoph Dieckmann, based mainly on the testimony of Tevye Solomyak, on September 5, the Jews of Ignalino were moved into an open ghetto, which was located on Gavėnų Street (later Ateities Street), one of the poorest sections of town. The Jews were permitted to leave the ghetto for only one hour each day other than for forced labor. The Jews lived in overcrowded conditions, and there was very little food for the Jews, many of whom worked repairing the railway lines.⁵ Estimates of the number of Jews in the ghetto vary between 400 and 1,200, but probably there were around 700 Jews living there. Even after the move into the ghetto, the Lithuanians continued to plunder the impoverished Jews; on one occasion, aged Rabbi Aaron Hyatt was beaten severely by a pillaging Lithuanian.⁶

During September, reports of the mass murders in other Lithuanian towns started to arrive from Utena, Ligmainai, and Dukszty. Allegedly the Judenrat was warned on September 20, 1941, that something terrible was about to happen. However, the Judenrat did not pass on this warning throughout the ghetto, for fear of spreading panic.⁷ Shortly before September 26, the Jews had to pay a “contribution” of 21,000 rubles to the Lithuanian authorities. By now armed Lithuanian partisans were guarding the ghetto perimeter to prevent any escapes. It is estimated that about 80 Jews, including the families of some Judenrat members, managed to flee just before or during the ghetto’s liquidation, mainly to other ghettos in neighboring Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien.⁸

In late September 1941, the Germans liquidated the Ignalino ghetto. Uniformed Germans and armed Lithuanian policemen entered the ghetto to assemble the Jews at a central point. During the roundup some Lithuanians acted with great cruelty, killing a small child and raping a woman. The assembled Jews were then escorted to an overcrowded barracks at the military camp (firing range), also known as the Poligon transit camp, near Nowe Świeciany. Carts driven by local peasants were used to transport the old, sick, and children, while the remainder had to walk. On October 9, 1941, after being held in the Poligon camp for more than a week under atrocious conditions, most of the Jews from Ignalino were shot, along with other Jews who had been collected in these barracks. Only a small group of craftsmen was selected just before the shooting and moved to the Świeciany ghetto.⁹

Some details regarding the misappropriation of Jewish property in Ignalino emerge from a letter of complaint by three former Lithuanian partisans (who probably had been cheated of their share):

The police in Ignalino and the former town mayor, Tījūlenis, as well as the present mayor, Albertas Olejunas, seized many objects of Jewish property for themselves. Police personnel and the two mayors hid these things with their relatives and friends in the villages. . . . We know that the police have the following in their possession: 220 gold rings, 55 gold watches, 35 sofas in good condition, 45 cabinets, 180 beds including mattresses, 45 cows, some 50 fur coats, and 250 tanned hides. In addition, there are many items that have been sorted, including clothing, shoes, etc. Only one tenth of the Jewish property was sold to the local residents when the Jews were liquidated.¹⁰

A subsequent investigation by German Gendarmes, however, did not result in the punishment of the Lithuanian officials assigned the task of collecting, administering, and selling off Jewish property in Ignalino.¹¹

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jewish community of Ignalino during the Holocaust can be found in these publications: Christoph Dieckmann, “Deutsche Besatzungspolitik in Litauen 1941–1944” (Ph.D. diss., Universität Freiburg, 2002), section F.1.2.6; Arūnas Bubnys, “The Fate of the Jews in the Švenčionys, Oshmyany and Svir Regions (1941–1943),” in Irena Guzenberg et al., eds., *The Ghettos of Oshmyany, Svir, Švenčionys Regions: Lists of Prisoners, 1942* (Vilnius: Valstybinis Vilniaus Gaono žydu muziejus, 2009), pp. 83–118, here pp. 100–101; and “Ignalino,” 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. 114–117.

Documentation regarding the murder of the Jews of Ignalino can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-94-435); LCVA (e.g., R 685-5-4, R 613-1-62); LYA (K 1-58-20526/3; K 1-8-194); and YVA (e.g., O-71/169.1).

Martin Dean and Alexander Kruglov
trans. Kathleen Luft

NOTES

1. YVA, O-71/169.1, pp. 145–191, testimony of Teyve Solomyak (born 1900) given to Leyb Koniuchovsky in February 1948.

2. LYA, K 1-58-20526/3, pp. 15 and verso, 48, 56–58, 141–142. There are some inevitable discrepancies between the witness testimonies and the exhumation findings, as cited by Bubnys, “The Fate of the Jews,” p. 100.

3. YVA, O-71/169.1, pp. 145–191.

4. LCVA, R 685-5-4, p. 1, order of Gebietskommissar Wilna-Land, August 18, 1941; and LYA, K 1-8-194, p. 280, protocol of B. Gruzdyš—both as cited by Bubnys, “The Fate of the Jews,” pp. 88–89.

5. Dieckmann, “Deutsche Besatzungspolitik,” section F.1.2.6; see also Bubnys, “The Fate of the Jews,” p. 101.

6. Bubnys, “The Fate of the Jews,” p. 101, cites 400 to 700. Spector and Freundlich, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Bialystok, Nowogrodek*, pp. 116–117, estimates 1,200, including a number of refugees.

7. YVA, O-71/169.1, p. 153.

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 156–170.

9. Spector and Freundlich, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Bialystok, Nowogrodek*, pp. 116–117.

10. LCVA, R 613-1-62, p. 211, letter to Kreislandwirtschaftsführer Josef Beck in Święciany, January 22, 1942.

11. See Bubnys, “The Fate of the Jews,” p. 101.

JONAVA

Pre-1940: Jonava (Yiddish: Yanova), town, Kaunas apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Jonava/Ionava, Kaunas uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Jonava, Kreis Kaunen, Gebiet Kaunen-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: rajonas center, Kaunas apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Jonava is located 32 kilometers (20 miles) northeast of Kaunas on the banks of the Neris River. After the partition of Poland between Germany and the Soviet Union in September 1939, a number of Jewish refugees arrived in Jonava, including members of the yeshiva in Kleck. The Jewish population in the town in 1940 was 3,000.

German forces captured the town by June 26, 1941. Several hundred Jews fled with the Red Army as it retreated. Of those who fled, several subsequently were forced into the Daugavpils ghetto in Latvia after being overtaken by the rapid German advance.¹ A number of houses were destroyed by the German bombardment of Jonava as the Red Army attempted to block the German advance across the Neris. Around 2,500 Jews remained in the town at the start of the German occupation. The destruction forced Jewish families to share the few remaining houses, and some homeless Jews moved into the synagogue and the Bet Midrash. About 150 Jews from Jonava moved to the Jewish village “Der Alter Gostinetz,” 8 kilometers (5 miles) away, where they performed agricultural work.²

Immediately after the occupation, Lithuanian nationalists formed a municipal administration and a militia unit (“partisans”) of around 50 men, under the command of Vladas Kulvicas, which soon began to act against the Jews. On the pretext of looking for weapons, armed Lithuanian partisans would break into Jewish houses and steal the best items for themselves. The partisans drove young and old Jews to perform forced labor, cleaning the streets, during which they beat the Jews brutally. Lithuanian activists also forcibly took some of the remaining Jewish businesses, including a bakery, which now served only non-Jews.³ During the third week of the occupation, the local authorities issued an order that Jews had to wear yellow patches.

According to the account of Efraim Zilberman, a few days later the head of the Lithuanian partisans summoned Rabbi

Ginsburg and demanded that the Jews pay a large sum of money within three days. If this demand were met, the partisan chief promised that “there would be no shootings of Jews and that a ghetto would be created.”⁴ The Jews of Jonava, however, soon established that they were unable to pay the ransom, mainly because most of the wealthier Jews had been deported to the east by the Bolsheviks just a few days before the German invasion. When the rabbi told this to the partisan leader, he was taken hostage together with a number of other Jews and severely beaten. Then he was escorted to Kaunas by two Lithuanian partisans to obtain the ransom with the help of the Jews of Kaunas. In this manner, the money was raised and the arrested Jews were then released.⁵

This respite lasted only a few days. Soon afterwards, the Lithuanian partisans rounded up around 500 young Jewish men, saying they would be taken for forced labor. Instead they were escorted only about 1 kilometer (0.6 mile) outside the town in the direction of Ukmergė, where they were shot in the Giraitė Forest. According to German documentation, a detachment of Einsatzkommando 3, with the participation of Lithuanian partisans, shot 497 Jewish men and 55 Jewish women—altogether 552 victims—in Jonava, on August 14, 1941.⁶ A few Jewish men managed to escape at the time of the shooting, but all but one of them were subsequently recaptured and killed.⁷

After this Aktion, the Jewish population in Jonava consisted almost entirely of women, children, and elderly men. Expecting another Aktion, some families went to hide in the forests or with Christians in the surrounding villages. When the partisan chief learned of this, he put up posters warning Christians not to hide Jews and offering a reward of pork or sugar equivalent to the weight of any Jew turned in. On August 23–24, the Jews of Jonava paid a “contribution” to the authorities of 120,000 rubles.⁸

About two weeks after the first Aktion, the remaining Jews in the town, together with the rabbi, were escorted to the same place in the Giraitė Forest, where large ditches had been prepared. Five Jews from among the 150 or so living in the Jewish village of Alter Gostinets were also brought to the killing site. According to the report of Einsatzkommando 3, it was responsible (together with Lithuanian auxiliaries) for the shooting of 1,556 Jews (112 men, 1,200 women, and 244 children) near Jonava between August 28 and September 2, 1941.⁹ Participating in the mass shooting were 16 members of the Lithuanian “self-defense” squad (as the militia had been renamed) from Jonava, under the command of Jonas Jurevičius, who had replaced Kulvicas.

The remaining Jews living in Alter Gostinets were spared on this occasion, as their labor was still required to bring in the harvest. In early September, however, they all were transferred to a former barracks in Jonava, where they were kept under close guard by the partisans. At this time the staff of the Lithuanian partisans issued a proclamation that any Jews who returned to the barracks from hiding would not be harmed and informed the remaining Jews that they would soon be transferred to the Kaunas ghetto. As a result, some Jews emerged

from hiding or were turned out by Christians, who said they were unable to help them anymore.¹⁰ Thus the barracks in Jonava served as a form of “remnant ghetto,” used by the authorities to tempt Jews out of hiding before their transfer to Kaunas.

On October 3, 1941, the Lithuanian guards took away any remaining valuables from the Jews in the barracks and announced that they would be sent to Kaunas the next day. The 180 Jews assembled there spent a sleepless night, still uncertain of their fate. On October 4, they were marched to Kaunas under close guard, arriving just too late to be included in the Aktion conducted against the “small ghetto” in Kaunas on that day, in which 1,845 Jews were shot. Instead, they were put into the Kaunas ghetto. Many of them were murdered, however, in the “large Aktion” conducted by the German police and their Lithuanian auxiliaries on October 28, 1941, when some 10,000 Jews from the Kaunas ghetto deemed “unfit for labor” were shot at Fort IX.¹¹

In 1944, the Germans took about 50 Jewish Police from the Kaunas ghetto to the Giraitė Forest near Jonava and forced them to exhume and burn the corpses from the mass grave there. Afterwards these men, too, were shot.¹² Only a few Jews from Jonava in the Kaunas ghetto managed to survive until the end of the war.

SOURCES Publications regarding the fate of the Jewish community of Jonava during the Holocaust include the following: Shimon Noi, ed., *Sefer Yanovab: Le-bantsa bat zikbram shel Ye-bude ba-ayarab she-ne-bevevab ba-Sboab* (Tel Aviv: Jonava Society, 1979); Arūnas Bubnys, “The Holocaust in the Lithuanian Province in 1941: The Kaunas District,” in D. Gaunt, P.A. Levine, and L. Palosuo, eds., *Collaboration and Resistance during the Holocaust: Belarus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2004), pp. 283–312, here pp. 294–299; and Rabbi Ephraim Oshry, *The Annihilation of Lithuania Jewry* (New York: Judaica Press, 1995), pp. 282–285.

Relevant documentation, including the testimonies of survivors and eyewitnesses, can be found in the following archives: LCVA (e.g., R 1534-186, p. 11); LYA (e.g., K 1-58-47536/3); MA (D4/711); RGVA (500-1-25); VHF; and YVA (e.g., M-1/E/1345 and 1358; O-22/49; and M-9/15(6)).

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NOTES

1. For a description of the flight from Jonava, see Jesaiah Ivensky (Sidney Iwens), “My Years of Agony,” in Noi, *Sefer Yanovab*, pp. 15–17. See also by the same author, Sidney Iwens, *How Dark the Heavens* (New York: Shengold, 1990).

2. Efraim Zilberman, “Aufn groysn masnkhever,” in Noi, *Sefer Yanovab*, p. 373. This article is reproduced from “Joneve,” in *Fun letstn kburbn*, no. 10 (December 1947): 64–69.

3. Reizl David (Rashkes), “Der anfang fun khurbn,” in Noi, *Sefer Yanovab*, p. 383.

4. Zilberman, “Aufn groysn masnkhever,” p. 373.

5. *Ibid.*, pp. 373–374.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 374—this source dates the first Aktion in early August. Also see RGVA, 500-1-25, report of Einsatzkommando 3, December 1, 1941.

7. LYA, K 1-58-47536/3, vol. 2, pp. 183ff., testimony of Nachumas Bliumbergas, October 30, 1945, the only survivor from the group of fugitives, as cited by Bubnys, “The Holocaust in the Lithuanian Province,” p. 296.

8. Bubnys, “The Holocaust in the Lithuanian Province,” p. 297.

9. Zilberman, “Aufn groysn masnkhever,” p. 374—this source dates the second Aktion on August 13, 1941. Also see RGVA, 500-1-25, report of Einsatzkommando 3, December 1, 1941.

10. Zilberman, “Aufn groysn masnkhever,” p. 374.

11. Ibid., p. 375; Ivensky, “My Years of Agony,” p. 17; and YVA, M-1/E/1345.

12. Zilberman, “Aufn groysn masnkhever,” p. 375.

JONIŠKĖLIS

Pre-1940: Joniškėlis (Yiddish: Yanisbkel), town, Biržai apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Joniškėlis/Ionisbkelis, Birzbai uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Jobanischkebl, Kreis Birsen, Gebiet Ponevesch-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Joniškėlis, Pasvalys rajonas, Panevėžys apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Joniškėlis is located about 32 kilometers (20 miles) north-northwest of Panevėžys. According to the 1923 census, there were 162 Jews (28 percent of the population) living in the small town. By 1940, the 210 Jews of Joniškėlis represented 21 percent of the population.¹

German armed forces occupied the town on June 27, 1941. Immediately, Lithuanian nationalists formed a local authority and a police force, which began introducing anti-Jewish measures. All the Jews' valuables were confiscated; they were assigned to various types of forced labor, during which the local antisemites subjected them to humiliation, mockery, and beatings; and they were forbidden to appear in public places and maintain relationships of any kind with other Lithuanians. Lithuanian activists also killed a number of Jews. Dr. Lichtenstein, the head of the Jewish community, tried to intervene, but his best efforts could do little to stop the beatings and killings.

In July 1941, all the town's Jews were moved into a ghetto, for which 10 houses were set aside.² The ghetto was liquidated on August 19, 1941, when all the Jews—some 200 people—were resettled into the Pasvalys ghetto, located in the synagogue there.³ They were shot on August 26, 1941, in the nearby Žadeikiai Forest, along with the other Jews gathered in the Pasvalys ghetto.

Only three Jews of Joniškėlis are known to have survived the occupation, having received shelter from local Lithuanian peasants.

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jewish community of Joniškėlis during the Holocaust can be found in these publications: “Joniškėlis,” in Shalom Bronstein, ed., *Yabadut Lita: Lithuanian Jewry*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust 1941–1945* (Tel Aviv: Association of Former Lithuanians in Israel, 1984); Dov Levin

and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 321–323; 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. 577; and “Ionishkelis,” in *Rossiiskaia Evreiskaia Entsiklopediia*, vol. 5 (Moscow: Rossiiskaia Akademia Estestvennykh Nauk, Nauchnyi-fond “Evreiskaia Entsiklopediia,” “Epos,” 2004), p. 511.

Documentation regarding the murder of the Jews of Joniškėlis can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-94-441); LCVA; and YVA.

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trans. Kathleen Luft

NOTES

1. Levin and Rosin, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Lithuania*, p. 321.

2. “Joniškėlis,” in Bronstein, *Yabadut Lita*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust 1941–1945*.

3. Report of the Biržai District Commission, May 26, 1945, published in B. Baranauskas and E. Rozauskas, eds., *Masinės žudynės Lietuvoje (1941–1944): Dokumentu rinkinys*, vol. 2 (Vilnius: Leidykla “Mintis,” 1973), p. 116.

JONIŠKIS

Pre-1940: Joniškis (Yiddish: Yanisbok), town, Šiauliai apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Joniškis/Ionisbki, Šiauliai uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Joniskis/Janisbken, Kreis Schaulen, Gebiet Schaulen-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Joniškis, rajonas center, Šiauliai apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Joniškis is located 39 kilometers (24 miles) north-northeast of Šiauliai. According to the 1923 census, there were 978 Jews living in Joniškis. By June 1941, as a result of out-migration in the 1930s, the Jewish population had declined to around 700 people.

German armed forces occupied the town on June 24, 1941. Soon afterwards, Lithuanian nationalists formed a local administration, headed by Mayor Antanas Gedvilas, and a police unit, headed by Juozas Sutkus. The police unit recruited 104 men, of which 54 were armed.¹ The local administration and police started their activities by arresting Jews and alleged Soviet sympathizers.

On July 11, 1941, the local Lithuanian Committee for Jewish Affairs, with Juozas Tininis as its head, announced a series of anti-Jewish measures. Among them was an order requiring that Joniškis Jews return from the villages. Other regulations included the compulsory wearing of the Star of David, a ban on Jews using the sidewalks, and a prohibition on Jews employing Aryans. Jews also were required to perform forced labor in agriculture and public works. On July 18, the Committee for Jewish Affairs demanded a “contribution” of 20,000 rubles from the Jews, which was to be paid to the local Lithuanian Activists' Front by the next day.² The contribution was actually paid on July 24.

In mid-July 1941, the Committee for Jewish Affairs examined the question of transferring the Jews to a separate quarter (a ghetto). It proposed putting some of the Jews in the synagogues and also housing the others on Dariaus, Girėno, and Pašvitinio Streets or transferring Jews to Žagarė. The same meeting prepared measures for the transfer of Jewish-owned farms to Lithuanians.³ A few days later, some Jews were forced to live in the synagogues, and the remainder were relocated to a group of houses adjoining the market square. This ghetto area was guarded by the local police.

The German Security Police in Šiauliai put pressure on the head of the police in Joniškis, Sutkus, to complete the murder of the Jews. At some time in August 1941, two Gestapo officials from Šiauliai, accompanied by other Germans, arrived in Joniškis to organize the murder of the local Jewish men. Sutkus then ordered the local policemen to arrest around 150 Jewish men from the synagogue. These men were put on trucks and taken to a site 5 kilometers (3 miles) outside Joniškis in the Vilkiaušis Forest, where a large ditch had been prepared. The men were ordered to undress and had to surrender their valuables. The Jews were then shot by the Lithuanian policemen (wearing white armbands) under German supervision.⁴ After the Aktion, the clothes of the murdered Jews were brought back to Joniškis, and the participants in the Aktion gathered at the local beer garden to celebrate with alcohol. Sutkus thanked his men for their “good work and sacrifices for the benefit of the Homeland.”⁵

On August 24–29, 1941, another 150 Jews were transferred from Joniškis to Žagarė, where they were murdered with the Jews of the Žagarė ghetto on October 2, 1941.⁶ The remaining 355 Jews in Joniškis, consisting mainly of the elderly, women, and children, were killed at the end of August or in September 1941 by a Lithuanian Self-Defense squad that arrived from outside the town.⁷

A number of Lithuanian collaborators, who were active in Joniškis, were tried by the Soviet authorities after the war. Among them were Antanas Gedvilas and Juozas Sutkus, who were tried in 1947.

SOURCES The main published source used for preparing this entry is “Joniškis,” by Arūnas Bubnys, “The Fate of Jews in Šiauliai and the Šiauliai Region,” in Irena Guzenberg and Jevgenija Sedova, eds., *The Šiauliai Ghetto: Lists of Prisoners, 1942* (Vilnius: Valstybinis Vilniaus Gaono žydu muziejus, 2002), pp. 242–243. Additional information on the persecution and murder of the Jews of Joniškis can be found in the following publications: B. Baranauskas and E. Rozauskas, eds., *Masinės žudynės Lietuvoje (1941–1944): Dokumentu rinkinys*, vol. 2 (Vilnius: Leidykla “Mintis,” 1973), pp. 231, 240, 252, 403; “Joniškis,” in Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 339–340; and Michael MacQueen, “Lithuanian Collaboration in the ‘Final Solution’: Motivations and Case Studies,” in *Lithuania and the Jews: The Holocaust Chapter; Symposium Presentations* (Washington, DC: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum,

Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies [2004]; first printing in July 2005), p. 8.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: GARF; LVOA (3377-55-150); and LYA (46599/3; 1356/3; K 1-46-1257).

Alexander Kruglov and Martin Dean
trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. LYA, 46599/3, vol. 5, pp. 342–344.
2. Baranauskas and Rozauskas, *Masinės žudynės Lietuvoje*, vol. 2, p. 240.
3. Minutes of the Joniškis Committee for Jewish Affairs, not later than July 18, 1941, LYA, 46599/3, vol. 5, p. 18.
4. *Ibid.*, 46599/3, vol. 1, pp. 307–313; K 1-46-1257, pp. 2–3; Baranauskas and Rozauskas, *Masinės žudynės Lietuvoje*, vol. 2, p. 403.
5. LYA, 46599/3, vol. 3, pp. 63–64, testimony of J. Diržinskas, as cited by Bubnys, “The Fate of Jews,” p. 243. See also MacQueen, “Lithuanian Collaboration,” p. 8.
6. Mayor of the town of Joniškis to the mayor of the town of Žagarė, September 1, 1941, in Baranauskas and Rozauskas, *Masinės žudynės Lietuvoje*, vol. 2, p. 252.
7. *Ibid.* Details of these murders can be found in the investigation of Zubrevičius, Brinklis, and others (LYA, 1356/3); verdict in the cases of Kakliauskas, Sutkus, and Ožalas, August 3, 1961 (LYA, 46599/3); statement of the former policeman Jonas Ožalas, January 25, 1961 (LVOA, 3377-55-150).

JURBARKAS

Pre-1940: Jurbarkas (Yiddish: Yurburg), town, Raseiniai apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Jurbarkas/Jurbarkus, Raseiniai uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Georgenburg, Kreis Raseinen, Gebiet Schaulen-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Jurbarkas, rajonas center, Tauragė apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Jurbarkas is located 72 kilometers (45 miles) west-northwest of Kaunas and 120 kilometers (75 miles) west of Wilno. A census conducted in 1940 recorded a population of 4,439, of whom 1,319 (29.7 percent) were Jews, although other sources put the number of Jews at about 2,000 or more.¹

Following the annexation of Lithuania by the Soviet Union in 1940, all large companies and banks were taken over by the state, and Jewish cultural and political organizations were banned. In mid-June 1941, the Soviets deported at least 60 people from Jurbarkas, including several Jewish families (almost half of those deported).²

In 1941, the town was only 10 kilometers (6 miles) from the border with Germany. On the morning of the German invasion of Lithuania, June 22, the German army marched into the town. A local government was established immediately. The German military commandant (Ortskommandant), Hauptmann Baar, announced that the mayor had to obey his orders and that acts of sabotage and plundering would be punishable

by death. Officials who had served in the interwar Lithuanian Republic returned to their previous posts. Jurgis Gepneris again became mayor, and Mykolas Levickas became chief of police, serving until the middle of July, when he resigned to direct the local branch of the Lithuanian Nationalist Party. Levickas organized a regular police force, but an auxiliary police company (Lithuanian partisans) was also established for self-defense purposes.³

Jurbarkas lay within the border region of Lithuania assigned to the Tilsit Gestapo. Among those agents of the German SD who operated in Jurbarkas were Grigalavicius, Voldemaras Kriauza, Richardas Sperbergas, Oskaras Seferis, and Karstenis.⁴ The Germans organized the massacres of the Jews, but the direct responsibility of the local Lithuanian perpetrators is not in doubt. German SS men began killing individual Jews during the first days of the occupation.

The first massacre of Jews occurred on July 3, when a group of about 40 men from the Security Police in Tilsit arrived in town and, together with local Lithuanian policemen, began to round up Jewish men from their houses and workplaces on the basis of lists prepared beforehand. A column of more than 300 people was assembled, including about 70 Lithuanians believed to have supported the Soviets. They were escorted to the Jewish cemetery, shot, and buried.⁵

After the July 3 Aktion, Kriminalsekretär Carsten of the Gestapo in Tilsit put the policeman Urbonas in charge of guarding the surviving Jews: the families of the men who had been shot and about 50 male Jews who had been kept alive as workers and their families. From the second day of the occupation, Jews had been compelled to perform various work tasks. For example, Jewish women had to sew and repair German uniforms.⁶

According to eyewitnesses, the second series of mass killings took place at the end of July and the beginning of August. First, 45 men over the age of 50 were shot along with other Jews from neighboring places. At this time the Jews in Jurbarkas were also ordered to tear down the historic wooden synagogue, and Jewish books and pictures were burned, as well as a bust of Stalin. The Jews also were ordered to dance and sing while Germans photographed the spectacle.⁷ Then, on August 1, 105 older women and children were marched in the direction of Smalininkai, where they were shot and buried in pits.⁸

In mid-August 1941, the Gebietskommissar in Šiauliai ordered the establishment of Jewish ghettos in the larger towns of the district, but in Jurbarkas such “ghettos” existed well before this order was given.⁹ In Jurbarkas, the term *ghetto* was used to mean a few buildings where Jews were held under guard. According to postwar testimony by Levickas (chief of the police), “after the first shootings in June, mass arrests were carried out by a group of the police and the auxiliary police. The arrested Jewish men were transferred into the ghetto. . . . I think that there were two ghettos, both in Dariaus and Girėno Streets, being guarded by police and auxiliary police.”¹⁰

Further testimony from a member of the Jurbarkas police states:

The Jews with their children and the elderly were placed in the ghetto, which was a building surrounded by barbed wire. . . . There the Jews lived under prison conditions. The diet was poor, consisting of cabbage soup and a little bread. They were driven to work under guard and had to clean rubbish from the houses and the streets and do other disgusting and difficult work, with food being scarce.¹¹

On August 21, there were still 684 Jews in the Jurbarkas ghetto, of whom 64 were engaged in forced labor.¹² From September 4 to 6, those Jews deemed unfit for work, about 400 women and children, were driven into the yard of the “Talmud-Torah,” which served as the women’s ghetto. They were then escorted to pits near Kalnėnai and murdered in cruel circumstances by Lithuanian police under German direction. On September 12, only 272 Jews were still alive in Jurbarkas, including 73 who were working.¹³ These Jews were murdered shortly afterwards by a small killing squad from Kaunas, again assisted by the local police.¹⁴

In a letter dated October 6, the mayor informed the Lithuanian Office of Statistics in Kaunas that “on October 1 of this year there were no more Jews within the borders of the town of Jurbarkas, and such is the situation today.”¹⁵ Local Lithuanians profited from the murder of their neighbors. In Jurbarkas, 208 houses had lost their owners and inhabitants.¹⁶ The names of 76 survivors from Jurbarkas have been documented.

SOURCES The main sources for this entry include an essay on the Holocaust in Jurbarkas by Christoph Dieckmann, *Deutsche Besatzungspolitik in Litauen 1941–1944*, 2 vols. (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2011); and also the useful B.A. thesis submitted at the University of Vilnius in 1997 by Ruta Puisyte titled “Holocaust in Jurbarkas: The Mass Extermination of Jews of Jurbarkas in the Provinces of Lithuania during the German Nazi Occupation,” available in English at jewishgen.org, which is also linked to the English translation of the Yurburg yizkor book, edited by Zevulun Poran, *Sefer HaZikaron LeKebilah Yurburg-Lita* (Tel Aviv: Organization of Former Residents of Yurburg, 1991).

Other publications specifically on Jurbarkas include the following: Chayim Jofe, *Jewish Life and Death: Jurbarkas* (Vilnius, 1996); “The Destruction of the Jewish Community of Yurburg,” in Shalom Bronstein, ed., *Yabadut Lita: Lithuanian Jewry*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust 1941–1945* (Tel Aviv: Association of Former Lithuanians in Israel, 1984), pp. 295–297; Rabbi Ephraim Oshry, *The Annihilation of Lithuania Jewry* (New York: Judaica Press, 1995), pp. 285–289; Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 324–329; and an article on the murder of the Jews of Jurbarkas by Antanas Salynas, “Nuzudytu veles budi,” *Kauno Diena*, August 7–8, September 23, 1996.

Documentation on the murder of the Jews of Jurbarkas can be found in the following archives: BA-BL (R 58/214); BA-L; LCVA (R 1753-1-3, R 1753-3-4, 12, 13); LG-UIm; LYA (B.85/3, B.14142/3, B.16816); and YVA.

Ellen Cassedy and Martin Dean

NOTES

1. On December 26, 1940, 1,319 Jews were counted in the town; see LCVA, R 1753-3-13, p. 28. Also see Levin and Rosin, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Lithuania*, pp. 324–329.

2. See LCVA, R 1753-1-3, p. 212, and 1753-3-13, p. 22; Puisyte, “Holocaust in Jurbarkas,” pp. 23–24.

3. Bekanntmachung des Ortskommandanten, June 24, 1941, LCVA, R 1753-3-12. After the war Levickas was tried and convicted by a Soviet military tribunal; see LYA, B.14142/3.

4. Transcript of the interrogation of Gepneris, August 22, 1945, LYA, B.85/3, p. 16.

5. BA-BL, R 58/214, p. 123, Ereignismeldungen UdSSR no. 19, July 11, 1941, records that 322 people, including 5 women, were shot; interrogation of Hans-Joachim Böhme, December 18, 1956, LG-Ulm, Ks 2/57 (Fischer-Schweder case), vol. 7, p. 1564.

6. *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 15 (Amsterdam: University Press Amsterdam, 1976), Lfd. Nr. 465, pp. 203–204 (LG-Ulm, Ks 2/57, verdict of August 29, 1958); Poran, *Sefer HaZikaron*, pp. 117–122, 404–405.

7. Puisyte, “Holocaust in Jurbarkas.”

8. Poran, *Sefer HaZikaron*, p. 406.

9. LCVA, R 1753-3-4, pp. 36–37, order of the Gebietskommissar in Šiauliai, August 14, 1941, which reached Jurbarkas only on August 27, 1941.

10. Transcript of the interrogation of Mykolas Levickas, November 24, 1948, LYA, B.14142/3, pp. 47–48.

11. Transcript of the confrontation of P. Kairaitis with the witness J. Keturauskas, June 21, 1948, *ibid.*, B.16816, pp. 69–70.

12. Reply of Gepneris on August 21, 1941, to the letter from the head of the district in Raseiniai, August 16, 1941, LCVA, R 1753-3-13, p. 22.

13. Poran, *Sefer HaZikaron*, pp. 392, 406–407. In the report of Einsatzkommando 3 on shootings carried out up to December 1, 1941, 412 victims were recorded for Jurbarkas; see BA-BL, R 70 Sowjetunion 15, p. 90. See also LCVA, R 1753-3-13, p. 58, letter of Gepneris to Kreischef in Raseiniai, September 12, 1941, which indicates that not all Jews had been shot by this date.

14. Puisyte, “Holocaust in Jurbarkas,” appendix 3, lists the names of 31 local collaborators who participated in the murder of the Jews of Jurbarkas.

15. LCVA, R 1753-3-13, p. 148.

16. *Ibid.*, R 1753-1-3, p. 3.

KAIŠIADORYS

Pre-1940: Kaišiadorys (Yiddish: Kosbedar), town, Trakai apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Kaišiadorys/Kaishadoris, Trakai uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Koschedaren, Kreis Traken, Gebiet Wilna-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Kaišiadorys, Kaunas rajonas and apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Kaišiadorys is located about 39 kilometers (24 miles) northwest of Troki (Trakai). According to the 1923 census, 596 Jews were residing in Kaišiadorys (31 percent of the total). The Jewish population fluctuated during the 1920s and 1930s due to emigration. By mid-1941, the number of Jews in the town

had declined somewhat. Under Soviet occupation in 1940–1941, a number of Jewish businesses were nationalized and Jewish organizations dissolved.

German armed forces entered the town on June 24, 1941. Immediately following the Germans' arrival, Lithuanian nationalists organized a local administration under the leadership of Povilas Gabe and an auxiliary police unit under Antanas Paškauskas. The new local authorities soon introduced a series of anti-Jewish measures. The Jews of Kaišiadorys were ordered to wear a Star of David on their outer clothing, and a Jewish Council (Judenrat), consisting of six members under the leadership of Aronas Jofanas, was established. The Jewish population was forced to perform a variety of labor tasks. While doing these unpleasant and arduous tasks, the Jews faced derision, humiliation, and beatings at the hands of local antisemites. In addition, Jews were forbidden to appear in public places or have any kind of direct contact with non-Jews.

During the first days of the German occupation, Lithuanian partisans murdered four local Jews. Shortly afterwards, local police auxiliaries maintained that they had “found” some machine guns and ammunition in the Bet Midrash and arrested the rabbi and the *shochet* (ritual slaughterer). The local police then chased the two men through the streets of the town, beating them until elderly Rabbi David-Aharon Yaffe died.¹

On August 10, 1941, all the Jews of Kaišiadorys were resettled into an improvised ghetto, which consisted of a large grain storage building near the railway station that had been built under Soviet rule. A total of 105 Jewish families (375 people) were forced to live in the ghetto. Jews were taken out of the ghetto every day for forced labor, working in the town, digging peat, or performing agricultural work for local farmers. Lithuanian auxiliaries, assigned to guard the ghetto, beat and robbed the Jewish inmates.

On August 17, 1941, additional Jews from Žaslai (263 men and 85 women) and from Žiežmariai (193 men and 89 women) were transferred to the Kaišiadorys ghetto. These individuals were primarily male Jews older than 14 and Jewish women, who were accused of having worked for the Soviet authorities in 1940–1941.² The overcrowding in the ghetto and the lack of food and medication led to the outbreak of disease among the ghetto inmates. Noting the deteriorating situation in the ghetto, the head of the Kaunas police department, Reivitis, asked SS-Obersturmführer Joachim Hamann to remove the Jews to prevent the spread of disease to the local non-Jewish community.³

On August 26, 1941, the German authorities liquidated the Kaišiadorys ghetto, killing a total of 1,911 Jews in a major Aktion.⁴ The shootings were conducted by members of Einsatzkommando 3, assisted by members of the Lithuanian auxiliary police. The killing took place in the Strošiūnai Forest about 5 kilometers (3 miles) outside the town. The German authorities subsequently shot one Lithuanian for giving shelter to a Jewish family who had evaded the mass killing.

Between 1943 and 1944, a labor camp existed in Kaišiadorys (Koschedaren), which was also a subcamp of the Kauen concentration camp.

SOURCES Information about the fate of the Jews of Kaišiadorys during the Holocaust can be found in the following publications: “Kaišiadorys,” in Shalom Bronstein, ed., *Yahadut Lita: Lithuanian Jewry, 1941–1945* (Tel Aviv: Association of Former Lithuanians in Israel, 1984); “Kaišiadorys,” in Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 571–573; and Neringa Latvytė-Gustaitienė, “Kaišiadorys,” *Holokaustas Trakų apskrityje/Voruta (Trakai)*, no. 9 (2003): 531.

Documents on the persecution and destruction of the Jews in Kaišiadorys can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-94-431); LVA; RGVA (500-1-25); and YVA (M-1/E/247).
Alexander Kruglov and Katrin Reichelt

NOTES

1. YVA, M-1/E/247; Latvytė-Gustaitienė, “Kaišiadorys.”
2. Latvytė-Gustaitienė, “Kaišiadorys.”
3. See the letter of the head of the police in Kaunas, Reivitis, August 23, 1941, published in B. Baranauskas and K. Ruksenas, *Documents Accuse* (Vilnius: Gintaras, 1970), p. 216.
4. RGVA, 500-1-25, p. 106, report of Einsatzkommando 3, September 10, 1941. It is likely that this number also includes the many Jewish women and children who had remained initially in Žasliai and Žiezmariai.

KALTINĖNAI

Pre-1940: Kaltinėnai (Yiddish: Koltenian), village, Tauragė apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Kaltinėnai/Kaltinenai, Tauragė uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Kaltinenai, Kreis Tauraggen, Gebiet Schaulen-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Kaltinėnai, Šilalė rajonas, Tauragė apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Kaltinėnai is located about 48 kilometers (30 miles) south-southeast of Telšiai. The census of 1923 reported 130 Jews residing in Kaltinėnai, constituting about 20 percent of the total population. In 1940, about 15 or 20 Jewish families remained in the village.

German forces occupied Kaltinėnai shortly after they invaded the USSR on June 22, 1941. At the end of June, Lithuanian partisans and SS men from Heydekrug (Šilutė) arrived in Kaltinėnai and arrested all the Jewish men over the age of 15. These men were transported by truck to a labor camp in Heydekrug. At the camp, the Jews, together with other Jewish men from the region, were forced to work from sunrise until late in the evening. A number of these Jewish prisoners were shot after only four or five weeks, and the others remained as forced laborers for more than three years. Their rations consisted of 300 grams (10.6 ounces) of bread and half a liter (half a quart) of watery soup per day. In the winter, they were forced to load trains. Some of these Jews ultimately ended up in the concentration camp system, passing through Auschwitz II-Birkenau in 1943. From there a group was sent to clean up the area of the Warsaw ghetto.

On September 4, 1941, the remaining Jews in Kaltinėnai, mostly women and children, were isolated in an improvised

ghetto located in an alley with the worst housing conditions.¹ The women and children were engaged primarily in agricultural work. On September 16, 1941, they were all taken to the Tūbinės Forest and murdered there along with Jews from the surrounding villages.

SOURCES Information about the persecution and murder of the Jews of Kaltinėnai can be found in the following publications: “Kaltinėnai,” in Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 596–597; and Christoph Dieckmann, “Deutsche Besatzungspolitik in Litauen 1941–1944” (Ph.D. diss., Universität Freiburg, 2002), section F.1.2.2.

Martin Dean

NOTE

1. Dieckmann, “Deutsche Besatzungspolitik.”

KAMAJAI

Pre-1940: Kamajai (Yiddish: Kamei), village, Rokiškis apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Kamajai/Kamaiai, Rokiškis uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Kamajai, Kreis Rokischken, Gebiet Ponewesch-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Rokiškis rajonas, Panevėžys apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Kamajai is located about 70 kilometers (43 miles) east-northeast of Panevėžys. In 1923, there were 336 Jews living in Kamajai, comprising 53 percent of the total population.

German forces occupied Kamajai on June 26, 1941. A number of Jews attempted to escape to the Soviet Union, but many became trapped in Rokiškis and shared the fate of the Jews there. In the interim period, before the arrival of the Germans, Lithuanian nationalists took revenge on Jews for the repression of Lithuanians under Soviet rule; several Jews were murdered, and others were beaten or had their property ransacked. The savagery against the Jews continued under German occupation. Jews were evicted from their homes and imprisoned in the large synagogue without regular provision of food or water.

A few weeks later all the Jewish men were sent to Rokiškis, where they were held briefly under even worse conditions. The women and children were sent to the nearby village of Obeliai. All the remaining Kamajai Jews were murdered between August 15 and August 27, 1941, together with other Jews from nearby towns and villages. The men were shot first in the Velniaduobė Woods, 5 kilometers (3 miles) north of Rokiškis. The women and children were shot later near the village of Antanašė, 5 kilometers (3 miles) south of Obeliai. The shootings were conducted by units of Rollkommando Hamann, subordinated to Einsatzkommando 3, assisted by Lithuanian partisans.¹

After the liberation, only a few Jews returned to Kamajai. Most of those who survived had managed to escape to the Soviet Union in time.

SOURCES Information about the persecution and murder of the Jews of Kamajai can be found in the following publications:

Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), p. 604; Rabbi Ephraim Oshry, *The Annihilation of Lithuania Jewry* (New York: Judaica Press, 1995), pp. 198–199; and Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), p. 280.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: LYA and RGVA (500-1-25).

Martin Dean

NOTE

1. Report of Einsatzkommando 3, December 1, 1941, RGVA, 500-1-25, pp. 111–112; Josef Levinson, ed., *The Shoah (Holocaust) in Lithuania* (Vilnius: Vilna Gaon Jewish State Museum, 2006), p. 503; Alfonsas Eidintas, *Jews, Lithuanians and the Holocaust* (Vilnius: Versus Aureus, 2003), pp. 288–289.

KAUNAS

Pre-1940: Kaunas (Yiddish: Kovne), city, apskritis center and provisional capital, Lithuania; 1940–1941: uезд center, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Kauen, city and Kreis center, Gebiet Kauen-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Kaunas, rajonas and apskritis center, Republic of Lithuania

Kaunas is located 100 kilometers (62.5 miles) west-northwest of Wilno. Prior to the war, roughly 40,000 Jews lived in Kaunas—about one quarter of the city’s population. The Soviet occupation of Lithuania in the summer of 1940 aggravated antisemitic sentiments in the country. Soviet repressive and economic measures affected the Jews just as much as, if not more than, non-Jewish Lithuanians.

Two days after the German invasion of the Soviet Union, on the evening of June 24, 1941, the 2nd Corps, part of the 16th Army in Army Group North (General von Leeb) occupied Kaunas. Security Police and SD units charged with “special tasks” followed on the heels of the Wehrmacht; when the leader of Einsatzgruppe A, SS-Brigadegeneral Dr. Walter

Stahlecker, reached the city about one day later, anti-Jewish violence was already in full swing. As elsewhere in Lithuania, nationalists took advantage of the withdrawal of Soviet troops to instigate pogroms against Jewish men. In Kaunas, one of the best-documented pogroms took place at the Lietukis garage, where Jews were beaten to death in front of German and Lithuanian spectators.

Stahlecker’s unit swiftly channeled uncoordinated violence into organized terror and transformed bands of Lithuanian collaborators into regular auxiliary police units that helped kill Jews in old forts (Forts IV, VII, and IX) outside the city. SS-Standartenführer Karl Jäger, leader of Einsatzkommando 3—a subunit of Einsatzgruppe A—based in Kaunas, reported that 4,000 Jews had been killed in pogroms prior to his arrival in early July. With the consolidation of German rule, the death toll in Lithuania rose to more than 136,000 Jewish men, women, and children by December 1941. More than any other killing site in or around Kaunas, Fort IX became synonymous with German genocidal policies; the Germans murdered an estimated 50,000 people there, including Jews deported from other countries, during the war. By late 1941, except for the surviving Jews in the few remaining ghettos, the “Jewish question” in the region was already regarded as solved.¹

Following the model that the Germans first adopted in occupied Poland in late 1939, the Nazi authorities in the major cities of Kaunas and Wilno, as well as in a number of other localities, registered, marked, and resettled the Jews into ghettos to work for the German war effort.² To organize the relocation of the 35,000 Jews in Kaunas to the designated area known as Slobodka in Yiddish, or Vilijampolė in Lithuanian, a part of town north of the Neris River that some 8,000 people (both Jews and Christians) had previously occupied, a Jewish committee was formed in early July 1941, headed by the well-known physician Elchanan Elkes (born 1879). This committee provided the nucleus for the Jewish Council of Elders (Ältestenrat) that was officially established on August 8, 1941. Despite protests by the committee about the lack of all vital preconditions (such as plumbing, sewers, and adequate housing) for the mass resettlement into Slobodka, the Lithuanian auxiliary city administration ordered on July 10, 1941, that the relocation had to be completed by August 15, the day on which the ghetto would be sealed off.³

The newly appointed German civil administration under Hans Cramer (former mayor of Dachau) as Stadtkommissar officially confirmed the Lithuanian mayor’s resettlement order on July 31, 1941, and assumed authority over the emerging ghetto, while security matters remained in the hands of Jäger’s police forces. A succession of German units and their Lithuanian helpers not only controlled the outer fence and the gates of the ghetto but, in January 1942, also set up a guard post within the ghetto. (The ghetto was guarded first by the 3rd Company of Reserve Police Battalion 11, followed by the 4th Company of an NSKK [Nationalsozialistisches Kraftfahrkorps, a motorized unit of the Nazi Party] detachment and from late August 1942 by Schutzpolizei from Vienna together with Lithuanian auxiliary policemen.)⁴ For less than



Jews are gathered at an assembly point in the Kaunas ghetto during a deportation Aktion, probably to Estonia, October 26, 1943. USHMM WS #10687, COURTESY OF GEORGE KADISH/ZVI KADUSHIN



Group portrait of staff from the Bikur Holim Jewish hospital in Kaunas, 1933. Seated at center is Dr. Elchanan Elkes, later chairman of the Kaunas Jewish Council of Elders.

USHMM WS #10191, COURTESY OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE LITHUANIAN JEWS IN ISRAEL

two months after its enclosure, the ghetto consisted of two separate areas: the “large ghetto” alongside the Neris River and the “small ghetto” to the west, connected by a wooden footbridge. Until its transformation into a concentration camp in the fall of 1943, the ghetto was reduced in size several times; simultaneously, the living space officially allocated to each ghetto inmate shrank dramatically.⁵

Elkes and his *Ältestenrat* met for the first time on August 17, 1941, before the Germans initiated a series of mass executions that claimed the lives of almost half the Jewish population in Kaunas. In an atmosphere dominated by confusion, fear, and desperation, the disparate gathering of men that formed the Jewish Council established a range of institutions designed to reconcile the irreconcilable: to alleviate the plight of the ghetto inmates, on the one hand, and to fulfill German demands, on the other. In 1942, the council supervised through its secretariat (headed by Avraham Golub [later Tory]) the work of the ghetto police and offices for health, labor, economics, food supply, housing, and welfare; there was also a fire brigade, a paint and sign workshop, a pharmacy, a hospital, a statistics office, and at times, a court, as well as education and residents’ records offices.⁶ (After August 1942, the *Ältestenrat* consisted of Elkes as chairman, his deputy Leib Garfunkel, Jacob Goldberg, and Avraham Golub as secretary.)⁷

Invariably, the administration of shortages and hardship affected some groups—the old, the young, the poor, and those without connections to the ghetto leadership—more than others. The *Ältestenrat* and its agencies, most notably the ghetto Jewish Police, could not avoid becoming key instruments for the implementation of German policies. In the eyes of most ghetto inmates, however, Elkes’s personal integrity remained untarnished at the time as well as after the war, in contrast to the experience of certain other major ghettos in Eastern Europe. Avoiding the abuse of its powers, the *Ältestenrat* tried to uphold minimal legal standards and to appeal to the sense of duty of those administering its decisions. Perhaps the most symbolic measure taken by the *Ältestenrat*

with a view towards fostering a sense of collective identity was the swearing in of the police on November 1, 1942; roughly one week after the Jewish Police had rounded up those Jews who were to be deported to Riga.⁸

Another aspect specific to the Kaunas *Ältestenrat* was its support for the underground inside and outside the ghetto. Resistance groups had emerged in the ghetto shortly after its closure and by early 1942 had consolidated along Zionist and leftist lines. Under the circumstances, contacts had to be highly clandestine to prevent the *Ältestenrat* from being implicated in resistance activities by the Germans; yet Elkes as well as his deputy Garfunkel became members of the Zionist umbrella organization “Matzok,” and even the Jewish Police supported underground activities. The *Ältestenrat* also tried to document the ghetto history by secretly compiling evidence of German atrocities. Organized resistance efforts focused less on preparing a mass uprising in the ghetto than on preparing the way into hiding for as many Jews as possible. In the summer of 1943, the underground established close ties with resistance groups outside the ghetto, especially in the forests, that helped hundreds of Jews to escape from the ghetto.⁹

As in other ghettos, in Kaunas work was perceived as the key prerequisite for collective survival: all men aged 16 to 57 and women 17 to 46 performed forced labor. Jews worked in ghetto workshops (established in December 1941) or, more frequently, outside in construction brigades. Several thousand Jews left the ghetto every day for the city and its surroundings, one of the most notorious assignments being the Aleksotas airfield construction site, with almost 3,500 laborers in the spring of 1942. Elkes and his men tried to rotate assignments to this brigade by alternating with people from other less-exhausting details; at the same time, the daily quota of workers set by the Germans had to be met.¹⁰

Against all odds, ghetto inmates tried to eke out a living and to uphold hope for survival. The Jewish Council added to the official starvation rations by cultivating gardens or smuggling in food; often transgressing the limits of its functions as defined by the Germans, it created facilities to educate children and to prevent the already appalling health conditions from further deteriorating and tried to preserve a minimum of cultural life, for example, through concerts by the police orchestra and observing religious holidays as well as through exhibitions of art created in the ghetto.¹¹ For a few weeks in the summer of 1942, there was even room for a unique pastime when the Jews were permitted to bathe in the Neris River.¹²

It is estimated that of the roughly 40,000 Jewish inhabitants of Kaunas, only 2,000 survived the war. Most of the victims were killed in mass executions in the first six months of the German occupation; ghettoization itself went hand in hand with the extermination of those regarded as either dangerous or useless. Three days after the ghetto was enclosed, 711 Jews were shot as members of the “*intelligentsia*”; on September 26, 1941, Jäger’s men murdered 1,608 more ghetto inmates, among them 615 women and 581 children, in an Aktion legitimized as a reprisal for an alleged attack on a German police officer.¹³



A musical performance in the Kaunas ghetto, n.d.
USHMM WS #10920, COURTESY OF GEORGE KADISH/ZVI KADUSHIN

On October 4, 1941, 1,845 Jews, including 818 children, were killed during the liquidation of the “small ghetto.”

At the end of October, the ghetto went through what survivors remember as the “large Aktion”: on October 28, German police selected from among the ghetto population assembled in Demokratu Square roughly 10,000 victims as “unfit for labor,” almost half of them children. An estimated 30 people died from exhaustion on the assembly square; those who had tried to hide were killed in their houses, the 10,000 “unfit” were escorted to Fort IX, where they were shot into mass graves one day later. According to Jäger, some 15,000 “work Jews” (*Arbeitsjuden*) and their families were left alive for the time being.¹⁴ Not only in scale but also in the manner of their conduct, these mass murders set a precedent; they incorporated elements that later became standard features of the “Final Solution” all across Nazi-occupied Eastern Europe. The expansion of the killings to include women and children on a massive scale and the “selection” of the “unfit,” as performed during the “large Aktion” in the Kaunas ghetto, resembled the procedure adopted much later at the “Rampe” in the Auschwitz II-Birkenau killing center.

In Kaunas, a so-called quiet period followed the organized carnage of the second half of 1941: a time span of almost two years in which the brutal and often deadly “normalcy” of ghetto life replaced the mass killings of ghetto inmates. In this phase, everyday persecution took the form of countless German orders, for example, stipulating that Jews caught trying to smuggle food would be shot, or of assaults on the ghetto inmates.¹⁵ At the same time, Kaunas remained the site of mass killings: in November 1941, almost 5,000 deported German Jews bypassed the ghetto and went straight to the killing fields at Fort IX; other transports from the west followed.¹⁶ Bitter cold, starvation, disease, and desperation continuously drained the life of the ghetto inmates; for the period between June 1942 and July 1943, the *Ältestenrat* reported an average monthly death rate of roughly 20 people.¹⁷

The separation of tasks that the Germans enforced after the establishment of the Kaunas ghetto—with Jäger’s office in

charge of security matters, the *Stadtkommissariat* regulating the ghetto administration, and the *Ältestenrat* as executor of German demands—remained in place until the summer of 1942, when the civil administration and the Security Police curtailed the functions of Elkes’s council. The civil administration took over the management of the large ghetto workshops in mid-June 1942; less than two months later, an identification card was introduced for all ghetto inhabitants. In early July 1942, the Security Police gave additional powers to its collaborators Joseph Serebrovitz (aka Caspi) and Benno Lipzer vis-à-vis the *Ältestenrat* and supported “clandestine agents” in the ghetto.¹⁸

In a seemingly “stable” situation, characterized, in the words of Avraham Tory, by “‘normal’ arrests, various persecutions, and excesses,” the determination of the Germans to finish what they had started became visible in a number of incidents: the deportation of several hundred ghetto Jews to work in Riga in late October 1942; the public hanging of Nahum Meck in November 1942 for smuggling, accompanied by the arrest of three members of the *Ältestenrat*; and the execution of several dozen Jews in the “Stalingrad Aktion” of February 1943.¹⁹ As planned by Jäger and Stahlecker as early as the summer of 1941, pregnancies and births in the ghetto were officially prohibited in July 1942; whoever violated this order was threatened with the death penalty.²⁰

In the spring of 1943, following mass executions in other ghettos in Lithuania, organized efforts to escape from the Kaunas ghetto to the forests intensified, with the help of the *Ältestenrat*.²¹ Simultaneously, German persecution increased as a result of Himmler’s order of mid-June 1943 to transform all ghettos in Reichskommissariat Ostland into concentration camps. In Kaunas, the transition from ghetto to concentration camp was extended over several months. The formal transfer of authority to the SS under concentration camp commander Wilhelm Göcke took place on September 15, 1943. For information about this transition and the period of the concentration camp, readers are referred to the entry in Volume I of this series (**Kaunas Main Camp**, pp. 848–852).

While survivors of the Kaunas ghetto played a major role after 1945 in collecting testimonies on German crimes in Lithuania,²² it took decades until the history of the ghetto received appropriate attention in public memory. Until the early 1990s, the official Soviet commemoration of Nazi crimes and the sentencing of Nazi collaborators dominated perceptions in Lithuania. Lithuanians felt more reluctant to deal with the issue, but since the country became independent in 1991, discussion of Lithuania’s role in the Holocaust has been more critical.²³

The efforts to bring the perpetrators to justice remained haphazard, as many successfully escaped their responsibility. Karl Jäger committed suicide in June 1959 when German prosecutors started investigating the wartime activities of his unit in Kaunas. Against Helmut Rauca, a former member of Jäger’s Security Police office who supervised the “selection” of ghetto inmates during the “large Aktion,” investigations were initiated in his new homeland, Canada, as well as in Ger-

many, where he died in custody in 1983. The U.S. Department of Justice has conducted several denaturalization proceedings since the 1970s against former members of Lithuanian auxiliary police units. Together with the archival documentation and survivor testimonies available, partly in published form, the material generated in the course of postwar investigations provides unique insights into the history of the Kaunas ghetto.

SOURCES Among the most significant published source editions are the following: 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); Solly Ganor, *Light One Candle: A Survivor's Tale from Lithuania to Jerusalem* (New York: Kodansha International, 1995); Reinhard Kaiser and Margarete Holzman, eds., *"Dies Kind soll leben." Die Aufzeichnungen der Helene Holzman 1941–1944* (Frankfurt am Main: Schöffling, 2000); B. Baranauskas and E. Rozauskas, ed., *Documents Accuse* (Vilnius: Gintaras, 1970); Avraham Tory, *Surviving the Holocaust: The Kovno Ghetto Diary* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990).

Of the many secondary works related to the Kaunas ghetto, the following are recommended for further reading: Wolfgang Benz and Marion Neiss, eds., *Judenmord in Litauen: Studien und Dokumente* (Berlin: Metropol, 1999); Christoph Dieckmann, "Das Ghetto und das Vernichtungslager in Kaunas 1941–1944," in Ulrich Herbert, Karin Orth, and Christoph Dieckmann, eds., *Die nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager: Entwicklung und Struktur*, vol. 1 (Göttingen: Wallstein, 1998), pp. 439–471; Dov Levin, *Fighting Back: Lithuanian Jewry's Armed Resistance to the Nazis, 1941–1945* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1985); Dina Porat, "The Holocaust in Lithuania: Some Unique Aspects," in David Cesarani, ed., *The Final Solution: Origins and Implementation* (New York: Routledge, 1994), pp. 159–174; and U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, ed., *Hidden History of the Kovno Ghetto* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown, 1998). For a more comprehensive listing of secondary works, see "Hidden History of the Kovno Ghetto: An Annotated Bibliography," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 12:1 (1998): 119–138.

Documentation on the history of the Kaunas ghetto can be found in the following archives: BA-L (ZStL, 207 AR-Z 14/58); LCVA (collections R 973 and R 1390: documents on the history of the Kaunas ghetto; R 731 and R 972: Security Police and SD in Lithuania [copies also available at USHMM]; LVVA (1026-1-3); LYA; USHMM (Acc.1995.A.989: Esther Lurie collection; "Tory collection of German laws," acquired for the Museum's Kaunas ghetto exhibition; and many oral testimonies); and YVA (B/12-4: Kovne Ghetto).

Jürgen Matthäus

NOTES

1. Ereignismeldung UdSSR no. 8, June 30, 1941, N-Dokument NO-4543; "Gesamtaufstellung der im Bereiche des Ek 3 bis jetzt durchgeführten Exekutionen," September 10, 1941; "Gesamtaufstellung der im Bereich des Ek 3 bis zum 1. Dezember 1941 durchgeführten Exekutionen," December 1, 1941; "Exekutionen bis zum 1. Februar 1942 durch das Ek 3," February 9, 1942, RGVA, 500-1-25 (microfilm copy at USHMM, RG-11.001M, reel 183).

2. Tory's *Surviving* offers the most complete account of the history of the Kaunas ghetto.

3. Order no. 15 by the Lithuanian military commander and mayor (Bobelis/Palciauskas), July 10, 1941, published in Baranauskas and Rozauskas, *Documents Accuse*, pp. 133–134; memorandum by Jewish Committee, July 5, 1941, YVA, B/12-4, folder 109, printed in Tory, *Surviving*, pp. 29–30.

4. See Tory collection of German laws (entry for August 30, 1942), USHMM; Tory, *Surviving*, pp. 67, 97–98, 114, 403–407.

5. For reductions in ghetto size and allocated living space per person, see LCVA, R 1390-3-25, pp. 2ff.; and the documents of the secret ghetto archive printed in USHMM, *Hidden History*, pp. 151–154.

6. See USHMM, *Hidden History*, pp. 77–110; LCVA, R 973-3-4 (entry for August 17, 1941), R 973-2-7, pp. 84, 87.

7. See Tory, *Surviving*, pp. 103–104, 123.

8. See *ibid.*, pp. 148–150; USHMM, *Hidden History*, pp. 34–35.

9. See USHMM, *Hidden History*, pp. 38–39.

10. Tory, *Surviving*, pp. 74, 81–86, 89–90.

11. See LCVA, R 973-2-40 (monthly reports by Ältestenrat).

12. Tory collection of German laws (entry for July 7, 1942), USHMM.

13. See Tory, *Surviving*, p. 38.

14. Fragmentary report by Einsatzkommando 3 regarding Jews, n.d. (early 1942), LVVA, 1026-1-3, pp. 268–273, excerpts published in Benz, Kwiet, and Matthäus, *Einsatz im "Reichskommissariat Ostland,"* pp. 174–176; investigative report by the prosecutor's office (Oberstaatsanwaltschaft) at Landgericht Frankfurt, November 16, 1965, BA-L, ZStL, 207 AR-Z 14/58, pp. 432–434.

15. For reports on daily violence in the ghetto, see, e.g., LCVA, R 973-2-47, pp. 12–13 (rape, October 11, 1941); R 973-2-32, pp. 102–103 (raid on ghetto by Lithuanians, December 12–13, 1941); R 973-2-46, pp. 118–120 (murder, January 8, 1942).

16. As for many other places of deportation in the east, no complete listing exists of all transports from the west to Kaunas. In January 1942, the Kaunas ghetto Ältestenrat prepared for the arrival of German Jews (see *ibid.*, R 973-2-33, p. 620; R 1390-3-7, p. 6); the deportees never entered the ghetto but were shot at Fort IX.

17. Monthly reports of the Ältestenrat in *ibid.*, R 973-2-40; based on these reports, see the compilation of deaths, births, marriages, and divorces in Benz, Kwiet, and Matthäus, *Einsatz im "Reichskommissariat Ostland,"* p. 220.

18. See Tory, *Surviving*, pp. 97–105, 120–122, 127–129, 165.

19. *Ibid.*, pp. 148, 153–156, 189–196 (quote: 189).

20. Compilation of German orders, USHMM; YVA, B/12-4; Tory, *Surviving*, p. 114. See also LCVA, R 1390-3-15, p. 7.

21. On the flow of information from Vilnius and other sites of mass execution, see Tory, *Surviving*, pp. 273–292.

22. See Israel Kaplan, ed., *Fun letstn Khurbn: Tsaytsbrifit far gesbikhte fun yidishn lebn beysn natsi-rezhim* (Munich: Central Historical Commission at the Central Committee of Liberated Jews in the American Zone, 1946–1948).

23. Memorials were created at Fort IX and on the site of the former ghetto; files on Soviet war crimes investigations against Lithuanian collaborators are kept at LYA (see also USHMM, RG-26.004M).

KĖDAINIAI

Pre-1940: Kėdainiai (Yiddish: Keidan), town, Kaunas apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Kėdainiai/Kedainiai, Kaunas uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Kedabnen, Kreis center, Gebiet Kauen-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Kėdainiai, rajonas center, Kaunas apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Kėdainiai is located about 45 kilometers (28 miles) north of Kaunas. In 1923, the Jewish population was 2,499. On the eve of the German invasion, there were about 2,500 Jews in Kėdainiai.¹

German forces captured Kėdainiai on June 24, 1941. In the short time available, some younger Jews tried to flee into the Soviet interior, but most were forced back by the rapid German advance or lost their lives on the roads. At least 2 Jews were murdered in the first days of the occupation, as Lithuanian “hooligans” went on a rampage. Immediately, local Lithuanian nationalists, including many from the educated middle class, formed a town administration. The local mayor was a man named Povilios, and a police force was established under the command of Vincas Mimavičius. At the end of June 1941, 30 Lithuanian partisans arrested about 100 Jews who were accused of being Communists and having collaborated with the Soviets. The partisans marched them through town in their underwear to the Babenai Forest about 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) outside the town, where they shot them.²

The new Lithuanian administration implemented a series of anti-Jewish measures. Jews were marked with yellow Stars of David, were ordered to perform forced labor, and were not permitted to maintain any relations with non-Jews. Local antisemites beat and plundered the Jews with impunity. Forced labor tasks included sorting out bombs left behind by the Soviets at the airfield, under close supervision by the Lithuanian police. About 10 Jews were killed during this work.³

On July 23, 1941, a second Aktion was carried out in Kėdainiai. On that day, Germans from Einsatzkommando 3 and Lithuanian policemen arrested 95 Jews (83 men and 12 women), as well as 15 Russian and 15 Lithuanian Communists.⁴ They transported the prisoners on six trucks about 10 kilometers (6 miles) into the Taučiūnai Forest and then shot them. In return for a large sum, a local Lithuanian informed the remaining Jews of the fate of those arrested, but initially their relatives were reluctant to believe that it was true.⁵

At the start of August 1941, on the order of Dočkus, the head of the Kėdainiai district, Mayor Povilios established a ghetto in the town. He instructed the Jewish leaders that the remaining Jews in Kėdainiai had to vacate their homes within 24 hours and move onto Smilgia Street to the synagogue; this area, together with the surrounding lanes up to Gaidiminių Street, was surrounded with barbed wire.⁶ On August 14, 1941, Jews from the village of Žeimiai were resettled into the ghetto.⁷ On the same day, 200 Jews were also resettled there from the village of Šėta. Others were brought in from Josvainiai. Overcrowding in the ghetto was severe, and almost all

food reserves were used up. The inmates of the ghetto suffered from hunger and outbreaks of typhus. Povilios ordered the Jews in the ghetto to pay a “contribution” of 100 rubles per head, threatening to destroy the community if the sum was not paid. People gave up their last rubles to meet this demand.⁸ Some Jewish youths wanted to flee to the forests and hide, but the community leaders urged them not to, lest they should endanger the entire community.

On August 16, 1941, on the orders of the director of the police department in Kaunas, all men over the age of 15 in the ghetto were rounded up. Women who allegedly “in the years of the Russian occupation worked for the Bolsheviks and at the present time continued with the same kind of insolent work” were also seized.⁹ In total, 730 men and 183 women were arrested and imprisoned in the barn of the Kėdainiai School of Technology, under close guard. The men were held separately from the women. Among the men were 19 students from the Mir Yeshiva who had arrived in 1939–1940 and had not managed to escape.¹⁰ The prisoners were held under terrible conditions, with almost no food and water for 13 days. The Lithuanian guards deprived them of their last few possessions. Each day they were transported to various forced labor tasks.¹¹

On August 27, 1941, district head Dočkus called a meeting to coordinate the destruction of the Jews. About 150 Lithuanians attended, including municipal employees, 20 technology students, 20 railroad workers, and Lithuanian partisans. A German officer addressed the group, saying that it was necessary to help Germany destroy its enemies: the Jews of Kėdainiai. A former bank clerk, Kungys, then spoke, also calling on the assembled Lithuanian patriots to help destroy the Jews, accusing them of having helped the Bolsheviks bring Soviet rule to Lithuania.¹² Those attending the meeting were then assigned to three separate groups: one for escorting the Jews, one for guarding the ghetto, and a third for taking care of the site of the shooting. Volunteer shooters came forward from among the crowd.

The next day, forces of Einsatzkommando 3, Lithuanian policemen, and other local personnel assembled and were issued ammunition. Not everyone from the meeting the previous day chose to show up. First, the sick and the elderly were transported on trucks to the killing site in a ravine 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) northwest of the city, on the road to Dotnuva near the Smilga stream. Here, Soviet prisoners of war (POWs) threw the old people into the pit like sacks before they were fired on. The Jewish men were escorted from the Technology School on foot and were made to undress at the pits. During the shooting of the men, there were several individual acts of resistance. One Jew, Zadok Schlapoberskii, a former officer in the Lithuanian army, managed to grab a pistol from a Lithuanian guard and wounded the German commandant as they grappled with each other, falling into the pit. Other Lithuanian guards jumped in and bayoneted Schlapoberskii, but not before he wounded a Lithuanian, Aleksas Cižas, sufficiently to kill him. Two other Jews were shot as they attempted to flee.¹³

Last to be shot were the women and children; some children were merely tossed into the pit to be buried alive. To cover the screams of the victims, the Lithuanians revved the engines of their vehicles. The shooting lasted until evening, and the murderers had brought with them large quantities of vodka and beer. Present at the site was Mayor Povilius, the high school principal, and a young Catholic priest.¹⁴ Among those who participated directly in the shooting were a restaurant owner, students from the College of Technology, railroad employees, and the manager of the power station. At the end, the Soviet POWs spread lime over the grave, and Police Chief Kurkitis gave his men permission to return home. In total, the few Germans present and their Lithuanian collaborators shot 2,076 people (710 men, 767 women, and 599 children).¹⁵

Local Lithuanians saw piles of tefillin and even baby's comforters next to the bloody grave site just after the massacre. They observed the ground moving over the following days as gas escaped from the grave. Locals looted the empty ghetto.¹⁶ The more valuable property was taken by the Germans and the police, with less valuable property being sold to the local population at fixed prices. Only three Jews from the Kėdainiai ghetto, Chaim Ronder, Shmuel Smulasky, and Benzel Berger, are known to have survived the massacre by escaping from the ghetto or successfully hiding. They then managed to hide with local farmers before joining the Soviet partisans later in the war.¹⁷

SOURCES Information about the persecution and murder of the Jews in Kėdainiai during the Holocaust can be found in the following publications: David Volpe, "Keydan," *Fun letstn kburbn*, no. 10 (December 1948): 48–56—a Hebrew version is in Yosef Krust, ed., *Kaidan: Sefer zikaron* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yotse Kaidan be-Yisrael, be-hishtatfutam shel yotse Kaidan be-Derom-Afrikah uve-Artsot-he-Berit, 1977), pp. 229–233, and an English version in David E. Wolpe, *I and My World: Autobiography* (Johannesburg: Dov-Tov, 1997), pp. v–x; *A Jew in the Forest* (New York, 1955); B. Baranauskas and E. Rozauskas, eds., *Masinės žudynes Lietuvoje (1941–1944): Dokumentu rinkinys*, vol. 2 (Vilnius: Leidykla "Mintis," 1973); Shalom Bronstein, ed., *Yabadut Lita: Lithuanian Jewry*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust 1941–1945* (Tel Aviv: Association of Former Lithuanians in Israel, 1984), p. 345; Rabbi Ephraim Oshry, *The Annihilation of Lithuania Jewry* (New York: Judaica Press, 1995), pp. 199–202; "Kėdainiai," in Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 581–589; "The Holocaust in 21 Lithuanian Towns," published on the Web at jewishgen.org; and Arūnas Bubnys, "Maziejė Lietuvos Zydu Getai Ir Laikinos Izoliavimimo Stovyklos 1941–1943 Metais," in *The Year Book of Lithuanian History, 1999* (Vilnius: Metai, 2000), pp. 168–169.

Documentation on the fate of the Jews of Kėdainiai during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: GARF; LCVA (R 683-2-2); LYA (33777-55-156); RGVA (500-1-25); USHMM (RG-50.473*102 and 103); and YVA (e.g., O-53/21, M-1/E/1415 and 1568).

Alexander Kruglov and Martin Dean
trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. Volpe, "Keydan," p. 49.
2. Levin and Rosin, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Lithuania*, pp. 581–589; Volpe, "Keydan," p. 49; Alfonsas Eidintas, *Jews, Lithuanians and the Holocaust* (Vilnius: Versus Aureus, 2003), p. 290.
3. Volpe, "Keydan," p. 50.
4. RGVA, 500-1-25, p. 110, report of Einsatzkommando 3, December 10, 1941; Volpe, "Keydan," p. 51.
5. Bronstein *Yabadut Lita*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust 1941–1945*, p. 345.
6. Testimony of Chaim Ronderis, October 7, 1957, in Baranauskas and Rozauskas, *Masinės žudynes Lietuvoje (1941–1944)*, vol. 2 pp. 136–137; and Volpe, "Keydan," p. 51.
7. LCVA, R 683-2-2, p. 20, report of the head of the police force in Žeimiai, August 15, 1941.
8. Testimony of Chaim Ronderis, October 7, 1957; Bronstein, *Yabadut Lita*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust 1941–1945*, p. 345.
9. Citation from the order of V. Reivitis, the director of the police department, August 14, 1941, in B. Baranauskas and K. Ruksenas, eds., *Documents Accuse* (Vilnius: Gintaras, 1970), p. 159.
10. Report of the head of the police force in Kėdainiai, August 17, 1941, in *ibid.*, p. 215; Oshry, *The Annihilation of Lithuania Jewry*, p. 202.
11. Bronstein *Yabadut Lita*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust 1941–1945*, p. 345; and "The Holocaust in 21 Lithuanian Towns," available via jewishgen.org.
12. LYA, 33777-55-156, pp. 112–113, testimony of Edvardas Miceika to the KGB, July 14, 1945, as cited by Eidintas, *Jews, Lithuanians and the Holocaust*, pp. 290–291.
13. "The Holocaust in 21 Lithuanian Towns"; and Eidintas, *Jews, Lithuanians and the Holocaust*, p. 291.
14. Wolpe, *I and My World*, pp. viii–ix.
15. RGVA, 500-1-25, p. 112, report of Einsatzkommando 3, December 1, 1941.
16. USHMM, RG-50.473*102 and 103.
17. "The Holocaust in 21 Lithuanian Towns."

KELMĖ

Pre-1940: Kelmė (Yiddish: Kelm), town, Raseiniai apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Kelmė/Kel'me, Raseiniai uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Kelme, Kreis Raseinen, Gebiet Schaulen-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Kelmė, rajonas center, Šiauliai apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Kelmė is located 100 kilometers (62.5 miles) northwest of Kaunas. In 1940, there were 2,000 Jews living in Kelmė.

German armed forces occupied the town on June 24, 1941, and the majority of the Jewish homes burned down during the fighting. A number of Jews fled the town to the east, and those Jews who lost their homes were accommodated in the few remaining Jewish houses, as well as on several Jewish farms near the town.

A few days after the occupation of the town, Lithuanian nationalists formed a town administration. The mayor was a Lithuanian named Cesnys, and the chief of police was a man

named Barkauskas (or possibly Kurkauskas).¹ On or just before July 1, all the Jews were required to gather in the marketplace and listen to a virulent antisemitic address by the authorities, which insisted that “all Jews should be imprisoned in camps, since they were responsible for the war.” Then on July 1, 1941, the town administration ordered the Jews to wear yellow Stars of David, and the able-bodied men were separated from the women.

The Jewish women, children, and elderly people who were still in the town were resettled to seven Jewish-owned farms scattered in the countryside around the town, which formed a kind of rural ghetto. According to Haya Roz, “[T]he Jews in these farms lived relatively freely and worked on the farms in the area. There were no guards, but they were forbidden to leave the farm. One boy was shot by Lithuanians for going from one farm to another.”² Another survivor, Jaakov Zak, noted that there were no guards around the farms, but the Lithuanians would come and rob the Jews.³

At the same time, the able-bodied men were moved to a camp in the granary of Zunda Lunts, which was closely guarded by the Lithuanians. Under armed Lithuanian escort, the men were sent out from there daily to perform various labor tasks, including cleaning the town and clearing away rubble. For their labors, the Jews received one cup of coffee with a piece of bread in the morning and evening and a bowl of watery soup with a little grain at midday. While working, the Jews were humiliated and beaten by the Lithuanian guards and by local antisemites. On one occasion, 11 Jews whose poor health kept them from working were shot dead in the Jewish cemetery. In addition to this group murder, individual killings of Jews also took place.⁴ The Jewish farm owners were not taken to the granary of Zunda Lunts. They were ordered to keep running their farms and to provide work for the Jews from the granary.

On July 29, 1941, the first large-scale Aktion took place in Kelmė. On July 28, Lithuanian guards assembled all the Jews from the various farms at the Grušewskis farm and conducted a selection there. Then some of the women and children were sent back to the farms. On July 29, most of the Jews from the Lunts granary, apart from 36 who were left alive,⁵ were also taken to a gravel quarry near the Grušewskis farm, where they were shot together with those women and children who had been kept at the Grušewskis farm overnight. According to the estimate of Haya Roz, about 1,200 Jews were shot altogether. Jaakov Zak notes also that several groups of Jews were shot throughout the day and that he learned from two Lithuanian students that all the Jews from Vaiguva and a great part of the Jews from the Jewish-owned farms had been shot to death. Zak was taken to sort out the belongings of the murdered Jews and recognized the clothes of his father, uncle, and other relatives.⁶

On August 22, 1941, a second Aktion was carried out in Kelmė. The remaining Jewish women, children, and elderly from the farms, along with the few Jewish workers still at the Lunts granary, were taken to the gravel quarry near the Grušewskis farm and shot there by the Lithuanians.⁷

A number of Jews managed to escape from the farms before the second Aktion and sought refuge with local peasants. Only a few Jews survived, as many people were betrayed by the peasants or were caught by the Lithuanian policemen and partisans.⁸ When the Germans were driven from Kelmė in 1944, only 15 of the Jews who came under German occupation were known to be alive.

SOURCES Information about the extermination of the Jews of Kelmė can be found in the following publications: “Kelmė,” in *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, vol. 10 (Jerusalem: Keter, 1972), p. 902; Idah Markus-Kerbelnik and Bat-Sheva Levitan-Kerbelnik, eds., *Kelm—’Ets Karut* (Tel Aviv, 1993)—an English translation is available on jewishgen.org; Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 598–604; and *Yabadut Lita: Lithuanian Jewry*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust 1941–1945* (Tel Aviv: Association of Former Lithuanians in Israel, 1984), pp. 350–352.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: USHMM (RG-50.120*0105); VHF (e.g., # 24630); and YVA (O-71/46, 48).

Alexander Kruglov and Martin Dean
trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. YVA, O-71/46, testimony of Jaakov Zak, 1948; O-71/48, testimony of Haya Roz, 1948.
2. *Ibid.*, O-71/48.
3. *Ibid.*, O-71/46.
4. *Ibid.*; “The End of the Road for the Jews of Kelmė,” in Markus-Kerbelnik and Levitan-Kerbelnik, *Kelm—’Ets Karut*, pp. 47–63.
5. B. Baranauskas and E. Rozauskas, eds., *Masinės žudynės Lietuvoje (1941–1944): Dokumentu rinkinys*, vol. 2 (Vilnius: Leidykla “Mintis,” 1973), p. 400.
6. Markus-Kerbelnik and Levitan-Kerbelnik, *Kelm—’Ets Karut*, pp. 47–63. YVA, O-71/48, estimates the number of victims on July 29 at 1,200. Also see O-71/46. Soviet sources indicate that after the occupation 483 corpses of men, women, and children were found in a mass grave 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) north of Kelmė; see Levin and Rosin, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Lithuania*, pp. 598–604.
7. Markus-Kerbelnik and Levitan-Kerbelnik, *Kelm—’Ets Karut*, pp. 47–63.
8. YVA, O-71/46.

KIEMIELISZKI

Pre-1939: Kiemieliszki (Yiddish: Kimelishok), village, Wilno województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Kemelishki, Ostrovets raion, Vileika oblast’, Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Kiemieliszki, initially Rayon Swir, Gebiet Wilejka, Generalkommissariat Weisruthenien, then from April 1, 1942, Kreis Swir, Gebiet Wilna-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Kamelishki, Astravets raen, Hrodna voblasts’, Republic of Belarus

Kiemielszki is located about 48 kilometers (30 miles) north-east of Wilno. On the eve of World War II, there were 27 Jewish families residing in the village.

German forces occupied the village at the end of June 1941. In the summer of 1941, a German military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur) administered Kiemielszki. In September 1941, authority was transferred to a German civil administration. Kiemielszki was initially incorporated into Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien.

In the summer and fall of 1941, a series of anti-Jewish measures were introduced in Kiemielszki. Jews marked their clothing with the Star of David, were forced into heavy labor, and were prohibited from leaving the village. The Jewish population was also subjected to systematic robbery and assault by the local auxiliary police, which initially consisted mainly of local inhabitants of Belorussian and Polish ethnicity.

In October 1941, a ghetto was established in Kiemielszki. It was organized by the head of the local police, Ivan Lazugo, and the head of the local administration, Boleslav Legovec. It consisted of several houses, which were enclosed by a fence and guarded by the local police. Jews left the ghetto daily to perform forced labor.¹

The number of Jews in the ghetto increased steadily in the fall and winter of 1941–1942, as survivors of the massacres in nearby places, including Niemenczyn and Podbrodzie, made their way there, as it was one of the few ghettos remaining in the area. Despite the strict rules against accepting newcomers, the Jewish Council (Judenrat), headed by Brumberg, did its best to accommodate the arrivals and provide them with shelter and work.² In early 1942, a number of Jewish youths were rounded up and taken away for forced labor.

On April 1, 1942, the region including Kiemielszki was transferred from Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien to Generalkommissariat Litauen and now became part of Gebiet Wilna-Land. At this time, Lithuanians came in and took over the local administration and police.³ Among the restrictions imposed officially on the Jews living in the ghettos in this region were a curfew from 7:00 P.M. to 7:00 A.M. and a prohibition on any personal or economic contacts with non-Jews.⁴

The Germans liquidated the ghetto on October 24, 1942, when a Security Police detachment from Wilno, with the assistance of local police, shot more than 350 Jews in the forest about 1 kilometer (0.6 mile) outside the village, including a number of Jews brought in from other places at this time.⁵ On October 27, 1942, the head of the Judenrat in Wilno, Jacob Gens, reported that the Germans had liquidated the ghettos in Bystrzyca and Kiemielszki during the previous week. He regretted that no Jewish Police from the Wilno ghetto had been present, as “all the Jews were shot there without any distinction.”⁶ According to one report, however, some of the Jews may have been transferred to the ghetto in Michalyszki.⁷ After the ghetto's liquidation, former Jewish houses were sold to local inhabitants for building material.

A few Jews from Kiemielszki managed to flee the ghetto and survived in hiding with non-Jews in the region. Among them were Bronia Wluka, who escaped from the ghetto and lived on the Aryan side, and Hadassah Rozen, who narrowly escaped being shot when a non-Jew, who knew her from the Kiemielszki ghetto, denounced her.⁸

SOURCES Information about the persecution and destruction of the Jews in Kiemielszki can be found in these publications: Szmerke Kaczerzinski, *Hurbn Vilne: Umkum fun di Yidn in Vilne un Vilner gegnt . . . : Zamlung fun eydus: Bavayzn oder dokumentn* (New York: Aroysgegebn fun dem far-eyniktn Vilner hilfs-komitet in Nyu-York durkh Tsiko bikher-farlag, 1947), pp. 164–166; Irena Guzenberg et al., eds., *The Ghettos of Osbmyany, Svir, Švenčionys Regions: Lists of Prisoners, 1942* (Vilnius: Valstybinis Vilniaus Gaono žydu muziejus, 2009), pp. 115–116; Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), pp. 312–313; “Kiemielszki,” 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. 552–554; Shimon Kanc, ed., *Sefer zikaron le-esrim veshalosh kebilot she-nebrevu be-ezor Svintzian* (Tel Aviv: Former Residents of Svintzian in Israel and the U.S., 1965), pp. 1389–1390; and Vladimir Adamushko et al., eds., *Handbuch der Haftstätten für die Zivilbevölkerung auf dem besetzten Territorium von Belarus 1941–1944* (Minsk: Gosudarstvennyi komitet po arkhivam i deloproizvodstvu Respubliki Belarus', 2001), p. 119.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: MA (D.1357); NARB (845-1-63, pp. 39, 44); USHMM (RG-50.473*0082); VHF (# 8796); YIVO (RG-104 I, no. 611); and YVA.

Alexander Kruglov and Martin Dean
trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. Guzenberg et al., *The Ghettos of Osbmyany, Svir*, pp. 115–116.
2. Kanc, *Sefer zikaron . . . Svintzian*, pp. 1389–1390.
3. USHMM, RG-50.473*0082, testimony of Antoni Witold Rakowski.
4. Anordnung Betr.: Ghettoisierung der Juden, issued by Gebietskommissar Wilna-Land, May 13, 1942, reproduced in Guzenberg et al., *The Ghettos of Osbmyany, Svir*, p. 130.
5. NARB, 845-1-63, pp. 39, 44.
6. See Jacob Gens's words at the meeting of the Judenrat in Vilnius on October 27, 1942, MA, D.1357, published in I. Arad, ed., *Unichtozhenie evreev SSSR v gody nemetskoj okkupatsii (1941–1944): Sbornik dokumentov i materialov* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1991), p. 254.
7. YIVO, RG-104 I, no. 611, report of Shmuel Kalmanovich, as cited by Christoph Dieckmann, “Deutsche Besatzungspolitik in Litauen 1941–1944” (Ph.D. diss., Universität Freiburg, 2002), section F.1.8.1.
8. VHF, # 8796, testimony of Bronia Wluka; Kaczerzinski, *Hurbn Vilne*, pp. 164–166.

KRAKĖS

Pre-1940: Krakės (Yiddish: Krok), town, Kėdainiai apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Krakės/Krakes, Kaunas uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Krakes, Kreis Kedabnen, Gebiet Kaunen-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Krakės, Kėdainiai rajonas, Kaunas apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Krakės is located 62 kilometers (39 miles) north-northwest of Kaunas. According to census data, there were 659 Jews living in Krakės in 1923; in 1930 the Jewish population numbered 550, or 165 families. By June 1941, emigration during the 1930s had further reduced the number of Jews, most of whom lived in the center of town.

German military forces entered Krakės soon after the start of the German invasion, probably on June 23, 1941, the same day that nearby Kėdainiai was captured.¹ Before the Germans arrived, local Lithuanians, the so-called activists, seized power within the community and arrested a number of Jews and alleged Communists. Some of those taken into custody were transferred to Kėdainiai and never seen again. Initial measures taken against the Jewish population included abuse, torture, and shootings, which were carried out mainly in the Jewish cemetery. The town's doctor, Dr. Alperovitch, was among those murdered at this time.²

Witnesses told postwar investigators that the situation calmed down somewhat once the main German forces had passed through Krakės. But in the wake of the German troops, Lithuanian activists carried out the first systematic measures against the Jews. They forced Jews to wear the yellow Star of David on their outer clothing and banned Jews from using the sidewalks. Property and valuables belonging to Jews were seized and often sold to the local population. The activists also carried out the first killings.

A few weeks after the German occupation of Krakės, probably in the first half of August, a ghetto was established in the town on a single street. A wooden fence about 2.5 meters (8.2 feet) high, topped with barbed wire, surrounded the ghetto area, and Lithuanian activists or members of the local police guarded the perimeter. The Jews suffered from overcrowding, with 10 people sharing a single room. The witnesses also remembered that some of the local Lithuanian residents aided the ghetto population, providing them with food in spite of the orders forbidding them all contact with the Jews.³ The Jewish men and some women capable of work were soon separated from the others in the ghetto and taken to a building described in some sources as a monastery situated on the edge of the town. These Jews performed a variety of work tasks on a short-term basis.⁴ *Pinkas ha-kehillot* indicates that in August the Jews of Dotnuva, probably around 100 people, were also sent to the monastery near Krakės, which was used as a ghetto.

The ghetto existed for approximately one month. According to an August 17, 1941, letter from the chief of the local police, A. Kuviotkus, a total of 452 Jews were residing in the Krakės ghetto at that time: 337 men and 115 women. The

number of people held in the ghetto had increased considerably by the end of August 1941, as Jews from Kėdainiai, Ariogala, Baisogala, Gudžiūnai, Grinkiškis, Pociūnėliai, Dotnuva, and other nearby villages were moved into it.⁵

In the middle of August 1941, the 3rd Company of the 13th Lithuanian Self-Defense Battalion, consisting of approximately 30 armed men under the command of Juozas Bardza, arrived in Krakės. The battalion brought with it a note in German, stating that it was tasked with murdering all the Jewish inhabitants of the town. Precinct Police Chief Teodoras Kerza then selected a site for the killings in the Peštinukai Forest, 1.6 kilometers (1 mile) outside Krakės, and ordered local inhabitants to prepare large pits there about 2 or 3 meters (6.6 to 9.8 feet) wide. The members of the battalion carried out the mass shooting on September 2, 1941, assisted by six members of the local Lithuanian auxiliary police and 10 to 12 Lithuanian activists, who were also issued with weapons. The Jews were marched from the ghetto to the killing site, suffering brutal beatings from the Lithuanian guards on the way. On nearing the pits, the victims had to undress to their underwear and enter the pits, lying down on top of the bodies of the previous victims, in groups of 20 to 25. The Lithuanians then shot them from the edge of the pits. A number of Jews tried to escape, but most were shot by the guards, with only a few successfully evading their pursuers. The elderly and children were taken from the ghetto in trucks and were killed at the same spot after the Jews brought from the monastery had been shot.⁶ Only one or two accounts mention the presence of a German official at the killing site; but there is no doubt about the participation of a number of Lithuanian policemen and activists from Krakės and its vicinity.⁷

The number of Jewish victims is not mentioned specifically by eyewitnesses, but it is likely that the ghetto liquidation was the incident reported by Karl Jäger in his report dated December 1, 1941. Jäger noted that between August 28 and September 2, 1941, a total of 1,125 Jews (448 men, 476 women, and 201 children) were shot in Krakės.⁸ After the murders, the participants got drunk in celebration, having traded the clothes of the victims with local people for home brew.⁹ A primary school teacher made a speech giving thanks for the “cleansing” of the settlement of its Jewish population. The remaining valuables belonging to the local Jewish population were gathered in one house in the former ghetto and distributed among the killers or sold to locals.¹⁰

For participation in the murder of Jews in Krakės, as well as in other localities in Lithuania, eight former policemen of the 3rd Company, Lithuanian Police Battalion 13, were sentenced to death at a trial held in Kaunas between September 27 and October 4, 1962.

SOURCES Additional information can be found in these publications: Arūnas Bubnys, “Mazieji Lietuvos Zydu Getai ir Laikinos Izoliavimimo Stovyklės 1941–1943 Metais,” in *The Year Book of Lithuanian History, 1999* (Vilnius: Metai, 2000), pp. 151–179; Alfonsas Eidintas, *Jews, Lithuanians and the Holocaust* (Vilnius: Versus Aureus, 2003), pp. 293–295; “Krakes

(Krok),” in Shalom Bronstein, ed., *Yabadut Lita: Lithuanian Jewry*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust 1941–1945* (Tel Aviv: Association of Former Lithuanians in Israel, 1984), p. 352, available in English on the Web at jewishgen.org; Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 208–209, 613–615; and “The Jews of Krakes,” published on the Web at shtetlinks.jewishgen.org.

Information about the fate of the Jews of Krakės during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-94-421); LCVA; LYA (3377-55-60); RGVA (500-1-25); USHMM (50.473*0032-38, testimonies of Vytautas Racickas, Gėnė Rackienė, Valerija Krilienė, Antanas Petrauskas, Janina Kaupienė, and Stanislava Gaucienė); and YVA.

Katrin Reichelt and Alexander Kruglov
trans. Kathleen Luft

NOTES

1. Bubnys, “Mazieji Lietuvos Zydu Getai,” p. 168.
2. Levin and Rosin, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Lithuania*, p. 613; and “The Jews of Krakes,” which includes the “memories” of several local inhabitants, including Ona Rekestiene.
3. USHMM, RG-50.473*0032, statement of Vytautas Racickas. See also “The Jews of Krakes,” memories of A. Jubauskas.
4. See USHMM RG-50.473*0035, statement of Antanas Petrauskas; and Eidintas, *Jews, Lithuanians and the Holocaust*, p. 294.
5. “Krakes (Krok),” in Bronstein, *Yabadut Lita*, vol. 4, p. 352.
6. Eidintas, *Jews, Lithuanians and the Holocaust*, pp. 293–295.
7. Ibid.; USHMM, RG-50.473*0034, statement of Valerija Krilienė, cassette 2; “The Jews of Krakes.”
8. LYA, 3377-55-60, p. 18; and RGVA, 500-1-25, p. 113, report of Einsatzkommando 3, December 1, 1941.
9. Eidintas, *Jews, Lithuanians and the Holocaust*, p. 293.
10. “The Jews of Krakes,” memories of Ona Rekestiene.

KRAŽIAI

Pre-1940: Kražiai (Yiddish: Krozsb), town, Raseiniai apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Kražiai/Krazhai, Raseiniai uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Kražiai, Kreis Raseimen, Gebiet Schaulen-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Kražiai, Kelmė rajonas, Šiauliai apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Kražiai is located 37 kilometers (23 miles) northwest of Raseiniai. In 1923, there were 660 Jews residing in Kražiai.

German armed forces occupied the town on June 24, 1941. Right after the arrival of German troops, Lithuanian nationalists set up a local administration and organized an auxiliary police force. In Kražiai the head of the local police was named Jurevičius, and the leader of the partisan headquarters was Vytautas Sakalauskas. These new local authorities soon launched a series of measures against the Jewish population. All Jews who had fled the town and taken refuge in the nearby villages were ordered to return to Kražiai. Next, the Jews,

numbering about 400, were concentrated and held in local storage buildings and in horse stables. Soon after their confinement in these facilities, Jews brought from the surrounding villages were placed with them. A short time later, all these individuals were assembled on the town’s market square. They had to surrender all the valuables they were carrying. Then the victims were escorted to the Siuksta Manor about 1 kilometer (0.6 mile) from Kražiai and locked in a large storage barn. This barn, surrounded and guarded by armed Lithuanians, became a ghetto. Those Jews who were able to work were taken from the barn-ghetto each day, guarded by Lithuanians, and forced to perform heavy manual labor.

On July 22, 1941, a small squad of about 12 German policemen, assisted by around 80 Lithuanian partisans, carried out an Aktion. They transported on trucks about 250 to 300 Jews, consisting of most of the adults over the age of 14, to the Kuprė Forest about 9 kilometers (5.6 miles) east of Kražiai on the pretext of a forced labor assignment. In the forest, the Germans and Lithuanian partisans shot the Jews into a pre dug trench. The Germans tried to ensure that all the Lithuanians took part in the shooting; two who refused were beaten but suffered no further punishment. Jonas Vladička testified that with the help of Sakalauskas he was able to get his fiancée, Lėja Aronaitė, out of the ghetto.¹

Following this killing, about 60 to 80 Jewish children and five adults remained alive in the barn-ghetto. About two weeks later, local Lithuanian women came to the barn to take home the children of particular Jewish friends, informing the Jews that the children’s parents had already been murdered. However, Rabbi Kramerman, who was among the remaining adults, intervened and ensured that all but two sisters were returned, as the Lithuanian women intended to convert the children to Catholicism.² According to the account written by Antanas Jonynas, “The Hill,” some of the Jewish children in the barn suffered from dysentery, but the Jewish doctor in Kražiai, who also had been spared from the initial Aktion, was not permitted to treat them.³

Among the children in the barn was Yoseph Ben-Yaakov, who recalled that some time after the first Aktion, “[a]ll of a sudden there were guards again. Two days later security was reinforced. We were guarded by Lithuanian partisans. . . . I understood that something bad was about to happen.” In response Yoseph went and hid in a pile of hay in the attic of a nearby barn. After three days he emerged and sought refuge with Lithuanian acquaintances of his father.⁴

In the meantime, on September 2, 1941, the remaining Jewish children and adults were taken out to the Medžiokalnės Forest 1 kilometer (0.6 mile) northwest of Kražiai and were shot. Only a few of the youths managed to escape.

One of the Lithuanians who allegedly participated in the killing of the Jews, Bronius Kaminskas, went to the United States as a refugee after the war.⁵ A number of others were tried by the Soviet authorities.

SOURCES Information about the persecution and murder of the Jews of Kražiai can be found in the following publications:

B. Baranauskas and E. Rozauskas, eds., *Masinės žudynes Lietuvoje (1941–1944): Dokumentu rinkinys*, vol. 2 (Vilnius: Leidykla “Mintis,” 1973), p. 401; “Kražiai,” in Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 607–608; and Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), p. 367.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: LYA (3377-55-2, pp. 9, 22, 24, 26, 48); and MA (A.401). A short story by Antanas Jonynas, “The Hill,” was published in the Soviet Union in 1966. It is reportedly based on real events surrounding the murder of the Jews of Kražiai. An English translation of the story is located at USHMM (Acc.2006.22).

Alexander Kruglov and Martin Dean
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NOTES

1. LYA, 3377-55-2, pp. 9, 22, 24, 26, 48, as cited by Alfonsas Eidintas, *Jews, Lithuanians and the Holocaust* (Vilnius: Verus Aureus, 2003), p. 279.

2. MA, A.401, testimony of Yosef Ben-Yaakov, as cited by Efraim Zuroff, *Occupation Nazi-Hunter: The Continuing Search for Perpetrators of the Holocaust* (Hoboken, NJ: Ktav Publishing House, 1994), pp. 102–103.

3. This detail is reported by Antanas Jonynas, “The Hill,” (USHMM, Acc.2006.22). According to this source, the Jewish doctor was murdered some time later.

4. MA, A.401, as cited by Zuroff, *Occupation Nazi-Hunter*, pp. 102–103.

5. David S. Wyman, *The World Reacts to the Holocaust* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), p. 351.

KREKENAVA

Pre-1940: Krekenava (Yiddish: Krakinove), village, Panevėžys apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Panevėžys/Panevezhis uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Kreis Ponewesch, Gebiet Ponewesch-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: town, Panevėžys rajonas and apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Krekenava is located 26 kilometers (16 miles) southwest of Panevėžys. According to the 1923 census, there were 527 Jews living in Krekenava, comprising half of the total population. By mid-1941, emigration, particularly in the 1920s and 1930s, had somewhat reduced the size of the village’s Jewish community.

At the onset of the German invasion on June 22, 1941, many Jews attempted to flee from Krekenava in a convoy of horse-driven wagons, but they were stopped by Lithuanian nationalist activists in Panevėžys and forced to turn back. German armed forces occupied the town on June 25, 1941. Lithuanian activists immediately formed a local authority and a police force, which began their work by introducing a series of anti-Jewish measures.

First, the young Jewish men were arrested and jailed; a few days later they were taken from the jail and divided into two groups. Each group was taken to a separate site outside the

village, where they were forced to dig their own graves and then shot. The Lithuanian activists also arrested a group of young Jewish women; in the jail they were subjected to gang rape and then murdered.

The remaining Jewish men were assembled in the Bet Midrash by Lithuanian activists. They were kept there under close guard without any food or water. One of the Jews attacked a Lithuanian guard with a knife, when the guard prevented him from leaving the Bet Midrash. After a few days the Jewish men were taken outside the village on the pretext of a work assignment breaking rocks for road construction and then shot. In total, about 200 people were shot near the village in the summer of 1941.¹

The remaining Jewish women, children, and old people in the village were herded into the synagogue and a few neighboring houses, which the Lithuanian activists declared a ghetto. Hungry and thirsty, they remained in this ghetto until July 27, 1941, when they were told they could take their most valuable possessions with them, as they would soon be transferred to another camp. They were then loaded onto carts and escorted off in the direction of Panevėžys. The Jewish women and children were killed in the Pajuostė Forest, 8 kilometers (5 miles) west of Panevėžys, probably sometime later in August 1941. In the meantime they were apparently kept in a makeshift camp at the Pajuostė airfield, left without even the few possessions they had loaded onto the carts, which had been stolen on their arrival. They were shot together with other Jews from the Panevėžys ghetto and region. The report of Einsatzkommando 3, prepared by SS-Standartenführer Karl Jäger, noted that 7,525 Jews (including 4,602 Jewish women and 1,312 Jewish children) were shot at Panevėžys on August 23, 1941. These figures probably include the remaining Jewish women and children from Krekenava.²

SOURCES Information about the fate of the Jewish community of Krekenava during the Holocaust can be found in these publications: “Krekenava,” in Shalom Bronstein, ed., *Yabadut Lita: Lithuanian Jewry*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust 1941–1945* (Tel Aviv: Association of Former Lithuanians in Israel, 1984), pp. 354–355; “Krekenava,” in Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 621ff.; 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. 676; and Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), p. 368.

Documentation regarding the murder of the Jews of Krekenava can be found in the following archives: BA-BL (R 70 SU/15); GARF (7021-94-426); LCVA; and YVA (M-9/15[6], O-3/3034).

Alexander Kruglov and Martin Dean
trans. Kathleen Luft

NOTES

1. B. Baranauskas and E. Rozauskas, eds., *Masinės žudynes Lietuvoje (1941–1944): Dokumentu rinkinys*, vol. 2 (Vilnius: Leidykla “Mintis,” 1973), p. 400.

2. Report by Einsatzkommando 3, December 1, 1941, BA-BL, R 70 SU/15.

KRETINGA

Pre-1940: Kretinga, town and apskritis center, Lithuania; 1940–1941: uезд center, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Kröttingen, Kreis center, Gebiet Schaulen-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Kretinga, rajonas center, Klaipėda apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Kretinga is located 133 kilometers (83 miles) west-southwest of Šiauliai. In mid-June 1941, there were about 700 local Jews in Kretinga. Including Jewish refugees, mainly from Klaipėda following its annexation by Germany in 1939, there were approximately 1,000 Jews in Kretinga at the time of the German invasion.

Kretinga lay within the zone (extending 25 kilometers [15.5 miles] behind the former Lithuanian-German border) that was subjected to “cleansing operations” against Jews and other suspected enemies, conducted by the head of the Staatspolizei (Stapo) office in Tilsit, SS-Sturmbannführer Hans-Joachim Böhme, during the first days of the occupation.¹

German armed forces occupied Kretinga on June 22, 1941, without encountering any serious resistance. Immediately on the capture of the town, Lithuanian nationalists set up a local administration and police force. The so-called Lithuanian activists included the following individuals: the head of the district, Šedviatas; the mayor of the town, Pikučys; the head of the security police, Pranas Lukys (alias Jakys); the chief of police, Petrauskas; and other leading activists such as Petras Janušaitas and Brother Aloyzas.²

Measures were taken against the Jewish population during the first days of the occupation. All adult men (older than 14 years) were ordered to gather at the town’s market square. Soon most of the non-Jews were released, but Lithuanian auxiliaries and German police beat the Jews brutally and made them kiss their boots. Local Lithuanians flocked to the square and demanded that those arrested be hanged for having collaborated with the Soviets. At the end of the day, most of the Jews were locked in the synagogue. Others were taken to the local prison.³

On the next day (either June 25 or 26),⁴ forces of Stapo Tilsit, joined by others from Stapo Memel (Klaipėda), including members of the Schutzpolizei, traveled to Kretinga. Before their arrival, around 150 Jewish men had been escorted from the synagogue and herded into a fenced-in part of the square near the ruins of the Russian Orthodox Church, where they were held along with about 60 non-Jewish prisoners. German and Lithuanian police also searched the town for Jews in hiding. By afternoon, they had found about 30 more Jews, who were brought to the square. About half of the non-Jews were released by Böhme, who was in charge of the Aktion, after consulting with the local security police chief, Pranas Lukys. Then the Stapo forces, reinforced by Lithuanian police and about 20 soldiers of the local garrison (Ortskom-

mandantur), conveyed all the victims by truck out of town to a place close to the estate of Prysmančiai. At this site, the Jews were forced to dig trenches while being beaten heavily by their guards. Before the execution, more of the Lithuanian (non-Jewish) prisoners were released. The Jews were then forced to line up in groups of 10, and 20 members of the Schutzpolizei from Tilsit shot them from behind into the completed trenches. Each group was informed that they were being shot in punishment for crimes committed against the Wehrmacht (two soldiers had been killed by snipers in Kretinga shortly after the capture of the town). In total, the Germans killed 214 persons (mostly Jews and including one woman). The Lithuanian activists served as guards during this Aktion, but the Germans did the shooting.⁵

During the following night, a fire broke out in the local synagogue and spread to neighboring buildings of the town. The Germans and Lithuanians immediately accused the remaining Jews of starting the fire as an act of revenge. These few hundred Jews (mainly women and children) were arrested and taken to Prysmančiai, where they were herded into a stable guarded by Lithuanian police (Litauischer Ordnungsdienst).⁶ This became a de facto ghetto for the Jews, where they were held for more than two months.

Following the fire in Kretinga, the police chief in nearby Palanga received a call from Kretinga, ordering him to arrest all the Jews to prevent a repetition of the arson there. Over the following days, the Germans and Lithuanians arrested 78 more people and shot them near Prysmančiai. Male Jews who had been hiding or were rounded up in the surrounding villages were taken to the prison in Kretinga, where they were abused and humiliated before being shot in turn after a few days or weeks. Between July 11 and 18, a further 120 men were shot at the Jewish cemetery in Kretinga.⁷

In early August, a meeting was held at the office of the Lithuanian head of the Kretinga district. Local Lithuanians met with several Gestapo officers to discuss the situation of the remaining Jews, among other issues. The Gestapo recommended that the Lithuanians should murder the Jewish women and children, as they were not worth feeding because they were unable to perform useful forced labor. The Lithuanians wanted to obtain confirmation from the Lithuanian administration in Kaunas first. The reply came the next day from the chief of police in Kaunas, saying that no decision had been made to murder the women and children, but this decision was to be left to the local officials. Plans were then made for the Lithuanian forces to kill the remaining women and children in early September 1941.

In mid-August 1941, the wives and children of 15 Jewish men who had been shot in early July—at least 20 people—were shot by the Lithuanian policemen.⁸ The remaining Jewish women, children, and elderly confined at Prysmančiai had been informed that their male relatives had been taken away to a separate labor camp. At the beginning of September, these Jews were told that now they would be able to join the men. They were taken to a nearby threshing hall, supposedly for a medical examination. As they left the hall, they

were attacked with iron bars, knives, and bayonets by drunken members of the Lithuanian auxiliary police. Some Germans stood by and photographed this gruesome scene. Those Jews who survived the attacks were shot, and all the victims were buried in a mass grave. The number of Jews taken from the barn in Pryšmančiai and murdered in early September 1941 was approximately 120.

In 1961, the German court in Tübingen, Germany, convicted and sentenced two former members of Stapo Tilsit, named Wiechert and Schulz, for taking part in the killings on June 26, 1941. Pranas Lukys was sentenced to five years in prison by the German court in Ulm in 1960.⁹

SOURCES Information on the murder of the Jews in Kretinga can be found in the following publications: *Hitleriniai žudikai Kretingoje: Faktai kaltina* (Vilnius, 1960); B. Baranauskas and E. Rozauskas, eds., *Masinės žudynes Lietuvoje (1941–1944): Dokumentu rinkinys*, vol. 2 (Vilnius: Leidykla “Mintis,” 1973), p. 396; Shalom Bronstein, ed., *Yabadut Lita: Lithuanian Jewry*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust 1941–1945* (Tel Aviv: Association of Former Lithuanians in Israel, 1984), pp. 353–354—a translation can be found in Joseph Levinson, ed., *The Shoah (Holocaust) in Lithuania* (Vilnius: Vilna Gaon Jewish State Museum, 2006), pp. 98–100; Rabbi Ephraim Oshry, *The Annihilation of Lithuanian Jewry* (New York: Judaica Press, 1995); “Kretinga,” in Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 617–621; “The Holocaust in 21 Lithuanian Towns,” published at jewishgen.org; *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1976–1979), vol. 15, Lfd. Nr. 465, vol. 16, Lfd. Nr. 499, vol. 17, Lfd. Nr. 509 and 521, and vol. 19, Lfd. Nr. 547; and Konrad Kwiet, “Rehearsing for Murder: The Beginning of the Final Solution in Lithuania in June 1941,” *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 12:1 (Spring 1998): 3–26.

Documentation on the fate of the Jews of Kretinga during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: BA-BL (R 58/214); BA-L (B 162/2582-2615); LCVA; LYA (3377-55-107); RGVA (500-1-758); and USHMM.

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NOTES

1. RGVA, 500-1-758, p. 2, report of Stapo Tilsit, July 1, 1941, published in Peter Klein, ed., *Die Einsatzgruppen in der besetzten Sowjetunion 1941/42* (Berlin: Hentrich, 1997), pp. 372–375.

2. Urteil LG-Tüb, gegen Wiechert und Schulz, May 10, 1961, in *JuNS-V*, vol. 17 (1977) Lfd. Nr. 509, pp. 343–344.

3. Ibid.

4. RGVA, 500-1-758, p. 2, report of Stapo Tilsit, July 1, 1941, dates the Aktion on June 25, 1941. Other sources date it on June 26, 1941.

5. Ibid.; *JuNS-V*, vol. 17 (1977) Lfd. Nr. 509, pp. 343–346.

6. RGVA, 500-1-758, p. 2, report of Stapo Tilsit, July 1, 1941; and LG-Ulm, Urteil gegen Böhme u.a., August 29, 1958, in *JuNS-V*, vol. 15 (1976) Lfd. Nr. 465.

7. The 78 victims include 15 Jewish men shot in early July with the participation of Lukys; see *JuNS-V*, vol. 16 (1976) Lfd. Nr. 499, pp. 816–817. Also see BA-BL, R 58/214, Ereignismeldung UdSSR no. 19, July 11, 1941.

8. *JuNS-V*, vol. 16 (1976) Lfd. Nr. 499, p. 818.

9. Urteil LG-Tüb, gegen Wiechert und Schulz, May 10, 1961, in *JuNS-V*, vol. 17 (1977) Lfd. Nr. 509; Urteil LG-Ulm, gegen Lukys and Schmidt-Hammer, November 3, 1960, in *JuNS-V*, vol. 16 (1976) Lfd. Nr. 499.

KREWO

Pre-1939: Krewo (Yiddish: Kreve), village, Wilno województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Krewo, Osbmiany raion, then Smorgon' raion, Vileika oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Krewo, initially Rayon Smorgonie, Gebiet Wilejka, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien, then from April 1, 1942, Kreis Aschmene, Gebiet Wilna-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Krewa, Smargon' raen, Hrodna voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Krewo is located 101 kilometers (63 miles) west-northwest of Minsk. On the eve of World War II, there were about 150 Jewish families living in the village.

In August 1939, several young Jewish men were mobilized into the Polish army just before the German invasion. On September 17, 1939, the Red Army occupied Krewo, which by the end of the year had been incorporated into the Soviet Union. The Soviet authorities nationalized all large businesses and closed down smaller enterprises. All workers were employed in cooperatives or worked for the state. There were shortages of goods, and people had to line up for basic necessities.¹

German forces occupied the village on June 25, 1941. Initially a German military administration was in control of the area. Soon after the Germans' arrival, all Jews were assembled and ordered to select a Jewish Council (Judenrat). The Germans introduced a number of anti-Jewish measures: all Jews had to wear yellow badges on their chests and backs; Jews were prohibited from using the sidewalks and visiting the market; and they were forbidden to leave the village or to have any dealings with the non-Jewish population.²

On July 25, 1941, German security forces conducted the first Aktion in Krewo. Eight people accused of being Soviet activists were arrested and shot.³

The Germans also imposed forced labor on all Jewish adults of working age and on boys over the age of 12. The men worked cutting wood and building roads. Women did laundry and cleaned German homes and offices. On the way to work, Jews were beaten mercilessly by local policemen. A number of Jews worked daily at a German airfield run by the Luftwaffe, outside of town.

In September 1941, authority was transferred to a German civil administration. Krewo was initially incorporated into Gebiet Wilejka in Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien. Then from April 1, 1942, until the end of the Nazi occupation in 1944, Krewo was part of Gebiet Wilna-Land in Generalkommissariat Litauen.

By October 1941, the Jews of Krewo had been resettled into a ghetto in a run-down part of town on Bogdanover Street, from the area of the castle up to the market.⁴ Farmers from the surrounding area plundered those houses that the

Jews vacated. According to one survivor, the ghetto remained unfenced,⁵ but Jews were only permitted to leave for work, provided they had work passes. Local policemen counted the Jews as they left and returned to the ghetto in work columns each day.⁶ There was severe overcrowding in the ghetto, and a number of Jews had to live in cold and uncomfortable conditions in the synagogue. Shortages of food and the unsanitary living arrangements resulted in the spread of infectious disease. However, the Judenrat tried to share the burdens as best it could; for example, refugees from other towns, who had been robbed of all their possessions by the local police, were assigned to eat with a different family every evening.⁷

Those employed outside the ghetto risked their lives by bartering possessions with local farmers for food and smuggling it into the ghetto. The German authorities periodically imposed “contributions” of money and goods on the Judenrat. In January 1942, the Germans rounded up a group of male Jews and escorted them out of town; they were never heard from again. In 1942, there were also assignments of Jews to forced labor camps, especially of young Jews to the forced labor camp in Žiezmariai run by the Organisation Todt, which involved the construction of a road between Kaunas and Wilno.⁸

According to German reports from the late summer of 1942, there were 447 Jews living in the Krewo ghetto, of whom 143 (102 men and 41 women) were deployed for work at various workplaces. Sixty-eight men and 26 women worked for the Wehrmacht (probably a Luftwaffe detachment), 10 men worked cleaning streets, and 8 men worked as artisans. The list also includes 3 men as ghetto guards and 3 working for the Judenrat (probably its members). Others include a female nurse and a female hairdresser, 2 men in the town bakery, and 2 men and 2 women in the dairy.⁹

In early October 1942, just after the High Holidays, the remaining Jews in the Krewo ghetto were transferred to the Oszmiana ghetto. Some of the Jews transferred to Oszmiana were subsequently murdered by a Lithuanian killing squad on October 24, 1942, in an Aktion directed against the elderly and the sick. When the Oszmiana ghetto was liquidated in March 1943, some Jews were sent to the Wilno ghetto, others were sent to the Ponary killing site to be shot, and a number were permitted to join relatives in labor camps in Lithuania, including the camp at Žiezmariai.¹⁰ A few Jews managed to escape from the Krewo and Oszmiana ghettos and join the partisans. Most of the known survivors, however, passed through the Žiezmariai camp.

SOURCES Information about the extermination of the Jews of Krewo can be found in the following publications: Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Białystok, Nowogródek* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 565–567; and M. Gelbert, ed., *Sefer zikaron li-kehillat Osbminab* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots’e Oshminab be-Yisrael, 1969).

Documents regarding the fate of the Jews of Krewo during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-89-15); IPN (SWKsz 28); LCVA (R 626-1-211); NARB; VHF (e.g., # 4991, 7295, 16340, 18162, 46855, and 50668);

USHMM (e.g., RG-02.002*21; RG-22.002M, reel 24); and YVA.

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trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. VHF, # 18162, testimony of Syma Freund.
2. Gelbert, *Sefer zikaron li-kehillat Osbminab*, [English section] p. 61; and VHF, # 18162.
3. GARF, 7021-89-15, p. 80. VHF, # 7295, testimony of Sonja Milner, mentions that four Jews were shot at the Jewish cemetery in the summer of 1941.
4. Gelbert, *Sefer zikaron li-kehillat Osbminab*, p. 292.
5. VHF, # 46855, testimony of Kalmon Jacobson in response to a direct question; most sources do not mention whether or not the ghetto was fenced.
6. *Ibid.*, # 18162.
7. *Ibid.*, # 4991, testimony of Ann Chinitz; and # 7295.
8. *Ibid.*, # 4991; 7295; 16340, testimony of Leon Cepelewicz; 18162; and 50668, testimony of Naomi Milikowski.
9. LCVA, R 626-1-211, pp. 18, 26–27, list of ghettos in Kreis Aschmena, October 1942, and list of Jews working in the Krewo ghetto, n.d.
10. Gelbert, *Sefer zikaron li-kehillat Osbminab*, pp. 292, [English section] p. 70; and Herman Kruk, *The Last Days of the Jerusalem of Lithuania: Chronicles from the Vilna Ghetto and the Camps, 1939–1944* (New Haven, CT: YIVO, 2002), pp. 532–534.

KUDIRKOS NAUMIESTIS

Pre-1940: Kudirkos Naumiestis (Yiddish: Naishtat-Sbaki), town, Šakiai apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Šakiai/Sbakiai uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Neustadt, Kreis Schaken, Gebiet Kauen-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Kudirkos Naumiestis, Šakiai rajonas, Mariampolė apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Kudirkos Naumiestis is located 60 kilometers (37 miles) west-southwest of Kaunas, on the banks of the Šešupė River. On the eve of the German invasion in June 1941, the Jewish community consisted of about 800 people, including a number of Jews expelled from the Suwałki region of Poland in 1939.

On the arrival of German troops on June 22, 1941, a number of individual Jews, including two Jewish barbers, were shot in reprisal for the killing of a German soldier in the town near the barbers’ shop. Lithuanian nationalists established a local administration and a militia (police force) who wore white armbands. The policemen were subordinated to regional Lithuanian authorities recognized by the Germans in Kaunas. The new authorities soon imposed a series of anti-Jewish measures. Members of the local militia and other residents seized Jewish property and valuables. The community was also required to fulfill daily labor quotas for construction work and other forms of manual labor. Those working on these projects were often beaten and humiliated by their guards. The town administration also decreed that it was now illegal for Jews to

have any contact with non-Jews, and Jews were banned from public places.¹

One evening during the first week of July, members of the Tilsit Gestapo and men from the Border Police (Grenzpolizei) post at Szyrwinty (Schirrwindt), led by SS-Hauptsturmführer Werner Hersmann, arrived in Kudirkos Naumiestis. With the assistance of the local militia, the German police rounded up all of the town's Jewish males over the age of 14 and assembled them at the District Council building. There they were ordered to hand over their valuables. Then they were escorted in groups of 50 to the Jewish cemetery, where they were forced to line up at the edge of several pits that Soviet prisoners of war (POWs) had dug earlier that day. Members of the Lithuanian militia shot the Jews into the pits; Gestapo men and men of the SD walked among the bodies, finishing off any who were still alive. After the Germans and their collaborators had shot 192 Jews, the murderers attended a banquet organized by the district governor and the mayor of Kudirkos Naumiestis, who had witnessed the executions. A few days after the Aktion, the Lithuanian militia discovered several male Jews in hiding who had evaded the roundup. These unfortunates, 9 in all, were also shot at the Jewish cemetery.²

Following the Aktion, Jewish women and teenagers were taken daily to perform public works in the town. On August 23, 1941, the remaining Jews in Kudirkos Naumiestis were relocated into a ghetto established in the most run-down part of town on Bathhouse and Synagogue Streets. Although the ghetto was not surrounded by barbed-wire fencing, it was heavily guarded by Lithuanian militia, and a curfew was imposed from 8:00 P.M. in the evening. Three weeks later, on September 16, 1941, the Lithuanian militia in the town liquidated the ghetto. The Jews were told that they would be sent to East Prussia for labor. Once assembled, the 650 ghetto inmates were loaded into carts and driven to a prepared execution site in the Paražniai Forest, 4 kilometers (2.5 miles) outside the town, where members of the local militia shot them into pits. On instructions issued by the Gebietskommissar in Kaunas, the property of the Jews was collected. Valuable items were taken by the German administration, while real estate and items of lesser value were administered by the local authorities. The distribution among local Lithuanians was accompanied by fierce disputes over who should get each item.³

A few of the Jews of Kudirkos Naumiestis, including Izaokas Glikas and his family, managed to escape from the ghetto prior to the liquidation Aktion. Two acquaintances of the Glikas family who served in the Lithuanian militia tipped them off, and the family went to hide on the militiamen's family farm, even though these men still participated in the ghetto liquidation. From this initial hideout, they subsequently moved on to Lithuanian farmers in more remote locations, who hid them without receiving any payment. Later, owing to security risks, the family was transferred to a Salesian monastery, where they were hidden, along with other Jews from the region, by Antanas Skeltys, the priest in charge. Although a handful of the Jews of Kudirkos Naumiestis managed to sur-

vive until liberation, the town's Jewish community was not reconstituted after the war, as the Jews soon moved away.⁴

SOURCES Information regarding the fate of the Jews of Kudirkos Naumiestis can be found in the following publications: Shalom Bronstein, ed., *Yabadut Lita: Lithuanian Jewry*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust 1941–1945* (Tel Aviv: Association of Former Lithuanians in Israel, 1984); *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 15 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1976), Lfd. Nr. 465; and Rima Dulkiniene and Kerry Keys, eds., *With a Needle in the Heart: Memoirs of Former Prisoners of Ghettos and Concentration Camps* (Vilnius: Garnelius, 2003), pp. 113–116.

Documentation regarding the destruction of the Jewish community in Kudirkos Naumiestis can be found in the following archives: BA-BL (R 58/214); BA-L (B 162/2615); LCVA (R 683-2-2); and VHF (# 11411).

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trans. Katrin Reichelt

NOTES

1. Bronstein, *Yabadut Lita*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust*, pp. 316–317.

2. BA-BL, R 58/214, Ereignismeldung UdSSR no. 19, July 11, 1941; *JuNS-V*, vol. 15, Lfd. Nr. 465, pp. 171–172. On August 29, 1958, LG-Ulm sentenced Hersmann to 15 years' imprisonment for his role in the mass shootings; Bronstein, *Yabadut Lita*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust*, pp. 316–317; Dulkiniene and Keys, *With a Needle in the Heart*, p. 114.

3. Bronstein, *Yabadut Lita*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust*, pp. 316–317; letter from the head of the Šakiai District (V. Karalius) and the head of the police (Vilčinskis) to the head of the Kaunas police department on September 16, 1941, published in Josef Levinson, ed., *The Shoah (Holocaust) in Lithuania* (Vilnius: Vilna Gaon Jewish State Museum, 2006), pp. 213–214; Dulkiniene and Keys, *With a Needle in the Heart*, p. 114.

4. Dulkiniene and Keys, *With a Needle in the Heart*, pp. 115–116.

KUPIŠKIS

Pre-1940: Kupiškis (Yiddish: Kupishok), town, Panevėžys apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Kupiškis/Kupishkis, Panevėžbis uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Kupischken, Gebiet Ponewescb-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Kupiškis, rajonas center, Panevėžys apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Kupiškis is located 40 kilometers (25 miles) east-northeast of Panevėžys. In 1938, there were 1,200 Jews living in the town (42 percent of the population).

After the German invasion on June 22, 1941, approximately 40 families were able to flee into the interior of the Soviet Union. Many other Jews also escaped into neighboring villages, awaiting the end of the bombing of the town. In these villages, they were robbed and then sent back to Kupiškis.¹ Around 1,000 Jews remained in Kupiškis at the moment of occupation.

German forces captured the town on June 26, 1941. Some Jews from other places also became trapped in Kupiškis at

this time. Immediately upon the town's seizure, Lithuanian nationalists formed a local administration and police force. The head of the police was P. Graizunas, and his deputy was V. Gudialis. The occupying forces appointed Dr. Werner Loew, a recent German immigrant and a teacher in the local high school, to the position of commandant of the town,² a position he held until the start of September 1941. During the summer of 1941, Loew organized the annihilation of Communist activists and all the remaining Jews in the town.

On June 28, 1941, 78 Jews and Lithuanians were arrested and shot in a nearby forest, accused of being Communist activists and collaborating with the Soviet authorities.³ At the start of July 1941, Loew ordered all the Jews to be resettled into a ghetto, which consisted of a few dilapidated houses on Vilnius Street, near the synagogue, and in a large storehouse. The ghetto was fenced off with barbed wire. The overcrowding, hunger, and thirst for the Jews confined within the ghetto were unbearable.⁴

In July and August 1941, all the ghetto inmates were shot by the Lithuanian police, on Loew's orders. The men were killed first, then the women and children, about two weeks later. The shootings were carried out at the Jewish cemetery. (There are 808 people on the list of murdered Jews. This list was compiled in 1946 by the midwife from the Jewish Maternity Hospital in Panevėžys and from several other sources. Further research is being undertaken to determine the exact origins of this list that supposedly names all those residents of Kupiškis who were killed during the summer of 1941. As there are only 808 people listed out of approximately 1,200 known residents, a number of people may have either escaped, been killed in other locations, or just been forgotten in the process of listing the names, which occurred several years after the fact.) The property of the murdered Jews was confiscated, placed in a warehouse, listed, appraised, and then distributed among the local population. Money was passed on to the town's commandant.⁵

The shootings of the Jews were carried out by a special detachment subordinated to the commandant, which was allegedly headed by Lieutenant Antanas Gudialis (aka Gudeliavicius, who fled to Australia after the war). Also reportedly taking an active part in the shootings were Petras Bernotavičius, the adjutant of the town commandant (who migrated to the United States after the war), and Antanas Jokantas (who also escaped to Australia).

One of the first young Jews to offer resistance was I. Gershumet. Others included Ch. Yutin, H. Shoistevnia, Tzundel, and their friends. They rebelled against the Lithuanian students who aided the Nazis. They wounded two students, which only increased the hatred of Jews among the Lithuanians.⁶

A priest named Ragouskas, a teacher in the Kupiškis high school, tried in vain to save some Jews, but Loew and his followers found them. Dr. J. Franzkevich, a doctor in Kupiškis, tried to save Rabbi Pertzovsky's wife and Mrs. Meyerovitz and her children, but they were discovered and killed about six weeks after the other women and children.⁷

Of all the Kupiškis Jews, only a small number survived the war. They consisted mainly of people who had managed to escape into the Soviet interior in time and a few who survived in the ghettos of Wilno and Kaunas.

On September 25–28, 1965, in a trial in Kupiškis, five former policemen were convicted of having taken an active part in murdering the Jews. Jonas Karalius and Stasis Grigas were each sentenced to 15 years in prison, and Kazis Šniukas, Aleksas Malinauskas, and Danelius Kriukas were sentenced to death by shooting. The German investigation of Dr. Werner Loew (born 1912) was closed due to ill health, and he died in 1990. The Australian Special Investigations Unit investigated two suspects between 1988 and 1992 regarding the murders of Jews in Kupiškis in 1941. Both cases were closed due to insufficient evidence.

SOURCES Information about the elimination of the Jews in Kupiškis can be found in the following publications: B. Baranauskas and E. Rozauskas, eds., *Masišės žudynės Lietuvoje (1941–1944): Dokumentu rinkinys*, vol. 2 (Vilnius: Leidykla "Mintis," 1973), pp. 399–400; Rabbi Ephraim Oshry, *The Annihilation of Lithuania Jewry* (New York: Judaica Press, 1995), pp. 214–215; Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 561–565; Attorney-General's Department, *Report of the Investigations of War Criminals in Australia* (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1993), pp. 121–124; and "Pages of Testimony from Yad Vashem," by M. Traub and D. Fleishman-Traub, Tel Aviv, available at jewishgen.org.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: ANA (SIU, PU 561 and 562); BA-L; LYA; and YVA.

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trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. Oshry, *The Annihilation*, p. 214.
2. See V. Khotianovskii, "Ubiitsa zhivet na Mommsenstrasse," *Izvestiia*, September 18, 1967.
3. Baranauskas and Rozauskas, *Masišės žudynės Lietuvoje*, vol. 2, p. 399.
4. Traub and Fleishman-Traub, "Pages of Testimony from Yad Vashem," pp. 1–3; Levin and Rosin, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Lithuania*, pp. 564–565; Oshry, *The Annihilation*, p. 214. There are some discrepancies in the respective descriptions of the ghetto.
5. Khotianovskii, "Ubiitsa zhivet na Mommsenstrasse."
6. Traub and Fleishman-Traub, "Pages of Testimony from Yad Vashem," p. 2.
7. *Ibid.*; Oshry, *The Annihilation*, p. 214.

KURŠENAI

Pre-1940: Kuršėnai (Yiddish: Kursban), town, Šiauliai apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Kuršėnai/Kursbenai, Šiauliai uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Kurschenen, Kreis Schaulen, Gebiet Schaulen-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Kuršėnai, Šiauliai rajonas and apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

1082 LITHUANIA REGION

Kuršenai is located 26 kilometers (16 miles) west-northwest of Šiauliai. In 1939, there were around 900 Jews living in the town, out of a total population of 2,892.

Immediately after the German invasion of the Soviet Union, on June 22, 1941, many Jews from Kuršenai tried to escape into Russia. However, only 30 families succeeded, as the Soviet authorities forced many to turn back at the Latvian border. On the night that German forces first arrived in Kuršenai, towards the end of June, they murdered two Jews.

Immediately following the Germans' arrival, a Lithuanian partisan squad was formed in Kuršenai, which was headed by Antanas Petkus and soon comprised 70 men. The Lithuanian partisans arrested alleged Communists and supporters of the Soviet regime. They also ordered the Jews to assemble daily in the marketplace, and from there they assigned the Jews to various forced labor tasks, which included clearing rubble from the streets and interring fallen Soviet troops and dead horses. The forced labor was accompanied by frequent beatings. New regulations forbade the Jews from using the sidewalks and ordered them to wear yellow Stars of David.

In the first half of July, the male Jews were confined within the synagogue and Bet Midrash. In mid-July 1941, the Lithuanian partisans seized around 150 male Jews from the prayer houses and escorted them into the Padarbos Forest, about 3 kilometers (2 miles) outside the town. Together with four Germans, the Lithuanian forces then shot the Jews into a large pit. The shooting lasted about five hours. The pit then was filled in by other local inhabitants, requisitioned for this task by the Germans. The Lithuanian partisans took some of the Jews' clothing for themselves, and some subsequently moved into Jewish houses. After the Aktion, the participants returned to Kuršenai to drink in celebration at the local canteen.¹

In July, a ghetto was established for the women and children, which was guarded by armed Lithuanian partisans, also known as "white-stripers." The Jews were confined within a small area of a couple of streets, which became very overcrowded. The women could only leave the ghetto for one hour per day to secure food from the locals, who cursed and chased them away from the stores.

After a few weeks the Lithuanian partisans were reorganized into a regular police force, which was headed by Povilas Vidugiris. In August or September 1941, the remaining several hundred Jews, mainly women and children, were transferred to the ghetto in Žagarė on about 50 carts, escorted by the local Lithuanian police. Before the transfer, the local police stripped them of any valuable possessions. Some non-Jews said farewell to their Jewish friends but were forbidden to reveal that they knew the cruel fate of the Jewish men.² The Jewish women and children from Kuršenai were all murdered on October 2, 1941, when the Žagarė ghetto was liquidated. Only one Jewish woman and one Jewish man from Kuršenai are known to have survived until the area was recaptured by the Red Army in 1944, having found refuge with sympathetic Lithuanian farmers.

After the war, the Soviet authorities tried and sentenced almost 40 former members of the Lithuanian partisans and local police from Kuršenai.

SOURCES The following published sources contain information on the persecution and destruction of the Jews of Kuršenai: Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 569–571; Arūnas Bubnys, "The Fate of Jews in Šiauliai and the Šiauliai Region," in Irena Guzenberg and Jevgenija Sedova, eds., *The Šiauliai Ghetto: Lists of Prisoners, 1942* (Vilnius: Valstybinis Vilniaus Gaono žydu muziejus, 2002), p. 244; and Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), p. 382.

Relevant testimonies can be found in the following archives: LYA (e.g., K 1-58-44084/3, K 1-58-14771/3, K 1-58-42308/3, K 1-46-1261); USHMM (RG-50.473*0041-44); and YVA (e.g., M-1/E/56, M-1/E/1566).

Martin Dean

NOTES

1. USHMM, RG-50.473*0041-44; LYA, K 1-58-44084/3, pp. 65–70, 77, 105–107, and K 1-46-1261, p. 66, as cited by Bubnys, "The Fate," p. 244.

2. USHMM, RG-50.473*0041, testimony of Antanas Spulginas.

KVĖDARNA

Pre-1940: Kvėdarna (Yiddish: Khveidan), town, Tauragė apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Kvėdarna/Kvedarna, Taurage uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Kvedarna/Kveidannen, Kreis Tauroggen, Gebiet Schaulen-Land, post-1991: Kvėdarna, Šilalė rajonas, Tauragė apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Kvėdarna is located 51 kilometers (32 miles) south-southwest of Telšiai. The census of 1923 shows that 394 Jews resided in Kvėdarna. Emigration in the 1930s led to a slight decline in their numbers by June 1941. In mid-1941, 65 Jewish families (approximately 300 individuals) lived in Kvėdarna.

The village of Kvėdarna was occupied by German armed forces on June 22, 1941. A number of Jews attempted to flee at the onset of hostilities, but most were forced to return home within a few days. Lithuanian nationalists quickly established a local administration and an auxiliary police force, which began taking action against the Jewish population. The Jews were required to surrender all their valuables, and they were forced to conduct various types of forced labor. In addition, Jews were banned from appearing in public places and from having any contact with non-Jewish Lithuanians. The killings of Jews began immediately. On the very first day of the German occupation, Lithuanian partisans murdered two Jewish boys, Leibel Schwatz and Rubin Meyer.¹

On Sunday, June 29, 1941, the first Aktion took place: Lithuanian partisans and 20 SS men from Heydekrug, under the leadership of SS-Untersturmführer Theodor Werner

Scheu, arrested all male Jews over the age of 15, about 80 individuals. They were held initially on the market square and were jeered by hostile Lithuanians emerging from the church. The rabbi's beard was shorn as an act of humiliation. Then the male Jews were transported by truck to a labor camp in Heydekrug. Eleven elderly Jews who were unable to work were shot by Lithuanian partisans, probably at the Jewish cemetery, on June 30, 1941.²

Of those taken to Heydekrug, together with Jews from Laukuva, Švėkšna, and other places, a number were shot after four to five weeks, and the remainder were kept as forced laborers for more than three years. Some of these Jews ultimately ended up in the concentration camp system, passing also through Auschwitz II-Birkenau in 1943. From there a group was sent to clean up the area of the Warsaw ghetto, and only a handful survived until liberation.³

The approximately 200 Jewish women and children left behind in the village were forced into a ghetto, for which a single street (Laukuva Street), including the synagogue, was set aside. The ghetto was under the control of local Lithuanian activists, who raped and murdered many of the women. This ghetto was liquidated in September or October 1941, when all its residents were taken by truck to the Tūbinės Forest near Šilalė and were shot by Lithuanian policemen.⁴ A number of Jews from the surrounding villages were also murdered in this place.

The Torah scrolls from Kvėdarna were hidden in the home of the priest, Milimas, and returned to the few survivors after the war.

SOURCES Information about the persecution and murder of the Jews of Kvėdarna can be found in the following publications: “Kvėdarna,” in Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), p. 295; Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), p. 384; and *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vols. 17 and 20 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1976-2010), Lfd. Nr. 511 and Lfd. Nr. 579.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: BA-L; GARF; LCVA; and YVA. The testimony of Gershon Young (Jung) is also summarized at jewishgen.org.

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NOTES

1. Testimonies of Motel Druzin (born March 20, 1903), Chaim Nadel (born May 7, 1905), Berel Levit (born May 3, 1917), Gershon Jung (born October 15, 1923), and Rosa Rachmel (born September 13, 1924), in YVA.

2. Ibid.; LG-Aur (Az 17, Ks 1/61), verdict of May 29, 1961, in the case against Struve, Scheu et al., in *JuNS-V*, vol. 17, Lfd. Nr. 511, pp. 441–442; and vol. 20, Lfd. Nr. 579, p. 309.

3. Testimony of Gershon Young (Jung) from YVA, summarized at jewishgen.org; Levin and Rosin, *Pinkas ha-kehillot: Lithuania*, p. 295.

4. Testimonies of Motel Druzin, Chaim Nadel, Berel Levit, Gershon Jung, and Rosa Rachmel, in YVA.

KYBARTAI

Pre-1940: Kybartai (Yiddish: Kibart), town, Vilkaviškis apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Kybartai/Kibartai, Vilkaviskis uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Kibarten, Kreis Wilkowschken, Gebiet Kauen-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Kybartai, Vilkaviškis rajonas, Marijampolė apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Kybartai is located 79 kilometers (49 miles) west-southwest of Kaunas. According to the 1923 census, there were 1,253 Jews living in the town (20 percent of the total population). In the 1930s, emigration caused a decline in the size of the Jewish population.

German armed forces captured the town on June 22, 1941, the first day of Germany's invasion of the USSR. Consequently, the Jews were unable to evacuate, and almost all of them remained in the town at the start of the German occupation.

Immediately following the German capture of Kybartai, the Germans freed all the prisoners from the jail, including some who had been accused of resistance to Soviet rule. A few of the released prisoners, together with other Lithuanian nationalists, soon formed a town authority and a local police force. The head of the Lithuanian activists was the veterinarian Zubrickas, who had been among those imprisoned. The chief of police was a man named Vailokaitis.

Initially the German army remained in control of the town and did not take any measures against the Jews. However, soon the local Lithuanian authorities announced a series of anti-Jewish measures. Jews were forbidden to leave the town or to change their place of residence. They were dismissed from all positions working for government- and state-run business institutions. They had to hand over any weapons and radios in their possession, and they were forbidden to maintain relationships of any kind with non-Jews. A curfew was enforced for the Jews from 6:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m., and they also were required to wear yellow patches on the front and back of their outer clothes. Murders of the Jews began, primarily of those who had cooperated with the Soviet authorities, during the 1940–1941 Soviet occupation, including members of the Kom-somol, a Communist youth organization.¹

In July 1941, on the orders of the Tilsit Gestapo, members of the Grenzpolizei (Border Police) office in Eydtkau (headed by Kriminalobersekretär Tietz), along with Lithuanian police, arrested all male Jews over the age of 16 and placed them in a barn in the village of Gudkaimis, 6 kilometers (3.7 miles) north of the town. A number of Jewish women and Lithuanians accused of having collaborated with the Soviet authorities were also arrested and taken to the same barn. There they stayed for several days without food or water. The guards turned back relatives who attempted to bring them food. On July 10, 1941, the prisoners from the barn were escorted by Lithuanian policemen to a meadow, where they were forced to enlarge existing Soviet antitank ditches. The male Jews then were made to undress, and the Germans took away any valuables from them. The Lithuanian police herded the

prisoners under severe blows to the ditch, where a squad of German Security Police (Sipo) shot each of them with a bullet fired into the nape of the neck. In total, 185 Jews and 15 other Lithuanians were executed. The shooting was carried out by a detachment of the Sipo and SD based in Tilsit, under the leadership of SS-Sturmbannführer Hans-Joachim Böhme, with the assistance of Lithuanian policemen. After the mass shooting, the participants ate a large dinner together, paid for from the money that had been collected from the victims.²

After the execution of all the men, the remaining Jewish women, children, and old people were placed in several red-brick buildings, formerly barracks, which became a ghetto for them. They remained in this ghetto for approximately one month, then they were moved to the Virbalis ghetto, having to leave most of their belongings behind. On September 11, 1941, the Virbalis ghetto was liquidated by shooting all of the inmates.³

On August 29, 1958, a court in Ulm, Germany, sentenced several persons, including Hans-Joachim Böhme, to various terms of imprisonment for participation in the execution of Jews in Kybartai, among other places, in July 1941. On October 12, 1961, a court in Dortmund, Germany, sentenced Gerke, another former official of the Tilsit Gestapo, to three years and six months in prison, also for participation in the Kybartai Aktion in July 1941.

After the war, several Lithuanian collaborators were convicted by Soviet courts for the murder of Jews and Communists from Kybartai. One of the last to be tried received a seven-year sentence, as it could only be proven that he had escorted the victims to their deaths.

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jewish community of Kybartai during the Holocaust can be found in these publications: B. Baranauskas and E. Rozauskas, eds., *Masišės žudynes Lietuvoje (1941–1944): Dokumentu rinkinys*, vol. 2 (Vilnius: Leidykla “Mintis,” 1973), p. 412; “Kybartai,” in Shalom Bronstein, ed., *Yabadut Lita: Lithuanian Jewry*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust 1941–1945* (Tel Aviv: Association of Former Lithuanians in Israel, 1984); Yosef Rosin et al., eds., *Sefer HaZikron LeKehillot Kibart Lita* (Haifa: Executive Committee of the Society of Former Residents of Kibart, 1988)—an English translation is available at jewishgen.org; and “Kybartai,” in Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ba-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 575–580.

Documentation on the murder of the Jews of Kybartai can be found in the following archives: BA-L (e.g., B 162/4650, 14163); GARF (7021-94-419); LCVA; and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Rosin et al., “The German Occupation and the Destruction of the Jewish Community,” in *Sefer HaZikron LeKehillot Kibart Lita*.

2. Ibid.; see also LG-Ulm, verdict of August 29, 1958, against Fischer-Schweder and others, in *KZ-Verbrechen vor*

Deutschen Gerichten, vol. 2, *Einsatzkommando Tilsit: Der Prozess zu Ulm* (Frankfurt/Main, 1966); LG-Dort, verdict of October 12, 1961, against Krumbach, Gerke, and Jahr, in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 17 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1977), Lfd. Nr. 521; and Levin and Rosin, *Pinkas ba-kehillot: Lithuania*, pp. 579–580.

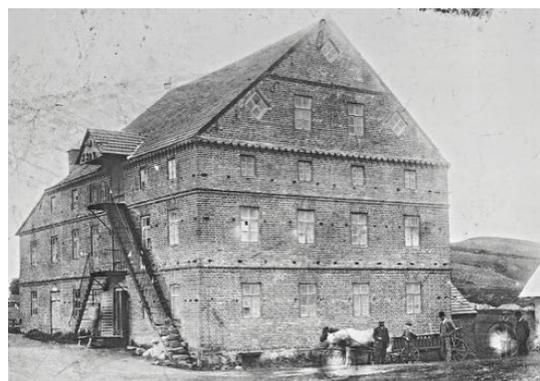
3. Rosin et al., “The German Occupation and the Destruction of the Jewish Community.”

LAZDIJAI

Pre-1940: Lazdijai (Yiddish: Lazdei), Seinai apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Lazdijai/Lazdiai, Seinai uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Lasdien, Kreis center, Gebiet Kauen-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Lazdijai, rajonas center, Alytus apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Lazdijai is located 77 kilometers (48 miles) south-southwest of Kaunas. In June 1941, there were about 1,200 Jews living in the town, including around 150 refugees from the Suwałki region.

German forces occupied the town on June 22, 1941, following a heavy bombardment that destroyed two thirds of the houses in Lazdijai. Only 40 Jews were able to flee in time. On June 23, 30 local Lithuanian nationalists formed an administrative committee for the town, which soon implemented a series of anti-Jewish policies. After electing Antanas Aleliūnas as chairman, they thanked the German army and the “greatest leader, Adolf Hitler” by singing the Lithuanian national anthem.¹ On the next day, with the approval of the local German commandant, a Lithuanian police unit was organized, led by Julijonas Geiga. On June 25, 1941, the committee was ordered by the German commandant to resettle “the Jews who were endangering the public order” into two wooden barracks near the church, next to a camp established for the wives and children of Soviet officials, who had been unable to



Pre-war view of a flour mill, owned by the donor's grandfather, in the village of Katkishok outside Lazdijai. This mill later became the killing site for the Jews of Lazdijai.

USHMM WS #62818, COURTESY OF JUDY LUCAS

evacuate.² The Jews were ordered to perform heavy labor. They were subjected to public humiliation and assault by the Lithuanian guards and local antisemites. Germans and Lithuanians threatened the Jews with death if they refused to hand over money, gold and silver, jewelry, watches, and other valuables. Some Jews were arrested as alleged Communists and Komsomol members. These people were escorted to Marijampolė and shot there.³

Twelve members of the Lithuanian committee went to Kaunas and returned on July 2 with authority from the Lithuanian provisional government to reorganize the local administration in Lazdijai. Aleliūnas became head of the local branch of Saugumas (the Lithuanian Security Police), and Albinas Karalius became the new head of the Lithuanian police for the Kreis, while the policeman Mikas Radevičius was named head of the Kreis administration in Lazdijai. Among the new anti-Jewish measures was their exclusion from all trade.⁴

On September 15, 1941, all the remaining Jews of Lazdijai were resettled into a ghetto, which consisted of six Red Army barracks on the Katkiškės estate, 1.5 kilometers (0.9 mile) from the town. The ghetto grounds were cordoned off by barbed wire and placed under the watch of armed Lithuanian guards, commanded by Bronius Kazlauskas, who ran the ghetto. Jews were also resettled there from nearby towns and villages, including Veisiejai, Kapčiamiestis, and Rudamina, bringing the total number of inmates to more than 1,600 people. A Jewish Council (Judenrat) made up of representatives of the various communities regulated the internal affairs of the ghetto. It was headed by a man named Astromsky, a pharmacist from Kapčiamiestis, who consulted also closely with Rabbi Gerstein. A Jewish police force was created to maintain order. Each day the men were assigned to forced labor by a Jewish Labor Office. At first the inmates received a daily ration of 200 grams (7 ounces) of unsalted bread and 300 grams (10.6 ounces) of potatoes, but the portions gradually diminished, and the Jews suffered from hunger. Only those who could trade personal items for food with local Lithuanians or those who received food for their agricultural work fared a little better.⁵

The ghetto was subordinated to the Lithuanian police chief for the Kreis, Karalius, who issued regulations for the ghetto similar to those applied to German concentration camps. Jews were not permitted to approach within 2 meters (6.6 meters) of the barbed wire, and no contacts were permitted across it. The penalty for leaving the ghetto without permission was death for the offender and his or her entire family.⁶

At the end of October, rumors spread that mass graves were being prepared nearby. Two Jewish women, who worked in the office of the German commandant, had overheard a conversation in which the head official in Marijampolė criticized his colleague in Lazdijai, asking when he was finally going to clear his Kreis of Jews. On Thursday, October 30, 1941, the ghetto was closed, and no one could leave to go to work. A Lithuanian police officer confirmed that pits were being dug and would be ready in a few days. Jews now tried to escape, but some were killed in the attempt.

The Lithuanians surrounded the barracks and boarded up all the windows and doors. The Jews were trapped inside without food or water. In total about 180 Jews managed to escape in these final days, but their chances of surviving in the countryside remained slim.⁷

The ghetto was liquidated on November 3, 1941, when the Rollkommando Hamann, assisted by Lithuanian activists and police, shot 1,535 people (485 men, 511 women, and 539 children).⁸ The Jews were forced to undress and climb into the pits. The Germans used machine guns, while the Lithuanians employed rifles. Local residents were requisitioned to fill in the pits, being forced to stay out of sight behind a hill during the shooting. The clothes of the murdered Jews were taken back to Lazdijai on wagons.⁹

Of the 180 Jews who escaped, most were killed by local farmers or were captured by the police and put in the Lazdijai jail. Once 35 Jews had been assembled there, they were all taken out and shot in the same mass grave as the others. Two escapees from the Lazdijai ghetto made their way to the Kaunas ghetto in July 1942. Only 8 Jews from the Lazdijai ghetto are known to have survived the war: Riva Gerstein-Michnovski, Zeiv Michnovski, Dov Zeif, Miryam Kuleiski and the sisters Gita and Batsheva Kaufman (all from Lazdijai), as well as Chmielevski (from Veisiejai) and Gedalia Kagan (from Rudamina).¹⁰

SOURCES Much of the information for this entry is based on the work of Christoph Dieckmann, “Deutsche Besatzungspolitik in Litauen 1941–1944” (Ph.D. diss., Universität Freiburg, 2002), section F.1.2.5. Other relevant publications include “Lazdijai,” in Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas habebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 349–352; Shalom Bronstein, ed., *Yahadut Lita: Lithuanian Jewry*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust 1941–1945* (Tel Aviv: Association of Former Lithuanians in Israel, 1984), pp. 303–305, available also in English in Josef Levinson, ed., *The Shoah (Holocaust) in Lithuania* (Vilnius: Vilna Gaon Jewish State Museum, 2006), pp. 100–104; and Alfonsas Eidintas, *Jews, Lithuanians and the Holocaust* (Vilnius: Versus Aureus, 2003), p. 299.

Documents dealing with the elimination of the Jews in Lazdijai can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-94-428); LCVA (e.g., R 409-2-5); USHMM (RG-22.002M, reel 19); and YVA (Koniukhovsky Collection, O-71/131, 132).

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NOTES

1. Protocol no. 1, June 23, 1941, in B. Baranauskas and E. Rozauskas, eds., *Masinės žudynes Lietuvoje (1941–1944): Dokumentu rinkinys*, vol. 2 (Vilnius: Leidykla “Mintis,” 1973), p. 151.
2. Protocols nos. 3 and 4, June 24 and 25, 1941, in Valentinas Brandisauskas, ed., *1941 m. Birželio sukilimas. Dokumentu rinkinys* (Vilnius: LGGRTC, 2000), pp. 240–243, as cited by Dieckmann, “Deutsche Besatzungspolitik.”
3. GARF, 7021-94-428; Levin and Rosin, *Pinkas habebilot: Lithuania*, p. 351.
4. Brandisauskas, *1941 m.*, pp. 245–247, as cited by Dieckmann, “Deutsche Besatzungspolitik.”

5. Levin and Rosin, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Lithuania*, pp. 351–352.

6. LCVA, R 409-2-5, pp. 33–34, Gettui-Taisyklės, September 22, 1941, as cited by Dieckmann, “Deutsche Besatzungspolitik.”

7. Levinson, *The Shoah*, pp. 103–104.

8. RGVA, 500-1-25, p. 114, report of Einsatzkommando No. 3, December 1, 1941; B. Baranauskas and E. Rozauskas, eds., *Masinės žudynes Lietuvoje (1941–1944): Dokumentu rinkinys*, vol. 1 (Vilnius: Leidykla “Mintis,” 1965), p. 136; B. Baranauskas and K. Rukšenas, *Documents Accuse* (Vilnius: Gintaras, 1970), p. 237.

9. USHMM, RG-22.002M, reel 19, as cited by Eidintas, *Jews, Lithuanians and the Holocaust*, p. 299.

10. Levinson, *The Shoah*, p. 104; Avraham Tory, *Surviving the Holocaust: The Kovno Ghetto Diary* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990), pp. 109–110.

LINKUVA

Pre-1940: Linkuva (Yiddish: Linkeve), town, Šiauliai apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Linkuva/Linkovo, Šiauliai uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Linkau, Kreis Schaullen, Gebiet Schaullen-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Linkuva, Pakruojis rajonas, Šiauliai apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Linkuva is located 45 kilometers (28 miles) north-northwest of Panevėžys. According to the 1923 census, there were 625 Jews living in Linkuva. In the 1930s, the number of Jews declined slightly. After the beginning of the war, a certain number of Jewish refugees settled in Linkuva.

German troops captured the town on June 28, 1941. Immediately after its capture, Lithuanian nationalist activists formed a partisan squad in Linkuva, which was headed initially by J. Jakubaitis and Jonas Tinteris. On June 29, 1941, the Lithuanian partisans started to arrest Jews and Communists, taking them to the Linkuva granary, which served as a police jail. Here they were interrogated, and more than 70 were murdered in Linkuva during the first days of the occupation. For example, on June 30, 10 young Jews were selected from the prison and taken to be shot near the Catholic cemetery. During the execution, 1 of them managed to escape.¹ On July 3, 1941, 3 kilometers (1.9 miles) northeast of Linkuva, 32 more people were shot.² On the previous day, July 2, 125 Jews—men, women, and children, both local residents and refugees—were taken to Šiauliai, where 57 men were put in jail. Later, almost all of these men were killed. The women and children were allowed to return to Linkuva. On their return journey, however, as they were passing through the town of Pakruojis, some of them were killed by local Lithuanian activists.³

According to the research of historian Arūnas Bubnys, the Linkuva partisan squad was reorganized into an auxiliary police squad in early July 1941, now headed by Lieutenant Petras Beleckas.⁴ The Jews who had survived the initial massacres were then locked up in the barns of David Davidson, probably before mid-July, establishing a kind of ghetto.

Accounts of the fate of these remaining Jews differ in the available sources. According to *Pinkas ha-kebilot*, all the remaining Jews were shot on July 23, 1941, when the barn ghetto in Linkuva was liquidated and up to 700 Jews (including some refugees from elsewhere) were shot in the Atkočiūnai Forest.⁵

On the basis of Soviet trials, Bubnys has reconstructed a more detailed version of the ghetto’s liquidation. First the Lithuanian auxiliary police brought the Jewish men to the Tsalke farm, outside the town, probably near the village of Veselkiškiai. The next day, on or around July 26, 1941, a small squad of German Security Police, assisted by Lithuanian auxiliaries, shot between 180 and 200 Jewish men into a pit. The Jewish women and children (about 200–300 people) were taken from the ghetto and shot about one month later in the Atkočiūnai Forest. The women were forced to strip naked first, and the Gestapo men finished off with pistols anyone still moving in the pit. After the mass shooting, the executioners returned to Linkuva for a bout of drinking. More valuable possessions collected from the victims, such as gold rings, were taken by the Germans to Šiauliai, while the Jews’ clothing was taken by the local policemen for their families.⁶ (According to another source, the ghetto in Linkuva was liquidated between August 5 and 7, 1941, by executing about 500 Jews, with 300 women and children shot in the Atkočiūnai Forest, 5 kilometers [3 miles] southeast of Linkuva, and around 200 men shot in the Dovariukai Forest, 4 kilometers [2.5 miles] northeast of Linkuva.)⁷

Only a handful of Jews from Linkuva survived until the end of World War II.

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jewish community of Linkuva during the Holocaust can be found in these publications: “Linkuva,” in Shalom Bronstein, ed., *Yabadut Lita: Lithuanian Jewry*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust 1941–1945* (Tel Aviv: Association of Former Lithuanians in Israel, 1984), p. 306; Arūnas Bubnys, “The Fate of Jews in Šiauliai and the Šiauliai Region,” in Irena Guzenberg and Jevgenija Sedova, eds., *The Šiauliai Ghetto: Lists of Prisoners, 1942* (Vilnius: Valstybinis Vilniaus Gaono žydu muziejus, 2002), pp. 245–247; Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 360–362; and J. Woolf, ed., “The Holocaust in 21 Lithuanian Towns,” available at www.jewishgen.org/Yizkor/lithuania3/lithuania3.html.

Documentation on the murder of the Jews of Linkuva can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-94-436); LCVA; LYA (e.g., K 1-46-1277 and K 1-58-39421/3); and YVA.

Alexander Kruglov and Martin Dean
trans. Kathleen Luft

NOTES

1. Bronstein, *Yabadut Lita*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust 1941–1945*, p. 306.

2. B. Baranauskas and E. Rozauskas, eds., *Masinės žudynes Lietuvoje (1941–1944): Dokumentu rinkinys*, vol. 2 (Vilnius: Leidykla “Mintis,” 1973), p. 404.

3. Bronstein, *Yabadut Lita*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust 1941–1945*, p. 306.

4. LYA, K 1-58-39421/3, pp. 32–35, 69–70.

5. See GARF, 7021-94-436, p. 28.
6. Bubnys, "The Fate of Jews," pp. 246–247.
7. Baranauskas and Rozauskas, *Masinės žudynes*, vol. 2, p. 404.

LYGUMAI

Pre-1940: Lygumai (Yiddish: Ligum), village, Šiauliai apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Lygumai/Ligumai, Šiauliai uezd, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Lygumai, Kreis Schaulen, Gebiet Schaulen-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Pakruojis rajonas, Šiauliai apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Lygumai is located 22 kilometers (14 miles) east-northeast of Šiauliai. According to the 1923 census, there were 240 Jews living in Lygumai, representing 32 percent of its population. In the 1930s, the number of Jews declined to 120.

In the first days of the war, Aleksandras Keniausis, head of the local detachment of Šaulys (marksman), organized a squad of Lithuanian partisans, which was later reorganized into an auxiliary police detachment.¹ At this time a number of Jews attempted to flee Lygumai, but most were turned back at the Latvian border and forced to return home.

German troops captured the village on June 28, 1941. Immediately after its capture, Lithuanian nationalists seized power in Lygumai and soon introduced a series of anti-Jewish measures. All Jewish refugees were ordered to leave without delay. On the pretext of searching for weapons, Lithuanian activists robbed many Jewish homes. They arrested a number of Jews on a charge of collaboration with the Soviet authorities in 1940–1941 and sent them to Šiauliai, where they were killed. Several Jews were murdered in the nearby Benaraisiu Forest.

In the second half of July, all the remaining Jews were rounded up and confined at two separate sites. The Jewish men were taken to a farm in the Juknaičiai Forest, about 3 kilometers (1.9 miles) outside Lygumai. The women and children were placed in the synagogue. These two sites served as a temporary ghetto for the Jews.

In early August, a squad of about 30 Lithuanian partisans assembled in Lygumai, where they were issued with weapons. They then went to the Juknaičiai Forest, where they escorted the Jewish men to a pit that had been prepared nearby. Under the command of four German officers from Šiauliai, the local partisans, reinforced by a squad of about a dozen men from Linkuva, carried out the shooting of the male Jews. The next day, or according to other sources, a few days later, the women and children from the synagogue were also escorted into the Juknaičiai Forest to be shot.

After each Aktion, the possessions of the victims were brought back to Lygumai on carts, and the participants congregated in the local government building to drink alcohol.²

SOURCES This account of the fate of the Jewish community of Lygumai during the Holocaust is based mainly on two publications: Arūnas Bubnys, "The Fate of Jews in Šiauliai and the Šiauliai Region," in Irena Guzenberg and Jevgenija

Sedova, eds., *The Šiauliai Ghetto: Lists of Prisoners, 1942* (Vilnius: Valstybinis Vilniaus Gaono žydu muziejus, 2002), pp. 228–259, here p. 245; and Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 352–354—an English translation is available at jewishgen.org.

Documentation on the murder of the Jews of Lygumai can be found in the following archives: BA-L (ZStL, II 207 AR-Z 104/67); GARF (7021-94-436); LCVA; LYA (e.g., K 1-58-P18194-LI and K 1-58-45022/3); and YVA (M-9/15[6], Leyb Koniukhovsky Collection [O-71, file 109]).

Alexander Kruglov and Martin Dean
trans. Kathleen Luft

NOTES

1. LYA, K 1-58-P18194-LI, p. 16, testimony of J. Barščiauskas, April 4, 1947, as cited by Bubnys, "The Fate of Jews," p. 245.

2. Available sources diverge somewhat on the precise chronology of events. For example, B. Baranauskas and E. Rozauskas, eds., *Masinės žudynes Lietuvoje (1941–1944): Dokumentu rinkinys*, vol. 2 (Vilnius: Leidykla "Mintis," 1973), p. 404, indicates that about 190 Jews were shot in July 1941. The testimony of Nisn Goldes (YVA, Leyb Koniukhovsky Collection, O-71, file 109) also mentions an execution by shooting in July 1941. German investigative sources, i.e., BA-L, ZStL, II 207 AR-Z 104/67, Concluding Report, April 26, 1971, p. 10, as cited by Wolfgang Curilla, *Die deutsche Ordnungspolizei und der Holocaust im Baltikum und in Weissrussland 1941–1944* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2005), p. 297, reports that about 500 Jews were shot on August 1, 1941.

LYNTUPY

Pre-1939: Lyntupy (Yiddish: Lyntup), town, Wilno województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Lyntupy, Vileika oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: initially Rayon Swir, Gebiet Wilejka, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien, then from April 1, 1942, Kreis Swir, Gebiet Wilna-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Pastavy raen, Vitebsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Lyntupy is located 76 kilometers (47 miles) northeast of Wilno. In 1930, there were 70 Jewish families living in Lyntupy.

German armed forces had occupied the town by the start of July 1941. As soon as the Soviets retreated, a Lithuanian, pro-Nazi militia took over and started to persecute the Jews, killing two people.

In the summer of 1941, a German military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur) exerted authority in the town. In September 1941, authority was transferred to a German civil administration. Lyntupy first was included in Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien (Gebiet Wilejka), and in April 1942, it became part of Generalkommissariat Litauen (Gebiet Wilna-Land).

In the summer and fall of 1941, a series of anti-Jewish measures was introduced in Lyntupy. These included marking the Jews with the Star of David, using them for forced labor, and

placing a ban on their leaving the town limits. The local auxiliary police robbed and beat the Jews with impunity.

Murders of Jews, singly and in groups, took place intermittently from the start of the occupation. Soviet records indicate that in 1941, 22 Jews were shot in Łyntupy.¹ For example, Lithuanian policemen arrested Rabbi Judkovsky and his family for listening to the radio illegally in the house of the former mayor. They were then taken outside the village and shot.² In addition, several Jews were arrested and sent to Wilejka, where they were shot despite bribes paid to the head of the German Gendarmerie in Wilejka.³

At some time in the second half of 1941 or in early 1942, all the Jews of Łyntupy were moved into a small, run-down section of town, where a ghetto was established.⁴ On May 19, 1942, partisans killed two German Kreislandwirtschaftsführer (agricultural leaders) on the Świąciany-Łyntupy road. In retribution, 400 “saboteurs and terrorists”⁵ were shot in Łyntupy and the surrounding villages. Soviet sources indicate that Jews may have been among those killed in reprisal, but available Jewish survivor testimony does not mention this event.⁶

According to the child survivor Irene Skibinski, at some point, in the spring or summer of 1942, the ghetto was divided in two, and part of the Jewish population was then resettled to the Świąciany ghetto. A census taken by the German authorities, officially dated May 27, 1942, reported that there were 161 Jews residing in Łyntupy.⁷ This figure probably represents those that remained in Łyntupy, although it may have been taken just before this transfer.

More than 100 Jewish skilled and essential workers, such as an electrician, together with their families, remained in the town. These people were resettled into three houses in the town center, forming a small remnant ghetto or labor camp. They lived there in very crowded conditions, with four to five families sharing a room. Skibinski recalls that there was no school and a shortage of food. Her brother was able to sneak out and obtain food and medicine for her when she fell ill.⁸

Following a partisan attack on Łyntupy on the night of December 18, 1942, the remnant ghetto/labor camp was liquidated on December 22, 1942, when the 93 remaining inmates were rounded up and shot. Some were shot inside the town and the rest at the mass burial site on the town’s southern edge.⁹ During the roundup, Skibinski’s brother was shot by Lithuanian policemen, but she managed to hide in a cellar with her mother. When they emerged from hiding some time later at night, the doors of the ghetto buildings had already been boarded up. They went to the house of Catholic priest Father Pakalnis, who instructed his housekeeper to hide them in the cellar until things quieted down.¹⁰

Basia Rudnicka also escaped successfully from the Łyntupy ghetto and found refuge with local people near Świąciany. Some Jews from Łyntupy were active in the underground in the Świąciany ghetto, where a group of Jews escaped to join the partisans in the spring of 1943.

SOURCES Information about the fate of the Jews of Łyntupy during the Holocaust can be found in the following publica-

tions: Shimon Kanc, ed., *Sefer zikaron le-esrim ve-shalosh kebilot she-nebrevu be-ezor Svintian* (Tel Aviv: Former Residents of Svintian in Israel and the U.S., 1965), pp. 1433–1446—an English translation is available at jewishgen.org; “Łyntupy,” 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. 395–397; and Irena Guzenberg et al., eds., *The Ghettos of Osbmyany, Svir, Švenčionys Regions: Lists of Prisoners, 1942* (Vilnius: Valstybinis Vilniaus Gaono žydu muziejus, 2009), pp. 429–431, 640.

Documentation regarding the persecution and murder of Jews in Łyntupy can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-89-13); LCVA (e.g., R 685-4-6); VHF (# 38278); and YVA.

Alexander Kruglov and Martin Dean
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NOTES

1. Marat Botvinnik, *Pamiatniki genotsida evreev Belarusi* (Minsk: Belaruskaja Navuka, 2000), p. 180.

2. Mordekhai Kentsianski (Max Khenchynski), “Our Shtetl,” in Kanc, *Sefer zikaron . . . Svintian*, pp. 1433–1446; Spector and Freundlich, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Bialystok, Nowogrodek*, pp. 396–397.

3. Irene Mauber Skibinski, “Through the Eyes of a Child—My Childhood in Łyntupy,” in Kanc, *Sefer zikaron . . . Svintian*, pp. 1433–1446; see also her more recent testimony, VHF, # 38278.

4. Skibinski, “Through the Eyes of a Child,” pp. 1433–1446.

5. LCVA, R 685-4-6, p. 22, Bekanntmachung, Gebietskommissar Wilna-Land, Wulff, published in B. Baranauskas and K. Ruksenas, *Documents Accuse* (Vilnius: Gintaras, 1970), pp. 250–251.

6. According to Botvinnik, *Pamiatniki genotsida*, pp. 180–181, on May 19 and 20, 1942, 61 Jews were shot in a forest northwest of Łyntupy, and 66 were shot on Golubkov Street. This may, however, reflect the destruction of the labor camp in December 1942, due to incorrect dating.

7. Guzenberg et al., *The Ghettos of Osbmyany, Svir*, p. 640.

8. VHF, # 38278.

9. The date and number of victims are taken from the inscription on the memorial; see Guzenberg et al., *The Ghettos of Osbmyany, Svir*, p. 429.

10. Skibinski, “Through the Eyes of a Child,” pp. 1433–1446; see also VHF, # 38278.

MARIJAMPOLĖ

Pre-1940: Marijampolė (Yiddish: Mariampol), town and apskritis center, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Marijampolė/Mariampole, uезд center, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Mariampol, Kreis center, Gebiet Kauen-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Marijampolė, rajonas and apskritis center, Republic of Lithuania

Marijampolė is located about 54 kilometers (34 miles) southwest of Kaunas. According to the 1923 census, there were 2,545 Jews living in the town. By 1940, it is estimated that the



Flowers and wreaths cover the base of a memorial to Jewish victims in Marijampolė, 1946.

USHMM VWS #14816. COURTESY OF SARA TROZKI KOPER

Jewish population had increased to some 2,900, out of a total population of 15,700. This number included about 200 Jewish refugees from the Suwałki region.

After a heavy bombardment, which caused several casualties, German armed forces captured the town on June 23, 1941. The rapid German advance forced most Jews who attempted to flee to turn back to Marijampolė. As recorded by the Kommandant des rückwärtigen Armeeggebietes 584, Generalleutnant von Speman, on June 28, 1941: "In Marijampolė the inhabitants formed a local self-defense and police force. Its measures were directed primarily against the Jews."¹ Many Jews were arrested in these first days, and they were subsequently shot in a forest about 4 kilometers (2.5 miles) outside the town in the direction of Vilkaviškis. Before July 18, five mass shootings were recorded in German reports, shootings that claimed the lives of at least 174 Jewish men, 14 Jewish women, and 15 Communists.²

On July 11, the Kreischef (regional head) ordered the establishment of a Jewish Council (Judenrat), headed by Rabbi Abrom Geleris, which had six members. By mid-July the Kreischef in Marijampolė had instituted a series of anti-Jewish measures. Jews had to wear six-pointed Star of David patches on the front and back of their clothing, and they were required to perform various kinds of hard labor, which included clearing up bomb damage for the men and domestic service for the women. Jews were banned from most public places, including parks, restaurants, and libraries, and could only visit stores at certain restricted times.³

One day, the Jews were forced to burn the Torah scrolls from the synagogue, and later in July, the Jews were ordered to abandon their homes and gather in the synagogue and several adjacent houses. In this improvised ghetto, the Jews were subjected to robbery, forced labor, and the abuse of women at night. Some men, who were taken out for forced labor, were simply murdered on the outskirts of town.⁴ According to an Einsatzgruppen report, on July 25, 1941, another 90 Jewish men and 13 Jewish women were shot.⁵

In August, the Germans forced Jewish youths to dig trenches behind the barracks near the Šešupė River. At the end of August, the Jewish Council was informed by the Lithuanian administration that a large ghetto was going to be established in the cavalry barracks and that the surrounding area would be handed over to the Jews. The German authorities also informed the Jews that they would be permitted to organize the social and economic aspects of their lives as they saw fit in the ghetto, as long as the war continued. This information was designed to allay fears and spreading rumors that the Jews would soon be shot. At the end of August, all the Jews of Marijampolė packed up their belongings and moved into the barracks. On arrival, the men were separated from the women and children and were crammed into the horse stables. Over the next days the men were subjected to physical abuse. Additional Jews were also brought into the barracks ghetto from Kazlų Rūda, Liudvinavas, and other nearby places at this time.⁶

Then on August 30, 1941, the remaining Jews in Kalvarija, probably in excess of 1,000 people, were told they would be transferred to the Marijampolė ghetto. They loaded all their belongings onto wagons, but these were only taken to the local synagogue. Then the Kalvarija Jews were also taken to the cavalry barracks in Marijampolė, which became extremely overcrowded, holding some 5,000 people by now.⁷

The mass shooting of the Jews concentrated in the Marijampolė ghetto was conducted between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. on September 1, 1941. The men were shot first, followed by the women, children, and the elderly and infirm. About 40 German officers and men organized the Aktion at the barracks, while the shooting at the trenches was conducted by 10 to 15 Germans, assisted by 20 to 30 Lithuanian policemen. According to the report of SS-Standartenführer Karl Jäger, in charge of Einsatzkommando 3, 1,763 Jewish men, 1,812 Jewish women, and 1,404 Jewish children were shot together with 109 mentally ill patients, a German citizen who was married to a Jew, and one Russian. The victims were stripped down to their

underwear, forced to lie down in the trench in groups, and then shot with machine guns from the side. Many of them were only wounded and buried alive. Three men of Einsatzkommando 3 prevented an escape attempt by killing 38 people who tried to flee down a forest path. Some infants were clubbed or trampled to death. Many of the killers were drunk during the Aktion.⁸

After the war, almost no trace of the former Jewish population remained in the town.

SOURCES Information about the elimination of the Jews in Marijampolė can be found in the following publications: “Marijampolė,” in Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 385–391; Alfonsas Eidintas, *Jews, Lithuanians and the Holocaust* (Vilnius: Versus Aureus, 2003), pp. 292–293; Rabbi Ephraim Oshry, *The Annihilation of Lithuania Jewry* (New York: Judaica Press, 1995), pp. 216–218; and Christoph Dieckmann, “Deutsche Besatzungspolitik in Litauen 1941–1944” (Ph.D. diss., Universität Freiburg, 2002), section F.1.2.5.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: BA-BL (R 58/214-216); BA-MA (RH 22/362); GARF; LCVA (e.g., R 1361-1-465; R 1361-3-21); LYA (3377-55-108); RGVA (500-1-25); USHMM; and YVA.

Martin Dean

NOTES

1. BA-MA, RH 22/362, p. 32, KTB Nr. 2, Korück 584, June 28, 1941, as cited by Dieckmann, “Deutsche Besatzungspolitik.”

2. BA-BL, R 58/214, Ereignismeldung UdSSR no. 11, July 11, 1941; RGVA, 500-1-25, report of Einsatzkommando 3, December 1, 1941.

3. LCVA, R 1361-1-465, p. 1; R 1361-3-21, pp. 4, 6, as cited by Dieckmann, “Deutsche Besatzungspolitik.” See also Levin and Rosin, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Lithuania*, pp. 385–391.

4. Levin and Rosin, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Lithuania*, pp. 385–391.

5. BA-BL, R 58/216, Ereignismeldung UdSSR no. 54, August 16, 1941 (NO-2849).

6. Levin and Rosin, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Lithuania*, pp. 385–391.

7. *Ibid.*, pp. 385–391 and pp. 590–594 (Kalvarija). These sources report some 8,000 Jewish victims gathered in Marijampolė, but German reports put the figure at around 5,000, which is probably more reliable.

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 385–391; RGVA, 500-1-25, pp. 112, 116; Eidintas, *Jews, Lithuanians and the Holocaust*, pp. 292–293; Oshry, *The Annihilation of Lithuania Jewry*, pp. 217–218.

MAŽEIKIAI

Pre-1940: Mažeikiai (Yiddish: Mazbeik), town, apskritis center, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Mažeikiai/Mazbeikiai, uезд center, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Moscheiken, Kreis center, Gebiet Schaulen-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Mažeikiai, rajonas center, Telšiai apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Mažeikiai is located 74 kilometers (46 miles) northwest of Šiauliai. According to the 1923 census, there were 771 Jews living in the town. As of 1941, there were around 1,000 Jews residing in Mažeikiai.

German armed forces occupied the town on June 25, 1941. At the start of July 1941, Lithuanian nationalists, headed by a certain Payulis, a former captain in the Lithuanian army, and his deputy Juozas Smauskas, ordered all the Jews to gather in the Bet Midrash. The dentist Dr. Fanya Lampe refused to leave her home, so the Lithuanians killed her and her child. A few days later, the Jews were moved from the Bet Midrash and resettled into a granary. There, Jewish men, over the age of 15, were separated from the women and children. The men remained in the building, while the women and children were resettled to the Psherkshkniai estate, near the village of Tirkšliai. In effect, two ghettos were set up in Mažeikiai, one for the men in the granary and one for the women and children on the Psherkshkniai estate, where the Jewish women and children from Tirkšliai were already concentrated. Able-bodied men were exploited for labor of various kinds in Mažeikiai and its surroundings. The intensive physical labor included loading and unloading trains at the railway station.

On August 3, 1941, all the Jewish men were taken out of the granary and shot near the Jewish cemetery. On August 5, the women and children were resettled into the granary. On August 9, the women and children were also shot near the Jewish cemetery. Along with the Jewish women and children from Mažeikiai, Jews from at least 10 other localities—Akmenė, Seda, Vieksniai, Tirkšliai, Židikai, Pikeliai, Klykoliai, Leckava, Laižuva, and Vegeriai—were also murdered. The total number of victims was around 3,000, buried in at least five separate mass graves. The killings were carried out by the Lithuanian police, under the supervision of the Germans, most likely a detachment of Einsatzkommando 2 from Šiauliai. About 30 non-Jewish Soviet activists, who had been held in the Mažeikiai jail, were also shot along with the Jews. The Lithuanian participants in the shootings were rewarded with Jewish clothing collected at the killing site. After the Aktion, the Lithuanian policemen celebrated their ill-gotten gains with a large meal accompanied by alcohol in Mažeikiai.

SOURCES Information on the persecution and murder of the Jews of Mažeikiai can be found in these publications: Shalom Bronstein, ed., *Yahadut Lita: Lithuanian Jewry*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust 1941–1945* (Tel Aviv: Association of Former Lithuanians in Israel, 1984), pp. 309–310—an English translation by Arye Harry Shamir is available at jewishgen.org; Rabbi Ephraim Oshry, *The Annihilation of Lithuania Jewry* (New York: Judaica Press, 1995), pp. 218–219; Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 304–305 (Tirkšliai) and 367–369 (Mažeikiai).

Documentation regarding the fate of the Jews of Mažeikiai in the Holocaust can be found in these archives: GARF (7021-94-423, pp. 51–52); LCVA; LYA (3377-55-111); and YVA (e.g., M-1/E/1555 and 1637; M-1/Q/279).

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MEJSZAGOŁA

Pre-1939: Mejszagoła (Yiddish: Meysbegola), village, Wilno województwo, Poland; 1939–1940: Maišiagala, Vilnius apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Maišiagala/Maisbagala, Vilnius uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Maischiogala, Kreis Wilna, Gebiet Wilna-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Maišiagala, Vilnius rajonas and apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Mejszagoła is located about 25 kilometers (15.5 miles) north-northwest of Wilno. About 700 Jews resided in the village on the eve of World War II.

When the Soviet forces withdrew in late June 1941, local Lithuanians organized a pogrom in Mejszagoła. On the arrival of the Germans, Jewish property was confiscated, including their farms. On German orders, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established in the village. Jews were required to perform forced labor and were subjected to other restrictions, including the times when they were allowed to purchase food.

The most detailed account of the Mejszagoła ghetto is the testimony by David Rudnik in handwritten Yiddish. He reported that after about one month a ghetto was established in Mejszagoła on small streets that were muddy and dark. At night Germans and Lithuanians entered the ghetto to rob and scare the Jews. They dragged out young Jewish girls and raped them. The Jewish men left the ghetto to perform forced labor working on road repairs, and the women cleaned the homes of local non-Jews. The Jews obtained food from the local farmers.¹

Living conditions in the ghetto were very overcrowded, with four families sharing a single room. This overcrowding became even worse when Jews from the surrounding villages were also brought into the Mejszagoła ghetto. The Judenrat did not treat the Jews badly but had to collect “contributions” in money, gold, and other items to meet German demands. The Jews also had to surrender all their livestock. The ghetto existed for about two months.²

The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos indicates that the Mejszagoła ghetto was liquidated on September 28, 1941, when its inhabitants were taken to the village of Wilanowa, where they were murdered a few days later by Lithuanian and German policemen. In the view of Christoph Dieckmann, however, it is possible that the Jews from the Mejszagoła ghetto were taken to the estate at Veliučionys, near Naujoji Vilnia, where the Soviets had erected a military college. Hundreds of Jews from the region were brought there around September 22 and were shot shortly afterwards. A brief report in *Hurbn Vilne* notes that the Jews of Mejszagoła were taken to Vilianove (12 kilometers [7.5 miles] from Wilno) on September 24 and were shot there within a brief time. It is likely that Wilanowa, Naujoji Vilnia, and Vilianove are all different spellings for the same place.

Rudnik reports that two days before Rosh Hashanah (on September 22 in 1941), on a Sunday, Lithuanian policemen arrived from Wilno and herded all the Jews into the synagogue. Here the Jews were forced to surrender their valuables, including their wedding rings. The Jews were told they would be taken to Wilno. The able-bodied were then marched

15 kilometers (9 miles) on foot to Wilanowa, not far from Podbrzezie,³ with the children and the elderly transported on trucks. The Jews were brutally beaten with sharp sticks by the Lithuanian police along the route. On arrival the Jews were locked in a barn for three days and nights. About 80 Jewish men, including Rudnik, were taken out to dig a large pit in the forest about 500 meters (547 yards) from the barn.

On Wednesday morning (September 23) the Lithuanian and Polish policemen became drunk and raped the young Jewish girls aged 14 to 18. Then SS men arrived from Wilno and started to take groups of 13 to 15 men to the pit to shoot them. Rudnik was among the first group, which scattered in all directions on a signal. He was 1 of only 3 people who managed to escape from the killing site. The rest of his group was shot trying to escape. After the men, the women and children were forced to undress and were shot into the same pit, some being buried alive. After the Aktion, the Lithuanians auctioned off the Jewish clothing.⁴

SOURCES Relevant publications include Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), p. 459; 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. 807; Christoph Dieckmann, “Deutsche Besatzungspolitik in Litauen 1941–1944” (Ph.D. diss., Universität Freiburg, 2002), section F.1.2.6; and Szmerke Kaczerginski, *Hurbn Vilne: Umkum fun di Yidn in Vilne un Vilner gegnt . . . : Zamlung fun eydus: Bavayzn oder dokumentn* (New York: Aroysgegebn fun dem fareyniktn Vilner hilfs-komitet in Nyu-York durkh Tsiko bikher-farlag, 1947), p. 133.

Documentation on the persecution and murder of the Jews of Mejszagoła can be found in the following archives: LCVA; LG-Würz (Ks 15/49, case gainst Martin Weiss); and YVA (M-1/E/1689).

Martin Dean

NOTES

1. YVA, M-1/E/1689 (USHMM, RG-68.095), testimony of David Rudnik.
2. Ibid.
3. It is possible that there was also a ghetto in Podbrzezie, but no detailed information could be found about it for this volume.
4. YVA, M-1/E/1689 (USHMM, RG-68.095), testimony of David Rudnik.

MERKINĖ

Pre-1940: Merkinė (Yiddish: Meretsb), town, Alytus apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Merkinė/Merkine, Olita uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Merken, Kreis Kauen, Gebiet Kauen-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Merkinė, Varėna rajonas, Alytus apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Merkinė is located 84 kilometers (52 miles) south-southeast of Kaunas. According to the 1923 census, there were 1,430 Jews living in the town. By June 1941, the population had decreased,

VOLUME II: PART B

owing to the out-migration of Jews, and stood at fewer than 1,000 people (350 families).

German forces captured the town on June 22, 1941. Merkinė endured severe bombardment, and many Jewish homes were destroyed. A few local Jews attempted to escape, but they were soon forced to return to Merkinė.¹

Immediately after the seizure of the town, Lithuanian nationalists, led by Matuleitis, the head of the local detachment of Šaulys (marksmen), formed a town administration and a police force, which soon implemented a series of anti-Jewish measures. Jews were marked with Stars of David, ordered into compulsory labor, and subjected to robbery and assault (including rape) by local antisemites. On June 24, 1941, the first group of Jews was murdered. On the grounds of the Jewish cemetery, Lithuanian partisans shot several Jews whom they accused of being Communists and having collaborated with the Soviet authorities.

According to the account in Rabbi Ephraim Oshry's *The Annihilation of Lithuania Jewry*, in early July, the German commandant in Merkinė took 50 Jews hostage in an attempt to force the return of Rav Shtoppel, the town's rabbi, who had gone into hiding. As no one was willing to betray the rabbi's whereabouts, the commandant then threatened to kill all the Jews. When word of this reached the rabbi, he surrendered voluntarily. He was then forced to dance and sing before being brutally killed.² Other Jews were taken to the Niemen River and drowned there.

In the first half of July 1941, all the Jews in the town were ordered to resettle into a ghetto. The area around the synagogue, the Bet Midrash, and its courtyard was designated for the ghetto. The men resided in the Bet Midrash, separated from the women and children. The ghetto was surrounded by barbed wire and guarded by armed Lithuanian police. A Judenrat with a few members was formed to oversee internal ghetto affairs. Local Lithuanians were permitted to requisition Jews for work. Some selected Jews against whom they had a grudge to take their revenge. From the ghetto, several groups of Jewish men were taken away in the direction of Alytus, then shot.

The Merkinė ghetto remained in existence for about two months. At the end of August, the Jews were made to prepare long trenches in the Jewish cemetery, which allegedly were needed for military purposes. Then a few days later, armed Lithuanians surrounded the ghetto and guarded it closely during the night to prevent anyone from escaping. The next morning, the Jews were driven out of the ghetto to the Jewish cemetery, leaving all their possessions behind.³

According to German documentation, the Germans and their collaborators shot the Jews from the Merkinė ghetto on September 10, 1941. A detachment of Einsatzkommando 3, assisted by Lithuanian policemen, shot 854 Jews (223 men, 355 women, and 276 children) in the Jewish cemetery.⁴ A few Jewish girls who managed to escape at the time of the roundup were subsequently captured and killed.

SOURCES Information about the persecution and killing of the Jews in Merkinė can be found in the following publica-

tions: B. Baranauskas and E. Rozauskas, eds., *Masinės žudynės Lietuvoje (1941–1944): dokumentu rinkinys*, vol. 1 (Vilnius: Leidykla "Mintis," 1965); Joseph Rosin, "Meretch (Merkine)," available at www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/meretch/meretch1a.html; Shalom Bronstein, ed., *Yabadut Lita: Lithuanian Jewry*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust 1941–1945* (Tel Aviv: Association of Former Lithuanians in Israel, 1984), pp. 311–312; Uri Shefer, ed., *Meretch: Ayara yebudit be-Lita* (Society of Meretch Immigrants in Israel, 1988); "Meretsh," in Rabbi Ephraim Oshry, *The Annihilation of Lithuania Jewry* (New York: Judaica Press, 1995), pp. 219–221; "Merkine," in Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 392–396; and Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), pp. 459–460.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: LCVA; RGVA (500-1-25); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Bronstein, *Yabadut Lita: Lithuanian Jewry*, vol. 4, pp. 311–312.
2. Oshry, *The Annihilation*, p. 221. This incident, however, is not mentioned in the account by Rosin, "Meretch (Merkine)."
3. Rosin, "Meretch (Merkine)," and Bronstein, *Yabadut Lita: Lithuanian Jewry*, vol. 4, pp. 311–312, both date the mass shooting on September 8, 1941.
4. RGVA, 500-1-25, p. 113, report of Einsatzkommando 3, December 1, 1941; Baranauskas and Rozauskas, *Masinės žudynės Lietuvoje*, vol. 1, p. 135; B. Baranauskas and K. Rukšenas, *Documents Accuse* (Vilnius: Gintaras, 1970), p. 235.

MICHALISZKI

Pre-1939: Michaliszki, town, Wilno województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Mikhalishki, Vileika oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: initially Michaliszki, Kreis Swir, Gebiet Wilejka, Generalkommissariat Weisruthenien, then from April 1, 1942, Gebiet Wilna-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Mikhalishki, Astravets raen, Hrodna voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Michaliszki is located 56 kilometers (35 miles) northeast of Wilno. In 1897, the Jewish population of the town was 951, out of a total of 1,224. Before World War II, there were about 800 Jews living there.

German forces captured the town on June 24, 1941. As the Germans arrived, many Jews fled into the forests. The non-Jewish local inhabitants exploited this opportunity to loot Jewish property. In response to a German order, warning that Jews who did not come home by a certain date would be punished, most of the fugitive Jews returned.

In the summer of 1941, the Germans ordered the chairman of the existing Jewish community (gmina) in Michaliszki, Ora Bleicher, to organize a Jewish Council (Judenrat). However, according to Bleicher's account, when it came to an

election, nobody wanted the position, as they were all afraid of the onerous responsibilities.¹ Nevertheless, a Judenrat was formed, which included the following as members: Yitzhak Świrski (chairman), Josef Chit, Szyjn Miller, Salmun Baruch, Salome Rabinowicz, and Szymon Eystein.

A ghetto was established in Michaliszki by October 1941 on two unpaved streets near the center of town. The spaces between the houses were boarded up with wooden planks, and there was only one exit to the ghetto, guarded internally by the Jewish Police and externally by non-Jewish local policemen. Inside the ghetto, several families had to share a single dwelling.² The Jews who performed forced labor left the ghetto area on a daily basis. The Jews worked mostly in the construction or reconstruction of bridges, roads, and railroad tracks, in mills, and in electrical companies. In addition, they had to clear the rubble and snow from the roads. Some Jews were also sent away from the ghetto for a period to cut lumber in the forests.

On April 1, 1942, the region including Michaliszki was transferred from Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien to Generalkommissariat Litauen and became part of Gebiet Wilna-Land. At this time, Lithuanians came in and took over the local administration and local police. Among the restrictions imposed officially on the Jews living in the ghettos in this region were a curfew from 7:00 P.M. to 7:00 A.M. and a prohibition on any personal or economic contacts with non-Jews.³ At the end of May 1942, there were 787 Jews in the Michaliszki ghetto: 363 men and 424 women.⁴ In July 1942, a total of 35 prisoners from the Michaliszki ghetto were sent to work in the eastern branch of the Włokiennicze cardboard company.⁵

A document dated November 6, 1942, from the office of the Gebietskommissar Wilna-Land, noted that Michaliszki had been recognized as a main ghetto, now subordinated to the administration of the Judenrat in Wilno, and that it had two subghettos, one in Łyntupy and a second in Świr.⁶ According to one report, some of the Jews capable of work may have been transferred to the Michaliszki ghetto from Kiemielszki and Bystrzyca when those ghettos were liquidated at the end of October.⁷ Other Jews arrived in Michaliszki after fleeing from Aktions in nearby ghettos, including Świr. Among them was Yehoshua Swidler, who was told by the Judenrat on November 7 that he must leave Michaliszki, as German orders barred the absorption of refugees from other towns. However, instead, he was added to the next transport of laborers to the ghetto in Wilno.⁸ At the end of 1942, about 500 inmates of the Świr ghetto were transferred to the Michaliszki ghetto. Only 60 “specialized” Jewish workers then remained in Świr.⁹

In a strictly confidential letter dated March 9, 1943, the Gebietskommissar Wilna-Land informed the Organisation Todt and the Giesler construction company of an order calling for the transfer of all the Jews working in these companies back to the ghettos in Oszmiana, Świr, Michaliszki, and Święciany by March 22, 1943. He also recommended in this memorandum that no appeal should be made against this order.¹⁰

In early March 1943, a group of young Jews from the Michaliszki ghetto managed to escape to the forests with the aim of joining the anti-German partisans.¹¹

At the end of March, the Germans liquidated the Michaliszki ghetto. H. Kruk records that 400 wagons with Jews and their possessions arrived in Wilno from Michaliszki. They were accommodated temporarily on Strashun and Oszmiana Streets. Then in early April, many of the Michaliszki Jews were added to a train containing other Jews from the region, reputedly headed for Kaunas. Instead, the train went only to Ponary, where all the Jews were shot. The train contained Jews from the ghettos of Soly, Oszmiana, Gudogaj, and Ostrowiec, as well as Michaliszki, about 2,500 in total. Only about 50 Jews from this transport managed to escape. A number of Jews from Michaliszki, however, were selected for labor and remained in the Wilno ghetto or were sent to various labor camps subordinated to it, including the camp at Vievis.¹²

SOURCES Information on the ghetto in Michaliszki can be found in these publications: Arūnas Bubnys, “The Fate of the Jews in the Švenčionys, Oshmyany and Svir Regions (1941–1943),” in Irena Guzenberg et al., eds., *The Ghettos of Oshmyany, Svir, Švenčionys Regions: Lists of Prisoners, 1942* (Vilnius: Valstybinis Vilniaus Gaono žydu muziejus, 2009), pp. 83–118, here pp. 114–115; Shalom Cholawsky, *The Jews of Bielorussia during World War II* (Amsterdam: Harwood, 1998); Christoph Dieckmann, “Deutsche Besatzungspolitik in Litauen 1941–1944” (Ph.D. diss., Universität Freiburg, 2002), section F.1.8.1; Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), pp. 464–465; Yitzhak Arad, *Ghetto in Flames: The Struggle and Destruction of the Jews in Vilna in the Holocaust* (New York: Holocaust Library, 1982); and Herman Kruk, *The Last Days of the Jerusalem of Lithuania: Chronicles from the Vilna Ghetto and the Camps, 1939–1944* (New Haven, CT: YIVO, 2002).

Relevant documentation can be found in these archives: BA-DH (ZM 1641, A 23); LCVA (R 614-1-736, R 626-1-124, R 677-1-46); USHMM; VHF (e.g., # 30396, 35318, 39703); YIVO (RG-104 I, no. 611); and YVA (e.g., M-1/E/286).

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NOTES

1. YVA, M-1/E/286, testimony of Ore Bleicher, as cited by Cholawsky, *The Jews of Bielorussia*, pp. 252–253.
2. VHF, # 39703, testimony of Martin Kulbak; # 35318, testimony of Abraham Rudnick.
3. Anordnung Betr.: Ghettoisierung der Juden, issued by Gebietskommissar Wilna-Land, May 13, 1942, reproduced in Guzenberg et al., *The Ghettos of Oshmyany, Svir*, p. 130.
4. LCVA, R 743-2-10274, pp. 31 and verso, as cited by Bubnys, “The Fate of the Jews,” p. 114.
5. LCVA, R 626-1-124, p. 48.
6. *Ibid.*, R 614-1-736, p. 299.
7. YIVO, RG-104 I, no. 611, report of Shmuel Kalmanovich, as cited by Dieckmann, “Deutsche Besatzungspolitik,” section F.1.8.1.
8. Yitzhak Siegelman, ed., *Sefer Kobylnik* (Haifa: Va’ad Yozei Kobylnik b’Israel, Committee of Former Residents of Kobylnik in Israel, 1967), p. 151, as cited by Cholawsky, *The Jews of Bielorussia*, p. 151.

9. BA-DH, ZM 1641, A 23, p. 129 (the case of Gite Mular); Cholowsky, *The Jews of Bielorussia*, p. 86.

10. LCVA, R 677-1-46, p. 5.

11. Kruk, *The Last Days*, p. 494.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 534; BA-DH, ZM 1641, A 23, p. 129 (the case of Gite Mular); Arad, *Ghetto in Flames*, p. 359; VHF, # 39703, # 35318, and # 30396, testimony of Jack Wysoki.

NAUMIESTIS

Pre-1940: Naumiestis (Yiddish: Neishtot-Tavrig), town, Tauragė apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Naumiestis/Naumestis, Taurage uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Neustadt, Kreis Tauroggen, Gebiet Schaulen-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Žemaičių Naumiestis, Šilute rajonas, Tauragė apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Naumiestis is located 150 kilometers (93 miles) west-northwest of Kaunas. According to the 1923 census, there were 667 Jews living in Naumiestis, 37 percent of the town's total population. About 120 Jewish families remained in Naumiestis by the time of the Soviet occupation in June 1940.

German forces captured the town on the morning of June 22, 1941, the first day of their invasion of the USSR. Following the killing of 14 German soldiers by gunfire, probably from Soviet stragglers, the Germans arrested a number of Jewish men as hostages, holding them in the Lutheran church. However, after the local Lithuanian priest avowed that the Jews were innocent, the men were released to return home.

Immediately after the occupation of the town, Lithuanian nationalists formed a local authority and a police force, which, together with the German Ortskommandantur (military commandant's office), introduced a series of anti-Jewish measures. Jews had to report daily to the Ortskommandantur, where they were assigned to perform forced labor. The tasks included sweeping the streets, road repairs, work in a German field kitchen, and the burial of fallen soldiers. The Jews were required to wear yellow patches on their clothes and were forbidden to walk on the sidewalks. At the end of June, the Jews were forced to remove the Torah scrolls and even the benches from the synagogue and burn them.

In early July 1941, all the town's Jews were concentrated in a few houses on Pigs Street, a derelict quarter near the Sustis River, which became the ghetto.¹ The Germans and Lithuanians removed five Jewish girls from the ghetto, and they were never heard from again.

The first Aktion took place on July 19, 1941. Initially, all Jewish males older than 14 were assembled at the synagogue. From this group, 27 able-bodied men were selected and put in the barracks. They were subsequently taken to the Heydekrug (Šilute) labor camp. Of the remaining Jewish males, 10 were sent back to the ghetto, while the others, about 70 in all, were shot near Šiaudvyčiai along with more than 100 male Jews brought there from Vainutas. The shooting was carried out by Lithuanian police and members of the 2nd SS-

Reitersturm, SS-Reiterstandarte 20. The Reiterstandarte was commanded by SS-Hauptsturmführer Karl Struve; the Reitersturm, by SS-Untersturmführer Theodor Werner Scheu. Other participants in the killing were members of the 2nd SS-Sturmabteilung, SS-Standarte 105, and two officials of the Tilsit Gestapo.²

During the mass shooting, at least one Jew tried to flee, but he was chased down and shot, and his body was also thrown into the mass grave. One of those selected for labor, Esriel Glock, heard the shooting in the distance (about 4 kilometers [2.5 miles] away) and learned from one of the Lithuanian guards what had happened to the other group of men. After a few hours, the SS men returned to the barracks from the shooting site. The forced laborers were then permitted to return home briefly to the ghetto to fetch some additional clothing before they were sent to the Heydekrug camp.³

According to *Pinkas ha-kebilot*, other Jews from Pajūris, Švėkšna, Veiviržėnai, Kvėdarna, and Laukuva were also brought to the killing site at Šiaudvyčiai on trucks and were shot there. These were probably male Jews who had been sent initially to the Heydekrug labor camp at the end of June 1941 and after four or five weeks had been deemed unfit, following a medical examination. Apparently these men were shot, probably at Šiaudvyčiai, in the second half of July.⁴

The remaining Jews in the ghetto continued to perform forced labor and suffered from hunger and abuse. The ghetto existed until September 25, 1941, when all the Jews were taken out and shot at the Šiaudvyčiai killing site.

The male forced laborers from Naumiestis were kept at the Heydekrug labor camp until the summer of 1943, when they were sent to Auschwitz II-Birkenau. Here, according to *Pinkas ha-kebilot*, 99 men from the group were sent to the gas chambers, and the remainder were sent in October 1943 to clear out the rubble from the Warsaw ghetto. Of the men originally from Naumiestis, only 7 are believed to have survived the war, some of them being liberated by the U.S. Army in Bavaria, after having been transferred to a Dachau subcamp.

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jewish community of Naumiestis during the Holocaust can be found in the following publications: *Our Town Neishtot* (Israel: Neishtot-Tavrig Natives Committee, 1982); Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 398–401—an English translation is available at jewishgen.org; LG-Aur, verdict of June 26, 1964, against Struve et al., in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 20 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1979), Lfd. Nr. 579, pp. 318–330; Ruth Leiserowitz, “Grenzregion als Grauzone. Heydekrug—eine Stadt an der Peripherie Ostpreussens,” in Christian Pletzing, ed., *Vorposten des Reichs?: Ostpreussen 1933–1945* (Munich: Meidenbauer, 2006), pp. 129–149.

Documentation regarding the persecution and murder of the Jews in Naumiestis can be found in the following archives: BA-L (B 162/5394-5399); GARF (7021-94-429); and YVA (Leib Koniuchovsky Collection O-71, files 4, 16; M-1/E/1619).

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trans. Kathleen Luft

NOTES

1. The ghetto is mentioned in LG-Aur, verdict of June 26, 1964, against Struve et al., in *ŹuNS-V*, vol. 20, Lfd. Nr. 579, p. 319.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 320–321.
3. BA-L, ZStL, II 207 AR-Z 162/59, vol. 2 (B 162/5395), p. 320, testimony of Esriel Glock, 1961, as cited by Leiserowitz, “Grenzregion als Grauzone,” p. 140.
4. YVA, testimony of Gershon Young (Jung) from Kvėdarna, summarized at jewishgen.org, who mentions the disappearance of a number of unfit men after four or five weeks.

NOWE ŚWIECIANY

Pre-1939: Nowe Świeciany (Yiddish: Nei-Sventzion), town, Wilno województwo, Poland; 1939–1940: Švenčionėliai, Švenčionys apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Švenčionėliai/Novo-Sventsiany, Sventsiany uezd, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Nowe Schwentschionys, Kreis Schwentschionys, Gebiet Wilna-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Švenčionėliai, Švenčionys rajonas, Vilnius apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Nowe Świeciany is located about 76 kilometers (47 miles) north-northeast of Wilno. According to unofficial data from July 1940, there were 966 Jews living in the town, comprising 20 percent of the total population.

Following the German invasion of Lithuania, nationalist riflemen (Šaulys) and (Lithuanian) Red Army deserters soon joined forces around Nowe Świeciany to form a Lithuanian partisan unit of about 60 men, led by Jonas Kurpis. This force attacked retreating units of the Red Army, and some fleeing Jews were killed in the cross fire.¹ The Lithuanian activists then began to arrest Jews and alleged Communists in Nowe Świeciany, shooting a number of them in early July, after the arrival of German forces. Among the Jews murdered were Portnoj (mill owner), Epstein (turpentine factory owner), Gavenda (tradesman), and Dr. Kopelovitch (physician).

Bronius Gruzdis was appointed head of the local police in Nowe Świeciany. In July the Jews suffered from looting and abuse at the hands of the Lithuanians. A Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established to organize forced labor detachments. Among the Jews involved on the council were the merchants Berl Guterman, Yeshayohu Katz, and Osher Butshunsky. They assisted the rabbi, who was in charge of setting up the council.²

On July 22, 1941, Lithuanian activists arrested and registered 50 Jewish men. These men were then taken to be killed in groups. When the final group arrived at the killing site and saw the graves, some of the Jewish men fled in different directions, and a few, including Fayve Khayet, managed to escape unscathed. Among the victims were also some Jewish refugees who had fled from other towns in Poland in the fall of 1939.³

At the end of July 1941 (or in mid-August, according to Khayet), all the town's Jews were moved into a separate quarter (open ghetto) on Kaltanėnu Street. The Jews continued, however, to trade with local non-Jews illegally, despite the

strict local regulations limiting their access to markets and stores. The Jews in the ghetto became increasingly resigned and desperate. However, rumors circulating about the murder of entire Jewish communities elsewhere in Lithuania encountered considerable skepticism.⁴

On September 26, 1941, the local police and former Lithuanian partisans surrounded the ghetto, and on the next day they transferred all the Jews (about 300 to 400 people) to an overcrowded barracks at the military camp (firing range), also known as the Poligon transit camp, located 1.6 kilometers (1 mile) outside the town.

The Jews were held in the Poligon camp for more than a week under atrocious conditions, together with thousands of Jews brought there from other towns in the region, including Ignalino and Podbrodzie. On October 6, the men were separated from the women, and on October 7 Fayve Khayet managed to escape, making his way to the enclosed ghetto in the nearby larger town of Świeciany.⁵ In the meantime, the German Security Police had informed the mayor of Nowe Świeciany, Karolis Cicėnas, and the police chief, Gruzdis, that all the Jews were going to be shot, and these officials organized the preparation of large ditches in the vicinity. Then on October 7–8, 1941, the Jews of Nowe Świeciany were shot, along with several thousand other Jews from towns in the region, including from Świeciany, where a number of craftsmen were selected out and kept alive in a remnant ghetto. The Jews were taken out of the barracks in groups of 50 and transported by truck to the killing site. The Aktion was organized by the German Security Police and implemented by the men of the Ypatingas Burys Lithuanian killing squad commanded by Juozas Sidlauskas, assisted by 120 local Lithuanian policemen and former partisans. According to the report of Karl Jäger, the commander of Einsatzkommando 3, the 3,726 Jewish victims included 1,169 men, 1,840 women, and 717 children.⁶ Other sources, however, indicate that as many as 6,000 to 8,000 people may have been killed at the site.⁷

SOURCES Much of the information for this entry comes from Arūnas Bubnys, “The Fate of Jews in Šiauliai and the Šiauliai Region,” in Irena Guzenberg and Jevgenija Sedova, eds., *The Šiauliai Ghetto: Lists of Prisoners, 1942* (Vilnius: Valstybinis Vilniaus Gaono žydu muziejus, 2002), pp. 83–118, here pp. 94–95; and Christoph Dieckmann, “Deutsche Besatzungspolitik in Litauen 1941–1944” (Ph.D. diss., Universität Freiburg, 2002), section F.1.2.6.

Documentation regarding the murder of the Jews of Nowe Świeciany can be found in the following archives: LCVA (R 1548-1-1); LYA (K 1-58-P19224); and YVA (O-71/169.1).

Martin Dean

NOTES

1. YVA, O-71/169.1, testimony of Fayve Khayet, recorded by L. Koniukhovsky, April 1948, p. 123.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 126.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 129. This source lists the names of 23 of the victims.
4. *Ibid.*, pp. 132–133; for the restrictions on Jews visiting markets and shops, see LCVA, R 1548-1-1, p. 309, Order no.

1096 LITHUANIA REGION

25, issued by the Head of Kreis Schwentschionys, August 25, 1941.

5. YVA, O-71/169.1, p. 134.

6. Report of Einsatzkommando 3, December 1, 1941, RGVA, 500-1-25, p. 114. This report gives October 9, 1941, as the date of the killing, but other sources indicate it occurred on October 7–8, 1941.

7. Shimon Kanc, ed., *Sefer zikaron le-esrim ve-shalosh kebi-lot she-nebrevu be-ezor Svintzian* (Tel Aviv: Former Residents of Svintzian in Israel and the U.S., 1965), p. 1376, gives the figure of 8,000 victims at the Poligon camp. Dieckmann, “Deutsche Besatzungspolitik,” uses the phrase “at least 5,000.”

OBELIAI

Pre-1940: Obeliai (Yiddish: Abel), village, Rokiškis apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Obeliai/Obialiai, Rokisbkiš uezd, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Obeliai, Kreis Rokisbken, Gebiet Ponewesch-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Rokiškis rajonas, Panevėžys apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Obeliai is located about 14 kilometers (9 miles) east of Rokiškis. In the early 1920s, there were about 760 Jews living in Obeliai, comprising around two thirds of the total population.

Following the German invasion of the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, many Jews tried to flee to the east, but the border with Latvia remained closed, and most were forced to return home. In Obeliai, local peasants exploited the power vacuum to attack the Jews and steal their property.

German forces occupied Obeliai on June 26, 1941. Lithuanian nationalist activists seized authority in the village. They arrested a number of Jewish men, who then disappeared, presumably killed. They forced the remaining Jews to perform hard labor. On August 6, 1941, the Lithuanian commandant in Rokiškis, Lieutenant Žukas, issued an order that any local inhabitants who collected Jews for work but then allowed them to move to other places or to avoid work by paying a bribe instead would be severely punished.¹ This reflected the common practice in the region of Jews being requisitioned by local farmers to work on their land.

As no survivor testimony could be located for this entry, details about the existence of a ghetto in Obeliai remain scant. However, a Lithuanian girl, who lived through the German occupation, mentioned the existence of a ghetto in testimony given more than 50 years after the events. She recalled that on the day when the Germans and Lithuanians planned to kill the Jews, some Soviet partisans intervened, emerging from the woods and opening fire, which apparently caused the Aktion to be delayed by 24 hours. The next day she went to the ghetto and observed that it was empty of Jews. She heard the sounds of shooting in the distance, and Jewish clothing was being brought back to the ghetto, where some Lithuanians had arrived with carts to loot the empty houses. She notes also that the Jewish men from Obeliai were taken to Rokiškis to be murdered, while the women and children were brought from Rokiškis to Obeliai to be killed.²

The men were probably shot first around August 15, 1941, in the Velniaduobė Woods, 5 kilometers (3 miles) north of Rokiškis. Then on or around August 25, 1941, Jewish women and children from Kamajai, Rokiškis, and several other places were brought to the village of Obeliai, where they were murdered together with the remaining Jews of Obeliai. This second mass grave lies near the village of Antanašė, 5 kilometers (3 miles) south of Obeliai. The shootings were conducted by units of Rollkommando Hamann, subordinated to Einsatzkommando 3, assisted by Lithuanian partisans. According to the Jäger report, on August 25, 1941, the Germans and their collaborators murdered 112 men, 627 women, and 421 children (1,160 people) near Obeliai.³

About six months after the massacre, Elena Zalogaite witnessed a local Lithuanian policeman and another man escorting two Jewish women to be killed, presumably after they had been denounced or revealed in hiding.⁴

In the spring of 1944, the Germans arrested a Lithuanian named Vladas Andonas, whom they accused of having given shelter to Jews.

SOURCES Information about the persecution and murder of the Jews of Obeliai can be found in the following publication: Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebi-lot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 113–116.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: LCVA (R 708-1-1); RGVA (500-1-25); and USHMM (RG-50.473*0100).

Martin Dean

NOTES

1. LCVA, R 708-1-1, p. 2, Order no. 5, issued by the Commandant of the Rokiškis District, published in B. Baranauskas and K. Ruksenas, *Documents Accuse* (Vilnius: Gintaras, 1970), pp. 149–150.

2. USHMM, RG-50.473*0100, testimony of Elena Zalogaite, born 1928.

3. Report of Einsatzkommando 3, December 1, 1941, RGVA, 500-1-25, pp. 111–112.

4. USHMM, RG-50.473*0100.

ONUŠKIS

Pre-1939: Onuškis (Yiddish: Hanasbiskok), town, Alytus apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Onuškis/Onushkis, Trakai uezd, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Onuschkis, Kreis Traken, Gebiet Wilna-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Onuškis, Trakai rajonas, Vilnius apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Onuškis is located 27 kilometers (17 miles) southwest of Troki (Trakai). According to the 1923 population census, 342 Jews were living in the small town, comprising 56 percent of the total population. At the time of the German invasion, there were about 300 Jews living in Onuškis.

German armed forces occupied Onuškis on June 23, 1941. Immediately, Lithuanian nationalists seized control of the town

and formed an auxiliary police force mainly composed of former members of the riflemen's organization (Šaulys). The Lithuanian policemen broke into Jewish homes and stole their property. Many Jews were arrested on the pretext that family members had collaborated with the Soviet regime or for the possession of firearms. Some of the prisoners were tortured and killed locally, and others were taken to Trakai to be jailed and subsequently killed. Other sources indicate that the local Catholic priest, Nikodemas Švogžlys-Milžinas, intervened with the German local military commandant (Ortskommandant), Major V. Finger, and obtained the release of at least two of the local Jews, who had been arrested as suspected Communists.¹

During the first weeks of the occupation, a series of anti-Jewish measures were introduced. Jews were marked with the Star of David, and they were forbidden to associate in any way with Lithuanians. All the Jews were then assembled in the synagogue, from which they were taken to perform forced labor.

In the second half of July 1941, the head of Kreis Traken, Petras Mačinskas, issued orders for Jews to be registered, for Jewish Councils to be established, and for the Jews of the Kreis to be isolated in ghettos. The aim was to prevent Jews from moving about freely from village to village. The local authorities were instructed to make suggestions for places where the Jews could be isolated.²

On September 1, 1941, the head of Kreis Traken reported to the Gebietskommissar Wilna-Land concerning ghettoization that the Jews of Onuškis, which had been heavily damaged during the German invasion, had all been resettled in the nearby villages of Panošiškis and Žydkaimis. The Jews of the villages of Kęstutis, Pasamavės, and Žilinis would also soon be brought there too, when space could be found for them.³ This report indicates that a form of rural ghetto may have been established in Panošiškis and Žydkaimis for the Jews of Onuškis and its surrounding villages.

The account in *Pinkas ba-kebilot*, however, only partially corroborates this report. This version indicates that most of the Jews remained in Onuškis until the eve of Rosh Hashanah (September 21, 1941). At this time, the men were rounded up by the Lithuanian police while praying, and the other Jews were collected from their homes. During the roundup, much Jewish property was looted. The Jews of Onuškis were then taken along with other Jews from Aukštadvaris to the village of Panošiškis, where they were held for more than one week. According to this version, the village of Panošiškis served only as a temporary concentration point for Jews, just prior to their extermination.

On September 30, 1941, the Jews of Onuškis, together with the other Jews concentrated in Panošiškis and Žydkaimis, were all escorted to the Worniki (now Varnikų) Forest, about 3 kilometers (1.9 miles) outside Troki. The younger Jews were escorted on foot, suffering blows from their Lithuanian guards, and the children and elderly were transported on carts. On arrival, they were shot by a detachment of Einsatzkommando 3, commanded by Martin Weiss and the Ypatingas Burys (Lithuanian execution squad), which had arrived from Wilno.⁴ They were killed alongside other Jews brought there from Rudziszki,

Landwarów, and Troki. The shooting started in the early morning and lasted until midday. The total number of victims was 1,446: 366 men, 483 women, and 597 children.⁵

Only a few Jews managed to evade the roundups and find refuge with local farmers. Most of these people were subsequently captured and killed by the Lithuanian police.

SOURCES Information about the persecution and murder of the Jews of Onuškis can be found in the following publications: "Onuskis," in Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ba-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 147–149; Neringa Latvytė-Gustaitienė, *Holokaustas Trakų apskrityje* (Vilnius: Valstybinis Vilniaus Gaono žydų muziejus, 2002); and Christoph Dieckmann, "Deutsche Besatzungspolitik in Litauen 1941–1944" (Ph.D. diss., Universität Freiburg, 2002), section F.1.2.6.

Relevant documentation can be found in these archives: GARF; LCVA (e.g., R 617-1-24); LYA (e.g., K 1-58-P14950); RGVA (500-1-25); and YVA.

Martin Dean

NOTES

1. Latvytė-Gustaitienė, *Holokaustas Trakų apskrityje*, p. 43.
2. LCVA, R 617-1-24, pp. 535–536, protocol of a meeting organized by Kreischef Traken, July 23, 1941, as cited by Dieckmann, "Deutsche Besatzungspolitik," section F.1.2.6; Latvytė-Gustaitienė, *Holokaustas Trakų apskrityje*, pp. 100–101.
3. Report of the head of Kreis Traken to Gebietskommissar Wilna-Land, September 1, 1941, published in Latvytė-Gustaitienė, *Holokaustas Trakų apskrityje*, p. 109.
4. LYA, K 1-58-P14950, p. 52.
5. RGVA, 500-1-25, report of Einsatzkommando 3, December 1, 1941.

OSTROWIEC

Pre-1939: Ostrowiec, village, Wilno województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Ostrovets, raion center, Vileika oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Ostrowiec, initially Rayon center, Gebiet Wilejka, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien, then from April 1, 1942, Kreis Swir, Gebiet Wilna-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Astravets, raen center, Hrodna voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Ostrowiec is located about 48 kilometers (30 miles) east of Wilno. In 1921, there were 30 Jewish families living there.

German forces captured the town in late June 1941. Immediately afterwards various anti-Jewish measures were promulgated, including the confiscation of property, the requirement to wear the Star of David on their clothing, and the introduction of forced labor. The Germans maintained Ostrowiec as a Rayon center, as it was located close to the railway line. Jews from neighboring villages were brought to the village by rail and murdered in the nearby forest.

In the fall of 1941, the German authorities ordered the establishment of a ghetto in Ostrowiec. Both local Jews and refugees were forced to move into the designated ghetto area,

where they lived under extremely crowded conditions. At the end of 1941, the Germans murdered most of the Jews in the ghetto. Only a few needed workers and their families were left in a remnant ghetto.

The ghetto area was then reduced in size, surrounded by barbed wire, and turned into a labor camp. Jews removed from other nearby ghettos were also brought to Ostrowiec—from Worniany, Kiemieliszki, and other places. The prisoners in the camp were put to hard labor, such as removing heavy tree stumps or repairing railroad tracks. They were seriously undernourished and frequently beaten by the Germans and local overseers.

On April 1, 1942, the region including Ostrowiec was transferred from Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien to Generalkommissariat Litauen and became part of Gebiet Wilna-Land. At this time, Lithuanians came in and took over the local administration and police. Among the restrictions enforced against the Jews living in the ghettos of this region was a prohibition on any personal or economic contacts with non-Jews.¹ At the end of May 1942, there were 102 Jews in the Ostrowiec ghetto.²

According to *Pinkas ha-kehillot*, in 1943, the surviving Jews learned that the Nazis intended to liquidate the camp. A sympathetic German officer secretly confirmed the report and advised them to hide with local farmers. Some Jews escaped into the forest, and a few of them survived until the Red Army drove the Germans from the region. On April 7, 1943, the remaining prisoners were taken to Szumsk, a neighboring village, where they were shot.

According to Herman Kruk, however, some Jews from Ostrowiec may have been taken to Wilno at the end of March, together with the Jews from other ghettos, including Michaliszki (it is likely some Jews were transferred to Michaliszki in the fall of 1942). Then in early April, many of these Jews were put on a train to Ponary, where they were shot. The train reportedly contained Jews from the ghettos of Gudogaj, Michaliszki, and other places as well as Ostrowiec.³

SOURCES Information on the ghetto in Ostrowiec can be found in these publications: Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Bialystok, Nowogrodek* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 99–100; Arūnas Bubnys, “The Fate of the Jews in the Švenčionys, Oshmyany and Svir Regions (1941–1943),” in Irena Guzenberg et al., eds., *The Ghettos of Oshmyany, Svir, Švenčionys Regions: Lists of Prisoners, 1942* (Vilnius: Valstybinis Vilniaus Gaono žydu muziejus, 2009), pp. 83–118, here p. 115; Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), p. 559.

Relevant documentation can be found in these archives: LCVA; NARB; USHMM; and YVA.

Samuel Fishman and Martin Dean

NOTES

1. Anordnung Betr.: Ghettoisierung der Juden, issued by Gebietskommissar Wilna-Land, May 13, 1942, reproduced in Guzenberg et al., *The Ghettos of Oshmyany, Svir*, p. 130.

2. Bubnys, “The Fate of the Jews,” p. 115.

3. Herman Kruk, *The Last Days of the Jerusalem of Lithuania: Chronicles from the Vilna Ghetto and the Camps, 1939–1944* (New Haven, CT: YIVO, 2002), p. 534.

OSZMIANA

Pre-1939: Oszmiana (Yiddish: Oshmene), town, Wilno województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Osbmiany, raion center, Vileika oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Aschmena, initially Rayon center, Gebiet Wilejka, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien, then from April 1, 1942, Kreis center, Gebiet Wilna-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Asbmiany, Hrodna voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Oszmiana is located about 56 kilometers (35 miles) southeast of Wilno. On the eve of World War II, there were about 3,000 Jews living in Oszmiana.

German armed forces occupied the town on June 25, 1941. Because the town was captured so quickly, most Jews were unable to evacuate, and almost all remained in Oszmiana under the occupation.

After about two weeks, the new authorities rounded up about 40 people, both Jews and Poles, accused of having collaborated with the Soviet authorities, and shot them.¹ On July 25, 1941, the Jewish Council (Judenrat) was ordered to supply a list of all male Jews aged between 17 and 65. The next day, on the basis of this list, a detachment of Einsatzkommando 9 rounded up almost all the adult male Jews in Oszmiana. According to the relevant Einsatzgruppen report, 527 people were shot. The victims were buried in the nearby village of Bartel.²

In the summer of 1941, the town was run by a German military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur). In September 1941, authority was transferred to a German civil administration. Oszmiana initially was part of Gebiet Wilejka in Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien. The German authorities introduced a series of anti-Jewish measures in Oszmiana, including the appointment of a Jewish Council, with eight



Exterior of the Oszmiana synagogue, photographed in the mid-1990s. USHMM WS #97259, COURTESY OF JACK KAGAN

members; the marking of Jews by requiring yellow Stars of David on their outer clothing; and the use of Jews for forced labor. Jews were forbidden to leave the town limits or to have any dealings with non-Jews.

In early October (or, according to one source, early September) 1941, on German orders, all the town's Jews were moved into a ghetto, along with those from the surrounding villages. The Jews were able to move their property into the ghetto in an orderly fashion, but some chose to give items to non-Jewish acquaintances for safekeeping. Those Jews already living inside the designated ghetto area had to take in those forced to move in from outside. The ghetto was fenced and guarded by the local police. Jews working outside the ghetto required permits in order to leave.³ On one occasion the Germans demanded that the holy books be burned, and a few old books were burned to satisfy them. In the ghetto, a number of newborn boys were circumcised by a mohel, who came from Wilno to perform the service.⁴

Living conditions in the ghetto were overcrowded, and there was a shortage of food. Jews leaving the ghetto on work details were able to barter clothing and other items of property with non-Jews and smuggle the food back into the ghetto. Some Jews, especially youths, also climbed over the ghetto fence at night to obtain food.⁵

In the fall of 1941, the German commandant arrested and shot two Jewish women, alleged to have participated in Soviet activities before the German invasion, and a girl caught not wearing her armband. Another woman was arrested for trading illegally with a non-Jew, and the commandant had her shot.⁶ The German authorities imposed repeated "contributions" on the Judenrat, including one demand for 200,000 rubles, of which only 64,000 were collected. Other demands were for soap, perfumes, fur clothing, and textiles. The Jews were also forced to surrender their cows and other livestock, apart from 10 cows needed to provide milk for the sick and children. Jews who entered the ghetto illegally from other places were also shot upon capture. However, with the help of a bribe to the Polish mayor (at that time, Skrzat), the Judenrat managed to prepare a new list of residents when the German commandant was replaced, which served to legitimize around 200 Lithuanian refugees.⁷

From April 1, 1942, Oszmiana became part of *Gebiet Wilna-Land*, now in *Generalkommissariat Litauen*. At this time new Lithuanian officials were appointed to take over, including Jonas Valys as head of the administration in Oszmiana and Vincas Tiknys as head of police.⁸ Just before the handover, around 120 Jews took the opportunity to be transferred to a labor camp at *Mołodeczno* (in *Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien*). They, like others, were anxious about what would happen once the Lithuanians took over, as almost all the provincial Jews in *Generalkommissariat Litauen* had already been killed. The new *Gebietskommissar*, Horst Wulff, in Wilno ordered the surrender of precious metals and other valuables, which had raised the sum of 26,546 Reichsmark by April 20.⁹

At the end of May, 1,849 Jews were registered in the Oszmiana ghetto.¹⁰ In August 1942, 80 Jewish men and 200

Jewish women were sent to a labor camp in Lithuania.¹¹ In the late summer or fall of 1942, there were 1,649 Jews reported to be in the Oszmiana ghetto, of which 702 were deployed for labor. By mid-October most of the remaining Jews from *Holszany*, *Smorgonie*, *Krewo*, *Żuprany*, and *Soly* had been resettled into the Oszmiana ghetto, increasing the total number of Jews there to around 4,000. This influx exacerbated overcrowding, such that about 20 people had to share a single house.¹²

The German Security Police, believing there were too many Jews in the ghetto, instructed the Jewish Police from the Wilno ghetto to select 1,500 people for liquidation, including women whose husbands had been shot in 1941 and women who had four or five children. They sent the chief of the Jewish Police, Dessler, to Oszmiana, and he determined that, first, the women who had lost their husbands in 1941 were working and therefore could not be liquidated and that, second, there were no families with four or five children; at most there were two children in a family. Therefore, after Dessler's return to Wilno, the number of Jews subject to liquidation was decreased to 800, and when Jakob Gens, head of the Judenrat in the Wilno ghetto, and SS-Hauptscharführer Martin Weiss from the SD Wilna arrived in Oszmiana, the number of Jewish victims was further reduced to 600. As a result, on October 23, 1942, with the participation of the Jewish Police from Wilno, 406 elderly people were rounded up and shot.¹³

In the following five months, life in the ghetto of Oszmiana was comparatively uneventful. The Jewish administration managed to organize the work of the craftsmen, a clinic, and a small hospital; ensured that the ghetto inhabitants had a regular supply of food; and set up a library, a club, a bath, and a boarding house for Jewish workers whose health had deteriorated.¹⁴

The situation altered sharply in late March 1943, when the decision was made to liquidate the ghetto. During its liquidation in late March and early April 1943, some of the Jews were sent to labor camps in Lithuania and to the ghetto in Wilno, if they had relatives there, and 713 Jews, together with Jews from other liquidated ghettos (around 4,000 in total), were taken to Ponary, near Wilno, and shot there.¹⁵

According to Shalom Cholawsky, there was an underground organization in Oszmiana that received a warning from the resistance movement in Wilno about the upcoming liquidation. As a result a group of about 50 Jewish youths, armed with two rifles and two grenades, managed to escape from the ghetto on the eve of the Aktion. Of this group, about 40 people subsequently joined up with partisan units to the east in the Belorussian forests.

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jewish community of Oszmiana during the Holocaust can be found in these publications: M. Gelbart, ed., *Sefer zikaron le-kebilat Oshmana* (Tel Aviv: Oshmaner Organization in Israel and Oshmaner Society in the USA, 1969); Arūnas Bubnys, "The Fate of the Jews in the Švenčionys, Oshmyany and Svir Regions (1941–1943)," in Irena Guzenberg et al., eds., *The Ghettos of Oshmyany*,

1100 LITHUANIA REGION

Svir, Švenčionys Regions: Lists of Prisoners, 1942 (Vilnius: Valstybinis Vilniaus Gaono žydu muziejus, 2009), pp. 83–118, here pp. 105–110; “Oszmiana,” 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. 107–114; Herman Kruk, *The Last Days of the Jerusalem of Lithuania: Chronicles from the Vilna Ghetto and the Camps, 1939–1944* (New Haven, CT: YIVO, 2002); Yitzhak Arad, *Ghetto in Flames: The Struggle and Destruction of the Jews in Vilna in the Holocaust* (New York: Holocaust Library, 1982); Shalom Cholowsky, *The Jews of Belorussia during World War II* (Amsterdam: Harwood, 1998); and Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), pp. 562–564.

Documentation on the murder of the Jews of Oszmiana can be found in the following archives: AŽIH (301/2244, 2537); BA-BL (R 58/216); GARF (7021-89-12); LCVA (R 626-1-211; R 1363-1-1 and 2); MA (D.1357); USHMM; VHF (e.g., # 11883, 20551); and YVA.

Alexander Kruglov and Martin Dean
trans. Kathleen Luft

NOTES

1. AŽIH, 301/2537, testimony of Lejzer Pert; 301/2244, testimony of Sima Baran.

2. BA-BL, R 58/216, Ereignismeldung UdSSR no. 50, August 12, 1941; Gelbart, *Sefer zikaron*, p. 27; “The Diary of Hinda Daul,” in Gelbart, *Sefer zikaron* (English section), p. 60. AŽIH, 301/2244—this source gives the number of victims as about 1,000. In the ChGK materials (GARF, 7021-89-12, pp. 2, 4), the number of Jewish victims is stated as 573, but the Aktion is erroneously dated on July 3–4.

3. AŽIH, 301/2537; Chanan Peled (Cepelunski) testimony, available at www.eilatgordinlevitan.com/oshmany/osh_pages/oshmany_stories_chanan.html; “The Diary of Hinda Daul,” p. 62. Kruk, *The Last Days*, p. 533, however, dates the establishment of the ghetto on September 5, 1941, as recorded by the former Judenrat of Oszmiana in 1943.

4. Pesie Kustin, “Oshmener geto,” in Gelbart, *Sefer zikaron*, pp. 348–351. This source also gives a rough description of the streets on which the ghetto was located.

5. VHF, # 11883, testimony of Rose Boyarsky.

6. “Durkh geto un katzetn,” in *Fun letstn kburbn*, vol. 1 (Munich: Tsentral historishe komisye baym Tsentral komitet fun di bafrayte Yidn in der Amerikaner zone, 1946), no. 6, pp. 37–43.

7. “The Diary of Hinda Daul,” p. 62.

8. LCVA, R 1363-1-2, pp. 4, 7, as cited by Bubnys, “The Fate of the Jews,” p. 108.

9. LCVA, R 1363-1-1, p. 7, as cited in *ibid.*

10. AŽIH, 301/2537; Guzenberg et al., *The Ghettos of Oshmany*, p. 634.

11. Gelbart, *Sefer zikaron*, pp. 29–30.

12. LCVA, R 626-1-211, p. 18, list of ghettos in Kreis Oshmiana, October 1942; Kruk, *The Last Days*, pp. 385, 439, 443; “The Diary of Hinda Daul,” p. 70; Kustin, “Oshmener geto,” pp. 348–351.

13. See Arad, *Ghetto in Flames*, pp. 342–347; see also Jacob Gens’s words at the meeting of the Judenrat in Wilno on Oc-

tober 27, 1942, MA, D.1357, published in I. Arad, ed., *Unichtozbenie evreev SSSR v gody nemetskoj okkupatsii (1941–1944): Sbornik dokumentov i materialov* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1991), p. 254.

14. Gelbart, *Sefer zikaron*, p. 31.

15. *Ibid.*, pp. 31–32; and Arad, *Ghetto in Flames*, pp. 359–362.

PAJŪRIS

Pre-1940: Pajūris (Yiddish: Payura), village, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Pajūris/Paiūris, Taurage uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Pajūris, Kreis Tauroggen, Gebiet Schaulen-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Pajūris, Šilalė rajonas, Tauragė apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Pajūris is located about 97 kilometers (60 miles) southwest of Šiauliai. The 1923 census recorded 280 Jews residing in Pajūris, constituting about 58 percent of the total population. Just prior to the German invasion, only about 30 Jewish families remained.

The Wehrmacht occupied the village of Pajūris shortly after the start of the invasion on June 22, 1941. According to the account in *Pinkas ha-kebilot*, at this time, a part of the Jewish population of Pajūris escaped to the nearby village of Teneniai, where two local families had been killed by local Lithuanians. The arriving Jews were imprisoned in a barn and held for several days without food or water. Subsequently they were taken to Kvėdarna. *Pinkas ha-kebilot* reports that these Jews were killed in Kvėdarna on June 29, 1941. Other sources, however, indicate that on June 29, most able-bodied Jewish men were rounded up in Kvėdarna and taken to the Heydekrug (Šilutė) forced labor camp. Only a smaller group of 11 elderly Jews, deemed unable to work, were shot by Lithuanian partisans in Kvėdarna on June 30, 1941.¹

Of those Jews who remained in Pajūris, very little information is known concerning their fate. It is likely that the SS also rounded up most of the able-bodied men and took them to the Heydekrug camp, where some of the prisoners were killed a few weeks later. The remaining prisoners there worked as forced laborers for more than three years; some of them later went into the concentration camp system, where they passed through Auschwitz II-Birkenau in 1943.

In early September 1941, the remaining Jews in Pajūris, consisting of only 4 men and 51 women and children, were locked up on an estate near the village, which became a provisional ghetto.² After about two weeks in the ghetto, they were all taken to the Tūbinės Forest, near Šilalė, and were murdered there together with other Jews from the surrounding villages.

SOURCES Information about the persecution and murder of the Jews of Pajūris can be found in the following publications: “Pajūris,” in Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 477–478; and Christoph Dieckmann,

“Deutsche Besatzungspolitik in Litauen 1941–1944” (Ph.D. diss., Universität Freiburg, 2002), section F.1.2.2.

Martin Dean

NOTES

1. LG-Aur (Az 17 Ks 1/61), verdict of May 29, 1961, in the case against Struve, Scheu et al., in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 17 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1977), Lfd. Nr. 511, pp. 441–442; and vol. 20 (1979) Lfd. Nr. 579, p. 309.
2. Dieckmann, “Deutsche Besatzungspolitik.”

PAKRUOJIS

Pre-1940: Pakruojis (Yiddish: Pokrai), town, Šiauliai apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Pakruojis/Pakruois, Šiauliai uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Pakruojis, Kreis Schaulen, Gebiet Schaulen-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: rajonas center, Šiauliai apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Pakruojis is located about 36 kilometers (22.5 miles) east of Šiauliai. According to the 1923 census, there were 454 Jews living in Pakruojis. By June 1941, the Jewish population had declined slightly as a consequence of emigration in the 1930s.

Following the German invasion of the Soviet Union, many Jewish refugees arrived in Pakruojis. Some refugees and local Jews tried to flee on towards Biržai and the Latvian border, but many of these people were intercepted by Lithuanian nationalists. Some were murdered, and the others were forced to return home. German forces captured the town on June 28, 1941, and Lithuanian partisans immediately formed a local authority and a partisan force, which subsequently became an auxiliary police unit.

The Lithuanian partisans soon began to arrest Jews, accusing them of having collaborated with the Soviets. Some of those arrested, including Moshe Plocki and Chaja Edelman, were murdered, and about 30 others were transferred, in early July, to the prison in Šiauliai. Anti-Jewish measures enforced by the Lithuanian authorities included the seizure of property, the imposition of forced labor, and the requirement to perform menial tasks; Jews also endured physical abuse.¹

On July 10, 1941, Lithuanian partisans rounded up and shot the Jewish men who remained. The women, children, and old people were then resettled into a ghetto formed in the courtyard around the synagogue, where they were detained under guard for several weeks. They were permitted to take part of their property with them and also some food. The ghetto was liquidated on August 4, when Lithuanian policemen shot all the Jews in a nearby forest. The Jews were made to stand on wooden boards placed across a prepared ditch and were then shot such that they fell into the ditch.² According to one Soviet source, the total number of victims was 265.³ The Jews were shot and buried in the Morkakalnis Forest, about 3 kilometers (1.9 miles) southeast of Pakruojis.⁴

Some of those sent to the prison in Šiauliai were subsequently transferred to the Šiauliai ghetto, and a few of these

people ultimately survived the war. The Jewish doctor in Pakruojis, Markus Sreiber, was initially spared, as his services were still required. He was murdered in April 1942, in front of the church.⁵ Around this time, other Jews uncovered in hiding were also killed.

SOURCES Information regarding the fate of the Jewish community of Pakruojis can be found in these publications: “Pakruojis,” in Shalom Bronstein, ed., *Yabadut Lita: Lithuanian Jewry*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust 1941–1945* (Tel Aviv: Association of Former Lithuanians in Israel, 1984), p. 333; “Pakruojis,” in Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 472–475; and Joe Woolf, ed., “The Holocaust in 21 Lithuanian Towns,” available at www.jewishgen.org/Yizkor/lithuania3/lithuania3.html.

Documentation on the persecution and murder of the Jews of Pakruojis can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-94-436); LCVA; VHF (# 34991); and YVA.

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trans. Kathleen Luft

NOTES

1. Levin and Rosin, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Lithuania*, pp. 472–475; David Katz, *The Lord Has Chastised Me Severely* (Stony Brook, NY: Y. Katz, 2001), pp. 31–32.
2. “Pakruojis,” in Bronstein *Yabadut Lita: Lithuanian Jewry*, vol. 4, p. 333; Woolf, “The Holocaust in 21 Lithuanian Towns”; VHF, # 34991, testimony of Ruth Igdal.
3. GARF, 7021-94-436, p. 29.
4. Josef Levinson, ed., *The Shoah (Holocaust) in Lithuania* (Vilnius: Vilna Gaon Jewish State Museum, 2006), p. 505.
5. VHF, # 34991.

PALANGA

Pre-1940: Palanga (Yiddish: Polangen), town, Kretinga apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Kretinga uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Polangen, Kreis Kröttingen, Gebiet Schaulen-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Palanga, Kretinga rajonas, Klaipėda apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Palanga is located about 144 kilometers (90 miles) west of Šiauliai on the Baltic coast. According to census records, a total of 455 Jews were residing in Palanga in 1923. The size of the town’s Jewish population fluctuated over the next decade, with some individuals emigrating, and as a result, the number of Jewish residents had decreased slightly by June 1941.

Palanga was occupied by German armed forces on June 22, 1941. Just one day after the arrival of German troops, a German officer was killed in the town. On orders from the head of the Gestapoleitstelle Tilsit, SS-Sturmbannführer Hans-Joachim Böhme, the head of Grenzpolizeikommissariat (Border Police Office, GPK) in Memel, Dr. Frohwann, began to arrest all the male Jews and suspected Communists residing in Palanga. This order was carried out by members of GPK

Memel and the Tilsit Gestapo, assisted by the Lithuanian auxiliary police. The male Jews were locked in the town's synagogue, and from there, they were taken to the building that served as the bus depot. At the end of June, 111 men were shot in an Aktion organized by the Tilsit Gestapo. At least 100 of the victims were male Jews; they were shot together with about 8 suspected Lithuanian Communists. A detachment of 30 members of the Memel Schutzpolizei under the leadership of Polizeileutnant Werner Schmidt-Hammer, and at least 15 airmen from the 6th Company of pilot candidates from Fliegerausbildungsregiment 10, also participated in the mass shooting, which took place on the sand dunes near Birutė Hill.¹

Following the killing of the Jewish men, the women and children were initially taken to the synagogue, where they were imprisoned for several days under subhuman conditions. They received almost no food or water, and at night the Lithuanian guards would shoot in the air, break windows, and instill fear in the prisoners. After a few days they were taken to a farm near Kretinga, which served as an improvised ghetto. The farm buildings held 226 people for nearly two months, guarded by a detachment of the Lithuanian auxiliary police. The able-bodied were employed in carrying raw amber to a central warehouse. Food and water were supplied in very sparing quantities, and around 10 people died of starvation and disease. In late August or early September, all the women and children (at least 200 people) were taken to the Kunigiškiai Forest, where they were shot by a detachment of the GPK Memel, assisted by Lithuanian auxiliary policemen.²

SOURCES Information about the persecution and murder of the Jews of Palanga can be found in the following publications: Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 491–495; LG-Ulm, Ks 2/57, verdict against Böhme and others, August 29, 1958, published in *KZ-Verbrechen vor Deutschen Gerichten*, vol. 2, *Einsatzkommando Tilsit. Der Prozess zu Ulm* (Frankfurt/Main, 1966); and LG-Tüb, Ks 2/61, verdict of May 10, 1961, against Wiechert and Schulz, published in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 17 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1977), Lfd. Nr. 509, pp. 350–357.

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trans. Katrin Reichelt

NOTES

1. Report of Staatspolizeistelle Tilsit to RSHA, July 1, 1941, published in Peter Klein, ed., *Die Einsatzgruppen in der Sowjetunion 1941/42. Die Tätigkeits- und Lageberichte der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD* (Berlin, 1997), pp. 373–375 (see also BA-BL, R 58/214, Ereignismeldungen UdSSR no. 14, July 6, 1941); LG-Tüb, Ks 2/61, verdict of May 10, 1961, against Wiechert and Schulz, in *JuNS-V*, vol. 17, Lfd. Nr. 509, pp. 350–357; and LG-Ulm, Ks 2/57, verdict against Böhme and others, August 29, 1958, in *KZ-Verbrechen vor Deutschen Gerichten*, vol. 2.

2. Levin and Rosin, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Lithuania*, pp. 491–495; *JuNS-V*, vol. 15 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1976), Lfd. Nr. 465, p. 214.

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CAMPS AND GHETTOS, 1933–1945

PAŅEVĖŽYS

Pre-1940: Panevėžys (Yiddish: Ponevezsb), city and apskritis center, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Panevėžys/Panevezhis, uezd center, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Ponewesch, Kreis and Gebiet center, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Panevėžys, rajonas and apskritis center, Republic of Lithuania

Panevėžys is located 97 kilometers (60 miles) north-northeast of Kaunas. In 1923, there were 19,147 people living in Panevėžys, among them 6,845 Jews (36 percent). The town's population had risen to 26,000 (among them more than 7,000 Jews) by 1939. Under Soviet rule between June 1940 and June 1941, a number of Jewish businesses were expropriated, and at least 27 Jews were exiled into the Soviet interior.

German armed forces captured the city on June 26, 1941, but attacks on local Jews likely began two days earlier. The Lithuanian activists who took the initiative in the persecution of the Jews included the gymnasium director Elisonas, his inspector Kasparavičius, the assistant prosecutor Grigaitis, the district court secretary Jasaitis, and others under the leadership of Lieutenant Ižiūnas. Immediately after the occupation, Lithuanian nationalists formed a city administration and police force, which introduced a number of anti-Jewish measures. Jews were ordered to wear Stars of David on their clothing and forced into various kinds of heavy labor. At the same time, the Jewish population was required to register, and non-Jews were strictly forbidden to sell them food. The Jews were also subjected to humiliation, degradation, and assaults by local antisemites. A rumor spread in the town that a Lithuanian physician had been murdered by Jews, and this served as the pretext for attacks on the local Jewish population. Groups of young Jewish men were marched out of the city and ordered to dig peat. These men never returned to Panevėžys.¹

Jews were ordered to settle into a ghetto before the night of July 11, 1941. The ghetto area incorporated three streets—Klaipėda, Krekenava, and Tulvičius (J. Tilvytis)—and the city's slaughterhouse. The ghetto borders were closed on July 17, 1941, at 6:00 p.m. It was surrounded with barbed wire and guarded by armed Lithuanian policemen. Non-Jews who moved out of the ghetto area were given Jewish houses outside the ghetto in exchange. The Jews Avraham Riklys and Moshe Levit were appointed to administer the ghetto. To discourage escape attempts, 70 Jews were taken hostage and imprisoned.² At the end of July, the ghetto contained 4,457 Jews, of whom 1,250 were still without any accommodation.³ The overcrowding, filth, and terrible shortage of all items necessary for living led within a few weeks to the outbreak of disease. The Jewish doctors had no medicine or other materials to cope with it. Dr. T. Gutman received permission to open a small hospital, but under these conditions, there was little that could be done for the sick.

Jews from the ghetto were taken for forced labor, for example, digging pits for rubbish or carrying heavy barrels at the local railway station, during which they were severely beaten and humiliated by the Lithuanian overseers. On one occasion a group of Jews was reportedly forced into a scalding

lime pit, causing severe wounds, before most of the men were shot.⁴ Up to the middle of August, Einsatzkommando 3 and the Lithuanian police carried out four large Aktions in Panevėžys, on July 21 and 28 and on August 4 and 11, in which they shot more than 1,220 Jews. Apart from 115 women, all of these victims were Jewish men.⁵

The ghetto in the city existed for about six weeks before it was liquidated. In mid-August 1941, a German Gestapo official informed the Jews that they would be moved to a former military barracks at Pajuostė, about 5 kilometers (3 miles) from Panevėžys, which would serve as a labor camp with better conditions than in the overcrowded ghetto. The ghetto residents, however, suspected that this was a trap, intended to lure them to their deaths, and had to be forced to leave the ghetto.⁶ A few days later, the majority of the Jews were marched under armed guard to Pajuostė. The elderly, the sick, and small children were transported on peasant carts. After arriving there, the Jews were taken in groups of 200 and shot in a nearby forest by men from Einsatzkommando 3, with the help of the Lithuanian police. The last to be shot were the elderly and infirm, accompanied by Dr. Gutman. Some people, including small children, were only wounded and were buried alive. The pits were filled in by Soviet prisoners of war (POWs), who discovered one Jewish child who was still alive. While they tried to conceal the child, the Lithuanian policemen soon discovered and shot the child. The next day, participants in the murder rummaged through the piles of clothes and shoes at the pits, taking any items they fancied.

According to the Jäger report, on August 23, 1941, 7,523 Jews (1,312 men, 4,602 women, and 1,609 children) were shot in Panevėžys.⁷ These numbers may include Jews from nearby villages, including Raguva, Ramygala, and Krekenava, who were also brought to Pajuostė on carts with their property and were murdered there in the second half of August.

SOURCES Information about the persecution and murder of the Jews in Panevėžys can be found in the following publications: B. Baranauskas and E. Rozauskas, eds., *Masinės žudynės Lietuvoje (1941–1944): Dokumentu rinkinys*, vol. 2 (Vilnius: Leidykla “Mintis,” 1973); Shalom Bronstein, ed., *Yabadut Lita: Lithuanian Jewry*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust 1941–1945* (Tel Aviv: Association of Former Lithuanians in Israel, 1984), pp. 329–331, published also in English translation in Josef Levinson, ed., *The Shoab (Holocaust) in Lithuania* (Vilnius: Vilna Gaon Jewish State Museum, 2006), pp. 106–112; Rabbi Ephraim Oshry, *The Annihilation of Lithuania Jewry* (New York: Judaica Press, 1995), pp. 229–230; Christoph Dieckmann, “Deutsche Besatzungspolitik in Litauen 1941–1944” (Ph.D. diss., Universität Freiburg, 2002), section F.1.2.1; and “Panevezys,” in Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 457–466, available also in English at www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/panevezys/pon3.html.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: BA-BL; GARF; LCVA; LYA; RGVA (500-1-25); USHMM; and YVA (e.g., M-1/E/357, 1128, 1731, 2280, 2551; O-3/2322, 2581; O-71/61, 62, 63).

Alexander Kruglov and Martin Dean

NOTES

1. Levinson, *The Shoab (Holocaust) in Lithuania*, pp. 106–112.

2. Ibid.; Levin and Rosin, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Lithuania*, pp. 457–466. On ghettoization, see the newspaper *Išlaisvintas Panevėžietis*, July 12 and 20, 1941, and Višniauskas, *Žydu tragedija*, p. 51, as cited by Dieckmann, “Deutsche Besatzungspolitik.”

3. Višniauskas, *Žydu tragedija*, p. 69, as cited by Dieckmann, “Deutsche Besatzungspolitik.”

4. This incident is reportedly described in an article by P. Yanusheitis, published in the Lithuanian Communist journal *Tiesis* in February 1945; see Oshry, *The Annihilation of Lithuania Jewry*, p. 229. Similar accounts can also be found in the secondary sources cited above.

5. RGVA, 500-1-25, report of Einsatzkommando 3, December 1, 1941.

6. This account was reportedly given to Meir Gendel, who had survived the war in the Soviet Union, by local inhabitants in Panevėžys shortly after the city was reoccupied by the Red Army. For a more detailed version, see Levinson, *The Shoab (Holocaust) in Lithuania*, pp. 108–111.

7. RGVA, 500-1-25, report of Einsatzkommando 3, December 1, 1941.

PASVALYS

Pre-1940: Pasvalys (Yiddish: Posvol), town, Panevėžys apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Panevėžys/Panevezbis uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Kreis Birsen, Gebiet Ponewesch-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: rajonas center, Panevėžys apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Pasvalys is located 32 kilometers (20 miles) north of Panevėžys. About 700 Jews lived in the town on the eve of the war.

German armed forces captured the town on June 26, 1941. Immediately after the occupation, Lithuanian nationalists formed a town administration, which actively took measures against the Jewish population. On June 27, four Jews—Sheina Kretzmer, Nehemiah Millin, Chanan Forman, and David Shapiro—were arrested and accused of being Communist activists and having collaborated with the Soviet authorities. On July 4, on this same pretext, more Jews were arrested. Some of them were put in the local prison, and some were held in Joel Farber’s granary. After a few days, the arrested Jews were transported to Šiauliai. Sometime later, a number of Jewish women were released and returned to Pasvalys.¹

In mid-July 1941, the Lithuanian administration ordered all remaining Jews into a ghetto. Parts of Biržai Street and Polivan Street were cordoned off for this purpose.² The town council provided food to the internal ghetto administration, which operated under the leadership of the town rabbi, Rav Yitzchok Agulnik. In the meantime, the Lithuanian guards subjected the inmates to repeated abuse. Conditions were so bad that Rabbi Agulnik even wrote to the head of the Šiauliai ghetto,

begging him to try to influence the Germans to rescue the Jews of Pasvalys from the clutches of the Lithuanians.³

Jews from outlying villages, including Joniškėlis, Pumpėnai, Vaškiai, Krinčinas, Daujėnai, Saločiai, and Vabalninkas, were subsequently brought into the Pasvalys ghetto after the middle of August. At this time the ghetto was surrounded by barbed wire.⁴ The Jews from Joniškėlis were reportedly transferred on August 19. According to Sheina Sachar Gertner, a survivor from Vabalninkas, she was transferred to the Pasvalys ghetto on August 20, 1941, where she was held in very overcrowded conditions.⁵ Among these new arrivals were at least 40 Jews from Vabalninkas, who had converted to Catholicism. These people were interned separately from the other Jews in Pasvalys.

The ghetto in Pasvalys existed for about one and a half months. Following a meeting by the town council, it was decided to liquidate the ghetto. On August 26, 1941, the Jews were informed that they would be transferred to a camp, and the men were separated from the women and children in the town. The separate groups were then escorted to two pits prepared in the Žadeikiai Forest, 4.5 kilometers (3 miles) outside Pasvalys. The converts to Catholicism were taken along with the rest of the Jews from the ghetto. According to a Lithuanian woman bystander, some of the Jews attacked their captors with their bare hands on the way to the pits, but the Lithuanians responded brutally, killing some of them on the way and dragging the others to the killing site. According to the report of Karl Jäger, in charge of Einsatzkommando 3, on August 26, 1941, 1,349 Jews (402 men, 738 women, 209 children) were shot in Pasvalys.⁶

Before and during the Aktion, a number of Jews managed to escape, including Sheina Gertner, who was warned by an elderly priest the night before and fled with her husband.⁷ However, most of the escapees were captured and killed shortly after the mass shooting; only a handful managed to escape successfully.

Participating in the mass shooting were members of the 3rd Company, Lithuanian Auxiliary Battalion 1 (later Schutzmannschafts-Bataillon 13), which arrived from Kaunas in two trucks. A unit member, Balys Labeikis, claims that the local police and the men of his company only guarded the victims and herded them to the pits. After the Aktion, the Lithuanian participants returned to Pasvalys, where they celebrated with a large dinner, and many of them got drunk.⁸

Among the small number of Lithuanians in the region who risked their lives and saved Jews was a man named Baniolis. He hid three Jewish girls for three years in a stable and provided them with food.⁹

SOURCES Information about the persecution and murder of the Jews in Pasvalys can be found in the following publications: B. Reinus, “Oysrot fun di yidn fun Posval un fun di derbeyike shtetlekh (Yanishkel, Vashki, Linkuva, Salat, Vabalnik),” in Mendel Sudarsky and Uriah Katzenelenbogen, eds., *Lite*, vol. 1 (New York: Jewish-Cultural Society, 1951), pp. 1859–1861; B. Baranauskas and E. Rozauskas, eds., *Masimės žudynes Lietuvoje (1941–1944): Dokumentu rinkinys*, vol. 2 (Vilnius: Leidykla “Mintis,” 1973), pp. 116–118; “Pasvalys,” in Dov

Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 466–470; Rabbi Ephraim Oshry, *The Annihilation of Lithuania Jewry* (New York: Judaica Press, 1995), pp. 230–232; Joseph Levinson, ed., *The Shoah in Lithuania* (Vilnius: Vilna Gaon Jewish State Museum, 2006), pp. 112–114—translated from Shalom Bronstein, ed., *Yahadut Lita: Lithuanian Jewry*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust 1941–1945* (Tel Aviv: Association of Former Lithuanians in Israel, 1984), p. 332.

Relevant documentation can be found in these archives: GARF; LCVA; LYA; RGVA (500-1-25); and USHMM (RG-02.002*12).

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trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. Reinus, “Aysrot fun di yidn fun Posval,” pp. 1859–1861.
2. *Ibid.*
3. Letter of August 23, 1941, as quoted in Levinson, *The Shoah in Lithuania*, p. 113.
4. Report of the Birzai uезд commission, May 26, 1945, published in Baranauskas and Rozauskas, *Masimės žudynes Lietuvoje (1941–1944)*, pp. 116–118. On August 19, 1941, around 200 Jews were sent to Pasvalys from Joniškėlis, 90 families (around 300 people) from Vaškiai, 90 Jews from Vabalninkas, 13 Jews from Saločiai, 21 Jews from Krinčinas, and 11 Jews from Daujėnai; see Barbara Armoniene et al., *Leave Your Tears in Moscow* (New York: J.P. Lippincott, 1961), p. 19.
5. USHMM, RG-02.002*12, pp. 1–4, testimony of Sheina Sachar Gertner, 1984.
6. Report of Einsatzkommando 3, September 10, 1941, RGVA, 500-1-25; and report of Einsatzkommando 3, December 1, 1941, p. 113. Also see B. Baranauskas and K. Ruksenas, *Documents Accuse* (Vilnius: Gintaras, 1970), p. 234.
7. USHMM, RG-02.002*12, pp. 1–4.
8. Alfonsas Eidintas, *Jews, Lithuanians and the Holocaust* (Vilnius: Versus Aureus, 2003), p. 289.
9. Reinus, “Aysrot fun di yidn fun Posval.”

PAŠVITINYS

Pre-1940: Pašvitinys (Yiddish: Pashvitin), village, Šiauliai apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Pašvitinys/Pasvītinitis, Šiauliai uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Posvitenen, Kreis Schaulen, Gebiet Schaulen-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Pašvitinys, Pakruojis rajonas, Šiauliai apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Pašvitinys is located 39 kilometers (24 miles) northeast of Šiauliai. According to the 1923 census, there were 274 Jews living in Pašvitinys. By June 1941, the Jewish population had declined slightly, as a result of emigration in the 1930s.

German forces captured the village on June 28, 1941. In the first days of the war, Lithuanian partisans, led by Leonas Balčiūnas, arrested up to 50 people alleged to have supported the Soviet regime, including a number of Jews. These prisoners were interrogated in Pašvitinys by the head of the local police, Povilas Pilka, and were then sent to the Šiauliai prison.

Some were executed, others were subsequently deported to Germany for forced labor, and a few were released.¹

In Pašvitinys the local Lithuanian authorities introduced a series of anti-Jewish measures. Jews were forbidden from having contacts with non-Jews, and their property was confiscated. Non-Jewish local inhabitants physically abused Jews. In one incident, a Jewish girl was molested, and her grandfather, who tried to protect her, was shot to death. Some Jews tried to leave the village, but on at least one occasion they were stopped by Lithuanian activists and forced to turn back.

Soon after the start of the occupation, all the Jews were rounded up and locked in an old horse stable next to the flour mill, called the “Magazine,” which served as an improvised ghetto. They remained there for approximately one month, and during this time the able-bodied Jews were sent out of the ghetto every day to perform agricultural work on neighboring farms. Those who were not physically strong and healthy were murdered, together with a group of Jews from Linkuva, along the road to Šiauliai; among the victims were the village’s last rabbi, David Nachman Dodman, and all his sons. In late August 1941, the remaining 70 or so Jews were transported in carts to the Žagarė ghetto, where they were shot on October 2, 1941, along with the other Jews gathered there.²

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jewish community of Pašvitinys during the Holocaust can be found in these publications: “Pašvitinys,” in Shalom Bronstein, *Yabadut Lita: Lithuanian Jewry*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust 1941–1945* (Tel Aviv: Association of Former Lithuanians in Israel, 1984), p. 334; Arūnas Bubnys, “The Fate of Jews in Šiauliai and the Šiauliai Region,” in Irena Guzenberg and Jevgenija Sedova, eds., *The Šiauliai Ghetto: Lists of Prisoners, 1942* (Vilnius: Valstybinis Vilniaus Gaono žydu muziejus, 2002), pp. 228–259, here p. 250; Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), p. 506; and “The Holocaust in 21 Lithuanian Towns,” compiled by Joe Woolf, available at www.jewishgen.org/Yizkor/lithuania3/lithuania3.html.

Documentation on the murder of the Jews of Pašvitinys can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-94-436); LCVA; LYA (K 1-58-P19196L); and YVA.

Alexander Kruglov and Martin Dean
trans. Kathleen Luft

NOTES

1. Bubnys, “The Fate of Jews,” p. 250.
2. “Pašvitinys,” in Bronstein, *Yabadut Lita*, vol. 4, p. 334; Woolf, “The Holocaust in 21 Lithuanian Towns.”

PLUNGĖ

Pre-1940: Plungė (Yiddish: Plungian), town, Telšiai apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Plungė/Plunge, Tel’shai uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Plunge, Kreis Telsche, Gebiet Schaulen-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Plungė, rajonas center, Telšiai apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Plungė is located 26 kilometers (16 miles) west-southwest of Telšiai. According to the 1923 census, there were 1,815 Jews living in the town.¹ By June 1941, emigration had reduced the Jewish population, and about 1,700 Jews remained in Plungė.

German armed forces captured the town on June 25, 1941. Immediately afterwards, Lithuanian nationalists formed a town administration and police force, which implemented anti-Jewish measures; the Germans played only a minor role in what followed, although they did immediately round up and kill approximately 60 young male Jews, whom the Lithuanians accused of having provided a rear guard for the retreating Red Army.

On or about June 26, the Lithuanians gathered all the Jews on the grounds of the synagogue and the Bet Midrash, which the captors declared a ghetto. Each day, Jews were taken out of the ghetto to perform different kinds of heavy physical labor in the town—such as street sweeping or cleaning latrines by hand—or on local estates. Beatings and humiliation accompanied the work. Some of the laborers never returned but were murdered. At the same time, the Lithuanian authorities extorted and stole the Jews’ valuables.

The living conditions for Jews in the ghetto were nearly unbearable. Overcrowding, filth, and lack of food and water brought about disease and death, especially among the elderly. The Jews lived in those conditions for approximately three weeks. The ghetto was liquidated on July 13 or 15, 1941 (sources differ), when Lithuanians trucked and marched the Jews to ditches located 4 kilometers (2.5 miles) to the northwest of the town, near the village of Kausenai, where they shot them.² Only those few Jews who had escaped or been deported to the interior of the Soviet Union survived.

SOURCES Information about the persecution and murder of the Jews in Plungė can be found in the following publications: B. Baranauskas and E. Rozauskas, eds., *Masinės žudynės Lietuvoje (1941–1944): Dokumentu rinkinys*, vol. 2 (Vilnius: Leidykla “Mintis,” 1973), p. 408; Rabbi Ephraim Oshry, *The Annihilation of Lithuania Jewry* (New York: Judaica Press, 1995), pp. 223–225; Josef Levinson, ed., *The Shoah (Holocaust) in Lithuania* (Vilnius: Vilna Gaon Jewish State Museum, 2006), pp. 125–127; “Plunge,” in Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 484–491; and Alfonsas Eidintas, *Jews, Lithuanians and the Holocaust* (Vilnius: Versus Aureus, 2003), p. 278. *Avotaynu: The International Review of Jewish Genealogy* 12 (22) contains a list of Plungė ghetto residents.

Documentation regarding the killing of the Jews of Plungė can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-94-430); USHMM (e.g., RG-50.473*0097 and 0098); and YVA.

Alexander Kruglov and Geoffrey P. Megargee
trans. Steven Seegel

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1. *Blackbook of Localities Whose Jewish Population Was Exterminated by the Nazis* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1965), p. 421.
2. GARF, 7021-94-430; the official number of victims is 1,704.

PODBRODZIE

Pre-1939: Podbrodzie (Yiddish: Podbrodzsh), town, Wilno województwo, Poland; 1939–1940: Pabradė, Švenčionys apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Pabradė/Pabrade, Svetsiansky uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Pabrade, Kreis Schwentschionys, Gebiet Wilna-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Pabradė, Švenčionys rajonas, Vilnius apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Podbrodzie is located 47 kilometers (29 miles) northeast of Wilno. Nearly 1,000 Jews were living in the town on the eve of World War II, comprising about one third of the inhabitants.

A number of Jews attempted to flee with the retreating Soviet forces at the end of June 1941, but they came under attack from (Lithuanian) Red Army deserters who had joined with local Lithuanian partisans led by Edvardas Baranauskas, and only a few dozen Jews escaped successfully. The Lithuanian nationalists soon seized control of the town, and eight Jews were shot at the end of June for alleged collaboration with the Soviets, around the time of the arrival of the German army. Jews were subjected to plunder at the hands of the Lithuanians.

On July 15, 1941, the Lithuanian police arrested more than 60 Jews and took them to the mill to be shot. Only one of the victims, Velvel Abramovich, managed to escape from the grave site.¹

In the period from July to September, the German military commandant and the local Lithuanian authorities enforced a series of anti-Jewish measures in Podbrodzie. Jews were required to wear patches bearing the Star of David, initially in white and later in yellow fabric. They were forbidden from buying food products in the market or from having any contacts with the non-Jewish population. In July a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established, which had to ensure that all German orders were carried out.² Among its members were Ben-Zion Vilian, Dr. Reyshevsky, Boris Blushinsky, Elye Likht, Yisroel Bratinsky, and Dovid Suzan.³

On September 1, 1941, all the town's Jews were moved into an open ghetto located on two streets inhabited by Christians, described in the yizkor book as Arnianer and Boyareler Streets. Initially the Jews were permitted only to take with them what they could carry in their arms, but the Lithuanian mayor permitted Jews to move in all of their property.⁴ Some sources date the ghetto's formation earlier, but this account matches with instructions issued by the office of the Gebietskommissar Wilna-Land to determine where ghettos were to be established by September 5.⁵ There was no Jewish police force. Local non-Jews moved into the vacated Jewish houses in Podbrodzie. At the time of the move into the ghetto, many Jews buried their valuables in their gardens and other hiding places or gave them to non-Jewish acquaintances for "safe-keeping."

Aware of the complete elimination of the Jews in some Lithuanian towns, the Jews of Podbrodzie discussed how best to save themselves. They collected money to bribe the Lithuanian police to warn them of an impending Aktion. After learning of the murder of the Jews in nearby Niemen-

czyn on September 20, 1941, a number of Jews prepared to go into hiding or flee the Podbrodzie ghetto to the towns of neighboring Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien, where the situation was not yet so bad. On September 23, the authorities demanded a large "contribution" from the Jews, and then on September 26, expecting an Aktion, many Jews secretly left the ghetto or went into hiding. According to survivor Morris Engelson, a local official of Polish ethnicity had tipped off a Jew who had given him refuge before under the Soviet regime—and word then quickly spread through the ghetto.⁶

On that day, many local non-Jewish inhabitants, including teachers, postal officials, forest wardens, as well as criminal elements, were mobilized to assist the local police in clearing the ghetto. Once the Jews' flight was detected, these local forces sealed off the ghetto, and some of the escapees were recaptured. Due to the mass flight, only just over 100 Jews were then rounded up by Lithuanian policemen, under the command of Antanas Žilėnas, which included also men brought in from Joniškis. Then the Jews of Podbrodzie were escorted to an overcrowded barracks at the military camp (firing range), also known as the Poligon transit camp, near Nowe Świeciany. The able-bodied Jews had to march there on foot, and the sick and elderly were loaded onto carts. On October 7–8, 1941, these people were all shot, along with thousands of other Jews who had been gathered at the Poligon camp.

The Lithuanian police in Podbrodzie searched for the escaped Jews and shot any they found on the outskirts of town. Some Jewish escapees and their families were fortunate to have Christian friends who gave them food and shelter for several weeks, before assisting them with their journey across the border into Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien. A number of the Jewish escapees subsequently made their way to the ghettos in Kiemieliszki, Michaliszki, Świr, Łyntupy, and other places deeper in Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien, where they shared the fate of the Jews there. About 100 Jews from the town survived the war, mostly from among those who escaped successfully into the Soviet Union.

In May 1942, 400 Jews were brought to Podbrodzie from the Wilno ghetto and placed in a newly built labor camp; these Jews were used to work on a railway line for the German Giesler company. In 1943, those who were still alive were returned to Wilno.

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jews of Podbrodzie during the Holocaust can be found in these publications: Arūnas Bubnys, "The Fate of Jews in Šiauliai and the Šiauliai Region," in Irena Guzenberg and Jevgenija Sedova, eds., *The Šiauliai Ghetto: Lists of Prisoners, 1942* (Vilnius: Valstybinis Vilniaus Gaono žydu muziejus, 2002), pp. 83–118, here pp. 98–99; Shimon Kanc, ed., *Sefer zikaron le-esrim ve-sbalosh kebi-lot she-nebrevu be-ezor Svintsian* (Tel Aviv: Former Residents of Svintzian in Israel and the U.S., 1965), pp. 1371–1406; Christoph Dieckmann, "Deutsche Besatzungspolitik in Litauen 1941–1944" (Ph.D. diss., Universität Freiburg, 2002), section F.1.2.6; B. Baranauskas and E. Rozauskas, eds., *Masinės žudynės Lietuvoje (1941–1944): Dokumentu rinkinys*, vol. 2 (Vilnius: Lei-

dykla “Mintis,” 1973); and “Podbrodzie,” 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. 515–518.

Documentation regarding the murder of the Jews of Podbrodzie can be found in the following archives: AŽIH (301/3531 and 3532); GARF (7021-94-435); LCVA (R 865-5-4); LYA (K 1-58-3501/3); USHMM; VHF (e.g., # 20551, 48155); and YVA (e.g., O-71/169.1).

Alexander Kruglov and Martin Dean
trans. Kathleen Luft

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1. Kanc, *Sefer zikaron*, p. 1373; see also Bubnys, “The Fate of the Jews,” p. 98.
2. Kanc, *Sefer zikaron*, pp. 1373–1374.
3. YVA, O-71/169.1, pp. 209–227, testimony of Yisroel Baravsky, as recorded by Leyb Koniuchovsky—as cited by Dieckmann, “Deutsche Besatzungspolitik,” section F.1.2.6.
4. Kanc, *Sefer zikaron*, pp. 1373–1374, 1383–1384—one survivor account states specifically that the Jews were in the ghetto for 26 days from September 1 to 26. Bubnys, “The Fate of the Jews,” p. 98, gives Lithuanian spellings for the two streets. AŽIH, 301/3531, testimony of Chuna Zak, March 25, 1948.
5. LCVA, R 865-5-4, p. 4, letter of Gebietskommissar Wulf to Kalendra, August 23, 1941, as cited by Dieckmann, “Deutsche Besatzungspolitik,” section F.1.2.6.
6. VHF, # 48155, testimony of Morris Engelson.

PRIENAI

Pre-1940: Prienai (Yiddish: Pren), town, Marijampolė apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Prienai/Preny, Marijampolė uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Prienai, Kreis Marijampol, Gebiet Kauen-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: rajonas center, Kaunas apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Prienai is located 31 kilometers (19 miles) south of Kaunas. According to the 1923 census, there were 954 Jews living in the town. By mid-1941, emigration, particularly in the 1920s and 1930s, had somewhat reduced the size of the Jewish population in Prienai.

German armed forces captured the town on June 24, 1941. Immediately, Lithuanian nationalists formed a local administration and a police force, which instituted a series of anti-Jewish measures. Jews had to wear Star of David patches on the front and back of their clothing, had to perform various kinds of compulsory labor, and were robbed and beaten by local antisemites. Jews were also prohibited from walking on public sidewalks and from having any relations whatsoever with non-Jewish Lithuanians. A special decree even forbade the Jews from lighting fires in their own hearths, so that they could not cook food—the sight of smoke from a Jewish chimney was enough to bring the authorities.

The Lithuanians also started killing Jews almost immediately after the Germans’ arrival. First they arrested and shot a

group of Jewish intellectuals. Then they arrested another group of Jews, accusing them of collaboration with the Soviet authorities, and imprisoned them in Marijampolė, where they subsequently were killed.

On August 14, 1941, the Lithuanians established a ghetto for the town’s Jews in a few unfinished barracks nearby. By order of the police administration in Kaunas, Jewish men and women who had collaborated with the Soviet authorities, and had been arrested in nearby localities, also found themselves in the Prienai ghetto. On August 16, 1941, 63 Jewish men and 26 Jewish women from Jieznas were sent to the Prienai ghetto.¹ Another 100 Jewish men and 6 Jewish women were brought there from Balbieriškis.² Others came from Veiveriai, Stakliškes, and other nearby localities. In all, 493 Jews were resettled into the ghetto from neighboring localities.³ The population of the ghetto in Prienai, as a result, exceeded 1,000 Jews.

Conditions in the ghetto were ghastly. There was no food, water, or sanitation. The barracks were horribly overcrowded. Diseases soon began to spread.

After nearly two weeks of this torment, the Prienai ghetto was liquidated. On August 25 the Lithuanians forced men from the ghetto to dig two large pits behind the barracks. The next day, with help from a German police unit, the Lithuanians marched approximately 1,100 Jews to the pits in groups and shot them with machine guns.⁴ A layer of lime was spread over each group. Witnesses reported that the piles of bodies heaved from the people who were only wounded. One woman even managed to crawl out of the pit and beg for her life, but the Lithuanian partisan Juozas Maslauskas shot her.⁵

Only about five Jews from Prienai managed to survive the war; most of them had been able to flee deeper into the Soviet Union in time. A few Jews found refuge with Lithuanians or fled into the forests around Prienai when the Jews were collected in the ghetto. However, almost all of these people gave themselves up, were thrown out by their protectors, or were denounced after a time. Peninah Binyaminovitz-Levitan managed to survive, as she was concealed successfully with the aid of a Lithuanian priest.

SOURCES Information about the elimination of the Jews in Prienai can be found in the following publications: B. Baranauskas and E. Rozauskas, eds., *Masinės žudynės Lietuvoje (1941–1944): Dokumentu rinkinys*, vol. 2 (Vilnius: Leidykla “Mintis,” 1973), pp. 86, 164, 176–177; Josef Levinson, ed., *The Shoah (Holocaust) in Lithuania* (Vilnius: Vilna Gaon Jewish State Museum, 2006), pp. 122–123, 211; “Prienai,” in Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), p. 502; and Alfonsas Eidintas, *Jews, Lithuanians and the Holocaust* (Vilnius: Versus Aureus, 2003), pp. 289–290.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: GARF; LCVA (e.g., 683-2-2, p. 77); LMAB (RS, f. 159, b. 46, l. 22); LYA; RGVA (500-1-25); and USHMM.

Alexander Kruglov and Geoffrey P. Megargee
trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. Report of the chief of the police precinct in Jieznas, August 16, 1941, published in Baranauskas and Rozauskas, *Masinės žudynes Lietuvoje (1941–1944)*, vol. 2, p. 86.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 164.
3. Letter of the director of the police precinct in Kaunas to “Obersturmführer Mr. Hamann,” August 23, 1941, published in B. Baranauskas and K. Ruksenas, *Documents Accuse* (Vilnius: Gintaras, 1970), p. 216.
4. See the report of Einsatzkommando 3 from September 10, 1941, RGVA, 500-1-25, p. 106.
5. See the testimony of Marė Brasokienė to the Special State Commission, in Levinson, *The Shoah*, pp. 122–123.

PUMPĖNAI

Pre-1940: Pumpėnai (Yiddish: Pumpian), village, Biržai apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Pumpėnai/Pumpenai, Biržbai uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Pumpenai, Kreis Birsen, Gebiet Ponewesch-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Pumpėnai, Pasvalys rajonas, Panevėžys apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Pumpėnai is located 23 kilometers (14 miles) north of Panevėžys. According to the 1923 census, 372 Jews were living in Pumpėnai. By June 1941, as a result of emigration in the 1920s and 1930s, the Jewish population had decreased significantly. One source has about 60 Jewish families living there when the war began.

German armed forces occupied the village on June 26, 1941. Immediately, Lithuanian nationalists formed a local administration and a police force, which implemented anti-Jewish measures. Valuable items were confiscated from the Jews, and they were required to perform various kinds of labor. They were subject to robbery, assault, and other forms of public denigration by local antisemites. They were also prohibited from walking in public places and maintaining any relations with the Lithuanians.

On July 15, 1941, all Jews of Pumpėnai were resettled into a ghetto. Several houses were assigned for this purpose, and the ghetto was surrounded by barbed wire. They remained there, reportedly without provisions, put to forced labor, and abused, until August 26, when the ghetto was liquidated. On that day, a detachment of Einsatzkommando 3, with the assistance of the Lithuanian police, shot nearly all the Jews of the village in a forest near Pasvalys. The town's pharmacist and his family were killed in Pumpėnai itself.

SOURCES Relevant publications include Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 451–452; and “The Holocaust in 21 Lithuanian Towns,” available at www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/lithuania3/lit3_002.html, pp. 9–10.

Alexander Kruglov
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RADVILIŠKIS

Pre-1940: Radviliškis (Yiddish: Radvilisbok), town, Šiauliai apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Radviliškis/Radviliskis, Šiauliai uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Radvilischken, Kreis Schaulen, Gebiet Schaulen-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Radviliškis, rajonas center, Šiauliai apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Radviliškis is located 19 kilometers (12 miles) southeast of Šiauliai. According to the census of 1923, there were 847 Jews living in Radviliškis. By June 1941, the Jewish population had decreased as a result of emigration in the 1930s.

German armed forces captured the town on June 25, 1941. Immediately, Lithuanian nationalists formed a local administration and a police force, which began to implement anti-Jewish measures. The authorities confiscated all the Jews' valuables and used the Jewish population for forced labor. Local antisemites subjected the Jewish laborers to humiliation, taunts, and beatings. Jews were forbidden to appear in public places or to maintain relations of any kind with non-Jews.

Accounts of events in Radviliškis vary somewhat. The most detailed, that in *Pinkas ha-kehillot*, states that the Lithuanians forced all the Jews into a ghetto in an abandoned Lithuanian army barracks on July 8. Some of the Jews had to build a barbed-wire fence around the place. Then, on July 12, the first Aktion took place when Lithuanian gunmen rounded up nearly all the men in the community (some 300 total), marched them to a grove next to the Jewish cemetery, and shot them.¹ The remaining women, children, and old people were later sent on to an enclosure that had formerly held Soviet prisoners of war. On August 22, 1941, the chief administrator of the town and of the county of Šiauliai (Kreis Schaulen-Land), J. Norejka, citing directives from the Gebietskommissar in Šiauliai, ordered all the county's Jews to be resettled into a single ghetto—the Žagarė ghetto—between August 25 and 29, 1941.² In compliance with this order, the ghetto in Radviliškis was liquidated in late August 1941, and all the Jews were transferred to the Žagarė ghetto. On October 2, 1941, they were shot along with the other Jews in the Žagarė ghetto. (Other accounts state that only about 400 of the Jews went to Žagarė, while the rest went to the Šiauliai ghetto. Some of these Jews subsequently wound up in camps in Germany and thus survived the war.)

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jewish community of Radviliškis during the Holocaust can be found in these publications: “Radviliskis,” in Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 625–628; Alfonsas Eidintas, *Jews, Lithuanians and the Holocaust* (Vilnius: Versus Aureus, 2003), pp. 279–280; Irena Guzenberg and Jevgenija Sedova, eds., *The Šiauliai Ghetto: Lists of Prisoners, 1942* (Vilnius: Valstybinis Vilniaus Gaono žydu muziejus, 2002), pp. 250–251; “Radviliskis,” 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. 1050; and Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettoes during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), p. 639.

Documentation on the murder of the Jews of Radviliškis can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-94-436); LCVA; LYA (K 1-46-1261); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. B. Baranauskas and E. Rozauskas, eds., *Masinės žudynės Lietuvoje (1941–1944): Dokumentu rinkinys*, vol. 2 (Vilnius: Leidykla “Mintis,” 1973), p. 405.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 226–227.

RASEINIAI

Pre-1940: Raseiniai (Yiddish: Raseyn), town, apskritis center, Lithuania; 1940–1941: uезд center, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Raseinen, Kreis center, Gebiet Schaulen-Land, Generalkommisariat Litauen; post-1991: Raseiniai, rajonas center, Kaunas apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Raseiniai is located 72 kilometers (45 miles) northwest of Kaunas. According to the 1923 census, 2,035 Jews were living in Raseiniai; by 1939, that number had declined to around 2,000.

Units of the German armed forces captured the town on June 23, 1941.¹ Immediately, Lithuanian nationalists formed a town administration and a police force, which they used to implement anti-Jewish policies. The Jewish population had to wear the Star of David on their clothing. In addition, Jews were assigned to various kinds of forced labor, including cleaning the streets, collecting armaments from the battlefield, and burying dead Soviet soldiers. Jewish women were forced to clean the homes of Lithuanian officials and Germans. Jews were subjected to robbery and assault at the hands of local antisemites. One of the victims of the terror and torture was the rabbi of Raseiniai, Reb Ahron Shmuel Katz. He was forced to dig his own grave and then was shot. On July 29, 1941, the head of the Raseiniai district, A. Sabaliauskas, issued Order no. 743, which imposed new restrictions on the Jewish population, including prohibiting them from using the sidewalks and public transportation and from appearing in public places.² An estimated 150 Jews were arrested during the first 8 to 10 days of the German occupation of Raseiniai.³

In the first half of July 1941, local authorities set up a ghetto or camp in the town in a monastery building. The area of the ghetto was cordoned off by barbed wire, and armed Lithuanian policemen stood guard around the perimeter. The ghetto commander was a local auxiliary policeman named Aleksas Grigaravičius; he already was very active in enforcing anti-Jewish measures and the physical abuse of Jews. His deputy, Kostas Narbutas, was placed in charge of the economic issues of the ghetto.⁴ Those Jewish men and women who were able to work were transferred from Raseiniai, in the direction of Jur-

barkas, to the farm of Žuveliškis, where they were told by the authorities that they would work as laborers. However, witnesses state that a unit of Lithuanian activists, led by Grigaravičius, took these approximately 500 individuals to a site and shot them. The victims had to wear blindfolds and had no knowledge of where they were being led.⁵ Before being shot, the victims had to undress, and their clothes were sent back to the ghetto. Zisla Flaumienė, who was in charge of the clothing department of the ghetto, found her husband's shirt among the items delivered.⁶ The remaining elderly people and the children from the ghetto were settled into some farm and storage buildings on Nemakščių Street that once belonged to the local Catholic Church. Witnesses later told investigators that Grigaravičius, at the beginning of the ghetto's existence, conducted a selection among the women. Women with children were allowed to stay in the ghetto, while approximately 50 girls and women without children were brought to Žuveliškės, where they were shot by Lithuanian “activists.”⁷ Another selection among the ghetto inmates identified those able to work. They were assigned to carry out some labor projects in the town and at several farms near Raseiniai. Some Jews also worked just outside the town, at the construction site of an air base that the Soviet authorities had started to build in 1940.⁸ Throughout these months, many Jews and suspected Communists were arrested and brought to the town's prison by local Lithuanian activists.⁹

The first major Aktion was carried out on July 29, 1941, when several hundred Jews and a number of Communists were selected in the ghetto and in the local prison. These people were herded to the Žuveliškės farm, approximately 5 kilometers (3 miles) outside Raseiniai. Not far from the farm, pits had been prepared in advance by the inhabitants of the surrounding farms. The victims were taken to the pits, forced to undress, and shot: a total of 254 Jews and 3 Lithuanian Communists. Witnesses stated that Jews from the surrounding smaller towns and villages such as Tytuvėnai, Nemakščiai, and Šiluva were also murdered at the Žuveliškės farm.¹⁰ The Aktion was conducted by members of the Gestapo. Lithuanian partisans guarded the victims at the killing site. The Gestapo men told these guards that they should learn to shoot Jews, as they would have to conduct the next anti-Jewish Aktion.¹¹ However, according to numerous witness statements, Grigaravičius and the following Lithuanian auxiliary policemen actively participated in the above-mentioned killing: deputy Kostas Narbutas, Jablonskis, Kaupas, Antanas Alemas, Kazys Stoikas, Kazys Barauskas, Pilonis, Urbšaitis, and Antanas Klimas.¹²

The town's ghetto existed only for about two months. It was liquidated on September 6, 1941, when all the remaining Jews were shot. According to the report of SS-Standartenführer Karl Jäger, the commander of Einsatzkommando 3, forces under his command, assisted by Lithuanian partisans, carried out three further “cleansing” Aktions in Raseiniai in August and September 1941. On August 5, 213 Jewish men and 66 Jewish women were murdered. Then on August 9–16, 294 Jewish women and 4 children were killed. Finally, between

August 25 and September 6, 1941, Raseiniai was “cleansed” of Jews, resulting in the deaths of 16 Jewish men, 412 Jewish women, and 415 Jewish children. In total more than 1,500 Jews were reported killed in the town.¹³

Some of the Jewish victims who were killed between August 25 and September 6, 1941, were transferred to the farm of Biliūnai. It had been the property of Count Bilevičius, who had been deported to Siberia by the Soviet authorities. The Jews were murdered there by members of the Security Police over the following weeks. At first, the victims were settled in two houses on this farm, and a Lithuanian activist named Viliamas acted as a de facto camp or subghetto commander during this time. The last Jews of Raseiniai were killed between August 29 and September 6 at the Kurpiškės farm.¹⁴

Only a handful of Jews managed to save themselves by escaping and hiding with local farmers, who risked their lives by offering protection. In addition, some, mostly younger Jews, had managed to escape into the interior of the Soviet Union in time in June 1941, and a few of these people returned to Raseiniai after the war.

SOURCES Information on the extermination of the Jews in Raseiniai can be found in the following publications: B. Baranauskas and E. Rozauskas, eds., *Masinės žudynės Lietuvoje (1941–1944): Dokumentu rinkinys*, vol. 2 (Vilnius: Leidykla “Mintis,” 1973), pp. 400–403; Shalom Bronstein, *Yabadut Lita: Lithuanian Jewry*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust 1941–1945* (Tel Aviv: Association of Former Lithuanians in Israel, 1984); Rabbi Ephraim Oshry, *The Annihilation of Lithuania Jewry* (New York: Judaica Press, 1995), pp. 235–238; “Raseiniai,” in Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 641–647; L. Kantautienė, *Raseinių Krašto Žydai* (Vilnius: Kronta, 2004); Arūnas Bubnys, “Mažijei Lietuvos Žydų Getai ir Laikinos Izoliavimo Stovyklos 1941–1943 Metai,” in *Lietuvos Istorijos Metraštis, 1999 Metais* (Vilnius, 2000), pp. 151–179; and Alfonsas Eidintas, *Lietuvos Žydų Žudinių Byla* (Vilnius, 2001). The existence of a temporary ghetto in Raseiniai is mentioned in Alfonsas Eidintas, *Jews, Lithuanians and the Holocaust* (Vilnius: Versus Aureus, 2003), pp. 295–296; and in *Rossiiskaia evreiskaia entsiklopediia*, vol. 6 (Moscow: Rossiiskaia akademiia estestvennykh nauk, Nauchnyi fond “Evreiskaia entsiklopediia,” “Epos,” 2007), p. 334.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: LCVA (R 1753-3-1); LYA (K 1-46-1269; 3377-55-119); RGVA (500-1-25); and YVA (e.g., M-1/E/625).

Alexander Kruglov
trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. Bubnys, “Mažijei Lietuvos Žydų Getai,” p. 165.
2. LCVA, R 1753-3-1, p. 97.
3. Eidintas, *Lietuvos Žydų Žudinių Byla*, p. 155.
4. *Ibid.*; *Lithuania: Crime and Punishment*, no. 6 (January 1999): 87.
5. Kantautienė, *Raseinių Krašto Žydai*, p. 83; see also LYA, 3377-55-119, pp. 57–69.
6. Eidintas, *Lietuvos Žydų Žudinių Byla*, p. 155; and interrogation statement of Aleksas Grigaravičius from October 3, 1947, in LYA, 3377-55-119, pp. 57–58, 61.

7. Eidintas, *Lietuvos Žydų Žudinių Byla*, p. 156; see also statement of Zisla Flaumienė, October 2, 1947, in LYA, 3377-55-119, pp. 76–78.

8. Statement of M. Karašas, in Kantautienė, *Raseinių Krašto Žydai*, p. 96.

9. Bubnys, “Mažijei Lietuvos Žydų Getai,” p. 165.

10. Bronstein, *Yabadut Lita: Lithuanian Jewry*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust 1941–1945*.

11. Bubnys, “Mažijei Lietuvos Žydų Getai,” p. 166; LYA, K 1-46-1269, pp. 37–39, testimony of A. Kmito, October 22, 1968.

12. LYA, 3377-55-119, pp. 57–69.

13. Adapted from a table compiled from the report of Einsatzkommando 3 on December 1, 1941; see RGVA, 500-1-25, pp. 111–113.

14. Bubnys, “Mažijei Lietuvos Žydų Getai,” p. 166.

RIETAVAS

Pre-1940: Rietavas (Yiddish: Riteve), town, Telšiai apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Rietavas/Retavas, Telšiai uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Rietavas, Kreis Telsche, Gebiet Schaulen-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Plungė rajonas, Telšiai apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Rietavas is located 34 kilometers (21 miles) southwest of Telšiai. According to the 1923 census, there were 868 Jews living in Rietavas. Emigration during the 1930s had probably reduced the number of Jews by June 1941.

On June 24, 1941, German armed forces captured the town. The night before their arrival, some Jews fled from Rietavas to neighboring villages. According to one account, local Lithuanians started to plunder Jewish property even before the Germans arrived.¹ At this time, a number of homes, including Jewish residences, were destroyed either by the retreating Red Army or by German bombardments.

Immediately after the German takeover, Lithuanian nationalists formed a local administration and a police force, which introduced anti-Jewish measures. Jews were ordered to return to the town. Lithuanians were forbidden to hide Jews. All Jews were registered and ordered to turn over their valuable possessions. Jews were forbidden to use the town’s sidewalks; they were subjected to beatings, hard labor, and starvation at the hands of local antisemites. One of the first victims was Rabbi Shmuel Fundiler, who had half of his beard cut off. He was forced to burn holy books and then was harnessed to a wagon loaded with garbage before the Lithuanians shot him. At least six other Jews were also shot and killed, accused of having collaborated with the Soviet authorities. Among those allegedly participating in these murders were the brothers Kazys and Stasys Rimayke.²

On June 27, 1941, all the Jews in the town were arrested and resettled to the nearby Prince Oginski’s estate, which became a temporary ghetto or camp. Jews lived for three days in this ghetto without food or water. On the fourth day, they were given sugar and salted fish. The starving people devoured this food like animals. Some stuffed whatever they could get into

dirty jars they had found in trash heaps. As a result, many developed diarrhea. Jews in the ghetto/camp were also compelled to perform physical exercises, despite their poor physical condition. From the ghetto/camp, five Jewish girls were sent back to Rietavas, where they had to clean out the Bet Midrash and burn the holy books kept there.³

On around July 10, 1941, the ghetto on the Oginski estate was liquidated.⁴ The Jews were sent to the Viešvenai camp, near Telšiai, where Jews from several other towns and villages also were concentrated. A few Jewish men from Rietavas were taken instead to the Heydekrug labor camp.⁵ On July 16, 1941, the remaining Jewish men were taken out of the Viešvenai camp, and after being forced to perform exercises and beaten, they were all shot. The women and children were taken one week later to the Geruliai camp. At the end of August 1941, around 400 young women were released from the Geruliai camp and were brought to the Telšiai ghetto. The remaining women and children at Geruliai were shot by Lithuanian policemen. Most of the 400 Jewish women relocated to the Telšiai ghetto were shot at the end of December 1941.

Two Jewish women and a Jewish girl from Rietavas are known to have escaped from the mass shooting Aktions. A mother and her daughter subsequently made their way to the Šiauliai ghetto. The other woman, Haya Movshovich, had fallen into the ditch unwounded and then fled naked to an elderly local peasant, who vowed to protect her despite German rewards for the betrayal of Jews. She survived the war.⁶

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jewish community of Rietavas during the Holocaust can be found in these publications: Alter Levite, ed., *Sefer Ritova; gal-ed le-zekher ayaratenu* (Ritova Societies in Israel and the Diaspora, 1977)—an English-language version is also available, *Ritavas Community: A Yizkor Book to Riteve—A Jewish Shtetl in Lithuania* (Cape Town: Kaplan-Kushlick Foundation, 2000), which includes a useful additional essay by Roni Stauber, “The Destruction of the Riteve Community,” pp. 149–152; “Rietavas,” in Shalom Bronstein, ed., *Yabadut Lita: Lithuanian Jewry*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust 1941–1945* (Tel Aviv: Association of Former Lithuanians in Israel, 1984), p. 359; Rabbi Ephraim Oshry, *The Annihilation of Lithuania Jewry* (New York: Judaica Press, 1995), pp. 238–241; and “Rietavas,” in Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 636–639.

Documentation on the murder of the Jews of Rietavas can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-94-430); LCVA; LYA; and YVA (e.g., M-1/Q/1322/136).

Alexander Kruglov and Martin Dean
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NOTES

1. YVA, M-1/Q/1322/136, testimony of Shaul Shenker, as cited by Stauber, “The Destruction,” p. 150.
2. Shaul Shenker, “Riteve,” in Levite, *Ritavas Community*, p. 157.
3. Zlatta Olschwang, “Thus the Town Was Destroyed,” in *ibid.*, p. 164.

4. Stauber, “The Destruction,” p. 150, notes that accounts differ regarding how long the Jews were held in the ghetto/camp on Prince Oginski’s estate, but most survivors indicate that it was about 10 to 14 days.

5. Shenker, “Riteve,” p. 157.

6. Chana Borochowitz-Golany, *A Childhood in the Storm* (USA: A.I. Saeks, 2003), pp. 30–31.

ROKIŠKIS

Pre-1940: Rokiškis (Yiddish: Rakishok), town, apskritis center, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Rokiškis/Rokisbki, uezd center, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Rokischken, Kreis center, Gebiet Ponewesch-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Rokiškis, rajonas center, Panevėžys apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Rokiškis is located about 80 kilometers (50 miles) east-northeast of Panevėžys. In 1939, on the eve of World War II, there were about 3,500 Jews living in Rokiškis, 40 percent of the total population. A number of Jewish refugees arrived in the town, following the German invasion of Poland.

On the outbreak of war between Germany and the USSR in June 1941, many Rokiškis Jews attempted to flee east with the retreating Soviet forces. However, most were turned back at the Latvian border and returned towards Rokiškis. In the meantime, a large Lithuanian partisan force had been organized in the region, which attacked the retreating Soviet forces and also robbed, beat, and killed Jews it encountered on the roads.

German forces took Rokiškis on June 27, 1941. Immediately after the occupation, Lithuanian nationalists in the town formed a civil administration and a police force. Lieutenant Žukas became town commandant, and Lieutenant Petkunas headed the guard company attached to the commandant’s office. Their first order of business was to initiate antisemitic measures. Jews were required to wear Stars of David, and they were assigned to various kinds of compulsory labor in the course of which local antisemites subjected the Jews to humiliation and beatings.

At the beginning of July 1941, the town authorities confined all the Jews in two separate ghettos. They put the Jewish men into Count Pzedzetski’s stone stables, and the women and children up to the age of eight were moved to the Antanašė estate, between Rokiškis and Obeliai.¹ One of the local collaborators, Zenonas Blynas, noted subsequently in his diary: “Interesting, Germans give a written order to herd Jews into a ghetto. Later German officers participate, as they are shot to death.”² For a short period a Jewish Council (Judenrat) operated in Rokiškis, which was headed by Ozinkowitz and Jacob Kark.

On August 4, 1941, Lieutenant Žukas ordered all Jewish inhabitants of Rokiškis to give up their valuable property such as furniture and other movable items. The items had to be registered at the office of the military administration by August 28, 1941. At the same time, he announced officially that all Jews able to work had to conduct labor for the community.³ On August 6, 1941, Žukas issued a further order that any local inhabitants who collected Jews for work but then allowed

them to move to other places or to avoid work by paying a bribe instead would be severely punished.⁴ This reflected the common practice of local farmers requisitioning Jews to work on their land.

As soon as German troops occupied Rokiškis, Lithuanian partisans began shooting Jewish men, as well as Lithuanians and Russians, who were believed to have collaborated with the Soviet authorities in 1940 and 1941. By August 14, 1941, they had killed 493 Jews, 432 Russians, and 56 Lithuanians.⁵ They carried out the shootings in the woods near the village of Steponai.

On August 15 and 16, 1941, a detachment of Einsatzkommando 3, with the participation of “Lithuanian partisans,” shot 3,200 Jewish men, women, and children, although the vast majority were probably men, including a number of men brought in from the surrounding villages, including Obeliai. Besides those victims, the firing squad shot five Lithuanian Communists, one “partisan,” and one Pole.⁶ Among the approximately 80 Lithuanian partisans who participated, more than 60 were detailed to escort the victims to the site of the killing and to cordon it off. The others did the shooting.⁷ The killing took place in the woods near the village of Baio-rai, to the north of Rokiškis. Members of the guard company (the partisans) who took part in the killing received a bonus of 150 rubles each “for the performance of special duties.”

On or around August 25, 1941, the Jewish women and children from Rokiškis, Kamajai, and several other places, who had been concentrated in the village of Antanašė, 5 kilometers (3 miles) south of Obeliai, were shot. The shootings were conducted by units of Rollkommando Hamann, subordinated to Einsatzkommando 3, assisted by Lithuanian partisans. According to the Jäger report, on August 25, 1941, the Germans and their collaborators murdered 112 men, 627 women, and 421 children (1,160 people) near Obeliai.⁸ A local inhabitant recalled in the 1990s: “Men from Obeliai were taken to Rokiškis to be murdered. Women, children, and old people were taken from Rokiškis to Obeliai to be murdered. I saw the carriages with old people arriving from Rokiškis to Obeliai, the road goes next to my house. One old person fell out of the carriage, and a guard killed him, beating his head with a rifle butt.”⁹

A few Jews from Rokiškis survived the war initially in the Kaunas ghetto and later in various camps. A number of the Jewish men who fled successfully from Rokiškis served subsequently in the Lithuanian Division of the Red Army, which was established in Gorki in January 1943.

On November 15, 1965, a court in Rokiškis sentenced to death four former policemen (Dagis, Lašas, Vamas, and Strumskis) who had participated in the killing of Jews in Rokiškis.

SOURCES Information concerning the extermination of the Jews in Rokiškis may be found in the following publications: M. Bakalczuk-Felin, ed., *Yisker-bukb fun Rakishok un umgegnt* (Johannesburg: Rakisher Landsmanshaft of Johannesburg, 1952)—an English translation is available at jewishgen.org; B. Baranauskas and E. Rozauskas, eds., *Masimės žudynes Lietuvoje (1941–1944): Dokumentu rinkinys*, vol. 2 (Vilnius: Leidykla “Mintis,” 1973), p. 403; Shalom Bronstein, *Lithuanian Jewry*,

vol. 4, *The Holocaust 1941–1945* (Tel Aviv: Association of Former Lithuanians in Israel, 1984); “Rakishok,” in Rabbi Ephraim Oshry, *The Annihilation of Lithuania Jewry* (New York: Judaica Press, 1995), pp. 233–235; “Rokiškis,” in Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 646–653; and Alfonsas Eidintas, *Jews, Lithuanians and the Holocaust* (Vilnius: Versus Aureus, 2003), pp. 288–289.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: LCVA (R 317-1-1); LYA (3377-55-39); RGVA (500-1-25); USHMM (Acc.2000.212, RG-50.473*0100); and YVA.

Alexander Kruglov and Martin Dean
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NOTES

1. Bakalczuk-Felin, *Yisker-bukb fun Rakishok un umgegnt*, pp. 383–390; “Rokiškis,” in Levin and Rosin, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Lithuania*, p. 650.

2. LYA, 3377-55-39, p. 129, diary of Zenonas Blynas, as cited by Eidintas, *Jews, Lithuanians and the Holocaust*, p. 289.

3. LCVA, R 317-1-1, p. 1. See also USHMM, Acc.2000.212, reel 1.

4. LCVA, R 708-1-1, p. 2, Order no. 5, issued by the Commandant of the Rokiškis District, published in B. Baranauskas and K. Ruksenas, *Documents Accuse* (Vilnius: Gintaras, 1970), pp. 149–150.

5. RGVA, 500-1-25, p. 106, report of Einsatzkommando 3, September 10, 1941. Bakalczuk-Felin, *Yisker-bukb fun Rakishok un umgegnt*, p. 388, dates the murder of the men on August 10 and the women and children on August 20.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 111, report of Einsatzkommando 3, December 1, 1941.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 116.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 112; Josef Levinson, ed., *The Shoah (Holocaust) in Lithuania* (Vilnius: Vilna Gaon Jewish State Museum, 2006), p. 505; Eidintas, *Jews, Lithuanians and the Holocaust*, pp. 288–289.

9. USHMM, RG-50.473*0100, testimony of Elena Zalogaitė, born 1928.

RUDAMINA

Pre-1940: Rudamina (Yiddish: Rudomin), village, Seinai apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Seinai uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Kreis Lasdien, Gebiet Kauen-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Lazdijai rajonas, Alytus apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Rudamina is located about 75 kilometers (47 miles) south-southwest of Kaunas. In 1923, there were 98 Jews living in Rudamina, constituting about 30 percent of the total population. On the eve of World War II, around 20 Jewish families resided in the village.

At the time of the German invasion on June 22, 1941, Rudamina suffered heavy bombardment, and several Jewish homes were severely damaged. Initially many Jews tried to escape deeper into the Soviet Union, but soon most were forced to return to the village. Lithuanian partisans seized power in

Rudamina and started to rob Jewish homes, beating the occupants. Jews were also forced to perform degrading work. The new authorities introduced a series of anti-Jewish measures, including a prohibition on buying certain food items and the requirement to wear a yellow patch in the shape of the Star of David. Disobeying these orders was punishable by death. In July 1941, the Jews had to pay a fine of 500 rubles per person. A makeshift ghetto was formed for the Jews, which included the Bet Midrash and several damaged houses.

On September 15, 1941, all the Jews were expelled from Rudamina and taken to the ghetto on the Katkiškės estate, where the Jews from Lazdijai and its surrounding villages were incarcerated. They all lived there under subhuman conditions for about six weeks. On November 3, the Jews from the Katkiškės ghetto were all murdered in the nearby forest. A number of Jews managed to escape from the Katkiškės ghetto just before its liquidation, and these people tried to hide with farmers in the area, but most were caught and killed. Only Gedalia Kagan from Rudamina is known to have survived until the end of the occupation.

SOURCES Much of the information for this entry is based on “Rudamina,” in Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 631–632. The ghetto in Rudamina is mentioned also in Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopaedia of the Gbetos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), p. 668.

Martin Dean

RUMŠIŠKĖS

Pre-1940: Rumšiškės (Yiddish: Rumsbiskok), town, Kaunas apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Rumšiškės/Rumsbiskok, Kaunas uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Rumschiskis, Kreis Kauen, Gebiet Kauen-Land, Generalkommisariat Litauen; post-1991: Rumšiškės, Kaišiadorys rajonas, Kaunas apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Rumšiškės is located 19 kilometers (12 miles) east-southeast of Kaunas. According to the 1923 census, there were 288 Jews living in the town. By June 1941, emigration had reduced the size of the Jewish population.

At the onset of the German invasion, few Jews were able to flee Rumšiškės due to the rapid German advance, but a number of refugees fleeing from Kaunas and other places became trapped in Rumšiškės. In the first days of the conflict, a Lithuanian partisan squad was formed, which soon started arresting Communist activists, Jews, and Red Army stragglers. The soldiers were transferred to the German army, which occupied the town on June 24, 1941. The Lithuanian nationalists formed a local administration and police force, which agitated against the Jewish population and carried out anti-Jewish measures. Several Jews were killed during the first weeks of the occupation, including the pharmacist Yirmeyahu Rubinstein and others accused of supporting the Soviet authorities. Valuable

items were confiscated from the Jews, and they were forced into various kinds of labor, including cutting peat. They were subjected to robbery, assault, and other forms of public denigration by local antisemites. They were forced to surrender their cows and other livestock. Despite a ban on contacts with Lithuanians, the Jews traded remaining property, such as clothing, with Lithuanian peasants to obtain food.

On August 7, 1941, the head of the Kaunas district ordered all Jews into a ghetto by August 15.¹ Two houses, owned by the Katz brothers, were initially used for this purpose, resulting in terrible overcrowding within the ghetto.²

The head of the police post in Rumšiškės reported on August 19, 1941, to his superior that on August 15, of the 140 Jews gathered there, 70 Jews (people aged between 15 and 70) had been arrested for allegedly supporting the Communists and escorted away by German and Lithuanian soldiers, commanded by Lieutenant Skaržinskas. This left only just over 70 women and children in Rumšiškės, who were crowded into the house of Yankl-Leyb Langman, which was guarded by the Lithuanian police.³ On August 22, the authorities demanded a “contribution” of 8,000 rubles from the Jews; the sum was delivered by a man named Rubinstein, the head of the Judenrat, on August 23.⁴ On August 29, 1941, the ghetto in the town was liquidated, and the Jewish women and children were shot at the edge of the Rumšiškės Forest by Lithuanian policemen arriving from Kaunas.⁵ It is likely that the Jewish men were taken to a labor camp at nearby Pravieniškės (a few kilometers north-northeast of Rumšiškės) and had been murdered there by September 4, 1941.⁶ Other sources, however, indicate that they may have been taken to Kaunas. Remaining Jewish property was auctioned off in the town by September 21, 1941.

The Germans were driven from Rumšiškės on July 20, 1944, but the Red Army found that most of the town had been destroyed.

SOURCES Information about the persecution and murder of the Jewish population of Rumšiškės can be found in the following publications: Shalom Bronstein, ed., *Yabadut Lita: Lithuanian Jewry*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust 1941–1945* (Tel Aviv: Association of Former Lithuanians in Israel, 1984); “Rumšiškės,” in Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 633–635; and Arūnas Bubnys, “The Holocaust in the Lithuanian Province in 1941: The Kaunas District,” in D. Gaunt, P.A. Levine, and L. Palosuo, eds., *Collaboration and Resistance during the Holocaust: Belarus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2004), pp. 283–312, here pp. 303–305.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: LCVA (R 683-2-2; R 1534-1-190); LYA (K 1-58-47533/3); RGVA (500-1-25); and YVA (O-71, file 148).

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NOTES

1. B. Baranauskas and E. Rozauskas, eds., *Masinės žudynes Lietuvoje (1941–1944): Dokumentu rinkinys*, vol. 2 (Vilnius: Leidykla “Mintis,” 1973), pp. 290–291.

1114 LITHUANIA REGION

2. Levin and Rosin, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Lithuania*, p. 635.
3. LCVA, R 683-2-2, p. 63, report of the head of Rumšiškės police precinct to the director of the police department in Kaunas, August 19, 1941; Levin and Rosin, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Lithuania*, p. 635.
4. LCVA, R 1534-1-190, p. 3, report of the head of Rumšiškės district to the head of the Kaunas Region, August 25, 1941.
5. RGVA, 500-1-25, p. 112, report of Einsatzkommando 3, December 1, 1941. On August 29, 1941, 20 Jewish men, 567 Jewish women, and 197 Jewish children were reportedly killed at Rumšiškės and Žiezmariai.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 113. Only 6 women were among the 253 Jews reportedly killed at Pravenischkės, which presumably included the 70 Jews from Rumšiškės. See also Josef Levinson, ed., *The Shoah (Holocaust) in Lithuania* (Vilnius: Vilna Gaon Jewish State Museum, 2006), p. 506.

ŠAKIAI

Pre-1940: Šakiai (Yiddish: Shaki), town, apskritis center, Lithuania; 1940-1941: Šakiai/Shakiai, uезд center, Lithuanian SSR; 1941-1944: Schaken, Kreis center, Gebiet Kauen-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Šakiai, rajonas center, Mariampolė apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Šakiai is located 56 kilometers (35 miles) west of Kaunas, close to the German-Lithuanian border. The available demographic records show that a total of 1,281 Jews resided in Šakiai in 1923. By June 1941, the number of Jewish residents had decreased slightly, a change caused by the emigration movements of the 1930s. There were about 1,000 Jews living there when the Germans arrived, plus about 100 Jewish refugees who had fled from German-occupied Poland.

The German army occupied Šakiai on June 22, 1941, the first day of its invasion of the Soviet Union. Only about 50 Jews succeeded in fleeing. The local Lithuanian nationalists established an administrative authority and a police force immediately. These bodies worked together and organized the initial measures against the Jewish population, many of whom they accused of collaborating with the Soviets. The Lithuanians confined all Jewish males aged 15 and over in a large barn on the outskirts of town. Jews were ordered to give up all their valuables, and they had to conduct physically demanding forced labor. While they worked, they had to face all kinds of mistreatment, harassment, and abuse from local antisemites. In addition, Jews were forbidden to appear in public places and banned from any private contacts with non-Jewish Lithuanians. The Jews had to wear yellow patches on their outer clothing, and they also had to give up radios and other similar equipment. In addition, a curfew between 6:00 P.M. and 6:00 A.M. was declared for the Jewish population.

On July 5, 1941, in the first Aktion against the Jews in Šakiai, Lithuanian auxiliary police took all the male Jews they had confined to a place in the woods outside of town, where they had already forced some of the Jews to dig a large

trench. There the Lithuanians shot them all. There was some resistance, and one young Jew, Benjamin Rothschild, managed to beat one of the executioners severely before he was killed. When the men were all dead, the Lithuanians brought out 40 of the wealthier Jewish women and killed them as well.

The Lithuanians forced the remaining Jewish women and children into a ghetto in the poorest part of the town. Although few specifics are available, it is known that conditions in the ghetto were terrible. Lithuanians were forbidden to give food to the Jews, so hunger was rampant. More direct abuses were also common. In the first days of the ghetto's existence, a group of Lithuanian youths abducted six Jewish girls and raped and killed them. Similar incidents continued in the weeks that followed.

The Lithuanians liquidated the open ghetto of Šakiai on September 13, 1941. During this Aktion, Lithuanian police shot 890 Jews at the same site where they had killed the others in July. On September 16, 1941, the Šakiai district was officially declared to have been cleared of Jews.¹ The total of 890 victims also included Jews from the villages in the vicinity of Šakiai, including Kriukai, Lukšiai, Šiaudinė, Sintautai, Griškabūdis, and Sudargas. The Lithuanians loaded the victims' belongings onto carts, brought them back to town, and distributed them to the local population.

SOURCES Information about the killing of the Jews of Šakiai can be found in the following publications: Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 699-704; Christoph Dieckmann, "Deutsche Besatzungspolitik in Litauen 1941-1944" (Ph.D. diss., Universität Freiburg, 2002), section F.1.2.5; and Alfonsas Eidintas, *Jews, Lithuanians and the Holocaust* (Vilnius: Versus Aureus, 2003), pp. 287-288. The ghetto in Šakiai 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. 1120.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archive: LCVA (R 683-2-2, p. 86).

Alexander Kruglov
trans. Katrin Reichelt

NOTE

1. Notes of the head of the Šakiai county (V. Karalius) and head of the local police (Vilčinskis) to the head of the Kaunas police department, September 16, 1941, published in B. Baranauskas and E. Rozauskas, eds., *Masimės žudynes Lietuvoje (1941-1944): Dokumentu rinkinys*, vol. 2 (Vilnius: Leidykla "Mintis," 1973), p. 111.

SALAKAS

Pre-1940: Salakas (Yiddish: Salok), village, Zarasai apskritis, Lithuania; 1940-1941: Zarasai uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941-1944: Kreis Ossersee, Gebiet Ponewesch-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen

sariat Litauen; post-1991: Zarasai rajonas, Utena apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Salakas is located about 120 kilometers (75 miles) east of Panevėžys. In 1923, the village had a Jewish population of 917. By mid-1941, emigration in the 1920s and 1930s had reduced the number of Jews in Salakas slightly.

German armed forces occupied the town on June 26, 1941. Immediately, Lithuanian nationalists formed a local authority and a police force, which began introducing anti-Jewish measures. All the Jews' valuables were confiscated, and they were deployed for various types of forced labor, during which local antisemites subjected them to humiliation and beatings. They were forbidden to go to the market, had to wear distinguishing patches on their clothes, and had to mark their houses with the word *Jude* (Jew). Some Jews were blackmailed by Lithuanian policemen. A Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established on which Rabbi Jacob Relve, Feibush Gilinski, and Abraham Bach served.

In the first days, the local authorities arrested and shot people they suspected of having collaborated with the Soviet authorities, including Berl Krupnik, whose son had been a member of the Komsomol. Then on August 9, 1941, the first large-scale Aktion took place in Salakas when Lithuanian partisans rounded up about 150 people, mainly Jewish men, and shot them in the nearby Songard Forest.¹

The remaining Jews, mainly women, children, and the elderly, were then placed in a ghetto on Planova Street. Lithuanians looted the vacated Jewish homes. The ghetto was liquidated on August 26, 1941, when all the Jews were shot in the Pažeimis Forest near the village of Diagučiai, along with other Jews from Kreis Zarasai.² A local Lithuanian named Radzewicz was subsequently shot by the Germans when he was found to have aided Jews in hiding.

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jewish community of Salakas during the Holocaust can be found in these publications: "Salakas," in Shalom Bronstein, ed., *Yabadut Lita: Lithuanian Jewry*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust 1941–1945* (Tel Aviv: Association of Former Lithuanians in Israel, 1984); "Salakas," in Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 427–430; and "Salakas," 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. 1120.

Documentation on the murder of the Jews of Salakas can be found in these archives: GARF (7021-94-439); LCVA; and YVA.

Alexander Kruglov
trans. Kathleen Luft

NOTES

1. "Salakas," in Bronstein, *Yabadut Lita: Lithuanian Jewry*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust 1941–1945*; and B. Baranauskas and E. Rozauskas, eds., *Masinės žudynės Lietuvoje (1941–1944):*

Dokumentu rinkinys, vol. 2 (Vilnius: Leidykla "Mintis," 1973), p. 414.

2. GARF, 7021-94-439.

SEDA

Pre-1940: Seda (Yiddish: Shad), Mažeikiai apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Mazheikiai uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Kreis Moscheiken, Gebiet Schaulen-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Mažeikiai rajonas, Telšiai apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Seda is located 23 kilometers (14 miles) northwest of Telšiai. According to the 1923 census, 814 Jews were living in the town. By mid-1941, owing to the emigration of Jews in the 1920s and 1930s, the Jewish population had decreased significantly.

German armed forces occupied Seda on June 24, 1941. As the retreating Soviet forces had shot 12 Lithuanian partisans in the town, the new Lithuanian nationalist administration and police force soon started arresting alleged Soviet activists. The new authorities also instituted measures discriminating against the Jews. By the end of June, Lithuanian partisans were rounding up young Jews, and those who were arrested were taken out and shot in the Jewish cemetery. Among those killed was Rabbi Mordechai Rabinowitz.

At the end of June 1941, Lithuanian collaborators gathered all the Jews at the market square between warehouses that belonged to Jews. There the Jews were held without food and water and in unsanitary conditions for several days. Then they were transported to a Jewish agricultural colony not far from the town, known as the "Jewish village." The Jews were quartered in granaries and cowsheds, which were guarded by armed Lithuanians, forming a temporary ghetto. The young Jewish men were separated from the women, children, and the elderly and were killed near the village on July 3, 1941. In early August 1941, this ghetto was liquidated, and the remaining Jews (around 200 people) were brought to Mažeikiai. On August 9, 1941, the Jews from Seda were shot at the Jewish cemetery in Seda together with the Jews of Mažeikiai. For participating in the mass shooting, the Lithuanian policemen received 300 rubles and strong alcohol that was available in plentiful quantities at the killing site.

SOURCES Information about the fate of the Jews of Seda in the Holocaust can be found in the following publications: J. Woolf, ed., "The Holocaust in 21 Lithuanian Towns," available at jewishgen.org; Shalom Bronstein, ed., *Yabadut Lita: Lithuanian Jewry*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust 1941–1945* (Tel Aviv: Association of Former Lithuanians in Israel, 1984), p. 320; Alfonsas Eidintas, *Jews, Lithuanians and the Holocaust* (Vilnius: Versus Aureus, 2003), p. 278; "Seda," in Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 421–422. Information on the initial days of the German-Soviet war and German occupation in Seda can be found in Valentinas Brandisauskas, ed., *1941 m. Birželio sukilimas. Dokumentu rinkinys* (Vilnius:

LGGRTC, 2000), pp. 109–128; and in B. Baranauskas and E. Rozauskas, eds., *Masinės žudynės Lietuvoje (1941–1944): Dokumentu rinkinys*, vol. 2 (Vilnius: Leidykla “Mintis,” 1973), pp. 178–185.

Relevant archival documentation can be found in LCVA and LYA (3377-55-111, pp. 70–71).

Alexander Kruglov
trans. Steven Seegel

ŠEDUVA

Pre-1940: Šeduva (Yiddish: Shadeve), village, Panevėžys apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Šeduva/Sheduva, Panevezhis uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Scheddau, Kreis Ponewesch, Gebiet Ponewesch-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Šeduva, Radviliškis rajonas, Šiauliai apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Šeduva is located 37 kilometers (23 miles) west of Panevėžys. According to the 1923 census, 916 Jews were living in the village. By mid-1941, as a result of emigration in the 1920s and 1930s, the number of Jews in the village had decreased.

German armed forces captured Šeduva on June 26, 1941. Lithuanian nationalists, headed by the teacher Gorionos, began to terrorize the Jews even before the Germans arrived. Jews trying to escape into the Soviet Union were stopped by the Lithuanian partisans, who murdered several on the road and robbed others, compelling them to return to Šeduva.

The Lithuanian nationalists formed a local administration and a police force, which carried out a series of anti-Jewish measures. Jews were forced to wear white armbands bearing a yellow Star of David. Valuable items were confiscated from the Jews, and they were required to perform various kinds of forced labor, guarded by armed Lithuanians, who abused them. Young men who had performed administrative functions in the Soviet regime were murdered. Other Jews that were forced to clear up the bombed armament factory in Linkaičiai were accused of stealing grenades and also killed.

In mid-July 1941, all the Jews were settled into a ghetto. First they were ordered to gather in the marketplace and to surrender the keys to their homes to the Lithuanian police. Under guard they were then escorted to the village of Pakuteniai, a few kilometers to the southwest, where they were placed in an abandoned barracks without water or electricity. The building was surrounded by barbed wire and guarded by armed Lithuanians. Other Jews, who had been working on local farms, were brought, beaten and bleeding, to the ghetto, where the Jewish physician Dr. Patorski gave them first aid.

From time to time, the Lithuanian partisans shot groups of Jews taken out of the ghetto on the pretext of conducting agricultural work. On August 3, 10 Jews were shot and buried in lime pits. In mid-August, 27 more Jews were shot, including Rabbi Mordechai David Henkin. Around the same time, another 35 who had been assigned to work on the Red Estate were murdered and buried in its surrounding fields.

On August 25 and 26, 1941, the ghetto was liquidated, and Lithuanian partisans shot most of the remaining Jews in the

Liaudiškiai Forest, 10 kilometers (6 miles) southwest of the village. According to the Jäger report, in total, 664 people were killed in Šeduva: 230 men, 275 women, and 159 children.¹ After the massacre, the Lithuanian murderers ate and drank all night in celebration.

Three Jewish families, including that of Dr. Patorski, were kept alive for another six weeks before being killed. One Jewish woman, Shulamith Noll, escaped from the pit in her underwear and survived the mass killing. She went to the local Catholic priest, who arranged for her to be hidden with local farmers for the remainder of the German occupation.

SOURCES Secondary sources on the fate of the Jews of Šeduva during the Holocaust include the following: J. Woolf, ed., “The Holocaust in 21 Lithuanian Towns,” available at www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/lithuania3/lithuania3.html; Shalom Bronstein, ed., *Yabadut Lita: Lithuanian Jewry*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust 1941–1945* (Tel Aviv: Association of Former Lithuanians in Israel, 1984), pp. 363–364; Rabbi Ephraim Oshry, *The Annihilation of Lithuania Jewry* (New York: Judaica Press, 1995), pp. 244–246; Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 654–658; and Efraim Zuroff, *Occupation: Nazi Hunter—The Continuing Search for Perpetrators of the Holocaust* (Hoboken, NJ: KTAV, 1994), p. 154.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: RGVA (500-1-25).

Alexander Kruglov and Martin Dean
trans. Steven Seegel

NOTE

1. RGVA, 500-1-25, p. 112, report of Einsatzkommando 3, December 1, 1941.

SEIRIJAI

Pre-1940: Seirijai (Yiddish: Serey), town, Alytus apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Seirijai/Seiriiai, Olita uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Seirijai, Kreis Olita, Gebiet Kauen-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Lazdijai rajonas, Alytus apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Seirijai is located 24 kilometers (15 miles) southwest of Alytus. According to the 1923 census, there were 880 Jews living in the town. By mid-1941, emigration had reduced the number.

German forces had captured Seirijai by June 24, 1941. Immediately, Lithuanian nationalists formed a local authority and a police force, which introduced anti-Jewish measures. For example, Jews were required to wear Stars of David and were used for various types of forced labor, during which they were subjected to humiliation and beatings by local antisemites. Jews were forbidden to appear in public places or to maintain relationships of any kind with Lithuanians.

As early as June 26, 1941, the first Aktion took place in Seirijai. At that time, Lithuanian partisans, led by Alfonsas Nykštaitis and Antanas Maskeliunas, shot about 50 Communists and Komsomol members, some of whom were Jews.¹

During a second Aktion on August 2, 1941, 115 Jewish men and 15 Jewish women were sent to Alytus and shot there.²

According to the account in Oshry, the town's remaining Jews "were crowded together in the Christian art school like herring in a barrel."³ This building served as a ghetto. The homes and belongings of the Jews were appropriated by their Lithuanian neighbors. Also placed in the ghetto were Jews from neighboring towns and villages, and as a result the ghetto population rose to nearly 1,000 people. The young and strong Jews were taken off for forced labor, such as repairing roads.

The ghetto in Seirijai was liquidated on September 10–11, 1941, when 953 Jews—229 men, 384 women, and 340 children—were killed. The Jews were driven from the town by the local police armed with clubs. After being forced to remove their clothes, they were shot in the Baraučiškės Forest, 3 kilometers (1.9 miles) east of the town, with the participation of members of 3rd Company, 1st Lithuanian Auxiliary Police Battalion, commanded by Bronius Norkus.⁴ According to the account in *Pinkas ha-kebilot*, several local dignitaries of the town, such as teachers, were present at the massacre of Seirijai's Jews.⁵

For participation in the killing of Jews in Seirijai, and in other places in Lithuania, eight former members of 3rd Company were sentenced to death at a trial in Kaunas in September–October 1962.

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jewish community of Seirijai during the Holocaust can be found in these publications: "Seirijai," in Shalom Bronstein, ed., *Yahadut Lita: Lithuanian Jewry*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust 1941–1945* (Tel Aviv: Association of Former Lithuanians in Israel, 1984); "Serey," in Rabbi Ephraim Oshry, *The Annihilation of Lithuania Jewry* (New York: Judaica Press, 1995), pp. 243–244; "Seirijai," in Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 444–447.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-94-3); LCVA; LYA (K 1-58-46373/3, vol. 2); RGVA (500-1-25); and YVA (M-1/Q/142; M-33/994; Leyb Koniuchovsky Collection, O-71/131).

Alexander Kruglov
trans. Kathleen Luft

NOTES

1. GARF, 7021-94-3, p. 39.
2. Ibid.
3. Oshry, *The Annihilation of Lithuania Jewry*, p. 244.
4. RGVA, 500-1-25, report of Einsatzkommando 3, December 1, 1941.
5. "Seirijai," in Levin and Rosin, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Lithuania*, pp. 446–447.

SEMELIŠKĖS

Pre-1940: Semeliškės (Yiddish: Semilishbok), village, Trakai apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Semeliškės/Semelishbkes, Trakai uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Semelishbkes, Kreis Traken, Gebiet Wilna-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen;

post-1991: Semeliškės, Trakai rajonas, Vilnius apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Semeliškės is located about 40 kilometers (25 miles) west of Wilno. About 60 Jewish families resided in the village on the eve of World War II.

No ghetto was established in Semeliškės for the 261 Jewish inhabitants until the end of the summer of 1941.¹ Fifty-four Jewish refugees from Baranowicze were also living there. On July 21, 1941, on German orders, the Jews assembled in the synagogue and elected a 12-man Jewish Council (Judenrat), which was headed by Šaja Šeškinas. At some time during the summer a group of Jewish men was shot by the local Lithuanians in charge of the village.

At the beginning of September, the local Lithuanian police moved all the remaining Jews into the synagogue, the Bet Midrash, and the former church building (that had been converted into a social club by the Soviet authorities), establishing a form of ghetto. Every day a number of Jews were taken out to perform various forced labor tasks.

On September 22, several hundred more Jews from Vievis and Žasliai were also brought to Semeliškės on carts. The Jews of Vievis were robbed of most of their property by Lithuanian auxiliary policemen just before their departure. In Semeliškės, the new arrivals were incarcerated separately from the local Jews. In early October, all the Jews in Semeliškės, including those brought in from outside, were escorted to a forest about 1.6 kilometers (1 mile) outside the village to the northeast, where they were shot. According to the report of Karl Jäger, forces subordinated to Einsatzkommando 3 shot 962 Jews (213 men, 359 women, and 390 children) in the vicinity of Semeliškės on October 6, 1941.²

A number of Jews managed to escape before or at the time of the Aktion. However, some of these people were caught subsequently, and only a few survived until the end of the occupation. Liubovė Slepak-Zacharaitė recalls:

Some people sheltered us for one night. Others for a week, or for some three days. They used to feed and hide us, risking their own lives and the lives of their families because there were many collaborators and local nationalists from whom nobody could expect mercy. . . . Death lay in wait for us around every corner and every bush. . . . In the autumn of 1942, my mother, brother and sister were caught and I never saw them again.³

SOURCES Relevant publications include Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), p. 697; Neringa Latvyte-Gustaitiene, "The Genocide of the Jews in the Trakai Region of Lithuania," translated by Svetlana Satalova, available at jew ishgen.org; and Rima Dulkinienė and Kerry Keys, eds., *With a Needle in the Heart: Memoirs of Former Prisoners of Ghettos and Concentration Camps* (Vilnius: Garnelis, 2003), p. 330.

Documentation on the persecution and murder of the Jews of Semeliškės can be found in the following archives: GARF

1118 LITHUANIA REGION

(7021-94-431); LCVA; RGVA (500-1-25); VHF (# 10804); and YVA.

Christoph Dieckmann and Martin Dean

NOTES

1. Dulkinieniė and Keys, *With a Needle*, p. 330, testimony of Jewish survivor Liubovė Slepak-Zacharaitė.

2. Report of Einsatzkommando 3, December 1, 1941, RGVA, 500-1-25, p. 114; Josef Levinson, ed., *The Shoah (Holocaust) in Lithuania* (Vilnius: Vilna Gaon Jewish State Museum, 2006), p. 506.

3. Dulkinieniė and Keys, *With a Needle*, p. 330.

SEREDŽIUS

Pre-1940: Seredžius (Yiddish: Srednik), town, Kaunas apskritis, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Seredžius/Seredzbius, Kaunas uезд, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Seredschius, Kreis Schaken, Gebiet Kauen-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Seredžius, Jurbarkas rajonas, Tauragė apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Seredžius is located 37 kilometers (23 miles) northwest of Kaunas. According to the 1923 population census, 449 Jews were living in Seredžius. By mid-1941, the number of Jews in the town had decreased significantly, owing largely to emigration.

German troops captured the town on June 24, 1941. Immediately, Lithuanian nationalists formed a local administration and a police force, which implemented a series of anti-Jewish measures. Jews were marked with the Star of David and were forced into labor of various kinds. The Jews were subjected to assault, robbery, and other forms of degradation by local antisemites. Jews were also prohibited from appearing in public spaces or having any relations with the Lithuanians. The Lithuanian nationalists arrested and shot Jewish men suspected of having collaborated with the Soviet authorities.

Soon the Jews were evacuated from their homes and resettled into the town synagogue, which effectively became a ghetto for them. The homes and property of the Jews were confiscated and distributed among their Lithuanian neighbors. In the middle of August 1941, Jewish men aged over 15 and Jewish women who had been accused of collaborating with the Soviet authorities in 1940–1941 were singled out and transported to Vilkija. In Vilkija, they were shot along with the local Jews on August 28, 1941.¹ The 193 Jews that remained, comprising 6 men, 61 women, and 126 children, were shot in the Pakralė Forest, just outside the town, on September 4, 1941.²

SOURCES Information on the persecution and murder of the Jews in Seredžius may be found in the following publications: Shalom Bronstein, ed., *Yabadut Lita: Lithuanian Jewry*, vol. 4, *The Holocaust 1941–1945* (Tel Aviv: Association of Former Lithuanians in Israel, 1984), p. 325; “Seredzjus,” in Dov Levin and Yosef Rosin, eds., *Pinkas ba-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 442–443; and J. Woolf, comp., “The Holocaust in 21 Lithua-

nian Towns,” available at www.jewishgen.org/Yizkor/lithuania3/lithuania3.html.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: LCVA; and RGVA (500-1-25).

Alexander Kruglov
trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. Bronstein, *Yabadut Lita: Lithuanian Jewry*, vol. 4, p. 325; Levin and Rosin, *Pinkas ba-kebilot: Lithuania*, p. 443.

2. RGVA, 500-1-25, p. 113, report of Einsatzkommando 3, December 1, 1941.

ŠIAULIAI

Pre-1939: Šiauliai (Yiddish: Shavl), city and apskritis center, Lithuania; 1940–1941: Šiauliai/Shauliai, uезд center, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Schaulen, Kreis center, Gebiet Schaulen-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Šiauliai, rajonas and apskritis center, Republic of Lithuania

Šiauliai is located 68 kilometers (42 miles) west-northwest of Panevėžys. On the eve of the war, the Jewish population of Šiauliai numbered between 6,500 and 8,000.

Following the occupation and annexation of Lithuania by the Soviet Union in 1940, 202 Jews became victims of the



The murder of a woman in the Šiauliai ghetto, n.d.
USHMM WS #70806, COURTESY OF ELIEZER ZILBERIS

Soviet deportations on June 14, 1941.¹ When Nazi Germany invaded the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, some of Šiauliai's Jews tried to escape into the interior of the Soviet Union. Approximately 100 refugees managed to reach the Soviet rear areas. Others failed, however, because of the Germans' rapid advance. They either returned to Šiauliai or sought refuge in the surrounding villages. The Red Army abandoned the city on June 26.

In the first days of the German occupation, a Lithuanian administration and police force were established. Various German institutions were also based in the town. Feldkommandantur 819 administered the town initially, then passed on its authority to a civil administration headed by a Gebietskommissar and his staff in August. Units of the Secret Military Field Police (GFP) and elements of Einsatzkommando 2, under Einsatzgruppe A, were also present. SS-Hauptscharführer Werner Gottschalk, head of the Restkommando, a subordinate unit of Einsatzkommando 2, directed the first murders of Jews from the city and region. In late July, the 3rd Company of German Police Battalion 65 arrived in Šiauliai. This company repeatedly participated in the murder of Šiauliai's Jews during the summer, assisted by other German military and police units.

The first mass murder of Šiauliai's Jews took place in the Kužiai Forest, 12 kilometers (7.5 miles) from Šiauliai, on June 29, 1941. The victims also included ethnic Lithuanian and Russian members of the Communist Party and the Komsomol. According to witness accounts, the Germans perpetrated the Kužiai killings.² Mass arrests of Šiauliai's Jews took place on June 30, July 1, and July 5. Among those whom the Lithuanian police arrested were 20 of the most distinguished members of Šiauliai's Jewish community, including Chief Rabbi Aron Baksht and Rabbi Avrohom Nochumovsky. They were held as hostages in the city jail until July 11, when they were murdered in "reprisal" for an alleged Jewish attack on German soldiers. Approximately 1,000 Jews were murdered before the establishment of the ghetto, many by Lithuanian partisans.³

The German occupation authorities began to plan for the establishment of a ghetto in Šiauliai in early July 1941. On July 10, a Lithuanian attorney named Linkevicius was designated mayor; Jews were ordered to wear yellow stars shortly thereafter.⁴ At that time, deputy mayor Antanas Stankus was put "in charge of Jewish affairs," a post he held until February 1, 1942.⁵ The military commandant, Konowski, issued instructions for establishing the ghetto. In cooperation with the Lithuanian authorities, a Jewish committee was established to deal with the problems of moving the Jews into the ghetto. The committee included Mendel Leibovitch, Ber Kartun, Fayvel Rubinstein, and Aron Katz.⁶ In accordance with a proclamation, all Jews had to register at the city administration office between July 19 and July 22. In July, Linkevicius and Konowski announced that the Jews were to move either to the Šiauliai suburb known as Kaukazas or to the town of Žagarė. According to the Judenrat secretary, Eliezer Yerushalmi (author of *Pinkas Shavli*, a journal of life in the ghetto), although Stankus and the mayor proposed the transfer of the Jewish community to Žagarė, the Jewish leaders (Kartun, Leibovitch, and others)

weighed the proposal and appealed for assistance from local Lithuanian intellectuals and the priest, Lapis. Yerushalmi notes that Jewish opposition to the idea caused it to be abandoned, and the ghetto was subsequently created in Kaukazas.⁷ (Nesse [Galperin] Godin, a survivor from Šiauliai [b. 1928], recalls that the Jewish committee managed to bribe Gestapo officials with valuables and promised to produce goods essential to the German war effort to avoid the transfer of the Jewish community to Žagarė.)⁸ The non-Jewish residents of these areas "were allowed" to move to other parts of the city of Šiauliai, some moving into formerly Jewish-owned properties.⁹

Two neighborhoods were chosen for the ghetto. One was Kaukazas, while the other encompassed Ežero and Traku Streets. The two areas were separated by 300 meters (984 feet). After the ghetto was enclosed, the Jews began moving in from various city districts, starting with the Kaukazas area. The Jewish committee was responsible for allocating accommodation inside the ghetto. The resettlement was largely complete by August 15, 1941, and the closed ghetto was officially established on September 1.¹⁰ Between 4,000 and 5,000 Jews were forced into the two ghettos, around which ran 2-meter-high (6.6-foot-high) barbed-wire fences. Police guarded the ghetto gate, and no one could leave without a special pass.

After the Jews were confined in the ghetto, confiscated Jewish gold and other valuables were remitted to the Šiauliai Gebietskommissariat. This was done in accordance with detailed inventory lists. Some Jewish property (primarily furniture) was taken by Gebietskommissariat officials; the rest was sold to the local population.¹¹

The number of Jews forced into the ghetto was greater than the available housing could hold. To solve this problem, in the first days of September, a number of "excess" Jews were herded into the synagogues and the Jewish Home for the Elderly on Vilnius Street, where they were registered. Most of these Jews (the elderly and those deemed unfit for work) were taken to Žagarė or to Kužiai, where they were murdered. On September 7 (according to other sources, September 6), a squad commanded by Lieutenant Romualdas Kolokša, formerly a lawyer in Užventis, raided the Jewish orphanage and seized 47 children and two teachers (A. Katz and Zhenia Karfel). The group was taken to the forest and murdered. On September 13, the police entered the ghetto, arrested many elderly people, and took them away to be shot.¹²

Mass murders of Šiauliai Jews took place near the village of Bubiai, in the Gubernija Forest, a part of the Normancių Forest District approximately 15 kilometers (9 miles) from Šiauliai, during September 1941. Groups of victims, numbering close to 500, were brought to the site in 10 trucks. Before they were shot, the Jews were forced to undress, beaten, and then driven into the pits. Witnesses to the murders stated that the executions were directed by German officers, although Lithuanian partisans participated as well.¹³ Yerushalmi describes one victim who managed to survive the shootings near Bubiai and returned to the town to report what was occurring there: "The representative M. Leibovitch went there (to visit the survivor of the shootings) and he became aware of the terrible

truth: all of those who had been seized were taken to the woods near Bubiai and there they were shot next to pits that had been prepared beforehand. The survivor had himself been wounded, but he still managed to escape from the pit.¹⁴ The shootings would start at about 3:00 or 4:00 P.M. and were supervised by German officers. The executioners were Lithuanian partisans and soldiers of the 14th Lithuanian Police Battalion, quartered in Šiauliai. In the Gubernija Forest, approximately 1,000 people were murdered.¹⁵ The last major shooting of Jews in 1941 took place between December 8 and December 15. On the orders of Gebietskommissar Hans Gewecke and the head of the German Security Police and SD, 72 Jews from Šiauliai, who worked in nearby villages, were seized and then shot. The executioners were policemen from the villages of Kuršėnai, Stačiūnai, Radviliškis, and Pakruojis.¹⁶

Following the mass murders in September 1941, the number of Aktions against the Jewish population declined. A Jewish administration and a unit of Jewish Police were created in the Šiauliai ghetto, similar to the structure of the ghettos in Wilno and Kaunas. Inside the ghetto, the original Jewish committee was reorganized into a Jewish Council (Judenrat). Its authority extended to both the Ežero-Trakų and Kaukazas ghettos. The Judenrat was headed by M. Leibovitch, and it included other influential Šiauliai Jews, such as Aron Heller and B.M. Abramovitch, and the teacher Eliezer Yerushalmi. The main responsibility of the Jewish Council was to direct internal life within the ghetto, while also maintaining contacts with the German and Lithuanian administrative offices. In addition, the council appointed the heads of the Ežero-Trakų and Kaukazas ghetto administrations. The administration of the Ežero-Trakų ghetto included S. Burgin, S. Kultchenitski (social affairs), and Ch. Cherniavski (labor affairs).¹⁷ The ghetto administration supervised the maintenance of public order in the ghetto, assignment of forced laborers, distribution of food supplies within the ghetto, sanitation, and other everyday activities.

A food shop and 40-bed hospital (headed by Luntz and Peisachovitz) opened in the ghetto. Beginning in September 1941, the inmates were driven to work at locations such as the Zokniai airfield, various workshops, the Frenkel leather factory (in Kaukazas), the Rekyva and Radviliškis peat bogs, the Linkaičiai weapons workshops, and the Pavenčiai sugar refinery. Ghetto inhabitants deemed capable of working were assigned yellow work cards. The Jews were not paid money for their work. The German Arbeitsamt (labor office) transferred the money to the ghetto administration.¹⁸ (Nesse Godin recalls that when her family of five was transferred to the ghetto, they were allotted only four yellow work cards. Nesse, who was 13 at the time [August 1941], was too young to receive a work card. Her mother bribed a Lithuanian officer accompanying the Gestapo official, who left a fifth card for Nesse. While this card offered the opportunity to work, Nesse did not receive a ration card because she was not officially registered in the ghetto.)¹⁹

Ephraim Gens was made head of the Ežero-Trakų ghetto police in early September 1941. He had 11 or 12 policemen at his disposal, who were unarmed. The ghetto policemen were responsible for maintaining public order inside the ghetto.



Nathan Katz works in the radio laboratory in the Šiauliai ghetto, 1943. USHMM WS #07367, COURTESY OF NATHAN KATZ

More specifically, their duties included the housing and re-settlement of inmates, prevention of crimes, such as robbery and speculation (food smuggling), maintenance of proper sanitary conditions, and the formation of “work brigades.” Those who violated the ghetto regulations were punished with fines, beatings, confinement in solitary cells, and temporary prohibition from work. The punishments were issued by the Ghetto Court of Law.²⁰

On February 7, 1942, an order was issued forbidding child-births in the ghetto. The order went into effect on August 15, 1942. Doctors had to perform abortions to prevent violation of this order.²¹ (The Judenrat discussed whether it was possible to force women to have abortions under the circumstances. Three births had taken place since August 15, 1942, and up to 20 women were estimated to be pregnant in the ghetto in late March 1943. Dr. Aron Pick, a physician living in the Šiauliai ghetto, kept a diary recording events in the ghetto. In a January 1944 entry, he details the birth of a Jewish baby girl born to a slave laborer. The child was drowned after birth to avert the “terrible danger [that] hung over the entire ghetto.”)²²

E. Gens remained head of the Jewish Police in the Ežero-Trakų ghetto until March 25, 1944, when he resigned because of a disagreement with the new ghetto administration chief, Georg Pariser. Gens then became an ordinary ghetto inmate, while Chaim Berlovitch occupied his previous post. David Fayn was head of the Jewish Police in the Kaukazas ghetto. His deputy was Zavel Gotz, who replaced Fayn in his duties in July 1943.²³

Underground anti-Nazi resistance groups emerged in the Šiauliai ghetto. The most active members of the Zionist youth movements created a secret organization in late 1941. Another “self-defense” organization, headed by engineer Yosel Leibovitch, appeared in 1942, with both Zionist and Communist membership. They acquired and concealed weapons but undertook no armed action. Small underground newspapers, *Massada*, *Hatechiya*, and *Mimamakim*, were produced.

Communities: Lithuania (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), pp. 687–689; and Guy Miron, ed., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010), pp. 715–716.

There is survivor testimony about Širvintos in USHMM (RG-02.170; Acc.1994.A.0312).

Alexander Kruglov
trans. Steven Seegel

SMORGONIE

Pre-1939: Smorgonie (Yiddish: Smorgon), town, Wilno województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Smorgon', Vileika oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Smorgonie, initially Rayon center, Gebiet Wilejka, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien, then from April 1, 1942, Kreis Aschmena, Gebiet Wilna-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Smarhon', raen center, Hrodna voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Smorgonie is located 72 kilometers (45 miles) east-southeast of Wilno. In 1931, there were some 4,000 Jews living in the town.

In 1939, the Soviet Union occupied Smorgonie. Under Soviet rule, a few wealthier Jews were exiled to Siberia. With the outbreak of war in June 1941, many Jewish males were conscripted into the Red Army.¹

The Germans occupied Smorgonie on June 26, 1941. At the time of its capture, local Poles took the opportunity to rob and beat Jews with impunity. When the German civil administration was set up in Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien on September 1, Smorgonie was incorporated into Gebiet Wilejka. In September, the German authorities established two ghettos in the town. One was located in the synagogue courtyard, the other in the Karke.² The Jews in the Karke ghetto (which remained open) were taken daily to build a railroad line.³

The main ghetto consisted of an area of about eight blocks, with the synagogue courtyard at its center; a wooden fence topped by barbed wire surrounded it. The Jews there were gathered and counted every morning, then sent to work cutting grass, cleaning the town, and so forth. Polish local police, led by Koszukowski, supervised them; they frequently harassed and beat the Jews. Jewish women were also made to cook, clean, and sew for soldiers quartered in barracks in Smorgonie on their way to the front. Some of the more lax German officers would let the women barter with the peasants for food. It was also possible to sneak out of the ghetto to barter with local non-Jews, although this was forbidden and therefore dangerous. Those who could obtain food would go to the synagogue to share it with others who could not. In January 1942, Belorussians replaced the Polish policemen.⁴

A Jewish Council (Judenrat) was also established in the main ghetto. It consisted of Rabbi Yitskhok Markus (the chief rabbi of Smorgonie), Rabbi Slodzinski, Meyer Goldberg, Abrasha Tsirulnik, Noyekh Yavitsh, Mordekhai Mirski, Perl, Sarahan, and Tshertok. All were chosen because of their important roles in the pre-war community. The main task of

the Judenrat was to fulfill a series of demands for money and property from the Gebietskommissariat in Wilejka between the fall of 1941 and March 1942.⁵ There was an underground organization in Smorgonie beginning early in 1942; it established contact with the underground in Kurzeniec, the center of a local network that was allied with a group of Soviet partisans in the nearby forests.

In April 1942, Smorgonie and other nearby towns were transferred to the Wilna-Land Gebietskommissariat in Generalkommissariat Litauen, under the jurisdiction of Gebietskommissar Horst Wulff.⁶

The ghetto was liquidated piecemeal through a series of deportations to various forced labor camps. The deportations focused on moving those who were fit for forced labor to locations where they could be of use. In the summer of 1942, the Karke ghetto was liquidated and its population moved into the main ghetto, which was enlarged to make room. The deportations began in August. First, 60 or 70 young Jews were deported to a forced labor camp in Varena and others to one in Olkieniki (Valkininkai). Shortly thereafter, 170 Jews were sent to the forced labor camp in Žiežmariai and 120 to Rudziszki (Rūdiškės).⁷ By this time, the majority of the young and able-bodied Jews of both genders had been deported. In September or October, most of the remaining Jews were sent to Oszmiana and a few others to Soly. About 150 remained in the ghetto, which was transformed into a small forced labor camp.⁸ In March 1943, the 74 Jews remaining in the camp were transferred to the Wilno ghetto. In early April, they were taken from there to Ponary, where they were killed.⁹

The Red Army liberated Smorgonie on July 6, 1944. The town was almost completely destroyed, and Jewish gravestones had been used to pave the sidewalks. Only about 60 Jews managed to survive the German occupation in the camps, in the forests, or in hiding. These Jews all left the town within a few years after liberation.¹⁰

SOURCES Smorgonie's small size made it necessary to rely almost entirely on survivor testimony for this article. Several survivor testimonies appear in the yizkor book: Abba Gordin and Hanoch Levin, eds., *Smorgon, meboz Vilna: Sefer 'edut vezikaron* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Smorgon be-Yisrael, 1965). The author of this entry also conducted an interview with Tania Rosmaryn, a native of Smorgonie who was interned in the ghetto there and was able to provide several important details. Herman Kruk's ghetto diary contains scattered references to Smorgonie: Mordecai W. Bernstein, ed., *Togbukh fun Vilner Geto* (New York: YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, 1961). It is now available in an excellent English translation by Barbara Harshav: Herman Kruk, *The Last Days of the Jerusalem of Lithuania: Chronicles from the Vilna Ghetto and the Camps, 1939–1944* (New Haven, CT: YIVO, 2002), which includes material from manuscripts not consulted in earlier editions. Most important, Kruk recorded the testimonies of other Jews about the camps and ghettos outside of Wilno, including the testimony of Rabbi Yankev Shneidman on Smorgonie.

Smorgonie is scarcely mentioned in the secondary literature, probably because of its small size, the lack of secondary sources, and the fact that it does not fit squarely into works on

ŚWIĘCIANY

Pre-1939: Święciany (Yiddish: Sventsian), town, Wilno województwo, Poland; 1939–1940: Sventsiany, raion center, Vileika oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1940–1941: Švenčionys/Sventsiany, uезд center, Lithuanian SSR; 1941–1944: Schwentschionys, Kreis center, Gebiet Wilna-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Švenčionys, rajonas center, Vilnius apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Święciany is located about 80 kilometers (50 miles) northeast of Wilno. In 1925, the Jewish population of Święciany was 2,750. On September 18, 1939, the Soviet army entered Święciany. Initially incorporated into the Belorussian SSR, after August 1940, Święciany was transferred to the new Lithuanian SSR.

Following their invasion of the Soviet Union, German forces occupied Święciany by July 1, 1941. At the time of the invasion, a number of Jews, especially those with links to the Soviet authorities, fled into Russia. Lithuanian partisans soon organized in the Święciany area and fired on retreating Soviet soldiers and officials, and also on fleeing Jews, forcing some to return to Święciany, where Jewish firemen had established a self-defense unit.

A German military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur) was established in the town, as were a local administration and police force. The latter institutions were dominated by Lithuanians, as Poles were excluded from holding office.¹ From August 1, 1941, P. Skrabutėnas was in charge of the Święciany district police force and Juozas Šležys the Święciany town police. Head of the Kreis Schwentschionys administration was Mykolas Kukutis, and mayor of the town was Vincas Blažys.

In the first days of the occupation, Jews were harassed and seized for forced labor, and a number were murdered as suspected Communists. According to Yitzhak Arad: "[N]ow the hatred of the Lithuanians for the Jews exploded in full force. Jews were beaten in the streets; their homes were looted; they were snatched away for forced labor and cruelly molested." Available sources indicate that around 140 Jews were arrested and shot in July 1941, in at least two Aktions, in which local Lithuanians played an important role.²

In August 1941, the German military administration was replaced by a German civil administration. The new Gebietskommissar Wilna-Land, Horst Wulff, ordered the registration of all Jewish residents. At this time, a series of anti-Jewish measures was introduced, including the wearing of the Star of David, a ban on travel by Jews, and restrictions on when Jews could buy food.³ Rumors spread about the liquidation of entire Jewish communities elsewhere in Lithuania. When the Jews learned, in the second half of September, that the Germans were preparing a concentration point for the Jews of the region in Nowe Święciany, Jewish representatives appealed to the Catholic priest for help, but he claimed he was powerless to intervene.⁴

On September 26, 1941, German and Lithuanian police surrounded Święciany and ordered the Jews to prepare to move to the barracks at the military camp (firing range), also known as the Poligon camp, near Nowe Święciany, some 12 kilome-

ters (7.5 miles) away. The Germans prepared a list of needed specialists, who would be permitted to remain in Święciany with their families. People attempted to bribe their way onto the list. During the night, a number of Jews fled towards Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien, including Yitzhak Arad. On September 27, the majority of the Jews were then taken to the Poligon camp, where they were held, together with several thousand others collected from throughout the region, for just over a week under terrible conditions. After a few days the remaining Jews in Święciany were permitted to bring a little food to the inmates, but the prisoners were robbed and abused by their Lithuanian guards. A few additional specialists were selected out, with the aid of bribes, and brought to Święciany, where a small remnant ghetto was established around the large synagogues. The vacated Jewish houses were soon looted by the Lithuanians.⁵

Some people who had evaded the roundup soon joined the craftsmen in the ghetto. However, when they were urged to register, to become legal, the Germans arrested those who came forward and took them to the Poligon transit camp to be shot with the other Jews there. In total there were around 300 Jews in the remnant ghetto.⁶

According to Einsatzkommando 3 commander, Karl Jäger, 3,726 Jews were shot at Święciany by October 9, 1941, reflecting the killing of the inmates of the Poligon camp at two sites nearby.⁷ Other sources, however, indicate that perhaps as many as 8,000 Jews from the region were murdered by the Security Police, members of the Lithuanian Ypatingas Burys killing squad, and other local auxiliaries at Poligon.⁸

A report, dated December 17, 1941, from the head of Kreis Schwentschionys to the Gebietskommissar, noted that the remaining Jews of the Kreis had been resettled into the Święciany ghetto, which was surrounded by barbed wire and guarded by the Lithuanian police. Those Jews assigned to perform labor were specially registered. Inside the ghetto, Antanas Markauskas, a Lithuanian policeman, was in charge of enforcing order and cleanliness. A five-man Jewish Council (Judenrat) had been formed, which was charged with maintaining order in the ghetto and dealing with internal Jewish affairs.⁹ In April 1942, the Gebietskommissar ordered the head of the Kreis to organize all Jews, regardless of age or sex, for labor details to clean the streets of Święciany.¹⁰

One of the earliest and strongest Jewish resistance groups in the region emerged in the Święciany ghetto. Gertman, Rudnicki, Shutan, Porush, Wolfson, Ligumski, Nadel, Beck, and Miedziolski were some of its members. At first, the resistance group planned to fight inside the ghetto, but later it decided its members should escape to the forest and join partisan units. The underground and the Judenrat came into conflict over the question of purchasing arms, probably following an incident that provoked a deadly response.

On May 13, 1942, on the orders of Jonas Maciulevicius, the head of the Lithuanian Criminal Police, two members of the Jewish underground, Beck and Miedziolski, were arrested in the ghetto after Miedziolski had accidentally shot and wounded Beck with an illegal firearm. This was reported to



WEISSRUTHENIEN REGION



Jewish workers make or touch up German and Belorussian business and road signs in the Głębokie ghetto, 1941–1942. In the back, on the right, one worker paints the portrait of a Wehrmacht officer. In German and Belorussian, the markers in front read, "Shunevichy," a nearby village.

USHMM WS #08076, COURTESY OF KARL KATZ

WEISSRUTHENIEN REGION (GENERALKOMMISSARIAT WEISSRUTHENIEN)

Pre-1941: parts of Baranovich, Belostok, Minsk, and Vileika oblasts, Belorussian SSR, Soviet Union; 1941–1944: (from August 31, 1941), Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien, Reichskommissariat Ostland; post-1991: parts of Beras'tse, Homel', Hrodna, Minsk, and Vitsebsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien (GkWR) was composed of western Belorussia, most of which was Polish territory in August 1939, apart from the eastern fringe that was in the pre-1939 Belorussian SSR. The German authorities established more than 90 ghettos in GkWR, generally concentrating the Jews into the Rayon centers, although some Rayons contained 2 or more ghettos, including a few in small towns and villages. The period of ghettoization extended from July 1941 until the summer of 1942. It was accompanied by the mass murder of the Jewish population by units of the Security Police (Einsatzgruppen and KdS), Wehrmacht, Order Police, SS, and various non-German auxiliaries. Skilled workers were often selected out and sent to forced labor camps or retained in remnant ghettos, serving a variety of workshops and labor needs.

Precise demographic data on the Jewish population of GkWR in August 1941 is not available, but it is likely there were over 300,000 Jews. Tens of thousands of Jewish refugees had arrived from central and western Poland in the fall of 1939, but many of them were deported to the Soviet interior before June 1941. A further unknown figure is the number of Jews who were evacuated or fled in time or were recruited into the Red Army. As an example, of the 70,998 Jews registered in Minsk in 1939, it is estimated that about 55,000 remained when the Germans arrived on June 28, 1941. Due to the rapid occupation of western Belorussia, a systematic evacuation of personnel, other than key Communist Party and State officials, was not possible.

Jews in western Belorussia were subjected to a wave of looting and sporadic killings during the first weeks of occupation. In the first two months, the rapidly moving Einsatzgruppen, supported by SS, Order Police, and Wehrmacht units, conducted a number of killing Aktions directed against suspected Communists and the Jewish leadership or "intellectuals." In larger towns, for example, Slonim or Minsk, the number of Jews murdered at this time exceeded 1,000. In August 1941, the first large-scale killings of Jewish women and children took place, notably in Hancewicze.

The military administration (rückwärtiges Heeresgebiet Mitte) prepared the first orders for ghettoization in July and August 1941, but only where this was necessary to prevent Jews from leaving town illegally. In Gebiet Minsk-Land, the military administration charged local authorities with the establishment of ghettos in August 1941, although actual implementation took several more weeks.¹

The German Field Commandant ordered the creation of the Minsk ghetto on July 19, 1941, initially giving Jews only

five days to relocate. They could take with them only what they could carry. The actual transfer took longer to be completed, but soon German guards and local police had instructions to shoot on sight Jews caught outside the ghetto.²

On August 31, 1941, the German military administration was officially replaced by the civil administration with the creation of Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien, as part of Reichskommissariat Ostland (RKO). Generalkommissar Kube in Minsk supervised 11 Gebietskommissare for the Gebiete of Baranowitsche, Glebokie, Hansewitschi, Lida, Nowogrodek, Minsk-Land, Minsk-Stadt, Slonim, Slutsk, Wilejka, and Borissov (the latter comprised in the fall of 1941 only the Rayons of Begoml and Pleshchenitsy). In practice, it took several months for the civil administration to become properly established. For example, some Gendarmerie detachments only arrived in November. In the meantime, the military commandant's offices (Ortskommandanturen) of the 707th Infantry Division, based in most towns, retained considerable influence into early 1942. Low-level posts in the local administration were filled by Poles and Belorussians, including the local police (Schutzmannschaft), subordinated to the Order Police.

The impact of the civil administration can be seen from an order issued by the newly appointed Gebietskommissar in Nowogrodek on September 26, 1941. This codified restrictions introduced previously by the military and added some new ones. Every Jew had to carry an identity card and wear a yellow star on his or her clothing. Jews were strictly forbidden to leave the town without an official permit, to engage in any form of trade, to attend the market, or to use the sidewalk.³ Other regulations soon followed for the confiscation of Jewish property.

By October 1941, part of Einsatzkommando 1b had taken over Security Police duties in Minsk from Einsatzkommando 8. German Reserve Police Battalion 11 and a Lithuanian Schutzmannschaft Battalion were also dispatched to Minsk from Kaunas. Subordinated to Military Commandant for Weissruthenien Gustav von Bechtolsheim, commander of the 707th Infantry Division, these units conducted a deadly wave of killings south of Minsk in October. It resulted in the destruction of several ghettos established shortly before, including those in Smilovichi, Rudensk, and Uzliany.⁴ The same units also descended on the recently established ghetto of Slutsk on October 27, 1941. Since this Aktion had not been coordinated with the Gebietskommissar in Slutsk, it resulted in the murder of needed skilled workers and widespread looting.⁵

On October 30, there were further massacres of Jews in Nieśwież and Kleck. Around 5,900 Jews were reportedly shot



Jewish men and women wear circular badges in Minsk, ca. 1941–1942. USHMM WS #07554 AND WS #06316, COURTESY OF YVA



dead in the Slutsk-Kleck area at this time.⁶ In Nieśwież, after the Aktion the skilled workers and their families, about 500 people, were given only a short time to move into a remnant ghetto.

Large-scale killing Aktions in some towns, notably in Slonim in November 1941, and in Nowogródek in December, were also accompanied by the ghettoization of those selected for labor. Gebietskommissar Erren in Slonim boasted of having rid his Gebiet of 8,000 unnecessary mouths.⁷ Wehrmacht forces from Stołpce, assisted by local policemen, conducted Aktions in early November 1941 in Jeremicze, Turzec, and Mir. Whereas almost the entire population of the small fenced ghetto in Jeremicze was wiped out, in Turzec 100 Jewish men were selected for forced labor at the Nowy Świerzeń sawmill. In Mir, however, a few days later, almost half of the Jewish population managed to hide or escape, as the Jews were forewarned by fugitives from Turzec.

In some small settlements, for example, in Gebiet Slonim, the Wehrmacht initially conducted killing Aktions to clear the countryside (*das flache Land*) of Jews. At the end of 1941, the civil administration began to concentrate Jews from smaller communities (less than 1,000 people) in the main ghettos.

In Gebiet Głębokie, several ghettos were established in the late summer and fall of 1941, including those in Dziszna, Głębokie, and Dokszyce. The small ghetto established in Hermanowicze in August 1941 was dissolved, and its 270 inhabitants were sent to the ghetto in Szarkowszczyzna in November 1941. Some small Jewish communities, such as Jody, were simply wiped out by the local police, while the concentration of Jews from smaller villages into ghettos was only completed later, after the last ghettos were set up in Druja and Brasław in April 1942. This concentration was soon followed by a wave of ghetto liquidations, which left only a few in places such as Postawy, Duniłowicze, and Głębokie by August 1942. During the ghetto liquidations, some specialist workers were transferred to Głębokie to increase production in the workshops based there. Many Jews who went into hiding or fled to the forests to evade the Aktions, however, soon accepted an amnesty announced by the Gebietskommissar and entered the Głębokie ghetto by the fall of 1942. This reflected the difficulties Jews faced in surviving outside the ghettos, rather than any trust in the Gebietskommissar's word.

From December 1941, the German authorities had already begun selecting able-bodied Jews from a number of ghettos

for work, sending them to various forced labor camps. The recently formed ghettos in Dworzec (Gebiet Nowogrodek) and Krasne (Gebiet Wilejka) took in many of these forced laborers for specific work projects in those towns. These sites have been classified here, nonetheless, as ghettos, as families of local Jews continued to live there alongside the laborers.⁸

In Gebiet Nowogrodek ghettoization came in two or three main phases. In late 1941, ghettos were established first in towns such as Lubcz, Iwieniec, Rubieżewicze, and Nowogrodek, which also soon received Jews from neighboring villages. Then in February and March 1942, additional ghettos were established in Korelicze and Dworzec, accompanied by the clearing of Jews from remaining villages by resettlement into nearby ghettos. On March 6, 1942, Gebietskommissar Traub ordered that every Jew found in a village or hamlet in his Gebiet should be arrested by the local police and brought to Nowogrodek.⁹ In May 1942, the bulk of the Jews of the Gebiet were then concentrated either in Nowogrodek or in the Dworzec labor ghetto, with another labor camp set up in Worobjewicze. Those unable to travel, including young children, were shot close to their homes, and many of the remaining Jews of the Gebiet, about 5,500 people, were murdered on August 7, near Nowogrodek. After this date the ghetto in Nowogrodek, like that in Dworzec, resembled a labor camp more than a ghetto.

In Gebiet Lida, coordinated Aktions were conducted in May 1942 in all of the ghettos in which members of the civil administration selected Jews capable of work and condemned the remainder to their deaths. Only three ghettos for the selected workers were retained, in Lida, Iwje, and Szczuczyn, although some Jews from Gebiet Lida were transferred to other labor ghettos in Weissruthenien.

At least 12 unfenced ghettos or open ghettos have been identified in Weissruthenien, and some ghettos, such as Dereczyn, were only fenced in later, shortly before the liquidation. Some ghettos, such as that in Krzywicze, were only remnant ghettos for selected craftsmen, preserved for a short period after the main Aktion.

Most of the ghettos in Weissruthenien were established in the poorer parts of town, where at least some Jews had lived before, usually in the small wooden houses typical of the region. For example, in Dereczyn, 2,880 Jews were crammed into only 34 small cottages around the synagogue.¹⁰ Notable exceptions included the second ghetto in Mir, in an old rundown castle; the transfer of Grozovo's Jews to a military barracks in Koniukhi; and the ghetto in Wilejka, located in an army barracks. The Dżisna ghetto was not fenced in, but it was isolated by two rivers, with access via a bridge guarded by a German sentry.

Leon Berk, a doctor, has described the overcrowded conditions that developed in the Baranowicze ghetto:

We were given space to live in a small house that already contained three other families. There were 27 of us all told. There was one kitchen, one bathroom, and nine of us slept in each of the other small rooms

in three-tiered bunks. . . . Food was scarce, cooking utensils were at a premium, and competition for use of the stove and the bathroom was inevitable. Every day there were tears and screams. The struggle to keep a family fed and clothes clean and free of lice was a battle they had no hope of winning.¹¹

During the course of 1942, units of the Security Police based in Minsk, Baranowicze, Lepel', Wilejka, and other locations organized the liquidation of most ghettos in Weissruthenien. Large-scale killing Aktions were conducted in Minsk and Baranowicze in early March 1942, focused on those incapable of work. Two or more ghettos, separating Jews by their ability to work or type of work, were established in several places, including Dereczyn, Słonim, Głębokie, and Wilejka, usually to facilitate the killing by separating out those unfit for work in advance. In Gebiet Wilejka, the Security Police developed their own methodology of killing, which generally involved herding Jews into a large building such as a barn, shooting the victims inside, and then burning the building to destroy the evidence. This methodology was used, for example, in Dołhinów and Krzywicze in March and April 1942. Following a massive wave of killings in almost all the Gebiete of Weissruthenien between mid-May and the end of July 1942, the Generalkommissar reported that in the last 10 weeks 55,000 Jews had been liquidated. Only in the Gebiete of Baranowitsche and Hansewitschi were such large Aktions still to be conducted, especially in Baranowicze, where about 10,000 Jews remained.¹²

Many of the Jews deported from Central Europe to the Minsk ghetto were murdered in late July 1942, when they were deemed unfit for work, and the occupants of some deportation trains were murdered on arrival, with the assistance of Latvian auxiliaries. Gas vans were also used in some killing Aktions in and around Minsk.

The attitudes of the local population towards the ghettos varied from direct participation in German anti-Jewish policies to providing assistance and shelter. Many survivors and eyewitnesses stress the active role of the local police, which generally guarded the ghettos, beat Jews performing forced labor, and robbed Jews repeatedly. In particular, the hunt for Jews in hiding or those who had escaped into the forests was conducted largely by the local police. Only very occasionally did policemen warn ghetto inmates of impending Aktions or assist Jews during roundups.

The establishment of the ghettos offered another opportunity for neighbors to plunder Jewish property. Some Belorussians and Poles bartered food for Jewish valuables and clothing, or took property into safekeeping. Local policemen moved into empty Jewish houses after the Aktions, and Jewish clothing was sold to local inhabitants. The acquisition of Jewish property served as an important motive for local collaboration in anti-Jewish measures.

From the end of 1941, an increasing number of Jews escaped from the ghettos to the growing Soviet partisan movement. Many Soviet units only accepted Jews who arrived with weapons, and some Jews were rebuffed or even murdered. Neverthe-

less, the escape of up to 20,000 Jews, from the ghettos to the partisans, forced the Germans to accelerate their ghetto liquidations and increase security, converting remnant ghettos into closely guarded labor camps. On September 8, 1942, Generalkommissar Kube instructed the Gebietskommissare that the strong presence of Jews with the partisans could only be countered by the accelerated cleansing of the countryside and by confining needed Jewish workers under close guard.¹³

According to Shalom Cholowsky, in some ghettos in GkWR the Judenrat opposed underground activities as too dangerous for the community, as they invited German reprisals. In others, relations between the Judenrat and the resistance were more amenable, such as in Baranowicze, where the date set for an uprising was postponed by agreement, and the underground agreed to hide its weapons. Only rarely did Jewish Councils actively organize resistance, usually once there was no choice, such as in Nieśwież, where a call to arms was issued just before the liquidation. Setting the ghetto on fire or resisting with primitive weapons aimed mainly at enabling a few Jews to flee. This was the case in Szarkowszczyzna, Zdzięcioł, and other ghettos. The most common response, however, was to prepare hiding places, behind false walls or in cellars and bunkers, with the aim of sneaking out once the Aktion was completed. Sometimes, such as in Slutsk and Slonim, the Germans set the ghetto on fire, to smoke out Jews who had gone into hiding.

Further ghetto liquidations were conducted in the fall of 1942, some as part of larger antipartisan sweeps. Only in a few cases, such as in Stolpce, in September and October 1942, was much attention paid to retaining Jewish laborers, now confined behind a high wooden fence. By the spring of 1943, ghettos remained only in a few locations, including Minsk, Lida, Nowogródek, and Głębokie. Only a few thousand Jews from Lida and Minsk were transferred west into the concentration camp system in the fall of 1943, and very few of them survived. In October 1943, the Minsk ghetto was the last in the region to be liquidated.

The history of the ghettos in the GkWR illustrates the flexible and partially decentralized nature of Nazi ghettoization policies. Examples of almost all ghetto types (destruction, open, enclosed, labor, and remnant) can be found in the region, and patterns of ghettoization varied widely among the respective Gebiete. Whereas in Gebiet Minsk-Land, ghettoization was implemented very early by the Wehrmacht, to be followed by rapid destruction, in other Gebiete, such as Nowogrodek, Slonim, and Głębokie, ghettoization was applied piecemeal and only completed in the spring or summer of 1942. This then coincided with the main wave of ghetto liquidations, which proceeded from around April through to the winter of 1942–1943. Due to the large Jewish population in this region, and the important role played by Jews as craftsmen, economic interests led to the temporary exploitation of Jewish labor alongside the destruction process. Nevertheless, security was also a major issue, and the large-scale escape of Jews to join the partisans prompted the Germans to liquidate all remaining ghettos by the fall of 1943.



Postwar portrait of Fira Kaplan, a survivor of the Minsk ghetto, 1947. USHMM WS #49757, COURTESY OF ESFR LUPYAN

SOURCES Among the secondary works dealing with the fate of the Jews in the ghettos of Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien, the following are recommended: Bernhard Chiari, *Alltag hinter der Front. Besatzung, Kollaboration und Widerstand in Weissrusland, 1941–1944* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1998); Shalom Cholowsky, *The Jews of Bielorrussia during World War II* (Amsterdam: Harwood, 1998); Martin Dean, *Collaboration in the Holocaust: Crimes of the Local Police in Belorussia and Ukraine, 1941–44* (London: Macmillan in association with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 1999); Christian Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde: Die deutsche Wirtschafts- und Vernichtungspolitik in Weissrusland 1941 bis 1944* (Hamburg: HIS, 1999); and Raul Hilberg, *Die Vernichtung der europäischen Juden*, vol. 2 (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1982).

Of use in helping to identify smaller ghettos were the following publications: Vladimir Adamushko et al., eds., *Handbuch der Haftstätten für die Zivilbevölkerung auf dem besetzten Territorium von Belarus 1941–1944* (Minsk: State Committee for Archives and Documentary Collections of the Republic of Belarus, 2001); Marat Botvinnik, *Pamiatniki genotsida evreev Belarusi* (Minsk: Belaruskaja Navuka, 2000); Emanuel Ioffe, *Belorusskie evrei: Tragediia i gerotizm, 1941–1945* (Minsk: Arti-Feks, 2003); *Rossiiskaia Evreiskaia Entsiklopediia*, vols. 4–6 (Moscow: Russian Academy of Natural Sciences, Jewish Encyclopedia Research Center, “Epos,” 2000–2007); Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ba-kebilot*.

Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland, vol. 8, *Vilna, Bielystok, Nowogrodek* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005); 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 collections of testimonies and other primary sources include the following: Vladimir Adamushko, Galina Knat'ko, and Natalia Redkozubova, eds., "Nazi Gold" from Belarus: *Documents and Materials* (Minsk: National Archive of the Republic of Belarus, 1998); 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); R.A. Chernoglazova, ed., *Tragediia evreev Belorussii (1941–1944): Sbornik materialov i dokumentov* (Minsk: Izdatel' E.S. Gal'perin, 1997); Ilya Ehrenburg and Vasily Grossman, eds., *The Complete Black Book of Russian Jewry* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2002); David Meltzer and Vladimir Levin, eds., *The Black Book with Red Pages (Tragedy and Heroism of Belorussian Jews)* (Cockeysville, MD: VIA Press, 2005); Joshua Rubenstein and Ilya Altman, eds., *The Unknown Black Book: The Holocaust in the German-Occupied Soviet Territories* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press in association with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2007); and Leonid Smilovitskii, *Katastrofa evreev v Belorussii 1941–1944 gg.* (Tel Aviv: Biblioteka Matveia Chernogo, 2000).

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AAN; AUKGBRBBBO; AUKGBRBGrO; AUKGBRBMO; AŽIH; BA-BL; BA-L; BA-MA; BLH; CDJC; GABO; GAGO; GAMINO; GARF; GAVO; IFZ; IPN; MA;

NA; NARA; NARB; OSI; RGASPI; RGVA; USHMM; VHAP; VHF; YIVO; and YVA.

Martin Dean

NOTES

1. Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, pp. 524–525, and 530. See also, e.g., USHMM, RG-18.002M, reel 5, R70-5-47, p. 21.
2. See NARB, 4683-3-397, pp. 6–7, and 359-1-8, pp. 1–2.
3. USHMM, RG-22.002M (GARF), reel 24, 7021-81-112.
4. NARB, 378-1-698, p. 4; and 651-1-1, pp. 3–7.
5. N-Doc. 1104-PS; see also *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 18 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1979), Lfd. Nr. 546, pp. 800–810.
6. BA-MA, RH 26-707/2, Report, November 10, 1941.
7. CDJC, CXLVa-8, Report of Gerhard Erren, January 25, 1942.
8. AŽIH, 301/2907; and BA-L, ZStL/202 AR-Z 73/67, Shmuel Gurion, July 26, 1968; and BA-L, B 162/1472, pp. 8649–8671.
9. Jack Kagan and Dov Cohen, *Surviving the Holocaust with the Russian Jewish Partisans* (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 1998), pp. 156–158.
10. AŽIH, 301/2140 and 4695.
11. Leon Berk, *Destined to Live: Memoirs of a Doctor with the Russian Partisans* (Melbourne: Paragon Press, 1992), p. 70.
12. N-Doc. 3427-PS. See also NARB, 370-1-483, p. 15; and *Unsere Ehre heisst Treue: Kriegstagebuch des Kommandostabes Reichsführer SS* (Vienna: Europa, 1984), pp. 247–249.
13. USHMM, Acc. 1996.A.0169, file 15, fr. 1217–1246.



BARANOWICZE

Pre-1939: Baranowicze (Yiddish: Baranovits), city and powiat center, Nowogródek województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Baranovich, raion and oblast' center, Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Baranowitsche, Rayon and Gebiet center, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Baranavichi, Beras'tse voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Baranowicze is located about 150 kilometers (93 miles) southwest of Minsk. According to the 1931 census, Baranowicze had 22,181 residents, including 9,423 Jews. By the time of the German invasion in June 1941, the Jewish community stood at about 12,000 (out of a total population of some 25,000).

Baranowicze was initially administered by a series of military command posts—first Feldkommandantur (FK) 815,

then, by August 1941, Ortskommandantur (OK) 826—which sometimes issued contradictory instructions.

By September 1941, a civil administration had established itself in the city and gradually assumed authority from the military, which was composed of elements of the 707th Infantry Division. The Gebietskommissar in Baranowicze was Rudolf Werner. There was also a Hauptkommissar in Baranowicze, Friedrich Fenz, who was superior to Werner and responsible for several of the surrounding Gebiete, but Werner was the more visible official for Baranowicze's Jews. Initially, the local mayor was a man named Sobolewski, but a local Belorussian named Voytenko soon replaced him. A detachment of German Schutzpolizei, commanded by Hauptmann Kurt Mischlewitz, was responsible for keeping order. The detachment was assisted by a local police force under the leadership of the Belorussian Bachar.¹

By early 1942, a permanent outpost of the Security Police and SD (KdS-Aussenstelle) had been established in Baranowicze. Its commander from April 1942, SS-Obersturmführer Franz Grünzfelder, was killed by Soviet partisans on June 9, 1942. He was replaced by SS-Untersturmführer Woldemar Amelung. A squad of auxiliaries, including Lithuanians and Latvians, as well as Belorussians, commanded by Lithuanian Józef Gurniewicz ("Litwin"), operated under the command of the Security Police. It played an active role in the shooting of Jews and Communists in Gebiet Baranowitsche, as well as providing guards for the nearby Kołdyczewo concentration camp.

The ghetto was established by the civil administration in mid-December 1941. The ghetto area was located within the confines of Cerkiewna, Wilno, Poniatowski, and Parkowa Streets, about 150 meters (492 feet) from the office of the Gebietskommissar. The area contained only about 60 buildings to house more than 10,000 people, which resulted in terrible overcrowding. Within a few months, control over the ghetto was transferred to SS-Obersturmführer Schlegel, head of the SD at the Baranowicze Security Police post.

The Judenrat was instructed to erect a barbed-wire fence 2.5 meters (about 8 feet) high around the ghetto. It also posted the names of Jews with their new addresses inside the ghetto. From the end of December, the ghetto was guarded by local policemen armed with rifles and dressed in black uniforms with gray cuffs.

Only a few German officials and SD men were permitted to enter the ghetto. Jews could only leave under guard and with the permission of the SD. The Labor Exchange within the civil administration assigned Jews to specific work tasks. However, the SD also supervised the labor assignments, as it was the main point of contact for the Judenrat.

Ghetto inmates worked at a large number of military bases, construction sites, factories, workshops, public utilities, and offices. Among the offices employing significant numbers of Jews were the military base (Heereskraftpark) (610 people); the Luftwaffe base (120); Organisation Todt (OT) (100); the railway (160); the airport (300); the carpentry factory (55); the rope-making factory (40); the construction site for the Kołdyczewo concentration camp (30); and the Gebietskommissariat



Baranowicze student Leon Tec in the mid-1930s. Tec attended medical school in Wilno before immigrating to Palestine in 1940. USHMM WS #43992, COURTESY OF NECHAMA BAWNIK TEC

(25). In addition, from 40 to 260 people worked for the Security Police and SD, mostly in various workshops for tailors, carpenters, shoemakers and glove-makers, and watch repairers. Smaller groups of Jews also worked in the bakery, the sewage department, the military garage, and the medical warehouse. Working hours were strictly enforced. The tailor Moisei Kaplan was shot for being just five minutes late for work.

There was a hospital in the ghetto supervised by Dr. A. Abramovski. With the Judenrat and Jewish police, he arranged for the inspection of houses to check on sanitary conditions and prevent epidemics.² They ordered people to wash in the Jewish bathhouse and disinfect their clothes. The daily ration was only about 100 to 200 grams (3.5 to 7 ounces) of bread per day for a working person and 1 kilogram (2.2 pounds) of grain per month, with an occasional potato.

Several accounts mention that the Germans demanded Jewish girls be supplied for a local brothel. According to Shmuel Jankielewicz, the Judenrat averted the implementation of this order with bribes.³

In January, there were rumors about a forthcoming Aktion. At night, people started to build hiding places in the ghetto. On the morning of March 3, 1942, just before the Purim holiday, nobody was allowed to leave the ghetto. That night the ghetto was divided into eastern and western parts, the inhabitants split between them: workers in the east, non-workers in the west. On March 4, at 8:00 A.M., trucks arrived at the ghetto gate. Policemen and Lithuanians in groups of three cleared the Jews from the western half, took them by truck to a nearby crossroads, and shot them.

On March 5, at 9:00 A.M., police and Lithuanians entered the ghetto. At 9:45 A.M., the senior German officials from the civil administration and police, including Giesecke, deputy Gebietskommissar Max Kranke, and commandant of the ghetto Schlegel conducted a selection. At 1:00 P.M., Józef Gurniewicz, the commander of the Lithuanians, took the chairman of the Judenrat, Izykson, and his widely respected secretary, Genia Mann, to the mass grave, ordered them to dance, and then shot them. At 2:00 P.M., the Aktion was over. The ghetto commandant, Schlegel, ordered the Jewish police to cover the graves where more than 2,000 people lay dead. Most of the Jewish police force was then murdered.⁴

After the Aktion, some 8,000 Jews remained. Schlegel ordered the deputy chairman of the Judenrat, Józef Leitman, to resume work as usual. The new chairman of the Judenrat, Shmuel Jankielewicz, fulfilled all the orders of the German administration, including some private demands. A new Jewish police force was formed, headed by Józef Rotkiewicz, but his deputy A. Warszawski, who was also in the underground, had more authority. Despite the severe losses, Jewish children still received improvised instruction, and Jews continued to pray, for example, in the house of Reb Mendel Goldberg.⁵

Some houses in the cleared part of the ghetto were used as workshops, but the ghetto remained split into two parts (productive and nonproductive), linked by a narrow passageway. Jews working outside the ghetto were escorted to work by German soldiers or company representatives.

In the fall of 1941, some Jews had fled to Baranowicze after massacres in the surrounding towns. After March 1942, more Jews arrived from places like Stołpce, mainly as skilled workers.⁶ There were also Jews from Horodyszcze, Nowa Mysz, Stołowicze, Nowojelnia, Mołczadź, Kleck, and other places in the ghetto. At the end of August 1942, 654 ghetto inmates were sent to Mołodeczno to work on the railway line to Wilejka.⁷

After the March Aktion, groups of Jews began to organize resistance in the ghetto. The first meeting was in the office of the Jewish police on March 17–18; a number of policemen, including the chief, Warszawski, were members of the underground. Jewish youths smuggled weapons into the ghetto with the help of young girls working outside during the day. At the same time, the underground also tried to establish contact with partisans operating in the surrounding countryside.

Soon more than 200 Jews were in the underground, and despite some rivalry, they agreed to work together. Initial plans for an uprising in July were abandoned. The leaders decided to wait for the next large Aktion, to avoid endangering the rest of the ghetto. Meanwhile, the ghetto fence was reinforced with an additional row of barbed wire.

On September 22, 1942, the day after Yom Kippur, the German police initiated another Aktion without warning, spoiling the underground's plans for an uprising. Only small groups managed to frustrate the Germans by hiding and escaping. The Germans and local auxiliaries escorted the Jews from the ghetto to the square in front of the Gebietskommissariat, then took them by truck to gravesites near the villages of Grabowiec and Gliniszczce. Belorussian and Lithuanian policemen participated in the Aktion. Many Jews hid in bunkers, and the ghetto was sealed off for more than a week.⁸

According to the available sources, some 6,000 people were murdered, either by shooting at the pits or by suffocation in the gas vans between September 22 and October 2. The use of gas vans is confirmed by Maita Shamshonowicz, who was assigned to clean out the vans afterwards. Probably some 200 Jews managed to flee to the forests during the Aktion.⁹

After the Aktion, Reb Mendel Goldberg was appointed head of the Judenrat, and Dr. Józef Lubraniecki commanded the ghetto police. The remaining Jews had no illusions about their probable fate. On December 12, 1942, a Jew named Judel Ostrowski killed a German and himself using a hand grenade. Five days later, as columns of Jewish workers left for their workplaces, the Germans started the final Aktion in the ghetto. The group that worked for the civil administration was loaded onto a truck, taken to the Jewish cemetery, and shot. On the third day, there were still shootings inside the ghetto. Belorussian, Ukrainian, and Latvian police searched the ghetto thoroughly for those in hiding.¹⁰ The clearing of the ghetto continued for several weeks, as many Jews were still hiding in the ghetto. It is probable that about 3,000 people were murdered in the liquidation Aktion.¹¹ Some groups that worked for various German organizations were kept alive longer, as late as the autumn of 1943, before also being shot.

It is estimated that of the more than 12,000 Jews who passed through the Baranowicze ghetto, about 750 probably



Group portrait of Jewish survivors from Baranowicze, 1944, commemorating the 3,000 Jews murdered in Baranowicze on Purim, March 4, 1942.

USHMM WS #12422, COURTESY OF GEORGE KADISH/ZVI KADUSHIN

escaped, but only some 250 survived to the end of the war. A number of Belorussians, Poles, and even German soldiers are mentioned as helping Jews on various occasions. Worthy of particular mention is the Pole Eduard Chacja, who worked in the Catholic cemetery. He helped scores of Jews, giving them food and shelter before assisting them to reach the forests.¹²

SOURCES Firsthand accounts of the Baranowicze ghetto can be found in the following publications: Avraham Shemu'el Shtain, ed., *Baranovits: Sefer zikaron* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Baranovits be-Yi'sra'el, 1953); B.P. Sherman, *Baranovichskoe getto: Koldychevskii lager' smerti: Spravka-kharakteristika krupnykh prestuplenii fashistov v gor. Baranovich i raione v 1941–1944 gg.* (Baranovich: B. Sherman, 1997); Nehama Zukerman, ed., *Ha-Ma'avak le'Chayim shel Yehudei Baranowicze: Kovets Zichronot al ha'Sho'ah shel Nitzolei Ghetto Baranowicze ve Lokhamav* (Tel Aviv: Arieli Press, 1992); and Yoysef Fuksman, ed., *Baranovitsb in umkum un vidersbtand: Materyaln un dokumentn, zikhbroynes un gvieseydesn . . . fun hurbn* (New York: Baranovitsher Farband of America, 1964).

The following survivor memoirs are also relevant: David Mishenka (Kolpynicki), "Nikto ne khotel umirat" (unpub. MSS); Leon Berk, *Destined to Live: Memoirs of a Doctor with the Russian Partisans* (Melbourne: Paragon Press, 1992); Avraham Lidowski, *Ba-Ye'arot: Reshimot shel Partisan Yehudi* (Tel Aviv: HaKibbutz Hameuchad, 1946); and Samuel Lato, *From Ghetto to Guerrilla: Memoir of a Jewish Resistance Fighter* (Palm Beach Gardens: Preeminent, 2006).

Since Yehuda Bauer's excellent essay "Jewish Baranowicze in the Holocaust," in *Yad Vashem Studies* 31 (2003): 95–152, includes a detailed analysis of the underground, and Shlomo Kless's "The Judenrat of the Baranovich Ghetto, 1942–43" (available online at www.jewishgen.org) describes the functions and history of the Judenrat, these aspects are sketched only briefly here. Other secondary works published (in Russian) in Belarus include: B.P. Sherman, *And the Land Was Terified* (Baranovich, 1990); *Pamiats': Baranovich i Baranovich District* (Minsk, 2000); and Hartmut Russ, "The SD in Baranovich (1941–1943) in the Context of the Local Occupational Period," *Belarussian Historical Review* (Minsk) (June

1998). Of interest also is Alexander Tatarenko, *Madness* (Belarus, 2004).

The Soviet Extraordinary State Commission reports for Baranowicze and some German documentation can be found in NARB (e.g., 845-1-6 and 861-1-1). Additional captured German documentation can be found in BA-BL; GABO; and NARA. A number of German, Polish, and Belorussian criminal investigations have information on the events in Baranowicze, especially the Eibner investigation (Sta. Oldenburg 2 Js 138/68) and the Renndorfer case (Sta. Mü I 113 Ks 1/65a-b). There are also many relevant testimonies in AŽIH; FVA (# 927); VHF, and YVA (e.g., O-33/35, 2681, and 11523).

Tamara Vershitskaya and Martin Dean

NOTES

1. See GABO, 995-1-5, pp. 21–22, for a list of local policemen in Baranowicze in early 1942.
2. Dr. Shabtai Shternfeld, "The Health Service in the Ghetto," in Shtain, *Baranovits: sefer zikaron*, p. 506; Bauer, "Jewish Baranowicze," pp. 13–14.
3. Shmuel Jankielewicz, "At the Ruins," in Shtain, *Baranovits: Safer zikaron*, p. 500.
4. Tätigkeits- und Lagebericht Nr. 11, 1.3.-31.3.1942, published 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. 308, gives the figure of 2,007 Jews shot in Baranowicze in early March 1942. E. Lidovsky, in Ohtain, *Baranovits: Sefer zikaron*, pp. 467–469, dates the Aktion on March 3, 1942, and states that the Germans intended to shoot 3,000 Jews but did not find sufficient people among those selected as unfit, so they also took some of those who had received work permits.
5. Dr. Lewinbuk in Shtain, *Baranovits: Sefer zikaron*, p. 561; YVA, O-33/11523, testimony of Rachel Litwak.
6. Josef Reich, *Vald un Flamen* (Buenos Aires, 1954), p. 71, notes that some 400 Jews were sent to Baranowicze from Stołpce in early August 1942.
7. Jankielewicz, "At the Ruins," p. 503.
8. NARA, T-77, reel 1159, p. 141, Lagebericht der Aussonderungsstelle Baranowitschi des Rüstungskommandos Minsk, Ende 1942.
9. Christian Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde: Die deutsche Wirtschafts- und Vernichtungspolitik in Weissrussland 1941 bis 1944* (Hamburg: HIS, 1999), p. 703; the date of the Aktion is confirmed in Jankielewicz, "At the Ruins," p. 502; YVA, O-33/35, testimony of Maita Shamshonowicz, March 1957.
10. Jankielewicz, "At the Ruins," p. 505; NARA, T-77, reel 1159, p. 141.
11. Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, p. 705.
12. Chacja was honored by Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations, but unfortunately his file (YVA, M.31/13) from 1962 does not contain much detailed information. See also YVA, M.31/3254.

BEGOML'

Pre-1941: Begoml', town, Dokshitsy raion, Minsk oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Begoml, Rayon center, Gebiet Borissov, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Biagoml', Dokshytsy raen, Vitebsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Begoml' is located 101 kilometers (63 miles) north-northeast of Minsk. According to the 1939 census, there were 206 Jews living in Begoml' (10.1 percent of the total population).¹

German armed forces occupied the town at the start of July 1941, approximately 10 days after the German invasion of the USSR on June 22. During this intervening period, some of the Jewish population was able to evacuate to the east. Men of eligible age were conscripted into or voluntarily enlisted in the Red Army. Over two thirds of the Jewish population remained in Begoml' at the start of the occupation.

In the summer of 1941, a German military command post (Ortskommandantur) administered the town. In the fall of 1941, authority was transferred to a German civil administration. Begoml' was officially incorporated into Gebiet Borisow, within Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien. However, the civil administration took several months to become established, and the military authorities still played an important role until the end of 1941.²

Shortly after the occupation began, the Ortskommandantur introduced regulations calling for the registration of all Jews; in addition, all Jews were required to wear an armband or a large yellow Star of David. The Jews were also compelled to perform various kinds of forced labor. In September 1941, all the Jews of the town were resettled into a ghetto. The Germans liquidated the ghetto on October 2, 1941.³ According to one source, a total of 148 Jews were shot in the cemetery.⁴ The mass shooting was probably carried out by a detachment of the SD based in Borisov, subordinated to Einsatzkommando 8, assisted by the local Belorussian police.⁵

On October 16, 1941, another 23 Jews from nearby villages were shot in Begoml'. On October 21, 4 Jews who had been in hiding were killed.⁶ Another 34 Jews were killed in the village of Otrubok,⁷ and 5 more in the village of Kraitsy.⁸

At the end of December 1941, the Gendarmerie outpost in Begoml' sent to Borisov 13 Jews who had been brought to Begoml' on December 27, 1941, from the village of Domzher-



Soviet civilians watch as German troops burn their homes in Begoml', n.d. USHMM WS #81336, BELORUSSIAN STATE ARCHIVE OF DOCUMENTARY FILM AND PHOTOGRAPHY

itsy. These Jews had found refuge in Domzheritsy with other Jews still living there after fleeing from Mstizh, when the Jews of that village had been shot in August. The group consisted of 5 women and 7 children from Mstizh, as well as Leja Gurevich, a Jewish woman originally from Begoml'.⁹

The Gebietskommissar in Borisov reported in August 1942 that the Jewish Aktion in Begoml' had taken place before the civil administration had been established, and most of the property was probably taken by the SD or the Wehrmacht. The remainder was collected by the mayor and paid into the budget for the local Rayon administration.¹⁰

SOURCES Documentation regarding the persecution and annihilation of the Jews in Begoml' can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-87-1); NARB (370-1-486); USHMM (Acc.1996.A.0169, reel 14); and YVA.

Alexander Kruglov and Martin Dean
trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. Mordechai Altshuler, ed., *Distribution of the Jewish Population of the USSR 1939* (Jerusalem: Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1993), p. 39.

2. BA-BL, BDC, SShO 2432, Organisationsplan der besetzten Ostgebiete nach dem Stand vom 10. März 1942, hg. vom Chef der Ordnungspolizei, Berlin, March 13, 1942. The city of Borisov remained under military administration until 1942.

3. GARF, 7021-87-1, p. 11 (reverse side).

4. *Pamiats' Belarus'* (Minsk: Respublikanskaia Kniga, 1995), p. 166. According to the materials of the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission (ChGK), 270 Jews were shot on October 2, 1941. This number is probably too high; GARF, 7021-87-1, p. 11 (reverse side).

5. NARB, 651-1-1, pp. 3-7, Lagebericht des Reserve-Polizeibataillons 11, October 21, 1941; see also, however, Report of Einsatzkommando 3, December 1, 1941, in RGVA, 500-1-25, p. 114. According to Vincas Bartusevicius, Joachim Tauber, and Wolfram Wette, eds., *Holocaust in Litauen: Krieg, Judenmorde und Kollaboration im Jahre 1941* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2003), p. 314, this document mistakenly spells *Begoml* as *Bicholim*, probably a corruption of the Polish spelling *Biehomla*. According to information from the trial of David Ehof, the Aktion in Begoml' was carried out by a detachment of Einsatzkommando 8, possibly before October 2, 1941; see Christian Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde: Die deutsche Wirtschafts- und Vernichtungspolitik in Weissrussland 1941 bis 1944* (Hamburg: HIS, 1999), p. 599.

6. GARF, 7021-87-1, p. 11 (reverse side).

7. *Ibid.*, p. 56 (reverse side).

8. *Ibid.*, p. 72.

9. USHMM, Acc.1996.A.0169, reel 14 (YVA, M41/306), Gendarmerie Aussenposten Begoml to Kreisführer der Gendarmerie in Borisow, December 28, 1941.

10. NARB, 370-1-486, p. 25, Gebietskommissar Borisow to Generalkommissar Weissruthenien, August 9, 1942.

BRASLAW

Pre-1939: Braslaw, town and powiat center, Wilno województwo, Poland; 1939-1941: Braslav, raion center, Vileika oblast',

1170 WEISSRUTHENIEN REGION

Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Brasław, Rayon center; Gebiet Glebokie, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Brasław, raen center; Vitebsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Brasław is located about 200 kilometers (125 miles) north-northwest of Minsk. In 1921, 1,130 Jews resided in the town; and in 1925 there were 1,900 Jews.

Of the 5,000 inhabitants of Brasław on the eve of World War II, some 3,000 were Jews.¹

On June 28, 1941, the German army entered Brasław. Shortly after the start of the occupation, the German commandant ordered all the Jews of Brasław to assemble at the triumphal gate built by the Soviets. There, the Jews were surrounded by German security forces and divided into two groups, one composed only of men, the other of women and children. They were then escorted 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) outside the town. On the road, the Germans shot Szlojm Zylberg and Chaim Milutin for attempting to escape. As he was dying, Milutin cried out, "Jews, avenge our blood!" The remaining Jews were taken to a marshy area and were held there against their will. When they were finally released, the Jews discovered that the local population had looted their homes.²

A few days later, the Germans started to requisition Jews for forced labor. The Jews of Brasław often worked 12 hours per day, sometimes without food or drink. They were escorted to work in columns and were guarded by a selected local "street brigade."³

During Hanukkah in the middle of December 1941, Jews were massacred in the nearby township of Jody. As a result, some Jews from Brasław began to flee and hide in the forest. The Catholic priests Szlenik, Kowalski, and Wasilewski gave some material and spiritual help to the Jewish population. They reprimanded their parishioners for excesses committed against the Jews.

On June 30, 1941, the local German commandant (Ortskommandant) started to recruit a local police unit from among local ruffians sympathetic to the Germans. A Pole named Jasiński was the commander. Other policemen included Kriwko, Stefan Żuk, Malinowski, Masara, Czesław Kolkowski, Żarniewicz, and Stanisław Nowicki.⁴ Sucharewicz was one of the most brutal participants in the persecution of the Jews. In the fall of 1941, responsibility for the local police was transferred from the Wehrmacht to German Gendarmes, once a civil administration had been established. Among the men based at the Gendarmerie outpost in Brasław were Johannes Czapp, Willy Dittmann, Otto Haymann, Paul Kontny, Leo Leidenroth, Ludwig Müller, Ernst Schreiber, and Waldemar Schulz.⁵

In September 1941, the German authorities established a Jewish Council (Judenrat) in Brasław. Its members were Icchak (Yitzhak) Mindel (chairman), Chayim Munic (secretary), Mazeh (a teacher), Wolf Fiszer, Gerszon Klioner, Sasza Tempelman, Hirsz Fridman, Leib Walin, Szienkman, Rafał Fiszer, Ulman, and Ksil Dajcz. The Jewish community of Brasław basically trusted the Judenrat and did not comprehend fully the role it was forced to play by the German authorities. Each day the Jews organized a meal and celebrated prayers, as read by

Rabbi Zahorie. At this meal, refugees from other ghettos were welcomed.⁶

The Jews built a small-scale "coffee" grain factory, where 15 people worked. There was also a factory for leather hides employing 20 Jews, and another for the production of jam, employing 10 Jews. Many Jews believed that their lives would be spared if they could make themselves useful to the Germans. Initially, working Jews received 330 grams (11.6 ounces) of bread per day; this was reduced to 250 grams (8.8 ounces) in November 1941. Later, the distribution of daily rations was stopped altogether.⁷

On April 1, 1942, on the eve of Passover, the Germans established a ghetto in Brasław. Thanks to the efforts of the Judenrat, the ghetto was set up on the former Piłsudski Street, where three quarters of the Jews already lived. The ghetto was surrounded on two sides by lakes: Lake Driwiat and Lake Nowiat. The third side was enclosed by what was called the Castle Hill (Góra Zamkowa).⁸ The Jewish social-administrative house in Brasław (*dom gminy*) was closed down. Living conditions in the ghetto were ameliorated slightly as the road to the marketplace bisected Piłsudski Street, such that Jews were still able to exchange some goods with local non-Jews. There were no medical services, however, and medicine was almost impossible to obtain. The Jewish workers lived in one ghetto. A second ghetto was established in Brasław, in which the elderly, infirm, and those unable to work resided, referred to as the "dead ghetto." The second ghetto was located between the mill and one of the bridges. Jews were also forcibly resettled into the Brasław ghettos from the following nearby villages: Dubene, Jajsi, Słobodka, Druisi, and Turmont. The Jews from the first ghetto worked on cleaning projects and road repairs, among other tasks assigned to them by the Germans.

When the murder of Jews started in the neighboring towns, 3 Jewish residents from the Brasław ghetto, Zusman Lejbowicz, Wolf Fiszer, and Szlojme Musen, began organizing an armed resistance group. They operated a clandestine radio, which began transmitting at the end of May 1942. There were 250 people in the resistance. They planned to escape from the ghetto into the forest on the day of its liquidation. On June 2, 1942, the Gendarmerie demanded that the Judenrat hand over 100 girls to work in Słobódka, 10 kilometers (6.2 miles) from Brasław, to clean the barracks.⁹

On June 3, 1942, at 4:00 A.M., SS men, German Gendarmes, and local police arrived in Brasław and surrounded the ghetto. A general panic ensued as the Jews tried to save themselves by escaping. Young people resisted with whatever they had available, and many tried to hide in places they had prepared. Among the first to be shot was the head of the Judenrat, Mindel, who went to the German overseers to see what he could do. Under the command of Otto Haymann, the head at the Gendarmerie post in Brasław, the Germans started shooting and set the ghetto on fire.¹⁰ Nearly 2,000 Jews were rounded up at the police station.¹¹ The Jews were forced to hand over all items of value. On June 4, columns were formed, each consisting of 50 people. The Germans and local police escorted them with Rabbi Zahorie at the front to ditches that

had been prepared and shot them there. The pogrom lasted for several days, as many Jews went into hiding.

After about two days, the German commander announced a halt to the shooting and sent some Jews to call to those still hiding that they would not be harmed if they came out. However, this was only a ruse; many of the remaining Jews emerged from hiding, but a few days later they were again rounded up and shot by the Germans and local police.¹²

In August or September 1942, the ghetto in Brasław was repopulated by a number of Jewish craftsmen from the nearby ghetto in the village of Opsa.¹³ This “second ghetto” in Brasław existed until March 1943, when the Germans and the local police again surrounded it and drove the Jews to the pits to murder them. On this occasion some Jews decided to fight. About 10 of them barricaded themselves in a house inside the ghetto and resisted with weapons, killing several of their foes before the Germans destroyed the house with grenades.¹⁴

Only about 70 Jews from Brasław survived the war. Some of them, like Mojżesz Belak and 19 others, joined the partisan detachment of Sazykin, which operated between Wilno and Minsk. The detachment carried out a variety of operations against the Germans, including blowing up truck convoys.¹⁵ Other Jews escaped successfully to the ghetto in Widze, from which they were sent to the labor camp in Podbrodzie to work in the sawmill. A few were hidden with the help of local inhabitants, such as the Szczerbiński family, or Michał Kizło, who saved Niuta Kantor and Stanisław Szakiel.¹⁶

SOURCES A yizkor book dedicated to the community of Brasław and a number of smaller communities in the vicinity was prepared by Ariel Machnes and Rinah Klinov, eds., *Emesh Sho'ab—: Yad li-kebilot: Gevidmet di kehile's Braslav, Opsab, Okmenits, Dubinab, Zamosb, Zarats', Ya'isi, Yod, Slobudkab, Plusi, Kislovshits'iznab, Rimshan* (Israel: Irgun yots'e Braslav vaha-sevivah be-Yisrael uve-Artsot ha-Berit, 1986). It contains a number of short survivor accounts in Hebrew, which are also briefly extracted in English and Yiddish. One account of Jewish resistance in the “second ghetto” can be found in Szmerek Kaczerginski, *Hurbn Vilne: Umkum fun di Yidn in Vilne un Vilner gegnt . . . : Zamlung fun eydus: Bavayzn oder dokumentn* (New York: Aroysgegebn fun dem fareyniktn Vilner hilfs-komitet in Nyu-York durkh Tsiko bikher-farlag, 1947).

Documentation regarding the plight of the Jews in Brasław under German occupation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/3140 and 5873); BA-L (B 162/1390-91); NARB (370-1-483); Sta. Dortmund (45 Js 1/00); Sta. Hannover (2 Js 388/65); USHMM; VHF; and YVA (e.g., M-1/E/1908). Testimonies by residents of Brasław in the form of witness protocols can also be found in the following Polish court files: SAOI, I K 140/50 (case against Stanisław Nowicki); and SAGd, I K 6/49 (case against Marian Niedźwiecki).

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trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. Machnes and Klinov, *Emesh Sho'ab*, pp. 612–627.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 607; see also BA-L, B 162/1390 (202 AR-Z 37/60, vol. 1), pp. 32, 37.

3. Machnes and Klinov, *Emesh Sho'ab*, pp. 605–606; and BA-L, B 162/1390, pp. 32, 37.

4. Testimony of Jan Pietkun, August 23, 1947, SAOI, I K 140/50, pp. 6–8; testimony of witness Krystyna Turowska, February 15, 1990, IPN, branch in Koszalin, Kpp 6/90.

5. Sta. Dortmund 45 Js 1/00.

6. Machnes and Klinov, *Emesh Sho'ab*, p. 610.

7. AŻIH, 301/3140, testimony of Mojżesz Bielak, January 23–27, 1948.

8. AŻIH, 301/5873, testimony of Borys Ulman.

9. Machnes and Klinov, *Emesh Sho'ab*, p. 602. These girls were killed on the following day with the rest of the Jews.

10. AŻIH, 301/1541, testimonies of Tojbe Fiszer, Lejbowicz, and Zusmann, June 1946.

11. The figure of 2,000 is given in a German report by the Gebietskommissar in Głębokie, July 1, 1942; see NARB, 370-1-483, p. 15.

12. AŻIH, 301/1541, testimonies of Tojbe Fiszer, Lejbowicz, and Zusmann, June 1946; see also statement of Kalman Pinow on November 20, 1962, BA-L, B 162/1391, pp. 981–983.

13. The Jewish population of Opsa was 334 out of a total population of 714 in 1921. According to a German report dated July 1, 1942, there were still 300 Jews in a ghetto in Opsa on that date; see NARB, 370-1-483, p. 15.

14. YVA, 1631/98-R and M-1/E/1908. See also Kaczerginski, *Hurbn Vilne*, p. 160; and Machnes and Klinov, *Emesh Sho'ab*, p. 599.

15. AŻIH, 301/3140, testimony of Mojżesz Bielak, January 23–27, 1948.

16. Machnes and Klinov, *Emesh Sho'ab*, pp. 595–596.

BUDSŁAW

Pre-1939: Budstlaw, village, Wilejka powiat, Wilno województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Budslav, Krivichi raion, Molodechno oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Budslaw, Rayon Krivitschi, Gebiet Wilejka, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Budslau, Miadzel' raen, Minsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Budsław is located 107 kilometers (66 miles) north of Minsk. According to the 1921 census, there were 121 Jews living in Budsław.¹

German armed forces occupied the village on July 2, 1941. A German military commandant's office governed the village in the summer of 1941; in September authority was transferred to the German civil administration. Budsław became part of Gebiet Wilejka within Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien.

In the summer and fall of 1941, the German authorities introduced a series of anti-Jewish measures in Budsław, including requiring Jews to wear yellow patches in the shape of a Star of David, using all Jews aged over 12 for forced labor, and restricting Jews from leaving the limits of the village. In addition, Jews were forced to mark their homes with identifying signs, and a curfew was imposed. At the end of July 1941, the Germans ordered the Jews to establish a Judenrat.²

The first Aktion in the village took place in late August or the first half of September, 1941. A group of German soldiers

led by four officers rounded up more than 50 Jews, including some children. They were then taken to a clearing in the nearby forest, where the Germans shot them so they fell into large pits that had been dug by local farmers.³

The remaining Jews probably lived in a form of open ghetto in the village until September 1942. At this time, German and local police forces, possibly reinforced by men of the 3rd Lithuanian Schutzmannschaft Battalion, who were assigned to Budśląw on August 22, 1942,⁴ shot most of these Jews, about 100 people, in the forest. The few Jews that remained were murdered in October 1942, along with several Belorussians and Poles accused of underground activity, and Budśląw was proclaimed to be “cleansed of Jews” (Judenrein).⁵ A few Jews managed to escape from the ghetto before it was liquidated and joined the Soviet partisans. The lists of names prepared by the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission (ChGK) indicate that 196 Jews were shot in Budśląw in the period 1941–1942.⁶

SOURCES Information about the murder of the Jews of Budśląw can be found in the following publications: “Budśląw,” 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. 135–136; and in Marat Botvinnik, *Pamiętniki genocidą ewreev Belarusi* (Minsk: Belaruskaja Navuka, 2000), pp. 48, 74, 89.

Documents of the ChGK regarding the extermination of the Jews of Budśląw can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-89-7); and NARB (845-1-63).

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trans. Kathleen Luft and Samuel Fishman

NOTES

1. “Budśląw,” in Spector and Freundlich, *Pinkas ha-kebilot*, 8:135.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 8:136.
3. GARF, 7021-89-7, pp. 2, 100; and NARB, 845-1-63, p. 17, give the date of August 25, 1941; Spector and Freundlich, *Pinkas ha-kebilot*, date the Aktion on September 13, 1941.
4. Wolfgang Curilla, *Die deutsche Ordnungspolizei und der Holocaust im Baltikum und in Weissrussland 1941–1944* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2006), p. 400.
5. GARF, 7021-89-7, pp. 92–93, 100; and Spector and Freundlich, *Pinkas ha-kebilot*, 8:136.
6. GARF, 7021-89-7, pp. 37–40.

BYTEŃ

Pre-1939: Byteń (nad Szczara), town, Słonim powiat, Nowogródek województwo, Poland; 1939-1941: Byten, raion center, Baranovichy oblast' Belorussian SSR; 1941-1944: Byten, Rayon center, Gebiet Słonim, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Bytsen', Ivatsevichy raen, Beras'tse voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Byteń lies on the Szczara River, about 45 kilometers (28 miles) southwest of Baranowicze. On the eve of World War II, there were over 880 Jews in Byteń. With the outbreak of war in 1939,

about 200 Jewish refugees from central Poland settled in the town.¹

On Wednesday, June 25, 1941, German soldiers entered Byteń. A German military administration was not set up until July 12. The names of the officers in charge were Leutnant Schmidt and Wachtmeister Lipmann.

It was around this time that the Germans issued an order to form the Judenrat. The list was drawn up in consultation with the community rabbi, Ben-Tsion Yafa. In addition to Rabbi Yafa, the Judenrat consisted of Yirshl Yudkovski (the chairman), Efrayim Karelitsh, Yisrael Rozhanski, Marek Rabinovitch, and the dentist named Arbuz. The Germans put a local non-Jew, Vasily Raykhov, in charge of the town and set up a police force consisting of local peasants, commanded by a Pole named Skibiński.²

Forced labor became part of the daily routine for the Jews of Byteń. Besides having to work on the roads, Jews worked on a variety of other menial tasks. At first, the soldiers supervising the roadwork treated the Jews with relative decency; however, later on, soldiers merely passing through the area would beat Jews they saw at work. The lot of those who were sent to work at the railroad station at Domanowo was particularly bad.³

In November, the Judenrat received word from Słonim that 10 Gendarmes would soon be stationed in Byteń. The Jews were ordered to prepare and furnish a house in which to quarter them.⁴ The Gendarmerie post leader was Adolf Noack. Among the other Gendarmes were Max Schulke, Hirche, Hanefthaler, Weber, and Schwarz. The official task of the Gendarmerie was to organize and supervise the local police and represent the SS in the town. But as far as the Jews could tell, their primary role was to harass them, frequently inspecting Jewish houses.⁵

On March 15, 1942, the Germans expelled the Jews from Iwacewicze, a neighboring village with a Jewish population of about 600. They were not given anywhere to go and could only bring with them what they could carry. Temperatures were dangerously low. About 400 of the Iwacewicze Jews headed in the direction of Byteń. When the first refugees arrived, and the Jews of Byteń learned what had happened, the Judenrat organized major efforts to prepare food, shelter, and medical care for the refugees.⁶

The office of the Gebietskommissariat issued the order to form a ghetto in May or June. The ghetto itself consisted of 48 houses and the large Bet Midrash, which was transformed into a residence. The ghetto had a population of about 1,200; hence, the overcrowding was extreme. The constraints on space prevented the Jews from bringing all of their few remaining possessions into the ghetto. The local non-Jews quickly looted whatever they had left behind. The Gendarmes announced that any Jew caught outside the ghetto without permission would be killed.⁷

A handful of Jewish craftsmen—the so-called useful Jews—were given special permission to live and work outside the ghetto. This group also included a few Jews who were able to pay large bribes to the authorities.⁸

Forced labor continued, but now the workers had to come and go in columns, under strict German supervision. The rudiments of cultural life continued as well. A barn and a

stall were turned into ad hoc places of prayer, which held twice-daily services. Rabbi Yafa attended one makeshift synagogue, and Rabbi Liberman, along with Rabbi Rakhman, the former rabbi of Iwacewicze, attended the other. Other members of the community continued to provide religious education for the children. A refugee from Łódź named Dr. Vodnik organized a sanitary commission.⁹

The black market was the only means of obtaining food available to the Jews. Every day, a few peasants would secretly bring food to the ghetto fence and exchange it with Jews—usually for clothing or other goods.¹⁰

On June 29, 1942, a large Judenaktion took place in Słonim; the Jews of Byteń found out about it a few days later. In response to the Aktion in Słonim, they built bunkers and other hiding places in anticipation of the liquidation of the ghetto.¹¹ On July 24, 1942, a rumor spread that peasants from the countryside had been put to work digging pits. The Jews suspected the real purpose of these pits and prepared to hide in their bunkers.¹² Before dawn on the next day, one of the few Jewish policemen went from door to door, telling people to go to the bunkers, as the ghetto had been surrounded by Gendarmes and Baltic police auxiliaries (Hilfspolizei). Not long thereafter, local Belorussian police and German Gendarmes entered the ghetto and began to round up the Jews. A force of about 80 Hilfspolizei, as well as an SS/SD squad had been brought in to carry out the Aktion.¹³

The Germans expected that the Jews would try to hide. Consequently, the ghetto was searched thoroughly by the local police, who discovered many of the hiding Jews, sometimes shooting them on the spot.¹⁴ The rest of the Jews were either driven on trucks or forced to walk to the pits that had been dug between the villages of Zapolie and Rudnia, a few kilometers from Byteń.¹⁵ The “useful Jews” living outside the ghetto were actually the first to be brought to the pits.¹⁶ There, the SS men shot both groups of Jews and covered the mass graves.¹⁷ Members of the 2nd Company of Landesschützen Bataillon 915 were employed to keep civilians at a distance while the Aktion was taking place.¹⁸ The local police also took the Aktion as an opportunity to loot. Peasants came and looted whatever had been left behind.¹⁹ Twelve Jews who worked at the sawmill at Blok-Byteń, and had special permission to spend the nights there, were also killed on the same day.²⁰ According to one survivor, the Germans themselves announced that 840 Jews had been killed and 360 remained.²¹

It seems that the order to carry out the Aktion came from the Gebietskommissariat in Słonim at the beginning of June. Alfred Metzner, a party official from the Gebietskommissariat, and Walter Bonke, the Gendarmerieleutnant in Słonim, appeared in Byteń on the morning of the liquidation, ostensibly to give Noack the order to begin.²²

After a few days, the hidden Jews came out of their bunkers. The Gendarmerie then gathered them together in the Bet Midrash and examined them to determine their ability to work. They were told they had only one month to live and were put to work clearing out the Jewish houses and bringing whatever they found there to the Gendarmes. Surviving artisans were allowed to continue practicing their trades.²³

In the summer of 1942, rumors reached Byteń of partisan activity in the area. Jews began escaping to the forests to join the partisans in August.²⁴ Escape was not easy: Gendarmes, local police, and the local part-time militia (the *samachowa*) guarded the town. Jews were dependent on Christians to tell them how to get around the guard posts, to give them places to hide once they escaped, and to serve as go-betweens with Jewish partisans in the forests.²⁵ Occasionally, the peasants would double-cross the Jews, denouncing them and keeping Jewish possessions. Nonetheless, 200 Jews managed to escape in the following month, many of them joining Unit 51, an important group of Jewish partisans originating mainly from Iwacewicze, Kosów Poleski, and Słonim.²⁶

On August 13, 56 skilled workers were transferred out of the ghetto. On Saturday, August 29, at 4:00 A.M., an SS unit, accompanied by Lithuanian auxiliaries, arrived and surrounded the ghetto. After daybreak, the Lithuanians and SS, along with the local police, entered the houses of the ghetto and rounded up residents. Later that morning, they marched the Jews on foot to the pits near Zapolie and shot them. The Gendarmes took any Jewish clothing they wanted and left the rest for the peasants. The plundering of Jewish homes in the ghetto by the local population began immediately.²⁷ In mid-September, the remaining Jewish workers and their families were shot inside the town.²⁸

SOURCES Sources on the Byteń ghetto are extremely limited. There is a fairly lengthy yizkor book, Dodl Abramovitsh and Mordekhay V. Bernshtayn, eds., *Pinkes Biten: Der Oyfikum un Untergang fun a Yidisber Kehile* (Buenos Aires: Bitener Landslayt in Argentine, 1954), which contains two extensive survivor accounts of the Nazi occupation of the town. Nachum Alpert's *The Destruction of Słonim Jewry: The Story of the Jews of Słonim during the Holocaust*, trans. Max Rosenfeld (New York: Holocaust Library, 1989) was also consulted for information about the events in Słonim and the German administration of the district.

There is a section of the trial verdict in the case against Gerhard Erren examined in BA-L (B 162/14527; see also B 162/5087-5101 for the investigative files [II 202 AR-Z 228/59]). The trial is focused on Słonim but also deals with Byteń, investigating primarily the first Aktion but also mentioning the ghetto, confiscation of property, and the second Aktion. Because the verdict is based on the testimony of German witnesses who had been stationed in the area, it complements the yizkor book well. Some limited information can also be found in the report on Byteń prepared by the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission, located in GARF (7021-81-102). Finally, there is a trial record of a local policeman from Byteń, Teodor Markuszewski (Skirsinieć), located in IPN (SW Ol 56-59); he was sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment in 1966.

Andrew Koss

NOTES

1. Dodl Abramovitsh, “Khurbn un vidershtand,” in Abramovitsh and Bernshtayn, *Pinkes Biten*, pp. 321–412, here p. 321; and Moshe Pitkovski, “Azoy iz Untergegangen di Yidishe Kehile in Biten,” in Abramovitsh and Bernshtayn, *Pinkes Biten*, pp. 207–314, here pp. 208–209.

2. Abramovitsh, “Khurbn,” pp. 322–324; Pitkovski, “Azoy,” p. 209; see also the interview with Byteń survivor Tanya Imber, conducted on August 8, 1994 (WCU).

3. Abramovitsh, “Khurbn,” p. 326; and Pitkovski, “Azoy,” pp. 210–211, 213.

4. Pitkovski, “Azoy,” pp. 213–214.

5. Ibid., pp. 216–217; Abramovitsh, “Khurbn,” p. 330; BA-L, B 162/14527 (Erren Trial Verdict), pp. 4343, 4347; Report of the ChGK, GARF, 7021-81-102, pp. 1–31.

6. Pitkovski, “Azoy,” pp. 221–224.

7. Ibid., pp. 225–227; Erren Trial Verdict, pp. 4344, 4352.

8. Pitkovski, “Azoy,” p. 229; and Erren Trial Verdict, p. 4349.

9. Pitkovski, “Azoy,” pp. 227–228.

10. Ibid., p. 230.

11. Ibid., pp. 214–215, 228.

12. Ibid., pp. 230–232; and Erren Trial Verdict, p. 4353.

13. Pitkovski, “Azoy,” pp. 233 ff.; and Erren Trial Verdict, pp. 4343–4354.

14. Pitkovski, “Azoy,” pp. 232–236; and Erren Trial Verdict, pp. 4345–4346.

15. Pitkovski, “Azoy,” pp. 235–236; Erren Trial Verdict, p. 4345; GARF, 7021-81-102, pp. 1–31.

16. Pitkovski, “Azoy,” p. 229; and Erren Trial Verdict, p. 4349.

17. Erren Trial Verdict, p. 4345.

18. Ibid., pp. 4347–4348.

19. Pitkovski, “Azoy,” pp. 233–234, 239.

20. Ibid., pp. 237–238.

21. Ibid., pp. 236–238. One German witness put the number of victims as between 500 and 600, while another put it at about 2,800. The Erren Trial Verdict considers the latter figure too high; see Erren Trial Verdict, pp. 4346–4347. According to the ChGK report, two mass graves were found near Rudnia—one contained 900 corpses and the other 80, coming close to Pitkovski’s figure of 840. Perhaps the second grave contains victims of the second Aktion. Another account in Abramovitsh and Bernshtayn’s *Pinkes Biten* gives the figure as “close to 900” (p. 456). A letter written on July 31, 1942, by Zlata Vishnyatsky, who survived the July 25 massacre, stated that “850 died a black death at the hands of the murderers,” and only 350 people were left; see 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* (New York: Holocaust Library, 1981), p. 246.

22. Erren Trial Verdict, pp. 4347–4351.

23. Ibid., p. 4354; and Pitkovski, “Azoy,” pp. 236–239.

24. Pitkovski, “Azoy,” pp. 239–240.

25. Ibid.; and Abramovitsh, “Khurbn,” pp. 327–328.

26. Pitkovski, “Azoy,” pp. 240–248; Abramovitsh and Bernshtayn, *Pinkes Biten*, p. 469.

27. Abramovitsh, “Khurbn,” pp. 331–343; Pitkovski, “Azoy,” pp. 240–241, and 248–250; Abramovitsh and Bernshtayn, *Pinkes Biten*, p. 3; WCU, Imber interview; and BA-L, B 162/5154 (II 202 AR-Z 228/59, Erren investigation, Handakte, Bd. 2), pp. 651–657.

28. Erren Trial Verdict, p. 164; Abramovitsh and Bernshtayn, *Pinkes Biten*, p. 3; and WCU, Imber interview.

CHOCIEŃCZYCE

Pre-1939: Chocieńczyce (Yiddish: Chatzintzitz), village, Wilejka powiat, Wilno województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Khotenchtsy, Iliia raion, Vileika oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Chotsientschtsi, Rayon Ilija, Gebiet Wilejka, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Khatsenchytsy, Vileika raen, Minsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Chocieńczyce is located about 45 kilometers (28 miles) north of Minsk. In mid-1941, the village had a Jewish population of around 80 people.

German armed forces occupied the village on July 3, 1941. In July and August 1941, a German military commandant's office was in charge of Chocieńczyce. In September 1941, authority was transferred to the German civil administration.

In July 1941, the Germans subjected the Jews of the village to various forms of humiliation, which were filmed, probably by a German propaganda company. At the end of July, a non-Jew named Zakhar got drunk and tore down Adolf Hitler's portrait in the mill where he worked. The Germans arrested him, but he denied any responsibility, blaming instead two Jews, Iosif Sosenskii and Izrail Tsimmerman, the mill's former owners. These two men were arrested as suspected Communists, but then released following the intervention of deacon Stepan Leshkevich, the village elder (*starosta*), who explained that the Soviets had confiscated the mill from the two Jews during the occupation from September 1939 until June 1941. The Germans then took Zakhar into the forest and shot him.¹

Jewish survivors remember a German commander named Seidler, who organized an Aktion in the late summer or fall of 1941, in which the Jews were first sent home to collect their possessions. Then they were assembled, including some Jews brought in from surrounding villages such as Ledwienie. The Germans beat the Jews and strip-searched them, taking all their valuables. Subsequently all the Jews were held in a school hall for several days, while a ghetto was being prepared. During this internment Leshkevich helped them by ensuring that they were supplied with some water.²

After a few days, probably in October, the Jews were moved into a ghetto located about 1 kilometer (0.6 miles) outside the village, which comprised up to five small houses or huts. In total, there were just under 100 Jews in the ghetto. People slept crammed together. Initially the ghetto was not enclosed, but the Jews were forbidden to leave. Later, guards were posted to enforce this regulation, and it was surrounded with a barbed-wire fence.³

From the ghetto the men were taken out to work, cleaning and repairing the roads and railroads, while the women did the washing and made soap for the German garrison. No food was provided to the ghetto by the Germans, but the local peasants bartered food with the Jews for their few remaining possessions. Leshkevich also helped with some supplies of potatoes, flour, and grain. In the winter of 1941–1942, the Jews suffered from the extreme cold, but they used melted

snow to obtain drinking water. The Jews on work details heard rumors about killing Aktions conducted against other Jewish communities nearby, and some Jews made plans to escape to the forests to join the Soviet partisans.⁴

On March 14, 1942, Soviet partisans attacked the Chocieńczyce estate, which enabled some of the Jews from the ghetto there to flee with the partisans into the forests. In response, the German Security Police from Wiljka conducted a reprisal Aktion against the ghetto in Ilja on March 17, in which about 600 Jews were murdered.⁵

The German Security Police planned to liquidate the ghetto in early June 1942. On the eve of the liquidation, the Jews of Chocieńczyce received warning of the impending Aktion. According to the account of survivor David Rubin, he rushed to Chocieńczyce from Ilja, as soon as he heard about the Aktion against the Jews in Ilja, which took place on June 6–7, 1942.

I decided that I must quickly let them know what had occurred in Ilja since they were inevitably next. I had to warn them so they could perhaps survive and join me in the fight against the Germans. I continued walking in deep thought for about 16 kilometers [about 10 miles]. At about 1:00 A.M., I arrived at Chocieńczyce. Jumping over the barbed wire and then slowly crawling, I knocked quietly at one of the homes. . . . I told them all that had occurred and that now Ilja had been eliminated, the Germans would get to them next. They needed to escape immediately. The entire Jewish population gathered and discussed what to do. The women cried bitterly and many were afraid of running. In the end, their instinct to survive drove them and they all decided to escape deep into the forest. At 4:00 A.M., as dusk approached, we left Chocieńczyce and began our new life. The men immediately started digging holes in the ground and covered them with tree branches and greenery. Inside, women, children, and elderly people hid in the damp darkness. The young men and teenagers started looking for the partisans. After a few days we were able to get in touch with the Soviet partisan base in the forest about 25 kilometers [16 miles] from where we had left the women, the elderly, and the children.⁶

Most of the Jews—that is, 15 families, or about 70 people—fled to the forest; and thanks to the ingenuity, mutual assistance, and support of local inhabitants, a number of them managed to hide from the Germans and local police for two years and survive.⁷ The remaining Jews in the ghetto (13 people) were shot.⁸

SOURCES Published sources on the ghetto in Chocieńczyce include A. Kopelovich, ed., *Sefer Ilyab* (Tel Aviv, 1962); Mikhail Sosenskii, *Nezakonchennaia povest'* (Jerusalem: self-published, 2003); and Leonid Smilovitskii, *Katastrofa evreev v Belorussii 1941–1944 gg.* (Tel Aviv: Biblioteka Matveia Chernogo, 2000), pp. 232–233.

Documentation regarding the murder of the Jews of Chocieńczyce can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-89-6); VHF (# 15987, 16803, and 39349); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Smilovitskii, *Katastrofa evreev v Belorussii*, pp. 232–233.
2. VHF, # 16803, testimony of Mikhail Sosenskii; # 39349, testimony of Sheva Sinder; and # 15987, testimony of Murray Jaros.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. BA-BL, R 58/221, Ereignismeldung UdSSR no. 184, March 23, 1942; Kopelovich, *Sefer Ilyab*, pp. 421–440; and NARB, 861-1-10.
6. David Rubin, “A Tale of Struggling, Toil, and Tears,” in Kopelovich, ed., *Sefer Ilyab*, pp. 317–338. A full translation of Rubin’s article prepared by Eilat Gordin Levitan can be found at jewishgen.org. Others sources credit Starosta Leshkevich with warning the Jews and assisting their escape; see A. Makarkin, “Russkie, obmanuvshie sebja,” *Sovershenno sekretno. Mezhdunarodnyi ezhebemesiachnik*, no. 6 (Moscow, 2003). After the liberation of Belorussia, Stepan Leshkevich was tried by the Soviet authorities as an accomplice of the Germans in the village of Ilja. Jews from Chocieńczyce spoke out in his defense, recounting how he had helped to save many Jews from the ghetto. No attention was paid to this, however, and the Soviets sentenced Leshkevich to death. See Smilovitskii, *Katastrofa evreev v Belorussii*, pp. 232–233.
7. D. Mel’tser, “Neizvestnaia stranitsa evreiskogo soprotivleniia,” *Vestnik* (USA), no. 7 (240), March 29, 2000.
8. GARF, 7021-89-6, p. 53.

DERECZYN

Pre-1939: Dereczyn, town, Slonim powiat, Nowogródek województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Derechin, Zel’va raion, Baranovichskii oblast’, Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Deretschin, Rayon center, Gebiet Slonim, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Dziarechyn, Zel’va raen, Hrodna voblasts’, Republic of Belarus

Dereczyn is located 73 kilometers (46 miles) west-northwest of Baranowicze. In 1921, the Jewish population of Dereczyn was 1,346.

Units of the Wehrmacht entered Dereczyn at the end of June 1941. On the initial arrival of German forces, many of the town’s inhabitants were gathered in the church, and the Jews feared the worst, as they began to be selected out from the others. However, they were suddenly released again when fighting broke out in the town. A retreating Soviet unit temporarily drove the Germans out, and much of the town was damaged by fire from aerial and artillery bombardment. In the nearby village of Hołynka, shortly after they arrived the German forces murdered up to 140 Jews, probably as a reprisal Aktion.¹

In mid-July 1941, the initial German military administration introduced a series of anti-Jewish restrictions: Jews had to wear yellow badges on pain of death; Jews aged 14 to 60



Exterior of the synagogue in Dereczyn, ca. 1920.
USHMM WS #97257, COURTESY OF JACK KAGAN

were obliged to report for forced labor every day; Jews were forbidden to use the sidewalks; and they had to obey a curfew after 5:00 P.M. To monitor compliance with these restrictions, the German commandant also established a Jewish Council (Judenrat).²

On October 6, 1941 (at the time of Sukkot), the German authorities forced a group of Jews from Dereczyn to dig a large pit some 45 meters (148 feet) long, 20 meters (66 feet) wide, and 4 meters (13 feet) deep outside the town. The men returned exhausted after 36 hours. It was not clear what the pit was for, but many received the impression they had been digging their own graves.

In November 1941, sometime after authority in the region had officially been transferred to a German civil administration at the end of August, a Gendarmerie post consisting of several German Gendarmes was established in the town. The most prominent Gendarme, whose name was recalled by several survivors, was Fritz Figas. The Gendarmerie also took over responsibility for the local police force, recruited from non-Jewish inhabitants of the area, who in the view of one survivor “were looking for a way to make an easy living.”³

During the fall and winter of 1941–1942, German officials made a series of menacing demands for large amounts of gold, money, and other valuable materials. Collection of these tributes was organized by the Jewish Council. On one occasion they even had to send a group of Jews illegally across the border to Wołkowysk in Distrikt Białystok to buy fabric demanded by the Nazis that was not available in Dereczyn.⁴ During the very cold winter, Jews were put to work clearing snow. The Jews also had to sell off their last possessions to their Christian neighbors for a few morsels of bread.

The ghetto in Dereczyn was set up in several stages, such that it is not possible to specify a precise date for its establishment. Soon after their arrival, the Germans evicted Jews from some of the best houses, taking them for themselves. Then, during the winter of 1941–1942, the German administration issued certificates to those Jews deemed “essential” on account of their skills as craftsmen, although some Jews were able also to buy such certificates using bribes. These “essential” Jews,

consisting of about 500 people, were permitted to live in their own collective area composed of workshops, to which non-Jews also had access in order to request their services. Probably in March 1942, the remaining few hundred Jews from the nearby villages of Hołynka, Jeziornica, and Kolonia Sinaiska were brought to Dereczyn and confined within the same small area as the 2,000 or so “non-essential” Jews living in Dereczyn.

In early March 1942 (at Purim), a couple of hundred men were sent from Dereczyn to work on the highways around Słonim. After some of these men returned to Dereczyn without permission, the German officials and their collaborators arrested them and their families. On April 30, 1942, they took these (approximately 200) people to the large pit near the village of Radziak and murdered them with machine guns and hand grenades. One woman who was only wounded escaped from the pit and returned to Dereczyn. She was subsequently found in the hospital, and the Germans shot her with others from the hospital at the cemetery.⁵

By May or June of 1942, at the latest, the ghetto for the non-craftsmen had become enclosed, and according to one account, some 2,880 Jews were living together crammed into only 34 small cottages.⁶ Its area comprised the entire Shulhof (synagogue courtyard) and the premises of the tailor’s Bet Midrash, called the Hayatim Shul, up to the “Kamienitzya.” The entry to the ghetto was through the yard between the wall to Slutsky’s house and the wall to Bebbeh Rabinovich’s house. The ghetto was surrounded with barbed wire and guarded by the local police. Due to poor sanitary conditions, there were epidemics in the ghetto, and many Jews died of disease and starvation.⁷ Gendarme Figas also shot Jews at will on the street.

News of Aktions in the surrounding towns encouraged Jewish youths to organize an underground movement. The underground collected weapons clandestinely and prepared to leave for the forests to join the partisans. However, as it was feared that the Germans would murder the remaining Jews in the event of an escape, the plan was only to use the weapons and flee as a last resort, when an Aktion commenced. Many Jews also prepared bunkers for hiding inside the ghetto, as the expectation of an Aktion increased.⁸

On July 24, 1942, German forces, including Security Police, Gendarmerie, local Belorussian police, and other Lithuanian or Ukrainian auxiliaries, arrived from Słonim on vehicles and surrounded the Dereczyn ghetto. Many of the Jews took cover in their prepared hiding places, but the Germans and their collaborators dragged out those they could find, transporting some of them on trucks to the large mass graves near Grabowa on the road to Zelwa, where they shot them. One survivor managed to leap from the departing trucks and flee successfully. Of those in hiding, about 200 or 300 managed to escape to the forests, but many of these were also subsequently killed, some being denounced by local peasants or captured by the police.⁹ In total, about 2,500 Jews were murdered in Dereczyn on July 24, 1942, and over the following days.

Some of those who fled managed to obtain arms and join partisan groups, such as that led by Dr. Yehezkel Atlas. On August 8, 1942, only shortly after the liquidation of the

ghetto, a Soviet partisan group, including many Jews, attacked the Dereczyn police station and killed five Gendarmes and a number of local policemen. Only about 90 Jews from the Dereczyn ghetto managed to survive until the Red Army recaptured the town in the summer of 1944.¹⁰

SOURCES The yizkor book (*Sefer Derets'in*), edited by Yekhezkiel Raban and others (Dereczyn organizations in Israel and the United States, 1966), is now also available in English, translated by Jacob Solomon Berger, *The Dereczyn Memorial Book: A Book of Remembrance Honoring the Communities of Dereczyn, Halinka, Kolonia-Sinajska* (Mahwah, NJ: J.S. Berger, 2000). It contains a number of useful accounts relating to the ghetto and the survival of Jews from Dereczyn with the partisans.

Documentation on the destruction of the Dereczyn ghetto can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/2140 and 4695); BA-L (ZStL/II 202 AR-Z 180/67 and II 202 AR-Z 149/78); LG-Hamb ((50) 19/72); MA (A.200); USHMM (e.g., RG-02.135 and Acc. 1994.A.195); VHF; and YVA (e.g., O-3/2781, O-22/47, O-33/291, M-1/E 2023, 2340, M-11/40).

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NOTES

1. Masha Kulakowski and Abraham-Hirsch Kulakowski, "This is How the Jewish Community of Dereczyn Was Destroyed," in *The Dereczyn Memorial Book*, pp. 195–203.

2. *Ibid.*, here p. 199.

3. Fritz Figas was identified from German investigative material; see BA-L, ZStL, 202 AR-Z 228/59 (investigation of G. Erren). Initially the local mayor in Dereczyn was a man named Lewandowski, and the head of the police was a Pole, Limansky; see Shmuel Berenstein, "I Was a Refugee in Oppressed Dereczyn," in *The Dereczyn Memorial Book*, pp. 217–218. Subsequently a man named Ivan Sinkevich (Sinkiewicz) became head of the local police.

4. Peshia Feinsilber, "Barely Escaping," in *The Dereczyn Memorial Book*, p. 208.

5. Kulakowski and Kulakowski, "This is How," pp. 195–203.

6. AŻIH, 301/2140 and 4695, testimony of the accountant Reich. An English translation is available: Y. Reich, "We Were Slaves," in *The Dereczyn Memorial Book*, pp. 211–212. It is not clear whether this number of 2,880 also includes the 500 "essential" workers living outside the ghetto.

7. BA-L, ZStL/II 202 AR-Z 180/67, Dok. Bd., pp. 7–8, statement of Vladimir Varfolomeyevich Ogorodnikov on February 19, 1968; Katya Bialosotsky-Khlebnik, "During the Days of Slaughter," in *The Dereczyn Memorial Book*, p. 242.

8. Kulakowski and Kulakowski, "This is How," p. 202.

9. YVA, O-22/47, testimony of Yosef Kotlarsky, and M-1/E/2340, testimony of Miriam Rosenberg.

10. YVA, O-16/334, testimony of Benjamin Dombrowski; S. Nieger, "The Destruction of the Dereczyn Community," in *The Dereczyn Memorial Book*, p. 234; AŻIH, 301/2140 and 4695.

DOKSZYCE

Pre-1939: Dokszyce, town, Dzisna powiat, Wilno województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Dokshtsy, raion center, Vileika oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Dokschiy, Rayon center, Gebiet

Glebokie, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Dokshtsy, raen center, Vitsebsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Dokshytsy is located about 110 kilometers (69 miles) north-northeast of Minsk. In 1925, the Jewish population was around 3,000. Only about 100 Jews managed to flee with the Soviet authorities before the German army occupied Dokszyce on July 3, 1941.

Initially the town was administered by a local military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur).¹ In September 1941, authority was transferred to a German civil administration. Dokszyce became a Rayon center in Gebiet Glebokie, where the Gebietskommissar was Paul Hachmann, who, however, on account of illness, was represented during the summer of 1942 by Gebietskommissar Petersen. From early 1942 until the summer of 1942, the SS-und Polizei-Gebietsführer in Głębokie was Wilhelm Schultz. Among the Gendarmes who served at the Gendarmerie post in Dokszyce were Richard Heinzel, Willy Körbis, and Otto Schaak.² The Gendarmerie was also responsible for the local police (Schutzmannschaft), which was commanded by Stefan Komulko. In Dokszyce there was also a local Polish mayor, named Kowalewski, who was especially renowned for his cruelty towards the Jews.

The ghetto in Dokszyce was established in November 1941. Its border ran from the bridge to Głęboker Street, to the front side of the synagogue courtyard, then down Polotsker Street to Garden's Beer Hall and the Berezena River, then included the market place up to the side of the synagogue courtyard. It was surrounded by boards, fences, and barbed wire and guarded by the local police. The resettlement took place on November 30, 1941, on a bitterly cold and snowy day. The town's 3,000 Jews were given only half an hour to assemble on the marketplace with all their belongings. The authorities then gave them only three hours to move into the ghetto. Much of their property, including livestock, was confiscated or stolen by the local police during the resettlement. The ghetto area was very overcrowded—between three and four families had to share a single dwelling. However, some of the houses vacated by Jews outside stood empty, due to the high proportion of Jews in the town.³

An underground movement existed in the ghetto, established by members of a Zionist organization. The Germans forced the Jewish men to perform heavy labor, and Jewish women also had to work as maids in private households. The Jews received no payment for their work other than some slices of bread, pieces of meat, or a little tobacco.⁴ The daily ration was only about 200 to 300 grams (7 to 11 ounces) of bread, and there were cases of death by starvation and disease in the ghetto. Jewish schools were closed down, and most forms of religious observance were prohibited. The Germans took carpenters and skilled craftsmen from among the Jews and organized them in workshops to support the German war effort. Jewish craftsmen had to work with very primitive tools. Every morning, those Jews who had work certificates gathered in the ghetto area and waited for their assignment to specific work details or workshops outside the ghetto. Those craftsmen

and workers who received written permission to work were able to leave the ghetto. Despite prohibitions, Jews working outside the ghetto were able to obtain groceries by trading with the local population. Discipline at the workshops was very strictly enforced. In one incident, Galman Raskind arrived late for work and was punished with 25 lashes.

A Judenrat consisting of five members, headed by Jakob Botvinnik, was created in the summer of 1941 at the behest of the German authorities, in order to assist with the implementation of their regulations concerning the Jews. In the ghetto the Judenrat was responsible for organizing the work details and also for sanitary conditions, including the administration of the public baths. The Judenrat was obligated to collect valuables demanded by the Germans from the ghetto residents, such as local and foreign currency (including U.S. dollars), gold, fur boots, and fur coats.

On several occasions the Judenrat intervened with the German authorities to try to alleviate harsh conditions. For example, they managed to open a synagogue in the ghetto and even got the ghetto area expanded slightly, adding Keydarum Street, by complaining about the threat of disease.⁵ The Judenrat was not directly involved in the Aktions against the Jews. In 1942, the Judenrat organized a system of internal guards (probably the Jewish policemen) that closely observed the activities of the Germans and local police guarding the ghetto, warning the inhabitants about any hint of an upcoming Aktion.

The liquidation of the Dokszyce ghetto took place in three separate Aktions conducted between March and June 1942. In the first Aktion, about two weeks after the Purim holiday, the German Gendarmerie shot some 60 Jews in Dokszyce, apparently intended by the Gebietskommissar as a warning to the Jews against having any contact with the partisans.⁶ Borys Kazhinitz recalled that the raid started at 10:00 p.m., when Germans and local police entered the ghetto and arrested about 60 Jews, plundering apartments at the same time. The following morning, the police shot those arrested in pits close to the Polish cemetery. The sound of gunfire could be heard in the ghetto: initially continuous salvos and then separate shots, as wounded victims were finished off.⁷

The second Aktion probably took place in early May 1942.⁸ At that time, the Jewish population was transferred to a school where Nikodem Derwinski carried out a selection, deciding who would be shot and who would remain in the ghetto. Commander S. Komulko was in charge of the shooting. During this operation, about 400 Jews were killed; apparently most of those released had work permits. After the Aktion, the local German agricultural leader (Sonderführer) and the police chief Komulko compelled the Judenrat to reduce the size of the ghetto along Koszciuszko Street and several of the adjoining small streets.⁹

The final Aktion took place on May 29, 1942, when according to a German report 2,653 Jews were living in the ghetto. On that morning, local police and German forces—Gestapo men (from the Security Police post in Lepel') and German Gendarmerie from throughout Gebiet Glebokie—surrounded the ghetto. On the same day, they had already liquidated the nearby ghetto in Parafjanów. Members of the

Judenrat warned the Jews, and many tried to hide in bunkers and other places. When the Germans forced their way into the ghetto, only the members of the Judenrat were waiting in the building of the Jewish Council. One of the bunkers used by ghetto residents was located close to the school, and more than 50 individuals hid there. During this Aktion, the Jews managed to hide so well that the Gendarmerie and the local police spent a whole week searching for them with the aid of trained dogs. During the sweep, the Germans found 15 Russian bullets in the possession of the head of the Jewish Council.¹⁰ Those seized during the liquidation were taken to a gravel pit on the edge of town and shot.¹¹ The victims were thrown into pits that had been dug by a work detail under the direction of a local policeman by the name of Janowski. Immediately following the mass shooting, the pits were covered with dirt.¹² According to Polish trial protocols, the local policeman Stanisław Wojnicz was particularly brutal during the Aktions against the ghetto. He took small children and killed them by smashing their heads against the walls. When he found Hanna and Benjamin Abezgaus hidden in the ghetto area, they tried to bribe him with 50 rubles to save their lives; but he took the money and attempted to kill them.¹³

The West German authorities carried out a number of investigations into the events in Dokszyce as part of wider investigations into crimes committed in Gebiet Glebokie. However, they were unable to bring to trial any of the major perpetrators in Dokszyce.¹⁴ In 1962, a court in Warsaw sentenced Józef Frackiewicz and Stanisław Wojnicz to 15 years, Eugeniusz Gorecki (or Kut) to 12 years, and Nikodem Derwinski to 10 years in prison, for crimes committed while serving in the Schutzmannschaft in Dokszyce.¹⁵

SOURCES Several personal testimonies about the Dokszyce ghetto can be found in the yizkor book in Yiddish and Hebrew edited by David Sztokfisz, *Yizker-bukh Dokshtits-Parafyanov: Monument tsum ondenk fun tsvey Yidishe kehile's* (Tel Aviv: Irgun Yots'e Dokshits-Parafyanov be-Yi'sra'el uva-tefutsot, 1970).

Documents and witness statements relating to the ghetto in Dokszyce can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/897); GARF (7021-92-214); NARB (370-1-483 and 2841-1-1); USHMM (RG-50.030*0082); VHF (# 9920); and YVA.

The most important German criminal investigations are Sta. Hamburg 141 Js 533/60, Sta. Dortmund 45 Js 16/73, and Sta. Hannover 2 Js 388/65, located in the relevant German regional state archives. Copies of much of this material can also be examined at BA-L. Statements by former inhabitants of Dokszyce can also be found in the Polish trials mentioned above, many of which are stored at IPN.

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NOTES

1. GARF, 7021-92-214, pp. 3–5, the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission report for the Dokshitsy raion dated March 30, 1945, names Captain Klaus as the Ortskommandant in Dokszyce; however, there were probably several successive local military commandants, and it is not clear when Klaus served in the town. On August 9, 1941, the Ortskom-

mandantur in Dokszyce was OK II/352 (BA-MA, RH/26/221-17), but during the initial German advance, the military commandant's offices frequently changed location.

2. BA-L, ZStL 202 AR 629/73, vol. 3, p. 404.

3. See B. Kazhinitz, "The Story of a Partisan," and Mordechaj Varfman, "The Holocaust in Our Town," and Y. Shapiro, "In the Dokshits Ghetto," in Sztokfisz, *Yizker-bukh Dokshits-Parafyanov*; BA-L, B 162/27191, vol. 1, pp. 130–132.

4. Kazhinitz, "The Story of a Partisan."

5. Shapiro, "In the Dokshits Ghetto."

6. BA-L, B 162/27191, pp. 130–132; Sta. Hannover 2 Js 388/65, vol. 11, p. 2157, vol. 3, p. 114, vol. 12, pp. 2372 ff.

7. Kazhinitz, "The Story of a Partisan."

8. Shapiro states that it was around the time of the Lag-Baomer holiday, on May 4 in 1942.

9. Statement of Antoni Masłowski, November 18, 1961, SWW, IV K 160/62, vol. 2, p. 115, gives the figure of 350 victims. According to Sta. Hannover 2 Js 388/65, vol. 2, p. 422, and vol. 12, pp. 2444 ff., some 600 Jews were killed. AŻIH, 301/897, Samuel Margolin states that 595 Jews were killed; he dates the Aktion on May 2, 1942. Most sources indicate, however, that of the 600 arrested, some 200 were subsequently released. See also Shapiro, "In the Dokshits Ghetto," and his May 3, 1966, statement, Kazhinitz, "The Story of a Partisan."

10. NARB, 370-1-483, p. 15, report of the Gebietskommissar in Głębokie on the Jewish Aktion, July 1, 1942; Varfman, "The Holocaust in Our Town"; BA-L, B 162/27191 (II 202 AR 932/65, vol. 1), pp. 130–132.

11. Sentence issued on December 29, 1962, SWW, IV K 160/62, pp. 397 ff.

12. Statement of Iwan Biegun, May 31, 1962, SWW, IV K 160/62, pp. 162 ff.

13. Statement of Grzegorz Kantorowicz, November 13, 1962, SWW, IV K 160/62, pp. 227 ff.

14. Sta. Hannover 2 Js 388/65.

15. See IPN, SWW 715-20. All of these sentences were reduced on appeal. On February 24, 1959, the court in Poznań filed a case against Stefan Komolek (IIDs. 14/59), the leader of the local police in Dokszyce. However, he was not traced in Poland. Among the Jewish survivors who testified in this case were Nohem Markman, Benjamin Abezgaus, and Hanna Abezgaus.

DOŁHINÓW

Pre-1939: Dołhinów, town, Wilejka powiat, Wilno województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Dolginovo, Krivichi raion, Vileika oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Dolbinow, Rayon Krivitschi, Gebiet Wilejka, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Daubinau, Vileika raen, Minsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Dołhinów is located 41.5 kilometers (26 miles) east-northeast of Wilejka. In 1921, the Jewish population was 1,747 (out of a total of 2,671). At the time of the German occupation, there were approximately 5,000 inhabitants in the town, of which about 3,000 were Jews.

The German army captured the town in the last days of June 1941. At first the Jews did not know how to react. Only a few had made the wiser decision to flee east with the retreating Red Army. The first order of the German military com-

mandant in charge of Dołhinów was that the Jews should form a Judenrat to ensure that German demands on the Jewish community would be carried out. Among the restrictions soon imposed on the Jews were that they must wear a yellow symbol on their clothing; that they could not leave the town; that they were not allowed to assemble or have any conversation or business with Christians; and that they were forbidden to possess cattle, horses, or any valuable property, as all such items were to be surrendered to the German authorities.

After a few days of occupation, the Germans arrested five Jews on suspicion of collaborating with the Soviets. They dragged the suspects out of their houses, took them outside the town on the road to Wilejka, and shot them.

After a few weeks, a food shortage began to take its toll on the Jewish population, whose major means of obtaining food was to barter with the Poles and Belorussians in contravention of German regulations. Some Jews gave their valuables to non-Jewish friends to keep them safe from German searches and demands for contributions. Jews were conscripted for physical labor on a regular basis by the Germans via the Judenrat. Jewish girls also had to work as housemaids for the Germans.¹

In the fall of 1941, a German Gendarmerie post was established in Dołhinów, which now came under a German civil administration as part of Gebiet Wilejka. The Gendarmerie also controlled the local police force, which included a man named Sadowski.

Under the harsh restrictions imposed by the Germans, virtually all Jewish social and communal activities ceased. There was no more prayer in the synagogue, no more studies in the school, and no more Torah. However, despite the widespread despair in the community, there was only one reported suicide among the Jews. During the fall and winter of 1941–1942, not only Jews became the victims of sporadic killings but also Communist activists and Soviet prisoners of war.

In March 1942, two Jews, named Mincel and Sigalczyk, tried to leave for the forests to establish contact with the partisans. They were intercepted by German guards but managed to escape from prison. The German authorities then threatened Niomka Riyyer, the head of the Judenrat, that all the Jews of Dołhinów would be killed if the two were not handed over.

Shortly afterwards, on March 30, just before Passover, the Jews woke up to discover that German forces had arrived in trucks. Together with local collaborators, they began arresting Jews and bringing them to the market square, where a selection took place. A small number of those arrested who were necessary to the Germans were left alive; the rest were taken outside the town, to Lemlin's factory at "Krochmalniyah" on the road to Minsk, where they were stripped of their clothes and shot without delay. Their bodies were thrown into a barn, which was then burned. Jews who were brought to the spot later on were stripped and thrown into the fire alive. On that bitter day, the Germans murdered, with bullets and by burning, some 1,000 of Dołhinów's Jews.

As many Jews emerged from their hiding places, they beheld a horrifying sight: houses broken into and corpses in the

streets. The Germans issued instructions through the Judenrat to collect the bodies and bury them in mass graves. As the earth was still frozen, it took many days before all the bodies were buried.²

While the Jews were still preoccupied with burying the dead in April of 1942, those left alive in Dołhinów were commanded to concentrate exclusively within the boundary of the ghetto, in an area that was bounded on both sides by Borisov Street. The borders of the ghetto were the Great Synagogue (it was outside the boundary itself), the house of the Catholic priest next to the market, and the riverbank. The ghetto was encircled on all sides by a wooden fence topped with barbed wire, and an entrance was constructed to control all those entering and leaving. The Germans instructed the Jews to move into the ghetto and settle themselves within only a very short period of time. First Jews brought in the movable property that they were allowed to take with them. "The most important items were, understandably, foodstuffs and valuable objects, because we thought that it would be possible later on to exchange them for food." The overcrowding was great, resulting in very difficult conditions. In a house where one family had lived previously, five or six families were now forced to live. Life turned to hell. People felt like they were locked in cages. The ghetto was guarded by the local police on the outside and by officers of the Jewish Police on the inside. Barter with the non-Jews continued, albeit in secret. Each day Jews left the ghetto for various physical work tasks, according to German instructions.³

One day the Judenrat was ordered to provide 100 workers, comprising 60 men and 40 women. The workforce was to be sent to the train station in Kniahinin, 25 kilometers (15.5 miles) northwest of Dołhinów, where they worked in craft workshops for the German Army and in agriculture, with the men and women kept separated from each other. Some of these workers returned periodically to Dołhinów. In Kniahinin, some Jews were shot and Jewish girls were raped when officials of the SS or SD arrived from Wilejka.⁴

On April 28, following the massacre of the Jews in nearby Krzywicz, officials of the Security Police and Waffen-SS from Wilejka arrived in Dołhinów late in the afternoon. Assisted by the Gendarmerie and the local police, these forces encircled the ghetto. Four SS men entered the ghetto and demanded that the Judenrat supply them with tobacco. This demand was promptly met, but many Jews suspected that the murderers would soon return and went into hiding, while others tried to escape to the forest. Over the following two days the ghetto was liquidated except for several hundred skilled craftsmen who were spared immediate death. More than 1,000 Jews were escorted out of town to the east and shot. According to a Waffen-SS report, "the Aktion in Dołhinów was remarkable in that the Jews had prepared proper bunkers as hiding places. For two days we had to search and clear out [the ghetto] partly with the aid of hand-grenades."⁵

A final Aktion against the Jews of Dołhinów was conducted on May 21, 1942, during which the remaining craftsmen were killed. Following this Aktion, the Waffen-SS sec-

tion reported that "the Jewish question in this town was finally solved."⁶

Only about 200 Jews from Dołhinów survived the war, including some who had served in the Red Army, others who joined the Soviet partisans, and a number who went into hiding. Among the Christians who assisted in hiding Jews were Andrei Stanko in the village of Milcza and Stephania Bogdanovich in the village of Mushenka.

SOURCES Among the available published sources, there are several firsthand accounts by survivors from Dołhinów in the yizkor book, edited by Yosef Krust and Matityahu Bar-Ratson, *Esh tamid—yizkor le-Dolbinov: Sefer zikaron li-kebilat Dolbinov veba-sevivab* (Israel: Irgun yots'e Dolhinov be-Yisrael, 1984 or 1985). There is also a relevant article in the Soviet Yiddish publication *Eynikait* (December 3, 1945).

Documentation on the destruction of the Jewish community in Dołhinów can be found in the following archives: AŽIH; BA-L; MA (A-331); NARB (845-1-63); USHMM (Acc. 1994.A.372); VHF; and YVA (e.g., O-22/47; M-1/E-1572/1441, 1704/1573, 1873/1721; M-1/Q-1496/288, 2457/626).

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NOTES

1. Shmuel Alperovitsh, "Al kidush ha-hayim," p. 238, and Natan Kizinitz and Yitshak Kizinitz, "Anuto shel bet-av be Dolinov," p. 360, in Krust and Bar-Ratson, *Esh tamid—yizkor le-Dolbinov*. See also USHMM, Acc.1994.A.372, extract from a published memoir by Ester May.

2. Alperovitsh, "Al kidush ha-hayim." Alperovitsh gives the number of 640 Jews as being murdered on this day. According to another account by Sigalczyk, 1,540 Jews were assembled on the marketplace and killed that day; see MA, A-331 (Yaakov Sigalczyk). The Soviet Extraordinary State Commission report gives a figure of 900 Jews being shot in April 1942; see NARB, 845-1-63, p. 17. See also BA-L, B 162/1472 (II 202 AR-Z 5/60, vol. 42), pp. 8691–8714, Soviet protocols taken from local inhabitants of Dolginovo (Dołhinów) in 1970.

3. Alperovitsh, "Al kidush ha-hayim," and Ya'akov Segelshik (Sigalczyk), "A Living Testimony for Future Generations [in Hebrew]," in Krust and Bar-Ratson, *Esh tamid—yizkor le-Dolbinov*.

4. BA-L, B 162/1461 (II 202 AR-Z 5/60), pp. 4033–4036, 4042–4044, statements of Esther Tylis and Sonya Markman on June 29–30, 1966.

5. *Unsere Ebre beist Treue: Kriegstagebuch des Kommandos- tabes Reichsführer SS* (Vienna: Europa, 1984), pp. 247–249, SS-UScharf. Lipps Aussenstelle Wilejka an Burgdorf, May 27, 1942; Aryeh Rubin, "I Was a Youth at the Time of the Tragedies [in Hebrew]," in Krust and Bar-Ratson, *Esh tamid—yizkor le-Dolbinov*.

6. *Unsere Ebre beist Treue*, pp. 247–249.

DRUJA

Pre-1939: Druja, town, Brasław powiat, Wilno województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Druja, Brasław raion, Vileika oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–44: Druja, Rayon Miory, Gebiet

Glebokie, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Druia, Bratslau raen, Vitsebsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Druja is located about 210 kilometers (131 miles) north of Minsk. The population of Druja on the eve of World War II was about 4,500 people, of which just under half were Jews.

German forces had occupied Druja by early July 1941. Within a few days, a Polish collaborator named Dworzecki drew up a list of some 300 former Soviet activists who were to be arrested and liquidated. Thanks to the efforts of members of the local community, the number of suspects was reduced to 18 people. Shortly afterwards, these people (including at least 1 Jew) were tracked down and killed on a nearby island. They were accused of collaboration, supposedly because they had welcomed the Red Army in September 1939.

The Germans forced the Jews of Druja to perform various kinds of menial labor, including road and railway construction, trash removal, and other degrading work, such as polishing the Germans' automobiles with their hats. After the Germans entered the township, local inhabitants started to rob the Jews. The most notorious person for this was the Polish collaborator Dworzecki. Realizing that they would lose their property if they did not act quickly, many Jews began to hand over items to Christian acquaintances for safekeeping or else to bury their jewelry and other valuables in the ground. The Germans also demanded a large contribution from the Jews, taking hostages to ensure its payment. At least one Jew, Hedesch, was shot as a hostage.

To enforce their regulations, the Germans established a Jewish Council (Judenrat) in Druja. Those serving on the council included Zelik Diwiusz, Jakow Rozman, and David Lewinson. The Judenrat was held accountable for ensuring that the Jews completed their labor tasks and for maintaining good sanitary conditions.¹ The Germans also arrested some Jews of the town and sent them to Miory, where they had to build the walls of a German bathhouse and lay pavements on the streets.

A ghetto was established in Druja in late April or early May 1942 on the instructions of the Gebietskommissar in Głębokie, Paul Hachmann (due to illness Hachmann was

represented during the summer of 1942 by a man named Petersen). It was located between the confluence of the Dvina and Drujka Rivers. Anyone caught leaving the ghetto could be punished with death.²

The members of the Judenrat in Druja gave help to 21 Jews who escaped from the ghetto in Miory on June 3, 1942, and managed to hide in the nearby woods. A sympathetic Christian peasant delivered a request written by the Jews from Miory to the Judenrat in Druja. Members of the Judenrat collected two bags of flour and also utensils from the prisoners of the ghetto and arranged for the goods to be brought to the fugitives through the mud and cold.

The Jews in Druja also organized some resistance against their German oppressors at the time of the ghetto liquidation.³ On June 17, 1942, members of the Security Police together with officers of the Gendarmerie from Głębokie (reinforced by Gendarmerie men from neighboring Gebiet Wilejka) arrived in Druja in vehicles. Members of the local police from throughout Gebiet Glebokie also assisted in the operation.⁴ These forces surrounded the ghetto and issued instructions for all the Jews to assemble near the railway bridge. According to a German report, fire broke out in the ghetto shortly after it was surrounded. The fire got out of control, and not only the ghetto burned down but also an orthodox church and 10 adjacent non-Jewish houses. While the German forces were trying to put out the fire, they were shot at from inside the burning ghetto. The same report noted that the ghetto had officially contained 1,318 Jews prior to the liquidation Aktion.⁵

The Jews who had been assembled near the bridge were shot into a large mass grave on the banks of the Drujka River. The Jews were ordered to undress and to stand on a plank over the ditch. The executioners shot them in groups of 9 or 10. Two Germans stood at the bottom of the ditch, piling up the bodies. Other corpses of the murdered Jews from the ghetto were also buried in four graves near the Jewish cemetery. The Germans also removed gold teeth from the corpses before burying them. About six days after the murders, decomposing blood and bones were observed emerging from the graves.

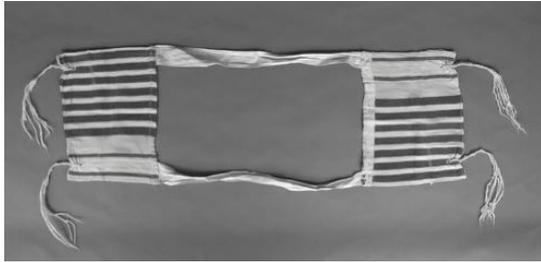
Fanya Barbakov, a 19-year-old Jewish girl, wrote a letter while in hiding shortly before her death: "My hand is trembling and I find it difficult to finish my letter. I am proud, for I am Jewish. I die for my people. I did not tell anyone that I am writing a letter before my death. Oh! . . . how I long to live and to do something good with my life. But everything is already lost."⁶

Only about 50 Jews managed to survive the Aktion by fleeing or hiding, then escaping later to the forests. Zemdlona Rozenmann, the wife of Zelman Rozenmann, who witnessed the murders and survived, remembered standing on the plank bridge over the grave. The Germans shot at her, but the bullets missed. She fell into the ditch and lay there until night came. Then she went to see the watchman in the cemetery, who dressed her and hid her in a nearby barn.

Some who escaped were captured later, however, such as Szlomo Musin and his mother, who were arrested next to a pharmacy in the village of Kędzierszczyna. Local peasants attacked them with sticks and axes and led them to the castle



Exterior of the synagogue in Druja, ca. 1924.
USHMM WS #97255, COURTESY OF JACK KAGAN



This tallit was found by Chaim Bornstein in a burned-out home near Druja, Poland, in 1945 at the end of World War II. A survivor of the Druja ghetto, he carried it with him while he was in displaced persons camps. USHMM ACC. 2003.163.1, COURTESY OF CHAIM BORNSTEIN

in Kaminka.⁷ The mother was murdered, but the son fought and escaped into the forest to join the partisans. Subsequently, however, the Germans managed to kill him in the village of Kaminka, near Druja, on the night of March 22, 1944. His desecrated body was allowed to hang for three days near the castle before it was finally buried in Druja. After the war, the local Jews placed his body in a coffin and gave him a proper burial. The gravestone bears an inscription in Russian: “Red Partisan” Szlomo Ilicz Musin, born in Druja in 1916.

SOURCES There is a yizkor book for Druja edited by Mordechai Naishtat: *Sefer Druyab U-Kebilot Miyor; Droisk, Ve-Le'onpol* (Tel Aviv: Be-hotsa'at Yots'e Druyah vaha-sevivah be-Yi'sra'el, 1973). Testimonies by Jewish survivors from Druja can be found in AŽIH (301/3150, 3151, and 5566) and YVA (e.g., M-1E/1216; O-3/731 and 2259; M-2/200; and O-33/515). Information regarding the liquidation of the Druja ghetto can be found in the following archives: BA-L (ZStL, 202 AR-Z 37/60) NARB (370-1-483 and 845-1-56). Relevant German postwar criminal investigations include Sta. Hamburg 141 Js 533/60; Sta. Hannover 2 Js 388/65; and Sta. Dortmund 45 Js 16/73.

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NOTES

1. AŽIH, 301/5566, testimony of Zalman Goldin, October 28, 1946.
2. BA-L, ZStL, 202 AR-Z 37/60, vol. 1, pp. 412–415, statement of Chaim Scheiner, August 7, 1961.
3. AŽIH, 301/3150 and 301/3151, Commission in Białystok, testimony of Szabtaj Estrow.
4. Sta. Hannover 2 Js 388/65, vol. 1, pp. 46, 101, vol. 2, p. 422, and vol. 12, pp. 2444 ff.
5. NARB, 370-1-483, p. 15, report of Gebietskommissar in Glebokie on the “Judenaktion,” July 1, 1942.
6. Extract from the letter published in Naishtat, *Sefer Druyab U-Kebilot Miyor; Droisk, Ve-Le'onpol*, pp. 95–100.
7. AŽIH, 301/5566.

DUKORA

Pre-1941: Dukora, village, Pukhovichi raion, Minsk oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Rayon Rudensk, Gebiet Minsk-

Land, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Pukhovichi raen, Minsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Dukora is located about 38 kilometers (24 miles) east-southeast of Minsk. In June 1941, there were probably about 600 Jews in the village.

German forces occupied the village at the end of June 1941, one week after the Nazi invasion of the USSR on June 22. During this week, some Jews attempted to evacuate to the east, and eligible men were mustered into the Red Army. Around two thirds of the pre-war Jewish population remained in Dukora at the start of the German occupation.

In the summer of 1941, the German military administration (Ortskommandantur) with a small garrison of troops established itself at the Machine Tractor Station (MTS) just outside the village and set up a local authority in the village. Soon after the occupation of the village, the German commandant ordered the registration and marking of all Jews in the Rayon and their deployment for various kinds of forced labor. After about one month, German soldiers and officers searched Jewish homes and stole their property.¹

In September 1941, authority was officially transferred to the German civil administration. Dukora became part of the Gebiet Minsk-Land within Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien. The Gebietskommissar was Regierungsrat Dr. Kaiser, and the SS- und Polizei-Gebietsführer was a Leutnant Kalla. It took several months, however, for the civil administration to take over, and in the meantime the local military commandants continued to run things at the local level.² At the start of September 1941, all Jews in the village were relocated into a ghetto, which was located on Smilovichskaia and Bolochannaia Streets.³

On October 8, 1941, more than 100 men, Lithuanians of the 2nd (later 12th) Schutzmannschaft Bataillon and German policemen of the 11th Police Reserve Battalion based in Minsk, arrived in Dukora on trucks. According to the report of the German military commandant in Weissruthenien, Gustav Freiherr von Bechtolsheim, the villages of Dukora, Ozernyi, Uzliany, and a nearby forest were searched for Jews, partisans, bandits, and politically unreliable elements. As a result, 618 people were taken prisoner, of whom 617 were then shot. Given that around 300 Jews were shot in Uzliany at this time, it is likely that about half of these victims were Jews from Dukora.⁴

Accounts from the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission (ChGK) indicate that on that day, armed Lithuanians, Germans, and local policemen gathered together the Jews of Dukora and the neighboring village of Kharvichi, including women and children, and held them on Bolochannaia Street in Dukora. From there they were led under close guard about 300 meters (328 yards) across the Svisloch' River in the direction of Rudensk to a meadow where a large ditch, 20 meters by 40 meters (22 yards by 44 yards), had been dug by about 15 local inhabitants. Here the Germans and their auxiliaries shot the Jews in groups, letting them fall into the pit. Estimates of the number of people killed at this site range between 275 and 394.⁵ Postwar testimony given by Lithuanian policemen present at the mass shooting in Dukora indicates that Lithuanian

officers used submachine guns to finish off any Jews who had only been wounded by the initial salvos fired by their men.⁶

A few Jews managed to escape the roundup, but they were hunted down and killed by members of the German garrison and the local Belorussian police over the following weeks and months. For example, the Germans captured two Jews at the edge of the forest and brought them to the Dukora MTS. There the German commandant gave them shovels and ordered them to dig their own graves before shooting them personally with his pistol.⁷

SOURCES Documents regarding the persecution and elimination of the Jews of Dukora can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-87-13); LYA (Impulevicius trial records); NARB (651-1-1 and 861-1-8); and YVA (M-33/431).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, RG-53.002M (NARB), reel 7, 861-1-8, pp. 206–207.

2. BA-BL, BDC, SShO 2432, Organisationsplan der besetzten Ostgebiete nach dem Stand vom 10. März 1942, hg. vom Chef der Ordnungspolizei, Berlin, March 13, 1942.

3. Marat Botvinnik, *Pamiętniki genotsida evreev Belarusi* (Minsk: Belaruskaja Navuka, 2000), pp. 46–47; and USHMM, RG-53.002M (NARB), reel 7, 861-1-8, pp. 206–207—this document indicates that the ghetto was established in October 1941 and liquidated in November 1941, but German documentation reliably indicates that the ghetto was liquidated on October 8, 1941.

4. See the report of October 19, 1941, “Kommandant in Weissruthenien,” on the Aktions from October 1 to 15, 1941, NARB, 651-1-1, pp. 14–15.

5. Botvinnik, *Pamiętniki genotsida*, pp. 45–46, 76–77; and GARF, 7021-87-13, pp. 4, 30.

6. LYA, statements of accused Jonas Juozo Davalga, Povilas Povilo Tinteris, and Pranas Jono Planciunas given in the trial against Antanas Impulevicius and others, held in Vilnius in 1962. USHMM, RG-53.002M (NARB), reel 7, 861-1-8, pp. 206–207, also mentions that any Jews who remained conscious in the pit were finished off.

7. Botvinnik, *Pamiętniki genotsida*, pp. 76–77; USHMM, RG-53.002M (NARB), reel 7, 861-1-8, pp. 206–207, 213 reverse side.

DUNIŁOWICZE

Pre-1939: Dunilowicze, village, Postawy powiat, Wilno województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Dunilovichi, raion center, Vileika oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Dunilovitschi, Rayon center, Gebiet Glebokie, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Dunilovichy, Pastavy raen, Vitebsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Duniłowicze is located about 130 kilometers (81 miles) north of Minsk. In 1921, there were 685 Jews living in the village (49.9 percent of the inhabitants); this number had risen to about 1,000 by 1925.

At the time of the German occupation of Duniłowicze in late June 1941, local inhabitants, including some ethnic Germans, looted Jewish property. Soon afterwards, a local police force was established with its headquarters on Wilno Street. The following men were among the most active members of the local police: Stefan Rombalski, Stanislaw Gigala, Leonard Sipowicz, Kazimierz Kuckiewicz, Aleksandr Nowicki, Kalikst Rychlicki, Władysław Zajkowski, Konstanty Majewski, and Franciszek Batory.¹

Almost immediately the local policemen began to abuse the Jews. One officer of the local police force, Sipowicz, was especially known for his cruelty. He beat Jews with whips. Other means of torture included dunking Jewish victims into cold water or forcing them to conduct humiliating physical work.

The ghetto was established in January 1942.² According to a German report dated July 1, 1942, 979 Jews were residing in the Duniłowicze ghetto just prior to its liquidation.³ The ghetto area was close to the center of the town, next to the lake,⁴ between Pachowska Street and Głębokia Street.⁵ The ghetto was surrounded by barbed wire and was also separated from the rest of the town by a water canal. There was only one gate, by which Jews left the ghetto to go to work.⁶ Jews were put to work in a sawmill, in tobacco fields, and also digging a canal, receiving a daily wage of about 125 grams (4 ounces) of bread. Non-Jews were forbidden to enter the ghetto.⁷

The liquidation of the Duniłowicze ghetto took place on November 21–22, 1942, during which about 900 Jews were murdered.⁸ The Aktion was conducted by members of a special unit, which arrived from the office of the Commander of the Security Police (KdS) in Minsk: commanded by Artur Wilke, it consisted of 40 members of the Security Police, 33 Latvians, and some members of the local Belorussian police.⁹ On the day of the ghetto liquidation in Duniłowicze, the Germans concentrated together the local police from several nearby towns, surrounded the ghetto area, and set fire to the houses in the ghetto. The Aktion started with the shooting of those Jews hiding inside the ghetto buildings. The Germans also arrested some of the ghetto inmates who had tried to hide and shot them in a large park inside the ghetto. The ghetto liquidation Aktion lasted for two days. After the Aktion, inhabitants from villages nearby were ordered by German authorities to bury the victims next to the Jewish cemetery in a mass grave.¹⁰ During the Aktion, the German authorities ordered the local inhabitants to stay at home and lock their doors, to prevent any escaping Jews from finding refuge with them.¹¹ On November 22, the second day of the Aktion, the Germans forced several hundred Jews, including men, women, and children, into a barn and set it on fire using gasoline, with the victims locked inside. The German forces also threw hand grenades into the building.¹² During the liquidation, the fire inside the ghetto also spread to surrounding buildings, and the local fire brigade had to extinguish it.¹³ The naked bodies of the burned victims were transferred on wagons to their place of burial.¹⁴

Some of the Jews in Duniłowicze bought weapons from the local population. A few even managed to travel to Głębokie and purchased weapons secretly from the local police. A large proportion of the ghetto population prepared to resist or evade the ghetto liquidation. Before the Aktion started, many Jews hid in previously prepared hiding places and bunkers. In one incident, about 60 people who were hiding together in a bunker were found because a baby's crying betrayed their hiding place. All of them were shot. In another bunker, about 20 Jews were hiding, but only 7 individuals survived the searches.¹⁵ Witnesses state that some Jews escaped from the liquidation across the frozen lake. Those Jews found hiding outside the ghetto were also shot. Members of the Duniłowicze local police who took part in the liquidation of the ghetto received money, watches, and gold items as a reward for their participation in the murders.¹⁶ The local police also guarded the confines of the ghetto during the Aktion, to prevent any of the victims from escaping. About 40 policemen guarded the ghetto posted at a distance of about 20 meters (22 yards) apart. Every policeman received orders to shoot anyone attempting to flee.¹⁷

In the fall of 1943, a Gestapo unit arrived from Łuczaj, close to Duniłowicze, and assisted the local police in shooting 20 Jews, all men and women engaged in construction work at the town's agricultural school. Some of the Jews managed to escape during this Aktion. The German police instructed the local population to bury the corpses in the local park.¹⁸

The State Prosecutor in Hildesheim opened a case against Wilke, accusing him, among other crimes, of participating as a member of KdS Minsk in the murder of the Jews in Duniłowicze and Hermanowicze (see Sta. 9 Js 1274/64).¹⁹ The court for the Wrocław województwo sentenced both Batory and Edward Kusowski to life imprisonment for their participation in the liquidation of the Duniłowicze ghetto as members of the local police.²⁰

The regional court in Szczecin (case IN Sb 94/54) sentenced Rombalski to 15 years in 1954 for the shooting of Kleper while serving as an officer of the local police in Duniłowicze.²¹ On August 31, 1954, the court for the Szczecin województwo filed a case against Sipowicz, accusing him of participation in the murder of Kleper on racial grounds and also in the liquidation of the ghetto while serving in the Duniłowicze local police force.²²

SOURCES Documents concerning the fate of the Jews of Duniłowicze can be found in the following archives: NARB; NHStA-H (Sta. Hannover 2 Js 388/65); OKŚZpNP-Gd (S/200/Zn); SWSz (K 104/54 and IV K 49/54); SWW (IV K 75/67); and YVA.

Monika Tomkiewicz
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NOTES

1. Statement of Stefan Rombalski, March 30, 1967, SWW, IV K 75/67, vol. 2.

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. 346.

3. NARB, Minsk, 370-1-483, p. 15.

4. Statement of Weronika Myszeko on December 6, 2000, OKŚZpNP-Gd, S 2/00/Zn, pp. 466–468.

5. Statement of Anna Podlipska, February 1, 1967, SWW, IV K 75/67, vol. 2.

6. Statement of Edward Kusowski, November 23, 1966, SWW, IV K 75/67, vol. 1.

7. Statement of Jadwiga Szafarowicz, February 2, 1967, SWW, IV K 75/67, vol. 2.

8. This is the figure given by M. Rajak and Z. Rajak, eds., *Memorial Book of Głębokie* [a translation into English of *Kburbn Głubok*, which was originally published in 1956 in Yiddish in Buenos Aires by the Former Residents' Association in Argentina] (1994), corresponding also with the German report, NARB, Minsk, 370-1-483, cited above.

9. NHStA-H, Sta. Hannover, 2 Js 388/65, vol. 7, p. 1212; vol. 2, p. 412; vol. 8, pp. 1322 ff.; vol. 14, pp. 2721, 2814, 2820, 2824, 2836.

10. Statement of Anna Podlipska, February 1, 1967, SWW, IV K 75/67, vol. 2.

11. Statement of Jadwiga Szafarowicz, February 2, 1967, SWW, IV K 75/67, vol. 2.

12. The Jewish Foundation for the Righteous, *Stories of Moral Courage*, Wanda Anishkewicz; statement of Stefan Rombalski on April 13, 1967, SWW, IV K 75/67, vol. 2. According to the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission report, the Aktion lasted four days, from November 21–24, and there were 828 victims; see NARB, 845-1-64, pp. 35–36, and 861-1-13, p. 117.

13. Statement of Ignacy Lipski, February 22, 1967, SWW, IV K 75/67, vol. 2.

14. Statement of Helena Norenberg, November 16, 2000, OKŚZpNPBi, S 25/00/Zn, pp. 3–5.

15. YVA, 1900/181 (Boris Friedman), as cited by Shalom Cholawsky, *The Jews of Bielorussia during World War II* (Amsterdam: Harwood, 1998), p. 204.

16. Statement of Ignacy Lipski, February 22, 1967, SWW, IV K 75/67, vol. 2.

17. Statement of Edward Kusowski, November 23, 1966, SWW, IV K 75/67, vol. 1.

18. Statement of Antoni Czyżewicz, September 29, 1966, SWW, IV K 75/67, vol. 1.

19. Wilke had already been sentenced to 10 year's imprisonment for other National-Socialist crimes by the court in Koblenz; see LG Koblenz 9 Ks 2/62.

20. SWW, IV K 75/67. The Highest Court in Warsaw, criminal department, reviewed the sentence against Franciszek Batory, and on October 31, 1967, revised it to seven years of imprisonment; see criminal case against Franciszek Batory and Edward Kusowski, SWW, IV K 75/67, vol. 3.

21. Criminal case against Stefan Rombalski, SWSz, IV K 104/54.

22. Criminal case against Leonard Sipowicz, SWSz, IV K 49/54.

DWORZEC

Pre-1939: Dworzec, village, Nowogródek powiat and województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Dvoretz, Diatlovo raion, Baranovich oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Dworzec, Rayon Djatlowo, Gebiet Nowogrodek, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Dvarets, Dziatlava raen, Hrodna voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Dworzec is located 139 kilometers (86 miles) southwest of Minsk. On the eve of the German occupation in June 1941, the number of Jews in Dworzec was probably just over 400 people, comprising about 75 percent of the total population.

German forces occupied the village on June 26, 1941. During the summer of 1941, a German military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur) was in charge of the village. In September 1941, authority was transferred to a German civil administration.

In the summer and fall of 1941, the Germans introduced a series of anti-Jewish measures in Dworzec. These included the appointment of a Judenrat, the use of Jews for forced labor, and a ban on their leaving the village. Initially, the Jews were still able to move about Dworzec with relative freedom. They were required to wear yellow stars on their clothes, but they were permitted to remain in their own homes.

In late December 1941, about 300 Jews from Lubcz and another 400 Jews from Zdzięcioł (Diatlovo) were brought to Dworzec as forced laborers.¹ More Jewish laborers were brought to Dworzec from Rubieżewicze, Iwieniec, Korelicze, and other places in the first months of 1942. The Jewish laborers were assigned to construction work on and around the site of the former Soviet airfield under the supervision of the Organisation Todt (OT). The work tasks included breaking and hauling rocks, which the Jews transported to the railroad station using a narrow-gauge railway and then loaded onto freight cars. Some Jews were engaged in constructing a bridge using tombstones from the Jewish cemetery.²

On March 6, 1942, Gebietskommissar Traub in Nowogródek ordered that following the concentration of the Jews in the Rayon towns of his Gebiet, no Jews were permitted to remain in the other smaller towns and villages.³ Probably just prior to this, the Jews of Dworzec learned that those incapable of work were to be transferred to the Rayon town of Zdzięcioł. According to the account of Eli Chodok and Icchak Kosower, thanks to a handsome bribe paid to the "Engineer," the order of the Gebietskommissar was rescinded for the Jews of Dworzec, and instead the Germans established a ghetto in Dworzec, which was to contain the nonworking Jews as well as the forced laborers.⁴ The ghetto occupied the territory between Molchadskaia, Goncharnaia, and Smutnaia Streets, covering an area of about 300 meters by 500 meters (328 yards by 547 yards). All the Jews were forced to move inside this area; as the ghetto continued to fill up with more forced laborers over the following months, there were about 20 Jews crowded into each house.

The daily ration consisted of a piece of bread and a bowl of soup. There was a bakery within the ghetto, where the Jews baked their own bread. The other main bakery was outside the ghetto. A small squad of about 15 local Polish and Belorussian police guarded the ghetto and escorted the Jews to their workplaces.⁵

In May and June 1942, still hundreds more Jews were brought to Dworzec, following selections conducted before and during the liquidation of several of the ghettos in the area. Among the working Jews sent to Dworzec were those from the Rubieżewicze ghetto who arrived via Iwieniec, and others from Naliboki and other nearby villages. These Jews were all of working age, having been separated from their children and elderly parents during the selections. In Iwieniec, for example, the remaining children and elderly were murdered in the forest nearby, soon after the departure of the working Jews in May. On the arrival of the Iwieniec Jews in Dworzec, there was not enough space for all of them, and some people had to live in a barn.⁶

The guard on the ghetto were not strict, and many Jews left regularly to barter clothes for food with local non-Jews. If caught, however, the Jews could be shot.⁷

By the summer of 1942, increasing partisan activity began to cause problems for the Germans. Some Jews encountered partisans on their forays outside the ghetto, and Jewish youths planned to gain arms and flee to the forests. Most Jews, however, were afraid to leave the ghetto permanently, lest their relatives and friends suffer reprisals.

The Germans liquidated the Dworzec labor camp/ghetto in the second half of December 1942. At this time there were probably about 2,500 to 3,000 Jews living there.⁸ Just before the Aktion, a group of local men was ordered to dig pits in the forest about 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) outside the village on the road from Dworzec to Nowojelنيا. For the Aktion, German and Latvian SS forces arrived in Dworzec, probably from Nowogródek. The police broke into the ghetto and chased the Jews out of their houses. Some managed to hide in secret hiding places built in advance. For example, in the house of Ted Winestone, 29 people hid during the Aktion behind a false wall constructed by his father. Many Jews were outside the ghetto when the Aktion started. Some were brought back from their work locations, but a number realized what was happening and managed to hide or escape. The head of the Judenrat, Novik, attempted to restrain those Jews who wanted to resist and negotiate with the Germans. When he came back empty-handed and confirmed that there was no more hope, a group of Jews attempted to flee by storming the fence, but they were fired on by the Germans and their collaborators. According to the estimate of Chodok and Kosower, as many as 500 Jews managed to flee or successfully went into hiding. However, the Germans set fire to the ghetto to flush out the Jews concealed in bunkers. Those Jews who were rounded up were loaded onto trucks and transported to the prepared mass graves just outside the village, where the Germans shot them. Local people covered the pits after the massacre.⁹

Local police forces continued to hunt for Jews in the days after the Aktion, once the SS forces had departed. Some Jews managed to escape from their hiding places in the ghetto and make it into the forest or find shelter with local non-Jews. For example, Reiza Bochkovoch and her daughter Rocha were hidden with the help of Vladimir Vetko for more than a year.¹⁰ According to one account, about 200 Jews survived the Aktion at the end of December and remained in Dworzec for a few more weeks before they in turn were shot.¹¹ Other sources indicate that at some time after the massacre, probably in 1943, about 50 Jews were caught in the forest near the village and were also shot.¹²

SOURCES Information about the ghetto/forced labor camp in Dworzec can be found in the following publications: B. Kaplinski, ed., *Pinkas Zbetti* (Tel Aviv: Zetel Association in Israel, 1957); and “Dworzec,” 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. 236–238.

Documents regarding the ghetto/forced labor camp in Dworzec can be found in the following archives: AŽIH (e.g., 301/2907, 2994, 3167, and 3356); BA-L (e.g., B 162/27191); GARF (7021-81-102 and 103); MA (A.108 and A.144); NARB; USHMM; VHF (e.g., # 6593, 15385, 24696, and 43261); and YVA (e.g., O-16/436).

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NOTES

1. BA-L, B 162/27191 (II 202 AR 932/65), vol. 1, pp. 135–136, statement of Wolf Solomianski, May 10, 1966; and AŽIH, 301/2907, testimony of Eli Chodak and Icchak Kosower.

2. Testimony of A. Evlanova, November 23, 1976, in Alexander Kruglov’s personal archive; VHF, # 15385; BA-L, B 162/27191, vol. 1, pp. 135–136, statement of Wolf Solomianski; Michael Walzer-Fass, ed., *Korelits-Korelits: Hayeha veburbanab shel kebilab Yebudit* (Tel Aviv: Society in Israel and the USA, 1973), pp. 19–34, and 235–244; and AŽIH, 301/2907, testimony of Eli Chodak and Icchak Kosower.

3. Order of Gebietskommissar Traub in Nowogrodek, March 6, 1942, original in the Museum of History and Regional Studies in Novogrudok, collection of documents regarding the war. A facsimile and English translation are published in Jack Kagan and Dov Cohen, *Surviving the Holocaust with the Russian Jewish Partisans* (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 1998), pp. 156–158.

4. AŽIH, 301/2907, testimony of Eli Chodak and Icchak Kosower. BA-L, ZStL/202 AR-Z 73/67, statement of Shmuel Gurion, July 26, 1968, confirms that whereas the Jewish forced laborers arrived without their families, children and elderly Jews native to Dworzec remained in the ghetto, which also made it possible for some children from other ghettos to sneak in and find refuge in Dworzec.

5. BA-L, B 162/27191 (II 202 AR 932/65), vol. 1, pp. 135–136; VHF, # 15385, testimony of Ted Winestone, and # 43261, testimony of Samuel Scherb; and information gathered by Tamara Verchitskaya from Dmitri Vladimirovich Vetko, a resident of Dworzec, born in 1926.

6. BA-L, ZStL /202 AR-Z 73/67, statement of Shmuel Gurion, July 26, 1968; VHF, # 24696, testimony of Genia Nowog (born 1925), and # 6593, testimony of Aaron Oshman (born 1910).

7. YVA, O-16/436, testimony of Mordechai Ralnik; and VHF, # 15385.

8. According to Marat Botvinnik, *Pamiatniki genotsida evreev Belarusi* (Minsk: Belaruskaia Navuka, 2000), p. 258, 2,500 Jews were shot. From December 11 to 20, 1942, Operation Hamburg, an antipartisan sweep, was conducted in the area north of Slonim, and 2,958 Jews were shot in its course (see *Meldungen aus den besetzten Ostgebieten*, no. 38, January 22, 1943). It is possible that these were mainly Jews from the Dworzec ghetto. BA-L, ZStL/202 AR 94e/59, vol. 1, pp. 70–80, gives the date of December 28, 1942, as do several other sources. Christian Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde: Die deutsche Wirtschafts- und Vernichtungspolitik in Weissrussland 1941 bis 1944* (Hamburg: HIS, 1999), p. 705, gives the date of December 19, citing probably 3,000 victims.

9. BA-L, ZStL/202 AR-Z 73/67, statement of Shmuel Gurion, July 26, 1968; AŽIH, 301/2907; Shalom Cholowsky, *The Jews of Belorussia during World War II* (Amsterdam: Harwood, 1998), pp. 165–166; and VHF, # 15385, testimony of Ted Winestone. Winestone asserts that a gas van was used to kill the Jews, but his version, probably based on hearsay, is unlikely, as other witnesses describe the vehicles as trucks.

10. Information gathered by Tamara Vershitskaya from Dmitri Vladimirovich Vetko.

11. YVA, O-16/436, testimony of Mordechai Ralnik.

12. According to information gathered by Tamara Vershitskaia, the remains of 51 bodies from Dworzec were reburied in the Jewish cemetery in Diatlovo. On June 25, 2006, a new monument was established at the grave by the Diana and Simon Lazarus Foundation. The text on the plaque reads: “To the Nazi victims: 54 Jews from the village of Dworzec, brutally murdered in 1942 [sic] are buried here.”

DZERZHINSK

Pre-1941: Dzerzhinsk (until 1932: Koidanovo); Yiddish: Koydenov, town, raion center, Minsk oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Koidanow, Rayon center, Gebiet Minsk-Land, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Dzierzhynsk, raen center, Minsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Dzerzhinsk is located 40 kilometers (25 miles) southwest of Minsk. In 1939, there were 1,314 Jews living in Dzerzhinsk, accounting for 15 percent of the total population.¹

Units of the XLVII Panzer Corps captured the town on June 28, 1941, only six days after the German invasion of the USSR on June 22. As a result, only a small number of Jews managed to evacuate, and a few were mobilized into the Red Army. It is estimated that around 1,000 Jews remained in Dzerzhinsk at the start of the German occupation. As Dzerzhinsk lay on the main railroad line from Brest to Minsk, much of the town was destroyed by aerial bombardment or in the fighting as the town was captured.

One Jewish survivor recounts that most of the young Jewish men of the town were killed within the first three or four days of the occupation. One of the young men, Iashke Kitievitsh, jumped from the truck as he was being taken away, but the Germans pursued him and shot him in the fields.²

In the summer of 1941, a German military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur) governed the town. Soon after the onset of the occupation, the Ortskommandantur ordered Jews to wear distinguishing armbands and to perform various kinds of forced labor.³ In August 1941, all the Jews of Dzerzhinsk were moved into a ghetto, which was located on a single street, as most of the rest of the town had been burned.⁴

As of September 1941, authority was officially transferred to a German civil administration. Dzerzhinsk became part of Gebiet Minsk-Land, within Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien. However, it took several months for the civil administration to establish itself in the smaller towns and villages. In the meantime, the Ortskommandantur, now subordinated to Major von Bechtelsheim, the military commander for Weissruthenien in Minsk, continued to exert authority in towns such as Dzerzhinsk into the fall of 1941.

The liquidation of the Dzerzhinsk ghetto was planned for October 20, 1941. According to the report of the German 11th Reserve Police Battalion, however, it had to be deferred for one day, as heavy rains made the soft (unpaved) roads impassable. Then on October 21, the 2nd and 4th Companies of the German 11th Reserve Police Battalion (commanded by Polizei-Major Franz Lechthaler), along with two companies of the attached 2nd Lithuanian Auxiliary Police Battalion, shot "1,000 Jews and Communists" in Dzerzhinsk.⁵

Sanzie Shuster, who managed to survive with her husband because they were sent to work at the train station outside the town on the day of the roundup, recalls several details of the events. The Germans and their collaborators collected all the Jews and drove them up the Kolvintshine Hill, where an old castle stood. Here they had prepared a deep, wide pit. The Jews, old and young, were shot in groups and their bodies were thrown into the pit. When Sanzie returned to town at the end of the day, Belorussian women, with tears in their eyes, told her what had happened. They warned Sanzie and her husband to flee and save themselves.⁶

Present at the killing site was a local inhabitant who had observed the digging of the large pits on the night before the mass shooting. He recalled:

They came from there, women, children, babies, and old people. Jews they were, hundreds of them. The queue led all the way back up the hill as far as the eye could see. The babies were wailing and many of the children were in tears. Their mothers were trying to calm them but the soldiers showed no patience. . . . At the base of the hill, the Jews were put into groups of about 10 or 12. Soldiers forced them to undress and then lined them up in front of the pit. Then another group of soldiers—with rifles—stepped for-

ward. . . . They didn't waste their bullets on the babies and children; they simply used the bayonet.⁷

Another local witness, Ivan Vasilievich Marshak, was ordered by local policemen to dig the pits. According to his account, the Germans brought the Jews to the pits, and then the Lithuanians, about 80 men, took over. The Germans made the Jews lie in the pits, and the Lithuanians shot them. The Lithuanian soldiers stood out from the Germans because their uniforms were yellow (or tan), whereas the German uniforms were green. Men, women, and children were shot; it was a terrible sight. When one group had been shot, another was driven in and made to lie on the corpses. During the shooting, Marshak waited about 50 meters (55 yards) away under German guard. Afterwards he had to help fill in the pit.⁸ Two women who were only wounded managed with effort to climb out of the mass grave. However, the murderers caught them and shot them again in the same pit.⁹

At the beginning of March 1942, the German Security Police (KdS) rounded up about 3,000 Jews in the Minsk ghetto and loaded them onto a train at the Minsk-Tovarnaia railway station. From there they were transported to the Dzerzhinsk railway station, where they were shot over two days in nearby pits by men of the KdS from Minsk, assisted by Lithuanian auxiliaries.¹⁰

A number of Jews from Dzerzhinsk managed to survive. For example, Roza Fridson, the head of the raion health department before the German invasion, took refuge in a nearby village with her 14-year-old daughter. When their hostess found out they were Jews and asked them to leave, they moved to Minsk, where they passed as "Aryans" and worked for the Soviet partisan resistance.¹¹ A few others also lived under false identity or escaped to join the Soviet partisans operating in the forests around Minsk.¹²

For participation in the murder of Jews in Dzerzhinsk and in other towns and villages in Lithuania and Belorussia in the summer and fall of 1941, seven former members of the 2nd (later 12th) Lithuanian Auxiliary Police Battalion, including the former commander of the 1st Company, Zianonas Kiamzura, and the former commander of the 3rd Company, Juozas Usialis, were sentenced to death in a trial held in Kaunas between October 10 and 20, 1962. The former battalion commander, Antanas Impulevicius, received a death sentence in absentia, and the case of one other defendant was remitted for further inquiry.

On January 9, 1963, the Landgericht Kassel (Germany) imposed a sentence of two years' imprisonment on the former commander of the 11th Reserve Police Battalion, Franz Lechthaler. The former commander of the 2nd Company of this battalion, Willi Papenkort, was acquitted.

On July 23, 1979, in a trial in Vilnius, the former commander of the 1st Platoon/1st Company/2nd (12th) Lithuanian Auxiliary Police Battalion, Jonas Plunge, was sentenced to death for participation in the murder of Jews in various towns and villages of Lithuania and Belorussia in the summer and fall of 1941.

SOURCES Some information on the fate of the Jewish community of Dzerzhinsk during the Holocaust can be found in Abraham Reizin, ed., *Koydenov: Zamlbukh tsum ondenk fun di koydenover kdoysbim* (New York: United Koidanover Association, 1955).

Documentation on the murder of the Jews of Dzerzhinsk can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-87-5); LYA (Impulevicius trial record, Vilnius, in October 1962); NARB (651-1-1); VHF (# 24632 and 29487); and YVA (M-33/423).

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NOTES

1. *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 2nd ed. (Detroit: Thomson Gale/Keter, 2007), 12:267; and Mordechai Altshuler, ed., *Distribution of the Jewish Population of the USSR 1939* (Jerusalem: Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Centre for Research and Documentation of East-European Jewry, 1993), p. 38.

2. Reizin, *Koydenov*, pp. 252–253.

3. VHF, # 24632, testimony of Faina Avskerova, and # 29487, testimony of Emma Zanger.

4. Marat Botvinnik, *Pamiatniki genotsida evreev Belarusi* (Minsk: Belaruskaja Navuka, 2000), p. 41, names the location as Pervomaiskaia Street; Reizin, *Koydenov*, pp. 252–253, says that it was on Vilne Gas. These may have been different names for the same street.

5. NARB, 651-1-1, pp. 3–7, situation report of the 11th Reserve Police Battalion (no. 176/41 g), Minsk, October 21, 1941, published in *Hamburger Institut für Sozialforschung*, ed., *Verbrechen der Wehrmacht: Dimensionen des Vernichtungskrieges 1941–1944* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2002), pp. 472–473).

6. Reizin, *Koydenov*, p. 239.

7. Mark Kurzem, *The Mascot: The Extraordinary Story of a Young Jewish Boy and an SS Extermination Squad* (London: Rider, 2007), p. 279.

8. LYA, statements of Ivan Vasilievich Marshchak (Marshak) in the trial of Antanas Impulevicius and others, held in Vilnius in October 1962, p. 186.

9. Reizin, *Koydenov*, p. 253. In 1971, a monument was placed at the site of the mass graves; see Botvinnik, *Pamiatniki genotsida evreev Belarusi*, p. 41.

10. David Meltser and Vladimir Levin, eds., *The Black Book with Red Pages (Tragedy and Heroism of Belorussian Jews)* (Cockeysville, MD: VIA Press, 2005), pp. 150–151. See also *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen* vol. 19 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1979), Lfd. Nr. 552, pp. 205–207. This source reports the number of victims as at least 1,000.

11. Meltser and Levin, *The Black Book with Red Pages*, p. 345. Roza was subsequently captured by the Gestapo and sent to the Eruville concentration camp in France, where she was liberated by the French Resistance, which she then joined.

12. Reizin, *Koydenov*, pp. 253, 257; and VHF, # 29487, testimony of Emma Zanger.

DZIEWIENISZKI

Pre-1939: Dziewieniszki (Yiddish: Divenishbok), town, Oszmiana powiat, Wilno województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Devenishki,

Osbmiany raion, Belorussian SSR; Dieveniške, Eišiškės apskritis (Devenishkes, Eishishkes uезд), Lithuanian SSR; 1941: Dziewienishki, Rayon Woronow, Gebiet Lida, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; 1942–1944: Kreis Eischishken (Eišiškės), Gebiet Wilna-Land, Generalkommissariat Litauen; post-1991: Dieveniškės, Šalčininkai rajonas, Vilnius apskritis, Republic of Lithuania

Dziewieniszki is located 58 kilometers (36 miles) south-southeast of Wilno on the Gawia River; and is surrounded by dense forests. In 1897, the Jewish population in Dziewieniszki was 1,225.

The German army occupied Dziewieniszki on June 25, 1941. The Germans established a local council headed by an antisemitic Polish teacher. In the summer of 1941, a German military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur) was in charge of the town. In September 1941, authority was transferred to a German civil administration. Dziewieniszki was incorporated initially into Gebiet Lida within Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien. On April 1, 1942, however, the town was transferred to Gebiet Wilna-Land in Generalkommissariat Litauen. This was accompanied by the transfer of power to a Lithuanian local administration.

In the summer and fall of 1941, the German authorities introduced a series of anti-Jewish measures in the town. A five-person Judenrat was appointed, which was charged with supplying men to the Germans for forced labor; Jews were made to wear distinguishing badges in the shape of the Star of David; and they were forbidden to leave the town limits.

In September 1941, the Jews of Dziewieniszki were herded into a ghetto established in the area of the synagogues.¹ According to the survivor, Iakov Gaukhan, who was transferred into the Dziewieniszki ghetto from Soleczniki in late fall (there was a sprinkling of snow): “[T]he right side of the town was for the Jews—70 percent were already living in this area. At this time the ghetto was unfenced.”²

When Dziewieniszki was absorbed into Weissruthenien in 1941, other nearby towns became part of Generalkommissariat Litauen (Lithuania). In these towns, the Lithuanians had murdered all the Jews by the fall of 1941. Under strong lobbying from local Lithuanians, the German authorities decided to transfer Dziewieniszki to Lithuania in 1942. When this news became known, it caused considerable panic among the Jews of Dziewieniszki. Therefore, according to one account, the head of the Judenrat bribed the German Gebietskommissar in Lida, Hermann Hanweg, so that the Jews could be moved to Woronów, the nearest Rayon town in Weissruthenien, to prevent their coming under Lithuanian rule.³ Whether or not it was the result of a bribe, Hanweg ordered the Jews from Dziewieniszki and several nearby villages to be brought to the Woronów ghetto in the second half of December 1941.⁴ On the day of the transfer, a detachment of armed men in civilian clothing herded the Jews into the two synagogues, then transported them in wagons to Woronów.⁵

In the Woronów ghetto, the Dziewieniszki Jews suffered from intolerable overcrowding and hunger. All able-bodied Jews were assigned to hard labor, cutting down trees. Ten days

after their arrival, the Germans arrested 28 elderly Jews from Dziewieniszki and brutally murdered them. Many more Jews from Dziewieniszki were killed in the large Aktion against the Woronów ghetto on May 11, 1942. At this time the ghetto was liquidated, and those Jews deemed fit for work were transferred to the Lida ghetto. On September 17, 1943, the remaining Jews from Dziewieniszki, together with the other Jews from Woronów, Lida, and other places, were sent from Lida to the Majdanek concentration camp near Lublin.⁶

SOURCES Information regarding the persecution and murder of the Jews of Dziewieniszki can be found in the following publications: David Shtokfish, ed., *Sefer Divenishok; yad vashem le-ayara yebudit* (Israel: Divenishok Societies in Israel and the United States, 1977); Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Bialystok, Nowogrodek* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 254–257; and 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, available at www.komisija.lt.

Documentation on the fate of the Jews of Dziewieniszki during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: GARF; USHMM; VHF (# 6403); and YVA.

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trans. Kathleen Luft

NOTES

1. Bubnys, “Holocaust in the Lithuanian Province in 1941”; and Shtokfish, *Sefer Divenishok*.
2. VHF, # 6403, testimony of Iakov Gaukman.
3. Spector and Freundlich, *Pinkas ha-kebilot: Poland, Vol. 8 Vilna, Bialystok, Nowogrodek*, 8:254–257.
4. Moshe Berkowitz, “Woronow, Voronova” (unpub. MSS, 1943, USHMM Archives: RG-3.019).
5. Bubnys, “Holocaust in the Lithuanian Province in 1941.”
6. Spector and Freundlich, *Pinkas ha-kebilot*, 8:254–257; and Berkowitz, “Woronow, Voronova.”

DZISNA

Pre-1939: Dzisna, town and powiat center, Wilno województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Disna, raion center, Vileika oblast’, Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Dissna, Rayon center, Gebiet Glebokie, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Dzisna, Miory raen, Vitebsk voblasts’, Republic of Belarus

Dzisna is located 133 kilometers (83 miles) northwest of Vitebsk. In 1939, on the eve of World War II, the Jewish population in Dzisna was probably in excess of 4,500 people.

In the days following the German invasion on June 22, 1941, about half the Jewish population fled, seeking safety to the east. On June 28, the city was shelled by both German and Russian forces, and part of the town burned down, including the synagogues. Many Jews tried to cross the bridge over the Dwina River into pre-1939 Soviet territory, but some were

turned back by Soviet officials. Others took refuge in nearby towns and villages, owing to the widespread destruction in Dzisna.

After Dzisna was occupied on July 3, the German military authorities (Ortskommandantur) ordered those people hiding in the countryside to return home. They also forced Jews from neighboring villages into the town, including those from Jazno and Wołkowo. They appointed a local administration with a man named Solintsev as mayor and established a local police force recruited from local Belorussians and Poles. In the summer of 1941, German security forces shot several people as alleged Communist activists.

In late July or August 1941, the Ortskommandant in Dzisna ordered all the Jews to move into a small ghetto area. The ghetto in Dzisna was located close to the Dzisna River, on “Potzker Gas” and its side streets, as well as half of “Gluboker Gas.” This was an area where mostly Jews had lived before the war. Entire families lived in the ghetto, including men, women, and children. Those who had to relocate were only able to bring with them what they could carry themselves. Houses, cattle, horses, shops, and most personal goods had to be left behind. Around 3,000 people were forced into extremely dirty and crowded conditions. Many families (more than 40 people) shared a single dwelling, with three or four families to a room. The ghetto was not fenced in but was effectively isolated by the two rivers, with access only via an iron bridge guarded by a German sentry. Farmers were allowed to cross the bridge to barter food for goods, but Jewish movement was severely restricted.¹

The Ortskommandant appointed a Judenrat, which had to carry out all German orders. It was composed of five men, headed by Nachum Rochlin; the other members included Gordon and Hausmann. A Jewish police force, headed by Berke Weispapir, was stationed by the bridge to monitor people assigned to forced labor outside the ghetto by the Judenrat. Jews were detailed to sweep the town’s streets, clean the police headquarters, clear the rubble from the shelling, and tend a vegetable garden on an island in the Dwina River called Stefan Batory. According to testimony in the yizkor book, work was unpaid and accompanied by beatings. There were no food distributions to the ghetto. People with possessions had to barter for food. However, the Judenrat collected food for the neediest people. Contributions were imposed by the German authorities in the form of demands for money, gold, copper, furs, leather, and furniture, which were accompanied by dire threats.² There is also mention in at least one account of German soldiers raping Jewish girls.³

In the fall of 1941, the Germans established a civil administration; the town became the center of one of nine Rayons in Gebiet Glebokie, which was headed by Gebietskommissar Paul Hachmann. A small squad of German Gendarmes arrived in Dzisna and took command of the local police (now renamed Schutzmannschaft). The head of the local police was a Pole, Swiniarski, and his deputy was Alfons Bielski.

In the ghetto, the children were not permitted to go to school. Due to the food shortages, some Jews died of hunger.

1190 WEISSRUTHENIEN REGION

The first Aktion took place on March 28, 1942, when a group of 30 Jews were shot, reportedly as a reprisal for the death of the son of the German Gebietskommissar. In early June, news arrived of the liquidation of the ghettos in the nearby towns of Lużki and Miory. This prompted the Jews in the Dzisna ghetto to prepare for the worst. Each night young sentries were posted to alert the inhabitants of any signs of hostile movement. Each household put aside some gasoline to set the houses on fire and thereby deprive the oppressors of any material gain when the Aktion started.⁴

On the night of June 14–15, 1942, a squad of the Security Police from Lepel, reinforced by forces of the Gendarmerie from Wilejka and the local police, surrounded the Dzisna ghetto, which according to German records had 2,181 inhabitants. At 3:00 A.M., the sentries alerted the ghetto that an Aktion was imminent. As the Germans and their collaborators entered the ghetto, some Jews resisted, throwing stones, pieces of iron, and bottles. Jews set their houses on fire, and many tried to flee in the confusion. Some Jews swam across the river, hoping to evade the police guards posted on the banks. A number of Jews were murdered inside the ghetto as the Belorussian police searched the houses, looking for Jews in hiding and seizing any remaining property. Those who were taken alive were escorted out of town to Piaskowe Górki, where they were shot in two mass graves not far from the ghetto.⁵

In total, a few hundred Jews managed to flee to the forest. Some found hiding places with local peasants, but many were turned in or found by the local police over the following days. The Germans offered a bounty of a packet of tobacco and a kilogram (2.2 pounds) of salt as a reward to those assisting them.⁶ Some of those who escaped made their way to Głębokie, where the ghetto was still intact, and remained there until the liquidation of that ghetto in the summer of 1943. Others stayed in hiding or joined local partisan units.

On January 22, 1943, the 17 Jewish artisans who remained alive after the ghetto liquidation in Dzisna were murdered by local policemen in the building of the high school.⁷

On May 4, 1965, Alfons Bielski, the deputy commander of the Belorussian police in Rayon Dissna from 1941 to 1944, was convicted by a Polish court of taking part in the liquidation of the ghetto in Dzisna, among other crimes. He was sentenced to the death penalty, but the Supreme Court in Warsaw commuted it to life imprisonment on September 2, 1965.

SOURCES Documents dealing with the fate of Dzisna's Jewish population during the German occupation can be found in the following archives: BA-L (B 162/1390-95 [202 AR-Z 37/60]); GARF (7021-92-213); IPN-Kos (IVK 96/64); NARB (370-1-483); USHMM; and YVA.

The yizkor book for Dzisna in Hebrew and Yiddish, edited by Abraham Beilin, Dov Bernstein, and Shalom Tsirlin, *Disnab: Sefer zikaron li-kebilab* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Disnab be-Yisrael uve-Artsot ha-Berit, 1969), contains several accounts regarding the Holocaust period, including brief descriptions of life in the ghetto.

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NOTES

1. Beilin, Bernstein, and Tsirlin, *Disnab*, pp. 162, 168, 181; BA-L, B 162/1391 (202 AR-Z 37/60, vol. 2), pp. 849–851, statement of Ester Zwik, October 23, 1961.

2. Beilin, Bernstein, and Tsirlin, *Disnab*, p. 168.

3. Leonid Koval, ed., *Kniga spaseniia* (Urmala: Golfstrim, 1993), 2:303.

4. Beilin, Bernstein, and Tsirlin, *Disnab*, 168–169, 181–182.

5. *Ibid.*, pp. 169–170; NARB, 370-1-483, p. 15, report of the Gebietskommissar in Głębokie on the Jewish Aktion, July 1, 1942; see also IPN-Kos, IVK 96/64, proceedings of the Provincial Court in Koszalin, in the criminal case against Alfons Bielski.

6. Shalom Cholowsky, *The Jews of Bielorrussia during World War II* (Amsterdam: Harwood, 1998), pp. 163, 261; and Beilin, Bernstein, and Tsirlin, *Disnab*, p. 164.

7. IPN-Kos, IVK 96/64, proceedings of the Provincial Court in Koszalin, in the criminal case against Alfons Bielski; and *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (Jerusalem: Keter, 1971), 6:75.

GŁĘBOKIE

Pre-1939: Głębokie, town, Wilno województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Głubokoe, raion center, Vileika oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Głębokie, Rayon and Gebiet center, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Hlubokoe, raen center, Vitsiebsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Głębokie is located 146 kilometers (91 miles) north of Minsk. In 1939, just over 5,000 Jews resided in the town.¹

The German army arrived on July 2, 1941. During the summer, a series of German military commandant offices (Ortskommandanturen) administered the town. Each successive commandant issued new orders, including a series of anti-Jewish measures.²

After some time, the Germans ordered the establishment of a Jewish Council (Judenrat). The first head of the Judenrat was Gershon Ledermann. To prevent the arbitrary seizure of Jews from the streets, the Judenrat assumed responsibility for assigning people to forced labor in accordance with German demands. The Jewish Police rounded up Jews for work. At the work sites, German supervisors and local guards often beat and humiliated the Jews.

On August 31, 1941, authority in the region was transferred formally to a German civil administration, headed by Generalkommissar Wilhelm Kube in Minsk. In Głębokie the Gebietskommissar was Paul Hachmann, who because of illness was represented during the summer of 1942 by acting Gebietskommissar Petersen. Much of the staff of the civil administration did not arrive until November or December 1941, such that the transition from military to full civil control stretched over several months. From early 1942 until the summer of that year, the SS- und PolizeiGebietsführer in charge of the Gendarmerie in Głębokie was Wilhelm Schulz. The Gendarmerie post in Głębokie consisted of 10 to 12 Gendarmes, supported by about 50 members of the local police (Schutzmannschaft).³



Jewish men working in a carpentry shop in the Głębokie ghetto, 1941–1942.

USHMM VWS #08058, COURTESY OF KARL KATZ

The Gebietskommissar ordered the establishment of a ghetto in Głębokie on October 22, 1941. The Jews were given only half an hour to move into an area of just a few streets.⁴ The ghetto was terribly overcrowded, with several families sharing a single room; most people had to sleep on the floor. The forced relocation of many Jews provided another opportunity for neighbors to loot Jewish property. Young girls helped themselves to items the Jews were unable to take with them in their enforced haste. Local police guards obtained bribes for permitting Jews to smuggle wood into the ghetto for fuel. Non-Jews also sold food illegally at inflated prices, sometimes cheating the Jews in the process.⁵

An inspection visit to Głębokie by officials of the civil administration from Minsk in November 1941 noted that Jewish property had been inventoried and registered on lists. It went on to comment that “since Jews provide the craftsmen and other workers that are absolutely necessary, a liquidation cannot be conducted.”⁶ The ghetto was surrounded with a wooden fence and watched by armed guards.⁷ Jews were forbidden to leave the ghetto, and those that went outside to work did so under police escort. Jews were searched on returning to the ghetto, and those caught smuggling might be shot. If not, they were arrested and beaten but could be released in return for a bribe. In December 1941, the Germans murdered more than 100 male Roma (Gypsies) near Głębokie; their children were left to die of cold. At this time Jewish fugitives from other communities brought news of the massacres of Jews conducted in the region, such as in the village of Jody within Gebiet Glebokie, or in many towns in Lithuania. In the winter of 1941–1942, some Jews were moved into the Głębokie ghetto from the nearby village of Królewsczyzna.⁸

On March 25, 1942, the German Gendarmerie assisted by the local police shot 110 Jews from the ghetto. According to the *Memorial Book*, this Aktion was a reprisal taken for the uncovering of a love affair between a Jewish girl and the German Gendarmerie commander Schulz, which subsequently

led him to be charged with defiling the race (*Rassenschande*). The local police also exploited this roundup to settle old scores with some Jewish neighbors. Shortly after the Aktion, the area of the ghetto in Głębokie was reduced in size, and Jewish property was stolen from the vacated rooms. German officials and local policemen took the best houses for themselves. Around this time another 800 Jews arrived in the ghetto, including about 250 Jews from the village of Hołubicze, 18 kilometers (11 miles) to the east of Głębokie.⁹

In return for a fee, local policemen offered to warn Jews of forthcoming Aktions. When the Security Police appeared in Głębokie in May 1942, at the start of a new wave of anti-Jewish massacres in the region, the Głębokie Jews began to prepare for the worst and construct hiding places. Remaining valuables were scraped together in the hope that this bribe would encourage the SD to leave. Some 20 Jewish victims were killed as a result of this visit.¹⁰

In June 1942, the Germans established a separate “second ghetto” in Głębokie for Jews unable to work. Then on June 19, 1942, the Germans conducted an Aktion in the town. German security units and local police arrived in Głębokie and ordered all the Jews from the main ghetto to assemble on the sports field to have their work permits renewed. Here the Germans conducted a selection. Some of the Jews were sent back to the ghetto, and the others were told that they had been selected to go to another town to work. Soon, however, they found themselves being driven brutally about 1 kilometer (0.6 mile) outside of town to the Borok Forest, where the Germans and local police shot them into prepared ditches. On the next day, the Jews from the unproductive “second ghetto” shared the same fate. According to a report by the Gebietskommissar, 2,200 Jews were killed.

On July 2, the ghetto was again reduced in size, resulting in further property losses.

German reports from the summer of 1942 provide a detailed picture of the wealth officially looted from the Jewish community. Acting Gebietskommissar Petersen calculated that up to August 31, 1942, a total of 358,000 RM had been collected and transferred to the Reich Credit Bank (Reichskreditkasse) in Minsk. The main components of this income were Jewish contributions of about 200,000 RM; profits raised from the sale of clothing, livestock, and Jewish real estate; and income from Jewish labor farmed out on a contract basis, mainly to the Wehrmacht. Not included in this total were 5,875 gold rubles (in coins), almost 10 kilograms (22 pounds) of gold objects, over 112 kilograms (247 pounds) of silver coins, and 36 kilograms (79 pounds) of Polish nickel coins that were sent to the Reich Credit Bank in Riga.¹¹

From the end of May to the middle of June 1942, German forces of the Security Police in Lepel’ commanded by SS-Untersturmführer Heinz Tangermann liquidated most of the other ghettos in Gebiet Glebokie. Generalkommissar Kube noted that these forces from the Rear Area, Army Group Center (Rückwärtiges Heeresgebiet Mitte) had murdered 10,000 Jews in Gebiet Glebokie without consulting the civil administration in advance. According to Kube, this had disturbed

preparations already made by the civil administration for the systematic eradication of these Jews. During these ghetto liquidations, hundreds of Jews escaped into the surrounding forests. After the Aktions, most of the skilled craftsmen who had been kept alive were sent to the ghetto in Głębokie, which had become a major center of craft production for the Wehrmacht. The Gebietskommissar reported on July 1, 1942, that 2,200 Jews remained in the Głębokie ghetto, but this number was soon to increase considerably.¹²

In August 1942, the Głębokie Gebietskommissar spread news of an amnesty for Jews in hiding, if they surrendered and came to the Głębokie ghetto.¹³ The head of the Głębokie Judenrat, Lederman, passed this message on to Jews in hiding. As a result, hundreds of Jews came out of hiding in the forest over the ensuing weeks, especially with the onset of winter, and made their way to the Głębokie ghetto.¹⁴

Following the massacres in the summer of 1942, the remaining Jews in Głębokie were put to work in a variety of workshops. According to a report dated October 20, 1942, 1,151 Jews were working on Wehrmacht contracts in Głębokie, including more than 800 involved in knitting socks and other garments. Others worked for the civil administration. A number of Jews were engaged in salvaging Jewish property, which was collected in local warehouses. A large laundry was established to clean the clothes of victims for sale. During the sorting and washing, some Jewish workers recognized items belonging to their own relatives, such as Manya Freydkin, who found the shirt of her murdered husband, Shimon.¹⁵ The German officials stationed in Głębokie took some of the most valuable items and also much of the production of Jewish craftsmen, sending large quantities back to Germany for friends and relatives or to line their own pockets.¹⁶ Dozens of train cars left Głębokie loaded with cloth, leather, wool, footwear, knitted items, and foodstuffs packed by a special office of the Gebietskommissar.

In the fall of 1942, a few youths in the ghetto started to obtain weapons and make plans to flee to the forest. The majority of Jews opposed these preparations, fearing they

would only provoke the Germans into destroying the ghetto. Some Jews, however, felt compelled to act, such as Yakov Suchowolski, who as a teenager left the ghetto on December 22, 1942, with a group of armed friends without informing his parents. He returned two weeks later, out of fear that his family might be killed as a reprisal. Indeed, his parents were arrested and shot shortly afterwards, and he only just managed to escape from arrest himself. In the forest he joined up with other mainly Jewish partisans and conducted attacks against isolated German outposts. Suchowolski subsequently returned to the ghetto several times, aiming to train other youths to fight and lead them out into the forest. Other survivors stress that they were not aware of an armed underground inside the ghetto, as those who obtained arms fled to the forest. Nonetheless, the Germans reported encountering some armed resistance during the ghetto's liquidation in August 1943.¹⁷

The liquidation of the Głębokie ghetto does not appear to have been carefully planned but resulted instead from the desertion on August 17, 1943, of a force of 1,700 Russian volunteers (collaborators), the so-called Druschina Battalion, which was stationed around Głębokie. The deserting Druschina unit joined forces with local Soviet partisans and murdered most of the German officials in Dokszyce before attacking the railway station in Królewsczyzna, killing more than 70 Germans and collaborators altogether. The weakened German forces feared an attack on Głębokie, which might link up with the 4,000 Jews in the ghetto. Instead, the Druschina forces probably headed southeast towards Berezino, where another Druschina unit was based. This gave the German forces time to regroup and call in reinforcements. They turned their attention first to the liquidation of the ghetto to prevent the Jews from escaping and reinforcing the partisans.

In Głębokie, events unfolded very quickly. On August 19, SS men came to the Judenrat and confiscated its funds and any remaining valuables. The guard around the ghetto was dramatically increased during the night, and at 4:00 A.M. on August 20 an SS officer instructed the Judenrat that all Jews were to report in two hours to be deported to Lublin. When the Jews responded by trying to escape, a hail of bullets greeted them. The Jews then took cover in cellars and attics, and a very one-sided battle ensued in the ghetto over the following days. The German forces, assisted by the local police, tried to smoke out the Jews by setting the buildings on fire or throwing hand grenades into the cellars and hiding places. A number of Jews managed to sneak out under cover of darkness, but more than 3,000 were shot or burned alive, mostly in or close to the ghetto. Much of the town was destroyed during the ghetto's liquidation, and the manhunt for escaped Jews continued for weeks afterwards.¹⁸

Some 7,000 Jews passed through the Głębokie ghetto, stemming from at least 42 different communities. Only a small fraction survived, either by joining Jewish or Soviet partisan groups or by hiding in the forest or with non-Jews who helped to conceal them.



Jewish men make wooden shoes in the Głębokie ghetto, 1941–1942. USHMM WS #07973, COURTESY OF KARL KATZ

SOURCES Information on the Jews of Głębokie are in the following: *Memorial Book of Głębokie* [a translation into English of *Khurbn Głubok* by M. Rajak and Z. Rajak] (Buenos Aires: Association of Former Residents of Głębokie in Argentina, 1994); Martin Dean, “Die Enteignung ‘jüdischen Eigentums’ im Reichskommissariat Ostland 1941–1944,” in Irmtrud Wojak and Peter Hayes, eds., “Arisierung” im Nationalsozialismus: *Volksgemeinschaft, Raub und Gedächtnis* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2000), pp. 201–218; Jakow Suchowolskij, “Es gab weder Schutz noch Erlösung, weder Sicherheit noch Rettung. Jüdischer Widerstand und der Untergang des Ghettos Głubokojce,” *Dachauer Hefte* 20 (2004): 22–38.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (e.g., 301/25); BA-L (e.g., B 162/1390-94); GARF (7021-92-212); NARB (e.g., 370-1-481); Sta. Hannover (2 JS 388/65); USHMM (e.g., RG-02.078*01; RG-18.002M; and RG-53.002M); VHF; and YVA.

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NOTES

1. 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. 433; and *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 2nd ed. (Detroit: Thomson Gale/Keter, 2007), 7: 642–643, “Głubokoye.”
2. *Memorial Book of Głębokie*, pp. 23–40.
3. Wolfgang Benz, Konrad Kwiet, and Jürgen Matthäus, eds., *Einsatz im “Reichskommissariat Ostland”: Dokumente zum Völkermord im Baltikum und in Weissrussland 1941–44* (Berlin: Metropol, 1998), pp. 125, 137; and BA-L, B 162/1394 (202 AR-Z 37/60, vol. 5), pp. 1893–1896, statement of Bruno Weiss, August 16, 1968.
4. NARB, 845-1-206, p. 154, the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission (ChGK) report, dated March 23, 1945, states that the ghetto covered the area of Karl-Marx, Engels, Red Army, and Red Partisan Streets, but these are the names given to the streets once the Red Army had recaptured the town in 1944.
5. *Memorial Book of Głębokie*, pp. 46–51; see also Vladimir Adamushko, Galina Knat’ko, and N.A. Redkozubova, eds., “Nazi Gold” from Belarus: *Documents and Materials* (Minsk: National Archives of the Republic of Belarus, 1998), pp. 83–84, Gebietskommissar to Generalkommissar Weissruthenien, July 10, 1942.
6. USHMM, RG-53.002M, reel 11 (NARB), 370-1-55, Inspection report on visit to Głębokie on November 14, 1941.
7. BA-L, B 162/1394, pp. 1893–1896, statement of Bruno Weiss, August 16, 1968.
8. *Memorial Book of Głębokie*, pp. 44–57; NARB, 845-1-206, p. 156. The ChGK report gives a much higher figure of around 1,000 Roma murdered around Głębokie altogether. Spector and Wigoder’s *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life*, p. 679, indicates that the transfer from Królewsczyzna did not occur until April 1942.
9. *Memorial Book of Głębokie*, pp. 58–61; BA-L, B 162/1390 (202 AR-Z 37/60, vol. 1), pp. 362–446, statement of Abraam Feldscher, August 3, 1961.
10. *Memorial Book of Głębokie*, pp. 60–64; on the wave of killing in Gebiet Głębokie, see Adamushko, Knat’ko, and Redkozubova, “Nazi Gold” from Belarus, p. 75, Gebiets-

kommissar to Generalkommissar Weissruthenien, July 1, 1942.

11. Adamushko Knat’ko, and Redkozubova, “Nazi Gold” from Belarus, p. 107, Gebietskommissar Głębokie to Generalkommissar Weissruthenien, September 4, 1942, and pp. 66–67, Gebietskommissar to Generalkommissar Weissruthenien, June 22, 1942.

12. Adamushko Knat’ko, and Redkozubova, “Nazi Gold” from Belarus, p. 75, Gebietskommissar to Generalkommissar Weissruthenien, July 1, 1942; and International Military Tribunal, ed., *The Trial of the Major War Criminals before the International Military Tribunal (IMT)* [Blue Series] (Nuremberg, 1947), 32:279–281, 3428-PS, Report of Generalkommissar Kube to Reichskommissar Hinrich Lohse, July 31, 1942.

13. USHMM, Art & Artifacts, Acc.1998.89, “Survival in German-occupied Poland,” p. 46; and Szmereke Kaczerginski, *Hurbn Vilne: Umkum fun di Yidn in Vilne un Vilner gegnt . . . : Zamlung fun eydus: Bavayzn oder dokumentn* (New York: Aroysgegebn fun dem fareyniktn Vilner hilfs-komitet in Nyu-York durkh Tsiko bikher-farlag, 1947), p. 155.

14. BA-L, B 162/1390, pp. 362–426, testimony of Schabtai Edelmann (aka Estrow), August 14, 1961. See also AŻIH, 302/47, diary of Yitzhak Aron.

15. *Memorial Book of Głębokie*, p. 94.

16. *Ibid.*, pp. 94–100.

17. Suchowolskij, “Es gab weder Schutz noch Erlösung,” pp. 29–32; BA-L, B 162/1391, p. 918, statement of Miriam Chanciska, and p. 968, statement of Chlawne Gellersztejn, November 25, 1962.

18. *Memorial Book of Głębokie*, pp. 120–130; Suchowolskij, “Es gab weder Schutz noch Erlösung,” pp. 32–35; and NARB, 370-1-481, Report of August 22, 1943. Survivor accounts recall the ghetto being bombed from the air, but the German report notes rather that one week earlier aircraft bearing German insignia had circled for a while before bombing the monastery where the German police had their headquarters.

GRÓDEK WILEŃSKI

Pre-1939: Gródek, town, Mołodeczno powiat, Wilno województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Gorodok, Radoszkowichi raion, Vileika oblast’, Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Gorodok, Rayon Radoszkowitschi, Gebiet Wilejka, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Haradok, Maladziechna raen, Minsk voblasts’, Republic of Belarus

Gródek is located about 45 kilometers (28 miles) northwest of Minsk. At the time of the German occupation, there were about 150 Jewish families (about 1,000 Jews) residing in the town.

Units of the German army entered Gródek in early July 1941. Initially a German military commandant’s office was responsible for administering the area. At the end of August, a civil administration was established, and Gródek became part of Rayon Radoschkowitschi in Gebiet Wilejka. The German Gebietskommissar in Wilejka was Kreisobmann Schmidt. In the fall of 1941, a local Gendarmerie post was established in Gródek, which also took over the local Belorussian police force. The local mayor was a man named Producha.¹



Group portrait of students and teachers at the Hebrew language Tarbut school in Gródek, May 1928. The children hold Hebrew signs with motifs of sayings from the sages.

USHMM WS #28973, COURTESY OF FANYA SZUSTER PORTNOY

In the summer of 1941, the newly established local Belorussian police arrested several former officials of the Soviet village council, who were then shot in the town's old castle. This event was witnessed by some of the town's Jews.² The Germans also established a Judenrat to implement their orders. Its chairman was Ephraim Recki; the other members were Nachman Swirski, Isaak Bunimowicz, Szmajohu Cukerman, and Chanan Moszkowski.³ The Judenrat assigned Jews to work on constructing a barracks for the German forces, felling trees, and railroad construction work. In the fall of 1941, on the orders of Gebietskommissar Schmidt, the Jews were requested to surrender items of value, such as watches, furs, money, 2,000 suits of clothes, and bed linen. The Judenrat tried its best to fulfill these demands, collecting the items from the Jews, in the hope of appeasing the German authorities with the aid of bribes. There was also a Jewish police force, which protected the inmates of the ghetto and did not cooperate with the Gestapo.⁴

There were some individual shootings of Jews, but unlike many neighboring communities, there was no large-scale massacre in the summer or fall of 1941.

The Germans established a ghetto on March 13, 1942, which was surrounded by a barbed-wire fence.⁵ The ghetto was based around the two red-brick synagogues. The Jews were all concentrated in about 20 old homes near the two synagogues.

On hearing of the massacres in other nearby towns, a group of 7 Jews from Gródek, including Yehuda Adelman and Gershon Zofeh, prepared a dugout in the forest nearby and intended to slip through the barbed-wire fence to hide there when they suspected the SS was coming to liquidate the ghetto. In May 1942 the German authorities transferred about 50 local Jews to the nearby town of Mołodeczno to work at a new radio station.⁶

At the beginning of June 1942 a German official humiliated the Jews by harnessing Rabbi Moshe and two other Jews to a wagon and making them pull other Jews through the streets of the town. The Germans and Belorussians mocked them as they passed by.⁷

Two days later the Germans began the liquidation of the ghetto; 20 trucks with several squads of police, led by Gebietskommissar Schmidt, arrived. They screamed "Juden! Raus!"

and combed the town for Jews. The Jews were collected together in the park between the two synagogues, next to the deep well where the Jews fetched their water.

There was a selection, and healthy men were sent to the right; the others, mostly women, children, and the elderly, were sent to the left. The people were ordered to get into the trucks and were crammed together with about 50 or 60 others. It was announced that they would be transferred to Krasne for forced labor. Small children were not all loaded onto the trucks; some were simply killed by being thrown into the well. Among a group of 20 people who were in hiding, a baby began to cry, and one of them suffocated the child to prevent the group from being captured by the SS.

Some of the men noticed that the trucks behind them with the women and children turned off to the right into the forest. They suspected that they would all be killed, and Michael Lidski shouted: "Let us jump! Let us at least die resisting!" More than 50 Jews leaped from the trucks and ran into the forests. The German forces pursued them, killing some and recapturing others; but according to Adelman, 36 young men got away, disappearing into the forest.⁸ The remaining people capable of work (about 400) were transferred to the ghetto and labor camp in Krasne. The 700 or so women and children were locked in a barn that was set on fire, and any that attempted to escape the flames were shot. Local peasants buried the corpses. A Jew, Fivle Saposhnik, who returned to the ghetto briefly at night from the Mołodeczno labor camp later in June, found that it was like a ghost town with the smell of burned human flesh.⁹ The Germans left 15 Jewish specialist workers alive at the time of the massacre, but they murdered them all as well two months later.¹⁰

More than 50 Jews from Gródek served in the Soviet partisan movement, and a number survived the war. Some, like Lazar Chazanovsky, remained in the forests after their escape at the time of the massacre, while others joined the partisans from the Krasne labor camp. Among the units they served in was one commanded by Colonel Kuznetsov. In early 1943, Jews from Gródek were involved in a partisan attack on the German garrison in the town, killing several of their enemies.

SOURCES Yehuda Adelman's memoir *Heroes without Medals* (New York: Vantage, 1983) provides information on the fates of a number of survivors from Gródek. In spite of some serious weaknesses—for example, blaming Nazi Germany for the Katyn massacre of Polish officers committed by the Soviet authorities—this volume also serves as a kind of Memorial Book for the Gródek community.

Documentation on the Gródek ghetto can be found in the following archives: BA-L (B 162/1473 [II 202 AR-Z 5/60, vol. 43]); and YVA (M-9/1194).

Martin Dean

NOTES

1. BA-L, ZStI 202 AR 629/73, vol. 3, pp. 393, 409, lists five members of the Gendarmerie in Gródek: Brose, Fischer, Stehling, Strauss, and Winkler. Among the members of the local police were men named Kolysko and Smolsky; see also Adel-

1220 WEISSRUTHENIEN REGION

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: BA-L; GARF (7021-89-7); IPN (SWP 68); NARB; USHMM (e.g., RG-22.002M); VHF (# 6987, 9348, and 43618); and YVA.

Samuel Fishman and Monika Tomkiewicz
trans. Katrin Reichelt

NOTES

1. Bar-Ratzon, *Ner tamid*, pp. 276, 285.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 273, 275, 278.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 327–328, 331, 386; *Unsere Ebre beisst Treue: Kriegstagebuch des Kommandostabes Reichsführer SS* (Vienna: Europa, 1984), pp. 247–249, SS-Usscharf. Lipps Aussenstelle Wilejka an Burgdorf, May 27, 1942; and GARF, 7021-89-7, pp. 99 and reverse side.
4. Bar-Ratzon, *Ner tamid*, pp. 327–352; GARF, 7021-89-7, pp. 99 and reverse side; verdict of the Bochum District Court 7 Ks Js 3/61; and IPN, SWP 68, Case against Michał Siemaszkiewicz.
5. Bar-Ratzon, *Ner tamid*, pp. 394–403; VHF, # 43618, testimony of Helene Burt (née Chasia Kacowicz), born 1930; # 9348, testimony of Aileen Frydrych (née Chaja Rabinowicz), born 1931; and # 6987, testimony of Jerry Kaidanow, born 1933.
6. VHF, # 343618, testimony of Helene Burt (née Chasia Kacowicz), born 1930; GARF, 7021-89-7, pp. 99 and reverse side; 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. 686.

LACHOWICZE

Pre-1939: Lachowicze, town, Nowogródek województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Liakhovichi, raion center, Baranovich oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Lachowitschi, Rayon center, Gebiet Baranowitsche, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Liakhovichi, raen center, Bernas'tse voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Lachowicze is located 20 kilometers (12.5 miles) southeast of Baranowicze. At the time of the German occupation, there were more than 3,000 Jewish inhabitants in the town, swelled by an influx of refugees fleeing from central and western Poland.

German forces occupied the town at the end of June 1941 and were welcomed by the local Polish population. Shortly after their arrival, the Germans selected some of the most respected Jewish citizens and murdered them. A few days later, 82 Jews were killed in a pogrom.¹ During the summer, the German military authorities established a Jewish Council (Judenrat) to pass on their instructions and made all the Jews wear armbands to distinguish them from the rest of the population. The Germans also forbade the Jews to trade with the non-Jewish population or to use the sidewalks.

Initially, a local military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur) administered the town, but in the fall of 1941, a

Gendarmerie post was established and authority was assumed by a German civil administration. The Gendarmerie officials who commanded the outpost in Lachowicze in 1941 and 1942 were successively Meisters Reinhold Hein (October 1941), Lustig (November 1941–August 1942), Wille (born 1897), and then Meier.²

At the end of October or the beginning of November 1941, the German police, assisted by Baltic auxiliaries brought in especially, as well as local Belorussian police commanded by a certain Mashkovskii, surrounded the town and began dragging the Jews out of their homes and marching them to an assembly point in front of the Gendarmerie post. Here some specialist workers were selected, and the rest were escorted away and shot in pits just outside the town, near the village of Łotwa. After this, the German security forces and their collaborators started to search for any Jews in hiding. Those who were found were also taken away and shot. By the evening, the shooting had stopped and officially only 280 Jews (the craftsmen and their families) remained. Over the following days, however, many more Jews came out of hiding, and gradually the number of survivors grew to around 1,000.³

On the day after the massacre, the Germans established a ghetto. The ghetto, located in the poorest quarter near the center of town, consisted of the synagogue courtyard (“Schulhof”) and part of “Veinger Gas” (after the war this was the site of a canning factory). It was enclosed by a fence erected by the Jews themselves and guarded by the local Belorussian police. Inside the ghetto there was terrible overcrowding and almost no food. The Jews in the ghetto worked hard in various workshops. Their only payment was 100 grams (3.5 ounces) of bread per day. To supplement this, they exchanged their remaining clothes for food, but if they were caught, they were whipped in punishment.⁴

One Friday in June 1942, there was a second Aktion in Lachowicze, during which all but about 300 Jews were shot. According to various survivor accounts, the Jews themselves set fire to the ghetto during the second Aktion to make it more difficult for the Germans to search for those in hiding. The Jews received very little assistance from the local population.⁵ The Aktions against the ghettos in Gebiet Baranowitsche in the summer of 1942 were organized by the office of the Security Police and SD based in Baranowicze. In the summer of 1942, this office was commanded by SS-Untersturmführer Woldemar Amelung, who was closely assisted by the Lithuanian Józef Górniewicz.⁶

After the second Aktion, Mendel Szczupak realized that the end was near and became a member of a group of 11 Jews who began preparing their escape. Shortly afterwards they fled the ghetto, with 8 of them reaching the forests. The escapees soon made contact with a group of 25 Soviet partisans, but its leader did not accept them, as they had no arms. They were then joined by 3 more escapees from Lachowicze and linked up with the “Shchors” Soviet partisan unit, which had more than 1,000 members, including a large Jewish contingent of 130 people. The Jewish partisans fought bravely, killing some Germans and engaging in sabotage. Several of them were

killed in action and received posthumous decorations as Heroes of the Soviet Union. Most of the Jewish partisans joined the Red Army after the liberation of Lachowicze in the summer of 1944.⁷ Only a handful of the Jews held in the Lachowicze ghetto survived the war.

SOURCES Some information on the ghetto and the fate of the Jewish population of Lachowicze can be found in the *yizkor* book edited by Yisra'el Rubin, Nisan Tuktsinski, and Avraham Lev, *Labovits, sefer zikaron* (Tel Aviv, 1948–1949).

The Soviet Extraordinary State Commission (ChGK) reports for Lachowicze and other relevant documents can be found in the following archives: NARB and GARF. Jewish survivor testimonies can be found in AUKGBRBBO; AŽIH; BLH (HJF, L.1794); USHMM (RG-50.120*0066); and YVA. Information from criminal investigations and trials can be found in AUKGBRBBO; BA-L; and IPN.

Martin Dean

NOTES

1. Rubin, Tuktsinski, and Lev, *Labovits, sefer zikaron*, p. 316. There were several Aktions conducted against the Jews of Lachowicze during the summer of 1941; see also, for example, NARA, T-175, reel 233, Ereignismeldung UdSSR no. 50, August 12, 1941, which reported the shooting of 22 “communists” in Lachowicze.

2. Sta. Oldenburg 2 JS 138/68, Closing Report (Einstellungsverfügung) in the case against Max Eibner, pp. 182–187.

3. AŽIH, 301/49, testimony of Mendel Szczupak. *Ibid.*, see especially the testimony of local policeman Stepan Mikhailovich Tschernak, who was tried by the Soviets after the war.

4. AŽIH, 301/49, testimony of Mendel Szczupak; Rubin, Tuktsinski, and Lev, *Labovits, sefer zikaron*, p. 316; USHMM, RG-50.120*0066, testimony of Nechama Hochbaum.

5. YVA, M-1/Q/2378/569, testimony of Segal on August 8, 1948; M-1/Q/1858/399, testimony of Zalman Rabinowicz on July 11, 1947.

6. Rubin, Tuktsinski, and Lev, *Labovits, sefer zikaron*, pp. 334–337, includes an account of the postwar trial of Józef Górniewicz in Poland, mentioning his role in organizing the massacre of Jews in Lachowicze and other towns. See also IPN, SoWr 67. Górniewicz was executed in Poland on November 26, 1947.

7. AŽIH, 301/49, testimony of Mendel Szczupak.

LEBIEDZIEW

Pre-1939: Lebedziew, village, Mołodeczno powiat, Wilno województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Lebedevo, Molodechno raion, Vileika oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Lebedziew, Rayon Molodetschno, Gebiet Wilejka, Generalkommissariat Weissrutbenien; post-1991: Lebedzeva, Maladzechna raen, Minsk voblasts, Republic of Belarus

Lebedziew is located 75 kilometers (47 miles) northwest of Minsk. In 1897, there were 1,232 Jews residing in the small town, comprising 54.2 percent of the total population.

German forces occupied Lebedziew in the last days of June 1941. Towards the end of October, the German authorities established a ghetto there, also bringing in Jews from the surrounding villages. According to the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission (ChGK), the ghetto was on Zarichanskaia and Vileiskaia Streets, and about 600 Jews were confined within it.¹ A fence enclosed the ghetto, and the Jews were prohibited from leaving without permission. Inside the ghetto, the Jews suffered from overcrowding and hunger. However, some food was smuggled in illegally, when Jews managed to obtain it in exchange for money or their last possessions from the surrounding villages. All Jews over the age of 14 were required to perform forced labor. One day in December 1941, SS men from Mołodeczno entered the ghetto and arrested 15 young Jews, who were then taken away and murdered. The Germans made a series of demands for contributions from the Jewish Council, which continued until the Jews in the ghetto had almost nothing left.²

On June 24, 1942,³ a detachment of the Security Police from Wilejka, accompanied by a platoon of Waffen-SS, set out in the early morning hours for Lebedziew. The vehicles arrived at the market square, and SS-Obersturmführer Rudolf Grave gave instructions for the Jews to be removed from their homes and assembled on the square near the ghetto gate. Wearing black uniforms, local policemen also took part in the Aktion. As the Jews were driven out of their houses, the police shot those who were ill or infirm and those who tried to resist. After the majority of the Jews were assembled, the corpses of several young Jews found in hiding or shot trying to escape were collected and taken to a barn outside Lebedziew. Then the Germans escorted the other young Jews into the Nieważa River and held them there for half an hour to impede any further escape attempts. Then these Jews were brought back to join the others and formed into a marching column. It is likely that Grave, as head of the Wilejka SD outpost, informed the Jews that they would be sent away to work and could take with them only very few belongings.

At 11:00 A.M., the Germans drove the Jews out to the northwest towards the village of Marków to a point only a short distance from the barn, where the young Jews' bodies had been taken. About 50 meters (55 yards) from the barn, the Jews were corralled into a group guarded by the police. Then smaller groups of Jews were escorted into the barn. The Germans killed the Jews there with single shots to the head. At the end, gasoline was poured over the pile of bodies, and the barn was set on fire. As the wooden building was burning, a Jew ran out in his burning clothes, trying to save himself. On Grave's orders, several policemen shot him.⁴ At least 500 Jews were murdered in this Aktion.

Some Jews managed to hide successfully and subsequently escaped into the woods. Afterwards, the Germans also burned the ghetto houses. In December 1943, the Germans murdered 25 Jews who had been uncovered and betrayed by local inhabitants. When the Red Army drove the Germans from the region in the summer of 1944, only a few Jews from Lebedziew remained alive.⁵

1222 WEISSRUTHENIEN REGION

In 1979, the court in Bochum sentenced Georg Johann Hasenkamp to four years in prison but decided not to punish Josef Lengl. Both men had been accused of participation in the murder of the Jews in Lebedziew, among other crimes.⁶

SOURCES Published sources on the Jewish community of Lebedziew include Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Bialystok, Nowogrodek* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 374–376.

Information on the fate of the Jewish population of Lebedziew during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-89-9); and LG-Bo (7 Ks 45 Js 3/61).

Monika Tomkiewicz and Martin Dean
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NOTES

1. GARF, 7021-89-9, pp. 29–34.
2. Spector and Freundlich, *Pinkas ha-kehillot*, 8:374–376.
3. This is the date given by the ChGK; see GARF, 7021-89-9, pp. 29–34.
4. LG-Bo, 7 Ks 45 Js 3/61; see also Wolfgang Curilla, *Die deutsche Ordnungspolizei und der Holocaust im Baltikum und in Weissrussland 1941–1944* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2006), pp. 490–491.
5. Spector and Freundlich, *Pinkas ha-kehillot*, 8:374–376.
6. Marat Botvinnik, *Pamiatniki genotsida evreev Belarusi* (Minsk: Belaruskaja Navuka, 2000), p. 89; and LG-Bo, 7 Ks 45 Js 3/61, verdict of April 11, 1979, pp. 74–76.

LENIN

Pre-1939: Lenin, town, Łuniniec powiat, województwo poleskie, Poland; 1939–1941: raion center, Pinsk oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Rayon center, Gebiet Hansewitschi, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Zhytkavichy raen, Homel' voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Lenin is located 94 kilometers (58 miles) east-northeast of Pinsk. The name “Lenin” derives from the last name of the former estate owner, Count Olel’kovich (1586), and is not related to the pseudonym of the Communist revolutionary V.I. Ul’ianov (Lenin).¹ In early 1941, including refugees from Poland, around 2,000 Jews resided in Lenin. Little thought was given to evacuating the town, even though people were aware of Germany’s persecution of the Jews. Most people wanted to believe that the Red Army would stop and destroy the “Hitlerite army.” Only a few Jews succeeded in fleeing, as the Soviet border guards did not allow people across the former “western” border, fearing the infiltration of German spies.²

German forces occupied Lenin by mid-July 1941. Many local Belorussian and Polish inhabitants from Lenin and the neighboring villages enlisted in the Red Army. The “local bandit” Boris Gergelikhes, was appointed commander of the police. The mayor of Lenin was an ethnic German named Max Firschenhaupt. His deputy was his son-in-law, Olishevskii.

By the end of July 1941, the Nazis had issued instructions for the Jews of Lenin to wear yellow badges on their clothes, and they were forbidden to communicate with the local Belorussians, Poles, and Russians. They were subjected to a curfew and also a blackout at night, were forbidden to walk on the sidewalk, and had to take off their hats when meeting a German or a local policeman. If they disobeyed these regulations, they could be shot. A Judenrat was established, headed by Aron Milner (chairman), including Itshak Kolpenitsky, Joseph Rubinshtein, and others. The Judenrat was ordered to keep track of the Jews in Lenin and to ensure that German instructions were carried out. The Nazis demanded contributions from the Jews in the form of food, warm clothes, crockery, bedclothes, money, and valuables. For disobeying the regulations, Jews were beaten, fined, and given other punishments.³

The Germans made the Jews reconstruct the destroyed bridges within four days, under the direction of Yankel Krevitsa. As they were forced to work, their supervisors cursed them with shouts of “Damned Jews!” More than 100 Jews were assigned to repair the roads to Mikaszewicz and Zhitkovichi, 15 people worked in the hospital, another group cleaned the



Pre-war photograph of Faigel (Fanya) Lazebnik (later Faye Schulman), a survivor of the Lenin ghetto, holding her nephew Schelemale. USHMM WS #56404, COURTESY OF FAYE SCHULMAN

area around the gmina building, and Jewish girls had to clean the houses for the German occupants and local inhabitants. In the winter, Jews were also forced to shovel snow. Those who were too slow were kicked and beaten with sticks.

Apart from these impositions, however, Firschenhaupt helped the Jews to avoid worse problems. He convinced the initial military commandant that the Jews were needed—on account of their labor and their willingness to follow commands—and this may have contributed to the postponement of large Aktions against the Jews.

Just before Passover (at the end of March) 1942, 60 young men and adolescents from Lenin were sent to the Jewish forced labor camp in Hancewicze. On May 21, all men capable of work and aged 14 to 60 years (150 people) were collected near the club on Lachovskaia Street and taken on foot to the railroad station at Mikaszewicze. There the Jews were herded into a cattle yard. The following day, they were transported in railroad cars to Hancewicze, guarded by 10 policemen. Nobody escaped, as the Nazis threatened to kill the families of anyone who tried.⁴ According to other sources, 230 Jews from Lenin and 120 from Pohost Zahorodski arrived in Hancewicze, where they performed forced labor in a German army camp.⁵

Often the Nazis and local police forced the Jews to give them “contributions” and surrender their valuables. When the daughter of Olishevskii wanted a fur jacket, the Judenrat scoured Jewish houses until they found what she wanted. Gergelikhes helped himself from Jewish houses, also taking vodka and tobacco. Frequently, Germans and policemen visited the Jews to rob them. In the fall of 1941, two young Germans regularly plundered the Jews of the town, killing people arbitrarily.

On one occasion, the Judenrat was ordered to collect 50 sets of male and female clothing to outfit a group of Belorussian youths being sent to Germany to work. In the fall of 1941, the Germans also confiscated all the Jews’ livestock—horses, cows, sheep, goats, and poultry—making it even harder for them to feed themselves.⁶ Following rumors that a ghetto might be established, people tried to hoard whatever food supplies they could get, especially flour and grain.

On May 10, 1942, the Nazis enclosed the Jews within a ghetto.⁷ On moving into the ghetto, Jews were permitted to take only those items they could carry in their arms. Most of the ghetto consisted of Jewish homes, in which now two or three families lived per room. The inmates constructed bunk beds to sleep on, three or four levels high. A high barbed-wire fence, hung between wooden poles driven into the ground, surrounded the ghetto. The local police guarded the perimeter.

The Germans also resettled about 150 Jews from the surrounding villages, such as Chorostów, Hryczynowicze, Grabów (32 kilometers [20 miles] north-northeast of Lenin), and Milewicze (24 kilometers [15 miles] in the same direction), into the ghetto, including about 60 women and young children from the village of Wolka (48 kilometers [30 miles] to the west), whose husbands and older children had been sent to the Łuniniec ghetto. Food and accommodation for the new arrivals were organized by the Judenrat. Generally, each person helped his neighbor as much as he could.

The ghetto in Lenin, like many others in Belorussia, had only limited economic significance. Its main function was to concentrate the Jews and hold them securely until their extermination. Food supplies and medical assistance were organized by the Judenrat. Ghetto inmates received daily rations of only about 100 grams (3.5 ounces) of bread and a soup made from potato peels. Once the ghetto was created, it became almost impossible to trade valuables for food with the locals as before, though the workers who went outside daily occasionally brought in some potatoes or flour concealed in their clothes.⁸

By August 1942, the Nazis had collected about 1,850 Jews from the surrounding area in the Lenin ghetto. The majority consisted of the elderly, women, and children. A month before the Aktion, the Jews were ordered to prepare a ditch at the place known as Ogarkov, a small hill in the town’s suburbs in the direction of Hancewicze. There were repeated roll calls early in the morning, during which those who were found in hiding were shot.

The mass killing was conducted on August 14, 1942. Policemen in black uniforms, including some Lithuanians, arrived early in the morning. The ghetto inmates were told they would be relocated to Hancewicze. About 25 skilled workers, including the photographer Fanya Lazebnik, who was recognized by Gebietskommissar Müller personally, were selected and locked inside the synagogue. The elderly and children were placed in trucks and taken to a hill near Polusciewicze. The others were escorted there on foot. While walking, some Jews threw their gold objects—rings, earrings, and gold coins—into the river, to prevent the Germans from having them. At the Polusciewicze Hill, a ditch had been prepared. The people were ordered to undress down to their underwear. Their clothes were thrown into the trucks. The women had their children taken from them. Then, in groups of 10 to 15, the people were forced to the edge of the ditch and shot.⁹

After the “mass killing” of August 14, 28 Jews were kept alive in Lenin to work for the Germans as tailors, shoemakers, builders, and photographers. Lubov Rabinovich was ordered to train a group of Belorussian apprentices to take over his trade within one month.

A German garrison of 100 people and 30 local policemen was based in Lenin, fighting against the Soviet partisans. An attack was planned by the “Kalinin” unit, assisted by two neighboring units (in total, about 150 people). On September 12, 1942, the partisans inflicted heavy losses on the garrison, apparently killing three German officers (including commandant Grossman), 14 soldiers, and 13 policemen. The ghetto quarter was burned down. The remaining Jews fled to the woods with the partisans.

After the liberation, Lenin was not the same. Only a few brick buildings remained. This was due to heavy fighting between the partisans and the German garrison as the town exchanged hands. In Pinsk, several Nazi collaborators from Lenin were tried. Boris Gergelikhes was given the most severe sentence, and Ivan and Nester Chopchits, Babchenkov, and Kolbasov all received 10 years in prison.

SOURCES Firsthand accounts of the ghetto and the fate of Lenin's Jews can be found in the yizkor book edited by Moshe Tamari, *Kebilat Lenin: Sefer Zikaron* (Tel Aviv: Former Residents of Lenin in Israel and USA, 1957); in the memoir of Faye Schulman, *Die Schreie meines Volkes in mir: Wie ich als jüdische Partisanin den Holocaust überlebte* (Munich: Lichtenberg, 1998), also available in English as *A Partisan's Memoir: Woman of the Holocaust* (Toronto, Ontario: Second Story Press, 1995); and in L. Bakal and Z. Tsukerman, eds., *Poslednie svideteli* (Moscow, 2002), pp. 210–257.

Additional information on the Jewish community of Lenin and the memorial sites can be found in L. Smilovitsky, "Lenin in Belarus," *Mishpokha* (Vitebsk), no. 10 (2001): 55–58; *Pamiat': Istoriko-dokumental'naiia khronika gorodov Belorussii. Zhitkovichskii raion* (Minsk, 1994); and Marat Botvinnik, *Pamiatniki genotsida evreev Belarusi* (Minsk: Belaruskaiia Navuka, 2000).

In the author's own personal archive, there are letters received from Boris Ginsburg in 2001 and 2004, from Michael Menkin in 2000 and 2004, and also from Khana Slutsky in 2004. The statement of Jakob Epstein given to the German investigative authorities can be found in BA-L (B 162, 202 AR 932/65).

Leonid Smilovitsky and Martin Dean

NOTES

1. In the Slutsk raion, the village of Romanovo was renamed Lenino after the revolution, as its former name was reminiscent of the tsarist family.

2. Smilovitsky, "Lenin in Belarus," pp. 55–58.

3. See the account of Mordechai Zeytski in Tamari, *Kebilat Lenin*.

4. Bakal and Tsukerman, *Poslednie svideteli*, pp. 223–230.

5. *Pamiat'*, pp. 361–362.

6. PALS, letter of Boris Ginsburg from Ashdod, June 1, 2004.

7. The date of May 10, 1942, is given both by Zeytski in Tamari, *Kebilat Lenin*, and by Schulman, *Die Schreie meines Volkes*, p. 84.

8. Zeytski in Tamari, *Kebilat Lenin*.

9. Schulman, *Die Schreie meines Volkes*, pp. 95–96. Fanya Lazebnik later changed her name to Faye Schulman. There is also a photograph of the mass grave at the time of the killing on page 98.

LENINO

Pre-1941: Lenino, village, Slutsk raion, Minsk oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Rayon and Gebiet Sluzk, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Lenina, Slutsk raen, Minsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Lenino is located about 20 kilometers (12.5 miles) west of Slutsk. Until 1917, the village was known as Romanovo. German armed forces occupied the settlement at the end of June 1941. Owing to the rapid German advance, only a few Jews were able to evacuate to the east. Fewer than 100 Jews remained in Lenino at the start of the occupation.

Initially, a German military administration (Ortskommandantur) ran the settlement. In September 1941, authority

was transferred to a German civil administration. Lenino was incorporated into Rayon Sluzk in Gebiet Sluzk, within Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien. The Gebietskommissar in Slutsk from the fall of 1941 was Gauamtsleiter Heinrich Carl.¹

Immediately after the occupation of the settlement, the Ortskommandantur ordered the registration and marking of the Jews and compelled them to perform various forms of forced labor. In late July 1941, all the Jews of the village and from the surrounding area, about 100 people, were resettled into a ghetto located on one street that led to the cemetery. Local police guarded the ghetto, which was surrounded by barbed wire on one side and enclosed by a river and a swamp on the other. After some time, 20 more people were added, bringing the ghetto population to 120.

The Germans ordered the establishment of a Jewish Council (Judenrat), which was headed by an ardent Zionist. The winter of 1941–1942 was very harsh. Forced labor tasks included clearing snow from the streets. Conditions in the ghetto were very overcrowded, with 15 or 16 people sharing a single room. Generally people helped each other, but there were some who starved. In the ghetto, some old men who were very religious spent much of their time praying.²

There was a Jewish female doctor in the ghetto. Despite a lack of medication, she did her utmost to prevent the spread of disease. The Jews in the ghetto heard rumors about massacres in other nearby towns, but there were no large-scale shootings in Lenino through the spring of 1942. In late May or early June, Grigorii Dorskii, who was about 20 years old, left the ghetto with his sister (the doctor) and escaped through the swamps to join the partisans. They left their mother behind, as she decided that she had to remain and look after her young nephew.

On June 12, 1942, the Germans and local police shot the remaining 70 or so Jews (mostly women, children, and the elderly) in pits that had been prepared 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) to the east of the village. A memorial was placed at the site of the mass grave in 1985.³

SOURCES The main sources for this entry are the video testimony of Grigorii Dorskii in USHMM (RG-50.378*0008) 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. 722. Other relevant documentation can be found in NARB (845-1-60, p. 43). Snippets of information on the history of the Jewish community of Lenino (Romanove) can be found in Nachum Chinitz and Samson Nachmani, eds., *Pinkas Slutsk u-be-noteha* (Tel Aviv: Yizkor Book Committee, 1962), pp. 488–489.

Martin Dean

NOTES

1. BA-BL, BDC, SSHO 2432, Organisationsplan der besetzten Ostgebiete nach dem Stand vom 10. März 1942, hg. vom Chef der Ordnungspolizei, Berlin, March 13, 1942.

2. USHMM, RG-50.378*0008, video testimony of Grigorii A. Dorskii, born 1922.

3. *Ibid.*; Spector and Wigoder, *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life*, p. 722; and Marat Botvinnik, *Pamiatniki genotsida evreev*

Belarusi (Minsk: Belaruskaja Navuka, 2000), pp. 78, 91. NARB, 845-1-60, p. 43, gives the figure of more than 140 victims.

LEŚNA

Pre-1939: Leśna, town, Baranowicze powiat, Nowogródek województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Lesnaia, Baranovichi oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Lesnaja, Rayon Nowa Mysz, Gebiet Baranowitsche, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Liasnaia, Baranovichy raen, Beras'tse voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Leśna lies about 30 kilometers (18.6 miles) southwest of Baranowicze. According to the survivor Sarah Trybuch, née Ozerowicz, who fled to Leśna from Konin in 1939, there were about 70 Jews, including a number of refugees, living in Leśna at the start of the German occupation at the end of June 1941. She and her family found themselves confined within a ghetto surrounded by a wire fence that was established at some time before the end of 1942. It was guarded by armed members of the local Belorussian police, who were commanded by Ivan Jurkiewich.¹ Only those Jews who were made to perform heavy forced labor were permitted to leave the ghetto. The Jews were employed in the local sawmill and at the tar factory. The Jews were escorted to work under close guard by the local police, and the work was unpaid.² The Germans also established a large camp for Soviet prisoners of war in the town, as it lay on a main railway line.³

The ghetto prisoners managed to eat only by selling their last possessions and using their last reserves of food. News reached the ghetto of the liquidation Aktions in the nearby towns but also of the existence of partisans in the surrounding forests. Only those with no family even thought of fleeing to join the partisans. Without any weapons there would be little chance of survival. One day in February 1943, when there was a severe frost, the men came back from work and reported that large graves had been prepared in the forest about 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) from the ghetto. The ghetto inmates now became resigned to their fate.⁴

On March 13, 1943, local policemen from throughout Rayon Nowa Mysz and German police took part in the mass shooting of about 70 Jews in Leśna. In the morning the German forces and local police surrounded the ghetto and also the Jewish workers at the sawmill. They drove them out of the houses with whips, accompanied by screams of abuse and terrible crying. The Jews were loaded onto vehicles and driven away under close guard to the forest, where the German forces shot them. After the shooting, the head of the local police, Jurkiewich, assisted by the policeman Józef Puszeko, returned to the ghetto and collected the Jews' belongings, taking them to the police station.⁵ Sarah Trybuch escaped to the forests with her two-year-old daughter Miriam, having survived the roundup hidden behind a broken-down door. She soon met up with a Soviet partisan unit that helped them both to survive until liberation by the Red Army in July 1944.⁶

In July 1972 the Polish Supreme Court upheld the sentences imposed on Waclaw Woronko and Józef Puszeko of

seven years and five years and six months' imprisonment, respectively, for their participation in the murder of the Jews in Leśna in March 1943, among other crimes.⁷

SOURCES The testimony of Sarah Trybuch, née Ozerowicz, is located in the yizkor book for Konin, edited by Mendl Gelbart, *Kehilat Konin bi-feribatab uve-burbanab* (Tel Aviv: Irgun Yotse Konin be-Yi sra'el, 1968), pp. 628–641. An English summary translation of parts of the testimony and the details of his own interview with Trybuch can be found in Theo Richmond, *Konin: A Quest* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1995), pp. 307–315.

Relevant documentation concerning the German occupation of Leśna and from investigations into the Nazi crimes committed there can be found in the following archives: GABO (e.g., 685-1-83); IPN (SWSz 69-78 and SWB 238-39); and NARB (861-1-1).

Martin Dean

NOTES

1. GABO, 685-1-83, p. 7, police roster for the Leśna post, undated (1942 or 1943).
2. Sarah Trybuch, née Ozerowicz, "Yidishe partizanen," in Gelbart, *Kehilat Konin*, pp. 628–641; IPN, SWSz 69-78, verdict of the Supreme Court in the case of Waclaw Woronko and Jozef Puszeko on July 13, 1972.
3. NARB, 861-1-1, pp. 1–2.
4. Trybuch, "Yidishe partizanen," p. 630.
5. IPN, SWSz 69-78, Woronko and Puszeko verdict; SWSz 71, pp. 534–536, statement of Alfons Siewruk on July 12, 1969.
6. Richmond, *Konin*, pp. 307–311.
7. IPN, SWSz 69-78, Woronko and Puszeko verdict, July 13, 1972.

LIDA

Pre-1939: Lida, town and powiat center, Nowogródek województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: raion center, Baranovichi oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Rayon and Gebiet center, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Lida, raen center, Hrodna voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Lida is located 160 kilometers (99 miles) west of Minsk. In 1941, the Jewish population of Lida numbered about 8,500.

German forces entered Lida on June 28, 1941. On July 5, 1941, Security Police units of Einsatzkommando 9, subordinated to Einsatzgruppe B, collected about 300 Jews in the school, selected 92 educated Jews, escorted them to a site about 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) outside of town, and shot them.¹ On July 8, 1941, 120 patients from the psychiatric hospitals in Minojty and Maleikovshchina near Lida were murdered, including the well-known physician Dr. Rubinovich.

From mid-August of 1941, the German troops based in Lida comprised the 3rd Battalion of the 727th Infantry Regiment. In April 1942, a Gendarmerie motorized squadron and, from the summer of 1942, the 3rd Battalion of the German 217th Reserve Infantry Regiment were based in Lida. Two Lithuanian police battalions were also garrisoned in the town for a time during the occupation.



Pre-war portraits of young Jews in Lida. On left, the Hebrew Tarbut school, 1931. On right, a gathering of friends, including Jan Szelubski (far left), January 19, 1935.

USHMM WS #21320 AND WS #34078, COURTESY OF ABA AND FRIDA GEFEN (LEFT); AND ANDRZEJ SZELUBSKI (RIGHT)

Lida became a Gebiet center, and Hermann Hanweg was appointed the Gebietskommissar. His deputy was Leopold Windisch, who as Chief of Staff and Director of the Politics, Race, and Nationalities Section was also responsible for Jewish affairs (Judenreferent). The latter was openly antisemitic, treating Jews as if they were not human beings.

During the first week of the occupation, representatives of the Jewish community were summoned to the military commandant and ordered to set up a Judenrat. It consisted of 14 members and was headed by a teacher from the Jewish high school, Kalman Lichtman. The other senior members included entrepreneur Simcha Kotok and lawyers Israel Kreczner and Benjamin Cederowicz.²

At this time, all men aged 15 to 60 were registered for a special labor camp. The work was very hard, with beatings and little food, and many men fell sick. After seven weeks, the labor camp was abandoned, and the Judenrat was given the task of assigning Jews to forced labor. Women ages 16 to 40 were also registered for work. Every day Jewish labor detachments were sent to clear rubble, clean the streets, chop wood, and perform other similar tasks. Their daily ration was a plate of soup made from rotting potatoes and 125 grams (4.4 ounces) of bread. Meat, butter, and eggs were forbidden to Jews on pain of death. They were also forbidden to have contacts with the local population or to leave the town.³

In September 1941, an order was posted on the streets announcing that the Jews of Lida were to leave their houses within 24 hours and move into a ghetto. They were also required to wear yellow patches, 10 by 10 centimeters (4 by 4 inches), on the left side of their chests and on their backs.

The ghetto was established in three separate quarters of the town: the most important section was on Postawska and Chlodna Streets, including the Jewish cemetery; the second section was in Kosharowa Street and Gastello Street, close to the forest of Borowka; the third was in the "Piaski," between the streets Jalowa, Zurawlinaja, and Orlicz-Dreszer. This section had been mostly Christian before and had to be cleared.⁴

Houses on both sides of Postawska Street near the river were surrounded by barbed wire. A sewing workshop was set up there, where the inhabitants of the ghetto made military uniforms. After the workshop was burned down, German forces killed a group of Jews right by the workshop.⁵

In early March 1942, Leopold Windisch, responsible for Jewish affairs within the civil administration in Lida, discovered that Jews from the ghetto were accused of having robbed an Orthodox priest. He demanded that the Judenrat hand over the thieves. The Judenrat surrendered four men, who in turn revealed that a number of Jews had escaped from the massacres in Wilno and found refuge in Lida at the end of 1941. These Jews asked for help from the Judenrat and were given the necessary documents.

All the Jews were driven from their houses by the German Gendarmerie and members of the Wehrmacht (3rd Battalion, Infantry Regiment 727) and were made to assemble in the square near the post office at 8:00 A.M. Numerous Jews were shot as they were being gathered together. After surrendering all their valuables, the Jews had to pass through a turnstile. During this procedure, the 4 Jews arrested for robbing the priest pointed out all those who had allegedly arrived in Lida from Wilno. Those selected, about 35 people, were then shot, along with the 4 Jews arrested previously, by the German Gendarmerie and Polish auxiliary police. About 200 of those who had stayed in the ghetto and were not subjected to being identified, mainly children and elderly people, were shot in their homes.

A week later, seven members of the Judenrat and the Jewish police, including the chairman, Lichtman, were arrested and interrogated in jail. They were then beaten and shot after gruesome torture in the prison courtyard by German Gendarmes and Polish auxiliary police. Their bodies were sent back to the ghetto one week later in a frozen and mutilated condition.⁶

The Jews were ordered to elect a new Judenrat within 24 hours. No candidates could be found. Finally, Dr. Charny was designated the new chairman. This was followed by further new regulations: for example, electricity had previously been

cut off in the ghetto, and now the Jews had to surrender all electrical appliances, such as lamps. On the suggestion of engineer Altman, a former director of the foundry “Benland,” the Judenrat received permission to open a number of light-industry workshops producing goods for local consumption and the needs of the Germans. The first workshops, for carpenters, tinsmiths, and cobblers, were opened several weeks later in the technical school building on Suwalska Street. Soon other workshops for producing electrical goods, clothes, knitted garments, toys, ropes, combs, and handbags and even for binding books were established. A large garage for repairing all types of cars and other vehicles was also opened. The workshops were run by Altman and Alperstein. Inspectors from Germany oversaw their work.⁷

On the evening of May 7, 1942, the ghetto was sealed. Altman was ordered to make a list of the able-bodied Jews, with their occupations. On the same day, three trenches were excavated by local villagers. The entire action was planned by the Sipo/SD from Baranowicze (commanded by SS-Obersturmführer Grünzfelder) together with Gebietskommissar Hanweg and his deputy Windisch.

On the morning of May 8, 1942, the Jewish quarters were cleared by German Gendarmes, the Sipo/SD units, and local auxiliary police. Those who did not go to the collection points voluntarily or could not keep up, owing to old age, sickness, or infirmity, were shot on the spot. The Jews from the Koszarowa quarter were driven for selection to the square near the northern military barracks. Those from the Postawska quarter were driven into Koszarowa Street and then selected further east at the railway underpass. The Jews from the Piaski quarter were driven westward in the direction of Grodno. The German selection of “useful” Jews was conducted at the barracks by presenting work certificates, and most of the skilled workers were separated out. At the end of the selection, however, following an altercation between Gebietskommissar Hanweg and Windisch, who carried out the selection, the last 150 Jews were simply sent for execution.

Those selected were driven in columns to the shooting site. At a distance of 60 meters (197 feet) from the graves, they were made to sit back to back in rows, waiting for their turn. They were directed in groups of 10 or 15 to the trenches and made to undress. Lithuanian or Latvian auxiliaries in SS uniforms, subordinated directly to the Sipo/SD, shot them with machine guns. The children were murdered first. They were torn from their parents, thrown into a separate trench, and killed with hand grenades. In some cases, children were tossed high into the air and shot. The last rabbi in Lida, Aaron Rabinovich, was among those murdered in this Aktion.

Abram Levin escaped from the convoy and managed to hide close to the killing site. Fishel Beloborodov and Mordekhai Gershovich were both wounded, but they managed to crawl out of the pit and escape. Among the escapees were also a young boy named Kamenski and the daughter of a poor tailor.

When the Aktion was over, the Judenrat was ordered to send a group of Jews to cover the trenches with quicklime and earth. Those who survived were ordered to kneel before Hanweg and

Windisch and thank them for their lives. The clothes of the victims were collected and taken to a warehouse, where they were later sorted by a group of Jews. Worn-out clothes were sold to the peasants, and the better-quality items were sent to Germany. The next day the Germans drove about 500 peasants with horse-drawn carts to spread a deep layer of earth on the grave. Some 5,670 people were murdered in this Aktion.⁸

Following the action of May 1942, there were efforts to organize an armed group inside the ghetto. One of the group’s leaders was Baruch Levin, who ran a manufacturing workshop in the ghetto, though other heads of the workshops were among the main opponents of resistance activity. They still believed that the lives of “useful” Jews would be spared.

The chief aim of the group members was to provide themselves with arms, mainly rifles, to escape to the forest and join the partisans. Tuvia Bielski, the leader of a purely Jewish partisan detachment, sent emissaries into the Lida ghetto and even visited it himself twice to bring out Jews.⁹ Captured arms could be obtained from the storehouses in the former Polish barracks. Some arms were also purchased from the local Christian population. The resistance group also managed to set up a small printing press and smuggle it out to the partisans.

From the autumn of 1942 until the liquidation of the ghetto in September 1943, hundreds of Jews fled to the forest. The doctors Kivelevich, Gordin, and Orliuk were brought out of the ghetto and served in different Soviet partisan detachments. P. Proniagin, the commander of the detachment named after Shchors, referred to Zorakh Kremen from Lida as the bravest of his partisans. Some escapees joined the detachment “Iskra,” but most of Lida’s Jews found their way to the Bielskis in the dense Naliboki Forest.

According to the testimony of I. Kardash, at the beginning of March 1943, a small group of Lida Jews and more than 2,000 who had been brought from the surrounding towns of Woronów, Iwje, Raduń, Żołudek, and smaller villages were collected in the square in front of the post office. They were led to the place called Borki (now a suburb of Lida) and shot there.¹⁰

Following the March Aktion, there remained about 2,000 Jews in Lida, according to an SS report from July 1943.¹¹ In the summer some of the remaining Jews from Szczuczyn were brought into the Lida ghetto. On September 18, 1943, the ghetto was surrounded by police. The Jews were driven to the railway station, loaded into railroad cars, and sent on two separate trains to the concentration camp in Majdanek and to the death camp in Sobibór, where virtually all of them were annihilated.¹²

About 300 Jews from Lida survived the Holocaust. Legal investigations were opened against Leopold Windisch by the authorities in Linz, Austria, in 1953 and again in 1964, but both were closed again shortly afterward, as the prosecution had no jurisdiction. Windisch was then located and tried by the West German authorities: the verdict issued on July 17, 1969, by the Landgericht (LG) Mainz sentenced him to life imprisonment.¹³

SOURCES The yizkor book for Lida, edited by Alexander Manor, *Sefer Lida* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yotse Lida be-Yi’sra’el u-Va’ad ha-’ezrah li-Yehude Lida ba-Artsot ha-Berit, 1970),



Jewish workers posing on the porch of a mill in Lubcz, 1930s.
USHMM WS #99529, COURTESY OF JACK KAGAN

no harm would be done to the Jews if they followed orders and did not leave town without permission. Groups of Jews were sent to the nearby estates of Weresków and Worobjewicze to perform agricultural work, such as digging potatoes.

Closely connected to the Jewish community in Lubcz were the Jews of Delatycze, a village about 7 kilometers (4 miles) to the northwest of Lubcz. In 1897, there had been 461 Jews in the village, but following considerable destruction during World War I, only about 100 Jews remained. Yisrael Slonimski recalls that one week after the war started, local peasants also robbed the Jews there, breaking into houses and destroying the Torah in the synagogue. Many Jews were beaten and some were killed. The Jews fled from their houses and ran to the Niemen River, where they hid for two days. When they returned, their houses had been extensively plundered. Some other non-Jews, however, took pity on them and gave them bread, milk, and flour. A few days after the Germans arrived in Delatycze, the Jews were ordered to wear yellow stars.⁵

At the end of 1941, around the time of Hanukkah, the Ortskommandantur instructed the Judenrat that 300 Jews would be sent to the forced labor camp in Dworzec; 2 of the Jews were murdered by their German guards on the road between Lubcz and Dworzec, when they fell behind the column. The Judenrat also had to supply food to the Lubcz Jews in the Dworzec camp over the ensuing months. Some of these people later managed to escape to the partisans from the camp.⁶

According to the account of Shifra Slominski, the Germans enclosed the ghetto in Lubcz at the time of the Purim holiday, at the beginning of March in 1942.⁷ On March 6, the Gebietskommissar in Nowogródek, Wilhelm Traub, ordered that all the Jews from the villages be concentrated in the Rayon towns.⁸ Therefore, the remaining Jews from Delatycze and Niehniewicze, where about 50 Jewish families lived, were brought into the Lubcz ghetto at this time.⁹

Soon after this, a squad of German police entered the Lubcz ghetto and arrested the policemen Naftali Alperstein and Yitzhak Rosenblum and the head of the Judenrat Chaim Bruk. All three of them were murdered on the orders of

the German commandant, apparently because of the poor hygienic conditions inside the ghetto.¹⁰

On March 15, 1942, the Judenrat received an order to collect all domestic animals, such as cows, goats, and poultry, and hand them over to the German authorities. On April 1, the Judenrat was instructed to send 125 workers to the ghetto in Nowogródek. Soon afterwards, the families of these workers followed them, possibly as many as 450 people.¹¹

The precise fate of the remaining Jews in the Lubcz ghetto is difficult to reconstruct from the fragmentary and contradictory sources available. According to some accounts, just before the Jewish holiday of Shavuot (around May 23, 1942), a large group of Jews from Rubieżewicze, Iwieniec, and Naliboki, who had been selected by the Germans for work, arrived in Lubcz on their way to Nowogródek.¹² On their arrival in Lubcz, the local Jews were assembled and divided into two groups. More than 600 younger Jews were sent to Worobjewicze just to the south of Lubcz to work on the road between Lubcz and Nowogródek.¹³ The remaining Jews, or at least those able to walk, were added to the large column of Jews being transferred to the ghetto in Nowogródek, where they arrived the following day after an overnight stop on the way. As there was insufficient room in the houses of the Nowogródek ghetto, many had to make do with a small space in a barn.¹⁴ On August 7, 1942, the Germans and their collaborators murdered more than 5,000 Jews from the Nowogródek ghetto, including many Jews from Lubcz, Delatycze, and Niehniewicze, at the pits of Litowka, just outside the town.¹⁵

By the end of July 1942 the road construction at Worobjewicze was completed. According to some sources, the Germans and their collaborators murdered 635 Jews in Worobjewicze on August 8, 1942, presumably as a follow-up to the Aktion on August 7 in Nowogródek. Some were shot in groups, while others had to stand and wait for their turn. One group was locked inside a barn, which was then splashed with gasoline and set alight, burning alive the people inside. Those who tried to escape were murdered. According to Mikhail Palchik, Vladimir Spagar, and Eugeni Kalala—residents of Wielka Worobjewicze—three women escaped and hid themselves under the bridge near the village of Basin. Somebody reported them, and then three local policemen on bicycles brought them to the killing site. By this time the grave had already been covered with earth, and the women were shot in the quarry on Ilukova Hill. The massacre in Worobjewicze was carried out by members of the local police, gathered from throughout Gebiet Nowogrodek. One of them boasted later that when he ran out of cartridges, he killed the Jews with the butt of his rifle.¹⁶

Some Soviet-era sources indicate that a number of Jews were shot and buried in the town of Lubcz itself, presumably at the time of the liquidation of the ghetto (between the end of May and early August 1942). It is possible that forces of the Gendarmerie and local police murdered children and Jews who were unfit to work on the spot, however, this information is not confirmed in most accounts by Jewish survivors from Lubcz.¹⁷



A recent photograph of a Soviet-era memorial in Lubcz. The sign reads: "To the eternal memory of 375 people savagely tortured by the Germano-Fascist executioners, 1941–1942."

COURTESY OF THE MUSEUM OF HISTORY AND REGIONAL STUDIES IN NOWOGRUDEK

SOURCES The main published source for the Lubcz ghetto is the yizkor book, edited by K. Hillel, *Lubats' ve-Delatits': Sefer Zikaron* (Haifa: Irgun yots'e Lubch ve-Delatits' be-Yisrael, 1971). There is also some relevant information in the yizkor book for Nowogródek, edited by Eliezer Yerushalmi, *Pinkas Navaredok* (Tel Aviv: Alexander Harkavy Navaredker Relief Committee in USA and Naveredker Committee in Israel, 1963). In addition, the unpublished manuscript of personal reminiscences prepared by Ellis Sampson (Ilye Shimshchevitz), "Life in the Shtetl," (in possession of the author) was also consulted.

Documentation on the fate of the Jews of Lubcz and Delatycz during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: BA-L (B 162/27191); GARF (7021-82-102); NARB; USHMM; and YVA.

Tamara Vershitskaya and Martin Dean

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CAMPS AND GHETTOS, 1933–1945

NOTES

1. 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. 751.
2. Yisrael-Gershon Yankelewicz, "I Was in the Ghetto," in Hillel, *Lubats' ve-Delatits'*, pp. 331–343, here p. 334.
3. BA-L, B 162/27191 (II 202 AR 932/65), vol. 1, pp. 133–138, statements of Shalom (Schmuel) Leibowicz, May 4, 1966, Wolf Solomianski, May 10, 1966, and Shifra Solomianski, May 15, 1966; see also the testimony of Shifra Solomianski, "In the Lubcha Ghetto," in Hillel, *Lubats' ve-Delatits'*, pp. 380–387.
4. Yankelewicz, "I Was in the Ghetto," p. 335.
5. Yisrael Slonimsky, "Pages from the Fire," in Hillel, *Lubats' ve-Delatits'*, pp. 412–432.
6. BA-L, B 162/27191, pp. 135–136, statement of Wolf Solomianski, May 10, 1966, and pp. 133–134, statement of Shalom (Shmuel) Leibowicz, May 4, 1966; Solomianski, "In the Lubcha Ghetto," p. 383. The Dworzec labor camp was actually part of the ghetto there, as young laborers lived together with the Jewish families of the town.
7. Solomianski, "In the Lubcha Ghetto," p. 384; BA-L, B 162/27191, pp. 133–134, statement of Leibowicz, May 4, 1966, however, dates the establishment of the ghetto in the fall of 1941.
8. Jack Kagan and Dov Cohen, *Surviving the Holocaust with the Russian Jewish Partisans* (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 1998), pp. 156–158.
9. Slonimsky, "Pages from the Fire," pp. 415–416.
10. BA-L, B 162/27191, pp. 137–138, statement of Solomianski, May 15, 1966; Shalom Cholawsky, *The Jews of Bielorusia during World War II* (Amsterdam: Harwood, 1998), p. 263.
11. Yankelewicz, "I Was in the Ghetto," pp. 336–337.
12. Moshe Gurion testimony in David Shtokfish, ed., *Sefer Rubishevitsb, Derevne ve-ha-seviva* (Tel Aviv, 1968), pp. 253–262; YVA, M-1/E/1574, testimony of Shalom Swinik.
13. Yankelewicz, "I Was in the Ghetto," p. 337.
14. Y. Yaffe, "The Final Wandering," in Yerushalmi, *Pinkas Navaredok*, pp. 319–321.
15. Yankelewicz, "I Was in the Ghetto," pp. 337–338; Gurion, in Shtokfish, *Sefer Rubishevitsb*, pp. 253–262; and YVA, M-1/E/1574, testimony of Shalom Swinik. On the fate of the Jews in the Nowogródek ghetto, see the entry in this volume.
16. GARF, 7021-81-102, pp. 82 and reverse side; Marat Botvinnik, *Pamiatniki genotsida evreev Belarusi* (Minsk: Belaruskaia Navuka, 2000), pp. 263–264; and information in the possession of the author, Tamara Vershitskaya. Some sources erroneously place Worobjewicz in the Slonim area.
17. Botvinnik, *Pamiatniki genotsida evreev Belarusi*, p. 263, indicates that 375 Jews from the Lubcz ghetto were shot in the cemetery in the spring of 1942. Another source summarized by Botvinnik indicates that 1,532 Jews from the Lubcz ghetto were shot, but this presumably includes all those sent to Worobjewicz and to Nowogródek. Yankelewicz, "I Was in the Ghetto," p. 337, indicates that only about 150 elderly and sick Jews remained in the ghetto following the departure of the group of workers to Worobjewicz. Some sources, however, indicate that Jews were transferred from Lubcz to Nowogródek by light railway—possibly also those unable to walk.

ŁUŻKI

Pre-1939: Łużki, village, Dzisna powiat, Wilno województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Łuzbki, Plisa raion, Vileika oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Łuzki, Rayon Sharkovsbchina, Gebiet Glebokie, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Łuzbki, Sharkovsbchina raen, Vitsebsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Łużki is located about 160 kilometers (100 miles) north of Minsk. No reliable figure is available for the Jewish population of Łużki at the start of the German occupation, but it probably comprised more than 500 people.

Units of the German VI Army Corps of the 9th Army occupied Łużki between July 6 and July 9, 1941. Initially the village was under German military administration. On August 31, 1941, Łużki was incorporated into the newly formed Gebiet Glebokie in Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien. The Gebietskommissar in Głębokie was Paul Hachmann.

During the summer and fall of 1941, the German occupation forces required the Jews to wear a yellow Star of David, forced them to engage in strenuous physical labor, and forbade them from leaving the village. From the available evidence it is clear that the Nazi authorities organized a ghetto in Łużki, however, it is unclear exactly when it was established. According to one witness, Vladimir Ignatevich Metelits, it was established in the fall of 1941.¹

Łużki was an “open ghetto,” which was guarded by local Belorussian police collaborators, and was not surrounded by a fence.² On pain of death, the local population was forbidden to communicate with the Jews. According to some sources, the ghetto consisted of several houses in the center of the village, but witnesses M.A. Krivko and C.F. Galetski assert that it was located in a local school building.

On the day of the massacre, June 1, 1942, the Jews were removed from the ghetto, lined up in columns, and escorted by Germans and local policemen to a wood about 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) outside the village, opposite the state farm “Gorodets.”³ The guards beat many of the Jews on the way. According to the testimony of Ya.V. Atrakhimovich, some of the Jews made an unsuccessful attempt to escape. All those who attempted to escape were killed. The Germans and their collaborators drove the remaining Jews into two ditches, made them undress, and shot them.

According to a report by the office of the Gebietskommissar, on that day 528 Jews from Łużki were shot, and another 419 were killed in nearby Plissa.⁴ The Ritsman, Kenigsberg, Kozliner, and Shinkman families managed to survive the roundup and subsequently joined the Soviet partisans.⁵ Hasia Cepelavicz feinted into the mass grave and was able to escape at night, subsequently making her way to the Głębokie ghetto and surviving the war.⁶

SOURCES A published account of the fate of the Jews of Łużki can be found in Gennadii Vinnitsa, *List'yi Istorii* (Vitebsk, 1999), pp. 164–168.

This article is based in part on local witness testimonies in the author's personal archive. Documentation on the perse-

cution and annihilation of the Jews of Łużki can be found in the following archives: BA-L (B 162/1390); GARF (7021-92-219); and NARB (370-1-483).

Gennadii Vinnitsa
trans. Ester-Basya Vaisman

NOTES

1. Recollections of V.I. Metelits (born 1921), published in Vinnitsa, *List'yi Istorii*, p. 165.
2. Ibid.
3. GARF, 7021-92-219, p. 148, testimony of C.F. Galetski.
4. NARB, 370-1-483, p. 15, report of the Gebietskommissar in Glebokie on the Jewish Aktion, July 1, 1942.
5. Witness statement of V.I. Metelits, in the author's personal archive.
6. BA-L, B 162/1390 (202 AR-Z 37/60), vol. 1, pp. 690–691, statement of Ann Seidlin (nee Hasia Cepelevicz), January 23, 1962.

MIADZIOŁ NOWY

Pre-1939: Miadzioł Nowy (Yiddish: Miadel), village, Postawy powiat, Wilno województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Miadel', raion center, Vileika oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Miadzioł, Rayon center, Gebiet Wilejka, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Miadzel, raen center, Minsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Miadzioł is located about 107 kilometers (66.5 miles) northwest of Minsk. It is estimated that there were approximately 200 Jews in Miadzioł on the eve of the German occupation.¹

German forces occupied the village on July 2, 1941. Immediately on the Germans' arrival, local Belorussian and Polish inhabitants began to pick on the Jews, beating and robbing them or denouncing them to the Germans. The Germans took the Jews, both men and women, for forced labor in agriculture and also made them perform grueling physical tasks that served no real purpose.²

Throughout the summer of 1941, a German military commandant (Ortskommandant) administered the village. In September 1941, authority passed to a German civil administration. Miadzioł was incorporated into Gebiet Wilejka in Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien. From the fall of 1941, there was a German Gendarmerie post in Miadzioł, which controlled the local auxiliary police, recruited from residents of the area. Among the more notorious police officials in Miadzioł were the German Gendarmes Sacher and Keil and the local police officers Boginsky and Rusakovich.³

In the summer and fall of 1941, the German authorities implemented a series of anti-Jewish measures, including the creation of a Jewish Council (Judenrat), the compulsory wearing of yellow patches (in August), and prohibitions on leaving the village. The Judenrat was based in Miadzioł Nowy and imposed taxes on the Jews to pay the large “contributions” demanded by the German authorities. On one occasion, the Germans demanded 300 leather coats, 500 pairs of leather boots, and a large sum of money. During the first three months

MINSK

Pre-1941: Minsk, city and capital, raion center, Minsk oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: center of Gebiet Minsk-Land and capital, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: capital and center, Minsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Between 1900 and 1930, Minsk was a predominantly Jewish city, with Yiddish one of four official languages there. At the beginning of Stalin's rule, Belorussia was targeted for "Russification." As a result the Jewish population had declined as a proportion of the total number of people in the city to 70,998 (or 29.71 percent of the total) by 1939.

The German invasion began on June 22, 1941. The main thrust of the German surprise attack delivered by Army Group Center was aimed directly through Minsk towards Moscow. The German encirclement forced the Red Army to abandon the Belorussian capital on June 28. This gave most citizens almost no opportunity to evacuate.

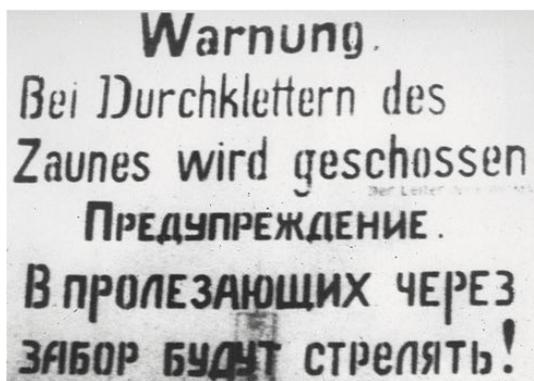
On July 19, 1941, the German Field Commandant ordered the establishment of a ghetto in Minsk. The official order permitted the Jews only five days to move from their homes into the ghetto. They could only take with them what they could carry in their hands.¹ However, the head of the Jewish Council in Minsk, Ilya Moshkin, managed through bribery to have the period allotted for transfer into the ghetto extended to two weeks. Indeed, many were still resettling into the ghetto at the end of July, and some even at the end of August. Non-Jews also had to move out of the ghetto area. Any Jews found outside the ghetto without permission faced severe punishment; German guards and local police had instructions to shoot on sight. The ghetto was formed within the boundaries of Kolkhozny Lane and Kolkhoznaia Street, Nemiga Street (excluding the Orthodox Church), Respublikanskaia, Shornaia, and Kollektovnaia Streets, Mebelny Lane, Perekopskaia, and Nizhnaia Streets, the wall of the Jewish cemetery, Obuvnaia Street, Second Opansky Lane, and Zaslavskaiia Street up to Kolkhozny Lane.²



The Jews forced to live in the Minsk ghetto were required to identify themselves by wearing a yellow piece of fabric in the shape of a circle, 10 centimeters (about 4 inches) in diameter, affixed to their clothing on the front and back, as well as another small rectangular piece of fabric giving their name and address. This label was later a crucial means of identifying and punishing all family members and the neighbors of any Jew caught trying to escape or found to be involved in underground or partisan activities. Orders were also issued that Jews had to take off their caps in front of any German, on pain of death. All Jews were ordered to remain within the ghetto at all times, which at first was simply a defined territory but later was fenced off with parallel rows of barbed wire reaching higher than an average man's height. All Jews were required to spend the night only in the house listed on their clothing and could be shot for failing to comply.

Jews who were able to work were assigned to forced labor squads. At work they received a meager supply of food and in rare instances small amounts of money. No other food or provisions were made for ghetto inmates; thus failure to join a forced labor squad meant starvation. Those able to work were supplied with 100 grams (3.5 ounces) of bread per day and a watery soup (*balanda*)—barely enough to feed a laborer but certainly not enough to feed a family. Labor squads were used to run the brush factory and the radio factory, to build a concentration camp on Shirokaia Street, to rebuild parts of Minsk, to run the main heating plants, to clean and service the train stations, to cook and clean for the Germans, and to accomplish other similar projects.³ Jews that were able to find places on the forced labor squads were issued an identity card (*Ausweis*)—a German document naming them as valued laborers. This document could mean the difference between life and death.

Jewish forced laborers often attempted to trade articles of value (i.e., clothing, jewelry, and household items) with Belorussians they encountered in the city for items of food (e.g., potatoes, potato skins, carrots, and flour) to supplement their meager rations and to bring home food for their children and



Left: A warning sign hangs on the barbed-wire fence of the Minsk ghetto fence. Right: A blowup of the sign, which warns, in German and Russian, that anyone climbing through the fence will be shot, 1941.

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1234 WEISSRUTHENIEN REGION

nonworking family members. Likewise, children were often sent under the ghetto fence, to beg from former neighbors and others or to try to barter articles of value for food. If they were caught leaving or reentering the ghetto, they were shot dead.

Electricity to the ghetto was cut off, and no candles, heating fuel, and cooking fuel were supplied. The only heat available for ghetto inmates during the fiercely cold winters was that made by breaking apart their furniture, floors, and the like, to burn in the wood-burning ovens. Ghetto inmates were so starved that they recall collecting nettles and grass inside the ghetto and trying to make soup from it and even collecting the bones from discarded German meals sometimes thrown their way.

Typhus spread throughout the ghetto once the inmates became weakened from the dire living conditions. Children whose parents were killed or died of starvation were often absorbed into other families or given to the orphanage that operated within the ghetto. There was also a hospital inside the ghetto, serving those with typhus and other diseases. During the pogrom of March 2–3 (around Purim) in 1942, the Nazis came into the Minsk ghetto orphanage and stabbed to death all the children they found there.⁴

A bakery (which still exists) operated within the ghetto, but its bread was for the Germans and not for Jews. Aside from the hospital, the Judenrat headquarters, the Jewish Police, and the orphanage, most normal social institutions did not exist within the ghetto. There were no shops, schools, restaurants, or theater performances within the ghetto—only conditions of starvation and death. Individuals continued to pray, but the only services held were the Kaddish dirges cried out following the roundups and mass killings.

The Minsk ghetto is thought to have held about 75,000 to 80,000 Jews in the fall of 1941, with about 55,000 of these having been local Minsk Jews and the remainder from western Belorussia.⁵ Despite the mass murders and killing Aktions, additional Jews came into the ghetto. In November 1941, the first transports from Germany and Austria began to arrive. Likewise, when some ghettos in the Minsk region were liquidated, the skilled laborers were spared and brought to the Minsk ghetto. Escaped Jews often migrated to the relative safety of the Minsk ghetto rather than wander among hostile Germans and Belorussians, who were afraid to offer them lasting shelter.

The ghetto was constantly subjected to raids, pogroms, and killing Aktions. Almost every night some house within the ghetto was broken into by bandits, local or imported police, or Germans coming to steal from, rape, and kill the inhabitants. Ghetto survivors state that the living conditions were not comparable to a European concentration camp because “at least there you knew at night when you had managed to live through the day that you would not face death again until the next day of horrors, but in the Minsk ghetto the terror was non-stop, twenty-four hours a day, extending beyond the daytime horrors into nightly killing, raping, and looting raids from which no one was protected.”⁶

The Nazi plan to decimate the Jewish population of Minsk was carried out at first by dire living conditions and then ac-

celerated by official “killing Aktions” or pogroms, the largest of which occurred on the dates given below. Official German figures for the number of victims are considerably lower than those given in Soviet or survivor sources, so examples of both are given:

<i>Date of Aktion</i>	<i>German Estimates</i>	<i>Soviet/Survivor Estimates</i>
Up to end of July 1941	5,000 ⁷	—
August 14–September 1, 1941	5,000–6,000 ⁸	—
November 7–11, 1941	6,624 ⁹	12,000 ¹⁰
November 20, 1941	—	15,000 ¹¹
March 2–3, 1942	3,412 ¹²	8,000 ¹³
July 28–31, 1942	9,000 ¹⁴	25,000 ¹⁵
October 21–23, 1943	4,000+ ¹⁶	—

Few definitive figures for the number of Jews in the ghetto are available. One report, probably from the second half of 1942, mentions 20,000 Jews (11,000 men and 9,000 women) capable of work in Minsk.¹⁷ Estimates vary about the numbers living and surviving to the very end. Some survivors say only a handful survived, perhaps 20 children, while others report up to 1,000 hiding during the final Aktion and managing to escape.

During the various Aktions, the Germans generally used Latvian, Lithuanian, and Ukrainian police to aid them in cordoning off an area of the ghetto selected for “liquidation.” The non-German police accompanied by German SS men went door-to-door, ordering the inhabitants out of their houses and searching for those in hiding. Out on the street, the Jews were formed into columns, with those able to display an Ausweis or work permit often spared, being allowed to step aside with their family members. “Extra” family members were often saved in these instances. Likewise “employers” often tried to preserve their workers by keeping them overnight in factories during the large killing Aktions in the ghetto.

In the first weeks of these night Aktions, many Jews constructed hiding places, or *malenas*, behind false walls, in attics, basements, and other rooms. Of course, the Germans and their collaborators searched for false walls, sometimes riddling areas they could not reach with bullets.

During some of the killing Aktions, Minsk Jews were rounded up and forced into gas vans called “soul killers” by the Minsk Jews. These windowless, closed trucks opened from the back and could hold from 60 to 100 people. The exhaust pipe of the truck was rigged so that the fumes entered this closed compartment; as a result, those inside were gassed to death by the time the trucks arrived at burial pits or in Maly Trostinets, where the corpses were thrown into pits and later burned in a crematorium erected there.¹⁸

In other cases the columns of Jews were loaded onto open trucks and driven to prepared pits where they were ordered to undress and pile up their clothing, and then they had to proceed naked to the edge of the pit, where they were shot in the head. Bullets were not wasted on children, who frequently were thrown into the pits and buried alive.

In one special Aktion the most beautiful girls were rounded up and taken to Yubileinaia Square, in the center of the ghetto, where they were shot in the head with exploding bullets and left to bleed to death on the square.¹⁹

Belorussian police were mainly employed to guard the Minsk ghetto. According to survivors, however, the most feared units were the Latvian and Ukrainian forces, although Lithuanian units also actively supported the Nazis during the various murderous pogroms.

The Germans established a Judenrat in Minsk, made up of “representatives of the Jews.” The Judenrat, or Jewish Council, in Minsk was apparently formed when the Germans simply picked 12 Jews off the street in July 1941. The Jewish Council and its chairman had strict orders to carry out all instructions from the German military administration in a careful and timely manner; the chairman and his vice chairman were to be held personally responsible for everything that occurred within the Jewish community. The Germans required that the Judenrat collect “contributions” of 2 million Soviet rubles and 10 kilograms (22 pounds) of gold in July 1941, which was a huge sum of money at that time. Subsequent demands were for cutlery, pots and pans, and even underwear, until there was nothing more to collect. The duties of the Jewish police were to keep order in the ghetto, to organize work squads to collect and bury the dead, and to collaborate in finding and rounding up resistors. While some members of the Judenrat and police did collaborate in betraying Jews, for the most part they were compelled to serve in these positions and tried not to compromise themselves where possible.

The Minsk ghetto inhabitants began organizing resistance activities within the ghetto as early as August 1941 and worked closely with the Communist underground in Minsk. One of the Minsk underground committee leaders, Issac Cazinetz, was a Jew, but because of his non-Jewish appearance, he was able to live hidden outside the ghetto. He was responsible for many of the links forged between the Minsk city underground and the ghetto. In May 1942, he was arrested and publicly executed. He was posthumously decorated as a Hero of the Soviet Union. Hersh Smolar and others worked to create and smuggle underground newspapers and even some arms into the ghetto. The underground’s most successful effort was in exploding a bomb under the bed of Generalkommissar Kube, killing him, although miraculously his pregnant wife, who was also in the bed, survived the blast. Severe retribution was visited upon both the city of Minsk and the Minsk ghetto following this event. Unorganized resistance included sabotaging radios in the Minsk radio plant, smuggling arms, and helping young people to escape and join the partisans, where they in turn fought the Nazis, blowing up train tracks and engaging in other forms of sabotage.

Those who were free of family commitments fled to the partisans, but those with family members still alive found it more difficult to leave, as this would mean probable starvation or punitive retribution for family and housemates left behind. It was not a simple matter to escape from the Minsk ghetto. Escapees had to find the partisans, and it was difficult to



Shalom Zorin, commander of Jewish partisan Unit 106, which was based in the Naliboki Forest near Minsk. Zorin’s unit absorbed Jewish escapees from local ghettos, 1944–1946.

USHMM WS #01790, COURTESY OF MOSHE KAGANOVICH

travel without false documents concealing their Jewish identity. The partisans did not welcome everyone and generally required potential recruits to come with a weapon in hand, not an easy task for a Minsk ghetto inhabitant to achieve. It is estimated that as many as 10,000 Jews may have escaped from the ghetto. The Minsk underground helped many ghetto inmates seeking to join the partisans.

The Germans ruthlessly tortured and killed anyone suspected of resistance activities. On October 26, 1941, the Germans made a public display of hanging 12 individuals accused of resistance activities. One of the women hanged is believed to have been Masha Bruskina, a Jewish underground leader from the Minsk ghetto. No one was allowed to cut down the victims for several days.

Levels of pre-war antisemitism were probably lower in Minsk than in many other Eastern European cities. Despite this, many Belorussians, although horrified at Nazi atrocities,



Monument placed on the site of the mass grave where Jews from the Minsk ghetto were murdered, n.d. It was created immediately after the war by survivors and victims' relatives. At present it is part of a larger memorial complex at the intersection of Melnikaite and Zaslavskaja streets in Minsk.

USHMM WM #ID31217, COURTESY OF FELIX LIPSKI

were afraid to help the Jews. Orders posted throughout the country made it clear that to harbor or help a Jew was punishable by death. A few Belorussian citizens hid ghetto children in their homes, adopting them during the war or helping to hide them in orphanages. Others gave food to ghetto inmates who worked outside in the city. Yad Vashem has named at least 389 Belorussians (including a number from Minsk) as Righteous Among the Nations for their rescue activities.²⁰

From November 1941 until October 1942, a total of nearly 24,000 Central European Jews were deported by train to Minsk.²¹ From the initial deportations, many were put into the Minsk ghetto. The first Jews to arrive from Western Europe were from Hamburg—hence, the Minsk Jews called all Westerners “Hamburg Jews.” The Jews from Central Europe were housed in a separate area of the ghetto, which had been cleared for them during the November 1941 pogroms. Many were conspicuous by their better-quality clothing. Soon, however, they grasped the realities of the ghetto; unless they found slave labor jobs, they were destined to starve to death. Unable to speak Russian, the Hamburg Jews relied on trading with the Russian Jews across the segregated area of the ghetto, barter-

ing their clothing and other belongings to Minsk Jews, who in turn exchanged them for money or food outside the ghetto.

Kube, the German Generalkommissar in Minsk, felt some sympathy for the Hamburg Jews and tried in vain to preserve them by writing to Nazi headquarters, pleading on their behalf. However, his appeals were denied, and the Hamburg Jews met a similar fate to the Minsk Jews. By the summer of 1942, the Germans had established a killing center at Maly Trostinets, on an estate just outside of Minsk. Some of the Central European Jews were then transported by train directly to this killing center. Upon disembarking, they were separated from their belongings and taken to pits where they were shot dead. Others were murdered using gas vans.

In 1943, the Germans began exhuming corpses from the killing pits and burning them in an attempt to cover up their crimes. The Trostinets killing center housed a small number of Jews who helped serve the functions of the killing center, but very little other labor occurred on the estate. One witness who was briefly held on the estate and another who was sent by the partisans to witness from the forests nearby and report back on events occurring there verify the arrival of gas vans and the existence of mass graves.²²

SOURCES The personal accounts written by Hersh Smolar, which differ in their various editions, partly due to diverging political pressures at different times, provide a valuable first-hand account of resistance: see, for example, Hersh Smolar, *The Minsk Ghetto: Soviet-Jewish Partisans against the Nazis* (New York: Holocaust Publications, 1989). On the evidence regarding Masha Bruskina, see Necama Tec and Daniel Weiss, “A Historical Injustice: The Case of Masha Bruskina,” *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 11:3 (1997): 366–377. Shalom Cholawsky is the author of two articles on the ghetto: “The German Jews in the Minsk Ghetto,” *Yad Vashem Studies* 17 (1986): 219–246; and “The Judenrat in Minsk,” in *Patterns of Jewish Leadership in Nazi Europe, 1933–1945: Proceedings of the Third Yad Vashem International Historical Conference Jerusalem, April 4–7, 1977* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1979), pp. 113–132.

Other publications on the Minsk ghetto include Dan Zhits, *Geto Minsk Ve-toldotav, Le'or Ha-teud Ha-badash* (Jerusalem: Rubin Mass, 2000); Barbara Epstein, *The Minsk Ghetto, 1941–1943: Jewish Resistance and Soviet Internationalism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008); V.F. Balakirau et al., eds., *Minskai geta 1941–1943 gg.: Tragedyia, geraizm, pamiats* (Minsk: NARB, 2004); Carlton Jackson, *Joseph Gavi: Young Hero of the Minsk Ghetto* (Paducah, KY: Turner, 2000); and R.A. Chernoglazova, ed., *Judenfrei! Svobodno ot evreev: Istoriia minskogo getto v dokumentakh* (Minsk: “Asobny Dakh,” 1999).

Numerous personal testimonies concerning the Minsk ghetto have been published, including E.G. Ioffe, ed., *Zhiva—Da, ia zhiva!: Minskoe getto v vospominaniakh Maii Krapinoi i Fridy Reizman: Materialy i dokumenty* (Minsk: istoricheskaja masterskaia v Minske, 2005); Karl Loewenstein, *Minsk: Im Lager der deutschen Juden* (Bonn: Bundeszentrale für Heimatdienst, 1961); “Existiert das Ghetto noch?,” *Weissrussland: Jüdisches Überleben gegen nationalsozialistische Herrschaft*, ed. Projektgruppe Belarus im Jugendklub Courage Köln e.V. (Berlin: Assoziation A, 2003); and Mikhail Treister, *Probleki pamiati: Vospominaniia, razmysleniia, publikatsii* (Minsk: istoricheskaja masterskaia v Minske, 2007).

Relevant documentation on the Minsk ghetto can be found in the following archives: BA-BL; BA-L; GAMINO; GARF; NARA; NARB; RGVA; USHMM; VHAP; VHF; and YVA. The author has also made use of a number of interviews she conducted in Minsk with survivors, which are in her personal archive (PAAS).

Anne Speckhard

NOTES

1. PAAS, interview with Rosa Zelenka, 2002.
2. The order to create the Minsk ghetto was published in issue no. 1 of the *Minsk Gazette*, July 27, 1941; see also NARB, 4683-3-397, pp. 6-7, and 359-1-8, pp. 1-2. A map showing the area of the ghetto can be found in Hamburger Institut für Sozialforschung, ed., *Verbrechen der Wehrmacht: Dimensionen des Vernichtungskrieges 1941-1944* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2002), p. 481.
3. PAAS, interview with Israel Elentukh, 2001.
4. *Ibid.*, interview with Frieda Raisman, 2000.
5. "Existiert das Ghetto noch?," p. 215; Smolar, *The Minsk Ghetto*, p. 143, gives a total of about 100,000 Jews passing through the ghetto altogether.
6. PAAS, interview with Frieda Raisman, 2000.
7. "Existiert das Ghetto noch?," p. 213.
8. Peter Klein, ed., *Die Einsatzgruppen in der besetzten Sowjetunion 1941/42* (Berlin: Hentrich, 1997), pp. 56-57.
9. BA-BL, R 58/218, Ereignismeldung UdSSR (EM) no. 140.
10. Smolar, *The Minsk Ghetto*, p. 41.
11. Vladimir Adamushko et al., eds., *Handbuch der Haftstätten für die Zivilbevölkerung auf dem besetzten Territorium von Belarus 1941-1944* (Minsk: State Committee for Archives and Documentary Collections of the Republic of Belarus, 2001), p. 130.
12. BA-BL, R 58/219, EM no. 178.
13. Adamushko et al., *Handbuch der Haftstätten*, p. 130.
14. *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 19 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1979) Lfd. Nr. 552, p. 197.
15. Adamushko et al., *Handbuch der Haftstätten*, p. 130.
16. *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 19 Lfd. Nr. 552, pp. 202-203.
17. YVA, M-41/315 (NARB, 370-1-245, pp. 26-27), undated report on labor deployment.
18. PAAS, e.g., interview with Maya Krapina, 2001.
19. *Ibid.*, interview with Frieda Raisman, 2000.
20. See YVA, collection M.31 (Righteous Among the Nations, Belarus).
21. Chernoglazova, *Judenfrei! Svobodno ot evreev*, p. 224.
22. PAAS, interview with Ilia Natovich Galperin Natomovic, 2003.

MIORY

Pre-1939: Miory (Yiddish: Mior), town, Brastaw powiat, Wilno województwo, Poland; 1939-1941: raion center, Vileika oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941-1944: Rayon center, Gebiet Glebokie, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Miory, raen center, Vitebsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Miory is located 163 kilometers (101 miles) west of Vitebsk. In 1939, the Jewish population in Miory was around 725.

On July 2, 1941, German forces entered Miory. As soon as they arrived, a group of about 30 local Poles led by a local doctor organized a pogrom in which they demolished Jewish residences and shot the rabbi and his wife. Apparently this was done in retaliation for the imprisonment of the parish priest during the Soviet occupation, for which one Jew among the local residents was allegedly responsible.¹ A number of Poles also volunteered for service in the German auxiliary police in Miory. Among them was the son of the *soltys* Ignacy Dąbrowski.²

The German authorities required the Jews to wear distinguishing markings, initially an armband and later a yellow Star of David on their clothes. The Germans also imposed forced labor on all Jews capable of work. The Jewish work details were closely guarded by the local and German police.³ A Judenrat (Jewish Council) was soon established, headed by the miller Zvi (Cwi) Altman, which was made responsible for supplying a number of forced laborers every day. The members of the Judenrat also collected "contributions" in the form of gold, silver, boots, and sheepskin furs from the Jews of Miory. These contributions were delivered to the Gebietskommissar in Głębokie. A Jewish labor office was also established in Miory, headed by the linen artisan Mosze Liplańczyk.

In the first days of the occupation, German Security Police came to Miory and arrested two Jews who worked at the furniture factory. They were forced to dig their own graves and were then shot in the nearby forest.⁴

The ghetto in Miory was established either in the fall of 1941⁵ or (according to other sources) on the Passover holiday (early April) in 1942.⁶ The area between Nabrzeżna and Wielka Streets was cordoned off. In the spring of 1942, a number of Jews were brought into the ghetto from other places in the region, including 35 from the village of Przebrodzie, 18 kilometers (11 miles) from Miory, and others from Ikażń, 25 kilometers (16 miles) away. The ghetto remained "open" (unfenced), but the German administration issued a decree forbidding the Christian population from entering the ghetto area. Order was maintained by 3 Jewish policemen, who closely watched the residents in the ghetto. Jews from the ghetto worked in a furniture factory 1.5 kilometers (almost 1 mile) outside the town, near the railway station. Jewish craftsmen needed a special permit from the German chief of police to leave the ghetto and perform labor for the authorities. People in the ghetto lived under very overcrowded conditions; on average, one house had to hold up to seven or eight families.⁷

The systematic extermination of the Jews in Gebiet Glebokie began at the end of May 1942 with the arrival of SS-Untersturmführer Tangermann of the SD office in Lepel'. According to the report of acting Glebokie Gebietskommissar Petersen, on June 2, 1942, German forces liquidated the ghetto in Miory with 779 Jews. "Here the Jews attempted a large-scale breakout and about 70 or 80 people may have succeeded in escaping."⁸ The Soviet Extraordinary State Commission (ChGK) report records that 678 peaceful citizens, mainly women, children, and the elderly, were shot in Miory during the German occupation, while the diary of Yitzhak Aaron records that 800 Jews were shot.⁹

1238 WEISSRUTHENIEN REGION

Several accounts exist of the liquidation of the ghetto. On June 2, 1942, at 3:00 A.M., a group of SS men, SD officials, and Gendarmes from Gebiet Głębokie, assisted by the local police, surrounded the ghetto. They seized the Jews from their homes, allegedly on the pretext of searching for weapons. The Jews were ordered to assemble on the market square to register their documents. A number of young Jews decided to rush the guards on the square. The guards shot many of the escapees, but a few dozen made it through to the nearby forest. Thereafter, the remaining Jews were guarded more closely and escorted in groups to the Krukowka Forest, where graves had been dug in advance. Nonetheless, there was another escape attempt near the grave site, and again a few Jews were able to escape from the guards. The head of the Judenrat was among those shot in the pit. Jewish property of value was confiscated by the Germans and sent to Głębokie, while the local police and other local inhabitants looted or bought cheaply remaining clothing and household items.¹⁰

On June 16, 1942, after the liquidation of the ghetto in Miory, members of the local police set out in 10 trucks together with SS men to exterminate the Jews of the nearby Druja ghetto.¹¹ In the meantime, a group of escapees from the Miory ghetto had received help from the Judenrat in Druja (located 27 kilometers [17 miles] from Miory). They obtained two bags of flour, two pots, pails, and spoons, which were used to establish a temporary camp in the forest. After three weeks in the camp, a local shepherd informed the Gendarmerie that Jews were hiding in the forest. The Jews had to abandon their camp and move to another location. Some escapees were caught and shot by the Gendarmerie and local police, and others suffered from hunger in the forest as winter approached.¹²

In the fall of 1942, the Gebietskommissar in Głębokie issued an order that all Jews who had fled underground or taken refuge in the forest could find protection and work in the ghetto in Głębokie. The head of the Głębokie Judenrat, Lederman, even passed this message on to Jews in hiding. As a result, many of the Jews in the forest made their way to the Głębokie ghetto, as did Schabtai Edelman.¹³ Of a group of 25 Miory escapees in the forest near Kozła, 24 made their way to Głębokie, and only 1 remained behind to maintain a base, to which Jews might flee if the Głębokie ghetto were to be liquidated. Some Jews from Miory subsequently joined the Soviet partisans.¹⁴

An investigation of the Lepel' SD-Section, which was accused of organizing the murder of the Jews in Miory, was conducted by the state prosecutor in Hamburg. The case against those serving in the SS (sygn. 141 Js 533/60) was led by the prosecutor in Hanover. The cases against the unidentified members of the Security Police (Sicherheitspolizei) and SD (sygn. 2 Js 388/65), and against unidentified members of the SD and SS formations (sygn. 45 Js 16/73), were led by the Central Office for the Investigation of Nazi Crimes in Dortmund. All of these investigations were suspended because the perpetrators of the crimes could not be identified.

In the proceedings directed by the state prosecutor in Hanover (2 Js 388/65) with regard to the mass murder of Jews, Gypsies, and Russian prisoners of war in Gebiet Głębokie

from 1941 to 1944, the names of the Gendarmerie officials serving in Miory were listed. These men, however, could not be located and sentenced: Gall, Gamba, Jerks (Jörks), Karl Kube, Petrowski, Schuhr, Willmann,¹⁵ Herbert Goy, August Krüger, Leo Leidenroth, Rudinski, and Wilhelm Uppmann.

On February 26, 1954, the Provincial Court in Olsztyn (SWOI) opened a case against Bronisław Dąbrowski (IV K 31/54). As an official of the Schutzmannschaft in Miory, he was accused of collaboration with the German authorities and of taking part in escorting the Jewish population from the ghetto in Miory to the site of the mass shooting. On June 29, 1954, the high penal court in Warsaw sentenced Bronisław Dąbrowski to life in prison. However, on January 30, 1969, the Provincial Court in Opole passed a resolution for his conditional release.

SOURCES Publications containing information on the Miory ghetto and its destruction include a yizkor book edited by Mordechai Naishtat, *Sefer Druyab U-Kehilot Miyor, Droisk, Ve-Le'onpol* (Tel-Aviv: Be-hotsa'at yots'e Druyah veva-sevivah be-Yisrael, 1973); Shalom Cholawsky, *The Jews of Bielorussia during World War II* (Amsterdam: Harwood, 1998); and V.I. Adamushko et al., eds., *Handbuch der Haftstätten für die Zivilbevölkerung auf dem besetzten Territorium von Belarus 1941–1944* (Minsk: Staatskomitee für Archive und Aktenführung der Republik Belarus, 2001).

Documents pertaining to the fate of the Jews of Miory during the Nazi occupation can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/3150 and 3151; and 302/47); BA-DH (ZM 1641, A. 23); BA-L (B 162/1390); GARF (7021-92-217); IPN-Kos (Kpp 6/90); LCVA (684-1-4); NARB (370-1-483); Sta. Hannover (2 Js 388/65); SWOI (IV K 31/54); USHMM (e.g., RG-22.002M); VHF (# 40975 and 12549); and YVA.

Monika Tomkiewicz and Martin Dean
trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. Shalom Cholawsky, *The Jews of Bielorussia*, p. 272; AŻIH, 301/3150, p. 1; and VHF, # 40975, testimony of Samuel Engel.
2. Protocols of the witness Antony Sawicki, August 5, 1953, SWOI IV K 31/54.
3. BA-L, B 162/1390 (202 AR-Z 37/60, vol. 1), pp. 362–426, testimony of Leib (Arie) Veif, July 14, 1961, and of Schabtai Edelman, August 14, 1961; and VHF, # 40975.
4. BA-L, B 162/1390 (202 AR-Z 37/60, vol. 1), pp. 362–426, testimony of Schabtai Edelman, August 14, 1961. This shooting was apparently conducted on the personal order of Gebietskommissar Paul Hachmann.
5. BA-L, B 162/1390 (202 AR-Z 37/60, vol. 1), pp. 362–426, testimony of Leib (Arie) Veif, July 14, 1961, and of Schabtai Edelman, August 14, 1961; and VHF, # 40975.
6. AŻIH, 301/3150, p. 1; and VHF, # 12549, testimony of Samuel Palec, a Jewish refugee from Jonava in Lithuania, who was brought to Miory with other Jews from the village of Słobódka near Brasław in March 1942, and states that at that time the ghetto “was not yet finished.” It seems likely that it may have been established in stages.
7. AŻIH, 301/3150, p. 1; and VHF, # 12549. At the end of April 1942, Gebietskommissar Hachmann strictly forbade Jews to go more than 1 kilometer (0.6 mile) from the ghettos in the Gebiet without a special pass issued by the Gebietskommissar.

Miory was not named specifically as one of the towns in which the Jews could still move around freely within this limit, but a copy of the order was also sent to the local council in Miory; see David Meltzer and Vladimir Levin, eds., *The Black Book with Red Pages (Tragedy and Heroism of Belorussian Jews)* (Cockeysville, MD: VIA Press, 2005), pp. 234–235, order of Gebietskommissar in Glebokie, April 30, 1942 (English translation).

8. Sta. Hannover, 2 Js 388/65, Supplementary volume, pp. 110ff., 124ff. and NARB, 370-1-483, p. 15, report of Gebietskommissar Glebokie, betr.: Judenaktion, July 1, 1942.

9. GARF, 7021-92-217, pp. 3–10, Soviet Extraordinary State Commission report, April 19, 1945; and Walter Zwi Bacharach, ed., *Dies sind meine letzten Worte . . . Briefe aus der Schoah* (Göttingen: Wallenstein, 2006), pp. 264–265—this source also mentions that 70–80 people survived, although it gives the number of Jews in the ghetto at the onset of the Aktion as 926.

10. AŽIH, 302/47, diary of Yitzhak Aron; protocols of the witness Krystyna Izabela Turowska, February 15, 1990, IPN-Kos, Kpp 6/90, pp. 29–30; AŽIH, 301/3150, testimony of Szabtaj Estrow, December 1947, pp. 1–3; Cholowsky, *The Jews of Bielorussia*, p. 215; protocols of the suspect Józef Rynkiewicz, February 5, 1949, SWOI IV K 31/54; BA-DH, ZM 1641, A. 23, p. 16; and protocols of the examination of the witness Alfred Siergun, August 12, 1953, SWOI IV K 31/54.

11. Protocols of the suspect Ignacy Dąbrowski, September 7, 1953, SWOI IV K 31/54; and protocols of the suspect Stanisław Bąk, September 25, 1953, SWOI IV K 31/54.

12. AŽIH, 301/3150, testimony of Szabtaj Estrow, December 1947, pp. 1–3.

13. Ibid.; and BA-L, B 162/1390, pp. 362–426, testimony of Schabtai Edelman, August 14, 1961. It seems that Schabtai Edelman and Szabtaj Estrow are the same person! See also AŽIH, 302/47, diary of Yitzhak Aron.

14. AŽIH, 301/3150, testimony of Szabtaj Estrow, December 1947, pp. 1–3.

15. Sta. Hannover, 2 Js 388/65.

MIR

Pre-1939: Mir, town, Stołpce powiat, Nowogródek województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: raion center, Baranovichy oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Rayon center, Gebiet Baranowitsche, General-kommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Karelitchy raen, Hrodna voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Mir is located 88 kilometers (55 miles) southwest of Minsk. Just prior to the German invasion, the Mir raion had approximately 3,000 Jewish inhabitants, of whom some 2,300 lived in the town of Mir.

The German army occupied the Mir Rayon at the end of June 1941. The German occupation authorities began recruiting a local police force within a few weeks of their arrival. The police force was initially composed of about 30 local men, mainly Belorussians aged between 25 to 35 from the villages surrounding Mir.¹ On July 20, 1941, German security forces carried out an Aktion against the “intelligentsia” in Mir in which 19 Jews and 3 non-Jews were selected. The Germans transported the victims out of town by truck and killed them in a nearby forest.²



Exterior of a destroyed synagogue in Mir, 1946.
USHMM WS #97358, COURTESY OF JACK KAGAN

Initially the local military commandant in Stołpce was responsible for the administration of the Mir Rayon. From August 1941, this was Leutnant Göbel of the 8th Company, Infantry Regiment 727. The military authorities imposed a number of restrictions on the Jews during the first weeks, but no ghetto was created at this time.

In October and November 1941, the 8th Company, Infantry Regiment 727, organized collections of valuables from the Jews of Turzec and Mir, and also carried out mass shootings assisted by local police in which roughly 2,000 Jews from Mir and Turzec died.³ Some Jews were sent to a labor camp in Nowy Świerżeń.

A few days after this massacre, the first German Gendarmes of the Order Police (Orpo) arrived in Mir.⁴ The Gendarmerie commander in Mir was Meister Reinhold Hein, who had about 12 Gendarmes under him and also gave orders to the local Belorussian police. Oswald Rufeisen, a Jew from western Poland who arrived in Turzec just after the shootings there, pretended to be a Pole and was recruited to the police as a translator because of his excellent German. Soon he became the secretary and translator for the Rayon police chief, the Belorussian Semion Serafinowicz, who brought him to Mir. Here Rufeisen recognized some former Jewish acquaintances from his stay in Vilnius from 1939, including Dov Reznik, and he resolved to help the nascent Jewish underground as much as he could from his position under cover within the police.

According to the recollection of Cila Zakheim, “within a few days of the November Aktion the first ghetto was formed. It was not a building but a collection of houses that had survived the invasion and included Zavalna, Tartarskaia, and Wisoker Streets. There was no barbed wire fencing or guards surrounding the Mir ghetto.”⁵

Available survivor testimony indicates that no ghetto was established in Turzec, although a Judenrat had been formed there prior to the massacres. In Mir a new Judenrat had to be elected in November, as several members of the first one, formed a few weeks after the German occupation began, had been murdered on November 9. Eliezer Breslin, who served in the second Judenrat, recalled the names of other members: Leiber Menaker, Shamay Berman, and Rabbi Eli Baruch

1240 WEISSRUTHENIEN REGION

Shulman, its head. The Judenrat, consisting of about 10 persons, continued to pass on German orders for forced labor and distributed food to the ghetto population. The Jews who worked received rations of 125 grams (4.4 ounces) of bread per day, which they collected from a shop on a weekly or monthly basis. Forced labor tasks consisted of cleaning streets, repairing roads, clearing snow in winter, doing agricultural work, and even performing domestic service for local officials.⁶

The German authorities ordered the transfer of the remaining 800 Jews to the closer confinement of the run-down Mir castle building just outside of town in May 1942. The castle was well suited for use as a ghetto, as there was only one entrance, blocked by barbed wire, and the windows were placed at a great height. Only about 4 Jews worked in the Jewish police force that guarded the entrance once the work details returned. In fact the guard was generally quite lax, as Hein would hold the Judenrat accountable if any Jews escaped.⁷

Fearing the liquidation of the ghetto, the Judenrat paid the first installment of a bribe to the local Belorussian mayor, Bielnowicz, in June 1942, when he promised in return that he would protect them. In fact, he had no such power, as the German authorities in Baranowicze had already ordered the liquidation of the ghetto by this time. Surprisingly, an attempt by the Judenrat to bribe the Gendarmerie Meister Hein was refused. He could only promise the Jews that they would die a humanitarian death.⁸

After the mass killing on November 9 in Mir, younger Jews formed an underground organization and made preparations for resistance. Efforts to obtain weapons, however, proved difficult, and several Jews were betrayed while doing so. Only Rufeisen's quick thinking prevented any more Jews from falling into a trap laid by Serafinowicz.⁹

In the end, though, the underground members were fortunate in being able to organize their escape without a battle. In particular, they received vital assistance from Rufeisen, working from within the local police. In June 1942, Rufeisen overheard part of a telephone conversation between Hein and the Captain of Gendarmerie in Baranowicze, Max Eibner, which revealed the date of the planned "liquidation" of the Mir ghetto. Acting on this information, Rufeisen not only succeeded in smuggling more than 10 weapons into the ghetto, but he also managed to send nearly all the Gendarmes and local police on a wild-goose chase after nonexistent partisans just before the ghetto liquidation was due to take place.¹⁰

Nevertheless, many within the ghetto were reluctant to follow his advice to flee. The situation was hotly debated within the ghetto. Some feared that escape would only hasten the end for those who could not leave. In total, about 200 of the younger Jews decided to try their luck in the forests.¹¹ They did not join the partisans immediately. But most of those who survived joined the partisans at some stage, either as fighters or in the family camps, especially those organized by the Bielski brothers.

Meanwhile, Rufeisen also managed to escape, probably thanks to his good relations with the Gendarmes. Shortly before the ghetto's liquidation he was betrayed by one of the remaining Jews and confessed to Hein, "I am neither an enemy of the Germans nor a Pole. I will tell you the truth because so far

I have always worked with you openly and honestly, but nevertheless I consider the planned anti-Jewish operation to be very wrong for I myself am a Jew. And this was the only motive for my action."¹² Nevertheless, the guard on him remained lax, and he was able to slip away without great difficulty. One Gendarme recalled, "[W]hen Rufeisen escaped, I had just come off duty. I was probably the first to see it. However, because we had such a good relationship with Rufeisen, I only reported what I had seen when Rufeisen was far enough away."¹³

The shooting of the remaining Jews followed shortly afterwards on August 13, 1942, as planned. A grave was prepared in advance in the nearby Jabłonowszczyzna Forest on instructions from Serafinowicz. On the evening before the liquidation, a reinforced guard of local police with machine guns was set up around the castle. The next morning a number of police auxiliaries (including Latvians and Lithuanians) from Baranowicze appeared in Mir. The remaining 560 Jews, mainly elderly people and women with children, were loaded onto trucks and taken to the killing site. Members of the Gendarmerie guarded the route and were ordered to ensure that no Jews escaped. Local police also took part in the shooting.¹⁴

The process of searching for those in hiding continued for some time after the Aktion. According to a report by Hein, some 65 of the escaped Mir Jews had been captured and shot by August 20, 1942. Investigative records reveal that 4 Jews were found in the cellar of Mir castle about three weeks after the ghetto liquidation. Local policemen from Mir dragged them out and then shot them nearby.¹⁵

Not only the police but also other local inhabitants continued to be active in tracking down escaped Jews over the following months.

A number of former local police collaborators were convicted by Soviet and Polish courts after the war. The German authorities opened investigations into the activities of the 8th Company, Infantry Regiment 727, and members of the German Gendarmerie post in Mir in the 1960s but did not have sufficient evidence against named individuals to initiate criminal proceedings. Mainly thanks to Rufeisen's assistance, more than 50 Jews from the Mir ghetto managed to survive the war. Among those who gave evidence at the pretrial hearing against Serafinowicz in Dorking near London in 1996 were David Protas, Ze'ev Schreiber, Lev Abramovsky, Michael Breslin, Menachem Shalev, Israel Shifron, and Shmuel Cesler. Serafinowicz was deemed unfit for trial on medical grounds in January 1997 and died shortly afterwards. The memorial grave sites in and around Mir were restored with new inscriptions in the 1990s, once survivors were able to visit their former homes.

SOURCES The main secondary works are Nechama Tec's *In the Lion's Den: The Life of Oswald Rufeisen* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), which provides an excellent biography of Oswald Rufeisen based on extensive interviews with him; and Martin Dean, *Collaboration in the Holocaust: Crimes of the Local Police in Belorussia and Ukraine, 1941-44* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000), which has several pages on the anti-Jewish Aktions in the Mir Rayon. Important also are the yizkor books for Mir: Nachman Blumental, ed., *Sefer Mir* (Jerusalem:

The Germans set up a local auxiliary police under the command of a rabid antisemite. They ordered the Jews to select a five-man Judenrat headed by Ehrlich, a refugee from Częstochowa. They compelled the Judenrat to collect and pay special taxes. The Germans demanded money, gold, and jewelry and subsequently clothing, shoes, furniture, and other items. Whenever a fine was levied, the Germans threatened to kill some Jews if their demand was not met promptly. The Judenrat members did everything they could to meet these demands. The Judenrat also had to supply people for forced labor. Every day groups of men and women were sent on work assignments around the town, guarded by local overseers. On their way to and from work the guards beat and humiliated the laborers. Groups of Jews were sent to various labor camps. From one group of more than 20 people sent to the camp in Kołdyczewo, several Jews managed to escape to join the partisans in the Naliboki Forest.²

On February 14, 1942, members of the local police, on their own initiative, removed 20 Jewish men and women from their houses. They took them to a tar pit outside town and murdered them. The Jews protested this Aktion to the German authorities in Baranowicze, which resulted in a death sentence being passed on the local police chief. However, his colleagues helped him to escape into the surrounding forests.

In January 1942, several members of pre-war Jewish youth groups made contact with Soviet partisans operating in the area and also fled into the forests. In March they and their families then slipped into the Horodyszczce ghetto. In April 1942, several youths from Mołczadź working at a farm in Dobrowszczyna rose up and killed the antisemitic farm manager and his helpers. In early summer, a group of younger Jews, some of whom had experience in the Polish Army, formed an underground resistance group. They even approached the Judenrat to try to get some money to buy arms. From various sources, they obtained three rifles and several revolvers and began to train. There was also spiritual resistance in Mołczadź, guided by the Stołowicze rabbi. Jews met in secret to teach the children and pray for deliverance.³

As news spread about the liquidation of other ghettos, many in Mołczadź hoped that they would not share the same fate. In late May or early June 1942, the police ordered the Judenrat to mobilize 200 Jews to dig pits, allegedly for fuel storage tanks, in Burdykowszczyzna, next to the Russian Orthodox cemetery of Horodyszczce. On June 3, 1942, after they finished digging, the Germans shot the 200 Jews at the pits. Around this time, sensing an impending Aktion, the Jews of Mołczadź began to dig bunkers and seek hiding places. Young members of the underground set up a guard to warn of the approach of hostile forces.⁴

Before dawn on July 15, 1942, truckloads of German Gendarmes and local police from various posts in Gebiet Baranowitsche surrounded the town. At daybreak the Jews were ordered to assemble in the market square. Local police then combed the houses for stragglers. When the Stołowicze rabbi emerged in his prayer shawl, he was shot to death. The Jewish

underground group sought to disrupt the encirclement by firing their weapons, hoping to create enough confusion for a mass escape. The Germans opened fire with machine guns and killed 20 Jewish fighters. Only 9 made it to the forest. Another 60 Jews fled into the Horky Forest, where, under the protection of partisans, they set up a family camp.

About 3,300 people assembled in the market square. They were lined up facing the wall, hands up, and searched for valuables. Then the Germans and local police took them in groups of 100 to the pits outside of Mołczadź. After ordering the victims to line up next to the pits and undress, they shot them. Over several days, from July 15 to July 18, approximately 3,300 Jews were murdered. The operation was probably organized by the Security Police outpost in Baranowicze, assisted by German Gendarmes and police auxiliaries from the Baltic states as well as Belorussia, including some local police from Rayon Neswish.⁵

A number of Jewish specialist workers and their families were initially spared during the Aktion and put into a remnant ghetto. In August 1942, the Germans urged everyone still hiding in the forest or elsewhere to come back to Mołczadź, guaranteeing their safety in the “new ghetto for the workers.” About 200 people were gathered in Mołczadź altogether. After 20 days, on the pretext that they were heading for a new work site to dig peat, they were taken to the pits and murdered.⁶

Young men in the forest joined various Soviet partisan brigades. Jewish partisans from Mołczadź settled accounts with several collaborators from their town and participated in other acts of sabotage along the railway lines. Some were caught, turned in by informants, or killed in action. A few sought refuge in the nearby Dworzec ghetto/forced labor camp. A number of Jews from Mołczadź survived until the return of the Red Army in the summer of 1944. They included partisan fighters, people still in hiding, and refugees who had escaped to the Soviet Union in the summer of 1941.⁷

SOURCES Information about the Jewish community of Mołczadź can be found in the following publications: “Mołczadź,” in Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ba-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Bialystok, Nowogrodek* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 404–408; Benzion H. Ayalon, ed., *Sefer-zikaron le-kebilat Meytsbet* (Tel Aviv: Meytscher Societies in Israel and Abroad, 1973); and Leonid Smilovitskii, *Katastrofa evreev v Belorusii 1941–1944gg.* (Tel Aviv: Biblioteka Matveia Chernogo, 2000), p. 187.

Documents regarding the destruction of the Jews of Mołczadź can be found in the following archives: AUKG-BRBMO (Arch. No. 3617, Case No. 35694); GARF (7021-81-102); NARB (845-1-6, p. 31); and YVA.

Samuel Fishman and Martin Dean

NOTES

1. “Mołczadź,” in Spector and Freundlich, *Pinkas ba-kebilot*, 8:406; Ayalon, *Sefer-zikaron le-kebilat Meytsbet*, e.g., p. 304, “there was no ghetto in Mołczadź.” See also the comments of survivors posted at www.jewishgen.org/Yizkor/belarus/bell78.html. Martin Gilbert, *The Holocaust: The Jewish Trag-*

edy (London: William Collins, 1986), p. 380, and *Rossiiskaia evreiskaia entsiklopediia* (Moscow: Russian Academy of Natural Sciences, Jewish Encyclopedia Research Center, “Epos,” 2004), 5:442, however, both refer specifically to a ghetto in Mołeczadz.

2. Spector and Freundlich, *Pinkas ha-kebilot*, 8:407.
3. *Ibid.*, 8:407; and Shalom Cholawsky, *The Jews of Bielorusia during World War II* (Amsterdam: Harwood, 1998), p. 127.
4. Spector and Freundlich, *Pinkas ha-kebilot*, 8:407.
5. *Ibid.*, 8:407; and NARB, 845-1-6, p. 31. On the participation of police from Nieśwież, see AUKGBRMO, Arch. No. 3617, Case No. 35694, against Petr Sergeevich Korolev, born 1915, 2 vols. On the nationalities of the perpetrators, see also www.jewishgen.org/Yizkor/belarus/bel178.html.
6. Spector and Freundlich, *Pinkas ha-kebilot*, 8:407. According to Marat Botvinnik, *Pamiatniki genotsida evreev Belarusi* (Minsk: Belaruskaja Navuka, 2000), p. 100, the 200 Jewish specialist workers and their families had been assigned to dig peat and were moved into an enclosed ghetto in August.
7. Spector and Freundlich, *Pinkas ha-kebilot*, 8:408.

MOŁODECZNO

Pre-1939: Mołodeczno, town and powiat center, Wilno województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Molodechno, raion center, Vileika oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Molodetschno, Rayon center, Gebiet Wilejka, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Maladechna, raen center, Minsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Mołodeczno is located 69 kilometers (43 miles) northwest of Minsk. On the eve of World War II, some 800 Jews lived in the town. In the fall of 1939, a number of Jewish refugees from Poland arrived in Mołodeczno, bringing the total number of Jews there in mid-1941 to more than 1,000.

German forces occupied Mołodeczno on June 26, 1941. A German military command post (Ortskommandantur 851) governed the town during the summer of 1941. Control passed to a German civil administration in September. The German Gendarmerie post then established in Mołodeczno assumed control over the auxiliary police force composed of local inhabitants. SS-Obersturmführer Rudolf Grave (who died in 1944) commanded the SD-Hauptaussonstelle Wilejka, which organized most of the anti-Jewish Aktions in the town in 1942 and 1943.

The German authorities undertook a number of anti-Jewish measures during the summer and fall of 1941. These included the creation of a Jewish Council (Judenrat), the requirement that Jews wear an armband with the Star of David, the introduction of forced labor for Jews, and the confinement of Jews within the town limits. Jews suffered systematic robbery and beatings at the hands of the local auxiliary police.

Sonderkommando 7a carried out the first Aktion in Mołodeczno on July 13, 1941, in the course of which the Germans shot 11 Soviet activists and Communists, including 7 Jews.¹ On July 18, 1941, a detachment of Einsatzkommando 9, led by SS-Obersturmführer Schneider, carried out a second

Aktion in Mołodeczno.² According to a summary prepared for the verdict of the Regional Court in Berlin on June 22, 1962, the Aktion began early in the morning when Schneider ordered the members of the unit to round up at least 100 Jews (about 70 men and 30 women) from their houses. Then the Jews were escorted to an open field behind the town. Here a table had been set up for members of the Einsatzkommando to record the names of the Jews and collect any valuables they had with them—rings, necklaces, and watches. From among the Jews, the unit formed a “work brigade” that replaced squad personnel in digging a ditch. A police platoon constituted the firing squad. It included the platoon commander, Neubert. At the command “Fire!”—which defendant Schneider gave repeatedly—a 10-man squad fired its rifles from a distance of about 10 meters (33 feet).³

The third Aktion against male Jews that remained in Mołodeczno took place on October 25, 1941.⁴ Apparently a detachment of the Wehrmacht carried out this Aktion.⁵ After the third Aktion, the German authorities confined those Jews left in the town, mostly women, children, and the elderly, within a ghetto located on Nevskaia Street.⁶ In the spring or early summer of 1942, a number of able-bodied Jews from the Mołodeczno ghetto were transferred to the ghetto/forced labor camp established by the Germans in Krasne. Not many Jews from the Mołodeczno ghetto were able to survive, but among those who did were the two children of the Jewish doctor Aron Babkis, Ada and Yakob. Babkis managed to smuggle them out with the aid of the non-Jew Anton Shnip, who initially concealed them in his own home, before transferring them to two trusted families in nearby villages. Their father, unfortunately, did not survive the German occupation.⁷

At the end of June 1942, members of the SD outpost (Hauptaussonstelle) Wilejka liquidated the ghetto and, with the collaboration of the Belorussian police, shot some 700 Jews about 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) outside the town on the banks of the Usha River.⁸

After the liquidation of the ghetto, a Jewish labor camp remained in Mołodeczno consisting of Jewish craftsmen employed in various German departments. A number of these Jews had been brought to Mołodeczno from Lida and Baranowicze. On the orders of the SD-Hauptaussonstelle Wilejka, on or around September 7, 1942, the Belorussian police shot between 25 and 30 of the Jewish forced laborers as “unfit for work.” The labor camp was closed down on July 17, 1943, when members of SD-Hauptaussonstelle Wilejka sent more than 70 Jews from the camp to Wilejka. There they placed 15 to 20 Jews in the local labor camp; they shot the rest.⁹

At some date during the German occupation following the main mass killing Aktions, the German authorities put up a sign at the railway station that read: “No Jews here—clean.”¹⁰

SOURCES Relevant publications include Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Bialystok, Nowogrodek* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 402–404.

1244 WEISSRUTHENIEN REGION

Information on the extermination of Jews in Mołodeczno can be found in the following archives: BA-L (B 162/3153); GARF (7021-89-9); NARB; VHF (# 6309 and 39440); and YVA (e.g., O-3/3053 and M-31 [Anton Shnip]).

Alexander Kruglov
trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. Peter Klein, ed., *Die Einsatzgruppen in der besetzten Sowjetunion 1941/42* (Berlin: Hentrich, 1997), p. 377; and GARF, 7021-89-9, pp. 119, 125.

2. M. Drayzen, "Ocean of Blood and Tears," in Matityahu Bar-Ratzon, ed., *Ner tamid; yizkor le-Krivitsb* (Tel Aviv: Krivitsb Societies in Israel and the Diaspora, 1977), pp. 264ff.

3. Landgericht Berlin, 3PKsl/62, verdict of June 22, 1962, against Filbert and others, in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 18 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1979) Lfd. Nr. 540.

4. Testimony of Chana Shafran (née Pozner), in Yehuda Cheres, *And the Shtetl is Burning* (N.p., n.d.), p. 74.

5. H. Heer, "Extreme Normalität Generalmajor Gustav Freiherr von Mauchenheim gen. Bechtolsheim. Umfeld, Motive und Entschlussbildung eines Holocaust-Täters," *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* (2003), p. 735. Between 500 and 1,000 victims were shot. The 11th Reserve Police Battalion, subordinated to the 707th Infantry Division, carried out the shooting assisted by Field Gendarmes and guards from Stalag 342.

6. NARB, 861-1-10, pp. 12, 20; VHF, # 6309 and 39440. Both use the term *ghetto* to refer to the situation of the Jews in Mołodeczno in 1941 and 1942.

7. YVA, M-31 (Anton Shnip).

8. Sta. Dortmund, 45 Js 3/61, Indictment (Anklageschrift) against Johann Karl Förster and others, January 25, 1977.

9. Ibid.

10. GARF, 8114-1-955, pp. 107–108.

NIEŚWIEŻ

Pre-1939: Nieśwież, town and powiat center, Nowogródek województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Nesvizh, raion center, Baranovichy oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Neswib, Rayon center, Gebiet Baranowitsche, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Niasvizh, raen center, Minsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Nieśwież is located 94 kilometers (58 miles) south-southwest of Minsk. The town's population in 1939 was about 7,000, of which some 4,000 were Jews. In September 1939, many Jewish refugees who had fled before the advancing Germans arrived in Nieśwież from western and central Poland.

German forces occupied Nieśwież on June 27, 1941. Two days later, the Germans ordered the establishment of a Jewish Council (Judenrat) headed by Magalif, a refugee lawyer from Warsaw who spoke good German.¹ The Judenrat organized forced labor by every Jew over 15 years old and coordinated the collection of goods and money through the Jewish police force it had established. On September 1, the Jews were forced to move from the main streets to crowded houses on the side streets.

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CAMPS AND GHETTOS, 1933–1945



Adults and children congregate outside the Nieśwież synagogue, 1920. USHMM WS #97253, COURTESY OF JACK KAGAN

On October 29, 1941, an order was issued by the German military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur) for the entire Jewish population to gather in the marketplace to have their documents examined. The next morning, people turned up in their best clothes, fearing that their houses would be looted while they were out. A selection was conducted of the skilled workers on the basis of a list. Doctors, engineers, glaziers, blacksmiths, textile workers, shoemakers, tailors, and carpenters were among those sent to one side with their families. During the selection, trucks appeared on the road that led to Slutsk. Uniformed Germans, Lithuanians, and local Belorussian police surrounded the marketplace. The 585 skilled workers and family members were escorted to the high school (*gymnazium*) by the local police.² German soldiers and Lithuanian auxiliaries took the remainder, approximately 4,000 Jews, to be shot in pits dug at two separate sites. One large group was escorted on foot to the park surrounding the Radziwiłł palace about 1 kilometer (0.6 mile) from the marketplace.³ A second group of 2,000 Jews was taken to another site, 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) away, next to the road to Snów.

The mass shooting was carried out by the Lithuanian 12th Schutzmannschaft Battalion together with German Reserve Police Battalion 11, commanded by Franz Lechthaler. The local German commandant in Nieśwież was Anton Specht, of the 8th Company, Infantry Regiment 727. Specht was assisted by the local Belorussian police.

Shortly after the mass shooting, a German civil administration was established in Nieśwież. German Gendarmerie officers then took charge of the Belorussian police (Schutzmannschaft), which was headed by Vladimir Sienko.⁴

The surviving Jews were taken to the ghetto, an area 250 meters long and 150 meters wide (273 yards by 164 yards) surrounded by barbed wire, where they lived in very overcrowded conditions. Forced labor continued. Groups were sent to remove any valuables from the houses of the murdered Jews, which were transferred to the local commandant's office. Some of these items were sent on to Baranowicze and Germany. Others prisoners worked in workshops according to their vo-



Certificate marking the one hundredth birthday of Perla Mosewicksa, signed by all the Jews in Nieśwież and the Polish doctor whom she assisted. She was later shot by the Germans at the age of 107. USHMM WS #38026, COURTESY OF WANDA GLASS

cation or in the surrounding fields. The shortage of food compelled Jews to smuggle items into the ghetto.

About two thirds of the remaining Jews were Polish refugees; only one third were native to Nieśwież. The Judenrat was responsible for running the ghetto and organizing the working groups. Other members of the Judenrat included Bashinkevitch, Grinvald, Vasilevsky, and Milstein.⁵ Magalif cooperated with the Germans, hoping that useful workers would not be killed. He conducted himself as if he were the absolute ruler of the ghetto, granting himself a high standard of living. Inside the ghetto he insisted on order and cleanliness. Within the Jewish community, he attempted to improve conditions, for example, permitting an illegal wedding. He was assisted by the Jewish police, which guarded the gate and had a small prison inside the ghetto.

The question of resistance arose soon after the establishment of the ghetto. The young were in favor of resistance, while the old and those with families, including Magalif, were against it, fearing any resistance or flight would endanger the

entire community. Underground groups formed under youth movement activists, mainly Zionists, such as Shalom Cholawski, Siomka Farfel, Freidel Lachowicky, Yerachmiel Shklar, Nathan Messer, Bronstein, and Buzhin, and other groups led by Berl Alperovitz and Moshe Dameshek. Children were taught illegally in the teachers' houses. Resisters smuggled weapons into the ghetto. Many Jews prepared hiding places in case of an Aktion.⁶

In March 1942, rumors spread of a recent Aktion in Baranowicz, and in early summer the Germans murdered members of the Polish intelligentsia. In early July, Judenrat elections took place, and Magalif was reelected, mainly due to the relative calm in the ghetto.

On Friday, July 17, 1942, news spread of the murder of all the Jews in nearby Horodziej. Magalif called for an illegal gathering of the Jewish congregation. Kadish was said for the victims. Young people argued for fleeing the ghetto; others argued that even the young should stay with their families and not leave them to die alone. Magalif announced that only when it was absolutely clear that the ghetto was going to be liquidated should resistance be commenced. It was decided to set the Jewish houses on fire, to provide cover for those able to run into the nearby forest.⁷ Nine fighting groups were organized, each consisting of five Jews.

On Monday, July 20, 1942, the German commander told the Judenrat that Belorussian policemen would replace the Jewish guards at the gate. Belorussian police from the surrounding areas cordoned off the ghetto at dusk. Many Jews went into their secret hiding places. During the night, the police fired scattered shots into the houses. In the morning, the German commander appeared at the gate, called Magalif, and told him that he needed to select only 30 textile workers without their families. The crowd heard this and shouted, "There will be no selection."⁸ Magalif said: "Brothers, I know that you had no trust in me. You thought I would betray you. In this last minute, I am with you, I and my family. We are the first ones to go to our death."⁹ The Germans opened fire and were surprised by a volley from the machine gun stationed on the second floor of the main (*kalter*) synagogue. Jews attacked German soldiers and Belorussian policemen, killing and wounding a few. Jews also set piles of hay alight; the fire soon spread to the houses. One German official later testified: "[M]y unit together with the Schutzpolizei, Gendarmerie, and Belorussian Schutzmannschaft, was sent to Nieśwież to cleanse the ghetto and liquidate the Jews. From the ghetto, shots were fired towards us. The shooting lasted a few hours until evening. We fired back. The ghetto started to burn. Jews ran away from the ghetto. We did not chase them, but withdrew. After a while, we approached the ghetto and searched the ruins. The ghetto was empty. Many corpses of Jews were seen lying around."¹⁰ A few Jews broke through the Belorussian police cordon to the forest.

Thirty-two Jews escaped and joined the partisans; 26 survived and were liberated by the Red Army.

After the war, German investigations against both Anton Specht and Vladimir Sienko were abandoned without any

1246 WEISSRUTHENIEN REGION

conviction. Specht died in 1972. The Sienko case was closed in 1982 due to insufficient evidence. Lechthaler was tried in 1961, convicted, and sentenced to three and a half years in prison.¹¹

SOURCES The following memoirs of survivors have been published: Moshe Lachowicky, *Churban Nesvizh* (Tel Aviv: Committee of Emigrants from Nesvizh, 1948); Shalom Cholawski, *Soldiers from the Ghetto* (San Diego: Barnes & Co., 1980); David Farfel, *In Nesvizh Ghetto and Naliboki Woods* [in Hebrew] (Ramat Gan, 1995); and Ishai Mazin, *The Revolt and Liquidation of Nesvizh Ghetto* [in Hebrew] (Lod, 1999). Important also is the Nesvizh yizkor book, edited by David Shtockfish, *Sefer Nesvizh* (Tel Aviv, 1976); and Moshe Ajzenbud, *Jews of Nesvizh* [in Yiddish] (Melbourne, 1965); as well as several other more general works on the Holocaust and Jewish resistance in Belorussia.

Survivor testimonies and other documentation can be found in the following archives: BA-L (II 202 AR 116/67; 202 AR 133/81); FVA (Elka Farfel); LG-Kass (3a Ks 1/61); Sta. Trier (3 Js 1257/81); USHMM; and YVA (0-3/2746).

Zvi Farfel

NOTES

1. Lachowicky, *Churban Nesvizh*, p. 2.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 6–18; YVA, 0-3/2746; FVA, Elka Farfel, 1996.
3. FVA, E. Farfel; YVA, 0-3/2746.
4. LG-Kass, 3a Ks 1/61, Trial of Franz Lechthaler; BA-L, II 202 AR 116/67, Investigation of Anton Specht; Sta. Trier, 3 Js 1257/81, Investigation of Vladimir Sienko.
5. Ajzenbud, *Jews of Nesvizh*.
6. Lachowicky, *Churban Nesvizh*, pp. 26–27, 33; YVA, 0-3/2746.
7. Farfel, *In Nesvizh Ghetto*.
8. Lachowicky, *Churban Nesvizh*, p. 40; FVA, E. Farfel; YVA, 0-3/2746.
9. S. Cholawski, in Yitzhak Zuckerman and Moshe Bassock, eds., *Sefer Milhemet Hagetaot* (Tel Aviv: Katsenelson, 1954), p. 480.
10. BA-L, 22 Js 104/61, Emil Otto Pick, October 18, 1961.
11. LG-Kass, 3a Ks 1/61, Trial of Franz Lechthaler; BA-L, II 202 AR 116/67, Investigation of Anton Specht; Sta. Trier, 3 Js 1257/81, Investigation of Vladimir Sienko.

NOWA MYSZ

Pre-1939: Nowa Mysz, town, Baranowicze powiat, Nowogródek województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Novaia Mysb', raion center, Baranovichy oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Nowa Mysch, Rayon center, Gebiet Baranowitsche, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Novaia Mysb', Baranavichy raen, Beras'tse voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Nowa Mysz is located about 10 kilometers (6.2 miles) west of Baranowicze. In 1897, the Jewish population of the town was 1,764 (out of a total population of 2,995), but many Jews moved to Baranowicze from the late nineteenth century, as the latter came to overshadow Nowa Mysz, once it became a major railway junction. In 1921, the Jewish population of

Nowa Mysz was 632, comprising 34.8 percent of the total.¹ There were probably about 800 Jews living in Nowa Mysz just before the German invasion.

German forces entered Nowa Mysz on June 27, 1941. The area initially came under German military administration, and an auxiliary police force was soon recruited from local inhabitants. In September 1941, authority was transferred to a civil administration, which became fully staffed over the ensuing months. Nowa Mysz was a Rayon center in Gebiet Baranowitsche, where the Gebietskommissar was Rudolf Werner.

In the summer and fall of 1941, the German authorities imposed a series of anti-Jewish measures. Jews were forced to wear yellow patches, they were prohibited from leaving the town or having any contacts with non-Jews, their property was confiscated, and they were forced to make ransom payments. With the help of the local police, several Jews were arrested on charges of being Communists and were taken out and shot. According to one source, the remaining Jews were concentrated in a specific area and prohibited from leaving it, establishing a form of “open ghetto.”² But the testimony of one local inhabitant indicates that no formal ghetto was established.³ However, it is likely that some Jews from nearby villages were brought to Nowa Mysz.

In the fall of 1941, a small squad of German Gendarmerie formed a Rayon post in Nowa Mysz, which took over control of the local police, now renamed Schutzmannschaft. In Rayon Nowa Mysch, members of a Polish underground organization (that was later linked to the Armia Krajowa [Home Army]) infiltrated the local police. The Rayon chief of police, Henryk Zaprucki, was apparently also a commander within the Polish underground. The Germans tried to purge the police force of its strong Polish influence during the winter of 1941–1942, but in Nowa Mysz many Poles got around this by fraudulently claiming to be Belorussian.⁴

According to a German report dated March 12, 1942, the office of the Gebietskommissar in Baranowicze proposed that only the Rayon physician in Nowa Mysz, Dr. Milenzew, should be retained and that the two Jewish doctors, Rosa Libermann and Mowscha Hilerovitsch, were superfluous. The same order stressed the need to purge the medical services in the Gebiet of all unnecessary Jewish personnel.⁵

German forces liquidated the “open ghetto” in Nowa Mysz in July 1942. A squad of German Security Police and SD arrived from Baranovichy, headed by Leutnant Amelung of the Security Police, and brought with them an “execution squad” of Lithuanians. Policemen were called in from the surrounding outposts, and under the command of the town police chief in Nowa Mysz, Wiktor Labun, they rounded up the Jews and assembled them at the fire station. A police cordon was thrown around the town to prevent any Jews from escaping. The local police escorted the Jews from the fire station to a large pit that had been prepared by local inhabitants just outside the town. The execution squad shot several hundred people in total—perhaps as many as 600. On this occasion the Germans also surrounded the killing site with machine-gun nests to prevent any intervention by Soviet partisans.⁶

According to eyewitnesses, members of the local police shot several Jews during the roundup and also more Jews, including children, over the following days as they were found in hiding.⁷ Some local policemen moved into the former houses of Jews following the mass shootings.⁸

SOURCES Information about the Jewish community of Nowa Mysz can be found in the following publication: Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Bialystok, Nowogródek* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 429–430.

Documents regarding the destruction of the Jews of Nowa Mysz can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-81-102); IPN (e.g., SWB 221 and 273, SWOI 12, and SWSz 69-78); NARB (845-1-6, p. 59); and Sta. Oldenbourg (2 Js 138/68, Closing Report [Einstellungsverfügung] in the case against Max Eibner).

Martin Dean

NOTES

1. Spector and Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot*, 8: 429–430.

2. *Ibid.*

3. IPN, SWB 273, p. 235, testimony of Stanisław Pierechod.

4. See Martin Dean, “Poles Serving in the German Local Police in the Eastern Districts of Poland and Their Role in the Holocaust,” *Polin* 18 (2005): 353–366.

5. 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. 130–132.

6. IPN, SWB 221, pp. 39–40, statement of Józef Kielbasko, May 31, 1963; Sta. Oldenbourg, 2 Js 138/68, Closing Report (Einstellungsverfügung) in the case against Max Eibner; IPN, SWSz 69-78; NARB, 845-1-6, p. 59.

7. IPN, SWB 221, p. 115, statement of M.P. on January 23, 1964, and p. 41, statement of E.L. on June 20, 1963.

8. IPN, SWOI 12, statement of A.W.

NOWOGRÓDEK

Pre-1939: Nowogródek, city, powiat and województwo center, Poland; 1939–1941: Novogradok, raion center, Baranovichi oblast’, Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Nowogrodek, Rayon and Gebiet center, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Navabrudak, Hrodna voblasts’, Republic of Belarus

Nowogródek is located 120 kilometers (75 miles) west-southwest of Minsk. According to the 1931 census, there were 6,309 Jews living in the town of Nowogródek out of a total population of 13,252. In addition, there were 4,153 Jews living in the villages of the Nowogródek powiat, including Lubecz, Delatyzcze, Wsielub, Niehniewiczze, and Walewka.

The 8th Infantry Division of the German army entered Nowogródek on July 4, 1941. The Germans had bombed the center of town heavily on June 22, 24, 26, and 28. As a result, several dozen people were killed, and many Jewish houses



Group portrait of young children in a Jewish school in Nowogródek, 1933–1935. Donor Esther Klug (née Ass), is pictured in the front row, second from left.

USHMM WS #49716, COURTESY OF ESTHER KLUG

were ruined and burned. At the time of the German arrival, there was some looting of Jewish homes by the local non-Jewish population. After a few days the German commandant issued orders for some of the wealthiest and most notable Jews to come to the German military headquarters (Ortskommandantur), each bringing 10 or more Jewish men with them, in order to elect a Jewish Council (Judenrat). When about 200 Jews had assembled, German security forces beat and humiliated them, murdering some. The Germans appointed a Judenrat from those who remained; it was responsible for organizing Jewish men to clear rubble from the streets.¹

On July 26, 1941, with the help of the Judenrat, the Germans collected another group of men in the market square. They were formed up in lines, and about 50 of them were selected and shot on the spot. According to the memoirs of the Catholic priest Zelenkevich, on that day a military band played a Strauss waltz shortly after the atrocity, a detail also recalled by the Jewish survivor Jack Kagan.

In the fall, a civil administration took over from the military. Wilhelm Traub was appointed Gebietskommissar of Nowogródek. On September 26, 1941, a poster heralding the imposition of new restrictions on the Jews and signed by the Gebietskommissar appeared in the streets. Every Jew had to carry an identity card and wear a yellow star. Jews were strictly forbidden to leave the town without an official permit, to engage in any form of trade, to attend the market, or to use the sidewalk.² Soon the new civil administration replaced the Judenrat. Around the end of August, the Germans arrested some 50 Jews, including the members of the Judenrat, and shot them the next day. A new Judenrat was then appointed and given strict instructions to carry out all German orders.

At the end of August 1941, the civil administration collected furniture, bedding, kitchen utensils, and other useful objects from the Jews to equip the households of the newly arrived German administrators. On November 22, 1941, Gebietskommissar Traub issued instructions to all local mayors and village elders that the Jews of the Gebiet were to gather together all valuables by November 28, 1941. Then Jewish representatives had to report to a local mayor or a village elder for a special permit and travel as a group to Nowogródek to surrender their possessions. The Jews were permitted to retain only 150 rubles for their own needs.³

On Friday, December 5, 1941, another order signed by Gebietskommissar Traub was published in Nowogródek. Jews who had a work certificate from the labor exchange were ordered to gather with their families in the building of the former courthouse on the morning of Sunday, December 7. The elderly and sick were to stay at home and await further instructions.⁴ Dov Cohen recalls that some Judenrat members, accompanied by a Belorussian policeman and a German officer, visited his house. From a list, they read out the names of those who had to go to the courthouse at the end of Korelicze Street. When the people assembled as instructed on December 7, they had to spend the entire day outside in the biting cold. The elderly and families with children were gathered in the building of the former monastery on May 3 Street. In the evening, about 100 young men (Dov Cohen among them) were selected for a work task. The Germans ordered them to take apart the wooden fence around the marketplace at the end of Korelicze Street and take it to Peresieka, a suburb about 1 kilometer (0.6 mile) away. Here they had to construct a fence around 28 houses for the future ghetto. During this horrible assignment, members of the Wehrmacht, Belorussian policemen, and Lithuanian auxiliaries watched over them. Those who could not carry heavy sections of the fence and fell down were shot immediately. The others had to carry the dead bodies on the wet, heavy pieces of the fence. Later they buried them at the side of the road near the village of Bretianka.

On December 8, the Germans organized a selection in the yard of the courthouse. Officers and men from the 7th Company, Infantry Regiment 727 (about 260 men strong, commanded by Oberleutnant Johann Artmann), surrounded the town to prevent Jews from escaping. Artmann also allocated some men to guard the courthouse, where members of the civil administration in brown uniforms carried out the selection. One group of Jews (about 1,300 people) was sent to the ghetto in Peresieka. The others were loaded onto trucks or taken on foot to the pits prepared in advance near the village of Skrydlewo, 1 kilometer (0.6 miles) behind the military barracks. Here unidentified men from the SD, the SS, and possibly members of the Lithuanian and Belorussian police shot them. The same happened to those gathered in the monastery on May 3 Street. In total, more than 5,000 people were shot. Members of the 7th Company, Infantry Regiment 727, formed a cordon around the massacre site.⁵

The ghetto in Peresieka was surrounded by a wooden fence with barbed wire and was guarded by Belorussian policemen

and German soldiers. The Judenrat appointed Jewish Police inside the ghetto. Their tasks were to keep order in the ghetto, prevent prisoners from trading with the local population, and help the Judenrat fulfill German orders. Every morning prisoners were escorted out to do temporary or permanent work in different workshops. Some workshops were established in the courthouse buildings. Craftsmen, such as shoemakers, tailors, carpenters, and saddle makers—about 450 men and women altogether—worked there. They worked to supply the needs of the German Army (making fur gloves, boots, and so on) and also made clothes and shoes ordered by local citizens. Another 250 men worked in the workshops in the military barracks on Slonim Street, and the remainder worked in town. The daily ration in the ghetto was poor: only 200 grams (7 ounces) of brown bread, a plate of soup, and an extra portion of soup for those who worked in the military barracks. Other Jews continued to work clearing the rubble in the town and were subjected to frequent beatings. Some ghetto inmates were able to supplement their meager rations by exchanging articles such as clothing or valuables with the local population for food.

In the spring of 1942, the Germans decided to clear the surrounding villages of Jews. On March 6, 1942, Gebietskommissar Traub ordered that every Jew found in a village or hamlet in the Gebiet should be arrested by the local police and brought to Nowogródek.⁶ In May about 1,500 Jews were brought to Peresieka on foot from the ghetto in Korelicze and 1,500 from the shtetl of Lubcz. On May 20, 1,000 Jews arrived from the village of Derewna, then 1,200 more came from Iwieniec and some other smaller places, including Wsielub and Walewka. The ghetto became very overcrowded, now holding about 6,500 people.⁷

In June 1942, partisans attacked a German police unit returning from an Aktion to murder the Jews in the town of Naliboki.⁸ Soon after this incident, which unsettled the Germans, the Judenrat received instructions to increase the size of the Jewish Police. Non-Jewish guards were also posted, and the police entered the ghetto to take the last few things the Jews had left. According to David Wolfowicz, the ghetto began to starve.⁹

Some Jews decided to escape to the forests and join the partisans. The Judenrat was held responsible for these escapes. Gebietskommissar Traub summoned the Judenrat for a meeting, only to arrest them and have them shot. He then appointed a new Judenrat, which included Chaim Aisikowicz, Moshe Mawochowicz, Leibel Pinczuk, Moshe Zamkower, Chaim Maslowote, and Daniel Ostaszinski. To prevent more youths from fleeing to the forest, the Jewish Police would catch them and take away their shoes. It was rumored that the authorities had promised the Judenrat and its staff 150 work certificates if they would help with a forthcoming Aktion. As these rumors spread, everybody in the ghetto started to organize hiding places and bunkers in preparation.¹⁰

On August 6, 1942, the Judenrat issued special permits to all the craftsmen and other people whose work was considered important by the German authorities. They were also moved to the location of their workshops at the courthouse in Kore-

licze Street, which was surrounded by a barbed-wire fence and guarded by the local police. This place was destined to become a Jewish forced labor camp.

On August 7, 1942, the Germans and their collaborators (including Estonian Police Battalion 36, stationed at that time in the town) took away most of the remaining inmates of the ghetto to the pits at Litowka, about 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) outside Nowogródek on the way to Wsielub, and shot them there. Of the 750 or so Jews then working at the military barracks, about 500 people, mainly men, were left alive. These people then occupied about 15 houses in the ghetto and lived there until the third massacre, which took place on February 4, 1943, again at the killing site in Litowka. At the newly constructed courthouse camp, German SS officers and Lithuanian soldiers selected all the children and searched for any in hiding. Then they loaded them onto a truck and took them to the pits at Litowka to be killed. In total some 5,500 Jews were killed at Litowka during the August 7 Aktion.¹¹

At the courthouse, a high wooden wall was constructed all around the building, and a sentry box for the guards at the entrance gate and watchtowers at the corners were built. One watchtower had searchlights, and the area was lit at night. The labor camp was guarded day and night. Jack Kagan recalls that Belorussian guards were called “black crows” because they wore black uniforms. One could bribe them with gold to bring pistols, cartridges, food, and sometimes let a couple of inmates escape.

There was no water in the camp. Every day some people were sent out for water. It was the only contact with the outside world and the only chance to escape. The daily ration in the camp was 150 grams (5.3 ounces) of bread and a plate of soup made from potato peels. After the massacre in Litowka, the inmates of the courthouse building camp were given numbers to wear on their clothes. Some carpenters who worked at the workshops in the military barracks on Słonim Street were also moved to the labor camp. Tailors, turners, shoemakers, carpenters, and saddle makers worked for the needs of the German Army in the buildings situated right behind the fence.¹² Members of the Judenrat at that time included Burstein and Szabakowski. The German Wilhelm Reuter was the official within the Gebietskommissar's office responsible for the Jewish question (Judenreferent), and he directly supervised the labor camp. He was notorious for his antisemitic attitude: Berl Kagan described him as a “real murderer, who never hesitated to kill a man for the slightest reason.”¹³

On May 7, 1943, another selection took place. The best workers were sent to the workshops, and the remainder, about 250 people, were rounded up by the police in the yard, beaten, and taken to the killing site at the end of Minsk Street, about 400 meters (1,312 feet) from the labor camp.

At the beginning of July 1943, 11 specialists from the labor camp were sent to the prison camp at Kołdyczewo near Baranowicze. German plans existed at that time to get rid of the remaining 250 Jews in Nowogródek, but these were deferred for fear of unsettling the more than 2,000 Jews in nearby Lida.¹⁴ Meanwhile, the Nowogródek Jews set up an escape

committee headed by Berl Joselewicz. The other members of the committee were former serviceman Josef Jarmowski, electrician Rakowski, and some other Jews who were not from Nowogródek. They decided to build a tunnel. The construction began in June, and on September 26, 1943, most of the inmates of the labor camp escaped through the tunnel, which was about 200 meters (656 feet) long, 70 centimeters (2.3 feet) wide, and about 70 centimeters (2.3 feet) high. Some elderly people who could not walk hid in the loft and stayed there for four more days until the guards abandoned the labor camp, taking away its equipment and raw materials. Only then did they leave, and some also managed to survive.

On the edge of Peresieka on the way to Litowka, there lived a “hitler's” (dogcatcher's) family by the name of Bobrowski. They were Poles. Every prisoner of the ghetto knew that he or she could count on a plate of soup in this house, sleep one or two nights there, and learn about the location of the Bielskis' Jewish partisan detachment. Sometime in February 1943, the Germans learned about their contacts with the partisans. They killed the adults, burned the house, and sent the four children to the concentration camp at Gross-Rosen. Yad Vashem has recognized the entire family as Righteous Among the Nations.¹⁵

Another Pole, Baiński, and a Belorussian peasant, Konstantin Kozlovski, also helped many Jews during the war. Elena Ruvimovna Derchanskaia recalled that a Belorussian girl, Nadia Protasievich, whom she had known prior to the war from their anti-Polish underground political work together, helped her escape when she left the ghetto to construct a road near the village of Sielets.

There were also many cases where Poles and Belorussians turned in Jews to the Germans. A Pole, Belaus, who lived on an isolated farm a few kilometers from Nowogródek, reported to the Germans on a group of Jewish partisans who came to his farm for food. All of the partisans but one were killed. Later other partisans from the same detachment murdered him and his family in revenge.

From the autumn of 1941, a Jewish partisan detachment headed by Tuvia Bielski was active in the Nowogródek area. It cooperated closely with another Soviet partisan detachment, Oktiabrskii, which was headed by Victor Panchenkov. In April 1943, Bielski's detachment became part of the Kirov brigade. On June 19, 1943, the detachment was reorganized into two groups: a family detachment named after Kalinin (991 people) and a fighting detachment named after Ordzhonikidze (149 fighters). They lived through the German blockade called “Operation Hermann” in July 1943. In the fall they built a permanent camp called Jerusalem in the dense Naliboki Forest. The fighting detachment named after Ordzhonikidze participated in joint combat operations together with other detachments of the Kirov brigade.

About 1,200 Jews survived the war in the forests with the Bielski partisan detachment. They were mainly escapees from the ghettos in Nowogródek and Lida or the other towns of the Nowogródek district. When they returned to Nowogródek after the liberation, the openly antagonistic attitude of the non-Jewish population forced them to leave their hometown.



The four Bielski brothers [Tuvia, Alexander, Asael, and Aron] hailed from the village of Stankiewiczze, near Nowogródek. Their partisan group was active in the Nalibocki Forest. On left, Alexander Bielski, photographed, 1945–1948; on right, Asael, photographed 1939–1941. USHMM WS #12135 AND WS #90241, COURTESY OF MOSHE KAGANOVICH

The Gebietskommissar of Nowogródek, Wilhelm Traub, died in a prisoner-of-war camp. The West German authorities opened a criminal investigation against Johann Artmann; however, it was closed in Traunstein in 1966 due to insufficient evidence.

The memorial grave sites in Nowogródek at Skrydlevo and Litowka were renewed on the initiative and at the expense of a ghetto survivor from Nowogródek, Jack Kagan, during the 1990s.

SOURCES The yizkor book for Nowogródek, edited by Eliezer Yerushalmi, *Pinkas Navaredok* (Tel Aviv: Alexander Harkavy Navaredker Relief Committee in USA and Navedredker Committee in Israel, 1963), contains a number of brief accounts of the Nowogródek ghetto, mostly in Yiddish, in the section on “The Holocaust” (pp. 229–332). The joint memoir of Jack Kagan and Dov Cohen, *Surviving the Holocaust with the Russian Jewish Partisans* (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 1998), provides the most detailed recent account and includes a number of documents. On the Bielski partisans who operated in the Nowogródek area, see Nechama Tec, *Defiance: The Bielski Partisans*

(Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993). Some additional information on the Nowogródek ghetto can be found in *Pamiat': Novogradok District* (Minsk, 1996); and Michael Skakun, *On Burning Ground* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999).

Documentation concerning the Nowogródek ghetto can be found in the following archives: AZIH (e.g., 301/1905); BA-BL (R 58/697); BA-L (ZStL, 202 AR-Z 94e/59); GARF (7021-81-112); NARA (T-77, roll 1138); NARB (861-1-1); USHMM (RG-11.001M.01 and RG-22.002M); and YVA (especially O-3, M-1/E, M.31). The author also had access to the collection of wartime documents from the Museum of History and Regional Studies in Novogradok.

Tamara Vershitskaya

NOTES

1. Kagan and Cohen, *Surviving the Holocaust*, p. 40. The extensive narrative accounts prepared by these two cousins, together with the yizkor book for Nowogródek, provide the main basis for this entry. Yerushalmi, *Pinkas Navaredok*, pp. 229–332, names eight individuals who formed the first “Jewish committee.”

2. USHMM, RG-22.002M (GARF), reel 24, 7021-81-112.
3. Museum of History and Regional Studies in Novogrudok, documents regarding the war; see also David Wolfowicz, 1948 testimony, YVA, M-1/E/2513.
4. BA-L, ZStL, 202 AR-Z 94e/59 (Investigation of Johann Artmann), vol. 1, pp. 15–29, statement of Szaul Gorodinski, December 13, 1960.
5. *Ibid.*, vol. 5, pp. 914–923, Decision of Landgericht Traunstein to close the case against Johann Artmann on January 11, 1966, due to insufficient evidence.
6. Museum of History and Regional Studies in Novogrudok, documents regarding the war.
7. BA-L, ZStL, 202 AR-Z 94e/59 (Investigation of Johann Artmann), vol. 1, pp. 30–42, statement of Mordechaj Meiorowicz, December 7, 1960.
8. BA-BL, R58/697, pp. 168–178, Report from the occupied eastern territories no. 9, June 26, 1942.
9. YVA, M-1/2513.
10. *Ibid.*; Yerushalmi, *Pinkas Navaredok*, p. 254.
11. Israel Yankelwicz, “Rosh Hashanah in the Woods,” in K. Hillel, ed., *Lubats’ ve-Delaitis’: Sefer Zikaron* (Haifa: Irgun yots’e Lubch ve-Delaitis’ be-Yisrael, 1971), p. 389, gives the figure of 6,500 victims.
12. According to appendix no. I of War Diary No. 5, Armaments Detachment (Rüstungskommando) Minsk, there were some 350 Jews in Nowogródek conducting work on army contracts as of October 20, 1942; see NARA, T-77, roll 1138, fr. 996-97.
13. Kagan and Cohen, *Surviving the Holocaust*, p. 55.
14. USHMM, RG-11.001M.01 (RGVA), reel 10, 500-1-769, file note on the expedition to Nowogródek on July 9, 1943, dated Baranowitsche, July 11, 1943.
15. See YVA collection M.31 for further details.

NOWY ŚWIERZEŃ

Pre-1939: Nowy Świerzeń, village, Stołpce powiat, Nowogródek województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Novyi Sverzhen’, Stolbtsy raion, Baranovichy oblast’, Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Nowy Swierzen, Rayon Stolpce, Gebiet Baranowitschi, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Novy Sverzhen’, Stolbtsy raen, Minsk voblasts’, Republic of Belarus

Nowy Świerzeń is located about 72 kilometers (45 miles) southwest of Minsk. Under Polish rule in the 1920s and 1930s, the Jewish community in Nowy Świerzeń formed around one third of the total population, comprising about 100 families (ca. 700 people).

When German forces occupied the village on June 29, 1941, they shot several Jews and burned some houses for alleged acts of resistance. After a few days, a German military commandant’s office (Ortskommandantur) was established in Stołpce, which introduced a series of anti-Jewish measures. Jews were ordered to wear a yellow star on their chests, using any yellow-colored material they could find. Soldiers from the Stołpce Ortskommandantur also came to the village administration, under the control of a local Christian named Szkodko, and demanded that the Jews supply pillows, quilts, blankets,

soap, sugar, and other items. After a short time, the Ortskommandant ordered that a Jewish Council (Judenrat) be formed in Nowy Świerzeń, which included the rabbi, Alpert, and the butcher, Grinwald. It was headed by a man from Warsaw named Tschwerchak. The Judenrat then took on the task of collecting the goods demanded by the Germans.¹

From August 1941 until February 1942, the Ortskommandantur in Stołpce was staffed by soldiers of the 8th Company, 727th Infantry Regiment, under the command of Leutnant Göbel.² In early October 1941, two Germans came to the village administration and demanded 30 Jews. They then took 18 young women and 12 young men who were working at the limestone quarry and shot them in the cemetery together with the rabbi. One woman fainted and subsequently managed to escape unscathed from the grave.³

On October 24, 1941, the Germans ordered the establishment of a ghetto in Nowy Świerzeń on the following day. It comprised a few houses on Stołpce Alley from the marketplace up to the bridge. There was very little time for people to move in, and the property they had to leave behind was taken by the non-Jews of the village. About five or six families were forced to share one small house, resulting in terrible overcrowding. The Jews lived like this in the ghetto for only nine days.⁴

On November 4, 1941, men of the 8th Company, 727th Regiment, based in Stołpce, assisted by the local police, conducted a large-scale massacre of the Jews in the town of Turzec in the neighboring Mir Rayon. Once all the Jews had been assembled, more than 100 able-bodied men were selected for labor and loaded onto trucks, being told they would be taken to Nowy Świerzeń to work. When they were about 4 kilometers (2.5 miles) outside the town, they began to hear the sound of shooting in Turzec behind them, as the remaining Jews, mainly women, children, and the elderly, were shot.⁵

On arriving in Nowy Świerzeń, the Jews from Turzec were placed in a makeshift camp surrounded by barbed wire just outside the village. On November 4, the Ortskommandantur ordered the Jews of the Nowy Świerzeń ghetto to assemble on the market square the next morning, bringing with them all their valuable possessions. That night local Belorussians dug a large trench in the cemetery. On the morning of November 5, two Germans collected the valuables from the assembled Jews on the market square, and the men capable of work were sent to their workplaces. Then another 20 women were selected to cook for the laborers, and the remaining roughly 600 Jews, composed of the elderly, women, and children, were loaded onto trucks and then shot in the prepared ditch by members of the Wehrmacht, assisted by the local police.⁶

The Jews who had arrived from Turzec witnessed how the Germans and local police carried out the slaughter in Nowy Świerzeń, chasing any Jews who tried to escape and shooting them. According to Yehuda Gesik, all the roads and sidewalks were covered with the bodies of those who had been shot. At the cemetery, some of the Jews were only wounded and were buried alive. After the Aktion, the 100 Jewish laborers from Turzec were moved into the Nowy Świerzeń ghetto, which was now surrounded by a fence and barbed wire. They shared

the accommodation with the 150 able-bodied local Jews who had been left alive. The Jews worked daily under armed guard in a gravel pit or in the sawmill.⁷

In the ghetto the Jews received rations of only a few sacks of flour and were expected to live off their reserves of hidden potatoes. One of the Turzec survivors, Mordechai Jalowski, with the aid of Judenrat head Tschwerchak, was permitted by the Germans to return to Turzec, where he found some potatoes he had hidden and also recovered the clothes of his murdered children from a neighbor, which he could then barter for more food. After a time, Tschwerchak was summoned to the commandant's office in Stołpce and never returned. He was succeeded as head of the Judenrat by Kazik Reichman, a refugee from Łódź.⁸

By the spring of 1942, contact had been made with some Jews who had escaped from the Stołpce ghetto and formed a partisan unit, including a man named Posesorski. Some Jews in the Nowy Świerzeń ghetto made plans to obtain arms with the aim of escaping to the forests to join the partisans, although others, with families, feared the impact this would have on those who remained. In July 1942, the German police searched the ghetto and arrested seven Jews, who were tortured and shot after having been denounced by some of the Belorussian and Ukrainian guards. Around this time, additional Jews were brought into the ghetto from Stołpce, and it was converted into a forced labor camp run by the Luftwaffe (German Air Force). The forced labor camp now consisted of only seven or eight very overcrowded houses surrounded by a barbed-wire fence and observation towers.⁹

Up until late January 1943, around 250 Jews remained in the camp in Nowy Świerzeń. On Friday, January 29, 1943, with the assistance of the Jewish partisan Posesorski, who had maintained contacts with the ghetto, about 200 Jews fled from the camp. Shortly before, the Jews had learned that soon non-Jewish laborers would replace them, prompting them to act. In response to the mass escape, Gendarmerie Captain Max Eibner in Baranowicze, after consultation with the SD, ordered the shooting of all the Jews in the Stołpce ghetto and all but 12 specialists remaining at the Nowy Świerzeń sawmill. On January 31, the Gendarmerie in Stołpce shot 254 Jews, including at least 50 brought in from Nowy Świerzeń. Over the following days, Wehrmacht patrols continued to capture Jews found in the surrounding area, including some of those who had escaped from Nowy Świerzeń.¹⁰

When the group of Jews led by Posesorski linked up with the Zhukov otriad of Soviet partisans in the village of Janiszczci (known as "partisan Moscow"), the partisan commander ordered them to surrender all their valuables. The younger armed Jews were accepted into the unit, but those Jews who were unarmed were separated from the otriad a few weeks later, as the commander viewed them as only a burden.¹¹

On August 8, 1943, the Gendarmerie post commander in Stołpce, Hauptwachtmeister Wilhelm Schultz, reported that the remaining 15 Jews at the Nowy Świerzeń sawmill had been shot that day, rendering the Stołpce Rayon "free of Jews (von Juden frei)."¹²

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CAMPS AND GHETTOS, 1933–1945

Thanks to the mass escape in January 1943, a number of Jews from the Nowy Świerzeń ghetto and labor camp managed to survive until the Germans were driven from the area in July 1944, most of them serving with various Soviet partisan units.

SOURCES Information on the Nowy Świerzeń ghetto and forced labor camp can be found in the following publications: Nahum Hinitz, ed., *Sefer zikbron Stoyebts-Sverz'no veba-ayarat ha-semukhot Rubezevits, Derevno, Nalibok* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Stoyebts be-Yisrael, 1964); Benyamin Vilitovski, *The Story of a Fighter, One of Those Who Survived* [in Hebrew] (Or Yehuda: Kavim, 2005); and Yehuda Gesik, *The Turec Jewish Community, 1900–1944* [in Yiddish] (Tel Aviv: privately printed, 1958).

Documentation on the fate of the Jews of Nowy Świerzeń during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (e.g., 301/642); BA-L (202 AR-Z 16/67); GABO (995-1-4 and 7); GARF (7021-81-102 and 7021-148-316); NARB (845-1-6 and 389-1-4); Sta. Mü I (117 Js 2/72, Investigation against F. Göbel); Sta. Oldenburg (2 Js 138/68); USHMM (e.g., RG-53.002M); WCU (Investigation of Semion Serafinowicz); and YVA (e.g., O-3/3569, 3863, and 3876).

Martin Dean

NOTES

1. YVA, O-3/3569, statement of Yisrael Celkowicz, February 24, 1972.
2. Sta. Mü I, 117 Js 2/72 (Investigation in the case of Friedrich Göbel), pp. 1228–1230, statement of Fritz Mühlemeyer on September 6, 1972. The investigation concluded that Göbel was deceased, and no other persons were indicted.
3. YVA, O-3/3569, statement of Yisrael Celkowicz, February 24, 1972; and AŻIH, 301/642, testimony of Monus Josilewicz.
4. YVA, O-3/3569, statement of Yisrael Celkowicz, February 24, 1972.
5. YVA, O-3/3876, statement of Mordechai Jalowski, February 1972; and Gesik, *The Turec Jewish Community*. Gesik dates the Aktion on November 3.
6. YVA, O-3/3876 and 3569; Gesik, *The Turec Jewish Community*; AŻIH, 301/642.
7. Gesik, *The Turec Jewish Community*; YVA, O-3/3876; AŻIH, 301/642; and WCU, Interrogation of Leonid Filipovich Botyak, April 21–22, 1947 (originals in AUKGBRBM).
8. YVA, O-3/3569 and 3876.
9. Gesik, *The Turec Jewish Community*; and AŻIH, 301/642.
10. NARB, 389-1-4, pp. 22, 24, report of the Gend.-Hauptmannschaft in Baranowitsche to KdG Minsk, February 5, 1943, and report of Gend.-Postenführer in Stołpce, Schultz, to Gend.-Gebietsführer in Baranowitsche, February 5, 1943.
11. Gesik, *The Turec Jewish Community*; and AŻIH, 301/642.
12. NARB, 389-1-4, report of Gend.-Postenführer in Stołpce, Schultz, to Gend.-Gebietsführer in Baranowitsche, August 8, 1943, betrifft: Bereinigung des Kreises Stołpce von Juden.

OPSA

Pre-1939: Opsa, village, Brastaw powiat, Wilno województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Braslav raion, Vileika oblast', Belorussian

SSR; 1941–1944: *Rayon Braslaw, Gebiet Glebokie, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien*; post-1991: *Opsa, Braslau raen, Vitsebsk voblasts'*, Republic of Belarus

Opsa is located about 180 kilometers (112 miles) north-northwest of Minsk. The Jewish population of Opsa in 1921 was 334 out of a total population of 714.

German forces arrived in Opsa at the end of June 1941. A few weeks after their arrival, the Germans established a Jewish Council, which was chaired by David Lewin. The council had to enforce anti-Jewish decrees, including the wearing of a yellow badge, the performance of forced labor, and the severance of relations with the non-Jewish population. Large contributions were also collected from the Jews throughout the region.¹ The German occupiers humiliated the Jews in Opsa, on one occasion forcing them to crawl and eat grass on the marketplace.²

In the fall of 1941, a German civil administration was established in the region. Opsa became part of Rayon Braslaw in Gebiet Glebokie. In Opsa a police force was recruited from the local residents, and this was subordinated to the German Gendarmerie. The name of only one Gendarme who served in Opsa is known—a man called Lundner.³

The Jews of nearby Jody were murdered in December 1941. Shortly after this, in early 1942, some of the Jews in Opsa were reportedly transferred to the towns of Widze and Braslaw, where ghettos were established.⁴ According to a German report dated July 1, 1942, however, there were still 300 Jews living in a small ghetto in Opsa on that date.⁵

On the eve of Rosh Hashanah (September 12, 1942), about 50 Jewish craftsmen from the ghetto in Opsa were transferred to Braslaw, where a “second ghetto” was created, after the murder of most of the inhabitants of the first Braslaw ghetto in June 1942. This transfer probably marked the end of the ghetto in Opsa. According to local Belarusian sources, those Jews unfit for work, women, children, and the elderly, were “liquidated” by the Germans and their collaborators in Opsa at the end of 1942.⁶

The second Braslaw ghetto existed until March 19, 1943, when the Germans and the local police surrounded it and drove the Jews to the pits to murder them. On this occasion the Jews decided to fight. About 10 of them barricaded themselves in a house inside the ghetto and resisted with weapons, killing several of their foes before the Germans destroyed the house with grenades.⁷ In the summer of 1943 Soviet partisan units, including a number of Jews, attacked the German garrison in Opsa.

At least one Jew from Opsa, Motke Rosenberg, is known to have survived, having been transferred from Widze on to the Wilno ghetto and from there to various camps.⁸

SOURCES A yizkor book dedicated to the Jews of Braslaw, which includes information on the community of Opsa, was prepared by Ariel Machnes and Rinah Klinov, eds., *Emesh Sho'ab*—: *Yad li-kehillot: Gevidment di kehile's Braslav, Opsab, Okmenits, Dubinab, Zamosh, Zarats', Ya'isi, Yod, Slobudkab, Plusi, Kislovsbts'iznab, Rimshab* (Israel: Irgun yots'e Braslav

vaha-sevivah be-Yisrael uve-Artsot ha-Berit, 1986). It contains a number of survivor accounts in Hebrew, which are also extracted in English.

Documentation on the fate of the Jewish community and the ghetto in Opsa can be found in the following archives: BA-L; GAVO (2841-1-1); NARB (370-1-483); and YVA (e.g., M-1/Q-116; and M-1/E-1908).

Martin Dean

NOTES

1. Machnes and Klinov, *Emesh Sho'ab*, p. 35.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 37.
3. BA-L, ZStL, 202 AR 629/73, vol. 3, p. 407.
4. 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. 939–340; Machnes and Klinov, *Emesh Sho'ab*, p. 37.
5. NARB, 370-1-483, p. 15.
6. *Pamyats' Belarus'* (Minsk: Respublikanskaia Kniga, 1995), p. 126; GAVO, 2841-1-1, p. 37. A memorial composed of a sculpture was erected at the cemetery in Opsa in 1983. Marat Botvinnik, *Pamiatniki genotsida evreev Belarusi* (Minsk: Belaruskaia Navuka, 2000), p. 169.
7. YVA, 1631/98-R and M-1/E-2129/1908. See also Szmereke Kaczerginski, *Hurbn Vilne: Umkum fun di Yidn in Vilne un Vilner gegnt . . . Zamlung fun eydus: Barayzn oder dokumentn* (New York: Aroysgegebn fun dem fareyniktn Vilner hilfs-komitet in Nyu-York durkh Tsiko bikher-farlag, 1947), p. 160; and Machnes and Klinov, *Emesh Sho'ab*, pp. 41–44.
8. Machnes and Klinov, *Emesh Sho'ab*, p. 41.

OSTROSHITSKII GORODOK

Pre-1941: Ostroshitskii Gorodok, town, Minsk raion and oblast', *Belorussian SSR*; 1941–1944: *Ostroschitskij Gorodok, Gebiet Minsk-Land, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien*; post-1991: *Astrashytski Haradok, Laboisk raen, Minsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus*

Ostroshitskii Gorodok is located 26 kilometers (16 miles) north-northeast of Minsk. According to the 1926 census, the population of Ostroshitskii Gorodok included 665 Jews (332 males and 333 females).¹ In the period 1927–1941, the number of Jews in the town decreased somewhat, primarily due to the resettlement of Jews to other regions.

German armed forces occupied the town on June 27, 1941, five days after their invasion of the USSR. During this time, a small number of Jews managed to evacuate eastward, and the men who were eligible for military service either volunteered or were conscripted for the Red Army.

In the summer of 1941, a German military commandant's office was in charge of the town. In September 1941, authority was transferred to the German civil administration. Ostroshitskii Gorodok was included in Gebiet Minsk-Land, where the Gebietskommissar was Regierungsrat Dr. Kaiser, and the SS- und Polizei-Gebietsführer, from early 1942, was Gendarmerie-Leutnant Karl Kalla.

Soon after the town was occupied, the German military commandant ordered the Rayon authority to register the Jews. Jews were also required to perform various types of forced labor, including some work for the Organisation Todt (OT). In late August or early September 1941, the local authorities ordered the establishment of a "Jewish quarter" in the town. According to one survivor, the ghetto was unfenced but was surrounded by barbed wire. The Jews were required to wear yellow circles on their clothing. Conditions in the ghetto were overcrowded, and the Jews had only potatoes to eat. Local Poles and Belorussians sometimes brought food to the ghetto for the Jews. As rumors spread of the massacres of Jews in other places, some Jews considered escape, but people did not know where to go, and joining the partisans was another unknown.²

In early October, the Germans organized a roundup of the Jews, ordering them all to report to the main square. Some Jews hid in cellars and managed to evade the roundup. Those that reported were then either shot nearby or transferred to the Minsk ghetto.³ Very few Jews from the Ostroshitskii Gorodok ghetto survived until the end of the German occupation in July 1944.

SOURCES Documentation regarding the persecution and murder of the Jews of Ostroshitskii Gorodok can be found in the following archives: GAMINO (623-1-51); GARF (7021-87-6); USHMM (RG-22.002M, reel7); VHF (# 37789); and YVA.

Alexander Kruglov
trans. Kathleen Luft

NOTES

1. *Vsesoiuznaia perepis' naseleniia 1926 goda, Tom X* (Moscow, 1928), p. 214.
2. VHF, # 37789, testimony of Valentin Petrov, born 1924 in Minsk.
3. GAMINO, 623-1-51, p. 1.

PARAFJANÓW

Pre-1939: Parafjanów, town, Wilno województwo, Poland; 1939-1941: Parafianovo, Doksbitsy raion, Vileika oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941-1944: Parafianowo, Rayon Doksbitsy, Gebiet Glebokie, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Parafianovo, Doksbitsy raen, Vitsebsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Parafjanów lies 28 kilometers (17.5 miles) south-southeast of Głębokie. In early July 1941, when the German Army occupied the small town, about 265 Jews lived there.

In late 1941 or early 1942, the Germans established a ghetto based around two streets of the village, where most of the Jewish population had previously resided. The ghetto was surrounded by a barbed-wire fence, and in this area two police guards were posted.¹ There was a pharmacy shop inside the ghetto, which also sold groceries. The Jews of the Parafjanów ghetto were mostly engaged in forced labor at the sawmill.²

There was a local police station in Parafjanów, which included the following members: Commander Antoni Maslowski,

Bolesław Kniaziewicz, Piotr Czernianin, Hilary Makarewicz, Jan Janukowicz, Eugeniusz Buczak, and Eugeniusz Karwowski. The local policemen often spent time in the ghetto area, demanding valuables such as jewelry from the Jews, or just conversing with residents of the ghetto.

The liquidation of the Parafjanów ghetto probably took place on May 29 or May 30, 1942.³ The Aktion was carried out by units of the Gendarmerie of Gebiet Glebokie, together with the local police from Parafjanów and Dokszyce; it was probably coordinated by Security Police/SD officers from Lepel' to the east. The Aktion started at about 9:00 A.M., when local policemen surrounded the ghetto. First, the German forces and their collaborators collected all the Jews from the ghetto and herded them into the fire station, having ordered them to take all of their valuables with them. The Jews had been informed that they would be resettled to a different location. It appears that Jews from the surrounding villages were also brought into the Parafjanów ghetto either beforehand or at the time of the Aktion. From the shed, where the Jews were held, local policemen escorted them to the killing site, which was about 200 meters (219 yards) outside the town.⁴ Eyewitnesses recalled that the victims consisted of about 200 Jews, including the elderly, women, and children.⁵ The pits used for the execution were at the same place where the town's garbage was usually dumped.

The following policemen took part in escorting the Jews to the execution site: Nikodem Derwinski, Stanisław Wojnicz, Eugeniusz Kut (later Gorecki), Józef Frąckiewicz, A. Kossak, and G. Makarewicz. With loaded rifles, these policemen were instructed to prevent any Jews from escaping. The Germans ordered the Jewish victims to deepen the pits into which they were subsequently shot. The corpses of the Jews were covered with lime fertilizer. All the property of the Jews was brought to a warehouse on the orders of the Germans.⁶

Some Jews managed to hide or escape from the ghetto and thereby avoided the initial roundup, in some cases receiving help from the local population. However, over the ensuing days the local police in Parafjanów played a particularly active role in searching for hidden Jews. In one instance, a member of the local police, Kniaziewicz, caught two Jewish men and two Jewish women and shot them personally at the same place where the other Jews were murdered. This perpetrator was well known for his cruelty towards the Jews. He volunteered to shoot these four people even though he was not actually on duty that day. The corpses of these victims were then buried by local workers.⁷ Among those Jews captured by the German Gendarmerie in Parafjanów in June 1942 were Shlena Levitan and Rubin Gilbert.⁸

In 1962, a court in Warsaw sentenced Frąckiewicz and Wojnicz to 15 years, Gorecki (Kut) to 12 years, and Derwinski to 10 years in prison for crimes committed while serving in the Schutzmannschaft (local police) in the Dokszyce/Parafjanów area.⁹ On October 19, 1962, Kniaziewicz was indicted in the Szczecin District Court for participating in the murder of Jews who had escaped from the Parafjanów ghetto. The verdict of the court in Poznań on March 30, 1950, sentenced him to the death penalty, but an appeal to the President of the

People's Republic of Poland, Bolesław Bierut, reduced his punishment to 15 years in prison.¹⁰

SOURCES The most important sources for this article were the Polish trials against Nikodem Derwinski and other local policemen from the Dokszyce/Parafjanów area, which can be found in the following archives: IPN (SWWW 715-20 and SAP 49); IPN-Kos; and IPN-Szcz (Ko 29/89, pp. 27–28).

Additional information on events in Parafjanów can be found in the *yizkor* book edited by David Sztokfisz, *Yizkerbukh Dokshits-Parafyanov: Monument tsum ondenk fun tsvey Yidishe kehile's* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Dokshits-Parafyanov be-Yisrael uva-tefutsot, 1970). The Soviet Extraordinary State Commission reports on the fate of the Jewish population of Parafjanów under German occupation are located in NARB (845-1-64, pp. 48–51) and in GARF (7021-92-214, p. 3).

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NOTES

1. Protokół przesłuchania świadka (statement of) Waclawa Kołotucka z dnia 18 lutego 1949 roku, akta Sądu Wojewódzkiego w Poznaniu, Wydział IV Karny, sprawa przeciwko oskarżonemu Bolesławowi Kniaziewiczowi, sygn. I K 163/49, s. 9 nn.

2. Statement of Waclaw Rzeczycki z dnia 21 lutego 1948 roku, akta Sądu Wojewódzkiego w Poznaniu, Wydział IV Karny, sprawa przeciwko oskarżonemu Bolesławowi Kniaziewiczowi, sygn. I K 163/49, s. 11 nn.

3. BA-L, B 162/27191 (II 202 AR 932/65, vol. 1), pp. 130–132, Y. Shapiro statement, May 3, 1966—Shapiro states that the Jews of Parafjanów were shot first, on the same day that the Aktion started in Dokszyce (May 29 according to German documentation; see NARB, 370-1-483, p. 15); the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission reports (NARB, 845-1-64, pp. 48, 51, and GARF, 7021-92-214, p. 3) date the Aktion in Parafjanów on May 30, 1942.

4. Statement of Bolesław Wojnicz, Protokół rozprawy głównej z dnia 13 listopada 1962 roku, Sąd Wojewódzki w Warszawie, Wydział IV Karny, sprawa przeciwko oskarżonemu Nikodemowi Derwińskiemu i innym, sygn. IV K 160/62, s. 235 nn.

5. Statement of Bolesław Olszewski, Protokół rozprawy głównej z dnia 13 listopada 1962 roku, Sąd Wojewódzki w Warszawie, Wydział IV Karny, sprawa przeciwko oskarżonemu Nikodemowi Derwińskiemu i innym, sygn. IV K 160/62, s. 238 n.

6. Statement of Jadwiga Janukowicz z dnia 14 maja 1990, GKBZHWP IPN OK. w Koszalinie, o w Szczecinie, sygn. Ko 29/89, s. 27–28.

7. Statement of Bronisław Czernicznia z dnia 18 lutego 1949 roku, akta Sądu Wojewódzkiego w Poznaniu, Wydział IV Karny, sprawa przeciwko oskarżonemu Bolesławowi Kniaziewiczowi, sygn. I K 163/49, s. 6 nn.

8. GARF, 7021-92-214, p. 3. The Soviet Extraordinary State Commission report also mentions a commandant of the post in Parafjanów, Benz, and a Meister (presumably Gendarmerie) Hick.

9. See IPN, SWWW 715-20. All of these sentences were reduced on appeal.

10. See IPN, SAP 49. He was released in 1959.

PLESHCHENITSY

Pre-1941: Pleschbenitsy, town and raion center, Minsk oblast, Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Pleschtschenizy, Rayon center, Gebiet Borissov, Generalkommissariat Weisruthenien; post-1991: Pleschbanitsy, Laboisk raen, Minsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Pleshchenitsy is located some 60 kilometers (37 miles) north-northeast of Minsk. In 1939 there were 827 Jews in the town (22.5 percent).¹

The German armed forces occupied Pleshchenitsy on June 28, 1941. With the approach of the front, Soviet officials and party workers fled the town, leaving behind the archive, state property, and also prisoners in the jail. The population plundered supplies from stores and warehouses. People then buried some of this food and other loot in their gardens to conceal it from the occupiers. The church and some of the houses were set on fire by artillery and aerial bombardments. Soon after the arrival of the Germans, the temporary military commandant appointed a town elder (mayor) and recruited a local police force (Ordnungsdienst). An Orthodox priest was permitted to hold a service in the former church, which had been converted into a cultural center after the Bolshevik Revolution. Under pain of death, Jews were forbidden to leave their homes without a yellow patch sewn onto their chest and back. The peasants were not allowed to trade with the Jews, converse with them, or even greet them.

An open ghetto was formed on the edge of Pleshchenitsy during the summer of 1941, when a number of Jews had to exchange houses with other local inhabitants. The ghetto was guarded but remained unfenced. It existed until mid-October 1941.² It consisted of about 50 houses, and approximately 1,000 people were settled into them.³ The chairman of the Jewish community and the rabbi had to compile a list of the town's Jews, including infants, within two days, indicating the professions of the men. According to the testimony of Izrail' Segal, the aged rabbi of Pleshchenitsy died in his sleep from emotional stress. The entire town turned out for his funeral, which the Nazis did not impede.⁴

The ghetto in Pleshchenitsy had no real economic significance for the Germans. Therefore, the German authorities did not concern themselves with the poor sanitary conditions in the ghetto, or provide any food. The main goal was to concentrate the Jews and isolate them from the local population. The Jews were compelled to perform forced labor, including the most arduous forms of work, without argument or any remuneration. They were used to collect garbage, clear the town of rubble, and load and distribute fuel and cargo. All contacts with the local population were prohibited.

The murder of the Jews of Pleshchenitsy was conducted shortly after the establishment of a civil administration in Generalkommissariat Weisruthenien on August 31, 1941. The first Aktion was carried out probably at the end of September 1941. At this time all of the Jews from the villages of Rayon Pleschtschenizy had been concentrated in the ghetto.⁵ Then it was announced in the market square that the Jews

would be resettled from Pleshchenitsy to Logoisk, where, it was said, a ghetto had been created for the entire region (*vo-lost'*). People were ordered to take only their valuables and food provisions at first. Furniture, warm clothes, and kitchen utensils were to be left behind under the pretext that they would be delivered later. According to the mayor, it was planned to resettle the non-Jews from the countryside into Pleshchenitsy. The mayor personally selected the skilled workers—cobblers, tailors, carpenters, the stove maker, the blacksmith, tinsmith, the glazier, the barber, and photographer—who, along with their wives, initially were permitted to stay in Pleshchenitsy. He explained that when Russians and Belorussians had been trained for these professions, the Jews would be sent to join the others.

The “resettlement” was set for the next day. When dawn broke, carts were already standing in the market square. These were assigned to courtyards belonging to the Jews. The families loaded the carts with what they could. They carefully tied together their belongings and piled them in a corner of their homes. They were ordered not to lock the doors. Feeble elderly men and women, sick people, and pregnant women with little children were placed on the carts. The police recruited from among the local inhabitants helped and saw that order was maintained. When everything was ready, the Jews were allowed to say their farewells to those staying behind, and then they drove off.

Hirsh Aronchik, the photographer, and his wife Rakhel' categorically refused to part with their children and joined the train of carts. The Jews were taken along the forest roads to a farmstead near Palik Lake some 20 kilometers (12.4 miles) east of Pleshchenitsy. The lists were checked, valuables and money were confiscated, and the Jews were led into a barn “for a rest.” The policemen who had accompanied them locked the door of the barn, which had a straw roof, and set it on fire. Those who tried to get out were shot. After an hour, it was all over. The men who had driven the carts brought news of the tragedy to Pleshchenitsy when they returned to town.

On October 16, 1941, Lithuanian volunteers, subordinated to German Reserve Police Battalion 11, murdered the remaining Jewish skilled workers.⁶ On this occasion, there were more than 50 victims from Pleshchenitsy.⁷ A few younger Jews managed to flee the ghetto before its final liquidation and escape into the forest; 4 of these Jews were interviewed by the Shoah Foundation in the 1990s.⁸

According to Dovid (Shmuel) Kugel', of the more than 1,000 Jews held in the Pleshchenitsy ghetto, only a few individuals survived. After the first Aktion, Kugel' was among the skilled workers left behind. On October 16, he and four other ghetto inhabitants were returning from work outside town. Belorussians warned them with the words, “Run to the forest. The Gestapo is rounding up the remaining Jews.” Shmuel and his comrades went to Dołhinów, where the local ghetto was still in existence.⁹

The Nazis collected the valuables, money, bonds, and precious metal items. Personal items and clothes were given to the local police. The SD and Wehrmacht took custody of the

greater part of the Jews' belongings. According to a report by the mayor of Rayon Pleschtschenizy to the Gebietskommissar concerning the sources of income for the Rayon budget in 1941, 41,011 Reichsmark (RM) were received from the sale of Jewish property, including 15,855 RM from the sale of houses; 6,686 RM from cattle and household animals; and 18,470 RM from clothes, dishes, and furniture.¹⁰ Some of the furniture and consumer goods were turned over to the German authorities. Twenty-five gold rubles were transferred to the Reich Credit Bank (Reichskreditenkasse) in Minsk in early December 1941. The civil administration sold off the remaining Jewish property on behalf of the Rayon.¹¹

During the German occupation, 2,063 people were murdered in Pleshchenitsy and the surrounding Rayon, the majority of them Jews. The town was liberated on June 30, 1944, in the course of the Minsk Offensive. According to a recent census, 7,860 people lived in Pleshchenitsy in 1999.¹²

SOURCES Information on the persecution and murder of the Jews of Pleshchenitsy can be found in the following publications: Izrail' Segal, *Lesnoi skitalets* (Tel Aviv: Moriaa, 2001); David Mel'tser and Vladimir Levin, *Cbernaia kniga s krasnymi stranitsami: Tragediia i geroizm evreev Belorussii* (Baltimore, 1996); Marat Botvinnik, *Pamiatniki genotsida evreev Belarusi* (Minsk: Belarускаia Navuka, 2000); *Pamiats' Belarus'* (Minsk: Respublikanskaia kniga, 1995); *Kholokost v Belorussii, 1941–1944 gg. Dokumenty i materialy* (Minsk, 2002); and 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. from Russian by John Glad and James S. Levine] (New York: Holocaust Library, 1981), pp. 182–186.

Documents on the fate of the Jews of Pleshchenitsy during the Holocaust can be found in the following archival files: IPN (SWP 101-105, Case of Napoleon Piasecki); NARB (651-1-1; 391-1-22; and 370-1-486); and VHF (# 6710, 11666, 45575, and 49188).

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NOTES

1. Mordechai Altshuler, *Soviet Jewry on the Eve of the Holocaust. A Social and Demographic Profile* (Jerusalem: Hebrew University and Yad Vashem, 1998), p. 232.
2. VHF, # 6710, testimony of Vladimir Kogan Savel'zon (born 1933), in 1995, # 49188, testimony of Vladimir Zavoľner (born 1933), in 1997, # 45575, testimony of Raisa Solovera (born 1920), in 1998, and # 11666, testimony of Dora Vudina (born 1923), in 1996; V.I. Adamushko et al., eds., *Spravochnik o mestakh prinuditel'nogo soederzhaniiu grazhdanskogo naseleniia na okkupirovannoi territorii Belarusi, 1941–44* (Minsk, 2001), p. 51; and NARB, 651-1-1, pp. 42–43.
3. Ehrenburg and Grossman, *The Black Book*, pp. 182–183.
4. Segal, *Lesnoi skitalets*, p. 14.
5. NARB, 391-4-64, Investigation of the Rayon mayor of Pleshchenitsy by the Gendarmerie in Borisov. The Rayon mayor was accused of enriching himself personally from Jewish property and taking bribes from the craftsmen for tempo-

rarily sparing their lives. The dating of the Aktion at the end of September is confirmed by the above document and also the testimony of Dovid Kugel in Ehrenburg and Grossman, *The Black Book*, pp. 182–183, which states that the Jewish holiday of Sukkot (October 6, 1941) took place between the first and second Aktions.

6. NARB, 651-1-1, p. 10, and 391-4-64, which notes that the craftsmen were arrested and taken away by Lithuanian policemen.

7. Botvinnik, *Pamiatniki genotsida evreev Belarusi*, p. 44, gives the figure of 75 victims.

8. VHF, # 6710, 11666, 45575, and 49188.

9. Mel'tser, and Levin, *Chernaia kniga*, p. 276.

10. *Kholokost v Belorussii*, p. 55; NARB, 391-1-22, p. 25.

11. Vladimir Adamushko, Galina Knat'ko, and Natalia Redkozubova, eds., *"Nazi Gold" from Belarus: Documents and Materials* (Minsk: National Archive of the Republic of Belarus, 1998), p. 93; NARB, 370-1-486, p. 25.

12. *Entsyklopedyia historyi Belarusi u 6 tamakh* (Minsk, 1999), p. 513.

PLISSA

Pre-1939: Plissa, village, Dzisna powiat, Wilno województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Plissa, raion center, Vileika oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Plissa, Rayon center, Gebiet Glebokie, Reichskommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Plissa, Hlybokae raen, Vitebsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Plissa is located about 140 kilometers (87 miles) north-northeast of Minsk. By 1925, the Jewish population was 528 out of a total population of 1,358.

Following the German invasion of the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, German forces reached Plissa within two weeks. The frontline units did nothing against the Jews, but soon the temporary German military administration (Ortskommandatur) forced them to wear a yellow Star of David and mobilized them for forced labor, such as cleaning work, while the Belorussians remained exempt. The Ortskommandatur also ordered the recruitment of a police force made up of non-Jewish local residents. Among those recruited was a man named Dombrowski.¹

On August 31, 1941, Plissa was incorporated into the newly formed Gebiet Glebokie in Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien. The Gebietskommissar in Głębokie was Paul Hachmann. Initially, the Jews continued to live in their own homes, but in the fall of 1941, all the Jews were moved into a ghetto composed of several houses. The ghetto was not enclosed by a fence.² At this time the local police was renamed the Schutzmannschaft, and responsibility for it was transferred from the German military to the German Gendarmerie (Order Police).

In the fall of 1941, the German civil administration demanded that Jews surrender any valuable items, as well as all livestock, as Jews were forbidden to own animals, including domestic cats. The Germans also punished severely any Jews who tried to contact local peasants to exchange their possessions for food.³

At Passover (April 2) 1942, the Jews in the ghetto managed to bake matzots with their last reserves of flour. At the end of

April the Gebietskommissar in Głębokie reaffirmed that it was strictly forbidden for Jews to leave the ghetto unless they were going to work in columns. Even Jewish craftsmen issued with special passes by the German authorities in order to perform work tasks were not permitted to go more than 1 kilometer (0.6 mile) from the ghetto.⁴

On June 1, 1942, forces of Einsatzkommando 9 known as "Trupp Lepel," assisted by the German Gendarmerie of Gebiet Glebokie and local policemen, surrounded the ghetto. They rounded up the Jews, driving them out of their houses with sticks and gathering them on the market square. Then the Germans and their collaborators escorted the Jews in small groups to a large ditch that had been prepared about 800 meters (875 yards—half a mile) to the north of the village, where they shot them. The Gebietskommissar in Głębokie reported shortly afterwards that 419 Jews had been murdered in Plissa.⁵

According to one account, during the roundup a Jewish policeman named Yakov helped the Germans and their collaborators by pointing out the places where some Jews were hiding in the ghetto.⁶ A few selected craftsmen and also some others who survived the Aktion were transferred, or subsequently made their way, into the ghetto in Głębokie, which was not finally liquidated until the summer of 1943.⁷

Jews from Plissa were among those who fled to the forests and joined the Soviet partisans to gain revenge. Boma Genikhovich tracked down and killed a German named Koppenberg who had murdered his father. Moshe Tsimkind successfully escaped from the Plissa ghetto, and after hiding with non-Jewish friends for three months, he subsequently served in the Soviet partisan unit of Lieutenant Medvedev.⁸

SOURCES Information regarding the ghetto in Plissa can be found in the following publications: Leonid Smilovitskii, *Katastrofa evreev v Belorussii 1941–1944gg.* (Tel Aviv: Biblioteka Matveia Chernogo, 2000), pp. 218–219; Gennadii Vinnitsa, *List'i Istorii* (Vitebsk, 1999), pp. 176–178; Vladimir Adamushko, et al., eds. *Handbuch der Haftstätten für die Zivilbevölkerung auf dem besetzten Territorium von Belarus 1941–1944* (Minsk: Gosudarstvennyi komitet po arkhivam i deloproizvodstvu Respubliki Belarus', 2001), p. 99; and G. Reykhman, "Moshe Tsimkind, beytarovets iz Plissy," *Evreiskii Kamerton*, March 5, 1999.

Documentation on the persecution and annihilation of the Jews of Plissa can be found in the following archives: BA-L (ZStL/202 AR 629/73); GARF (7021-92-219); GAVO (2841-1-1, p. 37); NARB (370-1-483); Sta. Hannover (2 Js 388/65); USHMM (RG-22.002M, reel 25); VHF; and YVA (e.g., M-33/1113, p. 5; and M-41/237).

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NOTES

1. BA-L, ZStL/202 AR 629/73, vol. 2, p. 410.
2. Vinnitsa, *List'i Istorii*, pp. 169–171.
3. Smilovitskii, *Katastrofa evreev v Belorussii*, pp. 218–219; USHMM, Acc.1996.A.0169, reel 13, (GAVO, 2848-1-44), p. 11.
4. David Meltser and Vladimir Levin, eds., *The Black Book with Red Pages (Tragedy and Heroism of Belorussian Jews)*

1258 WEISSRUTHENIEN REGION

(Cockeysville, MD: VIA Press, 2005), pp. 234–235, Gebietskommissar in Głębokie to the head of the local administration in Miory and Braślau, April 30, 1942.

5. NARB, 370-1-483, p. 15; *Memorial Book of Głębokie* [a translation into English of *Khurbn Głubok* by M. and Z. Rajak] (Buenos Aires: Głębokie Former Residents' Association in Argentina, 1994), p. 66. The Soviet Extraordinary State Commission Report (GARF, 7021-92-219) recorded the murder of 325 peaceful Soviet citizens, including about 100 children between the ages of 2 and 10.

6. Reykhman, "Moshe Tsimkind, beytarovets iz Plissy."

7. Sta. Hannover, 2 Js 388/65, vol. 6, pp. 1038 ff., vol. 12, pp. 2520 ff., vol. 4, pp. 690 ff., and vol. 5, pp. 813 ff.; Ilya Ehrenburg and Vasily Grossman, *The Complete Black Book of Russian Jewry* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2002), p. 163.

8. Ehrenburg and Grossman, *The Complete Black Book of Russian Jewry*, p. 165; Smilovitskii, *Katastrofa evreev v Belorusii*, pp. 218–219.

POGOST

Pre-1941: Pogost, village, Starobin raion, Minsk oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Rayon Starobin, Gebiet Sluzk, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Pabost, Saligorsk raen, Minsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Pogost is located 127 kilometers (79 miles) south of Minsk on the northern tip of the Soligorsk Reservoir. Before the war, there were around 500 Jews living in the village. After the Soviet annexation of eastern Poland in the fall of 1939, a number of Jewish refugees arrived in Pogost from Poland. They warned people about the Germans' treatment of the Jews, but few people paid attention to their stories.

German forces of Army Group Center occupied the village at the end of June 1941. Only a few Jews managed to flee or were conscripted into the Red Army. Some were unable to leave, as they lacked any means of transport.¹

In the summer of 1941, a German military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur) administered the village; authority was transferred to a German civilian administration in September 1941. Pogost was then incorporated into Gebiet Sluzk, within Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien.

Also during the summer, German authorities introduced a series of anti-Jewish measures in Pogost. A Judenrat was formed, Jews had to perform heavy labor, and they were forbidden to leave the limits of the village. On July 31, 1941, a detachment of Einsatzkommando 8 conducted the first Aktion in Pogost. A German report mentions that 38 Jews were shot for their alleged support of the partisans, but the number of Jews killed may have been twice this number, or possibly higher.²

Around the time of this Aktion, in late July 1941, the new "mayor" of Pogost, Grigorii Fedorovich Bel'ko, who had been chairman of the kolkhoz in Pogost, took the initiative in organizing a ghetto for the Jews in the former priests' residences on Tserkovnaia (Church) Street (other sources name it as Naberezhnaia Street), which were surrounded with barbed wire. The ghetto inmates were composed mainly of women, chil-

dren, and elderly persons. Around five families were forced to share each room, having only one bed per family. Adult Jews had to wear white armbands on their left arms bearing the image of the Star of David. The Jews received nothing to eat but potatoes.³

On August 24, 1941, German SS cavalrymen conducted a second Aktion in Pogost. Local police informed the Jews that a detachment of Germans would be arriving from Slutsk, and instructions were issued for pits to be dug near the buildings of the kolkhoz. Then at 5:00 A.M. on the day of the Aktion, the Jews were ordered to assemble at a large barn on the kolkhoz. From here the Jews were escorted to the pits and then lined up facing the Germans, who were armed with submachine guns, rifles, and grenade throwers. The shooting lasted more than an hour, and the account of one German cavalryman indicates that hand grenades were thrown into the crowd, and the soldiers continued shooting until there was no further movement. Some Jews hid in concealed spaces within the ghetto, and at least two Jews, Klara Fediuk and Sarah Shapiro, managed to escape on the way to or at the killing site.⁴ On this day several hundred Jews were shot by men of the 4th Squadron of the 1st SS-Cavalry Regiment and the 5th Squadron of the 2nd Regiment.⁵ Any gold teeth were removed from the corpses before the pit was covered with earth.

This second Aktion probably represented the liquidation of the ghetto, although a few Jews may have been killed over the following weeks. According to Soviet sources, more than 440 Jews were counted among those who were killed by the Germans during the occupation of Pogost in World War II.⁶ Of the few Jews who managed to escape from the ghetto before or during the Aktion in late August, most survived by joining the Soviet partisans operating in the area.

When Chaim Kuntser returned to Pogost as a soldier in the Red Army, shortly after the town's liberation in the summer of 1944, he found that non-Jewish neighbors had taken over Jewish property without any legal proceedings. He managed to reclaim his mother's cow and at gunpoint obtained some compensation for his family's stable.⁷

SOURCES Information on the persecution and murder of the Jews in Pogost can be found in the following publication: Chaim Kuntser, "Pohost," in N. Chinitz and Sh. Nachmani, eds., *Pinkas Slutsk u-benoteba* (Tel Aviv: Yizkor-Book Committee, 1962), pp. 469–471.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: BA-L; BA-MA (RS 4/430 and 936); GARF (7021-82-7); USHMM (RG-22.002M, reel 24); and VHF (# 37017).

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NOTES

1. VHF, # 37017, testimony of Klara Fediuk (née Podlipskaia).

2. The report of the Einsatzgruppe B on activities from the second half of July 1941 to the first half of August 1941: Bundesbeauftragte für die Unterlagen des Staatssicherheitsdienstes der ehemaligen DDR (Berlin), Zentralarchiv, RHE

4/85 SU, vol. 7, p. 182, gives the figure of 38 Jews shot. *Pinkas Slutsk u-benoteba*, p. 471, however, states that 80 Jews and 5 non-Jews were murdered as a reprisal for the murder of a priest by the partisans for allegedly cooperating with the Germans. The smaller of the two marked graves in the village commemorates 180 people buried there.

3. VHF, # 37017, testimony of Klara Fediuk (née Podlip-skaia); *Pinkas Slutsk u-benoteba*, p. 471; and GARF, 7021-82-7, pp. 10–11.

4. VHF, # 37017, testimony of Klara Fediuk (née Podlip-skaia), dates the Aktion on August 24, 1941; *Pinkas Slutsk u-benoteba*, p. 470; and Martin Cüppers, *Wegbereiter der Shoah: Die Waffnen-SS, der Kommandostab Reichsführer-SS und die Judenvernichtung 1939-1945* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2005), pp. 196–197.

5. Cüppers, *Wegbereiter der Shoah*, pp. 196–197. A former member of the 5th Squadron, 2nd Regiment, recalled that over 1,000 Jewish men, women, and children were killed in the Aktion, but this figure is probably too high. GARF, 7021-82-7, p. 10, indicates that more than 440 people were shot on this occasion.

6. GARF, 7021-82-7, pp. 5 (and reverse side), 32–35. In total, 289 murdered Jews are listed by name.

7. *Pinkas Slutsk u-benoteba*, p. 470.

POHOST ZAHORODZKI (AKA POHOST ZAHORODNY)

Pre-1939: Pohost Zaborodzki, village, Pińsk powiat, województwo poleskie, Poland; 1939–1941: Pogost-Zagorodskii, Pinsk raion and oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Pohost-Zaborodzki, Rayon Lobiszyn, Gebiet Hansewitschi, Generalkommissariat Weissruthe-nien; post-1991: Pahost Zaboradzki, Pinsk raen, Beras'tse voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Pohost Zaborodzki is located 32 kilometers (20 miles) north-northeast of Pinsk. On the eve of World War II, the village had probably about 1,000 Jews.

The Germans arrived in the middle of July 1941. They established a police station in the Denenberg house and they hanged the owner of the property. Some of the local citizens enlisted in the police force. Shwartz from Pińsk was appointed the commander, Jakov Samokhowecz was appointed the village elder (starosta), and Semen Voronovskii was appointed his deputy.

In the first days of the occupation, the Jews were collected in the square near the church and were forced to watch as Moişhe Pasternak, who had quarreled with the son of policeman Volodia Solonevich, was beaten. The Jews were assigned to arduous labor tasks such as chopping wood, cleaning houses, and cleaning the streets. The policemen and their families could enter Jewish houses and take what they wanted with impunity.¹

The first Aktion against the Jews was carried out by a squadron of the 2nd SS-Cavalry Regiment on August 10, 1941. On the pretext of an urgent work assignment, the Germans assembled about 150 Jewish men and youths over the age of 12.

They then escorted them to a natural ditch near Malaia Dolina, 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) from Pohost. The men were led into the grave next to the Kamen' Road, where the German cavalrymen shot them. Among the victims were Lazer Lutsky, the head of the Jewish organization in Pohost Zaborodzki, Rabbi Leon Shalom, and the mohel (ritual circumciser) Moişhe-Meyer Bortnik. Some of the others managed to flee to the forest.²

The Germans established a ghetto in Pohost Zaborodzki in November 1941. It was surrounded by barbed wire and was guarded. It was located on a few blocks of the main street and was directly opposite the railroad station. Along with the families from Pohost, the ghetto also held families from the shtetl of Łunin—in total, some 200 Jews.³ The ghetto prisoners were ordered to sew yellow markings on their clothing, and they were forbidden to communicate with the Belorussians, Russians, and Poles. One building of the Soviet judicial hall was decorated with an antisemitic banner. Posters and leaflets discussed the worldwide Jewish conspiracy. A Polish Jew named Grinbaum (Grinboim) was appointed as elder of the ghetto, and his helpers were Meyer and Yankel Rabinovich from Pohost. Later, Lazar Lutsky became the elder of the ghetto. The relationship between neighbors changed: friends and acquaintances turned away from the Jews.⁴

Skilled workers—carpenters, blacksmiths, and mechanics—worked in accordance with the wishes of the Germans and local citizens. Other Jews had to transport trees and sand, repair railroads, clear mounds, and pick up trash. Those who worked outside the ghetto tried to smuggle in some food for the small children past the local police guards.

Shortly after the establishment of the ghetto, the Germans began demanding money (“contributions”) from the Jews: money, jewelry, and even warm clothing and gold teeth. They only had one meal a day in the ghetto. Before returning from work, the inmates were given 300 grams (10.6 ounces) of bread and a bowl of watery soup (*balanda*). As starvation approached, Jews started exchanging what little clothing remained from the police raids for food.⁵

Almost every night, the Jewish houses were searched, and the women were taken to the police station and raped. When Peisach Proshitzkiy (16 years old) and Mordechai Shifman (25 years old) became sick with typhus, the Germans murdered them. Then in March 1942, all the Jewish men over the age of 14 (about 120 of them) were rounded up and taken to the labor camp in Hancewicze, some 60 kilometers (37 miles) away.⁶ There they worked in the forest, built the road to Baranowicze, and performed other labor tasks. Some of these men escaped to the forest and joined partisan units after hearing in August 1942 of the liquidation of the ghettos in Pohost Zaborodzki and Lenino. Others were killed trying to escape, while the remaining inmates of the camp, and those who returned, were murdered by the Germans shortly after the mass escape.⁷

On the morning of August 15, 1942, a large German force arrived in Pohost Zaborodzki to liquidate the ghetto. The Aktion was organized by the Security Police outpost (KdS) in Hancewicze (from mid-August 1942 under the direction

of Alfred Renndorfer), assisted by Latvian auxiliaries of the Security Police, as well as Gendarmerie and local police (Schutzmannschaft) units from throughout Gebiet Hansewitsche.⁸ The local Jews were told that a few partisans had infiltrated the ghetto and were trying to hide. All the ghetto inmates were ordered to leave their houses, taking only their children with them. As the Jews were frequently ordered to appear for roll calls in the ghetto, they did not expect that this was the end, although some Jews went into hiding in prepared bunkers. Then the Nazis stated that those who wanted to buy back their lives could do so in exchange for clothing, money, gold, and valuables. After the previous robberies, however, no one had anything left.⁹

The prisoners were kept in the square for 24 hours, closely guarded by local policemen. The Jews were neither fed nor given any water. The children cried from hunger. During this time, local policemen carefully searched the houses for the missing Jews. Then the gates of the ghetto were opened, and a large truck appeared. The Germans and their collaborators loaded people onto the truck. Those who did not fit inside the truck were ordered to run behind it. Those who fell while following the vehicle were shot on the spot. Semen Bobrov (who was about 25 or 30 years of age) jumped off the truck and hid under a bridge, but he was later found and killed.

The convoy was stopped near the suburbs of Pohost Zahorodzki between the flour mill and the lumber mill. The prisoners were undressed and taken to the top of the hill in groups. Below the hill was a ditch. Four SS men carried out the mass shooting. Not everyone was killed; some of the wounded, including children, crawled out of the grave. The Germans came back and finished them off. In total, about 600 people, men, women, children, and the elderly, were killed on that day. According to the testimony of eyewitnesses, the blood flowed like a river out of the ground in places.

Only three people are known to have survived the mass killing. Under the cover of darkness, the wounded Yudit Tzipershtein, Feigel Lutsky, and Rivka (Yoselewska) Goldman crawled out from beneath the dead bodies and escaped into the forest.¹⁰

Two days after the mass shooting on August 16, 1941, someone notified the authorities that 27 Jews, mainly youths and children, were hiding in a secret ditch in Pasternakov. They were surrounded and shot in the garden of Nikolai Misherevitza.

The Jews who succeeded in running away from the Hancewicz labor camp banded together, then split up into smaller groups scattered in the forests around the villages of Bogdanovka and Borky. There they hunkered down and waited for winter. Not everyone was lucky. Yankel Tzipershtein died in the swamp from a heart attack. The local police found Lazari Lutsky hiding in the forest and burned him to death. They also caught Avraham Tzipershtein, tied him to a horse, and dragged him until he died.¹¹

After the destruction of the Jews, the Germans settled Russians from the Smolensk oblast' into the former Jewish houses in Pohost Zahorodzki. By the spring of 1943, the sur-

ving Pohost Zahorodzki Jews hiding in the forest had created a partisan force called "Lazar Kaganovich," which was augmented by Jews from Baranowicze. The Jews from Pohost took part in attacks on the German garrisons in Telechany, Chotin, and Malkowicz.

SOURCES Information on the destruction of the Jews of Pohost Zahorodzki can be found in the following publications: Vera Laska, ed., *Women in the Resistance and in the Holocaust: The Voices of Eyewitnesses* (London, 1983), pp. 265–270; Itshak Iuzhuk and Reiven Iuzhuk, *Darovano vyzbit'. Gody i sud'by* (Pinsk, 2002); *Pamiats' Belarus'* (Minsk: Respublikanskaia Kniga, 1995); *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 20 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1979) Lfd. Nr. 617, pp. 17–18; *The Trial of Adolf Eichmann: Record of Proceedings in the District Court of Jerusalem* (Jerusalem: State of Israel Ministry of Justice, 1992), pp. 514–518.

Documents on the fate of the Jews of Pohost Zahorodzki can be found in the following archives: BA-L (ZStL, 202 AR 932/65); GARF (7021-90-29); NARB (510-1-103, pp. 72–73); YVA; and the personal archive of the author (Leonid Smilovitsky).

Leonid Smilovitsky
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NOTES

1. S. Shapiro, *Brat'ia "Aviv"* (Minsk), No. 9–10 (2001), p. 2.
2. NARB, 510-1-103, pp. 72–73; GARF, 7021-90-29, p. 24; *The Trial of Adolf Eichmann*, pp. 514–515, testimony of Rivka Yoselewska in Session No. 30.
3. In 1921 there were 51 Jews residing in Łunin.
4. V. Ilenkov, "Ego skrizhali," *Pinskii vestnik*, June 2, 1999.
5. "Ja vypolnil svoi dolg," *Poleskaia pravda*, April 17, 1996.
6. Author's personal archive, letter from Itshak Iuzhuk in Rishon-le-Zion, December 24, 1999, published in Leonid Smilovitsky, *Katastrofa evreev v Belorussii 1941–1944 gg.* (Tel Aviv: Biblioteka Matveia Chernogo, 2000), pp. 220–222; *Pamiat': Istoriko-dokumental'naiia kbronika gorodov i raionov Belorussii. Zhitkovichskii raion* (Minsk, 1994), pp. 361–362.
7. BA-L, ZStL, 202 AR 932/65, vol. 1, testimony of Jacob Epstein from Lenin on February 24, 1966.
8. *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 20, Lfd. Nr. 617, pp. 17–18. The German court dates the Aktion somewhat later in September or October. The date of mid-August 1942 is from *The Trial of Adolf Eichmann*, p. 515.
9. Laska, *Women in the Resistance*, pp. 265–270, testimony of R. Yoselewska on May 8, 1961, at the Eichmann Trial.
10. *The Trial of Adolf Eichmann*, pp. 514–518, testimony of R. Yoselewska.
11. Iuzhuk and Iuzhuk, *Darovano vyzbit'*, p. 9.

POŁONKA

Pre-1939: Połonka, village, Nowogródek województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Połonka, Nowaia Mysz' raion, Baranovichy oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Połonka, Rayon Nowa Myszch, Gebiet Baranowitsche, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Połonka, Baranovichy raen, Bera's'tse voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Połonka is located about 20 kilometers (12 miles) west of Baranowicze. According to one source, there were 480 Jews living in the village on the eve of the German invasion.¹

The Germans occupied Połonka at the end of June 1941. Soon after their arrival, the German military administration recruited an auxiliary police force from local inhabitants. The area initially came under German military administration, but in September 1941 a civil administration was established, which became fully staffed over the ensuing months. Połonka was located in Rayon Nowa Mysz, Gebiet Baranowitsche, where the Gebietskommissar was Rudolf Werner.

According to a census conducted for the German authorities, dated July 12, 1941, there were 257 Poles, 238 Jews, and 105 Belorussians living in Połonka.² In the summer of 1941, German soldiers raided Jewish homes, helping themselves to livestock and other property. Jews were forbidden to leave the village or conduct commerce with non-Jews. The German authorities ordered the establishment of a Jewish Council (Judenrat), headed by a man named Rozen, which organized forced labor and the collection of valuables to be surrendered to the Germans. Jewish men and women over the age of 14 had to perform various physical labor tasks, which included cleaning toilets as well as work in agriculture in the surrounding villages. On one occasion a German SS or police unit arrived and murdered a number of Jews, allegedly for their support of the Communist regime. When the Jewish Council was ordered to send 17 men to dig the graves for these victims, these men were also murdered.³

In the fall of 1941, a small squad of German Gendarmerie formed a Rayon post in Nowa Mysz, which also took over responsibility for the local Belorussian police based in Połonka. The Gendarmerie and local police in Połonka conducted a series of Aktions against the Jews and other groups over the ensuing months. During the winter and spring they arrested and shot about 20 former Soviet soldiers who were living and working on local farms in the surrounding villages and also hanged three suspected partisans in the village.⁴

At some time during 1941 or in early 1942, the Jewish families from the surrounding settlements (about 20 people) were rounded up by the local police and brought to Połonka, where a form of open ghetto existed.⁵ The survivor Hirsz Lachozwianski recalled that no special ghetto was created but that the Jews were unable to move about freely. He worked at the turpentine factory a few kilometers outside the village near the Połonka railway station. While he was working there together with several other Połonka Jews, they were kept behind a barbed-wire fence.⁶

In early 1942, local policemen from Połonka arrested a Jewish woman, Mrs. Winnicka, and her two children, who were suspected of having escaped from the ghetto in Baranowicze. They escorted the 3 Jews to a ditch on the edge of the village and shot them there. Mrs. Winnicka was only wounded and escaped later from the grave, but the local policeman Jan Rudy recaptured her and shot her. Several other Jews were shot on this day. According to the Jewish survivor Israel Czernichowski, in the spring of 1942 the Germans con-

ducted a campaign against all the elderly Jews in the village, rounding them up and shooting them with the participation of the local police.⁷ Reportedly about 80 of the 300 or so Jews in the ghetto were shot just outside the village on April 18, 1942, including the cantor and the ritual slaughterer.⁸

In June 1942, local farmers began preparing a large hole just outside the village, allegedly as a military entrenchment. Understanding what this meant, the young people called on the Judenrat to organize an escape to the forests. However, others feared for the fate of those who would have to be left behind if such an escape took place, as the Germans threatened to kill everybody if even one person was missing. The shooting of the remaining Jews in Połonka took place on August 12, 1942.⁹

Gendarmerie Captain Max Eibner, based in Baranowicze, reported in late August 1942: "in order to prevent further escapes I have eliminated the Jews still present in Połonka and Mir. A total of 719 Jews have been shot." A Jew armed with a knife wounded one local policeman (Schutzmann) during the Aktion in Połonka. Given the figures known for the number of Jews murdered in Mir, it appears that about 150 Jews were shot in Połonka on August 12, 1942.¹⁰ At the time of the shooting of the Jews, Józef Legun was chief of the local police in Połonka. The mass shooting took place early in the morning. Among the Jews who were shot were Dr. Komulinski and the teacher Rozen, both refugees from western Poland. Policemen from the other local police stations in Rayon Nowa Mysz were also present during the Aktion.¹¹ After the Aktion the local police searched the former Jewish houses for any Jews hiding there. They continued to shoot any escaped Jews they encountered in the surrounding area over the ensuing months.¹²

The Red Army liberated the area in the summer of 1944. Only about 10 Jews from Połonka are known to have survived the occupation. Several local policemen were convicted in Poland and the Soviet Union after the war for their participation in the shooting of Jews and other crimes, including Jan Rudy, Boleslaus Bakacz, and also Jan Kojpasz, who was sentenced to death by a Soviet Military Tribunal in Baranowichi in December 1950.¹³ A number of others, however, escaped to the West at the end of the war and avoided punishment.

SOURCES Documentation regarding the fate of the Jewish community in Połonka can be found in the following archives: GABO (995-1-4 and 7); GARF; IPN (e.g., SWB 231 and 253; and SWSz 69-78); NARB; USHMM (RG-68, Acc.1996.A.0169, reel 29); WCU; and YVA (e.g., O-33/1791; and M-1/E/806).

There is also a brief article on Połonka's Jewish community in Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 8, Vilna, Bialystok, Nowogrodek (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), p. 520.

Martin Dean

NOTES

1. YVA, M-1/E/806, testimony of Hirsz Lachozwianski, born 1895.

2. USHMM, RG-68, Acc.1996.A.0169, reel 29 (YVA M-41/1015); GABO, 685-1-12, p. 2.

3. Spector and Freundlich, *Pinkas ba-kebilot*, 8:520, and YVA, M-1/E/806.

4. IPN, SWB 253, Interrogation of Franciszek Borsukiewicz, February 21, 1963.

5. Ibid.; Spector and Freundlich, *Pinkas ba-kebilot*, 8:520, and *Rossiiskaia evreiskaia entsiklopediia* (Moscow: Russian Academy of Natural Sciences, Jewish Encyclopedia Research Center, "Epos," 2007), 6:267. Both use the term *ghetto* in reference to Połonka but do not give evidence in support of this.

6. YVA, M-1/E/806.

7. IPN, SWB 231 (Case against Wincenty Andrukiewicz), pp. 24–30, statement of Israel J. Czernichowski on August 23, 1944; and YVA, M-1/E/806.

8. 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. 1012; Spector and Freundlich, *Pinkas ba-kebilot*, 8:520.

9. Ibid.; and YVA, M-1/E/806.

10. GABO, 995-1-7, pp. 211–212, Hein Report on August 20, 1942, and p. 237, Report of Gendarmerie Captain Eibner, August 26, 1942; YVA, M-1/E/806. *Rossiiskaia Evreiskaia Entsiklopediia*, 6:267, gives the figure of 140 Jews shot in August 1942.

11. IPN, SWSz 69-78, record of examination of the witness Pawel Charkiewicz, November 18, 1969, in the case of Waclaw Woronko.

12. GABO, 995-1-4, p. 456, Gendarmerie Report, December 5, 1942.

13. IPN, SWB 231, pp. 103–104, Verdict in the case of Jan Kojpasz, December 21, 1950.

POSTAWY

Pre-1939: Postawy (Yiddish: Postav), town and powiat center, Wilno województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Postavy, raion center, Vileika oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Postawy, Rayon center, Gebiet Glebokie, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Pastavy, raen center, Vitsebsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus

The town of Postawy lies in the northwest of Belorussia near the Lithuanian border, about 50 kilometers (31 miles) northeast of Wilno. In 1941, the population was about 5,000, including some 2,500 Jews.¹

German forces entered Postawy on June 30, 1941; the ghetto was established in July 1941. The Germans forced the Jews to move into an area surrounded by a wooden fence with barbed wire between Basiliana, Kolejowa, and Braslava Streets.²

In the same month, the Germans ordered the establishment of a Judenrat. The dentist, Dr. Rubinstein, was appointed as its chairman. Gendel Hirsch, Simon Lubotaki, and Michael Taibes were also members.

During the following months, Jews from the villages around Postawy were brought into the ghetto, increasing its population. Some of these people had fled from mass shootings conducted in other parts of Gebiet Glebokie. Survivors estimate the number of people forced to live in the ghetto at



Group portrait of students and teachers at the Hebrew Tarbut school in Postawy, with their bicycles, ca. May 1930.

USHMM WS #28974, COURTESY OF FANYA SZUSTER PORTNOY

around 3,000.³ However, the office of the Gebietskommissar in Głębokie reported to the Generalkommissar on July 1, 1942, that there were 848 Jews in the Postawy ghetto.⁴ In view of the high estimates of the number of victims in the Postawy ghetto, some larger groups of Jews probably arrived in Postawy before November 1942.

The ghetto was guarded by a small squad (10 or 12 men) subordinated to the Security Police (Sicherheitspolizei), which was commanded by an officer whose name survivors remember to have been William. An outpost of the German Gendarmerie was based in Postawy as well.⁵ Its commanding officer was a man named Schmidt. After the war, witnesses remembered the names of other policemen appointed to Postawy as Adam, Kezik, and König.⁶ In guarding the ghetto, these German units were supported by local auxiliary policemen (Schutzmannschaften) from either Lithuania, Latvia, or Belorussia. The leaders of these auxiliaries were called Alexander I and Alexander II by the inmates, who were especially afraid of the former, as he used to shoot people at random while on patrol.⁷ In addition to the Sicherheitspolizei and the Gendarmerie, there was a fortified base of the Wehrmacht in Postawy.⁸ In the summer of 1942 the Polizeischule für Reit- und Fahrwesen Ostland (Police Riding and Driving School) was established in the former Polish Lancer barracks near the town.⁹ Thus, the German presence in this small town was quite considerable.

Every morning, the inmates left the ghetto through its only gate to perform forced labor. Besides cutting peat, male prisoners had to carry out construction work at the railway station, on the sewage system, or at German military or police facilities. Women functioned as kitchen or domestic servants for the Germans.¹⁰ During work hours, the guards beat, tortured, and occasionally even killed Jews.¹¹

Each day, Jewish craftsmen were brought to workshops in the town's Christian quarters. If the non-Jewish inhabitants had a document signed by the Sicherheitspolizei, they could take the Jews as forced laborers, paying the German authori-

ties for the work. Due to this arrangement, the inmates had some contact with the world outside the ghetto. Helpful Belorussians established contact with a group of Postawy Jews who had been hiding in the forests from early in the occupation. Their leader was Michael Friedman, whose parents were among the victims shot in July 1941. Through this channel, the Jewish upholsterer Zalman Rochman was informed of the imminent destruction of the ghetto in November 1942. Together with his family and some other inmates—about 60 persons altogether—he fled the ghetto.¹²

From the beginning of the occupation, the Gendarmes in Postawy escorted groups of people outside of town into the surrounding forests and shot them, for example, in early 1942, 30 women and 25 men were shot in the Kaschizy wood, 5 kilometers (about 3 miles) outside the town. The victims had been brought there from other Rayons. Ghetto inmates were also frequently killed arbitrarily in Postawy.¹³

Between November 19 and 26, 1942, the Germans launched Operation Nuremberg in the region of Głębokie-Lepel'-Borisov. It was the first operation against partisans carried out by Kampfgruppe von Gottberg.¹⁴ The inmates of the Postawy ghetto were murdered by von Gottberg's troops between November 23 and 25, 1942. It was one of the first Aktionen intended to "liquidate the peripheral ghettos," which meant the systematic extermination of the Jewish population in the ghettos on the edges of the Belorussian forests and swamps, conducted under the pretext of fighting partisans.¹⁵ After the war, the commanding officer of the Police Riding and Driving School, Oberstleutnant Albrecht, stated that the first partisan activities around Postawy did not start before 1943.¹⁶ This information reveals the true objective of Operation Nuremberg, which was the mass slaughter of innocent civilians.

It is difficult to determine exactly which units were responsible for the extermination of the Jews in Postawy. The regimental headquarters of Polizeiregiment 14 were definitely located in Postawy on November 23.¹⁷ Elements of Sicherungsgruppe Barkholt, probably Ukrainian auxiliaries commanded by Oberstleutnant Barkholt himself, were at least responsible for cordoning off the ghetto. The following day, this task was performed by a Baltic squadron of the Police Riding and Driving School.¹⁸ The SD unit in charge of the liquidation was commanded by SS-Hauptsturmführer Artur Wilke, an expert in the conduct of antipartisan warfare subordinated to the Kommandeur der Sicherheitspolizei (KdS) in Minsk.¹⁹

The liquidation of the Postawy ghetto took several days. Groups of Jews were taken to the shooting sites on Lenin Street and to a large pit next to the railway. German policemen along with Ukrainian auxiliaries searched for those in hiding several times and set fire to many buildings. Only very few people managed to escape from this inferno.²⁰

It is difficult to ascertain the precise number of victims, as the population of the Postawy ghetto at the time of its liquidation is not known precisely. On November 26, 1942, Kampfgruppe von Gottberg reported that 1,826 Jews had been shot

during Operation Nuremberg,²¹ not including "the bandits and Jews burned in buildings and bunkers."²² According to one survivor, there were about 1,500 Jews in the ghetto at the time of the ghetto liquidation Aktion.²³ Given the disparities in the available sources, it appears as if somewhere between 1,000 and 4,000 Jews were murdered in Postawy in November 1942.²⁴

By the time the Postawy area was liberated by the Red Army in 1944, many of the Jews who had managed to escape the massacre had died of the hardships and dangers of life in the forests.

One of the first trials to deal with the Postawy massacre took place near Minsk shortly after the war. The ghetto guard Alexander I was charged by the Soviet authorities.²⁵ A Polish member of the local police was also sentenced to 10 years in prison in Poland for his participation in the liquidation of the ghetto.²⁶ Although during the 1960s, the German courts conducted many investigations into Nazi mass murders in Belorussia, the public prosecutors were not able to identify all those responsible for the liquidation of the Postawy ghetto.²⁷ The most important investigation was conducted against members of the Police Riding and Driving School, accused of having participated in the mass shootings in Postawy.²⁸ The investigation was closed without any result on April 1, 1969.

SOURCES There are two short articles dealing with the Postawy ghetto: Daniel Schmidt, "Der grosse Weltenbrand 1939-1945: Erfahrungswelt und Alltag eines Polizeibeamten im Nationalsozialismus," in Alfons Kenkmann and Christoph Spieker, eds., *Im Auftrag. Polizei, Verwaltung und Verantwortung* (Essen: Klartext, 2001); and Moritz Felix Lück, "Partisanenkämpfung durch SS und Polizei in Weissruthenien 1943: Die Kampfgruppe von Gottberg," also in Kenkmann and Spieker.

The main archival source on the Postawy ghetto is the trial file of Walter Jucknies et al. (Sta. Dortmund 45 Js 21/64). The records are held in Sta. Mü and selected copies are also in BA-L (B 162/3888 [202 AR-Z 42/61]), together with some Soviet investigation files. Additional survivor testimonies can be found in VHF (# 6428 and 9920); and YVA (e.g., M-1/E/496; O-3/3493, 3496, and 3498 [Shmuel Zaslavsky]).

Daniel Schmidt

NOTES

1. Instruction of Sta. Dortmund, April 1, 1969, Sta. Mü, 45 Js 21/64.
2. Testimony of Raja E., June 16, 1963, Sta. Mü, 45 Js 21/64; according to the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission Report (NARB, 845-1-63, p. 45), the ghetto was not established until February 1942. It enclosed three streets in the northern part of town.
3. Testimony of Boris Jizhak Barkan, June 18, 1963, Sta. Mü, 45 Js 21/64.
4. NARB, Minsk 370-1-483. In view of the high estimates of the number of victims in the Postawy ghetto, some larger groups of Jews probably arrived in Postawy before November 1942.
5. Testimonies of Zalman Rochman, June 17, 1963, Boris Jizhak Barkan, June 17, 1963, Walter Jucknies, November 3,

1965, Kurt Littau, November 5, 1964, Sta. Mü, 45 Js 21/64. The public prosecutor supposed that the Sipo officer might have been Oskar Wiljam, who was investigated in another trial (BA-L, 5 AR-Z 14/58).

6. BA-L, Findbuch UdSSR, Heft 5, pp. 190–194.

7. Testimonies of Jakov Feigel, June 19, 1963, Boris Jizhak Barkan, June 17, 1963, Sta. Mü, 45 Js 21/64.

8. Report of Polizei Oberstleutnant Friedrich Wilhelm Albrecht, February 22, 1965, Sta. Mü, 45 Js 21/64.

9. See Schmidt, “‘Der grosse Weltenbrand 1939–1945,’” pp. 255–256.

10. Testimonies of Walter Jucknies, November 3, 1965, Boris Jizhak Barkan, June 17, 1963, and Jakov Feigel, June 19, 1963, Sta. Mü, 45 Js 21/64.

11. Testimonies of Raja E., June 16, 1963, and Zalman Rochman, June 17, 1963, Sta. Mü, 45 Js 21/64.

12. Testimony of Zalman Rochman, June 17, 1963, Sta. Mü, 45 Js 21/64.

13. BA-L, Findbuch UdSSR, Heft 5, pp. 190–191.

14. See Moritz Felix Lück, “Partisanenbekämpfung durch SS und Polizei in Weissruthenien 1943,” p. 234.

15. Instruction of Sta. Dortmund, April 1, 1969, Sta. Mü, 45 Js 21/64. See also Christian Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde. Die deutsche Wirtschafts- und Vernichtungspolitik in Weissrussland 1941 bis 1944* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 1999), p. 913.

16. Report of Polizei Oberstleutnant Friedrich Wilhelm Albrecht, February 22, 1965, Sta. Mü, 45 Js 21/64.

17. Instruction of Polizeiregiment 14, November 22, 1942, Sta. Mü, 45 Js 21/64.

18. Testimonies of Jakov Feigel, June 19, 1963, and Walter Jucknies, November 3, 1965, Sta. Mü, 45 Js 21/64.

19. See Klaus-Michael Mallmann, “‘Aufgeräumt und abgebrannt.’ Sicherheitspolizei und ‘Bandenkampf’ in der besetzten Sowjetunion,” in Gerhard Paul and Klaus-Michael Mallmann, eds., *Die Gestapo im Zweiten Weltkrieg. ‘Heimatfront’ und besetztes Europa* (Darmstadt: Primus und Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2000), p. 518. The unit came either from Minsk, Wilejka, or Riga; see instruction of Sta. Dortmund, April 1, 1969, Sta. Mü, 45 Js 21/64.

20. Testimony of Jakov Feigel, June 19, 1963, Sta. Mü, 45 Js 21/64.

21. Daily report of Kampfgruppe von Gottberg, November 26, 1942, in Instruction of Sta. Dortmund, April 1, 1969, Sta. Mü, 45 Js 21/64.

22. Personal file of von Gottberg, BDC; see Lück, “Partisanenbekämpfung,” p. 239. BdS Ostland to Reichskommissar Ostland, November 30, 1942, BA-L, Doc. Coll. USA 25; see Mallmann, “‘Aufgeräumt und abgebrannt,’” p. 518. During Operation Nuremberg the ghetto in Dunilowicz was destroyed as well.

23. Shimon Kanc, ed., *Sefer Zikaron le-Esrim ve-Sbalosh Kabilot be-Ezor Shvintcian* (Tel Aviv: Irgun Yots'e Ezor Shvintcian be-Yisrael, 1965), p. 1633, contains a brief account of the liquidation of the Postawy ghetto [in Yiddish], which includes this estimate.

24. Schmidt, “‘Der grosse Weltenbrand 1939–1945,’” p. 256. Christian Gerlach states that there were possibly as many as 5,000 victims in Postawy; see Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, p. 705. Shortly after the war, the Soviets estimated 4,000 victims: 1,500 Jews from Postawy and 2,500 Jews from the sur-

rounding districts (see NARB, 845-1-63, p. 45). Considering these pieces of information, the number of ghetto inmates in Postawy seems to have increased considerably after July 1942.

25. Testimonies of Jakov Feigel, June 19, 1963, and Raja E., June 16, 1963, Sta. Mü, 45 Js 21/64.

26. IPN, SAZG 3, Verdict in the case of Stanisław Szakała on December 14, 1950.

27. Sta. Coburg 5 Js 660/64, against members of 1. SS-Infanteriebrigade (mot.); BA-L, 45 Js 3/31, against members of KdS-Aussenstelle Wilna and Glebokie; Sta. Hannover 2 Js 388/65, against members of Gendarmerie Glebokie.

28. Sta. Mü, 45 Js 21/64.

RADOSZKOWICZE

Pre-1939: Radoszkowicze, town, Mołodeczno powiat, Wilno województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Radosbkowichi, raion center, Vileika oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Radoschkowitschi, Rayon center, Gebiet Wilejka, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Radashkovichy, Maladeczna raen, Minsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Radoszkowicze is located 35 kilometers (22 miles) northwest of Minsk. There were around 1,200 Jews in Radoszkowicze in September 1939. The German army occupied Radoszkowicze at the end of June 1941. Several Jews were killed during the initial bombing of the town, including Eliezer Godes and Dorum Chanan together with his wife and daughters. At the end of July 1941, the local military commandant (Ortskommandant) ordered the Jews to wear distinctive markings. There was also a strict curfew for the Jews, lasting from 6:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m. Every day the Germans ordered all Jews ages 15 to 55 to gather in the market square at 7:00 a.m. From there, they were escorted to work on various tasks, including road building, wood chopping, and street cleaning.¹

At the end of August 1941, authority in the area was transferred from the military to a German civil administration. Radoszkowicze became a Rayon center within Gebiet Wilejka, under the authority of Gebietskommissar Schmidt. At this time, an operational unit of the Organisation Todt (OT) comprising between 25 and 50 people arrived in the town. It was headed by OT-Haupttruppenführer William Schneider, a German from Cologne. The firm used 700 Jews as forced laborers to build a highway from Mołodeczno to Minsk, to crush stones for projects, and to build barracks.² The OT personnel were protected by the 2nd Platoon of German Police Battalion 69, which was quartered in House no. 3 on the market square.

In the summer of 1941, a Judenrat was established in Radoszkowicze. Its members included Meszulem Wajenblum, Słoszczer, and Ber Czecis. They handled German demands for clothes, shoes, underwear, bedclothes, and money, which had to be met under penalty of death. In September 1941, the German authorities demanded the surrender of a number of nickel-plated beds by the Jews. The Judenrat assisted by the Jewish Police then confiscated these items from their Jewish owners and gave them to the Germans.

The head of the Judenrat tried to maintain good relations with the Germans. For example, he requisitioned the contents of a jewelry shop, passing them on to the Germans to keep them well-disposed.³ The German authorities set a daily bread ration of only 200 grams (7 ounces) for the Jews. However, the Jews staved off hunger by bartering their remaining clothes and other items with their neighbors for food. Up to March 1942, sanitary conditions remained reasonable among the Jews under the careful eye of the Judenrat and the Jewish doctors Abram Szuster and Naum Wajsbort.

On March 10, 1942, Rudolf Grave, the chief of the Security Police and SD outpost (KdS Aussenstelle) in Wilejka, arrived in Radoszkowicze with a small detachment of Security Police to conduct an Aktion against the Jews. As no ghetto had been formed, Grave called on the local police and other German forces, including personnel from the OT based in Radoszkowicze to assist in rounding up the Jews.

On the morning of March 11, 1942, SS-Obersturmführer Grave issued orders for the Gendarmerie and local policemen to clear the Jews from their residences. The town had been encircled during the night to prevent any Jews from escaping. As they brutally drove the Jews to the market square, the old and infirm, as well as those who put up any kind of resistance, were shot on the spot. The Jews were gathered in front of the police station while the police continued searching the houses, also confiscating Jewish property. Finally, the Germans and their collaborators marched the Jews off in a column down Minsk Street and Iłska Street to the killing site, at two barns 1 kilometer (0.6 mile) outside of town to the east.⁴

At the two barns, Grave selected 60 craftsmen along with their families. The other Jews had to surrender any items of value and remove their top layers of clothing. The Security Police officers from the Wilejka outpost then shot the Jews at the entrance to one of the barns. At the end of the Aktion, all of the corpses were dragged inside the barn by the last remaining Jews, who were then in turn shot. Grave then closed the door and tossed a hand grenade inside, burning the corpses inside the barn. About 800 Jews were murdered there in the barn, and 60 more were shot at different locations around Radoszkowicze.⁵

At the end of March 1942, the head of the OT in Radoszkowicze, Schneider, organized a ghetto for the remaining 350 Jews (the craftsmen and their families, plus a few other Jews who subsequently emerged from hiding). A high barbed-wire fence surrounded the ghetto, and members of the local police guarded the two gates. In the ghetto there was terrible overcrowding, with as many as 30 persons sharing one room. Mosze Kliaczkowski was appointed by the Germans as the head of the Judenrat in the ghetto.⁶

After an attack by the partisans in the area of Radoszkowicze in the late spring of 1942, five young men and women escaped into the forest. But soon they returned to the ghetto, as the partisans refused to accept them, and once in the ghetto the Germans ordered their arrest and execution.⁷ In the ghetto eight young persons collected money to buy weapons and also planned to escape. However, the Judenrat tried to restrain

them, warning that their flight would result in the death of each and every Jew. The Judenrat members even threatened to inform the Germans of the plan.

In June 1942, about 60 Jews were working on the road near the village of Rogowa, 3 kilometers (1.9 miles) from Radoszkowicze. During the construction work, Hauptmann Willi Schneider arrived. His revolver accidentally discharged and wounded Chaim Szuman in the side. He then amused himself by shooting the man to death.⁸ Also in the summer of 1942, a Jewish butcher from Radoszkowicze named Jakow Zager was headed to the township of Udranki, to exchange items for food. He was caught by the German Gendarmes and beaten so severely that he came down with a very high fever. He suffered for a long time, and it took the efforts of Dr. Szuster in the ghetto to save his life. The local police and the German Gendarmes also shot some other Jews they caught outside the ghetto.

The final liquidation Aktion took place on March 7, 1943. Two young persons escaped from the ghetto. Aware of German warnings that everyone would be punished if even one person went missing, the 350 remaining Jews became highly anxious, with some also trying to flee. This only caused the Germans to become suspicious and organize a roll call, which led them to discover that a few Jews were missing. The German forces assisted by the local police, including Adam Jasiński, then shot 290 Jews. About 35 people managed to escape to the forest, and the Germans still kept alive 22 specialist workers.⁹ Among these 22, 5 soon died, but the remainder did not expect their reprieve would last long, and they managed to arm themselves from German supplies.

In June 1943, Filip Horman passed on a request from the 17 Jews in the remaining two houses of the Radoszkowicze ghetto to the partisan group from the Kotovsky brigade called "National Avenger," asking the partisans for their assistance in organizing an escape. On June 13, 1943, the commandant of the Krasionak partisan section dispatched several partisans to liberate the Jews from the ghetto. The group consisted of four people and was headed by Eliah Żukowski. They arrived in Udranki, which was located 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) from Radoszkowicze. But they encountered a German blockade and had to turn back. On July 13, 1943, the 17 Jews finally escaped to the forest. Reconnaissance personnel from the Kotovsky detachment met them and took them in. On July 1, 1944, the Red Army liberated the town. Only 40 Jews returned from the forests, as 10 had been killed while serving with the Soviet partisans.¹⁰

After the war the provincial court in Olsztyn tried Jan Ciechanowicz for his participation in the shooting of Jews while serving as a local policeman (Schutzmann) in Radoszkowicze under German occupation. The case went to the Supreme Court in Warsaw, and on November 5, 1954, he was sentenced to eight years in prison. The German Regional Court in Bochum tried three men in 1979 for their role in the murder of Radoszkowicze's Jews. However, the court acquitted them, as it deemed they had only acted as accomplices, a crime for which the statute of limitations by then had already expired.¹¹

SOURCES Information on the destruction of the Jewish population of Radoszkowicze during the German occupation can be found in the yizkor book edited by I. Rubin and M. Rabinsohn, *Radosbkovits: Sefer zikaron* (Tel Aviv: Hotsa'at Ir-gun yots'e Radoshkovits be-Yisrael [u]-M. A. Bar-Yuda, 1953), pp. 199–209.

Additional information regarding the fate of the Jews of Radoszkowicze can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/4425); BA-L (B 162/1472 [II 202 AR-Z 5/60, vol. 42]); LG-Bo (7 Ks 45 Js 3/61); SNW (III K 970/54); SWOI (IV K 19/55); VHF; and YVA (e.g., 1436/133).

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NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/4425, relacja Lejb Bomsztejn, June 1946.
2. *Ibid.*
3. AŻIH, 301/4425a, relacja Eliah Żukowski.
4. Protocols of the testimony of the accused Jan Ciechanowicz, April 9, 1954, and of the witness Jan Ganicz, March 8, 1954, from the case against Jan Ciechanowicz (SWOI, IV K 19/55). Jan Ganicz was the owner of the barns.
5. LG-Bo, 7 Ks 45 Js 3/61, p. 46.
6. AŻIH, 301/4425.
7. Shalom Cholawsky, *The Jews of Bielorussia during World War II* (Amsterdam: Harwood, 1998), p. 226, citing YVA, 1436/133 (Baruch Shub).
8. AŻIH, 301/4425a.
9. Cholawsky, *The Jews of Bielorussia*, p. 233. These 20 Jews continued to work as specialists in the leather-making factory. See David Meltser and Vladimir Levin, eds., *The Black Book with Red Pages (Tragedy and Heroism of Belorussian Jews)* (Cockeysville, MD: VIA Press, 2005), pp. 151–152; NARB, 845-1-140, pp. 33–34, Soviet Extraordinary State Commission Report on the Crimes of the German Occupants in the Radoszkowice raion, April 24, 1945; Protocols of the testimony of the witness Stanisław Kiciński, February 12, 1954, case against Jan Ciechanowicz, SWOI, IV K 19/55.
10. AŻIH, 301/4425a. Among those liberated were: Lejb Bomsztejn, Benjamin Zilburg, Szmuel Lapidos, Baruch Szepsenwol, Izak Elman, Reuven Miednik, Hirsch Szelman, Abraham and Icchak Fenkel, Leon Tenenbojm, Nechemie Szulman, Pesi Bomsztejn, Chaim and Reuven Grinbojm, Szalomon Bomsztejn, Zusman Grintlid, and Icchak Izraelski. See also Rubin and Rabinsohn, *Radosbkovits*, pp. 205–209.
11. SNW, III K 970/54; and verdict of LG-Bo, 7 Ks 45 Js 3/61, pp. 74–76.

RADUŃ

Pre-1939: Raduń, town, Lida powiat, Nowogródek województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Radun, raion center, Baranovichi oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Rayon center, Gebiet Lida, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Radun', Voranava raen, Hrodna voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Raduń is located 88 kilometers (55 miles) west of Minsk. On the eve of World War II, the Jewish population of the town exceeded 1,000.

German forces entered Raduń at the end of June 1941. Initially a German military administration ran the affairs of the town. In September 1941, a German civil administration took over responsibility for the region. Raduń became a Rayon center within Gebiet Lida, in Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien. The Gebietskommissar in Lida was Hermann Hanweg. In Raduń, the German authorities appointed a former Polish army captain, Kulikowski, as mayor and established a local police force, made up of Belorussians, Poles, and Lithuanians.

The German authorities also established a Jewish Council (Judenrat) to assist them in enforcing their regulations. The head of the Jewish Council was Noah Dolinski, who had fairly good relations with the Polish mayor, Kulikowski, as they were both ardent anti-Communists. Among the first anti-Jewish measures the German authorities imposed were the wearing of armbands bearing the Star of David (later changed to a yellow patch on outer clothing) and the imposition of forced labor. Jews were also forbidden to eat meat, butter, or eggs.¹

A number of survivors from Orany, Olkieniki, and Ejszyszki made their way to Raduń in the days and weeks that followed the massacres in those towns in late September 1941. For example, about 260 Jews are believed to have found refuge in Raduń from Ejszyszki.² On November 16, 1941, the Germans established a ghetto in Raduń, on Żydowska Street, where most of the Jews lived. This street was separated from the rest of the town by a fence.³ Jews were also brought in from the surrounding villages, including Nacza, Zabłoc, and Dowgieliszki. All together, more than 2,000 Jews were confined



A yellow star bearing two safety pins, worn by Shalom Ben Shiemesh Sonenson in the Raduń ghetto.

USHMM WS #N01378, COURTESY OF YAFFA ELIACH

within the ghetto, where they had to remain unless sent out on a work detail. An unarmed Jewish police force operated inside the ghetto.

Many of the refugees were able to get residence permits for the Raduń ghetto by obtaining forged documents stating that they were natives of Raduń. According to one survivor, in the ghetto four families lived together in one house. People slept on the floors and had to share cooking facilities.⁴ Often space within rooms would be demarcated by hanging up sheets to provide some privacy for individual families.

Healthy Jews of both sexes from the ghetto were drafted in shifts for forced labor in the Mieszczanca Forest about 10 kilometers (6.2 miles) from Raduń, cutting firewood for the German army on a weekly basis. They were punished severely for not meeting unrealistically high quotas and had to work in the bitter cold. Jewish men were also requisitioned to perform various tasks in and around town, including escorting sheep to the railway station at Bastuny, working in the flour mill, and cleaning and other work for Germans and local Poles. Obtaining food was a major problem. Some formerly wealthy Jews received assistance from former Polish maidservants who helped smuggle food into the ghetto.⁵

In the first days of 1942, a German assistant to the Gebietskommissar, Stabsleiter Rudolf Werner, arrived in Raduń. With the aid of the police he conducted a house-to-house search for any Jews residing in the ghetto without official residence permits. The Aktion uncovered about 40 Jews, who were then marched out of the ghetto and murdered. They were buried on the road to Bastuny in a bomb crater from World War I.⁶ Especially notorious among the Jews of the ghetto was a German Gestapo man named Kopke, who ordered the construction of a gallows in the center of the ghetto, where Jews were publicly hanged. He also shot Jews execution style, especially young girls.⁷

Despite the terrible conditions, some Jews continued to conduct religious services in secret, and improvised schools were also organized for small groups of children. At Passover, matzot were baked from flour smuggled into the ghetto. In recognition of the difficult situation, Rabbi Hillel issued permission for the young and the sick to eat nonkosher meat.

The liquidation of the Raduń ghetto took place on May 8–10, 1942. First, forces of the German Security Police, the Gendarmerie, and the local Polish police surrounded the ghetto. All groups working outside the ghetto were ordered to return, and no new details were sent out. Families within the ghetto debated heatedly whether some should try to flee or go into hiding. Suspecting their fate, a number of Jews tried to escape during the encirclement. As many as 150 were shot dead over three days and nights. However, it is believed that some 300 may have succeeded in escaping from the ghetto, some even abetted by local policemen who turned a blind eye.

On May 10, 1942, the Germans seized 100 young Jews to dig the pits at the Jewish cemetery. However, on a signal by Meir Stoler, the Jews attempted a mass escape, and although many were gunned down, about 30 of them fled into the woods.⁸ As a result the Germans had to seize a new working



Avraham Aviel testifies during the Eichmann trial about atrocities in the Raduń ghetto, 1961.

USHMM WS #49336, COURTESY OF AVRAHAM AVIEL

party of Jews to complete the graves under very close guard and with brutal beatings. These Jews were given special permits to reassure them they would not be shot. Then German officials, assisted by the local police, drove all the Jews out of their houses and assembled them in the center of the ghetto. Those unable to walk were shot on the spot.

Meanwhile, the Christian farmers from the countryside had come into town on wagons, "ready to begin looting once the Jews were led to their deaths."⁹ The assembled Jews were escorted to the pits in a long procession. Here they were made to undress and then shot in the large pit some 25 meters long and 30 meters wide (27 yards by 33 yards).¹⁰ The firing squad consisted of Germans and local police. Halfway through the execution, the shooting was halted, and the "specialist" grave diggers were permitted to identify their family members, who were also taken to one side. Estimates vary, but probably about 1,500 Jews were murdered on May 10, 1942, in Raduń.

About 300 Jews preserved as specialist workers (including their families) returned to the ghetto, which was reduced to

just a few houses near the gallows. The returning Jews were registered together with others who came out of hiding or even returned from the forests. However, these survivors were again assembled on the market square and forced to lie facedown. A number were shot almost at random by the local mayor, Kulikowski, and the German official, Werner, from Lida, before they were released.¹¹ The surviving Jews were now employed to bury the dead bodies scattered around the town and sort out Jewish property, with the most desirable items being sent off to Germany. In June 1942, most of the specialist workers were transferred to the Lida ghetto, while the other Jews were sent to the ghetto in Szczuczyn. These Jews shared the fate of the other Jews in these ghettos (the last remnant in Szczuczyn being deported to Majdanek concentration camp in September 1943).

Of those who fled from the Raduń ghetto, some managed to survive by hiding, usually with the aid of local peasants, and others served in various partisan units that operated in the surrounding forests. In July 1999, Yad Vashem awarded Antoni Gawrylkiewicz, a shepherd in the village of Korkuciany, the title of Righteous Among the Nations. He assisted in hiding 16 Jews who had fled from the Raduń ghetto, providing them regularly with food at great risk to himself between May 1942 and July 1944, when the Red Army drove out the German occupying forces.¹²

SOURCES Information on the Raduń ghetto can be found in the following publications: Yaffa Eliach, *There Once Was a World: A 900-Year Chronicle of the Shtetl Eishysbok* (Boston: Little Brown, 1998), pp. 595–609; Lieb Lewin, “At Radun,” in *Fun letsten burbn* (Munich: Tsentral historishe komisye baym Tsentral komitet fun di bafarayt Yidn in der Amerikaner zone, 1946), vol. 1, no. 4, pp. 66–74; Szmerke Kacerginski, *Hurbn Vilne: Umkum fun di Yidn in Vilne un Vilner gegnt . . . : Zamlung fun eydus: Bavayzn oder dokumentn* (New York: Arysgegebn fun dem fareynikn Vilner hilfs-komitet in Nyu-York durkh Tsiko bikher-farlag, 1947), pp. 128–129; Leon Kahn, *No Time to Mourn: The True Story of a Jewish Partisan Fighter* (Vancouver, BC: Ronsdale Press, Vancouver Holocaust Education Society, 2004); and Avraham Aviel, *A Village Named Dowgalisbok: The Massacre at Radun and Eishisbok* (Portland, OR: Vallentine Mitchell, 2006).

Documentation and testimonies on the ghetto in Raduń can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/638, 1475, 3629); BA-L (B 162/3424-51 [II 202 AR-Z 94d/59]); GARF; NARB (845-1-8 and 4420-1-3); USHMM (RG-50.030*0372); and YVA (e.g., O-3/508, 2815, and Kaf-5 [Margolies diary]).

Martin Dean

NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/638, testimony of Hersz Zuker; and 301/1475, testimony of Luba Lewin.
2. Eliach, *There Once Was a World*, p. 595.
3. Lewin, “At Radun,” pp. 66–74; and AŻIH, 301/638.
4. USHMM, RG-50.030*0372, Interview with Dora Kramen Dimitro, July 18, 1996.
5. Eliach, *There Once Was a World*, p. 599; and YVA, Kaf-5, Margolies diary.

6. Eliach, *There Once Was a World*, p. 599; and Kacerginski, *Hurbn Vilne*, pp. 128–129, testimony of Shoel Kaplan, April 12, 1944.

7. Kahn, *No Time to Mourn*, p. 57.

8. YVA, O-3/2815, testimony of Moshe Michalowski; Kacerginski, *Hurbn Vilne*, p. 128.

9. Eliach, *There Once Was a World*, p. 601.

10. *The Trial of Adolf Eichmann: Record of Proceedings in the District Court of Jerusalem* (Jerusalem: State of Israel Ministry of Justice, 1992), 1:495–499, testimony of Avraham Aviel.

11. Eliach, *There Once Was a World*, p. 606.

12. YVA, M.31, file of Antoni Gawrylkiewicz. Yaffa Eliach was among those who testified on his behalf.

RAKÓW

Pre-1939: Raków, village, Motodeczno powiat, Wilno województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Rakov, Radosbkovichi raion, Vileika oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Rakow, Rayon Radosbkwitschi, Gebiet Wilejka, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Rakau, Valozb raen, Minsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Raków is located 38 kilometers (24 miles) west of Minsk. On the eve of war in September 1939, there were probably around 1,000 Jews in Raków.

The Red Army entered Raków on September 17, 1939, and imposed a Soviet regime. Private businesses were closed or nationalized, and Jewish craftsmen were organized into cooperatives. Many younger Jews found employment in government and party institutions. Jewish schools were closed and converted to the Soviet system. Zionist and Jewish communal activities were suppressed.

The Germans occupied Raków on June 26, 1941. Shortly afterwards, based on a list provided by local collaborators, the Germans arrested more than 45 young Jews suspected of Communist activity and shot them just outside the settlement. A few weeks later SS men visited Raków again and arrested and shot another 14 young people.

In the summer of 1941, the Germans appointed a four-man Judenrat, which included M. Alperowicz, Y. Obrazenski, and H. Grynholz. The Judenrat had to provide people for various forms of hard and humiliating labor. Local Poles collaborated with the Germans in the persecution of the Jews. Among those who took an active part were Oleś Szydłowski, Władysław Judzkiewicz, Franciszek Łukaszewicz, and Jan Leszka.¹

In late September or October 1941, SS men again came to Raków and surrounded the town with the assistance of local police. The Jews were ordered to assemble in the market square while the police searched their houses. The sickly and any stragglers were shot in their homes. The Germans broke into the synagogue, piled up the sacred books in the courtyard, and set them on fire. One man was thrown into the flames and burned alive. The assembled Jews were forced to

sing “Hatikva” (the Jewish national anthem) and dance, and as they did so, they were beaten with rifle butts and whips. They were ordered to turn over their money. Then 31 young men were removed from the crowd and taken to the Jewish cemetery to dig a pit. Once they were finished, more than 100 Jews were escorted to the cemetery to be shot. Their bodies were thrown into the pit. At least 1 person managed to escape.²

In October 1941, the Germans established a ghetto in the area around the synagogue. Around 1,000 Jews were jammed into the few houses within its boundary, about 15 people to a room. Their abandoned houses on the outside were broken into and looted. Every day about 100 to 200 people were taken for forced labor. About a week after the ghetto was established, the SS demanded four bars of gold, some fur coats, and 300 kilograms (661 pounds) of shoe leather. They gave the Judenrat one hour to meet this demand, threatening to kill many people if they failed. The Judenrat members somehow managed to deliver the ransom. However, the Germans repeatedly demanded money, goods, and other valuables, leaving the Jews destitute.

While the ghetto was in existence a number of younger people escaped into the forest or found hiding places with non-Jewish farmers. By the spring of 1942, when Soviet partisans began to organize in the area, several Jews had been accepted into their groups.³

According to hearsay evidence given to a survivor, in February 1942, just before the liquidation of the ghetto in Raków, the policemen there made a list of the Jews in the Raków ghetto and handed it to the German police. They claimed that the ghetto would be liquidated, as the Jewish population was not useful. The list had been prepared in the residence of the pig trader Alexander Szaternik.⁴

On February 4, 1942, German and Lithuanian policemen arrived in Raków, assisted by Polish police from the posts in Raków, Gródek Wileński, and Radoszkowicze. The head of the local police, Mikołaj Sienkiewicz, ordered all Jews to assemble with their baggage at the “cold (non-Hasidic) synagogue,” as they were to be sent to Minsk. Then the Jews were brutally driven into the synagogue and their belongings confiscated. The police threw several deadly grenades into the crowd from the women’s part of the synagogue, which set the building on fire. All the Jews were burned alive, except for seven people. One person who had escaped from the ghetto before the Aktion was the pregnant wife of Abraham Milsztein, Chana. But she was betrayed and then thrown into the flames, as was Szyje Megalowicz, the butcher, who also attempted to flee.⁵

Available estimates of the number of victims on February 4, 1942, diverge considerably. According to Soviet Extraordinary State Commission (ChGK) reports, 928 Jews were burned alive on that day.⁶ The relevant German Einsatzgruppen report no. 168, dated February 13, 1942, however, surmises only that the ghetto in Raków with about 100 people was liquidated, as the Jews were agitating against the Germans among the local population. This information serves

also as the basis for the conclusion of the German court in Koblenz, which maintains on the basis of one German witness that about 100 Jews were shot in a pit nearby.⁷ It is difficult to reconcile these accounts, but in view of the pre-war population figures, it is likely that more than 1,000 Jews were murdered in Raków between June 1941 and February 1942. It is possible that some Jews were kept alive after the February 1942 Aktion as forced laborers and were sent or escaped to forced labor camps nearby, such as that linked to the Krasne ghetto.⁸

SOURCES Information relating to the history of the Jewish community of Raków can be found in the following publications: Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ba-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Bialystok, Nowogrodek* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 596–600; Shalom Cholawsky, *The Jews of Belorussia during World War II* (Amsterdam: Harwood, 1998); Leonid Smilovitskii, *Katastrofa evreev v Belorussii 1941–1944 gg.* (Tel Aviv: Biblioteka Matveia Chernogo, 2000); and *Rossiiskaia evreiskaia entsiklopediia* (Moscow: Russian Academy of Natural Sciences, Jewish Encyclopedia Research Center, “Epos,” 2007), 6:331.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŽIH (301/2214 and 3164-65); GARF (7021-89-14, pp. 20, 48–54); NARB (861-1-10); USHMM; and YVA.

Monika Tomkiewicz and Martin Dean
trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. Spector and Freundlich, *Pinkas ba-kebilot*, 8. 596-598. On these shootings, with some divergences regarding the dates and numbers of victims, see also AŽIH, 301/3164-65, testimonies of Hilel Ejdman; and 301/2214, testimony of Borys Grajneman. The shooting of Jews, Communist officials, and agents in Raków is mentioned also in Tätigkeitse- und Lagebericht no. 1 of the Einsatzgruppen, dated July 31, 1941; see Peter Klein, ed., *Die Einsatzgruppen in der besetzten Sowjetunion 1941/42* (Berlin: Hentrich, 1997), p. 117.

2. Spector and Freundlich, *Pinkas ba-kebilot*, 8:599–600. See also Vladimir Adamushko et al., eds., *Handbuch der Haftstätten für die Zivilbevölkerung auf dem besetzten Territorium von Belarus 1941–1944* (Minsk: State Committee for Archives and Documentary Collections of the Republic of Belarus, 2001), p. 131, which dates this Aktion on September 29, 1941.

3. Spector and Freundlich, *Pinkas ba-kebilot*, 8:600.

4. AŽIH, 301/3164.

5. *Ibid.*; NARB, 861-1-10, p. 27, Soviet Extraordinary State Commission report for the Radoshkovichi raion, April 24, 1945.

6. Adamushko et al., *Handbuch der Haftstätten*, p. 131.

7. BA-BL, R 58/220, Ereignismeldung UdSSR no. 168, February 13, 1942; and *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 19 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1978) Lfd. Nr. 552, p. 190.

8. This is suggested by Spector and Freundlich, *Pinkas ba-kebilot*, 8:600, although this source may contain some errors regarding dates. For further information, see *Sefer Zikaron Likehillat Rakow* (N.p., n.d.).

RUBIEŻEWICZE

Pre-1939: Rubieżewicze, town, Stółpce powiat, Nowogródek województwo, Poland; 1939-1941: Rubezhevichi, Stolbtsy raion, Baranovichy oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941-1944: Rubesbewitschi, Rayon Iwieniec, Gebiet Nowogrodek, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Rubiazhevichy, Stoubtsy raen, Minsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Rubieżewicze is located 50 kilometers (31 miles) southwest of Minsk. According to the 1921 population census, there were 903 Jews living in Rubieżewicze, whereas in 1939 there were about 700.

The first German forces entered the town at the end of June or in early July 1941.¹ In the summer of 1941, owing to the shortage of German manpower, much authority was wielded by the local Belorussian police, commanded by a man named Zhikher from the village of Zasule. Local non-Jews from Rubieżewicze and the surrounding area were recruited as policemen. The police office was in Meyer Osherovitch's house.

The German military authorities introduced a number of restrictions on the Jewish population that were enforced by the local police. Jews had to wear a yellow Star of David, they had to perform forced labor, and they were prohibited from leaving the village. The Jews were also required to establish a Jewish Council (Judenrat), which included as members Eliyah Ayzenbud, Yitskhok Gurion, Yaakov Soleveytshik, Lifshitz, and Yishayahu Shapiro.²

Every week, Gestapo officers arrived from Iwieniec and demanded furs, leather goods, jewelry, and other items from the Judenrat. Those who resisted were shot. The Gestapo conducted a first Aktion in Rubieżewicze on July 23, 1941, shooting 36 Jewish men and women aged 17 to 70.³ The head of the local police, Zhikher, also demanded payments to forestall further Aktions against the Jews. As time went on, these demands became increasingly difficult to meet.

In September 1941, power was officially transferred to a German civil administration. Rubieżewicze became part of the Iwieniec Rayon in Gebiet Nowogrodek, where Wilhelm Traub was district commissioner (Gebietskommissar). In the fall and winter of 1941, the German authorities established a ghetto in Rubieżewicze for its Jewish residents as well as for hundreds of Jews brought in from the nearby villages of Naliboki, Derewna, Wolma, Kamień, Chotów, Grań, and others. Some survivors from the massacre of the Jews in Dzerzhinsk on October 20-21, 1941, also arrived in Rubieżewicze and were not betrayed by the Judenrat, despite the fear of a German reprisal if they were discovered.⁴

The ghetto in Rubieżewicze was established on December 1, 1941.⁵ The ghetto area started at Yishayahu Shapiro's house on Raków Street, and it included the entire marketplace, Synagogue Alley, and part of Koidanov Street. The Germans transferred the few non-Jews who lived in the designated ghetto area into houses vacated by Jews outside the ghetto. There was great overcrowding, with as many as 20 or 30 people

living in a single room.⁶ The local police sealed off the Jewish houses outside the ghetto and confiscated the furniture and other items. Before the transfer into the ghetto, the German authorities gave the Jews one day to bring potatoes and wood into the ghetto. Many of the Jews brought in from other locations had neither food nor fuel. About 15 local policemen guarded the ghetto.⁷

On December 1, 1941, the entire Jewish population of Wolma, 20 kilometers (12.4 miles) from Rubieżewicze, was forced to march to the Rubieżewicze ghetto. The 70 Jewish families of the town mostly ran small businesses or worked as artisans. As soon as the Germans entered Wolma, Jews were beaten, tortured, and robbed. During the transfer of the Jews to Rubieżewicze, the Germans and local police (Poles, Belorussians, and Ukrainians) beat the Jews. As they could take few possessions with them, in Rubieżewicze some of the Wolma Jews risked their lives by leaving the ghetto at night in search of food. If they were caught, they were severely beaten.⁸

It was also forbidden for non-Jews to enter the ghetto. Any non-Jews discovered in the ghetto selling food were forced to wear a yellow patch on their chests and were led through the streets in disgrace to deter others. Every day, the Jews were taken to perform forced labor in agriculture and cutting wood in the forests. If there was nothing to do, they would be ordered to pry the cobblestones out of the road and then put them back. Jewish girls were sent to do the most demeaning tasks, especially cleaning toilets with their bare hands.⁹

In February 1942, the Germans ordered 100 young men to be sent to a labor camp in Dworzec. The Germans forcibly dragged young men out of their houses and loaded them onto wagons. The Jews worked in Dworzec loading rocks from the quarry. With the aid of bribes, the Jews of Rubieżewicze were able to send food and clothing to them through Polish intermediaries. At the end of March 1942, a few of the young Jews escaped from the Dworzec labor camp and returned to the Rubieżewicze ghetto.¹⁰

In the spring of 1942 an epidemic of typhus broke out in the ghetto. The ghetto residents observed Passover by baking matzot and holding Seders. However, during the Seder on April 2, 1942, the Gestapo broke it up, beating members of the Judenrat and looting Jewish property.¹¹

On May 8-9, 1942, Gestapo officers arrived in Rubieżewicze and ordered that about 300 able-bodied Jews be collected and escorted on foot to Iwieniec, about 20 kilometers (12.4 miles) away. As the column left, local non-Jews stood by, playing their harmonicas and laughing at the Jews' misfortune. When they failed to keep up, at least 12 people were killed on the way by the mounted police escorts. In Iwieniec the Jews were put into a ghetto based around the synagogue courtyard. They were left to worry daily about finding food and a place to sleep and obliged to dig bunkers for the Germans during the day.¹² A couple of weeks later, a second group of Jews from Rubieżewicze arrived in Iwieniec. Then the labor commissar from Nowogródek conducted a selection of the Jews collected there from several surrounding towns and villages. Many of

the Jews from Rubieżewicze were escorted to the town of Naliboki, where Belorussian police beat the prisoners and took the best clothing and shoes. The group was taken from there to Lubcz, then by train on to Nowogródek, where they were put into the local ghetto. Many of these Jews were murdered during a large Aktion in Nowogródek in August 1942.¹³ Most of the other Jews from Rubieżewicze who were selected for labor in Iwieniec were sent to the town of Dworzec, where they worked in the forced labor camp at the quarry.¹⁴

The Germans liquidated the Rubieżewicze ghetto on June 8 or 9, 1942, shooting the remaining mainly elderly Jews and children (up to 350 people) in the Simkowicze Forest just to the south of the town. The mass shooting was organized by forces of the Security Police outpost (Aussenstelle) in Baranowicze, assisted by auxiliaries from the Baltic states, German Gendarmerie, and local police. Local inhabitants filled in the graves.¹⁵

On December 28, 1942, the camp at Dworzec was liquidated, and all the Jews there were murdered except for about 150 who escaped into the forest. Some of these escapees survived until the area was liberated in June 1944.¹⁶

Sources report that about 75 Jewish survivors returned to Rubieżewicze after the war and marked the mass grave in the Simkowicze Forest. Most Jewish homes had been broken into, and Soviet partisans had destroyed the police station.¹⁷ The Soviet authorities gave the returning survivors housing and employment, but most left for Poland shortly afterwards and immigrated from there to the West.¹⁸ After the war, a monument was erected at the site of the mass killing. Some of the Jews from Wolma and Derewna who had been brought into the Rubieżewicze ghetto were among those who survived the war.

SOURCES The yizkor book edited by David Shtokfish, *Sefer Rubishevitsb, Derevne ve-ha-seviva* (Tel Aviv, 1968), includes a number of relevant testimonies by survivors; a short article on the town can also be found 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. 589–592.

Documentation on the persecution and extermination of the Jews in Rubieżewicze can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/2849, 2993, 3302, and 3353); BA-L (B 162/3452-59); GARF (7021-81-102); NARB (750-1-72); USHMM; VHF; and YVA (e.g., M-1/E/1574).

Nancy Krug and Alexander Kruglov
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NOTES

1. Eliezer Gurion, “Tragic Recollections of the Occupation Years,” in Shtokfish, *Sefer Rubishevitsb*, pp. 286–287, also 263–267.

2. Gishke Falayes testimony, in Shtokfish, *Sefer Rubishevitsb*, pp. 249–252. Another survivor listed Velvel Shimanovitsh and Solomitsh as members in addition to Lotte Ayznburg and Yitskhok Gurion; see *idem*, pp. 286–287.

3. NARB, 3500-4-346, p. 19.

4. Shalom Cholawsky, *The Jews of Bielorrussia during World War II* (Amsterdam: Harwood, 1998), p. 258.

5. Shtokfish, *Sefer Rubishevitsb*, pp. 263–267; AŻIH, 301/2993.

6. Shtokfish, *Sefer Rubishevitsb*, pp. 249–252; AŻIH, 301/2993.

7. BA-L, B 162/3452-59 (202 AR-Z 94e/59), translation file, statement of Anton Borisewitsch, April 16, 1969.

8. Moshe Shimonovitsch testimony in Shtokfish, *Sefer Rubishevitsb*, pp. 163–165.

9. Shtokfish, *Sefer Rubishevitsb*, pp. 286–287.

10. *Ibid.*; AŻIH, 301/2993.

11. Shtokfish, *Sefer Rubishevitsb*, pp. 286–287; AŻIH, 301/2993.

12. Shtokfish, *Sefer Rubishevitsb*, pp. 175, 263–267, 286–287.

13. *Ibid.*, pp. 253–262; YVA, M-1/E/1574, testimony of Shalom Swinik.

14. Shtokfish, *Sefer Rubishevitsb*, pp. 249–252, 286–287.

15. *Ibid.*, pp. 286–287; BA-L, B 162/3452-59 (202 AR-Z 94e/59), translation file, statements of Anton Borisewitsch, April 16, 1969, and Kazimir Gajdukewitsch, April 1969. The dating of this Aktion and the fate of the remaining Jews in Rubieżewicze are not entirely clear. Marat Botvinnik, *Pamiatniki genotsida evreev Belarusi* (Minsk: Belarускаia Navuka, 2000), p. 81, for example, dates the Aktion in November 1942, indicating 500 (or 1,000) victims, but these figures are certainly too high, as most Jews from the ghetto were sent to Iwieniec and then on to Nowogródek.

16. Shtokfish, *Sefer Rubishevitsb*, pp. 249–252, 263–267, and 286–287. These three accounts agree on December 1942 as the date of liquidation of the Dworzec labor camp.

17. On the capture of the police station in Rubieżewicze by partisans of the Stalin Brigade, see NARB, 750-1-72.

18. Shtokfish, *Sefer Rubishevitsb*, pp. 286–287.

RUDENSK

Pre-1941: Rudensk, town and raion center, Minsk oblast’, Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Rayon center, Gebiet Minsk-Land, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Rudzensk, Pukhavichy raen, Minsk voblasts’, Republic of Belarus

Rudensk is located about 36 kilometers (22 miles) southeast of Minsk. According to the 1939 census, there were 176 Jews living in Rudensk out of a total population of 1,128 (15.6 percent).¹

German forces of Army Group Center entered Rudensk at the end of June 1941, one week after the beginning of the German invasion of the USSR. During this week, some Jews managed to leave eastward with evacuation transports, while men of military age were either drafted into or volunteered for the Red Army. It is estimated that at least two thirds of the pre-war Jewish population remained in Rudensk at the start of the German occupation.

Throughout the summer of 1941, Rudensk was governed by a German military commandant. From September 1941, a civil administration took over responsibility for the town, as the area became part of Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien. Rudensk was incorporated into Gebiet Minsk-Land, where the

1272 WEISSRUTHENIEN REGION

Gebietskommissar was Regierungsrat Dr Kaiser, and the SS- und Polizei-Gebietsführer was Gendarmerie Leutnant Karl Kalla.² In the fall of 1941, a Gendarmerie post was established in Rudensk, which took over responsibility for the auxiliary police force composed of local volunteers.

Following the occupation of Rudensk, the German military commandant issued an order for the Rayon administration to carry out the compulsory registration of all local Jews. The Jews were ordered to wear special distinctive badges, and they were compelled to perform various types of forced labor, including road construction work. In September 1941, all the Jews were resettled into a ghetto, which was created on Dukora Street, where several houses were designated for that purpose. According to one Jewish survivor, Aleksei Kats, the ghetto remained unfenced and unguarded, but the Jews were forced to pay a large “contribution” to the Germans.³

On October 10, 1941, German police forces and their Lithuanian auxiliaries arrived by truck in Rudensk. Assisted by the local Belorussian police, these forces surrounded the ghetto. They then drove all the Jews out of their houses and collected them in the square. Among those gathered together were also some Jews brought in from Minsk. The Germans and their collaborators then escorted the Jews to a nearby quarry, where they shot them. The Jews were forced to undress before being shot.⁴

According to a report by the German military Kommandant in Weissruthenien, on October 9–11, 1941, a combined force involving the 707th Pioneer Company, the Secret Field Police (GFP), the 11th Reserve Police Battalion (commanded by Major Franz Lechthaler), and a unit of Lithuanian Schutzmansschaft (the 2nd detachment, subsequently renamed the 12th Schutzmansschaft Battalion) shot 800 partisans, Communists, Jews, and other suspicious persons in a large-scale operation conducted in the area around Rudensk.⁵ As these units conducted a number of separate Aktions against suspected partisans and Jews during this period, it is difficult to establish the precise number of victims in Rudensk. Another report, however, notes that on October 10–11, 189 prisoners were taken in the Rudensk area, of which 188 were shot. It is probable that the bulk of these 188 “prisoners” were Jews from the ghetto, although on that day 18 people were also shot in the nearby village of Sergeevichi.⁶ The Soviet Extraordinary State Commission reports that 118 Jews were murdered in Rudensk in October 1941.⁷

Marat Botvinnik states that the number of Jews murdered in Rudensk was around 300, but his sources indicate that another Aktion (probably carried out against Communist activists and male Jews) had taken place earlier in August 1941.

SOURCES The ghetto in Rudensk is mentioned in the following publications: Vladimir Adamushko et al., eds., *Handbuch der Haftstätten für die Zivilbevölkerung auf dem besetzten Territorium von Belarus 1941–1944* (Minsk: State Committee for Archives and Documentary Collections of the Republic of Belarus, 2001), p. 131; and Marat Botvinnik, *Pamiatniki genotsida evreev Belarusi* (Minsk: Belaruskaja Navuka, 2000), pp. 76, 90.

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CAMPS AND GHETTOS, 1933–1945

Documentation regarding the persecution and extermination of the Rudensk Jews can be found in the following archives: BA-L (B 162/4267-4272); GARF (7021-87-13); LYA (Trial of Antanas Impulevicius and others); NARB (651-1-1 and 378-1-698); USHMM; VHF (# 49936); and YVA (M-33/431).

Alexander Kruglov and Martin Dean
trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. Mordechai Altshuler, ed., *Distribution of the Jewish Population of the USSR 1939* (Jerusalem: Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1993), p. 39.
2. BA-BL, BDC, SSO 2432, Organisationsplan der besetzten Ostgebiete nach dem Stand vom 10. März 1942, hg. vom Chef der Ordnungspolizei, Berlin, March 13, 1942.
3. GARF, 7021-87-13, p. 14 (copy available in YVA, M-33/431); and VHF, # 49936, testimony of Aleksei Naumovich Kats (born 1930).
4. LYA, statement of Zinaida Fyodorovna Shlopak (born 1911), resident of Rudensk, given in the trial against Antanas Impulevicius and others, held in Vilnius in 1962.
5. NARB, 378-1-698, p. 4, report of “Kommandant in Weissruthenien,” October 16, 1941.
6. NARB, 651-1-1, pp. 14–15, Kommandant in Weissruthenien, Abt. Ia, report of October 16, 1941, about activity in the period October 1–15, 1941.
7. GARF, 7021-87-13, pp. 6, 8, and 95.

SHATSK

Pre-1941: Shatsk, village, Rudensk raion, Minsk oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Szabzk, Rayon Rudensk, Gebiet Minsk-Land, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Shatsk, Pukhavichy raen, Minsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Shatsk is located 56 kilometers (35 miles) south-southeast of Minsk. The Jewish population of the village on the eve of the German occupation was probably in excess of 300 people.

German armed forces occupied the village on June 30, 1941. It appears likely that some Jews managed to flee or were mobilized into the Red Army in the week prior to the Germans' arrival. In the summer of 1941, a German military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur) governed Shatsk. In September 1941, authority was transferred to a German civil administration. Shatsk was incorporated into Gebiet Minsk-Land, within Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien.¹ Regierungsrat Dr. Kaiser was appointed Gebietskommissar, and Leutnant Kalla of the Gendarmerie became the SS- und Polizei-Gebietsführer.

Shortly after the occupation of Shatsk, the German Ortskommandantur ordered the village council to arrange for the registration and marking of the local Jews, who were also required to perform various kinds of forced labor. According to an unconfirmed source, at some date before October 1941 (probably in September), all the Jews of the village were moved into a ghetto. German police forces subordinated to Einsatzkommando 3 then murdered the Jews of Shatsk in

October 1941, when they reportedly shot 319 Jews into a large pit 20 meters by 20 meters and 3 meters deep (about 22 yards by 22 yards by 3 yards).² Testimony regarding the murder of Jews in Uzda on October 16–17, 1941, indicates that on the eve of the Aktion there, a Jew from Shatsk stole into the Uzda ghetto and revealed that on the previous day all the Jews of Shatsk had been killed under the pretext of resettlement.³

In 1942, the Germans and local police shot six Jews at the Jewish cemetery in Shatsk. This incident was commemorated in 1944 by the erection of a memorial.

SOURCES The existence of a ghetto in Shatsk is mentioned in Marat Botvinnik, *Pamiętniki Genocysida Ewreev Belarusi* (Minsk: Belarusaika Navuka, 2000), pp. 77–78. Brief information on the Jewish community can be found 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. 1169.

Documentation regarding the persecution and murder of the Jewish population of Shatsk can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-87-13) and YVA (M-33/431).

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NOTES

1. BA-BL, BDC, SSHO 2432, Organisationsplan der besetzten Ostgebiete nach dem Stand vom 10. März 1942, hg. vom Chef der Ordnungspolizei, Berlin, March 13, 1942.

2. H. Heer, “Extreme Normalität. Generalmajor Gustav Freiherr von Mauchenheim gen. Bechtolsheim,” *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* (Berlin, 2003), p. 737; RGVA, 500-1-25, p. 114, Report of Einsatzkommando 3, December 1, 1941 (this source identifies the village as Scak). GARF, 7021-87-13, p. 5, indicates that 635 Jews were shot in Shatsk in October 1941. This estimate is probably too high.

3. Leonid Smilovitskii, *Katastrofa ewreev v Belorussii 1941–1944 gg.* (Tel Aviv: Biblioteka Matveia Chernogo, 2000), pp. 230–232.

SINIAWKA

Pre-1939: Siniawka, village, Nieśwież powiat, Nowogródek województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Siniawka, Kletsk raion, Baranovichi oblast’, Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Sinjawká, Rayon Klezk, Gebiet Baranowitsche, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Siniawka, Kletsk raen, Minsk voblasts’, Republic of Belarus

Siniawka is situated 20 kilometers (12.5 miles) southeast of Baranowicze. According to the 1921 census, there were 379 Jews living in Siniawka, out of a total population of 514.¹

German armed forces occupied the village on June 25, 1941. Only a few Jewish youths manage to flee the village into the interior of the Soviet Union.²

In the summer of 1941, a German military commandant’s office (Ortskommandantur) was in charge of Siniawka. In September 1941, authority was transferred to a German civil

administration. The village became part of Rayon Klezk in Gebiet Baranowitsche, within Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien. A local Belorussian police force was established in Siniawka. A Belorussian named Huryn served as police commander in Rayon Klezk during the German occupation.

In the summer and fall of 1941, the Germans implemented a series of anti-Jewish measures in Siniawka. These included the appointment of a Judenrat, the marking of the Jews with distinguishing badges in the form of a Star of David, and a ban on their leaving the village. The local police subjected the Jews to systematic robbery and beatings, and Jews were required to perform forced labor.

German forces conducted the first large-scale Aktion in Siniawka in the fall of 1941. They collected about 500 Jews in the synagogue. Then they selected 134 mostly elderly Jews, escorted them to a ditch, and shot them. The remaining Jews in Siniawka were then moved into a ghetto.

In the summer of 1942, forces of the German and Belorussian police rounded up the remaining Jews in the Siniawka ghetto and escorted them out of the village in the direction of Pińsk. The Germans then shot all the Jews of Siniawka, together with some 130 Jews who had been brought from Zastrowicze. The Jews were buried in a mass grave beside the road. About 600 people were murdered altogether.³

SOURCES Information on the Jewish community of Siniawka and its extermination under Nazi occupation can be found in the following publications: A.Sh. Shteyn, ed., *Pinkas Klezk* (Tel Aviv: Hotsa’at Irgun yots’e Kletsk be-Yisrael, 1959); “Lios Siniaskahó geta,” in *Pamiats’: Hist.-dak. khroniki baradou i r-nau Belarusi: Kletskii r-n.* (Minsk, 1999), pp. 280–282; “Siniawka,” 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. 620–621; and “Siniawka,” 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. 1186.

Documents about the extermination of the Jews of Siniawka can be found in the following archives: BA-L (202 AR-Z 171/67, vol. 2, pp. 231–233); GARF (7021-81-102 and 103); and ZGABO (616-1-70).

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trans. Kathleen Luft

NOTES

1. “Siniawka,” in Spector and Freundlich, *Pinkas ha-kebilot*, 8:620.

2. *Ibid.*, 8:620–621.

3. BA-L, 202 AR-Z 171/67, vol. 2, pp. 231–233; “Lios Siniaskahó geta,” pp. 280–282; and ZGABO, 616-1-70. Soviet sources date the liquidation of the ghetto to June 1942.

ŚLONIM

Pre-1939: Slonim, town, powiat center, Nowogródek województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Slonim, raion center, Baranovichi

1274 WEISSRUTHENIEN REGION

oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Slonim, Rayon and Gebiet center, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Slonim, raen center, Beras'tse voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Slonim is located 190 kilometers (118 miles) southwest of Minsk. On the eve of the German invasion in June 1941, there were probably around 20,000 Jews residing in Slonim.

At the start of the war Slonim was bombed heavily from the air, destroying and damaging many of the town's mostly wooden houses. The NKVD organized the evacuation to the east of large numbers of civilians. Many departed on foot the day the Germans arrived. Soviet officials from the east, essential workers, and their families received priority for the limited evacuation capacity. Residents of Slonim who were called up for the Red Army on June 24 soon returned home, once they saw that their Russian officers had fled.¹

German mobile forces of Army Group Center occupied Slonim on June 25, 1941. Soon after their arrival the German authorities ordered all the men to report to the sports stadium, where they were held for one week. They did not receive any food—only water. Those who could prove they were residents of Slonim were allowed to go home.²

Slonim initially came under a German military administration. On July 10, the Ortskommandantur ordered Jews to wear yellow patches 10 centimeters (about 4 inches) in size. Jews were also forbidden to use the sidewalks, and in mid-July, they were prohibited from residing in the same house with non-Jews. The Jews themselves organized a council to deal with the many problems facing the community, especially food shortages. An official Judenrat, with different members, was formed by the Germans a little later.

The first Aktion in Slonim took place on July 17, 1941. On that day Einsatzgruppen forces arrived in Slonim with 12 large trucks. They rounded up about 2,000 men in and around the area of the community center, near the market square, and loaded 100 men onto each truck, altogether about 1,200 men. They transported them out of town and shot them in the sandpits at Petralowicze Hill. The rest of the assembled men were then released. According to the report of the Einsatzgruppe, some 2,000 people (mainly Jews) were detained with the assistance of Police Battalion 316: "of these, 1,075 were shot the same day."³

At the end of August, Slonim came under a German civil administration as part of Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien. The Gebietskommissar in Slonim was Gerhard Erren. The German civil administrators wore brown uniforms. Part of his staff did not arrive from Germany until January 1942. One of the first measures taken by the civil administration was to conduct a census, which counted 14,461 Jews in the town.⁴

In September 1941, Erren ordered all the Jews to move into a ghetto composed of four separate parts, as follows: the ghetto of the island on Zhabinka Street, the ghetto on Ulinska Street where the Judenrat was located, the third ghetto on Mikolovska Street, and the fourth ghetto on Podgorna Street. Twelve Jew-



Pre-war photograph of the Slonim synagogue and market. USHMM WS #48362. COURTESY OF TOMASZ WISNIEWSKI

ish doctors and their families were permitted to live outside the ghetto.

Each ghetto section also had several more small side streets apart from the main streets named. Those Jews not residing in areas assigned to be part of a ghetto had to leave their homes and move into one of the ghetto areas. At that time, in September 1941, the ghetto was not enclosed, but soon work started on erecting barbed-wire fences. There were also gates set up for entry and exit. The ghetto was guarded from the inside by the Jewish Police, who were nominated by the Judenrat, and externally by the Belorussian police. Jews entering the ghetto were searched by the Belorussian policemen, and those leaving had their work passes checked by both the Jewish and Belorussian police.

In early November, the German Gebietskommissariat official dealing with Jewish matters, Hick, issued the Jews with green and yellow certificates. The yellow certificates were issued to useful Jews (*nützliche Juden*), such as craftsmen. Initially, most Jews did not grasp the significance of these cards, but people noticed, for example, that the island ghetto section on Zhabinka Street was inhabited only by Jews with yellow cards. Those who had green cards were permitted to live in the other three ghetto sections but not in the Zhabinka Street ghetto.⁵

In early November 1941, the German authorities took about 100 Jews hostage, including members of the Judenrat, threatening to shoot them unless a ransom of 1.5 or 2 million rubles (in gold or silver objects) was paid. Strenuous efforts were made to meet at least part of this impossible demand, even though the community had already been squeezed dry by two previous levies. Then on November 14, some women and part of the Judenrat were released, but the 60 Jews remaining in prison were all shot the next day.⁶

In the meantime, the German authorities organized a large-scale Aktion against the Jews of Slonim on November 14, 1941. One Jewish survivor was prevented from returning

home after visiting a friend, as German forces had sealed off the ghetto. From the loft of his friend's house, he observed German soldiers chasing people and beating them, throwing children to the ground. The people were screaming. Then he heard the sound of engines coming from the old marketplace. Then everything went quiet for about two hours. Finally things returned to normal—shops opened, and people emerged onto the streets. Most of his family was caught in the roundup, and he never saw them again.⁷

This Aktion was a joint operation between the Gebietskommissar and the Security Police, assisted by the Wehrmacht, Latvian and Lithuanian police auxiliaries, and the Belorussian police. These forces entered the houses in the ghetto and told people that they would be resettled somewhere else. The old people, children, and women were driven on trucks to Czepielów to pits prepared in advance by other Jews, who had already become the first victims to be shot and buried in the pits that they had dug themselves.⁸

A selection took place on the market square, and those with yellow employment cards were spared. In his report dated January 1942, Gebietskommissar Erren boasted of having rid Słonim of 8,000 “unnecessary hungry mouths.” He concluded that “the approximately 7,000 Jews remaining in the town were all employed in the work process, they work willingly owing to their constant fear of death, and in the spring they will be most carefully vetted and selected for a further reduction.”⁹

A Jewish survivor has described the march to the pits. After being told in the square that they were being relocated, the Jews initially departed in an orderly fashion. Panic set in at the railway station, however, once they realized they were not leaving by rail but being marched off into the forest. From here the guard was tightened, and anyone who fell out of the column was shot. It was too far across open fields to the forests for a successful escape. In the distance the Jews heard machine-gun fire. After marching for one hour, the Jews were made to sit on the ground. The men were separated from the women and forced to undress. The guards beat them with rifle butts and whips.

In groups of 20 people, all naked, the Jews were escorted up to a hill. At the top of the hill two large pits, one completely full with bodies and the other half full, were visible. As he was about to be shot, the survivor fainted and only came to later, when he was surrounded by blood and bodies inside the pit. Miraculously he managed to crawl out of the pit towards fresh air and sneak back to the ghetto under cover of darkness.¹⁰

Several witnesses observed the participation of the local Belorussian police in this Aktion. The local police had been organized by the Wehrmacht as an Ordnungsdienst and were at this time only dressed in civilian clothing. It was formed of young men from Słonim, from the villages, and some Poles. One survivor saw Belorussian policemen going into the houses and taking people out. Others describe them being used as escorts and cordon guards during the shootings. Following the mass shooting, the policemen held a party to celebrate.¹¹

In Gebiet Słonim, units of the Wehrmacht also conducted shooting Aktions against the Jews in some of the smaller villages. At the end of 1941 the civil administration issued orders for all Jewish communities of less than 1,000 people to be concentrated into the main ghettos. The Gebietskommissar in Słonim requested that the local military commandant, Glück, continue with his assistance in this process. Glück, however, replied that this was currently impossible due to the absence of necessary transport.¹²

In the ghetto, there was a soup kitchen to help the poorest Jews, and Rabbi Singer from Ostrów Mazowiecka organized services in the ghetto synagogue. In March 1942, the Germans also moved into the ghetto any apostate Jews (including at least one who had become a Christian monk) found in the area. According to one Jewish survivor, who was moved into the Słonim ghetto with his family in March, at this time the ghetto was fenced off and guarded by Jewish Police. He received only a few grams of bread each day and when he got a job as a mechanic in the waterworks, he left the ghetto each day to go to work.¹³

After the November Aktion, Jews in the ghetto formed an Anti-Fascist Committee to coordinate plans for resistance. Jews working in ammunition depots for the Germans managed to smuggle some arms into the ghetto. In the discussions whether to resist in the ghetto or flee to the forest, most people favored the latter. Contact was made with the partisans, and a number of Jews fled from the ghetto into the forests.

In May 1942, 400 male Jewish workers were assembled and deported by train to work at an SS labor camp in Mogilev. Most of these men were murdered by the end of 1942.¹⁴

At the end of June 1942, a squad of Waffen-SS and Security Police (KdS) from Minsk traveled to Słonim to participate in a large-scale Aktion to liquidate the ghetto there.¹⁵ The Security Police forces were assisted by local policemen, members of the Wehrmacht, Lithuanians, and men from the Gebietskommissariat, who surrounded the ghetto area.¹⁶ The Aktion started when Stabsleiter Rithmeyer shot the head of the Jewish labor office, Kwint. This made it clear that the Jews' fate was sealed, and the Jewish Police and others fled to their prepared hiding places. The Germans and their collaborators then entered the ghetto, driving the Jews out of their homes. Some resistance was offered by those Jews who possessed arms.¹⁷

In Słonim it appears that the German forces deliberately set fire to the ghetto to drive out those in hiding. One Jewish survivor concealed himself with his brother in a storeroom close to the house. From here he observed a group of Germans and Lithuanians approaching:

The Germans were giving orders and shouting with their weapons pointed “Juden raus” [Jews come out], but nobody came out. Then an order was given to throw phosphorous grenades into the house and it caught on fire. We saw all of this through the gaps in the wooden planks of our hiding place. Since there was no room for the whole family to hide under the

kitchen, some of my family members hid in the attic. I saw that my cousin jumped down and he was shot by a Lithuanian while he was still in the air. The Gebietskommissar, Erren, clapped his hands and shouted “Bravo Lithuanian.”¹⁸

One of the local firemen, called out to deal with the wooden houses on fire in the ghetto, saw German soldiers and Belorussian police there next to the river. He put the pump in the river to draw water to put out the fires. When he started to pump water onto some houses, he heard people shouting and emerging from the cellars. When he aimed the hose towards the people, a German told him to stop and shot at the people in the cellars.¹⁹

On the day of the main Aktion, it appears that members of the Gebietskommissar’s office, including Erren himself, played a leading role, while most of the Gendarmes were apparently absent on an antipartisan operation. Nevertheless, over the following days, members of the Gendarmerie and about 50 Schutzmänner were responsible for combing the ghetto once more for any survivors. Any who tried to escape were shot on the spot, while the rest were escorted to the prison. From here they were taken in batches to be shot by the Gendarmerie shortly afterwards.²⁰

Approximately 8,000 Jews were killed in Słonim at this time.²¹ Apart from the Aktion in Słonim, other ghetto liquidations were also carried out in the surrounding towns, for example, in Byeń on July 25.²² In September, Gebietskommissar Erren boasted that of the 25,000 Jews originally living in the Gebiet, only some 500 remained. These people had been saved due to important considerations regarding the war economy.²³ These last remaining Jews of the Słonim ghetto were murdered a few months later, at the end of 1942.

In Słonim more than 100 Poles were arrested on the night of June 29, 1942. Among those arrested, some along with their families, were teachers, lawyers, and priests. Eleven men were transferred to Baranowicze and shot there in July. Of the remainder, about 90 were taken to be shot at Petralewicze near Słonim on December 19, 1942.²⁴

About 400 Jews managed to escape to the forests from the Słonim ghetto, most joining Soviet partisan units. Many joined the Shchors unit (Company 51), which operated in the Słonim area.

SOURCES There are a number of relevant publications concerning the Słonim ghetto, including Nachum Alpert, *The Destruction of Słonim Jewry* (New York: Holocaust Library, 1989); the memoirs of Ljuba I. Abramovic, *Die faschistische Gebenna am Beispiel des Ghettoes der Stadt Słonim* (Hannover: Niedersächsische Landeszentrale für Politische Bildung, 1995); and Jacob Shepetinski, *Jacob’s Ladder* (London: Minerva Press, 1996). The yizkor book, edited by Kalman Likhtenshtein, *Pinkas Słonim*, 4 vols. (Tel Aviv: Irgun ‘ole Słonim be-Yisrael, 1961–1979), contains information on the ghetto. There is a short article in German by Hans-Heinrich Nolte in Gerd R. Ueberschär, ed., *Orte des Grauens: Verbrechen im Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Darmstadt: Primus, 2003), pp. 237–247.

Brief information on the history of the Jewish community of Słonim can be found in *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 2nd ed. (Detroit: Thomson Gale, 2007), 18:676–677.

The Soviet Extraordinary State Commission reports for Słonim and some relevant German documentation can be found in GARF (e.g., 7021-81-103) and NARB; additional captured German documentation can be found in BA-BL, CDJC, and NARA. A number of Belorussian, German, British, and Polish criminal investigations can be found in the following archives: AUKGBRBGrO; BA-L; NA (WCU); and IPN. Most extensive are the investigative and the trial documents concerning Gebietskommissar Gerhard Erren (LG-Hamb (50)19/72), who was convicted in 1974 but then released on a legal technicality. There are also, many relevant testimonies collected in AŽIH (e.g., 301/2851); USHMM; VHF; and YVA.

Martin Dean

NOTES

1. 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. 172–173; BNA (WCU), D7812, S282.
2. WCU, S325.
3. Ibid., D7812; BA-BL, R 58/215, Ereignismeldung UdSSR no. 32, July 24, 1941; Kermish, *To Live with Honor*, pp. 175–176—this source dates the Aktion on July 14; Likhtenshtein, *Pinkas Słonim*, 2:40–50.
4. Alpert, *The Destruction of Słonim Jewry*, pp. 68–69.
5. WCU, statement of Zorach Kremen, August 25, 1995 (D7808); Likhtenshtein, *Pinkas Słonim*, 2:40–50.
6. Kermish, *To Live with Honor*, p. 178; Likhtenshtein, *Pinkas Słonim*, 2:40–50.
7. WCU, D7852.
8. Ibid., D7812.
9. Ibid., D6249 and D6291; CDJC, CXLVa-8, Report of Gerhard Erren, January 25, 1942. GARF, 7021-81-103, pp. 179–180, also gives the figure of 8,000 victims.
10. WCU, D6291.
11. Ibid., D7852, D6249, and D6291; see also BA-L, B 162/4614-17 (202 AR-Z 228/59, Indictment in the case of Gerhard Erren), p. 4277, and B 162/5093, pp. 6129–6134.
12. NARB, 3500-2-38, pp. 533–553.
13. WCU, statement of Ahron Bandt, August 14, 1994.
14. Alpert, *The Destruction of Słonim Jewry*, pp. 132–136.
15. *Unsere Ebre heisst Treue: Kriegstagebuch des Kommandostabes Reichsführer SS* (Vienna: Europa, 1965), p. 242, Gruppe Arlt report, Minsk, August 3, 1942.
16. BA-L, B 162/4614-17 (Erren Indictment), pp. 4314–4324.
17. Ibid., p. 4302; Alpert, *The Destruction of Słonim Jewry*, pp. 160–163.
18. WCU, D7809.
19. Ibid., S282.
20. BA-L, B 162/4614-17 (Erren Indictment), pp. 4322–4341; WCU, D7809.
21. BA-L, B 162/4614-17 (Erren Indictment), p. 4305. *Unsere Ebre heisst Treue*, p. 242, Gruppe Arlt, Minsk, August 3, 1942, reported 4,000 victims. Alpert, *The Destruction of Słonim Jewry*, p. 160, gives the figure of 12,000 Słonim Jews prior to the Aktion.

22. BA-L, B 162/5088 (202 AR-Z 228/59), pp. 1823–1826, and B 162/5100, p. 4344.

23. CDJC, CDXXXVI-46, Report of Slonim Gebietskommissar, September 26, 1942. See also GARF, 7021-81-103, pp. 181–182, Protocol given by Moysha Yudelevich, who was among the specialist workers saved during the June Aktion.

24. A. Galinski, "Eksterminacja inteligencji polskiej latem 1942 r. w. nowogródzkiem," *Biuletyn Głównej Komisji* 23 (1972): 188–189.

SLUTSK

Pre-1941: Slutsk, town and raion center, Minsk oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Sluzk, Rayon and Gebiet center, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Slutsk, raen center, Minsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Slutsk is located 105 kilometers (65 miles) south of Minsk. In 1897, the town was predominantly Jewish, with the 10,624 Jews accounting for 74 percent of its 14,349 residents. By 1926, the Jewish population had declined to 8,358 (53.3 percent), and by 1939, it had dropped further, to 7,392 (33.7 percent).

Following the German invasion on June 22, 1941, martial law was declared in Slutsk within 24 hours. People were instructed to remain at their jobs and not give way to panic. Men began to be conscripted into the Red Army. There was no evacuation. Instead, official propaganda repeated slogans about victory over the enemy coming "with little blood and on foreign soil." Leaving work without permission was considered desertion. In the shops, people bought up foodstuffs and the necessities of life. Depositors sought to withdraw their savings from the State Bank, but only 200 rubles per customer (about one week's earnings) were permitted. Refugees from western Belorussia arrived in Slutsk, telling of the Germans' rapid advance. On June 24 and 25, the town was bombed.¹

On the afternoon of June 26, the Germans entered Slutsk. Only a few Jews managed to escape. On the first day of the occupation, the Nazis shot 70 Jews and Soviet activists.² A Belorussian police force was organized. The police station was situated in the building of a kindergarten and a day nursery. In Slutsk, on the grounds of the military camp, an assembly point for Soviet prisoners of war (POWs) was set up.³ In June and July 1941, German security forces conducted selections at the POW camp in Slutsk, and according to Soviet estimates, they shot between 1,500 and 2,000 Jewish servicemen. By September 20, 1941, a Stammlager (Stalag 341) was operational in Slutsk, and there the Security Police continued to select out and shoot Jews.⁴

In the summer of 1941, units of Einsatzgruppe B combed the town of Slutsk on several occasions, arresting and shooting several hundred Communist activists and Jews. For example, the Einsatzgruppen activity and situation report for the first two weeks of September 1941 noted that in Slutsk five members of the Soviet People's Court had been "rendered harmless" (one of whom was Jewish), and in total 115 people had been shot.⁵



The public abuse of an elderly Jew wearing tefillin [phylacteries] in Slutsk, ca. 1941.

USHMM WS #71234, COURTESY OF YVA

In July and August 1941, the Jews of Slutsk were required to sew yellow patches on their clothing and were forbidden to walk on the sidewalks or enter stores. Initially they continued to live in their own homes and had to perform various forced labor tasks, including construction work and cleaning. The German authorities established a ghetto in Slutsk at some time between July and October 1941.⁶ The Germans ordered a fence and barbed wire to be placed around Bobruiskaia, Monakhova, and Parizhskoi Kommuny Streets, enclosing about 40 buildings, and the ghetto was guarded by local police. In the ghetto, each person had no more than 2 square meters (21.5 square feet) of living space, and the buildings were unheated. People slept wherever they could find space. At night, an armed patrol enforced a curfew (from 10:00 P.M. to 6:00 A.M.), and offenders were shot on the spot. Eli (Eliaga) Epshtein was killed on the steps of his building when he went outside to urinate at 5:00 A.M. Food was in very short supply. The Jews cooked food on "trigons" (metal stands): a thick soup of potato peelings, beets, and bran. Sometimes they were able to trade their clothing with Belorussians for potatoes. Jews who performed work were issued, 250 grams (8.8 ounces) of bread per person per day, while the remaining prisoners were supposed to obtain their own, by risking their lives. Illegally carrying food into the ghetto was punished by death. Malka Troichanskaia was hanged on the gates of the Judenrat office when she tried to exchange clothing for flour and went a few meters outside the barbed wire. The Nazis brought additional Jews into the ghetto from the surrounding villages and small

towns, bringing the total, including some refugees trapped in Slutsk, to approximately 10,000 Jews in the ghetto.⁷

Units of German Reserve Police Battalion 11, together with two companies of Lithuanian partisans, organized a large Aktion in Slutsk on October 27, 1941. The Aktion was not coordinated with Gebietskommissar Heinrich Carl in advance. His request for a postponement of at least one day, to select out skilled Jewish workers and their families, was refused. The officer in charge of the police battalion replied that he had only been given two days to cleanse Slutsk of Jews, but he did promise Carl to spare Jews who had been issued official German passes.⁸

Carl's plan was for all Jews, including those at work outside the ghetto, to be concentrated inside the ghetto for an orderly selection. Instead, many Jews were taken straight from their factories and workshops. The Lithuanian auxiliaries conducted a brutal roundup throughout the town in which even local Belorussians suffered. They forced the Jews out of their houses and placed them in trucks; any who resisted were shot on the spot. They took the prisoners to a birch grove near the village of Selishche, stripped them, and shot them. According to the testimony of eyewitnesses, after the graves were filled with earth, people who were still alive tried to crawl out.⁹

On the streets of Slutsk lay dead and wounded citizens, their belongings scattered about. Carts without horses stood abandoned everywhere. Gebietskommissar Carl submitted a report to Wilhelm Kube, the Generalkommissar of Weissruthenien, in which he complained of the unwarranted cruelty and sadism of the perpetrators. In his words, the German administration, which had won the "full trust" of the Belorussian population in Slutsk, had now lost it again. Carl's particular indignation was aroused by the murder of skilled Jewish workers: tanners, carpenters, blacksmiths, tailors, and shoemakers, who could not be replaced with Belorussians. This brought to a standstill vitally needed production for the Wehrmacht. One estimate of the number of Jews shot in Slutsk on October 27–28, 1941, is in the range between 3,000 and 4,000 people.¹⁰ The German police battalion collected Jewish valuables during the Aktion in Slutsk, and the Lithuanian auxiliaries looted the town, taking items also from Belorussians.

Many Jews managed to hide successfully during the roundup, including some who were tipped off by the German physician Dr. Leder. Subsequently, he also smuggled food and medicine into the ghetto, assisted by two young Jewish girls who worked in the office of the military commandant. After the October Aktion, by January 1942 at the latest, the Germans established a separate ghetto on the outskirts of town, known as "Polevoe" (the field ghetto), for the elderly and those designated as incapable of work. Living conditions were much better for the Jews in the main ghetto because the prisoners who were escorted out to work every day received meager rations and had the opportunity to obtain extra food. In the field ghetto, life was harsher, as the prisoners were not allowed to cross its boundaries and had no reserves or opportunity to barter. The field ghetto was liquidated gradually. Shootings were carried out, generally on Mondays and Saturdays. Trucks came

to pick up the weak and feeble and took the doomed prisoners into the forest near the village of Bezverkhovich. The field ghetto was dissolved around Passover (March 1942). Those who were still alive were then taken to the main ghetto.¹¹

At some time in May 1942, according to a German Security Police report, 30 partisans were publicly hanged in Slutsk, and 38 hostages were shot.¹² In September 1942, according to correspondence of the civil administration, some Jews were still being employed as translators in the Gebietskommissariat, as no suitable replacements could be found.¹³

The ghetto was liquidated on February 8–9, 1943. On February 5, 1943, SS-Obersturmbannführer Eduard Strauch, the commander of the Security Police and SD (KdS) in Minsk, issued a detailed order for the forthcoming Aktion. In Strauch's order, the killing of the Jews was referred to as "resettlement," and its supervision was entrusted to SS-Obersturmbannführer Müller. Assisting the Security Police were more than 100 Latvian volunteers. The Jews were to be transported in six trucks, with four Latvian guards in each vehicle. Two pits were prepared in advance, and at each of them the firing squads were to be relieved every two hours.¹⁴

One female survivor, Mania Temchin, has described the ensuing roundup in Slutsk: "[T]he entire area was surrounded, and they began to load people onto trucks. Pinkhos was taken first. Then they took mama and the children. That was at 9:00 A.M. They took me at 1:00 P.M. I can still hear the screams of our little sisters as they were taken to be shot. Roza was shot. Children and men who had been wounded resisting were with me in the truck. We were taken down the Bobruisk highway. The truck bed was covered with a tarpaulin. Two Germans sat with us. I decided to jump off. It was better to die on the road."¹⁵

As many Jews went into hiding, the Germans decided to set the ghetto on fire to smoke out the remaining Jews. About 400 had emerged by evening, and these Jews were also transported to the graves to be shot.¹⁶ The prisoners were driven to the execution site along the Slutsk–Starye Dorogi highway, which was 0.4 kilometers (a quarter of a mile) west of the village of Sloboda on the bank of the Veseika River. According to incomplete information, about 3,000 Jews in total were murdered over the course of two days.¹⁷

After the ghetto was liquidated, a certain number of Jews were still being held in the Slutsk prison, through which thousands of prisoners of various nationalities passed during the occupation. According to one source, around 14,000 people were tortured in the town's prison altogether, and many of these people perished.¹⁸

Semyon Ongeiberg escaped from the Slutsk ghetto on February 8, 1943. At night he went 20 kilometers (12.4 miles) on foot to the village of Chaplitsy and hid in a pigsty. When the peasant woman came to feed the pigs, he surreptitiously ate along with the animals from the same trough. In the village, he was hidden by Tatyana Zabrodskaya and Afanasy Rimsha. After several days, Ongeiberg went into the forest, where he lived for three months until he encountered the Kalinin partisan brigade.¹⁹

Smilovichi is located about 35 kilometers (22 miles) southeast of Minsk. At the time of the German attack on the Soviet Union, on June 22, 1941, there were at least 1,500 Jews in Smilovichi. Most of the population believed Soviet propaganda proclaiming that the enemy would be destroyed on its own territory. Nevertheless, the situation was very tense; local residents remembered the many refugees arriving from Poland in 1939, when almost every Jewish family in town took in several people. There was no organized evacuation from Smilovichi. Men of eligible age were called up to the Red Army, leaving their families to fend for themselves. Only a few people tried to leave independently. Most remained, assuming that the Germans would not harm the Jews.

On June 27, 1941, a column of refugees—about 30 families—left Smilovichi. There were a few horses and wagons, which carried children and the elderly; the majority left on foot to the east. The refugees used country roads, as the major highways were blocked by Soviet troops and under attack from the Luftwaffe; they spent nights in the fields. The group went through Cherven', Berezino, and Pogost. On approaching Mogilev, about 20 families decided to return home, believing that German forces had already blocked the road ahead. About 10 families, however, continued on and crossed the Dnieper near Mogilev; behind them Soviet troops demolished the bridge.¹

German forces entered Smilovichi on June 29, 1941. Part of the local population, which had been on good terms with the Jews, now changed its attitude. They did not conceal their antisemitism but robbed Jews openly; a few, however, sympathized with the Jews and tried to help.

The Germans established a police station in the fire department building, on the corner of Sovetskaia and Komsomol'skaia Streets. About 40 people joined the local police. The policemen were mostly young men, aged up to 25 years, and many were known as hooligans. They acted with impunity, beating and robbing Jews. Andrei Kureichik came to the house of Moisei Gorelik and stole his bicycle. He also grabbed some boots, remarking: "You won't need these anymore."²

Isolated shootings of Jews, Komsomol (youth wing of the Communist Party) members, and Soviet activists began immediately after the arrival of the Germans. On June 29, 1941, a group of 50 Jewish men were arrested in Smilovichi. They were told they were needed to repair a bridge, but the Germans shot them the same day, about 1.5 kilometers (1 mile) outside the town, near Gudovichi. Rivka Gorelik witnessed the shootings. The Nazis also murdered the observant Jew Simcha for refusing to carry out German orders. He was hanged from the Lenin monument in the main square.³

In early July 1941, based on the denunciation of the peasant Pisarchik, the Germans arrested the chief architect of the new Minsk train station and his 13-year-old nephew in the village of Dukorschina. They were brought to Smilovichi, questioned, beaten, and hanged from a telegraph pole. Each had a sign saying "Zhid" (Jew) on his neck. Pisarchik was rewarded with a pair of boots. Three days later, Boris Plaksa, Abram Teif, and Khaim Kaufman had to take down the bod-

ies and throw them into a ditch near the market. As they carried out these orders, the Jews were forced to sing the "Internationale," the anthem of the Communist movement.⁴

From June 29 until August 1941, the Jews lived in their houses. The ghetto was created in August.⁵ It comprised several streets—Minskaia (Respublikanskaia), Girsh Lekkert, Voiskovaia, Zelenaiia, and some houses on Solominka Street. The ghetto contained about 100 houses, most of which had previously been occupied by Jews. The few Belorussians in the area were given houses vacated by Jews on Sovetskaia Street. About 20 or 30 Jewish families had to be relocated.

There were at least 1,700 Jews in the ghetto. Of these, over 1,000 were natives of Smilovichi, from a pre-war Jewish population of 1,500. The Germans also moved more than 100 Jews into the ghetto from the surrounding villages of Liady, Dukorschina, Starino, Zhuravkovich, and others. Besides this, there were approximately 200 Polish Jewish refugees, who had arrived before the German invasion. There were also no fewer than 300 Jews from Minsk in the ghetto. These Jews had fled towards Mogilev—and were trapped in Smilovichi—as they were unable to continue further east.

There were many women, children, and elderly people in the ghetto. Before the Germans' arrival, the older schoolboys (born 1924–1926) were sent to Uzliany to build an airfield. However, German aircraft fired on them, and they soon returned to Smilovichi to find the Germans had arrived.

The ghetto was enclosed by a fence, and there was a gate on Minskaia Street. On one side was the Volma River, and beyond it there was a swampy meadow on which the hay had been mown. During the roundup on October 14, 1941, many Jews fled towards the meadow, where they met their death. There was no constant guard on the ghetto; the police patrolled only intermittently. But Jews who left the ghetto without permission were taken away and disappeared forever, such as Avremul Voskovich.

Moyshe Shapiro was the head of the Jewish Council (Judenrat). He was a former innkeeper, dispossessed by the Soviets. Shapiro's main function was to transmit German orders to the Jews. Jews were occupied in the Smilovichi ghetto in leatherwork and at the felt factory. Moshe Gorelik (born 1925) transported bread from the bakery to the store, managed by his former teacher Zelinskaya (a Belorussian). The workers were mostly men. The most prudent inmates prepared bunkers in case of an Aktion. Many Jews in the ghetto were related, and they helped each other out. The observant Jews still attended synagogue. There had ceased to be a kosher butcher or a rabbi even before the war. Meyer Tsarfin led religious services in Smilovichi, as the most learned observant Jew.

The ghetto inmates did not receive any rations; they had to fend for themselves. People ate vegetables from gardens in and around the ghetto, and some Jews prepared potato pancakes, which they traded for other provisions in the villages. In August 1941, all the livestock was removed from the ghetto, and conditions worsened. At that time, the ghetto was not completely isolated from the Belorussian part of town; the felt factory lay inside the ghetto, and non-Jewish workers came in

to work there. However, there was no place for Smilovich Jews to find refuge. Soviet partisans did not become active in the area until late 1942. Belorussians feared severe German punishments imposed on those who helped Jews. Once, David Avrukhin, a former Jewish chairman of the suburban kolkhoz, appeared in the ghetto with a rifle, but he was spotted on Tatarskaia Street and killed.⁶

The Aktion in Smilovich was planned and carried out by men of the German 11th Reserve Police Battalion, assisted by Lithuanian auxiliaries. On October 14, 1941 these forces arrived early in the morning on buses. The buses unloaded on Sovetskaia Street, and the police forces surrounded the ghetto. Jews who tried to escape were shot on the spot. Former neighbors—local policemen—chased the Jews from their homes and drove them to Chkalov Street.

When the roundup began, some Jews committed suicide. Mania Gorelik climbed onto the roof of her house and killed herself by jumping off. Aaron Finkelstein hanged himself just before the Aktion.

"Solominka" was chosen as the place of the massacre: a quarry on the right side of Minskaia Street, before the Jewish cemetery. Before being shot, the victims were forced to drop their money, jewelry, and other valuables into a bucket, and some were forced to undress. The Lithuanian "partisans" carried out the shootings, while Belorussian policemen formed the cordon. At the edge of the ditch, people were lined up, 50 at a time, and the perpetrators opened machine-gun and submachine-gun fire. Children up to 2 years of age were thrown in alive.

During the Aktion, the Nazis spared only one tailor, whose family was killed. He was instructed to train several Belorussians, and subsequently he was also shot. Isolated shootings continued after October 14, 1941. Sorka Margolin was found after the Aktion and shot in Korzuny by a local policeman. Leyzer Gorelik, who was drafted into the Red Army, served only for two weeks near Brześć; his unit was surrounded, and he returned to Smilovich. He hid during the October 14 Aktion, then set off for Minsk. Unfortunately, a police car overtook him near Opchak. Gorelik was tied up and dragged behind the car until he died. In the "Solominka" quarry, the former secretary of the Smilovich party raion committee, Pletnev, was shot with his two children and his sister.⁷

A German report dated October 21, 1941, stated that on October 14, 1,300 Jews, Communists, and "elements hostile to Germany" had been shot in Smilovich. During the punitive operation, 100 rubles, silver, copper, and nickel items, and used clothing were confiscated. This property was delivered to the SS- und Polizeiführer (SSPF) in Weissruthenien.⁸ Some sources, however, indicate that about 2,000 Jews were murdered in Smilovich.⁹

Not many Jews managed to survive from the Smilovich ghetto. German-language teacher Liubochkina adopted a Jewish girl from the hospital whose parents (refugees from Minsk) had disappeared.¹⁰ The Germans ordered Khaim Gorelik, Izrail' Kaufman, and Itsik Plaksa to shepherd a herd of 60 cows, taken from the Jews, to Rudensk, where they wit-

nessed an Aktion against the Jews; one day later, the same thing happened in Dukora. Gorelik, Kaufman, and Plaksa fled to Minsk instead of returning to Smilovich, and they survived as a result.

Three days before the mass shootings, 10 Jews escaped from Smilovich and went to Minsk, among them Maria Kaufman and her two children.¹¹ On October 14, 1941, a few people were able to survive in Smilovich: Abram Teyf (born 1927) concealed himself in a hiding place in his house.¹² The Voskovich family—Zalman (1904), Iosif (1928), Masha (1930), and Nekhama (1932)—was able to get to the "Russian" part of town and climb into the attic of their house, where they hid. When policemen came to check the house, they decided that the stairs were too dilapidated, which saved the Voskovich family.¹³ Moisei Gorelik was lightly wounded in the head during the shootings and fell unconscious into the quarry. He was buried under other bodies, but he later climbed out and fled to Minsk.¹⁴

Smilovich was liberated on July 3, 1944. About 20 Jewish families returned from evacuation; some demobilized Jews also returned from the Red Army.

SOURCES Information on the Jews of Smilovich and their fate during the Holocaust can be found in the following publications: Marat Botvinnik, *Pamiatniki genotsida evreev Belarusi* (Minsk: Belaruskaja Navuka, 2000); *Pamiats' Belarusi* (Minsk: Respublikanskaia Kniga, 1995), pp. 336–340; "Mes- techko Smilovich i ego obitатели," *Evreiskii Mir* (U.S.), no. 24, September 17, 1998; and "Smilovich: Kak ono bylo i kak ono est," "Okna." *Prilozhenie k gazete "Vesti"* (Jerusalem), October 13, 1994.

Documentation regarding the persecution and extermination of the Jews of Smilovich can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-87-13); LYA (trial against Antanas Impulevicius and others, held in Vilnius in 1962); USHMM (RG-50.378*0005); and YVA (e.g., M-33/431 and 433). In addition, reference has been made to materials located in the personal archive of the author.

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NOTES

1. Personal archive of Leonid Smilovitsky (PALS), letter from David Eig, June 22, 2004.
2. YVA, M-33/433, p. 5.
3. *Ibid.*
4. PALS, letter from Moisei Khaimovich Gorelik, June 16, 1994.
5. USHMM, RG-50.378*0005, video testimony of Arkady Teif, August 1, 1995.
6. PALS, letter from M. Gorelik, July 14, 2004.
7. *Ibid.*; a brief description of the Aktion in Smilovich can be found in LYA, statement of Kazimir Stanislavovich Hermanovich (born 1917), resident of Smilovich, in the trial against Antanas Impulevicius and others, Vilnius 1962.
8. NARB, 651-1-1, pp. 3–7, Lagebericht des Reserve-Polizeibataillons 11, October 21, 1941; see also Johannes Schlootz, ed., *Deutsche Propaganda in Weissrussland 1941–1944: Eine Konfrontation von Propaganda und Wirklichkeit. Ausstellung in Berlin und Minsk* (Berlin: Freie Universität, 1996), p. 34.

9. Emanuil Ioffe, *Belorusskie evrei: Tragediia i geroizm, 1941–1945* (Minsk, 2003), p. 392, indicates there were more than 2,000 Jewish victims. Survivor Arkady Teif concurs; see USHMM, RG-50.378*0005.

10. Lubochkina with her adopted daughter left Smilovichy in 1948; PALS, letter from David Eig, May 18, 2004.

11. The Nazis killed Maria Kaufman in Minsk in 1942, following a denunciation when her brother fled to the partisans.

12. USHMM, RG-50.378*0005.

13. The Voskovich family perished in the Minsk ghetto on Ostrovskogo Street during the Aktion there on November 7, 1941.

14. Shimshon Shapiro perished with his family in Minsk on November 7, 1941. Moisei Gorelik found his father Khaim in the Minsk ghetto. He left for the forest in May 1943 and joined the Soviet partisans in the Naliboki Forest; PALS, letter from M. Gorelik, June 16, 1994.

SMOLEVICHY

Pre-1941: Smolevichi, town and raion center, Minsk oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Smolevitschi, Rayon center, Gebiet Minsk-Land, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Smaliavichy, raen center, Minsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Smolevichi is located about 35 kilometers (22 miles) northeast of Minsk. According to the 1939 population census, there were 1,385 Jews living in the town (20.5 percent of the total).

German armed forces occupied the town on June 26, 1941, four days after the German invasion of the USSR. Part of the Jewish population was able to evacuate the area. Some Jewish men were called into the Red Army or enlisted voluntarily. About 1,200 Jews remained in Smolevichi at the start of the occupation.

In the summer of 1941, a German military administration (Ortskommandantur) governed the town. In September 1941, authority was transferred to a German civilian administration. Smolevichi was incorporated into Gebiet Minsk-Land, within Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien.¹

Shortly after the Germans arrived, the Ortskommandantur ordered the registration and marking of the Jewish population and their exploitation for various forms of physical labor. On July 28, 1941, the Germans conducted a first Aktion, in which 150 Jewish men were shot.² Then in early August 1941, all the Smolevichi Jews were moved into a so-called ghetto, which consisted of an open field surrounded by barbed wire into which Jews from nearby settlements were also brought.³

In September 1944, local resident Leonid Aleksandrovich Shitytskii told the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission (ChGK) that all the Jews were driven out of their private homes and concentrated in the ghetto. All their belongings, including clothing, foodstuffs, and furniture, were confiscated. A large number of Jews, 1,400 in total, were herded into a single spot outdoors, surrounded by barbed wire, and were given nothing to eat. For more than 25 days, the Germans tormented them, forcing them to suffer from hunger and cold. A great

many were shot in the ghetto by the Germans and the police for the slightest reason—or for no reason at all. The local police and Germans were often drunk, and for their amusement they would bring several people out and shoot them.⁴

During a second Aktion on August 17, 1941, another 80 Jews were killed.⁵ Then, probably on August 28, a detachment of Einsatzkommando 8, under the command of SS-Hauptsturmführer Werner Schönemann, based in Borisov, assisted by a unit of the Wehrmacht, liquidated the ghetto in Smolevichi. All the Jews were lined up in a column and told they were being transferred to another place. They were ordered to wear their best clothes. Then they were escorted up a nearby hill. When some Jews realized they were being taken to be shot, they refused to go any further and were shot on the spot. Women with infants and small children begged for mercy, but not one was spared. A large pit had been prepared at the designated site, and the Jews were made to undress down to their undergarments. They filed into the pit, and the Germans shot them with submachine guns. Many children were thrown into the pit while still alive.⁶

Some sources date the final Aktion in mid-September 1941,⁷ but it appears more likely that most male Jews were shot first in July and August; then the women and children, after them, probably at the end of August. A German report dated in early October indicates that 1,401 people were shot. This number is corroborated by some Soviet sources.⁸

When Peter Chodosz, a Jew from Smolevichi who had been mobilized by the Red Army in the summer of 1941, returned home clandestinely in March 1942, he was informed that all of his family had been shot, and he made his way to the Minsk ghetto.⁹ In the second half of January 1944, a detachment of Sonderkommando 1005 arrived in Smolevichi and burned the corpses.¹⁰

SOURCES The ghetto in Smolevichi is mentioned in W. Orbach, “The Destruction of the Jews in the Nazi-Occupied Territories of the USSR,” *Soviet Jewish Affairs* 6:2 (1976): 21, 34; 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. 1204. Additional information can be found in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 20 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1979), Lfd. Nr. 573 and 662a.

Documents regarding the persecution and elimination of the Jews of Smolevichi can be found in the following archives: BA-L; GARF (7021-87-14); NARB (861-1-8); USHMM (RG-22.002M, reel 7); VHF (# 10927); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. BA-BL, BDC, SSHO 2432, Organisationsplan der besetzten Ostgebiete nach dem Stand vom 10. März 1942, hg. vom Chef der Ordnungspolizei, Berlin, March 13, 1942.
2. GARF, 7021-87-14, pp. 2, 11 (and reverse side).
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 1–2, 7–8.
4. *Ibid.*, pp. 7–8.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 2, 10.

6. *Ibid.*, pp. 7–8.
7. Manat Botvinnik, *Pamiętniki genocidy żydów w Polsce* (Minsk: Belaruskaja Navuka, 2000), p. 79. LG-Kö, 24 Ks 1/63, Verdict of May 12, 1964, against Werner Schönemann, in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 20, Lfd. Nr. 573, p. 177, also inclines more to the later date.
8. BA-BL, R 58/218, Ereignismeldung UdSSR no. 108, October 9, 1941; GARF, 7021-87-14, pp. 7–8.
9. VHF, # 10927.
10. LG-Hamb (50) 9/67, 147 Ks 2/67, verdict of February 9, 1968, against Krahnert, Goldapp, and Drews, in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 20, Lfd. Nr. 662a, p. 41.

SNÓW

Pre-1939: Snów, village, Nieśwież powiat, Nowogródek województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Snov, Nesvizh raion, Baranovich oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Snow, Rayon Neswizh, Gebiet Baranowitsche, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Snou, Nesvizh raen, Minsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Snów is located about 40 kilometers (25 miles) east-northeast of Baranowicze. According to one survivor, including a number of refugees from German-occupied Poland, there were 543 Jews residing in the village in 1940.¹

The German army occupied Snów on June 28, 1941. The town was bombarded by artillery for three days, and a number of houses were destroyed. At that time there were more than 100 houses in the village. In the summer of 1941, Germans came to Snów and shot a number of Jews who had been denounced by local Belorussians as alleged Communists. Jewish girls were also seized at night and raped.

Shortly after the Germans' arrival, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was formed, headed by a man named Dubkowski. Most of its members did their best to help the Jews, but Dubkowski and his brother, who was also a member, treated the Jews harshly, as they thought they would be safe if they did everything the Germans demanded.²

From October of 1941, the mayor of Snów was the Belorussian Walerian Sabicz.³ The chief of the Snów local police from November 1941 was Piotr Korolev, who was initially in command of 12 local policemen. The local Belorussian police post in Snów was subordinated to the German Gendarmerie post based in Nieśwież.

Very little information is available about the existence of a ghetto in Snów, but local resident Aleksander Sidorovich recalled in 1996:

At first the Jews lived freely, but later a ghetto was established, probably in late 1941. The ghetto was outside the village in houses that Jews already occupied. These houses were surrounded by barbed wire. This area was on Nieśwież Street in the northern part of the village. All of the Jews had to live in the ghetto, which was guarded by policemen. Nobody else was allowed near the ghetto, to prevent people

giving provisions to the Jews. The Belorussian police guarded the ghetto. Sergeev [Korolev] was the Belorussian policeman in charge, but he didn't come from Snów; he was a Russian. None of the policemen were from Snów.⁴

In February 1942, the German police, assisted by local police collaborators, shot a group of “Gypsies” (Roma) on the Gorny Snów estate. A local woman recalled that “the Snów police came in several vehicles bringing the Gypsies. The police started shooting them. They shot the old people immediately, on the spot, and threw the surviving children in the well.”⁵

Jews from the ghetto were escorted every day 8 kilometers (5 miles) to work in Pogorzelce. They were beaten severely by the guards. People would be shot for begging for a piece of bread from local peasants or for other minor infractions. In the spring of 1942, Menachem Korolczuk from the ghetto made contact with Soviet partisans operating in the region, including one Jew, who urged him and others to flee the ghetto to the forest. Korolczuk tried to persuade his friends to leave the ghetto with him, and they gathered some weapons, which had been left behind by the Soviets on their retreat. By the early summer of 1942, rumors began to spread of the complete liquidation of other nearby ghettos, but the head of the Judenrat, Dubkowski, tried to reassure people that nothing would happen in Snów, and he prohibited anyone from fleeing to the forests. He summoned Korolczuk to him and ordered him to prepare a list of all the Jews. When Korolczuk refused, he knocked his teeth out, insisting this had to be done.⁶

On June 28, 1942, the Germans and their Belorussian collaborators arrested more than 70 Poles in Rayon Neswizh, including lawyers, teachers, and priests. They were held for a while in the Nieśwież jail. On August 5, 1942, 73 Poles were taken by truck from Nieśwież in the direction of Snów, and then German Security Police shot them with the help of local Belorussian police. Among those killed was the Catholic priest from Snów.⁷

In the summer of 1942, the mayor of Snów, Sabicz, received instructions from the Germans to summon the Judenrat. He then arranged for some Jews to dig a large pit in a wood 1.5 kilometers (0.9 mile) from Snów, under the pretext that this would hold tanks for the storage of gasoline.⁸ A few weeks later the real purpose of this excavation became clear.

Several descriptions of the massacre of the Snów Jews have survived. On September 17, 1942, at 2:00 A.M. about 30 local policemen from Baranowicze, 15 from Horodziej, and about 20 from Nieśwież arrived in Snów. Having been given their tasks by about 12 officials of the German Gendarmerie, they drove the Jews out into the street, shooting on the spot any who resisted. The non-Jews had to stay in their houses. More than 300 Jews were then escorted along the Snów-Nieśwież road. About 1.5 kilometers (0.9 mile) outside the village, they turned into the forest to the pit, which measured approximately 12 meters long and 6 meters wide (39 feet by 20 feet). The Germans, assisted by their collaborators, brought people up to the pit in groups of 30, had them undress, and shot them

with submachine guns. During the shooting, no notice was paid to the fact that some people lying in the pit were still alive. They were covered over with a new group of people, and then they were buried.⁹ A number of Jews managed to hide during the initial roundup and tried to escape to the forests during the following days. But with the aid of the list of Jews prepared by the Judenrat, the Germans and Belorussian collaborators knew that a number of Jews were missing and spread word that a small remnant ghetto would be established in Rubinsztein's house. After the initial searches, a number of Jews were gathered here and initially given bread and a little milk. Then three days after the Aktion, the 40 Jews who had been found hiding in Snów were shot, once Gendarmes and local police had arrived from Nieśwież to deal with them.¹⁰

The hunt for other escaped Jews continued. According to a German Gendarmerie report, on September 23, 1942, seven male Jews and one female Jew who had escaped from Snów on September 17 were caught and shot in the village of Dudichi.¹¹ Only two Jews from Snów are definitely known to have survived the German occupation. Korolczuk, who escaped at the time of the roundup with some weapons, subsequently served in the Chapayev brigade of Soviet partisans until the Red Army liberated the region in July 1944.¹²

The mayor of Snów, Walerian Sabciz, was tried in Poland and initially sentenced to death in 1952, but on appeal his sentence was reduced to only 5 years. The police chief in Snów, Piotr Sergeevich Korolev, was tried in Baranowicze in 1949 and sentenced to 25 years' imprisonment. German and Canadian investigations were also conducted into other senior NCOs in the local Belorussian police, especially with regard to the murder of Jews and Gypsies in Snów. No prosecutions were brought to a successful conclusion, however, mainly owing to the unreliable nature of the Soviet testimonies, which provided the main evidence in these cases.

SOURCES There is a brief section in an article by Eric Haberer that deals with the crimes committed by the German police and their collaborators in Snów: Eric Haberer, "The German Police and Genocide in Belorussia, 1941–1944. Part II: The 'Second Sweep': Gendarmerie Killings of Jews and Gypsies," *Journal of Genocide Research* 3:2 (2001): 207–218. Haberer, however, argues on the basis of the evidence then available to him that no ghetto existed in Snów.

Documents on the murder of the Jews of Snów can be found in the following archives: AUKGRRBMO; BA-BL (R 6/348); BA-L; GARF (7021-81-102); IPN; NARB (845-1-6); WCU; and YVA (M-1/E/805).

Martin Dean

NOTES

1. YVA, M-1/E/805, testimony of Menachem Korolczuk, born 1895.
2. Ibid.
3. Up to October 1941 there was a Polish mayor in Snów, Wąkowitz.
4. WCU, D8660, Aleksander Adamovich Sidorovich, February 2, 1996. These records are currently held in NA, London, but are subject to customary privacy restrictions.

5. WCU, D9317.

6. YVA, M-1/E/805.

7. A. Galinski, "Eksterminacja inteligencji polskiej latem 1942 r. w. nowogródzkiem," *Biuletyn Głównej Komisji* 23 (1972): 188–189; see also GARF, 7021-81-102, pp. 99–101, Soviet Extraordinary State Commission Report for Nesvizh February 2, 1945.

8. IPN, SW KsZ 25, case against Walerian Sabciz, p. 42, statement of the accused on January 7, 1952; and YVA, M-1/E/805.

9. NARB, 845-1-6, pp. 54–56; WCU, D8660, A.A. Sidorovich, February 2, 1996. According to the testimony of the accused Sabciz, there were 548 Jewish victims of the Aktion in Snów; see IPN, SW KsZ 25, p. 42, interrogation of Sabciz on January 7, 1952. Piotr Sergeevich Korolev testified in his own case that 400 Jews were rounded up to be shot; see AUKGRRBMO, Arch. No. 3617, Case No. 35694, vol. 2, p. 116, Korolev testimony in court session in Baranowichi, October 28–29, 1949. YVA, M-1/E/805, however, dates the Aktion on June 17, 1942.

10. BA-L, ZStL, 2 AR-Z 16/67 (Eibner investigation), vol. 9, pp. 1771–1779 (interrogation of Korolev), March 10, 1979; AUKGRRBMO, Criminal Case 53302, Arch. No. 3617, vol. 1, pp. 38–39, and vol. 2, pp. 208–214, cited by Haberer, "The German Police," p. 215. YVA, M-1/E/805, indicates that 88 Jews were gathered in the remnant ghetto in Snów before they were shot.

11. BA-BL, R 6/348, pp. 101–107.

12. YVA, M-1/E/805.

STAROBIN

Pre-1939: Starobin, town and raion center, Minsk oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Rayon center, Gebiet Sluzk, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Starobin, Saligorsk raen, Minsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Starobin is located about 130 kilometers (81 miles) south of Minsk. In 1939, there were 1,210 Jews residing in Starobin (35.43 percent of the total population).¹

German armed forces occupied the town on June 26, 1941, four days after their invasion of the USSR. During this time, some Jews evacuated to the eastern regions of the country, and men liable for military service were mobilized by the Red Army.

In the summer of 1941, a series of German military commandant's offices (Ortskommandanturen) were in charge of the town. The German military authorities appointed a mayor and organized an auxiliary police force. In September 1941, authority was transferred to a German civil administration. Starobin became a Rayon center in Gebiet Sluzk, within Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien.

According to Soviet sources, the first Aktion in Starobin took place on July 18–19, 1941, when a motorized detachment of the Wehrmacht arrived from the direction of Sluzk. The German troops surrounded the town and drove all adult inhabitants into the market square. Here they arrested the head of a local kolkhos and his bookkeeper, allegedly for having

participated in the killing of three German officers in a nearby wood. The German soldiers beat up these 2 men and together with 370 Jewish men ages 18 to 50 and loaded them onto trucks. They drove them into a wood on the western edge of town, where they shot them all, then left Starobin.²

On August 5, 1941, an SS detachment about 200 strong arrived in Starobin from the direction of Slutsk and conducted a pogrom over the following two days. They arrested several hundred Jews, mainly women, children, and the elderly, and shot them in two locations—behind the Russian cemetery on the northern edge of town and behind the slaughterhouse on Starobin's western edge. A number of Jews were also shot in their homes or in hiding places, such as barns and cellars, during the roundup. The SS unit then departed in the direction of Petrikov.³

Another series of mass shooting Aktions against the Jews of Starobin took place in late August 1941, when detachments of the 1st SS-Cavalry Regiment were present in the town. On August 22, at 9:00 A.M., the 3rd Squadron of the 1st SS-Cavalry Regiment arrived in Starobin to “pacify” the town. That evening, the cavalry squadron’s commander, SS-Hauptsturmführer Johann Schmidt, reported to the acting regiment commander, SS-Hauptsturmführer Waldemar Fegelein, on the situation in the town, describing it as “extremely unsatisfactory.” The mayor appointed by the German authorities and several auxiliary policemen had been killed, he said, and the town had no leadership; the population was being “terrorized” by Jews who had turned Starobin into a “partisan stronghold.” The cavalry squadron named a new mayor, who, assisted by the squadron, formed a new auxiliary police force.⁴ In addition, as evident from two wireless messages sent by the squadron to regimental headquarters on August 22, the squadron shot first 13 and then 66 “robbers,” respectively.⁵ On the basis of Schmidt’s report, Fegelein sent the entire regiment (minus the 1st Squadron) to Starobin, and it reached the town at midday on August 23. Meanwhile, the situation in Starobin had deteriorated: the new mayor had been “murdered by three Jews,” and partisans had tried to set the town on fire during the night of August 22–23. In retribution, Fegelein first ordered all male Jews to be shot and a “cleansing” of the non-Jewish population to be carried out; 21 non-Jews were shot, and 15 of the men arrested were released.⁶

As for the Jews, the 4th Squadron of the 1st SS-Cavalry Regiment (squadron commander SS-Obersturmführer Hermann Gadischke) reported in a wireless message sent to regimental headquarters on August 23, 1941, at 4:00 P.M. that 203 “robbers” had been shot.⁷ On August 24, 1941, the regiment left Starobin, but on August 26 it passed through Starobin once again, leaving the 2nd Platoon of the 2nd Squadron (platoon commander SS-Untersturmführer Georg Vieth) in the village for further “pacification,” a task it pursued until August 30. On August 28, 1941, at 6:00 P.M., the platoon commander reported: “Around 150 Jews of both genders have returned to Starobin. The platoon concentrated these Jews in one place.”⁸ A wireless message sent at 9:40 A.M. on August 29, 1941, states: “Yesterday and today, 109 robbers were shot. A

search for the others is now under way. Last night, Jews returned to Starobin again. No other incidents of special interest.”⁹ That same day, at 4:15 P.M., the platoon commander reported: “Eighty more robbers were shot. It must be expected that additional Jews will return to Starobin at night to store food in the houses they had left. I will take the necessary steps.”¹⁰ Soviet sources indicate that the local police also participated in the Aktion on August 28–29.¹¹ Overall, more than 470 Jews were shot in Starobin in the period from August 22 to August 29, 1941.¹² According to the Slutsk yizkor book, some of the Jews were driven out of town on the road to Slutsk and shot in the forest there. This source also confirmed that some Jews fled to Slutsk and other places during the chaos in Starobin in the summer of 1941. It is likely that some returned subsequently to collect their own property or even to return permanently if they believed that the situation had stabilized.¹³

The Jews that survived the various mass shootings in August 1941 consisted of about 150 to 200 people, who were mainly specialist workers (craftsmen) and their families. These people were gathered together and placed in a ghetto located on Bol’shaia Korpilovskaia Street. The Jewish craftsmen, such as tailors, were kept alive to train non-Jews to take over their professions and were also used to carry out various forced labor tasks. According to the evidence of local Soviet witnesses interviewed in 1969, the Gendarmerie post in Starobin, under the leadership of an officer named Weinmann, was in charge of the ghetto and supervised the work of the Jewish specialists. The Germans shot small groups of Jews successively over the following year and a half. Weinmann and the forces of the local Gendarmerie post also participated in the final liquidation of the ghetto in the spring of 1943. Only 1 Jewish furrier and his family were left alive for some time after this final Aktion. They were also murdered before the retreat of the Germans in the summer of 1944.¹⁴

A number of Jews managed to escape to the forests from Starobin at the time of the massacres in August 1941 and thereafter. Most of these Jews joined Soviet partisan units in the region, serving alongside non-Jews. Notable among the survivors was Shmuel Pizarovitz, who played a distinguished role in a partisan attack on the German garrison in Pogost. When Jews returned to Starobin from the partisans in 1944, they found that much of the town had been destroyed, and local peasants had even dismantled some Jewish houses to erect them again in their own villages. A few Jews also returned from having been evacuated to the Soviet interior, but most Jews gathered in Slutsk, due to the desolate state of Starobin, where the Germans had even destroyed and burned the *matzevot* (tombstones) in the new Jewish cemetery.¹⁵

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jews of Starobin during the Holocaust can be found in the following publication: N. Chinitz and Sh. Nachmani, eds., *Pinkas Slutsk u-ben-oteba* (Tel Aviv and New York: Yizkor Book Committee, 1962), pp. 465–466.

Documentation regarding the extermination of the Jews of Starobin can be found in the following archives: BA-L

(B 162/16148); BA-MA (RS 4/430); GARF (7021-82-7); NARB; VHAP (Kdo.-Stab RFSS/K 24, A 154); USHMM; and YVA.

Alexander Kruglov and Martin Dean
trans. Kathleen Luft

NOTES

1. Some sources give a much larger Jewish population (ca. 3,050 Jews); see BA-L, B 162/16148, pp. 119, 124, 129. Nevertheless, a figure of 1,200 to 1,500 Jews in June 1941 seems more likely, given that some Jews fled in time.
2. BA-L, B 162/16148, pp. 119–120, 124–125, and 129–130.
3. *Ibid.* This source gives a figure of 1,000 Jewish victims for this Aktion, but this figure is probably too high.
4. VHAP, Kdo.-Stab RFSS/K 24, A 154, SS-Kav. Regiment 1, Bericht über “Befriedung des Raumes Starobin,” September 4, 1941.
5. BA-MA, RS 4/430. Schwadron, Funksprüche, August, 22, 1941.
6. See VHAP, SS-Kav. Regiment 1, Bericht über “Befriedung des Raumes Starobin,” September 4, 1941.
7. BA-MA, RS 4/430, 4. Schwadron, Funkspruch, August 23, 1941, 4:00 P.M.
8. *Ibid.*, 2. Zug, 2. Schwadron, Funkspruch, August 28, 1941, 6:00 P.M.
9. *Ibid.*, August 29, 1941, 9:40 A.M.
10. *Ibid.*, August 29, 1941, 4:15 P.M.
11. BA-L, B 162/16148, pp. 119–120.
12. According to the list of victims, 429 Jews were killed in Starobin (GARF, 7021-82-7, pp. 13–19).
13. Ch. Rubnitz, “Hurbn Starobin,” in Chinitz and Nachmani, *Pinkas Slutsk u-benotaba*, pp. 465–466.
14. *Ibid.*; and BA-L, B 162/16148, pp. 119–120, 124–125, 129–130.
15. Rubnitz, “Hurbn Starobin,” pp. 465–466.

STOŁOWICZE

Pre-1939: Stołowicze, village, Baranowicze powiat, Nowogródek województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Stolovichy, Baranovichy raion and oblast, Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Stolowitschi, Rayon and Gebiet Baranowitsche, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Stalovichy, Baranavichy raen, Beraś'tse voblasts, Republic of Belarus

Stołowicze is located 9 kilometers (5.6 miles) north of Baranowicze. Following the outbreak of war in September 1939, many Jewish refugees from central and western Poland arrived in Stołowicze, bringing the Jewish population to about 1,000 people.¹

German forces entered the village on June 25, 1941. The Germans appointed a Jewish Council (Judenrat) on September 1, which was headed by Zudl Bayarski from Wilno. There was no Jewish police force. In October 1941, the Germans drove all the Jews into a ghetto on Słonim Street and the neighboring small streets. The ghetto initially remained open with no fence.²

On their arrival the Germans began to rob and oppress the Jews in various ways. They would come with written instructions for the Judenrat to provide various things, such as clothing, shoes, bedding, furniture, food, and contributions in money or gold. These requests all had to be met punctually and in full, or the threatened punishment was the death penalty. The Jews were terrified. They gave the Germans their prized possessions, hoping they would thereby remain alive. The Germans also compelled the Jews to perform forced labor. Jewish gravestones were taken from the cemetery and used for construction purposes.³

According to the child survivor Richard Vanger (born 1932), the ghetto was enclosed probably in early May 1942, consisting of about 10 houses and two barns surrounded with barbed wire, located right next to the police station. There was only one gate to the ghetto. Presumably the Germans enclosed the ghetto at this time to prevent Jews from fleeing just prior to the Aktion they were planning for mid-May.⁴

On May 13, 1942, German security forces and local police arrived in Stołowicze. They surrounded the village, assembled the Jews in the marketplace, and drove them to two trenches near Bereznianka, 3 kilometers (1.9 miles) outside the village. On arrival the Jews were made to climb down into the trenches in groups on a kind of staircase. The Germans then shot the Jews in the trenches. Some Jews were made to arrange the bodies that had already been shot into orderly rows before being shot themselves in turn. On that day the Germans murdered almost the entire Jewish population of Stołowicze.⁵

Only a few Jews managed to escape from the shootings. Two young girls, Basia Ledowicka (16 years old) and Sonia Basiel (17 years old), survived. The commandant of the Belorussian police hid them for two days in his attic, wanting to help them. Then he told them to go, and they left in the direction of Baranowicze.⁶ Moyshe Pincaigski, a miller, managed to survive in the pits and fled. Two policemen pursued him, wounding him with a bayonet and eventually shooting him dead.

After the shootings, the local police, assisted by some of the local population, continued to search for Jews in hiding. According to Vanger, after a few days the Germans offered an amnesty to any Jews who emerged from hiding, and about 20 Jews went back into the ghetto, living in the synagogue. Food was still a problem, but Jews obtained some scraps by begging. This remnant ghetto existed for about two weeks. Then Vanger received a warning from one of his father's friends to leave the ghetto that night. The friend dressed him in her daughter's clothes and sent him to hide with other friends outside the village.⁷

The remaining Jews, about 10 to 20 people, were all shot that evening. Among the victims were Itshak Bielous (22 years old), Chaim Czernichowski (36 years old), Shmuel Kangarowicz (40 years old), Michal Dworecki (45 years old), and Aba Derecinski, together with his two brothers. Some of those who fled later served in the partisans and took their revenge against the Germans and their collaborators. One survivor

who joined the partisans was Tukaszewski, who was wounded and became an invalid.

SOURCES A brief entry on Stołowicze can be found 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. 1247.

This account is based mainly on the following two testimonies: AŻIH (301/2190) and VHF (# 37335). Additional documentation can be found in YVA (M-1/E/1447 and 2387).

Martin Dean

NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/2190, testimony of Zalmer Goldin on December 16, 1946.

2. Ibid.; according to Spector and Wigoder, *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life*, p. 1247, the ghetto was created in January 1942.

3. AŻIH, 301/2190.

4. VHF, # 37335, testimony of Heniuk Rzdaniuk/Richard Vanger (Wengier).

5. AŻIH, 301/2190.

6. Avraham Shemu'el Shtain, ed., *Baranovits: Sefer zikaron* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Baranovits be-Yisrael, 1953), p. 467, notes that some Jews who managed to escape the massacre in Stołowicze subsequently found temporary refuge in the Baranowicze ghetto.

7. VHF, # 37335.

STOŁPCE

Pre-1939: Stołpce, town, powiat center, Nowogródek województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Stolbtsy, raion center, Baranovichy oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Stołpce, Rayon center, Gebiet Baranowitsche, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Stoubtsy, raen center, Minsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Stołpce is located 69 kilometers (43 miles) southwest of Minsk. In June 1941, there were more than 3,000 Jews living in the town, including several hundred refugees from the German-occupied parts of Poland.¹

German forces occupied Stołpce on June 29, 1941. Some Jews tried to flee, but most were turned back by Soviet officials at the old Soviet border or were overtaken by the rapidly advancing German army. A large number of houses were destroyed during the bombardment of the town. Jews who lost their homes had to find shelter with others who had been more fortunate.

Within a few days of their arrival, the German military authorities introduced a regime of forced labor for Jews ages 12 to 60: repairing roads and railways, or cleaning German offices. A local police unit was established, which enforced the anti-Jewish regulations.²

After a week, the Germans shot around 200 Jews together with several dozen non-Jews, allegedly as a reprisal for sniper fire directed at German soldiers. A few days later, a number of

Jews were assembled at the local stadium. Several were murdered, and the rest were taken to the customs office and forced to perform humiliating labor tasks while being beaten. SS forces arrived in Stołpce and conducted a further Aktion in July 1941. Local Belorussians assisted them, pointing out where the wealthy Jews lived. The Germans then arrested 76 people and shot them in a nearby forest.³

About three weeks into the occupation, the German authorities established a Jewish Council (Judenrat). Members of the Judenrat included Wolf Pras, Tunik Boruchanski, and Wajnrach (all from Stołpce), and Witenberg, Kibelski, and Kinerski (refugees from Łódź). The Judenrat was ordered to collect a large financial contribution and also to surrender valuable items and furs. Subsequently the council encountered difficulties in meeting the unceasing German demands for furniture, clothing, linens, and foodstuffs. A Jewish police force was established to assist the Judenrat in carrying out its duties.⁴

From August 1941 until February 1942, the military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur) in Stołpce comprised men of the 8th Company, 727th Infantry Regiment, under the command of Lieutenant Göbel.⁵ In late August or September 1941, the German Ortskommandant established a ghetto in Stołpce.⁶ The ghetto was located in the worst part of town, and conditions were very overcrowded (up to 30 people sharing a room). The Germans surrounded it with thick barbed wire, and there was only one large gate, guarded by the local police and the Germans. There were no schools in the ghetto, and the rabbis went into hiding, fearing persecution.⁷

In November 1941, men of the 8th Company, 727th Regiment, assisted by the local police, conducted large-scale massacres of the Jews in Nowy Świerzeń, Mir, and other nearby places. However, no large-scale Aktion was conducted in Stołpce. From mid-November 1941, German Gendarmerie posts were established in Gebiet Baranowitsche, which assumed control over the local Belorussian police. However, the Gendarmerie outpost in Stołpce was not established until 1942, still remaining subordinated to the larger post in Mir. Among the leaders of the local police in Rayon Stołpce was Jan Szczekało.⁸

The Jewish survivor, Rochelle Sutin, has described conditions in the ghetto. Initially she was housed in an old meeting hall formerly belonging to the Baptists. Dozens of families were crammed together with only enough room to sleep. There were two wood stoves for cooking and keeping warm, but there was not much to cook, as food rations were limited to stale bread or worse. Sleeping was almost impossible due to the bedbugs in the mattresses, and during the day lice caused her skin to itch and rashes to break out. Those capable of work left the ghetto every day for the sawmill and other places in town, but the many unfit Jews remained behind in the ghetto. Rochelle brought back scraps of bark from the sawmill to be used for heating.⁹

In response to an enquiry made via the Red Cross, the Gendarmerie in Gebiet Baranowitsche reported that three members of the Kapuszczewski family, Israel, Minja, and

Nechama, were all Jews living in the Stołpce ghetto in June 1942.¹⁰ In the summer of 1942, as news arrived of the uprising in the nearby Nieśwież ghetto in July, young Jews in Stołpce prepared to offer armed resistance, secretly gathering weapons and German uniforms. However, in late July or early August 1942, at least 500 able-bodied Jews from the ghetto were selected for work, including some of those in the underground. They were sent to labor camps run by the Organisation Todt in Baranowicze and Minsk. As this selection was not an extermination Aktion, no uprising was staged; the underground feared for the fate of the women and children. Following this selection, about 2,000 Jews remained in the ghetto.¹¹

The Gendarmerie in Stołpce planned to carry out a large Aktion against the ghetto on September 23, 1942, ordering the concentration of all local policemen from throughout the Rayon, as well as members of the Latvian Police Battalion based in the town. These forces surrounded the ghetto early in the morning. A squad of the Security Police and SD from Minsk, including non-German auxiliaries, arrived in Stołpce to direct the Aktion. Some 450 Jews were sent to their workplaces, and 750 Jews, most of them women, were shot, while another 850 either managed to flee or remained in hiding in the ghetto. The Gendarmerie post commander, Hauptwachmeister Wilhelm Schultz, reported that over the following days up to October 2 another 488 Jews, composed mostly of women and children, were brought in and shot under his supervision. Another 350 Jews were killed on October 11, including many more who had attempted to hide among the work Jews living in the reconstituted ghetto. Schultz concluded that after this Aktion there were no children or unfit people remaining.¹²

Following the killings in October, Schultz ordered for the remaining smaller part of the ghetto to be sealed off by a 2.5-meter-high (8-foot-high) wooden fence. Local peasants came to salvage any property of value from the emptied area of the ghetto. The remaining 210 Jews, roughly half men and half women, were employed at the Stöhr Company Army Base, at the Luftwaffe Supply Office, and at the Zentrale Handelsgesellschaft Ost (Central Trade Society East, ZHO).¹³ In November 1942, the Jewish partisan Abraham Zaretski sneaked into the ghetto with the aim of leading out a group of Jews to join the Zhukov partisan detachment in the forest. However, the head of the Judenrat betrayed Zaretski to the Germans, who killed him, as the chairman feared the consequences of such an escape for those Jews who remained.¹⁴

In December 1942, about 60 Jews fled to the forest after hearing that Schultz was planning a further Aktion; 30 of them returned shortly afterwards, however, when they were offered "amnesty."¹⁵ In late January 1943, around 200 Jewish laborers remained in the Stołpce ghetto and about 250 in the sawmill labor camp (former ghetto) in nearby Nowy Świerzeń. On Friday, January 29, 1943, about 200 Jews fled from the Nowy Świerzeń labor camp run by the Luftwaffe, as they had learned that non-Jewish laborers would soon replace them. In response, Gendarmerie Captain Max Eibner in Baranowicze ordered the shooting of all the Jews in the Stołpce ghetto and

all but 12 specialists at the sawmill. On January 31, the Gendarmerie shot 254 Jews, including those brought in from Nowy Świerzeń. Subsequently, another 18 found hiding in the ghetto were shot, and guards killed 6 more as they attempted to flee from the ghetto area at night. Over the following days, Wehrmacht patrols handed over another 15 Jews captured in the surrounding area, such that 293 Jews had been shot by February 4, 1943.¹⁶

Some of the Jews who fled the Stołpce ghetto survived by joining the Bielski partisan unit in the nearby Naliboki Forest or by serving with other Soviet partisan units in the region.

SOURCES Information on the Stołpce ghetto can be found in the following publications: Nahum Hinitz, ed., *Sefer zikbron Stoyebts-Sverz'no veba-ayarot ha-semukbot Rubzevits, Derevno, Nalibok* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Stoyebts be-Yisrael, 1964); and Jack Sutin and Rochelle Sutin, *Jack and Rochelle: A Holocaust Story of Love and Resistance* (Saint Paul, MN: Graywolf, 1995).

Documentation on the fate of the Jews of Stołpce during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (e.g., 301/554, 564, and 569); BA-L (202 AR-Z 16/67); GABO (995-1-4 and 7); GARF (7021-81-102; and 7021-148-316); IPN (SAOI 14; SWGd 27; and SWOI 50-55 and 75); NARB (845-1-6 and 389-1-4); Sta. Mü I (117 Js 2/72, investigation against F. Göbel); Sta. Oldenburg (2 Js 138/68); USHMM (e.g., RG-02.214; RG-53.002M; and ITS (VCC—Ordner Nr. 6); VHF (e.g., # 11623 and 13957); and YVA (e.g., O-3/3569).

Martin Dean

NOTES

1. AŻIH, 301/564, testimony of Berko Berkowicz; and Sutin and Sutin, *Jack and Rochelle*, pp. 25–26.
2. AŻIH, 301/564.
3. Ibid.; Hinitz, *Sefer zikbron Stoyebts-Sverz'no*, p. xv; Sutin and Sutin, *Jack and Rochelle*, pp. 33–37; and NARA, T-175, reel 233, Ereignismeldung UdSSR no. 50, August 12, 1941.
4. AŻIH, 301/564.
5. Sta. Mü I, 117 Js 2/72 (investigation in the case of Friedrich Göbel), pp. 1228–1230, statement of Fritz Mühlemeyer on September 6, 1972. The investigation concluded that Göbel was probably deceased, and no other persons were indicted.
6. AŻIH, 301/564. Sutin and Sutin, *Jack and Rochelle*, p. 39; here Rochelle states that the ghetto was created two months after the Germans arrived (i.e., in August–September). The Nowy Świerzeń ghetto was established on October 25, 1941; see YVA, O-3/3569, testimony of Yisrael Celkowicz.
7. AŻIH, 301/564; and Sutin and Sutin, *Jack and Rochelle*, p. 40.
8. GABO, 995-1-4, p. 297; and IPN, SWOI, trial of Jan Szczekało, who was sentenced to 10 years in prison.
9. Sutin and Sutin, *Jack and Rochelle*, pp. 41–42.
10. USHMM, ITS collection, VCC—Ordner Nr. 6, p. 70.
11. AŻIH, 301/564 and 301/554, testimony of Lejzer Zarecki; VHF, # 11623, testimony of Isaac Haskell, who was among those sent to the labor camp in Minsk; Hinitz, *Sefer zikbron Stoyebts-Sverz'no*, pp. xvii, 140.
12. GABO, 995-1-4, p. 304, and 995-1-7, reports of Gend.-Postenführer in Stolpce, Schultz, to Gend.-Gebietsführer in Baranowitsche, October 3 and 18, 1942. AŻIH, 301/569, tes-

timony of Basia Pinczonslia, confirms that women and children found in the ghetto were murdered on Schultz's orders in October, leaving only 220 Jews capable of work.

13. GABO, 995-1-7, p. 307; and Hinitz, *Sefer zikbron Stoyebts-Sverz'no*, p. xviii.

14. Isaiah Trunk, *Judenrat: The Jewish Councils in Eastern Europe under Nazi Occupation* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), pp. 459–460.

15. AŽIH, 301/569.

16. NARB, 389-1-4, pp. 22, 24.

SZARKOWSZCZYŻNA

Pre-1939: Szarkowszczyzna, town, Dzisna powiat, Wilno województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Sharkovshchina, raion center, Vileika oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Scharkowschtschina, Rayon center, Gebiet Glebokie, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Sharkausbchyna, raen center, Vitsebsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Szarkowszczyzna is located about 160 kilometers (100 miles) north of Minsk. The number of Jews in the town on the eve of World War II was probably around 1,500.

Szarkowszczyzna was attacked and occupied on July 6–9, 1941, by German units of Panzer Group 3, commanded by Hermann Hoth, and the VIth Infantry Corps, belonging to the 9th Army. At first, the town was in the 9th Army's zone of operations; at the end of August 1941, it became part of Gebiet Glebokie in Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien.

Among the first victims of the German occupying forces were deputy of the town council Zalman Muszkat, Hitl Mindel', Tsodik Rozoy, and Raya Friedman, all of whom were shot during the first month of the occupation. Local police chief Marian Danilecki and his assistant, Michal Klenowski, were responsible for those deaths.¹ The Germans and their collaborators concentrated initially on those whom they suspected of being Soviet activists or who might be capable of organizing resistance.

Between September and November 1941, the Jews of Szarkowszczyzna, together with those of Bildziugi,² Hermanowicze,³ Nowy Pohost,⁴ Szkunciki, and other nearby villages, were rounded up and placed in a ghetto. The ghetto was on the corner of the streets known after the war as Kirov and Engels Streets, on the right bank of the Dzisna River.⁵ According to witness S.A. Byk, Jews forcibly confined in the ghetto were allowed to bring with them only a few household articles. All livestock was seized, and whatever the Jews left behind was also taken. To heighten security, the ghetto area was surrounded by a tall wooden fence topped with barbed wire, and a guard was posted. Jews were strictly forbidden to leave the ghetto or communicate with non-Jews. About 1,700 people were confined within the Szarkowszczyzna ghetto in conditions of terrible overcrowding.⁶ Ekhiel' Lipshin was chairman of the ghetto Judenrat,⁷ which organized a small Jewish police force to assist in carrying out its tasks.

Establishing the ghetto was part of the Germans' methodical efforts to weaken the inmates' will to resist. To that end,



Jewish men work in a shoe factory in the Szarkowszczyzna ghetto, 1942. USHMM WS #78937, COURTESY OF MARK FINTEL

they forced Jews aged eight and older to engage in heavy physical labor, for example, building a bridge across the Dzisna River, clearing snow from the roads in winter, or working in agriculture. The Jews were starved; each worker received just 100 grams (3.5 ounces) of bread per day. Violence and humiliation were deliberate. Inmates were systematically beaten and robbed and could be shot for failing to obey the German regulations.

News from outside the ghetto was also alarming. On December 17, 1941, the Gendarmerie from Szarkowszczyzna, assisted by local Belorussian policemen, murdered 450 Jews in the nearby town of Jody. The local population took the clothing of the Jews for themselves. The murderers did not cover up the grave for another month and a half, as they continued to use it to bury Jews they tracked down in hiding.⁸

At the end of March 1942 (three days before Passover on April 2), the Germans divided the Szarkowszczyzna ghetto into two parts, one for "necessary workers" and a second ghetto for the rest. All the ghetto residents suddenly claimed they had items to trade and did what they could to be registered in the "necessary workers' ghetto." At the beginning of June 1942, rumors spread about the slaughter of the Jews in the nearby towns of Miory and Brasław and then a few days later in Dzisna. At this time there were a few cases of typhus in the ghetto, and those who were sick were transferred to the Głębokie ghetto, which had a hospital. The Jews in the Szarkowszczyzna ghetto had procured some weapons secretly and began to station guards at night to warn of any suspicious movements, as most Aktions started early in the morning.⁹

According to the testimony of Y.E. Tseplovich, the Gendarmerie officer Hein (or Heidt) arrived in Szarkowszczyzna from Głębokie on June 17, 1942. Two of the Judenrat leaders met with him. When they asked about the future of the ghetto, the officer replied that there would be no Aktions. Early the next morning, however, on June 18, the German police and their local collaborators surrounded the Szarkowszczyzna

1290 WEISSRUTHENIEN REGION

ghetto and set about killing its inhabitants. They opened fire with submachine guns and machine guns and threw grenades. Some ghetto inhabitants also tried to set the ghetto on fire, but this was mostly unsuccessful because of the recent rain. Many Jews attempted to flee, however, breaking down the ghetto fence in places and bursting through the surrounding police cordon.¹⁰ I.I. Bakhir later testified that “a large number of Jews escaped from the ghetto into the fields, and the Germans from the punitive detachment shot at them.”¹¹ Some 700 mostly elderly ghetto inhabitants, who were unable to flee, were escorted away and shot. The mass shooting was carried out on the eastern edge of town in two ditches on the right bank of the Dzsina River. The bodies of those who had been killed in the ghetto were later brought there as well. Nearly 1,000 Jews took part in the mass escape, however, and the survivors sought refuge in the surrounding countryside.

The Germans, assisted by the local police, recaptured about 300 of the Jews who had escaped. A large group was found hiding close to a mill near Radiuki, a village 4 kilometers (2.5 miles) from Szarkowszczyzna, and the Germans shot them as soon as they were found.¹² The local police did not tire; for days and weeks they continued searching for fleeing and hidden Jews.¹³ Among the survivors were a number of former ghetto inmates who formed a Jewish partisan unit. As many as 500 Jewish escapees from the Szarkowszczyzna ghetto subsequently went into the ghetto in Głębokie. In August 1942, the office of the Glebokie Gebietskommissar spread news of an amnesty for those Jews in hiding if they gave themselves up and came to the Głębokie ghetto.¹⁴ Because of the difficulties in finding a safe place to hide, many Jews accepted this offer, despite their natural doubts as to its sincerity. The Głębokie ghetto was in turn liquidated in August 1943, and ultimately only about 60 Jews from Szarkowszczyzna managed to survive until the Germans were driven from the region by the Red Army in the summer of 1944.

German forces and their collaborators murdered Jews both before and after the liquidation of the ghetto, in villages of Rayon Scharkowschtschina, such as Semionowicze, Szkoldri, and Nowosiolki.¹⁵ Some Jews who fled from the ghetto were captured and killed: for example, in Rawiczewka, the Germans burned 7 Jews to death on December 7, 1942; 2 other men who tried to escape were shot. Ia. K. Statevich was also killed for sheltering Jews. In June 1943, 19 Jews who had probably escaped from the Szarkowszczyzna ghetto were shot in Raypol. In September 1943, 2 other ghetto escapees were killed in Robertowo.¹⁶

SOURCES Information on the Szarkowszczyzna ghetto can be found in the following publications: Michael Rayak and Tsevi Rayak, eds., *Hurbn Glubok, Sharkoystsene, Dunilovitsb, Postav, Droye, Kazan: Dos lebn un umkum fun yidishn sbtetlekh in Vaysrusland-Lite (Vilne gegent)* (Buenos Aires: Landslayt Farayn fun Sharkoystsene, Dunilovitsb, Postav, Glubok un umgegent in Argentine, 1946); Szerke Kaczevinski, *Hurbn Vilne: Umkum fun di Yidn in Vilne un Vilner gegnt . . . : Zamlung fun eydus: Bavayzn oder dokumentn* [in Yiddish] (New York: Aroysgegebn fun dem fareyniktn Vilner hilfs-komitee

in Nyu-York durkh Tsiko bikher-farlag, 1947); and Gennadii Vinnitsa, “Dve stupeni k vosstaniyu,” *Novosti nedeli (Evreiskii Kamerton)*, June 4, 2003, pp. 6–7.

Documents and testimonies regarding the annihilation of the Jews in the Szarkowszczyzna raion can be found in the following archives: BA-L (B 162/1390-91); GARF (7021-92-224); NARB (370-1-483); USHMM (Art & Artifacts, Acc.1998.89); and YVA (e.g., 0-33/2277). Gennadii Vinnitsa also consulted witness testimonies located in his own (PAGV) and other personal archives.

Gennadii Vinnitsa and Martin Dean
trans. Ester-Basya Vaisman

NOTES

1. Testimony of Y.E. Tseplovich, GARF, 7021-92-224, p. 320. Danilecki shot several other Jews after the establishment of the ghetto, but he was himself arrested and shot by the Germans in the spring of 1942; see USHMM, Art & Artifacts, Acc.1998.89, MS of Abraham Sosnowik, “Survival in German-occupied Poland” (1987), pp. 9, 15.

2. Kaczevinski, *Hurbn Vilne*, pp. 154–155, gives the population of Bildziugi as 280 but dates the concentration of the Jews in Szarkowszczyzna erroneously as the end of 1942 (it should be late 1941).

3. On the Hermanowicze ghetto, which existed only briefly in the summer and fall of 1941, see the separate entry in this volume.

4. BA-L, B 162/1390 (202 AR-Z 37/60, vol. 1), pp. 645–650 and 692–694, statements of Szachna Szejnman, October 30, 1961, in Buenos Aires, and Moses Treister on January 27, 1962, in Chicago, both survivors from Nowy Pohost, who were taken to the Szarkowszczyzna ghetto in September or October of 1941. See also USHMM, Art & Artifacts, Acc. 1998.89, “Survival in German-occupied Poland,” pp. 7–8, which dates the transfer to Szarkowszczyzna in October 1941.

5. Testimony of L.M. Shlabovskiy, in PAGV.

6. Act, April 10, 1945, Concerning the Investigation of Crimes of the German-Fascist Invaders and, their Accomplices on the Territory of Szarkowszczyzna Raion, Polotsk Oblast’, GARF, 7021-92-224, p. 4, states 1,600. BA-L, B 162/1391 (202 AR-Z 37/60, vol. 2), p. 936, statement of Zalman Cymmer, September 9, 1962, in Israel, gives the figure of 1,800 ghetto inhabitants.

7. Testimony of Ishayahu Cimmer, in PAGV.

8. Act, March 11, 1945, Concerning the Crimes of the German Invaders in the Village of Jody, Szarkowszczyzna Raion, Polotsk Oblast’, GARF, 7021-92-224, p. 56. For more detailed accounts of the events in Jody, see Peter Silverman, David Smuschkowitz, and Peter Smuszkowicz, *From Victims to Victors* (Concord, Ontario: Canadian Society for Yad Vashem, April 1992), pp. 79–88; and also YVA (M-1/E 2129/1912 and 0-33/2277).

9. USHMM, Art & Artifacts, Acc.1998.89, “Survival in German-occupied Poland,” pp. 24–27.

10. Report of Gebietskommissar Glebokie, July 1, 1942, to Generalkommissar Weissruthenien, W. Kube, concerning the Judenaktion, NARB, 370-1-483, p. 15; Rayak and Rayak, *Hurbn Glubok* [English trans.] pp. 66–67.

11. Testimony of I.I. Bakhir, GARF, 7021-92-224, p. 309.

12. Testimony of S.A. Byk, GARF, 7021-92-202.

13. Rayak and Rayak, *Hurbn Glubok* [English trans.], p. 67.
 14. USHMM, Art & Artifacts, Acc. 1998.89, "Survival in German-occupied Poland," p. 46; S. Kaczerginski, *Hurbn Vilne*, p. 155.
 15. GARF, 7021-92-224, pp. 58, 132, 260.
 16. *Ibid.*, p. 246.

SZCZUCZYN

Pre-1939: Szczuczyn, town and powiat center, Nowogródek województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Shchuchyn, raion center, Baranovichy oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Schtschutschin, Rayon center, Gebiet Lida, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Shchuchyn, raen center, Hrodna voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Szczuczyn is located 27 kilometers (17 miles) east-southeast of Grodno. In 1940, out of 3,500 inhabitants, 1,800 were Jews. Around 20 percent of the Jewish population consisted of recent refugees from central and western Poland. About 600 Jews (120 families) lived in the town of Różanka some 8 kilometers (5 miles) to the southeast.¹

The German army entered the town on June 26, 1941, arriving via Różanka, where German units had murdered 80 Jews in a reprisal Aktion after local inhabitants had accused the Jews of assisting the Soviets. In Szczuczyn, the German occupants initially arrested scores of prominent local Jews. After holding them hostage for three days, the Germans let them return home. According to the testimony of Liber Losh, the first person murdered in the town was a Jew, hanged in the market square by the Germans as an alleged Communist.²

In mid-August 1941, the Germans selected 40 Jews from among those working near the Palace of Drucki-Lubecki, where they were constructing air-raid shelters. They shot them all and buried them on the spot. Among those killed were Herzl Medlinsky, Leib Levin, Yaakov Vitovsky, and Asher Yantchuk. This was the first Aktion.³

Among the first anti-Jewish measures ordered by the Germans was that every Jew must wear a yellow star (Magen David). Jews were not permitted to trade in the market or have any communication with the Christian population. Jews were also not allowed to enter or leave the town, and a curfew was imposed on them at night. Every Jewish man and woman under the age of 60 was obliged to perform forced labor.⁴

Initially Szczuczyn was administered by a German military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur). During the first days of the occupation, the Ortskommandantur set up a local administration and a police force recruited from the Polish population. Among those who joined the police were the Kotzut brothers, the Novick brothers, Yozhvaski and Naomchik, as well as Piltzky and his sons.

From the end of August 1941, control over the area was handed over gradually to the newly created German civil administration. However, the Ortskommandantur remained in place during the transition, and in October 1941, the 12th Company of Infantry Regiment 727 manned the Ortskom-

mandantur.⁵ Szczuczyn became a Rayon center within Gebietskommissariat Lida, under Gebietskommissar Hermann Hanweg. The local German civil administrator in charge of Szczuczyn was Kreisleiter Ermann. The commander of the Polish police was Wojciech Kotzut, and the local mayor was Linewicz.⁶

At the beginning of July 1941, the Germans appointed a Judenrat with the following members: Y. Paretzki, Moshe Ilutovich, Yitschak Mendel Levin, Chaim Leib Lidsky, Yosef Listovsky, Zussel Levit, and Tsvi Marshinsky. Later, the following were appointed to the Judenrat: Berl Sosnovitz, Mendel Paretzki, Yudel Shavadsky, and others.

The function of the Judenrat was to carry out German orders promptly and to collect "contributions" for the Germans from the entire Jewish population. These contributions provided the Germans with money, clothes, and jewelry, in addition to the free supply of Jewish workers. The Jewish Police assisted the Judenrat. According to the recollection of Jakob Mazowecki, the policemen were Rafael Friedman, Alter Rotman, Simcha Marshinsky, and Aharon Kemenitsky. Golda Shwartz reported that "the Judenrat did everything they could and more to help." According to Mazowecki, they are credited with having organized medical services within the ghetto and establishing a soup kitchen to provide needy people with a hot meal.⁷

About a week after the formation of the Judenrat, in mid-July, the Germans published an order enclosing the Jews in a ghetto. The restricted area covered the following streets: Różanka Street and Railway Street; the market area to the power station; the two streets of the "Pliant"; Grodno Street and Vilna Street; and the market area to the non-Jewish "Meshchanin" houses (postwar: 17 September Street, Gastello Street, Komsomol'skaia Street, and Frunze Street). Once all the Szczuczyn Jews (about 2,500) were concentrated in the ghetto, another 500 Jews from Różanka and the more distant town of Bielica were brought in. Escorted by local police guards, the Jews were permitted to take with them only what they could carry in their arms. Several Jews from Różanka were also included in the Judenrat in the Szczuczyn ghetto.⁸ Life in the ghetto was characterized by terrible overcrowding and food shortages.

Available survivor testimony indicates that there was no artificial wall around the ghetto. However, local resident Victor Jarmalkowich claimed that there was a barbed-wire fence. The commandant of the ghetto was a man named Petuchow. According to survivor testimony, the Polish policemen who guarded the ghetto were susceptible to bribery.⁹

About two weeks after the creation of the ghetto, the Germans ordered the local police to assemble, "for the purpose of registration," all the Jewish intelligentsia (e.g., teachers, doctors, lawyers, and religious leaders) with their families. About 10 families, some 50 people altogether, were gathered (including Rabbi Yechiel Michal Rabinowitz, the ritual slaughterer Leib Zarenstein, the dentist Lisa Dvortsky-Sapir, and several teachers). The Germans led them out of the town to the village of Topilishky (about 8 kilometers, or 5 miles, from

Szczuczyn) and murdered them there by shooting them into pits that had been prepared beforehand.

The final massacre in the Szczuczyn ghetto took place on May 9, 1942.¹⁰ During the early hours of the morning, the members of the Judenrat and the Jewish Police numbered the houses and, under orders from the authorities, announced a gathering in the synagogue square for the purpose of a general population census (including children and the sick). When the whole community had gathered, the German Stabsleiter, Leopold Windisch, appeared with his assistant and translator, the Pole Wasiukiewicz from the Gebietskommissariat in Lida,¹¹ the local police commander Kotzut, the head of the local council Yazhevsky, and about 25 SD men with machine guns. Once those assembled had closed ranks in order (by family), the local police commander announced that 500 men, artisans and workers, with their families would be selected and transferred to Lida. The others would be sent home. When the 500 men had been selected (including some members of the Judenrat and Jewish Police), the remaining people were marched to the market square, where they had to lie facedown, heavily guarded by Polish police.

In the meantime, a group of German motorcyclists appeared in the synagogue square, armed with submachine guns. They started shooting into the crowd. An order was given to move while the murderers surrounded the rows from all sides, shooting nonstop and directing the condemned people to the outskirts of the town towards the pits that had been prepared previously. There, a firing squad of Lithuanians and Latvians awaited them. The people were led to the pits, ordered to undress, and then made to get into them. The murderers showered them with machine-gun fire and threw grenades into the pits. They then covered the dead with a layer of a chloride compound and prepared the next group to be shot. This continued until 5:00 p.m. The following day, the remaining Jews were given permission to gather those killed outside the pit and bury them next to the common mass grave. According to various sources, between 2,060 and 2,180 Jews were killed.¹²

The approximately 500 Jews who remained alive were then returned to the ghetto. The Judenrat was reconstituted (including Chaim Leib Lidsky, Yosef Listovsky, and Tsvi Marshinsky). The public kitchen and the public bathhouse were reopened. A *minyán* was organized to say Kaddish, and an underground *cbeder* for about 30 orphaned children was set up. In return for bribes, the new German Sonderführer now appointed to govern the town allowed the Jews to work in the gardens next to their houses or even to gather crops in the village fields belonging to Jews. In September 1942, the Germans started organizing groups of people and sending them to the Organisation Todt labor camps in Lida, Wilejka, Krasne, Oszmiana, and Borisov. Over the next six months, Szczuczyn was almost completely emptied of its remaining Jews.¹³

On September 17, 1943, the last Jews were deported in railway cars to the Majdanek concentration camp. Of 2,500 Jews from Szczuczyn, only 13 men are known to have survived. These men fought against the Germans in Soviet partisan

groups. At least 4 Jewish partisans from Szczuczyn were killed in combat.¹⁴

SOURCES The main published work on the Jewish community and the ghetto of Szczuczyn is the yizkor book by L. Lush et al., *Sefer Zikaron li-Kebilot Shts'uts'in, Vasilisbki, Ostrin, Novidvor, Roz'anke* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Ostrin be-Yisrael, 1964). There is also some useful information in two local history publications: *Pamiats': Historyka-dakumental'naia kbronika Shchuchynskaha raiona* (Minsk: Belaruskaja Entsyklopedyia, 2001); and Sjarhej Donskich, *Nash Shchuchin* (Grodno, 2001).

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: BA-L; GAGO; NARB; and YVA. Further information can be found in the German investigative files regarding the case of Leopold Windisch (Sta. Mainz, 3 Ks 1/67).

Sjarhej Pivavarchyk

NOTES

1. Donskich, *Nash Shchuchin*, pp. 22–23.
2. YVA, O-3/4378, testimony of Liber Losh.
3. Lush et al., *Sefer Zikaron*, p. 84.
4. YVA, O-3/4378.
5. On the Aktions conducted against alleged “Jewish partisans” in the area by 12th Company, Infantry Regiment 727, see Sta. Mainz, 3 Ks 1/67 (case against Leopold Windisch), pp. 1175a–1191e.
6. *Pamiats'*, p. 204; Donskich, *Nash Shchuchin*, p. 125.
7. YVA, O-3/6922, testimony of Golda Shwartz; and *Pamiats'*, p. 204.
8. Lush et al., *Sefer Zikaron*, pp. 443–444.
9. YVA, O-3/4378.
10. NARB, 861-1-7, p. 70; *Pamiats'*, pp. 204–205; YVA, O-3/4378. Some sources date the Aktion on May 10.
11. The presence of Windisch is questionable, as some witnesses put him in Żoludek on the morning of May 9; see BA-L, B 162/14386 (202 AR-Z 94d/59, verdict of LG Mainz, 3 Ks 1/67, July 17, 1969).
12. NARB, 861-1-7, p. 70; *Pamiats'*, pp. 204–205; GAGO, 1029-1-75, p. 81; *Niamecka-faschyski genacyd na Belarusi, 1941–1944* (Minsk, 1995), p. 315; see also Sta. Mainz, 3 Ks 1/67, Dok. Bd. 2, pp. 19–21, 50–53, 79–82.
13. Lush et al., *Sefer Zikaron*, p. 88.
14. *Pamiats'*, p. 205.

TIMKOVICHI

Pre-1941: Timkovichi (Yiddish: Timkovitz), village, Kopyl' raion, Minsk oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Timkovitschi, Rayon Kopyl', Gebiet Sluzk, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Tsimkavichy, Kapyl' raen, Minsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Timkovichi is located 101 kilometers (63 miles) south-southwest of Minsk. By mid-1941, emigration had reduced the Jewish population to less than 1,000.¹

German mobile forces of Army Group Center occupied Timkovichi on June 28, 1941, one week after the German invasion of the Soviet Union. During that time, only a few Jews

managed to evacuate to the east or, like Joseph Shuster, were conscripted into the Red Army.² Around 900 Jews remained in the village at the start of the German occupation.

In the summer of 1941, a German military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur) governed the village. In September 1941, authority was transferred to a German civil administration. Timkovichi was in Rayon Kopyl, Gebiet Sluzk, within Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien.

In the summer and fall of 1941, a series of anti-Jewish measures were introduced in Timkovichi, including the appointment of a Judenrat, the compulsory wearing of distinguishing markings, and the use of Jews for forced labor. Jews were also forbidden to leave the limits of the village and had to pay large contributions to the German authorities.

According to the recollection of three Jewish survivors, the Germans established a ghetto in Timkovichi only a short time after their arrival, in early or mid-July 1941. The ghetto was composed of a number of small houses, which became very overcrowded, with as many as eight families sharing a single dwelling. The Jews in the ghetto received no food rations.³ The survivors indicate that a barbed-wire fence surrounded the ghetto, which was guarded at least part of the time by the local Belorussian police. However, according to one account, the Jews were concentrated first, and the fence was erected later, in the fall of 1941.⁴

On March 25, 1942, the Germans ordered all the Jews to assemble on the market square. Here they conducted a selection. A group of about 300 Jews, comprising craftsmen and their families, were directed to one side and then sent back into the ghetto. The others, probably about 600 people, were taken out of the village in the direction of Prusy and were shot into a large pit.⁵

On June 25 or 26, 1942, four German Gendarmes, assisted by the local police, escorted all the remaining Jews to a pit about 1.5 kilometers (0.9 mile) outside the village. Here they were shot in groups of 15 to 20 people.⁶

SOURCES Information on the Jewish community of Timkovichi can be found in the following publication: Nachum Chinitz and Samson Nachmani, eds., *Pinkas Sluzk u-benoteba* (Tel Aviv and New York: Yizkor Book Committee, 1962), pp. 441–445.

Documentation on the persecution and murder of the Jews of Timkovichi can be found in the following archives: BA-L (B 162/16148); GARF (7021-82-8); NARB; USHMM (RG-10.455); VHF (# 2409, 24546, 39429); and YVA.

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trans. Kathleen Luft

NOTES

1. Chinitz and Nachmani, *Pinkas Sluzk u-benoteba*, pp. 441–445; 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. 1308.

2. Isaac Kowalski, *Anthology on Armed Resistance, 1939–45* (Brooklyn, NY: Jewish Combatants Publishers House, 1991), p. 119.

3. VHF, # 24546, testimony of Naum Bratkovskii (born 1915), and # 2409, testimony of Iakov Kuchinskii (born 1929); and BA-L, B 162/16148 (II 202 AR-Z 228/75), p. 151, testimony of Fishel L. Kirman (born 1891), given on July 13, 1970.

4. VHF, # 39429, testimony of Ilya Shuster (born 1922).

5. BA-L, B 162/16148 (II 202 AR-Z 228/75), p. 151, testimony of Fishel L. Kirman.

6. Ibid., p. 184—gives the date of June 25, 1942; the dates of the shootings given on the inscription on the memorial are March 26 and June 26, 1942. According to the list of names, there were 527 victims (GARF, 7021-82-8, pp. 112 verso–120 verso). Christian Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde: Die deutsche Wirtschafts- und Vernichtungspolitik in Weissrussland 1941 bis 1944* (Hamburg: HIS, 1999), p. 700, however, dates the Aktion in late July or even early August, around the same time as the final liquidation of the nearby Kopyl' ghetto (on July 23, 1941).

URECH'E

Pre-1941: Urech'e, town, Liuban' raion, Minsk oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Uretschje, Rayon and Gebiet Sluzk, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Urechcha, Liuban' raen, Minsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Urech'e is located 107 kilometers (66 miles) south-southeast of Minsk. In 1939, there were 979 Jews living in Urech'e (17.5 percent of the total population).¹

German armed forces occupied the settlement on June 28, 1941, six days after the German invasion of the USSR on June 22. Owing to the rapid German advance, only a few Jews were able to evacuate to the east. Around 750 to 800 Jews remained in Urech'e at the start of the occupation. The first Jewish victims were shot shortly after the arrival of German forces in the summer of 1941.²

Initially, a German military administration (Ortskommandantur) ran the settlement. In September 1941, authority was transferred to a German civil administration. Urech'e was incorporated into Rayon Sluzk, Gebiet Sluzk, within Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien. The Gebietskommissar in Sluzk from the fall of 1941 was Heinrich Carl. Under the civil administration, the local Belorussian police was transferred to the control of the German Gendarmerie (Order Police) and renamed the Schutzmannschaft.³

Immediately after the occupation of the settlement, the Ortskommandantur ordered the registration and marking of the Jews and compelled them to perform various forms of forced labor. In the fall of 1941, all the Jews of the town, and probably about 100 more from the surrounding villages, were resettled into a ghetto on Talskaia Street, which was guarded by the Schutzmannschaft and the Germans.⁴ According to Einsatzgruppen report no. 182, dated March 18, 1942, 10 Jews from the Urech'e ghetto escaped in order to join the partisans.⁵

Early in the morning of May 9, 1942, German-led forces drove the Jews out of their houses in the ghetto and conducted a selection. About 120 Jewish craftsmen, including tailors, carpenters, and shoemakers, were separated from the

1294 WEISSRUTHENIEN REGION

column. Then the remaining Jews, composed mainly of the elderly, women, and children, were escorted to two ditches that had been prepared in advance by local inhabitants about 3 kilometers (1.9 miles) northwest of Urech'e on the edge of the forest. On the way to the killing site, the Germans shot 12 to 15 Jews who tried to flee. At the ditches, the Jews were forced to undress and made to climb into them, where Germans, assisted by Belorussian Schutzmannen, shot them with machine pistols, rifles, and revolvers.⁶

On that day, a detachment of the Wehrmacht, together with men of the German Gendarmerie and local Belorussian police, shot 715 Jews. Two days later another 40 Jews uncovered in hiding were shot. An entry found in the diary of a dead German soldier recorded: "The young Jewish girls pleaded, 'Don't kill us, we want to live.' Many of them did not want to be shot but jumped into the pit in front of them and were buried alive."⁷ A monument was placed at the site of this mass grave in 1967.

Later in 1942, probably in late summer or fall, a detachment of German Gendarmes accompanied by Belorussian policemen under the command of the head of the Schutzmannschaft in Slutsk, Stefan Schneck, arrived in Urech'e from Slutsk and shot the remaining 100 or so Jewish craftsmen. Jewish property was collected from the victims; the Germans took the most valuable items back with them to Slutsk, and the other property, mainly clothing, was given into the custody of the police chief in Urech'e, Pavel Sevruck, for distribution among the local population. This Aktion was conducted in a ditch on the south-eastern periphery of the town near the airfield.⁸

SOURCES Documents on the persecution and elimination of the Jews of Urech'e can be found in the following archives: BA-L (B 162/16148); GARF (7021-82-7); NARA (NO-3233); TsGAMORF (233/2374/58); USHMM (RG-22.002M and RG-22.008); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. 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. 1362.

2. BA-L, B 162/16148 (II 202 AR-Z 228/75), vol. 1, p. 38, testimony of Nikolay Pavlovich Zlobin, March 12, 1947.

3. BA-BL, BDC, SSHO 2432, Organisationsplan der besetzten Ostgebiete nach dem Stand vom 10. März 1942, hg. vom Chef der Ordnungspolizei, Berlin, March 13, 1942.

4. BA-L, B 162/16148, vol. 1, pp. 38–39, testimony of Nikolay Pavlovich Zlobin, March 12, 1947; and Marat Botvinnik, *Pamiatniki genotsida evreev Belarusi* (Minsk: Belaruskaia Navuka, 2000), p. 71.

5. NARA, N-Doc., NO-3233, Ereignismeldung UdSSR no. 182, March 18, 1942.

6. BA-L, B 162/16148, vol. 1, pp. 38, 43, 47.

7. See Boris Shub, ed., *Hitler's Ten-Year War on the Jews* (New York: Institute of Jewish Affairs, 1943), pp. 199–200.

The names of 504 of the murdered Jews can be found in GARF, 7021-82-7, pp. 59–69. TsGAMORF, 233/2374/58, p. 14, Akt, June 30, 1944, records 930 Jews shot on May 8, 1942.

8. BA-L, B 162/16148, vol. 1, pp. 38–39, testimony of Nikolay Pavlovich Zlobin, March 12, 1947, and pp. 57, 63–64, testimony of the former head of the local police, Pavel Sevruck, August 7, 1959 and June 15, 1946.

UZDA

Pre-1941: Uzda, town and raion center, Minsk oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Usda, Rayon center, Gebiet Minsk-Land, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Uzda, raion center, Minsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Uzda is located about 60 kilometers (37 miles) south-southwest of Minsk. The Jewish community of Uzda is first mentioned in records from the eighteenth century; in 1765, 263 Jews lived there. Uzda became part of Russia in 1793. In 1847, 1,618 Jews lived in Uzda; and by 1897, the Jewish population had reached 2,068, comprising 75 percent of the total population. In 1926, the share of Jews in Uzda had fallen to 62.5 percent (1,564 Jews). In 1939, the share of Jews in the local population stood at 33 percent (1,143 Jews).

Most of the men of working age were drafted into the Red Army, but older people and families with many children were unable to leave town on their own. On June 27 1941, the German army entered Uzda without encountering resistance. That same day, the Nazis used the local cemetery as an execution site, where they shot Communists who had failed to evacuate and were revealed by local inhabitants.

The German commandant soon appointed a local police chief, Dlatovskii, and a deputy police chief, Iosif Savitskii. The detachment of German Gendarmes in Uzda was led by Woland. The municipal administration, an organ of local self-government, was headed by Viktor Vitkovskii. Respected people joined it, such as Kruglik, the senior doctor at the local hospital, and his spouse, also a doctor. Brel', a well-known local Stakhanovite (an industrial laborer singled out as a role model for hard work) and a master craftsman in the cobblers' *artel* (cooperative), became town mayor.¹

At the end of July 1941, the Germans ordered the Jews to leave their homes and move into a ghetto within two days. The ghetto was established on two streets: Leninskaia and Proletarskaia.² Jews were also brought into the Uzda ghetto from the nearby villages of Losha and Mogilno.³ The Jews were allowed to take with them only a few basic necessities, such as bed linen. Home utensils, furniture, cattle, and poultry were forbidden. All the ghetto's inhabitants, some 300 families, had to wear a round yellow patch on the left breast and on the back of their outer garments.⁴ Jews could walk only in the middle of the road; under no circumstances were they allowed on the sidewalk. The ghetto was not surrounded by barbed wire, but orders were posted on the walls announcing the rules of conduct for Jews: full compliance with the ghetto's internal regime, no

leaving the ghetto without special permission, no talking with non-Jews, and other restrictions.⁵ Any violation of these rules was met with one strict punishment: shooting. Conditions in the ghetto were very cramped. People felt cut off from the outside world and all news. They had to rely only on rumors.

The Uzda ghetto had no great economic significance. It served mainly as a place for concentrating the Jews to facilitate their annihilation at a later date. Therefore, no special measures were taken to provide for their social, medical, and material needs. Forced labor was only sporadic in nature. It is not known whether there was a Jewish Council (Juderrat).

In the first half of October 1941, deep pits were dug beyond the hillcrest at the far end of town on the other side of the bridge over the shallow Uzdianka River. A clay ditch located at the site was made deeper. According to some sources, this work was carried out by prisoners of war who were then shot.

The first Aktion was carried out on October 16–17, 1941. The day before, Vitkovskii, the head of the Uzda administration, convened leading figures from the ghetto in the former Thälmann Club and announced that all the Jews would be resettled to Minsk the next day. The Jews were ordered to dress in their best clothes, lay any valuables and money in the open at home, and leave the doors unlocked. Some of the Jews believed Vitkovskii. He had a reputation as a modest man and a good neighbor. That night, however, a Jew from Shatsk stole into the Uzda ghetto and revealed that on the previous day all the Jews in his ghetto had been killed under the pretext of resettlement.⁶

On October 16, at 5:00 A.M., a detachment of Security Police (subordinated to Einsatzkommando 3),⁷ Gendarmes, and local policemen surrounded the ghetto. At 7:00 A.M., the German police ordered those Jews unable to walk to board the trucks. A gut-wrenching cry went up. The remaining Jews were organized into a column and led northeast towards the edge of the forest in the direction of Zabolot'e, 1.5 kilometers (1 mile) from town.⁸

Upon arriving at the killing site, the Jews were forced to undress and led to the edge of the pit in groups of 10 to 15 people. They were shot with machine guns and automatic weapons. The bodies were thrown forward into the pit by the shots fired. Those who refused to go to the site were killed on the spot and their bodies tossed into the pit. If the machine guns did not hit those standing in the firing line—as a rule, children—they were pushed into the pit alive, along with their murdered friends and family members. According to witness accounts, a German truck driver lost consciousness at the sight of this massacre, but a local driver replaced him.

On October 17, the Germans hunted down and killed Jews trying to hide in their makeshift refuges. No fewer than 1,200 people were killed in the course of two days. After the pogrom, local policeman Aleksandr (Sashka) Zhdanovich went about town boasting about how he had killed Jews. He went into considerable detail in describing the killing of Jewish girls. Other local policemen involved in the Aktion included Pavel Golub', Yosif Savitskii, and Ivan Koptur.⁹

Before the Aktion the local administration had selected seven of the best Jewish craftsmen; they and their families were spared from the mass shooting, as they were required to work for the Germans.¹⁰ These Jews were placed in a smaller remnant ghetto in the town and may have been joined by other Jewish survivors after the first Aktion. The second Aktion took place in May 1942, when Roma (Gypsies) and, according to some sources, remaining Jewish specialists and their families—as well as possibly Soviet POWs—were killed at the Jewish cemetery. In all, 410 people were killed during that Aktion.¹¹

Only a few people managed to save themselves. Edik Uel'skii (12 years old), the son of a Jewish woman and a Belorussian man, was able to tear himself away from the hands of the executioners when he was already standing naked on the edge of the pit, awaiting his fate.¹² A Belorussian family from the village Zhmaka Uzdenskaia was able to save Sima Margolin.¹³ Zina and Khaim Grozovskii and their daughter Faina (10 years old) were hidden by Ales' and Tat'iana Krysko from the village of Bervishchi (one kilometer from Uzda), putting themselves and their seven children in danger. They hid the Grozovskii in their home for a year and then helped them link up with Soviet partisans. The commander of the diversionary group at the core of the unit that took in the Grozovskii was a certain Gritsenovich, also a Jew; the unit's radio operator was Sara Levin. Otherwise—that is, in partisan units without Jewish personnel—the fate of Jews roaming the forests who attempted to join them was uncertain (many were rejected or even hunted down).¹⁴

Uzda was liberated on June 26, 1944, by partisans of the 300th Brigade (Voroshilov), who held Uzda until the arrival of the 65th Army, 1st Belorussian Front, on July 4, 1944. On October 29, 1944, the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission arrived in Uzda and determined the sites where peaceful citizens had been shot. Upon examination, three large pits were discovered. The first of them was estimated to contain the bodies of 1,200 Jews. The second pit apparently contained 540 Jews, 120 POWs, and around 500 Belorussians. The third pit contained an estimated 950 bodies. This was the final burial site, which had been used in 1943–1944 for the murder mainly of non-Jews. The Extraordinary State Commission did not note the nationality of these victims. Another grave was found in Uzda itself, close to the city sauna. Upon opening it, officials found the bodies of 36 people who had been shot after interrogation and torture by Uzda's police and Gendarmerie. The remains of these victims were relocated to the city cemetery.¹⁵

According to Emanuel Ioffe, 1,610 Jews, and according to Marat Botvinnik 1,750 Jews, perished in Uzda during the occupation. However, these figures are significantly higher than the pre-war Jewish population of Uzda—1,143 according to the 1939 census. A number of Jews managed to flee east with retreating Soviet officials or were mobilized for the Red Army; and some were able to flee occupied Uzda and join the partisans. In addition to the Jews, the Nazis murdered Gypsies, POWs, Soviet activists, and Communists. Therefore, including refugees from western Belorussia and Jews from the

surrounding villages, it is likely that no more than 1,300 Jews perished in Uzda during the Holocaust.

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jews of Uzda can be found in the following publications: Sima M. Margolina, *Ostat'sia zbit'* (Minsk, 1997); Projektgruppe Belarus, ed., "Interview mit Sima Maximovna Margolina in 2001," in "Existiert das Ghetto noch?": *Weissrussland—Jüdisches Überleben gegen nationalsozialistische Herrschaft* (Berlin, 2003), pp. 78–103; Vladimir Adamushko et al., eds., *Spravochnik o mestakh prinuditel'nogo soderzhaniiia grazhdanskogo naseleniia na okkupirovannoi territorii BSSR 1941–1944 gg.* (Minsk: State Committee for Archives and Documentary Collections of the Republic of Belarus, 2001); "Evreiskii kamerton," supplement to the weekly *Novosti nedeli* (Tel Aviv), August 3, 2000; and Marat Botvinnik, *Pamiatniki Genotsida Evreev Belarusi* (Minsk: Belaruskaja Navuka, 2000).

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: BA-BL; GARF (7021-87-15 and 16); NARB (845-1-206); USHMM; VHF; and YVA (M-33/433-34).

Leonid Smilovitsky
trans. Ray Brandon

NOTES

1. GARF, 7021-87-15, p. 1; and NARB, 845-1-206, pp. 169–171.

2. The description of the ghetto is based mainly on Margolina's memoir *Ostat'sia zbit'*; a brief summary can be found in Leonid Smilovitskii, *Katastrofa evreev v Belorussii 1941–1944 gg.* (Tel Aviv: Biblioteka Matveia Chernogo, 2000), pp. 230–232.

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), pp. 748, 841. From Mogilno, 61 Jews were transferred to the Uzda ghetto, and from Losha, probably around 100.

4. Margolina, *Ostat'sia zbit'*. The Soviet Extraordinary State Commission report gives the figure of 300 families inside the ghetto, but the number of victims it gives for the Aktion on October 16–17 (1,740 Jews) is probably too high; see below.

5. Projektgruppe Belarus, "Interview mit Sima Maximovna Margolina," pp. 82–83.

6. Smilovitskii, *Katastrofa evreev v Belorussii*, pp. 230–232.

7. BA-BL, R 70 SU/15, Jägerbericht, December 1, 1941.

8. YVA, M-33/434, p. 2.

9. Smilovitskii, *Katastrofa evreev v Belorussii*, p. 231; NARB, 845-1-206, pp. 169–171.

10. Projektgruppe Belarus, "Interview mit Sima Maximovna Margolina," pp. 83–84.

11. Emanuel Ioffe, *Belorusskie evrei: Tragediia i geroizm, 1941–1945 gg.* (Minsk, 2003), p. 393; *Pamiat': Belarus'* (Minsk: Respublikanskaia kniga, 1995), p. 613. The Soviet Extraordinary State Commission report of October 29, 1944, mentions only the murder of Gypsies in May 1942; see NARB, 845-1-206, pp. 169–171.

12. Margolina, *Ostat'sia zbit'*, p. 16.

13. Ioffe, *Belorusskie evrei*, p. 204.

14. "Evreiskii kamerton."

15. YVA, M-33/434, pp. 8–9.

UZLIANY

Pre-1941: Uzliany, village, Rudensk raion, Minsk oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Usljany, Rayon Rudensk, Gebiet Minsk-Land, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Uzliany, Pukhavichy raen, Minsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Uzliany is located about 25 kilometers (16 miles) south of Minsk. By the middle of 1941, the Jewish population had declined by about one third, to around 400 to 450 people.

German forces had occupied the village by June 28, 1941, less than one week after the German invasion of the USSR on June 22. According to the survivor Lazar Tsirlin, few Jews tried to flee, as although Jewish refugees had brought information about the Nazi persecution of Jews in occupied Poland, people still did not anticipate Nazi atrocities, recalling the German occupation during World War I in a generally favorable light.¹ In the short time available, a few men of eligible age were conscripted into the Red Army or enlisted voluntarily. Around 400 Jews remained in Uzliany at the start of the German occupation.

In the summer of 1941, a German military commandant controlled the village. In September 1941, authority was transferred to the German civilian administration. Uzliany was incorporated into Gebiet Minsk-Land, which was headed by the Gebietskommissar, Regierungsrat Dr. Kaiser. Gendarmerie Leutnant Karl Kalla was appointed the SS- und Polizeigebietführer. The Gebiet Minsk-Land became part of Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien.

The first German troops to enter the village looted some homes for food but did not distinguish between the Jews and the rest of the local population. Soon afterwards, however, the German military commandant ordered the agricultural administration to register and mark all the Jews in the village. A local administration and a local police force were recruited, which included former opponents of the Soviet regime. For example, a local "kulak" was appointed as starosta (head of the local administration). During the summer of 1941, probably in July, all the Jews of the village were confined within a ghetto composed of a few houses. Jews residing in the ghetto, including young boys, were required to perform various forms of heavy labor, including the repair of roads and bridges.²

On October 6–7, 1941, a few refugees from the nearby town of Shatsk brought news of the shooting of most of the Jews there by the Germans on October 5. Then on October 8, Lithuanian auxiliary police (Schutzmannschaften) and German policemen of the 11th Reserve Battalion surrounded the ghetto. These forces rounded up the Jews and escorted them to the Jewish cemetery just south of the village, where they shot about 375 people into a pit that had been prepared in advance.³ A few Jews managed to escape during the roundup, most of them subsequently finding their way to the Minsk ghetto. According to the report of the German military commandant in Weissruthenien, German and Lithuanian police forces under military authority shot 630 persons in the area of

Uzliany and Rudensk, whom they deemed to be “suspicious persons without documents, communists, and Jews.”⁴

SOURCES Publications regarding the ghetto in Uzliany include Marat Botvinnik, *Pamiętniki genocysida evreev Belarusi* (Minsk: Belaruskaja Navuka, 2000), pp. 58, 77, and 91.

Documents dealing with the persecution and murder of the Jews of Uzliany can be found in the following archives: NARB (378-1-698 and 651-1-1); and USHMM (RG-50.378 # 0009).

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NOTES

1. USHMM, RG-50.378 # 0009, oral history conducted with Lazar Samuilevich Tsirlin.

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Ibid.*; Botvinnik, *Pamiętniki genocysida evreev Belarusi*, pp. 77, 91.

4. Report by “Kommandant in Weissruthenien,” October 16, 1941, NARB, 378-1-698, p. 4. See also NARB, 651-1-1, pp. 14–15, report of “Kommandant in Weissruthenien,” October 19, 1941, which detailed activities from October 1–15, 1941; it mentions that 617 persons were shot after the police searched the villages of Dukora, Ozery, and Uzliany and the forest 1 kilometer (0.6 mile) to the east of Uzliany for “Jews, partisans, bandits, and other politically unreliable elements.”

WASILISZKI

Pre-1939: Wasiliszki, town, Szczuczyn powiat, Nowogródek województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Vasilisbki, raion center, Baranovichi oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Wasilisbki, Rayon center, Gebiet Lida, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Vasilisbki, Shchuchyn raen, Hrodna voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Wasiliszki is located 26 kilometers (16 miles) east-northeast of Grodno. In 1940, the town had 2,596 inhabitants, of whom 2,190 were Jews.¹ Some 350 Jews lived in the nearby towns of Sobakińce and Zabołoc, located about 25 to 30 kilometers (15.5 to 18.6 miles) to the northwest.

The first German military units entered the town on June 25, 1941. Some local inhabitants presented lists of Jewish names to the German commander, alleging they were Communists. Following these denunciations, on July 26, the German authorities arrested and shot 7 Jewish men: Yakov Stein; Leizer Itche Borenstein, his son Hersh; Hersh Kavalsky, his brother Moishe; Nioma Ginzberg; and Binyamin Miller. In a subsequent Aktion a few days later, 11 more Jews were arrested and taken to Lida; nothing was heard from them again. Allegedly, one of the victims, the watchmaker Reuven Tzeshler, was denounced by a Polish colleague, to whom he had entrusted part of his property.²

The Germans set up a local council and a police force recruited from among the local Polish population. The chief of the Polish police was a man named Juzewski; the mayor

(Bürgermeister) was Vagit Shmigira; and the official responsible for Jewish forced labor was a certain Wolkiewicz.³ The local police escorted the Jews assigned to forced labor each day, beating them frequently as they worked. For half a Reichsmark (RM), any Christian could buy a Jew for a day's work. The town administration made a business out of Jewish labor. When some Christians were dissatisfied with the Jewish workers, they cursed and beat them. Other Christians were more humane, however; they gave the Jews food and even allowed them to take food home for their families. On one occasion, the Jews were obliged to surrender furniture, bed linens, dishes, and antiques in order to equip the office of the commandant. On another occasion, the local authorities demanded boots, fur garments, cloth, and other valuables.⁴

In mid-July 1941, the German commandant called up 20 men, the finest *balebatim* (notable citizens) of the shtetl, and ordered them to form a Judenrat. The members of the Judenrat included Herman Sendik, Yakov Kaufman, Kalman Kravitz, Alter Venzovsky, Yonas Mones, Moishe Bass, Mordechai Lipschitz, Chaim-Berl Gordon, and Dr. Katz. The Judenrat had to carry out all the German decrees and orders and meet every request to supply Jewish workers. The Judenrat was also ordered to form a Jewish police force of 20 men to assert its authority in the ghetto. Every day the German authorities issued new decrees.

Despite difficulties in raising money, the Judenrat did manage to save some Jews temporarily by bribing certain officials. Operating in the region was a German special unit that always arrived in a particular vehicle, called *di boid* (covered wagon). The special unit carried out murders of the Jewish population. For example, those Jewish families whose men had evacuated with the Soviet forces were identified and shot by the special unit, assisted by the local police under the command of Juzewski. During Rosh Hashanah, the “boid” returned, and a number of Jews were arrested during prayers. After much hard negotiating by the Judenrat, and in exchange for a large bribe, the police released the Jews.⁵

In the fall of 1941, the German Gendarmerie arrived in Wasiliszki and assumed control of the local Polish police. The Germans established a ghetto in Wasiliszki on December 12, 1941.⁶ The Judenrat was summoned and told to prepare for receiving some 200 Jews from Zabołoc, Sobakińce, and other nearby villages. A few days later, these Jews arrived and were put into houses on Kranker Street. The ghetto occupied half of Kranker Street, Foiler Street, Shulhoif Lane, and half of Vilna Street. In the ghetto, five families had to share one house. No information is available about the existence of a fence or a wall enclosing the ghetto. On moving into the ghetto, the Jews could take only what they could carry in their arms; later, some Jews who went back to visit their old houses to retrieve property were shot.⁷

All the inhabitants of the ghetto had to perform forced labor each day. Jews were forbidden even to talk to people who were not Jewish. Each ghetto inhabitant had to wear a yellow Star of David on his or her chest and back. The Germans

established a daily food ration of 125 grams (4.4 ounces) of bread per day for able-bodied Jews. As Samuel Poliachka recalls, the Germans imposed a strict policy of collective responsibility for any infringement of their instructions. A list of the people living in each apartment or house was posted at the entrance. The list was signed by the commandant of police and was certified by a seal. The police frequently inspected the ghetto at night. If someone was missing, or someone unlisted was present, then everyone in the residence would be killed. At night, it was forbidden to burn lights at home. This last decree also gave the police an opportunity to break into Jewish houses,⁸ claiming that they saw lights inside. Once inside, they forced the Jews to hand over gold and money.

In the winter of 1941–1942, several groups of Jews were murdered by the German special unit and the local police, including the notorious policeman Szakowicz. Conditions in the ghetto deteriorated as food became scarce and clothes became ragged with no possibility of repairing them. In March 1942, however, the German garrison in nearby Szczuczyn (12th Company, Infantry Regiment 727) left for the front, and after that things became quieter until the ghetto liquidation in May.⁹

On May 8, 1942, many Germans arrived in Wasiliszki, together with Lithuanian policemen. They surrounded the ghetto. All Jews were ordered to surrender their valuables to the Judenrat, and no Jews were permitted to leave their houses. Only Judenrat officials and the Jewish Police were permitted to move about the streets. On May 9, 1942, the police chief Juzewski shot Chaim-Berl Gordon of the Judenrat, after taking the gold and other valuables collected from the Jews in the ghetto.¹⁰

On the morning of May 10, the police and SS started to chase the Jews out of their houses towards the main square near the Judenrat office, shooting some on the way. At the square, a selection took place. Among those participating in the selection were Shmigira, the mayor; the commandant of the Polish police, Juzewski; and the leader of the labor office, Wolkiwicz. Leopold Windisch, the deputy of the German Gebietskommissar in Lida, was present, together with a large group of high-ranking German police officers, who came to carry out the massacre.¹¹

Those Jews who were directed to the left were escorted under severe blows to the cemetery, where mass graves had been prepared. A few tried to escape, but most of them were immediately shot by the guards. The selected Jews were then shot, and their bodies fell into the graves. According to different sources, between 1,800 and 2,159 Jews were murdered over the course of two days.¹² During the summer of 1942, the German authorities transferred the roughly 200 Jews still in Wasiliszki to the Szczuczyn ghetto, where a number of Jews from other towns in the region were also concentrated. Some of the Jews from Wasiliszki later were sent on from Szczuczyn to the Lida ghetto and to the labor camp in Lida run by the Organisation Todt (OT). Some of them were subsequently transferred to other OT camps in Wilejka and Krasne.

The Wasiliszki Jews who were taken to Lida established contact with Soviet partisans in the various forests of the re-

gion, particularly in the Naliboki Forest. During the spring and summer of 1943, a number of Wasiliszki Jews succeeded in fleeing to the forest.¹³ Most of them joined active partisan units and took part in various battles.

SOURCES A most valuable collection of firsthand survivor testimonies can be found in the yizkor book for Szczuczyn (Shchuchin, Belarus), edited by C.E. Volochinsky et al., *Sefer Zikaron li-Kebilot Shts'uts'in, Vasililiski, Ostrin, Novidvor, Roz'anke* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Ostrin be-Yisrael, 1966). Additional information is contained in the local-history publication *Pamiats': Historyka-dakumentalnaia khronika Shtetlshkaba raiona* (Minsk: Belaruskaja Entsyklapedyia, 2001).

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŽIH (301/294); BA-L (B 162/14386); GAGO; GARF; NARB (845-1-8); USHMM; VHF, and YVA.

Siarhej Pivavarchyk and Martin Dean

NOTES

1. *Pamiats'*, p. 516.
2. Volochinsky et al., *Sefer Zikaron*, pp. 232–234. Use has been made here of the translation by Miriam Dashkin Beckerman, put on the web by Jewishgen.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 233.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 235.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 239.
6. Sta. Mainz, 3 Ks 1/67, vol. 2, Hauptverhandlung, p. 373, statement of witness E.W. on March 5, 1969, cited in Christian Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde: Die deutsche Wirtschafts- und Vernichtungspolitik in Weissrussland 1941 bis 1944* (Hamburg: HIS, 1999), p. 531.
7. Volochinsky et al., *Sefer Zikaron*, pp. 239–240.
8. *Pamiats'*, p. 205.
9. Volochinsky et al., *Sefer Zikaron*, pp. 240–241.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 250.
11. *Ibid.*, pp. 245–246; *Pamiats'*, p. 206; verdict in the case of Leopold Windisch, LG-Ma 3 Ks 1/67, July 17, 1969, BA-L, B 162/14386.
12. Volochinsky et al., *Sefer Zikaron*, p. 244; NARB, 845-1-8, pp. 52–53.
13. Among them were Katiev Shlomo, the brother and sister Mudrick, Yerachmiel Portnoy, Leizer Eisishki, Tankel Kushner, Zalman Mednitsky, Peretz Stanetsky, Avraham Gershowitz, Yehuda Shartz, Mordechai Sviatoj, Dr. Alpert and family, Tanchum Gordon, Efraim Kopelman, Yakov Shlomo Boyarsky, Moishele Zablatky and wife, and Esther Pupko and her children.

WIAZYŃ

Pre-1939: Wiazyn', village, Wilejka powiat, Wilno województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Wiazyn', Il'ia raion, Vileika oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Wiazyn, Rayon Ilja, Gebietskommissariat Wilejka, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Wiazyn', Vileika raen, Minsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Wiazyn' is located 62 kilometers (39 miles) northwest of Minsk. According to the 1921 census, Wiazyn' had a Jewish population of 137.

German armed forces occupied the village on July 3, 1941, 12 days after their invasion of the USSR on June 22. During that time, some of the Jews were able to evacuate or flee to the eastern regions of the country. Attacks on Jews took place at the start of the occupation, and a few Jews left for the nearby village of Chocieńczyce.

In the summer of 1941, a German military commandant's office was in charge of the village. In September 1941, authority was transferred to the German civil administration. Wiazyń lay within Rayon Ilja of Gebiet Wilejka, in Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien. A German Gendarmerie post was established in the village, which took command of the local police, now renamed Schutzmannschaft. One of the members of the local police was a man named Wjaschewitsch.¹

In the summer and fall of 1941, anti-Jewish measures were introduced in Wiazyń, including the marking of the Jews with the Star of David, the use of Jews for unpaid forced labor, and a ban on leaving the village limits. The local auxiliary police subjected the Jews to systematic robbery and beatings. In October 1941, the Jews of Wiazyń were moved into a ghetto. At this time, those who had relocated to Chocieńczyce were sent back to the ghetto in Wiazyń. The Germans liquidated the ghetto in early June 1942 by shooting all the Jews, probably around 60 people altogether, including young children.²

Two Jews, Lazar and Genya Sosenskiy, succeeded in escaping from the mass grave after the shooting, as they had only been wounded. However, a local man, Mikhail Filistovich, who had come to loot the grave, discovered them hiding in a barn. Despite their pleadings, Filistovich betrayed them, and they were taken back to the mass grave and shot there. After the arrival of the Red Army in 1944, the Soviet authorities tried Filistovich and sentenced him to 10 years in prison. After serving 7 years, he was released under the terms of an amnesty.³

SOURCES Published sources on the Wiazyń ghetto include L. Smilovitskii, *Katastrofa evreev v Belorussii, 1941–1944 gg.* (Tel Aviv: Biblioteka Matveia Chernogo, 2000), p. 233. Documentation regarding the murder of the Jews of Wiazyń can be found in the following archives: BA-L (202 AR 629/73, vol. 3); GARF (7021-89-6); NARB; and YVA.

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NOTES

1. Wolfgang Curilla, *Die deutsche Ordnungspolizei und der Holocaust im Baltikum und in Weissrussland 1941–1944* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2006), p. 353; and BA-L, 202 AR 629/73, vol. 3, p. 411.

2. Smilovitskii, *Katastrofa evreev v Belorussii*, p. 233; and GARF, 7021-89-6, pp. 81, 82, 150. The overall number of victims is estimated variously at around 20; 60 to 70; and 16. The last figure is given in the report in which the crimes committed in the village by the occupiers and their accomplices are set forth. Possibly it refers to the number of Jews whose names are known. In light of the size of the pre-war Jewish population, the estimate of 60 to 70 victims is probably

closest to the truth. 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. 1441, give the figure of 60 Jews of Wiazyń murdered in June 1942. The names of some of the victims can be found on the Internet at www.eilatgordinlevitan.com/viazhin/viaz_pages/viazhin_yad_vashem.html.

3. Smilovitskii, *Katastrofa evreev v Belorussii*, p. 233.

WILEJKA

Pre-1939: Wilejka, town and powiat center, Wilno województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Vileika, raion and oblast' center, Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Wilejka, Rayon and Gebiet center, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Vileika, raen center, Minsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Wilejka is located 82 kilometers (51 miles) northwest of Minsk. On the eve of World War II, the town had a Jewish population of about 1,000 people.

Following the German invasion on June 22, only a few Jews managed to flee in time. German armed forces occupied Wilejka on June 26, 1941.

In the summer of 1941, a German military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur) governed the town. In September, authority was transferred to the German civil administration. Wilejka became the administrative center of Gebiet Wilejka in Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien. The Gebietskommissar was Kreisobmann Schmid, and the Gendarmerie-Gebietsführer was Gendarmerie-Leutnant Wilhelm Nowak, succeeded in mid-1942 by Gendarmerie-Leutnant Gailke. In the fall of 1941, a German Gendarmerie post was set up in Wilejka, which took charge of the local police (Schutzmannschaft). Mainly responsible for the anti-Jewish Aktions in Wilejka in 1942–1943 was the SD-Hauptausstellung (SD main outpost) there, headed by SS-Obersturmführer Rudolf Grave, which also controlled its own squads of Latvian and Belorussian auxiliary police.

In the summer and fall of 1941, a series of anti-Jewish measures were implemented in Wilejka, including the appointment of a Judenrat, the marking of Jews with distinguishing badges in the form of a Star of David, and the use of Jews for forced labor. Jews also were forbidden to leave the town, appear in public places, and walk on the sidewalks. They were required to remove their hats when encountering Germans.

Shortly after the arrival of the Germans, local ruffians broke into Jewish homes to steal property. On July 12, 1941, Sonderkommando 7a conducted an Aktion in the town, during which 140 Jews and 10 to 13 Belorussians were arrested and shot. At first, the Jews were gathered in the former synagogue and their identification papers confiscated. Then they were sent home with instructions to bring their money and valuables to the synagogue. After the skilled workers and professionals had been separated out, the rest were forced to walk 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) outside the town to the village of Stavki, where the Germans shot them. On July 30, 1941, Einsatzkommando 9 conducted a second Aktion in Wilejka.

1300 WEISSRUTHENIEN REGION

They rounded up about 400 people, who were then driven in vehicles to the village of Porsa and shot there in five pits that had been dug previously.¹

By December 1941, all the Jews of Wilejka, together with many Jewish craftsmen and their families brought in from Kurzeniec and other nearby communities, had been moved into a number of separate ghettos and labor camps, only some of which were fenced in. The main ghetto was located in two old army barracks. Those living in open ghettos could move about the town or even sneak back to their home communities, but they faced serious consequences if caught without official permission. According to Dorothy Kleinkopf, by early 1942 there was a so-called children's ghetto, which consisted of a large house surrounded by barbed wire not far from the prison in Wilejka. The children's ghetto was not guarded continuously, but people came to check on it periodically. As more Jews were brought into Wilejka, but the area of the ghettos remained the same, overcrowding increased and living conditions deteriorated.²

Food rations for the Jewish workers were quite meager: about 200 grams (7 ounces) of bread with bran and other additives per day and a watery soup. Among the work tasks performed by Jews in the Wilejka camps and ghettos were various industry-related jobs, the clearance of rubble in the town, road construction, and unloading consignments at the railroad. In the fall of 1941, a group of Jews from Kurzeniec clandestinely printed and disseminated anti-German propaganda, using paper and ink from the Wilejka printing shop, where some of them worked.³

In early February 1942, a main outpost of the SD (SD-Hauptaussonstelle) was established in Wilejka. Between February 5 and 28, 1942, its members shot 29 Jews.⁴ On March 3, 1942—around the time of Purim—the SD-Hauptaussonstelle carried out an Aktion in which all the Jews in the “children's ghetto” were seized and shot; afterwards the building in which they were killed was set on fire, to ensure that the corpses were burned.⁵ This pattern, the trademark of the Wilejka SD, was adopted for most subsequent Aktions in the town.

In August 1942 the Jews of the main ghetto (about 250–300 people) were divided into two groups, forming a “small ghetto” for craftsmen (working for the Gebietskommissar). Among work tasks carried out for the Gebietskommissar was the construction of a tennis court. Apart from the original ghetto in the barracks and the small ghetto, there was also an SD camp for Jews and a so-called commercial ghetto. During the summer of 1942, new groups of Jewish craftsmen arrived, and some of the remaining Jews (those unfit for work) were periodically escorted out in groups on trucks to the Lysaia Gora area, where the SD shot them into pits.⁶

Several hundred more Jewish workers arrived at the ghettos and camps in Wilejka in September 1942 from the Szczuczyn ghetto in Gebiet Lida. Jews from Kurzeniec learned of the destruction of all the Jews that had remained in their village at this time. The underground made plans for Jews to escape to the forest, but most people were held back by the fear of reprisals against those who were unable to leave. In early November

1942, the SD conducted a further large Aktion, in which all the Jews of the barracks ghetto and also some from the commercial ghetto were murdered, including many of the recent arrivals. Surviving Jews in the small ghetto learned from local inhabitants that the others had been taken to a small house in the woods about half a kilometer (1,640 feet) away. Here they were herded inside and shot. The building was subsequently set on fire.⁷

News of the liquidation of most of the ghettos and camps in the region caused the remaining Jews to consider escape. Once the worst of the winter was over in March 1943, a group of Jews, who had obtained weapons, fled from the small ghetto and just made it to the forests ahead of the pursuing policemen. Then on March 28, 1943, a selection of remaining craftsmen in the small ghetto was held, and some 40 to 60 Jews deemed unfit for work were shot and their bodies burned.⁸

According to the statement of Haase, the acting Gebietskommissar in Wilejka, made at a conference of the Gebietskommissars in Minsk from April 8 to 10, 1943, there were still Jews in Wilejka who were working in a harness factory and a flax scutching mill. Haase also mentioned the presence of about 50 Jews at the disposal of the SD-Hauptaussonstelle and around 100 Jews in the small ghetto, laboring in workshops subordinated to the Gebietskommissar.⁹ On July 17, when the labor camp at Molodeczno was liquidated, more than 70 Jews were brought to Wilejka, and 15 to 20 of them were placed in one of the remaining labor camps there. The others were taken out to a nearby village, where they were shot and their corpses burned.¹⁰ The other Jewish skilled workers of the small ghetto remained in Wilejka, probably until late June 1944, when they were shot, along with prisoners from the local jail, before the Germans withdrew.¹¹

No precise figure for the number of Jews murdered in Wilejka is available, but it probably exceeded 1,500, as many were brought in from other communities in the region.

SOURCES Information on the persecution and murder of the Jews of Wilejka during the Holocaust can be found in the following publications: K. Farber and J. Se'evi, eds., *Sefer zikaron kebilat Vileika ha-mezbozit, palakb Vilna* (Tel Aviv: Wilejka Society, 1972); Leonid Smilovitskii, *Katastrofa evreev v Belorussii 1941–1944 gg.* (Tel Aviv: Biblioteka Matveia Chernogo, 2000), pp. 165–167; “Wilejka,” in Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freulich, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Bialystok, Nowogrodek* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 314–319; 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. 1447. The yizkor book for Kurzeniec, edited by A. Meyerowitz, *Megilat Kurenits; ayara be-bayeha u-ve-mota* (Tel Aviv: Former Residents of Kurenits in Israel and in the USA, 1956), also contains several testimonies relevant to the ghetto in Wilejka; also relevant is the memoir by Charles Gelman, *Do Not Go Gentle: A Memoir of Jewish Resistance in Poland, 1941–1945* (Hamden, CT: Archon, 1989).

Documentation regarding the extermination of the Jews of Wilejka can be found in the following archives: BA-BL; BA-L (B 162/1294-1305, 1443-73, and 14585); GARF (7021-

89-3); IfZ; NARB (861-1-10 and 845-1-63); USHMM; VHF; YVA (e.g., M-33/1135); and ZSSSta-D.

Alexander Kruglov and Martin Dean
trans. Kathleen Luft

NOTES

1. Testimony of witness M.M. Iastshomba in a trial in Minsk, January 20, 1946, in *Sudebnyi protsess po delu o zlodeianniakh, sovershemnykh nemetsko-fashistskimi zakbvatshikami v Belorusskoi SSR (15–29 ianvaria 1946 g.)* (Minsk, 1947), pp. 198–200.
2. BA-L, B 162/1461 and 1472 (II 202 AR-Z 5/60, vols. 18 and 42), pp. 4059–4060, 8775–8776, 8800; and Gelman, *Do Not Go Gentle*, pp. 55, 83.
3. Smilovitskii, *Katastrofa evreev v Belorussii*, pp. 165–166; BA-L, B 162/1472, pp. 8767–8768; and Shalom Cholowsky, *The Jews of Bielorussia during World War II* (Amsterdam: Harwood, 1998), p. 137.
4. BA-BL, R 58/221, Ereignismeldung UdSSR (EM) no. 183, March 20, 1942.
5. *Ibid.*, EM no. 178, March 9, 1942; ZSSSta-D, Sta. Dortmund, 45 Js 3/61, indictment of Johann Karl Förster et al., January 25, 1977.
6. Gelman, *Do Not Go Gentle*, pp. 61, 75–83; BA-L, B 162/1472, p. 8783.
7. Gelman, *Do Not Go Gentle*, pp. 75–81; and testimony of the witness M.M. Iastshomba. According to Wolfgang Curilla, *Die deutsche Ordnungspolizei und der Holocaust im Baltikum und in Weissrussland 1941–1944* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2006), p. 497, about 70 to 80 Jews were shot.
8. Meyerowitz, *Megilat Kuenits*, pp. 316–318; GARE, 7021-89-8, p. 98; and Curilla, *Die deutsche Ordnungspolizei*, p. 498.
9. IfZ, Fb 85/I, p. 81.
10. ZSSSta-D, Sta. Dortmund, 45 Js 3/61, indictment of Johann Karl Förster et al., January 25, 1977.
11. BA-L, B 162/1472, pp. 8603, 8610, 8736.

WISZNIEW

Pre-1939: Wiszniew, town, Wołożyn powiat, Nowogródek województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Visbnevo, Volozhin raion, Baranovichi oblast, Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Wischniewo, Rayon Woloschin, Gebiet Wilejka, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Visbneva, Valozhyn raen, Minsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Wiszniew is located 94 kilometers (58 miles) west-northwest of Minsk. On the eve of World War II, about 700 Jews lived in Wiszniew. Following the German invasion of western and central Poland, about 200 Jewish families from Warsaw and Łódź sought refuge in the town, swelling the Jewish population to almost 2,000.

After the German invasion on June 22, 1941, a number of Jews tried to flee, but some were turned back at the pre-1939 frontier. The Germans arrived in Wiszniew at 9:00 A.M. on June 27. All Jews were ordered to assemble by 4:00 P.M. on the grounds of the Provoslav Church. During the night, the men



Six teachers from the Hebrew language Tarbut elementary school in Wiszniew pose in the snow in front of their school building, 1935. USHMM WS #24081, COURTESY OF FANYA SZUSTER PORTNOY

were taken in groups of 20 to the gmina (local administration), where they were assaulted and beaten. The women and children were sent home in the morning, but the men were taken for forced labor. They were kept at various tasks for three weeks before being sent home. Their families ventured out to bring them food but otherwise stayed indoors. The Germans set up a local militia, headed by a man named Finger, while Turunsky was appointed mayor. Survivors described these men as “cruel bloodsuckers.” Two weeks later, two Jews were arrested and shot. Their families sought permission from the authorities to give them a Jewish funeral, but the response was a storm of abuse: “Thousands of soldiers from the best of German youth are lying in the battlefields and not brought to burial, and you come to ask me for the corpses of two filthy Jews!”¹

Two weeks later, a German officer known as “Moko” arrived in town. In August, a rumor spread that 80 Jews were going to be executed. The Jewish leadership offered Finger a huge sum of money to intercede, but he simply took the money and shrugged them off. The men were forced to dig a pit in the cemetery; on the next day 38 of them were shot and dumped into the grave.²

A Judenrat of five men was selected by the community to administer its affairs. It was composed of Rodensky, Yosef Menachem Rabinowitz, Yosef Bergmann, Bar-Mikhel Rubin, and Mordechai Dudman. The Germans then added five more. The secretary was Gedalyah Podversky. The Germans soon imposed their first demand for gold and silver. The German officer Moko took the money and jewelry, beat up the two

Judenrat members who delivered it, and physically kicked them out of his office. Non-Jewish neighbors passed on the message that Jews had to wear a yellow marker on both the chest and the right side of the back.³

Shortly after the shooting of the 38 people, in the fall of 1941, the Jews were ordered to move into a ghetto. It was located on Krewo Street and in the yard of the synagogue. Christian neighbors stood by during the roundup, awaiting the opportunity to loot and occupy the Jewish homes, as about one third of the community had to relocate. A few days after the move, the ghetto was surrounded by a wooden fence and barbed wire with only one entry gate. Over 1,000 Jews were penned up in the small ghetto area, with seven to eight families to a house. In each house, the people organized themselves to share the washing, cooking, and other chores. An order was issued that any Jew found outside the ghetto without permission would be shot.⁴

Inside the ghetto, the Judenrat had a number of responsibilities, as recalled by one of its members, Rubin, who survived. These included organizing the lists of workers for forced labor at 28 separate locations and ensuring that those sent were in reasonable physical condition and had adequate clothing. The Judenrat tried to rotate workers in order to share the burden fairly. The Judenrat also had to meet the endless demands of the Germans for goods: wood, nails, glass, boots, uniforms, watches, bedding, underclothes for their wives, and “money, money, money.” Sometimes 15 wagonloads were sent. Invariably the Jew who delivered the goods returned severely beaten and bleeding. Judenrat member Dudman, who repeatedly volunteered for this thankless job, was referred to by the community as Mordechai Ha-Tzaddik, Mordechai the Saint.⁵

The Judenrat enforced strict hygienic rules to avert epidemics. The town physician, a rabid antisemite named Dr. Fobol, denied the Jews access to all medications. The Jewish doctor in the ghetto, Gershon Podzelber, had only a bit of brandy to treat the pain of injury and disease. Food was smuggled into the ghetto in exchange for goods and valuables.⁶ As Jews were constantly beaten and humiliated when working outside, living in the ghetto had the advantage of offering some respite, as inside the gates there were only Jews. During the winter of 1941–1942, about 300 Jews from Wiszniew were transferred to the labor camp in Krasne. The first to be selected by the Judenrat were refugees and single men.⁷

The first sign of a change for the worse occurred on Friday, August 28, 1942. Workers returning from forced labor were told they would not go out on Saturday. At 2:00 A.M. on Sunday, August 30, soldiers armed with machine guns surrounded the ghetto. The Jews were driven from their houses to the courtyard of the synagogue and forced to lie on the ground. Anyone lifting his head could be shot. An SS officer ordered a member of the Judenrat to conduct a roll call. When it was discovered that the rabbi was not present, he was the first to be shot, in the synagogue.⁸ The Jews, watched by many of their non-Jewish neighbors, were led down the road towards Krewo and taken to the wall of a derelict building on the edge of

town. Here the Germans, assisted by the local police, lined up the Jews in rows of around 30 and then mowed them down with a machine gun mounted on a truck. When the shooting started, many Jews ran for their lives, but almost all were caught and shot on the spot. The murders at the wall continued until there was no more room in the building. It was then set on fire, with most of the bodies placed inside along with the children, who were burned alive. The last to die were the doctor, Podzelber (though the non-Jewish townspeople pleaded for his life), and the town barber, Yosef Dudman (who assumed his services to the German officers were essential). In total, about 1,500 Jews were massacred.⁹

The few survivors from Wiszniew included a work detail that was out of town on the day of the massacre, three young boys who escaped to the Soviet partisans, and a handful of others who made it to safety in the turmoil of the final day. The town’s yizkor book contains several accounts by survivors who joined the partisans or found ways to elude capture until the Red Army drove out the German troops. Subsequently, in the winter of 1943–1944, Soviet partisans attacked Wiszniew in a raid involving about 200 to 300 fighters, and much of the town was burned down. With the aid of the Jewish partisan fighter Noah Podberesky, the partisans captured the mayor, Turunsky, and beat him to death when he refused to answer questions.¹⁰

SOURCES There is a yizkor book for Wiszniew, which includes a number of articles about the Holocaust: Hayyim Abramson, ed., *Vishneva, ke-fi she-hayetah ve-enenah od; sefer zikaron* (Tel Aviv: Wiszniew Society in Israel, 1971). The Web site www.eilatgordinlevitan.com offers English translations of parts of the yizkor book. A memoir of Wiszniew by a Jewish survivor includes details about the ghetto and the survival of Jews with the Soviet partisans: Samuel Podberesky, *Never the Last Road* (College Station, TX: Virtualbookworm, 2003).

Documents on the fate of the Jewish community in Wiszniew during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-89-4); NARB (861-1-10); USHMM (e.g., RG-22.002M); VHF; and YVA (e.g., O-3/428 and 1011).

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NOTES

1. Abramson, *Vishneva*, p. 111.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 112; Podberesky, *Never the Last Road*, p. 38. According to Podberesky, this incident occurred in October 1941.
3. Abramson, *Vishneva*, pp. 113, 125–148.
4. *Ibid.* Podberesky, *Never the Last Road*, p. 39, states that the ghetto was established in early November.
5. Abramson, *Vishneva* p. 116.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 114.
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 125–148.
8. Podberesky, *Never the Last Road*, p. 43.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 43–47; Abramson, *Vishneva*, pp. 117–118, 125–148. The figure of 1,500 victims is from GARF, 7021-89-4, p. 39; and NARB, 861-1-10, pp. 55–62.
10. Podberesky, *Never the Last Road*, pp. 81–87; see also Abramson, *Vishneva*, pp. 148–149.

WOŁOŻYŃ

Pre-1939: Wołożyn, town, and powiat center, Nowogródek województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Volozhin, raion center, Baranovichki oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Woloschin, Rayon center, Gebiet Wilejka, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Valozhyn, Minsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Wołożyn is located about 75 kilometers (47 miles) west-northwest of Minsk. In 1939, the Jewish population of the town was probably around 3,000 people.

In the days following the German attack on the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, much of Wołożyn suffered fire damage from German aerial bombardment. The German army occupied the town on June 25, 1941. Jewish survivors report that some local non-Jews welcomed the Germans warmly, especially Poles who supported the National Democrats, the most antisemitic group in Poland. Two weeks after their arrival, the Germans appointed a 12-man Judenrat, headed by the teacher Yakov Garber. At this time the German military administration required Jews to wear distinctive markings (initially an armband and later yellow patches) and forbade them from using the sidewalks. The tasks of the Judenrat included meeting German demands for contributions, in money or in kind, and for a daily quota of forced laborers. Male Jews had to work in the local sawmills, and women cleaned the Germans' quarters.¹

In August 1941, the German Security Police carried out the first Aktion in the town, in which they murdered 45 Jews.² During the same month, the German authorities established a ghetto in the quarter around Krumme Gas, Dubinska and Minsk Streets, near the former location of the synagogue. The ghetto, composed of only about 50 or 60 houses, held around 3,000 people, or about four or five families per house, including a number of refugees from the nearby towns of Wiszniew, Holszany, and Oszmiana, as well as others from Lithuania. The overcrowding was unbearable. Inside the ghetto a Jewish police force was organized. The Jews in the ghetto were required to perform forced labor and received no rations. Hunger and horrible living conditions brought people close to despair. To survive, they exchanged their remaining belongings with local non-Jews for food. However, the local police guards brutally beat any Jews caught trying to leave the ghetto. The Jews also witnessed the Germans maltreating Soviet prisoners of war at a nearby POW camp.³

In September 1941, authority was transferred from the military to a German civil administration. Wołożyn became a Rayon center in Gebiet Wilejka within Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien. A post of the German Gendarmerie was established in Wołożyn, which took over responsibility for the local police. Survivors indicate that the local police force was made up of worthless wretches from neighboring villages. The policemen would enter the ghetto at night and beat the Jews mercilessly, demanding money and valuables.⁴

On October 28, 1941, the German police ordered the Judenrat to deliver a large quantity of leather within two hours. On

November 4, 1941, the Judenrat was instructed to assemble all the Jews on the street in the ghetto. The Germans then conducted a selection, and some 200 people were locked inside the local cinema. The head of the Judenrat, Garber, was informed that they would be taken to work, and he was led away with the group. Instead, the Germans escorted the 200 Jews to the local sports ground in groups of 10 and shot them there. The local police robbed the bodies, also ripping out any gold teeth, and then a group of Jews was forced to bury the corpses. After the Aktion, Shnur Kivelevitsh became the new Judenrat head, and the area of the ghetto was reduced.⁵

During the winter of 1941–1942, some Jews were forced to clear snow from the roads. Jews that had regular work outside the ghetto were issued permits to leave and reenter it. In the spring of 1942, the Germans rewarded Jews who reported for labor with an extra ration of bread, which increased their willingness to work.⁶

On May 10, 1942, members of the SD main outpost (Hauptaussonstelle) in Wilejka together with a Latvian squad, and assisted by German Gendarmerie and local police, conducted a third Aktion in Wołożyn, possibly as a reprisal for the murder of four forestry officials nearby. First they assembled around 1,000 Jews in a forge, where they were required to surrender all their money and valuables. The Jews were held here for many hours without food or water, while local inhabitants came to mock them by dancing and singing. Inspired by the words of Rabbi Reuven Chadash from Holszany, some Jews tried to resist and escape, but only a few succeeded. The SS men then divided the Jews into groups of 10 to 20 persons and escorted them to an empty house near the Jewish cemetery, where the head of the SS shot them. After the shootings, the perpetrators threw gasoline on the corpses and burned them along with the building. The SD company from Wilejka remained in Wołożyn until May 15, 1942, rounded up any Jews found in hiding, and shot them, too.⁷

After the Aktion, the ghetto area was further reduced, and only a few hundred Jews remained. However, once the Germans assured these Jews that they would work and remain safe, some Jews who had fled before the Aktion decided to return.

During the fourth Aktion on August 29, 1942, the ghetto was completely liquidated. On that day, the members of the SD-Hauptaussonstelle Wilejka together with the German Gendarmerie and local police surrounded the ghetto, then drove all the Jews into a large barn on Shapovalovskaia Street. Once the Jews were inside, the SS shot at the barn from all sides, killing about 450 people in total. After it was over, they threw gasoline on the corpses and burned them along with the barn. A number of Jews escaped into the forest on the night before this Aktion. Subsequently, some of the Wołożyn ghetto escapees joined Soviet partisan detachments operating in the region. When the Red Army liberated Wołożyn in the summer of 1944, only around 20 Jews returned to the town from hiding in the countryside or serving with the partisans. Pnina Hayat, for example, managed to survive with the assistance of the peasant Ivan Kovalski and his family, who gave

1304 WEISSRUTHENIEN REGION

her and a friend food and shelter at considerable risk to themselves after the liquidation of the ghetto.

SOURCES Published sources on the ghetto in Wołożyn include the following: Eliezer Leoni, ed., *Wolozin: The Book of the City and of the Eitz Hayyim Yeshiva* (Tel Aviv: Wolozhin Landsleit Associations, 1970); from this volume, the account of Yusef Shvartsberg, "Volozshin," is also available in the series *Fun letsten hurbn* (Munich: Tsentral historishe komisye baym Tsentral komitet fun di bafrayte Yidn in der Amerikaner zone, 1946); M. Batvinnik, "Znischenne Valozhynskago geta," in *Pamiats': Hist.-dak. Kbroniki baradoi i r-nai Belarusi: Valozhynski o-n.* (Minsk, 1996); and Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Bialystok, Nowogrodek* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 291–295.

Documentation regarding the fate of the Jews of Wołożyn during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: BA-L (B 162/1294-1305, 1443-73, and 14585); GARF (7021-89-4); NARB (861-1-10); Sta. Dortmund (45 Js 3/61); USHMM (RG-02.129; RG-22.002M, reel 24; and RG-53.002M, reel 8); VHF (# 1429); and YVA.

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trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. VHF, # 1429, testimony of Miriam Cukier, born 1924; and Pnina Hayat (née Potashnik), "What My Eyes Have Seen," in Leoni, *Wolozin*, p. 550.
2. GARF, 7021-89-4, p. 2.
3. Mendel Wolkowitch, "The Destruction of Wolozhin," in Leoni, *Wolozin*, pp. 30–31; and USHMM, RG-02.129, testimony of Leon Liberman.
4. Leoni, *Wolozin*, pp. 30, 550.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 31–32, 550.
6. VHF, # 1429; and Leoni, *Wolozin*, p. 546.
7. Sta. Dortmund 45 Js 3/61, indictment in the case against Johann Karl Förster and others, January 25, 1977, pp. 141–146. See also *Unsere Ebre heisst Treue: Kriegstagebuch des Kommandostabes Reichsführer SS* (Vienna: Europa, 1984), pp. 247–249, SS-Usscharf. Lipps Aussenstelle Wilejka an Burgdorf, May 27, 1942; and Leoni, *Wolozin*, p. 537.

WORONÓW (AKA WERENÓW)

Pre-1939: Woronów (Yiddish: Voronava), town, Lida powiat, Nowogródek województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Voronovo, raion center, Baranovich oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Woronow, Rayon center, Gebiet Lida, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Voranava, raen center, Hrodna voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Woronów is located about 40 kilometers (25 miles) north of Lida. In mid-1941, there were approximately 1,500 Jews living in the town, including refugees from western and central Poland.¹

German armed forces occupied the town on June 23, 1941, only one day after their invasion of the USSR. As a result,

most of the Jews there were unable to evacuate and remained in the town at the start of the German occupation.

In the summer of 1941, a German military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur) was in charge of the town. Shortly after the Germans' arrival, a number of Jews were arrested, beaten, and shot, some as a result of denunciations by local inhabitants. For example, the German soldiers who occupied the town on June 23 seized a truck on the edge of town with 15 people in it (Russians and Jews) and shot them on the spot. A few days later, the auxiliary police arrested several young Jews who had been accused of Communist activity. These Jews were sent to Lida and killed there three days later.²

In the summer and fall of 1941, the Germans introduced a series of anti-Jewish measures in Woronów. They appointed a Judenrat chaired by Hirsh Kopelman and a Jewish police force (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst), headed by a man named Zalberg. At the same time they instituted the marking of Jews with badges in the shape of a yellow star 15 centimeters (6 inches) in diameter, which had to be worn by everyone over the age of eight, and a program for the use of Jews for forced labor, performing humiliating jobs. Jews also were forbidden to leave the town limits or to walk on the sidewalks. A curfew beginning at 8:00 p.m. was imposed on Jews, and on days of rest (such as Sunday and holidays), they were forbidden to appear in the streets at all. Jews were forbidden to eat meat, butter, eggs, honey, fats, milk, and sugar; the only foods allowed to them were black bread and potatoes, with water to drink. Jews were not allowed to own horses, cows, sheep, or chickens; they could have no more than 300 Russian rubles; and they were required to hand over all their valuables to the Germans. When meeting a German or a policeman, a Jew was supposed to lift his hat and stay at least 10 meters (33 feet) from the individual. The local auxiliary police subjected the Jews to systematic robbery, beatings, and mockery.

In September 1941, authority was transferred to the German civil administration. Woronów became a Rayon center in Gebiet Lida within Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien. There was a German Gendarmerie post in Woronów, commanded from 1941 to 1943 by Polizeimeister Lengen, which was in charge of the auxiliary police recruited from local residents. The German Gendarmes and local police took an active part in the anti-Jewish measures.

The Germans conducted a large anti-Jewish Aktion in Woronów in the first half of November 1941. By that time, a so-called Jewish quarter (an open ghetto) already had been established there. On November 6, police surrounded the Jewish quarter and began searching the houses, looking for Jewish refugees from Wilno. During this time, several Jews who tried to run away were killed immediately. In the course of the searches, 288 people were caught (in all, more than 500 Jews from Wilno had found refuge in Woronów) and put in the movie theater building. They spent seven days there, subjected to torture and violations of human dignity; 5 men who tried to escape were shot. On November 14, all the Jews were herded towards the railway station and shot there by Lithuanian policemen. Among the Jews who were shot were many representatives

of the intelligentsia (an artist, Treger Grubiiash; a doctor of philology, Natan Tsimmel; a professor, Orbach; a doctor, Gershun; a mathematics professor, Idelson; and others).³

On December 6, 1941, a second Aktion took place in Woronów, during which 35 elderly and sick Jews were rounded up and shot. After this Aktion, in late December 1942, the Gebietskommissar in Lida, a man named Hermann Hanweg, ordered Jews to be transferred to Woronów from the villages of Dziewieniszki, Beniakonie, Konwaliszki, Soleczniki, and others. As a consequence, the number of Jews in the town increased to more than 3,000. Ten days after their arrival, the Germans arrested 28 elderly Jews from Dziewieniszki and brutally murdered them.⁴ The accounts of Jews brought into the Woronów ghetto at this time describe intolerable overcrowding and hunger. An infestation of lice resulted in an outbreak of typhus. All able-bodied Jews performed forced labor felling trees and other tasks. By this time the ghetto had been enclosed by a fence about 1.5 to 3 meters (5 to 10 feet) high, which was guarded by Lithuanian, Polish, and Belorussian policemen.⁵

On the night of May 10–11, 1942, the German police and their local auxiliaries surrounded the ghetto. All the Jews were ordered to assemble in the market square, but around 500 Jews bribed their way out of the ghetto and hid in the forest. About 200 Jews hid in the ghetto itself, and 75 others were at work outside the town limits at this time. Therefore, around 2,700 Jews showed up in the square. Gebietskommissar Hanweg and his deputy Leopold Windisch conducted a selection. Those deemed fit for work were sent back to the ghetto, while the remaining Jews (1,885 people) were shot in a previously dug ditch on the northeastern edge of town (in 1964, a monument was erected at this site). During the ghetto liquidation Aktion, Munka Heikles, a butcher, attacked an SS officer with a stone and injured him and two policemen; he was then killed for this act of resistance. Another young man, Zalman Shreira, escaped naked from the killing site, but he was betrayed to the Nazis by a shepherd and was taken back to the killing site and shot.⁶ The remaining Jews in the ghetto, as well as those who returned from the forest and emerged from hiding places after the Aktion (about 1,200 in total), were transferred two weeks later to the Lida ghetto. On September 17, 1943, along with the other Jews in this ghetto, they were transported to the Majdanek concentration camp near Lublin.⁷

SOURCES Information about the Jews of Woronów and their fate in the Holocaust can be found in the following publications: H. Rabin, ed., *Voronova; sefer zikaron le-kedoshai Voronova she-nispu ha-sboat ha-natsim* (Voronova societies in Israel and the United States, 1971); and “Woronow,” in Shmuel Spector and Bracha Freundlich, eds., *Pinkas ba-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 8, *Vilna, Bialystok, Nowogrodek* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), pp. 305–307.

Documentation regarding the extermination of the Jews of Woronów can be found in the following archives: AŽIH (301/566 and 3953); BA-L (B 162/3424-51, 19298, and 14386); GARF (7021-86-38); NARB (861-1-7); VHF (e.g., # 6403, 26514, and 27223); USHMM (e.g., RG-3.019); and YVA

(M-33/706; O-3/3753, 4010, 7310, and 12562; TR-10/646 and 68650).

Alexander Kruglov

NOTES

1. According to Moshe Berkowitz, “Woronow, Voronova,” unpub. MSS, 1943 (USHMM, RG-3.019), in late 1940, there were 350 Jewish families (1,600 people) in Voronovo; AŽIH, 301/566, testimony of Yudel Konopka put the number at 1,500.

2. Berkowitz, “Woronow, Voronova.”

3. GARF, 7021-86-38, p. 2 (263 people were shot); NARB, 861-1-7, p. 43; and Berkowitz, “Woronow, Voronova.” AŽIH, 301/3953, testimony of Moyzer Plotnik, estimates the number killed at 150. Also see BA-L, B 162/14386 (LG-Ma 3 Ks 1/67, verdict of July 17, 1969, against Windisch), p. 26.

4. Berkowitz, “Woronow, Voronova.” AŽIH, 301/566, estimates the number at 4,500. VHF, # 26514, Herman Snyder was transferred from Dziewieniszki. Also see Spector and Freundlich, *Pinkas ba-kebilot*, 8:254–257. Two survivors—VHF, # 27223, Henrik Solodukhah, and # 6403, Iakov Gaukman—indicate that there was an open ghetto in Dziewieniszki prior to their transfer to Woronów.

5. VHF, # 26514.

6. Spector and Freundlich, *Pinkas ba-kebilot*, 8:254–257.

7. Berkowitz, “Woronow, Voronova”; GARF, 7021-86-38 (this file contains the names of 1,291 victims, including 204 from Beniakonie and 108 from Konwaliszki); Sta. Mainz 3 Js 155/64, indictment of December 15, 1966, against Windisch and Werner; LG-Ma 3 Ks 1/67, verdict of July 17, 1969, against Windisch.

ZAOSTROWICZE

Pre-1939: Zaostrawicze, village, Kleck powiat, Nowogródek województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Zaostrawicze, Kleck raion, Baranovich oblast, Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Zaostrawitschi, Rayon Kleck, Gebiet Baranowitsche, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Zaastrawiccha, Kleck raen, Minsk voblasts, Republic of Belarus

Zaostrowicze is located about 45 kilometers (28 miles) south-east of Baranowicze. Very little information is available about the existence of the small Jewish community in and around Zaostrowicze before World War II.

German armed forces occupied the village on June 26, 1941. In the summer of 1941, a German military commandant's office governed Zaostrowicze. In September 1941, authority was transferred to a German civil administration. Zaostrowicze was included in Rayon Kleck, Gebiet Baranowitsche, within Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien.

In the summer and fall of 1941, the German authorities implemented a series of anti-Jewish measures in Zaostrowicze, including the appointment of a Judenrat, the marking of the Jews with distinguishing badges in the form of a Star of David, and the use of Jews for unpaid forced labor. Jews were

1306 WEISSRUTHENIEN REGION

forbidden to leave the village, and the small auxiliary police force of about seven men subjected them to systematic robbery and beatings. A ghetto was created in the village in the fall of 1941. The ghetto was liquidated in June 1942, when all of the Jews (more than 100 people) were escorted from Zaostrowicz to Siniawka and were murdered there together with the Jews of the Siniawka ghetto. German police forces shot them, and the corpses were buried in a mass grave near the road from Siniawka to Pińsk.

SOURCES Documentation regarding the extermination of the Jews of Zaostrowicz can be found in the following archives: BA-L (202 AR-Z 171/67, vol. 2, pp. 231–233); GARF (7021-81-102 and 103); NARB (845-1-7, p. 39); and ZGABO (616-1-70). Additional information can be found in the publication *Karatel' zbiwet v Klifione. O fasbistskikh prispesbnikakh, ukryvaiuscbikh v SSbA* (Moscow, 1985), p. 84. The ghetto is also mentioned in Emanuel Ioffe, *Belorussian Jews: Tragedia i geroizm, 1941–1945* (Minsk: Arti-Feks 2003), p. 117.

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trans. Kathleen Luft

ZASKIEWICZE

Pre-1939: Zaskiewicze (Yiddish: Zaskovitz), village, Molodechno powiat, Wilno województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Zaskewichi, Molodechno raion, Vileika oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Zaskiewitschi, Rayon Molodetschno, Gebiet Wilejka, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Zaskewichy, Maladeczna raen, Minsk voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Zaskiewicze is located on the Usza River about 82 kilometers (51 miles) northwest of Minsk and 50 kilometers (31 miles) east of Oszmiana. In 1925, there were around 200 Jews living in the village.

On September 17, 1939, the Red Army entered the village, which was incorporated into the Belorussian SSR before the end of the year. German forces occupied the village on June 26, 1941, four days after their invasion of the USSR. In these days, only a few Jews managed to evacuate to the eastern regions of the Soviet Union.

In the summer of 1941, a German military commandant's office was in charge of the village. In September 1941, authority was transferred to a German civil administration: Zaskiewicze became part of Rayon Molodetschno in Gebiet Wilejka. In the summer and fall of 1941, the Germans implemented a series of anti-Jewish measures in Zaskiewicze, including the appointment of a Judenrat, the marking of the Jews with distinguishing yellow patches in the form of a Star of David, the use of Jews for unpaid forced labor, and a ban on their leaving the village limits. The local auxiliary police subjected the Jews to systematic robbery and beatings. According to some sources, possibly in October 1941, the village's Jews were moved into a ghetto, where they remained for more than six months.¹

In the absence of any survivor accounts, it is impossible to reconstruct any details of life in the ghetto or to be sure of the

fate of the Jews of Zaskiewicze. The authors of *Pinkas ha-kebilot* indicate that in June 1942 SD men and local police surrounded the ghetto and removed all the Jews. According to one report, they shot the Jews with submachine guns and buried them in large pits in a nearby forest. It is possible, however, that some Jews capable of work were taken to the ghetto in Smorgonie and, in October 1942, were transferred along with other Jews from that ghetto to the Oszmiana ghetto, where subsequently they were murdered.²

Soviet sources date the Germans' liquidation of the ghetto in November 1942. These sources indicate that the Germans and their collaborators shot 71 people and that some Jews fled into the forest just before the Aktion. Zaskiewicze was liberated by the Red Army in the summer of 1944.³

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jewish community of Zaskiewicze during the Holocaust can be found in the following publications: "Zaskiewicze," 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. 1491; and "Zaskiewicze," 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. 350–351.

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-89-9) and NARB.

Alexander Kruglov and Martin Dean
trans. Kathleen Luft

NOTES

1. GARF, 7021-89-9, p. 116. Spector and Wigoder, *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life*, p. 1491, indicate that a ghetto was established in Zaskiewicze but give no date.

2. Spector and Freundlich, *Pinkas ha-kebilot, Nowogrodek*, p. 8:351; see also Spector and Wigoder, *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life*, p. 1491. It may be that some Jews escaped from Zaskiewicze to the nearby Smorgonie ghetto rather than being transferred.

3. GARF, 7021-89-9, p. 116. The same file also contains a list of the names of murdered Jews, mentioning 69 people (on pp. 21–22).

ZASLAVL'

Pre-1941: Zaslavl', town and raion center, Minsk oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Saslawl, Rayon center, Gebiet Minsk-Land, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Zaslavl', Minsk raen and voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Zaslavl' is located 25 kilometers (15.5 miles) northwest of Minsk. In 1939, Jews comprised 9.04 percent of the town's total population, numbering 248 people, with another 112 more Jews living in the Zaslavl' raion.

German troops occupied Zaslavl' before the end of June 1941. In this first week of the invasion, some Jews managed to leave eastward with evacuation transports, while adult males were either drafted into the Red Army or volunteered. Around

two thirds of the pre-war Jewish population remained in Zaslavl' at the start of the occupation.

In the summer of 1941, the town was governed by a German military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur). From September 1941, a civil administration took over. Zaslavl' was incorporated into Gebiet Minsk-Land (Gebietskommissar—Regierungsrat Dr. Kaiser, SS-und Polizei-Gebietsführer—Leutnant of the Gendarmerie Karl Kalla), which in turn was part of Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien.¹ A post of Gendarmerie was set up in Zaslavl', and an auxiliary police unit composed of local volunteers was subordinated to it.

Soon after the occupation of the town, the German commandant issued an order to the Rayon council to conduct a compulsory registration of the Jews. The Jews were forced to wear distinctive badges (an armband on their sleeves that read "Jude" or circles sewn onto the front and back of their outer clothing). The Jews were recruited into various kinds of forced labor (e.g., digging ditches, maintaining roads, or cleaning the quarters occupied by the German authorities). At the start of September 1941, all the Jews of Zaslavl' were relocated to a ghetto—a building formerly occupied by Soviet border guards. By the end of the month, the Germans had almost completely liquidated the ghetto. On September 26 and 27, 1941, all the Jewish males were killed, at least 20 people in total—12 of them burned in the ghetto building. On September 29, around 100 Jews, mostly women, children, and elderly people, were taken on horse carts out of the ghetto under the pretext of future resettlement to Minsk. They were all shot in the forest near the village of Sloboda. The mass shooting was most probably carried out by a unit of German Gendarmerie with the participation of Belorussian policemen. For a month following the liquidation of the ghetto, 35 Jewish women were kept in one of the houses on Bazarnaia Street. They were used for different kinds of forced labor until they were all shot on October 29, 1941.²

SOURCES Documentation regarding the persecution and murder of the Jewish population of Zaslavl' can be found in the following archives: GAMINO (623-1-51); GARF (7021-87-6); and YVA (M-33/424).

Alexander Kruglov
trans. Ksenia Krimer

NOTES

1. BA-BL, BDC, SSHO 2432, Organisationsplan der besetzten Ostgebiete nach dem Stand vom 10. März 1942, hg. vom Chef der Ordnungspolizei, Berlin, March 13, 1942.
2. GARF, 7021-87-6, pp. 17 (both sides), 24.

ZDZIĘCIOŁ

Pre-1939: Zdzięcioł (Yiddish: Zbetel), town, Nowogródek powiat and województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Diatlovo, raion center, Baranovichy oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Dzatlowo, Rayon center, Gebiet Nowogródek, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Dzatlavla, raion center, Hrodna voblasts', Republic of Belarus



Portrait of the Benjaminowitz family, ca. 1930, in Zdzięcioł. The donor, Chana Benjaminowitz (now Dr. Ann Benjamin), was the family's sole survivor.

USHMM WS #28968, COURTESY OF DR. ANN BENJAMIN

Zdzięcioł is located 146 kilometers (91 miles) southwest of Minsk. Just before the German invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941, the Jewish population stood at more than 4,500.

German forces occupied the town on June 30, 1941. On July 14, the local military commandant (Ortskommandant) ordered the Jews to wear a six-pointed yellow star on the front and the back of their clothing. On July 15, the Germans arrested 6 Jews and took them to Nowojelnia, where they killed them on the pretext that they had previously worked for the Soviet authorities. Among the victims were Etl Ovsievitz, her daughter Dina, Shimon Leveranchik, Avraham Guzovski, and Judl Bielski. On July 23, about 120 of the most respectable citizens and members of the intelligentsia were selected from among all the Jews assembled in the square. The selection was carried out according to a list compiled by SS men who had arrived in Zdzięcioł. Among those arrested were Alter Dvoretzky and the rabbi. The local Jews bribed the Germans and attained the release of Dvoretzky and the rabbi. All the others were allegedly taken for forced labor, but two days later

VOLUME II: PART B

it was discovered that they had been murdered in the forest near the military barracks in Nowogródek. According to Abram Kaplan—the only Jew presently living in the Zdzięcioł area—the remaining Jews then had to perform a variety of different jobs. Some worked as cleaners for the local administration, and many others worked for farmers in the surrounding villages. On October 1, 1941, all the Jews living in Zdzięcioł were registered.

At the end of August 1941, authority was transferred to the civil administration. At this time a Judenrat was formed, with Shmuel Kustin as the chairman and Alter Dvoretzky as his deputy. Soon afterwards, Dvoretzky replaced Kustin as chairman. Dvoretzky was 37 and had been educated as a lawyer in Berlin and Warsaw.¹

One of the main tasks of the Judenrat was to ensure that all German orders were strictly implemented. On the second day of Sukkot, some Germans arrived in Zdzięcioł to requisition horses for the army. Many of the Jews decided to hide, but the Germans caught one, Jaakov Noa, and shot him. On November 28, 1941, the Jews of Zdzięcioł were made to line up and forced to surrender all their valuables to the Germans. Libe Gercowski, accused of having hidden two gold rings, was selected and shot in front of everyone. On that day the Judenrat was also obliged to provide four glaziers and 15 carpenters, who were sent to an unknown destination. On December 15, 1941, 400 men were sent to the labor camp in Dworzec to perform construction work at the airfield for the Organisation Todt (OT). On December 25, 1941, the German authorities ordered the Jews to surrender all their fur coats.

Alter Dvoretzky established links with the Jews living in the surrounding villages and with a group of former Red Army soldiers who were organizing a partisan force in the area. In the fall of 1941, before the ghetto was set up, Dvoretzky himself formed a Jewish underground, consisting of about 60 people. This organization was divided into 20 cells, each with 3 members. They obtained some weapons about a month before the ghetto was established. About 10 underground members were in the Jewish Police.²

On February 22, 1942, the authorities put up posters announcing that the Jews had to move into the ghetto, which was based around the synagogue and the Talmud Torah building.³ According to Peretz Bousel, two Jewish families were exempted from the requirement to move into the ghetto: the families of Ben Zion Paskovsky and Betzalel Bousel, who in 1939 had owned a leather factory. Jews were also moved into the ghetto from other nearby Jewish communities, including Bielica.⁴

There was no detailed plan for the resettlement of the Jews into their new living quarters. Five or six families had to share each house, and many families were split up. Eight or more people lived in each room, with the furniture removed and replaced by improvised bunk beds. Some families, like the Kaplans, prepared secret hiding places in the ghetto, which helped them survive the massacre.

The ghetto was partly fenced by wood and barbed wire, and two local policemen guarded the gate. The Jews were not

even permitted to talk to other citizens and could be shot if they attempted to obtain food from the outside. Nevertheless, peasants still brought food to the ghetto to exchange for gold, clothes, and other items. Special work permits were issued to those working outside the ghetto. The Jews were guarded when marching in and out of the ghetto in columns to perform forced labor.⁵

Upon moving into the ghetto, the underground headed by Dvoretzky had the following aims: to prepare for armed revolt if the liquidation of the ghetto was imminent; to collect money to buy weapons and bring them into the ghetto; and to try to persuade the local Christian population not to cooperate with the Germans.⁶

The group made contact with the local leader of the Soviet partisans, Nikolai Vakhonin. A number of Jews who had fled from Zdzięcioł, Żołudek, Bielica, Kozłowszczyzna, Dworzec, and Nowogródek were known to be hiding in the Lipichanski Forest. Pinya Green and Hershl Kaplinski were their leaders. On April 20, 1942, Dvoretzky and six members of the ghetto underground were forced to escape to the forest after their organization became known to the Germans. Unfortunately Dvoretzky was killed in an ambush by non-Jewish partisans shortly afterwards.⁷

After a while, a partisan detachment of more than 100 Jews was formed in the forest near Zdzięcioł, known as the "Zheteler detachment." Anyone who wanted to join the partisans first had to obtain a gun. The unit was divided into three platoons, headed by Hershl Kaplinski, Jonah Midvetsky, and Shalom Ogulnik. The battalion also included women, acting as nurses, cooks, secretaries, typists, and washerwomen. A few of them also took part in combat activities.

The unit's base was some 20 kilometers (12.4 miles) from Zdzięcioł in the Lipichanski Forest. Its members coordinated their activities with other Soviet partisans operating there, in particular with the Orlanski detachment (renamed "Bor'ba" [Struggle] on January 5, 1943, commanded by Nikolai Vakhonin) and the Lenin brigade. The partisans attacked the railroad tracks on the Lida to Minsk line and the Wołkowysk to Białystok line. Yisrael Bousel invented a fast-acting mine, which the partisans used to derail German trains. He was posthumously awarded the title "Hero of the Soviet Union."

On April 29, 1942, the Germans arrested the Judenrat, and at dawn on April 30, the ghetto inmates woke to shots inside the ghetto. The Germans announced through the Judenrat that all the Jews were to go to the old cemetery, situated inside the ghetto. At this time the Germans and their collaborators began driving the Jews out of their houses, beating, kicking, and shooting those who were reluctant to obey. The Gebietskommissar conducted a selection, and more than 1,000 Jews, composed mainly of women, children, and the elderly, were escorted into the Kurpyash Forest south of the town, where pits had been prepared. There, the Germans shot them in groups of 20. The massacre was conducted by German and local Polish police forces.

The second massacre started on August 6, 1942, and lasted for three days, as many Jews hid in prepared bunkers. During the liquidation of the ghetto, 2,000 to 3,000 Jews were shot and buried in three mass graves in the Jewish cemetery, with roughly 1,000 victims in each grave. Slightly more than 200 Jewish craftsmen were transferred to the ghetto in Nowogródek.⁸ This was the end of the ghetto and of the Jewish community of Zdzięcioł. Several hundred Jews, who had hidden, fled after the massacre; some formed a family camp in the Nakryshki Forest, where they survived until liberation.

Word of the “Zhetel partisan detachment” spread among Jews in the labor camps of Dworzec and Nowogródek, and a number of Jews tried to join them. Many were caught on the way to the forest. The Zheteler detachment also took revenge on local collaborators. For example, in the village of Molery on September 10, 1942, after eliminating two collaborators, the Jewish partisans informed the village elder of the reasons for this reprisal.

SOURCES The yizkor book of Baruch Kaplinski, ed., *Pinkes Zshetl* (Tel Aviv: Zetel Association in Israel, 1957), contains much information on the town but refers only briefly to the Holocaust period. A recent Israeli publication by Haya Lipski, Rivkah Lipski-Kaufman, and Yitshak Ganoz, eds., *Ayaratenu Z’etel: Shishim shanab le-burban kehilat Z’etel 1942–2002* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots’e Z’etel be-Yisrael, 2002), deals with the fate of the town’s Jews. In *Pamiats’. Diatlovo raion* (Minsk, 1997), there is a list of the Jews murdered in 1942. An article on the Holocaust in Diatlovo raion was published in *Moj Rodny Kut*, no. 2 (July 2002). Regarding the underground and the partisans, there is a memoir by Shalom Gerling, *Korot Lochem Yebudi* (Lohamei Hagetaot, 1968). Additional information can be found in Shalom Cholowsky, *The Jews of Bielorussia during World War II* (Amsterdam: Harwood, 1998); and Israel Gutman, ed., *Enzyklopädie des Holocaust: Die Verfolgung und Ermordung der europäischen Juden* (Berlin: Argon, 1993), 1:354–355.

Documentation regarding the fate of the Jews of Zdzięcioł can be found in the following archives: BA-L (B 162/3452-59); NARB (845-1-186, pp. 37–38); USHMM (RG-50.030*0332); and YVA (e.g., M-1/E/457).

Tamara Vershitskaya

NOTES

1. Gerling, *Korot Lochem Yebudi*, p. 47.
2. Ibid.
3. See oral history of Sonia Heidocosky Zissman, USHMM, RG-50.030*0332, p. 9 of transcript. The Soviet Extraordinary State Commission (ChGK) report, however, states that the ghetto was set up in 1941 and held up to 4,500 people; see NARB, 845-1-186, pp. 37–38.
4. L. Losh, ed., *Book of Belitzab (Bielica)* (Tel Aviv: Belitzah Landmannschaft Organizations in Israel and the U.S., 1965), p. 347.
5. NARB, 845-1-186, pp. 37–38.
6. Kaplinski, *Pinkes Zshetl*, pp. 369–370.
7. Ibid., pp. 47, 60–63.
8. See USHMM, RG-50.030*0332; BA-L, B 162/3453 (20 AR-Z 94e/59), pp. 329–333; and YVA, M-1/E/457 (Shmariahu

Furmanski). The ChGK dates the second massacre in July 1942 and estimates the total of Jewish victims at 3,500. The names of 1,601 victims have been established; see NARB, 845-1-186, pp. 37–38.

ŻOŁUDEK

Pre-1939: Żołudek, town, Szczuczyn powiat, Nowogródek województwo, Poland; 1939–1941: Zheludok, Shchbuchyn raion, Baranovichy oblast’, Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Żołudek, Rayon center, Gebiet Lida, Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien; post-1991: Zbaludok, Shchbuchyn raen, Hrodna voblasts’, Republic of Belarus

Żołudek is located 76 kilometers (48 miles) east-southeast of Grodno. Jews have lived in Żołudek since the end of the sixteenth century. They were mostly traders and craftsmen. In 1921, the Jewish population of the town was 1,053. In 1940, there were 2,436 inhabitants in the town, of whom some 70 percent (about 1,700) were Jewish. The Jewish population of Żołudek increased sharply in late 1939 and at the beginning of 1940, as many refugees from western and central Poland found refuge in the Soviet-occupied zone.¹

Żołudek was occupied by the German army on June 27, 1941. As the Soviet forces withdrew, local non-Jews plundered the town. During the fighting, many Jewish houses in the center of town were burned down, and the Jewish families had to move in with friends and relatives in very overcrowded conditions. More than half of the town was destroyed in the fire. The murder by the Germans of six Jews, denounced by the local inhabitant Pastuszko as Communists, was the first Aktion against the Jews of Żołudek.²

At the beginning of July, a local administration and a local police force were established in the town. Local inhabitants of Polish and Belorussian nationality served in these organizations. Kulinski became the mayor of Żołudek, and Pastuszko was named as commandant of the police. At this time no German officials were permanently based in the town, which was under temporary military administration. The first order issued by the new authorities was that all Jews had to wear a white armband with a yellow Star of David on it.³

On July 10, 1941, the German authorities ordered the Jews to elect a Jewish Council (Judenrat) that would be responsible for ensuring the implementation of all their instructions. According to the account of Moshe Birkh, no one wanted to be a member of the Judenrat. Lists of nominations were drawn up, however. The members of the Judenrat included Shlomo Nachumowski, Moshe Grejzewski, and Avraham Meir. Mendl Galay was named chairman of the Judenrat.⁴

Prior to the establishment of the ghetto in Żołudek, the Germans organized several Aktions against the Jewish population. As Nochman Shifmanovicz recalled, about 100 Jews were performing forced labor on the estate of the Czetwertynski family, where a German battalion was also based. It was a hot summer day, and many of the workers took off their

1310 WEISSRUTHENIEN REGION

coats, on which the yellow patches were sewn. The Germans approached the workers and rounded up 22 who were found without their patches. They were given spades and taken outside the estate. The Germans then ordered them to dig their own mass grave and shot them. The remaining workers were forced to fill in the grave.⁵

On several occasions, the Germans and local police extorted valuables from the Jews. On August 10, 1941, the German military authorities ordered the collection of a large sum of money. As the Judenrat faced considerable difficulties in collecting the money, they levied a specific sum on each person, calculated according to his station and responsibilities, and went from house to house, collecting the fine.⁶

From the end of August 1941, control over the area was gradually handed over to the German civil administration. Żołudek became a Rayon center within Gebiet Lida under Gebietskommissar Hanweg. The local police subsequently came under the control of the German Gendarmerie (Order Police), commanded by SS- und Polizei-Gebietsführer Leutnant Albert Wystyrk in Lida.

In another instance, the chief of police ordered the Jews who were performing forced labor to bring him their gold objects. He threatened to shoot them if they refused. When the workers returned to the town, they told the Judenrat what had happened. Galay immediately went from house to house, gathering gold watches, rings, and other valuables, which he gave to the Germans. The imposition of forced labor often was accompanied by beatings and the humiliation of the Jews.

The Jews still celebrated the religious holidays, but under conditions of persecution. For example, on Rosh Hashanah prayers were held secretly in private houses. People stood guard outside in shifts to warn those praying inside, in case of any surprise Aktions. The same occurred also on Yom Kippur (October 1).⁷

The ghetto was officially established on November 1, 1941. It was located on Orla Street, as at least part of the street had survived the fire intact. On November 2, 1941, the Jews from the nearby village of Orla (12 kilometers [7.5 miles] south of Żołudek) were moved into the ghetto. There was no artificial wall and therefore also no protection inside the ghetto. Conditions in the ghetto were very severe because of considerable overcrowding. According to the testimony of Pesja Birkh (née Levit), 8 to 10 families lived in one house. The synagogue had already been converted into a residence.

The survivors of the ghetto recall that the Jews in the ghetto tried to help one another as much as they could. The Judenrat and the community worked together under these difficult circumstances. Everyone tried to act in the best interests of the whole community. Birkh, together with her friend Dvorelle, who worked in a Polish restaurant, devised a scheme to help feed the ghetto. Sometimes the police sent Birkh with her friend to the mill to bring back flour for the restaurant. On the way, when they passed the ghetto, they would drop a sack of flour from the wagon and inform people living nearby, so that they could take it into the ghetto.⁸

During the autumn and winter of 1941–42, a German special unit carried out several Aktions against the Jews in Żołudek. This Kommando came in a specific sort of truck, which the local Jews named *di boid* (covered wagon). They knew that when “di boid” arrived, a killing Aktion targeting the Jews of Żołudek was about to take place. According to Birkh, in the autumn of 1941, 32 Jews from Orla and 28 from Żołudek were killed.⁹

After 15 residents of the ghetto were murdered, a guard force was organized within the ghetto. Every night, a few men would go outside to keep watch, according to a fixed rotation. The purpose of the guard was to alert residents of the ghetto to an approaching calamity. Many had already begun to arrange hiding places, in preparation for the liquidation of the ghetto. The ghetto was not large, and therefore the guard consisted of only three men each night.¹⁰

According to Birkh’s testimony, the local miller Kofko, a non-Jew, tried to convince the local peasants to help the Jews and not cooperate with the Germans. He could not always speak openly, but when he had the opportunity, he told them: “It is your duty to show kindness to the Jews. . . . As long as the Jews survive, it’s certain that you will survive. But you should know that after they liquidate the Jews the Germans will then turn their instruments of death against you.”¹¹

On May 8, 1942, German and Lithuanian soldiers, together with local policemen, surrounded the ghetto. Nobody was permitted to leave the houses. The next morning, the Jews were assembled in the market square. The German officials Leopold Windisch (born 1913), deputy Gebietskommissar in Lida, and Obersturmführer Franz Grünzfelder of the Security Police in Baranowicze were in charge of the ghetto liquidation in Żołudek. They conducted a selection in the market square: 80 Jewish craftsmen were sent to the synagogue inside the ghetto, and the rest were taken and shot near the forest in large pits that had been prepared on the instructions of the mayor. The available sources disagree on the number of victims, but between 1,000 and 2,000 Jews of Żołudek and Orla were killed on May 9, 1942.¹² The craftsmen who remained alive were transferred to the ghetto in Szczuczyn. From there, some of them were subsequently transported to the Sobibór death camp. One week before the liquidation of the ghetto in Żołudek, 140 young Jews were sent to perform forced labor at the railway station of Skribowo (about 9 kilometers [5.6 miles] to the north). Later these Jews were transferred to the Lida ghetto.¹³

Some of the Jews managed to hide inside the ghetto. They saw how local inhabitants came to loot any remaining property. Local policemen also searched for Jews and killed many of them. For example, as Birkh recalled, there were five Jews who hid in a bakery. The local police found them and killed them in an especially cruel manner. She was rescued with the help of the local policeman Janish. Shifmanovicz hid in an oven and later managed to escape to the forests, where he joined a partisan unit.

After the war, a German court in Mainz investigated Leopold Windisch and sentenced him to life imprisonment. Grünzfelder was killed in a partisan ambush in June 1942.¹⁴

SOURCES The yizkor book for the town, edited by Aharon Meirovits, *Sefer Z'eludok ve-Orlovah: Gal'ed le-Zikaron* (Tel Aviv: Va'ad Irgun yots'e Zeludok be-Yisrael uve-Artsot ha-Berit, 1967), includes several firsthand accounts of the ghetto written by survivors. There is also a local Belarusian "Memorial Book" for the region, *Pamiac. Shtutshin rajon* (Minsk: Belarускаia En-cyklapedya, 2001), which includes information on the ghetto.

The Soviet Extraordinary State Commission (ChGK) report for Żołudek can be found in NARB (845-1-8). Further relevant documentation can be found in the German investigative files from the trial of Leopold Windisch (LG-Mai, 3 Ks 1/67).

Siarhej Pivavarchyk and Andrew Koss

NOTES

1. *Pamiac*, p. 530.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 206, 530.
3. Meirovits, *Sefer Z'eludok ve-Orlovah*, pp. 235–236.
4. *Ibid.*, 205–261.
5. *Pamiac*, p. 206.
6. Meirovits, *Sefer Z'eludok ve-Orlovah*, pp. 205–261.
7. *Ibid.*
8. *Ibid.*; *Pamiac*, p. 206.
9. *Pamiac*, p. 206.
10. Meirovits, *Sefer Z'eludok ve-Orlovah*, pp. 205–261.
11. *Ibid.*
12. *Ibid.*; NARB, 845-1-8, p. 31.
13. *Pamiac*, p. 207.
14. See LG-Mai, 3 Ks 1/67.



SECTION VI

REICH COMMISSARIAT UKRAINE (REICHSKOMMISSARIAT UKRAINE)

In July 1941, less than a month after the German invasion of the Soviet Union, Adolf Hitler ordered the establishment of a civil administration to administer much of the occupied western regions of the Soviet Union. These territories, subordinated to Alfred Rosenberg as head of the Reichsministerium für die besetzten Ostgebiete (Reich Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories, RMO), were divided between the two Reichskommissariate, Ostland and Ukraine.

Reichskommissariat Ukraine, ruled by Reichskommissar Erich Koch, was set up in stages between August 1941 and September 1942 as additional territories were handed over from military to civil administration. The territory of Reichskommissariat Ukraine consisted of five Generalkommissariate—Wolhynien und Podolien, Shitomir, Kiev, Nikolajew, Dnjepropetrowsk—and the sixth, partial Kommissariat Taurida, in which apparently no ghettos were established.

Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien consisted mainly of the former Polish województwa poleskie and wołyńskie, the pre-1939 Soviet Kamenets-Podolskii oblast', and small parts of the Vinnitsa and Ternopol' oblasts. Generalkommissariat Shitomir was carved out of the pre-war Soviet Vinnitsa, Zhitomir, Poles'e, and Gomel' oblasts. Generalkommissariat Kiev consisted of the pre-war Soviet Kiev (now Kyiv) and Poltava oblasts. The area of Generalkommissariat Kiev east of the Dnieper River remained under German military jurisdiction until September 1942 but it is also dealt with in this section. Generalkommissariat Nikolajew was composed of the pre-1941 Nikolayev, Kherson, and Kirovograd oblasts. And Generalkommissariat Dnjepropetrowsk was made up of the pre-1941 Dnepropetrovsk and Zaporozh'e oblasts. These last two Generalkommissariate have been combined for convenience in this volume, as they both contained relatively few ghettos and were subjected to similar German occupation policies.



VOLHYNIA AND PODOLIA REGION



Jews are forced to march on the streets of Kamenets-Podolskii to a mass murder site outside the city, August 27, 1941. Gyula Spitz, a member of the Hungarian (Jewish) labor service, clandestinely took this photograph. USHMM WS #28215, COURTESY OF IVAN SVED

VOLHYNIA AND PODOLIA REGION (GENERALKOMMISSARIAT WOLHYNINIEN UND PODOLIEN)

Pre-1941: parts of Vinnitsa, Rovno, Volyn', Kamenets-Podolskii, Ternopol', Brest, and Pinsk oblasts, Ukrainian and Belorussian SSRs; 1941–1944: initially Rear Area, Army Group South, then from September 1941, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien, Reichskommissariat Ukraine; post-1991: parts of western Ukraine and southwestern Belarus

Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien (GkWP) was a German administrative unit within Reichskommissariat Ukraine, stretching from Brześć and Luniniec in the north to Kamenets-Podolskii and Iaryshev in the south. It consisted mainly of the former Polish województwa poleskie and wołyńskie, together with the pre-1939 Soviet Kamenets-Podolskii oblast' and small parts of the Vinnitsa and Ternopol' oblasts.

In 1939, the Kamenets-Podolskii oblast' contained more than 120,000 Jews, and at that time the Polish województwa poleskie and wołyńskie probably held around 350,000 Jews. As the possibilities for flight and evacuation from these western areas of the Soviet Union in late June 1941 were limited, it is likely that more than 400,000 Jews came under German occupation in the territory of what was to become GkWP. This region included a number of cities with Jewish populations of more than 10,000, including Równe, Brześć, Pińsk, Łuck, Dubno, Włodzimierz Wołyński, Proskurov, and Kamenets-Podolskii.

GkWP contained more than 120 separate Rayons in which more than 130 ghettos were established. Most of the ghettos were located in the Rayon centers and became concentration points for the Jewish population of the respective Rayon. The period of ghettoization in GkWP lasted from the summer of 1941 until the summer of 1942. A few ghettos, including those in Kupel', Balin, and Domaczów, were established in the first 10 weeks of the occupation when the region was still under German military administration. On September 1, 1941, a German civil administration took over the newly formed GkWP, with Generalkommissar Schoene, who soon moved to the region's capital in Równe, in charge. The civil administration, in the form of the 26 Gebietskommissars, was primarily responsible for the establishment of ghettos over the ensuing 12 months. The ghetto liquidation Aktions, conducted mainly in the summer and fall of 1942, were organized by units of the Security Police (Sipo) subordinated to the Kommandeur der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD (KdS) in Równe, SS-Sturmbannführer Dr. Karl Pütz. The last ghetto to be liquidated, in Włodzimierz Wołyński, existed until December 1943.

Violence against the Jews started in the first days of the German invasion. In Volhynia (województwo wołyńskie), Shmuel Spector has identified more than 20 places where the local Ukrainian population carried out pogroms against the Jews. Although the motive was often the acquisition of property, many incidents involved acts of murder. For example, in

Tuczyn, about 70 Jews were killed and many homes looted.¹ In Krzemieniec, in response to the Soviet murder of Ukrainian prisoners, Einsatzgruppe C reported that local Ukrainians "killed 130 Jews with clubs in revenge."²

In the summer and fall of 1941, units of the Einsatzgruppen, the Order Police, and the Waffen-SS conducted a number of mass shootings directed mainly against the male Jewish population of the region. It is estimated that almost 100,000 Jews, or about a quarter of the total Jewish population, were murdered in 1941.

At the end of July 1941, Reichsführer-SS (RFSS) Heinrich Himmler ordered SS-Cavalry units to cleanse the Pripjat Marshes of criminal elements, including Jews. Clarifying instructions sent by telegram on August 1 stated: "[A]ll male Jews are to be shot. Jewish women to be driven into the swamps." A few days later, one unit commander, Franz Magill, reported that "driving the women and children into the swamps was not successful, as the swamps were not deep enough for them to sink [and be drowned]."³ Nevertheless, men of the 2nd SS-Cavalry Regiment shot more than 5,000 mostly male Jews from Pińsk in early August. In Dawidgródek, Himmler's instructions were interpreted literally; all the male Jews were shot with the assistance of local non-Jews, but the women and children were driven out of town. After three weeks wandering in the forests, most women and children returned and moved into a ghetto with the few specialist workers who had been spared.⁴

Under military administration in July and August 1941, local police forces were recruited and subordinated initially to the Ortskommandanturen (OKs). The Jewish population was registered, required to wear distinctive armbands, and subjected to forced labor. Jewish Councils (Judenräte) were established and made personally responsible for the implementation of German regulations and demands.⁵ Apart from organizing forced labor details, the Jewish Councils also had to surrender all valuable objects and pay "contributions" demanded by the German authorities. In August 1941, the military administration in the area around Równe collected more than 2,500 kilograms (over 5,500 pounds) of mostly silver items from the local Jewish communities.⁶

A series of larger massacres conducted in the late summer and fall of 1941 were more closely linked to ghettoization. Höherer SS- und Polizeiführer (HSSPF) Russland Süd, SS-Obergruppenführer Friedrich Jeckeln, organized the slaughter of more than 23,000 Jews at the end of August 1941 in Kamenets-Podolskii, including about 11,000 Hungarian Jews, shortly after the establishment of a ghetto in the city center.

Selected craftsmen were then put into a smaller remnant ghetto. In Min'kovtsy, more than 2,000 Jews, including those from surrounding villages, were herded into a ghetto in August, only to be shot by Police Battalion 320 at the end of the month. A local witness, interviewed by Father Patrick Desbois, noted that the 70 or so Jews who survived in hiding were then placed in a single building, marked with a yellow Star of David on the front door.⁷ On November 6 and 7, 1941, in Równe, the capital of GkWP, the HSSPF, Sipo, and Order Police shot about 15,000 Jews.⁸ The victims were mostly those unable to work. The remaining 5,200 Jews were resettled into a ghetto on the edge of the city in December.

Reichskommissar Erich Koch had issued an order on September 5, 1941, to the Generalkommissar and the Gebietskommissars in GkWP that in towns with a notable percentage of Jews, ghettos were to be established that were strictly isolated (*streng abgeschlossen*) and in which no “Aryans” were permitted to reside. Jewish Councils were established to assist in the administration of the ghettos. They were to guarantee quiet (*Ruhe*), order, and security in the ghetto and to provide each day the required Jewish workforce. For every undesired event occurring among the Jews, the Judenrat was to be punished. To support the work of the Judenrat, a Jewish Police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst) could be established. In places with fewer than 200 Jews, no ghettos were to be established. A subsequent order was to be issued on the disposition of these few Jews.⁹

Following this order, a wave of ghettoization started in October to December 1941, with ghettos established in Berezne, Derażne, Kołki, Horochów, and Brześć, among other places. Some of these ghettos were enclosed by a fence, and others remained open. In Bar, the Rayonchef put up posters in mid-December informing the Jews they had only five days to move into one of three separate ghetto areas. One of these ghettos was reserved for Jewish craftsmen.¹⁰ Jews from surrounding



At the main gate of the Krzemieniec ghetto, Jewish children polish the boots of Jewish policemen, as German policemen look on, 1942. The ghetto fence is in the background.

USHMM WS #09525, COURTESY OF IPN



Under the supervision of a German policeman, Jews wearing circular badges are gathered with their possessions on an unpaved street during a deportation from the Krzemieniec ghetto, ca. 1941–1942.

USHMM WS #06392, COURTESY OF JOHN R. DENNIS

villages often were brought into the ghettos at this time, although in some places this concentration did not occur until later. Such transfers were especially devastating for the village Jews, as they had to leave behind much of their property.

The process of ghettoization is exemplified by the situation in Łokacze. In early November 1941, the Jews of the town were forced to move into a ghetto concentrated around one of the synagogues. As a result, about half of the Jewish houses were confiscated. Another 800 Jews from smaller nearby towns and villages were also forced into the ghetto, in addition to the 1,400 Jews already residing in Łokacze. Therefore, at least two families had to share each house, and some people had to live in stables. Furniture was improvised from scavenged materials. The ghetto initially remained open (unfenced), but in early January the Judenrat was instructed to build a fence around the ghetto, which was completed in February. It was 2 meters (6.6 feet) high and fortified by barbed wire. The enclosure of the ghetto immediately rendered trade with the local peasants much more difficult, and punishments for leaving the ghetto also became more severe. The Ukrainian police now began to shoot Jews on sight caught outside the ghetto. After 1 Jew was shot in mid-March 1942, black market prices in the ghetto shot up by 50 percent.¹¹

The Jewish population was to receive only a bare minimum of food supplies; as a result, those not working were likely to starve to death within a few months. Despite the avowed aim of isolating the Jews, a total blockade was impossible to enforce. Many Jews left the ghetto every day for work, and Jewish craftsmen were often the only source of production tools and consumer goods. Death rates from starvation and disease in the smaller ghettos varied considerably, depending mainly on access to extra food supplies. Yet as Christopher Browning has noted, in the eastern ghettos such as that in Brześć, “however scant the food supply and terrible the hunger, mass starvation as in Warsaw and Łódź did not set in.”¹²

The German authorities did not establish a ghetto in Pińsk until relatively late, that is, on May 1, 1942. On April 30, the

Jews were ordered to move into the ghetto within 24 hours. Few belongings were allowed, although people still brought more than was officially permitted. Non-Jewish neighbors took advantage of this sudden evacuation to steal and loot. The assigned area was the poorest and most crowded part of town. It was enclosed by a barbed-wire fence more than 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) in length and had three gates. The ghetto contained 240 wooden one-story houses on 23 streets, with only two water pumps. The allocation of living space per person was about 1.2 square meters (13 square feet), and each room was occupied by at least 10 people.¹³ Health conditions deteriorated drastically, and cases of dysentery, typhus, and starvation-related illnesses soon emerged.¹⁴

There was starvation in the Horochów ghetto, as it was extremely difficult to obtain extra food. People were shot if they tried to leave the ghetto. Skilled workers received 300 grams (10.6 ounces) of bread, while “useless” Jews received only 150 grams (5.3 ounces). Since food was so scarce, 20 youngsters built a tunnel under the fence as a way of getting out of the ghetto. They would take off their yellow stars and forage for food for their families. They mainly tried to barter items with the local population, such as clothing or jewelry, for food. The smells in the ghetto were horrible, and hygiene was almost nonexistent, with no soap, no toothbrushes, and no toothpaste.¹⁵

In some ghettos, Jewish craftsmen such as blacksmiths, tailors, and shoemakers were allowed to operate outside the ghetto area. In a number of ghettos, including those in Kobryń and Kowel, two ghettos were established, one for Jewish craftsmen and their families and another for the rest of the Jews. Some smaller Jewish communities were not ghettoized, but most were moved to the nearest ghetto by the summer of 1942. A few ghettos were literally only formed just prior to the liquidation Aktion, such as that in Powórsk. At least 15 ghettos remained open to the end, and in a few cases, fences were erected just prior to the liquidation, as the ghettos were sealed a few days in advance. At this time Jews were also sent back from labor assignments in the countryside, although these Jews sometimes had the opportunity to escape if they were tipped off in time.

In many ghettos of GkWP, there was a concerted attempt to exploit Jewish labor. In winter, Jews from the ghettos were deployed to clear snow from roads, and in the spring and summer, many were employed in agriculture. There were also deployments of younger able-bodied Jews to forced labor camps, and in some ghettos, such as Brześć, the establishment of workshops to exploit available Jewish labor. Unfortunately, little evidence has survived concerning payment of Jews for forced labor, and often payment came only in the form of extra rations. One source records that in the Kostopol ghetto inmates who worked received 5.60 rubles per day, of which 20 percent was deducted for a “Jewish tax” and another 25 percent as “income tax.”¹⁶

During the wave of ghetto liquidations from May until November 1942, most Jews were shot in pits dug only a short distance from the ghetto. The Jews usually were marched there on foot, with the elderly and sick being taken on carts. Only occasionally was motorized transport employed.¹⁷ Per-

sons who attempted to hide within the ghetto during the roundups were shot on the spot, often by members of the local police. The civil administration organized the ghetto liquidations by ordering pits to be dug in advance, providing transport if required, and disposing of Jewish property after the Aktions. Some members of Gebietskommissariat staff were present during the shootings.¹⁸ As Father Patrick Desbois has shown, many local inhabitants were requisitioned to dig the pits, press down the bodies, collect Jewish clothing, or clean up the execution site afterwards.¹⁹

The Aktions were coordinated by the Security Police, using manpower of the Gendarmerie and the local police (Schutzmannschaft) to round up and escort the Jews. In mid-August 1942, the German Security Police reported, for example, the shooting of 6,402 Jews in Krzemieniec, 3,399 Jews in Kamień Koszyrski, 1,792 Jews in Szumsk, and the killing of 420 Jews in Mikaszewice. Internal correspondence within the German administration indicates that, against the wishes of the Generalkommissar, some larger ghettos were liquidated before those in the surrounding villages. The result was that the village Jews were warned, and some attempted to escape when these smaller ghettos were liquidated, as happened in Turzysk, where the Aktion took place just a few days after the liquidation of the Kowel ghetto. The ghetto liquidations were discussed at the meeting of Gebietskommissars held in Łuck on August 29–31, 1942. Here it was explained that the planned 100 percent clearance was on the orders of Reichskommissar Erich Koch. A “stay of execution” for two months was permitted only for small groups of vital workers, not to exceed 500 men. These small remnants were to disappear within this period. In Podolia, more than 2,000 able-bodied Jews were selected out from the executions in August and were sent to work in the camps along Transit Highway 4 (Durchgangsstrasse, or DG IV), which were liquidated in turn during 1943.²⁰

Shortly before he committed suicide when under investigation for his crimes in the early 1960s, SS-Sturmscharführer Wilhelm Rasp, who was in charge of the outpost (Aussendienststelle) of the Security Police in Pińsk, provided a detailed account of the ghetto liquidations he organized in the fall of 1942. Over a three-month period from August to November, Rasp conducted Aktions against the ghettos in Janów, Łachwa, Stolin, Dawidgródek, Wysock, Łuniniec, and Pińsk, as well as other smaller rural ghettos, such as that in Mokrowo, during which more than 20,000 Jews were murdered. A combined force of Security Police, Gendarmerie, and local police was employed for most Aktions, with members of the Security Police generally conducting the shooting at the pits. According to Rasp, the orders for the ghetto liquidations came from Berlin and were passed on to him by his superiors, Kds Pütz and Commander of the Security Police and SD (BdS) Dr. Max Thomas.²¹

In order to facilitate the killing process, the Germans developed at least five regional killing centers in GkWP, where the Jews were brought from several different ghettos to be killed at one site. The best known of these is probably Bronna Góra, where Jews from Antopol, Brześć, Kobryń, and other ghettos



Jews are assembled for deportation in Brześć, ca. October 1942. USHMM WS #74322, COURTESY OF ŻIH

were murdered between July and October 1942. Other concentration points included Sarny, Manivtsy (Gebiet Antoniny), Starokonstantinov, and Iarmolintsy, where Jews from several ghettos were concentrated prior to being killed. This procedure entailed some risks for the Germans, as the increased layer of concentration could result in some delay, presenting opportunities for resistance. There was a mass breakout from the improvised camp in Sarny and also some brutal resistance among the Jews held in a former barracks at Iarmolintsy.

The Jews of the ghetto in Serniki had some warning of an impending Aktion in the fall of 1942, as most of the other ghettos nearby had by then already been liquidated. Among the warning signs was the fact that Jews were no longer sent to work outside the ghetto and that the owners of items given to Jewish craftsmen for repair came to collect them, regardless of whether the work had been finished. By early September there were also rumors that pits were being prepared nearby. Then local policemen, reinforced by the Gendarmerie, surrounded the ghetto at night. Assisted by the warnings and the close proximity of dense forests, 272 Jews managed to escape from the Serniki ghetto on the eve of the liquidation Aktion.²²

In GkWP, some Jews escaped from the ghettos and joined the Soviet partisans, while others hid in the countryside, lived on the Aryan side, or were hidden by non-Jews. Some Jews from Podolia escaped to the Romanian-occupied zone (Transnistria), where survival chances were much greater by the end of 1942. The attacks of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) in 1943, directed mainly at the ethnic cleansing of Poles from Volhynia, also made it harder for Jews to survive in hiding, and several hundred were killed by members of the UPA. Detailed figures for the numbers of survivors in GkWP are not available, but most estimates are around 5 percent or less.

SOURCES Secondary works dealing specifically with the fate of the Jews and German anti-Jewish policies in GkWP include the following: I.S. Finkel'shtein, "Massovoe unichtozhenie evreev Podolii natsistskimi palachami v 1941–1944 gg.," in *Katastrofa i soprotivlenie ukrainskogo evreistva (1941–1944)*

(Kiev, 1999), pp. 51–87; Dieter Pohl, "The Murder of Ukraine's Jews under German Military Administration and in the Reich Commissariat Ukraine," in Ray Brandon and Wendy Lower, eds., *The Shoah in Ukraine: History, Testimony, Memorialization* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press in association with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2008); Alexander Kruglov, *The Losses Suffered by Ukrainian Jews in 1941–1944* (Kharkov: Tarbut Laam, 2005); Shmuel Spector, *The Holocaust of Volhynian Jews, 1941–44* (Jerusalem: Achva Press, 1990); Martin Dean, "Lebensbedingungen, Zwangsarbeit und Überlebenskampf in den kleinen Ghettos: Fallstudien aus den Generalkommissariaten Weissruthenien und Wolhynien-Podolien," in Christoph Dieckmann and Babette Quinkert, eds., *Im Ghetto 1939–1945: Neue Forschung zu Alltag und Umfeld. Beiträge zur Geschichte des Nationalsozialismus*, vol. 25 (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2009), pp. 54–73; and Stephen Pallavini, "The Liquidation of the Jews of Polesie" (Ph.D. diss., Sydney University, 2003).

Reference works useful in helping to identify ghetto sites include: 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); Il'ja Al'tmann, *Opfer des Hasses: Der Holocaust in der UdSSR 1941–1945* (Zurich: Gleichen, 2008); *Handbuch der Lager, Gefängnisse und Ghettos auf dem besetzten Territorium der Ukraine (1941–1944)* (Kiev: Staatskomitee der Archiven der Ukraine, 2000); Vladimir Adamushko et al., eds., *Handbuch der Haftstätten für die Zivilbevölkerung auf dem besetzten Territorium von Belarus 1941–1944* (Minsk: State Committee for Archives and Documentary Collections of the Republic of Belarus, 2001); Christian Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde: Die deutsche Wirtschafts- und Vernichtungspolitik in Weissrussland 1941 bis 1944* (Hamburg: HIS, 1999); and Shmuel Spector, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 5, *Volhynia and Polesie* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1990).

Relevant collections of testimonies and other primary sources include the following: Joshua Rubenstein and Ilya Altman, eds., *The Unknown Black Book: The Holocaust in the German-Occupied Soviet Territories* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press in association with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2007); Father Patrick Desbois, *The Holocaust by Bullets* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2008); Ilya Ehrenburg and Vasily Grossman, *The Complete Black Book of Russian Jewry* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2002); Pinchas Agmon and Iosif Maliar, eds., *V ogne katastrofy (Shoa) na Ukraine: Svidetel'stva evreev-uznikov kontslagerei i getto, uchastnikov partizanskogo dvizheniia* (Kirzatz-Heim, Israel: Izdatel'stvo Beit lokhamei kha-gettaot, 1998); Samuil Gil', *Krov' ikh i segodnia govorit: O katastrofe i geroizme evreev v gorodakh i mestechkakh Ukrainy* (New York: n.p., 1995); A.F. Vysotsky et al., eds., *Nazi Crimes in Ukraine, 1941–1944: Documents and Materials* (Kiev: Naukova Dumka, 1987); and Boris Zabarko, ed., *Holocaust in the Ukraine* (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 2005).

The video and oral testimonies of Jewish survivors and other witnesses taken by the USC Shoah Foundation Institute (VHF), Father Patrick Desbois (YIU), and others since 1990 have added considerably to our knowledge of ghettoization in this region. The documentation of several previously unregistered ghettos has been possible only with the assistance of these recently available materials. Relevant documentation

1320 REICH COMMISSARIAT UKRAINE

on ghettoization in GkWP can be found in the following archives: AUKGBRBGO; BA-BL; BA-L; BA-MA; DARO; DATO; DAVINO; DAVO; GABO; GARF; IPN; NARA; NARB; PAAKag; RGVA; TsDAHOU; TsDAVO; USHMM; VHAP; VHF; YIU; and YVA.

Martin Dean

NOTES

1. AŽIH, 301/397; GARF, 7021-71-68, p. 4.
2. BA-BL, R 58/214, Ereignismeldung (EM) UdSSR no. 28, July 20, 1941. See also GARF, 7021-75-6, pp. 13 reverse, 20, and 49. The killings were probably instigated by the members of the Einsatzgruppe.
3. BA-MA, RS 3-8/36 Himmler Order to SS-Kav. Rgt. 2, August 1, 1941; VHAP, KdO. Stab RFSS, Report of Magill, SS-Kav. Rgt. 2, on the Pripiat Aktion from July 27 to August 11, 1941.
4. *Memorial Book of David-Horodok* (Oak Park, MI: B. Chase, 1981), pp. 62–63, 91–93, 109.
5. GABO, 2135-2-127, p. 3.
6. BA-BL, R 2104/21 (Reichshauptkasse Beutestelle), p. 256.
7. YIU, Témoin no. 864.
8. BA-BL, R 58/218, EM no. 143.
9. DAZO, 1151-1-22, pp. 1–5, Reichskommissar to Generalkommissar and Gebietskommissars, September 5, 1941.
10. DAVINO, 1358-1c-1.
11. Michael Diment, *The Lone Survivor: A Diary of the Lukacze Ghetto and Svyntukhy, Ukraine* (New York: Holocaust Library, 1992), pp. 38–72.
12. Christopher R. Browning, *Nazi Policy, Jewish Workers, German Killers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 131.
13. Werner Müller, ed., *Aus dem Feuer gerissen: Die Geschichte des Pjotr Ruwinowitsch Rabzewitsch aus Pinsk* (Cologne: Dietrich, 2001); Nahum Boneh, “Pinsk Jews in the Ghetto,” *Yalkut Moresbet*, no. 64 (November 1997).
14. Tikva Fatal Knaani, “The Jews of Pinsk, 1939–1943, through the Prism of New Documentation,” *Yad Vashem Studies* 29 (2001): 149–182, here pp. 172–173.
15. Personal interview with Charlene Schiff, June 19, 2003.
16. AŽIH, 301/1268.
17. DAVO, R2-1-196, pp. 218a–218b, report to Generalkommissar on gasoline supplies for the “special treatment” of Jews in Gebiet Luzk, August 27, 1942.
18. GABO, 195-1-300, p. 11; BA-L, ZStL, II 204 AR-Z 393/59 (B 162/4952-60), statements of Wilhelm Rasp, 1961–1962.
19. Desbois, *The Holocaust by Bullets*, p. 97.
20. IPN, GKŚZpNP Zbiór zespołów szcztatkowych jednostek SS i Policji, sygn. 77, pp. 2–3, 7–9.
21. BA-L, B 162/4952-60, statements of Wilhelm Rasp.
22. Meylekh Bakalchuk-Felin, *Zikbroynes fun a Yidishn partisan* (Buenos Aires, 1958), pp. 9–19.



ALEKSANDRIA

Pre-1939: Aleksandria, village, województwo wołyńskie, Poland; 1939–1941 and 1944–1990: Aleksandriia, Rovno raion, Rovno oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Alexandria, Rayon center, Gebiet Rowno, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; post-1991: Oleksandriia, Rivne oblast', Ukraine

Aleksandria is located about 13 kilometers (8 miles) northeast of Równe. According to the census of 1921, 1,293 Jews lived in Aleksandria; assuming a rate of natural increase of 0.9 percent per year, more than 1,500 Jews would have been living there in mid-1941. After the German invasion of the USSR on June 22, 1941, some Jews were able to evacuate to the east, leaving more than 1,100 Jews behind in Aleksandria at the start of the German occupation.

Units of the German 6th Army occupied Aleksandria on June 29, 1941. In July and August 1941, the village was administered by a military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur) and after September 1941 by the German civil administration. Aleksandria was included within Gebiet Rowno, and Regierungsrat Beer was appointed as the Gebietskommissar.¹ The village had a German Gendarmerie post, which also supervised a squad of local Ukrainian police. The anti-Jewish Aktions in Aleksandria were carried out by a squad of the Security Police and SD from Równe with the assistance of the local German Gendarmerie and Ukrainian police.

On July 1–4, 1941, Ukrainian nationalists carried out anti-Jewish pogroms, including the burning of synagogues and the plundering of Jewish homes. They also murdered several Jews. On July 31, 1941, pro-Soviet activists were seized and killed along with 85 Jews; the massacre was carried out by a squad of the Security Police and SD based in Równe (detached from the commander of the Security Police [KdS] in Lublin) with the assistance of the Ukrainian local police.

In the summer and fall of 1941, the German occupying forces implemented a number of discriminatory measures against the Jews in Aleksandria: a Jewish Council (Judenrat) with nine members was appointed; Jews were ordered to wear distinguishing marks (initially the Star of David, then later a yellow circle); they were assigned to perform hard labor, sometimes without pay; and they were forbidden to leave the confines of the village. Jews were also subjected to regular beatings and robbery by the Ukrainian police.

In late July or August 1942, the Germans ordered all the local Jews (about 1,080 people) to be concentrated in a ghetto, which was established on a side street and surrounded by a fence and barbed wire along the banks of the Horyn River.² Conditions in the ghetto were appalling. Children and the elderly died of hunger. Anyone caught bringing food into the ghetto was immediately shot. Every day the Germans drove groups of Jews out into the countryside to work. Any Jews caught not wearing their yellow patch might be shot on the spot, or if captured, they faced a fine of 50 Reichsmark (RM).³

On Yom Kippur (September 21, 1942), the ghetto was in mourning because the men had been taken out to work and did

not return. On that day a Security Police unit, together with members of the Ukrainian police, arrived in town to dig pits in preparation for an Aktion. The Ukrainian and German police surrounded the ghetto, and no one was allowed out.

Over the following days, the Security Police detachment from Równe, assisted by the Ukrainian police and German Gendarmerie, shot 903 Jews from the Aleksandria ghetto in a nearby forest.⁴ On the eve of the liquidation of the ghetto, Rywa Sparberg was among about 100 Jews who managed to flee, but 85 of them were caught later by the Ukrainian and German police and murdered in a mass shooting on October 28, 1942.

SOURCES The yizkor book contains much information about the Jewish community of Aleksandria: *Natan Livneh* Shemu'el Yisre'eli, *Pinkas ha-kehilah Aleksandriya* (Tel Aviv, 1972). There is also a brief article on the history of the town in Shmuel Spector, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 5, *Volhynia and Polesie* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1990), pp. 43–45.

Documents regarding the destruction of Aleksandria's Jews can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/451); DARO (R534-1-4); GARF (7021-71-41); and YVA.

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trans. Ilya Bourzman

NOTES

1. BA-BL, BDC, SSHO 2432, Berlin Document Center, Organisationsplan der besetzten Ostgebiete nach dem Stand vom 10. März 1942, hg. vom Chef der Ordnungspolizei, Berlin, March 13, 1942.
2. GARF, 7021-71-41, pp. 1 and verso, gives the date of mid-August; AŻIH, 301/451, testimony of Rywa and Cypa Sparberg, gives the date of July 22, 1942; see also DARO, R534-1-4, pp. 20, 31, which gives the date of September 1942.
3. AŻIH, 301/451.
4. GARF, 7021-71-41, pp. 91–92.

ANNOPOL'

Pre-1941: Annopol', village, Slavuta raion, Kamenets-Podolskii oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Annopol, Rayon Slavuta, Gebiet Schebetowka, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; post-1991: Hannopil', Slavuta raion, Kbmel'nyts'kyi oblast', Ukraine

Annopol' is located 50 kilometers (31 miles) east-southeast of Równe. According to the 1926 census, there were 2,832 residents of Annopol', of whom 1,278 were Jews (45 percent). In the 1920s and 1930s, the number of Jews in the village decreased significantly, due to the effects of the Holodomor famine of 1932–1933 and the resettlement of Jews to other regions.

After the German invasion of the USSR on June 22, 1941, part of the Jewish population fled to the east, and others joined the Red Army. The rapid advance of the German troops forced some of those trying to flee to return to the village. About 800 Jews remained in Annopol' at the start of the German occupation.

Units of the German army occupied Annopol' on July 7, 1941. In July and August 1941, a German military administration (Ortskommandantur) ran the village. The Germans appointed a village elder and recruited a Ukrainian auxiliary police force. In September 1941, authority was transferred to a German civil administration. Annopol' was incorporated into Gebiet Schepetowka, in Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien. German Gendarmes were not stationed permanently in Annopol'. Instead, the Ukrainian policemen based there were subordinated to the head of the Ukrainian police in Slavuta.

In the summer and fall of 1941, the German occupying forces introduced a series of antisemitic measures in Ukraine. All Jews had to wear yellow patches sewn onto the back and front of their clothes to distinguish them from the non-Jewish population.¹ They were forced to perform heavy labor with little or no pay and were prohibited from leaving the limits of the village.

In the summer and fall of 1941, there were at least two anti-Jewish Aktions in the village. In the first, local police beat Jews and arrested about 20 young Jewish men. Some of them managed to escape, but those that remained were shot on the outskirts of the village, on the road to the nearby village of Ponora. In a second Aktion, in late summer or the fall of 1941, members of the local Ukrainian police, probably in cooperation with men of the German 45th Reserve Police Battalion, shot more than 100 Jews in the quarry of a brick-making factory.² Jewish survivor Semen Velinger recalled: "The police from the villages and our Annopol' police . . . caught all the [Jewish] men of various ages including our rabbi. There was a primitive brick factory and there were quarries there, and they took them to those quarries and shot them there—200 people." He noted that after this Aktion the entire village fell silent, as the Ukrainians also had been shaken by the brutality of the events.³

In the fall of 1941, the German authorities established an open ghetto in the village located on one street where Jews already lived.⁴ Dozens of Jews from nearby villages, including Dovzhki, Klepachi, Velikii Sknit, and Golovli, were resettled there along with the Jews of Annopol', which resulted in considerable overcrowding.⁵ The Jews in the ghetto were forced to clear snow from the streets, work on road construction, and clean up the grounds of an alcohol distillery.

On March 2, 1942, the Germans liquidated the ghetto. Velinger recalls: "One fine day, they forced us out of our homes; they didn't let us take anything, but ordered everyone to go to the market square. There were a few carts waiting, they put the children in the carts and off we went to Slavuta."⁶ The German Gendarmerie and Ukrainian police escorted the Jews on the way. On arrival, the elderly and handicapped were singled out and shot immediately. The remaining Jews were put into the Slavuta ghetto. Then on June 25, 1942, the Germans and their collaborators shot them together with other Jews from the region.⁷ A detachment of the Security Police and SD from Starokonstantinov organized the mass shooting. The Ukrainian police selected

the killing site and guarded the victims on the way to their deaths.

Several Jewish craftsmen remained in Annopol' after the transfer of the Jews to Slavuta. Of these, 3 men and 1 woman ran away on August 10, 1942. In retaliation, the German Gendarmerie shot 10 Jews two days later; together with them, 4 Jewish women were shot for having infectious diseases and another 4 for alleged "laziness."⁸

SOURCES The testimony of Semen Velinger can be found in: VHF (# 44509). A published version of this testimony and also that of Sofia Malinskaia can be found in D. Hoshkis, *Nazaboena rana* (Slavuta-Netishyn-Iziaslav, 1996).

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trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. VHF, # 44509, testimony of Semen Velinger.
2. Testimony of Sofia Malinskaia (September 1994) published in Hoshkis, *Nazaboena rana*, p. 48. This source dates the second Aktion in August 1941.
3. VHF, # 44509. This source dates the second Aktion in October 1941 and states that no Germans participated. It also indicates that there was another Aktion in December 1941 in which a beautiful young woman was buried alive on the orders of the commandant in Annopol'. See also Hoshkis, *Nazaboena rana*, p. 38, for another version of Velinger's testimony.
4. VHF, # 44509; this source dates the establishment of the ghetto in September or October 1941. Another source dates it in November.
5. Hoshkis, *Nazaboena rana*, p. 49.
6. VHF, # 44509.
7. Hoshkis, *Nazaboena rana*, p. 50.
8. IPN, Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu, Zbiór zespołów szczątkowych jednostek SS i policji, sygn. 77, p. 3, report of Gend.-Gebietsführer Schepetowka, August 13, 1942.

ANTOPOL

Pre-1939: Antopol, town, województwo poleskie, Poland; 1939–1941 and 1944–1990: Antopol', Brest oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Antopol, Rayon center, Gebiet Kobryn, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; post-1991: Antopol', Bera's'tse voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Antopol is located 70 kilometers (43.5 miles) to the east of Brześć. On the eve of World War II, Antopol had about 4,000 inhabitants, of whom as many as 3,000 were Jews.¹

In accordance with the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, the town of Antopol was annexed by the Soviet Union in September 1939. German military forces occupied Antopol on June 24, 1941, only two days after their invasion of the Soviet Union, giving local Jews almost no chance to flee. A few weeks after their arrival in Antopol, the Germans appointed an ethnic German (*Volksdeutscher*), a former postman named Chrominski, as head of the Rayon. They instructed him to organize a

local police force. According to survivor accounts, he had not been hostile towards the Jews before the war, but now he became an enthusiastic antisemite, and his police unit mostly followed suit.

The local police and the Germans heaped other abuses on the Jews. Every Jew was required to wear a Star of David armband. The local police would indiscriminately whip Jews, especially when SS men were present. The Germans made Jews wash their cars, and they or the police would beat them mercilessly while they did so. The Germans also assembled the Christian population in the Orthodox Church in the center of town and instructed them to avoid social and business contact with Jews. Posters bearing antisemitic slogans were hung in the marketplace.²

A Judenrat was formed, with Rozenberg at its head. The other members were Binyomin Volf, Zalmen Altvarg, Rubinshteyn, and Rabbi Volkin. The latter allowed the Judenrat to meet in his house but otherwise declined to participate in its activities. The others were chosen because they were wealthy or important members of the community. A small Jewish police force, with Borukh Hersh Rabinovitch at its head, was also formed; its main task was to ensure the Jews obeyed German orders. A series of these followed: Jews had to wear yellow patches on the front and back of their clothes instead of the Star of David armbands; Jews were forbidden to hold public meetings and do business with Aryans; the Judenrat had to collect a large sum of money and goods from the Jews and hand it over to the Germans.³

From the very beginning of the occupation, the Germans tried to reduce contact between Jews and non-Jews. Later, the Jews living on one side of Pińsk and Kobryń Streets (Antopol's two main thoroughfares) were forced to leave their homes and relocate to the other side of the streets, creating an open ghetto of sorts. They were also forbidden to walk on the sidewalks. The open ghetto was probably set up in August 1941.⁴

At the end of August 1941, German police surrounded the open ghetto. They ordered the Judenrat to collect and hand over gold, silver, jewels, furs, leather goods, Polish or Soviet currency, and various food items. Simultaneously, all able-bodied men were ordered to assemble in the marketplace to be taken to work. Many Jews tried to hide. The German forces then arrested more than 200 men in the marketplace and held them in the "Polish Synagogue." They were then taken outside the town to pits dug by local peasants and shot.⁵ According to a report by the 8th Company, 3rd Battalion, Polizei-Regiment Mitte (Order Police), this unit shot 257 Jews and 8 Communists on August 28, 1941, in Antopol after gathering the men together and searching for those who were hiding.⁶ The Jews were told that these men had been sent to a forced labor camp and that their relatives could send them packages of food weighing up to 5 kilograms (11 pounds). Presumably the Germans or the local police confiscated the food.

From the summer of 1941 through the spring of 1942, groups of Jews arrived in Antopol from various towns and villages in the surrounding area, including Szereszów, Zabinka, Horodec, and the Białowieża Forest. Of some 1,000 Jews who

arrived from Szereszów in the late summer of 1941, about 500 were permitted to remain in Antopol rather than continue their painful odyssey, following appeals by the Judenrat.⁷

In early April 1942, the Gebietskommissar in Kobryń ordered the establishment of an enclosed ghetto in Antopol on Zaniewska and Gruszowa Streets. Gentiles had to move out of this area, and the Jews were given only 20 minutes to move in, so that they had to leave most of their possessions behind. About 2,500 Jews moved into the ghetto, including about 100 Jews from Horodec. They were packed into small houses like herring in a barrel.⁸ In June 1942, the Judenrat was ordered to produce lists of Jewish skilled workers and able-bodied men. On this basis the ghetto was divided into two parts: Ghetto A for "useful Jews" and Ghetto B for "non-useful Jews." Residents of Ghetto A received special papers.⁹

Cultural life in the ghetto all but ceased. The old wooden synagogue had been converted into a grain silo by the Soviets and remained one under the Germans. The brick synagogue, which had been completed in 1888, continued to function, but only a few people still came there to pray. Antopol's two Jewish doctors continued to provide medical services for the residents of the ghetto; they frequently were called out of the ghetto to tend to ill non-Jews in the town and in the surrounding villages. The other able-bodied men and women were taken out of the ghetto every morning under the supervision of the Ukrainian police as well as Jewish Police. Most men worked as manual laborers, building and fixing roads or helping the peasants with agricultural tasks. Women worked cleaning and keeping house for the Germans.¹⁰

In July 1942, Ghetto B was liquidated. It was surrounded by local police and members of the SS, and its residents (about 1,000 people) were taken to the train station, where they were put on trains carrying Jews from other towns—Janów, Drohiczyn, and others—and sent to Bronna Góra, where they were shot. Immediately after the liquidation Aktion, Ghetto A was more tightly enclosed, with a guard of local police stationed at the gate.¹¹

In August 1942, the ghetto once again was surrounded by armed men. By this time, many of the ghetto's Jews had constructed hiding places in concealed basements, behind double walls, and in other spaces. Thus the Germans had to conduct an active search for Jews inside the ghetto. They found several hundred and shot them outside the town. About 300 Jews remained in the ghetto.¹²

On October 15, in the evening, the mayor summoned the Judenrat and Jewish Police. They were immediately arrested and executed. The next day, in the early hours of the morning, the ghetto was surrounded once more. Because of the need to search for Jews in hiding, the Aktion lasted for four days. A handful of Jews managed to escape, but the Germans and their collaborators murdered the vast majority at the Perwomaiskoe cemetery east of the town. People were stripped naked, ordered to lie facedown in a pit, and shot with automatic weapons.¹³ Among the units participating in the ghetto liquidation was the 3rd Squadron of Polizei-Reiterabteilung I, a mounted police detachment. One member of this unit was

killed by a stray bullet fired at a Jewish woman who was attempting to flee while the ghetto was being searched.¹⁴

SOURCES The Antopol yizkor book, *Antopol: Antipolye sefer-yizkor* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Antopol be-Yisrael uve-Amerikah, 1972), edited by Benzion H. Ayalon, contains several accounts in Hebrew and Yiddish dealing with the war years. Most of the pertinent historical information can be found in those written by Gitl and Pinhas Tshernyak. *Antopol: Mi-voldoteha shel kehila abat be-Polesyah* (Tel Aviv, 1967), edited by Yosef ben Israel Levine, is a general history of the town's Jewish community, focusing on religious life. However, it contains almost no information about the war years. A brief article on the history of the Jewish community can be found in Shmuel Spector, ed., *Pinkas ba-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 5, *Vólbynia and Polesie* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1990), pp. 219–221.

There is also relevant documentation, including witness testimonies, in the following archives: AŽIH (301/2212); BA-L (ZStL, 204 AR-Z 369/63); GABO (514-1-255); GARF (7021-83-8); USHMM (RG-48.004M); and YVA (O-4/21, O-22/46).

Andrew Koss

NOTES

1. AŽIH, 301/2212, testimony of Benjamin Wolf.
2. G. Tshernyak, p. 340; P. Tshernyak, "Antopoler Geto," pp. 561–562—both in Levine, *Antopol*.
3. G. Tshernyak, p. 340; P. Tshernyak, "Antopoler Geto," p. 562.
4. G. Tshernyak, pp. 340–341; P. Tshernyak, "Antopoler Geto," p. 563.
5. G. Tshernyak, p. 346; P. Tshernyak, "Antopoler Geto," pp. 562–563. The yizkor book dates this incident in October 1941, whereas AŽIH, 301/2212, dates it at the end of July. However, the descriptions suggest that it was almost certainly the same incident described in the German police report mentioned below, which took place at the end of August 1941.
6. USHMM, RG-48.004M (VHAP), reel 2, fr. 201217, report of 8./III./Pol. Rgt. Mitte, August 30, 1941.
7. G. Tshernyak, p. 341; P. Tshernyak, "Antopoler Geto," p. 564; AŽIH, 301/2212; on the expulsion of the Jews from Szereszów and their subsequent fate, see Moishe Kantorowitz, *My Mother's Bequest: From Shershev to Auschwitz to New-foundland* (Canada: Moishe Kantorowitz, 2004), pp. 228–258.
8. AŽIH, 301/2212. GARF, 7021-83-8, p. 1a, also dates the establishment of the ghetto in the spring of 1942, giving the number of 2,500 ghetto inmates. G. Tshernyak's account, however, states that the ghetto was enclosed earlier, probably in late 1941 ("Antopoler Geto," p. 341).
9. AŽIH, 301/2212, GARF, 7021-83-8, p. 1a; G. Tshernyak, p. 341; P. Tshernyak, "Antopoler Geto," pp. 563–564.
10. G. Tshernyak, pp. 342–343; P. Tshernyak, "Pe'ulato shel rofe mahteret me-Antopol," in Ayalon, *Antopol: Antipolye sefer-yizkor*, p. 366.
11. G. Tshernyak, pp. 347–348; P. Tshernyak, "Antopoler Geto," pp. 564–565; Sta. Bielefeld 5 Js 703/70, Vermerk, October 26, 1973.
12. G. Tshernyak, pp. 348–349; Shoshanah Kats, "Haye ha-eymim sheli be-gito Antopol ve-hatsalti," in B. Ayalon,

Antopol: Antipolye sefer-yizkor, p. 360; P. Tshernyak, "Antopoler Geto," p. 565.

13. G. Tshernyak, p. 350; P. Tshernyak, "Di yorn," p. 552; P. Tshernyak, "Antopoler Geto," pp. 566–567; GARF, 7021-83-8, p. 1a, dates the ghetto liquidation on November 15, 1942.

14. BA-L, B 162/204 AR-Z 369/63 (investigation of Hahn), vol. 1, pp. 213–216.

BALIN

Pre-1941: Balin, village, Smotrich raion, Kamenets-Podolskii oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Rayon and Gebiet Dunajewzy, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; post-1991: Dunavitsi raion, Kbmel'nyts'kyi oblast', Ukraine

Balin is located 325 kilometers (202 miles) west-southwest of Kiev and about 15 kilometers (9.3 miles) north-northeast of Kamenets-Podolskii. According to the 1897 census, Balin had a Jewish population of 357 (22 percent of the total).

German armed forces occupied the village on July 10, 1941, almost three weeks after their invasion of the USSR on June 22. During that time, a small number of Jews managed to evacuate to the eastern regions of the country, and some men were drafted or volunteered for military service in the Red Army.

In July and August 1941, a German military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur) was in charge of the village, and it appointed a village elder (starosta) and organized an auxiliary police force. In September 1941, authority was transferred to a German civil administration. Balin became part of Rayon and Gebiet Dunajewzy, which in turn was part of Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien.

According to the testimony of Ilya Kelmanovich, some form of ghetto (probably an open ghetto) had been established in Balin by August 1941. The Jews had to wear yellow badges, and they were not allowed to leave the village. If they were found outside the village without permission, they were shot. The Ukrainian police forced Jews to perform hard labor every day. Most people had to work in the large factory in Balin. The police also robbed the Jews; if Jews did not hand over all their gold and other valuables, they were beaten. In early 1942, the police started rounding up Jews and taking them away for work somewhere near Dunaevtsy.¹

The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life mentions the murder of about 150 Jews from Balin in the fall of 1941, but most sources date the destruction of the Jewish population in 1942. According to Ilya Kelmanovich, the mass murders started in the spring of 1942. A pit was dug not far from Balin. The police would collect Jewish men in the mornings and tell them they were going to work, but instead they would be taken to the pit and shot. In the spring or summer of 1942, some Jews were rounded up and taken to a camp at Kamenets-Podolskii. Kelmanovich decided to go into hiding but was initially turned away by a Ukrainian acquaintance of his father from before the war, as the man was scared of the punishment he might face for assisting a Jew.

Therefore, Kelmanovich left Balin and found refuge, for a time at least, with a Ukrainian woman in another village.²

On September 5, 1942, German and Ukrainian police liquidated the ghetto in Balin: the Jews who were not able to work were shot in a clay pit (probably the one described by Kelmanovich), and the craftsmen were herded to the ghetto of Kamenets-Podolskii, where they too were subsequently murdered. It is estimated that about 150 to 250 Jews were murdered in Balin altogether.³

SOURCES Information about Balin's Jewish population can be found in these publications: Avraham Rozen, H. 'Sarig, and Y. Bernshtain, eds., *Kaminitz-Podolsk u-sevivatah: Sefer-zikaron li-kebilot Yisrael ba-'arim Kaminitz-Podolsk, Balin, Dunitzits, Zambob, Zvanits, Minkovits, Smotrits', Frampol, Kupin, Kiteygorod she-bushmedu bi-yeme ha-Sho'ah 'al-yede ha-Natsim bi-shevat 701* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Kamenets-Podolsk u-sevivatah be-Yisrael, 1965); *Kaminitz-Podolsk and Its Environs* (Bergenfield, NJ: Avotaynu Foundation, 1999); "Balin," in *Rossiiskaia Evreiskaia Entsiklopediia* (Moscow: Russian Academy of Natural Sciences, Jewish Encyclopedia Research Center, 2000), 4:76–77; 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. 82.

Documentation regarding the annihilation of the Jews of Balin can be found in the following archives: DAKhO; GARF (7021-64-815); VHF (# 15814); and YVA (M-52/179).

Alexander Kruglov
trans. Kathleen Luft and Gina Caruso

NOTES

1. VHF, # 15814, testimony of Ilya Kelmanovich.
2. Ibid.
3. Testimony of Ida Kats, in *Vestnik. Vypusk 2. Liudi ostaiutsia liud'mi. Svidetel'stva ochevidtsev* (Chernowitz, 1992), p. 50. According to ChGK documents (GARF, 7021-64-815, p. 89), 211 people were killed in Balin. According to Report 87 of the Board of the Khmel'nitskii Office of the Ukrainian Cultural Foundation, dated February 2, 1989 (archives of the author—PAAKru), 150 Jews were shot in a clay pit 0.6 kilometers (656 yards) north of the village. According to Report No. 02/134 ("Vedomost' o zakhroneniakh sovetskikh grazhdan evreiskoi natsional'nosti v period vremennoi okkupatsii fashistami Khmel'nitskoi oblasti") of the Khmel'nitskii Oblast' Nongovernmental Organization for Conservation of Historical and Cultural Monuments, dated October 11, 1990 (PAAKru), 264 Jews were killed in Balin during the occupation.

BAR

Pre-1941: Bar, town and raion center, Vinnytsia oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Rayon and Gebiet center, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; post-1991: Vinnytsia oblast', Ukraine

Bar is located about 90 kilometers (56 miles) southeast of Khmel'nitskii. In 1939, there were 3,869 Jews living in Bar (41 percent of the population).

After the German attack on the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, a number of Jewish men were drafted into or volunteered for the Red Army. A small number of Jews also managed to evacuate to the east. As a result, there were fewer than 3,000 Jews in Bar at the start of the German occupation.

Units of the German 17th Army occupied Bar on July 16, 1941. In July and August 1941, the town was run by the office of the local military commandant (Ortskommandantur II/757), which established a Rayon administration and an auxiliary police force recruited from local non-Jewish inhabitants. In September 1941, authority was handed over to a German civil administration. Bar became the administrative center of the Gebiet, which also included the neighboring Rayons (subdistricts) of Iaryshev, Novaia Ushitsa, and Murowanny Kurilowzy.¹

The Gebietskommissar was Franz Schwarz, and his deputy was Hans Eberle.² The German Gendarmerie-Gebietsführer based in Bar was initially Leutnant Richard Schulz, who in May 1942 became the deputy of the SS- und Polizei Gebietsführer, Gendarmerie Hauptmann Willi Petrich.³ Several Gendarmerie posts throughout the Gebiet were subordinated to him, including the one in Bar. In turn, the post in Bar had a Ukrainian police force under its control. The chief of the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police, Grigorii Vasil'evich Andrusiv, was appointed in July 1941. Before the war, he had been head guard at a sugar refinery. His deputy was Aleksei Keba.⁴ Andrusiv had seven policemen under his command at the end of July 1941.⁵ The head of the Rayon administration (Rayonchef) was a former middle school teacher, Vladimir Kol'vepyrk.⁶

The Aktions against the Jews in Gebiet Bar were organized in 1942 by a detachment of Security Police (Sipo/SD) based at the outpost in Kamenets-Podolskii. The detachment was established in May 1942 and headed by SS-Hauptscharführer Andreas Fermer. The German Gendarmerie and Ukrainian policemen also played an active role in the anti-Jewish operations.

Almost immediately upon occupying the town, the Germans began a program of abuse, plunder, forced labor, and murder.

On December 15, 1941, the head of the Rayon administration, Kol'vepyrk, decreed the creation of ghettos in Bar and Ialtushkov, starting on December 20, 1941. In Bar, three ghettos were set up: one on former Sholom Aleichem Street, near the synagogue; one in the area of March 8th Street, Komsomol' Street, and Kooperativ Street; and the third near the stadium. The latter was reserved for craftsmen, who were issued special certificates by the Jewish Council. Some non-Jews were displaced in order to create the ghettos, and the German authorities were concerned about preventing the Jews from destroying furniture that they had to leave behind and then preventing the local Ukrainians from stealing it.⁷ When Jews were resettled into the ghetto, they were not allowed to take property with them, although some left items for safekeeping with non-Jews outside the ghetto. In the Bar ghetto, survivor Evgeniia Lerner recalled that "our life was

НАКАЗ № 21
По Барській Районній Управі
від 15 грудня 1941 року

§ I.
Жидівське населення Барського району з 20 грудня ц. р. розміщується в ізольованих місцях (**ГЕТТО**) м.м. Бару та Ялтушкова.

§ II.
Жидівське населення населених пунктів району повинно до 20 грудня переселитися до м. Бару, або Ялтушкова (куди буде зручніше) і теж з 20 грудня розміститися в (**ГЕТТО**).

§ 3.
Жидівське населення м. Бару розміщується у таких частинах міста: **ГЕТТО №1**—бувша вулиця Шолом-Алейхема місцевість бувшої старої синагоги, **ГЕТТО №2**—бувша вулиця 8 березня, Комсомольська, Кооперативна та **ГЕТТО №3** частина бувшої вулиці 8 березня, що прилягає до стадіона.

ПРИМІТКА: **ГЕТТО №3** заселяють виключно ремісники за списком, який оголошується через жидівську раду.

§ 4.
ГЕТТО для жидівського населення м. Ялтушкова визначає сільська Управа м. Ялтушкова.

§ 5.
Всьому жидівському населенню району в зв'язку з переходом у **ГЕТТО**, забороняється руйнування житлових та не житлових приміщень, які вони залишають.

§ 6.
Українському населенню, що живе в місцях, які відведені під **ГЕТТО** звільнити свої приміщення і з'явитися до житлового відділу Районної Управи для одержання іншого приміщення.

§ 7.
Житловому відділу наказую взяти на облік всі приміщення, які будуть звільнені жидівським населенням.

§ 8.
На органи безпеки м. Бару та в районі покладено відповідальність за організацію вищезгаданого міроприємства та застереження від грабунків.

Голова Барської Районної Управи
КОЛ'ВЕПРИК

**ХТО ГРАБУЄ, ТОЙ БУДЕ
РОЗТРІЛЯНИЙ!**

awful because we could not leave the ghetto in order to find some food." However, a few Jews, especially children, managed to sneak out under the wire, and some local people also brought food to the fence. From each house in the ghetto, at least one person was assigned to work each day. The work columns were escorted by local Ukrainian police (Schutzmannen) and Germans with dogs. The Jewish workers were frequently beaten and sometimes shot for no reason by the guards. During the winter of 1941–1942, many Jews from the ghetto were killed; the Germans arrested some Jews as hostages and held them in the jail. Among them was Evgeniia Lerner's father; she managed to visit him once but never saw him again after that.⁸

On August 19, 1942, the first mass killing Aktion was carried out. Early in the morning, forces of the Security Police, the Gendarmerie, local policemen, and according to one ac-

Ukrainian announcement of ghettos established in Bar Rayon. The document reads:

"Order 21

Ratified by the Bar Rayon Administration on December 15, 1941

§I

Starting December 20, 1941, all Jewish population that resides in the Bar Rayon must relocate to isolated places (GHETTO) in Bar and Yaltushkov.

§II

Jewish population must relocate to Bar or Yaltushkov (whichever is more convenient) and also after December 20 be relocated into the GHETTO

§3

Jewish population has to be placed in the following parts of the city:

Ghetto #1—former Sholom-Aleichem Str., area near the old synagogue; **Ghetto #2**—former 8th of March Str., Komsomolskaya Str., Kooperatyvna Str.; **Ghetto #3**—a part of former 8th of March Str., which is located near the stadium. P.S. **Ghetto #3** should consist of craftsmen who are determined by the Jewish Council.

§4

Ghetto for Jewish population of Yaltushkov city is to be determined by local government of Yaltushkov city.

§5

It is prohibited for Jews to destroy any property when they are forced to leave their homes.

§6

The Ukrainian population that resides in the areas which are designated for the ghettos must renounce their current places of residence and apply for new residences with the local administration.

§7

It is obligatory that all the abandoned Jewish residences be registered by the local administration.

§8

It is the lawful responsibility of Bar's security forces to ensure that the abovementioned regulations are carried out and that any serious thefts are avoided.

Head of Bar Rayon Administration

Koivpepryk

Those who steal will be put to death!"

USHIMMA/RG-31-011M, REEL 3, 1358-LC-1

count, also members of the Wehrmacht surrounded the main ghetto. Then they drove the Jews out of their houses and collected them at the town's sports stadium. The Germans had informed the Jews that they would be transferred to a work camp, and everybody took their most important belongings along. On the sports field, the Gebietskommissar then conducted a selection, separating the younger people (those able to work) from the elderly and children and also demanding any property and ordering some persons to be shot on the spot. The group of selected workers was temporarily held in an unfinished barracks.⁹ Sara Benjamini, who was 12 years old, was pushed over to the group of able workers by her grandmother during the selection, as she recognized that the others would most probably be killed. The German forces then escorted the group of nonworkers to the site of the Frunze kolkhoz, about 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) to the northwest of the town, where they shot them.¹⁰ In total, the Sipo/SD detachment from Kamenets-Podolskii, assisted by the Gendarmerie and the Ukrainian police, shot 1,742 people.¹¹

1328 VOLHYNIA AND PODOLIA REGION

After killing most of Bar's Jews, the same Sipo/SD commando carried out shootings in the other population centers of Gebiet Bar between August 19 and August 21. In Ialtushkov, several hundred Jews from the ghetto there were shot on the afternoon of August 19.¹² In Novaia Ushitsa, 707 Jews were shot; in Kalius, 240; in Murovannye Kurilovtsy, 1,170; and in Iaryshev, 212 Jews.¹³

In Bar, the remaining younger people were then put into the craftsmen's ghetto, where they also performed forced labor. During this period the craftsmen's ghetto was surrounded by barbed wire. On the night of October 14–15, 1942, German forces directed by men of the Sipo/SD from Kamenets-Podolskii surrounded the ghetto. The following morning they drove the Jews out of their houses, beating them as they went. A few Jews, including Sara Benjamini, hid in bunkers they had prepared and managed to avoid the roundup.¹⁴ During this operation, the Sipo/SD shot all the Jews they could find in the ghetto, perhaps more than 1,000 people. A second wave of killings followed in the other population centers of the Bar district, including more than 1,000 Jews in the Ialtushkov ghetto, which was liquidated on October 15, 1942.¹⁵

In total, around 9,000 Jews were shot in Gebiet Bar during 1942. Several hundred Jews from the county were sent to work in a labor camp in Letichev in August 1942. The inmates there were used for road construction work on the transit highway project (Durchgangsstrasse IV), a major supply line for the German army. A small number of Jews, in part with help from locals, managed to escape being shot and were able to survive the occupation in hiding until liberation in March 1944. Some of them escaped into the Romanian-occupied zone, which by this time had become somewhat safer for Jews.

SOURCES Brief articles on the Jews of Bar can be found in: B.N. London, *Usbedsbie v vechnost': Zametki o evreiskoi obshchine goroda Bar* (Israel, 1997); and *Rossiiskaia Evreiskaia Entsiklopediia* (Moscow: Russian Academy of Natural Sciences, Jewish Encyclopedia Research Center, "Epos," 2000), 4:81–82. One survivor account of the Bar ghetto can be found in Boris Zabarko, ed., *Holocaust in the Ukraine* (Portland, OR: Vallentine Mitchell, 2005), pp. 29–36.

Documents and testimonies concerning the destruction of the Jews of Bar can be found in the following archives: BA-L (ZStL, 204 AR-Z 447/67); DAVINO (1358-1-1); GARF (7021-54-1273); IPN; USHMM (RG-31.018.M, reel 11; and RG-50.226*0017); VHF; and YVA (M-33).

Alexander Kruglov and Martin Dean
trans. Ray Brandon

NOTES

1. According to the census of 1939, these four raions were home to 10,671 Jews: Bar raion, 5,405 Jews; Murovannye-Kurilovtsy raion, 2,079 Jews; Novaia Ushitsa raion, 2,606 Jews; and Iaryshev raion, 581 Jews. Allowing for conscription of some Jewish men and limited evacuations, 9,000 to 9,500 Jews probably remained in these raions when the Germans first occupied the area.

2. See USHMM, RG-31.002M (selected records from TsDAVO), reel 3, 3206-2-19, p. 29. This document notes that Schwarz was only temporarily appointed to the post of Gebietskommissar, but his name is also recorded in the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission (ChGK) reports; see BA-L, ZStL, 204 AR-Z 447/67, vol. 1, pp. 60, 63.

3. BA-L, ZStL, 204 AR-Z 447/67, vol. 1, pp. 67–85, 159–166.

4. Andrusiv was sentenced to death at his trial in Bar in 1966. A copy of his trial record is located at USHMM, RG-31.018.M, reel 11, KGB Archives for the Vinnitsa Oblast', D-28506. Keba lived in São Paulo, Brazil, after the war.

5. RGVA, 1275-3-662, p. 5, Oberfeldkommandantur Winniza (Abt. VII) an Sicherungsdivision 444 (Abt. VII), August 1, 1941.

6. USHMM, RG-50.226*0017, interview with Evgeniia Lerner; and USHMM, RG-31.011M (DAVINO), reel 3, 1358-1c-1, Order No. 21, signed by Kol'vepryk.

7. DAVINO, 1358-1c-1.

8. USHMM, RG-50.226*0017, interview with Evgeniia Lerner; Elisaveta Bruschi (Moschel) (b. 1925), "One hundred and six members of our family perished in the ghetto, and thirty-eight at the front," in Zabarko, *Holocaust in the Ukraine*, pp. 29–36.

9. DAVINO, R6002-1-1, witness testimony of Evgeniia Solomonovna Lavrovaia (née Lerner) given in May 1993; Zabarko, *Holocaust in the Ukraine*, pp. 30–31.

10. BA-L, ZStL, 204 AR-Z 447/67, vol. 1, pp. 50–53, statement of Sara Benjamini, June 26, 1968.

11. IPN, Zbiór zespołów szcztatkowych jednostek SS i policji, sygn. 77, p. 10, report of Gendarmerie Gebietsführer, Leutnant der Gendarmerie Petrich, August 27, 1942, regarding Jewish Aktions.

12. BA-L, ZStL, 204 AR-Z 447/67, vol. 1, pp. 67–85, statement of Richard Schulz, February 1948, gives the figure of 213 victims. Ilya Ehrenburg and Vasily Grossman, eds., *The Black Book* (New York: Holocaust Library, 1981), p. 38, date the shooting on August 20. The ChGK report gives the number of victims as 450; see GARF, 7021-54-1273, pp. 14, 64.

13. IPN, Zbiór zespołów szcztatkowych jednostek SS i policji, sygn. 77, p. 10, Petrich Report, August 27, 1942.

14. GARF, 7021-54-1273, p. 14; BA-L, ZStL, 204 AR-Z 447/67, vol. 1, pp. 50–53, statement of Sara Benjamini on June 26, 1968.

15. GARF, 7021-54-1273, p. 64.

BAZALIIA

Pre-1941: Bazaliia, town, Kamenets-Podolskii oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Basalija, Rayon center, Gebiet Antoniny, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; post-1991: Bazaliia, Teofopil' raion, Khmel'nyts'kyi oblast', Ukraine

Bazaliia is located about 50 kilometers (31 miles) northwest of Khmel'nitskii. According to the 1939 census, there were 410 Jewish residents in the town (12 percent of the total population). In the villages surrounding Bazaliia, there were another 163 Jews. After Nazi Germany's attack on the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, more than 100 Jews from Bazaliia managed

to escape or were drafted into the Red Army. When the German troops arrived, about 300 Jews were still in the town.

Units of the German 6th Army occupied Bazaliia on July 6, 1941. In July and August 1941, a German military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur) administered the town. The military authorities established a local administration and organized a Ukrainian auxiliary police force.

In September 1941, a German civil administration took control of the town. Bazaliia became a Rayon center in Gebiet Antoniny. Regierungsassessor Harald Schorer was appointed as Gebietskommissar in Antoniny. His permanent representative was Gerhard Friedrich, and the head of the Gendarmerie was Karl Otto Paul.¹ There was no Gendarmerie post in Bazaliia, but a unit of local Ukrainian police was located in the town, subordinated to the commander of the Ukrainian police in Antoniny. The Security Police and SD outpost in Starokonstantinov organized most of the major Aktions against the Jews in Gebiet Antoniny, which included the town of Bazaliia. SS-Hauptscharführer Karl Graf was in charge of the Starokonstantinov outpost.²

In the summer and autumn of 1941, the German occupation forces imposed a series of anti-Jewish measures: Jews were ordered to wear special markings, initially the Star of David and later a yellow circle; the Jews were forced to conduct physically demanding labor and were forbidden to leave the town; and the Jewish population was subjected to forced contributions. In addition, Ukrainian auxiliary policemen robbed and maltreated the Jews.

In late 1941 or at the beginning of 1942, a ghetto was established in Bazaliia; it existed for only half a year.³ According to one local resident, the order to establish ghettos in Bazaliia, Krasilov, and Kul'chiny was issued by Gebietskommissar Schorer and posted in public places. The Jews of the Gebiet were ordered to move to one of these areas, where they would be confined to a specific quarter (ghetto). Conditions in the ghettos were very bad, owing to the overcrowding and the isolation of the Jews from the rest of the population.⁴

In the spring of 1942, some Jews were probably transferred from Bazaliia to a labor camp in Orlinty, close to Antoniny. The Bazaliia ghetto was liquidated in July 1942. Members of the German Gendarmerie and the Ukrainian police escorted the Jews to the village of Manivtsy, where they were held in a large horse stable on an estate at the edge of town for several days, as were many of the Jews of Gebiet Antoniny.⁵ Then one morning, three or four trucks arrived, and the Germans ordered the Jews to take off their outer clothes. They were then loaded onto the trucks in groups. The trucks carried them to a forest not far from Manivtsy, and German Security Police shot them into a pit roughly 20 meters long by 4 meters wide (66 by 13 feet). German Security Police from Starokonstantinov organized the shooting. The task of the Ukrainian auxiliary police was to guard the site of the killings and to prevent victims from escaping.⁶ About 200 Jewish craftsmen were shot on the grounds of the estate in Manivtsy in September 1942.⁷ According to the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission (ChGK) report investigating the crimes

committed by the German occupiers and their collaborators, 259 inhabitants of Bazaliia were shot.⁸ Almost all of them were Jews.

SOURCES Documents regarding the extermination of the Jews of Bazaliia can be found in the following archives: BA-L (ZStL, II 204 AR-Z 442/67); DAKhO (863-2-44, pp. 114–126); GARF (7021-64-793 and 794); and YVA (M-33).

Alexander Kruglov
trans. Katrin Reichelt

NOTES

1. BA-L, ZStL, II 204 AR-Z 442/67, concluding report of March 18, 1971, and instruction of June 18, 1974. Schorer was killed in 1943, and Paul died in 1969.
2. Graf died in 1953.
3. GARF, 7021-64-793, p. 95.
4. BA-L, ZStL, II 204 AR-Z 442/67, pp. 368–374, statement of Petr Tomchuk, December 18, 1972. Tomchuk dates the establishment of the ghetto in the summer of 1942. However, other sources indicate it was almost certainly earlier than this; see, for example, DAKhO, 863-2-44, pp. 114–126.
5. GARF, 7021-64-793, p. 95; BA-L, ZStL, II 204 AR-Z 442/67, vol. 1, pp. 344–349, statement of Denis Paska (resident of Manivtsy), March 14, 1973.
6. BA-L, ZStL, II 204 AR-Z 442/67, concluding report of March 18, 1971, and instruction of June 18, 1974.
7. Ibid., ZStL, II 204 AR-Z 442/67, vol. 1, pp. 344–349, statement of Denis Paska (resident of Manivtsy), March 14, 1973.
8. GARF, 7021-64-794, p. 1.

BERESTECZKO

Pre-1939: Beresteczko, town, województwo wołyńskie, Poland; 1939–1941: Berestebko, Volyn' oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Berestetsbko, Rayon center, Gebiet Gorochow, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; post-1991: Berestebko, Horokhiv raion, Volyn' oblast, Ukraine

Beresteczko is located 82 kilometers (51 miles) west-southwest of Równe. In 1921, there were 1,975 Jews living in the town. According to the 1931 census, 2,210 Jews resided in the town, and in 1937 there were 2,625 (or 35 percent of the total population). In the mid-1930s, three quarters of all trade in Beresteczko was in Jewish hands. Most of the local craftsmen were Jews. The town's chief rabbi from 1937 until the war's outbreak was Aron Zabarsky, who was killed in 1941.

Following the outbreak of war on September 1, 1939, Polish authority in the area disintegrated. To protect itself from Ukrainian attacks, the Jewish community formed its own self-defense unit, which operated until the arrival of Soviet forces later in the month. The Soviet authorities soon closed down most private businesses and Jewish communal organizations. Local craftsmen were compelled to operate within newly established cooperatives. The Soviets also arrested and deported people suspected of disloyalty to the new regime;

1330 VOLHYNIA AND PODOLIA REGION

some Zionist youth leaders sought refuge in Łuck to avoid arrest.

Units of the German 6th Army occupied Beresteczko on June 23, 1941. In July and August, the town was administered by a military administration; on September 1, 1941, a civil administration took over responsibility for the region. Beresteczko was a Rayon center in Gebiet Gorochow, where SA-Colonel Ernst Härter was appointed as Gebietskommissar.¹ In the fall of 1941, a Gendarmerie post of several German Gendarmes was established in Beresteczko. A detachment of local Ukrainian police (consisting of a few dozen men) was subordinated to this post.

In the summer and fall of 1941, the Germans introduced a series of anti-Jewish measures in Beresteczko. Jews were ordered to wear distinguishing markings bearing the Star of David on their outer garments. They were compelled to perform forced labor. They were not allowed to leave town. The Jewish community was subjected to forced contributions from the German authorities and individual acts of robbery and beatings by the local police.

On August 8, 1941, the first anti-Jewish Aktion was carried out in Beresteczko. A unit of the Security Police (Sipo) and SD arrived in the town (most probably, part of Einsatzkommando zbV based in Łuck, under the command of Schöngarth), and with the help of the local Ukrainian police, they collected some 300 male Jews aged between 14 and 60 on the pretext of sending them to perform a work task. The men were then forced to dig a grave, and the German forces shot them.²

In the fall of 1941, probably in October, a ghetto was established in Beresteczko. Jews from several surrounding villages also were brought there. The ghetto was based around a single street and was enclosed by a fence 2.5 meters (8.2 feet) high. It had only one exit (a gate). The local Ukrainian police guarded the ghetto and shot at anybody attempting to escape. Overcrowding in the ghetto was extreme, with a number of families living together in each house.³

In Beresteczko there was a Jewish Council (Judenrat) consisting of six people and also a Jewish police force. The Jewish Council had to collect the forced contributions demanded by the German authorities, which amounted to “hundreds of thousands of rubles.” The official rations consisted of only about 140 grams (5 ounces) of bread per day, which was probably reduced to only 100 grams (3.5 ounces) after the establishment of the ghetto. Many people died of hunger in the ghetto.⁴

Local Jewish artisans were housed in separate quarters outside the ghetto, which were not enclosed. These craftsmen were organized into workshops according to profession. Only the artisans, those performing forced labor in the surrounding area, and the men in charge of burying the dead were permitted to leave the ghetto. When they left the ghetto, people used this opportunity to smuggle in some food for the entire Jewish population. Several hundred Jews were employed in forced labor tasks elsewhere in the Gebiet, including cutting down trees and road construction. In June 1942, a group of workers from Beresteczko were temporarily confined within

the Łokacze ghetto. While in Łokacze they bought up available produce, noting that conditions in the Beresteczko ghetto were much worse.⁵

The ghetto existed for about a year. In early September 1942, about 200 German and local policemen surrounded the ghetto and also the quarter in which the craftsmen resided. For three days, the Jews were not permitted to leave their houses. During this time, the German authorities instructed local non-Jews to dig two large graves 18 meters by 8 meters by 3 meters (about 59 by 26 by 10 feet), about 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) outside the town.

The roughly 2,000 ghetto inhabitants were escorted out of the town. The adults were forced to undress before the German forces shot them. Small children were thrown into the graves alive.⁶ The Aktion was carried out by a Sipo and SD unit from Łuck, together with the German Gendarmerie and the Ukrainian police based in Beresteczko. The property of the Jews was collected. The Germans secured the more valuable items, and the clothing was sold to the local population.

Some Jews managed to survive by hiding in bunkers within the ghetto, including a group of 17 people who remained in hiding for 11 days without food. They then sought refuge in the forests or with local acquaintances. Michael Diment encountered 2 survivors from Beresteczko in the forests at the end of September 1942. They reported that a group of more than 50 people had survived the ghetto's liquidation, but many were killed or captured after being attacked by the local police. In the confrontation, one local policeman was killed.⁷ Very few of Beresteczko's Jews managed to survive in hiding or with the Soviet partisans until the Red Army liberated the town on April 24, 1944.

SOURCES Several personal accounts of the Beresteczko ghetto can be found in the *yizkor* book edited by Mendel Singer, *Hayetab Ayarab: Sefer Zikaron li-kebilot Berestets'kah, Beremelyab Veba-sevivab* (Haifa: Irgun yots'e Berestets'kah be-Yisrael, 1961). Short articles on the Jewish community of Beresteczko can be found in Shmuel Spector, ed., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 5, *Volhynia and Polesie* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1990), pp. 51–54; and in *Rossiiskaia Evreiskaia Entsiklopediia* (Moscow: Russian Academy of Natural Sciences, Jewish Encyclopedia Research Center, “Epos,” 2000), 4:126.

Documents on the persecution and annihilation of the Jews of Beresteczko can be found in the following archives: DAVO (R-66-4-15, p. 10); GARF (7021-55-1); and YVA.

Alexander Kruglov
trans. Ray Brandon

NOTES

1. BA-BL, BDC, SSHO 2432, Organisationsplan der besetzten Ostgebiete nach dem Stand vom 10. März 1942, hg. vom Chef der Ordnungspolizei, Berlin, March 13, 1942.
2. Leah Lerner, “Der Laydysveg fun die Brestetshker Yidn,” in Singer, *Hayetab Ayarab*, pp. 42–47.
3. Accounts vary as to the date of the establishment of the ghetto. Lerner, “Der Laydysveg,” dates the formation of the ghetto in August; Melekh Goldenberg, “Der Khurbn

Bretitshke,” in Singer, *Hayetab Ayarab*, pp. 25–33, dates it some three or four months after the start of the occupation. Shmuel Spector, *The Holocaust of Volhynian Jews, 1941–44* (Jerusalem: Achva Press, 1990), p. 366, dates it as October 5–14, 1941. The discrepancies might reflect several stages in the process of ghettoization.

4. Goldenberg, “Der Khurbn Bretitshke”; and Lerner, “Der Laydsvog.”

5. Michael Diment, *The Lone Survivor: A Diary of the Lukaczze Ghetto and Svyniukby, Ukraine* (New York: Holocaust Library, 1992), pp. 93–94.

6. Spector, *The Holocaust*, p. 366, dates the ghetto liquidation as September 7–9, 1942. Certificate No. 136, October 15, 1990, Volhynia Oblast branch of the Ukrainian Society for the Preservation of Monuments to History and Culture, gives the figure of 3,000 victims, as does the ChGK report; see DAVO, R-66-4-15, p. 1. However, several hundred Jews were murdered or died of hunger prior to the final liquidation, while a few others escaped. Lerner, “Der Laydsvog,” gives the figure of 2,000 victims, which is probably more reliable.

7. Diment, *The Lone Survivor*, p. 158.

BEREZA KARTUSKA

Pre-1939: Bereza Kartuska (Yiddish: Kartuz-Breze), town, województwo poleskie, Poland; 1939–1941: Bereza, raion center, Brest oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Beresa-Kartuskaja, Rayon center, Gebiet Kobryn, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; post-1991: Biaroza, Beras'tse voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Bereza is located about 102 kilometers (63 miles) northeast of Brest. In 1921, the Jewish community of Bereza numbered 2,163 (61.3 percent), and 2,743 in 1928. After the outbreak of World War II, Bereza was occupied by the Red Army in September 1939 and subsequently incorporated into the Soviet Union, in accordance with the terms of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact.

Bereza was captured by units of Army Group Center on June 23, 1941, only the second day of Germany's invasion of the Soviet Union. As a result, it was impossible for the majority of the town's Jews to evacuate.

In the summer of 1941, the town was under military administration. In September 1941, authority for the region was transferred to a German civil administration. Bereza and the surrounding Rayon were at first in Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien, but from January 1942, it formed a part of Gebiet Kobryn in Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien of Reichskommissariat Ukraine. The Gebietskommissar was Regierungsassessor Oskar Panzer.¹ Gebiet Kobryn also had a Gendarmerie-Gebietsführer, to whom the police post in Bereza was subordinated. The head of the local police in Bereza was Nikolai Stepanovich Olshevskii, who received his instructions from the German Gendarmerie officials based in the town.²

The first anti-Jewish Aktion in the town was the burning of the Bet Midrash by German soldiers on June 26, 1941. Soon afterwards, the local commandant ordered the Jews to

wear a six-pointed star on the back and breast of their outer garments, to hand over gold and other valuables, and to pay an indemnity. Jews capable of working were sent to do various kinds of forced labor, including constructing a barracks for the Germans, for which they received 250 grams (8.8 ounces) of bread per day. The occupiers also set up a Jewish Council (Judenrat) of 12 men—Nissan Zakheim, Naftali Levenson, Fishel Beiser, Hanoch Liskovsky, Meir Rashinsky, Yaacov Moshkovich, Biniamin Shapira, Yaacov-Asher Fridenshtein, Gadl Pisetski, Yaacov Shlosburg, Leibe Danzig, and Leibel Molodowski (who served as translator)—and a Jewish police force, which was headed by Shmuel Geberman.³ The Jewish Council and the Jewish Police were made personally accountable for ensuring that the Jewish population complied unconditionally with all the orders and regulations issued by the German authorities. During the first months of the German occupation, peasants from the vicinity still came to the town and sold foodstuffs, in exchange for materials and household goods.⁴

In the spring of 1942, a ghetto was created in Bereza and surrounded with barbed wire. The ghetto stretched from Ulani Mazosha Street to Shlomo Vinshteyn's [house], where the gate was closed. The ghetto was divided into two parts: Ghetto A housed Jews fit for work and their families; Ghetto B, the Jews unfit for work. All the Jews in the ghetto were also registered.⁵ Several hundred Jews from neighboring villages, including Małecz, Siehniewiczze, Błuden, and Piaski, were resettled to Bereza and confined in the ghetto.⁶ Several hundred Jews from Sielec were escorted to the ghetto in Bereza by members of the local police on May 25, 1942.⁷ In all, the Bereza ghetto held more than 3,000 Jews. According to one survivor, “[L]ife in the ghetto was unbearably difficult. The population supported itself with supplies that were smuggled into the ghetto despite the many guards.”⁸

The first Aktion against the ghetto took place on July 15, 1942. All the Jews in Ghetto B were directed to the railroad station under the pretext of resettlement to Białystok. Several Jews tried to flee but were shot by the guards. They were loaded onto a freight train, which took them to Bronna Góra, 15 kilometers (9.3 miles) northeast of Bereza. A Security Police and SD squad then shot them in ditches that had been dug near the station earlier. A few Jews managed to hide in attics and basements within Ghetto B or in the surrounding fields; several of these Jews were subsequently smuggled into Ghetto A with the aid of the Judenrat.⁹ In total, some 1,000 people were murdered.¹⁰

On October 15, 1942, in the course of the second Aktion, the ghetto was liquidated. That day, the Jews in Ghetto A—1,800 people—were transported away on trucks and shot by a Security Police and SD squad in the village of Smoliarka some 7 kilometers (4.4 miles) east of Bereza. Some Jews who resisted were killed in the ghetto itself.¹¹

The 1st and 3rd Companies of Police Battalion 320 (Berlin), which was also known as 3rd Battalion/SS-Police Regiment 11, took part in liquidating the ghetto. The 1st Company cordoned off the ghetto and unloaded the trucks at the

execution site, while the 3rd Company cordoned off the execution site itself. At the killing site, police from the latter company also formed a corridor through which the Jews were directed to the mass grave, in which they were shot by the Security Police and SD squad.¹²

Some Jews from the Bereza ghetto, who fled to the forests after the first Aktion in July, participated in the attack on the nearby town of Kosów Poleski at the beginning of August 1942. Just prior to the ghetto liquidation, some 21 Jews were arrested at the sawmill and shot, as the Germans suspected they had contacts with the partisans. Then on the eve of the ghetto's liquidation, almost all the members of the Jewish Council, including two doctors, committed suicide by hanging themselves. There was also some armed resistance during the night before the final roundup, and Jewish youths set the ghetto on fire, but the Germans and their collaborators crushed the uprising by shooting into the burning ghetto.¹³

Nevertheless, several Jews managed to save themselves by fleeing into the woods or to the ghetto in Pruzana. A number of young people from the ghetto joined the Soviet partisans, and several survived to see Bereza liberated.

SOURCES An article about the persecution and murder of the Jewish population of Bereza by J. Friedman, “The Holocaust Chronicle Kartuz-Bereza,” can be found in I. Kowalski, ed., *Anthology of Armed Jewish Resistance 1939–1945* vol. 2 (New York: Jewish Combatants Publishing House, 1985); some additional information can also be found in *Pamięć. Istoriko-dokumental'naiia khronika Berezovskogo raiona* (Minsk: Belorusskaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopediia imeni Petrusia Brovki, 1987). The yizkor book *Kartuz-Bereza. Sefer zikaron ve-edut le-kehilah she-busmedah by'd* (Tel Aviv: Organization of Emigrants from Kartuz-Bereza in Israel, 1993) also contains several firsthand accounts by survivors of the Bereza ghetto. Information on the history of the Jewish community in Bereza can be found in *Rossiiskaia Evreiskaia Entsiklopediia*, vol. 4 (Moscow: Russian Academy of Natural Sciences, Jewish Encyclopedia Research Center, “Epos,” 2000).

Documents and witness testimonies regarding the persecution and murder of the Jews of Bereza can be found in the following archives: BA-L (ZStL: 204 AR-Z 392/59, II 202 AR-Z 12/66, vols. 3 and 11, AR-Z 48/58); GABO; GARF (7021-83-9); IPN; and YVA.

Alexander Kruglov
trans. Ray Brandon

NOTES

1. BA-BL, BDC, SShO 2432, Organisationsplan der besetzten Ostgebiete nach dem Stand vom 10. März 1942, hg. vom Chef der Ordnungspolizei, Berlin, March 13, 1942.
2. BA-L, B 162/4838 (ZStL, II 204 AR-Z 334/59 [investigation of Rohde]), vol. 7, pp. 1696–1699.
3. *Kartuz-Bereza*, pp. 187–188, 197–198.
4. Moshe Tuchman, “The Destruction of Bereza-Kartuska,” in *ibid.*, pp. 197–200.
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Pamięć*, p. 172. According to Moishe Kantorowitz, *My Mother's Bequest: From Shershev to Auschwitz to Newfoundland* (Canada: Moishe Kantorowitz, 2004), pp. 253–255, the Jews

of Małecz were forcibly resettled to Bereza in the fall of 1941, and a number of Jews were shot in the confusion as they were being rounded up.

7. See *Kartuz-Bereza*, pp. 190–191; three local policemen from Sielec, Alfons Glowinski, Franciszek Nowysz, and one other, were tried in Poland in the 1960s; see IPN, SWSz 68.

8. David Bakler, “On the Jews of Sielec and the Jews of Bereza Kartuska and Their Bitter End,” in *Kartuz-Bereza*, pp. 190–191.

9. *Kartuz-Bereza*, pp. 187–189, 191, 199.

10. According to the materials of the ChGK, around 4,000 Jews were shot; see GARF, 7021-83-9, pp. 128 (reverse), 138. This figure appears to be too high.

11. *Kartuz-Bereza*, pp. 200–201. According to the ChGK report, the Germans shot around 3,000 people; see GARF, 7021-83-9, pp. 139 and reverse side. This figure seems to be too high. German investigative sources cite only about 1,000 victims of this Aktion; see BA-L, 110 AR 1797/95.

12. Sta. Bielefeld, 5 Js 703/70, report (Vermerk) of October 26, 1973.

13. *Kartuz-Bereza*, pp. 190–191, 197–201.

BEREŻCE

Pre-1939: Bereżce, town, województwo wołyńskie, Poland; 1939–1941: Velikie Berezhtsy, Kremenets raion, Ternopol' oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Bereshty, Gebiet Kremenez, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; post-1991: Velyki Berezhtsi, Ternopil' oblast', Ukraine

Bereżce lies on the left bank of the Ikwa River, 8 kilometers (5 miles) west of Krzemieniec. In 1921, the Jewish population of Bereżce was 181.¹

German forces entered Bereżce in early July 1941. During July and August 1941, a German military administration temporarily governed the small town until September 1941, when power was transferred to a German civil administration. The town was in the Rayon and Gebiet of Kremenez, in Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien. The Gebietskommissar in Krzemieniec was Regierungsrat Müller.²

In the summer and fall of 1941, German forces implemented a series of anti-Jewish measures in Bereżce: Jews were required to wear distinctive symbols (first a white armband with a Star of David on the right arm, and later a yellow patch sewn on their clothing), and they were compelled to perform forced labor, during which they were beaten and otherwise abused.

In the spring of 1942, the Germans established a small ghetto in Bereżce. It contained 238 Jews and was guarded by the local police, as recalled by Mikhail Tkatschuk, who subsequently became the head of the local police in Bereżce.³

In August 1942, the Security Police and SD, assisted by the German Gendarmerie and Ukrainian police, conducted a series of Aktions against the Jews of the Krzemieniec ghetto. In mid-August 1942, the Jews from the ghetto in Bereżce were brought in trucks and murdered along with more than 6,000 Jews in Krzemieniec.⁴

SOURCES Documents on the fate of the Jews of Berežce can be found in the following archives: BA-L (B 162, II 204 AR-Z 163/67); and IPN.

Martin Dean

NOTES

1. *Blackbook of Localities Whose Jewish Population Was Exterminated by the Nazis* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1965), p. 212. This figure includes the population of both the town and the nearby hamlet of Berežce.

2. BA-BL, BDC, SSSH 2432, Übersicht über die besetzten Ostgebiete nach dem Stand vom 10. März 1942, hg. vom Chef der Ordnungspolizei, Berlin, March 13, 1942.

3. BA-L, ZStL, II 204 AR-Z 163/67, vol. 2, pp. 293–294, statement of Mikhail N. Tkatschuk on May 26, 1944.

4. Ibid.; IPN, Zbiór zespołów szczątkowych jednostek SS i Policji, sygn. 77. The document has also been published in A. I. Kruglov, ed., *Sbornik dokumentov i materialov ob unichtozhenii natsistami evreev Ukrainy v 1941–1944 godakh* (Kiev: Institut iudaiki, 2002), p. 395.

BEREZNE

Pre-1939: Berezne, town, województwo wołyńskie, Poland; 1939–1941: Berezno, Rovno oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Beresno, Rayon center; Gebiet Kostopol, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; 1944–1991: Berezno, raion center, Rovno oblast', Ukrainian SSR; post-1991: Berezne, raion center, Rivne oblast', Ukraine

Berezne is located 56 kilometers (35 miles) northeast of Równe. In 1921, 2,372 Jews resided in the town (comprising 58 percent of the population).

Units of the German 6th Army occupied Berezne on July 6, 1941. In July and August 1941, the town was governed by a German military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur), and after September 1941, administrative authority was transferred to a German civil administration. Berezne became a Rayon center in Gebiet Kostopol within Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien. SA-Standartenführer Löhnert was the Gebietskommissar in Kostopol, and Leutnant der Schutzpolizei Wichmann became the Gendarmerie-Gebietsführer.¹

The German military administration established a Ukrainian local council and a Ukrainian police force. In the fall, the local police came under the direction of a German Gendarmerie post in Berezne consisting of several Gendarmes.

Immediately after the occupation of the village by German forces, antisemitic Ukrainians massacred, slaughtered, and robbed the Jews. A Jewish Council (Judenrat) was organized in the village, with Yoel Gilberg as the chairman. Among its tasks was the transmission of German orders and instructions to the Jewish population.

In the summer and fall of 1941, the German occupation authorities enforced a series of anti-Jewish measures. As recalled by Tzilla Kitron, the Germans plundered their houses, and Jews tried to conceal their valuables. Jews were obliged to



Portrait of the Raboy family in Berezne, 1935. Pictured are Abraham and Feiga Raboy and their four children, Buncia, Shaindel, Beila, and Aron. Only Aron survived the war.

USHMM WS #13556, COURTESY OF ARON RABOY

wear distinguishing yellow stars on the front and back of their clothes, whole families were sent to perform forced labor, bread was rationed, and people formed long lines in front of the shops.² According to Seweryn Dobroszkłanka, a resident of the nearby village of Małyńska, the Ukrainian police robbed and beat the Jews.³ About 300 Jews were sent from Berezne to a labor camp in Kostopol in the fall of 1941.

On October 6, 1941 (the first day of the Sukkot holiday), the German authorities established a ghetto in Berezne, surrounded by a wooden fence and barbed wire. There was only one entrance, by the road leading to the center of town. A second, separate ghetto was established for skilled workers and their families. Altogether at least 1,500 Jews lived in the two ghettos.⁴ Jews were not permitted to leave the ghetto unless they had a pass and were usually permitted to leave only to perform forced labor. It was somewhat easier, however, for children to evade the guards. For example, Tzilla Kitron's sister Sonya managed to visit Ukrainian friends with the aim of obtaining some food in the nearby village of Bori-Kotiy by putting on a Ukrainian peasant dress and passing as an "Aryan."⁵

1334 VOLHYNIA AND PODOLIA REGION

From mid-June 1942, Jews from the neighboring villages, including those from Małyńska 12 kilometers (7.5 miles) to the north, were moved into the ghetto. On arriving in Berezne, the Jews were awaited by members of the Judenrat, but the German police ordered them to surrender all their money and valuables on pain of death. By this time people were beginning to starve in the ghetto. Each ghetto inmate received ration cards for only 200 grams (7 ounces) of bread per day and some very thin soup. Conditions also became overcrowded, with two or three families sharing a room in decrepit buildings.⁶

On August 25, 1942, the Germans liquidated the ghetto. On that day, a squad of Security Police and SD men from Równe, with the help of the German Gendarmerie and Ukrainian police, entered the ghetto and ordered all the Jews to assemble for a work assignment. Aware of the fate of neighboring communities, most of the ghetto inmates realized that this was the end. The Jews were formed into columns and marched to pits prepared in advance outside the town. At the pits, they were forced to undress, and the Germans, assisted by their Ukrainian collaborators, shot them. In total, about 3,200 Jews were killed.⁷

In the chaos of the roundup, a number of Jews tried to escape. Tzilla Kitron's parents urged her and her siblings to try and save themselves. Tzilla managed to escape across the barbed wire of the ghetto amid screams, crying, and shots from machine guns. She hid in a nearby field for the rest of the day while Germans with dogs and Ukrainian police searched for any Jews in hiding. That night she joined her sister Sonya, who chanced to be foraging in Bori-Kotiy when the Aktion started. Another Jew managed to escape with the help of the local commandant of the Ukrainian police.⁸ Bracha Weisbarth was tipped off the day before the Aktion by a family friend and escaped with part of his family, taking refuge with another friendly peasant who had received a cow from them when the Soviets arrived.⁹

Approximately 200 Jews ran away during the Aktion or were fortunate to have been outside the ghetto when it began. In December 1942, more than 20 Jews were hunted down and shot by the local police, and some were also killed in the forests by Ukrainian partisans ("Banderowcy"). Of those who survived, some joined the growing Soviet partisan movement, which slowly changed the local peasants' obedience to German orders. The Red Army drove the Germans out of the region in January 1944.¹⁰

SOURCES Information on the fate of the Jews of Berezne during the Holocaust can be found in the following publications: Gierc Bejgiel, ed., *Mayn sbtetele Berezne: Zamlung fun zikbroynes fun Berezner landslayt in land un in oysland* (Tel Aviv, 1954); Shmuel Spector, ed., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 5, *Volhynia and Polesie 1942–1945* (Hanau: Salisberg Verlag, 1994); Bracha Weisbarth, *To Live and Fight Another Day* (Jerusalem: Mazo, 2004); *Fun letsten burbn* (Munich: Tsentral historishe komisy baym Tsentral komitet fun di bafrayte Yidn in der

Amerikaner zone, 1946), vol. 1, no. 3, pp. 57–58; and *Rossiskaia Evreiskaia Entsiklopediia* (Moscow: Russian Academy of Natural Sciences, Jewish Encyclopedia Research Center, "Epos," 2000), 4:123–124.

Documents concerning the persecution and murder of the Jews of Berezne, including the testimony of eyewitnesses and Jewish survivors, can be found in the following archives: AŽIH (301/1222, 1488, and 2739); DARO (534-1-3); GARF (7021-71-42); TsDAVO (4620-3-367); and YVA.

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trans. Ilya Bourtran

NOTES

1. BA-BL, BDC, SSO 2432, Organisationsplan der besetzten Ostgebiete nach dem Stand vom 10. März 1942, hg. vom Chef der Ordnungspolizei, Berlin, March 13, 1942.
2. Kitron, *Wanderungen*, p. 8; see also Weisbarth, *To Live and Fight*, p. 16.
3. AŽIH, 301/1222, testimony of Seweryn Dobroszkłanka.
4. Weisbarth, *To Live and Fight*, p. 19, gives the figure of almost 3,000 inhabitants of the ghetto; Kitron, *Wanderungen*, p. 8.
5. Kitron, *Wanderungen*, p. 9; see also Weisbarth, *To Live and Fight*, pp. 20–21.
6. AŽIH, 301/1222; in 1921 there were 39 Jews in Małyńska. Weisbarth, *To Live and Fight*, pp. 17–20, dates the transfer of the Małyńska Jews in July: the adult men were sent to a separate labor camp to fell trees.
7. GARF, 7021-71-42, p. 2, gives the figure of 3,680 Jews killed. According to a document dated January 4, 1946, 3,200 people were murdered (see TsDAVO, 4620-3-367, pp. 10, 21); AŽIH, 301/1488, dates the Aktion on August 25, 1942; Kitron, *Wanderungen*, pp. 9–10.
8. DARO, 534-1-3, p. 88.
9. Weisbarth, *To Live and Fight*, pp. 21–23.
10. AŽIH, 301/1222.

BEREŻNICA

Pre-1939: Bereźnica, town, województwo poleskie, Poland; 1939–1941 and 1944–1990: Berezbnitsa, Dubrovitsa raion, Rovno oblast, Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Beresbniza, Rayon Dombrowiza, Gebiet Sarny, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; post-1991: Berezbnysia, Rivne oblast, Ukraine

Bereźnica is located 109 kilometers (68 miles) northeast of Łuck. The Jewish community identified mainly with Stolín and Turzysk Hasidism. In 1897, the Jewish population was 2,160 (out of a total population of 2,964). Subsequently the Jewish population declined sharply. According to the 1921 population census, 1,321 Jews lived in Bereźnica.

In September 1939, the town came under Soviet control. Units of the German 6th Army occupied Bereźnica in early July 1941. Immediately after the German forces arrived, an antisemitic mood gripped the local Ukrainians, who organized a pogrom in the town. Many Jews were robbed and assaulted, and a number of people were seriously wounded. In the summer of 1941, a German military administration ruled

Bereźnica. Within a few days the Germans also established a Jewish Council (Judenrat).

In September 1941, a German civil administration was established. Bereźnica became part of Rayon Dombrowiza in Gebiet Sarny. Kameradschaftsführer Huala was appointed Gebietskommissar.¹ A German Gendarmerie post and a unit of the Ukrainian auxiliary police were established in Bereźnica.

In the summer and fall of 1941, German forces implemented a series of anti-Jewish measures in Bereźnica. Jews were ordered to wear distinctive markings in the shape of the Star of David and later in the form of a yellow circle. They also had to mark their homes with a blue six-pointed star. Jews were prohibited from leaving the town and were not permitted to buy goods from non-Jews. All Jews above the age of 14 were required to perform heavy manual work. Finally, the German authorities and the Ukrainian police subjected the Jews to systematic confiscations, robberies, and assaults.

On April 14, 1942, the Gebietskommissar in Sarny issued an order setting a deadline of May 10, 1942, for the establishment of a “Jewish residential quarter” in Bereźnica.² As a result, an open ghetto was established, containing about 1,000 inhabitants. On August 26, 1942, the Germans and their Ukrainian collaborators escorted all the Jews from the Bereźnica ghetto to Sarny, shooting many of them on the way. German forces and their collaborators then murdered the remaining Jews from the Bereźnica ghetto with other Jews from the region in Sarny on August 27, 1942. A number of Jews managed to escape in Sarny, and a few of these successfully hid in the region. Some of these survivors joined the Soviet partisans fighting against the Germans, including Aaron Perlow, who was a unit commander. The Red Army captured Bereźnica from the Germans in mid-January 1944, and by 1946 about 45 Jews had returned to the town, including some that had fled east into the Soviet Union in the summer of 1941.

SOURCES Relevant publications include the following: 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. 116; A. Kruglov, *Katastrofa ukraïnskogo evreïstva 1941–1944 gg.: Entsiklopedicheskii spravochnik* (Kharkov: “Karavella,” 2001), p. 32; and Shmuel Spector, ed., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland, vol. 5, Volhynia and Polesie* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1990), p. 51.

Documentation concerning the fate of the Jewish community in Bereźnica can be found in the following archives: BA-L (e.g., B 162/7287); DARO (R293-2-1); GARF (7021-71-49); and YVA (M-1/E/1234).

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NOTES

1. BA-BL, BDC, SShO 2432, Organisationsplan der besetzten Ostgebiete nach dem Stand vom 10. März 1942, hg. vom Chef der Ordnungspolizei, Berlin, March 13, 1942.

2. DARO, R293-2-1, p. 4, Order no. 280 of the main administration in Dąbrowica to the mayor in Dąbrowica, April 29, 1942.

BEREZÓW

Pre-1939: Berezów, village, województwo poleskie, Poland; 1939–1941 and 1944–1990: Berezovoe, Rovno oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Beresowo, Rayon Rokitno, Gebiet Sarny, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; post-1991: Berezovo, Rivne oblast', Ukraine

Berezów is located 32 kilometers (20 miles) north-northeast of Rokitno in a remote area of Polesie. In 1921, there were 58 Jews residing in the village. By the 1930s, their number had increased to about 100. On September 17, 1939, the Red Army arrived in Berezów, which became part of the Soviet Union. In the fall of 1939, it is probable that the Jewish population of Berezów was increased by the arrival of refugees from central and eastern Poland.

Soon after German forces occupied the region in July 1941, two SS men accompanied by two Poles arrived in the village of Glinne, not far from Berezów, to arrest a woman named Muszka Szuster. After saying good-bye to her family, Szuster was taken to Berezów, where the German authorities hanged her a short time later.¹

In the summer of 1941, a Ukrainian local administration was established in Berezów, probably by forces subordinated to the Ukrainian leader Bul'ba-Borovets' known as the Polis'ka Sich, which remained more or less in control of this region until the German civil administration was established in the fall of 1941. The Ukrainian administration included a uniformed local police force armed with guns.

At the end of September 1941, local Ukrainians, apparently on their own initiative, murdered the Jews in the small villages of “Vitkovits” (possibly Wierzchowicze) and Tupik (24 kilometers [15 miles] northeast of Rokitno). A few Jews from Tupik managed to escape to “Vilevich” (probably Białowieża), where the locals protected them. In Tupik the bodies of the murdered Jews were initially left lying in the street, so that dogs and wild animals began to eat them. After a while, Jews from neighboring communities came to remove the bodies and bury them in a mass grave in the large Jewish cemetery in the village of Glinne.² When the bodies were buried, Nachum Bryk, an educated Jew who was the Jewish elder of the ghetto, made a speech at the funeral in which he said: “Dear Jews, do not cry [yet], for you do not know who is going to bury you.”³

Some time before August 1942, probably between April and July of that year, the German authorities established a ghetto for the Jews in Berezów, which was surrounded by barbed wire. According to the account of Zevi Olshanski, the Jews of Berezów and its vicinity were supposed to be moved into the Stolin ghetto. However, the Jewish Council succeeded in bribing the local medical officer to issue a certificate that they were infected with typhus; as a result, the Jews were concentrated in Berezów instead.⁴ Jews from the surrounding smaller villages, including Glinne, and a few elderly Jews who had remained in Bleżewo, were brought into Berezów in July 1942, where around 300 Jews were crammed into only a few houses.⁵ The Jews in the Berezów ghetto did not lack food, as

people had their own gardens. They ate mainly dried bread and potatoes. However, the Germans assigned all the Jews to forced labor. Even youths were marched every day under armed guard to their workplaces. Work included peeling potatoes and cutting down trees. To prevent Jews from fleeing into the forest, the Germans conducted regular roll calls, threatening to kill Jews at random if anyone was missing.

At the end of August 1942, the Germans liquidated the ghettos in Rokitno and other towns in the vicinity, sending most of the Jews to Sarny, where they murdered them. A few of the Jews who escaped from these ghettos made their way to Berezów. Once the German authorities became aware of their arrival, they demanded from Nachum Bryk that the Jewish community pay a large ransom for the lives of these refugees to be spared. The money was collected with some difficulty, and the Jews were permitted to stay in the ghetto. However, at this time two Jews who had been working for a local Ukrainian learned of plans for the destruction of the Berezów ghetto and brought this news back into the ghetto.⁶

Early on the morning of September 11, 1942 (the eve of Rosh Hashanah), the German police, assisted by Ukrainian auxiliary policemen, surrounded the village and started to drive the Jews out of their houses, shouting, "Raus! Raus! Verfluchter Jude! Raus!" (Get out! Get out! Filthy Jew! Get out!). During the roundup, some of the Jews were shot on the spot, but more than 50 people managed to escape, assisted by the thick fog on that morning. The Germans and their collaborators escorted the rest of the Jews into the forest a few kilometers outside the village and shot them in a large pit prepared beforehand for that purpose.⁷

The Jewish escapees from the ghetto hid in the surrounding forests, living off cranberries and potatoes and whatever they could beg or steal from Ukrainian farmers. One group of Jewish survivors numbered about 15 people at one time. As the weather became colder, they stole clothes from the peasants to keep warm. The Germans were afraid to go into the woods because of the partisans, but they offered Ukrainians a reward of a pound of salt for catching Jews, as salt was scarce during the war. This made life difficult for the remaining Jews, but some local peasants around Bleżewo, and especially the Baptists (Stundists), for example, assisted them, helping to reunite family members and allowing them to hide on their property, at least for a time.⁸ Due to the continued hunt for Jews into 1943, some of the escapees were captured and killed, but about 40 managed to survive until the Red Army drove the German occupants from the Berezów area in January 1944.⁹

SOURCES Published sources on the Jewish community in Berezów and its destruction during World War II include the following: Shmuel Spector, ed., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 5, *Volhynia and Polesie* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1990), p. 48; Eliezer Leoni, ed., *Rokitno: (Voblin) veba-sevivah; sefer 'edut ve-zikaron* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Rokitno veba-sevivah be-Yisrael, 1967), pp. 291–295; 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. 116.

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CAMPS AND GHETTOS, 1933–1945

Documentation regarding the fate of the Jews of Berezów during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: DARO; VHF (# 23387 and 24104); and YVA (M-1/E/402 and 1907; O-3/3402 and 3478).

Crispin Brooks and Martin Dean

NOTES

1. VHF, # 24104, testimony of Nina Merrick.
2. In 1921, there were 66 Jews residing in Glinne. See *Blackbook of Localities Whose Jewish Population Was Exterminated by the Nazis* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1965).
3. VHF, # 24104, testimony of Nina Merrick; the fate of the Jews of Tupik is mentioned also in Leoni, *Rokitno*, pp. 291–293.
4. YVA, M-1/E/402, testimony of Zevi Olshanski.
5. In 1921, the Jewish population of Bleżewo was 101. On Bleżewo, see Spector and Wigoder, *Encyclopedia of Jewish Life*, p. 157; A. Kruglov, *Katastrofa ukraińskiego ewreistwa 1941–1944 gg.: Entsiklopedicheskii spravocnik* (Kharkov: "Karavella," 2001), p. 38; and Leoni, *Rokitno*, pp. 293–295.
6. VHF, # 24104, testimony of Nina Merrick.
7. *Ibid.*; Spector and Wigoder, *Encyclopedia of Jewish Life*, pp. 116, 157; and Leoni, *Rokitno*, pp. 293–295.
8. VHF, # 24104, testimony of Nina Merrick; and Leoni, *Rokitno*, pp. 293–295.
9. Shmuel Spector, *The Holocaust of Volhynian Jews, 1941–44* (Jerusalem: Achva Press, 1990), p. 358.

BOREMEL (AKA MICHAŁÓWKA)

Pre-1939: Boremel (Yiddish: Boromel), village, województwo wołyńskie, Poland; 1939–1941: Boremel (aka Mikhailovka), Rovno oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Rayon Demidowka, Gebiet Dubno, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; post-1991: Boremel', Rivne oblast', Ukraine

Boremel is located on the left bank of the Styr River, about 85 kilometers (53 miles) west-southwest of Równe. The Jewish population numbered 1,047 in 1897. By 1921, the Jewish population had declined to 857 (95 percent of the total).

Units of the German 6th Army occupied Boremel on June 25, 1941. At the time of the German invasion, local Ukrainians took the opportunity to rob the Jews, and a few Jews were killed. Among the first victims was Yosef Feldman. The German occupying forces also ordered systematic requisitions of Jewish property and valuables.

In July and August 1941, Boremel was governed by a German military administration, and from September 1941 authority was transferred to a German civil administration. Boremel was located in Rayon Demidowka, within Gebiet Dubno. The Gebietskommissar was Nachwuchsführer Broks, and the Gendarmerie-Gebietsführer from the spring of 1942 was Leutnant der Gendarmerie Eberhardt.¹

Shortly after their arrival, the new German authorities ordered the establishment of a Jewish Council (Judenrat). This consisted of seven men, drawn mostly from people who had been active in the community before the war. There was also a Jewish

police force. The Jews were made to perform forced labor, and nearly all the young men were taken to Dubno and Równe for work. Most never returned, and presumably they were killed along with the other Jews in these places. Of those Jews who remained in Boremel, many were taken to work on farms in the surrounding villages. Apart from these work assignments, Jews were not permitted to leave the boundaries of the village.

Throughout the occupation there were sporadic killings of Jews. Once the Germans had established a fenced ghetto in Boremel on the edge of the village by June 1942, some Jews were killed for leaving the ghetto in an attempt to obtain some bread. Despite German prohibitions, Jews still managed to barter their remaining possessions for food.²

In early October 1942, German police, assisted by the Ukrainian local police, liquidated the ghetto: about 700 Jews were shot; the men and women were escorted in separate groups to the graves outside the village. According to one survivor's recollection, on the night of the murder, Moshe Shloyme Ashers set the ghetto on fire and then hanged himself. After the liquidation of the ghetto, several dozen Jews who had managed to hide were found and shot. Only a few Jews managed to survive in the forests until the Red Army drove out the German occupying forces in the spring of 1944.³

SOURCES The following publications contain information on the annihilation of the Jewish community of Boremel: Shmuel Spector, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland, vol. 5, Volhynia and Polesie* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1990), p. 46; Mendel Singer, ed., *Hayetab 'ayarab: Sefer zikaron li-kehillot Berestets'kah, Beremelyab veba-sevivab* (Haifa: Irgun yots'e Berestets'kah be-Yisrael, 1960 or 1961), pp. 195–201.

Documents and testimonies regarding the destruction of the Jews in Boremel can be found in the following archives: DARO; GARF (7021-71-46); VHF (# 37741); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. BA-BL, BDC, SSHO 2432, Organisationsplan der besetzten Ostgebiete nach dem Stand vom 10. März 1942, hg. vom Chef der Ordnungspolizei, Berlin, March 13, 1942.

2. Rachel Kibrik, "A Cry for Help" [in Yiddish], in Singer, *Hayetab 'ayarab*, pp. 195–201; VHF, # 37741, testimony of Shoshana Mazeh. This witness states that the ghetto was established early in the occupation.

3. Kibrik, "A Cry for Help," pp. 195–201; GARF, 7021-71-46, p. 16; Spector, *Pinkas ha-kehillot*, vol. 5, p. 46.

BRZEŚĆ

Pre-1939: Brześć (Yiddish: Brisk), city, województwo poleskie, Poland; 1939–1941 and 1944–1990: Brest, raion and oblast' center, Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Brest-Litovsk, Rayon and Gebiet center, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; post-1991: Beras'tse, raen and voblasts' center, Republic of Belarus

Brześć is located 346 kilometers (215 miles) southwest of Minsk. As of March 20, 1937, there were 21,653 Jews living in

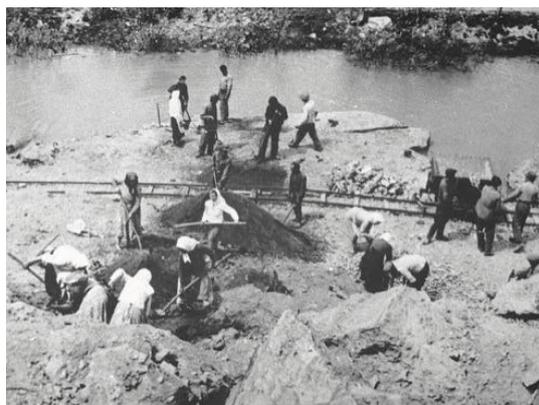
Brześć, or 41.6 percent of the total population of 52,024 persons.¹ By June 1941, the number of Jews in the city had decreased slightly.

German forces occupied Brześć for the first time on September 15, 1939. Already by September 22, 1939, the Red Army had entered the city according to the secret terms of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. German forces occupied Brześć for a second time on June 22, 1941, on the very first day of the German invasion of the USSR. On that day, practically all the Jews became trapped under German occupation and unable to evacuate the city.

In the summer of 1941, a German military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur) administered the city. In September 1941, authority was transferred to a German civil administration. Brześć was designated as a city (*Stadt*). Brześć became the administrative center of Gebiet Brest-Litovsk in Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien. Bürgermeister Franz Burat became the Stadtkommissar in Brześć. In September 1942, he was also appointed as Gebietskommissar for Gebiet Brest-Litovsk, replacing SA-Standartenführer Curt Rolle, who had served in this capacity since September 1941.

On June 24, 1941, a Security Police (Sipo) detachment of 15 men from Lublin under the command of SS-Untersturmführer Schmidt arrived in Brześć. In September 1941, this detachment returned to Lublin. In February 1942, an outpost of the Security Police and the SD (Sipo/SD-Aussendienststelle) was established in Brześć, headed by SS-Sturmbannführer Ernst Berger. This detachment served under the command of the Security Police and SD in Równe, headed by SS-Sturmbannführer Dr. Karl Pütz and organized and directed the mass killing Aktions against the Jewish population of Brześć.

From October 1941, the police unit "Nürnberg" commanded by Oberleutnant Josef Eisele was stationed in the city. This unit took part on a regular basis in various killing Aktions. At the end of 1941, around 10 men were taken from this Nürnberg unit, and they formed the core of the newly



Jews from the Brześć ghetto are forced to level the banks of the Bug River, 1941–1942.

USHMM WS #74374, COURTESY OF ZIH

established Schutzpolizei (Order Police) unit in the city. This unit was headed initially by Leutnant Karl Pressinger, who died on January 21, 1944. Pressinger was succeeded by Hauptmann Georg Bienert in March 1942. A local police unit served under the Schutzpolizei and took part in the measures taken against the Jewish population. Pressinger and Bienert served under the command of the SS- und Polizeistandortführer, Major and SS-Standartenführer Friedrich Rohde.

Beginning in July 1941, the 307th Police Battalion headed by Major Theodor Stahr was stationed in the city. It remained there for about two weeks. On July 6, 1941, the battalion, with the assistance of the Security Police, arrested 4,435 people and shot them on the following two days. Among the victims were also 400 Russian and Belorussian non-Jews, but more than 4,000 were Jewish men.²

In August 1941, a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was formed in accordance with the instructions of the occupying authorities. Hirsh Rosenberg served as its head, Nachman Landau as his deputy, and Boruch Landau as the secretary.³ A Jewish police unit was also formed, commanded by a man named Feldman. Jews were ordered to wear armbands bearing the Star of David and later patches in the shape of a yellow circle sewn onto the left breast pocket and back of their clothing. Jews were forbidden to leave the limits of the city and were subjected to systematic robbery and assault by the local police. In August 1941, Jews were also prohibited from trading with the locals, and non-Jews in turn could not sell anything to the Jews. Jews lost their right to walk freely on the streets and to use the sidewalks.⁴ A contribution of 2 million Karbonowaz was exacted from the Jewish population, and jewelry, property, goods, Soviet money, and other items of value—an estimated 26 million rubles' worth—were taken from the Jews. On September 15, the mayor of the city, a man named M. Bronikowski, drafted an instruction for the Stadtkommissar, who then ordered the officials of the city administration not to enter into any contact with the Jews. By the order of September 17, 1941, as decreed by the Generalkommissar, the Jews in communally owned and state businesses had to report for work once a week for uncompensated labor. In addition, they were to receive 80 percent of the salary of non-Jews.⁵

A registration of the population in the city was carried out in November 1941. According to this census, there were 49,780 residents, including 17,574 Jews.⁶ At this time the Jewish population over the age of 14 was also issued with identity cards, which included a photograph and fingerprint of the holder. Copies of these identity cards survived the war and can be found in the State Archives of the Brest oblast' in Belarus (GABO) and other archives.⁷

Preparatory work to construct a ghetto in Brześć had begun by November 1941, and the Judenrat is known to have registered some doubts about the small size of the area designated for the ghetto. In the first half of December 1941, the forcible resettlement of the Jewish population into a "Jewish residential district" was carried out, and the ghetto was sealed on December 15, 1941.⁸ The ghetto was surrounded by fences and barbed wire and was located in an area com-

posed mainly of small one-story houses. Shortly after its establishment, the ghetto was expanded by an area extending towards the Muchawie River, which was known as the small ghetto, as it was separated from the main (large) ghetto by a major transit road. The ghetto was guarded by the Jewish Police internally and the local police externally.⁹ Jews could only leave the ghetto with a special pass and, from April 1942, only in closed formations under Jewish Police guard to reach their workplaces. Some Jews, however, risked taking off their yellow patches to sneak out of the ghetto illegally.¹⁰

On the initiative of the Judenrat, a hospital, store, and communal kitchen were opened in the ghetto. Due to the German need for labor, increasing numbers of Jews worked in factories and other sites outside the ghetto, and the German authorities set up workshops for Jewish artisans. Whereas in January 1942 only 4,956 residents of the ghetto were registered as employed, by June this number had increased to 7,994, of which 5,039 were females.¹¹

The Jews in the ghetto received smaller rations than the non-Jewish population, in early 1942 only 180 grams (6.3 ounces) of flour per day and no potatoes or meat. To bake the flour into bread, there were four bakeries in operation, which had to serve all 17,724 residents of the ghetto. Bread was distributed at nine designated points. In April 1942, the bread ration for Jews, regardless of age and ability to perform labor, was cut to 150 grams (5.3 ounces) per day.¹²

In the spring and early summer of 1942, hundreds of young able-bodied Jews were removed from the ghettos in Gebiet Brest-Litowsk and assigned to forced labor under arduous conditions on road construction projects, farm labor, and other work at various sites throughout the Gebiet. They were housed in barracks, and many died from the inadequate food and poor living conditions.¹³

Inside the Brześć ghetto, there was no medicine available, nor much food or household goods for trading. There was also a shortage of drinkable water, since there were only two wells in the ghetto. Three or four families had to share a single house, leading to infestations of lice in the dirty conditions. Many Jews in the ghetto suffered from hunger and disease. There was a constant threat of being beaten, shot, and losing one's relatives, especially one's children. However, in the Brześć ghetto, at least, mass starvation as in Warsaw or Łódź did not set in.

The isolation from the outside world was almost total, and everything was subject to rumor. All of these conditions paralyzed the will of the people psychologically. Rumors of massacres of Jews in Distrikt Lublin and elsewhere in Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien made the Jews in the Brześć ghetto very anxious. German reports from the summer of 1942 stressed that this pressure increased their willingness to work "to achieve recognition of their right to exist through intensified labor."¹⁴ In the view of Christopher Browning, the local German authorities in Brześć were eager to continue exploiting this willing labor force. But at the end of August 1942, Reichskommissar Erich Koch, following a

meeting with Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler, was insisting on a 100 percent “cleansing” of the Jews from Generalkommissariat Wollhynien und Podolien within the next five weeks.¹⁵

In fact, it was just over six weeks later when it became the turn of the Brześć ghetto to experience a cleansing. As of October 15, 1942, there were 41,091 persons counted in Brześć, including 16,934 Jews in the ghetto.¹⁶ On that day in the early morning hours, the liquidation of the ghetto began. In the course of two days, around 16,000 people were exterminated.¹⁷ Several hundred Jews were killed in the ghetto itself, including the infirm and the personnel in the Jewish hospital, Jewish Police, children at the children’s home, and elderly from the home for the retired. Most of the Jews from the ghetto were sent via rail to Bronnaia Gora, near Bereza Kartuska, where they were shot and buried in mass graves. The Security Police, Police Company Nürnberg, the Schutzpolizei, the 3rd Company of the 310th Police Battalion, and members of the local police all took part in the mass murder.

Sensing the danger, a number of the Jews went into hiding. After the liquidation of the ghetto, the local police that also included a number of Poles, as well as Ukrainians and Belorussians, regularly conducted searches for Jews in hiding on the grounds of the ghetto. Jews who were captured were shot on the spot or sent to prison. The 300 or 400 Jews collected in the prison were later transported by train in the direction of Baranowicze.¹⁸

A number of young Jews in the ghetto created two underground organizations: “Liberation” (former Komsomol members) and “Revenge” (Zionists). The members of these organizations procured weapons and drew up plans for armed resistance. They devised a strategy to protect the ghetto and save Jews from liquidation. Worker units who were responsible for clearing the ruins in the fortress and military aerodrome were those who procured the weapons. The plan to protect and save the population intended that armed groups would open fire on the police and torch the ghetto at the moment the German forces started to liquidate the ghetto, creating a diversion that might enable some of the Jews to escape into the forest. However, the Gestapo, which was informed of all developments in the ghetto, arrested many members of the underground organizations, including those who had prepared the resistance plan, on the night before the liquidation Aktion.¹⁹

A number of Jews were saved, thanks to the efforts of non-Jewish residents in the city of Brześć. After identity cards were issued to the population (Jewish and non-Jewish) at the end of 1941, members of the city’s Communist underground organization were able to acquire such cards for M. Popov, A. Aronin, and M. Hamburg and to save them from expulsion from the ghetto.²⁰ The Jewish family of Tsilia, Boris, and Lyova Pikus was hidden by the family of P. Zhulikov, the head of a local Communist underground organization in the city. Zhulikov himself perished in 1943. Boris Pikus, who died in April 1942, served as one of the points of contact between the

city’s Communist resistance organization and the underground resistance organization in the ghetto.²¹

After the Germans were driven from the city by the Red Army in July 1944, only some 20 Jews from the ghetto are known to have emerged from hiding and returned to Brześć.

SOURCES Secondary works dealing with the Brześć ghetto include the following: John Garrard and Carol Garrard, “Barbarossa’s First Victims: The Jews of Brest,” *East European Jewish Affairs* 28:2 (Winter 1998–1999): 3–48; E. Rozenblat and I. Elenskaia, “Sotsial’no-demograficheskaia struktura Brestskogo getto po materialam pasportizatsii evreiskogo naseleniia,” in *Evrei Belarusi: Istorii i kul’tura: Sbornik statei, Vypusk 1* (Minsk, 1997), pp. 70–78; V.P. Samovich, *Rasstrel’ny, zamucheny, povesheny: O fasbistskom genotside v Breste* (Minsk, 1994). There is also a case study on the implementation of Nazi policies based on the detailed German correspondence regarding the Jews in the Brześć ghetto by Christopher Browning, *Nazi Policy, Jewish Workers, German Killers* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 116–142.

Additional information on the persecution and murder of the Jews in Brześć can be found in these publications: 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* (New York: Holocaust Library, 1981); E. Steinman, ed., *Brisk da-Lita* (Jerusalem: Encyclopaedia of the Jewish Diaspora: A Memorial Library of Countries and Communities, 1954); *Brisk da-Lita. Oyflag in idish. Hotsaat Entsiklopedya shel galuyot* (Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, 1958); Shmuel Spector, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland, vol. 5, Volhynia and Polesie* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1990), pp. 226–237; E. Rozenblat, “Zbizn’ i sud’ba” *brestskoi evreiskoi obschchiny XIV–XX vv* (Brest, 1993); and R. Levin, *Mal’chik iz getto* (Moscow, 1996).

Documents about the extermination of the Jews in Brześć can be found in the following archives: AAN (202/III/7, t. 1); BA-BL (R 94/6, 7); BA-L (e.g., B 162/4836 and 5016); GABO (e.g., 201-1-15, 19, 1042, 6173); GARF (7021-83-10); NARA (RG-242, T-454, reel 103); NARB (4683-3-918 and 942); Ts-GAMORF (233-2374-41); USHMM (e.g., Acc.1996.A.0169); VHF (e.g., # 2321, 24998, 29502); and YVA (e.g., M-41 [GABO, 514-1-41 and 192-1-20]).

Alexander Kruglov and Martin Dean
trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. Information from GABO, as cited by Rozenblat, “Zbizn’ i sud’ba,” p. 61.
2. BA-L, B 162/5016 (ZStL, II 204 AR-Z 392/59, Bd. IV), pp. 887–888; testimony of Heinrich M., in Paul Kohl, ed., “*Ich wundere mich, dass ich noch lebe.*” *Sowjetische Augenzeugen berichten* (Gütersloh, 1990), pp. 190–191; BA-BL, R 58/214, Ereignismeldung UdSSR no. 32, July 24, 1941. See also BA-L, ZStL, 204 AR-Z 82/61, testimonies of former members of Police Battalion 307, as cited by Browning, *Nazi Policy, Jewish Workers, German Killers*, pp. 119–123.
3. GABO, 201-1-1042, p. 5, contains a list of the Judenrat members and their permanent and temporary assistants.

4. A translation of the decree, which was written in Polish and signed by the mayor, M. Bronikowski, can be found in Garrard and Garrard, "Barbarossa's First Victims," pp. 23–24. See also VHF, # 24998, testimony of Moshe Smolar.

5. GABO, 201-1-15, p. 20.

6. NARA, RG-242, T-454, reel 103, fr. 7, Report of Stadtkommissar Brest-Litovsk, November 21, 1941.

7. GABO, 201-1-21 to 445. See also USHMM, Acc. 1996.A.0169 (copied from YVA, M-41/320 to 625), reels 5–17.

8. NARA, RG-242, T-454, reel 103, fr. 7, Report of Stadtkommissar Brest-Litovsk, November 21, 1941.

9. VHF, # 29502, testimony of Roman Levin; BA-BL, R 94/6, Stadtkommissar Brest-Litovsk, reports of December 23, 1941, and March 25, 1942.

10. BA-BL, R 94/6, reports of the Stadtkommissar and the SS- und Polizeistandortführer in Brest-Litovsk for April and May 1942. VHF, # 2321, testimony of Iakov Gandman.

11. GABO, 192-1-20, pp. 2–3, reports of the Arbeitsamt of the Gebietskommissar, July 7 and 15, 1942.

12. USHMM, Acc. 1996.A.0169, reel 22 (YVA, M-41/653), Das Stadtkommissariat, Ernährungsamt, Statistischer Bericht, April 23, 1942.

13. BA-BL, R 94/6, Report of Gebietskommissar Brest-Litovsk, Labor Office, July 6, 1942; VHF, # 29502. It appears that only a few Jews from the Brześć ghetto were among these youths.

14. BA-BL, R 94/6, Situation Report of Stadtkommissar Brest-Litovsk, July 12, 1942.

15. IPN, Zbiór zespolów szczytkowych jednostek SS i policji, sygn. 77, p. 8, Sturmbannführer Pütz to Aussenstellen der Sipo-SD in Brest, Pinsk, Starokonstantinow, Kamenez-Podolsk, August 31, 1942.

16. Information from GABO, as cited in Rozenblat, "Zbizn' i sud'ba," p. 61.

17. Report of the 3rd Company of the 310th Police Battalion, October 18, 1942, and the war diary of the 310th Police Battalion, entry for October 16, 1942, in GARF, 7021-148-4.

18. BA-L, B 162/4836 (ZStL, 204 AR-Z 334/59, vol. 5), p. 1141; AAN, 202/III/7, t. 1, p. 187, Polish Underground Report 252/A-1, December 17, 1942.

19. Information from GABO, as cited in Rozenblat, "Zbizn' i sud'ba," pp. 30–33. See also, e.g., VHF, # 24998, which mentions plans for resistance that did not materialize.

20. *Bug v ogne* (Minsk, 1965), p. 380.

21. A.I. Borovskii, *O nikh molchali svodki* (Minsk, 1970), p. 69.

CHERNYI OSTROV

Pre-1941: Chernyi Ostrov, village, raion center, Kamenets-Podolskii oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Tscherny Ostrow, Gebiet Proskurov, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; post-1991: Chornyi Ostriv, Khmel'nyts'kyi raion, Khmel'nyts'kyi oblast', Ukraine

The village of Chernyi Ostrov is located in western Ukraine, roughly 200 kilometers (124 miles) east-southeast of Lwów. According to the 1939 census, there were 1,172 Jews living in Chernyi Ostrov, representing 28.7 percent of the town's total

population. At that time the Chernyi Ostrov raion had a Jewish population of 1,995.

Units of the German 6th Army occupied Chernyi Ostrov on July 7, 1941. In the period since Germany's invasion of the USSR on June 22, 1941, more than 100 Jews fled to the east or had been drafted into the Red Army, leaving about 1,000 Jews in the town at the start of the occupation. Within a few weeks, the military administration (Ortskommandantur) appointed a village elder (starosta) and formed a Ukrainian auxiliary police force. The chief of police was a former bricklayer, P. Iarusevich, and the deputy chief was V. Bezno-siuk, a former unskilled laborer. In September 1941, a German civil administration was established, subordinated to Hundertschaftsführer Schmerbeck, the Gebietskommissar in Gebiet Proskurov.

Shortly after their arrival, the Germans introduced a series of anti-Jewish measures; Jews were forbidden to leave the village, were required to perform forced labor on road construction and street-cleaning projects, and were marked by a yellow patch on their clothing.

On July 27, 1941, German security forces conducted a first Aktion in the settlement. At that time, they rounded up about 200 adult male Jews; around 20 managed to escape, and the rest were shot. The remaining Jews, mostly the elderly, women, and children, were soon relocated into a ghetto established in a part of town near where the synagogue had been. The Jews were able to take most of their belongings with them into the ghetto. The perimeter of the ghetto was fenced off with barbed wire and guarded by Ukrainian police. Inside the ghetto, the Jews lived under terrible conditions. Despite the police guard, it was still possible for the ghetto inmates to barter with local peasants across the barbed wire or possibly forage for food while serving on work details outside the ghetto.¹ In May 1942, about 100 Jews from the ghetto were selected and sent along with other Jews from the region to a forced labor camp established in horse stables at Leznevo, about 6 kilometers (3.7 miles) to the northeast of Proskurov.²

The liquidation of the ghetto was probably organized by a detachment of the Security Police and SD from Starokonstantinow under the command of Hauptscharführer Karl Graf. In the early morning hours of September 12, 1942, German and local Ukrainian police surrounded the ghetto and then started rounding up the Jews by banging on the doors. Those unable to move fast enough were beaten. Once the inmates were assembled, a selection took place, and about 100 Jews deemed fit to work were sent to forced labor camps near Proskurov, where they worked on road construction. The German Gendarmerie and Ukrainian police loaded the remaining several hundred Jews onto carts and escorted them to a forest between the villages of Pavlikovtsy and Geletintsy, 17 kilometers (10.6 miles) southwest of Chernyi Ostrov. Here they were shot at a prepared killing site together with Jews from the village of Fel'shtyn. After the liquidation, Ukrainian police combed the former ghetto, searching for survivors who had hidden during the Aktion. Some 26 of these unfortunates were captured and shot at the Jewish cemetery.³

A handful of Jews managed to escape from the ghetto during the chaos of the liquidation Aktion; the young girl Anna Tsel'ner ran out of her grandparents' house and, owing to her size, slipped through the roundup unnoticed by the police and hid behind an outbuilding. Later she crawled through a gap in the barbed wire and fled, eventually reaching safety. After the war, the few surviving Jews soon left the area, and the community was not reconstituted.

SOURCES Information documenting the fate of Chernyi Ostrov's Jews can be found in the following publications: Iakov Khonigsman, "Tragediia evreev poselka Chernyi Ostrov," *Daidzhest*, no. 5 (22) (May 2001); 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. 248.

Documentation regarding the destruction of the Jews of Chernyi Ostrov can be found in the following archives: DAKhO (863-2-44); GARF (7021-64-817); and VHF (# 21488).

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trans. Kathleen Luft

NOTES

1. VHF, #21488, interview with Anna Tsel'ner.
2. Iosif Groysman, interview, January 2, 2001 (in the possession of Diana Voskoboynik), states that there were anywhere from 1,000 to 3,000 Jews in the Leznevo camp. Ilya Abramovich, *Ne Zabyt': Tragediia evreev goroda Zinkova* (New York: Effect Publishing, 1991), pp. 34–37, indicates that there were only a few hundred people.
3. Khonigsman, "Tragediia evreev poselka Chernyi Ostrov"; GARF, 7021-64-817; DAKhO, 863-2-44; VHF, # 21488, interview with Anna Tsel'ner.

CHOMSK

Pre-1939: Chomsk, village, województwo poleskie, Poland; 1939–1941: Khomsk, Drogichin raion, Brest oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Tschomsk, Rayon Drogitschin, Gebiet Kobryn, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; post-1991: Khomsk, Drabichyn raen, Beras'tse voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Chomsk is located 21 kilometers (13 miles) north of Drohiczyn. After World War I, there were more than 1,000 Jews living in the village. Under Soviet rule from September 1939 until the end of June 1941, three Jewish families were exiled to Siberia, which paradoxically saved their lives. According to some sources, there may have been as many as 1,700 Jews living in Chomsk just prior to the German invasion.

On the arrival of German forces in Chomsk in late June 1941, German forces robbed the Jews and murdered several people (both Jews and Christians), accusing them of being Communist activists. As Chomsk lay isolated in the Pripet Marshes, most German detachments bypassed the village during the first weeks of the occupation.

In early August 1941, however, a detachment of SS-Cavalry Regiment 1 under the overall command of Gustav Lombard arrived in Chomsk with instructions from Heinrich Himmler



Members of the Dror Zionist youth movement musical ensemble in Chomsk rehearse outside, ca. 1938.
USHMM WS #98682, COURTESY OF GFH

to murder all the Jews in the villages north of the main railway line from Brześć to Pińsk.¹ Moïshe Kantorowitz, who obtained information from local witnesses when he arrived in Chomsk a few weeks later, pieced together a rough account of what happened.

A cordon of about 150 German cavalrymen surrounded the shtetl at daybreak. Others entered the shtetl and began to gather the Jewish inhabitants. Some Jews tried to flee and were shot while running. Others then attempted to hide. With the active help of the local Christian population, the Germans searched thoroughly for all those in hiding and then escorted the entire Jewish population to a nearby meadow.

Here the 480 Jewish men among the group were ordered to dig a large ditch. Then the German cavalrymen shot the women, children, and elderly in groups, using a machine gun. The Jewish men had to throw in those bodies that did not fall directly into the ditch. This mass grave was then filled in by the Jewish men, before they had to dig another ditch, which was to be their own mass grave. After they too had been shot, local non-Jews filled in this grave. The entire Aktion lasted two days.²

A few, mostly younger Jews managed to escape through the German cordon, and most found refuge in nearby Drohiczyn. For a time, in August 1941, there were no Jews living in Chomsk, apart from one pharmacist who had been spared. However, in September 1941, about 80 Jewish families who had been driven from Szereszów in Gebiet Białystok in late August 1941, and marched all the way to Drohiczyn, were permitted by the authorities to settle in Chomsk, in the deserted and plundered houses of the Jews. The Szereszów Jews included a number of artisans who earned a living by providing useful services to the farmers around Chomsk. The empty Jewish houses had been robbed of almost everything that was useful, but some firewood remained, and there were sufficient potatoes in the small gardens to feed the Szereszów Jews for several months. After the Szereszów Jews had settled in Chomsk, the German authorities also ordered the 12 or so

survivors of the Chomsk Jewish community in Drohiczyn to return home.³

It does not appear that an enclosed ghetto was established in Chomsk, but the Jews lived together on the street which is described in *Pinkas ha-kehillot* as a ghetto that led to the two mass graves. Knowledge of the fate of the Chomsk Jews and of the active part played by the local Christians cast a heavy shadow over the Jews from Szereszów. For example, at the school, all the non-Jewish children were now wearing the coats of the murdered Jewish children, while the newly arrived Jews were excluded from school. In view of the fear and anxiety that persisted in Chomsk, some of the Szereszów Jews subsequently moved to the Prużana ghetto, which appeared to offer more security among a larger Jewish community.

Little is known about living conditions for the Jews in Chomsk after December 1941, as Moishe Kantorowitz and his family left at that time. However, in the Prużana ghetto he was able to piece together some details about the fate of the 80 or so Szereszów Jewish families that remained in Chomsk, as one of the Bikstein brothers managed to escape from Chomsk to Prużana just after the second mass slaughter.

On the morning of September 13, 1942, the Nazi killers surrounded Chomsk and herded the remaining Jews together, escorting them to the site of the previous two mass graves. At the request of the local non-Jews, the Germans spared five artisans and their families, including a blacksmith, a tailor, and a seamstress; however, they deliberately chose those artisans with the smallest families. Subsequently these Jews were placed together in one house, forming a small remnant ghetto. The other 75 Jewish families from Szereszów, together with the last Jews from Chomsk, were all shot and buried in the same graves used for the first slaughter of the Chomsk Jews almost 14 months previously.⁴

The few Jews in the remnant ghetto were not permitted outside. The police station was across the street from the Jews' house, and the local police kept a close eye on them. Only one of the Jews is known to have escaped from the house. The other four artisans and their families, including Pola Rotenberg, were all shot a few weeks later, in accordance with instructions issued by the Generalkommissar of Wolhynien und Podolien that specialist workers could not be preserved for more than two months after the main Aktions.⁵

According to Soviet sources summarized by Marat Botvinnik, up to 2,000 Jews were murdered altogether in Chomsk in 1941 and 1942.

When the Red Army drove the Germans from Chomsk in the summer of 1944, very few of the original Jews from the village were still alive. A couple of Chomsk Jews escaped to join the Soviet partisans, and just over a dozen returned from exile in Russia.

SOURCES The main source for this entry is the memoir of Moishe Kantorowitz, *My Mother's Bequest: From Shershev to Auschwitz to Newfoundland* (Canada: Moishe Kantorowitz, 2004). Earlier testimonies from the same author include Meishke Kantorovich, *Shershev: Agony and Death of a Shtetl: In Memoriam*,

which originally formed chapters 16–18 of Jacob Auerbach, *The Undying Spark* (Long Beach, NY: J. Auerbach, between 1976 and 1992). Brief information on the fate of the Jews in Chomsk can be found in Shmuel Spector, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 5, *Volhynia and Polesie* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1990), pp. 251–252; and regarding “Khomsk,” in Marat Botvinnik, *Pamiatniki genotsida evreev Belarusi* (Minsk: Belarускаia Navuka, 2000), pp. 125, 137.

Documents on the persecution and murder of the Jews in Chomsk under German occupation can be found in the following archives: GABO (R514-1-255); GARF; NARB; StA-Wfb; USHMM (RG-02.113); and YVA (O-3/2285).

Martin Dean

NOTES

1. StA-Wfb, 62 Nds Fb. 2, Nr. 1304, p. 269, report of SS Kav. Rgt. I, August 11, 1941.
2. Kantorowitz, *My Mother's Bequest*, pp. 239–243.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 242–256; YVA, O-3/2285, testimony of Yossef Bender, as cited by Shalom Cholawsky, *The Jews of Bielorrussia during World War II* (Amsterdam: Harwood, 1998), p. 148.
4. Kantorowitz, *My Mother's Bequest*, pp. 282–283.
5. IPN, Zbiór zespołów szczątkowych jednostek SS i Policji, Sygn. 77, pp. 8–9, Generalkommissar Wolhynien und Podolien to Security Police outposts in Brest, Pińsk, Starokonstantinov, and Kamenets-Podolskii, August 31, 1942.

CZETWIERTNIA

Pre-1939: Czetwiertnia, village, województwo wołyńskie, Poland; 1939–1941 and 1944–1990: Cbetvertnia, Rozbysbche raion, Volyn' oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Tschetwertnja, Rayon Rosbyschtsche, Gebiet Luzk, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; post-1991: Cbetvertnia, Rozbysbche raion, Volyn' oblast', Ukraine

According to Jewish survivor Fanya Rosenblatt, in the village of Czetwiertnia, located 16 kilometers (10 miles) northeast of Rożyszcze, there was a small rural ghetto that existed for a number of months before it was liquidated on October 10, 1942, almost two months after the liquidation of the Rożyszcze ghetto. Under the Soviet occupation, a kolkhoz had been established in the village on lands formerly belonging to a Polish noble family. When the ghetto was set up, Jews were brought in from other villages in the immediately surrounding area, including the villages of Susk, Łuków, Hodomicze, Łyszczce, and Ślawatycze,¹ such that probably around 100 or more Jews were concentrated there. All the Jews of the ghetto performed agricultural work on the kolkhoz. They learned about the destruction of the other, larger ghettos in the area during the summer of 1942 but continued to hope that they would be retained by the Germans as needed workers.

When Ukrainian policemen came to search the houses in the Czetwiertnia ghetto on October 10, 1942, Fanya Rosenblatt's parents hid her inside the sofa. The local policemen found her nonetheless, but an older one among them took pity on her. He then helped her to flee without the Germans

noticing. All the other Jews of the ghetto were murdered on that day. A policeman named Korney, who was tasked with guarding former Jewish property, also helped Fanya to survive, assisting her to regain her family's property from local peasants in order to buy a non-Jewish identity card.²

SOURCES The testimony of Fanya Rosenblatt can be found in the *Rożyszcze yizkor* book edited by Gershon Zik, *Roz'isbts' ayarati/Mayn shtetl Rozsbisbtsb* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Roz'isbts' be-Yisrael ve-ha-irgunim be-Artsot ha-berit, Kanadah, Brazil, ve-Argentinah, 1976). There is also a video testimony by Fanya Rosenblatt (VHF, # 8581), prepared by the Shoah Foundation.

Martin Dean

NOTES

1. In 1921 the population of Czetywiertnia was only 23, but in Susk there were 32 Jews; in Łuków, 14; in Hodomicze, 11; and in Łyszcze, 15.

2. Zik, *Roz'isbts' ayarati*, pp. 45–46. See also her account in the Hebrew section of the same volume, which includes more details about the ghetto.

DĄBROWICA

Pre-1939: Dąbrowica, town, województwo poleskie, Poland; 1939–1941: Dubrovitsa, raion center, Rovno oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Dombrowiza, Rayon center, Gebiet Sarny, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; post-1991: Dubrovitsia, Rivne oblast', Ukraine

Dąbrowica is located 114 kilometers (71 miles) north of Równe. According to the 1921 census, 2,536 Jews lived in Dąbrowica. In 1931, there were 2,739 Jews, and by the end of 1937, 3,225 Jews (comprising 43.4 percent of the population). In September 1939, the town came under Soviet control, resulting in the dissolution of Jewish communal institutions and the nationalization of much private property.

The Soviets began to evacuate Dąbrowica at the end of June 1941, and about 200 young Jews left with them by train towards Kiev. Units of the German 6th Army occupied Dąbrowica on July 6, 1941. In July and August 1941 a German military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur) ran the town, and in September 1941, a German civil administration took over. Dąbrowica was incorporated into Gebiet Sarny. Kameradschaftsführer Huala became the Gebietskommissar.¹ A German Gendarmerie post commanded by a man named König and a unit of Ukrainian Auxiliary Police were established in Dąbrowica.²

Immediately after the German forces arrived, an antisemitic mood gripped the local residents, who organized a pogrom in Dąbrowica. Many Jews were robbed and assaulted, and a number of people were seriously wounded. Soon afterwards, the Germans established a Jewish Council (Judenrat), which was headed by Avraham Liebersohn. The German occupying authorities used the Judenrat to pass on and enforce their various orders and regulations concerning the Jewish

population. A Jewish police force made up of a few individuals headed by Yaacov Perpelmazia was established and subordinated to the Judenrat.³

In the summer and fall of 1941, German forces implemented a series of anti-Jewish measures in Rayon Dombrowiza. Jews were ordered to wear distinctive markings, initially armbands bearing the Star of David, then later, patches in the shape of a yellow circle. They also had to mark their homes with a blue six-pointed star. Jews were prohibited from leaving the limits of the town and from buying goods from non-Jews. Finally, the German authorities and Ukrainian police subjected the Jews to systematic confiscations, robberies, and assaults. For example, on November 17, 1941, the town administration, headed by Mayor Rait, ordered the Jews to hand over all their goats and horses immediately.⁴

Most onerous was the imposition of forced labor. All male Jews over the age of 14 were required to perform heavy manual work, either at sawmills or at the train station, where they loaded and unloaded freight. Jewish women were sent to the fields for agricultural work. The Judenrat paid workers half a kilogram (1.1 pounds) of bread per day for their labors. One day in January 1942, when 80 men failed to show up for work, they were arrested, and the German authorities ordered them to be shot. The Judenrat paid a bribe to save their lives, but the arrested men were flogged every night for eight nights, still having to work the next day.⁵

The Jews of Dąbrowica were spared the hunger and starvation that afflicted many other communities because of a strategic connection with the local flour mill. Jews had previously owned the mill, but it had been nationalized during the Soviet period. It still had a number of Jewish workers, including the former owners. They made a special arrangement with the local ethnic German (*Volksdeutscher*) who managed the mill, a certain Gavrilchik, whereby the Jews could secretly remove as much as one quarter of the daily output in exchange for a complicated system of bribes and incentives that bought his cooperation. The German inspectors who periodically visited the mill were similarly rewarded for their discretion.⁶

In April 1942, the German civil administration established a ghetto in Dąbrowica. On April 14, 1942, the Gebietskommissar in Sarny issued an order to the mayor, giving him and his administration until May 10, 1942, to establish "Jewish residential quarters" in Dąbrowica and Bereżnica. On April 29, 1942, the Jews from the surrounding villages, including several hundred from Kołki, were forcibly resettled into the ghetto in Dąbrowica, raising its population to 4,327 Jews.⁷ The Jews were given only three days to move into the ghetto, but some brought with them such valuable items as glass, window frames, and broken electrical equipment. As a result, on May 5, 1942, the town administration in Dąbrowica ordered the Judenrat to compel all Jews moving into the ghetto to hand over the contents of their former homes in full, including all items of value and other belongings.⁸ No mention is made of a fence or other barrier in the available sources, so it was presumably an open ghetto, as was the smaller ghetto formed in nearby Bereżnica, which had about 1,000 inhabitants.

News of the massacres in other nearby towns, such as that in Kowel in early June 1942, caused a number of young people to meet secretly to plan their escape. The Judenrat tried to discourage them and even threatened to turn them in to the authorities.

The ghetto in Dąbrowica existed until the end of August 1942. On August 26, 1942, German police and Ukrainian collaborators liquidated the ghetto. As the Jews were being marched to the railway station to be transported to Sarny, about 1,500 of them fled en masse, as Leibel Landau had bribed the Ukrainian guards to look the other way, but about 200 of them were shot and killed on the spot. Of those who fled, more than 500 managed to escape to the forest, but many others were soon recaptured. Several hundred Jews made it to the nearby ghetto of Wysock, where they were killed together with the local Jews a couple of weeks later. German forces and their collaborators murdered the remaining 3,000 or so Jews from the Dąbrowica ghetto with other Jews from the region in Sarny.⁹

Many of the escapees from the ghettos died of hunger and disease in 1942–1943 or were arrested by the Ukrainian police and German Gendarmerie and then shot. The head of the Ukrainian police in Dąbrowica, Chaim Sygal, gave evidence in 1951 regarding the shooting of some 30 Jews found hiding in and around the Dąbrowica ghetto at the end of August 1942. Then in September 1942, the 70 Jews who had been in charge of “clearing out” the ghetto were also shot.¹⁰ Some of those who escaped from the ghetto or during another break-out in Sarny joined partisan groups. About 50 Jews from Dąbrowica survived until the town was liberated with the aid of Soviet partisans on January 10, 1944.

SOURCES Accounts by survivors from Dąbrowica can be found in the yizkor book edited by L. Losh, *Sefer Dombrovitsab* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Dombrovitsah be-Yisrael, 1964). Brief articles on Dąbrowica can be found in Shmuel Spector, ed., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 5, *Volhynia and Polesie* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1990), pp. 61–65; 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. 322.

Documentation concerning the fate of the Jewish community in Dąbrowica can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/3134); BA-BL; BA-L (B 162/7287); DARO (R293-2-1); GARF (7021-71-49); VHF; and YVA (e.g., M-1/Q-1367/161; O-3/3112 and 3513).

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trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. BA-BL, BDC, SSSH 2432, Organisationsplan der besetzten Ostgebiete nach dem Stand vom 10. März 1942, hg. vom Chef der Ordnungspolizei, Berlin, March 13, 1942.

2. In the summer of 1942, K. Sygolenko (alias Chaim Sygal, also Kovalski) was in charge of the Ukrainian police section. He was a Jew from Lwów who in the fall of 1941 (under

the name of K. Sygolenko) was a collaborator in the Ukrainian nationalist paramilitary unit called “Poleskaia Sich.” After December 1941, he became a translator working for the German Gendarmerie and the Ukrainian police chief in Dąbrowica. In 1943, he served as a translator for the Security Police and SD in Sarny; and after 1944 he worked in Königsberg and Potsdam. In 1952, Sygolenko was tried in Rovno. For further information, see T. Gladkov and B. Steklar, “. . . Vse ravno konets budet!” in *So sbchitom i mehom: Ocherki i stat'i* (Lvov, 1988), pp. 173–180; and also BA-L, B 162/7287, pp. 354–356.

3. Losh, *Sefer Dombrovitsab*, p. 446. The yizkor book also lists the names of several members of the Jewish Council and the Jewish Police.

4. For the instruction of November 17, 1941, issued by the town's administration concerning the Jewish population in Dąbrowica, see DARO, R293-2-2a, p. 73. According to another source, most horses and other livestock belonging to the Jews had already been confiscated by the Germans in July; see Losh, *Sefer Dombrovitsab*, p. 457.

5. Losh, *Sefer Dombrovitsab*, pp. 446–447, 456.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 438.

7. DARO, R293-2-1, p. 4, Order no. 280 of the main administration in Dąbrowica to the mayor in Dąbrowica, April 29, 1942. The figure of 4,327 comes from a ghetto census taken by the Judenrat including those Jews brought in from other villages; see Spector, *Pinkas ha-kebilot*, vol. 5, p. 61.

8. DARO, R293-2-1, p. 61, Order of the town administration in Dąbrowica to the Judenrat in Dąbrowica, no. 54/42, May 5, 1942.

9. According to the documents of the ChGK, 5,000 Jews were transported to Sarny and murdered there. See GARF, 7021-71-49, p. 4. This latter figure is almost certainly too high, even including those Jews brought from Bereźnica.

10. Spector, *Pinkas ha-kebilot*, vol. 5, p. 65; and BA-L, B 162/7287, pp. 354–356.

DAWIDGRÓDEK

Pre-1939: Dawidgródek, town, województwo poleskie, Poland; 1939–1941: David-Gorodok, Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Dawid-Gorodok, Gebiet Stolin, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; post-1991: Davyd-Haradok, Beras'tse voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Dawidgródek is located on the Horyn River, about 80 kilometers (50 miles) east of Pińsk. In 1921, the town had a Jewish population of 2,832, out of a total population of 9,851. On September 19, 1939, the Red Army arrived in the town and annexed it to the Soviet Union.

The non-Jewish population of Dawidgródek—known to the Jews as *Horodtsbukes*—considered themselves a distinct quasi-ethnic group, separate from both the peasants in the surrounding areas and the town's small Polish population. Jewish survivors from Dawidgródek speak more of indigenous anti-semitism than survivors from other towns in the area. Anti-semitic tsarist Horodtsbukes had attempted to organize a pogrom in 1917. Although the Horodtsbukes were not particularly

supportive of the Polish government, they fiercely resented the Soviets—with whom they came to associate the Jews.

Shortly after Germany invaded the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, Soviet officials and their families began to evacuate from Dawidgródek; many Jews tried to flee as well but were stopped by Soviet officials stationed along the former Soviet-Polish border. By July 6, the last remnants of the Soviet government had fled. The advance unit of Oberstleutnant von Pannwitz reached Dawidgródek on July 7–8, 1941.¹ However, the initial German forces did not leave a garrison in the town, as it was not on any of the major highways.² A delegation of non-Jewish townspeople, led by a medical worker named Ivan Mareiko who was known for his animosity towards Jews, reported to the German headquarters in Pińsk.³ According to Jewish survivors, the delegation reported that the Jews had been engaged in partisan activities. The Germans appointed Mareiko mayor of the town and made Lyovo Kosarev head of the local police force, which included the Tanyo brothers and Kulaga. The Jews were ordered to wear white armbands bearing a blue Star of David.⁴

On July 19, Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler placed the SS-Cavalry Regiments 1 and 2 under the command of Höherer SS-und Polizeiführer Erich von dem Bach Zelewski for the systematic combing of the Pripiat Marshes for Jews, remnants of the Red Army, and potential partisans.⁵ On July 28, he explicitly ordered the shooting of all adult male Jews in the area and that Jewish women and children were to be driven into the swamps.⁶ On August 10, in the early hours of the morning, members of the 2nd Regiment's 3rd Squadron arrived in Dawidgródek to do away with the Jewish population. The Jewish houses in which members of the squadron stayed were empty of furniture and belongings, having been looted already by the local population.⁷

The local militia brought all the Jewish males aged 14 and older to the marketplace.⁸ The Jews had been informed that they were going to be sent away for forced labor. The local police searched the houses of the Jews for men who tried to hide. Then, with the help of part of the 3rd Squadron, they escorted them to a pit near the village of Hinowsk, where the other members of the squadron were waiting. They ordered a group of Jews to line up, standing or kneeling, in front of the pit, each Jew opposite an SS man. After shooting them, they had the next row of Jews line up in similar fashion and proceeded thus until they had killed all of them—probably close to 1,000 men and youths in total.⁹

On the following day, the SS and local police expelled the Jewish women and children from Dawidgródek, following Himmler's order to "drive them into the swamps." Several Jewish men who had escaped the Aktion by disguising themselves as women were caught by the local police and killed. At this time, there were no partisan units in the forests to absorb the refugees. Many tried to enter surrounding towns, such as Stolin; others tried to hide with peasants. Eventually, many of them gradually returned to Dawidgródek, having nowhere else to go. Towards the end of 1941, most of the surviving Jews had returned, and they were forced into a ghetto surrounded by barbed wire, approximately 100 by 30 meters (328 by 98

feet) in area.¹⁰ Each resident was given a ration of 100 grams (3.5 ounces) of bread per day.¹¹ They were forced to work in various workshops that were set up inside the ghetto, primarily performing tasks necessary for the Wehrmacht. Many died of hunger or disease.¹² Some, however, managed to escape and join partisans operating in the area. The local partisan units, made up of both Jews and non-Jews, launched successful attacks on the police post in Dawidgródek.

In the summer of 1942, SS-Sturmscharführer Wilhelm Rasp, head of the Security Police (Sipo) and SD office in Pińsk, received orders from his superiors to begin liquidating the Jewish population in Polesie.¹³ On September 10 or 11, 1942, Rasp arrived in Dawidgródek with a Sipo/SD detachment of 10 men. The German Gendarmerie and the local police had surrounded the ghetto prior to his arrival. They then escorted the Jews to the pit near Hinowsk, where they were shot. While the shooting was going on, a search was conducted for Jews hiding inside the ghetto and those who tried to escape. When found, they were shot on the spot and then brought to the pit by local peasants. A group of about 50 peasants then covered the pits.¹⁴ By this point, the Jewish population had become so impoverished that no attempt was made to collect valuable items from their houses after the liquidation.¹⁵

SOURCES Despite Dawidgródek's small size, there is useful primary material on the town from both victim and perpetrator sources. Most of the former was found in Yitshak Eidan, ed., *Sefer zikaron: David-Horodok* (Tel Aviv, 1957), parts of which have been translated into English as *Memorial Book of David-Horodok* (Oak Park, MI: B. Chase, 1981). This book provides several survivor testimonies. The verdict of the trial in Braunschweig of Franz Magill, commander of the SS-Kavallerieregiment 2, has been published in the *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen* series.

There is also information on the fate of the Jewish population of Dawidgródek in the following archives: BA-L; BA-MA; GARF; Sta. Braunschweig; and YVA.

Andrew Koss

NOTES

1. BA-MA, RH 26-45/28, Meldung Vorausabteilung v. Pannwitz, July 7, 1941.
2. Y. Lipshits, p. 57; and Yitshak Nakhmanovitch, p. 443—both in Eidan, *Sefer zikaron*.
3. Lipshits, pp. 57, 62; Bas-Sheve Kushnir and Grunn Pilavin, p. 441; Nakhmanovitch, p. 443; and Meyer Hershk Korman, p. 448—all in *ibid*.
4. Lipshits, p. 57; Nakhmanovitch, pp. 443–445; and Miriam Bregman, p. 462—all in *ibid*.
5. *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 20 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1979), Lfd. Nr. 570, LG-Braun 2 Ks 1/63 (Strafsache gegen Franz Magill u.a.), pp. 41–43.
6. BA-MA, RS 3-8/36, Himmler Order to SS Cavalry Regiment 2, August 1, 1941.
7. BA-L, ZStL, 2 Ks 11/63, statement of Albert Colas, October 9, 1962.
8. *JuNS-V*, 20:58–59; Lipshits, in Eidan, *Sefer zikaron*, p. 57.

9. *JuNS-V*, 20:58–59. And Lipshits, see p. 57; Kushnir and Pilavin, p. 442; Nakhmanovitsh, p. 443; and Korman, p. 448—all in Eidan, *Sefer zikaron*. Also see BA-L, ZStL, 2 Ks 11/63, statement of Henschke; Sta. Braunschweig 1 Js 1409/60 (gegen Magill u.a.), vol. 1266, pp. 143–147, Max Mahn statement, July 10, 1962, and vol. 1270, pp. 69–73, Blum statement, March 8, 1963.

10. See BA-L, ZStL, II 204 AR-Z 393/59, Ghetto Vernichtung im Raum Pinsk. Also see Lipshits, p. 58; Kushnir and Pilavin, p. 443; Nakhmanovitsh, p. 445; and Bregman, p. 463—all in Eidan, *Sefer zikaron*.

11. Lipshits, p. 58, in Eidan, *Sefer zikaron*.

12. Nakhmanovitsh, p. 445, in *ibid*.

13. BA-L, ZStL, II 204 AR-Z 393/59, vol. 2, pp. 173–194.

14. *Ibid.*, ZStL, II 204 AR-Z 393/59, p. 249, statement by Nikolai Kosstjuk, February 5, 1972.

15. *Ibid.*, ZStL, II 204 AR-Z 393/59, statements by Richard Mitschke, December 17, 1962, and April 4, 1962, as cited by Stephen Pallavicini, “The Liquidation of the Jews of Polesie: 1941–1942. A Case Study: Pinsk and Surrounding Areas” (Ph.D. diss., Macquarie University, Sydney, 2001), pp. 118–119.

DEMIDÓWKA

Pre-1939: Demidówka, village, województwo wołyńskie, Poland; 1939–1941: Demidovka, Rovno oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Demidovka, Rayon center, Gebiet Dubno, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; post-1991: Demydivka, Rivne oblast', Ukraine

Demidówka is located about 75 kilometers (47 miles) southwest of Równe. According to the census, 595 Jews lived in Demidówka in 1921. In mid-1941, allowing for an estimated natural increase, there were probably around 700 Jews living in Demidówka.

Units of the German 6th Army occupied Demidówka on June 25, 1941. In the first week, seven Jews were shot as Communists. Shortly afterwards, the first requisitions of Jewish property and valuables began. In July and August 1941, Demidówka was governed by a series of German military commandants (Ortskommandanturen), and from September 1941, authority was transferred to the German civil administration. Demidówka became part of Gebiet Dubno. The Gebietskommissar was Nachwuchsführer Broks, and the Gendarmerie-Gebietsführer from the spring of 1942 was Leutnant der Gendarmerie Eberhardt.¹ There was a Gendarmerie post in Demidówka, as well as a squad of Ukrainian police.

Soon after the start of the German occupation, Jews were ordered to wear distinctive symbols on their clothing. A Judenrat was created in the settlement, headed by Eliahu Titelboym. In total there were 10 members of the Judenrat. The Jewish population suffered from severe shortages of food. One of the Judenrat's functions was the distribution of the limited supplies of flour it received from the German authorities. However, local Ukrainians also robbed the Jews of these flour rations as well as their money.

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CAMPS AND GHETTOS, 1933–1945

Forced labor was imposed, and Jews were put to work on farms and in peat bogs; some men were sent to work on the estate of Count Liudochowski, in the village of Smordwa. Here they were made to run up and down stairs and were beaten in the middle of the night.²

In May 1942, a ghetto was created, which existed until early October 1942. On October 8, 1942, a team of Security Police and SD from Równe, assisted by the German Gendarmerie and Ukrainian police, liquidated the ghetto: approximately 600 Jews were taken out of the village on trucks and shot. More than 100 Jews were able to avoid the massacre by hiding. Of this number, 50 people were found and shot later in October 1942.³ Afterwards, several dozen more Jews were captured and shot. After the liberation in March 1944, only about 30 Jews returned to Demidówka. According to material collected by Ilya Ehrenburg, some Jews managed to survive in the Demidówka raion with the aid of Vera Isosifovna Krasova and her daughter, who hid them from the Germans.⁴

SOURCES The following publications contain information on the annihilation of the Jewish community of Demidówka: Shmuel Spector, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 5, *Volhynia and Polesie* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1990), pp. 65–66; *Rossiiskaia Evreiskaia Entsiklopediia* (Moscow: Russian Academy of Natural Sciences, Jewish Encyclopedia Research Center, “Epos,” 2000), 4:375; and Mendel Singer, ed., *Hayetab 'ayarah: Sefer zikaron li-kehillot Berestets'kah, Beremelyah veba-sevivah* (Haifa: Irgun yots'e Berestets'kah be-Yisrael, 1960 or 1961).

Documents and testimonies regarding the destruction of the Jews in Demidówka can be found in the following archives: BA-BL; DARO; GARF (7021-71-46); and YVA.

Alexander Kruglov
trans. Ester-Basya Vaisman

NOTES

1. BA-BL, BDC, SSHO 2432, Organisationsplan der besetzten Ostgebiete nach dem Stand vom 10. März 1942, hg. vom Chef der Ordnungspolizei, Berlin, March 13, 1942.

2. Yehudit Rudolf, “Life under the German Occupation,” in Yitshak Siegleman, ed., *Sefer Mlinov-Muravits* (Haifa: Va'ad yots'e Mlinov-Muravits be-Yisrael, 1970), pp. 287–292.

3. GARF, 7021-71-46, p. 16.

4. Ilya Ehrenburg and Vasily Grossman, eds., *The Complete Black Book of Russian Jewry*, English edition trans. and ed. David Patterson (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2002), pp. 419–420.

DERAZHNIA

Pre-1941: Derazhnia, town, Kamenets-Podolskii oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Derashnja, Rayon center, Gebiet Letischew, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; post-1991: Derazhnyia, Khmel'nyts'kyi oblast', Ukraine

Derazhnia is located about 40 kilometers (25 miles) southeast of Proskurov. At its peak in 1897, as many as 3,300 Jews lived

in Derazhnia. The train station there is famous as the location for Sholom Aleichem's story "The German."¹ In 1939, the Jewish population of Derazhnia was 2,651.

The German army occupied Derazhnia on July 11, 1941.² Within a few weeks, the Germans established a ghetto just north of the train station that consisted of two parts separated by a main road. Initially, 1,848 Jews were registered, including 579 children and 715 "workers."³ Jews from the nearby Jewish collective farms of Loitera and Staryi Maidan, as well as Jews from the town of Volkovintsy, were brought into the Derazhnia ghetto.⁴ Before the relocations, the nearby collective of Staryi Maidan had a population that swelled many times larger than its pre-war size because Jewish refugees from other towns mistakenly assumed that farming skills would grant them special privileges.⁵

Several rows of barbed wire, which ranged from 3.3 to 5 meters (10.8 to 16.4 feet) high, surrounded the ghetto. Jews were forced to wear the Star of David on both the front and back of their clothes. On different occasions, "contributions" were collected in the amounts of 115 kilograms (254 pounds) of gold, 325 kilograms (717 pounds) of silver, and the equivalent of U.S. \$59,500.⁶

Smaller group killings took place in 1941 in Volkovintsy (369 Jews), in Nizhne (70 prisoners of war [POWs]), at the railroad station (62 POWs), and at various nearby locations (about 30 Jews).⁷ Strong, able-bodied Jewish workers were transferred to Letichev to work in the large slave labor camp there.⁸

Living conditions in the ghettos were overcrowded, as several families had to share each house. Local policemen guarded the ghettos, but some Jews still sneaked out, especially children, to beg or barter for food, such as milk or potatoes, with local non-Jews. Thanks to this and reserves of food within the ghetto, there was hunger but little starvation. Jews were taken for forced labor, working on excavation projects and repairing a bridge.⁹

On or about September 20, 1942, the Germans and the local police under the command of Vasil Shimkov began to liq-



Portrait of the Lewin family in Derazhnia, ca. 1927. Most of the family was killed by the Nazis in Derazhnia in 1942.

USHMM WS #25519, COURTESY OF ESTER AJZEN LEWIN

uidate the ghetto. German Gendarmes and the local police escorted the Jews in a column led by the rabbi to mass graves prepared from two ravines at the top of a hill outside Derazhnia near Nizhne. The Jews were forced to take off their clothes and place them in a communal pile and then lie face-down in the trench. A German "SS man" then shot them with a submachine gun. On this day, about 1,500 people were shot.¹⁰ At least 1 Jew tried to escape at the killing site but was gunned down before he could get far. Some of the victims were only wounded, and small children were thrown into the mass grave to be buried alive.

According to local inhabitants interviewed many years after the events by Yahad-In Unum (YIU), a number of Jews evaded the roundup by hiding in basements and behind false walls. The Germans and local police, assisted by dogs, then searched the ghetto area for these fugitives for several weeks. Those Jews who were found were placed in a tightly guarded ghetto for a while and were then shot together in a subsequent Aktion about one month after the first. Another pit was prepared for this. Some Jews sought shelter with local peasants in and around Derazhnia. However, since the families of anyone caught hiding Jews also faced the death penalty, most Jews were advised to go (or were taken) to more remote locations, where the chance of discovery was much less.¹¹

Various Soviet intelligence reports list the total number of Jews killed as between 3,378 and 3,647, but this number is probably too high.¹² The discrepancy may result in part from the killing of a sizable group of non-Jews. The entire Gypsy village of Kitanovka, outside Volkovintsy, perhaps 450 people in total, was also killed in Derazhnia.¹³ Local witnesses mention Russians and others shot in the same pit as some of the Jews, for concealing Jews or other suspected offenses against the German authorities.¹⁴

Gendarmerie and local police chiefs at various times included Paul Reski, Deichmann, Schultz, Mugle, Stockelmann, and Minkov. The head of the local police is identified as Vasil Shimkov, and another notorious policeman who allegedly also beat and shot Jews was Dema Podnevich.¹⁵

No information was found about resistance in the area. Survivors listed in the Soviet sources include Shpilberg, R. Mekhel, D.R. Beldf, Lazar Akselrod, Moisevich, and A.B. Kusharsky.¹⁶ It does not appear that these people recorded testimonies beyond the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission (ChGK) summaries. The only detailed testimony comes from B.Kh. Tsukerman. A tailor by the name of Melamed was also a survivor.

Several war crime trials of Ukrainian collaborators took place after the war. For example, a man named Mikhail Voitov was tried in 1950 for having served as a policeman in the village of Sharki, Derazhnia raion, during the German occupation.¹⁷

SOURCES Some information in English can be found in chapter 16 (Holocaust) of David Chapin and Ben Weinstock, eds., *The Road from Letichev: The History and Culture of a Forgotten*

1348 VOLHYNIA AND PODOLIA REGION

Jewish Community in Eastern Europe, vol. 2 (Lincoln, NE: iUniverse, 2000).

Relevant documentation and testimonies can be found in the following archives: DAKhO (e.g., 363-1-30 and 363-1-58); GARF; GASBU; PRO; and YIU (nos. 712–13).

David Chapin, Ben Weinstock, and Martin Dean

NOTES

1. Sholom Aleichem, *Tevye's Daughters* (New York: Crown, 1948).

2. Newspaper *Za chesť Rodiny*, no. 27, March 30, 1944.

3. B.Kh. Tsukerman, "Genotsid evreev na zemle Khmel'nitchnini," in Dr. Iurii Liakhovitskii, *Kholokost, "Evreiskii vopros" i sovremennoe ukrainskoe obschbestvo* (Kharkov and Jerusalem: Bensiah Library), p. 120 (reproduced in Chapin and Weinstock, *The Road from Letichev*, 2:744).

4. Ibid.; Vladimir Goykher, *Tragedy of the Letichev Ghetto* (New York: Vladimir Goykher, 1992); and YIU, *Témoin* no. 713.

5. PADC, Yefrem Mankovetsky testimony, 1994.

6. Tsukerman, "Genotsid evreev."

7. DAKhO, 363-1-30, p. 1, and 363-1-58, pp. 55–58, ChGK reports "About concentration camps and places of mass killing of Soviet people by the Fascists in the Territory of Khmel'nitskii Oblast' at the time of the Fascist occupation."

8. Goykher, *Tragedy of the Letichev Ghetto*.

9. YIU, *Témoin*s nos. 712 and 713.

10. Tsukerman, "Genotsid evreev"; statement of former local policeman V.I. Siniavski given on May 22, 1987, in material received by the Hetherington-Chalmers War Crimes Inquiry in the U.K. from the Soviet Procurators (records now in the PRO).

11. YIU, *Témoin*s nos. 712 and 713.

12. DAKhO, 363-1-30, p. 1, and 363-1-58, pp. 55–58, ChGK reports.

13. Ibid.

14. YIU, *Témoin*s nos. 712 and 713.

15. DAKhO, 363-1-30, p. 1, and 363-1-58, pp. 55–58, ChGK reports; Tsukerman testimony; *ibid.*, no. 712.

16. DAKhO, 363-1-30, p. 1, and 363-1-58, pp. 55–58, ChGK reports.

17. Information received from the Ukrainian authorities by the British War Crimes Investigation, Simyon Bik testimony, 1996 (records now in the PRO).

DERAŻNE

Pre-1939: Derażne, village, województwo wołyńskie, Poland; 1939–1941 and 1944–1990: Derażne, Kostopol' raion, Rovno oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Derażne, Rayon center, Gebiet Kostopol, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; post-1991: Derażne, Kostopil' raion, Rivne oblast', Ukraine

Derażne is located 38 kilometers (24 miles) northwest of Równe. In 1897 there were 770 Jews living in the village (51.4 percent of the total population), and in 1921, 592 Jews resided there.

Units of the German 6th Army occupied the village on June 28, 1941. In July and August 1941, a German military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur) governed the village, but in September 1941 authority was transferred to a German civil administration. Derażne became part of Gebiet Kostopol, within Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien in Reichskommissariat Ukraine.

The Gebietskommissar in Kostopol was SA-Standartenführer Loehnert, and the Gendarmerie-Gebietsführer was Leutnant der Schutzpolizei Wichmann.¹ A local Ukrainian administration and a Ukrainian police force were established in Derażne and reported to the local post of the German Gendarmerie that was established in September 1941, consisting of several German Gendarmes.

In the summer and fall of 1941, German occupational authorities introduced a series of anti-Jewish measures in the village. Jews were required to wear the Star of David for identification purposes; they had to surrender all gold and valuables; they were made to perform hard labor; they were forbidden to leave the village limits without permission; and the Ukrainian police subjected them to systematic looting and beatings. The German authorities ordered the establishment of a Jewish Council (Judenrat) in the village, which they used to transmit and enforce their orders and regulations for the Jewish population.

On October 5, 1941, the Germans established a ghetto in Derażne, where the Jews from the nearby villages were placed as well, about 1,000 people in total. The ghetto existed for almost 11 months.² In May 1942, most of the able-bodied men were sent for forced labor to work camps outside the ghetto, such that thereafter the inmates consisted mainly of women, children, and the elderly.³ The women also were obliged to work in agriculture to receive food or a ration card. According to one survivor account, the ghetto remained unfenced, but all the Jews were moved in together with those who already lived in the houses around the main square. Therefore, it remained fairly easy to sneak in and out of the ghetto.⁴

On August 24, 1942, the Ukrainian police and German Gendarmerie liquidated the ghetto. According to Chayah Sherman's recollection, in the evening (probably of August 23), all the Jews were ordered to assemble in the main square of the ghetto. Some Jews thought of escaping, but the rabbis and members of the Judenrat warned them that probably everyone would be killed if the Jews did not comply with German demands. While the Jews were gathered in the square, Germans and Ukrainians searched attics and basements in the ghetto for any Jews in hiding. From the square, the Jews were marched three abreast through the Ukrainian villages, watched by their neighbors. Jews begged the Ukrainians for water, in vain.⁵

The Jews of Derażne, together with those of the nearby village of Osowa Wyszka,⁶ 1,868 people in total,⁷ were escorted by the Ukrainian police to an area near Kostopol and then shot there by a squad of the Security Police and SD from Równe. In the fall of 1942, the Ukrainian police and the

German Gendarmerie caught 152 Jews in hiding and shot them in an area 4 kilometers (2.5 miles) north of the village.⁸

SOURCES An article on the destruction of the Jewish population of Derażne can be found in Shmuel Spector, ed., *Pinkas ba-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 5, *Volhynia and Polesie* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1990), pp. 67–68.

Documents regarding the destruction of the Jews of Derażne can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/1268 and 2872); DARO; GARF (7021-71-47); VHF (# 22483); and YVA.

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trans. Igor Puchkov

NOTES

1. BA-BL, BDC, SSSH 2432, Organisationsplan der besetzten Ostgebiete nach dem Stand vom 10. März 1942, hg. vom Chef der Ordnungspolizei, Berlin, March 13, 1942.

2. AŻIH, 301/1268, testimony of A. Dereczynski.

3. Ibid.

4. VHF, # 2483, interview with Chayah Sherman.

5. Ibid.

6. According to the 1921 census, there were 700 Jews residing in the village of Osowa Wyszka. Allowing for an annual natural population growth of 9 to 10 per 1,000, by mid-1941 there would have been approximately 850 Jews. About 30 Jewish youths from Osowa Wyszka escaped to the forest and formed a partisan unit.

7. GARF, 7021-71-47, p. 1. AŻIH, 301/1268, however, gives the date of August 22, 1942, for the liquidation of all the ghettos in Gebiet Kostopol.

8. GARF, 7021-71-47, pp. 20, 22–23.

DOMACZÓW

Pre-1939: Domaczów, town, województwo poleskie, Poland; 1939–1941: Domachevo, Brest oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Domatschewo, Rayon center, Gebiet Brest-Litowsk, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; post-1991: Damachava, Beras'tse voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Domaczów is located about 48 kilometers (30 miles) south of Brześć. In 1921, the Jewish population of Domaczów was 1,337. At the time of the German occupation, including a number of refugees who had arrived from central and western Poland, there were probably about 3,000 Jews residing in the town.¹

Units of the German 1st Cavalry Division captured Domaczów on June 22, 1941. Combat operations destroyed roughly half the houses in town; many Jews became casualties. Then the Germans began a program of restrictions, abuse, plunder, and murder.

The Germans established a ghetto within two or three months. The ghetto was quite small and overcrowded, consisting of only about 30 wooden houses. It was fenced with planks of wood along the main road and by barbed wire on the other sides. Jews from the surrounding villages, such as Leplówka, were also brought into the Domaczów ghetto.²



The Storch family vacations with friends in Chelmski guesthouse in Domaczów, 1938.

USHMM WS #64239, COURTESY OF HELENA JACOBS

During the summer of 1941, the town was administered by a succession of military administrative headquarters: for example, in early August 1941, Feldkommandantur 594 was based in the town.³ The first Rayon mayor appointed by the Germans was the Pole Stanisław Gwiadziński. The Germans arrested him in early 1942 and later murdered him. The mayor of Domaczów, appointed in February 1942, was an ethnic German named Ludwig.³

In the fall of 1941, a civil administration took over responsibility for the region from the military authorities. Domaczów became a Rayon center in Gebiet Brest-Litowsk, subordinated to the Gebietskommissar (Brest-Land), Curt Rolle. In August 1942, part of a German cavalry squadron arrived in Domaczów to reinforce the Gendarmerie post.

Shortly after their arrival, the Germans established a local police force made up of about 40 local Ukrainian and Polish volunteers, supervised by four German Gendarmes. The commander of the local police from the spring of 1942 to the summer of 1943 was Konstanty Korneluk. The tasks of the local police included guarding the ghetto and searching people returning from work to ensure they did not smuggle in any food. As Jewish survivor Faibel Stul later recalled, “[T]he Jews in the ghetto were not given any provisions; they were starving and were therefore compelled to go to their deaths on the other side of the wire in their quest for a piece of bread.”⁵ Local policemen also beat Jews they caught not wearing their yellow patches and demanded from the Judenrat that clothing and other items be made especially for them.

The winter of 1941–1942 was very cold, with temperatures sometimes more than 30 degrees below zero. No fuel was available to heat the houses in the ghetto, and the Jews had to burn their furniture to stay warm. There was insufficient food, and people lost their will to go on, as it appeared there was no end in sight; they were almost envious of those who died. Frequent

1350 VOLHYNIA AND PODOLIA REGION

raids into the ghetto by the Germans and the local police terrorized the ghetto population.

According to a German report dated March 1942, artisan workshops were established for blacksmiths, carpenters, tailors, and other craftsmen in Domaczów in order for “Aryans” to be trained by Jewish specialists.⁶ In the spring of 1942, the Judenrat asked all the Jews to assemble at the entrance to the ghetto; the younger men and women were loaded onto trucks and taken away, presumably for forced labor for digging peat and building roads, which the Gebietskommissar in Brześć demanded of all Jews capable of work.⁷ According to one account, some 500 Jews were taken from the Domaczów ghetto in May 1942 for work on the Brześć-Kowel highway. Apparently those who were exhausted and weakened were shot shortly afterwards.⁸

During the summer of 1942, conditions in the ghetto for those remaining deteriorated, and some Jews, including Ben-Zion Blustein’s family, constructed hiding places in anticipation of further recruitment of forced laborers or also a possible “liquidation Aktion.”⁹ Rumors spread of the massacre of the inhabitants from the ghettos in neighboring towns, such as Kowel and Małoryta.

On Sunday, September 20, 1942, a German special detachment arrived in Domaczów. The Jews received instructions to report to the sports stadium, where the Germans took away their gold and other valuables and forced them to strip naked. The local police then escorted them in large groups to a sandy area in the forest about 500 meters (0.3 mile) east of Domaczów. Here they were made to lie facedown on the ground. The Germans then shot the Jews and buried them in a pit.¹⁰ At the killing site, the Germans singled out 13 Jews who were kept alive to work in the stables for the cavalry squadron.¹¹

Shortly afterwards, the German Gendarmerie commander in Brześć reported that “on September 19 and 20, 1942, about 2,900 Jews were shot in Domaczów and Tomaszówka by a special command of the SD together with the cavalry squadron stationed in Domaczów, the Gendarmerie, and the Schutzmannschaft [local police]. The ‘Jewish Aktion’ took place without any disturbances.”¹² The village elder in Domaczów at the time, Moisei Naumchik, covered the graves with lime about a week after the mass shooting. He estimated that the Germans had shot about 1,000 Jews.¹³ The precise number of Jews in the Domaczów ghetto at the time of its liquidation is not known. Given the departure of many Jews to work on forced labor projects prior to the Aktion, the number of Jews killed was probably about 1,000, consisting mainly of the elderly, women, and children.

In the days after the massacre, the local police repeatedly searched the ghetto area and murdered any Jews they found—some had hidden in bunkers and other hiding spots—while also looting Jewish property.

After the massacre, the Gebietskommissar in Brześć complained that he had not been informed beforehand and that consequently the local population had plundered Jewish property. The small soap factory in Domaczów was forced to close down, as all its workers had been killed.¹⁴ In November 1942,

the Gebietskommissar issued instructions for the former Jewish houses to be sold by the end of the year.¹⁵

The Germans issued orders that anyone hiding Jews would be strictly punished, and rewards were offered for those who turned Jews in. For example, Boris Grunzstein was handed over to the Domaczów police after he was discovered by the local blacksmith, Stanisław Szepel.¹⁶ Most Jews who survived did so by joining the Soviet partisan movement in the area. In late 1943, the Soviet partisans launched an attack on the town of Domaczów in which they burned part of the town and killed several local policemen. In December 1943, there were eight Jewish members of the “Voroshilov” partisan group operating in the area, out of a total strength of 423 men and 26 women.¹⁷ Only a handful of Jews survived to return to the town after its liberation by the Red Army in the fall of 1944.

Of the local policemen involved in guarding the ghetto, escorting the Jews to the killing site, and especially in hunting down surviving Jews after the massacre, several were tried by the Soviets in the period from 1944 to 1948. The Polish authorities tried the head of the local police, Konstanty Korneluk, in the 1960s. Andrei Sawoniuk, a Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO) in the local police, was convicted on two counts of murder by a British court at the Old Bailey in 1999. He was the only person to be successfully prosecuted under the British (Nazi) War Crimes Act passed in 1991 and was given a mandatory life sentence for the crime of murder. He died in Norwich jail in November 2005.¹⁸

SOURCES Documents on the German occupation of Domaczów and the fate of the town’s Jews can be found in the following archives: AUKGBRBBO; BA-BL (R 94); BA-L; GABO; GARF; IPN; NARB; Sta. Dortmund; WCU; and YVA. Much of this article is based on the statement of Ben-Zion Blustein at the Committal hearing at Bow Street Magistrates Court in London in the case against Anthony (Andrei) Sawoniuk, a local policeman from Domaczów, in 1998 (cited as Bow Street, Blustein, 1998).

Martin Dean

NOTES

1. BA-BL, R 94/7, Report of Gebietskommissar Brest-Litowsk, March 24, 1942; BA-BL, RD 207/3-2, pp. 7-32, *Zentralblatt Reichskommissariat Ukraine*, January 9, 1943.
2. Bow Street, Blustein, 1998; WCU, Mariya Ivanovna Onufriyuk, Officer’s Information (OFI), February 1997; WCU, statement of Sergei Ulyanovich Melyanyuk, February 1997; Sta. Dortmund, 45 Js 13/64 (case against Hahn), vol. 1, pp. 82-86, statement of Erwin Glas on June 18, 1968. *Blackbook of Localities Whose Jewish Population Was Exterminated by the Nazis* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1965), p. 148, gives a population of 14 Jews for Leplówka in 1921.
3. BA-BL, R 2104/16, p. 353.
4. *Ibid.*, R 94/7, Report of Gebietskommissar Brest-Litowsk, February 24, 1942.
5. IPN, SWGd 72-74, Case against Konstanty Korneluk, pp. 11-12, statement of Anastasiya Andreevna Yuzvik, August 3, 1967; AUKGBRBBO, Search File for Konstanty Korneluk,

pp. 10–11, statement of the Jewish survivor Faibel Shmulyevich Stul, October 30, 1945.

6. BA-BL, R 94/7, Report of Gebietskommissar Brest-Litowsk, March 24, 1942.

7. *Ibid.*, R 94/6, Report of Gebietskommissar Brest-Litowsk, Labor Office, July 6, 1942.

8. GABO, 514-1-195, pp. 4–7.

9. Bow Street, Blustein, 1998.

10. AUKGBRBBO, Case of Ivan Yefimovich Chikun, Arch. File No. 466, vol. 2, pp. 94–98, statement of Ivan Stepanovich Khvisyuchik, March 16, 1983.

11. *Ibid.*, Case of Roman Antonovich Vitovskiy, Archive No. 6134, pp. 30–31, statement of the accused, January 28, 1945.

12. BA-BL, R 94/7, Gendarmerie-Gebietsführer Brest-Litowsk, situation report, October 6, 1942.

13. IPN, SWGd 72-74, testimony of Moisei Evstaf'evich Naumchik.

14. BA-BL, R 94/7, Gebietskommissar Brest-Litowsk, situation report, October 9, 1942; Gendarmerie-Gebietsführer Brest-Litowsk, situation report, October 6, 1942.

15. GABO, 195-1-300, p. 11, Gebietskommissar Brest to all Rayon chiefs on the use of houses left empty by the Jews, November 14, 1942.

16. See especially AUKGBRBBO, Case of Stanislav Dmitrievich Shepel, File No. 42 (1944).

17. NARB, 3500-4-305, Partisan records of the Stalin Brigade, 1942–44.

18. *The Guardian*, November 7, 2005.

DROHICZYN

Pre-1939: Drohiczyn, town, województwo poleskie, Poland; 1939–1941 and 1944–1990: Drogichin, Brest oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Drogitschin, Rayon center, Gebiet Kobryn, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; post-1991: Drabichyn, Beras'tse voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Drohiczyn is located about halfway between Kobryń and Pińsk on the main highway from Brześć to Gomel'. In 1921 there were 1,521 Jews living in Drohiczyn. In September 1939, Soviet forces occupied the town, which was incorporated into the Soviet Union shortly thereafter. Under Soviet rule, most shops and businesses were nationalized.

German forces occupied Drohiczyn on June 25, 1941. The only Jews who managed to flee were those with close connections to the Soviet authorities, including the photographer Israel Shvarts. On their arrival, the Germans searched Jewish houses, looking for arms, and stole items of value.¹

In the first weeks of occupation, a German military commandant controlled Drohiczyn. After a few days, he established a local administration, appointing as mayor the Pole Czaplinski, who organized a police force made up mainly of Poles. During the second week, the mayor ordered the Jews to place a Star of David on their houses and to wear yellow patches on their clothes. The Germans ordered the Jews living in the nearby villages to move into town.²

In early July, a detachment of Security Police arrived in Drohiczyn and arrested a number of Jews, allegedly as Com-



Group portrait of Jewish physicians in Drohiczyn who later committed suicide rather than witness the murder of the town's Jews, n.d. Among those pictured are Dr. Shekhter (third from left) and Dr. Lampel (second from right).

USHMM WS #41040, COURTESY OF YIVO

munist activists. They then shot these prisoners 4 kilometers (2.5 miles) outside the town. At the beginning of August, assisted by the Christian population, units of German SS-Cavalry Regiment I, commanded by SS-Sturmbannführer Gustav Lombard, brutally murdered almost all the Jews in the town of Chomsk (in Rayon Drogitschin) and also in Motol, after collecting a large “contribution” from those Jewish communities. German propaganda blamed the Jews for the war, both as Communists and capitalists, supposedly influencing the governments in the Soviet Union and the United States, respectively.³

As of September 1, 1941, authority was transferred from the military to a German civil administration. Drohiczyn was incorporated into Gebiet Kobryn, in Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien. The Gebietskommissar in Kobryń was Regierungsassessor Oscar Panzer.⁴ In the summer and fall of 1941, a series of anti-Jewish measures were implemented in Drohiczyn. Jews were required to perform forced labor. They were forbidden to walk on the pavements, read the newspaper, listen to the radio, communicate with Christians, or leave their place of residence; and their schools were closed down. The local auxiliary police also beat and robbed them with impunity.⁵

To assist in the enforcement of German regulations, the commandant ordered the Jews to elect a Jewish Council (Judenrat). Not all Jews wanted to serve on the council, but Litman Feldman was chosen as its first head, soon to be replaced by his deputy, Jakov Sidorov. Two Jewish doctors also advised the council, and a Jewish police force served under it. The council's first task was to collect from the Jews a “contribution” of 10,000 rubles and 2 kilograms (4.4 pounds) of gold within two hours, or the Germans would shoot everyone. Out of fear, the Jews promptly surrendered their watches, jewelry, and money to meet the demand. The Jewish Council also built up a reserve of cash, to meet future demands and pay bribes. Another major task it performed was the organization

of forced labor, with the Jewish Police sometimes using force to comply with German demands. The onerous burdens placed on ordinary Jews led to resentment against the Jewish Council and Jewish Police, some of whom were accused of enriching themselves.⁶

Soon after the arrival of the Germans, rumors spread in Drohiczyn that a ghetto might be established. In fact, the ghetto was set up in several stages. First, the Jews were driven completely from a few streets inhabited mainly by Poles, including the so-called Zamd, the street that led to the Jewish cemetery. Around this time (late summer 1941), several hundred Jewish refugees also arrived from Chomsk, Szereszów, and the nearby village of Kolonie, leading to considerable overcrowding in the shtetl. Meanwhile, German requisitions emptied most Jewish houses of their furniture. However, local Christians continued to trade food illegally with the Jews in exchange for clothing, supplementing the meager official ration of 100 grams (3.5 ounces) of bread and a little fat and sugar per day.⁷

The Gebietskommissar in Kobryń ordered the Jews of Drohiczyn to move into two separate ghettos on April 1, 1942 (Passover): Ghetto A for “useful Jews” and Ghetto B for “non-useful Jews.” The “useful workers” received special papers, and a lively trade in these certificates developed in the weeks before the establishment of the ghettos, as officials sold them secretly to the highest bidder, rather than issuing them directly to the actual craftsmen. The move into the two ghettos lasted several days. Soon Ghetto A was surrounded with a fence 2.5 meters (8.2 feet) high, while some of the youths from Ghetto B were sent to forced labor camps at Piotrowicze, Radostów, and elsewhere in the Gebiet. In the camps, the Jews mainly worked constructing roads or chopping wood. They received weekly food packages from the Jews in Drohiczyn. Those working as craftsmen in Ghetto A received additional food from Christian customers in payment for their work, while in Ghetto B some trade continued, as it was not fenced in.⁸

On July 25, 1942, the Germans and local collaborators conducted an Aktion against Ghetto B. Polish and Ukrainian police surrounded the ghetto at 11:00 p.m. and together with members of the Jewish Police assisted a detachment of German mounted police in brutally driving the ghetto inhabitants to the market square, where they were forced to surrender their boots and other valuable items. The Aktion lasted more than seven hours, as many Jews tried to hide. From the market square the Jews were escorted to the railway station. In total, some 1,700 Jews (including some from Ghetto A) were deported by rail to Bronnaia Gora, where they were shot on arrival together with Jews from Kobryń and Antopol. Only three members of the Jewish Council survived the Aktion.⁹

Following this Aktion, a new Jewish Council was established in Ghetto A, and the Jewish Police was reorganized. Christians moved into the houses of Ghetto B, and the property left behind was collected in a special warehouse. The Christians continued to trade illegally with the Jews, so there was no starvation in the ghetto. The yizkor book also speaks favorably of the two “Russian” mayors, Kreiditsh and Borisiuk, who succeeded Czaplinski: they helped the Jews to meet

some of the German demands for contributions and warned them of the impending liquidation of Ghetto A.

After a while, a number of specialist craftsmen were selected from the ghetto and sent to Kobryń, which indicated to those remaining that they in turn were now becoming “unnecessary.” Both at the nearby labor camp of Radostów and in Drohiczyn, the Jewish leaders tried to bribe the German authorities, in the hope that this would save them. However, the SD shot the entire Jewish Council just before the final liquidation of the ghetto in October 1942.¹⁰

On October 15, 1942, the local police surrounded the ghetto and drove the Jews (according to the yizkor book, about 3,000 of them) out to the railway station near the cemetery, where on this occasion the Germans shot them into a large mass grave. As they had expected this Aktion, many Jews hid inside the ghetto, and a number succeeded in fleeing. However, the Germans offered a reward of 50 Reichsmark (RM) with tobacco and schnapps to local peasants for handing over Jews, while also threatening with death those caught hiding them. The search for Jews in the empty ghetto lasted several days, and more were captured and killed (some betrayed by local peasants) in the surrounding forests thereafter. A few Jews managed to reach the Pruzana ghetto in Distrikt Bialystok, sharing the fate of the other Jews there. Some survived by hiding with local peasants and subsequently joined the Soviet partisan units that grew stronger in the area during 1943. Several, such as Erial Pomerantz, died as partisans fighting against the Germans.¹¹

In 1944, the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission (ChGK) uncovered a mass grave near Drohiczyn that apparently contained 3,816 corpses, partly tied to each other with barbed wire, including 895 men, 1,083 women, and 1,838 children. Given the breakdown of the victims by age and sex, the vast majority of these were probably Jews.¹²

SOURCES A detailed account of the persecution of the Jews in Drohiczyn can be found in the yizkor book edited by B. Varshavski, *Drobitshin, finf bundert yor Yidish-lebn* (Chicago: Bukh Komitet Drohitshin, 1958), especially pp. 287–303; there is also a short article in Shmuel Spector, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 5, *Volhynia and Polesie* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1990), pp. 242–244.

Documents regarding the fate of the Jews of Drohiczyn during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-98-28); NARB (845-1-13); StA-Wfb; and YVA.

Martin Dean

NOTES

1. Varshavski, *Drobitshin, finf bundert yor Yidish-lebn*, pp. 287–289.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 289.
3. StA-Wfb, 62 Nds Fb. 2, Nr. 1304, p. 269, report of SS Kav. Rgt. I, August 11, 1941; Varshavski, *Drobitshin, finf bundert yor Yidish-lebn*, p. 290.
4. BA-BL, BDC, SShO 2432, Organisationsplan der besetzten Ostgebiete nach dem Stand vom 10. März 1942, hg. vom Chef der Ordnungspolizei, Berlin, March 13, 1942.

5. Varshavski, *Drobitsbin, fnf bundert yor Yidish-lebn*, pp. 289–291.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 291.

7. *Ibid.*, pp. 292–293. On the fate of the Jews of Szereszów, see also Moishe Kantorowitz, *My Mother's Bequest: From Sber-shev to Auschwitz to Newfoundland* (Canada: Moishe Kantorowitz, 2004).

8. Varshavski, *Drobitsbin, fnf bundert yor Yidish-lebn*, pp. 293–294.

9. *Ibid.*, pp. 294–295; see also Benzion H. Ayalon, ed., *Antopol: Antipolye sefer-yizkor* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Antopol be-Yisrael uve-Amerikah, 1972), pp. 564–565.

10. Varshavski, *Drobitsbin, fnf bundert yor Yidish-lebn*, pp. 296–299; the craftsmen in Kobryń were murdered in 1943.

11. *Ibid.*, pp. 298–301.

12. GARF, 7021-98-28, pp. 1 and reverse, Soviet Extraordinary State Commission (ChGK) report, October 30 to November 2, 1944.

DUBNO

Pre-1939: Dubno, town, województwo wołyńskie, Poland; 1939–1941 and 1944–1990: raion center, Rovno oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Rayon and Gebiet center, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; post-1991: Rivne oblast', Ukraine

Dubno is located about 44 kilometers (27 miles) southwest of Równe. According to Moyshe Vaysberg and other sources, in 1939, the Jewish population of Dubno numbered some 12,000, or approximately 60 percent of the total population. In 1941, with the influx of refugees fleeing from Nazi-occupied western Poland, the number of Jews grew to about 13,000.¹

German troops arrived in Dubno only a few days after invading the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941. Yehoshua Vubk writes that “shortly after the Germans entered Dubno, they established a Ukrainian police force and a municipal administration, made up of Ukrainians.”² Ukrainian administrators



A Jewish water-carrier stands next to a horse-drawn cart on the streets of Dubno, ca. 1927–1930.

USHMM WS #64353, COURTESY OF YIVO

included the mayor Burka, deputy mayor Servas, and a village elder (starosta), Siderovich.³ Anti-Jewish measures took effect almost immediately, including marking, expropriation, harassment, beatings, and killings. In three Aktions between late June and late August, the Germans and Ukrainians killed well over 1,000 Jews at the Jewish cemetery. The first took place on June 30, 1941, when 23 Jews accused of collaboration with the NKVD were killed. During the second Aktion in mid-July, 80 men, mostly leaders and prominent members of the Jewish community, were killed. The third Aktion on August 21, 1941, was directed at the more assimilated members of the Jewish intelligentsia. Ukrainian militia forced their way into Jewish houses, dragged out the men, including, according to Helen Segall, her father, Hersh Leyb Szwom, his two brothers and two brothers-in-law. Together with men caught on the street they were taken first to the market place, later to the city jail, and finally all (about 900 to 1000 men) were murdered at the Jewish cemetery that day.

In mid-July, the Germans established a Jewish Council (Judenrat). Konrad Toybenfeld was placed at its head.⁴ “Rozenbaum and Bakszt were the directors of the Jewish Labor Office.”⁵ The Judenrat was ordered to collect sums of money and household goods as “contributions.” In the first week of August 1941, the German Ortskommandantur II (V) 909 in Dubno ordered the Judenrat to collect and surrender all the Jews’ gold, silver, and other valuables.⁶ In December 1941, the Judenrat had to collect and deliver to the Germans all fur and woolen items. Vaysberg noted that these orders were carried out with particular care, although people did what they could to hide their valuables.⁷ Jews were burying their jewelry and taking their valuables, silver, china, clothing, furs, and even furniture to their Christian Polish, Czech, and Ukrainian friends for safekeeping “until the war is over.”

After the first wave of killings, life went on, but it was never the same. Jews continued to live in their own houses and kept many of their possessions. There was privation but no general starvation. By September 1941, a German civil administration had taken over from the military. According to Vaysberg, the German administration of Dubno included the commandant of the Gendarmerie, von Papke, known for his cruelty; the leader of the German Labor Office (Arbeitsamt), Hauptmann Hammerstein; Gebietskommissar Werner Broks, who was responsible for the mass killings in 1942; his representative Stabsleiter Alleter; and Inspector Wiese.⁸ As news of murders committed during Aktions in Równe and other towns began to spread, people became nervous. The violence continued. Homes were vandalized by local Ukrainians, and people were arrested on trumped-up charges, jailed, and executed. “In such a way, my uncle Moniek Katz, Aunt Hana’s husband, was accused of listening to the radio, arrested, beaten, and shot on February 23, 1942.”⁹

The ghetto was officially established on April 2, 1942, the first day of Passover. It was located in the old Jewish section of town. Its northern border was Trzeciego Sierpnia Street, the main road leading from Zabrama in the west to Surmicze on the eastern outskirts of town. The Ikwa River marked its

southern border. People were given 24 hours to move in. They had to leave most of their belongings behind, as there was no time or space for furniture, kitchen utensils, and clothing to be transported.¹⁰ On the same day, a very tall wooden fence topped with barbed wire was constructed between the buildings forming the outer border of the ghetto. Windows and doors facing outward were boarded up and sealed tight.¹¹ Helen Segall writes that she and her mother were able to move in with her “grandparents, Golda and Pinchas Ajzenberg, whose house was on the edge of the ghetto. This made the move less traumatic.”¹² Some 11,000 Jews were crowded into the ghetto. It included people fleeing German persecution in other places. Bringing goods, food supplies, and other items into the ghetto was strictly forbidden and punishable by beatings, imprisonment, and even death. Nevertheless, people took risks and did it. There was hunger and epidemic diseases soon began to spread.

There were no public cultural activities in the Dubno ghetto. Religious and personal events were observed among family members in the space they occupied. Many people had books. Segall comments: “My mother, aunts, and I read a lot. My grandfather studied the Torah and prayed.”¹³

People able to work gathered at the gate every morning. Here they were organized into groups. Jewish Police led them to work in the morning and back into the ghetto each evening. Work varied. It was on construction sites, on the railroad, in factories, and in workshops specializing in products needed by the Germans. Jewish Police were the main force controlling order in the ghetto. Frequently, German policemen and Ukrainian Schutzmannen (in the fall of 1941, the militia was renamed the Schutzmannschaft) would carry out inspections of returning groups, confiscating food items and punishing individuals caught with them.

In the middle of May 1942, the ghetto was divided into two sections. One side was for the *Fachleute*, skilled workers and craftsmen, and the second for *nicht Fachleute*, people without a skill. Skilled workers were given special certificates. Many tried to obtain certificates by other means. They could be obtained through connections or purchased for a high price.¹⁴ Segall writes: “Others, like my mother, were able to move to the skilled side by arranging a fictitious marriage with a skilled worker.”¹⁵

Segall continues: “It was a beautiful spring. Lilacs were in bloom everywhere and their sweet scent permeated the air. Everyone was nervous. Rumors spread that large, deep ditches had been dug at the abandoned airfield in Surmicze.”¹⁶ According to Vaysberg and others: “On Tuesday evening, May 26, 1942, the Jewish ghetto police received an order not to let anyone from the ‘unskilled’ side enter the other side of the ghetto. At midnight, three shots announced the fourth Aktion.”¹⁷ SS men, armed with guns and leather whips, together with a few hundred Ukrainian Schutzmannen, entered the ghetto, which was surrounded by armed SS and police, some with dogs. Everyone was driven out of the ghetto and gathered at the “Platz” on Sholom-Aleikhem Street, at the ghetto entrance. The very sick and disabled were shot on the spot.

People who refused to leave were dragged out of their houses by Ukrainian Schutzmannen, who beat them as they herded them to the Platz. From there they were driven on trucks, or led in columns, to their places of execution. Vaysberg, other eyewitnesses, and the reports of the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission (ChGK) indicate that women, children, the elderly, and the sick were taken to the former airfield, behind the train station in Surmicze. The men were taken to Shybina Gora, a hill with a ravine below it, located west of the center of town and Zabrama, near the village of Kleshchikha. This Aktion was carried out by a mobile SS squad from Równe, assisted by German Gendarmerie and Ukrainian Schutzmannen.

At Surmicze, the victims were brought to pits previously dug by Soviet prisoners of war (POWs). They had to undress and, in groups of 20,¹⁸ walk over and lie facedown on top of others who had just been shot. They were then shot by German SS men. One report of the ChGK indicated that in several pits they found remains of women and children whose mouths and noses were tightly bound by rags. They concluded that these victims died of suffocation.¹⁹ At the end of this Aktion, approximately 300 small children who had been left behind were pushed by the SS men into a pit, into which they tossed two grenades.²⁰ Men who were brought to Shybina Gora were also murdered in previously dug pits in the ravine. As after the other Aktions, the graves were heaving, and blood was flowing for several days afterwards. German SS men did the killing. Ukrainian Schutzmannen were actively involved in the murders and in helping the SS. The victims’ clothing was loaded onto trucks returning to Dubno, placed in warehouses, and then shipped to Germany. Most sources indicate that approximately 5,000 people were murdered on May 27, 1942.²¹ That day almost every Jew in Dubno lost family members and loved ones.

Over the next four months, killings and the harassment of individuals increased. News of the liquidation of the Równe, Krzemieniec, and other Volhynian ghettos caused general demoralization and a sense of hopelessness. Whoever could bought Aryan papers, went into hiding with non-Jewish friends, or fled into the forests. Expecting the worst, almost everyone built a hiding place in his house. “In August 1942, there were about 4,500 to 5,000 Jews concentrated in the Dubno ghetto. This number included the Jews resettled into the Dubno ghetto from villages in the vicinity.”²² There was hunger, starvation, and epidemics. Vubk writes that for the Kol Nidre service, on September 20, 1942, “men gathered in a house near the river to pray. They were led by the only surviving cantor, Reb Pinkhes Shoykhet.”²³

The fifth Aktion in Dubno took place on October 5, 1942. People in the ghetto knew what to expect, and many committed suicide by taking poison, hanging themselves, cutting their veins, or jumping into the Ikwa River.²⁴ Jews were assembled at Rybnaia Street and from there driven on trucks to Surmicze. Hermann Graebe, chief engineer of the German construction firm Josef Jung from Solingen, witnessed the killing. In his affidavit presented at the International Military

Tribunal in Nuremberg in July 1946, he described in moving detail the slaughter he had witnessed as he stood at the killing site in Surmicze. Graebe states: “Armed Ukrainian militia drove the people off the trucks under the supervision of an SS man. The militia men acted as guards on the trucks and drove them to and from the pit.”²⁵ Graebe describes the man who did the shooting: “He was an SS man, who sat at the edge of the narrow end of the pit, his feet dangling into the pit. He had a submachine gun on his knees and was smoking a cigarette.”²⁶ The graves were again dug in advance; people had to undress and in groups of 20 walk down into the pits and lie facedown on top of others who had already been shot. During the Aktion, men of an SS mobile unit conducted the killing.

Eugenia Sztivel writes that 240 people given “iron certificates” were spared and remained in the ghetto.²⁷ Vaysberg states that following the October 5 Aktion, in an effort to lure survivors into the open, the Germans posted notices all over the ghetto promising that no harm would come to those who would come out of hiding willingly, because they were needed for work. During the next two weeks, about 150 Jews came out of hiding. On October 23, 1942, in a sixth Aktion, except for 10 specialists, all Jews in the ghetto were killed.²⁸ Most sources indicate that almost 1,000 people were killed that day.²⁹ Segall writes that “people who remained in the ghetto in hiding places had to leave them once their food and water supply ran out. Many escaped to the woods in an attempt to join the partisans.”³⁰ She continues: “My Aunt Natalie and her husband, Leyzer Gitrajer, were among them. Aunt Natalie, who was blond and had Aryan papers, got a job in the sugar refinery in Mizocz. Uncle Leyzer went into the woods, but was killed before the war ended.”³¹ Thus, by the end of October 1942, Dubno was officially declared to be cleansed of Jews (*judenrein*).

The key events in the history of the Dubno ghetto were the Aktions. The Dubno ghetto existed for less than seven months, from April 2 until October 23, 1942. Seven weeks after its establishment, even while people were still settling in, on May 27, more than half of its residents were slaughtered. During the summer of 1942, people tried to find means and ways to escape from the ghetto. Some did. There was no organized resistance or escape. Some individuals who escaped did so with the help of their Christian friends and survived in hiding. Others survived on false papers,³² and yet others survived cold and hunger in fields and woods alone, in groups, or with the partisans.

The Red Army liberated Dubno on February 9, 1944. According to the *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, only 300 Jews from Dubno survived the war, including those who had evacuated into the Soviet interior.

SOURCES Relevant published sources on the Dubno ghetto include the following: Ya’acov Adini, ed., *Dubno: Sefer zikaron* (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots’e Dubno be-Yisrael, 1966); Samuil Gil’, ed., *Krov’ ikh i segodnia govorit* (New York, 1995); International Military Tribunal, ed., *The Trial of the Major War Criminals before the International Military Tribunal (IMT)* [Blue Series] (Nuremberg, 1947), 19:507–509 and 31:446–450 (2992-PS); Douglas K. Huneke, *The Moses of Rovno: The Stir-*

ring Story of Fritz Graebe, a German Christian Who Risked His Life to Lead Hundreds of Jews to Safety during the Holocaust (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1985); Sara Gochberg de Silberstein, *Sobrevivimos* (Buenos Aires: Dunken, 2002); and Rhoda G. Lewin, ed., *Witnesses to the Holocaust: An Oral History* (Boston: Twayne, 1990).

Relevant documentation on the fate of the Jews of Dubno during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: AŽIH (e.g., 301/1542, 2168, 2887, and 4918); BA-BL (R 2104/21); GARF (7021-71-48); USHMM (e.g., RG-22.002M and Acc.1995.A.084 [Irene Zoosman memoir]); VHF; and YVA. In addition, reference is made to the author’s own unpublished manuscript, Helen Segall, “When the Lilacs Bloom: A Memoir.”

Helen Segall

NOTES

1. Moyshe Vaysberg, “Lebn un Umkum fun Dubner Geto,” in Adini, *Dubno: Sefer zikaron*, pp. 693–706.
2. Yehoshua Vubk, “Di Likvidatsye fun Dubner Geto,” in *Ibid.*, pp. 707–712.
3. Vaysberg, “Lebn un Umkum fun Dubner Geto.”
4. *Ibid.*
5. AŽIH, 301/2168, testimony of Eugenia Sztivel, July 16, 1946.
6. BA-BL, R 2104/21, pp. 341–462, report of OK II (V) 909 in Dubno, contains an extensive description of the valuables handed over up to August 10, 1941.
7. AŽIH, 301/2168.
8. Vaysberg, “Lebn un Umkum fun Dubner Geto.”
9. *Ibid.*
10. *Ibid.*
11. Segall, “When the Lilacs Bloom.”
12. *Ibid.*
13. *Ibid.*
14. Vaysberg, “Lebn un Umkum fun Dubner Geto.”
15. Segall, “When the Lilacs Bloom.”
16. *Ibid.*
17. Vaysberg, “Lebn un Umkum fun Dubner Geto.”
18. *Ibid.*
19. GARF, Report of the ChGK, which examined remains in some of the graves at Surmicze on December 11, 12, and 13, 1945; see 7021-71-48, p. 23.
20. *Ibid.*, “Protokol doprosa svidetelia,” 7021-71-48, pp. 36 and reverse side.
21. *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 2nd ed. (Detroit: Thomson Gale, 2007), 6:33–34; and GARF, 7021-71-48, pp. 33–34. It should be noted that the dates and statistics presented in the ChGK reports and in other eyewitness accounts are often incorrect.
22. Vaysberg, “Lebn un Umkum fun Dubner Geto.”
23. Vubk, “Di Likvidatsye fun Dubner Geto.”
24. Vaysberg, “Lebn un Umkum fun Dubner Geto.”
25. Testimony of Hermann Friedrich Graebe in International Military Tribunal, *The Trial of the Major War Criminals*, 19:507; the German original is at vol. 31, pp. 446–449 (2992-PS).
26. *Ibid.*, 19:508.
27. AŽIH, 301/2168, p. 3.
28. Vaysberg, “Lebn un Umkum fun Dubner Geto”; and AŽIH, 301/2168.

29. GARF, "Protokol doprosa svidetelia," November 21, 1944, 7021-71-48, p. 37.

30. Segall, "When the Lilacs Bloom."

31. *Ibid.*

32. *Ibid.*

DUNAEVTSY

Pre-1941: Dunaevtsy (Yiddish: Dinovitz), town and raion center, Kamenets-Podolskii oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941-1944: Dunajewzy, Gebiet center, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; post-1991: Dunaivtsi, raion center, Khmel'nyts'kyi oblast', Ukraine

Dunaevtsy is located 33 kilometers (20.5 miles) northeast of Kamenets-Podolskii. According to the 1939 census, 4,478 Jews resided in the town (68 percent of the population). Another 848 Jews lived in the villages of the Dunaevtsy raion. After Germany attacked the USSR on June 22, 1941, a small group of Jewish men were drafted or volunteered for the Red Army, and some other Jews were able to evacuate to the east. About 4,000 Jews remained in Dunaevtsy and came under German occupation.

Units of the German 17th Army captured Dunaevtsy on July 10, 1941. In July and August 1941, a German military administration governed the town, establishing a town council and an auxiliary police force recruited from local residents. In September 1941, power was transferred to a German civilian administration. Dunaevtsy became the administrative center of the Gebiet Dunajewzy, which also included the Rayons of Solobkowsy, Winkowsy, and Minkowsy. The Gebietskommissar was Gemeinschaftsführer Eduard Eggers. His assistant and chief of staff was Robert Hornig.¹ There was also a German Gendarmerie post in Dunaevtsy, and the detachment of Ukrainian local police (ukrainische Miliz) was renamed the Schutzmannschaft by 1942 and subordinated to the Gendarmerie. The Germans set up short-term training courses in Dunaevtsy for the volunteers recruited into the local police.²

The anti-Jewish Aktions in Gebiet Dunajewzy were mostly coordinated by a team of Security Police and SD from the outpost (Sipo-Aussendienststelle) in Kamenets-Podolskii. This detachment was established in May 1942 and was headed by SS-Hauptcharführer Andreas Fermer.³ The German Gendarmerie and Ukrainian police, as well as Gebietskommissar Eggers, also participated in these Aktions.

In the summer and fall of 1941, following the German occupation of the Ukrainian SSR, a series of anti-Jewish measures were introduced in Gebiet Dunajewzy, including marking, robbery, beatings, and forced labor. The German authorities established a Jewish Council (Judenrat), which is referred to in the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission (ChGK) documents as a self-governing Jewish community. One of the main tasks of the Jewish communal authority was the assignment of Jews to various types of hard physical labor for the Germans.

In February or March 1942, a group of Jewish men was assigned to work at the railroad station in Dunaevtsy. For some reason, these men abandoned their work, which the Germans considered to be an act of sabotage. On the orders of the Gebietskommissar, the German authorities arrested 20 Jews to make an example of them and discourage further attempts at sabotage or resistance. One of those arrested was released, but the rest were executed: 1 was shot as he attempted to escape, and 18 were hanged, their bodies left hanging for five days before the Germans let members of the Jewish community bury them.⁴

Sometime in the spring of 1942, all the Jews were forced to move into a ghetto: a separate part of the town that was sealed off with barbed wire and guarded by the Ukrainian police. There was no well within the area of the ghetto, and the only way for the Jews to obtain water was to leave the ghetto with the guards' permission. Food rations were also minimal. Jews were taken daily under armed guard by the local police for arduous forced labor.⁵

On May 8, 1942, the Jews were assembled in the yard of the Dunaevtsy Machine Tractor Station (MTS), a storage depot for agricultural equipment. Once there, the Germans selected a number of "specialists" (tailors, carpenters, and others) and those considered fit for hard labor and gave them special passes. The remainder, some 2,300 people, were marched 4 kilometers (2.5 miles) east of the town to the phosphorous mine near the village of Demiankovtsy. About 300 of them, primarily the very old and the very young, were shot on the way to the mine by the accompanying escorts of local police and Gendarmerie as they tried to escape or were unable to keep up with the pace of the march. Gebietskommissar Eggers ordered all the Jews to undress. They were then herded into the mine in groups of 15 or more people. The policemen beat with rifle butts those who resisted and did not want to go inside. Shots were fired into the crowd of naked, defenseless people. After all the Jews were inside the mine, the entrance was blown up. Those inside died a slow, torturous death from asphyxiation and starvation. Witnesses recall hearing moaning and screaming from the mine for five days following the Aktion.

Afterwards the clothes of those who had been murdered were transported back to Dunaevtsy.⁶ Most of the former policemen participating in the Aktion were rewarded by the Germans with clothes or fabrics. The "specialists" among the Jews of Dunaevtsy, about 2,000 in total, were moved back into the ghetto. Some former policemen reported that some of the Jews (about 500) were kept in the Dunaevtsy MTS, and the others (approximately 1,500) returned to the ghetto in the town. A special section of houses on one of the streets of Dunaevka (probably a section or suburb of Dunaevtsy) was fenced off with barbed wire and was permanently guarded by a group of 10 local policemen. During the day the Jews were taken out for forced labor and then locked up again at night.⁷

The liquidation of the ghetto was prepared and carried out jointly by the Security Police and SD from Kamenets-Podolskii, the German Gendarmerie, and the Ukrainian police.⁸ Just before the shootings began, 10 members of the

Kamenets-Podolskii Gestapo, along with the local police from the Minkowzy and Solobkowzy Rayons, arrived in the town. At 4:00 A.M. on October 19, 1942, the Gendarmerie chief Pusch assembled the police and Gendarmerie forces and assigned them their roles in the extermination of the Jews.⁹ Through a local interpreter and police member Bilinsky, Pusch appointed the guards, the shooters, the escorts, and those responsible for having the victims undress and leading them to the pits. After the meeting, the police cordoned off the town and searched the attics, basements, and other hiding places for Jews. The Jews were taken from their homes to the ghetto square and arranged in groups of 200 to 300 people. They were then escorted by local policemen to the Solonichnik Forest near the village of Chan'kovo, 4 kilometers (2.5 miles) west of the town, where pits had been dug in preparation. Ten policemen led the Jews in groups towards the pits and stripped them naked. Adults were shot in the nape of the neck, while children were thrown into the pits alive by the police and shot by members of the Gestapo. One of the victims, Shikogkoren, attacked one of the Gestapo men, biting him in the neck. He was immediately killed by the local policeman Magera, who was rewarded with vodka and clothing for saving the German's life. The waiting Jewish victims wept and begged the police not to kill them, but the entire group of nearly 2,000 people was shot on that day and buried in two pits.¹⁰

Some Jews successfully escaped the killings by hiding and survived until the liberation of the town on March 31, 1944. Several Ukrainian residents of Dunaevtsy helped these Jews to survive.

SOURCES A brief article on the annihilation of the Jews of Dunaevtsy can be found in *Vestnik. Vypusk 2. Liudi ostaiutsia liud'mi. Svidetel'stva ochevidtsev* (Chernovtsy, 1992), pp. 57–58; more general information on the Jewish population of the town can be found in the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (Jerusalem: Keter, 1972).

Documentation regarding the extermination of the Jews of Dunaevtsy can be found in the following archives: BA-L (ZStL, II 204 AR-Z 437/67 and II 204 AR 332/71, vol. 3); DAKhO (R863-2-44, pp. 32–33); GARF (7021-64-798); USHMM (RG-22.002M); and YVA (M-33).

Alexander Kruglov and Martin Dean
trans. Ester-Basya Vaisman and Ksenia Krimer

NOTES

1. BA-BL, BDC, SSHO 2432, Organisationsplan der besetzten Ostgebiete nach dem Stand vom 10. März 1942, hg. vom Chef der Ordnungspolizei, Berlin, March 13, 1942; BA-L, ZStL, II 204 AR-Z 437/67, pp. 86–94, closing report, April 15, 1970.
2. USHMM, RG-22.002M (GARF), reel 2, 7021-64-798.
3. After the war, Fermer worked for some time for the Criminal Police in Dortmund (Germany).
4. *Vestnik. Vypusk 2*, p. 57, dates this event in November 1941; the detailed evidence from former policemen in GARF, 7021-64-798, indicates February or March 1942.
5. *Vestnik. Vypusk 2*, p. 58; according to Else Exner, the ghettoization took place sometime in spring 1942, that is,

probably before the May Aktion. She also notes that the Jews were already living in a separate quarter of town, which was not enclosed, prior to the ghettoization; see BA-L, ZStL, II 204 AR-Z 437/67, Bd. I, pp. 159–162, statement of Else Exner, July 14, 1971.

6. BA-L, ZStL, II 204 AR-Z 437/67, Bd. I, pp. 86–94, closing report, April 15, 1970; *Vestnik. Vypusk 2*, pp. 57–58; *Podillya u Velykii Vitchyzniani viini (1941–1945 rr.). Zbirnyk dokumentiv i materialiv* (L'viv, 1969), p. 98; GARF, 7021-64-798, p. 53.

7. GARF, 7021-64-798.

8. *Ibid.*, 7021-64-798, p. 108.

9. BA-L, ZStL, II 204 AR-Z 437/67, Bd. I, pp. 86–94, closing report, April 15, 1970. According to other sources, the liquidation of the ghetto was carried out in September 1942 (GARF, 7021-64-798, p. 108). It is possible that the liquidation occurred on September 19 and not on October 19, 1942. The Dunaevtsy ghetto is also mentioned briefly by Boris Leibovich Levin, who dates the two Aktions as taking place in May and October; see I.M. Liakhovitskii, ed., *Zbeltaia kniga: Svidetel'stva, fakty, dokumenty* (Kharkov and Jerusalem: Biblioteka gazety "Bensiakh," 1994), p. 88.

10. USHMM, RG-22.002M (GARF), reel 2, 7021-9-798. Some witness reports collected by the ChGK indicate that as many as 5,000 Jews were shot on October 19, 1942, but that figure may include all the Jews of Solobkovtsy (ca. 500) and Minkovtsy (2,200) that were murdered. A. Kruglov, *Katastrofa ukrainskogo evreistva 1941–1944 gg.: Entsiklopedicheski spravochnik* (Kharkov: "Karavella," 2001), p. 109, gives the figure of about 1,820 victims from the Dunaevtsy ghetto.

DYWIN

Pre-1939: Dywin, village, województwo poleskie, Poland; 1939–1941: Dywin, Kobryn raion, Brest oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Dywin, Rayon center, Gebiet Kobryn, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; post-1991: Dzivin, Beras'tse voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Dywin is located 107 kilometers (66.5 miles) west-southwest of Pińsk. According to the 1921 population census, there were 786 Jews living in Dywin (34.2 percent of the total population). By mid-1941, allowing for the average natural increase of the Jewish population in Poland, there would have been around 1,000 Jews residing in the village.

As German forces approached Dywin after the surprise attack on June 22, 1941, there were attacks on Jews by local "bandits" in the villages around Dywin. Jews from Załuchów and Wólka Szcztyńska fled to Dywin following these attacks, taking the bodies of the victims with them for sacred burial. On June 24, 1941, the first German units arrived in Dywin. The new military authorities ordered the establishment of a Jewish Council (Judenrat) as an intermediary body between the Jewish population and the German authorities. Appointed as head of the Jewish Council was Abraham Engel. The German authorities also ordered the registration of the Jews. As men were being taken for forced labor, those who were not from Dywin fled back into the surrounding countryside, leaving their women and families in the village.

In the first days of the occupation, the Germans ordered a roll call of all Jewish men in Dywin and rounded up the Jews for forced labor. The work tasks included cleaning the Germans' boots and horses. The Jews feared that some men would be shot and were relieved when they were allowed to return home on completion of these tasks. A few days later, however, two Jews were shot in the surrounding countryside when they were discovered by a German patrol. Once news of this event spread, most of the men who had hidden in the forests again returned to Dywin. Some of the Jews from Wólka Szczyńska subsequently returned to their village, and from there they were moved into the ghetto at Kamień Koszyrski.¹

From June to August 1941, a German military administration (Ortskommandantur) was in charge of Dywin. In September 1941, authority was transferred to a German civil administration. Dywin became part of Gebiet Kobryn, in Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien. The Gebietskommissar in Kobryn was Regierungsassessor Oscar Panzer.² A local police force was established in Dywin. Under the civil administration, the local police was renamed the Schutzmannschaft and placed under the control of a small squad of German Gendarmerie.

In the summer and fall of 1941, the German authorities introduced a series of anti-Jewish policies in Dywin. Jews were ordered to wear patches in the image of the Star of David and were prohibited from leaving the limits of the village. Before the end of 1941, the Germans established a ghetto in Dywin in which a number of Jews from nearby villages were also forced to reside. The ghetto was guarded by the German Gendarmerie and local police (Schutzmannschaft).

The Germans liquidated the ghetto on August 12–13, 1942.³ On August 12, German and local police surrounded the ghetto. They drove all the men into a carpenter's workshop and sealed the windows with boards. Then they took the women into the synagogue. Close to the carpenter's studio, 30 peasants spent all night digging a large ditch. On August 13, the Germans murdered the Jews from the ghetto, shooting the men first, followed by the women and children. More than 1,000 people were murdered in total.⁴

Over the following months, units of the Order Police conducted searches for Jews who had escaped. On October 31, 1942, the 9th Company of Police Regiment 15, assisted by 39 members of the Schutzmannschaft from Dywin, shot 74 Jews in the village of Samary, on the border with Rayon Ratno. In addition, one Ukrainian family (six people) was shot together with the Jews in Samary for hiding a Jewish woman.⁵

SOURCES Relevant publications regarding the Holocaust in Dywin include the following: Shmuel Spector, ed., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 5, *Volhynia and Polesie* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1990), pp. 241–242; A.A. Stein et al., eds., *Sefer ha-zikaron le-kebilat Kamien Koszyrski ve-ha-seviva* (Tel Aviv: Former Residents of Kamin Koshyrsky and Surroundings in Israel, 1965), pp. 745–750. The ghetto in Dywin is mentioned in Vladimir Adamushko et al., eds., *Handbuch der Haftstätten für die Zivilbevölkerung auf dem besetzten Territorium von Belarus 1941–1944* (Minsk: State

Committee for Archives and Documentary Collections of the Republic of Belarus, 2001), p. 88; and in Marat Botvinnik, *Pamiatniki genotsida evreev Belarusi* (Minsk: Belarускаia Navuka, 2000), pp. 115, 128.

Documentation on the persecution and extermination of the Jews of Dywin during the Holocaust can be found in the following archives: GARF (7021-83-13); NARB (750-1-232); USHMM (RG-22.002M, reel 16); and YVA.

Alexander Kruglov and Martin Dean
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NOTES

1. Stein et al., *Sefer ha-zikaron le-kebilat Kamien Koszyrski ve-ha-seviva*, pp. 745–750.
2. BA-BL, BDC, SShO 2432, Organisationsplan der besetzten Ostgebiete nach dem Stand vom 10. März 1942, hg. vom Chef der Ordnungspolizei, Berlin, March 13, 1942.
3. GARF, 7021-83-13, pp. 7–8.
4. Ibid.; Botvinnik, *Pamiatniki genotsida evreev Belarusi*, pp. 128, 139, gives the figure of 1,450 Jewish victims, but this is probably too high.
5. GARF, 7021-148-2, pp. 346–347, Report of 9th Company, Police Regiment 15, November 1, 1942.

GORODOK

Pre-1941: Gorodok, town and raion center, Kamenets-Podolskii oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Rayon center, Gebiet Jarmolinzy, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; post-1991: Horodok, raion center, Khmel'nyts'kyi oblast', Ukraine

Gorodok is located about 50 kilometers (31 miles) southwest of Khmel'nitskii. The Jewish population of the town was 2,329 in 1939. In addition, there were another 1,632 Jews living in the villages of the Gorodok raion.

After the German invasion of the USSR on June 22, 1941, there was no organized evacuation of the population from Gorodok. A number of Jews attempted to flee the town by horse and cart, but many were caught by the Germans' rapid advance and had to return. It is not known how many Jews remained in Gorodok at the start of the occupation, but it was probably in excess of 1,000 people.

Units of the German 6th Army had occupied Gorodok by the middle of July 1941. The town was run initially by a German military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur), which appointed a local Ukrainian police force. Shortly after the Germans' arrival, they established a ghetto in Gorodok for the Jews. Part of the town was designated as only for the Jews, and they were forced to move into this area by the local police.¹ Jews were required to wear the Star of David and to perform forced labor. A Jewish Council (Judenrat) was also established.

In September 1941, authority was passed to a German civil administration. Gorodok became a Rayon center in Gebiet Jarmolinzy, which also included the Rayons of Satanow, Michalpol, and Jarmolinzy. The Gebietskommissar based in Iarmolintz was Kameradschaftsführer Ernst Mertes.²

Jews from neighboring villages were also brought into the Gorodok ghetto, for example, from the villages of Kuz'min (12 kilometers [7.5 miles] away), in October 1941, and Novii Shvet, just north of Gorodok. According to survivor Evgeniia Dantsis, the Jews were concentrated in one area, but it remained unfenced. Forced labor consisted of digging ditches. No food was provided to the Jews in the ghetto, but they were able to barter with local villagers. This was carried out mostly by children, who left the ghetto clandestinely.³ At some point in 1942, several groups of Jews were transferred from the Gorodok ghetto to the forced labor camp in Leznevo.

In late October 1942, on the order of Gebietskommissar Mertes, most of the remaining Jews from the ghetto in Gorodok (at least 300 people) were rounded up and transferred under close guard by truck to Iarmolintsy by forces of the Gendarmerie and Ukrainian police.⁴ In Iarmolintsy, all the Jews gathered from Gebiet Iarmolintzy were confined within a derelict barracks compound close to the railway station for a number of days.⁵ On the arrival of a detachment of Security Police and SD from Starokonstantinov, under the command of SS-Hauptscharführer Karl Graf, the Jews were shot in groups into three pits prepared nearby. The Ukrainian police were stationed around the execution site to isolate it and to prevent the prisoners from escaping. In total, about 6,400 Jews were shot there over the course of about six hours.⁶

According to Dantsis, who managed to hide during the roundup in Gorodok and was sheltered by local Ukrainians, about 10 Jewish families (more than 100 Jews) also survived the roundup and remained in Gorodok, probably kept alive, with their families, as skilled workers.⁷ Of these Jews, 87 were killed in December 1942 and another 16 in January 1943.⁸

SOURCES Relevant publications on the persecution and murder of the Jews of Gorodok include: A. Kruglov, *Katastrofa ukrainskogo evreistva 1941–1944 gg.: Entsiklopedicheskiy spravochnik* (Kharkov: “Karavella,” 2001), p. 89.

Documents regarding the extermination of the Jews of Gorodok can be found in the following archives: BA-L (B 162/5071-72); DAKhO; GARF (7021-64-796 and 818); and VHF (# 32340, 34283).

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NOTES

1. VHF, # 34283, testimony of Sofia Vugman.
2. BA-BL, BDC, SShO 2432, Organisationsplan der besetzten Ostgebiete nach dem Stand vom 10. März 1942, hg. vom Chef der Ordnungspolizei, Berlin, March 13, 1942.
3. VHF, # 32340, testimony of Evgeniia Dantsis.
4. BA-L, B 162/5072, p. 434, statement of Karl Furchert, August 30, 1962, gives the figure of 300 Jews in Gorodok, but this is probably too low; VHF, # 32340 and 34283.
5. GARF, 7021-64-818, p. 203. See also BA-L, B 162/5073, pp. 649–657.
6. BA-L, B 162/5071, pp. 89–92, statement of Wilhelm Kurt Paul Grosse, January 8, 1960.
7. VHF, # 32340.
8. GARF, 7021-64-796, pp. 63–65.

GRITSEV

Pre-1941: Gritsev, town and raion center, Kamenets-Podolskii oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Grizew, Rayon center, Gebiet Starokonstantinow, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; post-1991: Hrytsiv, Kbmel'nyts'kyi oblast', Ukraine

Gritsev is located 22 kilometers (13.7 miles) north of Starokonstantinov. In 1939, there were 1,095 Jews living in the town (36.1 percent of the total population). In addition, there were another 218 Jews living in the villages of the Gritsev raion.¹

Since Gritsev was located relatively far away from the nearest railway line (15 kilometers, or 9.3 miles), and many Jews hesitated to leave their homes, only a few managed to escape or join the Red Army before the Germans occupied the town on July 5, 1941. Many Jews were forced to return to Gritsev after having gone only a few kilometers to the east. Immediately after the arrival of the Germans, the Jews were humiliated and ordered to hang large Stars of David on the doors of their homes. Ten young Jewish men and women were arrested and thrown into the water in the middle of the large lake near Gritsev. The police used oars to kill those who emerged from the water, and only 1 was able to save himself and survive. A week later, 10 more young Jews were arrested and confined to a basement; 24 hours later, the Ukrainian police shot them not far from the village of Gora.²

In the first days of August 1941, on one of the streets that adjoined the lake, a ghetto was organized for the Jews. It was enclosed by a barbed-wire fence and guarded by Ukrainian policemen. A German detachment arrived in Gritsev at dawn and rounded up the entire Jewish population of the town. Remaining Jewish properties and valuables outside the ghetto were looted by the Ukrainians and taken to German police headquarters. The Germans appointed one of the inhabitants, a man named Niakha (Nokhem), as the elder in charge of the ghetto. Three others were named as his deputies.

The inhabitants of the ghetto managed to buy food only by selling their possessions to the Ukrainians. Children sometimes sneaked out of the ghetto for this purpose, but the trading mainly took place through the barbed-wire fence. From time to time the Ukrainians brought food to the Jews out of sympathy. But this was generally insufficient. Scarcity and starvation resulted in many deaths among the ghetto inhabitants.³

At dawn on August 4, 1941, part of the 10th SS-Infantry Regiment, 1st SS-Infantry Brigade, arrived in Gritsev and gathered all the Jews of the ghetto into a school building. After the registration and selection of a group aged 15 and older, these Jews were taken by truck into a nearby wood located about 2.5 kilometers (1.6 miles) from the town. The police separated the men and women, then lined the men up against a stone wall and shot them. They took all the young women in a second group and shot them as well. Altogether they murdered 286 people.⁴

The remaining Jews from the school were returned to the ghetto, where they realized that the Ukrainians had confiscated all of their most valuable belongings with the permission of the German authorities. The surviving women

and children were led out of the ghetto for work on a daily basis. This work included cleaning administrative buildings and the homes of the policemen and subsequently (during the winter) removing snow from the roads. Heavy labor, such as chopping wood and repairing roads, was performed by a group of 12 men under the guard of the Ukrainian police.⁵

During the selection at the school building, some of the young women had managed to avoid being taken by putting on the head scarves typically worn by old women. Some of the men escaped the Germans' inspection by hiding in concealed places inside the ghetto. Led by Isaak Bialik, a number of these men later managed to join the partisan resistance. Some of them also perished fighting against the Germans. Bialik himself survived until the arrival of the Red Army, which he then joined, to continue the struggle against Nazi Germany.⁶

On September 4, 1941, the German police conducted another selection after bringing all of the prisoners to the town's cultural center. On the previous night, one of the Germans had forewarned the Jews about the Aktion, but many did not trust him and therefore made no attempt to escape from the ghetto. The Germans spared the children, but shot a few hundred of the surviving women.

In September 1941, power was transferred from the military to a German civil administration. Gritsev became a Rayon center in Gebiet Starokonstantinow. The Gebietskommissar was Regierungsrat Schröder, who was later replaced by SA-Standartenführer Curt Rolle.

In May 1942, the remaining inmates of the Gritsev ghetto were escorted to the ghetto in Starokonstantinow and later shot there.⁷ Thanks to the help of several Ukrainian families—among them the Melen'chuk family, who received the title of "Righteous Among the Nations" from Yad Vashem—a group of five women and children were able to survive.⁸

All the Jewish homes in Gritsev were either demolished for their building materials or seized by the Ukrainians. The Red Army liberated Gritsev on March 6, 1944.

SOURCES The following publications contain relevant information on the fate of the Jews of Gritsev: I. Melen'chuk, "Riatuvaly, ryzkuiuchy zhyttiam," *Den' za dnem* (Shepetovka), no. 4 (1993): 3; and Alexander Kruglov, *The Losses Suffered by Ukrainian Jews in 1941–1944* (Kharkov: Tarbut Laam, 2005), p. 84.

Documents and testimonies regarding the Jewish community in Gritsev and the ghetto there can be found in the following archives: BA-L (ZStL/II 204 AR-Z 442/67); CAHJP (HM2/8969); and YVA (M-33/179, O-3/4019, O-3/4932, and M-31/7740).

Albert Kaganovich
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NOTES

1. CAHJP, HM2/8969.
2. YVA, O-3/4019, O-3/4932.
3. Ibid.
4. *Unsere Ehre heisst Treue: Kriegstagebuch des Kommandostabes Reichsführer SS, Tätigkeitsberichte der 1. und 2. SS-Inf.*

Brigade, der 1. SS-Kav.-Brigade und von Sonderkommandos der SS (Vienna: Europa Verlag, 1984), p. 108, Report of 1. SS Brigade, August 6, 1941.

5. YVA, O-3/4019, O-3/4932.

6. Ibid., M-33/179, O-3/4019, O-3/4932.

7. BA-L, ZStL, II 204 AR-Z 442/67, vol. 1, pp. 263, 324.

8. YVA, M-31/7740; Melen'chuk, "Riatuvaly, ryzkuiuchy zhyttiam," p. 3.

HOROCHÓW

Pre-September 1939: Horochów (Yiddish: Horcbiv), town, województwo wołyńskie, Poland; 1939–1941: Gorokhov, raion center, Volyn' oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Gorochow, Rayon and Gebiet center, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; post-1991: Horokhiv, Volyn' oblast', Ukraine

Horochów is located about 90 kilometers (56 miles) northeast of Lwów. According to the 1931 census, the Jewish population was 2,806. The total population of the town in 1937 was 6,260.

Most of the population did not evacuate when the German-Russian war broke out, even though trucks were available for those who wanted to leave. When the Germans arrived on June 24, 1941,¹ the non-Jewish locals rejoiced and greeted them with flowers because they hated the Communists and were pleased to be rid of them.

According to the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission (ChGK) report, on the second day of the occupation, June 25, 1941, the Germans ordered the town's residents to gather on the main square. Not everyone showed up because the order was not announced on all streets. Then the Germans threw incendiary grenades into houses around town. About half of the houses were burned.² The Christian population suffered most in this Aktion and blamed the Jews as a result.

Before the end of June, a German military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur) was established. On the request of the Ortskommandant, a squad of Security Police was sent by Sonderkommando 4a, based in Sokal, to Horochów, where they arrested and shot seven people as "communist functionaries."³ The Germans established a Ukrainian police force, which was merciless to the Jews. They tortured any Jews they caught and robbed Jewish houses. In July 1941, there was a pogrom during which two Jews were killed, and many were beaten and robbed.⁴

The first German decrees established a Jewish Council (Judenrat). All Jews had to pay a large fine, and everyone over 14 had to wear a white armband with a Star of David. All valuable personal possessions were confiscated: gold, silver, paintings, Persian rugs, telephones, fur, radios, and musical instruments. The levies in money and gold amounted to 100 rubles per adult and 50 rubles per child.⁵ One day, the Germans gathered the Jews in the marketplace and made them watch the burning of the synagogues. The Torah scrolls and prayer books were all burned.⁶

On August 12, 1941, two truckloads of Ukrainian police arrived in Horochów together with officers of the Gestapo

from Łuck. The Ukrainian police rounded up 300 Jewish men according to a list, with no involvement on the part of the Germans. The men were forced to dig a large pit near the forest, into which they were all thrown after being shot. The list of 300 men was probably drawn up from information provided by neighbors and former friends. The 300 men were local notables in the Jewish community. Another 70 or 80 people were shot on August 23, 1941.⁷

By August 1941, a permanent Gebietskommissar had replaced the temporary military commandant. The commander of the Gendarmerie post in Horochów was Krause, and the Gebietskommissar was Härter.⁸ Jews were not allowed to use electricity. Everyone over 14 had to engage in forced labor. Those who worked received an additional food ration. Many workers were black and blue from beatings endured during work. The local Ukrainian police guarded the Jews while they worked.

At the beginning of November 1941, all Jews had to leave their homes and gather in the marketplace with whatever they could carry. They were then herded into certain designated side streets in a very poor section of town. This became the ghetto. On the following day, a high wooden fence with barbed wire was erected around these streets. Most of the houses were dilapidated, and there was extreme overcrowding. The average housing density was two families (about 10 people) per room.⁹ There were two gates, and a written permit was needed to enter or exit the ghetto. Yellow patches on the chest and back replaced the white armbands.

All women aged between 14 and 40 and all men aged between 14 and 50 had to engage in forced labor for little or no pay. Those who worked outside the ghetto wore green armbands and were known as “useful” Jews. They mainly worked as tanners, preparing leather for military use. Other people worked on road construction. Some Jews established skilled workshops for other Jews to perform skilled labor: knitting, making brushes, and other craft activities. The workshops were situated in the town in houses outside the ghetto. Some Jews not employed in skilled jobs had to stand in the water all day during the winter in a river outside the town, probably working on bridge construction.¹⁰ Craftsmen were kept in a separate part of the ghetto from other Jews. Unskilled workers often performed meaningless manual labor, which they undid the following day.

There was starvation in the ghetto because there was no way to get food. People were executed if they tried to obtain food. Skilled workers received 300 grams (10.6 ounces) of bread, while “useless” Jews received 150 grams (5.3 ounces). Because food was so scarce, 20 youngsters built a tunnel under the fence as a way of getting out of the ghetto.¹¹ They would take off their stars and look for food for their families. They always had to barter items, such as clothing or jewelry, for the food.

The smells in the ghetto were horrible, and hygiene was almost nonexistent. Soap, toothbrushes, and toothpaste were not to be found. The chairman of the Judenrat was opportunistic: he treated the people in the ghetto very badly, and his family lived well at the community’s expense. For his own

benefit, he did things that he was not forced to do by the Germans. There was a Jewish police force in the ghetto.

At first, there was a doctor in the ghetto. At one of the weekly roundups, however, he was taken away a month or two after the ghetto was created. Several women organized a school in the ghetto. They had to stop lessons when they ran out of things to barter for school supplies. At night, people gathered in the ghetto square to talk and get fresh air.

As a means of resistance, some young organizers stockpiled kerosene to set fire to the ghetto. Having learned of their plans, other Jews attacked them, demanding that the preparations be abandoned because they were afraid that everyone in the ghetto would be killed.¹²

When people found out about the mass murders taking place in other cities, they began to build hiding places. Jews fasted and prayed in the ghetto. In the spring of 1942, everyone was moved to a smaller ghetto, because the population had dwindled so much. Three sides of this ghetto, like the previous one, were enclosed, but one side was contained only by the river. When the guard on the ghetto increased, people became hysterical; they continued building false walls and hiding places in their homes, hoping that if they hid, they would not be found.

Preparation for the liquidation began in early August 1942. A pit was dug at the town limits near the road leading to Druszkopol.¹³ Before the ghetto was liquidated, some people hid, and 200 young men escaped. However, reportedly only 8 of them survived; the others were shot by Ukrainians or died of hunger. Other people tried to escape by hiding in the bulrushes along the river and then crossing the river. The ghetto was liquidated on September 14, 1942. People were taken in eight trucks to the previously dug mass grave. It is estimated that more than 2,500 people were shot by forces under the command of the Gendarme Holberg. Jewish valuables were confiscated; some were taken by the police forces, and the rest went to the civil administration. Holberg, who was of Sudeten origin, was later killed by partisans.¹⁴

Among the survivors from the ghetto were Benjamin Fishman, Bessie Kisis Glinkiewicz, and Sonia Zyroff. Shulamit Perlmutter (Charlene Schiff) managed to survive in the forests until the arrival of the Red Army but soon left for the West because of the continuing hostile attitude towards Jews in the area, as the local people did not want to return the possessions they had taken.

SOURCES The main published work available on the Horochów ghetto is the *Horchiv Memorial Book* edited by Yosif Kariv (Tel Aviv: Horchiv Committee in Israel, 1966), which includes several accounts containing information about the ghetto.

Documentation and witness testimonies regarding the extermination of Horochów’s Jews can be found in the following archives: AŽIH (301/2862); BA-L (B 162/3878); GARF (7021-55-2); USHMM (RG-22.002M, reel 14; and testimony of Charlene Schiff, RG-50.030*0203); and YVA (Nazi Crimes Department of the Israeli Police, file pey-ayin 01273).

Ester-Basya Vaisman

VOLUME II: PART B

NOTES

1. USHMM, RG 22.002M, reel 14 (GARF), Soviet Extraordinary State Commission (ChGK) report for Horochów, 7021-55-2, p. 19.

2. *Ibid.*

3. USHMM, RG-30 (Acc. 1999.A.0196), Ereignismeldung UdSSR no. 24, July 16, 1941; see also *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 31 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1979), Lfd. Nr. 694a, pp. 60–61.

4. Shmuel Spector, *The Holocaust of Volhynian Jews, 1941–44* (Jerusalem: Achva Press, 1990), pp. 66–67.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 96.

6. A personal interview with Charlene Schiff conducted on June 19, 2003.

7. A. Kruglov, *Katastrofa ukrainskogo evreistva 1941–1944 gg.: Entsiklopedicheskii spravochnik* (Kharkov: “Karavella,” 2001), p. 89; according to the ChGK report GARF, 7021-55-2, p. 20, the Aktion took place in early September, and some 350 people were rounded up and shot together with 30 people brought in from Druszkopol.

8. ChGK report, GARF, 7021-55-2, p. 20a.

9. Spector, *Holocaust of Volhynian Jews*, p. 129. News of plans to establish the ghetto in Horochów had reached neighboring Łokacze by November 3, 1941; see Michael Diment, *The Lone Survivor: A Diary of the Łokacze Ghetto and Szyjniukhy, Ukraine* (New York: Holocaust Library, 1992), pp. 38–39.

10. *Horchiv Memorial Book*, p. 61.

11. Schiff interview.

12. *Horchiv Memorial Book*, p. 286.

13. GARF, 7021-55-2, p. 21.

14. Kruglov, *Katastrofa ukrainskogo evreistva*, p. 18, estimates that as many as 500 Jews may initially have escaped. According to the ChGK report, p. 21a, some 3,800 Jews were killed.

HORODEC

Pre-1939: Horodec (Yiddish: Horodets), village, województwo poleskie, Poland; 1939–1941: Garadzets, Brest oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Gorodez, Rayon Antopol, Gebiet Kobryn, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; post-1991: Haradets, Beras'tse voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Horoddec is located 67 kilometers (42 miles) east of Brześć. In 1897, there were 648 Jews in Horoddec (out of a total population of 1,761). In 1915, when the front reached the immediate vicinity of Horoddec, most of the population fled, so that in 1921 there were only 269 Jews registered in Horoddec out of a total population of 753. In 1939, Horoddec was annexed by the Soviet Union, and several Jews were exiled into the Soviet interior.

The Germans occupied Horoddec during the very first days after their attack on the Soviet Union in late June 1941. A few Jews were killed not long after the Germans' arrival. In April or May 1942, the German authorities forced all of the Jews into a ghetto surrounded by barbed wire. A Jew could be punished with severe beating for sneaking out of the ghetto to obtain food. Similarly, the local Christians were not allowed

to enter the ghetto. The Jews were divided into those who could work and those who were unfit, the latter category consisting primarily of the elderly. Those who were able to work were given a daily regimen of forced labor.¹

On July 26, 1942, the majority of the Jews were marched to the train station and sent by train to Bronna Góra, just outside Bereza Kartuska, where they were shot. According to one account, when the Jews were being marched to the train station, they were forced to sing the Soviet folk song “Katiusha.” The day before the Aktion, about 15 skilled workers were brought on foot to the Antopol ghetto, where they remained until its liquidation on October 15, 1942.²

Although no information is available about the German perpetrators, some of the names of the local collaborators are known. Volodya Kazik was appointed mayor of the town. His deputy was Vanya Glavatski. Kalya Glavatski and Marian Bramkilises were members of the local militia. Vanya Glavatski and Bramkilises were killed by partisans.³

SOURCES The Horoddec yizkor book, ‘E. Ben-‘Ezra and Yisroel Zusman, eds., *Horodets: A gesbikhte fun a shtetl (1142–1942)* (New York: Bukh-komitet “Horodets,” 1949), contains four brief accounts of the Holocaust period: two by Dovid Volinets, ostensibly the sole survivor, one by Binyomin Volf on Antopol, and a third by an anonymous Christian woman from Horoddec. Information on the Jewish community of Horoddec can also be found in Shmuel Spector, ed., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland, vol. 5, Volhynia and Polesie* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1990), pp. 245–247.

Andrew Koss

NOTES

1. Dovid Volinets, “Fun Dovid Volinets,” pp. 193–194; Binyomin Volf, “Fun Binyomin Volf,” p. 194; and Anon., “A briv fun a Kristin vegen der Horodetser geto,” p. 194—all in Ben-‘Ezra and Zusman, *Horodets*.

2. Volinets, “Fun Dovid Volinets,” pp. 193–194; Volf, “Fun Binyomin Volf,” p. 194; Anon., “A briv fun a Kristin,” p. 194; Sta. Bielefeld, 5 Js 703/70, Vermerk, October 26, 1973.

3. Dovid Volinets, “Vegen Horodetser mithelfer,” in Ben-‘Ezra and Zusman, *Horodets*, p. 194.

HORODNO

Pre-1939: Horodno, town, województwo poleskie, Poland; 1939–1941: Gorodnaia, Pinsk oblast', Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Gorodno, Rayon and Gebiet Stolin, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; post-1991: Haradnaia, Beras'tse voblasts', Republic of Belarus

Horodno is located 38 kilometers (24 miles) southeast of Pińsk. According to the 1921 census, there were 583 Jews living in Horodno, comprising 22.4 percent of the total population.

In September 1939, forces of the Red Army occupied Horodno, which was soon incorporated into the Belorussian SSR. At this time, many Jewish refugees from central and

western Poland arrived in the region. Under Soviet rule, some Polish landowners and Jews who owned stores were among those people deported to Siberia. By mid-1941, there were probably around 700 Jews living in Horodno.

Following the German surprise attack on the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, a number of Jews attempted to flee Horodno to the east. Some were turned back by Soviet guards at the former Polish-Soviet border, however, and had to return home. German military forces entered Horodno during the first half of July 1941. Initially, a German military administration was responsible for the area around Horodno, but no permanent garrison was stationed in the town. In early August 1941, German mounted SS forces conducted a first Aktion in Horodno. A detachment of the 2nd SS-Cavalry Regiment shot more than 50 Jewish men over the age of 14 near the Jewish cemetery. Some Jewish men managed to hide and avoid the roundup.¹

In August 1941, the German authorities ordered the establishment of a Jewish Council (Judenrat) in Horodno, which was made personally responsible for the enforcement of German regulations and demands. These included the collection of all valuable items, especially gold and silver, and their surrender to the Germans. According to the Jewish survivor Iosef Dryzhun, the ghetto was also established in August; it probably remained an “open ghetto” at this time, as Jews were prohibited from leaving the limits of the town.² Jews were also required to wear armbands bearing the Star of David.

In September 1941, authority was transferred to a German civil administration. Horodno was incorporated into Gebiet Stolin, within Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien. The Gebietskommissar in Stolin was SA-Standartenführer Dziembowski. In Horodno there was a squad of local police, which was subordinated to the German Gendarmerie.

According to *Pinkas ha-kehillot*, by May 1942, the ghetto in Horodno was enclosed with barbed wire, and additional Jews from the surrounding villages had been resettled into the ghetto.³ Local peasants would come to the ghetto and collect Jews to work for them. The Jews were paid with food in return. Some of the ghetto inmates were also required to work maintaining the roads. Members of the Judenrat who dutifully obeyed German orders thought that they would be spared in the event of a further Aktion. Everyone looked out for himself and his immediate family first of all.⁴

Sources disagree about the date of the German liquidation of the Horodno ghetto, but it probably took place in the first half of September 1942, around the time of the Aktions in Stolin and Wysock.⁵ Just prior to this, local peasants warned the Jews that the Germans had ordered the preparation of seven ditches in the forest nearby, and they advised the Jews to escape from the ghetto. However, the rabbi in Horodno reassured the Jews that God would save them and advised them to pray instead. In the opinion of Dryzhun, many more Jews could have escaped, but “religion stood in the way.” Dryzhun, together with three others, cut the barbed wire around the ghetto and ran to the forests on the day of the Aktion. About 60 Jews managed to escape altogether, but around 40

of them were captured and killed by the Germans and their collaborators over the ensuing weeks.⁶

Forces of the German Security Police based in Pińsk organized the Aktion, assisted by men from the smaller SD outposts in Stolin and Wysock. A larger number of German Gendarmes and local police guarded the Jews during the roundup and the mass shooting. According to one source, about 400 Jews were escorted into the nearby forest and shot near Podralicze, located 3 kilometers (1.9 miles) east of the village in the direction of Terebieżów. Another 200 Jews, mainly women, children, and the elderly (probably those unable to walk or found in hiding), were shot and buried in Horodno.⁷

Partisan activity in the area forced the Germans to abandon the town by the end of 1943, and forces of the Red Army moved into the area from the southeast in 1944.

SOURCES A brief article on the Jewish community of Horodno can be found in Shmuel Spector, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 5, *Volhynia and Polesie* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1990), p. 245.

Survivor testimonies regarding the fate of the Jews in Horodno can be found in the following archival collections: USHMM (RG-50.378*0014); and VHF (# 18847, 23729).

Alexander Kruglov and Martin Dean
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NOTES

1. USHMM, RG-50.378*0014, oral history interview with Iosef Fayvelevich Dryzhun, August 4, 1995, states that there were 70 victims. The information page of the Stolin Jewish cultural and educational association “Bridge” (www.stolinmost.narod.ru) gives the figure of 53 Jewish men killed.

2. USHMM, RG-50.378*0014.

3. Spector, *Pinkas ha-kehillot*, p. 245. See also USHMM, RG-50.378*0014.

4. *Ibid.*

5. The Aktions in these two towns took place around September 10–11, 1942. According to Wilhelm Rasp, the head of the Security Police Office in Pińsk, a number of Aktions were also carried out in smaller towns around Stolin at this time; see BA-L, B 162/4950 (204 AR-Z 393/59, vol. 2), p. 180. USHMM, RG-50.378*0014, Dryzhun, dates the Aktion in September 1943 [*sic*], but probably means September 1942. Other sources date it in July or August 1942.

6. USHMM, RG-50.378*0014.

7. Information page of the Stolin Jewish cultural and educational association “Bridge.”

HOSZCZA

Pre-1939: Hoszcza, town, województwo wołyńskie, Poland; 1939–1941: Hoshcha, raion center, Rovno oblast, Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Hoschtscha, Rayon center, Gebiet Rowno, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; post-1991: Hoshcha, Rivne oblast, Ukraine

Hoszcza is located 29 kilometers (18 miles) east of Równe. In 1921, there were 811 Jews residing in the village (36.3 percent

of the population). By mid-1941, including some refugees, there were more than 1,000 Jews in the town.

On Sunday, June 29, 1941, the Germans bombed Hoszcza from the air, killing scores of Jewish inhabitants and destroying many houses. Units of the German 6th Army then occupied the town on July 4, 1941. In July and August 1941, a German military administration governed the town, and from September 1941, power was transferred to a civil administration. Hoszcza was part of Gebiet Rowno. The Gebietskommissar was Regierungsrat Beer.¹ There was a German Gendarmerie post in Hoszcza, as well as a squad of Ukrainian police.

In the summer and fall of 1941, the German occupying forces implemented a series of anti-Jewish measures in Hoszcza: a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was created, Jews were required to wear distinctive symbols (initially an armband, and from September 1941, a yellow circle on their clothing),² and they were compelled to perform forced labor, during which they were beaten and otherwise abused. Among the forced labor tasks, Jews had to clean the streets, load trucks, and work on building a bridge. According to one account, the Jews were forced to relocate to one part of town soon after the Germans' arrival: two, three, or more families were forced to live together in overcrowded conditions.³ This initial "Jewish quarter" was not, however, enclosed. In addition, in the wake of the bombings the Ukrainian authorities had closed down most Jewish stores, removed all their merchandise, and even dismantled them, giving the wood to local Ukrainians. In this way, many Jews lost almost all their property.⁴

In late July 1941, the first Aktion was carried out in the town, during which 10 Jews were arrested from a work detail and shot.⁵ A subunit of the 10th SS-Motorized Infantry Regiment probably carried out the shooting; its headquarters was located in Hoszcza on July 27 and 28. A few weeks into the occupation, the Germans spread propaganda blaming the Jews for the war, in justification of their anti-Jewish measures. Local Ukrainians were forbidden to have contact with Jews, and most did not speak to them or even give them a dry piece of bread.⁶

Soon after their arrival, the Germans appointed a Jewish Council with seven members. Its head was Israel David Utzenik, and his main assistants were two local businessmen, Joseph Zawodnik and Zalman Zaltzman. The four other members, younger men with little experience in community affairs, assisted with the implementation of German orders. The Jewish Council was responsible for supplying Jews for work and for distributing the daily bread ration of 200 grams (7 ounces) per person from the bakery they established. These small rations were insufficient, but other goods, such as meat, butter, eggs, sugar, or tea, were unavailable. Some Jews criticized the Jewish Council, as they were sometimes seen drinking with the occupation authorities in Zaltzman's home, where they met, and they were inevitably viewed as tools of the Germans. It was suspected, for example, that when they collected utensils or money to meet

German demands, they kept some of this for their own benefit.⁷

During the cold winter of 1941–1942, some Jews passed the long dark evenings confined to the Jewish quarter, gloomily contemplating suicide or playing chess.⁸ News of the slaughter of some 17,000 Jews in Równe in November 1941 cast a bleak shadow over the celebration of Hanukkah. The synagogues had also been destroyed and the Torah scrolls torn apart. Some flour was found to bake matzot for Passover, but somehow the reciting of the Haggadah (Passover story) had no meaning in these terrible circumstances.⁹

By March 1942, some Jews had been issued with temporary identity cards.¹⁰ However, many still expected the worst once the ground was no longer frozen. In the week before the Shavuot holiday, word quickly spread that trenches were being dug in the woods nearby. Many rumors circulated, and the Jews were petrified with fear.

Then, early on the morning of Wednesday, May 20, 1942, a number of trucks arrived in town. Sensing the danger, many Jews fled and went to hide with local farmers or in other hiding places. This Aktion was carried out by a squad of Security Police and SD from Równe, assisted by the German Gendarmerie and the Ukrainian police. They collected the Jews in the central square and then escorted them to the Simanoff birch forest, about 6 kilometers (3.7 miles) from town. Here the murderers told everyone to strip down to their underwear and then shot them in pits in groups of 10. Children were crushed under the heels of their boots and were also thrown into the pits. According to Peretz Goldshtein, some 400 Jews were murdered on that day.¹¹ One platoon (37 men) of the 1st Company of German Order Police Battalion 33 also participated in the Aktion.¹²

After the Aktion, the survivors gradually emerged from their hiding places to find that many of their relatives had been killed and their houses plundered by local peasants. People gathered to recite Kaddish for the dead. Some Austrians based in Hoszcza, who had not participated in the slaughter, took pity on the Jews and shared their cigarettes.¹³

In the weeks that followed, news spread of the liquidation of the Równe ghetto on July 13, 1942, and survivors from other massacres in Kostopol and Tuczyn spread news of the destruction there. Surprisingly the "Jewish quarter" in Hoszcza does not seem to have been enclosed or closely guarded, although it was reduced in size, producing more overcrowding. Suspecting their fate, the remaining Jews attempted to hide their valuables with local peasants and prepare hiding places in case of need. Some farmers took money from Jews but then turned them out or betrayed them. The Judenrat continued its policy of fulfilling German demands for money or workers, although it no longer expected any good would come of it.

A third Aktion, killing the remaining Jews in the town, took place in late September 1942, when the Security Police and SD squad from Równe, assisted by the Gendarmerie and local police, shot 350 Jews. Of these about 40 were killed inside the town, where they had hidden. The bodies were buried

in the Simanoff birch forest.¹⁴ According to a peasant named Ochrim, who worked as a fireman for the Germans, about 140 surviving Jews later returned or were brought back to Hoszcza, and 123 of these were shot in a further Aktion on November 14, 1942. He reported that 17 Jews managed to escape.¹⁵ Another source indicates that about 20 skilled craftsmen were kept alive by the Germans in a labor camp thereafter and were killed by the local Ukrainian police on July 17, 1943.¹⁶ According to the report of the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission (ChGK), 1,270 civilians were killed in the Hoszcza raion under German occupation from 1941 to 1943.¹⁷

The few Jews who survived did so mainly with the assistance of local peasants who hid them, sometimes in return for some form of payment. At least five peasants are known who together helped to save 18 Jews from the Hoszcza area.¹⁸ For example, Pessah Kranzberg, with his wife, daughter, and the daughter's young friend, were helped by Fiodor Kalenczuk, who hid them for 17 months in his stable, despite the risks and the fears of his wife.¹⁹

SOURCES The following published sources have been used in the preparation of this entry: Peretz Goldshtein, *Let the World Know (Zol di velt visn)* (New York: Society of Hosht, 1965), which is an English translation of the main Holocaust narrative to be found in Re'uven Fink and Avraham Yaron, eds., *Seyfer Hosht: Yizkor bukh* (Tel Aviv: Hoshter Society of New York and Irgun yotse Hosht, Tel-Aviv, 1957); and Rochelle "Rachel" Smola Gelman, *It Could Not Have Happened: A True Story of Humanity and Inhumanity*, ed. Lou Weis (Irvine, CA: R. Gelman, 1995).

Documents regarding the annihilation of the Jews of Hoszcza can be found in the following archives: AŽIH (301/1453); DARO; GARF (7021-71-121); TsDAVO; and YVA.

Alexander Kruglov and Martin Dean
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NOTES

1. BA-BL, BDC, SSHO 2432, Organisationsplan der besetzten Ostgebiete nach dem Stand vom 10. März 1942, hg. vom Chef der Ordnungspolizei, Berlin, March 13, 1942.
2. USHMM, RG-31.017M, reel 2, "Amtsblatt des Gebietskommissars in Rowno," announcement dated September 17, 1941.
3. Gelman, *It Could Not Have Happened*, p. 15. It should be noted that the author did not arrive in Hoszcza until September 1941.
4. Goldshtein, *Let the World Know*, p. 8.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 15.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 7–8.
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 9–11, discusses the Jewish Council in some detail, giving the names of all its members.
8. Gelman, *It Could Not Have Happened*, p. 18.
9. Goldshtein, *Let the World Know*, pp. 19–20.
10. *Ibid.*, pp. 9–10, has a copy of the author's own identity card, including his photograph, noting his profession of baker and also that he worked for the Rayonverwaltung (local administration) in Hoszcza.
11. *Ibid.*, pp. 26–30.

12. See the report of the Higher-SS and Police Leader Ukraine for the period June 1–30, 1942 (TsDAVO, 3676-4-317, p. 29).

13. Goldshtein, *Let the World Know*, pp. 26–30; Gelman, *It Could Not Have Happened*, pp. 23–24.

14. Goldshtein, *Let the World Know*, p. 68; Martin Gilbert, *The Holocaust: The Jewish Tragedy* (Glasgow: William Collins, 1986), p. 403, gives the number of 500 victims.

15. Goldshtein, *Let the World Know*, p. 68.

16. Beth Hatefutsoth, The Nahum Goldman Museum of the Jewish Diaspora, Chronology for Hoszcza (available as an appendix to the USHMM copy of Goldshtein, *Let the World Know*).

17. GARF, 7021-71-121, p. 4.

18. Gelman, *It Could Not Have Happened*, p. 26.

19. According to Gilbert, *The Holocaust*, p. 862, Kalenczuk was honored by Yad Vashem as one of the Righteous Among the Nations. The relevant files can be found at YVA, in collection M-31.

IALTUSHKOV

Pre-1941: Ialtushkov, village, Vinnytsia oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Jaltuschkow, Rayon and Gebiet Bar, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; post-1991: Yaltushkiv, Vinnytsia oblast', Ukraine

Ialtushkov is located 14 kilometers (8.7 miles) southwest of Bar. In 1926 the Jewish population was 1,392; by 1939, the number of Jews had declined to 1,212. At that time the village of Ialtushkov was part of the Bar raion.

Units of the German 17th Army occupied the village in mid-July 1941. Very few Jews were able to evacuate during these initial weeks following the German attack on the Soviet Union. In late July and August 1941, a German military administration controlled the area and established an auxiliary police force recruited from local non-Jewish inhabitants. In September 1941, authority was handed over to a German civil administration. Ialtushkov was included in the Rayon and Gebiet Bar, within Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien. The Gebietskommissar was Franz Schwarz, and his deputy was Hans Eberle.¹ The head of the Rayon administration (Rayonchef) in Bar was a former middle school teacher, Vladimir Kol'vepyrk.²

Initially the Jews had to wear an armband with the Star of David on it; later they were obliged to wear a yellow Star of David on their clothes. The German authorities demanded from the Jewish population "contributions" of money, and the Jews were also required to surrender their valuables, clothing, furs, and especially any jewelry, gold, and silver items. On December 15, 1941, the head of the Rayon administration, Kol'vepyrk, decreed the creation of ghettos in Bar and Ialtushkov starting on December 20, 1941. Some non-Jews were displaced in order to create the ghettos, and the German authorities were concerned with preventing Jews from destroying furniture they had to leave behind and also local Ukrainians from stealing it.³ When Jews were resettled into the

ghetto, they were not allowed to take property with them, although some left items for safekeeping with non-Jews outside the ghetto. In Ialtushkov, according to one account, “the ghetto was set up next to the market place and surrounded by a tall barbed-wire fence. The people were starving.”⁴

On August 19, 1942, forces of the German Security Police, the Gendarmerie, and local policemen conducted a first killing Aktion in the ghettos of Bar and Ialtushkov. In Ialtushkov, several hundred Jews deemed unfit for work were rounded up in the ghetto. During the afternoon, the German forces and their collaborators escorted Jewish children and the elderly on foot to a sandy site a few kilometers to the northwest of the village. The policemen encouraged the Jews to keep moving by beating them with their rifle butts. At the pits, to save bullets, the Germans lined people up four deep to be shot. Some were then buried alive. Before the shooting, the people were made to undress. Afterwards the clothing of the Jews was stored in a house in Ialtushkov, and some of it was sold to the local inhabitants.⁵

Those Jews kept alive temporarily were mobilized for work mainly on road construction. In October 1942, the German Security Police conducted a second wave of killings in Gebiet Bar. According to the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission (ChGK) report, 1,194 Jews were shot when the Ialtushkov ghetto was liquidated on October 15, 1942.⁶

SOURCES A witness testimony on the ghetto in Ialtushkov can be found 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* (New York: Holocaust Library, 1981).

Documents and witness testimonies concerning the destruction of the Jews of Ialtushkov can be found in the following archives: BA-L (ZStL, 204 AR-Z 447/67); DAVINO (1358-1c-1; R2966-1-691; R6022-1-4); GARF (7021-54-1273); USHMM (RG-31.002M); and YVA (M-33).

Alexander Kruglov and Martin Dean
trans. Ray Brandon

NOTES

1. See USHMM, RG-31.002M (TsDAVO), reel 3, 3206-2-19, p. 29. This document notes that Schwarz was only temporarily appointed to the post of Gebietskommissar, but his name is also recorded in the ChGK reports; see BA-L, ZStL, 204 AR-Z 447/67, vol. 1, pp. 60, 63.

2. RG-31.011M (DAVINO), reel 3, 1358-1c-1, Order no. 21, signed by Kol'vepyryk.

3. *Ibid.*

4. Ehrenburg and Grossman, *The Black Book*, p. 38.

5. BA-L, ZStL, 204 AR-Z 447/67, vol. 1, pp. 67–85, statement of Richard Schulz, February 1948, gives the figure of 213 victims. Ehrenburg and Grossman, *The Black Book*, p. 38, date the shooting on August 20. The ChGK report gives the number of victims as 450; see GARF, 7021-54-1273, pp. 14, 64.

6. GARF, 7021-54-1273, p. 64. This figure probably represents the total of all Jews murdered in Ialtushkov during the German occupation.

IARMOLINTSY

Pre-1941: Iarmolintsy, town and raion center, Kamenets-Podolskii oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Jarmolinzy, Rayon and Gebiet center, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; post-1991: Iarmolyntsy, raion center, Khmel'nyts'kyi oblast', Ukraine

Iarmolintsy is located 30 kilometers (18.6 miles) south-southwest of Proskurov. The Jewish population was 1,264 in 1939 (61 percent of the total population).¹ Another 1,312 Jews resided in the villages of the Iarmolintsy raion, primarily in Sharovka and Frampol'. In the 1930s, Iarmolintsy was the center of a Jewish national sel'sovet (with 1,733 residents in 1931).

After the start of the German invasion on June 22, 1941, some of the Jewish men were drafted or volunteered for the Red Army, and a small number of Jews was able to evacuate to the east. More than 1,000 Jews remained in Iarmolintsy at the start of the occupation.

Iarmolintsy was occupied by units of the German 17th Army in early July 1941. In July and August 1941, a German military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur) governed the town. It established a local administration and an auxiliary police force recruited from local residents. In September 1941, power was transferred to a German civil administration. Iarmolintsy became the center of Gebiet Jarmolinzy, which included the Rayons of Satanow, Gorodok, and Michalpol, as well as Rayon Jarmolinzy. The Gebietskommissar was Kameradschaftsführer Ernst Mertes.² From the fall of 1941, there was a Gendarmerie post in Iarmolintsy, which was headed initially by Gendarmeriemeister Rudolf Buchholz and, from October 19, 1942, by Gendarmeriemeister Glossat. The head of the Gendarmerie post took over responsibility for the local Ukrainian police (renamed Schutzmannschaft). The head of the Ukrainian police in Iarmolintsy was a man named Kolbasiuk, and his deputy was Omanski.

In the summer and fall of 1941, the German authorities implemented a series of anti-Jewish measures in Iarmolintsy: a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was created; Jews were required to wear distinctive symbols; they were compelled to perform forced labor, during which they were beaten and otherwise abused; and they were forbidden to leave the town. Already on July 9, 1941, 16 Soviet activists, including several Jews, were shot in Iarmolintsy.³

Sources differ somewhat regarding the precise date of the establishment of the ghetto in Iarmolintsy. On the Germans' arrival, most of the Jews lived together in the center of the town, with only a few Ukrainians and Russians living among them. According to most sources, in the fall of 1941, following the receipt of an order from Generalkommissar Schöne, the remaining non-Jews were moved out of the Jewish section of town, which was also reduced in size to only about 15 percent of the town's area, forming a ghetto. According to Jewish survivor Semyon Zelfon, the ghetto was set up about three months into the German occupation. He states that many of the former Jewish houses were demolished to create

a park, and the ghetto itself was very overcrowded, with six to eight families sharing each small dwelling. Around this time, the ghetto was also surrounded with barbed wire and was guarded externally by the local Ukrainian police.⁴

In the ghetto the Jews suffered from hunger, as they only received a bread ration of 200 grams (7 ounces) per day. They were only permitted to visit the local market for one hour on Sundays. However, they managed to obtain some extra food by bartering their remaining possessions with the local population.⁵

Forced labor tasks for the Jews in the ghetto included earthworks on a large dam project, needed for the construction of an electrical power plant not far from Iarmolintsy.⁶ At some time in 1942, probably in April, the head of the Judenrat in Iarmolintsy was obliged to select 10 Jews who were to be hanged by the Germans as a reprisal for the killing of a German official in the town. Witnesses state that he selected 10 elderly or infirm Jews. When the Jewish elder in Frampol' was presented with the same demand for 10 victims, he volunteered himself as the first to be killed.⁷

According to the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission (ChGK) report, in June 1942, Jewish residential districts, "open ghettos," were also created in the nearby villages of Sharovka and Frampol'.⁸ In August 1942, 400 Jews from Gebiet Jarmolinzy were sent to the labor camp in Leznevo, 6 kilometers (3.7 miles) from Proskurov; the Jewish inmates of this camp were used for the construction and the repair of roads along the main transit road, Durchgangsstrasse (highway) IV.⁹

In late October 1942, on the order of Gebietskommissar Mertes, most of the Jews of Gebiet Jarmolinzy, including the majority of those from the ghettos in Gorodok and Mikhalpol', and also those from Frampol' and Sharovka, were rounded up and transferred by vehicle or on foot to Iarmolintsy, escorted by the Gendarmerie and Ukrainian police.¹⁰ In Iarmolintsy, all the Jews gathered from the Gebiet were confined within a derelict barracks compound close to the railway station for several days under unbearable conditions, without food or water.¹¹

As a number had been killed during the course of the concentration of the Jews and several large pits were prepared within sight of the barracks, the Jews there offered resistance to their impending murder. A member of the Ukrainian Schutzmannschaft, named by one witness as Kazik Ostrovskii, was sent into the barracks to bring out some of the Jews. Instead, he was overpowered and killed by them, severing his head. Some Jews also fired rifle shots at the German and Ukrainian police who guarded the barracks externally. A number of Jews also decided to commit suicide in the barracks rather than allow themselves to be killed by their tormentors.¹²

Fearing that the revolt might get out of control, the German officials in Iarmolintsy sent for reinforcements from other nearby police posts. On the arrival of a detachment of Security Police and SD from Starokonstantinov, under the command of SS-Hauptsturmführer Karl Graf, the Jews were

smoked out of the barracks when the Germans set it on fire.¹³ Once the remaining Jews emerged from the barracks, they were forced to undress and then were shot in groups of about 50 people into three pits prepared nearby. The Ukrainian police were stationed around the execution site to isolate it and to prevent the prisoners from escaping. In total, probably around 6,400 Jews were shot during this Aktion.¹⁴

Local witnesses indicate that some Jews hid in basements and other places in and around the Iarmolintsy ghetto during the transfer to the barracks. Over the ensuing weeks after the mass shooting, more Jews were uncovered and were shot in turn. Some Jews managed to survive with the help of local non-Jews. For example, in a nearby village a Jewish boy aged 15 was hidden by an elderly woman for the rest of the occupation. The remaining Jewish houses in the ghetto were dismantled after the Jews had been shot, and Jewish clothing was recycled for use by the local population.¹⁵

SOURCES Publications concerning the destruction of the Jewish population of Iarmolintsy include the following: Ilya Ehrenburg and Vasily Grossman, *The Complete Black Book of Russian Jewry* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2002), p. 21.

Documents regarding the persecution and murder of the Jews of Iarmolintsy can be found in the following archives: BA-L (B 162/5071 to 5073); DAKhO; GARF (7021-64-818); VHF (# 24841, 32340, 34283, 38519); YIU (nos. 594 and 595); and YVA.

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trans. Ester-Basya Vaisman

NOTES

1. V. Lukin and B. Khaimovich, *100 evreiskikh mestechek Ukrain'i. Istoricheskiĭ Putevoditel'*. Vypusk 1. *Podolia* (Jerusalem and St. Petersburg, 1998), p. 226.

2. BA-BL, BDC, SSHO 2432, Organisationsplan der besetzten Ostgebiete nach dem Stand vom 10. März 1942, hg. vom Chef der Ordnungspolizei, Berlin, March 13, 1942.

3. GARF, 7021-64-818, p. 202.

4. VHF, # 38519; BA-L, B 162/5072, p. 404, B 162/5071, p. 318. YIU, Témoin no. 595, however, states the ghetto was not enclosed until 1942. GARF, 7021-64-818, p. 202, dates the ghetto's formation in June 1942.

5. VHF, # 38519; YIU, Témoin no. 594.

6. VHF, # 38519; YIU, Témoin no. 595; BA-L, B 162/5071, p. 319.

7. VHF, # 38519; YIU, Témoin no. 595; BA-L, B 162/5072, p. 459.

8. GARF, 7021-64-818, p. 202.

9. IPN, GKŚZpNP, Zbiór zespołów szczątkowych jednostek SS i policji, sygn. 77, p. 4, report of SS-Hauptsturmführer Hilliges to KdS Rowno, August 18, 1942.

10. BA-L, B 162/5072, p. 434; VHF, # 32340 and 34283; GARF, 7021-64-818, p. 203. YIU, Témoin no. 594, mentions that the Jews from Sharovka and Frampol' were brought to Iarmolintsy but does not date this.

11. GARF, 7021-64-818, p. 203. See also BA-L, B 162/5073, pp. 649-657.

1368 VOLHYNIA AND PODOLIA REGION

12. YIU, Témoin no. 595; BA-L, B 162/5073, pp. 649–651, B 162/5071, p. 91. According to Ehrenburg and Grossman, *The Black Book*, p. 21, 16 local policemen and five Germans were killed in the uprising, but these figures are not mentioned in other sources.

13. VHF, # 24841; BA-L, B 162/5072, p. 494.

14. BA-L, B 162/5071, pp. 89–92, for the figure of 6,400; B 162/5072, p. 460, gives the figure of 8,000 Jews shot in the mass grave near the barracks, on the basis of ChGK materials.

15. YIU, Témoins nos. 594 and 595.

IARYSHEV (AKA YARYSHEV)

Pre-1941: Iaryshev, village, raion center, Vinnitsa oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Jaryschew, Rayon center, Gebiet Bar, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; post-1991: Iaryshev, Mobylyv-Podil's'kyi raion, Vinnitsia oblast', Ukraine

Iaryshev is located 101 kilometers (63 miles) south-southwest of Vinnitsa. According to the 1939 census, 509 Jews lived in Iaryshev (17.7 percent of the total population). An additional 72 Jews lived in the villages of what was then the Iaryshev raion.

After the German invasion of the USSR on June 22, 1941, a small number of Jews were able to evacuate to the east. Eligible men were conscripted into the Red Army or enlisted voluntarily. Around 400 Jews remained in Iaryshev at the start of the occupation.

Romanian armed forces occupied Iaryshev on July 19, 1941. In July and August 1941, a German military administration (Ortskommandantur) controlled the village. The Ortskommandant appointed a village elder and established a Ukrainian auxiliary police force.

In September 1941, authority was transferred to a German civil administration. The village was incorporated into Gebiet Bar, within Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien. Regierungsassessor Steffen was made the Gebietskommissar.¹ In 1942, Lieutenant Willi Petrich became the Gendarmerie-Gebietsführer in Bar, and the Iaryshev Gendarmerie post was subordinated to his authority. The Ukrainian auxiliary police unit served under the direction of the German Gendarmes based in Iaryshev.

On the very first day of the occupation, Romanian soldiers killed 25 Jews in the village.² In early August 1941, the German military administration for the region, based in Vinnitsa, noted that there were 800 houses in Iaryshev and that all the Jews had been (temporarily) driven out on the orders of a “Romanian commander.” At this time no militia had yet been recruited in the village.³ Many of the Jews would later return to Iaryshev.

In the summer and fall of 1941, a series of anti-Jewish measures were implemented on the authority of the German occupying forces in Iaryshev. Jews were ordered to wear distinguishing armbands bearing the image of the Star of David and, later, patches in the shape of a yellow circle. They were compelled to perform forced labor, and they were not permit-

ted to leave the limits of the settlement unless they were part of a forced labor crew.

In late 1941 or at the start of 1942, the German authorities established a ghetto in the village, which was surrounded by barbed wire.⁴ The Jews from the village of Serebrinets, 8 kilometers (5 miles) away, were brought into Iaryshev in the fall of 1941. Initially they lived with other Jews in Iaryshev, and subsequently they were moved into the ghetto.⁵ When the ghetto was set up, those Jews who lived in the center of town were required to move into the area around the marketplace. Inside the ghetto there was terrible overcrowding, with as many as 40 people sharing one room.⁶

Every morning the Germans selected a number of people from the ghetto to serve on work details. The Jews were beaten frequently by both the Germans and the local police. The German authorities took some Jews as hostages in order to extract a large ransom payment. There were also shootings and acts of rape committed by Germans against Jewish women over the age of 16. Due to inadequate clothing, the Jews in the ghetto suffered from cold in the winter. Food rations consisted mainly of soup and a small amount of bread, barely sufficient to keep people alive. A variety of diseases spread among the Jews in Iaryshev, including typhus, and a number of Jews died.⁷

The ghetto was liquidated on August 21, 1942, and according to an official German report, 212 Jews were shot.⁸ The Aktion was organized by a squad from the outpost of the Security Police based in Kamenets-Podolskii, which was headed by SS-Hauptscharführer Andreas Fermer, assisted by the German Gendarmerie and the Ukrainian police. On the day of the Aktion, the Jews were assembled and instructed to bring with them their valuable possessions. Then they were escorted into the woods, where a large pit had been prepared. Here they were forced to undress and were shot in the pit.⁹

On the night before the Aktion, it appears that the able-bodied Jews were selected out and transported to a forced labor camp. Jewish artisans were also selected at that time and allowed to remain alive for a short period longer.

Only a few Jews were able to escape from the ghetto and survive until the Red Army drove the Germans from the area in 1944.

SOURCES Documents regarding the persecution and murder of the Jews of Iaryshev can be found in the following archives: DAVINO (P1683-1-13); GARF (7021-54-1263); VHF (e.g., # 47924, 41939); and YVA.

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NOTES

1. BA-BL, BDC, SSHO 2432, Organisationsplan der besetzten Ostgebiete nach dem Stand vom 10. März 1942, hg. vom Chef der Ordnungspolizei, Berlin, March 13, 1942.

2. Ilya Ehrenburg and Vasily Grossman, *The Complete Black Book of Russian Jewry* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2002), pp. 27–28. According to another source, 40 Jews were shot in Iaryshev on July 19, 1941, and

another 175 Jews were killed two weeks later; see GARF, 7021-54-1271, p. 9.

3. See the report of Oberfeldkommandantur Winniza (Abt. VII) an Sicherungsdivision 444 (Abt. VII), August 11, 1941, in RGVA, 1275-3-662.

4. Ehrenburg and Grossman, *The Complete Black Book*, pp. 27–28.

5. VHF, # 41939, testimony taken in 1998 of Roza Veksler (née Abramson), born 1927.

6. Ibid., # 47924, testimony taken in 1998 of Leia Bandus, born 1929.

7. Ibid.; also # 41939.

8. Report of Leutnant Willi Petrich, the Gendarmerie-Gebietsführer in Bar, August 27, 1942, on Aktions against the Jewish population. See IPN, GKŚZpNP Zbiór zespołów szczerzkowych jednostek SS i policji, sygn. 77, p. 10. According to the materials of the ChGK, located in GARF (7021-54-1263, p. 53), on that day there were 595 Jews killed in the village.

9. VHF, # 41939.

IZIASLAV

Pre-1941: Iziaslav, town and raion center, Kbmel'niiskii oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Saslaw, Rayon and Gebiet center, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; post-1991: Iziaslav, Kbmel'niys'kyi oblast', Ukraine

Iziaslav is situated 68 kilometers (42 miles) southeast of Równe. In 1897, there were 5,998 Jews living in the town (47.6 percent of the total population). Before 1910 the town was known as Zaslav. According to the 1939 census, there were 3,208 Jews in Iziaslav (27.7 percent of the population).

Units of the German 6th Army occupied Iziaslav at the beginning of July 1941. During the two weeks from the start of the German invasion until the occupation of the town, a small number of Jews evacuated eastward, and some of the men were called up to or volunteered for service in the Red Army, so that at the start of the occupation about 3,000 Jews remained in the town.

In July and August of 1941, the town was under the authority of a German local commandant's office (Ortskommandantur), which also established a local administration and police force from among the residents. Among those appointed was a man named Digas, who served as "commandant" (probably chief of police), and also Bogutski, who became the town's mayor (Bürgermeister). In September 1941, authority was transferred to a German civil administration. Iziaslav became the administrative center of Gebiet Saslaw, which included the Rayons of Plushnoje, Lachowzy, and Teofipol, as well as Saslaw. The Gebietskommissar was SA-Oberführer Knochenhauer.¹ In the fall of 1941, a German Gendarmerie post was created in Iziaslav; it controlled the local Ukrainian police.

In the summer and fall of 1941, the following anti-Jewish measures were implemented in the town: a Jewish Council (Judenrat) was set up; Jews were ordered to wear distinguishing symbols, namely, the Star of David; they were assigned to forced labor; they were forbidden to leave the boundaries of

the town; and they were subjected to systematic looting and beating by the Ukrainian police. Jews suffered from food shortages from early in the occupation and had to line up for bread; however, the local authorities on occasion removed certain Jews from the bread lines.²

The first anti-Jewish Aktion in the town occurred on August 24, 1941. On this day, the 45th Reserve Police Battalion, commanded by Major der Polizei Martin Besser, with the help of the Ukrainian police, rounded up all the Jews, telling them to take with them their valuables for resettlement to another place, according to one survivor, to Palestine. At about 4:00 P.M. the remaining women and children were released, but approximately 1,000 Jews, mainly men, were taken away in vehicles to be shot.³ The mass shooting was conducted on the edge of the Obluga Forest, approximately 1.5 kilometers (0.9 mile) south of the city. For the mass grave, the Germans used defensive fortifications, which had been prepared by the Soviet authorities in order to conceal tanks. According to a witness, the Jews were made to lie facedown in the bottom of the ditches and were shot in the back.⁴

Shortly after this mass shooting, in late August or early September 1941, the German authorities established a ghetto in Iziaslav for the Jewish specialists selected before the Aktion and for other Jews who had managed to survive. In addition, Jews were brought into the ghetto from the surrounding villages, including Belogorodka (about 20 kilometers [12.4 miles] to the southwest).⁵ It is estimated that up to 2,500 people were enclosed in the ghetto.⁶

The ghetto was located in the Old Town section of Iziaslav, which previously had been occupied by a mixed population of Jews, Ukrainians, and Russians. It included a large two-story synagogue building and about 15 to 20 houses. It was surrounded by a fence made of wooden planks and topped with barbed wire. The ghetto was also guarded by the German and Ukrainian police. Some Jews sneaked out through holes in the fence, taking off their yellow badges, to forage for food.⁷

It appears that the new arrivals were accommodated in the synagogue, which held around 500 to 1,000 Jews altogether. However, another account reports that the synagogue was used as a hospital. Some of the Jews who caught typhus were removed from the hospital periodically and shot.⁸

According to Semen Shider, there was another roundup about a month after the establishment of the ghetto, in which most of the remaining men (about 200 people) were taken away on a transport. He believes these men were also shot. After this, only a few male specialist workers remained in the ghetto.⁹

Survivors name the Jewish elder or head of the Jewish Police as Abrasha Galevich (or Kalenich). The Jewish Police were noted for some corruption in their collection of valuables from the Jews for the Germans, and they did not enjoy a good reputation. Some Jews left the ghetto under escort by the Ukrainian police for forced labor in agriculture or repairing roads and bridges. These columns sometimes received food from other local inhabitants who took pity on them and the Jews attempted to smuggle this food into the ghetto.¹⁰

1370 VOLHYNIA AND PODOLIA REGION

Little information is known about resistance in the ghetto, other than individual or family efforts at hiding or escape. One survivor, however, mentions an incident in which 12 young Jewish boys from the village of Liakhovtsi overpowered their guards and managed to escape. Subsequently it appears they were all recaptured.¹¹

The Germans organized another large-scale Aktion against the ghetto on June 27, 1942. After rounding up the Jews, the specialist workers and their families were sent to one side. The remaining Jews were transported on trucks to a site about 1 kilometer (0.6 mile) southwest of the town, where a squad of the Security Police and SD, with the help of the German and Ukrainian police, shot more than 2,000 people. Apart from the specialists and their families, a few other Jews survived by hiding in attics or behind false walls or escaping into the countryside.

After the Aktion, the remaining 140 or so specialist workers and their families were returned to a smaller ghetto area. Among the tasks they were now assigned were the sorting and repairing of the clothing that had been gathered at the killing site.¹²

Following a final roundup in January 1943, when most of the remaining Jews were shot, the ghetto in Iziaslav ceased to exist. A few Jews managed to escape and survived with the help of local inhabitants who agreed to conceal them for a shorter or longer period of time. Some of the survivors also joined with the Soviet partisans, who had become more numerous in the region by the summer of 1943.

In total, between 1941 and January 1943, around 3,500 Jews (including Jews from the neighboring villages) were murdered in Iziaslav.¹³

The German case against Martin Besser, the former commander of the 45th Reserve Police Battalion, tried by the court in Regensburg in 1971, resulted in no punishment owing to his advanced age and ill health (in 1971, Besser was 79 years old).

SOURCES Articles on the destruction of the Jewish population of Iziaslav can be found in D. Hoshkis, ed., *Nezaboena rana* (Slavuta-Hetishyn-Iziaslav, 1996), pp. 115–124; and in *Rossiiskaia Evreiskaia Entsiklopediia* (Moscow: Russian Academy of Natural Sciences, Jewish Encyclopedia Research Center, “Epos,” 2000), 4:503–504.

Documentation regarding the annihilation of the Iziaslav Jews can be found in the following archives: DAKhO; GARF; VHAP; VHF (# 27799, 32021, 33649, 50048); and YVA.

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trans. Kathleen Luft and Tatyana Feith

NOTES

1. BA-BL, BDC, SShO 2432, Organisationsplan der besetzten Ostgebiete nach dem Stand vom 10. März 1942, hg. vom Chef der Ordnungspolizei, Berlin, March 13, 1942.

2. VHF, # 33649, testimony of Sofia Finkel; # 27799, testimony of Semen Shider.

3. Telegram of Höherer SS- und Polizeiführer Russland Süd, SS-Obergruppenführer Friedrich Jeckeln, no. 160, of August 25, 1941 (VHAP, Record Group—Kommandostab

Reichsführer-SS). On this day the battalion also conducted shootings of Jews in Baranovka and Dubrovka (Zhitomir oblast’), in total killing 1,342 people in three separate Aktions (the majority, however, were murdered in Iziaslav).

4. VHF, # 33649; # 27799.

5. *Ibid.*, # 50048, testimony of Lida Garnaga from Belogorodka, who dates the ghetto’s establishment in August 1941; # 27799, Semen Shider of Iziaslav, however, dates it in early September 1941; # 33649, Sofia Finkel, states that the ghetto was set up for those remaining after the first Aktion.

6. *Ibid.*, # 27799, gives the figure of between 2,000 and 3,000, which appears correct, given that about 3,000 Jews remained in the town, some 1,000 were killed in late August 1941, and a few hundred were brought in subsequently from neighboring villages.

7. *Ibid.*, # 50048; # 27799; # 32021; # 33649.

8. *Ibid.*, # 50048; # 33649.

9. *Ibid.*, # 27799.

10. *Ibid.*, # 27799; # 32021.

11. *Ibid.*, # 27799.

12. *Ibid.*, # 50048.

13. According to the ChGK report for Iziaslav, during the period of the occupation more than 5,000 civilians were killed, as well as 6,000 prisoners of war (see *Podillia Velykii Vitchyzniani vimi 1941–1945 rr. Zbirnik dokumentiv i materialiv* [L’viv, 1969], p. 113). Most of the civilian casualties were probably Jews.

JANÓW POLESKI

Pre-1939: Janów Poleski, town, województwo poleskie, Poland; 1939–1941: Ivanovo, Belorussian SSR; 1941–1944: Janow, Rayon center, Gebiet Pinsk, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; post-1991: Ivanava, Beras’tse voblasts’, Republic of Belarus

Janów is located about 133 kilometers (83 miles) east of Brześć and 41 kilometers (25.5 miles) west of Pińsk. In 1939, the Jewish population of Janów was around 3,000, about half of the total. From September 1939 until July 1941, Janów came under Soviet rule. Private property was nationalized, and workers had to join cooperatives. The Jewish population was swelled by refugees from central and western Poland, but a few Jews were among those deported to the interior of the Soviet Union.

The 45th Infantry Division of the German army occupied Janów on July 7, 1941. During the first two months of the occupation, Janów remained under a military administration (Ortskommandantur). The Ortskommandant ordered the Jews to wear markings and perform forced labor. He also appointed Alter Dubinsky, the former chairman of the Jewish community, as head of the Jewish Council (Judenrat). Since the members of the Judenrat were held personally responsible for the fulfillment of German orders, Dubinsky accepted this dubious honor only reluctantly.¹

In September 1941, a German civil administration assumed control of the Polesia region. Janów became a Rayon center in Gebiet Pinsk, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien.

In Janów, the 2nd SS-Cavalry Squadron carried out an anti-Jewish Aktion in early August 1941.² They shot about 400 male Jews, age 14 and over, after pulling aside some with special skills, such as furriers.³

In the fall of 1941, a platoon of 26 German Gendarmes took over the policing of Gebiet Pinsk from the military and assumed control of the local police, which was renamed the Schutzmannschaft. The Schutzmannschaft consisted of about 100 men, the majority of whom were Ukrainians. Six Rayon police stations were supervised by the Gendarmerie-Gebietsführer in Pińsk, including one in Janów.

In early April 1942 (around the holiday of Passover), the Germans ordered the establishment of a ghetto in Janów. The Jews were given only 18 hours to move into the ghetto and could only take 8 kilograms (17.6 pounds) of belongings with them.⁴ The ghetto consisted of about 68 houses on Sovetskaia Street between the market square and the mill. The ghetto was enclosed by a barbed-wire fence. Jewish carpenters quickly constructed bunk beds to deal with the overcrowding, as more than 50 people had to share each house, with only about 1.2 square meters (13 square feet) each.⁵ Many Jews performed forced labor at the sawmill. Daily rations were meager: 150 grams (5.3 ounces) of bread per day for workers and only 100 grams (3.5 ounces) for nonworkers. Jews were strictly forbidden to trade with non-Jews or to possess meat, butter, milk, or eggs. Those who worked outside the ghetto still exploited any opportunity to gain extra food illegally, in spite of regular searches when they returned. Some Jews were shot when they were caught returning to the ghetto with any food or tobacco. Others cultivated small parcels of land in an effort to supplement their diet.

In spite of these efforts to obtain extra food, hunger was rampant and disease widespread. As in other ghettos, Jewish religious life continued. There were two rabbis and a committee for assisting the community. Inside the ghetto, there was a Jewish police force of 10 men, commanded by Szmuel Grajer from the village of Zamoszi.⁶ In the summer of 1942, the Germans imposed a “contribution” on the Jews of 2.5 kilograms (5.5 pounds) of gold and 50 kilograms (110 pounds) of silver. This demand could be met only by surrendering wedding rings and pocket watches. Some Jews capable of work were sent to perform forced labor near Zhitomir. Fearing they would not return, wealthier Jews bribed the Judenrat to have their names removed from the list. Only one person, who escaped from the camp after five weeks, was ever heard from again.⁷

The murder of the Jews in Gebiet Pinsk was organized by the local outpost of the Security Police (Sipo-Aussendienststelle Pinsk), which was established in May 1942 and was under the command of SS-Sturmscharführer Wilhelm Rasp. The Aussendienststelle was staffed by members of the Gestapo, SD, and Kripo and was reinforced by Rasp’s Kommando Metz.⁸ There were 50 men serving at the outpost, including 15 Security Police officials, about 15 translators, and 20 or 30 officials of the Order Police. By August 1942, a small branch office of the SD had also been established in Janów.

The liquidation of the Janów ghetto began on September 22, 1942.⁹ In the evening, Gendarmerie and local policemen

surrounded the ghetto. Those capable of work (about 500 people) were kept under guard at the sawmill, and on the morning of September 23, forces of the Security Police and SD arrived from Pińsk at about 8:30 A.M. Discussions on procedure then took place between Rasp and Gebietskommissar Klein.¹⁰

The remaining Jews in the ghetto were assembled at the marketplace and then escorted to previously excavated pits about 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) outside the town, where they had to undress before being shot. As the Jews approached the pits, Chana Gorodecka attacked one of the policemen, and some Jews managed to escape in the confusion.¹¹ The mass shooting began only after about 500 Jews had been assembled, which meant that those who arrived first had to sit naked for about an hour before the shooting began. All were shot while lying in the pit with a shot from behind to the nape of the neck (*Genickschuss*) from an automatic pistol. As the pit filled up, those who were to be shot next had to walk over the bodies of those already killed in order to lie down for their turn. When it was no longer possible for the executioners to stand in the pit because of the number of dead, they stood on the edge of the pit and shot down into it.

As many Jews had gone into hiding, the Germans and local police started to comb the ghetto. One of the Germans involved, Heinrich Oeldmann, recalled after the war that the Janów ghetto suddenly burst into flames.¹² The Jews resisted with weapons and homemade explosives. People caught on fire and turned into burning torches. Between 400 and 500 Jews lost their lives during the uprising, but about 120 managed to escape from Janów to the nearby forests.¹³ According to the report of the German military economic office in Łuck for early October, “[I]n Janów . . . the entire ghetto was burned down with all its inhabitants.”¹⁴ The next morning, the mayor ordered the local population to collect the charred corpses from the streets.

On September 25, another selection was made at the sawmill, as a result of which all but 60 of the Jews held there were shot. There are conflicting estimates as to the total number of Jews murdered during the Aktion: the Germans probably murdered around 2,800 Jews altogether, including those shot or burned to death in the ghetto.¹⁵ A few Jews who came out of hiding were permitted to join the Jews at the sawmill, but the remaining Jews were murdered a few weeks later, apart from a group who fled to the forests in time.

Of those Janów Jews who escaped to the forests, at least 50 were subsequently slain by the Nazis and their collaborators as they searched for surviving Jews. A number of Jews from Janów served in Soviet partisan formations, including the “Szelezniak” detachment. At least 7 of these people died in combat with the Germans, including Dr. Włodawsky and a young girl named Cirinovsky.¹⁶ Around 100 Jewish escapees from the Janów ghetto managed to survive until the Red Army drove the Germans from the area in July 1944.

SOURCES Information on the Janów ghetto can be found in the following publications: Mordekhai Nadav and Nachman

1372 VOLHYNIA AND PODOLIA REGION

Blumental, eds., *Yanov al-yad Pinsk: Sefer zikaron* (Jerusalem: Irgun yots'e Yanov al yad Pinsk be-Yisrael, 1969); and Yehuda Adelman, *Heroes without Medals* (New York: Vantage, 1983).

Relevant documentation can be found in the following archives: AŽIH (301/156); BA-BL; BA-L (ZStL, II 204 AR-Z 393/59); BA-MA; GARF (7021-90-27); NARA (T-77, reel 628); NARB (845-1-13, p. 23; 861-1-11, pp. 45–47); Sta. Braunschweig (2 Ks 11/63); USHMM (RG-53.002M); VHF; and YVA (e.g., M-1/E/1944).

Stephen Pallavicini and Martin Dean

NOTES

1. Shalom Cholowsky, *The Jews of Belorussia during World War II* (Amsterdam: Harwood, 1998), p. 253.

2. Most sources date the Aktion between August 2 and August 5, 1941.

3. Sta. Braunschweig, 2 Ks 11/63, file 1266, statement of Alfred Weidlich, July 16, 1962; AŽIH, 301/156, Samuel Reznik.

4. Isr Aplbeym, "Fun iene teg," in Nadav and Blumental, *Yanov al-yad Pinsk*, p. 335; AŽIH, 301/156, Samuel Reznik, dates the establishment of the ghetto in May 1942.

5. Aplbeym, "Fun iene teg," pp. 335–336; V.I. Adamushko et al., eds. *Handbuch der Haftstätten für die Zivilbevölkerung auf dem besetzten Territorium von Belarus 1941–1944* (Minsk: Staatskomitee für Archive und Aktenführung der Republik Belarus, 2001), p. 89; AŽIH, 301/156.

6. AŽIH, 301/156.

7. Aplbeym, "Fun iene teg," p. 336.

8. BA-BL, R 94/9.

9. Aplbeym, "Fun iene teg," p. 338; AŽIH, 301/156. NARB, 861-1-11, p. 46, the ChGK report for the Ivanono raion dates the Aktion on September 26–27, 1942.

10. BA-L, ZstL, II 204 AR-Z 393/59, p. 3509, statement by Patik, April 5, 1963.

11. YVA, M-1/E/1944, testimony of Rosa Ichanowicz.

12. BA-L, ZStL, II 204 AR-Z 393/59, p. 12159, statement of Oeldmann, August 4, 1966.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 1404, statement of Wilhelm Rasp, December 18, 1961.

14. NARA, T-77, reel 628, report of Wehrwirtschafts-kommando Luzk, first 10 days of October 1942.

15. AŽIH, 301/156; BA-L, ZStL, II 204 AR-Z 393/59, p. 12159, statement by Oeldmann.

16. Adelman, *Heroes*, p. 39.

JEZIERZANY

Pre-1939: Jezierzany, village, województwo wołyńskie, Poland; 1939–1941: Ozeriany, Volyn' oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Jezeshany, Rayon Turisk, Gebiet Kowel, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; post-1991: Ozeriany, Turiis'k raion, Volyn' oblast', Ukraine

Jezierzany is located about 25 kilometers (15.5 miles) south-southeast of Kowel. According to the 1921 census, 340 Jews

were living in Jezierzany. By the middle of 1941, there were probably around 400 Jews in the village.

The village was occupied on June 28, 1941. In July and August 1941, a German military commandant's office (Orts-kommandantur) ran its affairs. From September 1941 onward, power was transferred to a German civil administration. Jezierzany was incorporated into Gebiet Kowel, which in turn became part of Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien. Regierungsrat Arno Kaempf became the Gebietskommissar in Kowel until June 1942, and Leutnant Philipp Rapp was appointed as Gendarmerie-Gebietsführer.¹ In June 1942, Kaempf was arrested for embezzlement of Jewish property and executed shortly thereafter. His successor as Gebietskommissar was Stabsleiter Erich Kassner.

The Germans also appointed a village elder in Jezierzany and assembled an auxiliary Ukrainian police unit, which served under the German Gendarmerie precinct in Turzysk.

In the summer and fall of 1941, the German occupying forces implemented a series of anti-Jewish measures in Jezierzany. Jews were required to wear distinctive markers in plain view, at first in the image of the Star of David and later in the shape of a yellow circle. They were subjected to various kinds of forced labor. They were not allowed to leave the limits of the village, and they suffered from systematic robbery and assaults by the Ukrainian police. A Jewish Council (Judenrat) was also established in the village, through which the German occupying organs passed their orders and regulations to the rest of the Jewish population.

In the spring of 1942, an open ghetto was established in the village. All the Jews of Jezierzany were resettled into the ghetto. Jews were also brought in from the surrounding villages, such as Kupiczów (which had a Jewish population of 236 in 1921). In August 1942,² an SD detachment arrived from Kowel and liquidated the ghetto, with the help of the German Gendarmerie and the Ukrainian auxiliary police. In total, 762 Jews were reportedly killed near the cemetery in the village of Sushibaba.³ As far as is known, 6 Jews from Jezierzany and 10 from Kupiczów survived until the area was liberated by the Red Army in 1944.⁴

SOURCES Published information on the fate of the Jewish community of Jezierzany during the Holocaust can be found in Shmuel Spector, ed., *Pmkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 5, *Volhynia and Polesie* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1990), pp. 101–102; and V. Nakonechnyi, *Kholokost na Volyni: Zbertvy i pamiat'* (Lutsk, 2003), pp. 37–38.

Documentation regarding the annihilation of the Jezierzany Jews can be found in the following archives: DAVO; and GARF (7021-55-1).

Alexander Kruglov
trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. BA-BL, BDC, SSHO 2432, Organisationsplan der besetzten Ostgebiete nach dem Stand vom 10. März 1942, hg. vom Chef der Ordnungspolizei, Berlin, March 13, 1942.

2. Nakonechnyi, *Kholokost na Volyni*, p. 37.
3. GARF, 7021-55-1, pp. 70 and reverse side.
4. Nakonechnyi, *Kholokost na Volyni*, p. 38.

KALIUS

Pre-1941: Kalius, village, Novaia Usbitsa raion, Khmel'nitskii oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941-1944: Kaljus, Rayon Nowaja-Ushiza, Gebiet Bar, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; post-1991: Kalius, Khmel'nyts'kyi oblast', Ukraine

Kalius is located on the Dniester River about 50 kilometers (30 miles) to the east of Kamenets-Podolskii. From the second half of the 1920s, Kalius was the administrative center of a Jewish national sel'sovet. In 1931, 1,204 Jews lived in the village.¹ The Jewish population subsequently decreased by a few hundred persons as a result of the Holodomor famine in 1932-1933 and the resettlement of Jews to other areas.

Around 500 Jews resided in the village on the eve of the war. After the German invasion of the USSR on June 22, 1941, a small number of Jews were able to evacuate to the east. At that time, men eligible for military service were either conscripted or voluntarily enlisted in the Red Army. Only about 400 Jews remained in the village at the start of the German occupation.

Units of the German 17th Army occupied Kalius on July 17, 1941. In July and August 1941, a German military commandant's office (Ortskommandantur) ran the village. It appointed a village elder and recruited an auxiliary Ukrainian police force from the local non-Jewish inhabitants.

In September 1941, authority was transferred to a German civil administration. The village was incorporated into Gebiet Bar in Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien. Regierungsassessor Steffen was named as Gebietskommissar.² The German Gendarmerie-Gebietsführer in Bar was initially Lieutenant Richard Schulz. From May 1942 he became the deputy of the SS- und Polizeigebietsführer and Gendarmerie-Gebietsführer in Bar under Hauptmann der Gendarmerie Willi Petrich.³

During 1942, members of the Security Police outpost (Sipo-Aussendienststelle) in Kamenets-Podolskii organized the anti-Jewish Aktions in Gebiet Bar, which included the village of Kalius. At this time SS-Hauptscharführer Andreas Ferner was in charge of the outpost. The German Gendarmerie and the auxiliary Ukrainian police also played an active role in all the Aktions.

In the summer and fall of 1941, the German military administration implemented a series of anti-Jewish measures in Kalius. Jews were required to wear distinctive markings in plain view, at first an armband bearing the Star of David and later a patch in the shape of a yellow circle. All Jews who were capable of work had to perform various forms of compulsory labor, such as chopping wood, building a bridge across the Kalius River, and building roads. The work was supervised by German overseers and the Ukrainian police, who were very

cruel and who robbed and beat the Jews frequently. Jews were not allowed to leave the limits of the village.

In December 1941 or early 1942, all the Jews of the village were moved into a ghetto, and thereby a number of Jews were forced out of their homes.⁴ At the start of July 1942, about 100 young, able-bodied Jews were sent to a forced labor camp in Letichev. A few dozen more Jews were sent to the camp during the following six weeks. Those who remained behind in the ghetto were murdered on August 20, 1942.⁵ Altogether there were about 240 victims of this Aktion.⁶ The mass shooting was organized by the Security Police detachment in Kamenets-Podolskii, assisted by the German Gendarmerie and the Ukrainian police.

When Moyshe Rekhtman returned to Kalius in April 1944, after the Red Army had driven out the Germans, he found only the mass grave where the local Jews had been murdered, as all the Jewish homes had been destroyed and converted into gardens. The village had virtually ceased to exist.⁷

SOURCES The testimony of Moyshe Rekhtman, a Jewish survivor from Kalius, can be found in David A. Chapin and Ben Weinstock, eds., *The Road from Letichev: The History and Culture of a Forgotten Jewish Community in Eastern Europe* (San Jose: Writer's showcase presented by Writer's digest, 2000), 2: 701-703. He has also published a memoir in English together with Phil Shpilberg, *Here My Home Once Stood: A Holocaust Memoir* (USA: Fourth Generation Publishing, 2008).

Documents and testimonies relevant to the extermination of the Jews of Kalius can be found in the following archives: BA-L (ZStL, 204 AR-Z 447/67); DAKhO; GARF (7021-64-803); IPN; and YVA (file M-33).

Alexander Kruglov
trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. A. Kruglov, *Poteri evreev Ukrainy v 1941-1944gg.* (Kharkov: Tabrut Laam, 2005), p. 204.
2. BA-BL, BDC, SSHO 2432, Organisationsplan der besetzten Ostgebiete nach dem Stand vom 10. März 1942, hg. vom Chef der Ordnungspolizei, Berlin, March 13, 1942.
3. BA-L, ZStL, 204 AR-Z 447/67, vol. 1, pp. 67-85, 159-166.
4. Testimony of M. Rekhtman, in Chapin and Weinstock, *The Road from Letichev*, 2:701-703. Other ghettos in Gebiet Bar were created in December 1941; see DAVINO, 1358-1c-1.
5. Testimony of M. Rekhtman.
6. Report of Lieutenant Petrich, the Gendarmerie-Gebietsführer in Bar, August 27, 1942, regarding "Jewish Aktions," IPN, GKŚZpNP, Zbiór zespołów szczątkowych jednostek SS i policji, sygn. 77, p. 10. See also GARF, 7021-64-803. According to the ChGK report, 540 Jews were murdered in the village in 1942, but the total number of Jewish deaths during the German occupation was 666. In view of the German report, this figure seems too high. Rekhtman, however, gives an even higher number of 850 Jewish victims buried in Kalius.
7. Testimony of M. Rekhtman.

KAMENETS-PODOLSKII

Pre-1941: Kamenets-Podolskii, city, raion and oblast' center, Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Kamenez-Podolsk, Rayon and Gebiet center, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; post-1991: Kamianets-Podil'skyi, raion and oblast' center, Ukraine

Kamenets-Podolskii is located about 100 kilometers (62 miles) southwest of Proskurov. According to the 1939 population census, 13,796 Jews were living in the city (just over 38 percent of the total population). In the villages of the Kamenets-Podolskii raion, there were 1,255 additional Jews. After the German invasion of the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, a small number of Jewish men were conscripted into the Red Army or enlisted voluntarily. Some Jews were able to evacuate to the east, but more than 12,000 Jews remained in Kamenets-Podolskii at the start of the German occupation.

Units of the Hungarian VIII Army Corps occupied the city on July 10, 1941. In July and August 1941, a German military commandant's office ran the city. Initially it was Feldkommandantur 183, under the command of Unterleutnant Josef Meiler. The military administration established a local authority in the city, which was run by a man named Kibets. In addition, an auxiliary police force was established, recruited from local non-Jewish inhabitants.

In September 1941, authority passed to a German civil administration. Kamenets-Podolskii became the administrative center of Gebiet Kamenez-Podolsk. Along with Rayon Kamenez-Podolsk, the other Rayon towns in the Gebiet included Chemerovtsy, Staraja Uschiza, Orinin, and Smotritsch. From September 1941 until August 1942, the Gebietskommissar was Regierungsrat Reindl. He was succeeded by Regierungsrat Rosenhauer. From November 1941 to June 1943, Leutnant Albert Reich served as the Gendarmerie-Gebietsführer. A number of regional Gendarmerie posts, including one in Kamenets-Podolskii, were established, which were subordinated to the Gendarmerie-Gebietsführer. From the end of April 1942 to July 1943, Gendarmeriemeister Fritz Jacob



Jews are marched through the streets of Kamenets-Podolskii to a mass murder site outside the city, August 27, 1941. Gyula Spitz, a member of the Hungarian (Jewish) labor service, clandestinely took this photograph.

USHMM WS #28216, COURTESY OF IVAN SVED

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CAMPS AND GHETTOS, 1933–1945

was the head of the Gendarmerie post in the city.¹ The German Gendarmerie also took over responsibility for the local Ukrainian police, which was renamed the Schutzmannschaft.

Sonderkommando 10b (subordinated to Einsatzgruppe D) was stationed in the city from the end of July to the middle of August 1941. Its commander was SS-Obersturmführer Siegfried Schuchart. Among its assigned tasks was that of preventing the mass deportation of Jews from the territory occupied by the Romanian forces into German-occupied territory.²

In May 1942, a Security Police (Sipo) outpost (Aussendienststelle) was established in Kamenets-Podolskii, which served under the Kommandeur der Sipo und SD (KdS), Dr. Pütz, in Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien based in Równe. SS-Hauptscharführer Andreas Fermer was in charge of the Sipo-Aussendienststelle in Kamenets-Podolskii until February 1943. In July 1942, a Ukrainian Criminal Police unit became part of the outpost; it was headed by a man named Gladun. The Sipo-Aussendienststelle took a leading role in the mass shootings of Jews in Gebiet Kamenez-Podolsk in the summer and fall of 1942, as well as in neighboring Gebiete, such as Dunajewzy and Bar.

In July and August 1941, the occupying forces introduced a series of anti-Jewish measures in the city. A former member of the Ukrainian police recalls a massive anti-Jewish propaganda campaign launched by the Germans that portrayed the Jews as war profiteers.³ The occupational authorities established a Jewish Council (Judenrat), which was responsible for collecting food, furniture, valuables, bed linens, and other items demanded by the Germans. Sometimes the Judenrat also had to supply clothing and shoes for non-Jewish prostitutes who served the Germans.

Jews had to wear distinctive markings: initially white armbands with a Star of David and subsequently yellow stars sewn onto the front and back of their clothes. Those caught without the badge had to pay a fine. Fines were generally levied for the smallest offense, for example, for greeting a German in an inappropriate manner. More often than not, a fine was accompanied by a severe beating.

In late July 1941, Jews from Hungary started to arrive in Kamenets-Podolskii.⁴ These Jews had been deported from Hungary following a decree issued by the Council of Ministers on the removal of all persons of dubious citizenship. The Jewish deportees were only permitted to take with them currency worth 30 pengös, food for three days, and a few personal items. They were deported to the border in freight cars, where they were transferred across the border at the rate of about 1,000 per day. Over the ensuing two weeks, more than 10,000 Hungarian deportees arrived in the area around Kamenets-Podolskii.⁵

Temporarily settled in Kamenets-Podolskii and other places nearby, the sheer number of Hungarian deportees frustrated the German authorities. They repeatedly insisted that the Jews be sent back and the deportations be halted, as they posed a threat to German lines of communication. On August 9, 1941, the military commandant's office posted announcements all across the city ordering all the Jews of Kamenets-

Podolskii to move into a ghetto, which was set up in the center of the city, in the Old Town, within 24 hours. They could take with them only 20 kilograms (44 pounds) of luggage. The non-Jews were forcibly evicted, and the area was fenced off. Ukrainian police guarded the ghetto externally, and a Jewish police force wearing white armbands maintained order inside the ghetto.⁶

All the Jews were registered, both by the Jewish community and by the local Ukrainian administration. Jews were forbidden to leave the ghetto without permission on pain of death, and the same penalty was also decreed for non-Jews who dared to visit the Jewish quarters to trade with the Jews. The Jews were not allowed to buy food at either the marketplace or regular stores, so hunger became widespread, as was black marketeering. Every day the German army conscripted Jews, especially women, for all sorts of work outside the ghetto, and they received food as payment for this work. Witnesses recall a series of pogroms during which ghetto inmates were beaten, tortured, humiliated, hanged, or shot. For instance, a prominent Jewish physician, Dr. Goldentrestler, was hanged from the balcony of his house. For days, the Germans forbade the Jews to remove his body for burial.

At the end of August 1941, SS-Obergruppenführer Friedrich Jeckeln, the Höherer SS- und Polizeiführer (HSSPF) Russland Süd, organized the mass shooting of around 23,600 Jews in Kamenets-Podolskii. He was eager to complete this Aktion before the region was to be transferred to a German civil administration on September 1.⁷ On August 25, 1941, most of the Hungarian Jews in the Kamenets-Podolskii ghetto were instructed to prepare for their transport back to Hungary. At the same time, the local (Soviet) Jews were ordered to pay a "contribution" of 200,000 rubles "to buy their own lives." The Hungarian Jews were ordered to assemble the next morning at the Central Square. From there they were taken to the Cossack barracks near the train station. On August 26 and 27, the German police forces shot these Jews in the vicinity of the Cossack barracks, probably along with other Jews from the ghetto. On August 28, about 7,000 local Jews from Kamenets-Podolskii were assembled in the ghetto. They were escorted on foot to pits prepared on the outskirts of the city and then shot.⁸ Jeckeln's military staff command (Stabskompanie) HSSPF Russland Süd played an active part in these mass shootings, as did men of Police Battalion 320, commanded by Polizeimajor Dall, the local Ukrainian police, and according to some accounts, men of the Hungarian army.

After the mass executions at the end of August 1941, only a fraction of the city's Jewish population remained alive, mostly craftsmen and their families who had been selected out, although they were soon joined by several hundred more Jews, who emerged from hiding places in attics and basements. Information regarding the location of the ghetto (or ghettos) in Kamenets-Podolskii from September 1941 is somewhat contradictory, but it appears that the original ghetto in the Old Town was more or less dissolved. Jewish survivors mention ghettos located in a former military barracks of a drill battalion on the outskirts of the city and also in the former Silicate

Institute (later an Institute for Technology), but they disagree on which came first and the date of the transfers.⁹ It is possible that both locations were used for parts of the ghetto population, either simultaneously or successively. According to another Jewish survivor, who describes being put into the annex of a large red building, which was next to the "Institute for Food Technology," conditions in the ghetto were very overcrowded, with only one bed assigned to each family. Some non-Jews managed to smuggle food into the ghetto to friends and relatives (from mixed marriages), indicating that security was not too strict. Jews who still had money were able to purchase a little food. However, malnutrition and disease, combined with hard physical labor and brutality, meant that every day several bodies were removed on a horse and cart to be buried.¹⁰

The ghetto was exploited as a pool of labor for various tasks, including rebuilding bridges and repairing highways. The Germans also set up workshops inside the ghetto for artisans, such as shoemakers, tailors, and clock makers. All the profits from these workshops went into the budget of the Gebietskommissar. During the summer and early fall of 1942, hundreds of additional Jews were resettled into the Kamenets-Podolskii ghetto from towns and villages in the surrounding area. From Chemerovtsy and Smotrich, all the Jews were marched to Kamenets-Podolskii, and after the skilled workers and their families had been selected out, the remaining 813 Jews were shot on August 11.¹¹ From other towns, such as Staraia Ushitsa, only the craftsmen and their families were transferred to Kamenets-Podolskii, while the remaining Jews were shot close to their homes.¹² According to one survivor who spent a couple of months in the ghetto, after being brought in from Chemerovtsy, in the ghetto people had only grains and rotting horseflesh to eat and gradually were reduced to skeletons.¹³

Some Jewish craftsmen worked for the SD. When the commander of the KdS in Równe, Dr. Pütz, learned of this, in August 1942, he ordered them to be shot along with their families.¹⁴

According to a former Ukrainian policeman, at the end of October 1942, there were up to 4,800 Jews in the ghetto.¹⁵ On October 30, 1942, German security forces conducted another large Aktion against the Jews.¹⁶ On that day, a squad of the Sipo-Aussendienststelle, assisted by the German Gendarmerie and Ukrainian police, reportedly shot more than 4,000 Jews. The mass graves were dug and filled in by Soviet prisoners of war (POWs). Around 500 Jews managed to escape or go into hiding on the night before the Aktion.¹⁷ The majority of these Jews, however, were caught and shot over the ensuing weeks and months. According to postwar investigative sources, the last skilled workers from the Kamenets-Podolskii ghetto, including about 65 workers at the jam factory, were shot in the spring of 1943.¹⁸

SOURCES Relevant publications on the Holocaust in Kamenets-Podolskii include the following: Avraham Rozen, H. 'Sarig, and Y. Bernshtain, eds., *Kaminitz-Podolsk u-sevivatav: Sefer-zikaron li-kebilot Yi'sra'el ba-'arim Kaminitz-Podolsk, Balin, Dumivits,*

Zamibov, Zvanits, Minkovits, Smotrists', Frampol, Kupin, Kiteygorod she-hushmedu bi-yeme ba-Sho'ab 'al-yede ba-Natsim bi-sbenat 701 (Tel Aviv: Irgun yots'e Kamenets-Podolsk u-sevivatah be-Yisrael, 1965), also available in English as *Kaminits-Podolsk and Its Environs: A Memorial Book of the Jewish Communities in the Cities of Kaminits-Podolsk, Balin, Dunitvits, Zamekbov, Zbvanets, Minkovitz, Smotrich, Frampol, Kupin, and Kitaygorod Annihilated by the Nazis in 1941*, trans. Bonnie Schooner Sohn (Bergenfield, NJ: Avotaynu Foundation, 1999); *Podillia u Velikii Vitchyzniani yinyi 1941–1945 gg.: Sbirnyk dokumentiv i materialiv* (Lviv, 1969); R.L. Braham, "The Kamenets Podolsk and Delvidek Massacres. Prelude to the Holocaust in Hungary," *Yad Vashem Studies* 9 (1973): 133–156; K.-M. Mallmann, "Der qualitative Sprung im Vernichtungsprozess. Das Massaker von Kamenez-Podolsk Ende August 1941," *Jahrbuch für Antisemitismusforschung* 10 (2001): 239–264; A. Kruglov, "Evreiskaia aktsiia" v Kamenets-Podol'skom v kontse avgusta 1941 g. v svete nemetskikh dokumentov," in *Golokost i suchasnist': naukovyi chasopis*, no. 1 (Kiev: Ukrain'skyi tsentr vyvchennia Golokostu, 2005), pp. 43–48.

Documentation regarding the persecution and murder of the Jews in Kamenets-Podolskii can be found in the following archives: BA-L (4 AR-Z 223/59); DAKhO (R863-2-42 and 44); GARF (7021-64-799); NARA (N-Docs.); USHMM; VHF; YIU (no. 661); and YVA (M-33).

Alexander Kruglov and Ksenia Krimer
trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. BA-BL, BDC, SShO 2432, Organisationsplan der besetzten Ostgebiete nach dem Stand vom 10. März 1942, hg. vom Chef der Ordnungspolizei, Berlin, March 13, 1942; BA-L, ZStL, 4 AR-Z 223/59 (Abschlussbericht, April 7, 1960); GARF, 7021-64-799.

2. Andrej Angrick, *Besatzungspolitik und Massenmord: Die Einsatzgruppe D in der südlichen Sowjetunion 1941–1943* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2003), p. 202.

3. USHMM, RG-22.002M, reel 2 (GARF, 7021-64-799, pp. 98–116), ChGK report for Kamenets-Podolskii.

4. RGVA, 1275-3-667, report of Feldkommandantur 183, July 31, 1941.

5. N-Doc., PS-197, as cited in Hamburger Institut für Sozialforschung, ed., *Verbrechen der Wehrmacht: Dimensionen des Vernichtungskrieges 1941–1944* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2002), p. 132.

6. GARF, 7021-64-799, pp. 98–116; Rozen et al., *Kaminits-Podolsk and Its Environs*, p. 67.

7. N-Doc., NO-3154, Ereignismeldung UdSSR no. 80, September 11, 1941, gives the figure of 23,600 victims, as does BA-BL, NS 33/22, Fernschreiben des HSSPF Russland Süd, August 30, 1941; N-Doc., PS-197.

8. GARF, 7021-64-799, pp. 117–118.

9. Testimonies of Moisei Schwarzmann and Bina Tenneblat in Boris Zabarko, ed., "Nur wir haben überlebt": *Holocaust in Ukraine—Zeugnisse und Dokumente* (Wittenberg: Ditrach, 2004), pp. 389–390, 403–405.

10. YIU, Témoin no. 661.

11. IPN, GKŚZpNP Zbiór zespołów szczątkowych jednostek SS i policji, sygn. 77, pp. 5, 6, report of the Sipo-Aussendienststelle Kamenets-Podolsk, August 13, 1942.

12. GARF, 7021-64-799, pp. 98–116.

13. Testimony of Semjon Waisblei in Zabarko, "Nur wir haben überlebt," p. 428.

14. IPN, Zbiór zespołów szczątkowych jednostek SS i policji, sygn. 77, p. 5, order of KdS Wolhynien und Podolien, August 18, 1942.

15. GARF, 7021-64-799, statement of Zaloga, former company commander of the Ukrainian police, May 25, 1944.

16. Testimony of Bina Tenneblat in Boris Zabarko, ed., *Zhivimi ostalis' tol'ko my: svidetel'stva i dokumenty* (Kiev, 1999), p. 415.

17. GARF, 7021-64-799, pp. 114–115, 226.

18. BA-L, B 162/5073, pp. 640–641.

KAMIEŃ KOSZYRSKI

Pre-1939: Kamień Koszyrski, town, województwo poleskie, Poland; 1939–1941: Kamen'-Kasbirskii, raion center, Volyn' oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Kamen Kaschirsk, Rayon and Gebiet center; Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; post-1991: Kamin'-Kasbyrs'kyi, raion center, Volyn' oblast', Ukraine

Kamień Koszyrski is located about 48 kilometers (30 miles) north-northeast of Kowel. Due to substantial losses in World War I and during the political instability thereafter, in 1921 the Jewish population was only 617. Just prior to the outbreak of World War II on September 1, 1939, it is estimated that slightly more than 2,000 Jews lived in the town.¹ Under Soviet occupation from September 1939 until June 1941, businesses were nationalized and craftsmen were forced to join state-sponsored cooperatives (*artels*).

German forces first entered Kamień Koszyrski on June 28, 1941, although a permanent German presence was not established for a couple of weeks. From mid-July until the end of August 1941, a German military administration (Ortskommandantur) ran the town. In September 1941, power was handed over to a German civil administration. Kamień Koszyrski became the administrative center of Gebiet Kamen Kaschirsk. In addition to the Rayon Kamen Kaschirsk, the Rayons of Ljubeschow and Morotschnoje were also part of the Gebiet. Kameradschaftsführer Fritz Michaelis served as Gebietskommissar, based in Kamień Koszyrski.² A local Ukrainian auxiliary police force was established in the town, subordinated to the German Gendarmerie post composed of a few German Gendarmes. The head of the Gendarmerie was a man named Berger, and the chief of the Ukrainian police was Jaschek Mazur.³

The Soviet authorities abandoned the town on June 26, 1941. Many farmers from the neighboring villages exploited this opportunity and looted Jewish-owned stores in Kamień Koszyrski. They sparked a pogrom in the town, during which the properties of many Jews were plundered, and 2 Jews were killed.⁴ On August 1, 1941, a squadron of the 2nd SS-Cavalry Regiment arrived in the town from Ratno. One day later they arrested and shot 8 male Jews. On August 22, 1941, a detachment of Security Police subordinated to Einsatzgruppe C

arrested all Jewish men aged between 16 and 60. The following day, they shot about 80 of the Jewish prisoners in a forest 5 kilometers (3 miles) west of the town. Among the victims was also the first head of the Jewish Council (Judenrat), Shmuel Verble.⁵

In the summer and fall of 1941, the German authorities imposed a series of anti-Jewish measures, including the wearing of distinctive armbands bearing the Star of David (later it was changed to a yellow patch on their clothes) and the imposition of physically demanding forced labor. Jews also were forbidden to leave their place of residence. Within Kamień Koszyrski, certain streets were cleared of their Jewish population at this time, the Jewish residents being forced to move in with other Jews, creating a form of “open ghetto” by the fall of 1941.⁶ Jews also faced systematic plunder and beatings from the Ukrainian auxiliary police. The Jewish Council was obliged to transmit to the Jewish population all the German regulations and demands that were imposed on them and also was held personally responsible for their fulfillment.

Among the new regulations was the requirement for Jews to surrender all valuable items and pay “contributions,” which were collected by the Jewish Council and given to the Gebietskommissar. Gold, furs, and shoes were among the items surrendered. It was also forbidden for Jews to possess a number of “luxury” goods: for example, in early 1942 one Jew was publicly hanged after some cooking oil was found in his possession.

On the orders of the Gebietskommissar, an enclosed ghetto was established in Kamień Koszyrski, probably in late March or early April 1942. The civil administration also ordered some Jews from nearby villages, including from Pniewno, to be transferred to Kamień Koszyrski.⁷ The ghetto area consisted of one side of Dolnik Street, extending to cover half of the market square and half of Kowel Street. By June 1942, it was surrounded by a 2-meter-high (6.6-foot-high) fence strung with barbed wire on top. The single entrance to the ghetto was guarded day and night by members of the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police.⁸ Altogether, some 2,300 Jews resided in the ghetto area. Within the ghetto there was no security for the Jews. In the summer of 1942, the Gebietskommissar and other German officials occasionally entered the ghetto and shot Jews arbitrarily, on the street or in their homes.

On August 10, 1942, the German Security Police from Brześć, with the assistance of the local German Gendarmerie and the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police, carried out the first mass shooting Aktion against the Jews of the ghetto. The police forces encircled the ghetto, and the Jews were ordered to gather at the gate on the false pretext that the entire area had to be disinfected. A selection was then conducted by the Gebietskommissar, assisted by the Judenrat, on the basis of permits issued to specialist workers. The majority of the Jews were made to strip naked and murdered in the nearby Jewish cemetery, where German forces shot them into mass graves that had been prepared in advance. Some 50 Jewish families from the village of Wielka Hłusza were among the victims, and about 130 Gypsies also were killed during the Aktion.⁹ Some Jews who hid within the ghetto were dragged out and shot by

the local Ukrainian police over the ensuing days. In mid-August, the Security Police reported the “special treatment” of 3,399 Jews in Gebiet Kamen Kaschirsk (of whom at least 1,700 had been shot within the town itself).¹⁰

About 600 individuals selected as useful workers, such as carpenters, were left alive in Kamień Koszyrski. After three days they were moved back into the ghetto, which was reduced in size. On November 2, 1942, about 400 Jews escaped from the ghetto. The Jews who remained behind were shot at the Jewish cemetery shortly afterwards.¹¹ Most of the Jews who managed to escape soon died: some perished in the woods of starvation or disease, or even at the hands of various partisan groups, while others were turned in by local farmers, whom the Germans rewarded with salt or gasoline. The German police shot these unfortunates shortly after their capture. Only about 100 of those who fled found partisan units willing to accept them, enabling many of these people to survive.¹²

SOURCES Information about the Jewish community of Kamień Koszyrski and its fate during the Holocaust can be found in the following publications: A.A. Stein et al., eds., *Sefer ha-zikaron le-kebilat Kamien Koszyrski ve-ha-seviva* (Tel Aviv: Former Residents of Kamin Koshirsky and Surroundings in Israel, 1965); Shmuel Spector, ed., *Pinkas ha-kebilot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 5, *Volhynia and Polesie* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1990), pp. 153–157; A. Biber, “The Township of Kamin-Koczirsk and Its Surroundings,” in Yehuda Merin and Ben Zion Kaminsky, eds., *Yalkut Volyn* (Givatayim: World Union of Wolynian Jews in Israel, 1998), pp. 55–60.

Documents and testimonies regarding the annihilation of the Jews of Kamień Koszyrski can be found in the following archives: AŻIH (301/530); BA-L (B 162/6338); DAVO; GARF (7021-55-11); IPN; USHMM; and YVA (e.g., M-1/E/656, 1380, 2200, 2203, and 2283).

Alexander Kruglov and Martin Dean
trans. Katrin Reichelt

NOTES

1. Biber, “The Township of Kamin-Koczirsk,” p. 34.
2. BA-BL, BDC, SSHO 2432, Organisationsplan der besetzten Ostgebiete nach dem Stand vom 10. März 1942, hg. vom Chef der Ordnungspolizei, Berlin, March 13, 1942. Michaelis died in March 1961 in Salzgitter-Lebenstedt before he could be brought to trial.
3. BA-L, B 162/6338, p. 35; Stein et al., *Sefer ha-zikaron le-kebilat Kamien Koszyrski*, p. 759.
4. Biber, “The Township of Kamin-Koczirsk.”
5. Ibid.
6. BA-L, B 162/6338, pp. 71, 340, 343.
7. Ibid., B 162/6338, pp. 21, 32; Stein et al., *Sefer ha-zikaron le-kebilat Kamien Koszyrski*, p. 756.
8. BA-L, B 162/6338, p. 32; Biber, “The Township of Kamin-Koczirsk.”
9. GARF, 7021-55-11, pp. 27, 32, 35 (reverse side); BA-L, B 162/6338, pp. 8, 34, 44; Stein et al., *Sefer ha-zikaron le-kebilat Kamien Koszyrski*, pp. 758–759. The Jewish population of Wielka Hłusza was 224 in 1921.

1378 VOLHYNIA AND PODOLIA REGION

10. IPN, Zbiór Zespołów Szczatkowych Jednostek SS i Policji—Sygnatura 77. The documents appear to be Polish transcripts of German originals, which may have been partially destroyed or even smuggled out by the Polish Underground. Efforts to trace the original documents have proved unsuccessful. This figure presumably also includes the Jews murdered in Lubieszów at this time and possibly those of Moroczna and other places.

11. Biber, “The Township of Kamin-Koczirsk”; GARF, 7021-55-11, p. 35, indicates that 815 Jews were shot on this occasion, dating it (erroneously) at the end of November.

12. Biber, “The Township of Kamin-Koczirsk”; BA-L, B 162/6338, p. 45.

KATRYNBURG

Pre-1939: Katrynburg, village, województwo wołyńskie, Poland; 1939–1941: Katerinovka, Ternopol oblast’, Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Katerburg, Rayon center, Gebiet Kremenez, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; post-1991: Katerynivka, Ternopil’ oblast’, Ukraine

Katrynburg is located 75 kilometers (47 miles) southwest of Równe. According to the 1921 census, the population of Katrynburg included 384 Jews. By mid-1941, there were probably some 450 Jews in the village. After the German invasion of the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, a number of Jewish men were drafted into or volunteered to join the Red Army. Another small group of Jews succeeded in evacuating to the east. Some 350 to 400 Jews remained in the village when German army units occupied it on July 3, 1941.

In July and August, a German military administration governed the town. Then, in September 1941, authority was transferred to a German civil administration. Katrynburg became part of Gebiet Kremenez in Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien. The Gebietskommissar was Regierungsrat Müller.¹ The German authorities appointed a village elder and a squad of Ukrainian policemen to assist them in running the village.

In the summer and fall of 1941, the German occupiers introduced a series of anti-Jewish measures in Katrynburg. They made Jews wear the Star of David; they compelled them to perform forced labor; and they forbade them to leave the town limits. A Judenrat was formed, which was obliged to collect “contributions” for the Germans and organize the Jewish forced labor squads. Among the labor tasks performed was the felling of trees. The Jews were escorted to work by the Ukrainian police, who frequently robbed and beat them.

In the early spring of 1942, probably in March, the Germans created a Jewish residential district, an “open ghetto,” in Katrynburg for the roughly 400 Jewish inhabitants of the Rayon.² It existed for only about four months.

On August 10, 1942,³ a detachment of the Security Police and SD, assisted by the Gendarmerie and Ukrainian police,

including members of Schutzmannschafts-Battalion 102 based in Krzemieniec,⁴ carried out an Aktion in the village, during which 312 Jews were shot and killed: 114 men, 112 women, and 86 children.⁵ A few Jews managed to hide from their persecutors and escaped annihilation.

The Red Army drove the German occupying forces from the town on February 5, 1944. Only about 30 Jews from the Katrynburg ghetto survived the German occupation.

SOURCES Relevant publications on the fate of the Jewish community of Katrynburg during the Holocaust include the following: Shmuel Spector, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehillot. Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities: Poland*, vol. 5, *Volhynia and Polesie* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1990), pp. 175–176; and A. Kruglov, *Katastrofa ukraińskiego ewreistwa 1941–1944 gg.: Entsiklopedicheskkii spravocchnik* (Kharkov: “Karavella,” 2001), p. 110.

Information concerning the extermination of the Jews of Katrynburg can be found in the following archives: BA-L (ZStL, II 204 AR-Z 163/67); DATO; GARF (7021-75-2 and 3); IPN; and YVA.

Alexander Kruglov and Martin Dean
trans. Ester-Basya Vaisman

NOTES

1. BA-BL, BDC, SSHO 2432, Übersicht über die besetzten Ostgebiete nach dem Stand vom 10. März 1942, hg. vom Chef der Ordnungspolizei, Berlin, March 13, 1942.

2. GARF, 7021-75-3, p. 3, as cited in *Handbuch der Lager, Gefängnisse und Ghettos auf dem besetzten Territorium der Ukraine (1941–1944)* (Kiev: Staatskomitee der Archiven der Ukraine, 2000), p. 159. According to survivor testimony from the neighboring Rayon of Schumsk (AZIH 301/2467), the ghetto there was established in March 1942.

3. GARF, 7021-75-2, p. 2.

4. BA-L, ZStL, II 204 AR-Z 163/67, vol. 2, p. 469.

5. IPN, Zbiór zespołów szczatkowych jednostek SS i policji, sygn. 77, p. 3, transcription of a Security Police report from SS-Untersturmführer Selm of the Rowno SD, August 15, 1942, concerning the “special treatment of the Jews.”

KISIELIN

Pre-1939: Kisielin, village, województwo wołyńskie, Poland; 1939–1941: Kiselin, Oziutichi raion, Volyn’ oblast’, Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Rayon Osjutitschi, Gebiet Gorochow, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; post-1991: Lokachi raion, Volyn’ oblast’, Ukraine

Kisielin is located about 32 kilometers (20 miles) west-northwest of Łuck and 107 kilometers (66.5 miles) west-northwest of Równe. In 1921, the Jewish population of the village was 94.

At the end of June 1941, soldiers of the German 6th Army occupied the village. From July to August 1941, a German military commandant’s office (Ortskommandantur) administered the village. The Ortskommandantur appointed a village elder (starosta) and formed a Ukrainian police unit from among the local population.

After September 1941, power was in the hands of a German civil administration. Kisielin was located in Rayon Osjutitschi within Gebiet Gorochow. SA-Standartenführer Härter was named Gebietskommissar and thereby placed in charge of the civil administration.¹

In the summer and fall of 1941, the German authorities introduced a series of anti-Jewish measures in Kisielin. Jews were required initially to wear armbands bearing the Star of David, later replaced by yellow patches to be worn on the chest and back. They were required to perform forced labor, they were prohibited from leaving the boundaries of the village, and they suffered robberies and assaults at the hands of the Ukrainian police.

On August 19, 1941, German security forces conducted the first Aktion in Kisielin. On the outskirts of the village, close to a desolate Polish (Roman Catholic) church, two Ukrainians who were considered Soviet activists were shot along with 48 Jews.²

On November 1, 1941, a ghetto was created in the village, which was surrounded with barbed wire. The authorities also brought in Jews from the villages of Oziutichi, Kholopichi, Tverdnyia, and Iukhimova.³

In August 1942, the Germans made preparations for the liquidation of the ghetto in Kisielin. Three days before the mass shooting, German and Ukrainian police surrounded the ghetto. Around this time local inhabitants were requisitioned to dig a large pit about 10 meters by 10 meters (11 yards by 11 yards), which took them two days. Some Jews managed to escape from the ghetto before the guard was increased, and others went into hiding inside the ghetto. According to the recollections of local non-Jewish inhabitants, the rabbi had announced to the Jews “our hour has come, we are being taken to be killed.”⁴

On August 12, 1942,⁵ the Germans liquidated the ghetto. The Jews were transported to the killing site on trucks and were forced to undress and then go down into the pits. The entire population of the ghetto, about 500 or 550 Jews, was shot.⁶ About 20 people were able to escape on the eve of the Aktion, but the police soon caught them, and they were also shot.⁷

SOURCES Information on the persecution and murder of the Jews of Kisielin during the Holocaust can be found in the following publications: V. Nakonechnyi, *Kholokost na Volyni: Zbertvy i pamiat'* (Lutsk, 2003), pp. 29–30.

Documentation regarding the persecution and murder of the Kisielin Jews can be found in the following archives: DAVO; GARF (7021-55-10); VHF (# 1973); YIU (nos. 450, 451); and YVA (M-1/E/1622).

Alexander Kruglov
trans. Steven Seegel

NOTES

1. BA-BL, BDC, SSSH 2432, Organisationsplan der besetzten Ostgebiete nach dem Stand vom 10. März 1942, hg. vom Chef der Ordnungspolizei, Berlin, March 13, 1942.

2. Nakonechnyi, *Kholokost na Volyni*, pp. 29–30.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 29.

4. YIU, Témoins nos. 449 and 450, Agnia Chouba (born 1926) and Serguei Romaniouk (born 1930), March 30, 2007.

5. Nakonechnyi, *Kholokost na Volyni*, p. 29. According to another account, the ghetto was liquidated on August 15–16, 1942. See GARF, 7021-55-10, p. 15.

6. GARF, 7021-55-10, p. 15.

7. Nakonechnyi, *Kholokost na Volyni*, p. 29.

KIWERCE

Pre-1939: Kiwerce, town, województwo wołyńskie, Poland; 1939–1941: Kivertsy, raion center, Volyn' oblast', Ukrainian SSR; 1941–1944: Kiwerzy, Rayon center, Gebiet Luzk, Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien; post-1991: Kivertsi, Volyn' oblast', Ukraine

Kiwerce is located 62 kilometers (38.5 miles) west-northwest of Równe. In 1921, the Jewish population had declined to only 175, owing to the effects of World War I. By mid-1941, the Jewish population was probably around 400, including a number of Jewish refugees who arrived in the fall of 1939 from western and central Poland.

Units of the German 6th Army occupied Kiwerce on July 2, 1941. On the first day of the occupation, the Germans shot a number of Jews and Poles who had held key positions in the local administration under the Soviets.¹ During July and August, a German military administration took charge of the town. In September, authority was transferred to a German civil administration. As a part of Gebiet Luzk, under Gebietskommissar Lindner,² the town lay within the Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien. German officials set up a local Ukrainian administration and recruited an auxiliary police force from the local inhabitants. The Ukrainian police was subordinated to the German Gendarmerie from September 1941.

During the summer and fall of 1941, the German occupation authorities instituted a series of anti-Jewish measures in Kiwerce. A Jewish Council (Judenrat) was established, which was headed by two Jews named Jukelsohn and Lesznar. The council was required to pass on all the orders issued by the German authorities and was made personally responsible for their prompt implementation. Among the German directives was an order for Jews to wear armbands bearing the Star of David; this was replaced in September 1941 by the compulsory wearing of a yellow circular patch on their clothes. Jews were forbidden to trade with or have other contacts with the local population. They also had to turn over all of their valuables to the German authorities and to carry out physically demanding work of all kinds for little or no payment. The Jews were forbidden to leave the borders of the area where they resided and were registered. The Ukrainian auxiliary police repeatedly looted Jewish property and beat the Jews.