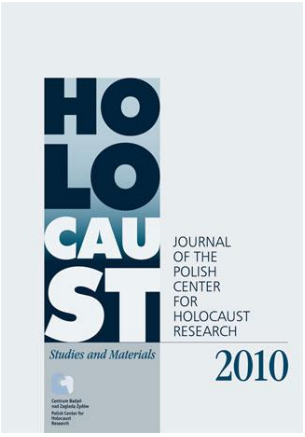


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For an overcoat, a suitcase and an apple. Crimes against Jews hiding in the villages of Falkowa, Wieniec and Janowice in ...

Dagmara Swałtek
PhD candidate at Institute of American Studies and Polish Dispora, Jagiellonian University in Krakow

redakcja@holocaustresearch.pl

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Dagmara Swałtek

For a Coat, a Suitcase, and an Apple. Crimes Against Jews Hiding in the Villages of Falkowa, Wieniec and Janowice in the Light of Post-War Trial Documents

The issue of hostile behavior of Poles towards Jews during the occupation often draws extreme emotions and hinders a matter-of-fact discussion. Additionally, as for the research of the attitudes of the Polish country dwellers, it is not an easy matter to find reliable sources of information which would reveal motives of action, the perception of reality and interpersonal relationships in the Polish provinces from 1939 to 1945. Opinions regarding the behavior of Polish peasants towards hiding Jews are based on memoirs, recollections, and testimonies of the Survivors and, on the Polish side, mainly of the municipal intelligentsia. Another type of sources includes reports and testimonies concerning the observations and the actions of people from Polish Underground State structures, as well as those engaged in organized help to Jews, and underground press.[1] Many pieces of information on reprehensible behavior of specific members of Polish society are presented in another category of sources, namely court documents of the occupation period, including a collection of denunciations.[2]

Andrzej Żbikowski indicated that there was a need to investigate the elements of the occupation-time reality in the light of diverse discourses, which commented on

[1] The issue of the reaction of the Polish Underground State to the ongoing Holocaust was analyzed by Dariusz Libionka. He points out, among others, the fact that one of the main tasks of the Council to Help Jews was to combat crimes against Jews. Deciding who was guilty in such cases was in the hands of the underground special civil courts established in 1942. The first sentence against a blackmailer was carried out in Cracow in July 1943. "ZWZ--AK i delegatura rządu RP wobec eksterminacji Żydów polskich," in *Polacy i Żydzi pod okupacją niemiecką 1939–1945, Studia i materiały*, ed. A. Żbikowski (Warsaw, 2006), 121–123.

[2] The best researched documents describing negative attitudes of the Polish society towards the Jews concern Warsaw. Cf. B. Engelking, *"Szanowny panie Gistapo," Donosy do władz niemieckich w Warszawie i okolicach w latach 1940–1941* (Warsaw, 2003) and J. Grabowski, *"Ja tego Żyda znam!" Szantażowanie Żydów w Warszawie, 1939–1943* (Warsaw, 2004).

specific events and social phenomena as they arose or immediately after the war[3]. In this context, valuable historical sources comprise the documents of the post-war trials of people suspected of collaboration with the Nazi authorities and tried on the grounds of the so-called "August Decree", i.e. the decree of the Polish Committee of National Liberation of 31 August 1944. An analysis of such documents concerning the cases from the Świętokrzyskie region was conducted by Alina Skibińska and Jakub Petelewicz. The outcome of their research was published in the article "Udział Polaków w zbrodniach na Żydach na prowincji regionu świętokrzyskiego."[4] The text contains a detailed discussion on the "August Decree" and the specifics of court trials conducted on its basis.[5] In their article, among other issues, the authors classified crimes against Jews committed by Poles. Many observations which were made on the grounds of these documents and referred to the Świętokrzyskie region, concerning the mechanisms of denunciation, robbery or murders of Jews, might also generally pertain to other parts of occupied Poland.

The purpose of this article is to analyze three specific events from the occupation period, which I tried to reconstruct on the basis of trial files, in which the accused were tried on the grounds of the "August Decree" before the Court of Appeals in Cracow (*Sąd Apelacyjny w Krakowie,* SAKr). The selection of the three specific cases was arbitrary. As a matter of fact, I was driven only by one criterion: in all of the three discussed cases a whole chain of events leading to a crime commenced when a hiding Jew or Jewess, threatened with death by the Nazis, turned to the dwellers of a village of the Cracow district to obtain at least temporary shelter.[6] As for the geographical location of the places, the two villages in which the events took place, i.e. Wieniec

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[3] A. Żbikowski, "Antysemityzm, szmalcownictwo, współpraca z Niemcami a stosunki polsko-żydowskie pod okupacją niemiecką," in *Polacy i Żydzi pod okupacją niemiecką*, 434–437.

[4] A. Skibińska and J. Petelewicz, "Udział Polaków w zbrodniach na Żydach na prowincji regionu świętokrzyskiego," *Zagłada Żydów. Studia i Materiały* 1 (2005): 114–147.

[5] War crimes, crimes of collaboration, crimes against humanity (i.e. participation in criminal organizations) committed from 1 September 1939 to 9 May 1945 were punished on the grounds of the discussed decree. With respect to those subject to martial courts, Article 185 of the Criminal Code of the Polish Army of 12 September 1944 applied, while all other crimes committed in this period were punishable according to the Criminal Code of 1932, which was still in force then. *Ibidem*, 118.

[6] Małgorzata Melchior writes about strategies of survival on the "Aryan side" of the Warsaw District. In her studies the author used mostly the testimonies and memoirs of Jews who survived the Holocaust. According to the typology proposed by the author, after Emanuel Ringelblum, three strategies of survival may be distinguished. First, "under the surface", consisted in hiding secretly in shelters or bunkers, without informing the community living in a given neighborhood, with the exception of the inner circle of single people. The second strategy, "near the surface," combined hiding in shelters with leaving them temporarily. This method was adopted by the people described in this article. The last strategy, "on the surface," was to acquire "Aryan identity," i.e. to function within Polish society. "Uciekinierzy z gett po 'aryjskiej stronie' na prowincji dystryktu warszawskiego – sposoby przetrwania," in *Prowincja Noc: Życie i Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim* (Warsaw, 2007), 370.

in the Gdów commune and Janowice in the Pleśna commune, are located within the boundaries of the triangle Cracow – Tarnów – Nowy Sącz. The third village, Falkowa in the Ciężkowice commune, is located a few kilometers west of the line Tarnów – Nowy Sącz.

In the 2nd Division of the State Archive in Cracow (*Archiwum Państwowe w Krakowie, Oddział II*), there is a Fond of the Court of Appeals with about 240 proceedings instituted on the grounds of the "August Decree", whose files were established during 1949–1950. The fond is incomplete; some of the files are missing or have not been preserved in full.[7] There is no thorough inventory of the fond, but based on the reading of the documents and the existing delivery-acceptance list I calculated that in the collection there are 97 cases in which the main thread concerned crimes against Jews. Most of them concern hiding Jews (74), organizing manhunts (8) or murders (10), and other forms of persecution (5). Compare this with the following: there were 28 crimes of denouncing partisans and other underground activists and 6 of them concerned turning in Soviet soldiers. In the remaining cases, we deal with charges of denunciation, signing the *Volksliste*, collaboration with the occupier, such as becoming a blue policeman, and harassing prisoners in labor camps. In many cases, crimes committed against Jews were one of several elements of collaboration with the occupier. I did not include such cases in the above mentioned category.

From trial files we can learn relatively little about the victims. In some of the cases even the name of the denounced person is missing. The witnesses and suspects refer to the victims simply as a "Jew" or sometimes as a "kike". As for the cases that I selected, only in the documents in file K 239/49 is there plenty of information about the victims, because those who testified were their immediate relatives. Among the several dozen cases I browsed, such a great deal of information about the victims was the exception. In all the files there is relatively much data on the suspects and the witnesses. Thanks to the minutes of the hearings, we may learn their age, place of birth and residence, nationality, family status, education, occupation, and property status, and also find out about other punishments adjudged by the judiciary. In the testimonies we can find information about everyday life and social relationships during the occupation, as well as, generally, about the interpersonal relations. Obviously, testimonies are not involuntary statements and one should bear in mind that those interrogated surely did not feel comfortable, and we might assume that they tried to testify to present themselves in a favorable light. It transpires from some of the minutes that the testifiers, in the course of several years, gained expertise in the discourse which was dominant in the People's Republic of Poland at the turn of the 1940s and the 1950s.

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[7] The existing files of the cases examined before the Provincial Court (*Sąd Wojewódzki*) since 1951 have been kept in Division IV of the archive. The documents of the earlier cases, investigated into by the Special Court (*Sąd Specjalny*) are in the Polish Institute of National Remembrance (*Instytut Pamięci Narodowej*, IPN). The files of the District Court are kept in both of the above archives.

Files of the Criminal Case of Melchior Łatka and Others[8] and Files of the Criminal Case of Jan Bulanda[9]

The first case which I would like to discuss concerns the denunciation of two people, hiding in the small village of Falkowa, to the German authorities, i.e. Mojżesz Baldinger and an unknown Jewess, who came from the nearby town of Jedlicze, perhaps under the surname Kant.[10] The investigation was launched when Anna Kurzawa, a resident of Falkowa, reported to the Security Office (*Urząd Bezpieczeństwa*, UB) in Nowy Sącz on 26 February 1945. During the occupation, Kurzawa hid the above mentioned Jewess. The case's procedural history is fairly complicated: two separate investigations against the accused were launched before the District Court in Tarnów in 1947 (VI K 450/46 and VI K 798/47).

According to the minutes of the interrogations of the witnesses and suspects, Mojżesz Baldinger, a Jew from the village of Brzana, was sheltered in 1942 by a host, Jan Gad, living in the village of Lipnica Wielka, about 20 kilometers north of Nowy Sącz. In October, Baldinger changed his place of residence and moved to the house of the Fryda family in the village of Falkowa, near Lipnica Wielka. Roughly at the same time, a Jewess from Jedlicze found shelter with the Kurzawa family. She hid there for five weeks. Given that they stayed for so long in the same building, it is surprising that the hosts were not familiar with her name and surname. One might assume that the contacts between the woman hiding in the attic and the hosts were highly limited.

Meanwhile, in November 1942, a group of men living in the village of Lipnica Wielka, set off "for the Jews," as one of the accused put it.[11] Kazimierz Bulanda

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[8] Archiwum Państwowe w Krakowie [State Archive in Cracow] (later APKr), SAKr, 978, K 225/49.

[9] APKr, SAKr, 964, K 114/49.

[10] The surname "Kant" was mentioned by one of the testifying people. Circumstantial evidence indicates that the Jewess from Jedlicze might have been Gisela (Gitla) Kant, née Zahler. According to Rena Kant, Gisela Zahler's daughter, her mother lived with her family, among others, with a family in Jedlicze and disappeared precisely in 1942. She was said to have gone to the country and hidden in Bobowa, but she might have landed in nearby Falkowa. Incidentally, Rena Kant, who was a child during the occupation, survived the Holocaust hidden in the house of an elderly couple, who took care of her for three years. She was treated properly, receiving food and clothing. She left her benefactors as late as 1945. The reason for her parting with the hosts reflects very well the relations in the country when the Germans were fleeing. This is how Rena Kant justifies her departure from the family: "When the Soviets arrived, I had to go to the village, because I did not want to hide anymore, and if anyone saw me it would be bad, as they murdered those who kept Jews. A Pole was murdered for this not far from us. They took me in as a shepherd girl. I did not tell anyone that I was a Jewess, I was afraid. I pastured cows for 4 months, and when it was chilly and I caught a cold, I returned to my hosts. We cheated those who asked who I was." (Archiwum Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego [Archive of the Jewish Historical Institute, later: AŻIH, Relacje, 301/1373, Testimony of Rena Kant).

[11] APKr, SAKr, 964, K 114/49, p. 438, Zeznanie Józefa Wrony z dnia 12 XII 1948 r.

and Wacław Noworol, the ringleaders of the action, visited all the houses in Lipnica, encouraging the men, mainly members of the fire brigade, to participate in the expedition. According to the testimonies of the accused, not all of the participants were willing to go "for the Jews." Those unwilling were convinced by Kazimierz Bulanda by the following words, among others: "he is a Nazi, he gives an order and you have to go with them; if you don't – he will report it to the Gestapo."[12] The group went to the house of Jan Gad, who was said to be hiding in his household a Jew from the nearby village of Brzana. "In the house, K. Bulanda, threatening Gad under the influence of the Gestapo and shouting at him, forced him to turn in the Jew, to make haste, because if he did not speak, he would be immediately arrested and transported to the Gestapo by Bulanda himself, whereas Gad explained to him that there was no Jew in his house, that there had been one a few days before, but he went towards Falkowa."[13]

Who were Kazimierz Bulanda and Wacław Noworol to be able to organize their neighbors to capture hiding Jews? They were both members of the local fire brigade. Kazimierz Bulanda was the chief of the local militia, whose aim was to maintain order and, if need be, prevent robberies. Wacław Noworol was believed to be an informer and his neighbors mistrusted him.[14] One of many offences attributed to him was the denunciation of a local priest to the German authorities. As a consequence, the priest was sent to a camp and died there. Almost all the men who took part in the events in Falkowa claim in their trial testimonies that they acted under compulsion, mostly for fear of Noworol. Today, we cannot establish what their actual motivation was, but, most certainly, laying the entire blame on a man who was already dead at that time was convenient for them.[15] The men accused of participation in the capture of Mojżesz Baldinger and the unknown Jewess were born in Lipnica Wielka and during the occupation they lived there. They were farmers, some of them had families, and all of them were young or middle-aged, without a pre-war criminal record.[16] I believe that one may venture the statement that they were thought to be decent people and perhaps even good neighbors. Only Wacław Noworol came

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[12] Ibidem.

[13] Ibidem.

[14] Leon Janis testified in the minutes of 14 February 1949: "I would like to add that Wacław Noworol was in the service of the Germans, which was later proved by his liquidation by an underground organization and this was why everyone feared him."

[15] For example, the wife of one of the defendants testified before the District Court in Tarnów on 18 January 1949 as follows: "My husband did not join this roundup in Falkowa out of goodwill, but he was forced and intimidated by Noworol, who threatened that he would denounce him to the Gestapo if he refused to take part in the roundup. When the accused returned, he said that a Jew and a Jewess had been caught. The testifying woman and her husband, defendant Żarowski, 3–4 times put up for the night 2 Jewesses and 1 Jew. . . . They gave shelter to the Jews selflessly." APKr, SAKr, 978, K 225/40, Protokół rozprawy głównej, p. 657.

[16] Except one of the defendants, who was sentenced to four years of imprisonment for killing a man in a fight by a non-binding court's judgment. Zeznanie Jana Bulandy z dnia 9 II 1949 r., p. 496.

from another village. He was sentenced to death for denouncing Jews in hiding and the hosts who provided them with shelter by the Special Civil Court (*Cywilny Sąd Specjalny*) in Cracow in 1943.[17]

When the group learnt that the hiding Jew was not in Lipnica Wielka anymore, they decided to go to Falkowa to Kurzawa's farm, where the refugee was to have gone. When they arrived there, Bulanda and Noworol told the rest to surround the households in which they suspected the Jews might have been hiding. They searched the houses where the Kurzawa and Fryda families lived.[18] First, they went to the household where the Jewess from Jedlicze was hiding. Although threatened, Jan Kurzawa did not want to reveal the woman's hideout. What is interesting, some of the men who came to Lipnica Wielka wore firemen's uniforms. I suppose that this was not accidental and that they thus tried to act as representatives of the authorities. The assailants got down to searching the house. They found the Jewess in the attic, hiding in straw, and led her out. Those gathered watched over her so that she could not escape. Some of the people remained outside, while the rest went to the Fryda house, where Mojżesz Baldinger was hiding. Józef Wrona described what happened in the following manner:

> . . . K. Bulanda saw that the straw on Fryda's house was moving and he started to bang on the door of the house, but they would not let him in; then he rushed to the window and smashed it all with an ax which he was holding in his hand; he went inside the house, opened the door, letting in Noworol, Głąb and Stanisław Bulanda. K. Bulanda shouted to join him in the attic with a light. I saw an unknown woman in the attic being terribly beaten by K. Bulanda with an ax and by Noworol with a stick, and then I recognized her, she was not a Jewess but the hostess of the house, Maria Fryda, and I told the men not to beat her, as she was the hostess, and they stopped beating the above mentioned woman, and then led her down to the apartment. K. Bulanda questioned her where the Jew was, to which she replied that there was no Jew.[19]

The attitude of Maria Fryda is remarkable – despite the beating and the threats she did not reveal Mojżesz Baldinger's hideout. On the other hand, it is difficult not to notice the distinction that the witness made when describing the reaction to the beating of a woman. His words show that drastic physical violence against the hostess is something unacceptable and reprehensible, whereas beating a woman who was initially considered a Jewess was something obvious. The witness Józef Wrona further testified as follows:

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[17] The judgment was published in an underground paper, *Rzeczpospolita Polska* 18 (1943): 3, quoted in: D. Libionka, op. cit., 123.

[18] The testimonies differ: according to some, only Noworol and Kurzawa entered the houses, while according to others, more people searched the houses.

[19] APKr, SAKr, 964, K 114/49, Przesłuchanie Józefa Wrony na posterunku w Korzennej, 30 IX 1948 r., p. 439.

> When about an hour had passed, K. Bulanda fetched a Jew of a surname unknown to me to the house of Ignacy Fryda, beaten and covered in blood. Noworol and the rest of the men entered the house after Bulanda. In the house, K. Bulanda demanded 1,000 zlotys to free the Jew from Fryda's wife, but she promised him only 500 zlotys, which Bulanda did not accept; he took the Jew and the Kurzawa Jewess with him and headed for Lipnica Wielka, Korzenna commune, with Leon Janis, who escorted the Jewess, while Noworol led the Jew.[20]

According to other testimonies, Mojżesz Baldinger tried to escape north, but he was captured. It is difficult to establish why the bribe was not accepted. Perhaps Noworol and Bulanda concluded that things had gone too far and they could not withdraw, especially as there were so many witnesses present. Or was the offered sum too small? Or perhaps they expected a higher reward for the delivery of the captured? Or maybe they were driven only by profit motives? Maria Fryda treated Noworol with vodka and tried to get him drunk so that he left the captured people in peace. Also, a certain Michalikowa, a hostess from Lipnica Wielka, which the procession passed later, offered vodka to the men, which according to Leon Janis was to get the guards drunk and have the prisoners released. Both attempts failed.[21]

Mojżesz Baldinger and the Jewess from Jedlicze were taken to the police station in Korzenna, from where they went to Nowy Sącz, and were shot there. The witnesses did not provide detailed information about their death. We know more about Jan Kurzawa, who hid the Jewess from Jedlicze. According to his sister, Maria Kurzawa, "on 12 December 1943 [it should be 1942 – D.S.], a Gestapo officer, two Polish policemen and Franciszek Głąb came and took my brother away. He was imprisoned in Nowy Sącz, then in the general [penitentiary] in Tarnów, and later he was, allegedly, deported to Auschwitz. On 15 May 1943, we received information about the death of my brother, Jan, of a heart attack in the Auschwitz camp."[22] The host who hid Mojżesz Baldinger, Fryda, was also deported to Auschwitz, where he died.

Those responsible for the death of the two Jews and for sending the two hosts who hid them to the camp were rewarded by the German authorities. During the interrogation on 15 March 1945, Franciszek Głąb testified that a few days after the events in Falkowa they "were summoned by the Gestapo to Nowy Sącz, and as a bonus for our eager work, each of us received two 'Jewish' coats." It is possible that these were the clothes left after the liquidation of the ghetto in Nowy Sącz. Most of the accused explained that the coats were a reward for their work in the fire brigade.

Those who participated most eagerly in capturing the hiding Jews afterwards met with the aversion of the rural society. Perhaps it is not too far-fetched to say that

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[20] Ibidem.

[21] APKr, SAKr, 964, K 114/49, Zeznanie Leona Janisa, 14 II 1949 r., p. 472.

[22] Ibidem, Zeznanie Marii Kurzawy, 29 X 1948 r., p. 433, full text of the testimony is printed in the appendix.

their main offence was not so much handing over the two Jews to the authorities as causing the death of Poles and Catholics living in the neighborhood.[23] Wacław Noworol was killed by representatives of the Polish Underground State. After the occupation, most people involved in handing over the Jews from Falkowa to the authorities still lived in Lipnica Wielka or the nearby towns. Unfortunately, case files K 114/49 have not been preserved in full. Among other documents, the pronouncement of the judgment is missing, and consequently it remains unknown what Kazimierz Bulanda's punishment for his action was. Probably separate proceedings were initiated in his case. According to files K 225/49, we only learn that he received a harsh sentence for his collaboration with the occupation authorities. The rest of those participating in handing over Mojżesz Baldinger and the Jewess from Jedlicze were either acquitted or sentenced to a few years.[24] In the judgment, the court decided that "the involvement of all those sentenced was limited to accompanying and escorting the Jews already captured by Noworol, that this involvement was compelled by Noworol's threat to report [them] to the Gestapo and was rather passive… [and thus] the criminal act ascribed to all of the accused is not an offense regulated by Article 1, Paragraph 2 of the above mentioned Decree, as the perpetrators of the capture were only Noworol and Kazimierz Bulanda." An additional extenuating circumstance for one of the accused was his age at the moment of the commission of the crime; he was under 17 at that time.[25]

In the above described case, the responsibility for handing in the hiding Jews was ascribed most of all to the man who died during the occupation. Those sentenced were in principle regarded as passive participants. According to their own words, they were forced to take part in the incident. According to many testimonies, the fear of people who kept contacts with the authorities might have been one of the main motives of passive participation. There is no clear answer to the question whether financial motives were significant, although, according to Anna Kurzawa, all the belongings of the Jewess were stolen from her hideout. The files do not show whether the robbery motive was important or whether the plunder was committed, so to speak, because the opportunity arose.

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[23] Franciszek Głąb testified on 15 March 1945 as follows: "Together with the Gestapo officer, Hinz, we managed to capture Fryga and Kurzawa, who were sent to Auschwitz, where they died after some time and their families were informed about it. After that incident I feared the dwellers of Lipnica Wielka, I felt guilty and tried to get any job in Nowy Sącz. I got a job, I was employed in an employment office (*Arbeitsamt*) as an overseer of people who were sent to Germany for forced labor. I performed this function from 2 September 1943 to July 1944. Then I left for my home town, Lipnica Wielka, where I stayed until the Red Army came. APKr, SAKr, 977, K 222/49, Zeznanie z dnia 15 III 1945 r.

[24] The Operation Court in Tarnów (*Sąd Operacyjny w Tarnowie*) and the Court of Appeal in Cracow sentenced the convicts to 5–8 years imprisonment and, as was the case with the judgments based on the "August decree," to forfeiture of property. In the judgment of the Supreme Court (II.K. 681/51) the punishment was reduced to 2.5 years and – in one of the cases – to 2 years (APKr, SAKr, 964, K 225/50, pp. 291–303).

[25] APKr, SAKr, 964, K 225/50, Odpis wyroku SN (II. K. 681/51), no date, p. 303.

Files of the Criminal Case of Władysław Węgrzyn and Others[26]

Another case concerns the handing over of Sabina Blaufeder and Genia Raber to the authorities by two dwellers of Wieniec village, whom they asked for shelter.[27] The case is also interesting because the witnesses were relatives of the denounced women, i.e. Dawid Raber and Jakub Blaufeder, who survived the Holocaust. Thanks to their testimonies we know relatively much about the victims, who are not anonymous as was the case in the majority of trial files concerning denunciations of the Jews. The investigation was launched after the report of the crime submitted by Jakub Blaufeder.

Sabina Blaufeder and her daughter, Genia Raber, lived in Nieznanowice near Bochnia until 1942. When the order for all the Jews from the region to report to the ghetto in Bochnia was issued, they decided not to obey it and to hide at their friends' places. In the first place, the shelter was to be provided by Władysław Węgrzyn from the neighboring Wieniec village, whom they had known before the war. Dawid Raber, Genia Raber's husband, lived in Wieliczka at that time,[28] but he gave all the valuables to his wife and mother-in-law, because he thought they would be safer there. In August 1942, Sabina Blaufeder informed him that she had managed to find a shelter and tried to persuade him to hide there with her: "In August 1942, between 18 and 20 August, on Thursday evening, my mother-in-law, Sabina Blaufeder, resident of Nieznanowice, came to me. At that time I was living in Wieliczka. She proposed that I give my wife and her all the valuables, because Władysław Węgrzyn of Wieniec had promised to hide her and all her family members at his place. She also tried to persuade me to go there, but I refused, while my wife agreed to go there."[29]

It is worth mentioning that Sabina Blaufeder was a wealthy woman. Before the war she owned a mill and a sawmill. She could afford to pay the hosts to "take care" of her and her family. She arranged with Władysław Węgrzyn early enough that he would agree to hide her for 2,000 zlotys per person. Jakub Blaufeder remembered what means his wife and mother-in-law had with them: "I gave my wife my golden watch with a chain, 2 golden bracelets, 2 diamond rings, 3 bars of gold of about 320

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[26] APKr, SAKr, 974, K 212/49.

[27] Unfortunately, the documents are incomplete. Only the first of the three files of case K 212/49 were delivered to the State Archive. Files K 206/50 and K 615/51 are also missing. They concerned the same case at least in part. According to the information which I received in the archive of the District Court in Cracow, the files were probably lost. Nevertheless, I believe that the files are worth discussing.

[28] Until the last days of August 1942 when an SS Einsatzkommando murdered all the Jews in Wieliczka, the town was a hiding place for many Jews from Cracow and its surroundings. Wieliczka was considered to be safer and more peaceful than Cracow. Henryk Schönker wrote interesting memoirs about hiding in Wieliczka as well as life in the Bochnia and Tarnów ghettos. The events which I describe happened in this very region; H. Schönker, *Dotknięcie anioła* (Warsaw, 2005), 92–206.

[29] APKr, SAKr, 974, K 212/49, Protokół przesłuchania świadka Dawida Rabera, pp. 117, 118.

grams from my brother-in-law, Eisenstein, and a gold watch with a chain; my wife also had a gold wristwatch. My mother-in-law had two long gold chains and a few thousand zlotys in silver. They both had good quality linen, clothes in the suitcase and sheets."[30] It was sizeable wealth for rural conditions.

Having left Nieznanowice, the two women hid in the fields for several days, and then went to the village of Wieniec, where they expected help in finding a shelter. First, however, they went not to Władysław Węgrzyn, but to the farm of Józef Włodek, who initially refused to put them up for the night, but then let them stay until the morning. Sabina Blaufeder knew him from before the war. According to Włodek's testimony, at some point Władysław Węgrzyn turned up, as he had learnt about the Jewesses' arrival in the village from the playing children, and asked Włodek to let him talk with the hiding women.

We can clearly observe a certain inconsistency here. If the women had made arrangements with Węgrzyn (as Dawid Raber testified) why did they not go to him straight away? Unfortunately, I was unable to establish how Węgrzyn explained it, because his testimonies are missing from the preserved part of the files. His first statements date back to as late as 1950, when he was arrested by the UB. Until then he had been hiding from PRL authorities in a forest, conducting pro-independence activity within the remnants of the organization Freedom and Independence (*Zrzeszenie Wolność i Niezawisłość*, WiN).[31] During the occupation, he was a member of a local Home Army (*Armia Krajowa*, AK) detachment.

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[30] Ibidem.

[31] According to the report of 13 August 1948 of the MO commandant in Niegowić (K 239/50, p. 37), Władysław Węgrzyn was a member or even the commandant of the local AK during the occupation. Another report states that after 1945 Węgrzyn disclosed his identity and soon rejoined the unit of "Salwa" [i.e. Jan Dubaniowski – D.S.]. He disclosed himself in 1947, then worked for some time in a commune office in Niegowić, and later he vanished without a trace until 1950. He was then captured by the UB, quickly tried and sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment under Article 86 § 2 of the Criminal Code of the Polish Army and under Article 4 of the Decree of 13 June 1946 by the District Military Court in Cracow (files: Sr 455/50 and Sr 136/52). Some light on Władysław Węgrzyn is shed in the documents from the trial to reverse the court's decision launched by his family's motion in 1994. These documents are kept in the Archive of the District Court (*Archiwum Sądu Okręgowego*) in Cracow (file III KO I 753/94). Władysław Węgrzyn's son testified that three cases were brought against his father, two for his activity in the AK and one concerning "some Jews." According to him, Węgrzyn reported the arrival of the Jewesses to the "village guard." (III KO I 75394, Zeznanie z dnia 11 IV 1996 r.). The Provincial Court quashed the court's judgment of 1950 sentencing Węgrzyn for fighting against the political regime of the time, highlighting the significance of his activity for the sake of the independent Polish State, while the judgment concerning the denunciation of the two Jewesses remained binding and it was said not to be linked to post-war political issues.

The other defendant, Józef Włodek, was also a member of an underground organization during the occupation (K 239/49, Protokół rozprawy głównej z dnia 23 III 1949 r., p. 302). Nothing is known about his pro-independence activity after 1944. Maciej Korkuć does not

Let us emphasize again that we deal here with court documents which come from the most dishonorable period of PRL judiciary. Regardless of the great historical value of these documents as sources concerning social life during the occupation, we need to remember that when political issues occur, one should be very careful. It is possible that the blame for denouncing the Jewesses was deliberately shifted onto Węgrzyn. It would be difficult to ignore the political context as Węgrzyn was linked with "Salwa," i.e. Captain Jan Dubaniowski, who fought very actively against the local representatives of the UB and Citizens' Militia (*Milicja Obywatelska*, MO) as a partisan during 1945–1947.[32] There are more question marks: according to Dawid Raber's testimony of 4 April 1947, his family was murdered by the Germans, but there is no information on Poles' involvement in the incident. The document mentions the deceased wife and children, but not his mother-in-law.[33] On the other hand, in the trial testimonies there is no information on Raber's children.

According to the witnesses' testimonies, Węgrzyn and Włodek decided together to inform the village council chair of Wieniec about the two Jewesses' arrival. They went together to the village council chair, who preferred not to take sides in the matter, and said: "I do not want to weigh it on my conscience and I say: do as you wish."[34] Such a passive attitude is often present in other "August Decree" cases. Węgrzyn and Włodek understood the chair's utterance as consent to denounce the arrival of the two Jewesses in the village to the police station in the nearby Niegowić. There, a German gendarme ordered Węgrzyn and Włodek to report again to the village chair, who was to assemble a larger group of men and bring both women to the station.[35] So it happened. A group of men took the two women to the police station in Niegowić, where they were shot.

Some of the people escorting the women to the station claimed that they did not expect such an ending. "I did not warn the Jewesses to escape, because I was afraid that Węgrzyn would denounce me to the police and that the hostages would be killed. I was not aware that the Jewesses were in mortal danger, I thought that

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mention him as "Salwa's" associate, see idem, "Oddział partyzancki NSZ kpt. Jana Dubaniowskiego 'Salwy,'" *Zeszyty Historyczne WiN* 22 (2004).

[32] According to the document found by Maciej Korkuć, Władysław Węgrzyn was a soldier or a closest associate in "Salwa's" unit and his pseudonym was "Poniatowski"; Archiwum Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej Oddział w Krakowie [Archive of the Institute of National Remembrance, Cracow Division], 074/19, Charakterystyka nr 19 b. „Salwa", pp. 158–174, Wykaz członków bandy „Salwy", quoted in: M. Korkuć, "Oddział partyzancki NSZ."

[33] AŻIH, Relacje, 301/3254, Relacja Dawida Rabera.

[34] APKr, SAKr, 961, 239/49. Protokół rozprawy głównej z dnia 23 III 1949 r., pp. 293, 294

[35] A group of men from Wieniec indeed helped to escort both women to the police station, but definitely under compulsion, not on their own initiative: "Węgrzyn told me that a German gendarme, Frank, had advised him to take three men and bring the Jewesses to the station; he told me that if this order was not carried out, the hostages would be shot, the families would be deported, their buildings burnt and their property confiscated." Ibidem, Protokół rozprawy głównej, p. 293.

the Jewesses would be transported to the ghetto in Bochnia, because it was the time when the ghetto was established."[36] In the trial documents of "August Decree" cases this is the most frequent explanation of denouncing the hiding Jews to the German gendarmes or the blue policemen. Let me quote a defendant in a completely different case, an illiterate man from Tonia near Dąbrowa Tarnowska, whose words well illustrate the line of thinking leading to justifying such activity:

> I did not like the Germans, and most of all I was afraid of them. I know that they harassed the Poles for no reason at all. People told me after the Sunday mass many times that Auschwitz exists to murder Poles. As for the Jews, the more reasonable farmers told me that they were forced to work, but no one told me that they were murdered. I do not know why the ghettos were established, besides gathering the Jews. The accused is unable to answer the Presiding Judge's question and explain to the Court why the Germans murdered the Poles.[37]

Is it really possible that the dwellers of the villages in this region did not hear about the executions of Jews, for example several kilometers away, in Cracow or Tarnów? In June 1942, the first deportation of Jews from Tarnów took place, when the Germans murdered about 3,000 Jews in the town alone.[38] In the Cracow ghetto in Podgórze the deportation took place the same month, and many people were shot on the spot.[39] In my opinion, such ignorance is highly unlikely. Information about the events must have reached the adjacent villages, at least as gossip.

Soon after the death of Sabina Blaufeder and Genia Raber, Jakub Blaufeder tried to find out what had happened to them. He even made some notes, but they perished (*cf.* Jakub Blaufeder's testimony in the appendix). After the war, he organized an exhumation of his relatives and, as we can easily guess, there was not even a trace of the valuables in the grave.

Files of the Criminal Case of Władysław Nosek[40]

On 14 August 1949, a man from the village of Wróblowice came to an MO station in Gromnik (Tarnów county) to report a crime committed in Janowice during the occupation. The victim was a Jewess, who had come there looking for a shelter. He learnt about the events from the village dwellers.

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[36] Ibidem. Actually, the Bochnia ghetto was established in 1941.

[37] APKr, SAKr, 961, K 82/49, p. 257. The widespread conviction that the fate of Poles under the German occupation was worse than the Jewish fate is mentioned by D. Libionka, *op. cit.*, 24, 25.

[38] A. Chomet, "Zagłada Żydów w Tarnowie," in *Zagłada Tarnowskich Żydów*, ed. A. Pietrzykowa and S. Potępa (Tarnów, 1990), 45, 46.

[39] K. Zimmerer, *Zamordowany Świat, losy Żydów w Krakowie 1939–1945* (Cracow, 2004), 112–132.

[40] APKr, SAKr, 984, K 212/49.

An unidentified Jewess came to Janowice in 1942. According to one witness, she was a refugee from the ghetto[41], while according to another she came from Łódź, and worked in Wielka Wieś in Brześć county until 1942. It is possible that the woman did not escape from the ghetto, but tried to avoid being locked there. In another place, a witness mentions that the Jewess came to the village when the Germans established the ghetto.[42] According to a different testimony, the woman's arrival was connected with the liquidation of the Zakliczyn ghetto. As in many other "August Decree" trial files, the victim remained anonymous. According to the witnesses' testimonies, she was in her thirties, had a suitcase and a certain amount of jewelry, including a characteristic ring[43] and… she was pretty.[44] In the first place, the woman was given shelter by Karol Chwalibożek, but only for one night. He did not agree to hide her longer, even when she promised him a high compensation. He explained that his house was close to a busy road. Chwalibożek took the fugitive to the house of Władysław Nosek, where the hostess accepted her willingly, and the Jewess stayed there for a week.

For a broader image of the situation, let me provide several pieces of information on Władysław Nosek. He was a middle-aged man, married with three children, born in a nearby village. He completed one year of elementary school and he had no criminal record before the war.

The following fragment of the testimony of 13 September 1949 explains what happened to the woman in hiding:

> After a week, I took this Jewess to the field, and took a stick with me. When we were about 50 meters from home in the bushes, where this Jewess was hiding, I approached her and, without saying a word, I hit her on the head with a stick several times, as she was lying on the ground with her head up and eating my apples, which she had plucked from my apple tree, which made me even more angry. After I hit her, she screamed once and died.[45] (Nosek's more extensive testimony is in the appendix.)

The content of Nosek's testimonies given during the interrogations is completely contradictory to what he said later, during the main trial, when not only did he not plead guilty to killing the woman, but he also laid the blame on unknown men in German uniforms. The woman was also said to have voluntarily given her sheets, stockings and other clothing to Nosek's wife. He explained that his former testimo-

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[41] It remains unknown whether the woman escaped from one of the nearby large ghettos or one of the smaller ones in the adjacent towns (e.g. Bobowa or Gorlice; these smaller ghettos were liquidated in 1942).

[42] Probably the ghetto in Tuchów, which was set up in 1942.

[43] APKr, SAKr, 984, K 212/49, Zeznanie z dnia 13 IX 1949 r., p. 19

[44] From the minutes of the confrontation of witnesses of 13 September 1959: "… Chwalibożek said he could not believe Nosek had the nerve to beat such a pretty Jewess…." K 212/49, p. 21.

[45] Ibidem, pp. 23, 24.

nies were due to "sickness of the head", then claimed that he did not testify at all, and – later – that he had been forced to testify by the MO.[46]

According to the words of the accused, he killed the Jewess himself without any witnesses. But other testimonies indicate that the neighbors were well aware that Nosek was torturing the woman, or even killing her. The information they gave was surprisingly detailed:

> thus Mazur asked him with what he [Nosek] killed her and Chwalibożek said that it was with a peg, and Chwalibożek counted when Nosek murdered her, that he hit her 12 times and this Jewess begged him not to kill her, to spare her life, and she promised him all her belongings, which she was said to have on the other bank of the Dunajec river, but Nosek murdered her anyway.[47]

According to Chwalibożek, his and Nosek's farms were about a kilometer apart, so accidental eavesdropping is out of the question.

As for the financial matters, the files clearly show that Nosek appropriated the murdered woman's belongings. His children wore her clothes later. At Nosek's place Chwalibożek also saw the golden ring which he had noticed when the Jewess asked him for help. According to the testimonies of other villagers, the murder of the Jewess was widely discussed. The witnesses said that she was a wealthy person.

By decision of the Court of Appeal in Cracow of 25 January 1950, Karol Chwalibożek was acquitted of incitement to kill the Jewess of an unknown name. Władysław Nosek was sentenced to death, but after the decision was announced, he was pardoned by the president. His sentence was commuted to life imprisonment.

Summary

Murders and thefts are committed in every society. Moreover, moral decay and blurred social norms in a period as difficult as the occupation were conducive to all kinds of pathologies, additionally fueled by the Nazi propaganda. But a crucial element that distinguishes reprehensible behavior towards the Jews from other crimes was participation, be it passive or active, in such events of a large group of people. This was the case in all the three events I discussed. A. Skibińska and J. Petelewicz have drawn attention to this important element before.[48] This issue looked completely different when it came to "ordinary" crimes, when the perpetrator usually preferred not to boast about theft or, much less, murder. In this context, it is interesting to read the letters asking for pardon, written by those sentenced or their families, in which, for obvious reasons, the undersigned try to diminish their

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[46] Ibidem, Protokół rozprawy głównej, p. 135; A. Skibińska and J. Petelewicz, op. cit., 125.

[47] APKr, SAKr, 984, K 212/49, No 3, Sprawozdanie z przeprowadzonego śledztwa sporządzone przez Adama Juliana z Posterunku MO w Gromniku, z dnia 13 IX 1949 r.

[48] A. Skibińska and J. Petelewicz, op. cit., 125.

involvement in the crime.[49] Unfortunately, post-war collaboration trial files cannot serve as a reliable basis for the estimation of the number of such crimes as those described above. To be sure, many offences from the occupation period were never reported to the authorities.[50] If we look from the perspective of some of the right-wing historians, who claim that a vast majority of Polish society was hostile towards the newly formed People's Republic of Poland, we can assume that the denunciations of Polish neighbors, i.e. the members of their own group, were not an obvious solution. As in the majority of cases where the Nazis killed entire Jewish families, there were often no relatives who could demand justice, as was the case with the denunciation of Sabina Blaufeder and Genia Raber. On the other hand, there were trials for collaboration, a consequence of denunciation, where it was clear that the motive of the denunciator was to settle scores between neighbors. But in such cases there was no Jewish thread.[51] In my opinion, it is connected with the question of complicity, at least passive, in crimes against Jews of a number of dwellers in a given village. On the other hand, collaborators denouncing Polish neighbors were in danger of ostracism and had to act on their own, and their activity was condemned by the community.

From the documents of the Court of Appeal, which are kept in the State Archive in Cracow, we can conclude that the criminal motives of denouncing and murdering the Jews in the majority of cases were similar. First of all, the most important issue was that of property, even if the profit was to be as little as a coat, a suitcase, a kilo of sugar or a hundred kilograms of grain. Secondly, another factor was fear of

[49] APKr, SAKr, 964, K 114/49, Fragment of the letter of Rozalia Wrona and her family to the Supreme Court asking for the commutation of the sentence: "To the Supreme Court, As everyone trembled when they heard the word 'Gestapo', everyone knew that such an informer was always among the neighbors and listened for what he might pass on, and because of him several people were arrested in the village commune and they never returned to their families. Facing such a harsh threat, my dad dressed up and went out with him, but he did not take part in anything, during the whole occupation he did not collaborate with the occupier, nor did he take part in this manhunt, he was just present there, but he did not capture them and he did not take them to the police."

[50] Tadeusz Seweryn, who was the head of Civil Resistance (*Walka Cywilna*) in Cracow, recalled many heroic activities of Poles who helped Jews. He also wrote about the constant threat from blackmailers among those hiding in villages and towns. The Directorate of Civil Resistance issued a special statement condemning persecution of Polish citizens. From 1944, the posts of investigation agencies established by the order of the Government Plenipotentiary for Poland could shoot blackmailers and denunciators without court decisions. According to Seweryn, thanks to harsh and quick persecution of racist crimes committed by morally depraved individuals in the Cracow Province, the scourge of blackmail of Jews was not as common as in other places. T. Seweryn, "Wielostronna pomoc Żydom w czasie okupacji hitlerowskiej," in *Ten jest z ojczyzny mojej. Polacy z pomocą Żydom 1939–1945*, ed. W. Bartoszewski and Z. Lewinówna (Warsaw, 2007), 3rd edition, 140–141.

[51] An example of such activities can be found in trial files: K 4/49 – SAKr, 946. The case also concerned two men who denounced one another due to neighbors' quarrels even from before the war, then during the occupation and finally after it.

being denounced by the neighbors and fear of the Germans. The third reason was a willingness to act in accordance with the law, even if it was the one imposed by the occupier.[52]

The division into "familiars" and strangers had a fundamental significance also with reference to people who were not Jews. Not only did the dwellers of Lipnica Wielka denounce two Jews, but they turned in the hosts from another village providing them with shelter as well. At the same time, a farmer from the same Lipnica, who previously hid the same refugees, was not handed in to the authorities. The trial files show that a Jew was an Other, to whom the rules of solidarity and the unwritten code of conduct did not apply, even if this Jew was a neighbor from a nearby village.

APPENDIX

SAKr, 984, K 239/49, Testimony of the witness Jakub Blaufeder, pp. 290, 299.

The witness Jakub Blaufeder testifies: In May 1942 I was deported from Nieznanowice, where I lived with Sabina Blaufeder and her daughter, Genia Raber, and initially I worked at the airport in Rakowice, and after some time I was assigned to work in the marketplace in Cracow. When I worked in the Cracow marketplace, a boy from Pierzchów, whom I knew because he came to our mill, although I do not know his name, came to me once and said that my aunt Sabina Blaufeder and her daughter Genia Raber had been shot on Monday. He was unable to tell me about more detailed circumstances, so I went to Nieznanowice and Wieniec and I learnt from the hosts there the following:

They told me that Sabina Blaufeder and Genia Raber were hiding in the house of Władysław Węgrzyn and that Węgrzyn together with Józef Włodek went to the chair of the village, Trojański, to report at the police station that there were Jewesses in the village. Trojański told Węgrzyn "I will not do that, go alone if you want to." I was told that Władysław Węgrzyn went to the station in Niegowić, where an order was given to chair Trojański to bring the Jewesses to the station. They were brought in, as I heard, by Władysław Węgrzyn, Józef Włodek, Jan Włodek and Koza from Skała.

Before Sabina Blaufeder and Genia Raber had left Nieznanowice, they wrote to me and sent me parcels. When the ghetto in Bochnia was established and the above mentioned women were aware that they would go to the ghetto, they wrote that

[52] Henryk Schönker quoted the opinion of a woman, resident of a village near Wieliczka, who discovered that her son suggested, for a steep price, that he would hide the Schönker family for the time of the German cleansing of the town of Jews in August 1942. Then the woman told the people hiding in the basement: "It's sheer impudence to expose strange and innocent people like that!" (H. Schönker, op. cit., 122). The line of thinking of the woman was probably as follows: if the Jews were pursued, persecuted and killed by the authorities, they must have deserved it.

Genia Raber would have bars of gold and diamonds in her bra and that they would take suitcases with them.

People have been telling me that for some time they wandered in the fields, and Fąfara from Nieznanowice, who is dead now, told me that he had seen my aunt and her daughter lying in the potatoes. Fąfara told me that one of them had lost a watch when she was passing a meadow and that it was later found by a certain Jurek.

Sabina Blaufeder and Genia Raber roamed in the fields for a week before they came to Węgrzyn. I was told that Węgrzyn and Józef Włodek had robbed them, because before they came to Węgrzyn they had all their belongings with them. This is what I was told and I wrote it all down, I had all the names of people who spoke to me and details that I heard from them, but then I went through 5 concentration camps and my notes were taken away from me.

I got a day off in *Bauleutung*, where I worked, and to make use of it, I went to Nieznanowice and Wieniec, and I learnt from several people, although I talked to them individually, that my aunt and her daughter were to have been robbed by Władysław Węgrzyn and Józef Włodek. Besides, he testifies identically as in the investigation as per page 19.

I knew Trojański well from the days when I was living in Nieznanowice – he enjoyed a very good reputation.

Several people repeated the same thing, namely that in reply to Węgrzyn's demand to inform the police that the Jewesses were in the village Trojański declared that he would not do it and that Węgrzyn could do it himself.

I heard that Władysław Węgrzyn had threatened and beaten people during the occupation, but I was not told why he did that. What I know is that people feared Władysław Węgrzyn.

I was told about that after my return from the camp, i.e. in 1945.

I thought that Izaak Blaufeder, Sabina's son and Genia Raber's brother, would return from a camp in Germany and that he would report this matter. As he did not return from the camp, I reported it to the Public Prosecutor.

SAKr, 964, K 114/49, Testimony of the witness Maria Kurzawa, pp. 533, 534.

In this case I am aware of the following: In early November 1942, a young Jewess came to us asking for shelter, to which we agreed with my brother Jan. We hid her in the attic for about 5 weeks. At that time, she asked me to go to Jedlicze twice to bring her stuff. We did not tell anyone about her stay. She had a lot of underwear, sheets, 5 pearl necklaces, and 20 dollars in one bill. We cared for her a lot, we fulfilled all her wishes, especially as she assured us that if she survived, she would reward us. In the evening of 9 December 1942, I heard in my sleep a loud cry of "open up," so my brother got up and opened the door. Then a few individuals came in and they went straight to the attic, from where they took down the Jewess to the chamber. Thus I got out of bed and noticed a dozen people or so, among whom I recognized Stanisław Buland, his son Jan, Józef Wrona, the Janisiak brothers, Melchior Łatka, Wacław Noworol, but I did not know the rest of them. They were all from the Lep-

nica village commune. Józef Wrona, dressed in a fireman's uniform, brought down the Jewess. Then, having taken all her belongings, they wanted to take my brother with them, but my and my mother's cry prevented them from [carrying out] this intention. I cannot say in which direction they went. On 12 December 1943 [should be 1942 – D.S.], a Gestapo officer, two Polish policemen and Franciszek Głąb came and took my brother away. He was imprisoned in Nowy Sącz, then in Tarnów, and later he was allegedly deported to Auschwitz. On 15 May 1943, we received information about the death of my brother, Jan, of a heart attack in the Auschwitz camp. I cannot say who gave the hiding Jewess away and who ordered organization of the manhunt. I do not know anything more about this case, and I do not remember the name of the Jewesses. Here the minutes were closed and read aloud before signing.

SAKr, 974, K 212/49, Testimony of the witness Jan Ulanecki, p. 2.

Jan Ulanecki claims that on his way to work from the field, Franciszek Gałecki and Władysław Wójcie were sitting and talking about something in the balk of the field, thus Ulanecki asked them what they were talking about, to which Władysław Wójcie replied that they were talking about a murder of a Jewess, whom Władysław Nosek murdered with a peg, that the Jewess escaped from the ghetto and sought a shelter, that she came to Michał Jakobin in Wróblowice and asked him to hide her from the Germans for a night, and for this good favor she gave him a lot of money, but he refused to shelter her and took her to Karol Chwalibożek in Wróblowice, who was also afraid of the German authorities and directed this Jewess to Władysław Nosek in Janowice, and Nosek took her on and hid her for a long time. Some time later, Ulanecki talked to Chwalibożek, who told him that Władysław Nosek together with his brother Franciszek had killed that Jewess [nothing more about the mysterious brother is known – D.S.] and they shared the belongings of the Jewess. Ulanecki states further that Karol Chwalibożek told him that he had heard most exactly Nosek's blows of the peg hitting the Jewess and that the Jewess begged him to spare her life, and she promised him all her property which she was said to have on the other bank of the Dunajec river, but he had his own way: he murdered the Jewess and buried her near his house, and as for the belongings she had, he took them and appropriated them.

SAKr, 974, K 212/49, Testimony of the witness Władysław Lasota, p. 2.

[The witness] testifies that on 30 April, he cannot remember the year, about 9 p.m., he went to play at a wedding in Wróblowice and in a forest near a brook he met an unknown woman, who wore a coat and a watch. Lasota asked her where she was going, but she did not answer him; he joked that he had a brother in a police station and that he would take her there for a night with him, but on hearing that the girl burst into tears; from the girl's fear and when she cried immediately, Lasota noticed that she was a Jewess, and he told her to go ahead, so she went straight to Janowice, and after a year Lasota heard in Wróblowice that someone said, although he cannot remember who that was as about 7 years have passed since then, that the

wife of Władysław Nosek had said that her husband beat her just like he beat the Jewess, or that he wanted to kill her just like he killed the Jewess.

Witness Lasota adds that after the Jewess was murdered Aniela Jakobin, who at that time was Nosek's servant, sold expensive and beautiful things, but Jakobin was poor and could not have such things, although Jakobin served at Władysław Nosek's place, but he could not have given her such things for work either as he was poor himself. Moreover, Władysław Lasota saw Aniela Jakobin with a watch similar to the one owned by the Jewess whom Lasota met.

SAKr, 974, K 212/49, Testimony of the defendant Władysław Nosek, p. 26–27.

Yes, I plead guilty and explain that around autumn 1943 when I came from work one day in the evening, my wife, the late Rozalia Nosek, told me that that evening our neighbor, Karol Chwalibożek, had come to our house and brought with him a Jewess, saying that he had put the Jewess up for a night, but he had no intention of doing it again and he left her with us to hide, and at the same time he was to tell my wife "hide her or murder her."

This Jewess was not at my place then, only my wife told me that she was in a barn. I was not interested in this Jewess at that time, I did not go to her, only my wife told me the other day that she gave her food. Not until the third day, when I did not go to work, did I go to the barn out of curiosity and saw the Jewess for the first time. The person was in her thirties, of a scruffy appearance and dopey look, as she did not answer my questions when I asked her where she was from. I told her to go away, because I did not want to hide her, but she said nothing to that. I saw two worn-out suitcases lying by her, but I did not look into them and I went away, and the Jewess was still lying on the threshing floor. I had no more interest in her, I only knew that for the next days, the Jewess hid in the bushes near my house, and she brought harm to my garden, because she plucked my fruits. Several days after the Jewess had been brought in, I met Karol Chwalibożek, who told me that the Jewess had been at his place for some time, but he did not say how long, she told him that she had escaped from some *lager*, that when she stayed there, he took her suitcase from her and wanted to turn her in to his family, but the Jewess started screaming and he gave her the suitcases back, and finally Chwalibożek told me "hide her or kill her, as you wish."

I did not say that I intended to kill the Jewess as I had no such intention then.

A week or so later, after the Jewess arrived at my place, the Jewess plucked my young apples in my garden and it made me angry with her.

As my wife also urged me to get rid of the Jewess and have some peace finally, I decided to kill her.

In order to do that, I prepared a peg as thick as the beater of a flail and without telling my wife or anyone [else], late in the evening I went to the bushes where the Jewess was hiding, and hit her on her head several times with the peg with the intention of killing her.

The Jewess I was beating started to scream, but she soon became silent. I waited about half an hour until she stopped moving and then dug a hole behind my garden in the field and I buried the corpse of the deceased in the hole. I buried the corpse in the clothes she wore and the corpse has been lying in the same place until now, but it is ploughed soil and there is no trace of a grave.

I took the suitcases which the murdered woman had with her, and when I opened them, it turned out that one of them was completely empty, and the other one contained one sheet and a pair of shoes. Those things were used by my family and children, but I noticed that my wife as well as my children must have guessed that they were the belongings of the killed Jewess.

I had no other things of the killed woman; in particular I did not see any ring on the Jewess's finger and I did not take it.

During the occupation I did have a ring, but I had found it before the event I described above, but later I lost this ring.

I deny that I gave anyone any objects of the killed Jewess, and especially that I gave any objects to Aniela Jakubik. I bought Aniela Jakubik some bits of her clothing for her work at my place, but I deny that I ever gave her a watch.

As for the reasons which led me to kill the Jewess, the suspect does not give clear answers, and once he claims that he murdered the Jewess because Karol Chwalibożek talked him into killing her, but he cannot elaborate on that, as he states that Chwalibożek did not say why they should kill her.

Then, the suspect explains that the harm the Jewess did in the orchard made him angry, but in the end he says that he committed the crime because Karol Chwalibożek talked him into that as well as because the Jewess was a nuisance to him, as she did some damage in the orchard and that he was afraid of the germans punishing him for hiding the Jewess.

After I had committed the murder, I met Karol Chwalibożek and when he asked what was going on with the Jewess, I replied that I did not know, although I guessed that Chwalibożek knew that I had murdered the Jewess.

I guessed that afterwards, because Chwalibożek demanded that I share the belongings of the killed woman, but I told him that he could take this old [illegible – D.S.] as nothing more was left. Chwalibożek, however, never came to take these things and I did not give him anything.

My wife died in 1944, and the day I murdered the woman, in my house, apart from my wife, there were my children, the oldest one was 7 and they did not know I wanted to kill the Jewess, but later they guessed that I had killed the Jewess.

Translated by *Jerzy Giebułtowski* and *Patrycja Rojek-Wesołowska*

Abstract
The article contains a discussion and an attempt at analysis of the post-war investigation and trial materials regarding three different cases of murder or denunciation

of Jews being hidden by the local Polish population. The crimes discussed in the article took place in three villages, which during the occupation were located in the Cracow district: Falkowa, Wieniec and Janowice. After the war the perpetrators were indicted on the basis of the Decree of 31 August 1944, i.e. the so-called "August Decree". According to the testimonies of the witnesses and the defendants, the main motive behind the murder of Jews or their denunciation to the occupier was the desire for quick material gain, and, secondly, the fear of the consequences if the information that the Jews were hiding in the village reached the authorities. Another important element of the incidents was the active or passive participation of numerous village dwellers in the crimes.

Key words
the Holocaust, hiding Jews, robbery of Jewish property, Polish-Jewish relations, the "August Decree"