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**THE
POLISH ATROCITIES AGAINST
THE GERMAN MINORITY
IN POLAND**

EDITED AND PUBLISHED BY ORDER OF THE FOREIGN OFFICE

AND BASED UPON DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

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VOLK UND REICH VERLAG BERLIN

"Whereas reason requiers, that those vices, to which any nation dothe naturally inclyne, should be restrayned by seveare lawes, those are in Polonia barbarous cruelty and lubricity, thys last being as common as the first."

From: Sir George Carew, A Relation of the State of Polonia and the united Provinces of that Crown anno 1598.

Let our foe, the German, fall!
you
Plunder, rob, and set on fire!
above . . .
Let the enemy die in pain;
him
He that hangs those German dogs,
cause.
Reaps reward from God on High.

I, your priest do promise
Bliss and joy in Heaven
But the curse will fall on
Who doth plead the German

Polish hymn of hate against Germany dating from the 1848 revolution.

". . . They (the Polish authorities) torture those that refuse to confess in so grim a manner, that the inquisition of the Middle-Ages dwindles into nothingness before the sufferings to which the Poles subject their prisoners in and near Vilna."

From: Pierre Valmigière, "And to-morrow . . . ? France, Germany and Poland".

The further you go into Poland, the more you find pillage and murder.

Russian proverb.

"One, however, of the Slav Peoples, the Poles, forms a sorry exception. Violence and intolerance have left their mark on its history."

From: Danilewsky, Russia and Europe.

". . . The oppression of the Ukrainian minority in Poland is growing worse every day. It would perhaps be wearisome to record the oppressive acts, . . . such a record would be of almost impossible length. But there are certain things that cannot be left unrecorded, that must be heard by the civilised world -- namely, the horrible and inhuman barbarities that are inflicted on Ukrainian political prisoners in Polish gaols, and which are part of the war waged by the Polish dictatorship against the Ukrainian minority."

From: "Manchester Guardian" of December 12, 1931: "Oppression of Ukrainians. Methods of Middle Ages revived by Poles." Special Report from Lemberg (East Galicia).

". . . As long as the Poles show some insight, and are outnumbered, they appear submissive and adaptable; but once they have found a weak spot and have gained the upper hand, they become headstrong, arrogant and cruel . . . The unfettered licence in which the Poles live, and their law, which allows all crimes with the exception of one or two to be expiated by money, is the real cause of the fact that, among other things, homicide is very common in Poland."

From the Diary of the Frisian Nobleman Ulrich von Werdum 1671/72.

"Fellow countrymen and brothers, who like myself have had the misfortune to become acquainted with the Poles, unite with me in order to eradicate, once and for all, the maliciousness and falsity of that people. Let all brothers hear, let every echo resound that the Pole knows no law and justice and that the word of a Tartar is a hundred times better than all the treaties signed in Poland."

From: Méthée: Histoire de la Prétendue Révolution de Pologne. Paris 1792, p. 184.

"This nation of peasants inclines to drink, quarrel, abuse and murder; it would be hard to find so many murders in any other nation."

From: Richard Roepell: Geschichte Polens, Bd. I., Hamburg 1840.

"Poland is a mixture of sarmatian -- well-nigh aboriginal cruelty and French super-arrogance; an ignorant people with not a trace of taste, yet given to luxury, gambling and fashion."

From: Georg Forster: Forsters Briefe, I., p. 467.

Polish Pamphlet Inciting the Mob to Murder.

"Why cannot we act like the Spaniards? Let every one who is fit take up arms and march on the enemy. Let the women, the boys and the old men murder at home whenever an enemy soldier is billeted with them. When their troops march through the town throw boiling water and stones from the windows. Destroy him where you find him! Hide all food from him. Out in the lines our glorious Polish army will deal with them! -- We shall see whether our foes, all three of them, will stand up to us, even for a few months, on our holy Polish soil. No, not even that long will they hold out. Those that will escape our weapons will run for the frontier."

From the Polish pamphlet "Words of truth for the Polish People".
Printed under the auspices of Our Lady, the Patron of Poland. 1848.

"But Poland's immediate neighbours have known those brilliant promises for a long time -- and hence mistrust them.

From their experience they are afraid that the Poles, in the administration of their new independence will show an utter disregard for order and will prove themselves unreliable and irresponsible anarchists.

Since their neighbours know the Poles to be vindictive, irate and quarrelsome, they fear that their regime will be brutal, clumsy, intolerant and tyrannical."

From: D'Etchegoyen, Olivier: Pologne, Pologne . . . Paris 1925.

"The minorities in Poland are to disappear, and it is Polish policy that they shall not disappear only on paper. This policy is being pushed forward ruthlessly and without the slightest regard for public opinion abroad, for international treaties, and for the League of Nations. The Ukraine under Polish rule is an inferno -- White Russia is an even more hellish inferno. The purpose of Polish policy is the disappearance of the national minorities, both on paper and in reality."

From: "Manchester Guardian", December 14, 1931 (special report from Warsaw).

French Protest against Polish Police Terrors.

"A wave of terror is sweeping Poland at this very moment. The Press can hardly breathe a word because it is gagged. A police regime with all its horrors and its wild measures of oppression strangles the country. The prisons of the Republic to-day hold more than 3000 political criminals who are maltreated by their jailers, humiliated and beaten up with belts and sticks. The life they have to stand is such that in many prisons the inmates prefer death to the slow torture inflicted upon them."

Paul Painlevé, Edouard Herriot, Léon Blum, Paul Boncour, Séverine,
Romain Rolland, Victor Basch, Georges Pioch, Pierre Caron, Charles
Richet, Aulard, Hadamard, Bouglé, F. Herold, Mathias Mornardt, Jean-
Richard Bloch, Pierre Hamp, Charles Vildrac, Lucien Descaves, Henri
Béraud, Michel Corday, Léon Bazalgette, Paul Colin, Albert Crémieux,
Henri Marx, Paul Reboux, Noel Garnier.

From: Protest against the terrorisation of minorities in Poland submitted by French
politicians and men of letters, 1924.

More than 58,000

Dead and Missing

were lost by the German minority in Poland during the days of their liberation from the Polish yoke, as far as can be ascertained at present. The Polish nation must for all time be held responsible for this appalling massacre consequent upon that Polish reign of terror. Up to November 17, 1939, the closing day for the documentary evidence contained in the first edition of this book, 5,437 murders, committed by members of the Polish armed forces and by Polish civilians on men, women and children of the German minority had already been irrefutably proved. It was quite apparent even then that the actual number of murders far exceeded this figure, and by February 1, 1940, the total number of identified bodies of the German minority had increased to 12,857. Official investigations carried out since the outbreak of the German-Polish war have shown that to these 12,857 killed there must be added more than 45,000 missing, all of whom must be accounted dead since no trace of them can be found. Thus the victims belonging to the German minority in Poland already now total over 58,000. Even this

appalling figure by no means covers the sum total of the losses sustained by the German minority. There can be no doubt at all that investigations which are still being conducted will disclose many more thousand dead and wounded. The following description of the Polish atrocities which is not only confined to murders and mutilations but includes other deeds of violence such as maltreatment, rape, robbery and arson applies to only a small section of the terrible events for which irrefutable and official evidence is here established.

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SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND EXPLANATIONS

The statement of the acts of atrocity committed on minority Germans in Poland is based on the following documentary evidence, the penal records of the Special Courts of Justice in Bromberg and Posen, the investigation files of the Special Police Commissions, the testimony of the medico-legal experts of the Health Inspection Department of the Military High Command, and the original records of the Military Commission attached to the Military High Command for the investigation of breaches of International Law. The documentary evidence concerning the individual cases of atrocity has been taken from the aforementioned files.

The Special Courts of Justice set up at Bromberg and Posen are regular courts, their administration of justice being based on the Common Law of Germany and the jurisprudence of the Supreme Court of the Reich, and which deal with all cases in complete accordance with the principles of the German Penal Code. The legally justified confirmation of verdicts and the sworn statements of German as well as Polish witnesses have been used. These were taken from the records of these Special Courts of Justice up to the Nov. 15, 1939. The various Criminal Investigation Departments' reports, documents, and photographs, have been employed and taken from the files of the Special Commissions. Reproductions of statements, photographs and preserved specimens, as well as the collective memoranda representing a report on the result of the autopsy on the victims, were taken from the records of the medico-legal experts. The statements of eye-witnesses sworn and taken down before the military legal officials, have been taken mainly from the investigation files of the Army Investigation Department. These in turn are based upon extracts from the High Command's (Legal Dept.) book on this subject, issued in two volumes, "Polish Atrocities on minority Germans and Prisoners of War in Bromberg, Pless, Stopanica" (vol. 1) and "Polish Atrocities on minority Germans and Prisoners of War in the District and Province of Posen" (vol. 2) and in which the various statements are compiled.

The records have been supplemented by accounts of personal experiences by individuals of the German minority arrested, ill-treated, and abducted, as well as by photographs of numerous atrocities on minority Germans, as perpetrated by soldiers of the Polish army and by Polish civilians (i. e. murders, mutilations, and arson). The photographs are genuine copies of snap shots taken of the actual victims, either beaten to death, shot dead, or mutilated, and taken on the spots where the victims were found and the crimes committed. Any pictures that could not be considered definitely authentic were rejected and not included in the collection. Attached are photographic reproductions of whole pages of "dead and missing" notices. These appeared daily for weeks, after those days of horror, in the Bromberg and Posen newspapers.

[p. 10] In the text, the findings of the Military Investigation Department are cited with the reference No. W. R. I and W. R. II, those of the Special Courts with the reference No.

Sd. K. Ls. or Sd. Is. with consecutive file numbers. Those resulting from the investigation of the Special Police Commission of the Criminal Police Office of the Reich are marked RKPA., and those of autopsy and post mortem findings with OKW. HS. In. Br. or P.

The amount of material on atrocities was so great as to render it impossible to print the full text of the sworn statements in all cases. Some are printed in their original version. Others refer to the decisive position, as narrated by the eye-witnesses. For the same reason it was decided to omit the history of illness suffered by minority Germans, due to their serious injuries received during the marches they were forced to make through Poland. All this collection of facts is stored in the Protestant Deaconess Hospital of Posen and in the German Military Field Hospital and Municipal Hospital in Bromberg, and is open to any further investigation. Only a selection of the copious photographic material is used in this book. All the documents and proofs used in this collection of material are filed in the respective central offices in Berlin.

This book deals exclusively with acts of violence committed by Poles on minority Germans. Further evidence of the Polish breaches of International and Military Law, in so far as it concerns the treatment of German prisoners of war and Germans killed in action, has been placed in safety elsewhere and has not been included in this book, as well as that of numerous acts of atrocity committed on minority Germans before the outbreak of war.

Statement

THE GERMAN-POLISH SITUATION UP TO THE OUTBREAK OF WAR

Europe was relieved to hear of the German-Polish agreement on Jan. 26, 1934. The realistic peace determination of Adolf Hitler, together with the true sense of statesmanship of Marshal Pilsudski, had found common ground in the mutual desire to establish a new state of political relationship by direct contact between Germany and Poland, the basic idea being to ensure the maintenance and security of a lasting peace between the two countries. It was realised by all those who saw in the latent tension between Germany and Poland an immediate danger to the peace of Europe that such a constructive cooperation of the two statesmen must be of interest to the whole of Europe. It was the most earnest desire of Germany and Poland to follow up the first declaration of a 10-years pact by the development of sincere friendly relations. Such a friendship based on peaceful development would have left the door open for a friendly and acceptable settlement of all outstanding questions between the two neighbouring countries. There was no doubt that problems, as yet unsettled, did exist between the two countries. It was quite clear that the conditions and boundaries imposed on Germany by the Treaty of Versailles were for any length of time impossible and unacceptable. It depended on the honesty of purpose of Poland as to how far an

arrangement of a closer understanding between the two countries could fulfil the sincere hopes of Germany and all peace-loving friends. At that time already, certain definite forces abroad were actively trying to disturb the work of conciliation between Germany and Poland. The opponents of the Third Reich were not in the least interested in a relaxation of the tension between Germany and Poland; in fact they were secretly and openly fanning the ever-glowing fires of propaganda in Poland and directed against Germany and everything German. The change of course in policy both in Berlin and Warsaw in no way suited their plans. Apart from this, a reconciliation of Poland with her neighbour did not represent the aims of the supporters of the Treaty of Versailles, who intended that Poland should remain in a state of permanent opposition to Germany, and that she should remain as an active instrument in the encirclement policy against the Reich. As a result the enemies of friendly advances between Germany and Poland tried to stifle from the very beginning any reasonable political arrangement and any attempt at a reconciliation between Germany and Poland, by resuscitating the old differences and suspicions. With the help of extremist Polish societies and the Press, already controlled by Jewish elements, the saboteurs of conciliatory measures very soon gained the upper-hand. The intensified campaign of anti-German propaganda had an increasing influence on public opinion and incited it against Germany and the German minority in Poland. The anti-German activity found ready response amongst Polish officials and military circles. The continued efforts of the Government of the Reich, with a view to persuading those in Warsaw responsible for the creation of public opinion to act in accord with the German-Polish Press agreement of Feb. 24, 1934, and to arrive at an effective moral disarmament within the spirit and general lines of the agreement of understanding remained unsuccessful.

Since the days of Versailles, the political situation between Germany and Poland had never calmed down. On the contrary the systematic deprivation of the right of the German element long established in former Prussian provinces remained such a dead weight on German-Polish relations that the greater part of the world's opinion was always sceptical of the success of the German-Polish agreement of understanding. In German opinion the strong personality of Pilsudski offered in itself guarantee enough that, in the development of the idea of an understanding, an alteration in sentiment would take place, together with a change in the hostile attitude of wide circles of influence in Poland against German minority groups. The Führer held the firm opinion that, in spite of all obstructive circumstances, the German-Polish work of cooperation must be attempted and developed until the desired results had been attained. He held that despite the disappointment of the German Government caused by the unscrupulous Polish methods within the sphere of minority policy, as well as by the continuous anti-German press campaign, these must not be allowed to interfere with his hopes for the success of the final issue.

Even during Pilsudski's lifetime it had been clearly shown that the authority of the Marshal himself was not sufficient to make the subordinate Polish officials adhere to a just treatment of the German minority. The exaggerated Polish patriotic feeling still appeared in a more moderate way, but it had not been eliminated. For the time being suppressive measures were not so brutal, but more cunning. The political system based on the old watchword of sworn principle to exterminate everything of German origin, continued unhampered; full responsibility for this must be ascribed to the Polish Government. After the death of Marshal Pilsudski the mask was completely dropped. A

campaign of aggressive activity, based on the desire for annexation and such aims was very soon developed in speech and in print.

The continuous efforts of Germany to bring about tolerable relations between the German minority and the Polish population were of no avail. Her efforts were completely frustrated by the sterile attitude of the Polish Government. Poland's absolutely negative attitude, marked by an unbroken chain of violations of the spirit of the German-Polish pact, and also by a continual breach of the fundamental principles governing the protection of minorities, agreed to and signed by Poland in the reciprocal minority agreement of Nov. 5, 1937 became manifestly clear when the respective representatives of the central administrative offices of both countries met in Berlin on Feb. 27, 1939, to discuss all outstanding questions, pertaining to minorities. These unsuccessful discussions showed that Poland had no intentions of carrying on Marshal Pilsudski's clearly defined policy of peace and harmony with his German neighbour. The specific desire of the Führer for a definite settlement of the Danzig question, and that of a territorial link between East Prussia and the Reich were repeatedly placed before the Polish Government in the friendliest manner. The evasive attitude, however, of Colonel Beck, Minister for Foreign Affairs, made it clearer from month to month that the Polish authorities were methodically turning their backs on any intention of agreement [p. 15] with Germany. Poland's increased resistance to any kind of reparation or even alleviation of the injustice of Versailles as regards Germany's Eastern boundary, corresponded with the stiffening of the Polish policy towards the members of the German minority and with an intensified Chauvinistic activity of the Polish press, tantamount to a direct challenge to the Reich.

Even in the spring of 1939 it became quite clear that the change in Poland's foreign policy was being definitely advanced and guided by two forces. Polish public opinion, influenced by the Government's toleration of anti-German propaganda, was imbued with an unparalleled feeling of hatred against everything German. Any statement or expression pertaining to the daily life of the German minority was considered as an hostile act against the Polish State and in consequence the extermination of everything of German origin was put forward as a national duty. It was evident that the restraint of the German Government towards this degeneration of hatred towards minority Germans was regarded by the Polish authorities as an expression of weakness. This fateful error was the underlying motive for the vehement attacks on Germany which expressed themselves in impassioned demands for the annexation of German territory, and reached their climax in the ridiculous display of megalomania, as displayed in a demand for the River Elbe as a boundary necessary to Polish national requirements. The Polish Government gave a free hand to the perpetrators of such bellicose demonstration of annexation, as well as to the miscreants of acts of violence against the German minority in the Western provinces, who were in their turn aided and abetted by the provincial authorities. The responsibility for this feverish atmosphere was hereby placed on the shoulders of the Polish Government. This finally resulted in moral chaos in towns and in the country, accompanied by indiscriminate murders of thousands of defenceless and innocent minority Germans by Polish soldiers and armed civilians.

The question arose as to how the Polish Government could allow such a dangerous sentiment to develop in the country and to such an extent as to permit her own citizens of German origin to be surrendered to the lowest class of Polish degenerates, whose very lust for murder made them ignore constitution, law, morality and humaneness. Furthermore how could responsible Polish rulers allow themselves to be manoeuvred deeper and deeper into a condition of irreparable tension with Germany, without accounting to

State or people for the inevitable consequences of an armed conflict with Germany? The answer to this leads to the second force which influenced Poland from outside and allowed Poland to believe that all further consideration towards the German minority or the Reich could be dropped. This force was England, was the guarantee of assistance given by the British Government to Poland, and the British active influence to use Poland as a pawn to stimulate the British encirclement policy so thoroughly as to kindle the fires of war -- a war which had been prepared long beforehand, and was intentional, and which actually broke out in connection with Danzig and the Corridor. As England was guaranteeing this diabolical scheme, Warsaw was of the opinion that no moderation or consideration of action as to avoiding overdoing anything was necessary. England had guaranteed the integrity of Poland! The British promise of assistance to Poland had provided the latter with the role of a political battering ram. Since then, and conscious of this, Poland had permitted herself to challenge the Reich in every conceivable way and, in her delusions, even dreamt of a "victorious battle before the gates of Berlin." Had the British war clique not continually urged Poland into an obstinate resistance towards the Reich, and had it not been for Britain's promises, of which she felt perfectly sure, it is very doubtful whether Poland would ever have allowed things to go so far, as to make the signal for the removal of Germans in the eyes of Polish military and civilians equivalent to a signal for the murder and bestial butchery of German people (1).

(1) The British Government must have known, having due regard to the temperamental national character and inclination to extremes of political megalomania, of the likewise anti-German propaganda carried on in the Press for years and worked up against Germany and the German minorities some months before the War to a definite state of aggressive bloodthirstiness. She must have known that her active interest in the warlike policy of Poland, backed up by the pact of assistance, would of necessity be the cause of national hatred, spreading like an epidemic and resulting in the most unbelievable and bloody outrages on German citizens. If the British Government had not realised the delirious effect on Poland of the pact of assistance which was responsible for the ghastly consequences, then it would appear that the extent of the bestiality of the Polish atrocities on Germans must prove England to be even more guilty of the bloodshed. Only he who moved amongst Poles during those decisive weeks could really measure the direct destructive effect of Chamberlain's guarantee of assistance on the Polish mentality and psychology.

Without the blank cheque given by Great Britain to Poland the latter would never have so frivolously rejected the unique offer for compromise made by the Führer, as was made public in his speech in the Reichstag on April 28, 1939, or would Poland ever have started her war machinery or opened the doors to the Provincial governors' policy of extermination of the German minority. The German minority in Poland had long since been gagged and deprived of all rights (2).

(2) The terrific losses caused to German interests in Poland during the Polish domination can be given in figures under the heading of emigration, expropriation, closing of German schools, as follows: up to the middle of 1939, 1.4 million Germans under the pressure of Polish officials had emigrated from Posen-West Prussia and from Upper Silesia. German settlers had lost 1,263,288 acres of land and of these 265,288 acres due to the one-sided Agrarian Reforms unilaterally applied against Germans, 998,000 acres due to cancellation and liquidation. Of the 657 public German minority schools in existence in 1925 (in 1927 only 498), only 185 were left at the beginning of the school year 1938/1939 (of these 150 in Posen-West Prussia and 35 in Upper Silesia).

Thousands of German enterprises and independent German businesses had been systematically destroyed by cancellation of orders, boycott, by taxes rigorously calculated and even more vigorously applied, withdrawal of concessions, confiscation, and the refusal of permits for the purchase of land. Innumerable German workmen and employees, for the greater part old and trusted hands, were made victims of mass dismissals, based on political race discrimination, and were driven from their normal areas of work and reduced to a condition of absolute penury with no further means of existence. The one-sided application of the Agrarian Reform Laws and the regulations governing frontier zones forced old established German settlers to emigrate. German church services were disturbed, German newspapers were seized one after the other; and the use of the German language was made impossible either in the street, in shops or restaurants. Germans were attacked in the open country, in their homes and on their farms. From May 1939 onwards prohibition orders and punishments literally hailed down upon them. The closing down of schools, kindergartens, libraries and German clubs, the elimination of cooperatives, cultural and charitable societies, and the personal threat to each individual, increased to an unimaginable degree, quite contrary to the rights of the German minority as guaranteed by the Constitution.

THE POLISH POLICY OF ATROCITY

During the twenty years of Polish domination, Germans in Poland had become used to injury and want. Devoid of every right and protection they were also prepared for their position to become more threatening and subject to more intolerable pressure as the German-Polish relations aggravated. During the last weeks before the outbreak of war, they were under such pressure and their private life so continually watched by Polish spies, that they already scented the danger that was being brought about by the work of agitation, emanating from secret and public Polish sources. Not even the worst pessimist had ever visualized that the wide-spread menaces, attacks, and acts of violence would increase and reach the point of the massacre of men, women, and children, or that these murders would ever reach the gruesome total of over 58,000. One could feel the abysmal hatred that the Poles had for anything German; hatred that was being engendered by an anti-German press, radio and pulpit propaganda. The Warsaw rulers gave proofs daily of their hostile attitude towards any sincere understanding. This manifested itself even down to the subordinate official positions, where a white-hot fanaticism culminated in treating all Germans as spies and suspected enemies of the State. It was known that the Association of the West, rebels, and rifle corps were planning evil, and that Polish Youth organisations, above all the boy scouts, were being systematically trained under military supervision in the use of firearms. Outbursts of racial propaganda could be read in the Polish press; in just the same way the poisoned atmosphere emanating from the excessive provocation of public agitators could be felt more and more every week as it spread and penetrated deeper and deeper amongst the Polish population. The result was that even the more reasonable Polish elements were dragged into the vortex, which swept away any sensible thought or moral feeling towards minority Germans already pursued and

tortured. It was apolitical psychosis which enabled every Pole to feel that he might commit any kind of deed, even the most terrible against minority Germans, and without the slightest restraint.

During the last days of August 1939, Germans were openly menaced in villages with the expressions: "Slaughter them off" (1).

(1) Murder of Sieg (Sd. Is. Bromberg 819/39).

In the towns Germans were the victims of insane incitement, leading to a state of boycott, terror, and direct danger to life, which the Warsaw Government tolerated and encouraged. This outbreak of concentrated fury and Polish national passion directed against everything German and invoked by the Polish officials, seemed to be the unavoidable solution for putting an end to the intolerable tension between Germany and Poland. When, therefore, on Sept. 1, 1939 the ever increasing avalanche of defence measures against the Polish provocations and attacks, which led to open raids by Polish soldiery into German territory, culminated in the entry of German troops into Poland, the last pillars of State discipline collapsed with the flight of the Polish authorities. A deluge of ghastly acts of bloodshed, like an unparalleled storm burst over the heads of German men and women. These, although conscious of their defenceless state (2)

(2) "A perpetual state of anxiety reigned as no one was any longer sure of his life . . . The whole night they slunk round the house, and this furtive slinking, the proximity of a permanent danger was very difficult to endure" -- this is how the Rector's wife, Frau Lassahn of Bromberg-Schwedenhöhe, characterizes the heavily laden atmosphere of ill-boding, just prior to the "Blood Sunday" in Bromberg. (Eye-witness report of Frau L.). The 32-year old minority German Gerhard Grieger expresses himself similarly, shortly before he was bestially murdered: -- "I have a terrible feeling, I feel as though I am being perpetually watched, and think it would be the best thing to clear out". Then again the witness Judge (retired) Klabun of Bromberg confirms that "everywhere they slunk around us and watched us". . . (Criminal proceedings against Nowitzki and others, Sd. K. Ls. Posen 28/39).

were by no means faint-hearted, for they were comforted in their firm belief in their impending liberation. A few had indeed been able to save themselves in time by flight to safety (3)

(3) How tragic is the case of Vicar Reder of Mogilno, who at the time of his order for internment was on holiday in Zoppot, so that he had ample opportunity for flight. In spite of this he obeyed the order, so as to be together with the members of his parish and his co-internees during the days of trouble. He was shot down with a pistol by the Commandant of the railway station of Glodno and after receiving several blows with the butt of a rifle he was given the "coup de grâce" by Polish Military guard (OKW. HS. Ins. Br. 80).

over the frontiers of the Reich and to Danzig; in spite of repeated Polish statements to the effect that in case of war all Germans would be murdered and all German farms would be burnt down, most of the Germans stuck to their homes and possessions, part of which had been acquired or inherited from former settlements or by honest purchase, hundreds of years ago, because they themselves could not believe that the menaces of murder would ever be carried out. What was the reason for all classes of Poles participating in the excesses committed against Germans? Why did that portion of the Polish population which for years had lived in harmony with their German neighbours in town and country hardly lift a hand to protect Germans exposed to lawlessness? Why did Poles, without the slightest reason, attack the one or other German -- known or unknown to them --, why were they willing to take part in these indescribable atrocities? The answer to all this is that all action against Germans had

been carefully planned beforehand; it had been definitely ordered. The question arises: could not Christian and religious principles in such a devoutly Catholic country have proved sufficient to ensure a moral and disciplinary bulwark against such wanton excesses? On the contrary, the massacre of Protestant clergy, the destruction of Protestant rectories, the burning and pillaging of Protestant churches (4)

(4) Protestant churches and parish halls were destroyed and burnt in Bromberg-Schwedenhöhe, in Hopfengarten near Bromberg, in Gr. Leistenau near Graudenz, in Kl. Katz near Gotenhafen. The number of vicarages robbed and pillaged has not been ascertained. A "house search" in the Protestant Consistory in Posen is further evidence of wanton destruction. In the Parish Church of Bromberg and in St. Peter's Church in Posen, altars were defiled and the altar lights destroyed, bibles and altar cloths were torn to rags. (Periodical "Junge Kirche", dated Nov. 4, 1939).

show clearly that the old adage of Protestant-German, Catholic-Pole, made the distinction of creed the instrument and tool of political murder.

In many cases it was enough to be German and Protestant to be arrested (1).

(1) The witness Kube, Bromberg, 13 Bergkolonie, deposed on oath that a soldier, who had forcibly entered her apartment, questioned her nephew Karl Braun, who was on a visit, as to his name and religion (!) On Braun's truthful declaration as to who he was and that he was a Protestant he was arrested and carried off. Since then no trace of him has been found and it would appear that he had been shot (Sd. K. Ls. Bromberg 32/39).

Sympathy for Germany or German connections were sufficient: even Catholic Germans were relentlessly pursued and killed, and Catholic priests themselves were ill-treated because of their sympathy towards the German element. Even the reproach to a German that he sent his child to a German school and that during the 20 years of Polish domination he had not learnt to master the Polish language, was sufficient to have him killed (2).

(2) Eye-witnesses' statements on the murder case Kala/Keller in Kardorf (Sd. Is. Posen 42/39) criminal proceedings against Jan Lewandowski (Sd. K. Ls. Bromberg 85/39).

He who was master of the Polish language and able to make himself understood in the Polish language or even he who stated he was a Pole, was spared (3).

(3) The minority German Ferdinand Reumann in Schulitz saved himself from being carried off and killed by maintaining that he was Polish and by speaking in Polish to the soldiers; he was the only survivor of 13 Germans (Sd. K. Ls. Bromberg 31/39).

This is proof that only German lives and property were envisaged. Further proof of this is shown by the fact that the hordes whether in company of Polish soldiers or alone, only searched homes, attics and cellars of Germans. They were brought out into the street and where no Germans were present, the locality was left without disturbing a single hair of any Pole (4).

(4) Statement by the Polish witnesses Maria Szczepaniak and Luzia Spirka of Bromberg, who were hidden in an air raid cellar together with Germans (Sd. K: Ls. Bromberg 12/39).

Germans were murdered indiscriminately and regardless of age, creed or sex, whether peasant, farmer, teacher, clergyman, doctor, merchant, workman or factory-owner, no class or rank was spared. The victims were shot without trial -- there was never any legal reason for the massacre of Germans. They were shot, tortured to death, beaten and stabbed without any reason at all (5),

(5) "Never before have I seen faces so distorted with fury or bestial expression -- they had certainly ceased to be human beings --" stated the eye-witness Paul Zembol of Pless (WR I).

and most of them, furthermore, were maimed in the most bestial way. These murders were intentional, and for the greater part, committed by Polish soldiers, police and gendarmes, but also by armed civilians, schoolboys and apprentices (P.W.O.N.) (6).

(6) P. W. = Przynsposobienie Wojskowe, i. e. an organization for the pre-military training of youths under military supervision. O. N. = Obrona Narodowa, i. e. Reservists mobilized at a later date.

Rebels in uniform, members of the West Marches Society, rifle corps, railwaymen, and released convicts were in the motley crowd that took part in these murders (7).

(7) At a few places, convicts also took part in the atrocities against the Germans; but the statement coming from a Polish quarter that the escaped or liberated criminals were the main perpetrators, and that the atrocities against Germans, for example, in and near Bromberg are to be ascribed principally to the criminals who escaped in Crone-on-the-Brahe -- or that similar atrocities against Germans in the neighbourhood of Thorn were due to criminals who broke out in Fordon -- is refuted by the fact that in those places hardly any pillaging or thefts occurred, and further by the identification by name of the perpetrators and accomplices, verified in the investigations and criminal proceedings by statements of reliable witnesses, The erroneous and tendentious Polish statement that convicts and similar rabble had incited the soldiers and civilians to acts of violence is absolutely contradicted by the results of the juridical proceedings.

Everywhere a definite method governed the procedure, from it could be [p. 20] deduced that a centralized system of murder was being practised (1).

(1) The declaration of the 17 year-old Pole, Bernhard Kokoczynski, interrogated and condemned for serious breach of the peace by the special court of Bromberg, on September 27, 1939 (Sd. K. Ls. Bromberg, 24/39), that he was ordered to hunt up minority Germans repeats itself several times in the attempts at justification made by the Poles convicted of murder or complicity. The murderers or accomplices relied therefore on instructions. This establishment of fact is parallel with the attitude of nearly all the murderers and the accomplices, who based their action firmly and decisively on the grounds that the Germans had started shooting, and that that was why measures had been taken against them. For this assertion no proof was brought forward in any single case. The unanimity of this assertion points conclusively to the fact that it must have been issued by a central office as a definite basis of action.

That these unheard-of cruel individual and mass-murders were carried on in such a way is explained by the mentality of the Pole, and his habit to incline to cruelty and torture. The proverbial courage of the Pole corresponds with his equally proverbial cunning and deceit. Innumerable Polish murderers present themselves to our eyes as crafty and bloodthirsty creatures. Denunciation and treachery are expressions of the Polish national character, from which elements the brutal mentality and lust for murder emanate. All that occurred in and around Bromberg, Posen and Pless, in the days of September 1939, is nothing but a repetition of the bloodshed that occurred in Upper Silesia during the Polish riots in 1920/21, which, at the time, shocked public opinion throughout the civilized world.

The hunt for minority Germans in the towns and villages was carried out more or less according to the following system; following the command Nr. 59 (2)

(2) The broadcast of the Polish Government of Sept. 1, belongs to one of the most important pieces of evidence proving that acts of violence against Germans bore the character of a campaign, centrally organized and under official control: Frau Weise, the wife of the senior physician of the Posen Protestant Deaconess Hospital together with Dr Reimann of the same place, give the text of the broadcast heard by them on the **morning** of Sept. 1, as follows: - "Hullo! Hullo! Germans, Czechs and Bohemians! Carry out Command No at once." The two witnesses were no longer certain of the actual number. In a verbal statement, Konrad Kopiera, director of the Schicht Trust of Warsaw, definitely remembers the number as 59. Frau Klussek of Posen, 24, Hohenzollern Straße, heard the following on the **afternoon** of Sept. 1. "Hullo! Hullo! To all courts, prosecuting attorneys and other authorities. Circular No. concerning" after which followed an example of some kind of secret code message which Frau Klussek could not remember, but it ran more or less like this: -- 824,358 X 5 + 9/4 -- "has to be carried

out immediately!" Further investigation is being under taken as regards the number of the circular as well as the code text.

repeatedly broadcast by the Warsaw Government on Sept. 1, a *modus operandi* which must have been agreed upon beforehand with provincial authorities, the provincial governments instructed the local police immediately to enforce the orders of arrest already drawn up and provided with consecutive numbers, against the minority Germans. These warrants did not include the new arrivals within the last few weeks, proof in itself that the orders had been prepared long before (3).

(3) There were 3 kinds of warrants of arrest -- Red: for arrest and house search, Pink: Internment (supposed to have been applicable particularly to German nationals), Yellow: evacuation from a place of residence with travel permit to definite location in Central or East Poland, as prescribed by the Mayor. As a rule all these colours were treated with the same severity, i. e. those distinguished by the mild "yellow evacuation warrants" were treated in the same way as those abducted in batches under police control (Photographic copies of the warrants of arrest in the archives RKPA 1486/8. 39).

In accordance with these orders, the minority Germans were arrested without reason being given, and carried off to the police-station in the shortest possible time. Some were questioned (others were not) with the intention of trying to force a confession to the effect that they had been actively engaged as spies or enemies of the State. They were either thrown into prison or sent home under the impression that they were free mere. Often, all their papers of identification were taken away by the police; they were liberated without these papers being returned, with instructions to call for them later. This "later" was destined to become "never". Either they never got so far, or, if they did, they never came back; they were murdered in the meantime (1).

(1) The murder case of the brothers Lemke in Bromberg, Nakeler Strasse (Sd. K. Ls. Bromberg 33/39).

They were severely ill-treated on their way to or from the police station and in the prison cells. They were kicked, beaten with rifle butts, spat on, and subjected to the most awful words of abuse. Those who had not been arrested, interned or abducted, were, in accordance with exact lists, fetched out of their homes and either beaten to death or shot down by soldiers, police, or armed civilians, chiefly led by men of unsavoury reputation, wholly anti-German (2).

(2) The lists played a very important part in the preparation of Polish atrocities. According to Gertrud Becker, servant, of Bromberg-Jägerhof and witness in the murder case of Schröder and

Köhke (WR I) "the names of all persons who were in the cellar were called out from a list." The commanders of local rebel organizations had drawn up "Death lists" which served as preliminaries for the massacre of Germans. The sworn statement of the innkeeper Litwa at Landsberg, district of Rybnik, shows that the rebel Kwiotek had drawn up a list of 150 minority Germans "who were to be killed at a convenient moment" (SG. in Kattowitz 19/39). The witness Frau Emvira Diesner in Ciechocinek (WR II) deposed that "the whole Town Council took part in drawing up the black list." Witness Paul Raketete, Pastor of Schokken (WR II) declared that the preparation of the lists was in the hands of all the local administrative authorities. A Polish police sergeant of Rogasen told the witness, Innkeeper Ewald Thou, that the "black-list" had been drawn up "by someone in a high position (WR II). The witness Erwin Boy, a master-tailor of Ostburg is of the opinion that the Polish village elder was responsible for the drawing up of the lists: without such lists "it would have been impossible for the soldiers to use a piece of paper for calling out our names."

The entries of "Suspicious" in the military passports of minority Germans liable to military service, or in the discharge certificates were similar in importance. In all these cases the holders of such papers, with one exception (Eugen Hoffmann), were murdered in Bromberg on Sept. 4. It has been established that all entries of "Suspicious," as well as the discharge papers, constituted an order to the Polish authorities to have the holders of such papers shot (for details see documents RKPA 1488/22. 39 and 1486/24. 39).

The facts which established that the Polish action against minority Germans was prepared by the officials, according to plan, completely contradict the statement of Polish emigrants who maintain that all these acts of atrocity were a form of "reprisal," and that in their flight before the German troops the Poles had carried off minority Germans and, as the position in general became worse and worse "they killed them out of sheer exasperation." In reality all minority Germans were interned, abducted, ill-treated and murdered in accordance with well-thought-out plans. It was not a spontaneous action resulting from the shock of the entry of German troops into Poland.

Anyone asking what was the reason for such persecution, or why his arrest had been made, was answered with a shot in the neck, blows from the butt of a rifle, or stabs with a bayonet. As a rule, when people were fetched by force and ill-treated, these acts were accompanied by house searches for weapons, secret wireless transmitters, wireless receiving sets and suspicious documents. No Germans had any weapons because for years conditions had rendered this impossible. It was sufficient to find a child's percussion-cap pistol to justify a murder (1).

(1) Verbal statement by the witness Charlotte Korth (WR I).

It actually happened that an accusation was made that a weapon had been found; actually this weapon had been concealed by the Poles on the spot beforehand, or during the interrogation. As regards the search for hidden ammunition, a cartridge was secretly laid on a cupboard during the search; the discovery of this cartridge was then brought forward as proof of guilt (2).

(2) Statements of the witnesses Herbert Schlicht in Bromberg and Anna Krüger in Jägerhof (WR I).

Again a minority German's notebook was taken away, drawings of an incriminating nature were secretly made inside; this was then used as a *corpus delicti*. We have evidence of a case in which Polish infantry asserted that a hand-grenade had been found in a house. Finally however, a Polish soldier intervened and honestly declared that he had seen another Polish soldier put it there. This saved the minority German's life (3).

(3) Statements of witness Friedrich Weiss, butcher in Wonorce, and Willi Bombicki in Gratz (WR II).

In towns, a systematic signal for concerted action against Germans was usually the sudden explosion of a shot in the midst of the seething crowds (4),

(4) In many cases no shot had ever been fired, some Pole simply made a false statement, trying to indicate that from the house of some German a shot had been fired.

instantaneously cries echoed from the streets: "The Germans have started shooting! Catch them! Kill the Germans, the Huns, the Swine, the Spies!" In spite of knowledge to the contrary and without the slightest justification, Germans were accused of shooting. This gave the Polish soldiers sufficient excuse for shooting Germans in pursuance of the object aimed at by the bandits and indicated by the agitators, namely, the complete extermination of all Germans (5).

(5) This signal for action was spread by the press, wireless and chauvinistic associations. It was even proclaimed from the pulpit on that "Blood Sunday" itself in Bromberg (statement of Wladyslaw Dejewski [Sd. K. Ls. Bromberg 16/39] accused and convicted of three murders of minority Germans.) Dejewski's statement about the devastating work of anti-German propaganda by the Polish intelligentsia and the clergy, including various other credible statements of his, brings up and touches on a most serious subject: The abuse of the Pulpit and its connection with the political campaign for the extermination of everything German (cf. Document No. 23) Dejewski declares: "had the clergy exhorted us to calm and circumspection, it would **never** have come to such bloodshed." Here he referred to definite sermons inciting the population made by Canon Sch. in Bromberg shortly before the German troops occupied that town. In these sermons the canon incites the inhabitants "to resist the Germans to the last drop of blood and to destroy everything German." In his statement before the Special Court at Posen, the Pole Henryk Pawlowski declared: "the population was incited by the clergy" (Murder case Grieger-John, Sd. Ls. Posen 28/39, cf. document No. 50).

Thereupon the howling and enraged mob blindly attacked and overwhelmed civilians of both sexes. Often women in a frenzy of fanaticism indicated to soldiers, who were strangers to the locality, where Germans lived. The soldiers forced their way in and stabbed or shot the Germans. For the most part, male Germans of every age, including children, down to infants of 2½ months, were murdered (1).

(1) According to definite proof, the oldest man murdered was the 86-year-old Peter Rierast of Ciechocinek and the youngest victim the two and a half month old infant Gisela Rosenau of Lochowo, who died of hunger on the breast of her murdered mother. The greatest number by far of the Minority Germans who were beaten to death or shot is represented by the members of the German Association (which was approved according

to statute by the Polish Government) as well as by members of the Young German Party. In the case of the inclusion of victims in the "lists" it was principally the most esteemed citizens of German descent who were subject to acts of violence, but smallholders who were absolutely harmless politically, and unemployed German workmen and invalids were also murdered without exception.

Although mainly men of military age, especially between the ages of 16 and 25, were killed, later on even German women and girls were not spared, and for weeks after those sordid events, death notices in the *Deutsche Rundschau* in Bromberg as well as in the *Posener Tageblatt* give an appalling survey of how German men, women, old men, cripples, invalids and children were done to death at the murderous hands of the Poles, and how most of them were mutilated in a ghastly way and robbed. The type of injury (shots in the neck, stabs in the eye-sockets, crushing of skulls with rifle butts, and exposing the brain, shots in the head fired straight down, etc.) is singularly uniform in all the different localities where murder took place. A definite conclusion could be formed from the uniformity of time and method in which these outrages were committed against the German minority, that the organization of bloodshed among Germans was carried out in a uniform manner. In any case; the conclusion arrived at by the medico-legal experts, resulting from the examination of hundreds of murder cases, is that there is a remarkable similarity in the type of injury. Presence of mind saved the lives of some who either feigned death or were fortunate enough not to have suffered fatal wounds (2).

(2) For information as to injuries, etc., refer to the memoranda of the medico-legal expert Surgeon Major Dr. Panning and University Lecturer Dr. Hallermann, based on conclusions arrived at from 250 post-mortems (Appendix to the document section). The result of, the post-mortems confirm the statements of witnesses made before the special courts and military investigation offices, from which a clear picture is formed showing that the major part of the murders of minority Germans were committed by Polish soldiers. These post-mortems clearly show that the injuries were caused by high-velocity weapons (Army rifles) and also by Army pistols, hand grenades and machine guns. There is also some evidence which indicates the use of dum-dum bullets (OKW. Hs. Ins. Br. 18).

Mass arrests, abductions, ill-treatment and murders of minority Germans have been proved to have taken place in all parts of Poland, wherever Germans had settled or become domiciled, among other places, besides Warsaw, in the district of Chelm, in Volhynia and in Vilna. They attained an exceptional degree of intensity where Germans were massed in comparatively large numbers and where, in consequence, arrangements for evacuation could not be carried out in an organised and methodical way, owing to the rapid advance of the German troops. The murderous outrages of both soldiers and civilians were at their worst in those districts where years of agitation had completely poisoned the soul of the Pole, and where an analysis of the population showed a high percentage of minority Germans, and where the political frenzy of the Pole reached its climax. This explains the fact that those who were made to suffer more severely under the Polish lust for blood were in particular the German settlements in the Posen region, the preponderantly German villages, and those with a preponderance of German blood in the lowlands of the Vistula, as well as Bromberg, town and district, with its high percentage of German population. Here whole villages and families were completely exterminated (1).

(1) Official investigations carried out since the publication of the first edition of this collection of documents concerning atrocities against the German minority in Poland have disclosed a far

more terrible situation than was revealed by the graves discovered before November 17, 1939. The numbers of killed and missing as ascertained by the Central Office for the Discovery and Interment of Minority Germans instituted by the Head of the Civil Administration in Posen, have already had to be vastly increased since that date. Not only were far more Germans killed in the surroundings of Posen and within the radius of Bromberg on Blood Sunday, but even Silesia and Central Poland have disclosed such hecatombs of victims that, according to the latest figures available on February 1, 1940, the number of dead and missing in the German minority now amounts with certainty to 58,000, of whom 12,857 have so far been discovered and identified. Heavy frost during the winter months has almost completely interrupted the systematic exhumations and the possibility of identification. The list of missing, compiled from information given by their relatives, leaves no room for doubt that the enormous grave-yard of minority Germans in Poland contains far more than 58,000 victims, all of whom perished in the Polish reign of terror.

The worst persecutions of Germans took place between Aug. 31 and Sept. 6, 1939. They reached their climax on the "Blood Sunday", Sept. 3, in Bromberg and terminated about Sept. 17/18 with the liberation of the abducted victims by the arrival of German troops near Lowitsch. The Germans were usually herded together, driven off and massacred in isolated spots, in numbers ranging from 39, 48, 53 to 104 at a time (2).

(2) Among others, 36 murders took place in the Eichdorf settlement, 39 murders at Jesuitersee, 53 murders at Klein-Bartelsee. In the suburb of Jägerhof, near Bromberg, 63 Germans were murdered in one single day. In a mass grave at Slonsk, south-east of Thorn, 58 bodies of minority Germans were discovered. The largest mass grave found close to Tarnowa, north of Turek, on October 14, 1939, contained 104 bodies of Germans, who had been led away in columns from Schroda and were afterwards killed by blows, or shot and mutilated. A mass grave of 40 minority Germans from Thorn and its neighbourhood, discovered close to Alexandrowo, contained such terribly mutilated bodies that only three could be identified (see illustrations). Ghastly discoveries were further made in the Cracow district, in the province of Posen, and east of Klodawa.

Between Klodawa and Krosniewice three mass graves were found in the first week of December 1939: each containing between 18 and 20 appallingly mutilated victims of the Polish lust for murder, mainly German farmers from Schrimm and Santomischel. Near the village of Tenczynek, between Kattowitz and Cracow, 20 minority Germans, who had been shot dead, were discovered with their hands bound in a common grave, live hand grenades having been strung between their bodies. Along the Kutno-Lowitsch road 26 bodies of murdered and mutilated members of the German minority were found buried in a number of places, the body of one man having been thrown into an air-raid trench and a latrine for Polish soldiers erected above it. (Communication from the Posen Central Office for Investigating the Graves of murdered Minority Germans).

Wherever Germans were found shot or beaten to death, they were discovered on the thresholds of their houses, in the courtyard or garden, along the road, unburied, sometimes merely covered with leaves and branches, often only hurriedly covered with a thin layer of earth. In nearly every case there were ghastly mutilations such as eyes gouged out, teeth smashed, brains oozing out of the skulls; tongues torn out, abdomens slit open, broken arms and legs, fingers hacked off, feet and lower portions of the legs chopped off. Those who were massacred in this way lay bound together with ropes in twos or threes, or were placed in rows, hands tied to their backs with ropes and straps. [p. 25] They lay in the ditch of a field, on the edge of a wood, or on the shore of a lake (1)

(1) Group of murdered civilians at Jesuitersee R.K.P.A. 1486/9/39.

whither they had been driven, often only to be slaughtered by a shot in the neck. Many victims were only found six, seven or even eight weeks later, and at some distant spot. Many bodies were completely smeared with dirt and blood. In a number of cases the mutilations had taken place whilst the murdered person was still alive. Wherever Germans had succeeded in fleeing from their homes and property in time, to hide in

cellars, attics, plough furrows, hedges, woods, ditches or in fields of potatoes, beetroot and sunflowers, they were often betrayed by Polish neighbours and hunted out by hordes of politically fanatical residents, Polish adolescents of from 17 to 20 years of age (2),

(2) In many places Polish schoolboys were often accomplices, volunteers and even ringleaders. As early as the end of July, 16-year-old boys had already been armed with army rifles. (Witness's statement . . . Hertel in Pless WR I.)

ill-treated and then beaten to death. These hordes were armed with weapons of every possible description--fence stakes, cudgels, knives, iron bars, axes, choppers, daggers, spades, whips, hay forks, pickaxes, stanchions, lead-tipped sticks, and then again with sabres, pistols and rifles. Where did the civilians, especially these adolescents, get these weapons from? How did all these incited, and immoral elements come into possession of such instruments of murder? It was no mere chance that they were in possession of these weapons. They had either been distributed by the local Police offices or served out by the magistrates shortly before the administrative officials left, i. e. the Polish officials aided and abetted these acts of violence and murders of Germans (3).

(3) In Upper Silesia the Rebels and members of the West Marches Society were the chief perpetrators of acts of violence against the German minority. They had always threatened the Germans "that one day they would be done in," and as early as the beginning of July were equipped by the "Polish military authorities with automatic pistols, light machine-guns and army rifles." (Statement of witness Hertel in Pless WR I.)

Sometimes it was one or more of the ringleaders who with their wild behaviour goaded the masses into the desire to kill their German-born fellow citizens. Working in close cooperation with the Polish soldiers, air-raid wardens were also outstanding in their cruelty. Though the greater part of these murders were committed by soldiers belonging to scattered units, or by the rear-guard in flight and by parties of sappers, the participation of regulars and even Polish officers in these murders has been definitely established. It was not only the remarks of the Polish military: "We shall stamp out the Germans root and branch" (4),

(4) Sworn statement of the Polish N.C.O. Friedrich Lorenz of Lischkowo. (WR I and Sd. Bromberg. Dated Sept. 28/29, 1939.) . . . General Bortnowski's remark that "All Germans must be exterminated," is testified to by witness Otto Leischner, teacher of Slonsk (WR II). The sworn statement of witness Heinz Friedrich, baker, in Wonorze (Ostburg) reveals that on Aug. 28, 1939, Capt. Czaynert, of the Polish Res. Inf. Regt. 59 in Hohensalza, on the barrack square, prophesied amongst other things, that the Poles would be in Berlin in 3 days, and he continued: . . . "Boys, when we march into Berlin, we shall kill all the German swine, leaving just enough alive as will have room under a pear tree, and we will have breakfast with these." Finally he said: "Well boys! if you see any Germans on the way you will know what to do." (WR II).

or the orders to shoot Germans, which prove the part taken by commissioned and non-commissioned officers in these acts of murder, but also the systematic use made of whips in rounding up Germans forcibly carried off, and the use of the pistol by Polish officers to kill them. These Polish officers have stated that they had orders to shoot Germans.

The civilian assassins and their accomplices belonged to every class of the Polish population. They were mainly composed of members of the West Marches Society and of the Association of Reserves as well as of the Rebel Association, officially supported by the Kattowitz Provincial Governor Grazynski. They were labourers, workmen, parish employees, clerks, locksmiths, mechanics, electricians, chauffeurs, hairdressers,

foresters, dental-mechanics, book-keepers, railway guards, gardeners, weavers, roof layers, slaters, butchers, cattle dealers, rarely peasants, but very often railwaymen (1).

(1) The fact that in this list, which could be supplemented by the addition of other professions, no mention is made of members of the academical profession, is explained by the fact that the greater portion of the intelligentsia, the leading classes of Poland, had fled from Poland before the outbreak, of hostilities.

Wherever hordes of armed civilians struck down or shot minority Germans in the open street, Polish soldiers and police present on the spot made no attempt to interfere (2).

(2) A few exceptional cases are on record where soldiers arriving on the scene took preventive action against the bloodthirsty Polish civilians (Sd. K. Ls. Bromberg 88/39); or where a Polish officer liberated a German woman from the assassins' hands (Sd. K. Ls. Bromberg 91/39).

Searches effected in houses, gardens, courts or cellars were generally carried out by these bands of assassins, on their own initiative or accompanied by Polish soldiers. Both soldiers and civilians took an equal part in the destruction of furniture and household articles, in the theft of money, jewels, linen, documents, watches, fountain-pens etc. Accompanied by the curses of the incited mob and exposed to blows, cuffs, kicks and stabs, and missiles such as bottles and stones, the Germans, completely defenceless, were driven to the police or more often to soldiers who were complete strangers to the locality, who in their turn, no less than the police and gendarmes, ill-treated and killed them without rhyme or reason. The derisive attitude of the Polish soldiers towards any idea of morality or right sprang from politico-psychological roots; every kind of influence having been employed in the barracks to create a general atmosphere against everything German especially by the repeated orders of the Polish Government, clergy, subordinate officials, as well as certain quarters financed by the authorities, to eliminate all trace of the established German element. Thus so many murders took place against "persons unknown," just because the persecuted, abducted and ill-treated people happened to be Germans, and as such had to disappear to comply with the Government's watchword which, in the meantime, had become popular opinion.

A sordid chapter dealing with the atrocities committed on minority Germans is the active part taken by fanatical Polish women, married women, widows, and unemployed, acting as informers to the soldiers as to the whereabouts of minority Germans and demanding their murder (1).

(1) One of the most fanatical examples of hate was shown by the laundrywoman Maria Goralska, of a Bromberg: She openly boasted that she had "betrayed many Germans": her mania for murder literally made her foam at the mouth" (Sd. K. Ls. Bromberg 88/39). Another Polish woman, Sophie Bednarczyk shouted to the crowd, "All Germans must be slaughtered! The accursed Hitler pigs must be castrated!" (Sd. K. Ls. Bromberg 73/39). Also the Polish woman Salewski demanded that "Germans should have their throats cut" . . . (Sd. Is. Bromberg 151/39). The Polish woman Franziska Wolska had a military patrol fetched by a boy and led them into a house belonging to the minority German Rohrbeck: father and son were shot (Sd. K. Ls. Bromberg 44/39). How Polish women inflicted serious injuries on Germans with various weapons is shown in the testimony of Steinborn in the case of the massacre of Iwno (Sd. Is. Posen 643/39).

The attitude of these Polish women had an intensifying effect on the general lust for murder and roused the baser instincts of the marauding hordes. Whatever fanatical women did to defenceless abducted victims is no less reprehensible than the acts of the armed women who joined the francs-tireurs.

The method and degree of cruelty gives the Polish atrocities a special place in the history of political murders in the 20th century. The number of German-born children, of school or under-school age, who were killed or shot (2)

(2) The medico-legal experts have compiled a list of a number of murdered German-Polish children, whose deaths had doubtless been caused by firearms (OKW. Hs. In. Br 60; Br. 74, Br. 76, Br. 100; Br. 118, Br. 129, P. 29).

is just as indicative of the unscrupulous pursuit of the official murder policy against anything of German origin as is the fact that the victims of fanatical hatred were tortured in a most bestial manner, many of them being forced to dig their own graves (3)

(3) Sd. Is. Posen 529/39.

and that the fatally wounded were exposed to a more or less lengthy period of mortal agony (4).

(4) In this way the married woman Gollnik of Bromberg was obliged to witness the murder of her husband which was extended over a period of 9 hours (OKW. Hs. In. Br. 110) and Frau Radler in Kleinbartelsee was prevented from giving assistance to her severely injured husband who lay dying for seven hours. (The same Br. 46.)

Again, the ill-treated were bound with cow ropes and were left to die of hunger and thirst; war invalids, wearers of artificial limbs and sick people were forced to march for impossible distances; dead horses or dogs were thrown on the mutilated bodies of Germans as an expression of contempt (5).

(5) Sd. Is. Bromberg 516/39.

Even a pregnant woman was murdered shortly before parturition (6).

(6) OKW. Hs. In. post-mortem No. Br. 127.

No pity was shown to a child begging for its life (7),

(7) Sd. K. Ls. Bromberg 85/39.

or to the sobs of the small boy clinging moaning and terrified to the arms of his mother (8).

(8) RKPA 1486/7. 39.

The plea for grace was answered with blows (9)

(9) Sd. K. Ls. Bromberg 14/39.

with the fist. German-born men were killed before the eyes of their wives and children, boys torn from their mothers' sides; relations were prevented from giving relief to the groaning victims. German-Polish men and women brought forward to be shot were lined up with their faces to the wall and made to bend their knees, while rifles were aimed at them without being actually fired; this form of martyrdom was repeated time after time, so that these tortured people were completely demoralised and in a state of mental despair before they were killed. Hearts were torn from the corpses (1),

(1) Testimony of N. C. O. Fremke: "A male body was found with its heart torn out; it lay alongside the body" (WR I).

those who lay dying on the ground were trampled upon (2),

(2) The physical and mental torture to which victims of Polish bloodthirstiness were submitted in their mortal agony is typically shown in the sworn statement re the murders of Steinke and Thom (Sd. K. Ls. Bromberg 68/39), and Ernst Kruger (S d. Is. Bromberg 151/39): The witness Pelagia Wiczorek (Polish) of Michelin states under oath that an old man lay dying on the ground and that "the murderers trampled all over him" (Sd. Is. Bromberg 814/39). The witnesses Heinrich Krampitz, electrician, and Anton Hinz, organist, both of Kulm, deposed on oath that the chauffeur Wladislaus Rybicki of Kulm "kicked and stamped on an old man who lay dying from stabs and knife injuries inflicted on him by Polish civilians so violently and so often that the blood squirted up from under his boots" (Sd. Is. Bromberg 117/39). Bruno Bender of Schokken, dairyman, deposed on oath that Polish soldiers beat a minority German to a state of unconsciousness and then "stamped on his head until it was a mere mass of bloody matter" (W R II).

and those already beaten to a state of unconsciousness were kicked in the face, or dragged to death with horse-reins; others had their noses cut off, their eyes gouged out, or were castrated. All this demonstrates so clearly the bestial attitude of the Polish

murderers and assassins, that no surprise can be felt at the fact that in certain cases the corpses were even put on view for money, amid the applause of the ghoulish mob. All this was the outcome of the political complex of a complete moral and spiritual degeneration that had taken this country of Poland in its grip (3).

(3) Murder case Barnicke (RKPA 1 486/5. 39) and statement of the witness Maria Häuser (WR II). The pregnant were not spared (Sd. K. Ls. Bromberg 79139). Found with the genital organs cut off (Sd. Is. Bromberg 151/39). Further statements of the witnesses Siebert and Matthies in Schwersenz (WR II) as well as the murder case Dr. Kirchhoff in Ciolkowo (WR II). "The Germans were to be run over by lorries" (Sd. K. Ls. Bromberg 117/39) -- Whenever a body was found bound hand and foot, but with no visible injury, it must be assumed that the victim was buried alive. (Witness Otto Hofmann, merchant of Hohensalza. WR II). In Nessau (district of Thorn), 14 minority Germans were shot on Sept. 4, 1939, and made to dig their own graves beforehand. Amongst these was the farmer Kurt Poschadel, who had been only slightly wounded. When Poschadel pleaded with the Polish soldiers to shoot him, their answer was derisive laughter; "one bullet was quite enough for a German". Poschadel was then buried alive. Several eye-witnesses of this case were afterwards able to establish the fact that the earth which had been shovelled on to Poschadel moved repeatedly. The following statement, showing the strongest sentiment of hatred towards Germans, was made by a high Polish military doctor of Ciechocinek, a representative of the Polish intelligentsia, who stated to the victims abducted from Bromberg: "If you can't stand the fellows before the machine-guns, then send them to me for my operating table" (This statement was taken from the written complementary declaration of Chief Editor G. Starke in Bromberg and is from a book on his personal experiences; see documentary section). Ludwig Arrandt in Hohensalza (WR II) testifies that those abducted were refused medical attention and admission to Polish hospitals.

An exact picture showing to what extent rape took place is not available. Rape on German women and girls can be proved to have taken place and for no other reason than that "they were Germans." (4)

(4) The statements of the witnesses Hedwig Daase in Slonsk (WR II) and Vera Gannott in Bromberg (WR I and Sd. K. Ls. Bromberg 86/39).

But a great many women from a sense of shame concealed the fact that they had been raped and numerous women hanged themselves for the same reason. (1)

(1) The widow of the farmer Hammermeister, Minna Hammermeister, 40 years old, was raped by a Polish First-Lieutenant. The unhappy woman was forced to march to Lowitsch, but was eventually rescued there. Observing the results of the rape after her return home, she hanged herself. Hammerstein himself had been murdered by Polish bandits.

The sufferings of the German farmer were certainly even greater than those of the Germans in the towns, because each one was left entirely to his own resources on his own farm, and they were not able to assist one another to the same extent.

The farmers were exterminated to such an extent that some villages had only a single survivor as eye-witness of the Polish atrocities. 20 victims lay in a meadow not far from the shooting-range at Hohensalza -- "all big strong men" (2),

(2) Statement of the witness Josef Pirschel, gardener, of Hohensalza (WR II).

"lying singly and each having been killed by numerous shots; many of the bodies were still warm. The execution was carried out by a lieutenant and ten men of the Polish army (3)."

(3) Eye-witness report of Felix Stefanski, mechanic's apprentice Hohensalza (WR II).

Another twenty-nine horribly mutilated farmers belonged to the purely German village of Slonsk, founded by German settlers. All of the male population of this 300-year-old purely German village on whom the Poles could lay their hands, whole families were cold-bloodedly shot and terribly mutilated by soldiers of the 63rd Infantry Regiment from Thorn (4).

(4) A farmer, Artur Daase, of Slonsk stated "I and another farmer who had the good fortune to escape after being carried off, are the only German farmers who remained alive in the whole northern part of Slonsk," (WR II).

The property of the German farmers of Langenau and Otteraue are in blackened ruins, having been burnt down by Polish soldiers, and their inhabitants are almost all murdered. A somewhat different picture presents itself in the Posen district. Here village elders and agricultural labourers, in league with soldiers, set the barns on fire, drove away the cattle, robbed and blackmailed the Germans (5).

(5) Rings were stolen from the hands of the dead (The murder of Rurkat, Sd. Is. Posen 38/39). In Schwersenz Polish women land-workers mishandled arrested German women in the most brutal manner, tearing off their clothes, stockings and shoes, and robbing them under the eyes of Polish soldiers (Trial of Luczak, Sd. Is. Posen 55/39).

And in all the towns the Germans were herded together into columns and marched away into the interior of Poland. A "class-war" spirit directed against the German estate owners combined here with the general anti-German agitation among the Polish masses.

Were no consciences stirred when the minority Germans were herded together in hundreds in every street, and marched away in thousands into the interior of the country? Pregnant women, children, war-invalids, cripples, old men and women -- names like Professor Bonin, 83 years old, of Lissa; Bohrmann, an 82 year old market gardener of Schönsee; Fräulein Schnee, 76 years old; Rector Assmann of Bromberg, 70 years old; all of them Germans of high repute among Poles as well as Germans. Tied together in twos, handcuffed, many of them bare-footed, some dressed only in shirts and trousers, some in slippers, underclothes or dressing gowns, some dragged directly from their beds -- in this manner they came from Bromberg and Posen, from Lissa and Gratz, from Schroda and Schrimm, Obornik and Wollstein, leaving their [p. 30] homes behind them, carried away by brutal guards, who cursed them, beat them and stabbed them with their bayonets. They held together through thick and thin, supported and carried one another forward, suffered hunger and thirst and the brutal contempt of their guards in dogged silence. Their feet bleeding and festering, many burning with fever, some of them half-mad from suffering; 20, 25 or 30 miles a day in forced marches, on and on, almost without a pause, eastwards and still further eastwards -- their destination Bereza-Kartuska, ill-famed Polish internment camp; "there they would find their end soon enough." (1).

(1) Remarks made by members of the Polish guard accompanying the column of abducted Germans to Lowitsch, corroborated by the statement in court of the witness Wawrezin Dmagala, a Polish groom (WR II).

Passing Polish soldiers, made furious by having been forced into rapid retreat by the advancing German troops, struck savagely at the physically and mentally exhausted Germans. Polish officers also shot some of them down, and mishandled women and the sick with whips and crops (2).

(2) Description of Herr Wiesner, estate-manager of Wollstein (WR II).

Children of 3 to 5 years, tied to their parents, were driven along with the rest. Polish spies, scoundrels and convicts mixed with the Germans and tried to take advantage of their dazed misery. All of a sudden, someone shouted; "All clear, run for it!" and when the wretched prisoners attempted to make for the open country they were shot down by police and soldiers. There were strict orders to shoot anyone who lagged behind (3),

(3) Told by a Polish N. C. O. to the farmer Hermann Netz of Crome a. B. (WR II).

and one officer ordered that those who did not keep up with the column should be struck down with rifle butts (4).

(4) Report of Pastor Bickerich of Lissa (WR II).

The order was carried out so thoroughly that many hundreds of minority Germans remained behind, shot or struck down dead, filling the roads and ditches, pitiful evidence of Polish lust for Murder. The prisoners fed themselves with Swedes and were compelled to sleep in the open even in rainy weather. They got water from dirty puddles and duck-ponds, or had it poured out for them, filthy and undrinkable, from petrol cans. Painfully seldom were they allowed a ration of even this foul water with which to moisten their lips. The extent of the cruelty shown to the minority Germans in these columns of prisoners is shown by the fact that, whilst being driven through the little town of Schrimm, 25 Germans were beaten to death and the rest of the column mishandled in such a way that even resident Poles, amongst them a Prior, protested, without however being able to stop the atrocities (5).

(5) Report about the march of abducted Germans from Schrimm (Sd. Is. Posen 243/39).

When a halt was made, the Germans were often "drilled" -- forced, for instance, to kneel for an hour, those who fell over being struck dead, others, weak from exhaustion, "shot down like dogs" (6).

(6) Report of his experience by Pastor Rakette, of Schokken (WR II); others were "shot like hares running before the beaters" (see elsewhere).

Women and old people were not spared these "drills". In the Posen column, a war-invalid, Herr Schmolke, who had two artificial limbs, was shot, together with his wife, his 15-year-old daughter and his son, aged 18 months, when their strength gave way (7).

(7) Eye-witness account of Father Breitingger and Otto Kaliske (WR II).

Two other disabled men, one called Jentsch of Rakwitz, and the other, the 65-year-old Kiok of Wongrowitz (both had wooden legs) suffered the same fate -- no wonder that many soon became so utterly hopeless that they committed suicide (1).

(1) Report, of Wilhelm Romano, of Wongrowitz (WR II). Starke (Bromberg) reports how a young German, in despair, severed the artery of his neck (eye-witness report WR II). A farmer, Drescher (Czempin) stated that one of his comrades "jumped into a water-hole in order to drown himself." (WR II).

Some began to have the wildest hallucinations. One imagined that he saw splendid castles, another "saw a firework display." A terrified cry from one of the prisoners, who was dreaming, brought a hail of bullets into the middle of the German group. The lives of human beings were naturally of no importance, when those human beings were Germans. It was worst of all when shots were fired wildly into the ranks of the marching prisoners from behind, by their rear guard, or when men saw their fathers or friends die by their side simply because they could not continue marching for mile after mile with their arms raised aloft. Torn from their homes, driven forward like cattle and threatened every minute with death, these Germans were marched on towards Kolo-Klodowa, towards Kutno, Lowitsch and Turek-Tulischkow. The column of unfortunates from Warsaw reached the hell of Bereza-Kartuska (2).

(2) Eye-witness report of Father Odilo Gerhard (Document section).

Even weeks after being liberated many were still suffering terribly as a result of the mental and physical torture they had gone through, and many finally succumbed to the after-effects of their terrible experiences in these groups, completely broken in health by the superhuman exertions they had been subjected to by the brutality of their Polish oppressors (3).

(3) So far it has not been possible to come to a final conclusion as to the extraordinary number of minority Germans killed in these marching columns or the number of the columns themselves. It is probable that at least one column was put together in every district town of Posen and West Prussia.

The atrocious cruelty of the Poles to the minority Germany in these marches of prisoners is one of the greatest blots on the already so sordid history of minorities in our time (4).

(4) Cf. the eye-witness reports of Starke (Bromberg), Father Breitingger (Posen), Military Surgeon Dr. Weise (Posen), Pastor Lesczynski (Kosten), Veterinary Surgeon Schulz (Lissa), estate-owner Dr. Schubert (Grune near Lissa), Pastor Rauhut (Gnesen), Father Odilo Gerhard (Cracow), baker Kaliske (Rakwitz, Wollstein district), Manager Romann (Wongrowitz), Pastor Rakette (Schokken), farmer Glaesemann (Schwersenz), and others. (Cf. Document section.)

Everything in the nature of atrocity which was inflicted by the Poles on the minority Germans, was done not out of an individual desire for revenge, nor for personal reasons; it was not the product of class-hatred or envy of the wealthier man, but simply of political mass-antagonism; it was nothing more nor less than organised massacre, not due to any sudden excess of fury amongst masses which had got out of hand, but to a systematic agitation which, playing upon that lust of murder and robbery which is an essential part of Polish mentality, resulted in cruelties of all kinds. The motive for these atrocities lies deep in the soul of the Pole, it is politico-pathological. The hate-imbued will to exterminate everything German was the driving power behind the atrocity campaign, which was nurtured by press, wireless and Government (5),

(5) It is significant of the attitude of the Polish Government that they instantly rejected the suggestion made by the German Foreign Office after the outbreak of war, through the Swedish Legation, to exchange for Polish nationals the minority Germans abducted by the Poles from the areas in the meantime occupied by German troops. (D. N. B. report of 14. 9. 39.) Why the Polish Government rejected this offer made to them purely on the grounds of humanity is quite incomprehensible.

as well as from pulpits and barracks.

It was probably only in the case of the robberies committed by Polish farm-hands in the Posen countryside that personal gain was the motive; all the rest was done merely to satisfy the feeling of revenge against the Germans with their higher standard of culture. The Pole has never lost his inferiority complex in regard to the Germans.

The Germans in Poland have always during the 20 years of Polish domination been regarded and treated by the Polish authorities and a large part of the Polish public (1),

(1) Whenever a Pole intervened in earnest on behalf of a minority German, he was intimidated by threats and violence to such an extent that he had to put conscientious objections out of his mind. In spite of this various Poles behaved decently and courageously. Polish landlords and servants are reported to have tried to protect Germans at the risk of their own lives.

as "disloyal citizens". Suspected unjustly of being spies, and accused of being actively engaged in espionage for the Reich, the minority Germans were ever under the shadow of Polish suspicion. Poland never found a way of establishing a loyal and peaceful

relationship between herself and the German minority. Daily intercourse between minority Germans and Poles was a permanent danger to the lives of the former, due to Polish chauvinistic anti-German propaganda on the one side and the lack of protection from the Polish authorities on the other. This unbearable state of affairs, which had existed for years, reached its climax during the weeks prior to the outbreak of war, once the Poles had become convinced that by reason of the guarantee of assistance by the British Government, there was no further need for them to place any restraint on their provocative attitude or their shameful behaviour. The blank cheque given to Poland by Britain not only stiffened Poland's political backbone, but encouraged, or even directly incited her to commit these ghastly acts of atrocity. The determination of the British war-mongers to destroy Germany was unmasked and laid bare to the whole world in all its mercilessness by the Polish atrocities. The full guilt of the British clique, whose despotism all the world over is founded on lies, oppression, cruelty and murder, has been irrefutably proved for all time by the documentary evidence on some of the most horrible crimes in the history of mankind, contained in this volume.

CASES OF TYPICAL ATROCITIES

[p. 35]

1. German children's home in Bromberg searched five times

Threatening of German children's nurses by Polish soldiers and armed civilians.

As proof of the baseness with which Polish soldiers and armed civilians went against minority Germans in the September days of 1939, we publish in the following an eye-witness's account based on a statement made on oath by Sister Schmidt concerning the events in the German children's home in Bromberg.

Though no act of murder was committed in this case the fact that the search was repeated four times at short intervals on the ground of persistent and completely unfounded assertion that weapons were hidden in the children's home, speaks for itself.

On the "Blood Sunday" five searches in all were made in the German children's home in the Thorner Strasse in Bromberg. At about 7 a.m. two Polish soldiers arrived and demanded admittance. They searched the house for weapons and departed after having convinced themselves of the uselessness of their action. These soldiers were quite polite. At about 9.30 a second search was made by six Polish soldiers. They knocked at the door with their rifle-butts and demanded entrance with much noise and abuse. One of them put his pistol at the temple of Sister Olga, the head of the children's home. Asserting that a machine-gun was in the home and had just been fired, they demanded from Sister Olga that the weapons should be handed over. She replied that there were no weapons in the home and left it to them to make a search if they so wished. The second party also had to leave without finding any weapons, after they had completely searched through the home and smashed in containers, which could not be easily opened. In the course of the late

forenoon, when the children were just sitting down for lunch, the third search took place by four to five Polish soldiers, accompanied by as many civilians. Some of these soldiers had already taken part in the previous search. The soldiers demanded to see the machine-gun, again asserting that fire had been opened from the home; one of them pointed his bayonet at the chest of the sister. Sister Olga again replied that she had no weapons. One of the soldiers, whom the sister took to be an officer, declared: "But we have been told that shots have just been fired from here." Those soldiers who already took part in the previous search confirmed to the sister that in fact "nothing was upstairs". However, the Pole Maximilian Gackowski, who was the only civilian who had followed the soldiers into the hall, kept on shouting in between: "But shots have been fired, I have seen it myself." He shouted at Sister Schmidt: "You old witch, you old woman, you and your breed should have gone long ago." He also added: "If I could do as I wished, you would no longer be alive, I should have killed you long ago." In saying so he brandished a weapon, which the sister took to be a steel switch, in front of her face. Gackowski had this time no luck with the soldiers, on the contrary, they left the home.

In the early afternoon, at about 3 o'clock, the next search was made by about five soldiers and five civilians, among the latter again being Gackowski. The leader of this Squad ordered all the inmates, consisting of three sisters and 18 children aged from 2 to 18, to line up with raised hands. Gackowski also on this occasion repeated his previous abuse and repeatedly asserted that shots had been fired from the home, and demanded to see the machine gun. He also dragged in an alleged witness who, he said, was going to state on oath that shots had just been fired. Whilst the soldiers searched the home, one of them remained in front of Sister Olga with his bayonet. Gackowski took part in the search. When this squad had also not found anything, he declared "They work during the day, but at night they have men with them, and smoke cigarettes. I have seen it myself; and at night they shoot." This squad was leaving the home, when a man was brought in from the direction of the Rifle Club and of whom it was also asserted that he had fired. Gackowski was the first who took up this assertion and approached the man. After this fourth search the sisters discovered that small valuables, such as Sister Olga's watch, were missing. The last search in the house took place in the evening at about 5.30, and again soldiers and civilians took part. The leader of this squad approached Sister Olga with levelled rifle, and threatened to shoot her. At this moment one of the sisters who had been sent to the station to assist in the work of clearing up, returned to the home followed by a batch of soldiers and civilians. On returning home, this sister was covered from head to foot with dirt, as she had to clean the railway track at the station. At the instigation of Gackowski, who was again one of the party, a railway worker declared that the engine oil on the hands and the dress of the sister originated from a machine-gun. Also on this search Gackowski incited the soldiers continually with the assertion that shots had been fired. In point of fact, however, neither were any weapons in the home, nor had any shots been fired from there.

2. The suspicious cap of a member of the Black Guards

Witness Wilhelm Starke. Director of the Vereinsbank in Lissa, deposed on oath as follows:

It was asserted that the cap of a member of the Black Guards had been found in the possession of Berndt, the horticulturist, who together with his two brothers was thereupon arrested. Neither Berndt nor his two brothers had had the cap in their homes, and it was subsequently ascertained that the cap was "Captured" during an attack by Poles on the village of Geiersdorf. At this place there were ten members of the Black Guards who had to leave the village and abandon their equipment. It was definitely proved that the cap was the property of Ernst Wiedermann of Vienna, a member of the Black Guards.

Source: WR II

3. Scenes of horror on the Bromberg Blood Sunday

"Always three to the front" and shot down

Military Court of the Air District Staff 3.
Bromberg, Sept. 16, 1939

Present:
Judge Advocate Dr. Waltzog, acting as Judge.

Gunner Endlich specially engaged as Secretary.

(1) Furniture Factory Owner Herbert Matthes.

After the significance and sacredness of the oath had been explained to him, he deposed on oath as follows:

Re person: My name is Herbert Matthes, I am 46 years of age, a Protestant, furniture maker in Bromberg, 24 Albertstr.

Re matter: I hand over herewith a declaration drawn up by myself entitled "The march of death of about 150 minority Germans to Piecki near Brzoza," together with a supplement "Researches of a Field Company" (1). Both documents have just been read

out to me once more. The additions in pencil have been made in my presence, and according to my statements. I make these documents the subject of my evidence.

Read, approved, signed

Herbert Matthes.

The witness took the oath.

(2) Heinz Matthes.

He was warned to tell the truth and deposed as follows:

Re person: My name is Heinz Matthes--I am 13 years of age, pupil of the German High School in Bromberg, and live with my parents.

Re matter: Both reports compiled by my father have been read out to me, I make them the subject of my evidence. Polish soldiers in Piecki stabbed me with a bayonet through the right shoulder.

Read, approved, signed

Heinz Matthes.

The witness in view of his youth, did not take the oath.

(signed) Dr. Waltzog (signed) Endlich, Gunner

The fatal march of about 150 minority Germans to Piecki near Brzoza

On the "Blood Sunday", September 3, 1939, at 10.30 I was driven out from the air raid shelter in my factory, together with my two sons, 13 and 15 years of age, by four young bandits armed with axes. In the yard we were taken over immediately by two soldiers with fixed bayonets and had to run with raised hands to the main guard room. On the way there the mob howled. Women and girls were like furies. We were spat on and beaten, the soldiers making no attempt to stop this. At the main guard room we

(1) The supplement has not been printed here.

were beaten with rifle butts, whilst passing a line of about 8 yards. With raised hands we stood about one hour against a wall, after our pockets had been searched. After that a group of about 100 persons, mostly well-known citizens of the town, were driven out into the street and, under guard, we had to go through the Danzig-Elisabeth Strasse up to the barracks at the station all the time with raised hands. On the way the beasts threatened us with swords, daggers and axes; they spat on us and beat us -the poor boys could hardly go farther. There were several of these boys among us. In the riding-stable a platform was erected; "All come up here"-we were the first. There were still more coming-in-many fathers with their sons, and, at last, when it was getting dark, there were about 400 of us. They were all calm, quiet, but with courage in their eyes. A sudden enervation set in only when an intelligent man of about 20 years moved six steps away from us. He was pushed back with a bayonet, when he called out "Heil Hit",--a sharp report, and he fell to the ground, hit in the body. His legs, which still moved, were fastened to a stretcher and he was carried out, whilst filthy abuse was used. Then a sudden command "Those to report who carry military papers." The papers were taken from us--"you can call for them tomorrow at the Commissions' Office." A section of us were called out to load up ammunition--these were the few lucky ones, because the majority of them are still alive to-day. We others were put together and had to march out on the Kujawier Strasse to Brzoza. Very soon on the way the old men, who lost their breath, were stabbed with bayonets, and some were murdered. Shortly-beyond the town "Halt" was commanded; we were forced to give a cheer for Poland, and were to go home. The group had hardly got as far as No. 40 to 60, Kujawier Strasse, when shots were fired at us from the front and the rear. Many of us were murdered in a bestial manner. Driven together, we were now only about 150 and were dragged off further by a convoy. I covered my boys and was stabbed with a bayonet in the right upper thigh. Those who could not run and sat down, were knocked down with the butt, because after about two hours the Lieutenant forbade shooting because of the loud reports. Behind milestone No. 10 we had to go 2 miles to the left into the wood and were penned into a low, miserable, open cow stable; it was 5 o'clock Monday morning. We were terrified to find that only 44 of us were left;

frightful thirst and hunger tortured us all. My son Heinz was examined every hour five steps ahead of us, as to whether I or others had fired on Polish soldiers. He defended us all rather-efficiently in the Polish language under my guidance, which I could at times whisper to him, because he was permitted to come back to us, and he succeeded at last, through his engaging manners, to soften the hearts of the brutal Polish soldiers. A horror lamed us all, however, when Heinz whispered to us that they were sending for petrol and were going to burn us, that however the children would be allowed to go home. However, they did not find any petrol. We were suddenly called out and were given coffee and a small biscuit. We will be left alive, was what we now all hoped, but During, a turner, whispered in my ear: "this is the farewell meal." He proved to be right; at 7.30 soldiers came running in, wildly shouting: "line up, three of you at a time." Silently the first three went out, a sharp report-and they had died for our country. This was repeated six times. Heinz courageously went to the hole and begged that he and his brother Horst should be spared; he was stabbed with a bayonet through the right shoulder; "Again three out" I counted the steps, they were ten to twelve, and they had been murdered. Now Heinz told me that the corporal had said it was a waste of good cartridges, the rest should be stabbed to death. "Ah-my God!" could now only be heard. Those who were not quiet received the dull deadly butt blows. Now we three were next; there were five behind us, who would not go out and firmly held on for dear life. We went out hand-in-hand, but were pushed aside to the left. Two soldiers, corporals, took hold of us and pushed us a few steps ahead; they were the two robbers whom Heinz cleverly had told during the day that we carried many valuables and much money on us. We gave them all we had and they began to quarrel about the distribution. We utilized this moment and ran off. At night, always in front of Polish machine-guns: we found no sleep. There was no end to our wandering about; it was Monday night. Heinz was bandaged up with a piece of my shirt. We were only in our shirts, our shoes had been kicked off our feet during the run in Bromberg. It became disastrous on Wednesday night-we saw many military in our vicinity, ran on to two battery-positions, and continually had to evade danger. "Is it not better to die?" asked Horst. Our tongues were swollen and quite white, the lips thick and encrusted. Rescue arrived: heavy dew lay on the low fir trees, we greedily licked it off and ate a frog. "More delicious than wine" said Heinz, and we had Horst who had said farewell to life, back to life again. Wednesday night was. quite dry and now came deadly hunger. Heinz said suddenly: "I have saved a small piece of bread, but this we shall not eat until five minutes before our death-then we shall still live for a few hours" and this indeed is what happened. On the forenoon of Thursday we continually met military, but were too weak to recognize what it was. At 2 o'clock we were certain we could see our German soldiers ahead of us and ran up to a Captain. Coffee and some brandy put new life into us, and a delicious pea soup and bacon gave us back our old vitality. Two hours later we entered relieved Bromberg with a glorious feeling and were soon in the arms of my wife and mother who still could not grasp that such a miracle of reunion could have happened.

Bromberg, September 12, 1939.

Furniture maker,

Sergeant (Reserve) and acting officer, decorated with the Iron Cross 1st and 2nd class

Source: WR I

4. Quarrelling about the spoils

According to the facts ascertained in the case; witness Herbert Matthes of Bromberg deposed on oath as follows:

In the hours of the forenoon of September 3, 1939 the accused Kazimir Dybowski, Paul Kinczewski and Peter Pijarowski, accompanied by a large number of unknown Polish civilians, and several Polish soldiers with fixed bayonets, paraded through the [p. 40] Albert Strasse in Bromberg. Whilst Dybowski carried a knife in his hand, Kinczewski and Pijarowski were armed with an axe and chopper respectively. When the gang get to 24 Albert Strasse, in which house the witness Herbert Matthes, a minority German has a large joinery, they stormed the house led by Kinczewski, whereby Kinczewski asserted to witness Biermann, who, being an air raid warden, was passing through the entrance hall, that Matthes had fired on Polish military. All protestations of Biermann that this was incorrect could not prevent the mob from forcing their way into the yard, where Matthes had hidden himself in a drying room with his wife, his two sons, aged 13 and 15, and his 72 year old mother. The door leading to this room was locked. When, at Kinczewski's call to "Come out" the door remained locked, he simply took an axe and smashed the door in. Thereupon the wife, Ella Matthes, with her two sons and her mother-in-law appeared in the door-way, whilst Herbert Matthes remained in hiding for the moment. Frau Matthes informed the members of the gang and the soldiers that her husband was no longer present and that she did not know his whereabouts. On Kinczewski declaring that in that case he would take away the two sons as hostages, Matthes showed himself in order to save his children. It is only due to the fact that Biermann stepped in between at the last moment that the stroke of the axe which Kinczewski directed at Matthes missed him. Previous to this Pijarowski had already threatened the 72 year old Selma Matthes with his chopper, and Dybowski had threatened her with his knife, without however hurting her. Matthes and his two sons were finally led away by the Polish soldiers. Matthes and his sons were able to save themselves by escaping on the way, when the

Polish soldiers quarrelled over the distribution of the valuables taken from Matthes, and neglected to guard them (1).

Source: Sd. K Ls. Bromberg 22/39

5. The "swaby" (huns) must all be shot

Murder of Giese ... Parts of brain and blood adhered to the kitchen wall

Witness Giese of Bromberg deposed on oath as follows:

R e person : My name is Johanna Giese, nee Keusch. I am 51 years old, Protestant, a minority German, and domiciled in Bromberg, 9 Konopnickiej.

R e matter : On Sunday, Sept. 3, 1939, between 11 and 12 o'clock we were in the cellar of our house. Polish soldiers and civilians entered our property. They insisted that we came out of the cellar. When we had emerged, one of the soldiers asserted that shots had been fired from our house. We in fact had no weapons in the house at all.

My son-in-law left the cellar first. At that moment a civilian shouted "The 'szwaby' (Huns) must all be shot." My son-in-law was at once fired at by a soldier, and was shot through the artery; he also received three further shots in the chest and throat. In spite of this he did not die immediately, but was still alive on Sunday evening, when we had to flee. We could not take him with us and laid him on a sofa in the house.

(1) Details of this incident in previous document.

After the German military marched into Bromberg on Tuesday, I took an N. C. O. with me to my farm, because I wished to see how things looked there. It was a frightful sight. My son-in-law had been taken off the sofa. They had dragged him into the kitchen up to and under the kitchen table. The head was split, the cranium was missing altogether and the brain was no longer in the head. Parts of the brain and blood adhered to the kitchen wall . . .

My son Reinhard Giese had also been with us in the cellar; he was 19 years old. When he saw that my son-in-law had been shot dead he tried to escape, and he succeeded in getting over the fence into the neighbour's property. They ran after him, caught him and shot him dead. I brought the body of my son into the wash house in the evening. He had been shot in the chest.

Another son of mine, Friedrich Giese, 25 years old, is said to have been shot in Hopfengarten together with his whole family, to whom he had fled.

Source: WR I

6. "Kill the Germans"

Eyes gouged with bayonets

Witness Paul Sikorski deposed on oath as follows:

R e p e r s o n : My name is Paul Sikorski, 35 years of age, Catholic, merchant. I claim to be a minority German, domiciled in Bromberg, at 4 Müllerstrasse.

R e m a t t e r : On Sunday, Sept. 3, 1939, at about 6 a. m. I went to the mill to switch off the light and to stop the turbine. On the way there I suddenly heard loud cries from the railway embankment. At a distance of about 100 yards I saw below the embankment a group of railwaymen, civilians and military beating seven persons aged from 20 to 60 years with bayonets, rifle butts and cudgels. They had surrounded their victims. I ran nearer and heard them shout in Polish "Kill the Germans." I saw the blood spurting, even at that distance. I turned however when I noticed that the horde wished to spring on me. I returned at 9 o'clock and inspected the corpses. On two of them the eyes had been gouged with bayonets. The orbits were empty and there was only a bloody mass. In the case of three bodies the skull had been opened and the brain lay a yard distant from the corpse. The other corpses were entirely bashed. One of the bodies was entirely slit open. Two of the murdered were known to me, they were Lechnitz, a butcher of Jägershof, and Herr Schlicht.

In the afternoon, between 3 and 4 o'clock, a group of soldiers with railwaymen came to my mill, Peterson's mill, and brought 18 Germans with them. They were bound together in pairs. I had an exact view of them from my garden. The whole 18 of them were then shot down, two at a time. They then struck them while they were lying on the ground. Amongst the victims were a 14 year old boy, and a woman. Evidently everything had to be done quickly on this occasion, because they all moved off immediately. I carefully inspected the corpses afterwards; they were there for three days.

On Monday afternoon, when it was said that the Polish soldiers had already evacuated the town, two soldiers brought in an elderly man and an elderly woman. In front of my eyes they put them to the wall in the mill. I ran over to the soldiers, knelt down before them and begged them in Polish to release these two old persons, both of whom were

about 65 years of age. However I was pushed away with the rifle butt by one of the soldiers, who said: "Let these damned Germans perish." Before I could rise again they had shot the old people down, and their bodies fell into a ditch. Thereupon the soldiers marched off at the double.

Source: WR I

7. "They should be beaten to death--not shot"

Murder of Wildemann

According to the facts ascertained in the case, witness Frau Wildemann deposed on oath as follows:

Several hordes had repeatedly searched the house of the witness Wildemann in Bromberg,

Schwedenbergstrasse (56 Ugory) in the forenoon of Sept. 3, for weapons without finding any.

At about three o'clock in the afternoon a new horde of about 30 men appeared, all of them armed with cudgels and similar weapons. Pretending that shots had been fired from the house that therefore the house must be searched for weapons, a new search was-made. During the search a number of articles, the property of the Wildemann family, was stolen. There were no weapons in the house, nor were any shots fired from there. Wildemann had hidden in the cellar when he saw the horde arrive. In response to the question as to his whereabouts put to her under threats, Frau Wildemann declared that he had gone to see some acquaintances in the Kujawer Strasse. She was thereupon taken to that place. As her husband was not found there she admitted where he was, after she had been threatened with shooting, and on the promise that nothing would happen to her husband. The horde then returned to Frau Wildemann's property, seized her husband and, handling them roughly on the way, carried both of them off into the adjoining garden. They were then stood in a position as if they were to be shot. When they embraced each other and commenced to pray, they were laughed at and mocked. There were continued shouts of "They should be beaten to death, not shot." Among the shouting crowd was the barber Alfons Lewandowski. On Frau Wildemann's turning to him and asking "What have you got against me, what have I done to you?" he hit her in the face saying "You German swine, you damned Hitlerite." Frau Wildemann was then led away by the soldiers, who on the whole had been rather moderate. Some days afterwards they found Wildemann's dead body terribly mutilated, not far from the premises. He had been hurriedly buried in sand and was only recognizable by his clothing and the contents of his pockets.

Source: Sd. K. Ls. Bromberg 14/39

8. All Germans must be butchered

Murder of Gollnick and Köpernick

According to the facts ascertained in the case witnesses Olga and Franz Tafelski, Bromberg, deposed on oath as follows:

The crowd which was on the move in the Breite Strasse incited the soldiers against the German Gollnick. The soldiers knocked Gollnick down with their butts and left him lying in the street, badly injured. He lived until the evening. Witness Tafelski saw that Gollnick, towards evening was still convulsively moving his left leg and left hand. Gollnick who had fallen on to his face had been turned over by the mob and his trousers opened so that the entire lower part of his body was exposed. Towards evening a civilian appeared with two soldiers, who thrust their bayonets into Gollnick's stomach. Thereupon he was finally killed by a finishing shot. During the afternoon bands of civilians and soldiers raged up and down the Breite Strasse, quite near the spot where Gollnick lay badly injured, shouting that the Germans had fired from their houses. Amongst this horde was Sofie Bednarczyk, an unemployed woman. She flirted with the soldiers and behaved, according to the statement of Olga Tafelski "like a mad woman." Franz Tafelski saw Bednarczyk marching in front of the horde with crossed arms. Her whole attitude expressed that she considered herself extremely important. She shouted, as heard by Olga Tafelski: "Give me a rifle, all Germans must be butchered, the damned Hitlerites." Franz Tafelski heard her shout: "All Germans must be shot dead." In doing so she even smiled at the soldiers. At the corner of 5, Breite Strasse she stopped. When she saw the minority German Gollnick lying there with trousers torn open in front she shouted, as heard by the witness Bartkowiak: "This Hitlerite must have his b ----. . . cut off." About half an hour later the German Köpernick was dragged past the same place and, shortly afterwards, murdered.

(These facts were ascertained at the trial on October 10. 1939 at the special court in Bromberg, on the strength of statements on oath made by Bartkowiak and Christa Gollnick, in addition to those of the witnesses Olga and Franz Tafelski.)

Source: Sd. K. Ls. Bromberg 73/39

9. "That swine is still alive!"

Murder of Gollnick

Witness Christa Gollnick of Bromberg, 101 Kujawier Strasse, deposed on oath as follows:

We kept a greengrocer shop, and also sold flour and fodder. When the first Polish troops marched off I saw our Polish neighbour approaching a Polish major, telling him something and pointing to our house. Thereupon Polish soldiers stormed our shop. after they had smashed in the door. We thought that a battle was going to take place and that the soldiers intended to barricade themselves in our house. We thereupon ran to our dug-out, which we had built by order of the authorities. We did not, however, get that far because the Polish soldiers opened fire on us. My husband was struck in the shoulder, and received a rifle butt blow in the face. He reeled but still endeavoured to escape. He tried to climb over the fence, but was held back by a civilian. He received a further butt blow from a Polish soldier so that he fell. My children and myself were brought back into the house by a Polish lieutenant. I could see my husband lying on the ground, from the attic. He still lived for a long time. I saw him draw up his legs to the body and straighten them again, and now and then he raised his hand. It was impossible for us, however, to go out to him as Polish soldiers and civilians were standing about. A Polish policeman was continually stationed at the fence where my husband lay. Polish women screamed: "That swine is still alive." Towards evening three shots were fired at my husband by Polish soldiers, after he had received a bayonet stab in the body earlier in the afternoon. I observed my husband continually feeling for this place and trying to open his trousers, which were subsequently found to be open. My neighbour told me that my husband had still gasped the next day. My husband was tall and strong and only 38 years old, therefore he must have had a fearfully prolonged death. He had lain for about 18 hours before death delivered him from his agony.

Source: WR I

10. "We will butcher you!" "Here is one of Hitler's young brats"

Murder of Bettin

According to the facts ascertained in the case, witness Bettin of Bromberg, deposed the following on oath:

On September 3, 1939, the so-called "Bromberg Bloody Sunday", a horde of Polish bandits forced their way into the premises owned by the Bettin family at 76 Frankenstrasse in Bromberg. The Bettins heard the panes being smashed in from the outside and thereupon opened the door. They were led outside with raised arms and had

to kneel down. Witness Bettin was wearing a Swastika, which fell out of her blouse. This was cause for the crowd which consisted of some Poles armed with revolvers and hay forks, and one man with an axe, wildly to abuse the witness. Expressions such as "Hitler brat" "Hitler swine" "We will butcher you" fell from the crowd. She was then led away by two Poles, one of whom was the railway official Bruski. Thereby she was roughly handled and actually thrown from the yard. On the way her arm was pulled and she was threatened with a cudgel. At the corner of Bolitzer Strasse she was handed over to two other Poles, a Post Office official dressed as a policeman, and a railway man. Bruski said "Here is one of your Hitler brats." In the afternoon between 4 and 5 o'clock she was freed by a Polish officer. When she reached home she [p. 45] found that only her mother and sister-in-law were still present; her father and her brother had also been dragged away by the Polish gang. The brother was found murdered some time later, her father has since been missing, and has apparently-also been murdered.

Source: Sd. K. Ls. Bromberg 91/39

11. "Seize him, so that I may kill him"

Murder of Thiede and Mittelstädt

According to the facts ascertained in the case, witnesses Gerda Thiede and Otto Papke a wheelwright of Schulitz, deposed on oath as follows:

Waclaw Pasterski, a chauffeur, owns some property in Schulitz opposite to the Thiede family's place. The Thiede family consists of the mother and two children, the daughter named Gerda, and son, Werner, the family is German, and has been domiciled there for years. Waclaw Pasterski is a Pole and came to Schulitz about seven years ago.

On Sunday September 3, 1939 ownerless cattle, formerly the property of fugitive Poles, were driven into Thiede's turnip fields by Polish soldiers. In order to inspect the harm done, the Thiedes, accompanied by Emil Mittelstädt, who happened to be calling on them and who owned a farm some plots away, went into the field. When they got there, a squad of Polish soldiers came from the wood and called to them: "Are you Germans or Poles?" Werner Thiede replied: "Germans." Mittelstädt replied "Pole." Thereupon the soldiers searched Werner Thiede for weapons, but he carried none. Then the Thiedes had to walk with raised hands in the direction of the wood, followed by the soldiers. Mittelstädt was allowed to stay on the meadow Meanwhile the chauffeur Waclaw Pasterski came from the direction of the wood, armed with axe and knife and shouted to the soldiers on seeing Werner Thiede: "Seize him, that small fellow there in a shirt, so that I can kill him." On hearing the shout, Werner Thiede altered his direction and ran off to one side. The soldiers immediately took up the chase and fired shots after him. Witness Gerda Thiede looked back in spite of the order to the contrary, and saw

Mittelstädt lying in his blood on the meadow. He had a wound in his side, which she thought was due to a stroke made with the axe by Pasterski, because the soldiers had left the meadow in following Thiede; therefore only Mittelstädt and Pasterski remained behind, and none other than Pasterski could come into question as the perpetrator of the deed. Gerda Thiede had also heard Pasterski say of Mittelstädt that he was a German after all. Otto Papke, who had likewise seen Mittelstädt lying on the meadow, has definitely recognised the wound as being due to a stroke by an axe. Mittelstädt suffered agonies until he died in the night. Werner Thiede was found dead by his neighbour Kriewald and buried. According to his statement, as also deposed by Gerda Thiede, Thiede was shot in the back and had a large slash on the head.

Werner Thiede was 20 years old. Mittelstädt was about 30. Mittelstädt had lately become a widower and leaves a small child.

Source: Sd. K. S. Ls. Bromberg 7/39

12. "Oh God! . . . Now we must die!"

Murder of Finger

Present: Bromberg, Nov. 15, 1939.

Public Prosecutor Bengsch, acting as examining official.

Clerk of the Court Kraus, acting as secretary.

In the criminal proceedings against Owczaczak on the charge of murder, witness Finger appeared on a summons and deposed as follows.

My name is Kathe Finger, nee Boehlke, 48 years old, widow of a bank official, of Bromberg, not related by blood or marriage to the accused.

On the "Blood Sunday," several minority Germans and a Polish woman, whom we had asked to come in for our protection, were in our house. My husband would be 62 years old today. In the forenoon, at about 11 o'clock, the mob came through our street. Amongst the crowd were the Weyna brothers, who live opposite to us in the Raddatz' house, and the accused Owczaczak. One of the Weyna brothers was armed. After a while I heard my husband in the adjacent room telling our household help Goede that Owczaczak was pointing to our house. Immediately afterwards he came over to me and

said: "Oh God! that mob is coming into our house. Now we must die." He declared that we would die together. Immediately afterwards the mob including a soldier forced its way into our house. The soldier ordered my husband and me to lie down on the carpet. We did so. Then he fired. My husband was killed instantly. As a second shot was not fired as I had expected, I raised myself somewhat and noticed that my hands were reddened by the blood of my husband. Then, as I said "my God," I was pushed up and led away with other persons who had sought protection in our house. On the way we were abused, beaten and kicked. As we passed the sluices a Polish civilian tried to drag me up the canal with the words: "You damned Hitler b ---" I succeeded however in tearing myself free. I was then taken to the Police station, where I was received with such a violent kick that I was thrown against a wooden fence. We were then forced to lie down at full length in the police station yard. They called to us: "Lie down here like cattle, you b ----- . . . German dogs!" There were continuously new victims arriving, who had been beaten until blood was drawn, and who groaned with pain. I would add that my boy of 12 years of age was lying alongside of me. There was continual shooting into the police station yard from adjacent houses and from the direction of the sluices, several Germans were hit. These men were then taken away. Whether they were dead I do not know. After about 7 hours I was released with my 12 year old son on the entry of a Polish police official.

In the police station yard a machine gun was trained on us, and we were forced to kneel down and give a cheer for Rydz-Smigly. Then we were asked mockingly whether we had not really been treated well in Poland, and, when one of the women dared to deny this, the machine gun was trained on her and they shouted that she would be shot at once. There was a frightful confusion in the yard. I really cannot tell you any more details of the maltreatment.

I confirm the correctness of these statements and refer to the oath I already took in this matter on Sept. 11, 1939, before the special court in Bromberg.

Re-read, approved, and signed. Kathe Finger (nee Boehlke).

Concluded:

(signed) Bengsch (signed) Kraus.

13. "The Bloodhound of Bromberg"

Pregnant woman bayoneted

Witness Roesner deposed on oath as follows:

At the police station I was ill-treated by blows in the face and kicks. At night we were transferred to the Government House. There I heard the screams of the ill-treated and noticed that about 200 dead and wounded were lying there. Part of the procedure was to tell those Germans who had just been interrogated that they could go. When, however, they walked down the staircase, they were shot from behind or knocked with rifle butts and thrown down the stairs. In particular, I saw a pregnant woman being bayoneted from behind; the bayonet was then withdrawn by placing the foot on the woman's body, and she was then pushed down the stairs; where she was shot dead. A certain Roberschewski, a higher police official, who was known here as the "Bloodhound of Bromberg", and who has since fled, repeatedly said, when the screams of those interrogated under torture became too loud and a hand siren was sounded, pointing at a small dog running aimlessly about: "What's that dog still barking about, hit him on the head." He meant, of course, that those screaming should be finished off. This was then done. Roberschewski, at the Police station, had already ordered three Germans, who were still alive, to be killed. I saw there ten persons lying completely naked in one room. Seven of these were already dead. The bodies of all of them were frightfully beaten. The three still alive lay further back and groaned. Roberschewski came in with several Poles and asked: "Are they still alive?" Thereby he beckoned to the other Poles, whom I do not know, whereupon they took an axe already covered with blood and killed the three.

Source: Sd. K. Ls. Bromberg 79/39.

14. 11 year old youth torn from his mother and killed

The four-fold murder of the gardener Beyer's family in Bromberg

Extracts from the files of the State Criminal police office-Special Commission Bromberg-file No. Tgb. V (RKPA) 1486/7 39.

I.

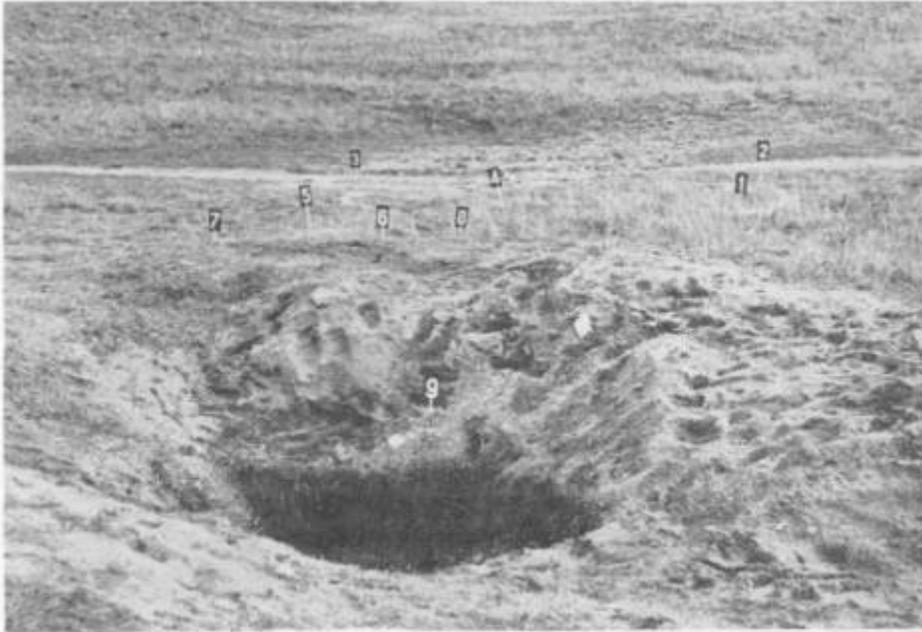
The murder of the Beyer family, gardeners of Hohenholm, a suburb of Bromberg, is characteristic of the large proportion of German-born families belonging to special professions that were decimated or entirely exterminated as victims of the murderous Polish element on the Bromberg "Blood Sunday;" it also characterises the particular groups of miscreants whose origin can be traced to organisations of Polish state officials but without any apparent connection with the military, who were actually responsible for the hundreds of massacres.

II.

The criminalistic and medico-legal expert attention given to the Beyer murder case, having entirely elucidated the events by statements of witnesses and objective record material, shows clearly that on the late afternoon of the "Blood Sunday" eight or nine (on this point the statements of witnesses differ) State officials of the so-called "French-Gdynia-Railway" in uniform and led by the 17 year old Jan Gaca, who has since been sentenced to death by court martial, forcibly entered the nursery garden of Friedrich Beyer Prior to this the perpetrators had opened fire on these premises. Owing to the shots the Beyer family, consisting of the parents, their two sons of 11 and 18 respectively, and the 22 year old gardener's assistant Erich Thiede, tried to escape into the house near by of Beyer's mother, a woman of 66 years of age. The railwaymen, still led by Gaca, followed and drove the whole family, including the old mother, back to their garden. Here the old assertion so often heard in Bromberg was made, Herr Beyer owned a machine-gun, which he should hand over. After a vain search, both Beyer, his two sons, and Thiede were forced to accompany the railwaymen to the railway police station on the pretext of an interrogation being necessary concerning the illicit possession of a machine-gun. The railway officials did not shrink from dragging the 11 year old son Kurt, who was anxiously held by his frightened mother, from her arms by using brutal force, so that also this child should "answer for" the alleged possession of the machine-gun. Characteristic for the carrying off of the Beyers is the remark of a Polish woman to others: "Now they are chasing the Beyers."

III.

On the Monday following the "Blood Sunday," at about 9 a. m the Polish subject Stefan Sitarek discovered in the former military drill grounds, which adjoin the French-Gdynia Railway to the North, the dead bodies of Friedrich Beyer and his son Heinz, as well as of the assistant Thiede, lying alongside and on top of each other; among them the 11 year old child, evidently badly hurt, twisting and groaning loudly. Sitarek, a Pole, took care of the badly hurt boy. He was, however, in accordance with his credible statement, turned away by all departments dealing with the transport of



Re Murder case Beyer, Tgb. V. (BKPA) 1486/7 39. Photo shows a pit in which the dead bodies of Friedrich Beyer and his two sons of 11 and 18, and that of gardener's assistant Thiede were found hurriedly buried. The figures indicate: 1 and 2: the dead body of Kurt Beyer, 3 and 4: that of Friedrich Beyer, 5 and 6: that of Erich Thiede, 7 and 8: position of the dead body of Heinz Beyer. At spot marked 9, a pool of blood was found.

the seriously wounded, so that the child, as deposed by the Polish witness, died of his wounds in the hours of the forenoon of Sept. 4, alongside the dead bodies of his father and brother. Towards midday of the same day the four dead bodies were hurriedly buried at the spot where the murder was committed, and where subsequently the criminal-police investigations were carried out.

IV.

The medico-legal autopsies show that in these four cases mainly pistols were employed. The bullets found in the corpses of Beyer, father, and Heinz Beyer, son, indicate that Nagan revolvers were used, i. e., the model with which a large number of Polish Railway Police were equipped. The dead body of the 11 year old child Kurt Beyer alone showed two shots in the chest, running from the front to the back, one of them a wound caused by a bullet embedded in the body; furthermore a serious fracture of the right forearm bone, and a stab wound across the left eye, none of which, not even in a combined effect with others, was absolutely deadly.

[p. 50]

15. Murder of the Radler family

Threatened by the bayonets of Polish soldiers, 14 year old daughter Dorothea forced to help her mother bury her murdered father and brothers.

Extract from the files of the State Criminal Police Dept--Special Commission--file No. Tgb. V. (RKPA) 1486/2. 39.

I.

In the course of September 3 and 4, 1939, the minority German Artur Radler of Bromberg, 55 Wladyslawa Belzy, his two sons Fritz, aged 19 and Heinz aged 16, were shot on their premises by members of the Polish army (1). The shooting which in the case of Artur Radler himself, was carried out with an almost incredible brutality, represents acts of unparalleled inhuman bestialities, in view of the vulgar and inhuman atrocity with which the perpetrators worked on the feelings of the survivors, i. e. Frau Hedwig Radler and her daughter Dorothea still in her childhood.

II.

In conformity with one another, the widow Hedwig Radler and her daughter Dorothea, born on June 20, 1925 in Bromberg, have described the course of the actual facts which, in an abbreviated form, can be summarized as follows:

In the early afternoon of Sept. 3, 1939, five Polish soldiers appeared on Radler's property, and with continued threats against the lives of the whole family, carried through a search and subsequently carried off the 19 year old Fritz Radler. On hearing a shot a few minutes afterwards, Artur Radler ran into the street, where he found the dead body of his son quite near the house. However, the father of the killed boy was driven away from the body and back into the house by a Polish officer, who hit him with a riding whip and threatened to have him shot dead. On the morning of the next day soldiers fetched Artur Radler from the house in order to get him to water their horses at a pump just outside the property. Towards 8 a. m.--in other words only a short time afterwards--the same soldiers demanded something to drink at the exit of the yard, whereupon the 16 year old Heinz Radler gave them milk from a can. Pointing to the dead body of his brother lying quite near, the soldiers mocked the boy and goaded him into remarking that the killed boy had really done nothing to warrant his death. Immediately, as if they had only been waiting for such a "reason," they hit Heinz Radler, who sought to escape the ill-treatment by trying to flee into the garden at the rear; however, everybody who happened to be in the vicinity followed him--soldiers and civilians. Shortly afterwards two shots were heard in

the garden, and a short time later a hand grenade was thrown into the room behind the sitting-room in which Frau Radler was with her sick daughter, which caused the door leading to the sitting-room to blow into the room in splinters. Suddenly, Artur Radler, who had had to be of service to the soldiers whilst his youngest son had been chased and shot, came in. He could however hardly ask what had happened, as he was again, impatiently called out of the house. Mother and daughter

(1) Presumably the Infantry Regiment No. 61. Investigations continue.



Concerning the murder case Radler—Bromberg-Tgb V. (BKPA) 1486/2. 39.
Frau Hedwig and her 14 year old daughter Dorothea Radler.

begged him to hurry up, in order not to give the soldiers any reason which might also lose them husband and father. At the house door, however, the unhappy man was shot at immediately when he appeared; he collapsed and, obviously in great pain, writhing on the floor, begged continuously to be "quite finished off." But the soldiers and civilians now mocked the wounded man all the more and cried: "Let that dog die miserably," thereby showing their wish that his wounds should cause him a "miserable death." After some time a Polish officer rode into the yard, spat in the presence of the wife on the writhing man and cried: "Teraz jest Ci lepiej, Tybandyta hitlerowski" ("Now you feel better; you Hitlerite bandit"). The young daughter of the wounded man, already badly weakened by her illness, was prevented from giving water to her father. Hours thus passed, during

which the soldiers who did not tire of jeering and reviling, had even the vulgarity to take mother and daughter away from the house and the wounded man, in order that they should show them at what spot in the garden they had hidden their valuables; these were then dug out and distributed to the crowd, amongst which also women and children had now mingled, although the place was only a few yards distant from where Artur Radler lay writhing in his blood, groaning and screaming for water. In the afternoon, at about 4 o'clock, the same soldier who had previously wounded Radler shot him in the head with his rifle at close range. Shortly afterwards-mother and daughter had meanwhile had to return to the sitting-room-soldiers and civilians carried the dead bodies of the three Radlers into the garden in front of the sitting-room window, and forced the woman, together with her child, to bury the dead bodies of the three persons killed in a pit about 1 1/2 yards deep. The strength of the woman failed when she had to throw the first handful of earth on to the bodies, after having made the pit; they then offered to cover the bodies with earth if she paid a sum of 20 Zlotys for this.

III.

The principal statements of the witnesses already made several days earlier, which neither in themselves nor in comparison with one another contained any contradiction, could definitely be checked at the actual place of the occurrence and were also confirmed by post mortem. In the first place it could be ascertained that Radler's house, situated at the only scarcely inhabited eastern boundary of the town, directly at a cross road leading to the south-eastern exits of Bromberg, was situated near a point where on September 3 and 4, all the Polish troops converged in their retreat from the town. At the entrance to Radler's property, separated from the street by a small front yard, traces were found in the wood at a height level with a man's chin, which were incontestably due to the effects of shots, and which definitely show the direction of these shots. The depositions, particularly those which describe happenings which occurred outside the house, and were observed from inside the rooms, were repeated by witnesses at the actual spot, and it was ascertained that they could in fact be observed. It has for instance been recorded by photographs that young Dorothea Radler not only could observe the process of shots being fired at her father, but could in fact hardly fail to sight him from the place of observation indicated on the previous days. In the same way the statement made by the witnesses, concerning the serious ill-treatment of Heinz Radler, the events at the place of the murder in the garden, and the mockery of the wounded Artur Radler by the officer on horseback, were checked up definitely and with positive results. On the other hand, concerning the facts indicated by the result of investigation, it was ascertained that statements had been omitted where, owing to conditions of space, observations could not be made, which in particular substantiate the importance of the depositions made by youthful Dorothea Radler to a considerable degree. In accordance with criminalistic experience, especially in cases such as the foregoing, it is known that not seldom confusion arises between personal experience, things heard of, things only subsequently seen, or things reconstructed according to the logic of the persons giving the evidence,

and which are then given as something actually observed by the person making the depositions.

IV.

The result of the investigations which were carried out with the most painstaking accuracy forces one to the conclusion that the occurrences recounted by the survivors of the Radler family are authentic. No reason therefore which might supply a justifiable motive for the shooting--of any subjective value at least--is recognisable, so that they are proved murders in the sense that they were wilful and premeditated killings deliberately carried out. However, with the exception of the murder of Fritz Radler, in which armed civilians may have participated, the perpetrators, as investigations have proved, were Polish soldiers who, unchecked at any rate by their superior officers, not only committed murder, but were further guilty of the bestialities described.

Statement of Dorothea Radler, aged 14

. . . . On Sunday, Sept. 3, 1939, at about 4.30 p. m., about six Polish soldiers came into our house. They made a search for weapons and, this proving fruitless, they, took my elder brother Fritz, aged 18, with them. They took him behind a fence about 200 yards away from the house. A little later, a neighbour, now also dead, told my father, Artur Radler, that they had shot my brother. More Germans had already been shot. The air-raid-warden explained to us that the soldiers would be taking away all the dead. We therefore left my brother where he was until Monday evening. Then, at the command of the soldiers, we had to bury him. My father told us that my brother had been shot through the chest.

On Monday, Sept. 4, a lot of Polish soldiers, this time a whole company of them; came again. They wanted a drink. My 16-year-old brother was outside in the yard. There were several civilians with the soldiers and these told the soldiers that my other brother had been shot the day before. The Polish soldiers then told him that my elder brother had fired at them and when he answered that it was not true they struck him on the head and shoulders with their rifle butts and fists. In fear, my brother ran away and tried to hide in the raspberry bushes. They found him and shot him. He was shot twice, once through the head.

A quarter of an hour later, my father entered the house and told us that the soldiers had just placed a bomb in the house. Immediately after that some soldiers came into the yard again, and my father went out to them. They at once fired at him and a bullet entered his throat and passed out through his shoulder blade leaving a gaping hole behind, causing the lung to protrude. My father was not yet dead; he lived for another five hours. They would not allow us to give him a drink or to help him in any way. He begged them to end his sufferings with a merciful bullet but they only laughed and said: "You can lie there

and rot!" The crowd laughed and jeered. At last, after 5 hours, a soldier took pity on my father and ended his sufferings with a bullet through his temple. The wound caused was so large that parts of the brain protruded. We stayed indoors throughout that Monday night. The following day a large number of Polish guns were driven up in the neighbourhood of our home. Fearing that something might happen to us, we took refuge in the home of our neighbour, Johann Held. This witness is still alive. We wanted to hide in the cellar, but Held's Polish tenant who lives on the premises would not permit this. His name is Gorski

Read, approved and signed (signed) Dorothea Radler.

Source WRI (1)

(1) The record is printed in its original form (See phot. on p. 271).

16. German woman struck by 18 shell splinters

Murder of Max Korth.

The witness, Frau Korth, of Bromberg, made the following statement on oath:

Re person: My name is Charlotte Korth, nee Fricke. I am a widow: my husband, Max Korth, was a merchant. I am 41 years old, Protestant, a minority German and live in Bromberg, 3 Hippelstrasse.

Re matter: My husband was formerly an active German officer and saw service in the Great War. He was a prisoner of war in Russia for 6 years. He was 45 years of age.

On the morning of Sunday, Sept. 3, my husband had hidden in a Polish house opposite ours because the Polish police and the rebels were searching for him. They knew that he had been a German officer. He had then hidden in the air-raided cellar of the Polish house. The Pole, Sionon Janek, pointed out to the soldiers and rebels where my husband was hiding and he called to them: "There is the Szwab." "Szwab" is a term of abuse applied to us Germans.

The following further account of the matter was given me by Frau Bayda who lives with us.

They dragged my husband on to our own land and stuck a bayonet into his left temple as he lay on the ground. As he was still alive after 20 minutes they clubbed him to death with their rifle butts. They dragged him back again on to the road, where I found him at noon on Tuesday. He had a jagged wound about 2 inches wide in his left temple. The left side of his skull was so battered in that his brain was exposed.

They made such a wreck of my house that I cannot go into it even now.

On Friday, Sept. 1, I went to see my parents who live in Bromberg, 20 Berliner Strasse, because my father had had a stroke. My two children accompanied me.

On Sunday, Sept. 3, the Poles came to this house too. There was a Polish lieutenant with 5 soldiers and 3 rebels. They knocked at the door and, when I opened it, they said to me: "Where is the person who fired a shot here?" I answered: "There is no man here except my father who is very old, and the rest are women." We five women [p. 55] were made to stand in the yard; Frieda Fröhlich the maid, Liwia Cresioli, a boarder, a mother and daughter called Karowski, and myself. There were two Polish relatives of the Karowskis in the yard with us as well. In the presence of the officer we all had to huddle together in a bunch. A rebel drew a revolver but a Polish soldier stopped him saying: "No, a hand-grenade." I ran into the house, jumped through the window into the street and tried to seek shelter at the house of a baker named Kunkel. But the woman said: "It serves the cursed 'Niemce' (Germans) right." I ran on down the street. They fired at me and I was struck in the left hip. The bullet has not yet been extracted. I stood still. A rebel came up, seized me by the arm and took me to the Military Headquarters at the Hippel School. When I had to pass the soldiers on my way through, they gave me terrible blows with their rifle butts hitting me wherever they could. For 3 hours I had to stand against the wall, my hands above my head, my nose touching the wall. After three hours, I heard them dragging my father along and flinging him to the ground. My father is 71 years old and quite helpless. He could no longer move by himself. They also brought all my other relatives and the remaining occupants of the house along.

My children were questioned. As they spoke Polish well my daughter managed to get permission for us to sit down and to have water brought to us by the soldiers. We were accused of firing upon Polish soldiers from our house with a machine gun. It is a fact that later on German soldiers found in a Polish house opposite, three machine guns and some hand grenades and bombs. It is also a fact that we had no firearms at all in our house, i. e. the house of our parents. Then, at about 5 o'clock in the afternoon, we were finally released, no reasons being given.

Before I could manage to get away from the yard, the hand grenade that had been thrown at us by the rebel exploded quite close. I received in all 18 wounds from splinters. (The witness showed several marks on her body caused by these splinters.) Three of us had to be taken to hospital. They were chiefly suffering from injuries to the feet.

While we were being taken away, our house was plundered by the bandits. Only jewellery and money was taken, but they wrecked everything.

The witness begged to be spared the ordeal of having her statement read over to her as she could not bear to hear it again. She had a clear recollection of everything and the record of her statement was in order.

The witness remained seated while taking the oath, as her wounds prevented her from standing.

(signed) Charlotte Korth.

Source WR 1

17. Murdered--Robbed--Buried

The murder of Schlicht

The witness, Herbert Schlicht of Bromberg, 197 Berliner Straße, made the following statement on oath:

On Sunday, Sept. 3, 1939, my brother-in-law, Hannes Schfilke, and I were both captured by roving bands of Poles. We were taken off to the barracks of the 62nd Regiment. There we were beaten and roughly handled with cudgels and knives. When they were about to stab me with a knife, I begged them to leave me alone as I had a wife and two children. They then put heir knives away but they beat me with cudgels and iron bars wherever they could.

I had been captured because I was alleged to have participated in some shooting. I had no weapons at all so they put some cartridges in front of us and then asserted that we had been shooting.

Schlicht was set free later as his military papers proved he had served in the Polish army His statement continues:

Hardly had we passed through the gate when the minority Germans who had stayed behind were shot.

I then went to my parents' house and in the cellar there I met my mother and sister. They told me that my father had been murdered and that his body was lying somewhere on Peterson's land. I then took a spade and went to look for his body. Soon after I got to the field, I came across a soft patch of ground which gave way under my feet. After removing a few spadefuls of earth, I found my father's body. His right eye had been gouged out with a bayonet and the right side of his face torn open. In addition, his body was covered all over with green and blue marks. My father was 58 years old. He had also been robbed and his empty wallet had been flung down in front of the door at my mother's feet. The perpetrators are unknown to me.

The bodies of six other men lay buried under my father's. Three of these I managed to dig up. In one case the top part of the head and the brain were missing. Another had a bayonet wound in his abdomen and his bowels protruded. The third had his face smashed in and his nose was missing.

(signed) Herbert Schlicht.

Source: WR I

18. The brain was protruding--The eyes were missing

"My husband was shockingly mutilated." The murder of Boelitz and of Paul Berg, aged 15

The following statement was made on oath by the witness, Anna Boelitz, of Bromberg:

On Sunday, Sept. 3, 1939, at midday, considerable shooting broke out in Jägerhof. We went into the room occupied by an employee of ours, Paul Berg, in order to get out of the house. The Polish soldiers fired direct into the window. We lay flat on the ground until my husband suggested I should go out as I could speak a little Polish. They demanded that my husband should come out, saying that he had been shooting. I told them that we possessed no weapons at all. My husband had to put his hands above his head. They kicked him, and struck him with their rifle butts. They led him away and thereupon searched my house. Shortly afterwards they sent for the lad, Paul Berg, and took him off too. Paul Berg was 15 years old. On Wednesday evening I found my husband in the same spot on the bridge where the clergyman Kutzer lay.

My husband's body was horribly mutilated. The top of his head was completely gone, the brain was hanging out and the eyes were missing. Paul Berg lay in the same spot. I did not look at his wounds because he lay face downwards on the ground.

Source: W R I

19. A hammer placed on the body of the victim

The murder of Ristau and Schmiede

Bromberg, Sept. 11, 1939.

Present:

Military Judge-Advocate Dr. Waltzog (Air Force) as judge,

Walter Hammler as secretary specially appointed.

In the investigation of Bromberg 1 of breaches of international law, the witness Irma Ristau, nee Bloch, having been instructed as to the sacredness of the oath, made the following statement:

Re person. I am 25 years old, Protestant, and live in Bromberg, 10 Kartuzka.

Re matter: My husband worked for a gardener named Schmiede in Bromberg. On Saturday, Sept. 2, my husband asked his employer by telephone whether he should come to work as usual. Herr Schmiede told him that he knew nothing of any war yet and that he should carry on as usual. My husband therefore set out for the garden. I accompanied him, as a Polish neighbour of ours named Pinczewski of 8 Kartuzka had threatened to tear us "two Hitlerites," as he called us, limb from limb and scatter our entrails over the street as soon as war broke out. I could no longer go to work either, because on the previous day I had been struck at and threatened with an iron bar. In this strained situation I did not move from my husband's side.

We stayed overnight that Saturday at the gardener Schmiede's house. The gardens were situated on tile outskirts of the town. There were several Poles there as well. After lunch that day the Poles left and sent some soldiers to us: When the soldiers got there they asked for an interpreter, as Herr Schmiede was far too excited to make himself understood in Polish. They said to him: "Have you any weapons, you son of a b----?" Schmiede said that he had not, and invited them to search the house. Thereupon they

said: "Three paces back," and then they shot him Frau Schmiede flung herself down beside her dead husband to take her last leave of him and, though likewise fired upon by the Poles, was not hit. She then fled, crying to us: "Children come into the cellar; the Poles will kill us all!" We fled to the cellar. The Poles surrounded the house and fired from all sides through the doors and windows of the cellar. Finally they set the house on fire. As we did not want to be burned alive we tried to escape from the cellar. This was no longer possible by way of the door as the entrance was already in flames and, besides, the Polish soldiers shot as soon as any of us showed ourselves. We therefore tried to go out through the window. An apprentice employed by the gardener first climbed through. Later, we found him in the garden, shot. Then my husband and I climbed out and got as far as the street. We raised our hands above our heads and called to the Poles not to shoot and that we would surrender. But the Polish civilians who were looking on, cried out, "You've got to shoot at these, they are Hitlerites and spies." At once a Polish soldier fired and my husband who was at my side was shot dead with a bullet through his head. I sank to the ground through the noise and the fright and lost consciousness. When I came to myself, there was a Polish soldier standing near me with a bayonet fixed to his rifle. This man then took my husband's wedding ring, his watch and 45 Zlotys. My husband's shoes which he had worn at our wedding and which he had had on only five times altogether, were taken off and given to the Polish civilians. I myself was seized by my hair and lifted up, but again collapsed at my husband's side. When I asked the soldier to let me have at least the wedding-ring as a memento, he thrust at me with his rifle butt hurting my back and neck so much that even today after over a week I can hardly move my back. I was then handed over to two soldiers, with fixed bayonets, to be taken to the guard-room. As I was not willing to leave my husband's side, they kept striking my hands until I had to let go. Then, just as I was, my arms above my head, splashed with my husband's blood and my hair in disorder, I had to go. The Polish civilians shouted to the soldiers not to let me--a German spy--go but to shoot me where I stood. As soon as I lowered my hands from weakness, they thrust at my arms with their rifles and kicked me. When I reached their headquarters, I was questioned by an officer. It was established that I had done nothing wrong. I asked two soldiers who were present at the interrogation to shoot me as I had no further wish to live. One of them answered: "It is a pity to waste a bullet on you, you miserable Hitlerite; go to the devil." The Poles jostled me and hit me and then let me go. I washed my hands and face in a ditch and then went back to my husband's body. There I saw soldiers and civilians mutilating his body. His mouth was so distorted that he appeared to be smiling and so they threw refuse on his face and cried "You damned Hitlerite--still laughing are you?" They had also stuck a bunch of keys and a hammer on the body of Schmiede, the gardener. I took my husband's papers away. While I was doing this, Polish soldiers struck me and drove me away. I stayed out of doors wandering about in the neighbourhood, until 8 o'clock, when, on the appearance of a German aeroplane, we all had to run into the doorways for shelter. A Polish woman took me in and put me in a room adjoining which several Poles were gathered. I heard the woman tell her husband to go for the Polish soldiers as there were still a few Germans about in the streets and they were apparently not feeling very safe. Her husband did not get back until about 3 in the morning and told his wife that the Polish soldiers had already fled and that the Germans were coming. He said he would follow them, for the Poles having murdered all the Germans, the Germans would serve all the Poles in the same way; so they all fled. I crossed over to a house where two German widows were living.

Read, approved and signed, Irma Ristau (nee Bloch). The witness took the oath.

Concluded:

(Signed) Dr. W a l t z o g (Signed) Walter Hammler

Source: W R I

20. His family murdered before his very eyes

The murder of Finger

Bromberg, Sept. 9, 1939.

Investigation conducted in the presence of Dr. Schattenberg, Senior Naval Judge-Advocate in charge of the investigation, and Dirks, Senior Government Inspector, as secretary.

At the court of enquiry held at Bromberg 1, Herbert Finger, bank clerk, appeared as witness and, after taking the oath, made the following statement:

I am 24, Protestant, live in Bronnberg-Schleusenau, 44 Chaussee-Strasse, and am a member of the German minority.

My parents live on the outskirts of Bromberg at Schleusenau. My father worked for the German Welfare organization.

On Sunday, Sept. 3, between 10 and 11 o'clock in the morning. we were in our house watching the police and the mob taking a number of minority Germans out of their houses, threatening them with pistols, and ill-treating them with sticks and knuckledusters.

Owczarzak the air raid warden in charge of our block,--who has been arrested since--drew the attention of the soldiers and the mob to our house, shouting: "Just go in there! There are some more Germans there!" The soldiers battered in the door which we had barred and two of them with fixed bayonets at once dashed into the drawing-room where my parents were. I myself was in the adjoining room. A mob of young hooligans aged from 17 to 24, crowded in after them. They were armed with sticks, bayonets and other weapons of assault. One of the Polish soldiers ordered my father to lie down on the floor. My mother flung herself down beside him. The soldier pointed his rifle at my father's chest and shot him through the heart. He was killed instantly. Then the mob rushed at us, i. e. my mother and me, at my 13-year-old brother, and our two maids. They struck us down and then we were hauled off to the police station. On the way we were beaten continually. The soldiers had remained behind in order to search the house, and money to the value of 2000 Zlotys and other valuables were stolen from us. At the police station we received further blows. A police official struck down my mother with a rifle butt Finally, through a policeman whom I knew, I succeeded in getting my mother and brother released. Later I was dragged off with 80 or 90 other prisoners to the town hall. Rifle butts, etc. were freely used. By good luck a professor I knew enabled me afterwards to secure my release.

The witness took the oath.

Read aloud, approved and signed

Herbert Finger

Source: W R I

[p. 60]

21. Abdomen and chest trampled upon

"Well I'm d . . . ! This beggar hasn't a penny on him; the other one I killed had 150 Zlotys

The Public Prosecutor at the Special Court

at Bromberg. Temporary address: Wloclawek, November 20, 1939.

The officials present were:

The Public Prosecutor, Bengsch

as examining official.

Johann Kurkowiak, Interpreter,

Lucian Szafran, Secretary.

In the course of the preliminary investigation against Wroblewski for murder, the witness. Pelagia Wieczorek, was summoned and, after having been informed of the nature of the enquiry and of the significance and sacredness of the oath she was about to take and cautioned to speak the truth, she stated:

Re person: "My name is Pelagia Wieczorek, a Pole, living in Michelin, where I am married. I am 35 years of age, and a Catholic, and am not related to the accused in any way.

Re matter: When I was going to Siedlecki's shop in Michelin at about midday, the first Wednesday in September, I came across an old man of about 70 lying in the ditch at the roadside in front of the shop. I found out that he was a minority German who had been taken away with many others but had been too exhausted to go on. Close to the old man. who was still alive, was the man Wroblewski, whom I knew, and another Pole who was a stranger to me. I saw, Wroblewski searching the German's pockets and heard him exclaim: "Well I'm damned! the beggar hasn't a penny on him--the other one I killed had 150 Zlotys." Then, shouting something else about "Hitlerites and shooting," he jumped with both feet upon the German's body and trampled on his chest and abdomen. He also stamped on his face. When I begged him to leave the old man alone, he abused me and asked me if I was also a German; he said he would treat me in the same way if I was. So he went on trampling on the old man, and he went on doing it even when other fugitives who were going that way, tried to persuade him to leave off. I then went into the shop. and, when I came out again, I saw the second Pole, whom I did not know, pulling the shoes off the dead German. Then I went home.

The dead body remained in the ditch for about 2 weeks after that, covered with a small heap of sand.

Read out in Polish by the interpreter, approved and signed.

The witness Pelagia Wieczorek being illiterate signed by means of crosses XXX

Concluded:

(signed) Bengsch (signed) Lucian Szafran

Public Prosecutor Secretary.

signed) Johann Kurkowiak

Interpreter

Source: Sd. Js. Bromberg 814/39.

[p. 60]

22. Skull completely smashed in--the corpse stripped of its clothing

Murder of the brothers, Bönitz and Bogs

Frau Margarete Bogs nee Bönitz, of Schwedenbergstrasse, Bromberg, appeared without being summoned and made the following statement:

On Monday, Sept. 4, 1939, at about 7 o'clock in the morning, the Polish workman, Dejewski senior, whom I knew by sight, and who lived in the workman's huts in Bromberg, Sandomierska, came to the house of my mother-in-law, a minority German widow named Berta Bogs of 4 ul. Sandomierska (formerly Schulstrasse) and said: "Where are the Niemcys (Germans) who have been shooting?" My two brothers, Erwin and Helmut Bönitz, replied that nobody had been doing any shooting there, which was also true. With the words "We'll soon show you" he went away. I happened at the time to be there on a visit to my mother-in-law, and I heard these words and so did my sister-in-law, Frau Hildegard Nowicki, whose home address was No. 4 Sandomierska. About two hours later two Polish soldiers appeared at the above mentioned house of my mother-in-law and searched the place for weapons, but they found none.

On the same day at about 2 p. m. seven other Polish soldiers came to the house and took away my two brothers,

- a) Erwin Bönitz, horse dealer, 29 years old, married,
- b) Helmut Bönitz, no occupation, 27 years old, single and
- c) my unmarried brother-in-law, Bruno Bogs, tailor, aged 30.

From that time we had no knowledge of the fate that had befallen them until yesterday when we found them with several other Germans in the wood near ul. Kujawa (Kujawier Strasse), done to death. We also buried them yesterday. Their skulls were completely smashed in. Erwin Bönitz had about 250 Zlotys on him when he was taken off, and Bruno Bogs a hundred Zlotys. The money had been stolen and their bodies had been stripped to their underclothing.

Source: Sd. K. Ls. Bromberg 16/39.

23. Misuse of his calling as a priest

Police Headquarters Bromberg, Sept. 13, 1939.

Emergency Squad 2

Troop No. 3 (Reschke).

THE HEARING

The accused, Wladislaw Dejewski, a Pole, baker and confectioner, born on May 7, 1895 in Bromberg, Catholic, married to Helene nee Liszewska, 5 children, aged from 2 to 16 years, residing at Bromberg No. 1 ul. Sandomierska, appeared before the court and, having been informed of the subject of the enquiry, and duly cautioned, made the following statement:

"I confess that on Sunday, Sept. 3, 1939 (not on Monday 4th) I made an accusation to the Polish military authorities to the effect that the Bogs family of No.4 Sandomierska had been shooting from their house. I must, to tell the truth, admit that I did not know if there had been any shooting from that house and if the minority Germans, Bogs and Bolitz themselves had taken any part in it. It is also a fact that I was at widow Bogs' house on Sunday Sept. 3, at about 7 o'clock in the morning, and met some men there whom I accused of having taken part in some shooting. Of course I did not know if they had, and all of those present including, if I remember rightly, an elderly woman too, protested that not only had they done no shooting but they were not in possession of any weapons either. Thereupon, I went away and reported to the Polish soldiers that there had been some firing from that house. It is also true that I had threatened the occupants that "we would show them." Why I made these false accusations against this minority German family to the Polish military authorities, I myself cannot say today. The only excuse I can put forward is that we had been incited against everything German by the Polish upper classes. In particular the *Pfaffen* (the accused's own expression for Catholic priests) have breached this doctrine to us time after time and even from the pulpit, that if the Germans were to come they would kill everyone of us, and for that reason we must settle all the Germans first. I beg to say further that I attended the service in the parish church in the ul. Farna on the Sunday before Sep. 3, 1939. It was the second Mass that day, held somewhere between 9 and 10 o'clock. The preacher was a priest about 45 years old but I did not know him by name as I had not been living in this parish for more than 2 months. During the sermon this priest spoke among other things of the tension between Poland and Germany and he actually said in Polish "Nie damy sie Niemcom pobic do ostatnie j kropli krwi! Niemcow musimy z polskiej ziemi wywlaszczyfl" (which means: "We shall defend ourselves against the Germans to the last drop of blood! We must exterminate all Germans from our Polish soil"). These words uttered by the priest had the effect of inciting the working class element of the Catholic population in particular to deliver the minority Germans on Sunday Sept. 3, into the hands of the Polish soldiers, or even to kill them themselves. I do know for a fact that on the 3rd, the Sunday in question, very many Germans were also done to death by the Polish civilian population. But I acknowledge responsibility for the deaths of only those three persons, namely

1. Erwin Bölit,

2. Helmut Bölitz and

3. Bruno Bogs

and only, as I said at the beginning, inasmuch as I knowingly made untrue accusations against them, to the Polish military authorities, concerning the shooting. Otherwise, I have not betrayed any Germans. As an excuse, I can only add that the idea of betraying these German families, Bogs and Bölitz, was not entirely my own but I was led into it by the two Polish workmen:

a) Jan Powenzowski of No. 1 ul. Sandomierska and

b) Tarkowski, aged about 22, son of the workman Tarkowski residing at ul. Smolinska in the workman's quarters.

These two told me to go to the Polish soldiers and tell them that there had been firing from the Bogs' house and that weapons were to be found there. It was like this: On the Sunday morning in question, my eleven-year-old daughter, Sabina, was going to our neighbours for milk. At about 6.30 a. m., happening to be in the yard, I heard my daughter shout and I ran into the street. Powenzowski and Tarkowski were standing there and they told me that my girl had been wounded in some shooting that had taken place. Where the shooting had come from they did not say and I myself had not heard any. I examined my daughter without finding any traces of a wound. The only thing I could find was a slight tear on the right side of her skirt. She told me she had heard a shot and had been frightened. Where the shot was supposed to have come from she did not know either. As there were no other minority Germans living in our street, Powenzowski and Tarkowski considered I ought to go along to the soldiers and tell them that there had been shooting from Bogs' house. Although I myself did not believe that the damage to my daughter's dress could have been caused by a shot as there was not actually a hole in it but only a tear, I took this opportunity to make the accusations referred to at the beginning, to the Polish military authorities and to induce them to make a search of Bogs' house. I also led the soldiers to the house of widow Bogs. I did not stand in the yard while the search was in progress, however, but took part in it.

The fact that the two brothers Bölitz and Bruno Bogs were arrested later and killed by Polish soldiers, was unknown to me until now. At any rate, no weapons were found in the house.

I particularly emphasize that neither the Bogs nor the Bölitz family had ever done anything personally to me, in fact I did not even know them well. My only reason for reporting them to the Polish soldiers was the fact that they were Germans and that Tarkowski and Powenzowski had told me that there had been some shooting.

It is true that I fled with my family to Zlotniki (Deutsch-Gildenhof, District of Hohensalza) on the morning of Sept. 4, 1939 because my wife was pregnant, and firing could already be heard from the German lines. On Sunday Sept. 10, 1939 I returned to Bromberg with my family.

Powenzowski and Tarkowski also fled on Sept. 4, 1939 and have not yet come back. Where they are I do not know.

I should not have denounced the Bogs family to the Polish military authorities about the shooting, if the Germans had not continually been described to us by the Polish

intelligentsia and the clergy as the greatest enemies of Poland and that they would kill all the Poles. One of the greatest agitators against everything German was Canon Schulz, whom I met here in prison yesterday. Schulz is known in the town to be an agitator against Germans. I myself have never been present at any of his sermons as I did not belong to his parish. I was employed with about 350 other Polish workmen in the Millner factory for the production of spare parts for cycles; at Bromberg. From these workmen and also from other Polish families whose names however I am now unable to give, I heard on all sorts of occasions that Canon Schulz, up to shortly before the capture of Bromberg by German troops, had charged the inhabitants to fight to the last drop of blood against the Germans and to destroy everything German. On a Polish holiday, maybe two months before the taking of Bromberg by the Germans, Canon Schulz, at a great public meeting in the old market square, held a speech which was broadcast by means of loudspeakers. I was also present at this gathering which was a sort of Mass. Schulz, in this speech, urged the uttermost resistance to the occupation by German troops of the town of Danzig.

It was also Canon Schulz who, as I have heard from other Poles, was supposed to have called upon the people to see to it that the following Protestant churches in the town of Bromberg be taken from the Protestant German minority and incorporated in the Catholic church:

- (1) St. Paul's Church in Plae Wolnosci (Welzinplatz)
- (2) The Nakielska Church (Nakeler Strasse)
- (3) The Schleusenau Church and
- (4) The Church in Zimny Wody (Kaltwasser).

Apart from this, I cannot say anything detrimental to Schulz, as I have not had anything to do with him. According to what I have heard about him from other Polish people, I consider him one of the chief persons responsible for the massacres committed by the Poles on Sept. 3, 1939 in Bromberg, for which we wretches must now suffer. With us Poles and Catholics the word of a priest carries great weight, as he is supposed to be our leader and we believe him. If the priests had urged us to be calm and levelheaded this massacre could have been avoided. On the contrary, however, they always depicted the Germans as the greatest barbarians who had no pity even for children, but shot down everything indiscriminately.

I cannot give you the names of the persons who have killed or maltreated Germans or betrayed them to the Polish military authorities or made false accusations against them, as I do not know the names of any such people. I should name them if I knew any of them. I only know that people wearing green armlets with metal badges on them led the Polish soldiers to the houses occupied by minority Germans. The soldiers took the Germans away with them. I saw this happen both in the Thorner and Danziger Strasse. Later, some men wearing red and white armlets came along, and they also showed the Polish soldiers where there were German families. I did not see anyone I knew amongst them. I myself have seen people wearing these armlets plundering German shops and civilians.

I have now told the whole truth and concealed nothing.

I just remember that a Polish workman named Kasprich, living in Bromberg, 1 ul. Sandomierska, did some plundering in some German private houses and stole some articles of clothing. I met him in Thorner Strasse myself with coats, curtains and lamps on his arm. It was on Sunday, Sept. 3, 1939 between 12 and 1 o'clock in the day. As far as I know Kasprich is at home.

My statement has been read out to me slowly and distinctly: I have understood it all. As regards its meaning the record corresponds with the statement as given by me.

I confess that I was directly responsible for the deaths of the 3 minority Germans mentioned at the beginning of my statement, by having falsely accused them of being in possession of weapons, but I should never have reported them to the Polish military authorities if I had foreseen that they would be killed.

Read, approved and signed

(signed) Wladislaw Dejewski.

Certified by:

Kraus, Court official.

Source: Sd. K. Ls.-Bromberg 16/39.

24. Hidden in a Dung Pit

The murder of Hans Schutz and Helmut Knopf. Son and son-in-law killed

The witness, Friedrich Schulz, of Bromberg, made the following statement on oath;

Re person: My name is Friedrich Schulz. I am 52, Protestant, a butcher by trade, a minority German and live in Bromberg, 15 Oranienstrasse.

On Sunday, Sept. 3, 1939, somewhere about 2 p. m. several bands of soldiers, civilians and railwaymen came to our place and said: "The house will be blown up That will make the "Niemce" (Germans) come out." We fled. I myself jumped into the dung pit in the yard. My son Hans, aged 20, and single, and my son-in-law, Helmut Knopf, who has 2 children, one aged 4 months and the other 18 months, escaped over the garden fence with the idea of hiding among the potato plants and stalks. At the fence, however, they were caught. From my hiding place in the dung pit I recognized the voice of a neighbour of ours, a railwayman named Przybyl, who shouted "Hands up!" My son and son-in-law were taken off to another garden, about 500 yards further away. I gathered this from the place where their bodies were found.

My son-in-law had had the gold settings knocked out of his mouth and stolen His tongue had also been cut out. The "International Commission" photographed him. Besides, he was so covered with blood that we did not examine him any more.

My son had a great hole in the back of his head from which his brain protruded.

Neither of them had been shot; they had- been beaten to death. No bullet wounds were found.

That I escaped with my life is due solely to the fact that they did not discover my hiding place. My wife and daughter and her two children--who had taken refuge partly in our cellar and in the cellar of a Polish neighbour--remained unhurt.

The witness took the oath, read, approved and signed Friedrich Schulz.

Source: W R I

25. Rifle butts used on a pregnant Woman

The murder of Blumke

The witness, Martha Blümke of Bromberg-Jägerhof, 74 Brahestrasse, made the following statement on oath:

"They were all seated in the cellar except Günther Gehrke, aged 13, and Ernst Boldin, aged 12, who were in the yard. The soldiers asked the children where their fathers were. The fathers then came out into the yard. They had to put up their hands and were at once beaten with rifle butts. Kanderski and his son, who had hidden themselves in the same cellar, were also beaten in the same way. They took my brother away. My sister-in-law ran after them crying, and little Günther was crying too. They thrust my sister-in-law back. They also took the youngster with them. They pushed my sister-in-law into a ditch and dealt her a blow with a rifle butt, although they could see that she was pregnant.

I saw the bodies afterwards. My brother had been beaten to death, not shot. His face was completely smashed in. The lad had likewise been beaten to death. His arm lay across his face.

Source: WR I

26. With crow bars and clubs

The murder of Springer at Sehleusenau

The witness, Rudoff Jeske, wheelwright, of Bromberg, made the following statement on oath:

In the afternoon of Sunday, Sept 3, 1939 from 10 to 15 hooligans armed with iron bars and poles came to Schleusenau, Grunwaldzka. They at once made a rush for the house of our neighbour, Springer, and I saw them beat him to the ground with their crow bars and sticks. Then they gave him a severe kicking as he lay there. They tortured him in this way until he had to get up. He was to be taken off to the police station. but he was much too weak to walk. They kept beating him with their rifle butts In desperation and terror of death, Springer tried to seize hold of a rifle butt. Then there was a shot and he collapsed sideways. Half of the civilians ran on, the other half ran up to my house. When they came to fetch Springer two hours later, and put him on a stretcher, I saw him trying to raise his head slightly. Springer was about 62 years old.

Source: W R I

27. Skull split half-open

25 Germans from Wonorze shot

The witness, Friedrich Weiss, butcher, of Wonorze, made the following statement on oath:

Altogether, 25 men from Wonorze were shot. They were hastily buried by Polish soldiers, after having been robbed of most of their clothes. Eight or 9 days later, when digging up their dead bodies, I ascertained that they all had bullet wounds, in some cases, the skulls were so injured that they were split half-open. Whether these injuries were due to shots or were the result of other ill-treatment, I cannot say.

Source: WR II

28. Abdomen slit open--Bowels hanging out--Castrated!

The murder of Ernst Krüger, the brothers Willi and Heinz Schäfer, and Albert Milan

The witness, Heinrich Krüger, farmer, of Tannhofen, stated the following on oath:

As my son Ernst had been frequently asked for, and certain of the villagers had already been shot by the Polish soldiers, he fled on Tuesday Sept. 5, 1939 together with Albert Zittlau and the brothers Willi and Heinz Schäfer, who had at first taken refuge in a barn. On Sept. 19, 1939, I learnt from Frau Zittlau that she had found her husband buried in a field close to the main road in the vicinity of the Rucewko estate. She said that only his head and an arm were sticking out of the ground. Near the same place Willi Schäfer's cap had also been found. As we all supposed that now all four fugitives were very likely lying together, I went there with a few Germans from our village. With the help of some other persons whom we had called, we dug up the ground at that spot and laid bare the body of my son, that of Zittlau and of the two Schäfer brothers. The bodies were in a confused heap. Underneath the soil was covered with blood. I assume that all four had been actually done to death in this pit and had been buried just where they had fallen.

The lower part of my son's clothing had been undone, his jacket, vest and also his shirt had been drawn away on both sides, laying bare his abdomen. This was slit open and his bowels were half out. His boots had been taken off and were missing. His wallet containing about 40 zlotys, his watch, and chain and his papers had been taken as well. At any rate these things had been in his possession when he left his parent's house.

Heinz Schäfer likewise had had his abdomen slit open and his bowels were hanging out. Heinz Schäfer and my son had been treated in the same way, except that his genitals were missing. These had been cut away, for I could clearly see shreds of flesh and bowels, where they should have been. Heinrich Wising, a farmer, from Tannhofen, who was also present, corroborated this when we discussed it together later. In the case of both my son and Heinz Schäfer, we looked for bullet wounds but could not find any.

In the case of the others, the clothing had not been touched. Zittlau had been shot in the chest and Willi Schäfer's body had no signs of any wound. We did not remove the clothing, but only loosened Zittlau's clothing in front a little.

Source: Sd. Is. Bromberg 151/39.

29. Head torn half away

The murder of Alf--"Shoot them all!--Spare only the little children!"

In accordance with the findings of the inquiry, the witness Blendowski, made the following statement on oath:

On Sept. 5, 1939, Alf, a farmer, told Blendowski and his family, who lived in Klein-Neudorf, to come to his place at Gross-Neudorf for safety from the Polish hordes. Blendowski agreed, and came to Gross-Neudorf on Sept. 6, 1939, at about noon. The Alf family were just having dinner. Frau Alf invited Blendowski to share it with them. While they were still at their meal, Alf's daughter shouted: "They have come!", and some Polish soldiers drove into the yard in a farm waggon. The waggon was driven by a workman, named Bernhard Zielinski. On his own statement he had met the Polish soldiers just before, as they were passing through the village of Gross-Neudorf. They had asked him where there were any minority Germans to be found and where they could get oats. On that occasion, they said something to the effect that all Germans should be shot. Zielinski then climbed on the waggon and drove the soldiers to Alf's farm. When they got there, the soldiers ordered the following persons to place themselves against the wall, facing the soldiers. Altogether there were: Blendowski himself, the farmer Hermann Alf, aged about 57, Erich Benzel of Tannhofen, aged 45, Edwin Eberhard of Gross-Neudorf aged about 40, and a German fugitive from Bromberg, aged about 72, who was unknown to Blendowski. The minority Germans named did as they were told. Then the soldiers demanded oats. At the request of the farmer, the women folk gave them the oats. Thereupon the Germans standing against the wall were given the order to turn round and face the wall. They complied. Thereupon Zielinski said to the soldiers: "Shoot them all except the little children. They are the, children of poor people." They opened fire, but Blendowski was not hit. He collapsed, however, from the fright and fainted. When he came to himself, the soldiers and Zielinski had gone, and the other Germans, who had been placed against the wall, were dead. Two of them had their heads half blown away.

Source: Sd. K. Ls. Bromberg 1/39.

30. Whole families murdered

The witness, Anton Dombeck, garden inspector, of Bromberg, 2c Goethestrasse, made the following statement on oath:

On Tuesday, Sept. 5, 1939, the Polish militia with some regular soldiers among them departed. About half an hour later the German troops entered the town. We began to restore order in the town on Wednesday morning. The sights that met our eyes were terrible. The elderly people had been shot, but were without any mutilation worth mentioning. On the other hand, we found in a large mass grave at 8 Bülowplatz some dead bodies, mutilated beyond recognition. The bodies were covered with straw and a had sand thrown over them. In some cases the back of the head was completely

knocked off, the eyes gouged out, the arms and legs broken, and even some of the fingers.

Whole families have been murdered. For example: Kohn: father, mother and 3 children. Boldin: 3 persons. Böhlitz: father and 2 sons. Beyer: father and 2 sons (18 and 10 years old)--the younger had to be torn from the broken-hearted mother's arms.

Source: WR I

31. Polish woman full of murder lust foams with rage

Murder of the 2 Rapps, father and son

Frau Helene Stein of Bromberg, 79 Frankenstrasse, was summoned to appear and stated:

On Sept. 3, 1939, I was on air raid duty in front of my house and I saw the gang go to the Bettins . . . Some hours after these occurrences, another gang came and took Frau Reinhold away. I recognized only the woman Goralska among the party. She kept raining blows on Frau Reinhold until the latter fell to the ground. Goralska seized her from behind, by the hair, and Frau Reinhold screamed terribly. Goralska also kicked her and maltreated her so severely that the men belonging to the party got between Goralska and her victim, whom she would otherwise have murdered then and there.

The witness further stated:

Before the incident with Frau Reinhold, above described, Goralska told some women she knew that a minority German, Rapp, had shot the Polish baker named Vlatowski (Ulatowski is however still alive) and that the Rapps had then been taken away and she mentioned how she had enjoyed seeing the Rapps knocked down and shot, both the elder and the younger Rapp, and their wives and she had been amused over it all. During her recital of these happenings, **Goralska literally foamed at the mouth**. The witness added that Goralska had already betrayed many Germans.

Source: Sd. K. Ls. Bromberg 88/39.

32. "I die for my Country!"

The murder of Betitzer

In accordance with the findings of the investigation, the witness Lassa stated on oath:

On Monday, Sept. 4, 1939, at about half past seven in the morning, the father of a casual labourer named Max E. Jankowski, whose whereabouts are still unknown, appeared with seven Polish soldiers at the farm of his neighbour, Lassa. The father of Ejankowski, pointing to Lassa, said to the soldiers: "This is a Hitlerite, you could shoot him straight away." At the same time he struck him in the face with his fist. When Lassa's wife, in fear for her husband, protested to the soldiers that he was innocent, Ejankowski's father shouted: "You shut your mouth. You're all in for it now!" Thereupon Lassa was led away from the yard on to the road by the Polish soldiers.

On the road there was a horde of Polish bandits, among them Max Ejankowski. He drew the attention of the Polish soldiers who were taking Lassa off to a house on the opposite side of the road, where a butcher named Bruno Belitzer, a minority German, aged 65, lived, and he shouted out to them: "There's another Hitlerite over there, you could take him with you at the same time." Max Ejankowski and his father went on to tell the soldiers that Belitzer and Lassa had fired on Polish soldiers. Then they both accompanied two soldiers across to Belitzer's house, fetched him out and took him off with Lassa. At their headquarters, they had to stand against the wall with their hands raised above their heads. Several dead minority Germans were already lying on the ground, shot. After Belitzer and Lassa had been standing about 5 minutes against the wall, a Polish soldier ordered Belitzer to repeat a Polish sentence after him. As Belitzer had no command of Polish he knew at once that he was going to be murdered, so he said to Lassa: "Goodbye Josef, my etid has come. I die for my country!" The soldier then shouted to him: "What is that you are saying, you pig?" Belitzer called once more to Lassa: "Goodbye! Heil Hitler!" Thereupon the soldier shot Belitzer, first in the arm, then in the head and then smashed his head in with the butt of his rifle. Lassa was released the same day through the intervention of two former school chums who at the moment happened to be in the Polish army.

Source: Sd. K. Ls. Bromberg 21/39

33. German mother with six young children begs in vain for shelter

The following experience, reported by Frau Amei Lassahn, wife of a clergyman (Bromberg Schwedenhohe), relating to her wanderings in quest of shelter for herself and her six children, is indicative of the deep hatred felt for the Germans, inspired and fostered by Polish agitators (1).

. . . Suddenly the thought came to me: "Quickly, to the House of the Catholic Sisters of Mercy!" They have been having things from our garden for years. We rang the bell. The door was opened. The nun in charge of the children, whom we knew well, stood before us, an open prayer book in her hand. "Sister, do take pity on us and take us in."

A torrent of abuse broke from her. "Go back to the place you came from. We have no room here for cursed Germans. Be off with you."

(1) Extract from the detailed report in manuscript of the writer's experience concerning the occurrences in and around the rectory and church of Bromberg-Schwedenhohe.

[p. 70]

Then I flung all my pride away and entreated her once again in all meekness. "Sister, I implore you, have pity on me. I don't ask for myself, I won't come in myself, but save my children from the mad crowd."

To soften her heart, I pushed my little boy forward. "Be off with you! There's no room here for you cursed Germans." The door was slammed. We had not moved 4 paces from the door when the mob tore the old sexton from my side. When I tried to hold him, I received such a blow in the back that I stumbled forward. . .

34. Father shot--Daughter outraged--Both robbed

The murder of Gannott.

Staff Field Court of the Air Force, Commander 3rd District. Bromberg, Sept. 14, 1939.

Present:

Dr. Waltzog, Military Judge Advocate of the Air Force acting as judge.

Hanschke, Senior Court Clerk of the Air Force acting as secretary.

In the case of the inquiry into the International Law case Bromberg I, the witness, Frl. Vera Gannott of Bromberg, 125 Thorner Strasse, appeared, and after being cautioned to tell the truth and reminded of the significance of the oath made the following statement:

Re person: I am 19 years old, protestant, of no occupation.

Re matter: When it was known in the town that German troops were marching in, the populace and the Polish soldiers began committing acts of violence against us, too. On Sunday at about 2 p.m. some Polish soldiers and civilians approached our house at 125 Thornerstrasse, situated 3 miles from the town. The civilians said: "There are Germans living here," upon which the soldiers at once started shooting. We fled into a shed. In my opinion they also threw hand grenades. First of all they hauled my father out of the shed. He was asked by the Poles where he had the machine gun. My father, however, did not understand the question, as he did not understand Polish. Then I came out of the shed as well. I wanted to stand by my father as I could speak Polish. I asked the Poles what we had done to them and pleaded for my father. The Poles, however, shouted: "Down with the German pigs!" My father received several blows from rifle butts in the face and on the body and was also stabbed with bayonets. He thereupon fell to the ground and, as he lay there, he received 6 bullets; he died. The mob of soldiers then withdrew, after telling the civilians they might plunder the house if they liked, otherwise they would set fire to it. Then my mother too came out of her hiding place. We wanted to wash my father's body which was covered with blood. We had just begun to do this when another Polish horde appeared armed with staves and cudgels. My mother as well as my aunt were beaten with the cudgels; I myself was cuffed left and right. Then they went away again. After a time another horde of Polish soldiers and civilians appeared on the scene. On their approach I ran into the water of the Brahe; a river which flows behind our house, but I was pulled out by the hair. Ten or 15 civilians dragged me into the house. They said I would see that Poles were not at all such bad fellows and they would allow me to change my wet clothes. As however none of them made any move to go out, I refused to change, whereupon the Poles tore the clothes off me and laid me out naked on the floor. About 10 men held me down by the head, hands and feet, while one of the Poles raped me during which I sustained several injuries. The first days I suffered considerable pain. but not now. No other Poles violated me. While this was going on, my mother was led to a room upstairs and kept there at the point of 'a rifle.

The Polish soldiers robbed my father and me of our money, handbag, watches and rings. Our house was completely wrecked. The furniture was smashed with axes. All the crockery as well as the linen was stolen.

We had no weapons in our house. We had already delivered them over to the police in accordance with the general order.

Read, approved and signed

Vera Gannott The witness took the oath.

Concluded:

(signed) Dr. Waltzog (signed) Hanschke

Apart from Willi Gannott, six other persons in the same house were murdered, namely: The son of Frau Emma Gannott, the minority German Karl Kohn, his wife and their 3 children, aged from 16 to 24. Willi Gannott and Karl Kohn were murdered on the "Blood Sunday" and the other five Germans on Monday, Sept. 4th.

Source: WR I (1)

35. Violation of German Schoolgirls

The witness, Hedwig Daase, teacher's wife of Slonsk, makes the following statement on oath:

On Friday, Sept. 8, 1939 a mounted patrol consisting of about 20 men, entered our village. They were looking for weapons and literature from Germany. A military search was also made in our house again. The search was so thorough that everything out of cupboards, drawers, dressing tables, etc., also in the classroom was taken out and scattered all over the floor. The leader of the patrol put my husband's new fountain pen into his pocket. A soldier stole six new soup spoons, another soldier stole 180 zlotys, my gold watch, a penknife, some spirits and some honey from me.

The inspection commission were greatly disappointed to find that my husband had already been interned. I had the impression that the soldiers were looking especially for German men.

(1) The record is reproduced in the original (see photostatic copy on page 272-273).

Towards the evening of the same day two auxiliary policeman came in a waggon, drove up before our house and took away bread, hay and honey. At about 11.30 p.m. they both came again, accompanied by a third. I was forced to stay in the kitchen under guard, whilst the second auxiliary policeman took my youngest daughter into the bedroom and the third went into the living-room with my eldest daughter. I heard my eldest daughter screaming horribly. As she later related to me, she was beaten, half-strangled and threatened with shooting unless she gave herself up to him. The resistance put up by my daughter prevented the auxiliary policeman from carrying out his intention. He therefore let her go, she came to me in the kitchen and he went to the official who was with my youngest daughter. Together they succeeded in overpowering her. After that the two turned their attention to my eldest daughter and overpowered her in the same way. They had previously torn down the knickers of both girls. Both men were natives of Ciechocinek.

Source: WR II

The witness Melitta Daase, schoolgirl, of Slonsk, deposed on oath as follows:

On Friday night, three civilians with red and white armllets came into our home. One had a sabre, the second a rifle and the third a Browning. My mother had to stay in the kitchen, with an armed civilian beside her. My sister, two years younger than myself, and I were led into separate rooms each one by another civilian. I was forced to sit on the sofa, the civilian sat down beside me and began to make a physical examination. Then he grasped under my skirt, tore my knickers and demanded that I should be intimate with him. I defended myself frantically, even when, with the Browning to my breast, he threatened me with death. Only after bringing over to his assistance the second civilian, who in the meantime had raped my younger sister, was he able to force me to sexual intercourse with him. The doctor, whom I visited the next day, confirmed that sexual intercourse had taken place. The same result was shown by the examination of my younger sister. They beat me and tried to strangle me; I have not, however, sustained any considerable open wounds.

Source: WR II

36. Her Daughters as Targets

The Witness Else Siebert, nee Dey, of Rojewo, in the Hohensalza district, deposed on oath as follow.

On Sept. 7, 1939, we observed Polish soldiers marching along the high road in the direction of Hohensalza. One band came to a halt by the roadside and several soldiers came into our house and asked us if we were perhaps "waiting for Hitler"; they demanded of us that we should leave immediately. We loaded the most necessary things onto a waggon as hastily as we could, sharing another waggon with the Trittel family, as each of us had only one horse. My brother-in-law, who also went with us, had harnessed both his two horses to his cart. We travelled over Hohensalza-Rojewo to an estate near there. Here we made a halt but were betrayed by a family of the name of Hallas, of Liskowo, to the Poles on the estate, of whom some wore armlets. These Poles ordered my husband to come with them, led him to the boundary of the estate and there shot him. I did not see the actual shooting myself but heard the shot and, later, saw him lying there. Shortly after, the men with the armlets fetched my brother-in-law and took him to the same place and killed him with two shots. Soon after the taking away of my husband, I went with my three daughters to the place in question and was in time to see him drop to the ground. Then the men with the armlets fetched our neighbour Trittel and shot him also, although he begged ceaselessly for mercy. And afterwards Trittel's daughter was shot, likewise from the front, and, some time later, the son, who received the bullet from behind and fell upon the body of his sister. All the assassinations were carried out by one and the same man and with a rifle. I presume that he was from the estate in question and that he there played a role similar to that played by the men wearing the same armlets on our own estates here. After the shooting of these five persons the turn of myself and my three daughters came. We were forced to lie on the earth, face downwards, and then the man with the rifle took aim at us. I myself did not see him do this, but I was told about it by my daughter, who repeatedly turned round. The people of the estate stood around us and shouted continually that we must be shot. The man with the armlet, however, did not shoot us, but allowed us, after we had lain there for about two hours, to go into a barn, into which he locked us.

I wish to add that Herr Trittel, when he resisted being taken to the spot where he was later shot down, was struck by civilians in the most brutal manner with whips and sticks.

Source W R II

37. Mass Murder in Jägerhof

The murder of Pastor Kutzer -- Eighteen fettered Men shot down one after another

Extract from records of the Reich Police Headquarters - Special commission in Bromberg - Ref. No. Tgb. V (RKPA) 1486/16.39.

With what cold-blooded deliberation the murders of the Bromberg "Blood Sunday" were carried out has been revealed with particular clarity by the investigations into the case of Kutzer, the Protestant pastor of Bromberg-Jägerhof, and into the other mass murders committed in that part of the town. In Jägerhof alone, during the course of Sept. 3, 1939, sixty-three minority Germans of ages ranging from 14 to 76, were collected from their homes by search-parties of Polish soldiers, acting either under the leadership of armed Polish civilians or on denunciation by the latter, and murdered in various parts of the district, in some cases in its centre.

The mass murders of Jägerhof were started with the murder of the 45-year-old Protestant pastor Kutzer, a married man and the father of four children, of the ages of three to fourteen years. This German, imbued as he was with the German tradition, was particularly hated by the Poles because he conducted a parish consisting almost entirely of minority Germans in an exemplary manner, urging them unceasingly to courage and tenacity in those difficult days before the outbreak of war, so that, for instance, by the time the morning of "Blood Sunday" arrived, fewer minority Germans had fled from Bromberg-Jägerhof than from any other part of the city. Pastor Kutzer went so far as to give the shelter of his home, which until then had been used as a billet by Polish officers of a regiment stationed in Jägerhof, to German refugees from other parishes.

In the course of Sept. 3, 1939, seven different visits were made by seven different search-parties, under the pretext that weapons were believed to be hidden in the Rectory and in the church; these parties were led on, or incited by, the same civilians in every case. The absurdity of such an accusation is proved sufficiently by the one fact alone, that until after the beginning of the war Polish officers were billeted in the Rectory. After failing to find weapons or any other objects considered by the Poles as dangerous, in spite of repeated searching, the pastor was taken, at 1.30 p.m. the same day, from the circle formed by his family and the refugees he had taken under his protection, and led away. About 3 p.m. a new search-party appeared, again searched the Rectory on the same pretext, incited by the same Polish civilian element of Jägerhof. The party, after a further vain search, took away with them the 73-year-old father of the pastor, Otto Kutzer, the 14-year-old refugee Herbert Schollenberg, the 17-year-old refugee Hans Nilbitz and three other refugees.

These Germans, taken at 3 p. m. from the Rectory. without any justifiable reason, were, as is shown by the evidence of Polish and German witnesses, led to an embankment in the neighbourhood of the church grounds and there, with twelve other German men and one German woman, Frau Köbke-who had been likewise dragged from their homes, they were stood, fettered, in a row. Then 12 Polish soldiers standing at a distance of about 8 yards, shot them down, one after another. After the first man had fallen, Frau Köbke, who was standing in the middle of the group of unhappy victims and whose husband had been murdered earlier that day on their property, fell senseless to the ground. Heedless of this, the remainder of the eighteen fettered men were shot down, and following this, they released the hands of the witness Köbke and forced her, after she had recovered her senses and before they allowed her to go, to look once more at the murdered men, one by one. This "entertainment" was watched by about 200 Polish soldiers and men and women of the civilian population.

The corpse of Pastor Richard Kutzer was found, together with the bodies of the three other murdered minority Germans, near the canal bridge in Jägerhof, on Sept. 6, 1939. According to the medico-legal post-mortem on his body, the pastor received a fatal shot just above the shoulder-blade, accompanied by severing of the vein; the lower jaw had been smashed by a blunt instrument.

38. Twenty Minority Germans shot at Jägerhof

The Murder of Köbke, Schröder and others

Present: Bromberg, Sept. 20, 1939

State Attorney Bengsch as examiner,

Court official Kraus as court clerk.

In the inquiry into the case of Gniewkowski, accused of murder, the witness, Anna Kobke, widow, n6e Wietychowski, of Jägerhof, 1 Okopowa, born on July 2, 1882 at Susannental, district of Rosenberg, after having been made acquainted with the reason for her interrogation, deposed as follows:

When my husband, my daughter and son and myself heard on Sunday, Sept. 3, of this year, that all Germans were to be killed, we went for refuge into the cellar of a friendly neighbour, Schroder, and locked ourselves in there. At about 12 o'clock there came a great crowd of soldiers and civilians, beating against the cellar-door, throwing hand-grenades and shooting through the cellar-window. My daughter was wounded by a shot in the hip. I was the first to flee from the cellar and I ran into our garden. So terrified was I when I came out of the cellar that I did not recognise any of those among the big crowd. I recognised only our neighbour, the mason Klimczac, as the latter attempted to catch hold of me and cried out that I was a German and must be struck down. I was able, however, to escape from Klimczac and to get into my garden.

After about a quarter of an hour; I went to the Polish family, Gorny (a shoe-maker), that lived near by. I hoped perhaps to find protection with them. Gorny and his wife and some others who were there spat upon me and insulted me, until soldiers appeared and led me away into a wood, where I found about 20 other minority Germans. I was then fettered, and they began to drive us to and fro, striking us with the butts of their rifles and kicking us. They told us that we were to be shot in Schleusenau. On the way to Schleusenau we were followed by a great crowd of Polish civilians, women, men and even children, who were continually cursing us, demanding our death and striking at us with axes and sticks. Among this crowd were Gniewkowski, the butcher, whom I know personally, and a

certain Paschke, of Schleusenau. I quite definitely heard their voices among the crowd, shouting that we should be shot down. Whether either Gniewkowski or Paschke were carrying axes or sticks I do not know. We minority Germans-there were about 20 men, amongst whom I was the only woman were then halted at an embankment in Schleusenau and every one of the German-born men was shot by the soldiers and railwaymen in the presence of the Polish crowd. Gniewkowski and Paschke were among this crowd. I became unconscious and fell to the ground, and, at the command of an officer, I was set free. As I was about to leave; the Polish crowd forced me to return to look at the bodies and to shout "hurrah for Poland" several times.

Among the 20 persons shot were:

Artur Gehrke, Hans Bolowski, Horst Stuwe, a certain Goertz, a man named Arndt, another named Stöckmann, another called Redel, a Grammar School pupil, Mielwitz, and Trojahn, a house owner, all of Jägerhof.

Of the people left behind in the cellar the following were, as I afterwards learned, shot whilst attempting to escape:

My husband, Emil Köbke, butcher; my son Arthur Kobke, butcher's journeyman; Schroder, owner of a market garden, and Hans Schrodei his son; Gerhard Vorkert, market gardener's assistant; and a servant, girl employed by Schroder junior.

Read, approved and signed

Anna Köbke.

The second witness, Fräulein Elli Köbke, of Jägerhof, 1 Okopowa, born on June 3, 1912 at Jägerhof (Bromberg), declared after being told the reason for her interrogation:

After my mother had fled from our neighbour Schroder's cellar on Sept. 3, 1939, we also rushed out of the cellar, into which the Poles were not only shooting but also throwing gas and hand grenades. Overcome by the effects of the gas and the wound in my hip, I fell down almost immediately in the court. All the men amongst the other persons rushing out of the cellar were at once shot down by the soldiers; and with them died also a Polish servant-girl. Frau Schroder had been badly wounded in the cellar. Among the crowd which stood before the cellar, shouting continuously that we were Germans and must be shot immediately, were:

a certain Grabowski, who lived opposite us; a certain Klimczak, others named Rynkowski, Szymanski, Lewandowski, Domzewski (about 16 years old), Mme. Wolnik, Mme. Borek, all from our street.

I quite definitely saw and heard the above-named persons shouting with the rest of the crowd that we were Germans and must be killed. When I collapsed, and in this way escaped death, the crowd screamed (and with it the above-named persons) that I also

should be shot. A Polish soldier, however, declared that the women should be spared. For several hours I remained, exhausted, together with Frau Schroder, lying near the bodies, whilst the crowd dispersed.

I also wish to state that Mme. Wolnik and Mme. Borek, Szymanski and Rynkowski stole things from our home during the events of Sept. 3, 1939. We found the things ourselves in the homes of the above-named when we visited them accompanied by German soldiers. In the apartment shared by the Boreks and the Wolniks we found our sofa, a linen-press, two bedsteads, chairs, a settee, a can, wash-boiler and other smaller things.

At Rynkowski's I found our wardrobe.

At Szymanski's, our wash-basket with some linen.

Read, approved and signed.

Concluded:

(signed) Bengsch

(signed) Kraus

Certified: Kraus. court official.

Source: Sd. Is. Bromberg 95/39

39. Thirty-nine shot at Jesuitersee

Badly Wounded thrown into the Lake and further fired upon.

Extract from the records of the Reich Police Headquarters-Special Commission in Bromberg-Ref. No. Tgb. V (RKPA) 1486/9.39.

I.

On the day after the Bromberg "Blood Sunday," that is on September 4, 1939, late in the afternoon, thirty-nine German-born men of Bromberg and its immediate surroundings were murdered by members of a regular Polish army unit, at the Jesuitersee, which lies about 13 miles south of Bromberg on the road to Hohensalza. Among those whom it was intended to murder were the minority Germans, Gustav Gruhl of Bromberg and Leo Reinhard of Zielonka, who escaped death by a lucky chance.

From the statements of these witnesses, it appears that on the morning of September 4, 1939, a large band of men, women and children, amongst whom was Gruhl, were driven along the ditch at the side of the high road in the direction of Hohensalza. In a glade, five miles south of Bromberg, the women and children were separated from the group and the men lined up before a machine-gun for execution. On the command of a Polish officer, however, the murder was not carried out on this spot. Whilst the Germans were being lined up for the intended murder, a second group of German-born men, fettered in such a way that the left wrist of each man was secured to the right wrist of his neighbour, were driven along the high road. This second group, among whom was the witness Reinhard, was joined to the first group all ready to be shot, and the men, accompanied by soldiers and Polish field-gendarmes, who continually mishandled them, were led on to the Jesuitersee where they were handed over to a military formation stationed there (1).

(1) The fact that a regular army unit was concerned here is borne out by both the statements of German and Polish witnesses, including Gruhl and Reinhard, and the discoveries made on the actual spot of the crime; particularly those discoveries made in buildings used as shelters and stables which stood in the neighbourhood of this spot.

II.

Whilst the foregoing report is based upon statements made by the witnesses Gruhl and Reinhard, which from the strictly legal standpoint it is not possible to verify completely, the following details are based almost exclusively upon objective and remarkably well-preserved evidence found on the spot of the crime:

The 41 Germans--39 bodies from the group in question were recovered--were lined up in a row, some still in their fetters, with their faces to the lake and about 13 to 15 yards from its shore. The soldiers then began to shoot wildly at the minority Germans with their rifles and, as is revealed by the post-mortem results and by the bullets found lodged in the victims' bodies, with highly effective automatic pistols. The marksmen stood, as is shown by the spent cartridges and other objects which have been found, in a half-circle behind their victims, standing at a distance of sometimes less than five yards and sometimes more than 20 yards away from them. After this shooting orgy had begun, a German aeroplane appeared high above the lake, with the result that all the murderous marksmen ran for cover. Six still unwounded, or only slightly wounded Germans took advantage of this opportunity to flee towards, or along the sides of the lake. The witness Reinhard, who had freed himself from the loosened fetters, was able to escape by swimming and wading, into a dense strip of reeds at the water's edge, whilst the witness Gruhl succeeded in hiding himself under a bathing hut built upon posts from 9" to 18" high. Two of the Germans attempted, with the aid of a boat which had lain at the lake's edge, to reach the other shore: a third of the witnesses attempted to swim across. This incident can have lasted only a few moments, and in the meantime the German aeroplane had passed, so that the Polish soldiers could continue their shooting orgy and they succeeded in hitting the three fugitives last mentioned, who were not yet far from the shore. Another wounded man obviously dragged himself to an old boat lying in a shed near by and there succumbed to his wounds. And then--this is the most monstrous part of the behaviour of the Polish soldiers at the Jesuitsee--those of the Germans who were not yet dead but in a badly wounded condition were dragged along a landing stage built 60 yards out into the lake and thrown from there into the water, and, as is again clearly proved by the post-mortem results, fired upon from the landing stage. This fact is proved not only by the statements of the two witnesses who escaped with their lives, in particular that of Gruhl who was able to watch the incident from his hiding-place, but also by the extensive traces of blood on the planks of the landing stage and by objects dropped there and in the water and washed on to the lakeshore. The findings of the medico-legal examination complete the picture. It would take too long to enumerate here the wounds of the 39 victims (1) as ascertained by the medico-legal experts, and to draw the conclusions therefrom. To show the nature of the "humane" death which the Polish soldiery accorded to their victims, it will doubtless be sufficient to say that one German, apart from a bullet wound, in itself comparatively harmless, had received 33 bayonet-thrusts in the region of the neck, of which only one was a fatal stab. Another victim was deliberately shot

(1) 38 unknown dead, of whom 28 could be later identified, have been exhumed and subjected to post-mortem examinations.

in the anus, whereby it must be remembered that, as is shown by the wound on the abdomen where the bullet left the body, the German, although not in a lying position, must have been in such a position that his face was to the ground. A number of victims received up to 15 ricochet and grazing bullet-wounds, of which not one shot was absolutely fatal. In the case of the last-named victims--and this will be proved even more conclusively after completion of the examination of the parts of the lungs taken from the bodies--death by drowning is to be assumed. Under these circumstances, it hardly appears worth while to mention further that almost all the victims show extensive wounds caused by blows, stabs or cuts--two of the Germans showed clear traces of having been stabbed in the eyes.

III.

Despite the brevity of the above description, representing the copious results of the investigations made by the police and medico-legal authorities, it is sufficient evidence of the indisputable fact that, at Bromberg, a regular Polish Army unit murdered 39 German-born men, in a manner hard to describe and of almost unbelievable brutality, not only by shooting but also with the aid of the bayonet and the rifle butt, and throwing badly wounded men into the lake.

40. A Murder in almost every Home!

The witness Dora K u t z e r , of 14 Kroner Strasse, Bromberg, deposed on oath as follows:

In our Protestant parish there is, so far as I know, hardly a single house which has not to mourn the murder of one, two or even three minority Germans. Up to the present moment 59 dead are lying in our Protestant churchyard, and we are still far from having found all the dead.

Source: WR I

41. "Put a Bullet In his Head!"

The Murder of Gustav Fritz.

The witness, Walli Hammermeister, a servant-girl in the employ of Erich Jahnke, Langenau near Bromberg, deposed on oath as follows:

. . . When the soldiers discovered that Herr Fritz could not speak Polish, one of them told him that he himself, although a young man, could speak both German and Polish, whereas Fritz, despite the fact that the Polish State had been in existence for 20 years, could not yet speak Polish. Herr Fritz replied that he was 75 years old and could not learn Polish at this age. To this, another Polish soldier said: "Put a bullet in his head!"

The first soldier then shot Herr Fritz in the right side of his head. I saw this with my own eyes and I fled into the hay-loft.

Source: WR I

[p. 80]

42. The Massacres of Eichdorf

38 Victims of Polish "Civilization" - Minority Germans aged from 3 to 82 years shot indiscriminately

Extract from the records of the Reich Police -- Special Commission in Bromberg -- Ref. No. Tgb. V (RKPA) 1486/3.39.

I.

From the late evening of September 4, 1939 until the evening of September 5, 1939, 38 minority Germans, from infants of 3 years up to old people of 82 years, belonging to the parishes of Eichdorf and Netzheim on the road from Bromberg to Labischin, were murdered by members of a Polish infantry regiment, whose regimental number has been ascertained.

Eichdorf, in the neighbourhood of the smaller parish of Netzheim, is a settlement established by German peasants centuries ago, which contained until 1918 not a single resident of Polish race. As a result of the fact that, up to the time of the Polish war, the population was 80 per cent German, there was, even on the "Bromberg Blood Sunday," comparatively speaking, a peaceful atmosphere in the parish, parti-



The murders of Eichdorf — Tgb. V (RKPA) 1486/3. 39:
Water-hole in the wood near Targowisko, into which 15 bodies of murdered German-born men, women and children were thrown, together with the carcass of an animal.

66

81

cularly as no Polish military unit occupied the immediately surrounding area until that date Baiting and threatening on the part of the Polish inhabitants of the village, who were so much in a minority, were not taken seriously and it was the first reports coming from Bromberg 10 miles away, about the massacre there, which caused uneasiness among the Germans. This uneasiness, however, did not bring with it any relaxation of discipline, and particularly the women and children remained calm. Only the Eichdorf men fled on the night of September 4, 1939, into the fields and meadows, returning to their homes only with some caution. Frightened men who tried to persuade their wives to hide with them, were reassured by these brave women (some of the evidence given by witnesses on this point is heart-rending) who said that the Poles would surely not harm the women and children and that, at the same time, somebody had to look after the cattle.

Late in the evening of September 4, 1939, Polish soldiers, pouring back along the road from Bromberg to Hohensalza, entered Eichdorf and Netzheim. These troops occupied provisional positions, and shortly after began, with the murder of the farmer Emil Lange of Eichdorf, an orgy of murder probably unparalleled in the history of all civilised nations.

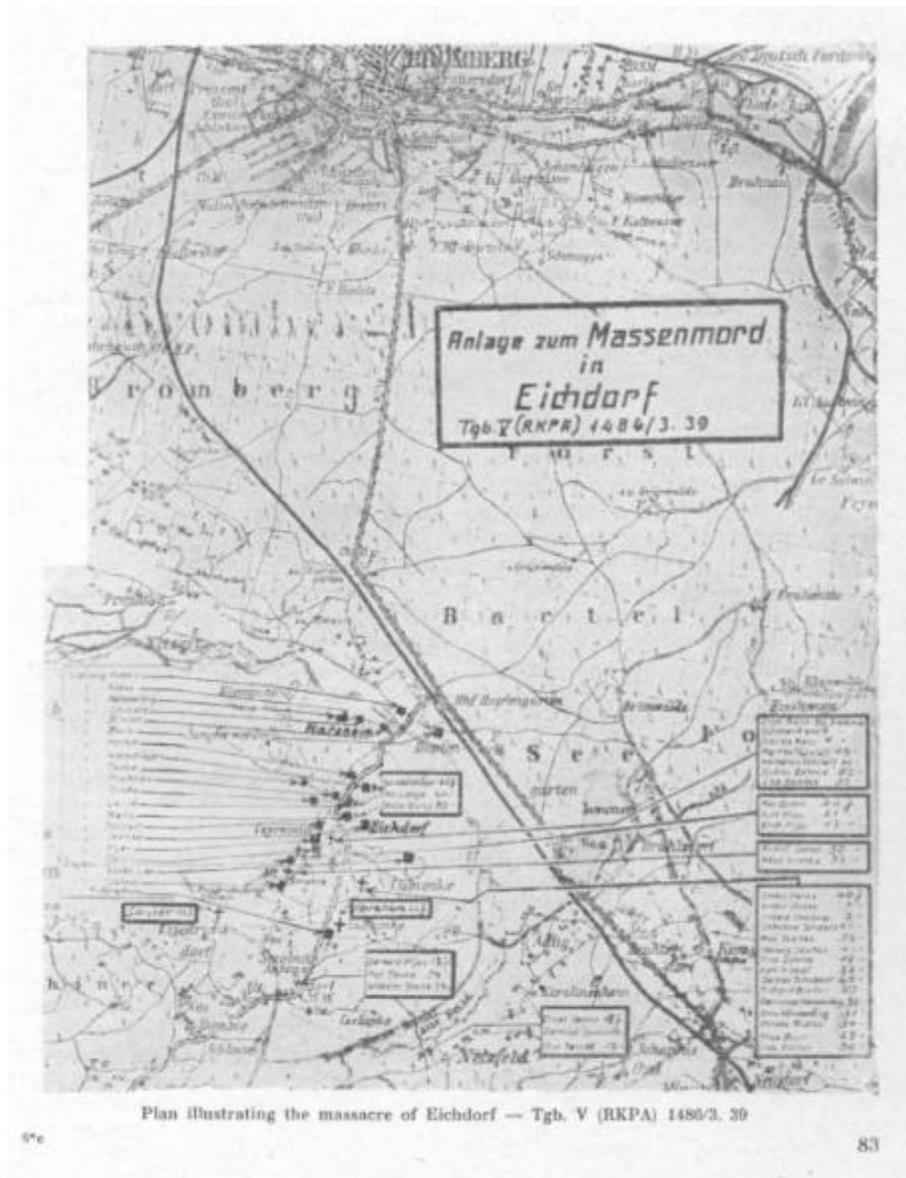
II

Unimpeachable discoveries made at the various places of murder, show quite clearly the positions in which the murderers and their victims were standing when the crimes were committed, whilst spent cartridges found lying about corresponded in some cases with shots lodged in the bodies of the dead men, and a handkerchief stamped by the Polish military authorities revealed the battalion involved. Also parts of letters and cards, the

senders of which were Polish soldiers.--All these facts help to substantiate the following:.

On the road which branches off at Hopfengarten Station from the Bromberg-Hohensalza road and leads to Gnesen, over Labischin, lie a few houses of Hopfengarten and those of Netzheim and Eichdorf, all more or less together on a strip of land just 2 miles long, so that there is hardly any noticeable interstice between each of the three parishes. Among these houses were 21 houses of German families, who, with 38 murder victims on one single day, have been almost completely wiped out.

In this particular case, Polish "civilisation" was demonstrated, by 38 victims in eight different spots, of which six are of the smallest possible area and none more than 100 yards from the road and the houses of the bereaved families. Here, the victims--as is proved beyond all question, even where there is insufficient evidence of another nature, by the post-mortem examinations made on all the 38 bodies--were killed in the most incredibly bestial manner. Two of these places lie at a little distance from the others and in one of these died Max Teske, aged 34, and Wilhelm Stolte, aged 55, both of Eichdorf, together with the 13 year old boy, Gerhard Pijan, whom the two men had found wandering helplessly about in the woods. All three had attempted to find a hiding-place in the meadows 2 miles north of Eichdorf, but were



caught by Polish soldiers and shot. In the other place, three children, Else, Gertrud and Ernst Janot, of the ages of 12, 15 and 18 respectively, (whose 50 year old father was also found shot in yet another spot) were murdered.

On the advice of the Polish village-elder, the Janot children, together with their mother, attempted to escape in the early morning of September 5, 1939, two days after their father had gone into hiding in the fields. Frau Janot, however, was stopped by Polish soldiers and forced to return to her farm, where she was to hand over the horses and waggon of the family to them. On the advice of the mother, the children were to await her return, but through some unknown agency were caused or compelled to go on alone. They chose the way through the wood south-east of Eichdorf, which would lead them, on the other side of this wood, over a stretch of meadow, bog, and pasture-land, 1½ miles wide and completely open, to Netzfeld, where their grandmother lived. Unimpeachable witnesses, residents of Netzfeld, who were lying hidden in the willow bushes on the outskirts of the village, state that the children, on leaving the open

ground, were simply shot down by military sentinels who were in hiding at the entrance to Netzfeld. And this the sentinels did after a short debate and--as is revealed by the discovery on the spot of pieces of the birth certificates of the children--after examining the papers of the children.

Shocking even for experienced police officials, hardened against sentimentality by constant investigation into daily capital crimes, was the examination of two particular spots--two of five such places all lying close to one another--where 80 year old Otilie Renz and her two grandchildren, Gisela and Günther, aged four and nine, were murdered. And equally shocking to examine, another place where the Poles massacred 15 minority Germans, among them 8 women, a seven year old child and a 3 year old child.

The house of the Leo Benz family lay some distance from the road, and for this reason Erich Renz, the brother, whose farm was near the road, sent his two small children and his aged mother to Leo, whilst he himself; together with his wife, remained on his own property. But on the morning of September 5, 1939, Polish troop formations appeared at Leo Renz's farm. Little Gisela and Günther Renz--made afraid by the anti-German agitation of the past weeks, which had frightened even the children of the village--made use of the first confusion and escaped through a gate at the back of the farmyard into the wood. A short time later, the Leo Renz family were ordered also to leave their home, without being able to take with them the old woman, of whom they then lost sight. A few days afterwards members of the family found a grave in the wood, 50 yards distant from the road. From this grave stuck out a child's head and hand. It was the grave of Gisela and Günther Renz and their father, hurriedly buried. Inquiries revealed that Erich Renz must have seen the danger of his children from his hiding-place in the fields, and in attempting to help them had been murdered together with his little son and daughter. The old woman, Otilie Renz, was found hurriedly buried near the wall of her son Erich's house, underneath a large potato box. How the old woman went from Leo's house to Erich's can only be surmised, but the traces found in the living-room and kitchen of the latter's home point clearly to murdering by several persons.

Thrown into a cattle-trough together with the body of a dog

Of a quite different nature were the discoveries made at a place in the woods near Targowisko, about 300 yards from the high-road at Eichdorf. Soldiers, directed by officers, had led 46 Germans, aged from six months to 80 years, and of both sexes, to a small slope in the wood, forced 15 of them to run up the slope and shot these 15 down after they reached the top. The names of the 15 shot in this manner were:

Emma Hanke, 40 years

Gustav Schubert, 65 years

Walter Busse, 7 years

Richard Binder, 50 years

Erhard Prochnau, 3 years

Emanuel Hemmerling, 35 years

Johanna Schwarz, 45 years

Erna Hemmerling, 30 years

Max Jeschke, 55 years

Frieda Ristau, 31 years

Hedwig Jeschke, 47 years

Frau Blum, 28 years

Else Dahms, 19 years

Frau Golz, 50 years

Kurt Kempf, 22 years

Of the 46, 23, i.e. 50%, were women, only 5, that is 10.8%, men, and 18, i.e. 39.2%, children, amongst them one infant.

The distance from the place where the group of Germans stood herded together, to the top of the slope was a little less than 20 yards, and to the place where the victims fell, between 30 and 36 yards. If one may mention special cases in a deed so uniformly horrible, then one must mention the lame children's nurse Johanna Schwarz, who had to run up the slope together with her little charge Erhard Prochnau and Frau Hanke, who ran with her step-son Walter Busse--all four died together on the other side of the slope. The most important witness here--though even without her the evidence of 31 other witnesses is overwhelming--is Frau Prochnau, who, after her three-year old son had been led over the hill and murdered, had also to go through the same ordeal, carrying her six-months-old infant in her arms, and leading her little four-year-old daughter by the hand. According to her statement--which is borne out completely by subsequent investigation--she reached the top with the two children and saw there, grouped about the place where the murders were carried out, hundreds of soldiers lying about, a field kitchen with which soldiers were cooking, and a civilian playing modern dance music on an accordion. This man, whom other witnesses also heard playing, it was later possible to arrest. Frau Prochnau added further details which made it possible to reconstruct, quite without any doubt, the whole sequence of events.

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Examination of the other places in this group yielded discoveries which, although in each case different in themselves, are yet not sufficiently different from those described in the foregoing paragraph to merit a full description. It would mean merely considerable repetition to go fully into murder-cases of Martha Tetzlaff, 45 years old,

Heidelies Tetzlaff, 11 years old, Else Behnke, 35 years old, Gustav Behnke, 82 years old (all members of one family) or into any of the other cases.

III

Even in the form of extracts from extensive records, the descriptions given make it impossible to doubt for a moment that the Polish soldiers not only committed the murders on the commands and before the eyes of their officers, but also gave expression to their loathing for everything German, in every conceivable way. Apart from the fact, ascertained by medico-legal experts at the post-mortem examinations of the victims, that shots were fired from military rifles and highly effective firearms, from all ranges and from all sides and angles, and at children carried in their mothers' arms, and that the Germans were stabbed and slashed with the bayonet--apart from all this, the treatment of the bodies merits special mention. The brother and sister Janot were simply left lying in the place where they had been murdered, so that animals had already begun to feed on the bodies before the relatives, after the departure of the troops, were able to bury them. The bodies of the Tetzlaff family lay in a disorderly heap, covered with a layer of earth about 8 inches deep, whilst parts of the bodies of the murdered Renz children actually protruded from the earth and, in this way, were discovered by the searching mother. Typical is the case of the murders in the Targowisko wood, where the 15 murdered men, women and children were thrown, together with the body of a dog, into a cattle-trough.

IV

The foregoing report indicates clearly in how great a measure this systematic murdering by the Polish military wiped out the German population of the country, as for instance that of Eichdorf.

Of the 130 Germans of Eichdorf, up to September 3, 1939, eleven had fled, five had been called up for Polish military service, and five others called up for other service by the Polish authorities. Thus, on September 3, 1939, i.e. before the appearance of the Polish soldiers, the German population of Eichdorf was still 109 persons. Of these, in the night of September 4, 1939, and during September 5, 1939, thirty persons (1) were murdered, that is 19% of the whole population, 23% of the German population as it was before the outbreak of war, and 27.5% of the persons belonging to the German minority who were still in Eichdorf at the beginning of the war. The thirty victims are distributed, among 15 of the 30 German families of Eichdorf, that is to

(1) 8 victims were natives of the little parishes of Netzheim and Hopfengarten, which also have to mourn others murdered at other spots.

say that 50% of the German families were bereaved, some in so terrible a manner that, as in the case of the Jeschke family, there was not one survival, whilst of the Janot

family, after the murder of the husband and the three children, only the wife was left alive. Of the Renz family, Frau Renz was also the sole survivor after losing husband, her two children, father and mother-in-law. To be emphasized is the fact that of the whole 38 families of Eichdorf 79% were purely German.

With reference to sex and age, the, thirty dead of Eichdorf can be classified as follows:

There were 15 men murdered, that is 50% of the total of the dead, of which 46.6% were over 50 years old, 20% over 60 years and 2 only 17 and 18 years old. Of the others, there were 8 women, i.e. 26.6% of the dead, aged 15 to 80 years, and 7 children from 3 to 13 years old--so that 23.4% of the total number of those murdered consisted of children under 14 years.

43. Legs and hands broken, tongue, nose and ears cut off

Massacre in Schrimm

The witness Oskar Hartmann, brick-works manager, of Schrimm, deposed on oath as follows:

. . . Nine of these comrades were attacked, in Schrimm, by the populace and so maltreated in the open street that they died. My comrade Willi Mantei had the entire base of his skull smashed, Herbert Raabe had his eyes gouged out and his fingers cut off. Others also lost fingers, in some cases legs and hands were broken or dislocated. Still others had their faces completely mutilated by blows, their tongues, noses and ears cut off.

Source: W R II

44. The arteries severed

Discovery of hideously mutilated corpses in Schrimm

The witness Oskar Hartmann, brick-works manager, of Schrimm, deposed on oath as follows:

. . . In one grave there was a person who could not be identified. Further, in the Protestant graveyard of Schrimm, the bodies of the following persons were found: Conrad Lange, Wilhelm Schulz, Heinrich Haussler, Wilhelm John, Erich Gaumer, Richard Weibt, Wilhelm Jeschke. All the bodies were more or less mutilated. The heads were knocked in, tongues, noses and ears cut away. Hermann Raabe had had his eyes gouged out. There were arteries severed and the shin-bone of one body was completely smashed.

Source: W R II

45. Father, husband and uncle murdered

The witness Gertrud Lemke, of Hohensalza, deposed on oath as follows:

My name is Gertrud Lemke, nee Kadolowski, born on April 8, 1906, in Elbing, married since 1937 to Herbert Lemke, compositor, of Hohensalza.

Re matter: On Wednesday, September 6, 1939, at about 11.30, a member of the Polish Army in uniform, and carrying a carbine, and eight or ten civilians with bludgeons entered our home. The soldier ordered my husband to go with him at once. As my husband had forgotten his passport, I ran after him a few minutes later, but was only in time to see him, accompanied by my father, the soldier, and the civilians, turn the next corner.

I heard no more about the fate of my father, husband, and uncle until Sunday, September 10, 1939, when my father-in-law came to me and related that eight bodies, partially burnt, had been found in the neighbourhood of our flaying-house. The bodies had lain on the ground and dogs had already been at them. I begged him to go himself and find out whether our relatives were among the dead. When my husband and father were taken away, I had already a feeling that I should never see them again, as for some time there had already been intensive agitation against Germans in Hohensalza.

A short time later, my father-in-law came back and confirmed my fears. Between two straw-ricks lay my husband, my father, my uncle, three men of the Fuchs family and an assistant of Herr Fuchs. The eighth victim was unknown

Source: W R II

46. Twenty-seven murdered Germans in the churchyard of Kaminieck

Hurriedly buried in a hole--Soles of feet cut away

The witness, Maria Richert, nee Richert, farmer's widow, of Rybno, deposed on oath as follows:

. . . On Tuesday, September 12, 1939, or Wednesday, September 13, we found my son and the farmers Gatzke, Dreger and Tober in a small wood near Koneck, hurriedly buried in a hole. They had gouged out one of my sons's eyes, his back showed numerous bayonet wounds and on both arms were deep cuts, so that the flesh hung down. The whole of the left side of his face was also missing. Dreger's stomach was hanging out of his left side, whilst the soles of Tober's feet had been cut away and blood ran from his back. The body had been thrown on top of another.

We found the Konrad brothers in a hole in a field near Chromowola; Agathe Konrad and Frau Tober were found in Koneck, both with half of their heads missing.

Peter Bitschke lay, as I heard, near Wilhelm Bolke, Bolke's mother, Frau Konrad and another Bitschke in Kaminieck woods. In the churchyard of Kaminteck lie altogether 27 Germans from our village and its immediate surroundings.

47. The face split into three pieces

The witness Ida Albertini, wife of the Kaminieck teacher, and piecentor, deposed on oath as follows:

. . . In our churchyard 26 persons have been buried whose bodies were collected and carried there after having, in some cases, already been in the ground. I saw the bodies and am able to state the following:

Some of the persons had certainly been shot, but with others there is no doubt that they had been killed by blows and stabs. Of the dead, 3 were women and 23 men. Of the wounds which I saw I can give the following details:

One woman had lost half of her face, obviously as the result of a sabre-blow, a male body had three stabs in the chest, so that in one place the liver was protruding. The face of Emil Konrad had been split into three pieces, one cut directly above the forehead, the other at right angles to it, whilst Frau Luise Konrad's hand had been so

completely severed from the wrist that it hung only on a few tendons. The eyeballs of one man hung far out of their sockets, obviously gouged out.

Source: W R II

48. Kicks in the face

Lorry-driver told to drive over dying German

The State Attorney at the
Nov. 23, 1939.

At present in Kulm,

Special Court in Bromberg.

Present:

State Attorney Bengsch as examining official,

Agnes Pischke as Secretary.

At the trial of Wladislaus Rybicki, for murder, the witness Heinrich Krampitz, after being made acquainted with the matter on hand and warned of the significance and sacredness of the oath, deposed on oath as follows:

My name is Heinrich Krampitz, born on May 30, 1921, at Kulm. I am an electrical engine-fitter, of Kulm, 4, Schulstr., Roman Catholic and minority German. I am related to the accused neither by blood nor marriage.

Re matter: On Sunday, September 3, I went with about 28 Poles on a lorry driven by the accused, Rybicki, from Kuhn to Thorn. I wanted to stay in Thorn, but as the town was occupied by troops, I went on further with the lorry. Towards evening on Monday, September 4, 1939, our lorry developed engine-trouble about a mile beyond Wloclawek. Whilst we were standing in the road, a column of arrested minority Germans passed us. I would estimate the number of minority Germans at about 200, and they were accompanied by members of the Polish Youth Organisation (Przysposobienie wojskowe) under the command of a Polish officer. When this column was about 50 yards away from the lorry, I saw an elderly man in the ranks of the Germans collapse and remain lying in the road. The column went on, and the German was surrounded, as he lay, by Polish civilians who had followed the column from Wloclawek. Rybicki joined this crowd. I then saw the crowd strike at the German lying on the ground, and when Rybicki, after a while, returned to the lorry, he said that when the German had tried to pull himself upright he had knocked him back again with a kick in the face. At the same time, he showed us his boot, saying that he still had blood on it as a result of the kick. And, indeed, I saw dark stains on his boot, which looked like blood. It was growing dark, certainly, but it was not so dark that I could not see this. Rybicki further said that when a Polish cyclist who was passing the group declared that it was barbaric to treat a human being in such a way, a Polish officer who was in command of the column of arrested minority Germans struck this cyclist in the face with his fist. I myself saw this Polish officer standing by the German and I also saw some cyclists there. There were

many people standing there and I was not able actually to see the incident described by Rybicki. Rybicki also told us that the crowd standing round the German shouted to the driver of an approaching lorry to run the latter over. I saw the lorry but did not see whether it ran over the German. After Rybicki had returned to our lorry, we were kept for a further hour on the same spot owing to the engine-trouble, and during this time the crowd round the German did not disperse. In the meantime it grew dark. People who went past then told us that the German had been buried in the woods. There were only two small houses near the spot.

Concluded:

(signed) B e n g s c h (signed) P i s c h k e

Source: Sd. K. Ls. Bromberg 117/39.

49. Bound and dragged to death

Murder of the agricultural labourer Wilhelm Steg, of Feyerland

Extract from the records of the Reich Criminal Police Department - Special Commission in Bromberg

- File reference Tgb. V (RKPA) 1486/15. 39.(1)

I.

In a forest in the vicinity of the village of Feyerland, eight miles east-south-east of Bromberg, the body of a man, already in an advanced stage of decomposition, was

(1) The documents pertaining to the present case are to be found as a supplement in the State Attorney's office at the Special Court in Bromberg under file reference Sd. Is. 819/39.

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found on November 14, 1939. In the presence of the competent local official of the gendarmerie, the body was identified by its personal characteristics as that of the agricultural labourer Wilhelm Sieg, of Feyerland, born on March 13, 1896. The dead man, a minority German, leaves a widow and two children of 9 and 4 years of age respectively.

II.

The dead man lay on his back, at a distance of 50 yards from the road, in a small wood to the south of the village of Ruden. The tracks in which he had been dragged, still extraordinarily easy to distinguish, led to his feet and could be followed for another 29 yards into the wood, not, however, in the direction of the road. Round the neck of the dead man a driving-rein was bound in such a manner that one end dangled free from

the back of the neck. At the medico-legal examination of the body, the description of the exterior condition of the corpse was amplified as follows: In the region of the left shoulder, all articles of clothing showed cuts 3 inches long which, by reason of their smooth edges, must have been caused by a stab or an incision, and in the region of the left shoulder-blade a wound was found, which leads to the conclusion that a downward stab had been dealt. The rubber heels of the boots of the dead man had been partially torn away from the rear part of the boot-heels, and moist leaves and grassy mould was found between the rubber and the leather heels. The hands of the dead man were bound together in such a way that the wrists were tightly strapped and knotted together on the back with a horse-rein. The shorter end of the rein hung loose from the wrists, whilst the other end, far greater in length, ran from the knot tightly along the back to the nape of the neck and from that point encircled the neck so as to form a noose running round the wind-pipe, and connecting with a second knot behind the nape. The end of the rein beginning at this knot was another 32 inches long.

The purely medico-legal findings established, apart from the stab or cut already mentioned and the broken hyoid bone, a severe bullet wound. in the head, which must have been inflicted on the man as he was lying on the ground. Further investigations by the Criminal Police established the fact. that between September 3 and 5, the Germans in the village of Feyerland, who as early as the concluding days of August had been threatened with being "butchered" (1) had fled into the woods with their children and the old men. Here they had sustained themselves on berries and on the dew from the bushes. In attempting to venture back to their homes, where they wished to attend to the cattle and fetch food, Wilhelm Sieg and his nephew Kurt Sieg were seized in the early morning of September 4. Under threat of death, Kurt Sieg was compelled to reveal the hiding place of the other minority Germans who were then despoiled of everything. Max Ziesak, one of their number, was seized with the

(1) Statements of witnesses

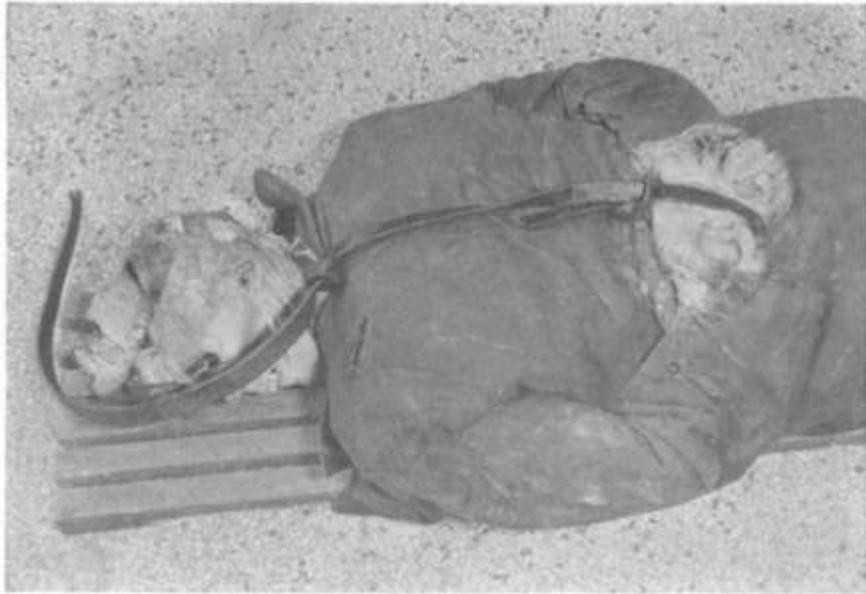


Pertaining to the murder case Sieg, of Feyerland, near Bromberg — Tgls. V (BKPA) 1486/15.39:
The photograph shows Wilhelm Sieg at the spot where he was found murdered. The leather bond terminating in a halter is visible at the neck.

intention of shooting him together with Wilhelm and Kurt Sieg. It is impossible from this point onwards to undertake any further investigation of the martyrdom of the dead man after the witnesses, who later escaped, lost sight of Wilhelm Sieg and the soldiers.

III.

The results of the investigation can be summarised as follows: Wilhelm Sieg was bound in a manner so fiendish that even those with long experience in dealing with crime have seldom met with a similar case. The bonds prevented the victim from moving his hands, which were strapped together in an unnaturally high position, back. The victim had no option other than to remain in this contorted position, since any movement of his arms or hands would have caused the bonds to strangle him. The cruelty of the way in which the leather strap was fastened, was almost exceeded by the cunning with which the knot at the throat had been tied, allowing the free end of the rein to be used as a halter. Judging by the state of the corpse, the rein must have been used in such a way that, by pulls and jerkings, the perpetrator could increase



Pertaining to the murder case of Sieg, of Feyerland, near Bromberg — Tgh. V (BKPA) 1485-15. 39:
The photograph shows the fiendish method of binding the murdered man, and the strap leading from the fastened wrists up to the neck and ending there in a halter. Note the wound (cut or stab) on the left shoulder.

the torment of his victim still further. As the tracks showing where Sieg had been dragged along lead out of the wood in the direction of the country road between Bromberg and Seebruch, that is to say, from the middle of the patch of wood to the road, we must of necessity conclude that Sieg fell a victim to the tortures to which he was subjected, since he was no longer physically capable of walking any further in his bonds. The victim, bound in such an unnatural way, and having fallen to the ground, must therefore have been dragged by the perpetrator through the wood. In consequence, the condition of the fractured hyoid bone, as established by the medico-legal authorities, can be explained naturally. On the other hand there is no necessity for any further inquiry into the degree of the atrocities carried out by the perpetrators, with a view to discovering whether Sieg received the injury to the skull while being dragged through the wood or, as must be supposed, actually at the place where the corpse was

found. This deed (for which--as in so many cases--members of the Polish military forces must be held responsible) represents a murder carried out in the basest and most brutal fashion.

50. "At them! At them!"

The murder of Grieger and John in Posen: Four hurriedly buried male bodies

Extract from the records of the Reich Criminal Police Department - Special Commission in Posen - File reference Tgb. V (RKPA) 1486/4. 39.

At a place in the Matthäus Cemetery in Posen, easily reached from the outside, four male bodies, shovelled roughly into the ground at a depth of 3 feet, were found on September 24, 1939. A superficial examination by the medical expert of the Court showed that all four had met their death by acts of violence.

The post-mortem examination, conducted on September 25 and 26, 1939, exceeded the results that had been anticipated from the external inspection.

In the occiput of the corpse P. 1 (Grieger) were severe fractures of the skull, which had been caused by, blows with a blunt, instrument. The face was covered with innumerable stabs; the left eye had been pierced. Furthermore, a bullet wound which traversed the chest can, with certainty, be stated not to have been fatal. Death was caused by the joint influence of various acts of violence. A bullet was also found embedded in the left hip.

A bullet was found embedded in the skull of the corpse P. 2 (John). Besides this, there were wounds caused indubitably by stabbing. The skin of the face was split in several places. The severe splintering of the upper jaw, on account of the unusual nature of the fractures, led the doctor to conclude that in this case the teeth had probably been previously extracted. (1)

On the evening of September 3, 1939, about 10 Polish army lorries manned by troops of a tank regiment and scouts, drew up in front of the house, 3, Markgrafening, in Posen. A crowd formed in the street.

The air warden of this district, the fugitive Pole, Stefan Nowicki, ordered Gerhard Grieger, 32 years of age, who as concierge was responsible for the air raid precautions in his house, to search the roof, alleging that somebody was moving about there. Grieger's search was in vain.

This trap, set for him with such incredible baseness, sealed his fate, for at that moment shouts arose from the street that somebody on the roof was signalling with a light. Grieger was dragged out of the house by three soldiers and, under maltreatment, led to the Schiller Grammar School several hundred yards away. The Pole, Hendryk Bronikowski, reports that Grieger, who had been kicked by the soldiers and beaten with the butts of rifles, could utter only incomprehensible words when he arrived at the school. After about five minutes the same witness heard a number of shots, which were also heard by others.

(1) The two other corpses were identified as those of Max Otto, aged 48, and Erich Manthe, aged 21. They had been murdered by Polish police officials at another spot.

However, the air warden Nowicki was not yet satisfied. He re-entered the house with other soldiers had the 32 year old staff employee Paul John arrested and conducted in the same way to the Schiller Grammar School. On the way John attempted to escape, but was seized again by the howling mob and so brutally beaten that he could no longer walk unaided along the short road to the place off the murder. After a few minutes he too was shot down by the soldiers.

Then, urged on by the shouts of the mob, youths who were standing about, dealt out blows with axes, shovels and pickaxes to the men now lying in pools of blood. The Pole, Henryk Pawlowski, who was arrested with a number of others in the course of the investigations, gives, in his confession, a clear account of the proceedings. He received the order to bury the two men who had been shot down, in the strip of lawn opposite. One of the two was ,still alive. Pawlowski now seized his shovel and struck with all his strength at the man lying on the ground. "I am a Christian and did not want to bury the man alive" he answered, when, asked what he had thought when striking the man. Amid cries of "At them! At them!" other youths, according to his statement, were incited to similar acts of violence. The soldiers looked on inactive.

When both were dead, they were dragged right across the street-in the one case a pick was hooked between the coat and waistcoat.

They were buried in the strip of lawn on the promenade opposite, about 15 yards from the place of murder. Later the bodies were disinterred and secretly conveyed to the Matthäus Cemetery.

Pawlowski declared that, as a Catholic, he had often gone to church. When asked what the priest had recently been preaching, he answered literally: "They incited the people."

The scene of the crime was visited on Sept. 26, 1939. The spot where the murders took place is situated in a street with a single row of houses in a suburb of Posen. It was possible to record photographically what were unquestionably stains of blood. On the pavement in front of the Schiller Grammar School two further large stains were discovered, radiating from which blood bespattered the roadway and the pavement to a distance of 4 yards. The wall of the Schiller Grammar School was stained to a width of 7 yards with splashes of blood. Traces where the bodies had been dragged along, led from the stains on the pavement to the roadway.

The result of the medical post-mortem and the investigations which were carried out with exactitude by the Criminal Police, show that neither Grieger nor John was subjected to any trial even in the slightest degree resembling martial law. The circumstances of the arrest, the sequence of events and the location of the spot where the crime took place, supply clear proof that the crime was murder in the criminal as well as in the legal sense.

On November 11, 1939, before the Special Court at Posen, Henryk Pawlowski was sentenced to death, being found guilty of participation in murder.

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51. Slowly tortured to death

How 12 were murdered in Sebulitz--eyes gouged out--abdomens slit open

Description based on the evidence given on oath by the witnesses Kurt Schulz, Klara Kriewald and Ferdinand Reumann:

On September 4, 1939, seven or eight Polish soldiers appeared in the farmyard of August Schulz, a German by descent, in Schulitz. The soldiers declared that the Germans had revolvers and rifles concealed in the house and stated that the forester, Michael Naskret, had supplied them with this information. In spite of the assertions of the Germans present and notwithstanding a fruitless search of the house, the minority Germans August Schulz and his son Kurt, were arrested and carried off. The same occurred at the home of the farmer Kriewald. Under the pretext that, according to information given by the forester Naskret, revolvers and rifles were hidden in the house, a search of the building was made and the farmer Kriewald, as well as his 21-year-old son were led away. Frau Klara Kriewald, a woman of 54 years of age, was raped by a Polish soldier. Polish soldiers appeared too at the house of the minority German Ferdinand Reumann and demanded the surrender of weapons. Reumann spoke Polish to the soldiers and asserted to them that he possessed no weapons and also that the minority Germans had none concealed. The Polish soldiers were very surprised at this statement and one of them explained that the forester Naskret, had nevertheless denounced the Germans as possessing weapons. Reumann, as he pretended that he was a Pole and spoke Polish with the soldiers, was not taken away. The minority German Schmelzer and another seven minority Germans were arrested under similar circumstances by the Polish military.

The twelve people arrested and among them notably the father of Kurt Schulz, the husband of Frau Kriewald, and the father of the witness Schmelzer, were that same day taken from Schulitz into the forest. There they were bound together and forced to remain in a squatting position. Anybody collapsing in consequence of weakness was beaten by the soldiers with their rifle butts. Kurt Schulz, who speaks Polish fluently, once more in the forest asked the soldiers why they had been arrested and what the charge against them was. The soldiers thereupon explained that they were accused of having fired with a machine gun on the forester Naskret, who fled from Schulitz, and of having done so when he had attempted to return to Schulitz in order to attend to his cattle. Naskret, they alleged, had supplied this information. The Polish lieutenant in charge of the platoon, who feared that his line of retreat might be intercepted if he did not withdraw from the wood at the first opportunity, begged Kurt Schulz to lead him out of the wood onto the road. At the witness's request, he promised in return to liberate his father and other minority Germans from Schulitz. Kurt Schulz later made his escape and returned to Schulitz. In the meantime, to be exact, on September 5, Olga Schulz and Klara Kriewald had presented themselves before the Polish military stationed at Schulitz and implored them to set their husbands and sons free. They desired that the forester Naskret should be summoned, who would most certainly corroborate their statement that the Germans were not in possession of weapons and had not fired. The soldiers then laughed and answered, "He was just the one who told us."

Kurt Schulz, as soon as he arrived back in Schulitz, immediately set out to search for his father and the other ten men of Schulitz who had been carried off. Near the spot where he and the Polish lieutenant had separated from the remainder of the column, he found the earth had been disturbed. Just below the surface he came upon his father, the other Germans from Schulitz, and a man unknown to him; all murdered. The victims were still bound together. In every case their eyes had been gouged out and their teeth knocked out. Some had had their throats cut and their stomachs slit open. The skin had been torn from the hands of August Schulz and Schmelzer. The twelve murdered men had thus been slowly tortured to death by the Polish soldiers.

Source: Sd. K. Ls. Bromberg 31/39.

52. Shot down one after another

"Sixteen were shot before it was my turn"

The witness Erwin B o y , master tailor, of Ostburg, testified on oath to the following:

At the crossroads by Dabrowa we were forced to lie down with our heads on the sloping side of the road and with our feet in the field. Our rings were then taken from us; from me they took my signet ring as well as my wedding ring. When this was completed, the names of those lying at either end of the row were called out simultaneously. The person whose name was called out, had to stand up and go into the field. A soldier followed him and fired two shots at him. Sixteen had already been shot, when my turn came. When my name was called, I ran zig-zag into the field. The first bullet struck me in the right half of my body passing clear through, but without wounding me fatally. I threw myself upon the ground. The soldier following me thereupon fired at me again from a distance of 4 yards. This bullet pierced my right shoulder and tore open my right upper arm. I did not move, although I remained fully conscious. And then I heard them shooting my other comrades. When all had been shot down, they shouted: "There they lie now, that Hitler gang, the whole of the Young German Party," and both soldiers and civilians clapped their approval. Then I heard an order: "Dig holes!" To my left a hole was dug for me. I could see two civilian youths digging the hole. Just as I was to be thrown into the hole--in the meantime it had become dusk and the road was no longer visible--I jumped up and begged the civilian, who gaped open-eyed at me, to spare my life, and told him that I had a wife and children and was a poor tailor. Instead of answering me or saying anything, he took a revolver from his pocket and fired a shot at me. However, it missed its mark. I then sprang at him, dealt him a punch in the stomach and took to my heels. He called out after me, "Wojska!" which means "soldiers!" Somewhere between Luisenfelde and Stanomin I collapsed in a ditch overgrown with thorns and lay there waiting for the morning. Towards 10 o'clock I scrambled out and made my way to a well-known German landed proprietress named Klatt, in Stanomin Abbau. She gave me something to drink but was afraid to take me in, as a lad had meanwhile come running up with the news that murder was loose in Stanomin. She advised me, however, to conceal myself in a small wood in the vicinity and gave me a shooting jacket and spade to take with me. I then left in the direction of the wood. Hearing shots from the wood, I took cover in a ditch running along between willow trees and about 400 yards in front of the woods. Here I lay motionless under artillery and machine gun fire until early on Saturday morning. A battle between Polish and German troops had obviously been fought near me. I noticed that a German aeroplane continually circled over the woods. However, in the meantime, I fell asleep and awoke again at midday, but I had become very weak. Suddenly I heard my wife, who had come out to look for me, calling out my name, to which I replied. I was bandaged by a German military doctor who was summoned, and transported to the hospital at Hohensalza. My wounds are still open and I cannot yet use my right arm.

As well as myself, Eduard Kunitz and Hermann Galster were able to save their lives in this miraculous fashion.

In my opinion, our names had already been listed before the outbreak of war, for otherwise the soldiers would never have been able to read out our names from a chit

and I consider that the village elder of that time, a man named Gorne, must be held responsible for the drawing up of the lists.

Dictated aloud, approved and signed.

Erwin Boy.

Source: W R I

53. The Massacre in Samara

Ten uninterred bodies Samara, October 13, 1939.

Court for the Examination of Breaches of International Law with the Supreme Command of the Forces.

Present:

Hurtig, Judge Advocate.

Pitsch, Military Inspector of Justice.

On being called upon, Oskar Brakop, farmer's son, resident in Samara, appeared and, after the significance and sacredness of the oath had been explained to him, deposed as follows:

Re person: My name is Oskar Brakop, born on November 15, 1909, in Samara, single, farmer's son, resident in Samara, near Straczewo.

Re matter: After several searches of our house had been carried out by the Polish soldiers, who threatened us with death, I fled with my mother and two brothers into the fields. When the German troops had occupied our village, I returned on Sunday, September 10, 1939, to my farm. I found it had been completely plundered. Accompanied by German soldiers I went searching for dead. In one of the fields belonging to the farm Chromowold near Strhczewo, we came across uninterred bodies. I found there the bodies of five members of the Richert family from Straczewo, namely the three sons between the ages of 16 and 19, their mother, and grandmother who was about 60 years old. The search for Herr Richert had obviously been unsuccessful, I heard that he had hidden in the barn. His two daughters and two younger sons had found a hiding-place with him and had not been discovered by the Poles. Besides those already mentioned, Jakob Blum and his 19-year-old son, both of Straczewo, lay on the field as well as the farmer, Johann Feiertag and his wife, Peplau junior and Frau Leschner, a niece of the farmer Blum, who happened at that time to be staying with him. Frau Richert's eyes had been gouged out and the whole of her skull smashed or shot off; Johann Blum had received a bayonet wound as well as a bullet wound; half the face of Otto Richert was missing. German soldiers made a photographic record of the discovery of these corpses, but I do not know to which body of troops they belonged. As I have heard from Herr Richert, the perpetrators were Polish soldiers who had been instructed to search the villages for Germans and to butcher them.

Dictated aloud, approved and signed.

Oskar Brakop.

The witness took the following oath, "I swear by Almighty God that I have .spoken the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help me God."

Concluded:

(signed) H u r t i g (signed) P i t s c h

Source: W R I

54. Chin smashed off, Brain scattered about

Murder of Feiertag and Richert

Court for the Examination of Breaches of International Law with the Supreme Command of the Forces.

Samara, October 13, 1939. Present:

Hurtig, Judge Advocate.

Pitsch, Military Inspector of Justice.

On being summoned, Emilie Feiertag, farmer's wife, resident in Samara, appeared and, after the significance and sacredness of the oath had been explained to her, deposed on oath as follows:

On Saturday, Sept. 9, 1939, I found the bodies lying in a field; the chin of Otto Richert was missing, as was also the case with Johann Feiertag. The entrails of Otto Richert were hanging out of the body. One of Frau Richert's eyes was missing and also the top of her skull; the brain lay scattered about.

Later I set out with other minority Germans to search for further dead, as well as, for my husband whom I believed to have been shot. In the course of our search we discovered the bodies of the newly-married couple farmer Heinrich Blum and his wife Alwine, roughly buried in a small hole in a wood. The hole was certainly not more than one yard square. The corpses had been completely doubled up so that they could be thrown into the hole. Everywhere in the neighbourhood of our village and the surrounding villages, murdered minority Germans were found. The acts of the Polish soldiers were in my opinion carried out systematically; they even carried lists with them on which all members of the German-born families were noted.

The last Polish troops disappeared on Saturday, Sept. 9, 1939, at about 4 a. m. The first German troops arrived at our village towards 10 o'clock in the morning.

Dictated aloud, approved and signed.

Frau Emilie Feiertag, her mark.

The witness took the following oath, "I swear by Almighty God that I have spoken the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help me God."

Concluded:

(signed) H u r t i g (signed) P i t s c h

Source: W R I

55. Looting of German Farms

In the criminal case against

1. Wladislaus Skrzypzciak, gardener, of Koziogrowy, born on September 16, 1919, in Rakietnica, single, Roman Catholic,
2. Stefan Zaudzinski, gardener's assistant, of Kochfeld, born on May 15, 1912, in Antoniewo, district of Wongrowitz, single, Roman Catholic,
3. Stanislaus Bambor, labourer, of Kochfeld, born on April 19, 1908, in Samter, married, Roman Catholic,
4. Bruno Finke, labourer, of Kochfeld-, born on November 15, 1921, in Teschendorf, single, Protestant,
5. Edmund Schlabs, butcher, of Kochfeld, born there on May 11, 1919. Roman Catholic,
6. Bruno Nowak, miller's assistant, of Schlehen, born on January 16, 1908, in Liebuch, single, Roman Catholic,

-- all under arrest in the Court Prison in Posen --

in the cases 1-5 for serious breach of the peace,

in the case 6 for uttering threats.

The Special Court with the Military Commander in Posen, at the sitting on October 25, 1939, at which assisted

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Junior Judge Dr. Schaefer, as President,

Junior Judge Dr. Kiep and

Judge of the Superior Court Wehl, as assessors,

Prosecutor Sommer as officer of the Attorney General,

Prosecutor Rast as Records Officer of the Legal Department, sentenced according to law:

the accused Skrzypczak, Zaudzinski, Bambor, Finke and Schlabs, guilty of serious breach of the peace, Skrzypczak being armed, the others in collaboration with an armed man, being in full knowledge of and assenting to the fact of his bearing weapons, the accused Nowak, guilty of uttering threats, as follows;

The accused Skrzypczak, Zaudzinski, Bambor, Finke and Schlabs are sentenced to death, the accused Nowak is sentenced to 6 (six) months' imprisonment.

The accused, with the exception of Nowak, will be deprived of civic rights for life.

The sentence pronounced on Nowak to include the 1 (one) month's imprisonment while awaiting trial.

Costs to be borne by the defendants.

Reasons.

On the evening of Sept 3, 1939, approximately ten young men, acting on their own initiative, banded themselves together in Kochfeld, near Tarnowo, under the leadership of the labourers, Czapara and Szczechowiak, at present still fugitive, with intent to visit the German-born families and their farmsteads in Kochfeld and the vicinity, under the pretext of searching for weapons and in order to seize the opportunity for plunder. The horde consisted of the defendants Skrzypczak, Zaudzinski, Bambor, Finke and Schlabs and some others. It has not yet been possible to apprehend the remaining confederates.

At about 8 p. m. on the same day the horde made its first appearance in front of the German farmer, Arthur Bussmann of Kochfeld, encircled his house, tore a number of stakes from the wooden fence, knocked down the farmyard fence and created an uproar and din. Then, shouting such words as "Sons of bitches," they began to bombard all the windows of the ground and first floor of the house with stones. For this purpose they also used a certain number of the staves from the fence as missiles. Altogether no less than 47 window panes were smashed, four window frames broken and four roller blinds, which had been let down were also damaged. An attack with axes, so fierce that the house resounded with the blows, was made on three massive fence posts, until at length they were overturned. The witness Arthur Bussmann, who except for his brother was alone in the house, fled with him at once into the loft, as he feared for his life on account of the uproar and the great fury of the crowd. By means of a ladder, which they had dragged up with them as a precautionary measure, they climbed from the loft into the uppermost attic. As Bussmann was climbing up the ladder in the darkness, he was struck on the shoulder-blade by a brick thrown through the dormer window, with the result that he almost fell from the ladder and was unable to use his arm for some time. The fury of the mob lasted about half an hour. The witness Bussmann could hear from his hiding-place how during this time the crowd even shook the trees in the kitchen garden. Apparently the bandits assumed that the members of the household in their fright had hidden themselves in the trees. Nobody yet penetrated into the living-rooms; this was to be reserved for a later period.

The horde then left Bussmann's house to go to the farmstead of the German, Schemme, in Kochfeld. Warned in time by the violent clamour at Bussmann's, he had already taken refuge with his family in the barn cellar. Here also stakes were torn out of the fence. Nearly all the window panes were then smashed with them or with stones. Two window frames were also destroyed. Here too, the fury lasted about half an hour. Two curtains were stolen from the broken windows. Then the mob withdrew to the farm of the German, Mücke, in Kochfeld, where several window panes were broken and the gate battered until it collapsed.

About 17 pints of milk in a can standing in front of the house were drunk. The witness Robert Mucke, who had also been warned in time by the tremendous uproar and the splintering of glass, had already hidden himself and his parents and a great-aunt in a field of maize, about 200 yards from the house. Here, in fear of their lives, they remained for four hours. The witness Super, gardener, Mücke's neighbour and later the leader of the Polish defence corps of Kochfeld--attempted by friendly persuasion to prevent the mob from doing further damage.

The fugitive, Czapara, declared however to the defenders that Super, should he really wish to prevent them, would "get his face punched in."

The band then went to the farm of the German-born widow Weissmüller. This land lies actually in Gurten-Ausbau, but is in fact nearer to Kochfeld. Here they began by breaking 34 window panes and smashing three window frames. Then, through the broken windows, they shone lights on the beds, which however were empty, as the witness Weissmüller and her daughter had already jumped out of bed and were standing upright under cover of the wall. The 83 year old mother of the witness, who is almost blind and suffers from paralysis of the feet, was to have been concealed by her granddaughter in the wardrobe. However it was not possible to do this because a stone, weighing more than four pounds came hurtling through the window, actually splitting the cupboard door. The witness presented this stone to the court for inspection. Then the bandits smashed in the door leading from the kitchen to the garden and several men thrust their way into the kitchen. There, amidst loud invective, they overturned the table and threw a basket of 60 eggs on to the ground. The witness Weissmüller during this time heard shouts such as, "You Germans drop bombs on us." Here it must be explained that a German aeroplane had two days before dropped a bomb near Kochfeld. The tumult in the kitchen continued for about five minutes. Then the mob retired, throwing a pot of mustard on the path in front of the house. The Weissmüller family, thinking in their fear that the bandits would return, dragged their old mother to a place of concealment, first behind a stack of straw near the stable and then, when they could no longer withstand the cold there, in the warm forage-kitchen. The next morning they discovered, besides the damage already mentioned, that two chairs, a face towel and half a home-made loaf had been stolen. Two more chairs lay smashed in the garden and two sets of curtains and two window blinds had been damaged.

From Weissmüllers' the marauders proceeded to the German-born farmer, Unkenholt, whose land also lies in Gurten-Ausbau. At this place also, nearly all the windows were broken and the window frames smashed. Four sets of curtains were torn down and damaged. Nobody penetrated into the living-rooms, plainly because Unkenholt's dog was running from room to room barking, furiously. However somebody reached through a broken window and stole two draw-curtains and a mirror. The Unkenholt family had concealed themselves opportunely in a potato field a few hundred yards from the house, whence they could hear the fury of the mob and the splintering of glass. After this, the band moved to the farm of the German widow Strodtmann. There, as a commencement, almost every window pane, altogether about 66, was broken with stakes and stones and

no less than 11 window frames smashed. Some of the bandits penetrated through the front door into the rooms, overturned an earthenware jar of cucumbers and a tin of malt coffee, trampled on cake which they found; and destroyed the wireless accumulator, two sets of curtains in the bedroom, the daughter's trousseau, and appropriated, amidst loud jeers, the sum of 50 Zloty, which they found there, as well as the volt-meter and two sets of curtains. The Strodtmann family had hidden themselves in time in the cellar in the barn.

The gang then retired to Kochfeld to the farm of the German, Schmalz. Here too the window panes on the yard and garden sides of the house were broken, to the accompaniment of a great din. Some of the men demolished the veranda on the side of the house facing the yard, smashed the front door of the house in the veranda by means of a large poker they had found in the yard, penetrated into the house and stole 180 Zloty in cash, a lady's umbrella, three sets of curtains, one pair of reins for carriage horses as well as chains and neckstraps for two horses. The family of the witness Schmalz had in good time made their escape right up on to the roof and there concealed themselves, whence the witness Arthur Schmalz distinctly recognised the voice of the defendant Skrzypczak. On their retirement, the horde hurled a huge fire-cracker which exploded with a loud report and which they had previously found in Schmalz's house. They carried off with them an iron crowbar which they had found in the yard.

Towards 11 p. m. the mob retired from Schmalz's house of the farm of the minority German Scheintze in Kochfeld. Here, to begin with, they broke no less than 65 window panes in the house and 3 stable windows by means of sticks, stakes and stones, and completely smashed three window frames, obviously with the crowbar they had brought with them. Furthermore, they tore down two curtains and bent two curtain rods. They did not break into the house itself.

After the bandits had made the round of these German farms--there are only these eight German farmsteads--they returned once more to their point of departure, the property of the German born witness, Bussmann. There, to the accompaniment of great shouting and howling, they once more threw stones at the windows and the house. Then some of the men penetrated through the windows into the living rooms and dispersed themselves among the various apartments and even went into the cellar and the attics. The doors were slammed, and the door of the servant's quarters broken in, as the witness Bussmann, who again had fled with his brother into the loft, was able to hear. The horde damaged the wireless set and the aerial, two plush arm chairs, threw ten plants in flower pots on to the floor and broke two more panes of the book cupboard. The following objects were stolen: a diamond glass-cutter, a pair of woollen pants, a woollen jacket, an empty portfolio, a pencil sharpener, 15 preserving glasses containing cherries and fruit juice, six curtains, eight stockings, a large number of handkerchiefs, three pieces of soap, a tin of boot-polish, two tins of face creams, a clock, twelve knives, twelve forks, twelve spoons, three pots, two pans, two eiderdown covers together with pillows, one tablecloth, and one pound each of butter, lard and sausage, a meter rule made of iron, and two pails. The contents of some of the stolen boxes of fruit juice were drunk there and then.

The witness Bussmann and his brother did not leave their place of concealment beneath the roof until nearly 3 o'clock the next morning, when they went and hid the whole day in a field of potatoes about one and a half miles away as the great fury of the mob still caused them to fear for their lives.

Two days after these events, the witness Bussmann heard his ploughhand, the defender Bambor, quarrelling in the yard about the loan of two horses with Nowak the miller

assistant; charged in these records with uttering threats. Bussmann, who was also in the yard, called out to the two men that they should not make such a noise, and went towards them to settle the quarrel. The defendant Nowak, who was holding a dung-fork in his hand, brandished it threateningly at Bussmann with the words: "All such people must be got rid of."

The court has based its findings on the testimonies given on oath by the witnesses: Arthur Bussmann, Otto Schemme, Robert Mucke, Wilhelmine Weissmuller; Frieda Unkenholt, Otto Kranz, Arthur Schmalz, Wilhelm Heintze, Stanislaus Gadjinski, Wladislawa Napieralla, Franz and Kunigunde Super, together with the mutual accusations of the defendants.

Source: Sd. Is. Posen 78/39

56. Polish Soldiers as Incendiaries

Murder of Karl and Lydia Baar

Court of Inquiry for Breaches of International Law with the Supreme Command of the Forces.

Present:

Hurtig, Judge Advocate. Pitsch, Military Inspector of Justice.

On being called upon, Martha Baar, farmer's daughter of Wojciechowo, appeared and, after being warned of the significance and sacredness of the oath, deposed on oath as follows:

. . . A private first entered our house. He asked if we were Germans and if we had many sons. We answered in the affirmative to the question as to whether we were Germans and with regard to the question as to how many sons we had, I explained that only my 46 year old brother Karl was present. Hardly had he left when a "podporucznik" (Polish lieutenant) came in and made my brother show him his military papers. I was standing in the hall. My brother Karl, my sister Lydia, my mother, a lad of 13 named Arthur Bieser, and a Polish girl of 9 named Hedwig, were in the kitchen. When the Polish lieutenant had read through the military papers, he said in Polish "It does not matter," turned round and went out of the house. However, he had hardly stepped into the yard, when he turned round again and fired with his rifle into the kitchen. My brother was first struck, receiving the bullet in the stomach; he immediately sank to the floor but was not dead. He then shot at my sister Lydia, who also collapsed, but was nevertheless able to rise again and run into the garden. There she must have lain down, for we found her there when the German troops took possession. She had, however, several wounds and so must have been stabbed in the garden or been fired at again. The German military doctor, who arrived about two hours after, attended to her; but she died of her wounds the same night.

The Polish lieutenant also fired at my mother, without hitting her however. The 13 year old schoolboy Bieser was struck in the shoulder. I was still standing in the hall, and the last bullet was intended for me, but it also missed its mark. My mother and I,--the schoolboy Bieser and the girl Hedwig had meanwhile taken flight--carried my brother Karl, who had not yet succumbed, to the cellar, where we intended to take shelter. My

brother said several times, that it served no purpose to do so, for he must soon die, as he did in fact soon afterwards. In the meantime, our barn had been set on fire by the Polish soldiers and, fanned by the wind, the flames were now spreading towards the house, which as a result also caught fire. At the last moment we dashed into the open, having to fight our way through the flames. We left my dead brother lying in the cellar, and he, was burned with the house. There were only bones left when we searched for him, after the fire had subsided. When we ran into the yard, the Polish soldiers had already withdrawn, but were still standing on the road near our garden, firing in the direction from which the German troops were advancing. Two hours later the first German troops reached us.

In our village, the Polish troops burned down three German farmsteads and also shot farmer Gatzke, a man of about 32 years of age.

Dictated aloud, approved and signed Martha Baar.

The witness took the following oath, "I swear by Almighty God that I have spoken the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help me God".

Concluded:

(signed) H u r t i g (signed) P i t s c h .

Source: W B 1

[p. 105]

Between Burning Stacks of Straw

The witness, Eduard K u n i t z , carpenter and farmer in Wonorze, made the following statement on oath:

On the morning of Sept. 7, 1939 Polish artillery arrived and took up their quarters here. The artillery men gave us to understand that they were to be followed by Polish infantry, who would murder all the Germans. They advised us to flee. I discussed the matter. with other Germans. However, at first not one of us, could decide to desert our farmsteads, nor did we know what direction to take. We did eventually pack up the most necessary things, load them on to carts and drive off, taking a country road leading towards Stanomin. When we arrived at Stanomin, Polish infantry were already there to receive us. They ordered the men among us to climb down from the carts and to stand on one side. We were forced to show our papers, and all jewellery in our possession was taken from us. We had to take up our positions in a row and raise our arms above our heads. Those who could no longer keep their arms up. were either kicked or prodded with bayonets. We were forced to stand in this position for about an hour. After that we were stood with our faces to the wall of an inn, our arms raised against the wall. We had to stand like this about a quarter of an hour, and then line up in fours and march towards Dabrowa-Biskupia. We arrived at Dabrowa-Biskupia at sundown. Here we were formed up in a row on the side of the road, once more with uplifted arms and, just as before, we were treated to kicks and bayonet thrusts. We stood there for probably another fifteen minutes. I was the fourth man on the left wing. On our right I noticed a Polish lieutenant speaking with an infantryman. This soldier

then approached us and ordered the German on the extreme left to turn about and walk into the field. The man in question was allowed to lower his hands. Grasping his rifle the soldier followed him for a few paces and when the German had taken about 20 or 30 steps into the field, he raised his rifle and shot him from behind. The man fell to the ground, whereupon the soldier went up to him and put a bullet through his head. He then returned and proceeded with the second and third in exactly the same way. Then it was my turn. Simultaneously, however, the man standing next to me was ordered to move also, for apparently the soldier thought the procedure was taking too long. Another soldier then walked behind my companion. When we had taken 20 or 30 paces into the field I was struck by a bullet in the back. The bullet came out on the left side of my chest. I fell to the ground with my hands stretched out in front of me and, like the others, was then to be shot through the head. I was however wearing a cap which, as I fell, had slipped well over to the left. As a result the soldier apparently assumed that my head was further to the left. In any case the bullet penetrated between my skull and the cap and only slightly grazed me. I lay motionless but fully conscious and heard all the following shots. When darkness had fallen-it may perhaps have lasted half an hour-I feared that a working party would now come to bury us. I therefore very cautiously crept forward as far as a stack of straw. My body wound did not cause me any special inconvenience. As I lay near the straw stack, it suddenly became quite light. I discovered that all the stacks had been set on fire. Fearing that my stack would also be fired, I crept away, perhaps a distance of 40 or 50 yards. Later I crept as far as a ditch where there was a pool of water, in order to be able to quench my thirst. There I lay the whole night, for I had not the strength to crawl further. When day broke--it may have been about 7.30--I noticed a Polish patrol of three men obviously engaged in searching the ditch. They asked me where I came from. I gave them a truthful answer and said that I should have been shot the previous day. The patrol wanted to learn from me the whereabouts of two other Germans. When I told them I would give them no information, they threatened to shoot me. I took up a position in front of them, bared my chest and asked them to shoot me on the right side, as I already had a bullet through the left. At this, the soldiers could not find the heart to fire. They then led me to a lieutenant, who gave me water when I asked for it and then, after telling his batman to give me four pieces of army bread, advised me to hide in a small wood. I then walked towards the wood, but lay down in a ditch, where I could not be seen. At long intervals I was able to crawl further until, in the evening, I at length reached a farmhouse, where I was recognized by a relative. Early next morning, Saturday, the German troops arrived, by whom I was bandaged.

Source: WR II

58. "Stand them all against the wall!"

The witness, Wiesner, farm manager in Posadowo, testified on oath to the following:

The testimony, given on oath, of the administrator Wiesner, Posadowo, on October 4, 1939, concerns a case of most revolting cruelty practised on innocent German civilians (1)

More than one hundred minority German= were brought before the company commander of the cycle company of the 58th Infantry regiment, stationed in Posen and here received the report that four of their n umber had already been shot. He said to the 300 to 400 soldiers standing about on the parade ground: "Well, do you want to see any more of these German Hitler swines killed?" When they answered: "Yes, shoot the lot!"

he first struck one of the Germans about 15 times across the head with his crop, so that the blood ran from his mouth, nose and ears, then had him placed against the wall and shot him with his Browning. Swelling with pride. he shouted to his soldiers: "Do you still want to see more of the German Hitler pigs killed?" As they howled their answer: "Stand them all against the wall!" he chose at random two further Germans from the group and let a man standing next to him choose a third, and shot these three unfortunate individuals down with his Browning. He then called for three cheers for **Marshal Rydz-Smigly** and had the Polish National Anthem sung.

Source: WR II (1) For further details see the record of the experiences of Wiesner p. 160 etc.

59. The eyes gouged out

The witness, Adolf. D u s t e r h o f t , bricklayer of Schwersenz, near Posen, testified under oath to the following:

. . . On Sept. 4, 1939 the bodies were brought back to Schwersenz, and I was able to see the body of my son Arthur, born on Sept. 23, 1909 and also that of the labourer, Kelm. Both bodies had been mutilated in the same way:

The facial bones were battered in, the eyes were gouged out and bullet wounds were visible in both bodies. Moreover, my son's stomach had been ripped open, so that the entrails were hanging out. I have heard that the bodies of other Germans had been mutilated in the same manner.

Source: WR II

60. Jaws broken--castrated

The witness, Hermann M a t t h i e s , waggoner of Schwersenz, testified on oath to the following:

. . . The names of the two dead are Diisterhoft and Kelm, both of Schwersenz. They had been horribly. mutilated. Diisterhoft's jaw was broken as was also a rib. The heads and faces of both were swollen and covered with bruises. The scrotum of one of them was badly swollen, a state which must have been caused by a blow, possibly from a rifle butt.

. . . Altogether I transported twenty corpses to Schwersenz. All were terribly mutilated; nearly all had broken jaws, in nearly all cases the skulls were battered in and various bones broken. The bodies displayed wounds caused by stabs, the thumb of one of the bodies was torn off and eyes and tongue were bulging out of the heads. One of the bodies had been castrated.

Source: WR II

61. Both legs hacked off

Many bodies were completely naked.

The witness, Otto M i l b r a t , merchant in Hohensalza, No. 20 Market Place, testified on oath to the following:

. . . On Saturday, Sept. 9, 1939 or Sunday, Sept. 10, 1939 I came across eight unburied bodies lying among the stacks of straw near the skinnery in Hohensalza. One body was completely charred, for a nearby stack had been fired. The second body was partially charred; on the third the left leg was missing; both legs had been hacked off the fourth, one eye of the fifth had been gouged out, both eyes of the sixth had been gouged out and the tongue of the seventh had been cut out and the stomach slit open. On the eighth body, which furthermore was already in an advanced state of decomposition, I could distinguish only bullet wounds, which must have been caused by shots fired at point blank range.

. . . I found the body of the blacksmith, Wagner in a cesspool, near the nurseries of the arboriculturalist, Fuchs. It was mutilated in gruesome fashion by stabs on the head and body. On the corpse itself lay large quantities of human excrement, so that one must conclude that the perpetrators had evacuated on the body.

. . . Numerous bodies were stark naked, leading to the conclusion that these corpses also had been despoiled.

Source: WR II

62. A mutilated son

"The fingers and toes of nearly all the bodies were missing."

The witness, Bruno S i e b e r t , labourer of Swierczewo near Posen, testified on oath to the following:

I first saw my 16-year-old son Helmut again, when he was lying in his coffin in Schwersenz. The sight was indescribable; there were 16 stabs in the body, obviously bayonet wounds. Almost the whole of the right side of the face was missing, as well as the left eye, and the nose was smashed. There was also a bullet wound in the middle of the forehead. I should not have been able to recognize my son in this condition, if an injury to the right thumb nail, the yellow sports shirt, the pants and the colour of the socks had not enabled me to establish his identity beyond doubt. I should also like to mention that the places where my son had been struck were all covered with bruises.

I collapsed in anguish.

Besides the body of my son, I saw seven others which had been buried together with Helmut in Falkowo. They were all adult men, except for one other 16-year-old youth. The corpses were without exception horribly mutilated; the fingers and toes of nearly all were missing and almost all had the stomachs slit open, so that the entrails were

bulging out. I remember that the eyes of one body had been torn out. The heads of all the corpses were shapeless and unnaturally large, for they were all badly battered.

Source: WR II

63. Nine German Women murdered in Neutecklenburg

The witness Karl S c h m i d t , blacksmith, of Neutecklenburg, in the district of Wreschen, testified on oath to the following:

On Tuesday, Sept. 5, 1939, Polish troops retreating from the west, passed through our village, Neutecklenburg. The last body of these troops-they were infantry, but I cannot state the regimental number-dragged me and 14 other minority Germans out of our houses and led us off. The soldiers were clad in drill jackets, were wearing forage caps and carrying their rifles slung across their backs. Those arrested consisted of nine women and six men. Among them were my wife, Bertha Schmidt, nee Grawunder, my mother-in-law, Wilhelmine Grawunder, nee Becke, my brother-in-law, Paul. Grawunder, and my sister-in-law Else Grawunder.

On the march, whenever we did not. make sufficiently fast progress, we were threatened with the butts of rifles. The Polish soldiers shouted at us: "You'll soon be tired of your Hitler!" At a distance of about one and a half miles from the village, we were lined up facing a ditch filled with water. When we had been relieved of our watches and money, we were shot at from behind at a range of between 20 to 30 yards. A bullet struck me in the right side. I did not lose consciousness, but I threw myself down, falling into the ditch. All those who did not immediately fall into the water, were then thrown into the ditch. Most of them screamed frightfully. They were then fired at again. My brother-in-law was thrown on top of me, but I managed to keep my head above water.

The Poles then retreated. After about half an hour, I risked crawling out of the ditch. Everything was quiet and there was no sign of life, but two dogs which had been shot at the same time were howling.

Source: WR II

64. Mass murders in Ostwehr

Polish officer orders: "Shoot them all!"

Court of inquiry for breaches of international law with the Supreme Ostwehr, October 15, 1939.
Command of the Forces.

Present:
Judge Advocate Hurtig.

Military Inspector of Justice Pitsch.

On being called upon, Willi Veltzke, schoolmaster in Ostwehr, appeared and, after appropriate explanation of the sacredness of the oath, declared on being interrogated:

. . . Having arrived behind a granary, I noticed a Polish lieutenant among the troops escorting us. Against our will he ordered us to dig our graves, which however we could not do in any case, as we had no spades. We were then forced to line up, and the lieutenant asked each one of us, as he flashed a pocket lamp in our faces, if we were Germans. When he had gone along the whole row, he counted us. There were 21 of us. He thereupon gave the order to the soldiers: "Shoot them all!" We were standing lined up against the wall. The soldiers then fired at us from the side. and from the front. As I became giddy just at that moment, I was stooping a little and leaning on my brother. When a few shots had been fired, I was struck in the thigh and fell to the ground. I could hear my brother, prostrate beside me, in his death agony. Some cried out for the coup de grace, others merely groaned aloud. When we were all lying there, the Polish officer approached us and shone his lamp into each one's face. Many received their finishing shot, and another bullet was also fired at me. This bullet however merely tore the toe of my shoe to shreds, without wounding my foot. Gradually quietness set in again and deep darkness obscured everything. The first corpses were already being removed, when I heard the officer shout: "Look them over!" Fearing that I might yet be murdered, I crept along the wall, looked round the corners of the building and saw that the street was full of soldiers.

[p. 110]

Thereupon I crawled first to a poplar tree, pulled myself into an upright position and climbed over a fence. I got caught on the fence, but managed to free myself and fell on to a heap of drain pipes, at a spot which the Poles had used as a latrine. I was covered with human excrement, but found a shirt, which a soldier had obviously hung up to dry, and bound up my thigh- with it. As soldiers were everywhere standing in close proximity to me, I crept further along the buildings, crossed the court and concealed myself in some nettles. From there I crawled into a ditch, where I was able to slake my thirst. When the air had cleared, I limped back across the fields in the direction of Ostwehr and arrived home about half an hour after midnight. In the meantime the Polish troops had retired. In constant fear of my life, I passed the night in a small room. However on Sept. 9, towards 9 a. m., German soldiers appeared in our village. A German military doctor bandaged my wounds and gave me an injection, and on Sept. 11, I was transported to the hospital in Hohensalza; where I lay for nine days. I am still confined to bed, for the wound is still suppurating. On Sept. 8, 1939, the following men were shot on the farm of Michalowo: Herr Jordan and his two sons, farmer Wagner, the farmer's son Hanse, two brothers of farmer Schott and also his son, and his nephew Sperling; farmer Getschmann and his son; farmer Friedrich; farmer Jakob and his son; dairyman Gerlieb; master-baker Veltzke; farmer Veltzke and his son Walter; farmer Ruther.

In the village itself the following were shot on Sept. 7, 1939: The farmer's sons Erich and Wilhelm Marquardt; farmer Schott and farmer Bohlemann.

Only Bruno Hanse and I escaped from the butchery on the Michalowo farm. My father was 74 years old, and Schott's son only 13 years old.

Dictated aloud, approved and signed.

(signed) Willi Veltzke

Source: WR I

65. 14 Minority Germans shot near Nieschawa

The witness, Olga K o s c i n s k e , nee Utke, labourer's wife, of Podole, testified under oath to the following:

On Thursday, Sept. 7, 1939, I was just about to leave my house and cross the road which connects Ciechocinek with Nieschawa, intending to go and help at farmer Tessmann's, where my husband was employed. I was accompanied by my nine year old daughter. Just at that moment I noticed Polish soldiers on the roadway, approaching on bicycles. As they came nearer, I was able to distinguish civilians, whom they were leading along. One of the soldiers had the number 63 on his shoulder strap.

Daniel Leischner, whom I knew, said as he passed quite close to me: "Give my love to father and mother," whereupon a Polish soldier shouted at me: "Do you know these bandits? You're one of these Hitlerites too, I expect!" I made no reply.

I happened to hear the soldiers discussing among themselves as to whether they had sufficient bullets: Thereupon I hurried as fast as possible back to my house, as I had a foreboding that the civilians were to be shot. Glancing sideways I managed to see the 14 men lined up against the dyke of the Vistula, and the soldiers commencing to fire at them. They first shot farmer Keller. I then heard the others cry out: "O God, Glory be to God in the highest, all honour and glory be His!" Soon afterwards, the other shots rang out, and I saw Karl Fleming raise himself up on all fours. A soldier went up to him and fired at him with his Browning. When he again dragged himself up, they beat him with the butts of rifles, until he was dead. Without burying the bodies, the soldiers rode on towards Nieschawa. I was standing about 40 paces from the spot where the murders took place. Among the 14 civilians were: Keller, Fleming, Leischner, Kessler, Dreyer and Rienast. I did not know the others.

Source: WR II

66. German lad transfixed by a bayonet and carried across the market square of Alexandrowo

The witness, Alexandra B e r t h o l d , nee Teschner, minister's wife, of Nieschawa, testified on oath to the following:

. . . On Tuesday, Sept. 5, 1939, I saw from our windows a column of three to four hundred prisoners being driven along. They were all clean, decent Germans, both town and country people, well dressed, with dumb despair written on their faces, engaged couples holding hands, and old men supported by the younger people. Some could hardly crawl further and were being borne along by their companions. About a tenth of the prisoners were women. They were allowed to sit down on the sand before our house. The majority immediately threw themselves down. The escort, consisting of from 15 to 20 police with fixed bayonets, were supplied with food, but the German prisoners were not.

. . . Our parishioners related to us how the lad Peplau, of Alexandrowo, who was soon to have been confirmed, was carried across the market square of Alexandrowo on a bayonet. He was by no means dead and he is said to have screamed so much that even the Polish population was outraged at the spectacle.

Karl and Lydia Schulz, brother and sister, of Zbrachlin in our parish, were first transfixed with bayonets by Polish soldiers aided by Polish civilians, and driven into their house, which was subsequently set on fire. Both perished in the flames. On Sept. 12, 1939, I accompanied my husband to Stouisk, to inter 22 members of the German minority, who had been murdered. The bodies had been horribly mutilated. The legs of our parishioner Wiesner had been broken, the face of the butcher Keller had been slit open with a bayonet, the nose and ears of Daniel Leischner, a young man, had been severed. His face was completely cut to ribbons, and his father, Heinrich Leischner, had also been murdered. As I was told by the parishioner of Slonsk, the daughters of Daase, the schoolmaster, were forced at the order of the Polish military to disrobe and were then raped by the soldiers. In Slonsk, 48 people, men for the most part, were murdered. The stench of corpses pervaded the country round Slonsk. I also learned from the parishioners that the head of Frau Agathe Leischner had been severed from her body. This too, they say, was done by the Polish military.

Source: WR II

67. Head completely smashed--right eye put out

The murder of Posehadel

The witness, David P o s c h a d e l, a workman of Slonsk, made the following statement on oath:

On Thursday, September 7, 1939, I was going to Ciechocinek, while my son was taking the cow into the field. As I was returning from the town, I met my son being led away by a soldier. My son was 36 years of age. I dared not speak to him. My son also said nothing, only looked at me and cried. I found him on Sunday, September 10, 1939, lying buried in a ditch on my neighbour Glasmann's land. The head was completely smashed, in addition there were many bayonet wounds; amongst other injuries, the right eye had been put out. He had received one shot in the chest.

Source: WR II

68. The corpses in the manure ditch

The witness, Bruno H a n s e, a farmer of Ostwehr, made the following statement on oath:

On September 8, 1939, towards evening, I was taken, together with other Germans, to the Michalowo farm by Polish soldiers. After we had been lined up in two ranks with our faces to the wall behind a barn on the farm, a thin little lieutenant with black hair, 5ft 6in tall, ordered the escort to unbuckle their spades. They laid these down in front of

the first rank. Then the lieutenant ordered the first rank to dig holes. We did not do this, although called upon to do so three times.

Then we had to line up in single rank with our faces to the wall. To my right was the eldest of the Jordans, Alfred by name, to my left my brother, to my brother's left Adolf Jordan; in the darkness I was no longer able to recognize the others. Hearing the lieutenant give the order to shoot us all, I tried to ascertain from what point the shooting would be done. Then, as we were getting into line, I noticed that a soldier on the right of Alfred Jordan, at a distance of about a yard, had put his rifle to his shoulder and was aiming along the line at the level of a man's head. Being an old soldier, I thought to myself at once that he wanted to bring down several with a single shot, and bent my head a little forward. At this instant the first shot rang out, and both Alfred Jordan and my brother collapsed without a sound. I threw myself to the ground in a similar fashion. I heard the soldier fire along the line at least four times more. I heard the groans and the death rattle of some of those who had been hit while others begged to be finished off, and I noticed the Polish lieutenant with a flash lamp in his hand going along the line of victims, flashing a light upon them; while one of the soldiers standing behind us fired on the screaming and groaning men to finish them off. The thought flashed through my mind that, when my turn came, I should either be shot dead or buried alive. Having to make a rapid decision, I jumped up and ran past the soldiers and round the farm buildings. I knew the layout of the place. After I had run about 20 yards, about three shots went off behind me. However, on account of the prevailing darkness, I was not hit. I wandered about and finally reached home towards 7 o'clock the following evening. When I got home, my mother told me that German troops had already passed through.

On Monday, September 11, 1939, at about 12.30 p.m., I went back to the Michalowo farm and there found the bodies of the murdered men lying in a manure ditch with a few shovelfuls of earth thrown over them. My brother had received a shot through the carotid artery; Alfred Jordan, who was on my right, had been shot at close range through the temple. Some of the victims also had their heads smashed in with a rifle.

Source: WR I

69. Woman in an advanced state of pregnancy shot dead and thrown into a pig-sty

The murder of Helene Sonnenberg and Martha Bunkowski in Hudak

Extract from the records of the Reich Criminal Police Department-Special Commission in Bromberg

File reference: Tgb. V (RKPA) 1486/12. 39.

On September 7, 1939, in the village of Rudak, a few miles south-east of Thorn. Frau Helene Sonnenberg and Frau Martha Bunkowski, amongst many others, were murdered.

These two murders represent a climax of vileness and depravity since in the case of the 26-year-old Helene Sonnenberg, the wife of Albert Sonnenberg, the sexton of the Protestant parish of Rudak, it concerned a woman far advanced in pregnancy, who was

also the mother of a little son three years of age. These acts in particular are clearly the result of the extraordinary persecution of the Protestant clergy, sextons, and the members of their families. In Rudak, on Sept. 1, 1939, in the course of this persecution, the sexton Albert Sonnenberg was fetched out of his house. at a time when his wife and little son were away, and dragged off with many others. Frau Sonnenberg heard of this before she returned to her little house next to the church, and decided to save herself and her child by not going back to the house at all; she had heard enough in the previous weeks to have no doubt that no good would come to her from the Poles, as the wife of a man in the honorary service of the Church.

This pregnant woman, with her little son, wandered about in the neighbourhood of Rudak, anxious about her husband and uneasy as to her own fate, from the 1st to September 6, 1939, after she had in vain begged many people for shelter, and had passed the nights in barns and in a brickworks. On Sept. 6, 1939, she met with Martha.

Bunkowski, an unmarried woman, who like herself was escaping from the furious Polish mob, and both the fugitive women then concealed themselves, together with the little boy Heinrich Sonnenberg, in a fortified place which the Polish troops had abandoned and in which other fugitives already had thought to find shelter. On the following day, Sept. 7, 1939, the pregnant woman asked Fraulein Bunkowski to fetch clothing from her house for the three-year-old boy. Fraulein Bunkowski readily complied, but came back shortly afterwards, led by Polish soldiers, and was then marched away together with Frau Sonnenberg and her child. Witnesses declare that after some time a soldier brought the boy back and said in Polish: "The two will never come back!"

On Sept. 8, 1939, some German people found the pregnant woman and her companion in the pig-sty of the sexton's house, which lay about 30 yards away from the church. She was lying with her face in a pool of blood; the body of Fraulein Bunkowski was lying with the upper part of the body across two wooden barrels. The sty was locked from the outside.

The investigations of the Criminal Police lead to the conclusion that the two women had received in all, five shots outside the buildings, so that the victims, already dead, had been dragged into the pig-sty as corpses, and there thrown down and locked in.

The Sonnenberg case cannot be better characterized than by quoting the concluding words of the report given by the medico-legal expert, Dr. Panning (1), in which he states:

"The fact that the remains of the foetus were not found in the body of the mother but between the upper thighs corresponds to the generally known process of so-called 'coffin-birth;' that is to say, an expulsion of the child's body from the uterus in cases of this kind brought about as the result of putrefaction . . . In any case the degree of pregnancy was so advanced that it could not escape even the most casual glance."

70. Led to execution, handcuffed in pairs

The 73 year-old witness, Albert B i s s i n g , sculptor and churchwarden, of 1, Grüne Gasse, Lissa, stated on oath as follows:

We were guarded by firemen and soldiers and bound in pairs:--I and Juretzky, Weigt and Gaumer, two baker's hands of Linke (Lissa), Schulz and Konke, and the apprentice, Schwarz and Jeschke, a teacher. We were accused of shooting; the witnesses against us were two Poles, of Lissa, one, Ulrych, of evil reputation, and the housekeeper Glumniak . . .

On Sept. 2, 1939, at 2 o'clock in the morning, we were again bound in pairs by firemen and were not allowed to sit down again. At 3 o'clock we were told to climb

(1) OKW Army Medical Inspection Service, file reference Br. 112.

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into a vehicle standing in front of the house; as we were tightly bound together, we could not do this and so were thrown up into it. It was a workman's cart on which there was only a board, not very wide. With my 73 years I suffered much pain from the severe jolting and the tight binding--my posterior was soon sore to the bone--I asked that the bonds might be loosened at least. They loosened. them only a little for me. A woman whom we asked for water, held some up to our mouths. In the same way my cap, at my request, was pulled down over my face. Thus we came to Kriewen. Up to that point we had remained unmolested. Only Juretzky was sworn at in the town by a Polish fellow-tradesman. From Kriewen onwards there were always cyclists riding ahead of us mobilizing the people of the villages through which we passed. The villagers struck at us with sticks and whips. I am also certain that I saw a scythe. We asked for the vehicle to be stopped so that we could retire for a moment; this was not allowed; finally, however, it stopped and we had to relieve ourselves sitting on the side of the vehicle.

We arrived in Schrimm on September 2, 1939, at about 9 o'clock in the morning. The people of the town met us with loud cries. My fellow prisoner, Hausler, a master locksmith, received such a blow in the eye from a metal object attached to a leather strap that the eye was left hanging out. Afterwards he asked for a moist rag to alleviate the pain a little; he was told that such a thing was unnecessary, he would be shot in any case. We were accommodated in the school attached to the Catholic church. In a yard nearby we had to jump down from the vehicle, bound as we were; I still do not know how we managed to do it. Here the nine of us were joined by two German farmers, Hermann Lange and Wilhelm John of Sentschin (Furstenwalde near Punitz), both about 50 years of age. One of them, in Kroben, had been thrown down on the ground and his back trampled on with boot-heels to such an extent that lie could no longer stand upright; the other, in Schrimm, had had all this teeth except two knocked out. The space we were in, was so confined that it was only possible for half our number, at the most, to sit down. Hausler lay down on a cupboard, to sleep. We were given nothing to eat, only a bucket of water was passed in to us. Towards 12 o'clock all eleven of us were taken to the Police Station of the town hall on the marketplace. A third of the space in a medium-sized room was penned off by iron bars all the way round. We could just stand in this space, and were obliged to do so. The civilian official on duty annoyed us continually. For example, he said that glycerine and a can for making bombs had been found at my place; also a jemmy and an axe to murder Poles with. Actually there was a small crowbar and an axe

as required by the regulations, in my anti air-raid cellar. Furthermore, he said we need not think that a single inch of Polish land would go to Germany; in Lissa the dead Germans were lying about like flies.

After nine of those arrested had been sentenced to death for alleged possession of weapons, and Bissing, on account of his advanced age, had had "his sentence graciously commuted to 10 years imprisonment," they took leave of one another. Albert Bissing reports on this:

The other eight asked me to stand by their families and to say good-bye to them. I proposed that we should all say the Lord's Prayer together, and we all repeated it aloud. The prior then reappeared, and we told him that an injustice was being done us He replied: "Well, we will say the Lord's Prayer," to which I answered: "We have already said it once but it will do us no harm if we pray a second time." We prayed aloud; after a while the prior fell out and we finished the prayer alone--Juretzky had been previously taken into the school church--and had there received Holy Communion. At the altar he had said: "I die innocent, I die for my German Fatherland."

The eight men had to get ready. They were taken away by the soldiers at 11.30 midday. They asked for a strong escort so that they would not be beaten or molested by the mob. They also begged for good marksmen. Gaumer said to me: "What do you think my old father will say when he sees me so soon?" Weigt said: "I won't let them blindfold me, or otherwise the Poles will think that I fear death." They were led away in twos, chained together with handcuffs, in the following order: Juretzky, Jeschke, Gaumer, Weigt, Hausler, Schulz, Lange, John. Konke and I wanted to go' with them as far as the door; this was not allowed, we were driven back and locked in. A sentry stood before our cell. I asked for some paper to write on; it was refused. Then I sat down at the table and prayed. Half an hour later I heard two volleys, one after the other. The corporal had assured us previously that the whole proceeding would not last more than a second. All eight of my comrades who were shot had shown an admirable calm for the remaining time they were with me, and they also went calmly to their place of execution . . .

Source: WR II

71. "Gate-money" for the viewing of corpses

A stamp-collection as evidence of espionage

The murder of the brothers Alfred and Kurt Barnicke in Posen

Extract from the records of the Reich Criminal Police Department - Special Commission in Posen - File reference Tgb. V (RKPA) 1486/5. 39

On September 4, 1939, in the immediate vicinity of their house, on a courtyard in the thickly populated working-class district of "Wallischei" in Posen, the 27 year old clerk, Alfred Barnicke and his 24 year-old brother, the fitter, Kurt Barnicke, were shot dead by Polish soldiers.

The two victims occupied, together with their 51 year old mother, a rented apartment in house No. 1 at Wallischei. They were regarded by the Polish population of their district

as steady, hard-working people. Kurt Barnicke was well-known as a sportsman and boxer; the young Poles in the neighbourhood nicknamed him "Leo."

Already in the evening of the day previous to the murder, some adolescents of the civilian Air Raid Precaution Service (LOPP) had attempted to abduct Alfred Barnicke from his home. He was accused of having given flash-light signals. After they had been obliged to recognize that this accusation was devoid of foundation, he was beaten, in the presence of his mother, until the blood ran . . .

After that, Frau Barnicke had to get a bowl of water in order that the louts could cleanse themselves of the blood of the victim.

On the following day (4. 9. 1939), the militia made a fruitless search for weapons in the victim's home. The only thing they could object to, however, was a book: "Das Deutschtum in Polen" (The Germans and German Culture in Poland)-it had to be burnt. Shortly afterwards Polish soldiers forced their way into the apartment.

Frau Barnicke made the following statement in regard to the above:

"Towards 11 o'clock on Sept. 4, 1939, three Polish soldiers came and, as soon as they had entered the place, behaved like wild beasts, smashed open cupboards and drawers, and threw everything (Clothing, underclothes, food etc.) on the floor, and even knocked out the bottom of a drawer.

When they came into the room and went up to my son Alfred, they said in Polish, when they discovered the stamp collection: "Now we have got the spy!" They proceeded to beat him with their rifle butts on the back and shoulders. When he tried to explain to them that a collection of stamps could certainly have nothing to do with espionage, they struck him in the face and spat on him; one could see all their finger marks on my son's face-my son was being beaten in this way in my presence, I intervened and begged the soldiers in Polish not to beat him so cruelly. Thereupon one of the soldiers drew his bayonet and pressed it against my chest, and another struck me on my left shin with the butt of his rifle. They smashed our wireless set with rifles with fixed bayonets. When they discovered my son's savings, amounting to somewhat over 1000 Zlotys, they swore in Polish: "The accursed Germans, the money they have got!" I saw one of the soldiers putting the money into his pockets . . ."

The stamp collection and an old steel helmet, a souvenir of the World War, sealed their fate. These objects, also a motor-cycle lamp and a mileage recorder, which the soldiers could not even recognize as such, were sufficient proof for members of the Polish army--both were led away as spies.

In the courtyard, accessible to all tenants of the flats at 4, Venetianer Gasse, they together with a convict who had been recaptured, were exhibited before the view of the crowd which had assembled. Men, women and children--some 17 families live herded together around the backyard of these worker's quarters--and the mob that had collected, maltreated and abused the two defenceless men.

For two hours they had to endure abuse and maltreatment. Finally, the officers who were present decided to have the shooting of the two brothers carried out on the spot. The convict, who had previously received food and clothing, was allowed to go free.

Although a few civilians, with better judgement, pointed out that women and children should certainly not be allowed to be witnesses of this execution, an officer gave the order for the two Germans to be put against the wall in the backyard.

Shortly afterwards both were shot down by four Polish N.C.O.'s. before the eyes of the crowd and those of the women and children living in the house. The two bodies were left lying in the yard, after the soldiers had appropriated the valuables.

Even though executions of this kind are not exactly customary, the following scenes however testify to a brutality of feeling which, to a person of cultivated mind and mentality, is quite inexplicable. The crowd which had assembled in the street, and on account of the congestion in the yard, had not been able to witness the spectacle of the execution, now demanded admission so as to see at least the corpses of the two Germans. No scruples were shown about profiting from the crowd's desire for sensation, and "gate-money" was demanded from all who wanted to enter the yard, the money being used later to buy cigarettes and spirits.

Statements relative to this made by the Polish eye-witness, Peter Borowski:

. . . After the shooting, the whole street was full and the people wanted to see what was going on. . . : The soldiers were collecting money in a military cap from people who wanted to see the bodies . . . The soldier who was collecting the money was standing at the street-door. He gave me his cap with money in it to hold because the people were pushing; he wanted to press them back. However, I passed the cap on to Mme. Nowacka and told the people it was not a circus, and that they should not push so much. Then they swore and shouted at me and I had to get away . . .

Another witness, Mme. Stanislawa Wolff, states:

I saw Mme. Nowacka and Mme. Gorzanek collecting the gate-money . . . I also noticed that, first of all, Peter Borowski was collecting the money. He was standing in the doorway and had a cap in his hand. He took money from anyone who wanted to go into the yard. I have also heard from these two women that Borowski had had sausages, spirits and cigarettes bought out of the money for the soldiers; I saw the two women going off to buy these things. They told me that they were now going to do some shopping . . .

It was possible to prove from the statements of witnesses that-the brothers Barnicke had been shot at about 1.30 p.m. It was not until shortly before 5 p.m. that the bodies, were removed on the instructions of the Militia, and were conveyed through the town on a platform lorry without covering of any kind. The relatives were not informed of the place of burial.

Stefan Piaskowski, a member of the Polish Militia, tried to make capital out of this fact in a blackmailing kind of way by promising the mother of the murdered men, who had an understandable interest in knowing the burial place of her sons, that he would name the place if she gave him money. Frau Barnicke in fact handed him a total of 30 Zlotys, without however ever obtaining this information from him. Only after weeks of investigation was it possible to recover the bodies of the brothers Barnicke from a mass grave.

Objective evidence and the result of the autopsies support the statements of the witnesses, which in themselves are identical. In the backyard of the house, 4, Venetianer Gasse, three bullet holes are clearly discernible in the rear Wall.

In addition to a fatal bullet wound, injuries to both eyes were found in the case of Kurt Barnicke, which according to medical opinion were probably due to stabs.

On the body of Alfred Barnicke were found two bullet wounds and the bridge of the nose was broken as well.

The proofs that the brothers Barnicke were shot by Polish military, are confirmed by a document of Polish, origin.

In the home of the former Chief of Militia of the 5th Commissariat, the journal of the local office was discovered hidden away and was confiscated. It contains the entry, stating that on the September 4, 1939, a certain Alfred Barnicke, and another person unknown, were shot dead by a Polish military patrol in the yard of No. 4, Venetianer Gasse (Venecjanska). A later addition states that the unknown person was, in fact, Kurt Barnicke.

72. Corpses of Germans to be seen for a penny

The witness, Maria H ä u s e r , nee Kaletta, wife of a motor-driver, of 5, Walischei. Posen, stated on oath as follows:

Two German prisoners were led to the courtyard of 4/5, Venetianer Straße, at the moment when I was in the street, and were put up against a wall there. As I conjectured they would be shot, I went away in order not to be an eye-witness. Just as I was going away I saw a Polish officer, coming from the Warthe, go into the yard, and shortly afterwards I heard three shots fired.

Then, later, I saw people being admitted into the courtyard on payment of 20 groszy (a penny) to look at the corpses of the two Germans. The money was accepted by the Polish military.

Source: WR II

73. Five corpses in a confused heap

The witness, Anna T r i t t e l, nee Wolter, of Rojewo, District of Hohensalza, stated on oath as follows:

. . . I had remained behind, and then ran away because acquaintances from Bromberg told me that I really ought to go. For some time after that, I wandered about with my foster-child, and finally went back again to Rojewo, which was now full of German soldiers, and then on Wednesday I again drove to the place where my husband

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and my children had been shot. The five bodies lay in a Polish trench, thrown together in a confused heap; the carcass of a cow was lying on the body of my son. My husband had a bullet-wound in the chest, my daughter also. My son had two wounds, one in the right wrist and one in the right lower jaw. I was not able to find further wounds.

Source: WR II

74. Polish grammar-school boys as franc-tireurs

German people in Pless as victims of rebels in ambush

Investigation Department for Breaches of International Law, attached to the Pless, Sept. 12, 1939

Military High Command.

Present:

Scholz, Government Counsellor,

as Judiciary Official of Military Justice, appointed.

Franz, Government Chief inspector, as Record Officer.

The manager Nieratzik appeared and declared:

My name is Hans Nieratzik, born at Miedzna, near Pless, on Dec. 10, 1898, at present, manager of the Schadlitz estate in Pless.

On Friday, Sept. 1, 1939, the first Polish soldiers retreated from Pless in the direction of Gora. The whole night we heard Polish artillery and cavalry passing by Pless on the motor road. We knew therefore that the Poles were beaten, and expected that the German troops would soon march in.

On Saturday, September 2, at 12 o'clock, the first German armoured cars went past to the right of the motor road, 550 yards south of Pless. Towards 2 p.m. the first armoured reconnaissance cars crossed the southern boundary of Pless. They were followed by mechanized infantry. We were, happy and grateful that everything was going on so satisfactorily. We felt quite safe, and therefore called women and children from the cellars. About 300 vehicles drove past us. Every single one of them was greeted with immense exultation. Everybody laughed and cried together, the women quickly fetched flowers from anywhere they could find them, provided bread and butter, milk and fruit, and tried to shake every soldier's hand. We men fetched out our last cigarettes and gave them to the soldiers. The boys climbed on to the cars, and rode a short distance on them. Everybody was beside himself with joy. The last of the vehicles stopped just in front of us for a short halt, and we conversed for about five minutes with the soldiers.

Suddenly a shot was fired at us from the water-tower. This was evidently the signal agreed upon for a general attack. An exceedingly heavy fire was opened from the water tower, the court building, the former police building and the boarding-school garden with machine guns, sub-machine guns and rifles. The *franc-tireurs* fired on the German soldiers and on the fleeing women and children. Frightful confusion prevailed. Children cried for their mothers, wives for their husbands. In the midst of it all one heard the cries and groans of the wounded, and of people shouting for stretcher bearers. The German soldiers returned the fire for a long time, but then had to drive off in order not to lose contact with those ahead.

Some of the dead were still lying in the street on Sunday afternoon. Previously we had only been able to carry away those who were lying near cover, because anyone who showed himself was shot at. Even the stretcher-bearers were not spared, one of them was shot dead. In all, as I learnt subsequently, 20 civilians were killed and two severely wounded. The family of the master-locksmith Niemitz suffered particularly badly. The wife was mutilated beyond recognition, a grown up son and a daughter about 6 years of age were also killed. The husband was reported severely wounded.

The perpetrators of this atrocious massacre are to be sought only amongst the civilians of Pless and the neighbouring district. It is a case of Insurgents who had been armed by the Polish authorities in the middle of the summer and before the mobilization. They received instructions to remain behind when the Polish soldiers marched off and to fire on the German soldiers from ambush. Polish grammar-school boys who had been incited beyond control by their teachers were particularly conspicuous.

This written statement was read to the witness, approved by him and signed as follows:

(signed) Hans, Nieratzik

He took the following oath: I swear by Almighty God that I have told the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help me God.

Concluded:

(signed) S c h o l z

(signed) F r a n z

Source: WR I

74.a Shot dead by Polish Insurgents

Investigation Department for Breaches of International Law, attached to the Pless, Sept. 12, 1939.

Military High Command.

Present:

Scholz, Government Counsellor, as Judiciary Official of Military Justice, appointed.

Franz, Government Chief Inspector, as Record Officer.

The official, Herr Zembol, appeared. He declared: My name is Paul Zembol, born in Pless on June 15, 1899, and I live at 21, Bahnhof Strasse, Pless.

On Saturday, September 2, 1939, at about 4 p. m., a German armoured car stopped before our house because of a chain defect. Three young men therefore went out of the cellar where we all were, and helped to repair the damage. This occurrence was said to have been observed by a young Polish miller who belonged to the insurgents, from the mill opposite. He is alleged to have informed Polish soldiers who were concealed in the Station Park. After the armoured car had been gone half an hour or an hour, we left the cellar, as my wife wanted to warm some milk for the child. We had been up hardly a few minutes, when two armoured cars and a motor-cycle came past. My wife ran to the window and called out: "Look, the German soldiers are already here." She wept for joy, seeing German soldiers for the first time. She waved to them and several times cried: "Heil!" I had a feeling that all was not yet over, and for that reason held back my wife, who really wanted to go out into the street. At that instant, just as she was giving the child something to drink, 50 Polish soldiers came from out of the Station Park under the command of a Polish officer. They rushed up to our house. My wife tore the child out of the cradle and we hid ourselves in the kitchen behind a dresser, as we had no time to run into the cellar.

The Polish soldiers threw hand-grenades into the two lower apartments, and into those of our neighbours. Then they smashed in the door of our place and started shooting about in the room. The child cried out in fright. "Here is another little Hitlerite yelling. Shoot!" The soldiers shot into our corner, but did not hit us.

Then they drove us into the street with the butts of their rifles, and the officer shouted: "I'll show you, calling 'Heil Hitler'." Other Polish soldiers were waiting downstairs. All of them struck and stabbed at us.

I received a stab in the trousers, the child's shirt was pierced. My wife cried: "At least spare the child!" The Poles, however, went on blindly shooting and striking at us. I caught a blow from a rifle butt, intended for the child, on my shoulder. My wife received a bayonet thrust, a shot in the heart, and several blows with rifle butts, which broke her ribs and legs in many places. She collapsed, and in falling, gave me the child. Soon afterwards she died. We had been married for 9 years. We had four children, three of whom are still living.

I was in the World War from 1917 to 1919. I saw many things there and underwent very much suffering. Never before have I seen faces so distorted with fury or bestial expression, as in this sudden attack on my defenceless family. They had certainly ceased to be human beings.

On the same day, my brother-in-law and my brother were shot by Polish insurgents. My brother-in-law died a few hours later. He left behind a wife, and a child nine months old. My brother is lying in hospital with severe injuries.

This written statement was read over to the witness, approved by him and signed as under:

(signed) Zembol Paul

He took the following oath: I swear by Almighty God that I have spoken the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help me God.

Concluded:

(signed) S c h o l z

(signed) F r a n z

Source: WR I

74.b 16 year-old Polish youths as murderous bandits

Investigation Department for Breaches of International Law, attached to the Pless, Sept. 12, 1939

Military High Command.

Present:

Scholz, Government Counsellor,

as Judiciary Official of Military Justice, appointed.

Franz, Government Chief Inspector, as Record Officer.

The former employee of the *Volksbund*, Hertel, appeared. He declared:

My name is Heinz Hertel, born at Claustal, District of Zellerfeld, on April 18, 1902. am now employed by the District Council in Pless. On Sept. 1 and 2, I guided the German troops through the district of Pless, and was in the Regimental Commander's car. On Sept. 2, at about 3 o'clock, we advanced across the southern boundary of the town of Pless, in the direction of the railway-station and the Pilsudski settlement.

In the former Furstenstrasse we were met with great jubilation by about 100 minority Germans who had assembled together in all haste, although the march through came as a surprise. They cried and laughed, shook the German soldiers' hands and pelted them with flowers which they had quickly fetched. Tears of joy came into my own eyes too, that Pless, too, had now been freed.

We had passed the station, when a sharp fusilade was suddenly opened upon us from the station building, from the gas; works and from private houses. At the same time a frightful series of reports went off all over the town. As I learned later, the first shot was fired from the court building. It was obviously the pre-arranged signal for the general attack. The *franc tireurs*, who first let the German troops march through and then fired from ambush on the last of the vehicles and on the German civilian population, were in plain clothes. I saw some of them myself being brought out of a house from which a considerable amount of shooting had occurred.

It was generally known in the Pless district that the *franc tireurs* had been equipped at the beginning of July with sub-machine-guns, light machine-guns and rifles by the Polish military authorities. The *franc tireurs* were continually threatening the German population that one day they would all be shot.

Amongst others, many Polish grammar-school boys were conspicuous as *franc tireurs*. They had received preliminary military training and had been particularly spurred on by their teachers who all came from Congress Poland. On July 30, many 16 year old youths also were armed with infantry rifles.

This written statement was read to the witness, approved by him and signed as under:

(signed) Heinz Hertel

He took the following oath- I swear by Almighty God that I have spoken the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help me God.

Concluded

(signed) S c h o l z

(signed) F r a n z

Source: WR I

75. Barrage by Insurgents

Investigation Department for Breaches of International Law, attached to the Pless, Sept. 12. 1939

Military High Command.

Present:

Scholz, Government Counsellor, as Judiciary Official of Military Justice, appointed.

Franz, Chief Government Inspector, as Record Officer.

The works manager Schwarzkopf appeared. He declared: My name is Emil Schwarzkopf. I was born at Kreuzburg (Upper Silesia) on Jan. 15, 1883, now residing at 7, Kopernikus Strasse, Pless.

On Saturday, between 2 and 3 p. m., we heard that the German troops were marching in. My wife and children wanted to look at this I tried to hold them back but their joy was too great. They would not be held back. They picked all the flowers in the garden and ran off. I went after them. We took up a position at the water-tower. Every one was jubilant, cried "Heil" and showered flowers on the troops. The women gripped the soldiers' hands and tried to embrace them.

Probably over 100 cars had driven past, when suddenly shots were fired on soldiers and civilians. The soldiers shouted: "Lie down!" And a regular volley started. More than 1000 shots were fired.

I took cover in the ditch on the right side of the road. My wife and my son-in-law, Stephan Niemicz, were shot dead right neat to me. I received a shot in the arm and slight wounds in the throat, in the eye and in the back of the head. My daughter Lucie, my son Fritz and his wife were severely wounded. My son-in-law left behind a wife with two little children, one three years old, the other six months old.

Polish soldiers were no longer in the place at the time of the shooting, which was solely the work of insurgents, who some time previously had been armed by the Polish authorities.

In Pless, people are now generally saying that the insurgents were planning a massacre on a still larger scale. They are said to have had the intention of shooting all those who acknowledged themselves as Germans at the time of the passing of the German troops. They were prevented from carrying out this plan only because the shooting had started prematurely, while the German soldiers were still there.

This written statement was read over to the witness, approved by him and signed as under:

(signed) Emil Schwarzkopf

He took the following oath: I swear by Almighty God that I have spoken the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help me God.

Concluded

(signed) S c h o l z

(signed) F r a n z

Source: WR I

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76.



Pertaining to the murder case Schmi ede — Tgh V (RKPA) 1486/10. 39.

The photograph shows the ground floor and the exposed cellars in Schmi ede's house, which was totally destroyed by fire caused by incendiaries. 16 persons were obliged to endure the heat in the cellars for 8 hours, because shots were being fired through the windows. It was only afterwards that the minority Germans were able to crawl into another cellar, the roof of which was covered with concrete. Schmi ede himself and two other persons who came out of the cellars were shot dead on leaving the burning building.

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PERSONAL ACCOUNTS OF SURVIVORS OF THE VARIOUS CONCENTRATION MARCHES

77. The march of terror to Lowitsch --

Narrative of Gotthold Starke, Chief Editor of the "Deutsche Rundschau" in Bromberg.

Military Court of the District Air Service Command 3,

Staff for Special Duties. Bromberg, Sept. 15, 1939.

Present: Dr. Waltzog, Air Service Judge-Advocate, as Judge. Charlotte Janz, as Clerk of the Court, specially detailed.

Re person: My name is Gotthold Starke, 43 years of age, a Protestant, the Chief Editor of the "Deutsche Rundschau" in Bromberg. I am married and have four children.

Re matter: On Sept. 1, 1939, at 7.30 p. m., I was arrested in my home by a Polish police officer. He told me I was under arrest as soon as he entered, and then carried out a search which yielded no result. He then handed me a red warrant of arrest on which I had to sign that a search of my home had been carried out with no result. I was then taken in a car to the former Reich War Orphans' Home in Bromberg, where I met many minority Germans and also German nationals who likewise had been arrested some time on Sept. 1st. As I learned later, a general order for the whole country had been sent out to this effect through the Polish Broadcasting Organization. The lists of persons to be detained must have already been prepared at the end of April or the beginning of May. Persons who, at a later date, had come to live in Bromberg and who might have appeared just as politically suspect as we others, or been suspected with even more reason, were in fact not arrested. On the other hand, people were sought out who had moved away within the last few months.

Legally speaking, there were three categories of arrested persons, who, however, all experienced the same treatment: firstly, those detained on a red ticket, to which group I belonged, secondly, the internees with a pink ticket, applying principally to the German nationals, but also including a few minority Germans as distinct from those of German nationality, whereas some German nationals also had red tickets; and thirdly, the evacuees with yellow tickets. On these yellow tickets was an order that the persons concerned--probably almost entirely minority Germans, not German nationals--were to go for four weeks, at their own expense, to a place in East Poland, where they were to live under police supervision. The yellow-ticket category was by far the smallest; the holders enjoyed a certain amount of preference as compared with the detained persons, which, in one instance known to me, was no doubt due to the estate-owner in question being given a good report by Poles he had billeted. As on Sept. 1st, it was no longer possible for the evacuees to travel by train to East Poland, they were put on the same footing as the detained persons, the internees also receiving no different treatment. Amongst these internees were the chief of the German Passport Office in Bromberg, Consul Wenger, and his secretary, Frl. Müller, both officials of the German Consulate-General in Thorn: I last saw Consul Wenger in Lodz, he is not yet back in Bromberg (1).

The intention clearly was to remove us to a camp where we were to be fed. Some of us were told at the time of arrest to provide ourselves with food for four days, but only very few could obtain food. On Sept. 2nd, more prisoners joined us, including the Chairman of the German Association, Dr. Hans Kohnert, likewise holder of a red ticket. While watching at the window the impact of the German airmen's bombs, we also witnessed German peasants being so severely beaten that a rifle butt was split (testimony of Frl.

Müller of the German Passport Office still in Lodz). It was then that they first started the method of intimidation. Our guards, composed of police, auxiliary police and members of semi-military associations, compelled us with fixed bayonets to lie down on the ground, threatening to shoot anyone who tried to rise. In the afternoon of Sept. 2nd, at about 5 o'clock, we were assembled in two ranks and led into the courtyard. Previously, one of the Haller soldiers had singled out a few prisoners whose hands were then fettered together. We then formed a large square in the yard, rifles and machine-guns were loaded in our presence, and we were marched off, first of all through the Polish population of Bromberg who cursed and swore at us as we passed. They threatened to lynch us in front of the police prison where we were able to make a short halt. When it had become quite dark, we started off to march via Langenau and Schulitz to Thorn, a forced march of about 36 miles, quite unendurable for the old people and children who were amongst us. The hardships were intensified by the lack of food and by the constantly recurring order to go into the ditch when German airmen attacked. We were no further than Langenau when 76-year-old Frl. Martha Schnee had to remain behind in a dying condition. She was a niece of the well-known German East African Governor, and had devoted her life to the service of the poor, finally as head of the German People's Welfare.

In Thorn we were accommodated for the night in a dirty hall in a suburb. The first signs of mental derangement made themselves apparent here, women and men crying out wildly, while anti-German demonstrations were made by Polish convicts who had been added to our number. On Sept. 4th, we marched from Thorn as far as the Polish brine spa Ciechocinek. Our guard were kept busy collecting Polish deserters. Judging by the fighting, we all believed that German troops would yet be able to free us. A short way from the health resort, one of our comrades, young Gerhard. Schreier from Bromberg, cut his throat, severing the carotid artery. A surgeon amongst

(1) Consul Wenger was saved.

us, Dr. Staemmler from Bromberg, attended to him. The injured man was taken to Ciechocinek, where he died. Dr. Staemmler told me personally that with normal treatment he would certainly have been saved. While the young fellow, whose nerves had completely given way, was lying in his own blood, he was kicked by the last Polish Chief Constable of Bromberg, who led the column. All pocket-knives and razor blades, however, were taken away from us others. In Ciechocinek we were accommodated in a camp for youths, the sexes being separated. It was again impossible to have any rest at night as there were fresh outbreaks of insanity and the hysterical cries did not cease. There was nothing to eat. On Sept. 5, we marched through the great heat from Ciechocinek to Wloclawek. Foot trouble spread, the hunger became greater, provisions which some had brought with them were distributed. Our money had been taken away; nevertheless in Nieszawa the prisoners made a collection so that bread could be bought. The commandant entrusted Dr. Staemmler with the purchase and distribution. Later, unfortunately, he had not the same generous feelings towards us.

In Nieszawa we camped at midday in scorching heat on a large refuse dump. Here we were joined by a large company of prisoners from Pommerellen, women and old people amongst them, hunted, driven, emaciated creatures. Then we marched along the bank of the Vistula into the shell-torn town of Wloclawek, where we were herded together in a gymnasium and locked in. The whole night long we had no water, although we were nearly dying of thirst. As I was looking in the darkness for a way out, to get to a supply of water, I met a German farmer, Vorweyer, who had been arrested with his 14-year-old son. Later on they took the fair-haired boy away from him, and as to the boy's fate

nothing is known. The next morning we were driven on. Some of the old people who could not continue, and also some women, were loaded on to a vehicle. When the two Bromberg men, Pastor Assmann, Church Superintendent, and Dr. von Behrens, both over 70 years of age, also asked permission to ride, they were refused as "particularly dangerous political bandits." Young comrades carried them along that day as well. On this day, Sept. 6, the way led from Wloclawek to the Chodsen sugar mill near Chodecz, where we were joined to several other columns from Pommerellen, the total number of abducted persons probably attaining the figure of 4,000, of which 600 to 800 came from Bromberg. Amongst these 4,000 there were about 1,000 Polish Social Democrats, convicts and other wretched-looking specimens. Other bodies of Germans had had Lad experiences in the Chodsen sugar mill which was under military command. They had been beaten with rubber truncheons, put up against the wall, terrorized, and maltreated in other ways. Some had also been shot. We were driven for the night into a narrow space between two walls, where there was barely room for one person to sit, but where we were obliged to sit on coke and liquid tar. Polish civilians with armlets, whose orders we had to obey, moved among us. Whoever approached the barbed wire ran the risk of being shot dead. Machine-guns were mounted on the factory roof. Although in the evening we had been promised barracks with straw--evidently this sugar mill was intended as a concentration camp--we were driven the next morning on to Kutno via Chodecz, a small town in which we were able to get food in the market place. On the way we were continually being called murderers, bandits and sons of bitches, particularly by the women--and by the officers. We were accompanied on the way, by columns of fugitives, military and civilian, who took every opportunity to attack us. Those who were unable to march were sometimes put on the cart, usually, however, shot dead at the end of the column. We marched from the morning of Sept. 7 all through the night, with few halts, in the ditch or in the filth of the road until 9 a. m. on the morning of Sept. 8, when we arrived at a farm, Starawies, about 2 miles beyond Kutno, where we made a halt of 4 hours. Here several of us dropped dead from exhaustion. Only a part of the column received bread, all, however, got water to drink, which meant the greatest bliss for us. We had in fact thrown ourselves down, as soon as twilight came, on the grass at the edge of the road, to moisten our tongues and lips with the dew. We were also able here and there to get a turnip from the field so as to stave off the awful pangs of hunger.

We marched on from Starawies' at midday, once more throughout the night, staggering, sleeping, constantly troubled by our insane comrades, badly upset by the shots in our column;--one of my companions alone counted 44 Germans shot dead that night--and molested by the many military columns streaming back. Anyone who could not maintain his proper position in the marching column was driven back in the ranks with clubs and bayonet' prods by the escort, who were better fed than we were and who could sometimes ride on bicycles and also 'sometimes be relieved by others. Even in the case of our doctor, Dr. Staemmler, no exception was made when he remained in the front or the rear of the endless column in order to help an unfortunate with some stimulant. He had not been allowed to bring his case of instruments. This particular night he himself commenced to rave. Dr. Kohnert and two marching next to him were beaten by passing soldiers. Time after time we had to close up because the ranks were opening out. A 70-year-old peasant, Korner by name, who could endure his thirst no longer, jumped from a bridge about 23 feet high into the Bzura, where he was shot at but not wounded. He drank some water out of his hat and was then able to rejoin the end of the column.

At 9 o'clock on Sept. 9 we arrived in Lowitsch, at a point between the powder magazine and the barracks, under intense German artillery fire. Practically all the Polish guards left us, the commandant was not to be seen. We withdrew from the danger zone into a

small wood above the town, and on the way we were able to quench our thirst and wash ourselves at several fountains. Out of the column of roughly 4,000, only 2,000 were saved when we got to Lowitsch--which, at the same time, was being occupied by German troops. Of those missing, there were first of all the 1,000 Poles who had been with us, but the remaining number of 1,000 Germans is by no means just a statistical error; on the contrary, I believe that the latter lost their way in the woods, meadows and villages during that last absolutely unbearable night in which we could hardly drag ourselves along. A part of them must, be considered as definitely lost. Others kept coming into Lowitsch in little groups. Of the

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final 2,000 who had remained together; about 1,200 broke away near the barracks and went to meet the German soldiers in separate groups, in some cases making prisoners of their escort, of whom finally 30 were captured. The remaining 800, including amongst others Dr. Kohnert, Dr. Staemmler, Baron Gero von Gersdorff, Herr Modrow, the chairman of the Land Union, and also myself, were taken into the previously-mentioned small wood where *strzelce* (semi-military riflemen), young armed bandits 17-18 years old, were waiting for us. These then drove us off another 5½ miles to the north-east of Lowitsch in the direction of Warsaw into a straggling village where water was to be had. The greater part of these 800 were Germans from "Congress" Poland (former Russian territory), who could hardly be held together, particularly when we were driven again up a hill on to a so-called *gromadawiese* (village common), which was exposed to fire from all sides.

Pastor Krusche, as leader of the Germans from "Congress" Poland, and we from Bromberg consulted together as to what was now to be done. Dr. Kohnert and Dr. Staemmler were commissioned to parley with the single remaining Bromberg policeman accompanying us. It was suggested that he should gather his comrades together, so that we should not be shot down by the soldiers swarming-back on the retreat, or by the young *strzelce*, who to all appearances had prepared an ambush for us. In return, we were willing to guarantee the guards' lives and positions if we fell into German hands. As Dr. Kohnert and Dr. Staemmler approached the policeman, he misinterpreted their action and became aggressive. Dr. Staemmler tried to wrest the weapon from him, the policeman stepped back a few paces and shot him dead. The policeman disappeared in the upper village calling loudly for revenge and for assistance. We now assumed that the defenceless 800, would be shot at from all sides. Every where Polish soldiers and armed civilians became visible. Suddenly a tank appeared at the foot of the hill. Everybody thought that it was to bar our escape to Lowitsch. Dr. Kohnert and Pastor Krusche went towards it with a white handkerchief on a stick. We hoped we would be secure against the malice of the police and the *strzelce* if we submitted to the Polish military. The 800 streamed after the two men bearing the flag of truce. Half-way we made the discovery that it was a German tank, which freed us. A young German officer drove through our midst on this tank, which bore the name "Ziethen," right to the upper village up the entire *gromada* hill. There the Polish peasants fell on their knees and kissed the officer's hands and uniform. He directed us, however, back to Lowitsch. We took the body of Dr. Staemmler and marched through potato and stubble fields where there was some side-cover, into the town, which was occupied by German troops. The march to Lorzitsch, which with deviations represented a distance of about 150 miles, had come to an end. The condition of those who had taken part was, in the majority of cases, shockingly wretched. When I was in the Commandant's headquarters, where the country doctor, Dr. Studzinski (a German) from Waldau, District of Schwetz, who had been beaten black and blue, and who

attended to the most acute cases of festering foot injuries and visited those who were, seriously ill, until he dropped, I discovered among others the 68-year-old Senator Dr. Busse-Tupadly lying on a straw bed. He called me and put his arms round me, weeping. Although he is the godfather of my son, I should never have recognized him. Stones which had been hurled at him and blows of rifle butts had left his head a blue-black shapeless mass from which only the red lips, dripping with blood, protruded. Dr. Busse is one of the foremost European cattle-breeders. He was also particularly esteemed by the Poles and was well-known as a judge at all international cattle-shows. Next to him lay the 82-year-old horticulturist Bohrmann, from Schonsee, in a state of complete exhaustion. In the headquarters yard, however, there was a pile of corpses of those who even at this point had died from exhaustion and of others who had been cut off from the main column before Lowitsch and murdered by the soldiers flooding back. 26 had been counted near the *gromada* hill alone. The majority of them had been beaten to death with rifle butts. Deeply moved, we thanked our liberators.

By the Bzura, where we took our first bath, we sang the German national anthems and raised a cheer of "Sieg Heil" for the Führer and the German Army. At night, we were given food and looked after by farmers from Pommerellen who had been dragged as far as the Lowitsch prison, on suspicion of espionage, and now also had been released by the German troops. In view of the fighting which was in progress, the 2,000 people saved were brought the next day, during the afternoon of Sunday, Sept. 10, on *panjemagen* (peasants' carts) and on 800 requisitioned bicycles to Lodz, via Glowno, where we rested at night in the open.

Dictated by the witness, approved, signed

Gotthold Starke.

The witness then took the oath.

Concluded:

Dr. Waltzog Charlotte Janz

Source: WR I

78. Father Breitinger, German Catholic Priest, Posen, on the March of the Victims Abducted from Posen

Investigation Department for Breaches of International Law, attached to the Posen, Oct. 5, 1939.

Military High Command

Present:

Hurtig, Judge-Advocate.

Pitsch, Military Inspector of Justice.

Called upon, the Rev. Father Breitinger appeared and, after being duly informed as to the oath, declared on interrogation:

Re person: My name is Lorenz Breitinger, known to the Order as Father Hilary. I was born at Glattbach, near Aschaffenburg on June 7, 1907, and am priest to the German Catholics in Posen. I reside in the Franciscan Monastery in Posen.

Re matter: Towards 6 p. m. on Sept. 1, 1939, a police officer appeared at the Monastery gate and told me that I was under arrest. To my request to be allowed to bring some clean clothing and food with me, he replied that it was not necessary, as I should soon be back home again after a short examination. Another police officer was waiting outside the Monastery with fixed bayonet, and both officers took me like a criminal with three other persons to Police Headquarters. There the police officer who arrested me handed me an internment order, taking a receipt for it, from which I saw that I was officially interned. I met with about 20 acquaintances in the police yard, and I spent the night along with them in the open air. During the night, further transports of fellow-sufferers arrived. The abbot of my Monastery approached the Chief Administrative Police Commissar to intervene on my behalf. On my return home later, he informed me that his attempt at intervention had been summarily rejected with the following words: "What, you dare vouch for such a man? You then stand up for spies and therefore deserve a bullet through the head just as the other man does." When the abbot then asked if he might bring me a suitcase with some clothes and food, he was told that the lice should eat them. My abbot was so indignant at this answer that, as he told me later, it was the first time in his life that he was ashamed of being a Pole. I was further informed by my abbot that, on my behalf, he had also called on the Provincial Governor, a good mutual acquaintance of ours. The latter answered that, unfortunately, he could do nothing in the matter because all power had passed into the hands of the military. On Sept. 2, we were ordered to line up in pairs. A police official in mufti, in the name of the Provincial Governor, deprived us of our civic rights, adding that we had now to march to a camp, and that anyone who did not march properly in the streets would immediately be shot. The police then loaded their rifles, fixed bayonets, and we were led through the streets of Posen to Głowno. The police guards again and again called out to the waiting crowds to the left and right of us: "These are all Germans," the answer of the crowd always being incredible shouting and raving, as well as awful cursing. On reaching the old market, the crowd began to grab at us, and we were beaten with sticks, kicked and stoned, so that by the time we reached the suburb of Głowno, we were covered with bruises. I felt a ray of hope when, in a tavern on the road, a catholic priest, the vicar of Głowno, entered. From him, in particular, I hoped for understanding and a protection for all of us, as well as for information as to our future fate. On presenting myself I was exceedingly surprised to hear him start questioning me in order to find out if I were a disguised spy, asking me roughly why I had taken up arms against the Poles. Entirely speechless, I gave up any further attempt at conversation.

In the late afternoon, we were led to a large meadow which was encircled by a great crowd of people. Further groups of internees came marching in, amongst them, women and children, two cripples who could hardly walk (they were war-invalids with wooden legs), and a large number with bandaged heads, whose clothes were smeared with blood. We were ordered to line up in fours in the meadow and were counted. Then at a command from the leader of our guard, which consisted of a few policemen and various grammar school pupils in the uniform of the military youth organisation, we were obliged to sing a song of hate against Germany. He then had me step out of the ranks alone, in my clerical robes, and, amidst the jeering of the crowd, made me drill. Finally, he placed me in the first row as the ringleader of the rebels as we were continually

designated. We then walked to Schwersenz through a lane of enraged people who spat on us, threw horse-dung at us, and ill-used us with sticks, stones and kicks. The accompanying guard did nothing to protect us against this ill-usage, or, if the will to protect us existed, they were powerless and not energetic enough to do so. In Schwersenz, the mob, sunk to the level of the brute-beast, struck at cripples and children seated on carts, until their sticks were shattered. On the following day, I noticed that the presidents of practically all German organisations, as well as the whole of the German priesthood, had been herded together. They were persons who were convinced they had carried out their civic duties to the Polish state conscientiously and therefore, could not grasp why they were now being treated even worse than hardened criminals.

In Schwersenz, both a Protestant clergyman and myself asked if we might hold a service for the internees, but the man in charge of the escort roughly answered that we could not. We then again had to run the gauntlet of the fury of the crowd through the town of Kostrzyn to Wreschen. At the latter place we were again badly beaten with sticks and kicked. It was here that my Cardinal rode past us, and he must have recognized us as internees from Posen. He did not, however, say a word in our favour. In Wreschen we were again drilled in a hall, where we were obliged to stand up, sit down, go down on our knees, etc. I personally received the special attentions of the man in charge. He called me a hypocrite and a liar and said that the cross ought to be torn off me as I had been a traitor to it. The march continued at about midday. The guard rode on the waggons together with the sick, and often we were obliged to trot behind the waggons, whenever the driver thought fit. On passing through a village, we all endeavoured to cover our heads with blankets and overcoats as a protection against stones being thrown at us. It was inconceivable to me that Polish soldiers and even Polish officers should play so conspicuous a part in these excesses. It sometimes happened that Polish Army officers wearing decorations walked along our ranks, giving those of us within their reach a violent kick. At Konin we were not able to continue our march to Kutno and were suddenly marched off northwards. About five miles beyond Konin, our guard left us, leaving behind a single policeman who was mentally deficient. Meanwhile we were badly beaten with fists and stones by Polish recruits. We were freed from this by military police. We were allowed to halt for three days at a farm near Maliniec because the policeman had to obtain instructions as to what was to happen to us.

Beyond Slesin we passed through the first Polish lines and were lodged outside the town at a farm which was occupied entirely by Polish military. Here we encountered a young Polish officer who, with innumerable curses, threatened us with death. We were awakened as early as 2 o'clock the following morning to continue our march. The waggons with the cripples and sick remained behind. I heard later that they were shot. They included the entire Schmolke family, and another war-invalid with one leg. With the sound of the guns in our ears, we were forced on at top speed to Babiak. In the afternoon the march continued, after our having been divided into three groups, and numerous soldiers being added to our escort. On a path in the woods, we were obliged to hand over our watches and other jewellery, money and, in some cases, even wedding rings, to the soldiers. When, on the Monday morning, we were obliged to continue our march, some of us could no longer stand on our feet. Apart from five who were ill and absolutely unable to continue (among them, a lady teacher from Posen), three persons in better condition remained behind for their protection. We afterwards heard that their escort had simply shot them and stoned them to death in a bestial manner.

After long marches in different directions, lasting days at a time, while the front was moving nearer and nearer, we were finally freed by German troops on Sept. 22, 1939. We were then transported home, via Breslau, by the German military.

Dictated aloud, approved, signed

Lorenz Breitinger (Father Hilary)

The witness, took the following oath: I swear by the Almighty God that I have told the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help me God.

Concluded:

(signed) H u r t i g (signed) P i t s c h

By way of appendix I would add:

I was together with all the Posen internees. Among them, in my group, were also director Hugo Bohmer, Pastor Stefani, Dr. Swart, headmaster of the German grammar school, Dr. Robert Weise and other leading German personages.

I also swear to this on oath.

(Signed) Lorenz Breitinger (Father Hilary)

Concluded:

(signed) H u r t i g (signed) P i t s c h

Source: W R II (1)

79. Dragged off for 200 miles --

Personal experience reported by Robert Weise M. D., Superintendent of the Posen Deaconess Hospital

Investigation Bureau for Breaches of International Law at General Staff Posen, October 3, 1939.

Headquarters

Present:

Dr. Reger, Judge-Advocate, Bachmann, Military Court Inspector,

as President of Investigation. as Secretary.

Dr. Robert Weise's statement was taken down in the hospital of the Protestant Deaconess Hospital, of which he is the Superintendent. The attention of the witness was drawn to the fact that his statement would have to be sworn to on oath and that he should therefore speak nothing but the truth. He then declared:

Re Person: My name is Robert Weise, I was born at Birnbaum on Oct. 2, 1893. I am a Protestant, have been, up to now, a Polish citizen, of German descent. I am married and have two children aged 6 and 3.

(1) The last page of the record is given in the original (see photograph p. 274).

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On Sept. 1, 1939, I was arrested at my home by the police. I had supposed I was to be interned and had therefore already prepared a rucksack. The policemen told me I need not take anything with me as I should be released immediately. I was only to give them my signature. Before I was arrested, my home was searched. They were looking for arms. After first being taken to the police station, I was removed to Police Headquarters, where a number of people were being assembled for transportation. They consisted of a large number of minority Germans who had been herded together there. I am unable to give the exact number. In my group there were about 60 to 80 men.

At about midday on Sept. 2, 1939 (until then, I had been given nothing to eat except a slice of bread and a mug of coffee) our march began. As soon as we began the stretch through Posen to Głowno, we were exposed to the worst possible ill-usage by the mob, who beat us with sticks and fists, kicked us and threw stones at us. On this occasion, in the Breite Straße in Posen, Dr. Gustav Klusack, the director of the Polish Military Agricultural Society, was struck twice so violently on the back of the head with a stone that he fell on his face on the cobbles, where he remained unconscious. As a doctor, I at once suspected that Dr. Klusack had got a fracture of the base of the skull. I therefore tried to get the man in charge of our escort, a policeman, to allow Dr. Klusack to be conveyed to a local or military hospital, but my request was refused. We carried Dr. Klusack, who was bleeding from mouth and nose, vomiting and semi-conscious, as far as Głowno. He was obliged to march with us to the end.

At Głowno our column was augmented by other groups from Posen and the Wollstein district, and now numbered about 260 men. Our guard was also strengthened by uniformed rebels, so that our escort now consisted of the latter, regular State and auxiliary police. The commandant of the column now was a sub-lieutenant who wore the rebel uniform. On the same day we proceeded to Schwersenz. There we were again ill-used by the Schwersenz populace in the same manner as in Posen. I would stress that, until the end, the police tried to protect us, but were unsuccessful. The police even charged the crowds with batons. We stayed the night at Schwersenz. The next day, we went on to Wreschen, the day after, to Slupca, and the following day to Marantow. Up to Marantow, we still had three waggons with us in the column, on which the war-invalids as well as the women and children, and later the sick, rode. At Marantow, the waggons were taken from us, but I succeeded in getting them to allow at least one waggon to continue with us. We stayed at Marantow for three days. From there we went via Slesin on to a village not far beyond it, the name of which I have forgotten. At this place we were awakened in the night and driven on with all haste in the direction of Klodawa, because the military situation had apparently become serious. As there was no longer any waggon at our disposal, a man named Schmolke, from the neighbourhood of Wollstein, who had worn an artificial limb ever since the Great War, his wife, his daughter aged about 16, and his 18 months old son, as well as another man who wore

an artificial limb but whose name I cannot tell, and a certain Frau Blank, of Ketsch near Posen, were left behind. Ostensibly these minority Germans were to be brought up after us by waggon. During the midday rest at Babiak the same day, I was informed by one of our escort, who was a farm-hand on the Turkowo estate, in the district of Neutomischel, that these Germans had been shot. They were probably killed by the military, and the persons guilty are doubtless members of the Schwersenz regiment of the militia which was stationed in the Slesin district. I definitely believe that the Germans were killed by the military because none of our escort had remained behind, and the military were stationed in the village in which we were lodged. The same military unit had already taken over charge of us there.

From the photograph shown me I recognize the two invalids and the 16 year old daughter of Schmolke. Who the fourth person on the picture is, I do not know.

We then continued our march to Brzewienna Krotkie. There we stayed for the night in the open air and the next morning, the following fellow-Germans had to be left behind as they were unable to march: von Treskow, farmer, Frl. Hanna Bochnik, Frl. Molzahn, Vincenz Gierczynski, a Jew named Goldschmied, and various other persons. Hermann Pirscher, a student, also stayed behind, as he had volunteered to look after them. Frl. Bochnik had already become mentally deranged. We were again told that a waggon would be requisitioned for those who had remained behind. After we had been marching for a little more than a mile, we heard firing. There was no doubt in my mind, after what I had heard about the end of those who had been left behind previously, that this last lot had been shot as well. The exhumations that took place later confirmed this.

We were finally driven via Klodawa, Kutno, Gostynin, Zychlin to a village between Kutno and Lowitsch, on the Bzura, where we were at last freed by German troops on Sept. 17, 1939.

The distance we traversed I estimate at about 200 miles.

I should not like to omit mentioning that our money, jewellery and other valuables were taken away from us by the escort. Those of us to whom this occurred, never saw our property again. In my own case, for example, my silver wrist-watch, 280 Zlotys in cash, and my pocket-book with all my papers were taken from me.

Dictated aloud, approved, signed

Dr. Robert Weise.

The witness took the following oath: I swear by the Almighty God that I have told the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help me God.

Concluded:

(signed) Dr. R e g e r

(signed) Bachmann

Source: WR II

80. The murder of Dr. Staemmler, the surgeon

Personal narrative by Georg Drescher, farmer of Czempin, district of Kosten

The witness, Georg Drescher, farmer, of Czempin, made the following statement on, oath:

On Saturday, Sept. 2, 1939, I was arrested at 6 o'clock in the morning and, together with other fellow-Germans of Czempin, marched off to Schrimm. During this march we were threatened with pitchforks and sticks, beaten and horribly abused by the Polish populace. In Schrimm, too, we were ill-used; while we were lying about in a courtyard for two hours, a Polish police officer informed us that 20 fellow-Germans of Lissa had been condemned to death by the Military Court and were to be shot within two hours. I heard that 14 fellow-Germans of Lissa had in fact been shot. A group consisting of about 400 men and accompanied by an escort of police and auxiliary police, then marched off from Schrimm to Schroda via Neutomischel. We arrived at Schroda in the evening and were lodged for the night in a gym-hall. It was in the courtyard that we were first beaten by Polish soldiers; here Pastor Kienitz was also ill-used for the first time--by a Polish ensign. At noon the next day we were marched to Peisern, where we arrived in the course of the evening. There we were lodged in a hall which was intended to accommodate 50 to 60 men at the most. One can imagine how crowded we 300 to 400 persons were in the place. We were heaped together in a confused mass, nobody being allowed to leave the hall and relieve himself, or being allowed any water. In the morning we at last got some water and a few loaves. I should also state that during the night we were bound together in pairs, three pairs again being bound together with an extra rope. Our march then took us via Konin to Turek. The first death in our ranks occurred on this stretch. Old Baron von Gersdorff became weak, began to rave, stumbled a few paces backwards, and was shot with a rifle by a Polish sergeant. In the meantime it had become dark, the streets were chock-full of fugitives, and, as I had stepped out for a drink of water, I found myself in a group of 50 men who had been dispersed. We did not know what to do and therefore reported at the nearest police station. We wandered about bewildered in the village until we were stopped by a Polish infantry patrol and taken to the prison at Turek. We remained there only a short time and were then led to a forest by some soldiers. On the way, one of my comrades sprang into a waterhole with the intention of taking his life. The soldiers fired three shots at him, whereupon he remained lying in the hole. In the wood, we were placed against a fence, and a Polish officer told us that we were sentenced to death. Hereupon one of my comrades ran away and was shot down with three bullets. This man was Fritz Sonnenberg of Czempin. We were then lined up in the road and were to be shot in a sand-pit. With arms raised we were obliged to march for miles. At any sign of cramp in the arms we received bayonet prods and were hit with rifle butts. I heard shots fired behind me, from which I concluded, especially from the cries of those hit, that again a few comrades had lost their lives. Bergmann, a master-builder, received terrible rifle butt blows, Hoffmann-Waldau, the estate owner of Kurschen, near Schmiegel, received seven bayonet thrusts. I myself got a bayonet thrust in the right arm. Finally we were led to a churchyard where we were obliged to lie face downwards with hands outstretched. We awaited our death. The soldiers, however, took advantage of this position of ours to plunder us of everything we had. From me, for example, they took 165 zlotys, and everything else I had on me. Some comrades even had their boots taken, so that they were obliged to walk barefooted. This plundering lasted about two hours. We were then ordered to march again and informed that we were to be shot in a German churchyard. This march led us over ploughed land, where a comrade lost his head and tried to run away. A few shots put an end to his life. We thought our end was to come when we arrived at a village. First, we were led to a farmyard and again searched. Everything that had not been taken from us before, was taken now. We then passed through the village where there were very many soldiers. The Polish soldiers

jeered, shouted, and abused us. Another group of the column that passed ours was fired on by these soldiers with rifles and machineguns. After this attack the remaining seven or eight men of this group joined ours. After half an hour we were marched on to Kolo. This march was a real funeral procession. The soldiers fired into our ranks at random. The person in charge of our escort was a Polish woman corporal. I owe my deliverance only to the fact that I was in the second row from the front and the head of the group consisted of women. It was on this march that Hoffmann-Waldau, the estate owner, lost his life. We arrived at Kolo about 10 o'clock in the evening, where we were put in gaol. There were about 28 men in a small cell. I should mention here that Bergmann, the master-builder of Schmiegel, in this funeral procession received a serious wound from a shot which smashed the bones in his forearm. Despite this serious injury, he continued the march until Saturday afternoon, that is three and a half days. It was on this Saturday afternoon that his wound was bandaged for the first time by German troops, who freed us.

We marched off from Kolo on Sept. 13, 1939, in the direction of Klodawa: From then onwards, we were also exposed to air attacks against Polish troops. Both the populace and the soldiers became more and more enraged. We were finally accommodated on a large farm beyond Kutno. Here we were set upon by Polish soldiers, belaboured with whips, and obliged to run. From Kutno we continued in the direction of Lowitsch the outskirts of which we reached at about 6 o'clock in the morning. On account of heavy air attacks we walked back about four miles and camped in a small barn. After an air attack took place here, we went on to the next village. During this march the column became more and more straggling as we simply could not carry on. I fell back with Herr Schneider, a miller of Schmiegel; the escort had run away in the meantime. We failed to make contact with the column and wandered aimlessly through the fields in continual fear of being caught as spies and shot. We therefore returned to the last village, met a Polish policeman there and asked him where our group was. He showed us the way, and we took that route. We found however, that it was not our group but another consisting of people from Bromberg, Thorn and Graudenz. They had just left Lowitsch because it was continually being bombed from the air. There were also women and children in this group which consisted of about 800. There was also a woman with a six weeks old infant among them.

After camping for about half an hour, the policeman we had met shortly before, came back and was addressed by one of our comrades. Dr. Staemmler, of Bromberg, came up stretching out his hand with the intention of pacifying the excited, drunken policeman, whereupon the latter stepped back and shot the Bromberg doctor with a rifle bullet that tore right through his chest. Dr. Staemmler died instantly; I was about 10 yards away. The policeman was about to fire again, and it was only when several comrades implored him not to, that he desisted and rushed back to the village. After a few minutes, we saw an armoured car with machine-guns mounted coming up the road out of a village on the right, and we feared the worst. The car circled round our group, and then stopped in front of us. We cried out in fear and wanted to take cover. Others raised their arms, but then we noticed that it was a German armoured car. In the meantime a second German armoured car appeared for our protection, whereupon we started off across the fields and by-paths for Lowitsch. On the way we sang the hymn "Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott" and we looked around for comrades who, we were convinced, had been murdered in the last hours.

I saw the dead bodies of many internees lying near Lowitsch. After the German military had given us something warm to eat, we were finally transported back to our native land via Breslau.

Dictated aloud, approved, signed

Georg Drescher

The witness took the following oath: I swear by Almighty God that I have told the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help me God.

Source: W R II

81. The murder of Dr. Kirchhoff

Man with an artificial limb killed and castrated

Investigation Dept. for Breaches of International Law, attached to the Military High Command Ciolkowo, September 27, 1939.

Present: Dr. Reger, Military Judge Advocate, as President Drescher, as secretary.

I hereby swear on oath to carry out the duties of a secretary truly and conscientiously, and to maintain silence.

(signed) Drescher, Secretary.

Frl. Sophie Wiese, housekeeper, was called on at the farm at Ciolkowo. It was made clear to her that she would have to take the oath regarding her statement and that perjury would render her liable to severe punishment.

[p. 140]

She then made the following declaration:

R e p e r s o n : My name is Sophie Wiese, I was born at Marlewo in the district of Wongrowitz, on August 19, 1890, am a housekeeper in the Kirchhoff household at Ciolkowo, am a German-Catholic, single, and a Polish citizen, but of German descent.

R e m a t t e r : On Sunday, September 3, 1939 two Polish soldiers arrived at the farm in a motor car at 6.30 a. m. The car was driven by a chauffeur in civilian clothes. I am not able to tell their rank or regiment, but it is believed that the chauffeur is known in Rawitsch or Sarne.

One of the soldiers went into the stable and arrested the inspector. He handed Schulz over to the other soldier, who carried a rifle with fixed bayonet. The first soldier then entered the house from the back. He first encountered Dr. Kirchhoff, who, alarmed at the noise, had come out of his bedroom. Dr. Kirchhoff had dressed hurriedly and had on only his shirt, trousers and shoes. The soldier shouted to him in Polish to hold his hands up. In the excitement of the moment, Dr. Kirchhoff at first did not understand what the soldier wanted of him. I told him he was to raise his hands. Dr. Kirchhoff was searched at the point of the revolver. Our chambermaid, Martha Vogel, handed Dr.

Kirchhoff a case containing a few articles of clothing, which had already been prepared because Dr. Kirchhoff had expected to be interned.

Dr. Kirchhoff, who was an invalid, seriously wounded in the Great War, and had an artificial right leg, asked for his walking-stick. When the soldier forbade him to have it. Dr. Kirchhoff pointed out that he could not walk without one, which is a fact. The soldier thereupon said that he would be taken by car.

We heard nothing of Dr. Kirchhoff's or Inspector Schulz's fate from the time of their arrest until Sunday, Sept. 10, 1939, when Albert and Fritz Vogt of Krähen came and informed us that corpses had been found at Malachowo, one of them with an artificial limb, and that it might be that of Dr. Kirchhoff. Dr. Kirchhoff's 71-year-old mother, who also lives here, ordered Martha Vogel and me to drive over to Malachowo to identify the body. The next day we drove to Malachowo, a village situated about 15 miles away. There, at about 30 yards from the school, lay four dead bodies. They had been dug up only the day before, but had again been lightly covered over.

Both Martha Vogel and I recognized Dr. Kirchhoff by the artificial limb, the shirt and the necktie. He still had his shirt on but his trousers were missing. The body was in a terrible state; both the arms were broken, the tongue had been torn out of his mouth, the skull was smashed in, and the neck showed signs of awful blows with rifle butts. Dr. Kirchhoff had also been castrated.

Inspector Schulz had a bayonet thrust in the pelvis, his tongue too had been torn out, the skull smashed in, showing, like the body, signs of blows dealt with the butt of a rifle.

Two other bodies were identified by another housekeeper, Gertrud Hensel of Smirowo, these bodies also being in a terrible condition. Farmer Walter Ehmann, of Smirowo, had his skull smashed in, his body showed traces of blows with rifle butts, the tongue was torn out, and one eyeball was out of its socket. His assistant, a 65-year-old man, had his head completely bashed in, his tongue torn out, and the body covered with traces of blows with rifle butts.

The other five bodies had also been dealt with in a similar terrible way. As far as I have heard, the bodies in question were those of a certain Brambar of Gostyn, his 16-year-old apprentice, of whom I know only the Christian name, Joachim, further of the foreman Lange of Osawo, and lastly of two men unknown to me.

With the exception of the 16-year-old apprentice, all the bodies showed no traces of bullet wounds; all the men. had been beaten to death.

In contrast with other rumours I have heard, I should like emphatically to remark that Dr. Kirchhoff's artificial limb was not splintered and that the other, the sound leg, had not been chopped off, but the corpse was dreadfully mutilated even so.

I am ready to swear to this statement.

Re-read aloud, approved, signed

Sophie Wiese

The witness then took the following oath: I swear by Almighty God that I have spoken the truth, whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help me God.

Second Witness: Martha Vogel.

The witness's attention is drawn to the fact that she will be called upon to take the oath, and, as in the case of the previous witness, is accordingly made to understand the significance of the oath.

She then stated:

R e P e r s o n : My name is Martha Vogel, I was born on January 14, 1907 at Ciolkowo, am a Protestant, single, of Polish citizenship, of German descent. I am a chambermaid in the Kirchhoff household at Ciolkowo.

R e m a t t e r : The witness gave the same account as the other witness, Sophie Wiese. After witness Wiese's statement had been made known to her, Vogel stated:

That statement is correct on every point, and I make it my own, in every respect, before the judge.

I am prepared to swear to this statement.

Read, approved, signed

Martha Vogel

Witness then swore the following oath: I swear by Almighty God that I have spoken the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help me God.

Concluded:

(signed) Dr. R e g e r

(signed) D r e s c h e r

Source: WR I

82. How Pastor Rudolph of Grab was shot from behind

Witness Karl H i r t , a butcher of Opalenitza, made the following statement on oath:

In the prison at Schwersenz there were already other Germans and, fettered together with about 20 others, I was loaded on to a farm waggon the same evening. Two lancers of the Polish army escorted the waggon. First of all we were taken to Iwno, where we waited an hour, then we continued in the direction of Gnesen. In the early morning we arrived at a farm beyond Iwno. Polish military (cavalry) were stationed on this farm. In my opinion they were lancers from the Lemberg region. When we continued further into the woods two young fellows were pulled down from the waggon on pretext that they were required to scrub boilers. They had hardly been led to a clearing when three shots

were fired after them. Later, when the bodies were exhumed, I found that they had bullet wounds in the chest and had also been beaten by rifle butts. After the shooting of these two comrades, whose names were Kelm and D \ddot{u} sterhoft, our waggon was driven about 2 miles and a half further. When we reached the last wood before Gnesen they ordered Pastor Rudolph, of Gratz, locksmith Fritz Gulde, farmer Krok of Buk, a 16-year-old boy of Zabikowo, and two other comrades down from the waggon. They were also led into the wood by the lancers and shot from behind without any reason or cause. I asked: "What on earth are you doing, shooting innocent people?", and the reply was that I had better keep quiet or the same would happen to me.

Source: WR II

83. How Pastor Kienitz of Czempin, was maltreated

Witness Herbert L e i t l a u f , farmer in Czempin, district of Kosten, deposed on oath as follows:

On the march from Schrimm to Schroda, our Pastor Kienitz received such heavy blows from rifle butts that he collapsed in the street and was brought to his feet again only after further rifle butt blows had been inflicted, and obliged to continue to march. At Schroda, in a prison courtyard, we were forced to sit on the ground with outstretched legs, while Polish soldiers hit us with their rifle butts: Pastor Kienitz suffered in particular at the hands of a Polish ensign. When he was asked how long he had lived in Poland he answered, 21 years. The ensign then struck him in the face 21 times. He was then hit with rifle butts on the chest and back so that he dizzily reeled backwards and forwards. As soon as one of us dared to raise his knees he received a rifle butt blow on the knees. Finally -we were taken to Peisern. On the march to the latter place, old Baron von Gersdorff stumbled out of the ranks, for which he received blows from rifle butts. When he raised his hands in protection he was shot down by two rifle bullets by soldiers.

Source: WR II

84. Man with an artificial limb not spared

Murder of the Schmolke family--four in number

Witness Robert W e i s e , M. D., at the Deaconess Hospital at Posen, on oath deposed as follows:

. . . As no waggon was at our disposal a certain Schmolke of the neighbourhood of Wollstein, who has an artificial limb from the Great War, his wife, a 16-year-old daughter and his 18-month-old son, as well as another man with an artificial limb whose name I cannot give, and a Frau Blank of Ketsch near Posen were left behind. These Germans were supposed to be brought along in a waggon. On the occasion of a midday rest the same day at Babiak, I learned from one of our escort, who was a farmhand on the Turkowo estate in the district of Neutomischel, that these Germans had been shot.

Source: WR II

85. The Murder of Freiherr von Gersdorff

Witness Fritz K r e t s c h m e r , labourer of Alt.-Boyen, deposed on oath as follows:

. . . I myself witnessed the death of Freiherr von Gersdorff. Herr von Gersdorff had lingered behind. He gabbled in delirium out of sheer exhaustion. When soldiers struck at him to induce him to walk faster, he grabbed at a soldier's bayonet to avoid the thrust. He was pushed into the ditch, and then the report of a shot was heard. Herr von Gersdorff collapsed and died. This occurrence took place while the old man wished to drink some water at an old well during a very short halt.

. . . If I am asked whether the village in question was Tarnowo, I cannot be sure. I do know that the village lies in the district of Turek and on the highway to Kutno in the region of Kosniewice. There we met a few of our comrades of Alt Boyen. Later on, Herr Gernoth, my master, the owner of the Kuschen estate, and some one unknown to me collapsed. They remained behind and we heard three shots. I never saw these three comrades again and I suppose they were shot. I, too, received a bullet in the knee when I reeled out of the ranks (left knee). I walked for another four days with this wound until we arrived at Kosniewice, where I remained lying for a day. I succeeded in escaping the next day.

Source: WR II

Witness K u h n e r t , farmer of Alt-Boyen, deposed on oath as follows:

. . . At Peisern, where, in the meantime, we had arrived, we were fettered together in the night in groups of six. The reason was a slight one, for in his sleep one of us, filled with fear, had called out:--"Halt! They are coming!" The result was an awful uproar. We were beaten and fettered. Two men who had been outside to relieve themselves never returned. I have never seen them again and they were doubtless killed. The names of the men in question I cannot give. And so we finally arrived in the vicinity of Turek, at a village whose name I don't know. In the row ahead of us was old Baron von Gersdorff, who, due to the undergone hardships, had already begun to rave. He was being borne along by a man unknown to me and by a farmer named Alfred Schulz of Alt-Boyen. Herr von Gersdorff fell behind; the men who had been bearing him along had to leave him and a little later I heard the crack of a rifle. Persons in mufti were standing around; we, however, were not allowed near. Veterinary surgeon Bambauer of Schmiegel also witnessed the occurrence and reported the details.

We were allowed to drink out of a dirty, stinking pool, but we were so parched that we greedily rushed at it. On the market place of the village whose name is unknown to me the police left us for an hour at the mercy of the populace, who took advantage of the occasion to strike and throw stones at us. I myself was a witness of one of our comrades collapsing dead, hit by a heavy stone.

Source: WR II

86. Numerous dead bodies of abducted Germans on the road to Lowitsch

Witness Max H o f m a n n of Schokken, in the district of Wongrowitz, deposed on oath as follows:

. . I myself, for example, saw how a woman of the Bromberg group, no longer able to walk and already mentally, disturbed, was beaten to death by a guard with the butt of his rifle. Also the war invalid Ernst Kiok of Jaroschau near Wongrowitz, a man of about 70, who for long had not been able to walk and lay on a waggon, was dragged off the waggon by the escort, thrown into the ditch and there beaten to death by blows from rifle butts. On our way to Lowitsch there were numerous dead bodies of interned Germans lying to the right and left of the road as well as on the road itself, so that we almost stumbled over them. It was an incredible martyrdom on the road to Lowitsch. The military passing us on the road also participated in the maltreatment, etc.

Source: WR II

87. Locomotive crushes 2 waggons filled with abducted Germans

Witness Bruno R a u h u d t , farmer in Kaczanowo, district of Wreschen, deposed on oath as follows:

. . . And so at last, after many halts, we arrived at Klodawa via Konin. . . . At night fall, it was already completely dark, the following occurrence took place:

Behind the column, at about a distance of 100 yards, stood a locomotive. This was set in motion so that it ran into the rear waggons. I was not in the last waggon, which was smashed to bits and derailed. The engine then ran on into the last waggon but one so violently that it mounted it and then fell down crushing the rear part. A number of Germans were thereby killed and many seriously or slightly injured. Among the dead were farmer Pieper of Guriczki, farmer Muhlheim of Wilhelmsau, farmer Mikos of Biechowo, farmer Grawunder of Sendschau, and others. I heard that 15 to 20 Germans thus lost their lives. The bodies were hurriedly buried immediately in the neighbourhood of the railway station.

We survivors were herded together, the injured also being brought to us. We were finally penned together in one car. The train continued on its way. At daybreak, we found that two of the seriously wounded had died in the meantime. I should like to emphasize that the injured were not even bandaged by the ambulance staff. The two bodies were hurriedly buried immediately alongside the railway line by fellow Germans who were called upon to do so by the Poles. Towards evening the seriously injured were loaded on to a lime waggon. After having spent three days on this waggon, the seriously injured at last succeeded in being transported to a field hospital. After things had become so serious, we others, in the meantime, had been unloaded from the now open railway car and led on foot in an easterly direction. The greater number of compatriots were barefooted, just as they had left the car.

Although in this locomotive incident also a policeman and another were killed, there is no doubt in my mind that the locomotive was run against our two cars intentionally in order to cause mischief among us Germans. This is clearly proved by the threats uttered by the Polish railwaymen as mentioned previously.

Source: WR II

88. The fatal march to Kutno

Personal narrative by Wilhelm Romano, manager of Wongrowitz.

On Sept. 22, 1939. Wilhelm R o m a n n deposed on oath as follows:

On Friday, Sept. 1, 1939 by virtue of a red slip of paper signed by the mayor, I was arrested by a policeman and an auxiliary policeman at about 4 p. m. and taken to the police station. There I asked police commandant Nowak what was to happen to me. He was, however, unable to give me any information. The name of the mayor of Wongrowitz was Zenkteller. I had got on well with authorities in Wongrowitz, and with the officials, but nevertheless they had managed to put me on the black list. From the police station I was removed to the gaol, where the German teacher Heuchel and I were put into two indescribably dirty cells. We were able to communicate with one another through the wall. In order to get a little fresh air, I first of all smashed in the window.

On the following day, Sept. 2, 1939, the town was bombarded. The same evening I and the other internees, who had since been brought in (there were about 52 of us), were let out of the cells and set in march to Elsenau under police escort. The war invalid Kiok, a man of 65 with a wooden leg, was allowed to ride in the car. At Elsenau we were loaded on to a local train after each of us had paid four Zlotys. During the night, we remained at the railway station locked into the local train without being allowed to open the windows. We repeatedly heard the railwaymen of the train saying that it would be best to shoot us down. The next morning the train was set in motion to Gnesen. There it stood in the station throughout the Sunday, and we were not allowed to leave it. Stones and bottles were frequently thrown into the compartments in which railwaymen also participated. On Sunday evening, the train continued in the direction of Thorn. At the latter station our train was again bombarded with stones, soldiers and railwaymen again taking part. They were principally after me. I was called the fat organiser of Wongrowitz. I should add that at Gnesen we were transferred to cattle trucks, 52 persons to a truck. The ventilators were nailed up and the doors locked. At one time we were obliged to hold out for six to seven hours without the admittance of fresh air and without water. Between Thorn and Wloclawek our train, which in the meantime had increased to 20 waggons, stopped on the line because the stretch had, obviously been put out of operation by air attacks. After about a day and a half, the journey continued in the direction of Wloclawek. There we left the train and our group of 52 men was led through the town three times, and repeatedly beaten. Aubert, for example, had the bridge of his nose smashed with an bicycle-pump. Pastor Rakette was hit in the face with a hard object so that he was covered with blood. Kiok the war invalid, who had almost become insane, was knocked down.

A long column of internees stretched along the road from Wloclawek to Kutno. Ahead of us walked a column of internees from Argenau, which had a much larger escort than we had; we had only six policemen allotted to us. All of us without exception received blows on the march to Kutno. On the road itself we saw many bloodstains which must

have come from maltreated or shot internees being led along the road ahead of us. At Wloclawek an internee had received a bullet in the chest from a pistol. He told me this when, on the way to Chodtz, I was allowed to sit on a waggon for about a mile, where I found him lying. After this short ride I received violent blows with a baton from a police sergeant and was driven off the waggon with the words: "You fat dog, you can walk." The police sergeant himself then sat on the waggon and ordered me to hold on and follow. But soon the speed of the waggon increased to a trot, and I had to run. If I did not keep up I was beaten by a policeman who was riding a bicycle. I had endeavoured to ride on the waggon because I had become absolutely footsore and was also very sore between the legs. No shooting or other murders occurred in our group as far as Chodtz, but during the night march we were often badly ill-used. Kiok had a brick thrown at his head, whereupon he fell to the ground and remained lying. He was, however, picked up by the group following ours and led up to us. At about 1 o'clock at night we arrived at Chodtz and had to remain lying out in the open until morning. On the following day, the roll was called and we were placed in a shed of the local sugar mill. We here met a group of about 30 internees from Hohensalza, as well as some from Bromberg. Before we were marched off we were divided up into groups of a thousand each. Later I heard from the army captain in charge of our group that there were not quite 6,000 internees marched off from Chodtz. I was in the third group. On the way there was wild shooting at those who tried to escape or reeled out of the ranks or fell and were unable to continue. As far as Kutno I did not see anyone shot with my own eyes because it was night. But when anybody strayed behind and fell we soon heard a shot, from which we concluded that he had been finished off by a bullet. We arrived at Kutno the next morning, where we rested and, for the first time, received a scanty meal. One loaf of bread had to do for 16 men. I should remark that, during the day, we had been accompanied by German planes which were evidently observing our fate.

When we passed Polish troops they struck at us with spades; in one of the groups behind us they shot with machine guns, once 50 to 60 shots being fired in succession.

Just before reaching Kutno, one of our number who was walking on a field alongside the road ran into the arms of some Polish troops. I saw two soldiers strike him with the butts of their rifles until he was dead. In another case a man's head was literally trampled under foot by Polish soldiers. Behind Kutno I saw an internee lying dead on the road; he had been beaten to death by rifle butt blows. From what I heard he had asked for some water, and his murder was the reply. Polish soldiers repeatedly advised our escort to kill us off as we were going to be shot anyway. I further saw a policeman using his baton on a woman carrying a child on her arm. Later on, I found her lying on the road face downwards. In my opinion she was dead. The march from Kutno to Lowitsch had to be done without a halt, that is 40 to 45 miles. It was a special forced march because German troops were approaching our column. At Lowitsch our group was led to a place encircled by barbed wire. The Polish military fired at this place with machine guns. On this occasion a certain Franke of Deutschfeld near Schokken received three bullets, tried to rise, and was dead. I passed by and managed to close his eyes. In the meantime a group of soldiers approached whom we took for Germans. First there were 2, later 12. As soon as we were certain they were German soldiers we ran towards them, the Polish machine gun fire still being directed on us. After a German machine gun had engaged the Polish machine gun the latter was silent. After our release I saw numerous internees being carried together. They were loaded on to a motor truck.

The Rogasen group had -a worse time than even we had. Barber Seehagel of Rogasen could give detailed information about this. He now lives at Bukowitz, which is 5 miles from Wongrowitz. Polish military fired into the ranks of this group when German tanks

approached. I was able to convince myself that he had a bullet wound in the shoulder. Further information of this group can be given by the merchant Thorn and the manufacturer Schutz of Rogasen. These two still reside at Rogasen.

In conclusion I would remark that all of us were completely broken in spirit so that we wanted to commit suicide. In my opinion, about 20 to 25 percent went mad, but many recovered their senses, especially after the release by German troops. I saw the former senator Dr. Busse completely broken down, and he is still in hospital at Lodz. The wife of an estate manager from the Argenau region lay insane in the Lowitsch hospital. I heard her screaming and shouting. Whether she is still alive I do not know.

Dictated aloud, approved, signed

Wilhelm Romann

Source: WR II 89. Old men among the victims of abduction

Personal narrative by veterinary surgeon Dr. Schulz at Lissa

Witness Dr. S c h u l z , veterinary surgeon, deposed on oath as follows:

In the afternoon of September 1st, the 350 to 400 arrested Germans were led to Storchnest by a provost sergeant-major of the Polish army. Among us was the 82-year-old Prof. Bonin in his underpants and dressing-gown. Besides Prof. Bonin there were the elderly Herr Tiller, a tailor, 82 years of age, and other 70-year-old men in the column. There were also women among us. They had not even spared children. The march to Storchnest was comparatively bearable, also that which followed to Schrimm. At Storchnest, butcher Gaumer, elektrician Weigt, teacher Jaschke, forwarding agent Weigt, brushmaker Senf, tailors Tiller (father and son), sculptor Bissing and photographer Juretzky, from whose houses shots had allegedly been fired, were called out of the ranks. But of these thefollowing were again released: Weigt, forwarding agent, Tiller (father and son), and Senf. The Tillers (father and son), however, were again singled out at Schrimm. Of the others, the old people, women and children were released but were not able to return to Lissa and were driven to other districts. Those singled out, such as Gaumer, Weigt, and the others were tried by a military court at Schrimm and, on the evidence of Polish citizens of Lissa, shot. Only in the case of the 72-year-old Bissing was the death sentence commuted to a term of imprisonment. To make the situation clearer, I would further mention that the "trustworthy" witnesses attached to the military court, who were called upon to give information about us, were a notorious person of evil reputation in Lissa named Ullrich and a tailor called Trzeczak.

At Schrimm, we were beaten and had stones thrown at us by the Polish mob and military. We were called "rebels" because we were alleged to have shot at the soldiers at Lissa. The escort hardly protected us. From Schrimm the march continued visa Santomischel to Schroda. At Santomischel, through which we passed on a Sunday, we were again maltreated and spat upon by the Polish populace and military, so that we refused to enter Schroda with the inadequate escort, because we feared being beaten to death. With the assistance of the extra police that were called we did in fact get through Schroda more or less unmolested, especially as the auxiliary policeman Wendzonka, of Lissa, forced a path through for us with his bayonet. But during the night which we passed at Schroda, every few minutes some of us were called out and bestially maltreated outside by the

guard. This maltreatment stopped at midnight only after some Germans from Lissa-Land joined us. I should like to add that at Schroda we were given water to drink out of petrol buckets. We got nothing to eat and were obliged to have bread etc. sent for at our own expense.

From Schroda we continued to Peisern ("Congress" Poland) via Miloslaw. The column of 250 men had to pass the night there in the far too small fir station. During the night we heard shots in the room, but no one was hurt. The next morning our watches and other valuables were taken from us. However, through the mediation of the auxiliary policeman Wendzonka, who was otherwise amenable, we got our property back again. From Peisern, the march continued further to Konin and then to Rlodawa. Here we passed the afternoon in a fowl yard, where we were also to pass the night. There we received water we only against payment. AS the Polish populace molested us by stone-throwing etc., we bribed the Polish sergeant who now had charge of our column to allow us to continue our march instead of spending the night at Klodawa. From Klodawa onwards we marched day and night as they apparently were endeavouring to get us out of the Kutno encirclement. On the Klodawa-Kutno road, in the ditch to the right and left of us, we counted 38 Germans who had been shot or had died from exhaustion all of whom must have belonged to the marching columns ahead of us.

On Saturday, Sept. 9, 1939 we finally reached the region of Lowitsch. This locality was at the time being bombarded by German planes and shells. Our escort, therefore, led us about 4 miles across the fields in a northerly direction. On the way, two more were shot--one because he did not leave the waggon quickly enough, the other because it was alleged he had wished to escape. I should remark here that there were two farm waggons in our column on which those were to ride who were most exhausted. The escort, nevertheless; tried to prevent this by means of blows from the rifle butt and shots We were all of us so exhausted and footsore that we could only have marched another day at the most. On the occasion of a short midday rest in a village the majority of the escort left us . . .

It was at this village that our release took place through German armoured cars. Our joy at our rescue was indescribable.

Source: WR II

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90. Pastor Rauhut, minister of the Gnesen German Catholic church, on those abducted from Gnesen

Investigation Dept. for Breaches of International Law with the Supreme Command
Gnesen, Sept. 21, 1939

of the German Forces

Present:

Hurtig, Judge Advocate.

Pitsch, Military Inspector of Justice.

Pastor August Rauhut of Gnesen appeared and declared on interrogation:

R e P e r s o n : My name is August Rauhut, born on Sept. 21, 1888 at Dambitsch, in the district of Lissa, minister of the German Catholic church in Gnesen, former headmaster of the German private grammar school. deputy chairman of the German Catholic Association in Poland, resident at la Poststrasse, Gnesen.

R e M a t t e r : With my party of expelled minority Germans, accompanied by two policemen. I was on the road from Wreschen to Stralkowo. On the way we saw Polish troops stationed at the edge of the wood, and as they saw us passing by the threatened to shoot us, particularly me, as minister. But, accompanied by the two policemen, we nevertheless reached Stralkowo. Just before Stralkowo the two policemen obtained three military lorries for the rest of the journey, for which we had to pay heavily. We were supposed to go to Kossow in the Province of Polesie (Pinsk district).

After wandering about for several days in the fields and woods between Stralkowo and Powitz, our party of 42 decided to send 3 men to Powitz; this was on Sept. 7, 1939. These 3 men were to request the authorities in Powitz to allow us either to stay in Powitz or to return to Gnesen. The men's names were:

- (1) Ernst Wiedemeyer of Gnesen, merchant,
- (2) Farmer Derwanz of Przybrodzin, District of Gnesen,
- (3) Myself, August Rauhut.

We reached Przybrodzin at eleven o'clock and received personal identification papers from the temporary authorities, and permission for us to settle in Przybrodzin. While these formalities were being completed Herr Wiedemeyer and I saw our third companion, Herr Derwanz, together with my former pupil, Lyk, being taken away by the military, apparently to be shot. We did not see Herr Derwanz again, but later heard that he was supposed to have been buried naked in the Protestant cemetery in Powitz. Derwanz was later found and recognised when persons known to me were opening and examining various graves.

At 2.30 a.m. Wiedemeyer and I, with our personal identification papers, and having the permission of the authorities, were returning to our party which was in the wood 2 miles away, in order to bring them into the town. Just before we reached them we were overtaken by a noisy band of armed youths, and were taken back by force and threats of death of all sorts, since they said: "You must go back, your identification papers are no longer valid, you will be shot." They wanted to carry out this threat of death several times on the way. We had to keep apart and were ordered not to speak; Wiedemeyer whispered to me: "If you get away with your life, give my love to my wife and children." When we reached the town, the public attitude to us became very threatening and we were frequently insulted and abused, particularly myself. At 4.30 a.m. we arrived at the commissariat, where the commissar, a Polish landed proprietor, made several grievous remarks on the shooting of Derwanz, which act he actually condemned. We sat for about two hours in the waiting room and were again asked for our identification papers, which were shortly after returned to us, whereupon we were taken away to be shot by 3 shabbily

uniformed Polish soldiers, amongst whom was a lame invalid, who was armed, and who showed his brutality to me particularly. Wiedemeyer remained behind. When I was in the corridor I was called back to the conference room, where there were a number of youths, amongst them also an elderly chairman of the so-called shooting commission. He accused me of being a gang leader in possession of a short wave wireless set. When I refuted all this, he said that religious work with short-wave wireless sets was a very bad stain on my character. I realised that my fate was sealed.

Then I remembered that my ecclesiastical superiors had given me a letter of recommendation to my Bishop in Polesie. I produced this and they were surprised. Meanwhile the local clergyman entered the conference room and said: "I have no authority over him, transfer him to Gnesen to the deacon, Zablocki, who was at the head of the civil council of Gnesen." I then had to leave the conference room and return to the waiting room. Wiedemeyer was no longer there, and I knew what had happened to him. I suspected at all events that he had been shot in the meantime, because the same fate was to be allotted to me. Shortly afterwards the local clergyman called for me and explained that he had assumed full responsibility for me, and that I must spend the night at the presbytery and would be handed over to my superiors in Gnesen on the following day (Friday Sept. 8, 1939), which actually took place. For my own safety as a priest I was accompanied by another priest who happened to be staying in Powitz, and the local chairman of the civil council. We reached Gnesen despite many reproaches and insults levelled at me on the way. The civil council decided, for my own safety, to put me in the "Hospital of the Grey Sisters," and I stayed there until 11.30 a.m. on Monday September 11, 1939, when the German army marched in and I was freed by a German captain.

I would point out that on the journey from Powitz to Gnesen, accusations were continually made that I had a short wave set in the stove or stoves in my home, and because of this I had an investigation made by the chairman of the Civil Committee as to the lack of foundation for these accusations.

Thereupon he said to me: "Let me tell you that Mr. Wiedemeyer is no longer alive." He asked me not to say anything. On Thursday, Sept. 14, 1939, the new graves in the cemetery in Powitz were opened by civilians, who had been sent by the town of Gnesen, and the bodies of Derwanz as well as of Wiedemeyer were found. Wiedemeyer's body was particularly mutilated and showed, in particular, bloody wounds on the throat.

Both men were murdered by the Polish military.

In addition to these two men, six more people from the neighbourhood of Gnesen were bestially murdered near their homes by armed civilians. Amongst them were Kropf, and his son-in-law Brettschneider. One of the victims had had his stomach cut open and his head crushed. In Gnesen these deeds were talked of with disgust, even amongst the Poles.

In my opinion these civilians were armed by the authorities. This took place during my absence from Gnesen.

Concerning the state of the dead, the grave-digger of the Protestant cemetery was able to give information, but I cannot remember his name at the moment. The expulsion order was handed to me on September 1, 1939, by the district administrator, and I left Gnesen on September 3, 1939.

Dictated, approved and signed.

August Rauhut

The witness took the oath

Concluded:

(signed) H u r t i g (signed) P i t s c h

Source: WR II

91. Even a deformed minority German was not spared

The witness Ewald T o n n , business man and inn-keeper of Rogasen in the district of Obornik, deposed the following on oath:

About 4½ miles from Gnesen our deformed comrade Puder stepped out of the marching column because he was completely exhausted. He was immediately beaten on the chest with rifle butts and was left behind. Since I wanted to look after him, I wound my way to the rear of the column and saw him lying on a waggon in the agonies of death. He died shortly afterwards.

Source: WR II

92. Driven forward with bleeding feet

On oath, the 70-year-old witness Emil L a n g e , farmer in Slonsk, deposed the following:

. . . The march (1) was very difficult for me, a man of seventy years; my feet were covered with blood, the nails had to be torn off my toes, and it was only with the

(1) The march referred to was from Ciechocinek via Nieschawa to Wloclawek.

help of my son and one of my neighbours that I was able to last out the march. We were urged to inhuman efforts, particularly by the knowledge that we would be murdered if we fell behind. On the way my son was struck heavily in the back by the rifle butt of a Polish soldier. The power of the blow was lessened by a bag which he was carrying on his back.

Source: WR II

93. 80-year-old minority German brutally beaten by Polish police

The witness, Szczepan S i e d l e c k i , grocer in Michelin, deposed the following on oath:

On the first Wednesday in September of this year, I saw about 150 minority Germans who, being marched off by Polish policemen, passed my shop window in the direction of Kutno. An old minority German of about 80 years of age could go no farther, and was struck with rifle butts by policemen, so that he broke down completely and was left lying in the street. Some civilians standing near by were told by two Polish policemen to finish him off, and I saw two men, strangers to me, go through the old man's pockets, after which they struck him with a stone and kicked him with their feet . . .

Source: Sd. Is Bromberg 814/39

94. Polish officer murderously shoots captured minority Germans

The witness, Kurt S e e h a g e l , barber in Rogasen, at the time of writing resident at Bukowice, deposed the following on oath (Seehagel served in the Polish infantry from 16.4.31 to 16.3.33):

On Sept. 1, 1939, I was arrested in Rogasen together with 20 to 25 other inhabitants and marched with about 700 minority Germans to internment in Warsaw, via Kutno, Lowitsch.

Between Kutno and Lowitsch our party made a halt in a public park. Our escorts, who were Polish reservists doing military police service, and some Polish soldiers, who were standing near by, commenced indiscriminately shooting at us, and some of us were not only wounded but killed. Before we marched into the public park there was a Polish officer standing at the entrance, who was in charge of the Polish troops in the neighbourhood. He asked our escort who we were. When they replied that we were Germans and had called Hitler to Poland--the escort's actual words were somewhat as follows: "These are the swine who called for Hitler"--the Polish officer drew his revolver, and shouting out that he would like to kill one of "them", fired at a German-born comrade who was marching in front of me. Shot right through the temple, he lay dead, and I had to step over his body, whilst the Polish officer behind me, again shot at us, but I could not tell whether he murdered another comrade, since it was forbidden to look round.

On the way the escort indiscriminately pulled my comrades out of the column and murdered them in one way or another, either by shooting or by beating them with rifle butts. In the night, as we were between Lowitsch and Warsaw, three of our escort drew me out of our party and kept me behind with them with the intention of murdering me. Whilst one held my arms, the other two struck me with the butts of their rifles, but I managed to pull myself free, and to escape. They fired after me, and shot me through the shoulder so that I fell down. I heard them shout out that I was finished, but I managed to run on and hide until I saw some German troops. After washing myself, changing into a clean shirt that they gave me, and having my wound bound by German first-aid men, I went with some other rescued comrades a short way back along the route along which our party had previously marched, and we saw a large number of the bodies of our comrades on the road. Most of them were disgustingly mutilated and their faces unrecognizable. In my opinion they were beaten to death by rifle butts.

Source: WR II

95. From Lissa to Lowitsch

Report of an actual personal experience by Dr. Schubert, farmer.

Dr. Albrecht Schubert, farmer in Grune Dear Lissa, deposed the following on oath:

On Sept. 2, 1939, I was arrested in my home without being given any reason, and was taken away with threats of death. In Griewen a sergeant of the 17th Polish Lancers, stationed in Lissa, robbed us of our personal belongings, and the guards--Polish regular soldiers--also stole some of the prisoners' money. We were all driven on foot from Griewen to Lowitsch, about 150 miles practically without food or shelter. Once, each prisoner received half a loaf of bread, and then only because I bribed the sergeant with 100 Zloty, and paid him 30 Zloty more each day, collected from the prisoners. We suffered terribly from hunger and thirst and those who took a swede from the fields were beaten with rifle butts so that they collapsed.

The German-born civilian prisoners were made up of people from 14 to 76 years of age, including women. No prisoner was equal to the strain of the march, which was carried through without food, mainly without shelter and in absolutely insufficient clothing. The people were arrested just as they were clothed at the time, most of them in their shirts and trousers, some in clogs, others with only one shoe on; they were not even given time to dress themselves properly. Most of those who became ill during the march and could go no further, were finished off by shooting or beating. I did not personally see the shooting or beating because it mostly happened at night, and because we were not allowed to look backwards, nevertheless I frequently heard the noise of heavy blows, cries, and shots, and those prisoners who were taken out of the column did not return to us. On our route I saw at least six

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dead--minority Germans--who had been beaten to death or shot by troops marching in advance of us.

In Schroda the prisoners from Lissa were unbelievably ill-treated, thrashed and beaten with rifle butts by their escort, men of the 17th Polish lancers. Master-tailor Schulz was pulled out of the column four consecutive times and so maltreated that he had many bad head wounds.

In Peisan where, as an exception, we were sheltered in a room, penned in without straw, Semenjuk, a teacher from Lissa, went mad through the maltreatment and harassment that he had suffered, and started screaming; this immediately caused the guard to start shooting into our room. Only the presence of mind of the prisoners avoided a massacre. Our escort let the mob into our lodging, and the prisoners were robbed of their possessions, watches, rings and money, and what was left over was stolen by an N.C.O. of the 17th Lancers, who came the next morning.

I, personally, suffered severe maltreatment through being beaten with rifle butts, and am only alive today because the soldier who shot at me, missed me; the bullet went right past my head. All this took place only because I tried to help an old man of 70 who had collapsed on to a waggon. I, and all of my fellow-prisoners who survived, are of the firm conviction that during the march numerous minority Germans were slain or shot, but because of the darkness of the night we could only see some of them. During the whole march we were most severely beaten with rifle butts and whips, not only by our escort, who belonged to the 17th Lancers, but also by nearly all of the retreating Polish troops that we met. Between Kolo and Klodawa, a Polish major of a mechanized unit,

with disgusting insults and blows of his whip, joined his men in the maltreatment. On the march from Slopa to Lowitsch (90 miles) there was no further rest, not even at night; we made only short halts necessitated by the road being blocked up.

The organist Wiener, of Griewen, collapsed after 15 miles, because his artificial leg broke and he could not carry on. I carried him, my comrade in captivity, for 10 miles since I did not want to leave him behind to be probably slain. Because I carried him I was badly beaten with rifle butts.

A man from Lissa, whose name I will find out later, had to march on past Lowitsch with a shot in his testicles; his scrotum was completely filled with blood, and he endured unspeakable pain.

Source: WR II

96. In cattle trucks, and on forced marches towards Lowitsch

Report of the experience of Pastor Rakette of Schokken. On October 9, 1939, the witness Paul Rakette deposed the following on oath:

Since January 1938, I have been minister to the parish of Sklokken.

On Sept. 1, 1939, I was arrested with about 30 parishioners and locked up in the police prison of Schokken. I was put in a cell, meant for one man, but for a night 10 other of my compatriots were kept there as well. On the next day we were taken in cars to Wongrowitz, where we were also locked up in the prison. Here we experienced the bombing by German aeroplanes of the railway station and other important buildings. At eight o'clock in the evening we were marched off to Elsenau, and at 11 p. m. entered the railway station, where we were put into railway carriages and taken to Gnesen. Whilst the train was still in the station we experienced the second German air raid there, and during the course of the day, a Sunday, there were several more bombing attacks. I had the impression that the train was deliberately left standing there; fortunately none of us were injured. After we had waited during the whole of the Sunday and the night from Sunday to Monday, penned up in the carriage in the station, we were transferred to cattle trucks. Together with 52 other parishioners and comrades from Wongrowitz, I was, put into a cattle truck. For several hours we were left in these cattle trucks practically without fresh air, and a man named Kiok, a war invalid and estate owner from a neighbouring parish, became delirious and began to rave. Early on Monday our goods train started off in the direction of Thorn, and during the journey, as well as in Thorn itself, we again experienced bombing attacks on the railway line and on the station at Thorn. On the way from Thorn to Wloclawek our train had to stop for several hours before the line was repaired, probably on account of hits by bombs. Because our truck was nailed up and it was difficult for us to breathe--at the commencement of every bombing attack our escort hid themselves in the fields or woods--I shouted out during a halt on the open track, and despite threats, with rifles at the ready, by a sergeant-major of the State police, succeeded in being allowed to leave the truck and get two buckets of water. In Thorn, and on the journey to Wloclawek, besides being disgustingly abused, we continually had bottles and other things thrown at us, also by Polish railwaymen. Maltreatment also took place on many occasions. Kiok, whom I mentioned before, was mentally deranged, and a Polish policeman struck him wildly with his rubber truncheon. A bottle exploded in our waggon, which considerably

demoralised the occupants. In Wloclavek we were taken out of the train. Apparently without reason, nevertheless in my opinion deliberately and wilfully, we were first of all made to march through the town, where we were stoned and struck by cudgels, etc. I, for example, received two blows in the face from the butt of an army revolver. One blow broke the bridge of my nose, as a doctor later ascertained. Finally we were led into a sugar mill, a collecting centre for all groups of internees. We remained there for two nights and a day, some of us in the yard and some in the rooms of the sugar mill. The number of internees had in the meantime grown to 7,000 men, women, and children. On Thursday, Sept. 7, 1939, the forced marches in the direction of Kutno and Lowitsch began, and for 26 hours, practically without a break, we, kept on to just past Kutno, where we rested for six hours in a meadow. On the march I personally saw how those of my countrymen who had become weak, were left lying exhausted by the wayside, and how at the order of a Polish sergeant they were shot like dogs. According to what I experienced and saw this happened in about 80 cases, until we were rescued by our troops. After a rest near Kutno we kept on for 16 hours in a practically unbroken march to Lowitsch. Now and then we met bodies of Polish troops, and as we passed by, they insulted us disgustingly. It was not seldom that I heard wild shooting behind me, and I am not wrong in assuming that this was done by Polish lawless soldiery who fired into groups following us. Shortly before reaching Lowitsch we came upon an advance guard of German troops, which took the Poles by surprise. Our Polish escort tried to drive us in a certain direction in order to get out of what was, for them, a danger zone. They were successful in doing this with about 800 internees. We others, however, lay still in the meadow where we had halted, and awaited further events. Then Polish troops shot into our groups, which were lying down, whereby another parishioner of Revier, named Franke, was fatally hit. After the German troops had won ground our hour of relief came at last. The German army at Lowitsch sent us in waggons to Lods, and from there we went in lorries to the nearest railway station at Kempen. We then went home by rail via Breslau and Schneidemühl. I, personally, went via Lissa, where I used to live.

I would not like to leave unmentioned that on these enforced marches, people in despair ran out of the marching column and were then shot down like driven hares. One case I remember particularly. One of these comrades had run out of the marching column, and was driven by shots from the guards into a hollow. At that moment some Polish soldiers swarmed down a rising, and as they reached him did not shoot him dead, but kicked him with their nailed boots. I could only see him get up once more, whereupon he was struck with rifle-butts until he sank down, dead. Even then they stabbed at him with bayonets. The brutality of the Polish soldiers and police was too bestial . . .

Source: WR II

97. Shot by Polish Infantry

"Secret Plans" surreptitiously drawn in notebook

The witness Willi Bombitzki, of Grätz, 10 Weinberg Strasse, deposed the following on oath:

. . . . Polish infantry then came by and asked us who we were, and on being told that we were minority Germans, shouted that we were spies. They then ran to the officer leading them, who came to us and ordered us to be stood with our face to the wall and said that we would all be shot. On this occasion the officer punched Hirt, a minority German, of Opalenitza, several times in the face, because he did not turn round quickly

enough. At the officer's instructions, a new escort was commanded to take us to Iwno, where a policeman appeared from the direction of Gnesen and told us that we were free and could go home. He advised us not to go back in one column but to break up into small groups, because we should then not so easily be molested by the mob. We broke up into smaller groups and went by side roads in the direction of Posen. After remaining in a ditch with two other minority Germans for about two hours, we were caught by an N.C.O. and two privates of the 57th Posen machine gun company and taken to the village of Iwno. On being arrested by the three Polish soldiers we had to lie on the ground with outstretched hands whilst the N.C.O. continually trod on our heads with his boots, saying: "Kiss Polish ground, you German swine." The three soldiers then led us through the village, where the N.C.O. ordered the civilians to beat us because we were spies. The civilians obeyed the order to its fullest extent. In Iwno itself further small groups of minority Germans with whom we had formerly been, came together again; they had also been caught by Polish infantry. In all we were now about 25 men. We were led across a meadow to a thicket, where we were ordered to kneel. The soldiers then took all our valuables away from us. On the German-born Oskar Rothe, of Nonkolewo, the soldiers found a German passport, and he was then immediately killed by a pistol shot of a Polish infantryman. We were then led back to a farmyard, where we again found about 20 minority Germans. In the farmyard the infantrymen reported to an officer that four of us had signalled with a shirt to German airmen. I did not see anything like this happen and think it quite out of the question. At the officer's command the minority Germans concerned were led behind a wall and there shot by infantrymen with their rifles. I could not see this myself, but I heard from the shots that they could not have come from pistols. Then an officer of a Polish tank division appeared and ordered the civilians present to see if they knew any of us. The civilians named one of us, and an N.C.O. asserted that this man had secret plans in his notebook. In this connection I must state that when we were in the meadow formerly mentioned, I had seen the N.C.O. himself, thinking he was unobserved, make a drawing in the man's notebook. In the farmyard the lieutenant himself killed this minority German by a shot in the neck from behind. Then the civilians called out Wilhelm Busch of Neutomischel. He was asked by the lieutenant if the accusation of the civilians that he had printed a German newspaper was true. Busch could not answer because he did not speak Polish, and had really not understood the question. The lieutenant immediately picked up a long rubber truncheon and struck Busch with great force in the face. He did this about eight times. To the lieutenant's question, which was repeated in German, Busch answered in the affirmative. The lieutenant declared that he had thus acted against the Polish state. He was put with his face to the wall, and then the lieutenant personally killed him. by shooting him three times in the back of the neck and the head. My name was then called out by the Grätz boy scouts. The lieutenant ordered the scouts to pick me out; but this did not take place because, at that moment, three more minority Germans were brought in by infantrymen. I owe my life to this interruption. A civilian stepped up to the lieutenant and declared that one of the minority Germans who had just been brought in had held secret meetings. Without any questioning whatever, this man, whom I did not know by name but who came from Iwno itself, or from that neighbourhood, was shot personally by the lieutenant with his pistol. The rest of us had to line up in a row, apparently because the lieutenant, on account of an order which he had just received, had no more time to occupy himself with us. We had to get, one at a time, into a lorry, and, whilst doing so, each one of us received from the lieutenant a heavy blow with his rubber truncheon. The lorry then took us to Gnesen

Source: WR II

98. Polish lieutenant as mass murderer

Report of the experience of Paul Wiesner, estate manager, of Wollstein. Posadowo, Oct. 4, 1939.

Investigation Department for breaches of International Law with the Supreme Command of the German Forces.

Present:

Hurtig, Judge - Advocate

Pitsch, Military Inspector of Justice

On being called upon, Paul Wiesner, an estate manager in charge of the estates in Posadowo, appeared and stated on interrogation and after explanation of the sacredness of the oath:

Re person: My name is Paul Wiesner, born on November 14, 1874, at Marsfelde, in the district of Neutomischel, estate manager, resident at 1 Bismarck Strasse, Wollstein, at the moment residing at Posadowo.

Re matter: On August 31, 1939, I was arrested by the police at the railway station at Opalenica, whilst on my journey to Wollstein. I presume that my arrest took place because I was frequently in Germany, particularly in Schwiebus, and it was believed that I was working for an intelligence organisation against Poland. After a thorough search of my person and examination of my bags, I was taken to the police station. First of all they explained that if nothing was found against me I should be discharged, and they even tried to stammer some words of excuse. The investigation produced nothing suspicious against me. In the meantime the police sergeant nevertheless telephoned to the police at Wollstein, and I overheard this conversation: In answer to the question of the Opalenica policeman as to whether they had anything against me, I heard from the earpiece of the telephone the voice of the police captain of Wollstein, who shouted, "Arrest him and lock him up." Thereupon I was locked up in a cell and soon afterwards they brought in Dr. Krause, a veterinary surgeon of Opalenica, whom I had visited for a few minutes from the railway station. In this cell I stayed two nights and one day, and, with Dr. Krause, was then taken to Buk under police escort. There I was led to a room in which about 100 minority Germans were already interned. After about four hours we were put into waggons, including two rack waggons, 12 men in each; escorted by two policemen and two soldiers with fixed bayonets, we were driven through the night to Posen, which we reached on

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Sunday, September 3, 1939, at about 6.30 a. m. We were led through the town, and the Polish inhabitants threw stones, bricks and dirt at us; their outburst of rage went so far that they jumped on to our waggon and struck us with cudgels until we bled. We were sheltered in an elementary school, where we stayed for two days and two nights, without food, and sleeping on the floor. On Monday, September 4, 1939, we marched from Posen through the towns of Schwersenz and Kostschyn. In the latter the mob again beat some comrades till they bled, and five of the women in our group were

stripped to their underclothes. The howling Bolshevik inhabitants of Kotschyn enriched themselves with these women's clothes. Our group had to go beyond the town, where we were to await further instructions. After about two hours a police sergeant from Gnesen came and, turning to me, since I spoke Polish best, explained that we were all released and should break up into troops of 5 to 10 men. I remained with the last group of about 20 men. After they had broken up over a front of about half a mile, some soldiers of a bicycle company who were stationed on the Iwno estate came and commenced to fire with their rifles and machine guns at the surrounding fields over which our group of 100 to 120 people had spread. At first we lay still, because we thought that we should not be hit on account of the high shooting. As, however, they aimed right into the middle of the turnip field in which we were lying, we sprang up and raised our hands. The soldiers now drove us together and led us, first of all 30 of us, to a brickfield. There we found Greisel, the superintendent of Neutomischel, lying with a broken foot. From the brickfield we were transported to the Iwno farmyard where we were ordered by a Polish officer to go into the ditch by the road, and to lie on the embankment, with our faces to the ground and our hands stretched out in front of us. After our carrying out these instructions, I expected fire would be opened on us by the Polish soldiers, since there were about 200 of them on the road with rifles in their hands. Whilst I was thinking about this I received from a Polish woman standing next to me a blow with a large stone on the left side of the head, so that I lost consciousness for a moment. When I recovered consciousness I found myself lying in a pool of blood. I could still see my comrades being plundered by the soldiers; money as well as watches were taken away from them. We were then ordered to stand up and were led, in twos, to a neighbouring wood, where we were all to be shot. Our escort consisted of about 40 soldiers, armed with rifles and led by a young Polish officer. On the way to the wood, which was about a mile away, it suddenly occurred to me that I had in my pocket-book some letters--although only copies--, one being an acknowledgement from the "*storosta*" of that time, for my work on the Posen district council, as well as from the district commissar who had himself identified this letter of acknowledgement in detail. I therefore took out my pocket book, extracted the two letters of recommendation, and put them in an envelope in order to give them to the Polish officer when the opportunity occurred. At that moment a Polish ensign who was marching next to me sprang at me and snatched away the envelope, since he apparently thought that I wanted to conceal something. To this I remarked that I had no objection since it had been my intention to give both papers to the Polish officer.

On the way till we reached the wood the ensign read the papers through, and, when we arrived there, handed them to the lieutenant. Both then went behind an alder bush and conferred together. After a short time I was called over and asked by the Polish officer how I had come by these references--was I a Pole; to save the situation, I answered in the affirmative. He then asked further if I understood what measures he now proposed taking with my comrades. From his whole behaviour, particularly on account of the spades which were lying ready, I concluded that we were to be shot. I therefore answered: "These men are just as innocent as I, and if they are to be shot, then please shoot me too." This seemed to make him waver, and, particularly, because I had refused his accusation that we were rebels, I believed I had gradually turned the situation in our favour. At this moment, however, the ensign returned from a search of our comrades who had to submit to this, kneeling down. He brought with him four membership cards of the German Youth Movement, which he had found on four comrades, and we were thereupon led back to the farmyard. The four comrades on whom the membership cards had been found were led at the rear of our group. Just before reaching the farmyard they were stood with their faces to the wall of the park, and all four men were shot down by one salvo, at three or four paces, by about twenty soldiers. We were then led on to the farmyard. On arriving there, a commander of the bicycle corps appeared on a motor cycle, with a lieutenant wearing the regiment

number "58." This regiment was stationed in Posen and billeted in the barracks of the former 6th Grenadier Regiment.

Just previously, the young lieutenant had sent me to the field kitchen, which was in the yard, and had my other comrades led over to the wall of the yard. When the First-lieutenant arrived he said to his lieutenant in an -arrogant tone, so loud that I could hear it: "Well, how many more of the Hitler swine have you finished off?" The lieutenant replied: "Four are already lying behind the wall, and the others are at your disposal." Pointing to me, he explained further that I was to be excluded, and showed him my two letters of recommendation. Then the First-lieutenant had me called to him and asked me what rank I had held in the World War. When I answered truthfully that I had been an acting sergeant, he said it was in order and I was stood aside. Then he turned to the 300 to 400 Polish soldiers who were standing in confusion in the yard, and called out in an arrogant manner: "Well, do you want to see any more of this German Hitler pork?" Thereupon all the soldiers answered in chorus: "Yes, shoot all the swine!" Then the First-lieutenant called two soldiers over to him and had the editor Busch, of Neutomischel, brought out. In answer to the question as to what his profession was, he showed his identification paper without answering, since he did not understand Polish. The First-lieutenant, who was armed with hand grenades, a Browning and a horse whip, shouted: "What, you German swine, you are an editor and have incited the people, and in 20 years have not even learnt Polish!" And he hit Busch, with all his strength, about 15 times on the head, so that the blood streamed from his eyes, mouth, nose and ears. He then had two soldiers put him with his face against the yard wall, drew his Browning, and fired at him. I saw Busch, shot in the back of the head, plunge to the ground. Even then he again shot him twice in the head to finish him off. Arrogantly he turned again to his soldiers . and shouted: "Do you want any more of this Hitler pork?" In one voice they shouted: "Put them all against the wall!" The First-lieutenant then drew two more comrades out of the group at random and personally shot them in the same way. He let a farm driver select a fourth man, this was the unhappy settler Pohlmann, from Skalowo, near Kostschin, whom he also shot personally.

After this murdering of four German comrades, he made a speech to the soldiers, to the effect that these four would be enough. that they were not Bolsheviks but Polish soldiers, and should honour their chief war-lord, [Marshall Rydz-Smigly](#), for whom he asked for three cheers, which the soldiers gave in a bawling voice, finishing up with the Polish national anthem.

At the officer's order, our other comrades, who had up to now been standing by and looking on,. put the four dead into a grave which had already been dug, and shovelled them over. After this we, were put on to a lorry. Whilst getting in, the lieutenant dealt each of us a heavy blow with his horse whip. After driving to Gnesen we were given up to the Polish police. After staying for two days in a school we marched on foot, with a police escort, in the direction of Warsaw. Our destination was supposed to be a place between Warsaw and Brest-Litowsk. We did 25 to 30 miles daily and in 10 days covered about 250 miles without any food from the Polish organisation. That which we obtained to eat we procured ourselves. We spent the nights partly in barns and partly in the open, even when it was raining, and fed mainly on swedes. Our escort consisted of two active policemen and six Polish reservists who had been drafted as auxiliary police. Suffering insults and maltreatment, we at last reached Ilow on September 16, and 17, 1939. This town lies north-east of Kutno--Warsaw. On September 17, 1939, after we had lain a whole day in a barn during a severe air raid, our escort left us. The aeroplanes not only dropped bombs but also fired with machine guns. From 10 p. m. on September 17, 1939, we were without any escort. On September 18, 1939, after I had

entreated my comrades to remain lying in the barn during the night, we broke out. From the artillery fire in the direction of Ilow, which had set in the previous evening, I concluded that the German troops were now not far away. I was not deceived in my supposition for, on September 18, 1939, after we had marched westwards in single file for about 20 minutes, we met the first German soldiers of an artillery regiment. Our martyrdom was at an end.

As further witnesses I name:

Jesske, an estate owner, of Paczkowo near Kostschin, further, his son and his son-in-law, who, in a bad state, were brought to the Iwno farmyard when we were already there.

With him in Jesske's farmyard there was also a military Polish unit, and he will be able to tell much of interest about their conduct.

Dictated, approved and signed

(signed) Paul Wiesner

The witness took the following oath:

I swear by Almighty God that I have spoken the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. so help me God.

Concluded:

(signed) Hurtig (signed) Pitsch

Source: WR II

99. German teacher struck down with a sledge-hammer

Supreme Command of the Forces. Lodz, October 23, 1939

Investigation Dept. for Breaches of International Law, with the Supreme Command of the Forces.

Present: Judge Advocate Zirner, in charge of the investigation.

Inspector of Justice with the Landwehr, Grope, as recording officer.

In the case at Lodz, investigated in accordance with International Law the undermentioned witness appeared on summons.

He was told the object of the investigation and instructed as to the sacredness of the oath, and the criminal penalty for breaking it.

Then he was examined

Re person: Petrak, Wilhelm Karl, 30 years old, Protestant, minority German. married, one child, master dyer, resident at flat No. 22, 17 Katno Strasse, Lodz, platoon commander in the former Polish army.

Re matter: On Sunday, September 3, 1939, I was called to the ranks at Lodz. As Lodz was evacuated by the military in the night of the 5th to the 6th, I, with my unit of troops of the remaining detachment of the 4th Heavy Artillery Regiment. marched out of Lodz in a northerly direction. On Wednesday the 6th, just before 1 p. m., we reached the Wood north of Wola Bledowa west of Glowno.

Although we were regular soldiers we were not uniformed, and outwardly could not be distinguished from civilians. As we were camped on the edge of the wood, some civilians brought in two minority Germans to us, who were supposed to be teachers. The civilians maintained that they were spies and that the blond one of the two teachers had had with him a map with drawings on it.

While we were still encamped, a lieutenant of the reserve carried out an examination. The blond one of the two knelt on a truck. His hands were bound behind his back with a chain, which was also knotted round his throat. I watched the examination from a distance of, at most, 50 yards, although I could not understand the individual words. Two soldiers, who were standing on the lorry behind the two teachers, then struck them with rifle butts and a sledge-hammer, apparently at the instructions of the examining officer. They both cried loudly with pain. When we then moved on, both teachers remained on the truck. The blond teacher had to remain kneeling the whole time; he was not in a state to do so and leaned against the side of the truck, which was about a foot high. He had broken down completely and he hung his head in front of him. The other teacher, who had black hair, lay bound on the truck. During a halt at about 5 p. m. I had a close look at both of them at a distance of 2 to 3 yards. Although the two of them were already beaten up, the two soldiers were still hitting them. Both teachers were terribly mutilated. The blond teacher's head was completely covered with blood, the nose completely swollen and pressed to one side, so that I assumed that the bridge was broken. The left side of his chin was covered with blood and the skin was split open; the lower jaw bone was apparently broken. The left side of his chest was smeared all over with blood. He was practically unconscious, and when the soldier hit him with a sledge-hammer he only moaned. The other teacher was also completely beaten up. After this I did not see the teachers again. Soldiers of my platoon later told me that the two were to have been shot. Since, however, they could neither walk nor stand, they were dragged to the edge of a wood and were there bayoneted. They were supposed to have been hurriedly buried by civilians, and their grave is on the road beyond Bromberg.

The teachers were definitely not spies. They had apparently taken flight. The soldiers said that they had admitted everything, but they definitely only did this because they were so terribly beaten, for at first they had said quite frankly that they were German teachers. The lieutenant who had conducted the examination had no authority to do this, he should have had the two teachers taken to the regimental command, which was, at the most, about three quarters of a mile away.

I remember still another case. At the end of September, I believe it was the 23rd, we found the bodies of six German soldiers on a field path between Chelm and Rejowiec. They were vilely mutilated. The mouth of each soldier was crammed full of tobacco so that this teeth were deranged; the tobacco had apparently been pressed in with a piece of wood so that we had difficulty in getting it out. Rifle bullets, with the cases, had been

stuffed into each nostril. The bodies had been completely plundered, and I could find no mark of identification. We then buried the bodies.

I assume that the soldiers, who had apparently been wounded, were murdered by the civilians. I cannot think that a Polish soldier could have committed such atrocities.

Read, approved and signed

(signed) W. K. Petrak

The witness took the oath.

(signed) Zirner

(signed) Grope

Source: WR IV

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100. Polish officer allowed minority Germans to be shot

The witness Gerd von Delhaes-Günther, of Kreuzfelde; in the District of Schrimm, deposed on oath as follows:

My name is Gerd von Delhaes-Günther, born on February 28, 1907, at Bromberg. I am a farmer in Kreuzfelde, in the district of Schrimm, am married and have two children. I was a Polish subject, of German race, and by religion Protestant.

On Monday, September 4, 1939, a group of 20 minority Germans from the neighbourhood of Schmiegel and Czempin, were driven over the Warthe bridge to Schrimm, and were put into the prison, where the military left them. The acting mayor set them free, whereupon the Germans, in small groups, wanted to go back over the Warthe bridge. Thirteen of them were again arrested by the last Polish blasting squad, led by lieutenant Bejnerowicz, and, presumably, by the N.C.O. Krol and lieutenant Szakowski, of the pioneers (Regiment unknown). Bejnerowicz demanded of the acting mayor Dambrowski the arrest of the remaining Germans. Dambrowski said that he refused this, since he maintained that they were innocent. As far as I know, the files to which I have had access also came from him. Without even knowing their names, Bejnerowicz then had the Germans shot. As far as I have heard, Bejnerowicz let the Polish mob manhandle the Germans, as could be seen when the bodies were later found. I did not see the bodies myself, but I was told that they were mutilated; none of the 13 were found, and they all belonged to Czempin. The names are:

1. Hermann Raabe, Piechanris

2. Herbert Raabe, Piechanris

3. The elder Steinke, Peterkowalz
4. Steinke, son of above, Peterkowalz
5. Paul Steinke, Peterkowalz
6. Manthei, Piechanris
7. Wilhelm Nier, Peterkowalz
8. Kint, Peterkowalz
9. Adam, Peterkowalz

As to the condition of the bodies, information can be given by district mayor Hartmann, of Schwersenz.

Source: WR II

101. Polish women like furies--with whips and pistols

Report of the experience of Richard Glaesemann, farmer and cattle merchant, of Schwersenz.

Present: Posen, November 18, 1939

Junior Judge Bömmels, as Judge.

Court Official Mische, as recording official at the office.

In the prosecution against Luczak for illegal detention, Richard Glaesemann, farmer, appeared on summons and stated:

Re person: My name is Richard Glaesemann, 51 years old, a farmer and cattle merchant in Schwersenz, s. V.

Re matter: At about 8.30 a. m. on September 4, 1939, there appeared before my house in Schwersenz a Polish N.C.O., accompanied by Valentin Luczak, a mechanic of Schwersenz, whom I knew. I saw Luczak pointing out my house, and visibly making statements about me to the N.C.O., who demanded a horse from me, saying at the same time that I was suspected of spying, and that he must arrest me. As I was standing before the house, to be led away, I saw Luczak and the carpenter Walczak, of Schwersenz, remonstrating with the N.C.O., and pointing at me. The N.C.O. then led me off, just as I was, I was not allowed to take anything with me. The N.C.O. took me to Liefke's timber yard in Schwersenz, and led me to a Polish officer who covered me with a loaded revolver, whilst the N.C.O. emptied my pockets. The officer said to me: "As a matter of fact we should not concern ourselves much about you, but should shoot you at once!" But I was not told why I was arrested, and was forbidden to ask any questions. The officer did not even give me permission to receive a drop of water, although it was very hot.

My horse, which had been at the same time led away from my yard, was to be used to draw a load of oats. The officer said to the N.C.O.: "Let him ride, and if you meet a group of internees on the way, throw him off."

Just before reaching Osthausen, we met a column of arrested minority Germans who were taking a rest at the roadside. The N.C.O. handed me over to the sergeant of the escort of this column, and gave him the things which had been taken off me. In the column I met Paul Wiesner, an estate manager, from Wollstein, whom I knew, and who told me of the column's experiences up to that moment. The column, which had been under way since August 31, 1939, consisted of 121 minority Germans from Wollstein and Neutomischel, including four women. Wiesner also told me that they were taken in carts to Posen, and on the way had been maltreated and insulted by Polish civilians. In the district of Jerzyc they were put in a hall where it was disclosed that they would all be shot.

The sergeant then led the column round Kotschin. Wiesner told me that it was lucky for us that we were taking the route along the railway, and not through the town, because he had heard that in Kotschin groups of minority Germans had already been badly maltreated. But after we had passed Kotschin, before we reached the main road, and were near the estate of Stromniany, about 100 people, men and women, came running after us. The women broke into the column and tore off the cloaks, stockings and shoes from the four women who were with us. At the same time they beat them, and it was horrible to see. We did not dare to interfere; otherwise we should have been beaten to death. We were also held back by the escort

For several days the women had to walk barefoot; two of them, however, were able to buy themselves shoes and stockings in Witkowo, but, until September 17, 1939, the other two marched barefoot with the column. One of these women was nearly 70 years old. She had such injuries under her toes, exposing the raw flesh, that she had to be left behind about three days before our release in the village of Zechlin, between Kutno and Lowitsch. Whether the woman got home I do not know. She told me that she had been arrested from the sick-room of her husband who had been confined to bed for the last few years.

After the people of Kotschin had given up maltreating us, we came to the forked roads, where the streets from Wreschen and Gnesen diverge. There we had to wait while the leader of the escort drove to Gnesen to obtain further instructions. After about 2 hours, another sergeant came from Gnesen, and said that from now on we were free, and should spread out over the field in small groups, in order not to be held up again. He also gave us back our things.

We divided up into individual groups. With me was the accountant Hintz, of the Savings Bank of Neutomischel. We went into a small wood on the south of the road, and wanted first to wait until the large number of marching columns had decreased. We may have, sat for about two hours on the border of the wood, when we were seen by a machine-gun company and surrounded. During the rest we had torn up the entries, in the German language, in our business note-books, so that these would cause us no further difficulties if we were again arrested. The soldiers took each of these bits of paper with them and wanted to shoot us on the spot, because they took us for spies. But I explained to them in Polish that we had already been arrested, and then let free again. The officer of the company then had us led away to the Iwno farm to have the matter investigated.

Before reaching the farm we met two waggons. The two farm hands sprang off and beat the two of us terribly on the head with the butt end of their whips. We put up our hands to protect ourselves, and on my right hand I caught such a blow that it was swollen for weeks, and to this day I cannot move my index finger. The two soldiers who were supposed to guard us did not restrain the farm-hands, but laughed at us scornfully, and did not lead us off to the farm until the servants were tired of hitting us.

In the farm-yard there were about 50 minority Germans from our column, including four women and my acquaintance Wiesner. Most of them were splashed with blood. In Wiesner's head there was a hole as big as a two-shilling piece, from a stone thrown at him. He told us that his group had struggled through north of the village of Glinka. Near this village they were shot at by a machine-gun unit from a range of about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile, so that they had sought cover in a turnip field for about an hour, until the soldiers advanced and captured them anew. During this shooting, so Wiesner told me, a clergyman was shot. I recently saw the announcement of his death in the newspaper, but I have forgotten his name. According to Wiesner, this group, whilst on the Iwno farm, was also terribly maltreated being pelted with stones and beaten with clubs, without any intervention on the part of the escort. This was the reason for the terrible head injuries of some of them.

After confirming to the officer that we had belonged to his group, our pockets were again searched. Thereby a soldier took my gold watch and chain, and various small things.

Whilst the search was still going on, an officer had four people of the group summarily shot. The soldiers said that these people had given signals to German airmen, who had then dropped bombs. I, personally, had seen nothing of airmen. One of those who were shot wore the badge of the Young German Party.

During the interrogation which followed, the same officer asked me if I also belonged to the Young German Party, and whether I spoke Polish. In my opinion, the fact that I, as a business man, can speak good Polish, saved my life. During this interrogation the officer had two men shot; they both belonged to the Young German Party, and one of them wore their badge.

The officer wanted to release me, as well as Hinz, who also spoke Polish. Another officer, however, drove up on a motor cycle, and, when he saw the group of minority Germans, he said with a horrible scornful laugh: "You have enough bandits there!"

He sprang into the column, and asked each one individually whether he could speak Polish. Those who could not answer in Polish were then terribly beaten with a whip, the thongs of which were threaded with wire. Particularly a 72-year-old editor from Neutomischel was terribly beaten; he was hit so often in the face that it was completely covered, one might say black, with blood. From these blows the man should, in my opinion, have died. The officer then turned him round, kicked him aside, and then shot him down with his revolver.

He then had us lined up in two rows against the wooden fence, opposite the soldiers with rifles. He asked the soldiers if he had done well, and they shouted: "Yes, sir, well done!"

Then a farm-hand came and told the officer that a certain man named Wartermann, from Kostschin (a group of minority Germans from there had been brought to the farm),

had continually held secret meetings in his house. Wartermann, a man of about 60, was called out. He denied that he had held such meetings. But the officer said that it was proved by the statements of the farm-hand, and that such a fellow as he (Wartermann) had earned no more than a bullet. After he had led him a few paces aside, he shot him with his revolver.

Then he called out to the people in the yard: "You civilians, would you like one of these internees here? Come over and pick one out, and he will be shot!" None of the people came forward. He also called out to the wife of the estate manager, as she was going by: "If you see one here who has done anything against you, or whom you want to have shot, pick him out and I will have him shot for you." The woman replied that he had done well to shoot the band, they should really all be shot. The officer then said that he would do us the 'favour' of giving us a motor car ride to Gnesen. He had a farm lorry driven up, the tailboard was let down, and the officer demanded that we should get in with one jump. Thereby he struck each of us on the head with his horse whip. As I was getting in I held up my left hand, which was not wounded, and received such a blow that the little finger is still bruised and the nail black.

.....

During the whole of the journey to Gnesen, which took two hours, we had to remain kneeling in the lorry and bend our heads. For all those who were injured it was terribly painful, but if anyone raised his head, the escort dealt out blows with rifle butts. When the lorry stopped on the way in a village, the escort did not restrain the Polish population from insulting us and hitting us with sticks.

In Gnesen we were accommodated in a school, not in the empty class-rooms, but in the corridor, on forms on which we slept a little because we were shockingly tired.

On this day we received just as little food as on the following day, on which we were brought to Witkowo, again being continually spat upon, beaten with clubs and stoned, without any intervention on the part of the escort. The soldiers had only scornful laughter for us. Our request for permission to buy something with the money we had been allowed to keep was refused, on the way as well as in Witkowo, which we reached at about 3.40 p. m. There we had to stand for 1½ hours in the market place before we were put in the synagogue. Here also no one troubled himself, either about our food or our wounds.

During the following days we were then marched on foot through Slupca, Konin, Kolo and Kutno, to a place near Lowitsch. We were given no food at all, and lived solely on carrots and swedes which we fetched from the fields. We did not even receive enough water. The insulting shouts and the maltreatment by the inhabitants did not cease even to the last day; the fugitives from the evacuated areas were particularly spiteful.

On September 16, we arrived at a German settlement, the name of which I have forgotten. Here also the men had been arrested and taken off. The inhabitants spoke only German. Here, for the first time, we received warm food from the people. On September 17, the Polish troops, who were close by, were heavily fired on, and were bombed by aeroplanes. The Polish military retreated, and our escort suddenly disappeared. Until the morning we stayed in the barn, where we were sheltered, and then set off in the direction of the German lines.

At 10 a. m. on September 18, we met the first German soldiers. Most of us were so exhausted that we could hardly go any further.

Of the fate of the people from Wollstein, and Neutomischel, who had not come up

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to the Iwno farm-yard, I only heard from another group which had tried to struggle through from Kostschin in a north westerly direction.

About the middle of September the bodies of nine murdered of this German group were found between Jankowo and Karlskrone; later on the bodies of three more were found.

I can confirm these statements on oath.

Read, approved and signed

(signed) Richard Glaesemann

The witness then formally took the oath.

(signed) Bömmels

(signed) Mieke

Source: Sd. Is. Posen 55/39

102. The murders in Klodawa

Report of the experiences of Otto Kaliske, master-baker of Rakwitz.

Kaliske, master-baker, on Oct. 4, 1939, deposed on oath as follows:

On Sept. 1, 1939, at about 9.30 a. m., I was arrested and taken to the police-station by about 20 armed men belonging to the "Narodowce" (National Party) and the "strzelce" (semi-military riflemen). I was told I was to be interned and was at first locked in a prison cell. Later on, 13 other men were put into my cell; in the end, the prison was so full that we had to be led into the prison yard. From Rakwitz we were about 40 men and 2 women; among us there was an invalid With both legs missing and a second with only one leg, as well as a 15-year-old girl and an 18-monthold child. About 40 others from the German village of Tarnowo joined us so that altogether our group consisted of about 80 persons. At about 3 p. m. we were transported away on rack-waggon in the direction of Posen. Some of the men were barefooted and jacketless just as they had been found in the field. An escort of 5 men was detailed to accompany us. The first halt was made in the market place at Grätz, where we were abused and ill-treated. During one of the next halts, at Stenschewo, we were severely beaten with cudgels. When we stopped again on the outskirts of the village, the ill-treatment we were subjected to was particularly bad. Herr Neumann of Rakwitz who sat on the waggon next to me received such a violent blow on the head with a waggon stanchion that he died 10 minutes later. We were nearly all bleeding freely.

At Fabianowo, just outside Posen, our leader called a halt at a field outpost, at about 11 p. m., the man in charge being told that we were rebels. After receiving further ill-treatment during the halt, the Polish soldiers fired blindly at our six waggons, as we were starting off, and Druse of Tarnowo sustained a bullet wound in the abdomen; he screamed in agony for about half an hour and then died. Otto Werner was also wounded in the abdomen which caused his death the following day. Otto Werner's son received 2 bullets in the leg; Eppler, a teacher, one in the thigh and genitals; Fischer, a farmer, one that went right through the hip. Hoffmann, of Rakwitz, got a bayonet thrust in the thigh. At Posen we were conveyed to the barracks of the old 6th Grenadier Regiment. Later, we continued with the dead bodies and the injured on the waggons through the main streets of Posen until at last we stopped in the suburb of Glowno where we were led into a hall. Here the wounded were bandaged by a nurse and then conveyed to a Posen hospital. The bodies of the two dead men were left behind at Glowno on the waggon in the street. After the Posen internees had joined us, among whom were several leading personages of Posen, we were all marched off in a group of 150 to 200 men in the direction of Schwersenz. Every time we came to, or marched through, a village of any size, we again suffered maltreatment at the hands of the inhabitants, whereby some of us were wounded on each occasion and had to drag ourselves along with difficulty. I believe it was at Babiak that we had to hand over all our money, our watches and other valuables to the Polish troops, and we were then escorted to a farm outworks near Klodawa. When we were starting off from there, two women and three men were unable to continue, and remained lying; among them were Herr von Treskow, aged 65 and a Fraulein Bochnik. Two young men remained behind with them to protect them. We had not gone very far when we heard firing behind us. After our release we were informed that all seven of them had been shot.

In a village outside Babiak, the Schmolke family consisting of the father, a one-legged invalid, his wife, their 15-year-old daughter and their 18-months-old child as well as another one-legged invalid named Jentsch had to be left behind. From the latter we heard also that they had been shot there. Their bodies are still being looked for, and our pastor Schulz has gone there today with some detectives to help in the search.

From Kotschin on, we proceeded on our march in an altogether haphazard fashion, and we noticed that we were getting nearer and nearer to the front or rather that the front was coming nearer and nearer to us. On Sept. 17, 1939, at Zechlin we were set free by German infantry and brought via Kutno and Lodsch to Sieradz from where we were sent back home by rail.

Read, approved and signed

(signed) Otto Kaliske

Source: WR II

103. Held up to the ridicule of the mob

Report made by Ulrich Schiefelbein, of Rakwitz, concerning the fatal march, to Kutno

On Sept. 1, 1939, at Rakwitz, nearly all the Germans were fetched out of their houses by heavily armed Polish hooligans, for internment. The Transport proceeded in the afternoon of the same day, and we first reached the city of Gratz, where we were received by the Polish mob with a volley of stones after which knives came into play. On reaching the market, we were subjected to storms of abuse and were beaten with beer-bottles and other objects. We were delivered over to the mob who spat in our faces, without receiving any protection whatever from our escort. After the mob had vented their fury on us, we proceeded on our way to Ptaszkowo where we met with the same ill-treatment as at Gratz. They could have taken us through the towns and villages direct to Posen without a halt, but they did not do so. They purposely made us stop at every fair-sized place in order to surrender us to the mercy of the expectant and furious mob. Our way then led to Steszew where the first deaths occurred. Konrad Neumann, minority German of Rakwitz, was beaten with a stave until he showed no further signs of life. Gustav Hoffmann, a minority German of Rakwitz, received deep cuts and stabs in the leg. The other Germans were so badly hurt with stones and blows that with few exceptions they all needed first-aid treatment, when they got to Posen.

The march of terror continued. We got within a short distance of Posen, and in the night were subjected to fire from a Polish military patrol. Our escort had already called their attention to us. After those of us on the first waggon had been dreadfully maltreated by blows with rifle butts and had begun to groan and cry, pleading that an end be made to this maltreatment,, as one of us had already been killed at Steszow, the commander of the patrol asked where he was. He was told that he was on the last waggon. He and a few soldiers then went to the last waggon, had a look at the dead man and then said: "What, you have only one dead and such an overfed pig at that!" The Polish soldiers then received the order from their commander to fire at us. The results were: One dead, named Gustav Druse, of Tarnow, and four injured These are: Otto Werner, who later died of his wounds, his son, Epler, a teacher, and a certain Kernchen, all of Tarnow. Friedrich Moers, a German, had 3 ribs broken from blows with rifle butts. The same night, at 4 o'clock in the morning, we landed in a barracks yard in Posen. There we were driven all round the town on show by two grammar school pupils armed with carbines, in order to have us further subjected to the usual beatings and abuse. We pulled up at a hall in the northern part of the town into which we were driven by two ruffians under a rain of blows and kicks. There, for the first time, we were allowed to sit on chairs, our hurts were attended to by a pitying nurse and we were allowed to do some shopping in the town under the protection of the police. In the afternoon we were joined by the Posen internees among whom were some notable persons such as doctors, solicitors and directors. At about 4 o'clock in the afternoon, we were led to sports grounds where we were obliged to sing the Polish National Anthem and suffer the ridicule of the young people of the town, after which we had to do military drill which did not stop until we were unable for sheer exhaustion to continue. In the evening of that day, we were taken, of course, on foot (as was always the case from then on) 6 miles further to Schwersenz

After a wearying day's march we arrived towards evening at a place beyond Konin. We did not enter the town itself because at the time of our arrival the place was being subjected to heavy bombing. When this was over we begged our escort to bring us some food from the town; the money for this purpose was accepted but we never saw the food, money or the escort again. From then on nobody bothered at all about providing us with food: We were left to starve and it depended only upon the kindness of passers-by as to whether they would sell us anything. From that time on, we always slept out in

the open and this naturally resulted in several of our fellow sufferers being taken ill . . .
...

We were later informed by one of our own people who escaped from the transport that from time to time about five men were picked out who were obliged to dig their own graves in a field, with their own hands, and were then shot. Those who had become weak were simply kicked aside and then shot. We found many of these lying in the highway ditch. I should like to take this opportunity of adding something I had forgotten. When, at Steszow, the wounded minority German Otto Werner, of Tarnow, begged for water, one of the escort, Maraszek, a milker of Rakwitz, replied: "Give him hogwash to drink!" Herr von Treskow; of Owinsk, when he asked permission to relieve himself, was seized by the beard, dragged out of the ranks and kicked into the ditch. This gentleman is over 70 years old; nobody worried any further about him. In the meantime we had arrived within a short distance of Kutno and were informed by fugitives that the front was situated near Kutno, that we were bottled up and that the region behind us had been evacuated by the Polish military. We therefore decided to march back and, suffering terrible privations, finally arrived at a farm where we spent 3 days digging up potatoes in exchange for food which consisted of boiled potatoes in milk. After these 3 days had passed, we wandered back again to Slesic, where we found ourselves under the protection of the German military who transported us together with the other German fugitives to Wreschen, where we of German descent were separated from the others and sent to our native land, which we reached in the evening of Sept. 18, 1939.

The report was drawn up by the German internee, Ulrich Schiefelbein of Rakwitz, conscientiously and to the best of his knowledge. The proof of the veracity of his statements is corroborated by the following whose signatures appear below.

(signed) Karl Gellert, Kurt Gutsche, Schiefelbein, Michael Lisznak, Edgar Arlt, Hans Gutsche

Source: WR (Ld. Schtz. Reg. 3/XI)

104. Murder of abducted persons on the march to Tulischkow/Tuow

Shot down in pairs. Of 181 abducted persons only 5 returned!

The Special Court Posen, November 18, 1939

Present:

Junior Judge Bömmels, as Judge,

Court Official Mische, also Records Officer of the Office.

In the investigation into the abduction of Walter Kabsch, a minority German of Parsko, the overseer Walter Kabsch appeared and declared:

Re person: I am Walter Kabsch, aged 27, overseer in Parsko near Woinitz.

Re matter: I am overseer in the employ of Baron von Gersdorff, of Parsko. On September 1, 1939, Matuczak, the gardener on the estate, came to me and announced that I was

arrested. I wanted to appeal to my employer. He, however, was already standing together with the administrator Golinski and the wheelwright Laubsch on the yard, and I saw that they too had already been arrested. I wanted to take flight, but Herr von Gersdorff told me that he was coming and that we were going together to a camp. I therefore remained and did not think any more of how. Matuczak had presumed to arrest us. He drove us to the police-station at Schmiegel. There he was asked why he had brought us, but I did not hear whether he gave an answer, and, if so, what answer he gave. The police transported us to Schacz and handed us over to the military. We found a large group of minority Germans already assembled there. Among them was also my brother Karl, from Woinitz, and my other brother Willi, from Alt-Boyen. When at 10 p. m. we were marched off in the direction of Kosten, we numbered about four hundred. From midnight until 3 a. m. we were housed in the gaol and were then led on to Schrimm, whence we proceeded to Schroda. Here the civilian population was engaged in digging trenches. As we were led past, the people flung themselves at our column and attacked us with spades. In this way a large number received wounds and bled very badly. I saw one man, whose nose and upper lip were completely severed. The escort did not allow the wounded to be attended to, but forced them to continue the march. We received just as little food on the first day as on the subsequent days. We had to share what some had brought with them, and eventually fed on swedes, which we gathered in the fields.

On the evening of this day we arrived at Paiser. Here we were accommodated in a hall and in groups of six were tied together by the wrists with thin cords. These were drawn together as tight as possible, with the result that our hands became blue and swollen from the stoppage of the flow of blood. People cried out in agony. Thus we were left bound all night. The next day, still bound, we were forced to march to Tulischkow, which the elder ones in the column said was about 45 miles distant. While marching I had succeeded in loosening my bonds a little. The others however were still bound so tightly that they were crying out in pain the whole way. In the villages the population reviled us and pelted us with sticks and stones, so that once more many of our number were injured. Many marched on with their faces covered with blood.

After passing Tulischkow, we were led on to a meadow. Herr von Gersdorff, who was 65 years of age and hardly capable of walking any further, stumbled as he was looking up at a German aeroplane. A soldier dealt him a blow with the butt of a rifle and he almost fell down. He regained his balance and shouted up to the aeroplane: "Heil Hitler!", whereupon the soldier struck him in the chest with the [p. 175] mouth of the rifle barrel, so that he fell into a ditch. The soldier then pulled the trigger. Nobody paid any heed to the dead man. We were not allowed to go near him.

On the meadow we were given very dirty water from the duckpond to drink, and allowed to rest for ten minutes. We then continued our march in the direction of Turek. During the night our column was divided at a well. The older men, who had been marching in front, had drunk first and were driven on. Our section, when we were numbered, consisted of 181, mostly young men.

We did not meet the first group again. The soldiers told us, as we were marching onwards, that we were all to be shot in Turek. As I can speak Polish, well, I asked the soldiers why we were to be shot, but received no reply. In the village the soldiers shouted to the civilian population that it was we who killed women and children. Thereupon the people naturally attacked the column and struck out blindly among us with whips, sticks or whatever else they could find handy. If any tried to ward off the

blows or say anything, the guards themselves struck at us with their rifles. Some of us could no longer keep pace, being completely exhausted. The soldiers simply shot at these and then battered them to death with the butts of their rifles, if they had not been mortally wounded. That night about twenty of us were murdered in that way.

Towards 11 or 12 midday we reached Turek, but marched straight on. Shortly after Turek we were passing a farm, when a German aeroplane appeared. Our escort left us standing in the road, but themselves took shelter in the roadside ditches or behind the willows. The airman must have concluded from this movement that he had to do with a convoy of minority Germans, for he immediately subjected the willows to fire. Of the soldiers forming our escort, which meanwhile, the nearer we approached to the front had continued to increase in numbers until it now was between 80 and 90 strong, a large number was wounded. At this the soldiers became so enraged that, without even leaving their places of concealment, they blindly directed machine gun and rifle fire into the midst of our column. When we were driven forward again those who had been struck were left lying there. The soldiers did not trouble whether the people were dead or wounded. We now numbered only about a quarter of the 181 men of whom our group had originally consisted.

About one and a half or two hours march beyond Turek, the soldiers drove us on to a field. We were forced to line up in double file. The soldiers formed a rank on our left front and then began, without anybody having said a word to us, to shoot us down in pairs. My brother Willi was standing beside me and my brother Karl a little further forward. He suddenly shouted: "Every man for himself!" He took to his legs, and I and my brother Willi also. The soldiers fired after us with machineguns and rifles. I stumbled and fell after about 200 yards. While I was still lying on the ground, I received a grazing shot in the head. My brother Willi immediately dragged me to my feet. We ran on and, as I ran, I discarded my coat which had been pierced by several bullets. As the meadows at this spot are here and there covered with bushes, we succeeded in escaping. We spent the night concealed in a potatoe field, and after two days arrived at Kolo. Here we were once more taken by the military and brought up for court martial. We were told that if we were Poles we should be released, but that if we were Germans we should be shot. Nevertheless we declared that we were Germans, but in order to escape from our unpleasant position we explained that we had been driving requisitioned cattle to Paiser and had lost our way on the return journey as a peasant had apparently directed us wrongly. The officer shouted at us that we would do better to confess that we were spies and had murdered Polish women and children while their menfolk were at the front. When I replied that this was not true, he seized a rifle and struck me across the head just on the spot where the grazing shot had wounded me. The blow broke my skull. Later Dr. Theune, of Schmiegel, extracted from the wound a splinter, which I have myself seen. Dr. Henschke afterwards operated on me in Posen in the Deaconess Hospital and removed two fragments of bone. I sank to the ground beneath the blow, but soon regained consciousness and was transferred to prison, without anybody taking any notice of the wound. After two hours, towards 10 p. m., we were driven out of the prison with blows from a knout and taken into the town. At that moment another column of minority Germans was being driven through the town. We jumped into the middle of the column as they were marching in fours, and in this manner we were able to evade some of the blows levelled at us by the population and to which we had been far more exposed when marching two abreast. We marched with this column as far as Lowitsch and arrived there at about 10 in the morning. On this day the German troops had already advanced as far as Lowitsch. The escort wanted to drive us back, but we had not marched more than one and a half miles on the road back, when German armoured cars suddenly appeared. I was at first taken by the German troops to the hospital in Lods where I spent five days. I was then transferred

to the hospital in Strehlen, remaining there about eight days, after which I returned to Schmiegel. There I learned that my brother Karl had arrived home safely, and later that of our column, the butcher Bogsch, of Schmiegel, and the farm manager Zabke, of Woinitz, had returned.

We five are the only ones of the group of 181, who escaped with our lives.

Read aloud, approved and signed

Walter Kabsch

The witness thereupon formally took the oath

(signed) Bömmels

(signed) Miehe

Source: Sd. Is. Posen 833/39

105. Pastor Leszczynski's report on the fatal march to Tarnowa

Mass graves found containing 30 and 70 mutilated bodies of Germans

Pastor Leszczynski, of Kosten, who was in the party of abducted persons up to Turek-Tarnowa, describes the death of 100 Germans on the fields near Tarnowa (1). The Germans shot and robbed at the place were found in two mass graves containing 30 and 70 terribly mutilated corpses. (See page 251: "Graves, only graves." Front page of the "Posener Tageblatt" No 236.)

It was the 1st of September. Columns of cars with fugitives were driving through the town of Kosten. They were much hindered by the fleeing families of Post and Railway officials, who were hurrying with files to the station. In the hours of the afternoon an intoxicated horde of young Poles forced their way into my house and dragged me out into the street. Howling and screaming, they took me to the police prison. In one of the cells I met carpenter Bohm and harness-maker Schon. In the afternoon the arrested Germans were taken to the "Sokol" building (Youth Organisation) and their names recorded. In addition to Schon, Wegner, Bucholz (father and son), Bohn and myself, who all came from Kosten, there were chiefly inhabitants of Schmiegel, namely, Mieke, Halliand, Zugehor and Sohn, and others. In the evening we were taken to the court prison, where somewhat later newly arrested persons arrived who were pushed and driven with rifle butts into the cells.

On Sept. 2, about 300 of us under the charge of Police-sergeants Wawrzyniak and Schwarz, started on the way to Czempin via Kawczyn. On arrival at the latter place we were met by an agitated crowd, with horrible abuse. Simultaneously, the persecution of the Germans at Czempin started. Many of them, including Pastor Kienitz, were attached to one group. Then we went on to Schrimm. In Schrimm we were ill-treated for the first time. The march through the streets was like running the gauntlet. They beat us mercilessly with butts and sticks. I myself received several kicks on the upper thigh and in the small of the back. We were only at peace after we had been locked into the courtyard of the monastery.

The next day we went to Schroda, where we arrived at eventide. Also at this place we were ill-treated with blows, and stones were thrown at us. In the yard of a factory we had to sit down on the cobbles. The chief of the military command, to whom we were handed over, ill-treated us in the most cruel manner. He ill-treated in particular Pastor Kienitz, Mieke, and myself.

We continued the march on Sept. 3. During a halt, Germans from Schroda joined us, amongst them architect Gewiese. We were ill-treated in Miloslaw by an excited crowd, who beat us with sticks and threw stones at us. Many of us were bleeding from numerous wounds. Towards evening we reached Pyzdry, where we were quartered at the fire station. It was already the third day on which we had nothing to drink. In the early morning hours of the next day two each of the younger men

(1) Ostdeutscher Beobachter, No. 259, Nov 9, 1939.

were tied to one another and each six of such pails were chained together. We started off at about. 7 o'clock. It was not until the afternoon that we received some water.

During a halt, a shot was fired and I learnt that Herr v. Gersdorff had been shot. We then went on via Drosina towards the Polish front. In the twilight we could see the reflection of the gun shots. All the Germans in my group had sore feet and they could only drag themselves forward with difficulty. In Tulischkow soldiers dashed out of their quarters; they beat us and also fired. On the market square, where we had to squat on the pavement, machine-guns were placed in position. It was indicated to us that we would be shot. A medical staff officer intervened on our behalf and declared to a major that such a slaughter would be a disgrace to civilisation. As a result of this the execution was not carried out.

In the night we continued on our way. While we were drinking water at a farmstead, the main body of our people left us. 50 men remained behind who did not dare to follow the main body. We spent the night in a small wood. In the morning, some went off, among them also Dr. Bambauer. When we saw that they were being arrested at the entrance to a village by a guard, we fled to a near-by hill covered with trees. I could not keep step with the others and finally remained behind alone. From a juniper bush, where I hid myself, I heard a series of shots. No doubt the captured Germans had been shot down. The wood was surrounded by the military. I stayed there for three days without water and food. I guarded myself against the cold of the night by digging a hole in the ground with my hands. After the soldiers had marched off in the night of Sept. 9, I ventured to come out. An elderly farmer took care of me and took me to Tulischkow, where I was put into prison. Soon afterwards, ten other Germans were brought in who belonged to our group of 50 men that had remained behind. The treatment here was more humane. On September 16, after all the Polish authorities had gone away, we marched off to Konin, where we encountered German military.

Investigations as to the fate of the main body, from which the 50 men had separated; brought the following particulars to light. The Germans had been driven on to Turek. In the village of Tarnowa about 150 men were led from the main road on to a by-path, where they were ordered to climb on to a hill in a closed column across an open field. Prior to this the Poles had put two machine-guns into position on the hill and had posted soldiers on the opposite side, partly in the open and partly in the various farms and gardens. When the chased Germans were nearing the top of the hill, fire was opened upon them from the machine-guns. The Germans fell dead in masses, others threw themselves down. The machine-guns were firing for several minutes. During a pause in the firing, in which probably new cartridges were inserted, the survivors, about

75 men, jumped up and ran over the hill through a ravine towards a wood about 500 yards distant. They were protected from the machine-gun fire by some rising ground; now, however, the soldiers stationed at the left flank became active. A real drive now set in on those Germans who ran for their very lives. Most of them were shot dead and only a few reached the wood. Immediately afterwards the military rabble left their hiding-places. The dead and badly wounded Germans, lying in groups or singly, were belaboured with butts and bayonets. The dead bodies were plundered and hurriedly buried. Five days later the dead Germans were buried at the order of the Polish civil authorities by the surviving Germans from Tarnowa at the cemetery fence in Tarnowa in two mass graves of 30 and 70 corpses. These are the mass graves reported in the "Posener Tageblatt" of October 17. German women in Tarnowa narrated that the major part of the German male population of Tarnowa were bestially tortured to death. One of the Germans had his eyes gouged out. He was then driven to the next village where he was slain.

According to various accounts given by German women in Tarnowa, the greater part of the German male population in that town was brutally tortured to death. One of the men had both eyes gouged out, was then dragged to the next village and finally murdered.

106. Cartridge as evidence

The murder of Krüger

The witness Anna Krüger, of 62 Brahestrasse, Bromberg-Jägerhof, gave the following evidence on oath:

. . . . Shortly after midday, civilians and soldiers in uniform came and asserted that my husband had fired a machine-gun. The dwelling was searched, firstly by a soldier and then by a civilian. The soldier found nothing. The civilian placed his hand on the wardrobe and ordered the soldier to examine it again. The soldier took out a small cartridge from it, on which grounds my husband, my son and my son-in-law were taken away in a motor car. On Wednesday I found the three of them again in the woods. Frau Gutknecht was the first to find them. My husband was completely mutilated, his entire face was smashed in, leaving only a large hole. He was not shot but beaten to death. My son had a gaping wound as though they had ripped open his entire face. My son was not shot either.

Source: WR II

107. The blood sacrifice of the Lissa Germans

Extract from the report of the experience of minority Germans abducted from Lissa, as published in the *Posener Tageblatt* of September 19, 1939.

We can hardly yet conceive that we are free, again permitted to live, and that our native country is under the protection of the German Army. Hardly any one of us had dared to hope to come out of this Polish hell alive. Too many of our comrades had fallen victims to the Polish murder bandits.

On Sunday September 17 we buried in Lissa four shockingly mutilated victims in a common grave. in their, native soil for which they had died (Gaumer, a butcher, [p. 180] Weigt, a master plumber; Herr Häusler and Herr Jäschke, a teacher). We have advised the relations of these victims as well as those of all the others affected. If anybody should still believe that the murders were only individual occurrences he will be convinced by the reports of comrades from all territories of Posen and Pommerellen, that this murder and plundering were systematically planned long beforehand and carried out simultaneously on a given signal announced over the Warsaw Broadcasting Station early on September 1.

On the morning of Friday Sept. 1 at about 11 o'clock, my parents and I were taken out of the house by armed civilians, who had just before smashed all the windows of our business premises for the purpose of plundering. The dwelling was searched, all cupboards had to be opened and left open, and everything left as it was. Nobody was allowed to take even a coat with him, or any food. At the police station we were thoroughly searched and after waiting several hours with many other comrades, amongst whom were women and children, we were taken to a collecting place outside the town. In the afternoon under military guard we were driven about 10 miles inland to the small town of Storchnest, where in the evening we were locked up in the hall of a shooting club. After some hours a captain and some civilians came in, and some of the women and older men were permitted to go home, it being explained to all the others that we were to be brought before the military court, as allegedly some Germans had fired on Polish soldiers in Lissa. As a matter of fact it was the German artillery which had fired on a military objective in Lissa. In the confusion, the armed Polish civilians, some of whom were equipped with machine-guns which had been placed by the Poles in the towers of both Protestant Churches in Lissa, began shooting wildly. Some of our comrades were removed from Storchnest and taken before the military court at Schrimm, although not one of them had ever possessed any firearms, not to speak of having used them. We have not seen these comrades again, and we only found out from some of those who had escaped with a sentence of 10 years hard labour, that the others had been shot, and the kind of accusation which had been brought forward by the witnesses for the prosecution One was accused of hanging a picture of the Fuehrer in his house, another is supposed to have had his window open with his wireless set tuned in loudly to German stations etc. etc., in a provoking manner.

However, the military court at Schrimm condemned nine of our comrades to death. Early on Saturday morning, Sept. 2, the remainder of us were again driven on. Then began our march of martyrdom, which is impossible to describe, and the great torture suffered can be realized only by those who went through it. Old men, women and children were driven with us, roughly ill-treated with rifle butts and, particularly during the march through towns and villages, were sworn and spat at, pelted with stones and beer bottles, beaten and kicked--Polish soldiers playing a conspicuous part. There was no food of any kind; those who had sufficient money could try to buy something through the accompanying guard, but it often happened that we got nothing and also never saw our money again. We had water only very rarely and in the end it became so bad that we had to buy drinking water by the bottle. En route, when it was permitted by the guards, we pulled up carrots and turnips in order to stop our gnawing hunger. It was lucky for us that the weather remained warm and dry, as only a small number of us were allowed to take overcoats or blankets. Our pocket knives were firstly taken from us and, in Peisern, most of our watches and rings were stolen from us by Polish soldiers. We had hoped at the beginning that the ill-treatment and stone-throwing would diminish as soon as we arrived in the centre of Poland, but soon found that the contrary was the case. and that the treatment became worse daily. We now had to march day and night with only short rests in ditches. He who was unable to keep up

was hounded on with cudgels, and when at last he collapsed, was shot. Some of us who were the victims of this experience became insane.

We were thus driven from place to place via Schrimm, Schroda, Peisern, Slupco, Konin, Kolo, Kutno to Lowitsch. Here it was first explained why we were being driven on so quickly and why the hatred was always becoming greater. We had been driven into the middle of the retreating Polish Army for the purpose of revenge. When we came to the outskirts of Lowitsch a German air attack took place, and we were driven off the road on to the field and our guard informed us that now every one of us was to be shot. We did not really believe this threat as we had heard it so often before, but shortly after a second group of minority Germans from North Posen and Pommerellen had joined us, who had also been so threatened, we realized the danger we were in. We overheard a conversation between our guards that we were to be taken to a river near by and shot, so that the bodies could float down to Germany. Under such a threat we were driven across open country for about 4 miles and some of our comrades were shot while trying to escape. At last, Dr. Staemmler of Bromberg endeavoured to negotiate with the commander of the transport but was knocked back with a rifle, and, as he was falling, he gripped hold of the rifle in defence, and was also shot.

A moment later our guards ran away, hell for leather, for suddenly a German tank came towards us over the field, circled round us once, the crew calling out that Lowitsch was occupied by German troops and that we were saved. We could not at first believe that our rescue had come at the last minute, nor were we able fully to rejoice in our own rescue, as one of our comrades who had just fallen was lying dead before our eyes.

None of us will ever forget the march into Lowitsch, the greetings of the German soldiers, and the first warm meal, the touching care for us and the great trouble taken in order to return us quickly to our homes, for which we have especially to thank comrade von Romberg. Neither shall we ever forget the tortures and ill-treatment. **Today, we know that there is only one method against a nation which is capable of such atrocities, i. e. merciless severity with unyielding determination. The words of a comrade who called out to us when bidding us good-bye as we were leaving for our freed native land, are only too true: "A nation which is capable of such cruelty and brutal treatment against defenceless people has no more right to exist, and has thereby automatically struck itself off the list of civilized nations."** For those of us, however, who were able to return to our native homes through a merciful act of fate, there is something more to remember at this time, namely, that our lives and work belong now more than ever before to our people, and our great love and gratitude to the Fuehrer, for returning to us the freedom of our native land.

The foregoing is a description by an inhabitant of Lissa, who was amongst those minority Germans who took part in the march of martyrdom to Lowitsch. Many of those arrested have not returned, as they were unable to bear the terrible hardships and were left behind, only to be shot on the spot. Thus there are missing, the 80-year-old master-tailor Tiller with his son, Juretzki, the photographer, Frau Groschowski, the wife of a teacher, and others. Other tragedies also occurred. Herr Hoffmann, of Posen, and Frau Hoffmann (nee Anneliese Remus), formerly Frau Runge of Lissa committed suicide together by taking poison, as the young wife was expecting a child in two months and under the circumstances it seemed quite impossible for her to stand the strain of such a march with the abducted. It was impossible to flee over the frontier, notwithstanding

its close proximity, Fraustadt being only 12 miles away. The few who were able to get through to Danzig in time can consider themselves very fortunate.

108. Dragged off to Brest-Litowsk

The experience of Karl Mielke of Bromberg (1)

On August 29, when I came home from work, a large car belonging to the Anti-Espionage Department was standing before my house. I was driven in it to my office where a thorough search was made of both my office rooms. Not only the maps of Posen and Pommerellen which the itinerant teachers needed for their work were scrutinised and packed up as suspicious material, but also perfectly harmless school statistics, reports of closed-down German schools, lists of transfers of teachers, monthly reports, and similar papers, which at previous searches had been passed as harmless by the officials. Judge G. of the Criminal Court, before whom I was brought, showed hatred of everything German on his face. He tried with fanatical eagerness to get his victim to say what he was determined to hear. The first thing said to me was, that every German was a spy and it was further implied that the whole cultural work of the Educational Department of the German Association was only a cloak for carrying on espionage on a large scale. I was taken away and locked up in a local police gaol.

(1) Published in *Der Volksdeutsche*, October 1939, issue No. 19, under the heading, "Arrested, abducted and released".

I was then taken to Siedlce, and my name was entered as a *szpieg* (spy) i. e. I was no longer a prisoner awaiting trial, but a convicted spy. On September 3, I heard for the first time the town's air raid signals and knew that German planes were expected. I knew of the mobilization from seeing the wall-posters at the railway stations giving notice of same. It was not very long before the first bomb fell. After a few days our regular meals stopped, and I was transferred to a small cell in which there were now seven of us, and the conditions of which were more terrible to bear than the prospects of being hit by a bomb. On some days we were given neither water nor food. When one of many bombs hit the prison wall, killing a warder, a panic broke out in all the cells, some of the occupants shouting to be let out, whilst others pulled off the iron legs from the bedsteads fixed to the wall and beat with them against the iron-lined doors, while others again prayed in loud tones, and in all this uproar we thought the prison was on fire, as the hammering at the doors sounded as though the walls were falling in. Amidst this chaos could be heard the rifle-shots of the guards' shots, by which they endeavoured to silence the raving prisoners. Later, we were herded 10 together in a cell intended for only one prisoner.

On September 7, a real funeral procession began for us. We were handed over to an infantry lieutenant whose duty it was to transport us with about 100 men of his own troops as a guard to the far-away prison in the east, situated at Bialypodlask. His first action was to give the soldiers strict orders to shoot any one of us who got out of line or spoke a word of German. This order was made known to all the 281 prisoners. At 1 a. m. the march began through the burning town of Siedlce. A dying German who was already as thin as a skeleton had to be dragged naked along with us as he was unable to walk; four of us carried him by the arms and legs just above the ground. The comrade alongside me was given a deep thrust in the seat with a bayonet. After we had marched along different roads until the dawn of day, we halted in a small wood. Here

we had to leave the dying man and we covered him with a coat. He most probably received his *coup de grace* before the march continued. Another prisoner about the age of 70, who was unable to continue any longer, was taken aside by the soldiers, and, after we had heard the report of two rifle shots, we were told that he too had been settled.

We had received nothing to eat or drink up to then. Our march was continually delayed by air-raid alarms when we had to lie down as near to trees as possible without moving and wait until we were ordered on again. We blessed the German airmen as we were otherwise given little time to rest ourselves, and many of us were already exhausted and lame. The first ones to remain behind fell victims to the fate which we all expected. They were forced to kneel down with their heads on the ground and were then shot in the back of the head. Nobody wanted to remain behind and march in the rear ranks, the old and weak held on to the stronger ones, linked arms and stamped on with iron determination and tight-lipped, despite open wounds on their feet and great pain. All those condemned to death died like men, and as one was on his knees waiting to receive the shot of his murderer, he cried out a defiant "Heil Hitler" and, even after the first shot which did not kill him, again faintly cried out the greeting to the Fuehrer.

We were glad when at night we arrived at Bialypodlask and were then told to go in a prison again, that this town was also being evacuated. We received the greatest blow of all we had experienced up to then when we were informed that we should have to march a further 25 miles to Brest-Litowsk. A proof of the inhuman treatment of our executioners was when we were forced to march by a wonderful wafer pump, without being permitted to stop for a drink of water. That same night we had to walk a further 9 miles before we were grudging a rest.

The march from Wioska to Brest-Litowsk was the last terrible stage of our route. We marched without a stop from 6 o'clock in the afternoon until 3 o'clock the next morning. On this stretch of the route was heard the unmerciful cracking of rifle shots in the rear ranks, and about 60 in all were shot. We gave a sigh of relief when at last, we saw the silhouette of our destination appear before us in the bright, moonlight. We had to wait endlessly in the entrance of the military prison of the fortress. After standing for two hours we were huddled together in the entrance of a corridor and counted by fives, and thus we found out that we were now only 200. All we had with us was taken away, and we were placed, 10 together, in small cells. On the following day we were given water, which we divided out equally amongst us. An army biscuit and five small pears was the last nourishment given us, which we shared in equal portions. In the two beds standing side by side--no--on top of each other, two comrades lay in each bed, while the other six had to spend the night partly in a diagonal position under the bed.

The next day we received a visit from German aeroplanes, and bombs burst unceasingly on the middle of the fortifications where our prison was situated. The thought that one would hit our cell was terrible, but in our serious conversations always came to the same conclusion namely, that to the end we must remain true to the principle of which we had so often spoken, which was, that it is not the individual that counts but that the most important things are the greatness and glory of the Reich. Another two days passed under these conditions, during which time the want of water was at its highest. We no longer felt hungry. We all had a fever rash on our lips, our tongues were thick and rough, and we were hoarse and could only speak in a very low voice. We were afraid of becoming insane. Water was now shared out by the spoonful. When we implored the warders to give us water, we were told that there was none. How cruel were these people who called themselves representatives of the Polish people, when we later saw that they had casks of water in the court-yard which were mostly three-quarters full!

On September of the German artillery fire and the dropping of bombs by German planes reached their height, and all the walls of the prison shook and shivered. Thick smoke came pouring through the small window of our cell. There was not [p. 185] a guard in the corridor. Suddenly we heard the banging and crashing of the doors of two cells, then hurried steps on the landing and eager talking. Two cells had been broken open by their occupants. We stormed into the courtyard with our water cans and fetched water with our last remaining strength. The guards, in their terror of death, had retreated to a bomb-proof shelter leaving us to our own fate; however, the soldiers returned, and fired a few shots at us in order to show us what we were up against.

Then came the morning of September 17, when the din of the battle gradually ceased. With fear we asked ourselves what this meant. I climbed on to the bed and looked through the iron-barred window on to the courtyard, which was completely destroyed. A German infantryman was coming towards us over the courtyard, and it is impossible for me to describe my feelings when I saw him. We drummed on the door, shouting with joy, and in all the other cells we heard deafening calls. The doors of the cells were eventually smashed down by the rifle-blows of the German infantrymen. We were free! and we found that our warders, who were to have shot us on this very Sunday had been made prisoners.

When we were all standing in the prison yard we began to sing, at first softly, and then louder and louder. As the words of "Deutschland, Deutschland über alles" and the "Horst-Wessel-Lied" resounded in this place of horror, now a place of happiness, we were not ashamed of the tears which ran down our dirty, unshaven cheeks.

Source: *Der Volksdeutsche*, October 1939, issue No. 19.

109. Father Odilo Gerhard O. F.M.

A German Catholic priest under arrest in Poland.

Father Odilo Gerhard was the German Catholic Priest a Cracow. On the outbreak of war he was arrested by the Poles at 3.30 p.m. on September 1, 1939. After his watch, money and identification papers were taken from him at the Headquarters of the Police Commissar in Kielce, he was dragged off by force with many German members of his congregation via Radorri-Brest-Litowsk to the internment camp at Bereza-Kartuska. In the issue of October 1939 of *Die Getreuen*, the Catholic Mission magazine published for Germans abroad, he describes his experiences.

At 6.30 p. m. the train arrived at Bereza-Kartuska and, after a forced march of 3 miles we reached the internment camp at about 8 p. m. Immediately our 10 guards were taken away. Then we had to run the gauntlet through a lane of 200 police who beat us with rubber truncheons, rifle butts and staves, and even an old man of 70 was not spared this punishment. We were counted on the drill ground and then taken into a heated room, where each of us was forced to lie face downwards on the cement floor. I was about to lie down, when a policeman hit me with a rubber truncheon and dragged me off to the commander of the camp, who questioned me and gave the order to convey me to the doctor's isolation ward No. 2 and to give me better treatment. At the doctor's quarters I fell down in a half-fainting condition and begged for water.

On Sept. 8, when being medically examined on the drill ground, my companions in distress exclaimed: "You have been beaten black and blue!" Before being led on to the drill ground without my habit and only in a shirt and stockings, five commanders questioned me. They all said: "If you are a Roman Catholic Priest you are a Pole." I replied "No, I am a German." "Yes, a German spy!" and on denying this, I received a blow from a rubber truncheon. We had to stand on the drill ground in the unbearable boiling hot sun and clouds of dust until the evening, without anything to eat or drink. Then we were forced to give up everything including money, our necessary under-clothing and even rosaries, locketts, breviaries, shaving equipment, nail cleaners, cigarettes and tobacco etc.

Then the drill began. We were allowed to do exercises lying and sitting down, during which, a commander was continually beating with a stick those who were not exercising quickly enough. At 8 o'clock at night we were led to our quarters, a room about 58 ft. long, 24 ft. wide and 12½ ft. high, with 16 bunks placed in twos, one above the other. One bunk was for nine men in which only four were just able to lie down. As the three with me were men of over 60, and one an Italian very ill with pneumonia, I lay down on the cement floor under the bunk. We were given a pail-full of water for 140 people, the first after three days, and bread for the first time after five days, a portion weighing about 30 grammes and only half-baked. So I only took the crusts, kept them for two days and ate them in small pieces when hard. At different times we were given watery soup with a little barley, at 8 o'clock in the morning, at 7 o'clock at night, and then only again at about 11 o'clock. From 4 in the afternoon until 8 o'clock at night we were on the drill ground. The doctors advised everyone who weakened not to report to hospital because they would hardly leave there alive, which in fact was confirmed in many cases.

So the days passed. On Sunday September 10, I requested the commander to permit me to hold prayers in 'the room. His answer was a flood of curses and blows with a rubber truncheon; the same happened when I asked to administer spiritual comfort to the sick.

During the night from Sunday (September 17) until 3 o'clock on Monday morning we found that the police had fled and' that we were free. We were soon on the drill ground, where I again met many German Catholics from Cracow and the province of Posen to whom I had given spiritual help. Unfortunately we found behind the hospital 7 German flying officers and 16 internees, who had been imprisoned in a dark cell, and among whom the former were dead, their heads having been battered in. As we were told that the Russians were en route for Bereza, we soon departed in order to reach the German front as soon as possible, which we accomplished on Tuesday afternoon when we arrived at Kobryn. We then continued to Brest-Litowsk, so that we had covered a distance of 61 miles in 2½ days, but on some stretches only at the rate of 2 miles per hour. At Brest-Litowsk our soldiers transported us in lorries, to East Prussia, where the N.S.V. (National Socialist Welfare Organisation) took over our care.

Oskar Daum, a Protestant clergyman reports on his stay at the internment camp at Bereza-Kartuska as follows: (1)

The camp guards received us with rubber truncheons, took away from us all the things we needed for our daily use. I was not even allowed to keep my New Testament. Our cells were entirely devoid of everything, the concrete floor providing the only place for sleep. The food was almost unbearable. Besides this soup we were given two spoonfulls of water once or twice a day and uneatable, bread. From the moment of our arrest we had no

opportunity of washing. We were subjected to specially chosen, painful and cruel exercises and those who broke down were maltreated

110. The march of the interned from Obornik -- a party of abducted persons marched away nearly to Warsaw

Old men who collapsed through weakness were shot down

Special Commission of the Reich Criminal Police Department in Posen.

Tgb. V (RKPA) 1486/10.39.
20, 1939

Posen, November

On September 2, 1939 about 600 German-Poles were arrested in the district of Obornik, north of Posen, and made up into an internees contingent. The march was made via Gnesen, Slupca, and Kutno near to a place just this side of Warsaw.

About 100 fellow compariots from the diocese of Morawana-Goslyn alone had not returned by October 2, 1939. The total number of dead had not ye been ascertained.

The interrogation of Willi Grossmann, a wheelwright, who survived the march is attached.

(Signed) Discar, Commissioner of Criminal Police.

Special Commission of Chief of Police

Posen, Oct. 2, 1939

Elfriede Weigt, a married woman (a member of the German minority) appeared voluntarily and declared:

My husband, Friedrich-Wilhelm W., born on May 26, 1901 in Potarzyce, had been estate manager (administrator) of the Przendowo estate in the district of Obornik

(1) Report in the *Gemeindebote für das evangelisch-lutherische Wien* of October 8, 1939.

(North Posen) for about 8 years. The estate hands are pure Polish. The estate owner is Countess Luettichau, a German. My husband was known to the authorities as an upright German. He was a member of the German Association.

On August 25, 1939 the city militia was billeted on our estate. The leader of the company was a Reserve officer of the Polish Army named Sigmund Rakocy from Morawana-Goslyn.

On September 1, 1939 my husband was arrested with all other German residents of Morawana. The arrest was caused by R. The reason for arrest was not given. My husband together with 23 others, was taken to Morawana.

Note: Grossmann, the wheelwright who was arrested on the same day, will be further closely interrogated afterwards re Weigt's fate. The further questioning of Frau W. in this connection will therefore be set aside.

My husband's height was about 5 ft. 6 inches, he was clean-shaven, with slightly curly fair hair. He wore glasses. He had a broken-off incisor in the upper jaw which had been crowned with gold, therefore he had half a gold tooth. At the time of his arrest he was wearing a pair of greenish-coloured riding breeches with leather strappings, and black riding boots, a mother-of-pearl coloured linen or canvas jacket with pleated side and breast pockets, and double breasted with ordinary bone buttons to match the cloth, a striped tricot shirt and long tricot underpants. His linen is marked F. W. I am unable to produce samples of underwear for identification, if needed, as everything was later stolen by convicts set free during my absence from the estate. On my return I found a pair of convict's trousers in our home.

Special Commission of the Chief of Police
1939

Posen, October 2,

The minority German Willy Grossmann, a wheelwright, born on May 20, 1909 in Koblin, residing on the Przpendowo estate in the district of Obornik, appeared voluntarily and made the following statement:

Since 1937 I have been employed as a wheelwright on the P. estate: I was on normal social terms with the Poles. I have never had any trouble with the civilian population or with the authorities. I have always kept to myself without troubling about politics. A few weeks before the German-Polish disagreement, the relationship between us and the Poles became rather strained, but there were no particular acts of violence on the part of the Polish workers on the estate.

As Frau W. has already described, the city militia was billeted on our estate on the August 25, 1939. On Sept. 1, 1939, all the German men were arrested without grounds by the City militia--the minimum age being fixed at 16--and taken to Morawana-Goslyn. There we were quartered in an inn until September 2, 1939. There about 600 minority Germans of all ages and of both sexes from the district of Obornik joined us. At about midday on September 2, 1939, the march continued to Gnesen, about 38 miles away. The children and a few elderly people, in all about 20 persons, were left behind. In the night from Monday to Tuesday the march continued with the newly arrived minority Germans from Gnesen to Slupca, where we arrived towards morning. Our escort consisted of policemen and also auxiliary policemen in uniform. Lieutenant R. did not accompany the transport. On the same day the march proceeded in the direction of Kutno, leaving Kolo on our right. It was probably on Thursday morning when we passed through Kutno. On the morning of September 9, at about 10.30, we reached the park of Sochaczew, about 31 miles west of Warsaw. During the march we had to spend the nights in the fields. We were given no kind of food and we fed on swedes or other field produce. During the whole way we were maltreated by the escort, which consisted of regular police, as well as by the civilian population. I have a scar over the right eye, received from a blow with a rifle butt. Occasionally, upon our meeting cavalry, they drew their sabres and beat us with them. A certain Herr Baurichter of Langoslyn, in the district of Obornik, received a bad wound on the head, and as he put up his hand to protect himself, his small finger was nearly cut off, and today he is still under medical treatment. A Frau Baum of our district was hit with a rifle butt, the blow paralysing her facial muscles, so that she had a twisted

face. It was by no means a swelling from a blow. This was confirmed to me by a German doctor whose name and address I do not know. He was a German military doctor whom we met on the return march.

In the park of Sochaczew we were supposed to receive a meal, that is about midday on September 9, but instead of getting any food we were shot at by the mob. One of us was shot down. As we were about to march off, the guards shot three elderly men, whose names are unknown to me. Two of them had been wounded by the mob and were unable to continue the march; the third tried to escape. He was caught, made to stand before us, and was shot at close range by a policeman. Many of the older people, began to rave during the march. For instance, when a cart passed by, many cried out: "That is my cart. How does that man come to be driving my horses?". Others asked to be shot. It was a terrible march.

Towards 2 o'clock of the same day Herr Weigt was wounded in the knee on the high road to Warsaw. The escort, as well as passing military detachments, amused themselves by shooting into our column. Herr Weigt had to remain behind alone. We were not allowed to look back. I know Weigt was shot in the knee as he was walking alongside me. Weigt was probably killed later. From Sochaczew onwards our martyrdom started. Old men, who through sheer weakness fell down, were shot. I myself saw an old man; who from weakness was clinging to a tree, shot from behind and at close quarters by one of our Police escort. I could see his brains oozing out of his head. This was about 3 miles beyond S. After an air raid, during which the escort came under fire whilst taking cover in the ditch, Herr Heckert, accountant of our estate, was shot by a policeman. Later on during the march others [p. 190] were killed. I cannot give further details. It was certain that our ranks were becoming thinner and thinner. From our estate alone 10 persons are still missing, who, if they have been shot, must be lying somewhere this side of Warsaw. They are:

Herr Weigt, Friedrich	aged 38
" Heckert, Hans	" 36 (?)
" Repnack,	" 50 (?)
" Belter, Alfred	" 24 (?)
" Sommer, Ferdinand	" 23 (?)
" Sommer, Gustav	" 48 (?)
" Sommer, Waldi	" 20 (?)
" Sydow, Gottfried	" 30 (?)
" Riemer, Willi	" 31
" Riemer, Walter	" 26 (?)

I myself saw Willi and Walter Riemer lying dead 2 miles this side of Warsaw. They belonged to the district of Morawana. As far as I can estimate, about 200 comrades of

our column must have been killed. All the bodies should be lying alongside the highway from Sochaczew to Warsaw.

During the night of the 9th to 10th September most of our column fled, myself among them. The next day we encountered German troops. After no great detour we returned home.

Yesterday in Church I heard that about 100 comrades of our column and locality were still missing.

Read out, approved and signed

Willi Grossmann

Grossmann was most emphatic. During the interrogation he was asked if he was exaggerating. He answered "Inspector, you can take my word for it there is not the slightest exaggeration in what I am telling you." He repeated several times the following: "You cannot tell the wives of those murdered men everything, they are in enough despair as it is".

(signed) Discar, Police Inspector.

At present at Bromberg and Berlin, 20.11.1939

The medico-legal experts of the Military High Command for Bromberg: Dr. Panning, the Senior Medical Officer and Superintendent of the Medico-Legal Department of the Army Medical Academy.

For Posen: Dr. Hallermann, Assistant Medical Officer of the Reserve, Lecturer at Berlin University.

R e p o r t

on the results, available up to the present, of the Investigation of the Medico-Legal Department of the Army Medical Academy, set up for the purpose of investigating the Polish acts murder in the Posen and Bromberg districts(1).

I. The task of the medico-legal experts

By order of the Health Inspection Department of the Military High Command, Medico-Legal Experts were appointed on Sept. 20, 1939, to investigate the Polish acts of murder in those districts which suffered most, particularly in Bromberg, but also in Posen. Subsequently numerous medico-legal autopsies were carried out, which at present are still being continued. The investigation of cases of murder took place in close co-

operation with Special Commissions of the Reich Police Criminal Dept. i. e. with the officers, and in accordance with the methods of the Criminal Investigation Department.

In pursuance of the instructions received, detailed results of all autopsies were certified in records and filed for present and future use by the addition of a still increasing collection of photographic reproductions and preserved specimens. The opportunity was taken to inspect the proofs available on the spot, at Bromberg and Posen, by several commissions of medical and army officers, as well as German and foreign journalists.

II. Scope of Investigation

The investigations carried out so far cover 131 autopsies and 11 cases of postmortems in and near Bromberg, and 51 autopsies and 53 post-mortems in Posen and its environments. Therefore, up to the present, about 250 bodies have been examined by medico-legal experts--this figure not representing even a mere fraction of the number of murders perpetrated, which is so great that it is impossible to estimate them from here. It is, however, impossible to carry out autopsies on all the persons murdered. In Bromberg alone, for example, the question would have arisen of examining no less than 1000 bodies. It is to be expected, therefore, that decomposition and the frozen soil of the graves will shortly terminate all post-mortem examinations.

(1) All results of autopsies and postmortem examinations are illustrated photographically; for reasons of space, only a selection has been reproduced here.

[p. 195]

The results obtained by the investigations must thus be regarded purely as small random sections taken from an abundance of material. It has not been attempted to summarise statistically the data obtained, as no comparative figures could represent a true picture of the events investigated, in view of the enormous number of cases where it was not possible to hold a post-mortem examination. Only for a few sections, which cover a series of murders in which each or certainly almost every case has been examined by autopsy, will a statistical survey be feasible.

III. Results of investigations

Difficulties in analysing the results obtained

Great difficulties were encountered in judging on merit the data obtained. In view of the large number of bodies heaped up in a restricted space, a provisional burial of 60 or even more bodies in one common grave had had to be arranged. The bodies were later exhumed and examined with the consent and knowledge of their sorely tried relatives, when transferring them to a place of rest in cemeteries especially designated for this purpose. It goes without saying that the findings were frequently influenced by the state of decomposition which, in the meantime, had set in. In spite of this it was possible by following the exact and scientific methods of medico-legal examination to arrive at expert conclusions perfectly clear in their essential parts. It was also obvious that the results of the autopsies carried out could by no means show up all the injuries which the unfortunate victims had suffered. Particularly tissue haemorrhages as the result of

bodily maltreatment were frequently almost impossible to trace during the autopsy on account of the advanced state of decomposition, and obviously various forms of brutal physical injuries, mutilations, etc., were only apparent by special and circumstantial evidence.

Injuries caused by blunt instruments, rifle butts, etc.

It may serve as an example to point out that blows administered by rifle butts, bludgeons, staves, etc., as witnessed on innumerable occasions, were naturally only traceable at, an autopsy, when they were followed by injury to the bone. In this respect some very impressive and weighty findings were observed in such cases as:

Sect. No. Br. 93, Albert Heise, aged 21 years--complete crushing of facial portion of skull by heavy blows of a bludgeon.

Sect. No. Br. 116, Richard Kutzer, aged 46 years, parson, crushing of inferior maxilla (lower jaw) without injury to the skin--caused, according to police evidence, by a blow with a rifle butt.

Sect. No. Br. 115, Otto Kutzer, 73 years of age--father of the above--multiple fracture of costal cartilage, weakened by senility,--due to a blow with the butt of a rifle.

Sect. No. Br. 107, Hans Schulz, 20 years of age--crushing of skull with rifle butt or other heavy instrument, as also in a great number of other cases.

Frequently, as shown in the post-mortem records, the forcible use of blunt instruments could only be assumed, namely, in such cases when the victim received the injuries, such as shots, blows or cuts, while lying down and when it was necessary to explain how he came to be in a recumbent position.

Mutilations

The findings of the experts were equally handicapped through post-mortem change in the case of extremely brutal mutilations of the victims. Whereas in a great many cases it was possible to obtain definite statements of witnesses--mostly relatives of the murdered persons--as to the mutilations inflicted upon the deceased, such as castration, severance of members of the body (ears, nose, etc.) or the piercing of the orbital cavity--these injuries could not be considered as findings in a strict medico-legal sense, because all traces had been naturally subject to decomposition, and destruction by vermin. However, especially in a good many cases of punctured wounds of the eye, in conjunction with injury to the lids, it has been possible to establish definite proof of such injuries on bodies exhumed shortly after burial. This statement is impressively corroborated by the photograph on page 285 in case Br. 17 of an unknown man, aged about 20, and murdered in Bromberg-Klein-Bartelsee and also by the photograph on page 286 in the case of Sect. No. P I. Grieger, Paul, 32 years of age, murdered in Posen. A case of piercing of the orbital cavity which, owing to destruction of the body by vermin, could not definitely be ascertained, is depicted on the photograph on page 288, post-mortem examination No. Br. 4 of an unknown man, aged about 45, and murdered in the woods near Hopfengarten in the Bromberg district. Furthermore, it has also been proved by photographic records that all cases of bullet wounds in the eye have been carefully excluded in the findings of punctured injuries to the orbital cavity.

Similar references can be made to other forms of mutilation. In certain cases one is forced to accept as evidence the clear statement of witnesses as to pre-mortem castration or other mutilations and to assume that objective findings were impossible owing to the advanced stage of decomposition. The well-known fact should be borne in mind that the destruction by vermin, or any other post-mortem change, affects in the first instance and most readily all injured parts of the body. It is consequently not surprising that in this respect the findings of the experts fall short of the statements of witnesses.

Punctures

A special group of additional injuries independent of those of a fatal nature, of a distinctly sadistic nature, were observed in very many cases, namely punctured wounds, as found by themselves or in addition to fatal bullet wounds. In the main, this refers to shallow and flat punctured injuries to the surface or the limbs and members of the body. In accordance with statements of witnesses, these injuries were frequently inflicted upon the victims, as it were, "for encouragement" by the guards or the mob en route to the place of murder. Thus, amongst many others, the case Sect. No. Br. 56 of Eduard Schulemann, a 72 year-old man, may be quoted as an example; he was killed by a shot through the skull and a deep stab of a bayonet from behind in the back. Thrusts of the bayonet to the dying were inflicted repeatedly, as in the case Sect. No. Br. 27 of an unknown man, aged 30 to 40, with a stab in the abdomen and also Sect. No. Br. 110 Herbert Zollnik, 38 years of age. A particularly bestial case of the application of a stabbing weapon and the murder of the wounded man by 33 stabs, inflicted by a Polish soldier, within a military formation, will be referred to on another occasion.

Injuries involving long death agony

The wholly unimaginable brutality of the perpetrations is evidenced by the consideration of the causes of death and, consequently the length of the period of pre-lethal agonies. It has been proved beyond doubt that in numerous cases the injuries inflicted were by no means of a fatal character, but that the victims succumbed in the course of time from such uncomplicated injuries, as for example, a bullet wound through the lung. Similar observations could be made in cases where only injuries to the limbs with lacerations of more or less insignificant arterial ramifications were detected. In this connection attention should be drawn to the photographic reproduction on p. 281. Sect. No. Br. 46: Artur Radler, aged 42; he had received a shot through the cervical portion of the neck, which was by no means dangerous to his life. Death actually supervened more than seven hours later through a shot through the head, after his relatives had been deliberately prevented from rendering any assistance to the wounded man. We can see very similar conditions reproduced in the photographs on page 300-301, Sect. No. Br. 100, Kurt Beyer, aged 10, whose agonies lasted throughout the night, a period of at least 12 hours, during which he was lying in a field with two non-dangerous shots through the lung, and a smashed arm. A similar case is represented by Sect. No. Br. 100 Wilhelm Gollnik, aged 38, whose death agonies in the presence of his wife lasted over 9 hours.

Further reference will be made in due course to a group of victims who also were subject to more or less protracted agonies of death.

Coups de Grâce

In numerous other cases the perpetrators have fired "shots of mercy", on victims lying on the ground, as was established by the bullet wound canal rising or falling at a sharp angle. It was abundantly evident that the coup de grace administered had nothing whatsoever to do with the traditional meaning of such action, i.e., the speedy and immediate despatch of the victim as for example in the case of wounded game. It is, on the contrary, unmistakable that the shots fired on victims lying on the ground were executed to satisfy sadistic instincts, inasmuch as they were not directed at the heart or the skull, but indiscriminately at any part of the body. It is most remarkable that frequently bullet wounds were found issuing from the gluteal region near the anus and tearing their way through the body. As one has to assume that the perpetrators had a certain knowledge of marksmanship and these, in the cases in point, were Polish soldiers, one is inevitably forced to the conclusion that systematically the buttocks of the dying "Hitlerites" were aimed at. Two cases in one group of persons maltreated with this kind of bullet wound injuries, are recorded on the photograph on page 294 Sect. No. Br. 95, of the gardener, Erich Schmiede, 43 years of age, and Sect. No. Br. 101, Berthold Rabitsch, aged 64, and numerous other cases have been certified in the post-mortem examination records.

Bonds

A significant and frequently applied form of maltreatment of victims consisted of placing them in bonds, as witnessed in the case of three persons belonging to a group of seven victims from the Kutzer Rectory, in the suburb of Bromberg-Jägerhof, photograph on page 279, Sect. No. Br. 115, Richard Kutzer, aged 73; photograph on page 304, Sect. No. Br. 118, Herbert Schollenberg, aged 14, and Sect. No. Br. 119, Hermann Tetzlaff, 51 years of age. In the cases referred to, the bonds were made of thin string, tied in a simple manner into loops and knots. In several other cases, as in photograph on page 280, Sect. No. Br. 67, Albrecht Schmidt, about 45 years, the bonds were attached to long pieces of rope, used for dragging the victims along. In the Jesuitersee group of mass murders, to which further reference will be made, no less than 12 victims were actually tied to one another with cattle rope and other such material into one long chain.

If the nature of the fetterings just mentioned, points for the most part to an exceptionally brutal mentality, particularly when applied to old people and children, the recent case of Sect. No. Br. 124, Wilhelm Sieg, aged 43, labourer in Feyerland, represents a method of fettering sadistically designed as an integral part of the actual murder process. The unfortunate victim was fettered with reins in such a manner that his hands were tied behind his back and the noose knotted round his neck as tightly as possible. According to the depositions of the Criminal Police and medico-legal experts, Sieg was dragged for a considerable distance on the ground, fettered in such a way and then killed by a shot from a rifle whilst still in a recumbent position.

Classification of victim's according to age. Murders of crippled and sick people

The classification of the victims of murder in accordance with their age and state of health, requires special consideration. Post-mortem examinations have definitely established that the age of the victims varied from infants of 4 months to old men of 82. Although the compilation of statistical data from the material is, as explained above, not without its difficulties, it would seem necessary to quote some figures in connection, so as not to let it be thought that murders of children were nothing but regrettable and isolated incidents.

Among the autopsies carried out, the following were on children:

No. Killed by(1)	sect No.	Name and Age	
1. 27 Grenade	Br. 129	Egon Berger, 4 months	
2. 25 probably rifle	P. 29	Kurt Schmolke, 15 months	Shot,
3. 21 Pistol shot	Br. 76	Erhard Prochnau, 3 years	
4. -- Shot, probably pistol	Br. 59	Gisela Renz, 4 years	
5. 24	Br. 74 - ditto -	Walter Busse, 7 years	
6. 22 shot	Br. 60	Günther Renz, 9 years	Rifle
7. 23 pistol shot	Br. 100	Kurt Beyer, 10 years	1
			1
tearing shot			
			1
rifle shot			
8. -- shots, probably pistol	Br. 66	Heidelies Tetzlaff, 11 years	2
9. -- rifle shots	Br. 94	Else Jannot, 12 years	2
10. -- shot	Br. 70	Gerhard Pijan, 12 years	Rifle
11. 26 shot	Br. 118	Herb. Schollenberg, 14 years	1 rifle
			1
pistol shot			

To use a biblical expression in the extremely brutal sense of the term, "the child in the womb was not spared", as can be seen from the following cases, amply illustrated by photographs Sect. No. Br. 112, Frau Sonnenberg, photograph on page S.306, and also Sect. No. 127, Frau Kempf, photograph on page 308, who were both murdered in the last stages of pregnancy, the perpetrators in both cases being Polish soldiers. As far as

Sect. No. Br. 127, Frau Kempf, is concerned, there is every reason to assume that she was in labour when she died.

It can be proved in many cases that crippled, sick and aged people were not spared by the assassins. In Posen, for example, among six persons jointly murdered in a marching column of internees near Rózepole, (the Schmolke family with neighbours: Sect. No. P. 28-33) there were two men with artificial limbs, the one with a femur prosthesis, and the other with two artificial legs. (Photograph on page 296, Sect. No. P. 32). Similarly, several persons with amputated legs and some otherwise crippled victims were murdered in and near Bromberg, such as Sect. No. Br. 85, Gustav Schubert, 65 years, who was suffering from advanced curvature of the spine; Sect. No. Br. 104, Paul Piotrowski, 55 years, with a sprung right leg iron; photograph on page 295, Sect. No. Br. 126, Paul Lepczynski, about 50 years, with a complete leg prosthesis; Sect. No. Br. 110, Wilhelm Gollnik, 38 years, with severe injuries to the cranium received from Poles in attempted murder 10 years ago; also Sect. Nr. Br. 78, Emanuel Hemmerling, 35 years, suffering from severe bilateral T.B. of the lungs owing to which he was previously exempted from auxiliary services by the Poles themselves.

(1) It was not always possible to draw a clear distinction between rifle and pistol shots, as, up to the present in civilised countries, no data are available on the effect of military firearms upon children, particularly on the osseous system. It would appear that certain deviations of the usual effects could be observed which, on the strength of this recent and deplorable experience, would require scientific investigation.

[p. 200]

As far as the highest age classification is concerned, it would appear that the limit of 82 years in the case of a victim on which a post-mortem was held (Gustav Behnke, Sect. Nr. Br. 65 in the group of persons murdered at Eichdorf-Netzheim) must be considered as fortuitous: it has become evident that other investigating officers have established the murder of persons of a still more advanced age.

Weapons used

By far the most important conclusions to be drawn from the medico-legal investigations appear to be after all not so much the inhuman mental and physical brutalities, which have been so clearly established in the post-mortem examinations; the greater significance should be attributed to the fact that in the overwhelming majority of cases subjected to an autopsy, the use of military weapons has been proved beyond any doubt. In most cases rifles were used, occasionally pistols, more rarely hand-grenades. These facts are clearly corroborated by numerous bullets or splinters, such as were extracted in about 50 cases.

In particular, the use of military firearms can, even without the surgical detection of the bullet, be proved by their highly destructive effect, especially on the osseous system, and in a remarkable measure by the hydro-dynamic phenomenon of the lifting of the skull in the case of a bullet tearing right through the brain.

The principal weapon of murder in the attempt to exterminate the German element in Poland and especially on the "Bloody Sunday" in Bromberg, has accordingly been the Polish Army rifle.

The medico-legal officer is forced to draw particular attention to this fact, established by autopsies, as it may prove to be extremely valuable to the investigating authorities in ascertaining and proving the existence of organised massacres.

Murders committed with makeshift weapons, bludgeons or knives appear to be exceptional.

No casual weapons such as pieces of garden fencing, which might be used by a person overwhelmed by passion, were employed, but highly efficient firearms.

In regard to the pistols used, it is not possible to draw in each separate case the same definite conclusions as in the case of rifles, even when the bullet was detected in the body.

It was however possible to ascertain through examinations of the peculiar shape of the bullet extracted that in the following three cases the Nagan revolver was used:

Sect. No. Br. 48, Fritz Radler,

Sect. No. Br. 98 and Sect. No. Br. 99, Heinz and Friedrich Beyer.

The Nagan revolver was, however, a weapon obtainable in the open market and therefore excludes the assumption of the existence of a definite group of miscreants or organisers.

One item, however, seems to be of conspicuous interest: all bullets fired from small-arms retrieved in the large number of Bromberg cases, altogether 10 in number, were encased, i. e. belong to modern highly effective small-arms, namely, in three cases, the Nagan revolver, and in the other cases automatic pistols. Lead bullets as fired from a revolver are completely absent here. The assumption that all lead bullets fired from revolvers generally pass through the body is erroneous: experience proves that such bullets almost invariably become lodged, one is therefore confronted with the fact that all portable firearms used were of a highly effective and modern type, and this in a country, the population of which were hardly familiar with modern appliances in other fields even by name. The conclusions of these medico-legal investigations should prove to be of importance when questions of organisation come under review.

Can the killing of minority Germans be considered as legal executions?

It was of paramount importance in the medico-legal reports on each individual case, as well as on the various mass-murders, to ascertain whether it could be assumed that the shooting took place by the order of a court-martial and consequently took the form of an execution. It would be fruitless to attempt to consider the character of crimes punishable by death, supposed to have been committed by thousands of persons, including 4 months old infants, which were considered to have been sufficient grounds for execution.

The unbiased examination of the cases in point forces one to the following conclusions:

It is true that injuries such as may be expected after an execution, i. e. by shots delivered by a firing-squad at the victim, and striking the head or body either from the front or the back in a typical manner, did actually occur. They are, without exception,

cases where individuals or small groups of victims were dragged out of their homes and "stood against the wall."

Considerable numbers of such instances were found by the Criminal Police in their intensively conducted investigations into the mass-murder in the Parish of Eichdorf-Netzheim, where 38 minority Germans were murdered, on 36 of whom post-mortems were held. Although the bullet wounds bear a certain resemblance to injuries inflicted during an execution, it is quite impossible to speak of it as a military execution, if one considers who the victims of this mass-murder were. Indeed this group comprised no less than seven children, aged from 3 to 13 years, furthermore 12 women, whose age varied between 16 and 80 years; and among the men there were only a few of military age, besides several sick and aged persons.

Another considerable group, victims of mass-murder, which has also been investigated most thoroughly by the Criminal Police, is the assassination of 39 minority Germans (38 autopsies) at the Jesuitersee near Bromberg, which might possibly come under the heading of "execution by court-martial," if one considers the class of victims concerned. Only men were included in this group, and as far as it was possible to identify them, their ages varied between 17 and 58 years. The assumption that a military execution had taken place might in this case be more readily entertained, as these people were handed over by civilians and army representatives to an organised Polish unit who murdered them.

An examination of the corpses, however, leads us to conclude that no military executions had taken place in this case. On the contrary, a bestial and indiscriminate slaughter of unarmed victims had occurred, 12 of whom had been bound together with cattle rope.

Apart from firearms, stabbing instruments were employed, 4 men actually having been killed by stabbing alone, and 13 others by both firearms and stabbing weapons.

In one particular case, a victim knocked down by a pistol-shot grazing his head had received 33 thrusts of the bayonet or stabs with a dagger (photo on p. 278, Sect. No. Br. 23, Willi Heller, 19 years). In many cases dying victims had been bayoneted, as in Sect. No. Br. 27, an unknown man, aged about 30, who had received a bullet through the lung.

The injuries referred to above, namely: slight or shallow stabs, inflicted as a stimulus, were established in three cases. Twice, in Sect No. Br. 18, Max Probul, 35 years, and also in the case of Sect. No. Br. 27, an unknown man, about 35 years of age, the orbital cavities of the victims had been punctured.

The total number of stabs found on 38 bodies examined was no fewer than 69.

The bullet wounds also require a more detailed examination. Altogether 98 bullet wounds were found on the 34 victims remaining after excluding those who had been stabbed to death.

The highest number of direct bullet wounds in one particular case amounted to five. Furthermore, in a considerable number of cases, all the bullet wounds were inflicted on the victims whilst they were in a recumbent position, so that not a moment's consideration can be given to the thought that one or other shot was meant as a coup de grace. The statement made above, i. e. that it was not a matter of "finishing shots"

with the intention of terminating sufferings, but tortures which were inflicted, applies to all those numerous cases in which the victims were hit by shots whilst either in an upright or recumbent position.

The dastardly practice, to which attention has already been drawn above, of shooting at the gluteal region of the dying victim, was practised in the group under consideration no less than four times.

Particular significance must be attributed to the fact that frequently injuries from ricochet bullets were traceable, i.e. injuries caused by splinters of bullets, smashed when rebounding from an object, often probably from the body of a person in the immediate vicinity. Wounds caused by splintered bullets were established in 10 cases. One of the murdered men, namely Ernst Kolander (Sect. No. Br. 31), 27 years, was found to have received exclusively such "ricochet" injuries to 15 different parts of the body, but was not struck once by an aimed bullet. These injuries bear silent testimony to a wild shooting of victims herded together. This fact alone would entirely suffice to dismiss the assumption of a regular execution.

Attention should further be called to the fact that out of a total number of 98 shots fired, no less than 15 were fired from a pistol. In point of fact, in other cases of mass-murder, as has already been mentioned above, pistols had frequently been employed. In the case under consideration, however, the fact alone that the perpetrators consisted of an organised Polish unit leads to the indisputable conclusion that officers or specially appointed persons must have been amongst the murderers, as they alone were armed with pistols--a fact which should be borne in mind when the question of organised action is considered.

In order to complete the observations made, it should be stated that, during the massacre at the Jesuitersee, injuries inflicted not only by firearms and stabbing weapons were ascertained, but also such caused by blunt instruments, obviously in the shape of rifle butts, were found, leading in three cases to fractures of the skull, in one case to a fracture of the fibs, and in another to a fracture of the humerus.

Truly appalling facts come to light if one considers in this mass-murder the question of the effect of the injuries and the duration of the death agonies of the various victims.

Only in 21 cases out of a total of 38 murdered victims were injuries found, such as shots smashing the cranium, shot or stabs followed by cardiac opening or injury to the main near-cardial arteries, which lead to the assumption that death was instantaneous. The remaining 17 cases exhibited shots through the lungs, injuries to the limbs, shots through the spinal cord or less extensive bullet injuries to the skull, so that in none of these cases could instantaneous death have occurred, and indeed in some of them, protracted agonies lasting for hours must be assumed. In accordance with the findings of the Special Commission of the Criminal Police, it is probable that the perpetrators threw the victims from the landing stage into the shallow water and then renewed their fire on those who still gave signs of life. It is therefore possible that the agonies of one or the other of that group of unfortunates were terminated by drowning. On the other hand, this fact must also be considered as far as the question of military execution is concerned. There is no doubt that neither drowning, thrusts of the bayonet, nor stabbing can, in any circumstances, possibly be considered as a means of regular and lawful execution.

A complete statement of the findings of medico-legal experts on the massacre at the Jesuitersee inevitably leads to the conclusion that in this case no execution had taken place, nor, according to the investigations of the Special Commission of the Criminal Police, could there have been any reason or legal right for such action. In these cases the murders were committed in the most dastardly manner, with such methods of extreme brutality as are seldom to be found in the records of ordinary capital crime.

It would therefore appear that, in considering the question of organized action, the most important medico-legal finding is that of the co-operation of the leaders of military units--abundantly corroborated by the presence of pistol shots--on whom, consequently, the main responsibility rests.

IV. Summary

The medico-legal findings in the post-mortems conducted on about 250 minority Germans, representing only a small proportion of the victims of the Polish massacre, have established the fact that persons of every age, from 4 months old infants to 82-year-old victims were murdered quite indiscriminately and that even women in an advanced stage of pregnancy were not spared.

It has been demonstrated that the murders were carried out with the utmost brutality and that in numerous cases measures with distinctly sadistic tendencies were adopted. Particularly, punctures of the orbital cavity were found, as well as other mutilations which must be considered as wholly convincing evidence offered by witnesses.

The planning of the individual murders often shows a high degree of cunning in the devising of the mental and physical torture applied to the victims; several cases, especially where the actual process of killing lasted several hours and where the death agonies of the victims were deliberately protracted, cannot be sufficiently stressed.

Probably the most important finding is the proof that only quite exceptionally, were makeshift weapons, such as bludgeons, knives, etc., used, and that, generally, modern and highly effective weapons, i. e. military rifles and pistols, were at the disposal of the murderers. It must be particularly noted that the consideration even of the smallest details leads to the exclusion of the idea of formal executions of victims.

Br. 118.(1)
13, 1939

Bromberg, Nov.

Coffin marked:

Herbert Schollenberg.

Aged 14 years.

A. External examination

1. Body of boy, height 148 cm., build: slight.
2. Hands tied behind back with ordinary double-knotted loop; ordinary string of 0.4 cm. in thickness, somewhat thickened through damp.
3. Advanced stage of decomposition. Epidermis decomposed in exposed places except for remains on fingers. Here and there superficial softening of the corium with uneven basis (probably due to vermin), likewise in some sections of the scalp, the size of the palm of the hand, and furthermore over the chin and in places on limbs of body. Otherwise corium of dirty greyish to greyish-green colour, in parts dried to a brown hue.
4. Hair -- up to 4 cm. -- medium fair.
5. Scalp intact, where examination not made impossible by the action of vermin; same applies to skin of face and neck.
6. Bulbi oculi sunk deeply back into orbital cavities.
7. On right upper thorax, 124 cm. from the soles of the feet, 8 cm. from median line directly beneath the inner third of the collar-bone, a circular aperture of 0.6 cm. in diameter between nipple and anterior axillary lines. (Phot.)
8. In a perpendicular line under the abovementioned aperture over 4th rib, 112 cm. from the soles of the feet, 8 cm. to the right of median line--a similar circular aperture, equally of 0.6 cm. in diameter. (Phot.)
9. Surface of abdomen intact, also genitals and limbs, as far as can be ascertained by examination of parts not affected by vermin.

(1) As an illustration of the meticulous care taken by the medico-legal experts in making their statements, the appendix to Sect. Br. 118 (OKW H. S. In.) is here reprinted (vide phot. on p. 304)

[p. 205]

10. On left dorsal side, over region of scapular ridge, 117 cm. from the soles of the feet, 7 cm left of median line--an irregular oval lacuna of soft parts, 3 by 2 cm. in length, the longer diameter being perpendicular. Lobulated edges; their juncture diminishes the aperture and divides it more or less to indicate an upper and a lower half. (Phot.)
11. On the right dorsal side in the scapular line, over the upper half of the scapula, 120 cm. above the soles of the feet, 8 cm. to right of median line--an irregular circular aperture of 0.8 cm. in diameter. (Phot.)

B. Internal examination

I. Cranial cavity

12. Soft and osseous walls intact.

13. Brain softened to pulp of dirty-greenish colour.

II. Thoracic and abdominal cavities

14. From the soft aperture under the right clavicle a tract, the width of a pencil, is ascertainable. and continues right through the main pectoral muscle and the tissue of the inner sections of the right axilla, on to the back towards the sub-scapularis muscle, then through the scapula with a circular aperture of some 0.8 cm. in diameter, and finally to the small soft aperture on the right dorsal side.

Axillary vessels intact. From the scapular aperture which is situated about 1 cm. from the interior edge and 1.5 cm. under the spine of the scapula, several fissures on the right upper and lower halves; the fragments of bone embraced by these fissures are partly displaced towards the back. The track forms a straight line when the scapula is slightly raised and the articular tragus lowered, as the position would have been when the boy was fettered.

15. A further bullet track, the width being that of a pencil, can be seen between the lower aperture of the right anterior thorax and the large aperture on the left dorsal side. It leads through the anterior soft parts of the thorax and from there into the right pleural gap, i.e. through the third intercostal space on the mammillar line. The fourth rib was grazed at its upper edge and shows a mark of about 2 cm. in length on the posterior side of its upper edge. Then the track follows, again in the same thickness of a pencil, the right upper lobe of the lung and runs through the posterior mediastinal tissue towards the vertebral column. In this section of the track the thoracic artery shows a large tear in its posterior wall, so that, on a length of more than 4 cm. only a strip 1 cm. wide of the anterior wall remains. The rim of the torn-out piece is unevenly ragged with numerous fissures running in zig-zag lines right into the remaining part of the wall.

At the vertebral column, the track, about two fingers wide, is bifurcated into the left sections of the fifth and sixth thoracic vertebrae. It is noticeable that the degree of fungoid tissue destruction is moderate. Furthermore the costal cartilages of the fifth and sixth ribs the length of 2 cm. had been smashed. The track now leaves the left pleural gap, through an aperture the size of a florin, and emerges through the dorsal muscles into the soft parts of the left side of the dorsum. In this latter section of the track the interior edge of the scapula was struck half way up, forming an injury 2 cm. in length, in the shape of a circular segment. The edge of the injury shows an outward slope and fissures radiating into the infra-spinous parts.

16. Organs of the thoracic and abdominal cavities not mentioned in this report were found to be intact.

17. Changes of organs due to disease were not observed; considering the height and lymphatic secretion they were in fair condition.

18. Determination of age: Symphysis over 2 mm. wide and well preserved in upper arm. Clear interior and exterior sutures. Not quite completed permanent teeth. (The two right second molars are missing).

All indication marks coincide with the age of 14, as stated.

Br. 118.
13, 1939

Bromberg, Nov.

Coffin marked:

Herbert Schollenberg.

14 years of age.

Preliminary report

I. The post-mortem examination has established two bullet injuries.

a) Penetrating shot from right infra-clavicular fossa through tissue of axilla to right side of dorsum, right through the scapula. Slight smashing effect on osseous parts; slightly descending track.

b) Penetrating shot from median region of thorax to left scapula, grazing vertebral column, tearing thoracic artery, moderately ascending track.

II. The shot through the thorax with severance of the thoracic artery proved fatal and caused instantaneous death.

III. Judging by its effective power, the shot through the right axillary scapula was obviously fired from a pistol. As far as the shot through the thorax from right to left in the back is concerned, its effect points in all probability to an army rifle. This is particularly indicated by the degree of severance of the thoracic artery, whereas the effect on the osseous parts appears to be surprisingly small. In this respect it should be pointed out that it is only since the Bromberg massacre that experience has been gained as to the effective power of rifle bullets on the osseous system of children. The above mentioned differences in the effective powers of these weapons seem to be typical.

IV. The pistol shot from the right infra-clavicular fossa to the right dorsal side might have hit the victim whilst in an upright position, though only in that position, of the shoulder girdle as indicated and produced by the fettering of the hands behind the back as found on the body. Unless one assumes that the bullet was fired from a kneeling position, as shot through the thorax could only have been fired on a body in a recumbent position, as demonstrated by the slightly ascending direction of the bullet track, especially so as the spot hit was 112 cm. from the soles of the feet.

V. Particular attention is drawn to the bonds of the 14 year old victim, as actually found on the body and also proved by the direction of the bullet track in I a). Similar bonds were found on two other persons belonging to the same group of murdered people.

VI. Exhibits:

a) Right fourth rib grazed by bullet.

- b) Partly smashing bullet wound grazing fifth and sixth thoracic vertebrae and the corresponding left ribs,
- c) Pistol shot through the right scapula.
- d) Grazing rifle bullet shot through the left scapula.
- e) Severance of thoracic artery, caused by grazing rifle bullet.

Panning

p. 211:

DOCUMENTS

Starosta G. Dziawisz Popuowi dnia 1. 5. 1939 r.
Piecząt nagłówek starostwa (niezawieszany)

Nr. 115/16. DO PANA (i) Beckera Georga Antu
 w Popuamii
 ul. 44. Murzin 66/67.

Zarządzenie konfinowania poza miejscem dotychczasowego pobytu

Na zasadzie art. 3 ustawy z dnia 22 lutego 1937 r. o stanie wyjątkowym (Dz. U. R. P. Nr 17, poz. 108) oraz § 2d Rozp. Min. Spr. Wewn. z dnia 5 VI. 1937 r. (Dz. U. R. P. Nr 43, poz. 373) nakazuję Panu(i) zamieszkanie poza obrębem dotychczasowego miejsca pobytu na przeciąg dni 30, w miejscu, które zostanie Panu(i) wskazane przez starostwo. W tym celu ma Pan(i) przybyć do starostwa w ciągu 12-tu godzin od chwili otrzymania niniejszego zarządzenia.

Zarządzenie konfinowania należy okazać w starostwie.
 Przejazd Pana(i) do miejsca nowego pobytu odbędzie się na koszt własny.
 Przy wyjeździe do miejsca konfinowania i podczas pobytu w nim winien(na) Pan(i) stosować się ściśle do warunków wyśmienionych na odwrocie niniejszego zarządzenia.

Zarządzenie niniejsze na podstawie § 8 Rozp. Ministra Spr. Wewn. z dnia 5 czerwca 1937 r. (Dz. U. R. P. Nr 43, poz. 373) jest natychmiast wykonalne. Od powyższego zarządzenia służy Panu(i) prawo wniesienia odwołania do właściwego Wojewody za moim pośrednictwem w ciągu dni 14-tu, licząc od dnia następnego po dniu doręczenia zarządzenia. Wniesienie odwołania nie wstrzymuje wykonania niniejszego zarządzenia. W razie niezastosowania się Panu(i) do niniejszego zarządzenia zostanie Pan(i) przymusowo doprowadzony(ą) do wyznaczonego miejsca pobytu, niezależnie od grożącej Panu(i) w tym wypadku odpowiedzialności karnej z art. 11 ustawy z dnia 22. II. 37 r. o stanie wyjątkowym.

Piecząt okrągła zastępuje podpis starosty



(Podpis)

STAROSTA

Osoba konfinowana ma się zgłosić w starostwie w

Kossowie *)

Popuamii

data

(podpis)

STAROSTA

*) Wypełnia starostwo właściwe dla dotychczasowego miejsca zamieszkania.

Przybyła osoba konfinowana ma zamieszkać w miejscowości

data

(podpis)

Three classes of arrest and internment orders, Page 211 and 212 (see text p. 20, footnote 1)

p. 212:

The original of the Internment Order for Fräulein Bochnik of Posen, who was murdered in Bierzwienna-Krotka on September 11, 1939

p. 213:

Discharge Certificate as Death Warrant.

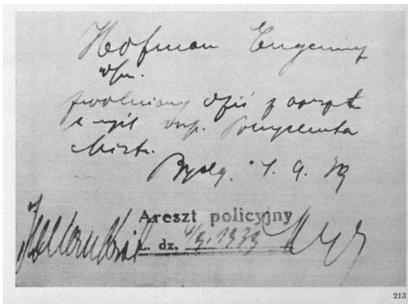
Extract from the files of the Criminal Police Office of the Reich -- Special commission in Bromberg -- Ref. No. Tgb. V (RKPA) 1486/24. 39.

On Sept. 2, 1939, the minority German Eugen Hofmann, merchant of Bromberg, was seized and put into the womens' prison of Bromberg through the initiative of Isidor Berger, the Jewish Polish A. R. P. Commander of this area. On Sept. 4, he was released from imprisonment and a certificate of discharge, as shown by photostatic print herein, was handed to him.

The same discharge certificate was received by all minority Germans released at the same time as Hofmann. Of these, all with the exception of Hofmann were murdered on Sept. 4.

The curious certificate of discharge, of which the translated text is as follows: "Hofmann, Eugen, of this town discharged today in accordance with the decree of the President of the Republic. Bromberg, Sept 4, 1939. Seal: Police arrest L. dz. 4/9/1939. Two illegible signatures," represents, according to previous findings, an order to the Polish authorities to kill the bearer of such a discharge certificate. Hofmann escaped the death destined for him only by the fact that he went to his relations in Bromberg and stayed there until the entry of the German troops, without his unforeseen presence there being discovered.

(Signed) Dr. Wehner, Criminal Commissar.



p. 214:

"Suspects"

Minority German, holder of a military passport, destined to be shot

Extract from the files of the Criminal Police Office of the Reich -- Special commission in Bromberg -- Ref No. Tgb. V (RKPA) 1486/24. 39.

On Monday Sept. 4, 1939 at 8.30 a. m. 4 Polish soldiers appeared in the home of Robert Kunde in Bromberg, 23, Wierbathstr. who, following a fruitless search for arms, made entries in the military passports of Kunde and his sons Richard and Wilhelm, marked the passport holders as "Suspects" A note was made on other pages of the military passports to the effect that the bearers were to be shot. The male members of the Kunde family, together with other minority Germans who had been herded together, were handed over to other members of the Polish military by the soldiers who had carried out the search, were driven into a wood where they were to be shot. Richard Kunde, together with another minority German from Bromberg, Grüning, was able to escape, whereas his father was later on found murdered.

The entries made in the passports of Richard and his father, which were found on the body, are intact, with the exception of the entries that the bearers were to be shot. Richard Kunde, in fear, tore out the further entry in his military passport and buried it in the wood. The buried page was found again and is now being examined at the Criminal Police Headquarters of the Reich.

(Signed) Dr. Wehner, Criminal Commissar.

The photo on the left is taken from an old German passport which was the property of Richard Kunde's murdered father who, as a German, had served in the German army before 1918. The photo on the right is a photo from the Polish passport of Richard Kunde who, though of German extraction, was liable to military service in the Polish Army.

p. 212:

The original of the Internment Order for Fräulein Bochnik of Posen, who was murdered in Bierzwienna-Krotka on September 11, 1939

p. 213:

Discharge Certificate as Death Warrant.

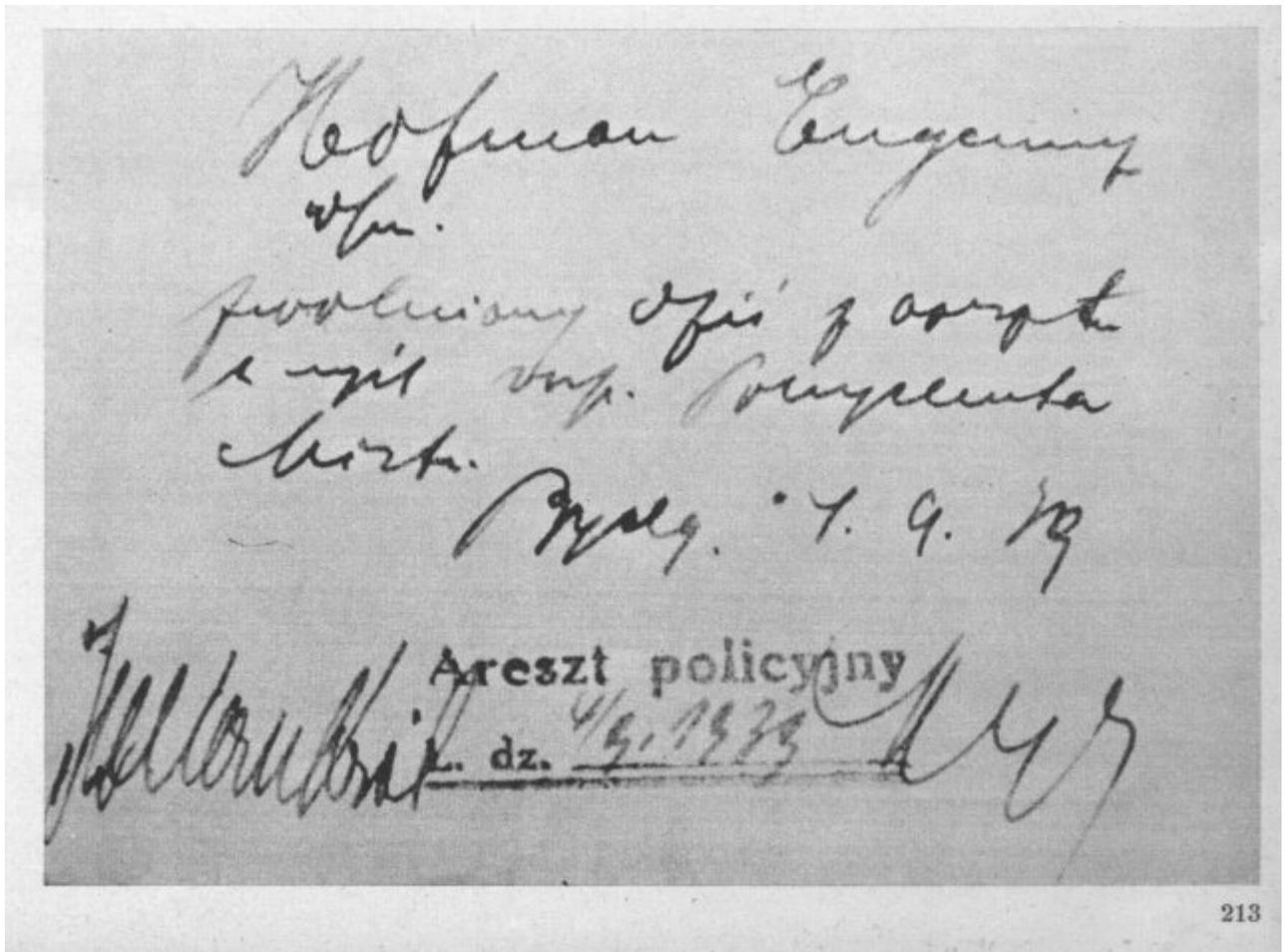
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213

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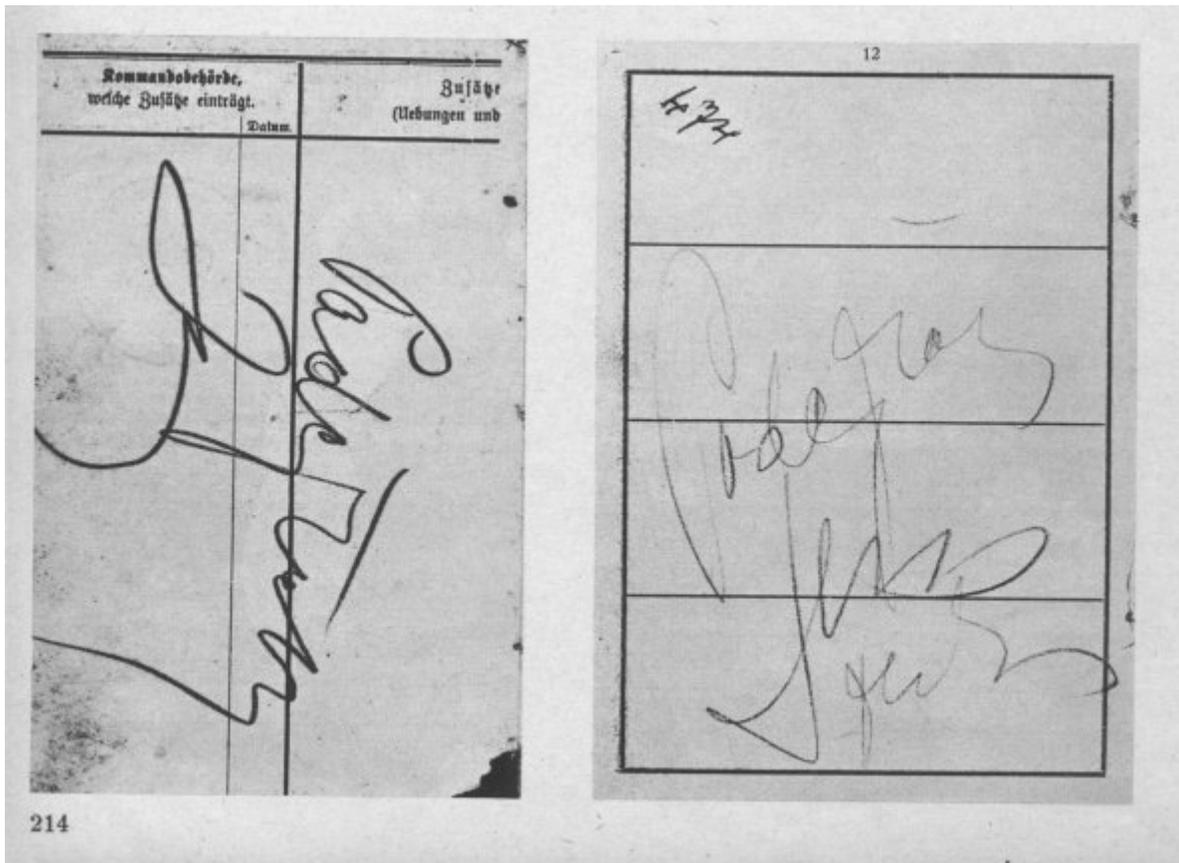
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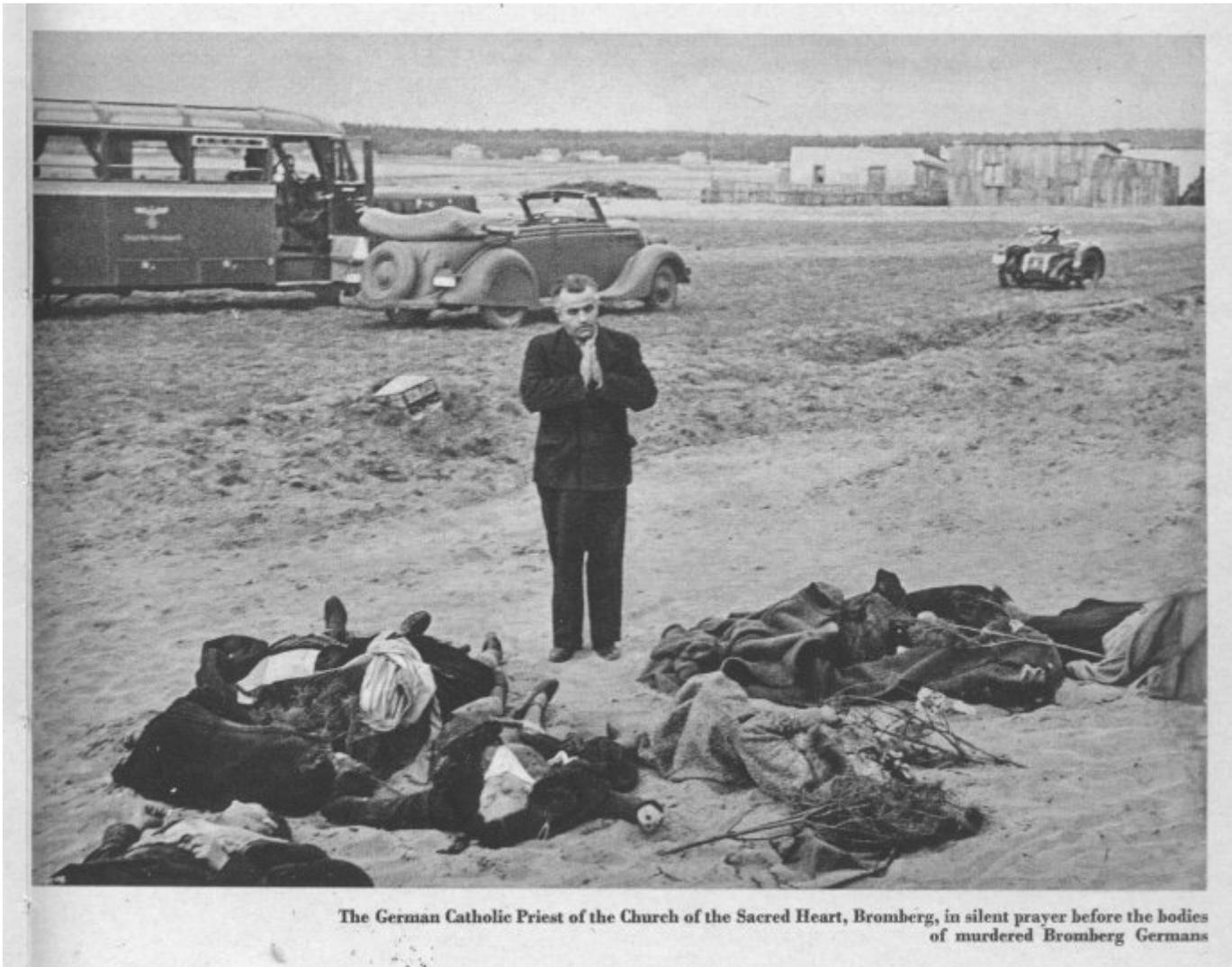
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p. 219:



The German Catholic Priest of the Church of the Sacred Heart, Bromberg, in silent prayer before the bodies of murdered Bromberg Germans

p. 220:



Foreign Press representatives convince themselves, on the spot, of the Polish atrocities committed against minority Germans (left, in the background, Mr. Oechsner of the United Press).

p. 221:



Eight murdered Germans in one place, of whom 2 were found lying separately and 2 others, lying apart, in Glöck, near Wundberg

p. 222:



Here lie 18 bodies found on the bank of the Bromberg Canal, among them the bodies of 2 children. With the exception of one, all the dead had their hands tied together behind their backs.

p. 223:



At the end of the Thorner Straße in Bromberg, 10 minority Germans were found beaten to death and mutilated.

p. 224:



Murdered minority Germans before their burial in the Protestant graveyard in Bromberg

p. 225:



Murdered minority Germans of Schulte

p. 226:



The mutilated bodies of three murdered minority Germans of Bromberg: Alfred Wisniewski, box manufacturer, Wiesel, a merchant, and Friedrich Bok, a workman.

p. 227:



Murdered by four shots in breast and neck — the son-in-law of the widow Giese, Bromberg

p. 228:



Gertrud Rohde, the 18-year-old daughter of the peasant Rohde, of Langenau, had two fingers of her right hand chopped off so that her rings might be stolen.



German farmer's wife from Langenau, near Bromberg. Her right foot was cut off and then her leg was, separated butcher-fashion, from the thigh.

p. 230:

Killed or murdered German-born peasants from the villages of Langenau and Otteraue near Bromberg.



230

p. 231:



p. 232:

Here lie the bodies of the gardener Friedrich Beyer, his two sons, Kurt and Heinz (aged 10 and 18), and Thiele, the gardener's assistant, of Gr. Bartelsee, District of Bromberg.



Friedrich Beyer

p. 233:

Kurt Beyer



Heinz Beyer and Thiele

p. 234:



The 39 murdered minority Germans in Hopfengarten near Bromberg.



The bodies, entirely mutilated, lay close together. Most of the victims were bound together in twos with rope.

p. 236:



Murdered minority Germans from the village of Glinke near Bromberg

p. 244:



Mass grave near Sompolno of 45 murdered Germans, including 41 German farmers of the village of Sockelstein near Wreschen

p. 245:



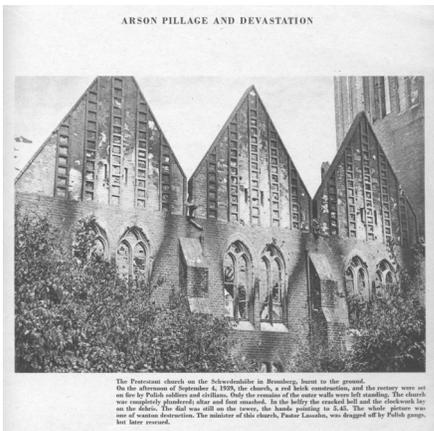
Masses of minority Germans from Warsaw beaten to death or shot. They were found scattered over streets, fields and in woods and laid in one place to be identified.

p. 246:



33 German farmers murdered in the village of Luchewo found their last resting place here.

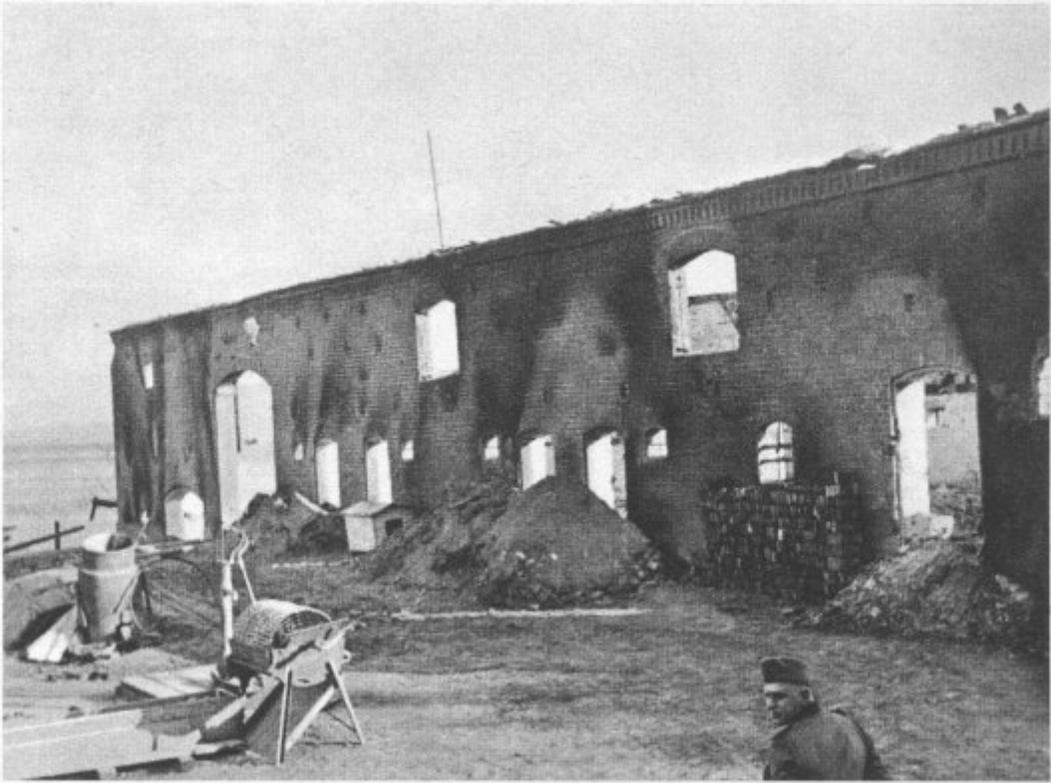
p. 247:



The Protestant church on the Schwandshöhe in Bromberg, burnt to the ground on the afternoon of September 6, 1939, after church, a red brick congregation, and the rectory were set on fire by Polish soldiers and civilians. Only the remains of the altar walls were left standing. The church was completely plundered after and later demolished. In the belfry the cracked bell and the clockwork lay on the debris. The bell was left on the tower, the hands pointing to 2:45. The whole picture was one of wanton destruction. The minister of this church, Pastor Lamsche, was dragged off by Polish gang-bust later arrested.

p. 248:

German farmsteads at Langenau and Otterau near Bromberg burned down by Polish hordes



Farmstead Fenner at Langenau

p. 249:



After the search. The home of Herr Symosek in Gnesen, manager of the farmers' Co-operative Society, which was devastated and plundered by 20 Polish soldiers. Symosek was carried off together with his two daughters, Eva aged 19, and Dora aged 16. The soldiers stole a large sum of money from the desk and all of Symosek's suits, including clothes laid away for the winter. The Iron Crosses (1st and 2nd class), and other of Symosek's war decorations were thrown into large washbasins, the latter then being used by the soldiers for relieving themselves.

ANNOUNCEMENTS OF DEAD AND MISSING



These cuttings from the "Posener Tageblatt" of Wednesday, October 11, 1939, under the heading "We accuse", give details of the horrible atrocities perpetrated on six Germans recently discovered at Slesin, and continue with an account of the burial of 19 other murdered Germans, and of their sufferings before they were put out of their misery.

This cutting is an account by a clergyman, the Reverend Berger, of the discovery of one hundred Germans, six weeks after they had suffered a cruel death at the hands of the Poles. His description of how the victims were identified is especially interesting since it shows how careful the Poles were to leave no personal belongings on those whom they murdered, whereby the latter might be identified.

Von 282 Gemeindegliedern, die in den ersten Septembertagen erschossen, zum polnischen Militär eingezogen oder ins Gefängnis gebracht waren, sind folgende 79 polnische Nachhut zum Opfer gefallen, die zwischen am 9. u. 10. September zwischen Gosenow und Warschau.

- Der Kirchweiliger**
 Landwirt Heinrich Juch aus Langenau, 32 Jahre, vermisst
- Die Gemeindevorsteher**
 Schuldenrevisor Albert Neumann, Gossin, 43 Jahre, vermisst
 Landwirt Wilhelm Lehmann, Gossin, 63 Jahre, vermisst
 Landwirt Kurt Dautschler, Langenau, 39 Jahre, vermisst
 Landwirt Otto Beckhöde, Kellertal, 59 Jahre, vermisst
 Landwirt Adolf Gannenburg, Kolbgraben, 59 Jahre, vermisst
 Landwirt Hermann Rebel, Treuenhof, 63 Jahre
- Die Gemeindeglieder**
aus Gossin
 Schneider Robert Drafke, 28 Jahre, vermisst, sein Sohn
 Schreierlehrling Robert Drafke, 15 Jahre, erschossen in Bromberg
 Kaufmann Jakob Frey, 38 Jahre
 Arbeiter Erich Hoffmann, 39 Jahre, vermisst
 Böttchermüller Adolf Kijal, 71 Jahre, vermisst
 Kaufmann Erich Kuchendrücker, 32 Jahre
 Landwirt Emil Lang, 33 Jahre, vermisst
 Schlosser Erwin Laiber, 32 Jahre, vermisst
 Arbeiter Friedrich Neubert, 34 Jahre
 Buchhalterin Sally Neumann, 31 Jahre, vermisst
 Schlichter Ernst Radweg, 35 Jahre, vermisst
 Landwirt Oswald Reibholz, 47 Jahre
 Arbeiter Otto Reffel, 53 Jahre
 Witwe Emma Rebel, 69 Jahre, vermisst
 Aufseher Paul Timm, 40 Jahre, vermisst
 Arbeiter Jakob Wolf, 51 Jahre, vermisst
 Buchhalter Max Zimmermann, 29 Jahre, vermisst
- aus Langenau (Lang-Gossin)**
 Landwirt Robert Webers, 34 Jahre, vermisst
 Landwirt Otto Webers, 24 Jahre, vermisst
 Landwirt Walter Dautschler, 26 Jahre, vermisst
 Arbeiter Hugo Fährstädt, 26 Jahre, vermisst
 Landwirt Erich Dietrich, 29 Jahre, vermisst
 Landwirt Hugo Klabe, 34 Jahre, vermisst
 Landwirt Johann Ochs, 37 Jahre, vermisst
 Landwirt Helmut Müller, 34 Jahre, vermisst
 Landwirt Fritz Müller, 28 Jahre, vermisst
 Schlosser Euseb Reibholz, 39 Jahre
 Ihr Sohn Günter Reibholz, 16 Jahre
 Tischler Emil Rieck, 30 Jahre, vermisst
 Gutswärter Erich Schulz, 31 J., erschossen in Gossin, Nr. Gossin
 Stellmacher Karl Wenz, 32 Jahre, vermisst
- aus Wilhelmshagen**
 Landwirt August Baumann, 53 Jahre
 sein Sohn Will Baumann, 18 Jahre, vermisst
 Landwirt Emil Dreyer, 68 Jahre, vermisst
 Jagler Richard Ficht, 31 Jahre
 Jagelwächter Kurt Füllbrand, 46 Jahre, vermisst
 Landwirt Christian Fröhlich, 29 Jahre
 Landwirt Otto Hornel, 38 Jahre
 Landwirt Paul Heibinger, 33 Jahre, vermisst
 Landwirt Oswald Reitel, 37 Jahre, vermisst
 Landwirt Ewald Reibel, 47 Jahre, vermisst
 Landwirt Waldemar Caspary, 27 Jahre, vermisst
 Landwirt Georg Riemer, 38 Jahre, vermisst
 Landwirt Adolf Scheler, 36 Jahre, vermisst
 Arbeiter Will Wolf, 25 Jahre, vermisst
- aus Kallensheim**
 Arbeiter Reichold Gensde, 29 Jahre, vermisst
 Landwirt Ludwig Gentel, 69 Jahre, vermisst
 sein Sohn August Gentel, 32 Jahre, vermisst
 Landwirt Gottlieb Kiel, 32 Jahre, vermisst
 Arbeiter Wilhelm Ritzmann, vermisst
 Landwirt Gust Neumann, 37 Jahre, vermisst
 Landwirt Heinrich Verstehe, 47 Jahre, vermisst
 Landwirt Ewald Raubert, 30 Jahre, vermisst
- aus Lütlichhof (Hirschbäume)**
 Arbeiter Albert Beiler, 33 Jahre, vermisst
 Rechnungsführer Hans Gester, 64 Jahre, vermisst
 Arbeiter Gustav Heil, 37 Jahre
 Schlossermüller Will Riemer, 32 Jahre
 sein Bruder, Schlossermeister Walter Riemer, 26 Jahre
 Arbeiter Gustav Sommer, 45 Jahre, vermisst
 sein Bruder Ferdinand Sommer, 23 J., vermisst
 Gutswärter Friedrich Weigt, 38 Jahre, vermisst
- aus Kamrau-Spielhof (Kaminke-Hausen)**
 Landwirt Artur Klein, 34 Jahre, ermordet bei Schwesberg
 Boris Wande, 31 Jahre
 Sechser Richard Schmidt, 33 Jahre, vermisst
- aus Kolbgraben**
 Arbeiter Adam Ritzmann, 26 Jahre, vermisst
 Landwirt August Reier, 62 Jahre, vermisst
- aus Kellertal**
 Landwirt Karl Ross, 53 Jahre
 Arbeiter Emil Reibberg, 34 Jahre, vermisst
- aus Kollhof (Kollsteme)**
 Kaufmannslehrling Gerhard Freitag, 13 Jahre
- aus Kellertal (Kollsteme)**
 Landwirt Alfred Schmiedke, 24 Jahre
- aus Gosenow**
 Landwirt Alfred Pfeiffer, 29 Jahre, vermisst
- aus Gosenow**
 Landwirt Heinrich Jung, 47 Jahre, vermisst.
- Nach den Berichten, die nach Verhören gerechtfertigte Augenzeugen
 gemacht wurden, sind erst 11 Leichen von Warschau gefunden wor-
 den. Da von den Vermissten teilweise Spuren aber Nachricht vor-
 liegt, muß auch bei ihnen selber demselben geschick werden, daß sie
 über Treue zu Gott und Heimat mit dem Tode besessen haben.
 „Bei Gott bis an den Tod, so will ich Dir die Krone des Lebens
 geben“.
- Gossin, Sonnabend 1939.
 Der Gemeinde-Richtwart.
 Meyer, Bierer.

The murdered at Gossin and Schepanowo

Am Dienstag, dem 5. September, abends, als die Sonne sich senkte, wurden durch polnische Militär-Mörderbanden am Waldestrand ihres Heimatortes erschossen

Hugo Rahn

51 Jahre alt

Erich Rahn

34 Jahre alt

Hilmar Lange

32 Jahre alt

Paul Lange

28 Jahre alt

Richard Klingbeil

46 Jahre alt

Adolf Wenzel

28 Jahre alt

Martin Brier

18 Jahre alt

Ewald Müller

25 Jahre alt

Max Schülke

32 Jahre alt

Wilhelm Paizer

60 Jahre alt

Sie starben als echte Deutsche im Glauben an Ihren Führer und an das Großdeutsche Reich.

In tiefer Trauer:

Die Hinterbliebenen.

Schepanowo, im Oktober 1939.

Kreis Moqilno.

Death announcements from the *Deutsche Rundschau*, Bromberg, of the murdered at Lochowo, Prinzenthal-Schleusenau, Jägerhof and Klein-Bartelsee-Schröttersdorf

**Die Evangelische Kirchengemeinde
Jägerhof**

verlor durch polnische Mörder am
3. und 4. September 1939 ihren sehr
verehrten Pfarrer
Richard Ruzer

ihre Gemeindevertreter:
Max Sauerland
Emil Koebke
Karl Nebel
Kurt Schröter
Wolff Krüger
Willy Gutzke
Kurt Sidmann

ihren Kirchendiener:
Erwin Nebel

ihre Gemeindeglieder:
Otto Ruzer
Kurt Koebke
Gerhard Fortner
Joh. Sauerberg
Bruno Schmidt
Erich Koch
Alfred Koebke
Paul Berg
Karl Paulski
Willy Randerhölzl
Herbert Gense
Hans Polowski
Reinhold Gehr
Gork Stabe
Alfred Gohse
Günter Krüger
Konrad Abend
August Blümke
Otto Blümke
Günter Gehrte
Germann Krutz
Gustav Grösch
Karl Hoffmann
Germann Wigalle
Ernst Boldin
Richard Trojan
Georg Gols
Karl Sauerland
Robert Semrau, vermißt
Wilhelm Frik
Mathilde Frik

„Ich weiß wohl, was ich für Gedanken über euch habe, spricht der Herr, Gedanken des Friedens und nicht des Leidens, daß Ich euch gebe das Ende, das ihr erwartet.“

Jer. 29, 11.

Jägerhof, den 22. November 1939.

f. Iax.

Deutsche Rundschau of November 25/26, 1939

Die evangelischen Kirchengemeinden Klein-Bartelsee und Schröttersdorf haben — nach den bisherigen Behelfungen —

53 Opfer

des blutigen Völkerterrors am 3. und 4. September d. J. zu beklagen.

Ermordet aufgefunden wurden die Kirchenältesten

August Schmidt,	74 Jahre alt
Friedrich Wiebe,	85 „ „

die kirchlichen Gemeindevorsteher:

Karl Behr,	84 Jahre alt
Friedrich Beyer,	45 „ „
Albert Boldin,	58 „ „
Edgar Rande,	72 „ „
Kurt Naber,	42 „ „
Erich Schmiede,	45 „ „
Karl Sonne,	45 „ „

der Kirchendiener

Emald Kollmann,	50 Jahre alt;
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ferner die Gemeindeglieder:

Gustav Beyer,	40 Jahre alt
Kurt Beyer,	26 „ „
Helmut Beyer,	15 „ „
Kurt Beyer,	10 „ „
Marta Boldin,	68 „ „
Robert Boldin,	28 „ „
Bruno Bogd,	30 „ „
Willy Gannott,	58 „ „
Germann Gannott,	16 „ „
Lito Gehr,	30 „ „
Helmut Gehr,	24 „ „
Marta Grünig,	35 „ „
Alfred Karl,	34 „ „
Albertine Kleinerl,	78 „ „
Karl Kohn,	80 „ „
Friedrich Kohn,	21 „ „
Frieda Kohn,	24 „ „
Alwine Kohn,	56 „ „
Ellen Kohn,	17 „ „
August Krüger,	33 „ „
Hovert Kruse,	17 „ „
Martina Kuhfeld,	54 „ „
Kurt Kuhfeld,	15 „ „
Kurt Kollmann,	19 „ „
Reinhold Kollmann,	84 „ „
Fritz Koblitz,	18 „ „
Helmut Koblitz,	16 „ „
Friedrich Koblitz,	80 „ „
Albrecht Schmidt,	30 „ „
Edmund Schülmann,	71 „ „
Martina Schülmann,	58 „ „
Erich Tiede,	22 „ „
Maria Tiesch,	36 „ „
Ida Wiegand,	67 „ „
Robert Wiegand,	58 „ „

An den Folgen des Völkerterrors verstarben:

am 8. 9.: Erich Pakulat,	26 Jahre alt
am 15. 9.: Margarete Frik,	36 „ „

Von den Verschleppten werden bis heute noch

vermißt:

der Gemeindevorsteher

Willy Bessel,	37 Jahre alt;
---------------	---------------

die Gemeindeglieder:

Edgar Behrend,	34 Jahre alt
Wilhelm Rande,	30 „ „
Willy Wiebe,	30 „ „
Wilhelm Koblitz,	61 „ „
Gung Jodan,	84 „ „

Unerschütterlich war ihr Glaube an die Befreiung dieses Landes durch unsere großen Brüder Adolf Hitler; tief gemutet war ihre Sicht zu unserem deutschen Volke. Von vielen müssen wir auch:

„In ihrem Herzen lebte Christus!“
Römer 8, 35-39.

Schröttersdorf, Klein-Bartelsee, 12. Oktober 1939.

Carl Bauer, Pfarrer.

Deutsche Rundschau of October 15, 1939

p. 254:

German Pastors killed by Polish murderers

In treuer Erfüllung ihres Dienstes an Volk und Kirche der Heimat
starben, soweit bisher unzweifelhaft festgestellt werden konnte, in den
Tagen der Befreiung, durch polnische Mörderhand umgebracht oder
durch die Anstrengungen der großen Märsche zugrunde gerichtet, folgende
Pfarrer und Kirchenbeamte unseres Kirchengebietes:

Pfarrer Friedrich Just in Siemno
im 55. Lebens- und 29. Amtsjahre, ermordet am 1. September 1939 in Siemno

Pfarrer Richard Ruzer in Bromberg-Jägerhof
im 46. Lebens- und 10. Amtsjahre,
am 3. September 1939 ermordet in Bromberg-Jägerhof

Diaton Willy Lubnau in Posen
Landesposaunenwart im Evangelischen Jungmännerwerk
im 39. Lebensjahre, ermordet am 10. September 1939 bei Kutno

Pfarrer Emil Mix in Strelno
im 64. Lebens- und 18. Amtsjahre
gestorben im „Haus der Barmherzigkeit“ in Lodz am 20. September 1939
an den Folgen der schweren Misshandlungen, die er auf dem Marsch
nach Nowitsch erleiden mußte

Superintendent Georg Reifel in Neutomischel
im 75. Lebens- und 46. Amtsjahre
gestorben am 12. September 1939 im Diakonissenhaus in Posen
erschöpft durch die Anstrengungen der Internierung

Pfarrer Paul Rudolph in Gräg
im 43. Lebens- und 17. Amtsjahre
ermordet am 10. September 1939 bei Kosschin

Pfarrer Johannes Schwerdtfeger in Posen
im 48. Lebens- und 24. Amtsjahre
ermordet am 10. September 1939 bei Kutno

Pfarrer Johannes Tauber in Sontop
im 47. Lebens- und 15. Amtsjahre
ermordet am 10. September 1939 bei Kosschin

Das Andenken dieser Männer wird für immer in unserem Herzen bleiben.

„Niemand hat größere Liebe denn die, daß er sein
Leben läßt für seine Freunde.“ Joh. 15, 13.

Posen, den 16. Oktober 1939. 5676

**Das Evangelische Konfitorium und der Synodalvorstand
der Unionen Evangelischen Kirche.**

D. Blau **Birschel**
Generalsuperintendent Präsident der Synode.

Deutsche Rundschau of October 18, 1939



Es starben den Tod für Deutschland
unsere lieben Sangeskameraden:

Franz Basche

2. Vorsitzender der Ortsgruppe Bromberg
des Bundes deutscher Säger und Sägerinnen

Wilhelm Goerz

Hugo Rahn

Kurt Rohrbed

Jakob Schmidt

Friedrich Neumann

Bruno Schroedter

Erwin Rapp

Bruno Grabau

Fritz Bettin

Hans Goga

Ernst Strehlau

Sie waren echte deutsche Männer, die stets für
unser Volkstum eingetreten sind und in den Jahren
der Unfreiheit treu zum deutschen Lied standen.

Die ersehnte Freiheit und Rückkehr zum Groß-
deutschen Reich Adolf Hitlers konnten sie nicht er-
leben.

Ihr Andenken ist uns heilig und wird stets in
Ehren gehalten.

Wir vermiffen bis zum heutigen Tag die Ka-
meraden:

Hugo Feier

Richard Quast

Alfred Rehlaff

Hans Aroente

Franz Roeste

Carl Fritz

Carl Pollatz

Bernhard Milewski

doch geben wir die Hoffnung noch nicht auf, diese
treudeutschen Männer wiederzusehen.

**Die Sangeskameraden
der ehem. Ortsgruppe Bromberg
des Bundes deutscher Säger u. Sägerinnen**

(—) Georg Herold

Deutsche Rundschau of October 6, 1939

Die Bromberger Malerinnung hat durch polnische Mörder-
hände liebe Kollegen, Meisterlehre und Gesellen verloren.
Es starben für ihr Volkstum

Alfred Rohrbed

Albert Hübscher

Paul Reiß

der Meisterlehre

Georg Hübscher

die Malergesellen

Albrecht Schmidt

Artur Schmidt

In Ehrfurcht gedenken wir der toten Kollegen, denen
es nicht vergönnt war, die Rückkehr unserer Heimat in das
Reich zu erleben.

Siegfried Welte
Kommissarischer Obermeister.

Bromberg, den 25. November 1939.

Deutsche Rundschau of November 25/26, 1939



Der Ruder-Club Frithjof hat durch feige pol-
nische Mörderhände liebe Kameraden und
langjährige Mitglieder verloren. Es starben
für ihr Volkstum und für Groß-Deutschland

Otto Finger

Ulrich Neumann

Georg Bozorski

Günther Rahn

Georg Schmidt

Dr. Paul Tonn

Unsere Kameraden haben die Befreiung aus dem unerträp-
lichen Joch genau so herbeigeführt wie alle Deutschen unserer an-
gestammten Heimat. Sie sind durch brutale Gewalt von unserer
Seite getötet worden und können sich der Freiheit nicht erfreuen.

Wir grüßen unsere toten Kameraden! Sie marschieren auch
weiter in unseren Reihen mit.

Ruder-Club Frithjof

Deutsche Rundschau of October 3, 1939

Im Glauben an Führer und Vaterland starben, hingschlachtet von polnischen Mördern, am 3. und 4. September den Ehrentod für die Heimat folgende Gemeindeglieder der Kirchengemeinde Lochowo:

1. Erich Fröh, Bauernsohn,	15 Jahre alt
2. Alfreed Bey, Bauer	30 " "
3. Eduard Domdey, Bauer,	52 " "
4. Karl Draheim, Bauer,	35 " "
5. Gustav Suderian, Bauer,	65 " "
6. Karl Suderian, Jungbauer,	25 " "
7. Hermann Suderian, Bauer,	67 " "
8. August Suderian, Bauer,	75 " "
9. Erich Helbig, Bauer,	45 " "
10. Ernst Heruth, Bauer,	34 " "
11. Jakob Heckendorf, Bauer,	54 " "
12. Rudolf Krüger, Bauer,	61 " "
13. Alfreed Krause, Jungbauer,	25 " "
14. Emil Krause, Jungbauer,	27 " "
15. Otto Köbernick, Arbeiter,	33 " "
16. Erich Liebnau, Bauer,	45 " "
17. Walther Liebnau, Jungb.,	32 " "
18. Wilhelm Luhn, Bauer,	44 " "
19. Willi Labott, Arbeiter,	25 " "
20. Ernst Manthey, Jungbauer,	19 " "
21. Erich Manthey, Jungbauer,	18 " "
22. Otto Piek, Arbeiter,	21 " "
23. Willi Preuß, Arbeiter,	26 " "
24. Emil Parnow, Arbeiter,	34 " "
25. Julius Rosenau, Bauer,	33 " "
26. Otto Strohschein, Altbauer,	76 " "
27. August Steinke, Arbeiter,	57 " "
28. Erich Schmidt, Bauer,	41 " "
29. Gustav Tof, Arbeiter,	59 " "
30. Rudolf Wegner, Bauer,	58 " "
31. Wilhelm Wegner, Jungb.,	31 " "
32. Gustav Wall, Bauer,	48 " "
33. Gustav Wendland, Schuhm.,	65 " "
34. Karl Hoffmann, Zieglerstr.,	68 " "
35. Otto Maziemke, Bauer,	31 " "
36. Kurt Maziemke, Arbeiter,	28 " "
37. Albert Rehbein, Bauer,	77 " "
38. Helene Schmidt, Gutsbesitz.,	43 " "
39. Hermann Flöter, Lehrling,	24 " "
40. Ernst Chichotki, Bauer,	49 " "
41. Peter Schulz, Arbeiter,	24 " "
42. Erich Helminole, Vogt,	74 " "
43. Ferdinand Dreger, Bauer,	72 " "
44. Gustav Merzin, Arbeiter,	51 " "
45. Gustav Kopiske, Bauer,	45 " "
46. Gustav Dreger, Bauer,	74 " "
47. Gisela Rosenau, 2½ Monate alt; polnische Soldaten ließen das Kind verhungern.	

Niemand hat größere Liebe als die, daß er sein Leben läßt für seine Freunde. Joh. 15, 13.

Bromberg, den 21. 9. 39.

Staffehl.

5243

Im Glauben an Führer und Vaterland starben, hingschlachtet von polnischen Mördern, am 3. und 4. September den Ehrentod für die Heimat folgende Gemeindeglieder der Schwesterngemeinden Prinzenthal und Schleusenau:

1. Reinhold Sommerfeld, Bauer, 53 Jahre alt	
2. Otto Dietrich, Bauer,	67 " "
3. Bruno Boeck, Bauer,	57 " "
4. Fröh Boeck, Mechaniker,	19 " "
5. Oskar Schröder, Fleischer,	67 " "
6. Willi Buchholz, Arbeiter,	30 " "
7. Otto Finger, Beamter,	62 " "
8. Ingo Meckel, Lehrling,	16 " "
9. Eduard Vesteike, Bahnbeamt.,	46 " "
10. Ernst Springer, Bäckerstr.,	62 " "
11. Ludwig Leichnitz, Fleischerstr.,	78 " "
12. Herbert Schollenberg, Lehrl.,	14 " "
13. Hugo Reiß, Lehrling,	17 " "
14. Jakob Schmidt, Schneider,	30 " "
15. Franz Basche, Fotograf,	62 " "
16. Helene Basche, Ehefrau,	58 " "
17. Elise Mau, Fräulein,	59 " "
18. Otto Mau, Arbeiter,	47 " "
19. Robert Rips, Gärtner,	75 " "
20. Frieda Rips, Fräulein,	44 " "
21. Grete Rips, Kontoristin,	41 " "
22. Bruno Koch, Schriftsetzer,	26 " "
23. Gertrud Berg, Fräulein,	45 " "
24. Albert Schulz, Kaufmann,	62 " "
25. Waldemar Schulz, Schüler,	17 " "
26. Gustav Schlicht, Bauuntern.,	58 " "

Wir sollen auch das Leben für die Brüder lassen. 1. Joh. 3, 16.

Bromberg, den 23. 9. 39.

Staffehl.

5292

„Am Glauben, Hof und Heimatland
 Stehn wir wie Felsenmauern,
 Geeinte Brüder, Hand in Hand
 Und treu wie Posner Bauern.“
 (Wolze-Stich)

Im September dieses Jahres starben, von nichtswürdiger polnischer Mörderhand getroffen, unsere Berufsgenossen

der Landwirt
Otto Foerster
 Boguschin, Kreis Lissa
 Vorsitzender des Bezirksausschusses

der Bauer
Paul Hoffmann
 Sontop, Kreis Neutomischel
 Aufsichtsratsmitglied, Mitglied der Klassenprüfungscommission,
 stellvert. Kreisgruppenvorsitzender und Ortsgruppenvorsitzender

der Landwirt
Dr. Werner Kirchhoff
 Solkau, Kreis Gostyn
 Aufsichtsratsmitglied, Vorsitzender der Klassenprüfungscommission,
 Bezirksgruppenvorsitzender, Kreisgruppenvorsitzender,
 Vorsitzender des Ausschusses für Betriebswesen,
 Vorsitzender des Wirtschaftsrings Anraben

der Bauer
Heinrich Guelttemeyer
 Herrnhofen, Kreis Schroda
 Aufsichtsratsmitglied,
 Vorsitzender des Ausschusses für bäuerliche Betriebsberatung
 und stellvertretender Vorsitzender des Kreisbauernvereins

der Landwirt
**Rudolf
 Freiherr von Bersdorff**
 Parsko, Kreis Koßen
 stellvertretender Kreisgruppenvorsitzender

der Gärtner
Adolf Hornschub
 Gostyn
 Sachbearbeiter für Gärtnerfragen

der Landwirt
Hugo Geisarth
 Rübenfelde, Kreis Schroda
 Aufsichtsratsmitglied, Kreisgruppenvorsitzender,
 Vorsitzender des Wirtschaftsratsausschusses,
 stellvertretender Vorsitzender des Zuckerrübenvereins

der Landwirt
Hermann von Trestow
 Radojewo, Kreis Posen
 Ortsgruppenvorsitzender und Vorsitzender des Stierzüchtvereins

Die Verstorbenen haben in den von ihnen verwalteten Ämtern ihr Bestes geleistet. Für Führer, Volk und Heimat haben sie ihr Leben hingegeben. Das Beispiel treuer Pflichterfüllung bis zum Letzten, das sie uns gaben, möge uns allen Mahnung und Verpflichtung zugleich sein. Ihr Andenken wird unvergessen bleiben.

Posen, im Oktober 1939.

Bernd von Saenger
 Vorsitzender des Aufsichtsrates der Melage

Dr. Otto Sondermann
 Vorsitzender des Hauptvorstandes der Melage

Waldemar Kraft
 Hauptgeschäftsführer und Mitglied des Hauptvorstandes der Melage

Uniere Frauen wurden am 6. 9. von polnischen Militärbanden verschleppt. Wer kann Auskunft über sie geben.

Frieda Lange
mittelgroß, dunkelblondes Haar, 39 Jahre alt, best. m. bunt. Sommerfeld, braunen Schuhen.

Berta Rosente
größere Figur, hell. schwarzer Rock, blaue gebülmte Bluse, schwarze Mantelschürze (weiß gepunkt.) u. Holzpantoffeln.

Ueber nähere Auskunft wären sehr dankbar

**Fritz Rosente
Franz Lange
Heverland.**

30. 10. 39

Wer kann mir Auskunft geb. über meinen Mann

**Franz Krüger
und meinen Vater
Wilhelm Poette**

Dieselben sind am 4. 9. Interniert worden u. zuletzt in Hohenjagge gesehen worden. Genaue Angaben sind bitte zu richten an
**Frau Anna Krüger
in Kemsdorf Abbau
Kreis Schubin.**

24. 10. 39

Wer kann Auskunft geben über:

Adolf Arieße,

46 Jahre alt, wohnhaft Kaller Str. 193a

Berner Arieße,

16 Jahre alt, wohnhaft Kaller Str. 193a

Richard Quab,

31 Jahre alt, wohnhaft Chauffeestr. 6

der am Sonntag, dem 3. September 1939 aus dem Luftschuttkeller der Fa. Wily Templin verhaftet, zur Hippelschule geführt und von dort die Anjavier Str. hochgetrieben worden ist.

Wer über den Verbleib der obengenannten irgendwelche Auskunft erteilen kann, wird gebeten, sich möglichst schnell zu melden bei:

Frau Martha Arieße

Adolf-Hitler-Straße 46

(bei Verfall)

Deutsche Rundschau

21. 10. 39

262

Dankbar

wäre ich jedem, der mir Auskunft über meinen Mann **Richard Lüneberg** und meinen Sohn **Werner** geben könnte, sie wurden a. Sonntag, dem 3. 9. aus der Wohnung Berliner Str. 23 von polnischen Banden verschleppt. Gest. Angaben erbittet

**Frau Ella Lüneberg,
Wilhelmsort,
Kr. Bromberg.**

17. 10. 39

Achtung!

Wer kann Auskunft geben über meinen Sohn **Bruno Duwe**. Er wird vom 4. September vermißt und wurde wohl von polnischen Soldaten verschleppt. Derselbe ist 2 Jahre alt, 1,80 groß, dunkelblond, hellbeidet war er mit Manchesterhose, dunkelbl. Jacke, dunkelbl. Oberhemd, Schnürschuhen. Kennzeichen: Am Zeigefinger der rechten Hand fehlt das erste Glied. Freundl. Angebote an **H. Duwe, Schulh. Bahnhofstr. 27.**

5. 10. 39

Wer kann Auskunft geben über den

Landrat a. D. Naumann

auf Suchoracz?

Er wurde von den Polen verschleppt und ist bisher nicht zurückgelehrt.

Baldige Angaben erbeten an **Schmidt & Schenke, Bromberg, Danziger Straße.**

5327

27. 10. 39

Wer kann Auskunft geben über den Verbleib des reichsdeutschen Kaufmannes

Johannes Stürtz

aus Bromberg? Wo wurde er zuletzt gesehen?

Er wurde zusammen mit seiner Ehefrau am 1. September verhaftet und am 2. September in die Marsch-Kolonie der verschleppten Korridordeutschen eingereiht. In den letzten Tagen des Marsches wurde er von seiner, inzwischen heimgekehrten, Ehefrau getrennt und ist seitdem verlohren.

Auskunft erbittet **Frau Wanda Stürtz** in Bromberg, Bahnhofstraße 45.

5345

28. 10. 39

Vermißt!

Wer kann Auskunft geben über meinen Mann

Alfred Rippf

51 J. alt, der in Begleit. d. 13-jähr. Sohnes Bruno a. d. Flucht am 4. 9. in Groß-Neudorf bei Hopfengarten gefeh. wurd. Weitere Ang. erbittet **Fr. G. Rippf, Rochelnstr. Brombg.**

6. 11. 39

Wer kann Auskunft geben

1. über meinen Mann **Richard Dietrich, Lohowow, b. Bromberg, 58 Jahre alt, Größe 1,65, Kleidung: braune Manchesterhose, Strümpfe, br. Hosen, zuletzt gesehen worden bei Bartichin am 9. 9.**

2. über meinen Sohn **Erwin Dietrich, Lohowow, b. Bromberg, 30 Jahre alt, dunkelbl., Größe 170, Kleidung: braune Manchesterhose, lange Stiefel, graublauer Jackett und Weste. Zuletzt Montag nachm. 4/9 in Brinzenthal gesehen word.**

3. über meinen Schwiegerohn **Hermann Arause, Bromberg, Anappenstr. 5, Größe 170, hellbl., 42 Jahre alt, Kleidung: hellgraue Stiefelhose, lange Stiefel, br. Jackett wurde am 3. 9. nachm. 5 Uhr aus der Wohnung verschleppt. Über Auskunft wären sehr dankbar**
Etfriede Dietrich, Lohowow-Brombg., Wilma Arause, Anappenstr. 5, W. 4

4./5. 10. 39

Wer kann Auskunft über meinen Mann

Wilhelm Schmidt

erteilen. Er ist am Sonntag, dem 3. September, mittags gegen 12 Uhr aus unserer Wohnung, Berliner Straße 35, von polnischen Soldaten weggeholt worden und an gebl. am Abend desselben Tages noch mit anderen Deutschen in der Schule Hippelstr. gesehen worden. Seitdem fehlt jede Spur. Freundl. Angaben erbittet

**Frau E. Schmidt
Berliner Straße 35**

3. 10. 39

Wer kann mit Auskunft über meinen Mann **Erich Giarnecki, Bromberg, Schillerstraße 12** geben? 34 Jahre alt. Er wurde am 3. 9. von den Polen verschleppt. Best. mit grau-farbiertem Sportanzug, schwarzen Lederschuh. Für jede Nachricht bin ich sehr dankbar
Frau Else Giarnecki, Bromberg, Schillerstraße 12.

5318

4./5. 10. 39

Aus der Unterten Evangelischen Kirche in Posen werden seit den ersten Septembertagen dieses Jahres noch folgende Geistliche vermisst:

Superintendent Julius Ahmann, Bromberg
Pfarrer Hr. Ernst Rienitz, Czempin
 „ **Oskar Keder, Mogilno**
 „ **Heinz Werner, Erin**
 „ **Wilhelm Borgmann, Neustadt bei Pinne**

Pfarrvikar Max Wiede, Schmiegel
 „ **Ernst Fröhlich, Schönsee**

Alle Personen, welche über den Verbleib der Vermissten zweckdienliche Angaben machen können, werden gebeten, diese persönlich oder schriftlich an das Evangelische Konsistorium in Posen, Mühlenstr. 11a, zu richten.

Posen, den 13. Oktober 1939.

Evangelisches Konsistorium.
 D. Blan.

6714

19. 10. 39

Wer kann Auskunft geben über Superintendent Ahmann

Er war unter den Verschleppten. Nach der Befreiung ist er in Lowlitz einwandfrei gesehen und sogar gesprochen worden.

Wer kann mitteilen in welchem Lazarett er in oder bei Lodz war. Seine Frau erbittet baldige Angaben. Schulstr. 11/3.

15. 10. 39

Wer kann mir über den Verbleib mein. Sohnes **Adolf Gaedel** welcher am 4. 9. vormt. in der Danziger Str. verhaftet wurde, und am Kornmarkt noch einmal gesehen worden ist, nähere Angaben machen? 2932
 Frau Käthe Gaedel, Chauffeestraße 62

Wer kann Auskunft über meinen Mann **Bruno Nidel**, Gr.-Lubin, erteilen? Er ist am 1. September interniert und ist bei Lowitsch zuletzt gesehen worden. Augenblicklich soll er sich in Lodz oder Lowitsch i. Lazarett befinden. Freundl. Angaben erbittet 6539
 Frau Ella Nidel, G.-Lubin b. Graudenz.

10. 10. 39

Deutsche Rundschau

Wer kann über meinen Sohn Hans Kroente

Auskunft geben, der am 3. September verhaftet und dann zur 62. Kaserne gekommen ist? Von dann ab fehlt mir jede Spur. Mitteilungen erbittet

Frau Hedwig Kroente, Albert-Förster-Straße 3.

5060

29. 10. 39

Wer kann Auskunft über Architekt Bruno Dembel

geben? Am 3. September, vormittags, von polnischen Banden aus seiner Wohnung, Berliner Straße 22 abgeführt, wurde er in Richtung des 3. Pol.-Rom. gesehen. Baldige Angaben erbittet

Frau Wally Dembel, Berliner Straße 22 2879

12. 10. 39

Verschleppt!

Wer kann Auskunft geben über meinen Mann Landwirt

Richard Belau
Alein Lonot
 65 J. alt, u. Jungbauer
Kurt Bielle
 Gogolin

welche am 8. 9. auf der Flucht in Montwn hinter Hohensalza zusammen mit etwa 50 Volksdeutschen verhaftet wurden. Die Gefangenen wurden am 7. 9. angeblich Richtung Wloclawek abgeführt. Baldige Nachrichten erbitten an 2921

Frau Belau
Alein Lonot
 Post Wierzychucin Kreis Bromberg.

Verschleppt!

Wer kann Auskunft geben über meinen Sohn **Herbert**

welcher am Blutsonntag von polnischen Banden nach Hohensalza mitgenommen wurde. Angaben bitte zu richten an 2904

Robert Ristau
 Bromberg-Brahnan

Dankbar

wären wir, wenn wir Auskunft über den Verbleib der Familie **H. Schottowitt** erzielten, welche am 5. oder 6. September zuletzt in Trzciniec, Kr. Kutno, gesehen worden ist. 2878

Famkie Schiller, Schulz.

8. 10. 39

Vermisst

wird **Helmuth Grossmann**, 29 J. alt, geb. Todgorz, Kreis Thorn, Auskunft erbittet 3090

Diegan, Bromberg, Dorfstraße 8.

14. 10. 39

Vermisst.

Wer kann Auskunft über meinen Mann

Germann Krause

Mechaniker, 33 J. alt. (gearbeit. bei Toru now geben? Er ist a. Blutsonntag, nachts zwisch. 11-11 aus der 62. Kaserne angebl. nach d. Kujawierstr. getrieben worden. Von da an vermisst. Angaben erbittet 2900

Frau Martha Krause, Schwedenbergstr. 13/9.
 Von 5 Uhr nachm. ab.

Wir bitten um Nachricht über den Verbleib von 2129

Herbert Wolter

d. am Blutsonntag mit 3 ander. Volksdeutsch. 4 km von Bromberg, Richtung Hohensalza als Begleiter unserer Viehherde erschossen sein soll (?).

Mitteilungen an **Wodrow, Falkenhofst Kreis Schwes oder Wolter bei Wodrow.**

Für jede Nachricht aufrichtig dankbar.

Verschleppt wurde

Herbert Lünig

abgeholt mit Pferd u. Wagen am 31. August, Neutirchen, Kr. Schubin war beladet mit einer braungrauen Rothweilangenen Stieleseln, roten Sportittel, wollestem geittemm Vorhemd u. einen braunen Plaidmantel, heller Wäge. War 1,75 großschmales längliches Gesicht. Am 7. 9. wurde er zuletzt in Hohensalza gesehen. Wo ist er noch gesehen worden? In welcher Stadt oder Dorf? An welchem Datum und Tage? Bitte um genaue Auskunft. 2890

Adolf Lünig, Neutirchen, (Spiorz).

18. 10. 39

Verschleppt

wurde am Montag, d. 4. 9. 1939, mittags 2 Uhr der Maurerpolier **Richard Walfowiat**, 68 Jahre alt, mit ihm war der Krankenwärter **Krause**. Wer kann Auskunft geben über die Vermissten? Frdl. Angaben erbittet Frau **Selma Walfowiat, Bromberg, Bülowplatz 5.** 2896

7. 10. 39

Wer weiß

etwas über den Verbleib meines Mannes, des Landwirts Erwin Laube aus Neufelde (Nienawilicz) bei Rogasen, Kreis Obornik, 42 Jahre alt, bekleidet mit Reithose, schwarzgrauem Jackett und Weste, grauen Wadenstrümpfen, braunen Schuhen, heller Mütze; Trauring E. V. 12. 7. 25, Stempel 900?

Am 4. September mußte er sich mit seinem Nachbarn Seidler in Posen zum Militär stellen. Gesehen wurde er als Internierter bei Gnesen und Warschau. Bei Thorn soll er von einem Landwirt aus der Gegend von Filschne gesehen worden sein, als er schwach zurückblieb.

Wer etwas von meinem Mann und Seidler weiß, wird gebeten, sofort gegen Erstattung der Unkosten nähere Angaben zu machen.
859) **Frau Liesbeth Laube.**

Wer weiß

etwas von meinem Sohn Willi Ruwisch aus Buchdorf (Budziszewko), Kreis Obornik, geb. 23. 10. 1907? Er wurde am 1. September interniert und war bis 8. September bei derselben Gruppe vor Warschau. Er hatte eine helle Kortjacke, schwarze Hosen mit weißen Streifen, ein Hemd weiß mit blau und grauen Streifen und ein helles Vorhemd an. An der linken Hand fehlte der Daumen bis zum ersten Gelenk, an der Schläfe hatte er eine kleine Narbe.

Wer Näheres über den Verbleib meines Sohnes weiß, wird gebeten, mir sofort davon Mitteilung zu machen. Unkosten werden gern ersetzt.
858) **Karl Ruwisch.**

Wer weiß etwas über den Verbleib meines Sohnes

Paul Knappe

der als Bäderegele bei Herrn Bäckermeister Huß in Czarnikau beschäftigt war?

Seit dem 27. August fehlt von ihm jede Spur. Auch ist mir nicht bekannt, ob er zum Militär eingezogen oder verschleppt worden ist.

Bitte herzlich um Nachricht. Unkosten werden zurück-
erstattet.

10 217

Paul Knappe
Weißenburg, Kr. Gnesen.

Vermißt!

Wer etwas von meinem 13-jährigen Sohn **Andreas Golenia** Gymnasiast, weiß, der sich am 9. September zwischen Sorkazew und Warschau verlaufen hat, wird gebeten, Nachricht zu geben. Alle Unkosten werden erstattet.

Posen, Warschauer Str. 103

17. 10. 39

Wer weiß etwas über den Verbleib der Internierten (670)

Karl Grund und Heinrich Bahrenburg

aus Deutsches, Kreis Schroda, die am 3. September von Schroda über Turel nach Tulschlow und dann noch weiter getrieben und dort von ihren Leidensgenossen getrennt wurden.

Aus Deutsches fehlen noch Wilhelm Humann Gerhard Kreinframp und August Wedepohl, die von polnischen Soldaten nach Stralskowo verschleppt wurden, am Montag, d. 4. September. Um Nachricht bittet

Frau Martha Grund
Deutsches, Kr. Schroda.

21./22.
10. 39

Wer weiß etwas über meinen Sohn

Helmut Kattner

Gutsärtner in Góreczki, Kr. Krottschin.

Habe seit dem 25. August von ihm keine Nachricht. Weiß nicht, ob er zum Militär eingezogen oder verschleppt worden ist.

Bitte um Nachricht. Unkosten er-
statte gern zurück.

Emil Kattner, Bäckermeister
10092 Gräb, Posener Str. 45.

Bojanowo

Wer weiß etwas über den Verbleib der Familie Walter?

Von Leopold habe ich Nachricht.

Krenz.

11. 10. 39

Wer weiß

etwas über den Verbleib des in Lazisf bei Zagorów verhafteten und von den Polen verschleppten Kaufmanns

Bruno Nehring.

Mit anderen Volksdeutschen führte ihn sein Leidensweg über Peisern, Ruhwat, Tuliszów, Turek und angeblich noch nach Uniejów. Seitdem fehlt jede Spur. Angaben werden gegen Rück-
erstattung famil. Unkosten unt. Nr. 67 an die Geschäftsst. dies. Blattes erbeten.

21./22. 10. 39

Wer weiß

etwas über den Verbleib meines Mannes

Frei v. Hoffmannswaldau

aus Kuschen bei Schmiegel

verhaftet und verschleppt am 1. September, zuletzt gesehen zwischen Kolo und Klodawa am 5. September. Unkosten für Nachrichten werden vergütet.

Marie Luise v. Hoffmannswaldau
Kuschen b. Schmiegel, Kreis Kofen.

21./22. 10. 39

Wer weiß etwas über den Aufenthalt meines Schwagers, des Obermüllers

Hermann Kattner

Senkowo, Kr. Samter

War tätig in der Wassermühle bei A. Schneider, R von Drajan, Kr. Neumark (chem. Pommerellen)

Unkosten erstatte ich. Nachrichten an

Oskar Gebauer

10222

Senkowo, Kreis Samter

27. 10. 39

Wer weiß etwas über meinen Mann, den Landwirt

Otto Krüger

aus Werdum, Post Ritschenwalde? Er wurde am 1. 9. interniert und verschleppt, am 8. oder 9. trennte er sich von seinem Nachbar bei Lowitsch und hat seitdem keine Nachricht. Er trug hellgrau gestreifte Hose, braunlariertes Jackett, helle Mütze.

Bitte um Nachricht. Unkosten erstatte gern zurück.

Frau Gertrud Krüger

Werdum bei Ritschenwalde.

109

24. 10. 39

Mein Mann, der Landwirt
Reinhold Säckel, Elsenhain

Kreis Kofen, wurde am 3. September verschleppt. Er soll sich angeblich mit 9 Volksdeutschen aus Nalaj von Kuzno nach Warschau begeben haben. Wer weiß etwas über seinen Verbleib?

Frau Hedegard Sädel,
Elsenhain, Kr. Kofen.

10013

Pozener Tageblatt

21./22. 10. 39

Wer weiß

etwas von

Paul Wenske, Karnrode, Kr. Gnesen,

33 Jahre alt, eingezogen 26. 8. zur Gnesener Artillerie, abtransportiert am 2. 9., zuletzt gesehen am 13. 9. in Modlin, als verdächtig bewacht von Feldwachtmeister. War zusammen mit Oswald Tepper, Kr. Neutomischel. Nachricht erb. unt. 10007 an das „Poz. Tagebl.“, Martinstraße 70.

24. 10. 39

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NOTICES AND OTHER PROOFS
Public posters concerning the execution of Polish murderers sentenced to death



<p>Der Dorfschulze Jan Gluchowski aus Kokojschen, Kr. Gnesen, ist durch rechtssträfliches Urteil des Sondergerichts bei dem Militär-befehlshaber von Posen vom 27. September 1939 wegen Mordes, begangen an dem Volks-deutschen Otto Mier, und wegen schweren Landfriedensbruchs zu Tode verurteilt worden. Das Urteil ist heute vollstreckt worden. Posen, den 28. September 1939.</p> <p>Der Leiter der Anklagebehörde bei dem Sondergericht beim Militär-befehlshaber von Posen.</p>	<p>Sołtys Jan Głuchowski z miejscowości Kokoschken, powiatu gnieźnieńskiego, został na mocy prawomocnego wyroku Sądu dla spraw wyjątkowych w Posen z dnia 27 września 1939 r. za morderstwo, dokonane na osobie Niemca Otto Mier oraz za zdradę stanu skazany na śmierć. Wyrok wykonano w dniu dzisiejszym. Posen, dnia 28 września 1939.</p> <p>Sąd dla spraw wyjątkowych przy Dowódcy Wojskowym Posen.</p>
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Druckwerk der Volkswirtschaftlichen Druckerei G.m.b.H. Posen, Torgartenweg 21

Jan Gluchowski, mayor of Kokoschken, in the district of Gnesen, has been sentenced to death by the Special Court under the Military Commander of Posen. Judgement was given on 27 September 1939. The charges were: murder of Otto Mier, a member of the German minority, and breach of the public peace. Posen, 28 September 1939

The Officer for the Prosecution
with the Special Court
under the Military Commander of Posen.

p. 267:

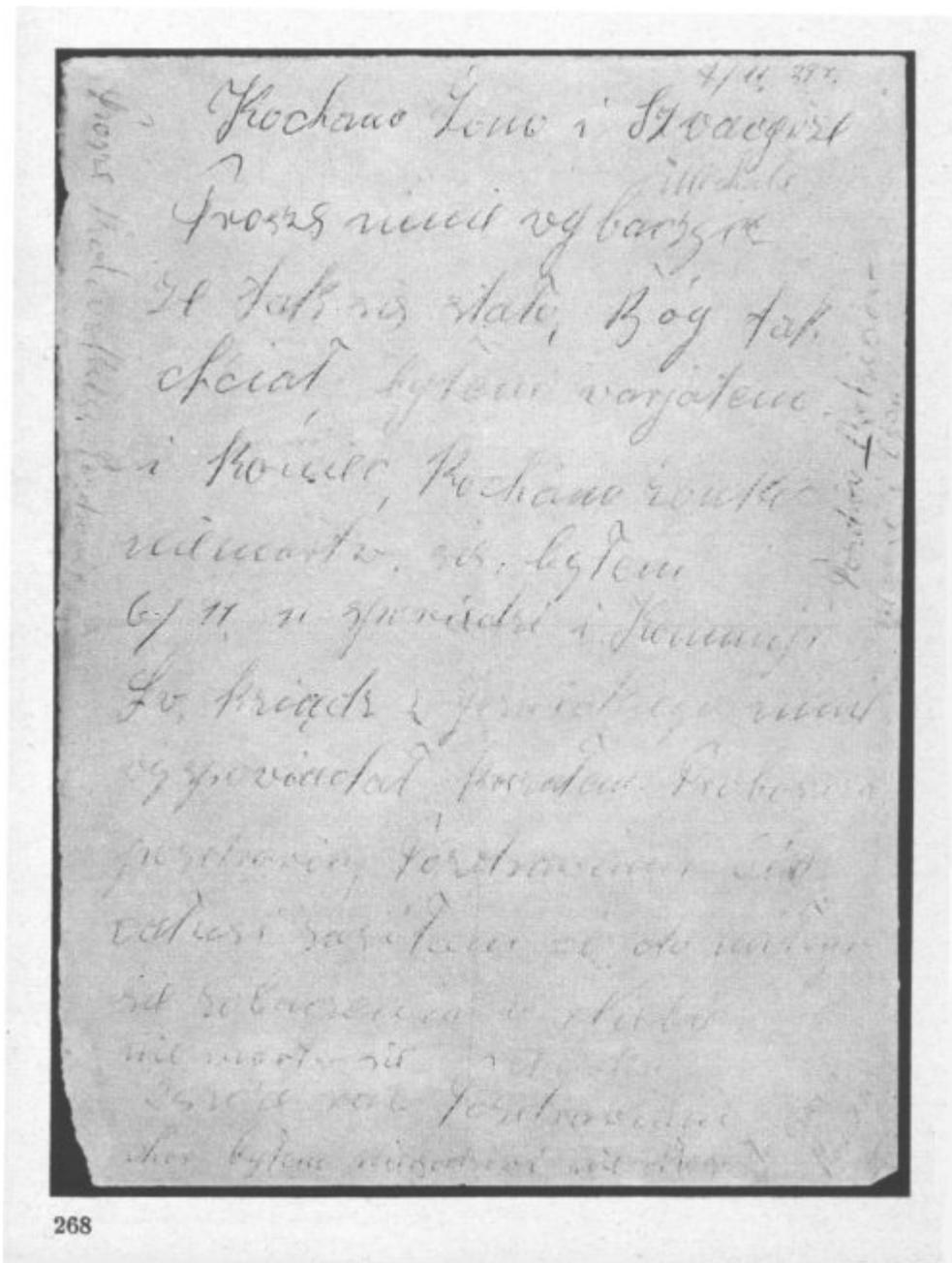


p. 268:

Translation of the farewell letter: My dear wife and dear brother-in-law.
November 7, 1939.

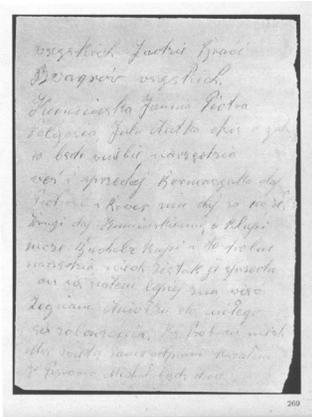
Please forgive me for what has happened. God willed it so. I must have been mad, that is all I can say. My dear wife, do not worry. I went on November 6, to confession and holy communion. The priest from the Jesuit Church has been with me. I have sent greetings to the prior. I greet and kiss you. We shall meet again in heaven. Do not worry, my little angel. Again I greet you, though I have been a good-for-nothing; there is no more time, it's all over. Please give my love to Kolewski, to my parents, mother and father, and everybody: Jadzia, the brothers and brothers-in-law. Please also greet Janina Kuminska, Peter Polgos, Julek and Antek. At 10 o'clock today I shall be in heaven. Take all my tools and sell them. Give the boring machine to Peter, sell the bicycle to him for 100 zł. Give the second one to Kuminski, Buchholz will surely also buy something; what is left ask Zietok to sell, he knows better what to do with these things. Farewell, dear angel, till we meet again. Ask the priest to read a Holy Mass for me, I have sent him greetings. Michael, farewell.

Bromberg, November 8, 1939.



Farewell letter of a Polish murderer written before the execution. Jan Lewandowski, plumber, to his wife. (Re murder case Lewandowski, Sd. K. Ls. Bromberg 85/39)

p. 269:



p. 270:

Official proceedings in the cell of the Polish murderess, Franziska Wolska, in Bromberg at 10 a. m. on 14 October 1939. She was informed of the impending execution of her sentence at 3 p. m. and was asked for her last wish ("to confess before a priest and write a letter to my grandfather".) Both wishes were complied with.

V e r h a n d e l t
in der Zelle Nr. 50 des Gerichtsgefängnisses
in Bromberg um 10⁰³ Uhr.

Die Unterzeichneten
Staatsanwalt **B e n g s o h**
und
Justizobersekretär **m.E. K ü h n** (als Urkundsbeamter)
hatten sich hierher begeben und fanden anwesend:

~~den~~ Verurteilten Franziska **W o l s k a** ,
Gefängnishauptwachtmeister **Iffländer**,
Gefängnisoberwachtmeister **Loboda** als Dolmetscher.

~~Der~~ durch Urteil des Sondergerichts in Bromberg
am 12.10.1939 zum Tode verurteilten

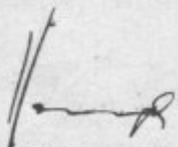
Franziska **W o l s k a**
wurde durch Vermittlung des Dolmetschers bekanntgegeben,
daß das genannte Urteil rechtskräftig sei, ein Gnaden-
erweis vom Herrn Reichsminister der Justiz abgelehnt sei
und daß das Urteil heute um 15 Uhr durch Erschießen
vollstreckt werden würde.

Auf Befragen, ob ~~ich~~ noch etwas zu erklären habe
und ob ~~ich~~ noch einen Wunsch habe, erklärte ~~ich~~:

Ich möchte vor einem Pfarrer eine Beichte ablegen
und einen Brief an meinen Großvater schreiben.

Dieser Wunsch wurde ~~ih~~ gewährt.

Geschlossen


Staatsanwalt


Justizobersekretär **m.E.**

(Re murder case Franziska Wolska. Sd. K. Ls. Bromberg 44/39)

In der Nacht vom Montag zum Dienstag blieben wir noch zu Hause in unserer Wohnung. Am nächsten Tage wurden viele polnische Geschütze in der Nähe unseres Hauses aufgeföhren. Aus Furcht, daß uns etwas passieren könnte, gingen wir zu unserem Nachbarn Johann Held. Dieser Zeuge ist noch am Leben. Wir wollten dort in den Keller. Der polnische Pächter des Zeugen Held, der also in dem Grundstück drin sitzt, erlaubte uns das nicht. Der Pächter ^{heißt} Górski. Wir gingen daraufhin in das nächste Haus, daß dem Deutschen Albert K a r l gehört. Wir blieben bei ihm 2 Stunden. Während dieser Zeit kam der Schwiegersohn des G ó r s k i . Er heißt M y l s z y n s k i . Ich habe den Namen eben so buchstabiert, wie wir ihn immer Aussprechen. Der Mylszynski ist von deutscher Hilfspolizei gestern abend verhaftet worden.

Als Mylsziynski von uns hörte, daß mein Vater und meine beiden Brüder erschossen worden sind, erklärte er uns: "Ja, ich konnte nichts anders. Aus Euerem Hause ist dreimal auf mich geschossen worden." Er sagte dann weiter: "Hitler ist schon in der Stadt. Wir lassen ihn ruhig bis hier auf die Berge. Hier kommt es zur Schlacht." Er sagte ferner: "Es könnte vielleicht doch zum Durchbruch kommen und wenn ihn die Deutschen bekönnen, dann würde er an den Beinen aufgehängt. Er sei ein wichtiger Staatsmann, er hätte aus Warschau noch nicht die letzte Nachricht.

V. g. u.

Dorothea Radler
Wk

Urschriftl.

dem Sondergericht

Bromberg

Der Beauftragte der Untersuchungsstelle des Oberkommandos der Wehrmacht für völkerrechtl. Verletzungen übersendet obenstehend den Schluß der Vernehmung der Zeugin Dorothea Radler aus Bromberg, Klein-Bartelsee ~~Wk~~ Wl. Belz-y 55.

Aus der ~~polnisch~~ Vernehmung der Zeugin ergibt sich, daß der Pole Mylszynski polnische Soldaten veranlaßt hat, unter der falschen Beschuldigung eines Angriffs auf ihn selbst den Vater der Zeugin, den 18jährigen Bruder Fritz und den 16jährigen Bruder Heinz zu erschießen. Nach Angaben der Zeugin befindet sich M. in Händen der Deutschen Polizei in Bromberg.

J. K. ...
Marineoberkriegsgerichtsrat

Last page of the original record on the statement of the 14-year-old Dorothea Radler. Cf. document No. 15, page 53f.

p. 272:

mit Voller
Feldgericht des Stabes z.b.V.
des Kommandeurs des Luftgaus 3.

Bromberg, den 14.9.1939.

(W.H.I.)

Gegenwärtig :

KGH d.Lw.Dr Waltzog

als Richter,

JOJ d.Lw. Hanschke

als Protokollführer

In der Völkerrechtsuntersuchungssache Bromberg I
erscheint als Zeuge

Frl. Vera Gannot, wohnhaft Bromberg, Thornerstra.
125 und erklärt, zur Wahrheit ermahnt, folgendes:
nach Eidesbelehrung folgendes :

Zur ^{Pflicht} Sache : Ich bin 19 Jahre alt, ev. Glaubens,
ohne Beruf.

Zur Sache : Als es in der Stadt bekannt wurde, dass die deutschen Truppen einrückten, begann auch bei uns die Zivilbevölkerung und polnische Soldaten Gewalttätigkeiten auszuüben. Sonntag gegen 2 Uhr näherte sich unserem Hause Thornerstrasse 125, 4 Km von der Stadt entfernt, polnische Soldaten und polnische Zivilbevölkerung. Die polnischen Zivilisten sagten: Hier wohnen Deutsche. - Daraufhin begannen die Soldaten sofort zu schießen. Wir flüchteten darauf in einen Schuppen. Die polnischen Soldaten warfen auch m.M. nach mit Handgranaten. Zuerst wurde mein Vater aus dem Schuppen herausgeholt. Er wurde von den Polen gefragt, wo er das Maschinengewehr hätte. Mein Vater verstand jedoch die Frage nicht, da er nicht polnisch konnte. Ich ging daraufhin auch aus dem Schuppen heraus. Ich wollte meinem Vater beistehen, da ich polnisch kann. Ich habe die Polen gefragt, was wir ihnen angetan hätten und für meinen Vater gebeten. Die Polen riefen jedoch: Herunter mit den deutschen Schweinen! Mein Vater erhielt mehrere Kolbenhiebe ins Gesicht und an den Körper, sodann wurde er mit dem Seitengewehr gestochen; Daraufhin fiel mein Vater zu Boden und erhielt im Liegen noch 6 Schüsse. Die Horde zog sodann ab, nachdem sie der Zivilbevölkerung gesagt hatten, sie könnten das Haus plündern, sonst würden sie es in Brand stecken. Nunmehr verließ auch meine Mutter ihr Versteck. Wir wollten beide dem

p. 273:

den blutüberströmten Vater abwaschen. Als wir mit dieser Tätigkeit ^{begonnen} hatten, erschien erneut eine polnische Horde, die sich mit Latten und Knüppeln bewaffnet hatte. Meine Mutter und meine Tante wurden mit diesen Knüppeln geschlagen. Ich selbst bekam links und rechts Ohrfeigen. Daraufhin zogen sie wieder ab. Nach einiger Zeit kam eine andere Horde polnischer Soldaten und Zivilisten. Als diese sich näherte, lief ich in die hinter unserem Haus fließende Brahe. An den Haaren wurde ich jedoch ~~heraus~~ herausgezogen. Etwa 10-15 Zivilisten schleppten mich in das Haus. Sie sagten, ich solle ~~sehen~~ sehen, dass die Polen garnicht so schlimm seien, sie würden erlauben, dass ich meine nassen Kleider wechsele. Da jedoch niemand das Zimmer verliess, weigerte ich mich, mich umzuziehen. Die Polen rissen ^{mir} daraufhin die Kleider vom Leibe, legten mich nackt auf die Erde. Etwa 10 Mann hielten mich fest und zwar an Kopf, Händen und Füßen. Einer der Polen verging sich an mir. Er vollzog den Beischlaf. Ich habe hierbei Verletzungen erlitten. Die ersten Tage hatte ich erhebliche Schmerzen, jetzt nicht mehr. Weitere Polen haben sich an mir nicht vergriffen. Während dieses Vorfalles wurde meine Mutter in ein ~~das~~ Zimmer geführt, das in dem oberen Stockwerk liegt und mit vorgehaltenem Gewehr festgehalten.

Polnische Soldaten haben meinem Vater und mir Geld, Manteltasche, Uhren und Dinge geraubt. Unsere Wohnung wurde völlig zerstört, die Möbel mit Beilen zerhackt. Sämtliches Geschirr und die Wäsche wurden gestohlen.

Waffen haben wir in unserem Hause nicht gehabt. Wir haben sie vorher auf Grund einer allgemeinen Anordnung der Polizei abgeliefert.

v. g. u.

vera gamott

Die Zeugin wurde beeidigt.

Geschlossen:

Suz *Waltzer*

Beck

mit einem sehr kräftigen Fusstritt bedachten. Von Konin aus konnten wir unseren Marsch nach Kutno nicht mehr fortsetzen und marschierten plötzlich nach Norden. Etwa 7 km hinter Konin verliess uns unsere Begleitmannschaft und es blieb ein einziger Polizist, der geistig beschränkt war, zurück. Inzwischen wurden wir von polnischen Reservisten mit langen Prügeln und Steinen misshandelt. Von diesen befreiten uns Feldpolizisten. Auf einem Vorwerk bei Malinac konnten wir 3 Tage liegen bleiben, da unser Polizist erst Weisung holen musste, was mit uns geschehen sollte.

Hinter Slesin kamen wir durch die ersten polnischen Stellungen und wurden hinter der Stadt auf einem Gutshof untergebracht, der völlig mit polnischem Militär belegt war. Hier war es ein junger polnischer Leutnant, der uns unter unzähligen Verwünschungen den Tod androhte. Am nächsten Morgen wurden wir bereits um 2 Uhr morgens zum Weitermarsch geweckt. Die Wagen mit Krüppel und Kinder blieben zurück. Später hörte ich, dass man diese erschossen hatte. Es war dies die ganze Familie Schmolke und noch ein Kriegsinvalide mit einem Bein. Bei Kanonendonner ging es nach einem Gewaltmarsch nach Babiak. Am Nachmittag ging es wieder weiter, nachdem wir jetzt in 3 Gruppen eingeteilt worden waren und zu unserer Bewachung noch zahlreiche Soldaten hinzukamen. Auf einem Waldweg mussten wir den Soldaten alle Uhren und sonstigen Schmuckstücke, ~~xxxx~~ Geld ^{zum Teil} und sogar die Eheringe abliefern. ~~xxxx xx~~ Als wir am Montag morgen wieder weitermarschieren mussten, konnten einige von uns nicht mehr auf den Füßen stehen. Neben 5 Kranken, die unmöglich weitergehen konnten, unter diesen befand sich eine Lehrerin aus Posen, blieben 3 Gesunde zu deren Schutz zurück. Später erfuhren wir, dass diese von der Bewachung einfach niedergeschossen und in viehischer Weise mit Steinen zu Tode geschlagen worden waren.

Nach tagelangem Hin und Hermarschieren, die Front rückte immer näher an uns heran, wurden wir dann am 17.9.39 von deutschen Truppen befreit. Über Breslau wurden wir durch die deutsche Wehrmacht wieder in die Heimat zurückbefördert.

Laut diktiert, genehmigt und unterschrieben.

Lorenz Breitinger (P. Hilarius)

Der Zeuge leistete folgenden Eid: Ich schwöre bei Gott dem Allmächtigen und Allwissenden, dass ich die reine Wahrheit gesagt und nichts verschwiegen habe, so wahr mir Gott helfe.

Geschlossen:

Wittig

P. Hilarius

Final page of the original record of the statement made by Father Breitingger (Cf. pages 132-135).

p. 277:



Unknown man, from 30—40 years of age, belonging to the Jesuitersee group of murders. Assassination of 39 minority Germans by a complete Polish Army unit. Two thrusts of bayonet in thorax of which one proved fatal, puncturing cardiac arteries.

Autopsy No. Br. 1 (OKW./H. S. In.)

p. 278:



Heller, Willi, 19 years, also belonging to the group of Jesuitersee murders. 33 stabs from dagger or thrusts of bayonet, of which the one marked with arrow, through cervical spinal cord, proved fatal.

Autopsy No. Br. 23 (OKW./H. S. In.)



Kutzer, Otto, 73 years, member of Rector Kutzer's household. Together with Kutzer, Otto, were murdered: his son, the pastor, 46 years of age, and also 5 German-born fugitives, aged from 14—74 years, who had taken shelter in the rectory. The hands of the 73-year-old man are bound behind his back. The same crude way of binding was used on two other persons belonging to the same group of murders. Death was caused by bullet shot through thorax, severing cardiac arteries. Independently of this, fractures of ribs caused by blunt instruments were also ascertained; evidence of witnesses proved them to be blows delivered with the butt of a rifle.

Autopsy No. Br. 115 (OKW/H. S. In.)



Schmidt, 43 years old, belonging to a group of numerous murders which took place all over the suburb of Homburg-Rieschweiler. The links were bound together. Remarkable are the hand ropes placed at bottom and top, which were used to drag the victim to the place of murder. Cause of death: pistol shot through trunk, penetrating cardiac arteries. (Source: No. 10, of JOURNAL, 1, 1.)

p. 281:

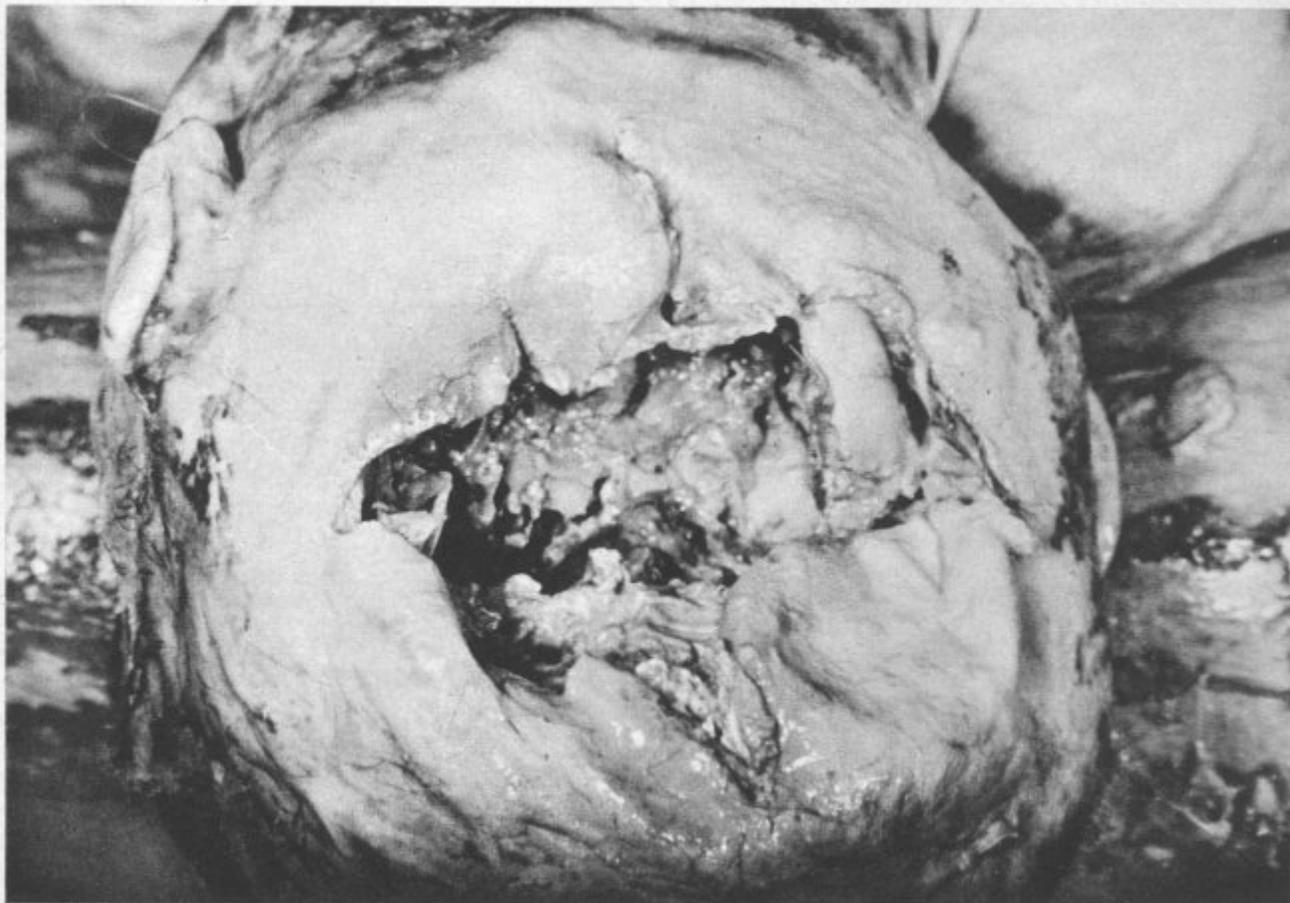


Radler, Arthur, 42 years, belonging to the Radler family murder case. The bullet entered the body on the left at the cervix and left it at the nape of the neck, also on the left. The victim lived for over 7 hours after this non-fatal injury. His wife and 4-year-old daughter were forcibly prevented from rendering assistance to the wounded man. Death was caused by a shot through the head. Two sons, 17 and 18 years old, had been murdered previously. Autopsy No. Br. 46 (OKW/H. S. In.)



Behnke, Else, 35 years, unmarried, belonging to the Eichdorf-Netzheim group of murders. Apart from Else B., in this family there were also murdered: her 82-year-old father, her 45-year-old married sister and the 11-year-old daughter of the latter. The bullet entered the head through the orbital cavity.

Autopsy No. Br. 64 (OKW./H. S. In.)



Bullet left head at occiput, having entered it through eye. The degree of explosive effect produced proves use of army rifle.

Autopsy No. Br. 64 (OKW./H. S. In.)

p. 284:



Butler, Felix, 32 years, belonging to the Butler family number one. Threat of imminent attack with order on ship and in region of right eye. Death of Felix R. was caused by shot from Nagas revolver. Butler lodged in there. (Source: See, No. 47 (1925-26, 3, 12))

p. 285:



Unknown man of about 20 years of age, belonging to a group of murders which took place all over the suburb of Bromberg-Kleinbartelsee. Aperture in orbital cavity, evidently caused by puncture. The only illustration in this series of records of puncture of the orbital cavity, as the photographic recording of this injury is difficult to reproduce from a decomposed body. The punctured injury to the eye as shown above and other punctures of the orbital cavity are proved by the preservation of the injured parts as Formalin preparations.

Autopsy No. Br. 17 (OKW/H. S. In.)



Grieger, Paul, 32 years. Murdered by Polish soldiers and senior grammar school boys with pistol shots and blows of a pickaxe. The picture shows an injury which in view of the good preservation of the body can only be explained as a puncture of the left eyeball. Autopsy No. P, 1 (OKW./H. S. Ia.)



Klueck, Winthold, 34 years, belonging to the group of Jamboree murders. Below left head at height of orbital line.
Autopsy No. 30. Dr. F. O. W. H. S. S. 1.

p. 288:



Unknown man of about 45 years of age, belonging to a group of murders scattered in the woods near Hopfengarten. Aperture in both orbital cavities, which has not however been attributed to punctures, as considerable damage had been caused by vermin. Autopsy No. Br. 4 (OKW./H. S. In.)



Jeschke, Max, 54 years, belonging to the Eichdorf-Netzheim group of murders. Together with him were murdered his wife Hedwig Jeschke, 47 years, also the maid Else Dahms, 19 years, and the farm-hand Kurt Kempf, 20 years. Bullet entered by way of nape of the neck and left in region of nose. Army rifle probable, but use of heavy pistol not excluded.

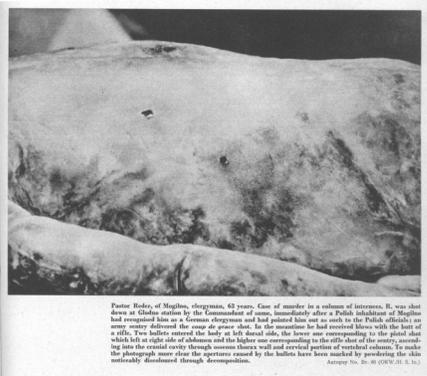
Autopsy No. Br. 82 (OKW./H. S. In.)



Unknown man of about 40 years of age, belonging to the Jasenovac group of murders. Missing aperture in face giving out of every side. The unknown man belongs to a group of 12 victims in Jasenovac, who were bound to each other with a cattle rope.

Autopsy No. 10. 11 (DNV. 10. 1. 12.)

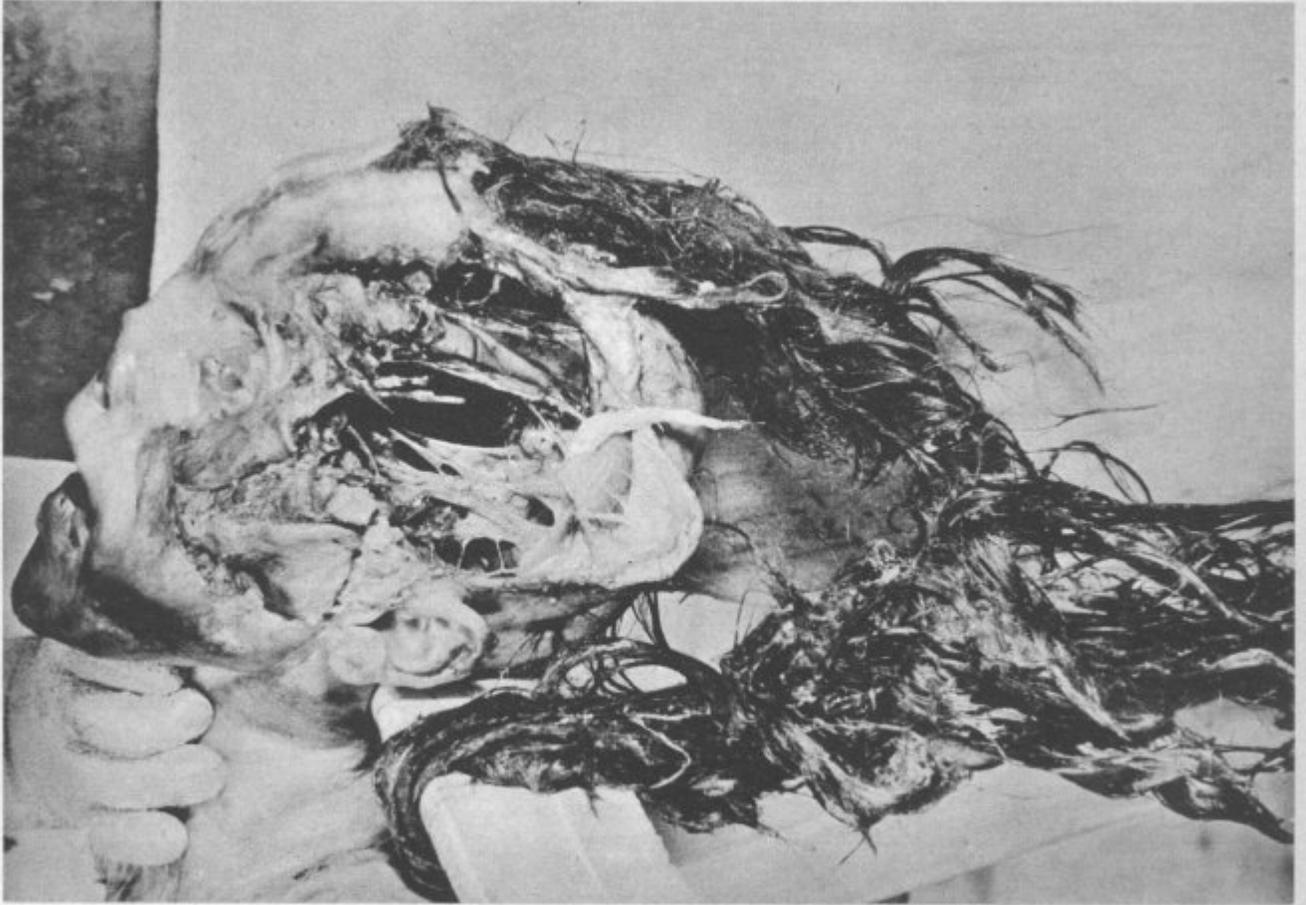
p. 291:



Franz Reber, of Maglita, clergyman, 42 years. Case of murder in a column of internees. He was shot down at Glinča station by the Commandant of camp, immediately after a Polish inhabitant of Maglita had recognized him as a German clergyman and had pointed him out as such to the Polish officials in camp. Reber followed the camp director. In the morning he had received bullets with the left of ribs. The bullets entered the body at left dorsal side, the lower one corresponding to the point that which left at right side of abdomen and the higher one corresponding to the left side of the chest, entering into the spinal cavity through various thoracic wall and several portions of vertebral column. To make the photograph more clear the apertures caused by the bullets have been marked by powdering the skin suitably discoloured through decomposition.

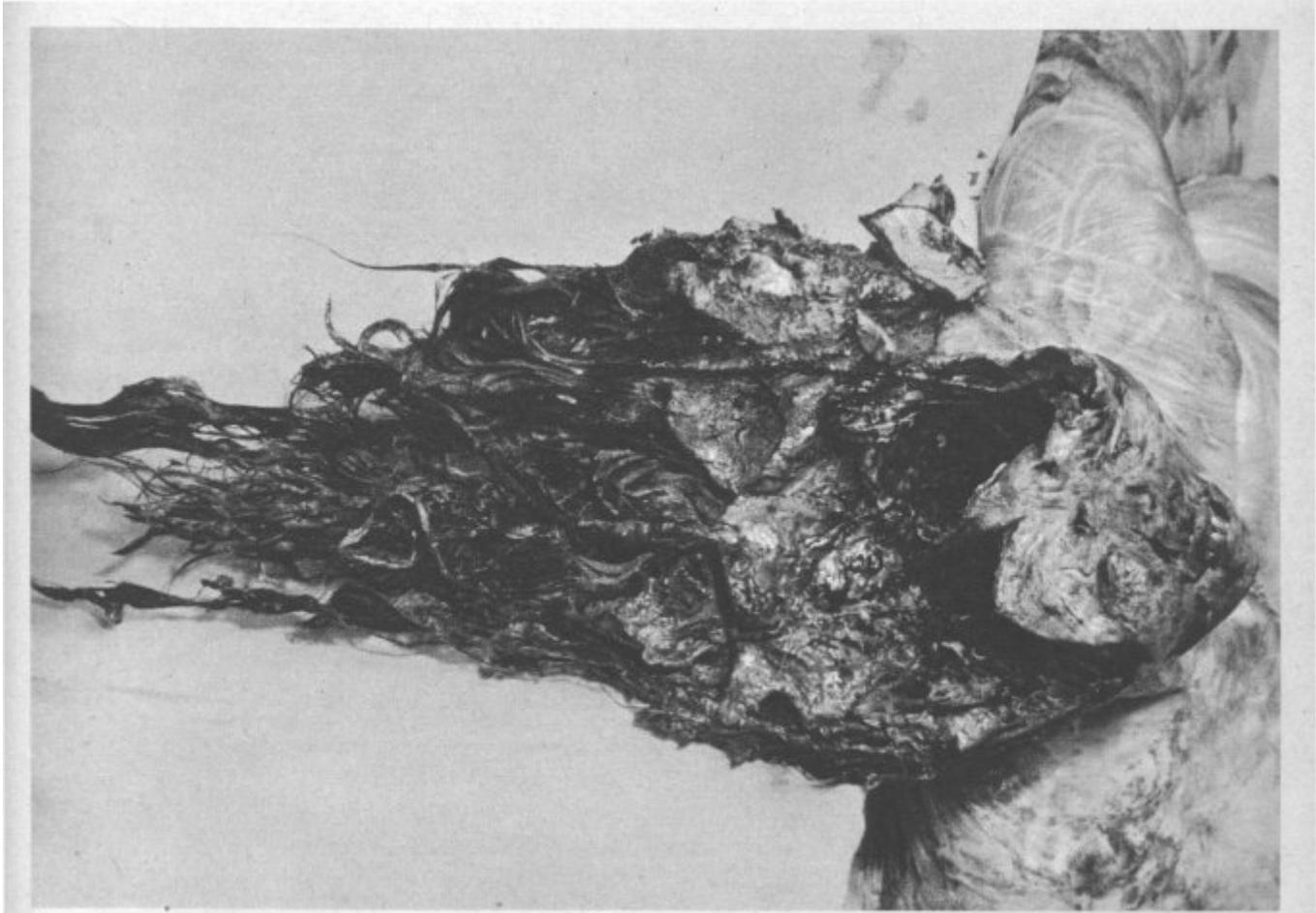
Autopsy No. 10. 10 (DNV. 10. 1. 12.)

p. 292:



Ristau, Frieda, married, 31 years, belonging to the Eichdorf-Netzheim group of murders; mother of 3 children who escaped death only by accident. Smashing shot through cranium, bullet entering from region of occiput.

Autopsy No. Br. 88 (OKW./H. S. In.)



Jeschke, Hedwig, married, 47 years, belonging to the Eichdorf-Netzheim group of murders. Together with her were murdered: the 54-year-old Max J., the 19-year-old maid Else Dahms, and the 20-year-old farm-hand Kurt Kempf. Rifle bullet injury of cranium, smashing effect proving use of an army rifle. Corresponding entrance aperture of bullet at occiput.

Autopsy No. Br. 79 (OKW/H. S. In.)

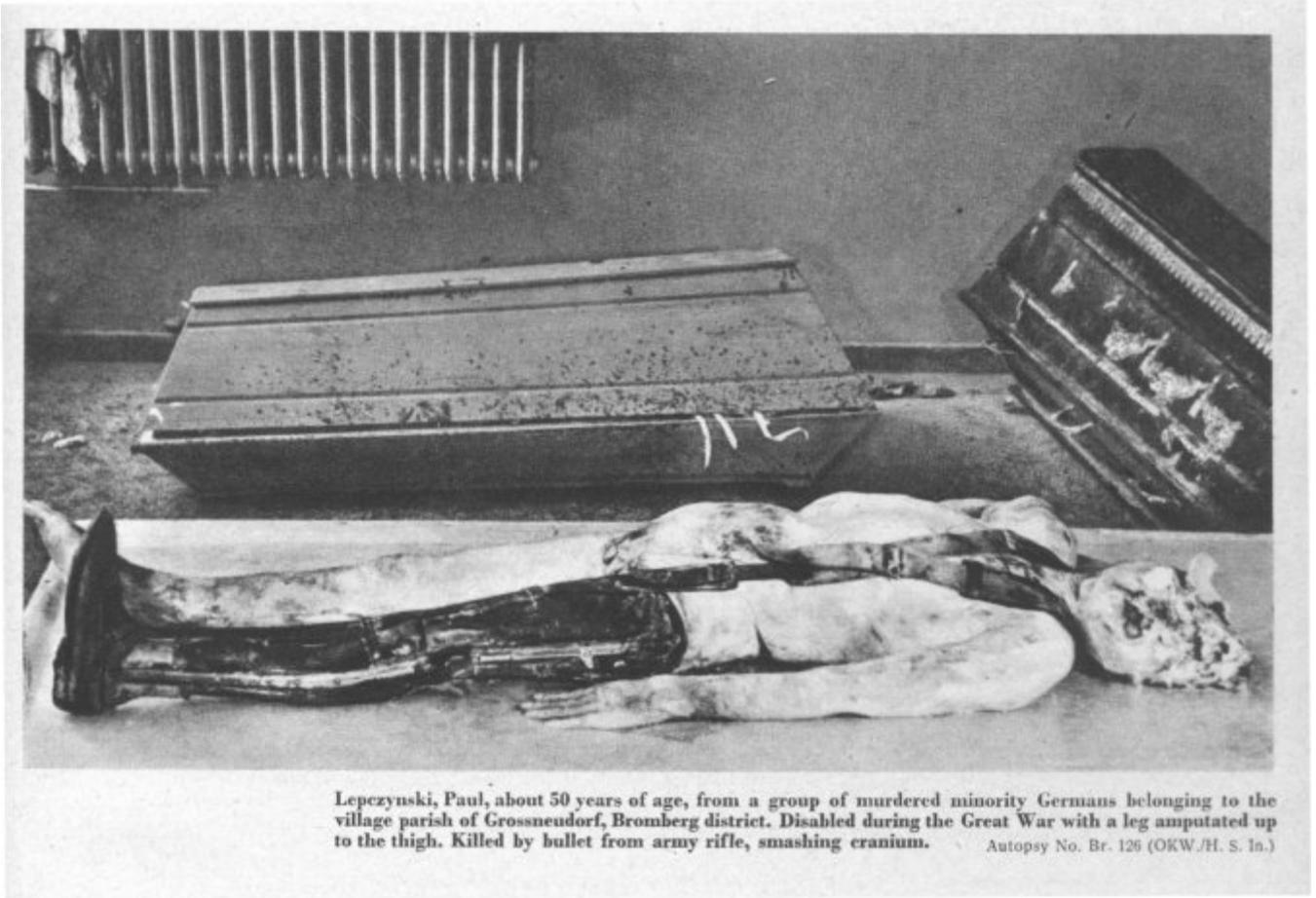
p. 294:



Schmidt, Erich, 43 years, belonging to the murder group of the Schmidt-Rahdorf family in the suburb of Bismarck, Coblentz; father of ten children, murdered together with his eight-year-old son, 64 years, and his partner for 20 years. — Penetrating shot through skull from right glacial hill to right eye region of skull with fracture and tearing right eye socket. From left to right: entrance only one, a shot of the victim in flight from the side of the left foot to the thigh, could have hit the victim while he occupied an upright position. Attention should be drawn to the skin scars, i. e. the dorsal region of the dying man's body.

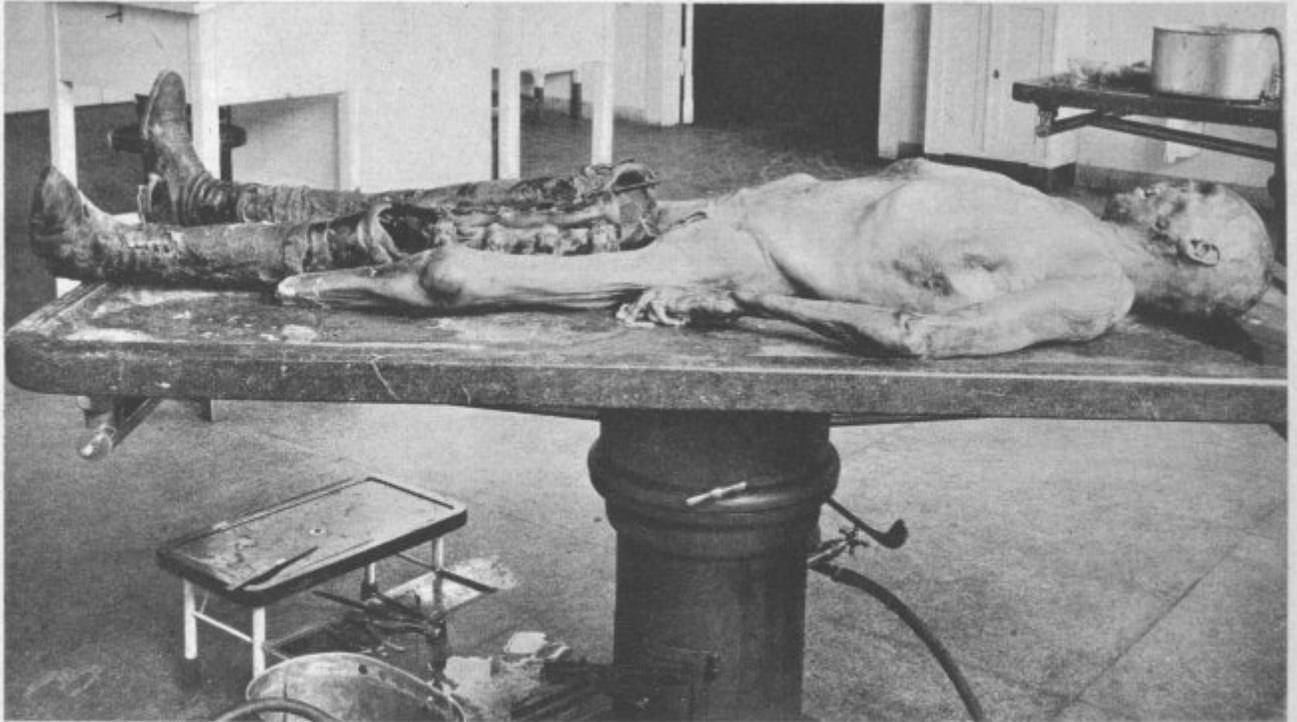
Autopsy No. Br. 91 (OKW/H. S. In.)

p. 295:



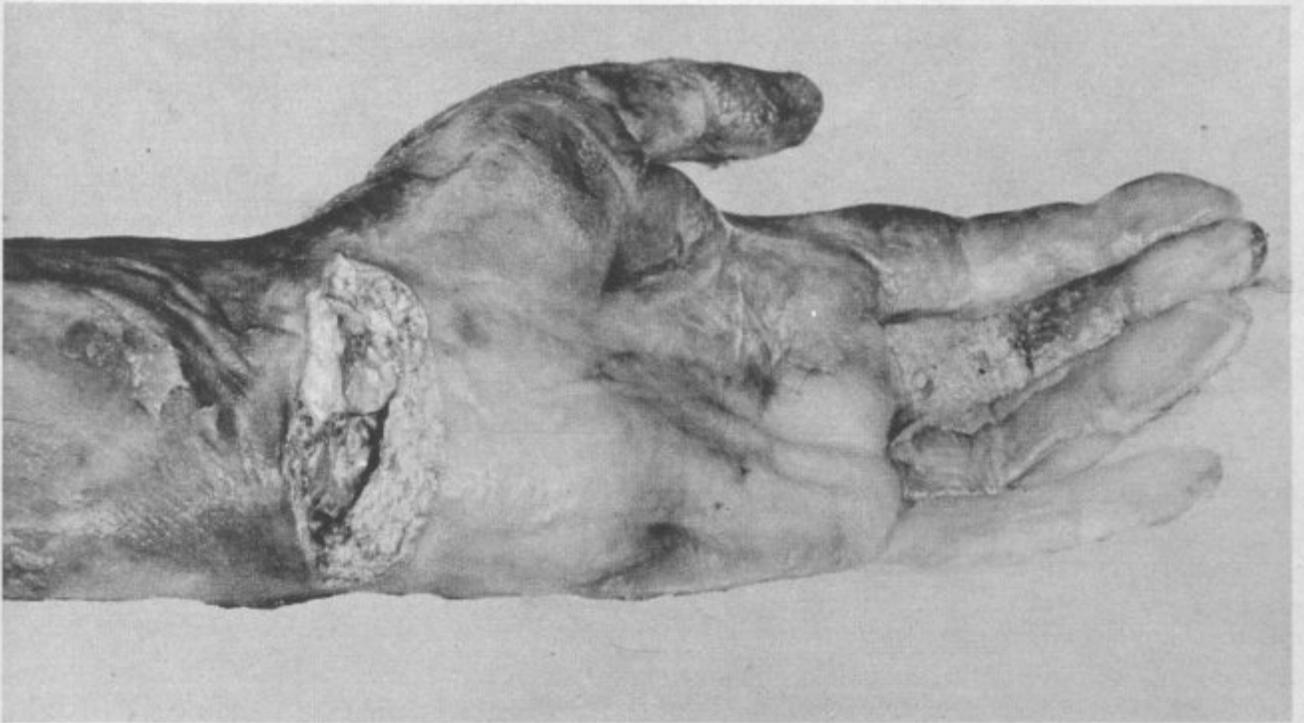
Lepczynski, Paul, about 50 years of age, from a group of murdered minority Germans belonging to the village parish of Grossneudorf, Bromberg district. Disabled during the Great War with a leg amputated up to the thigh. Killed by bullet from army rifle, smashing cranium. Autopsy No. Br. 126 (OKW./H. S. 1a.)

p. 296:



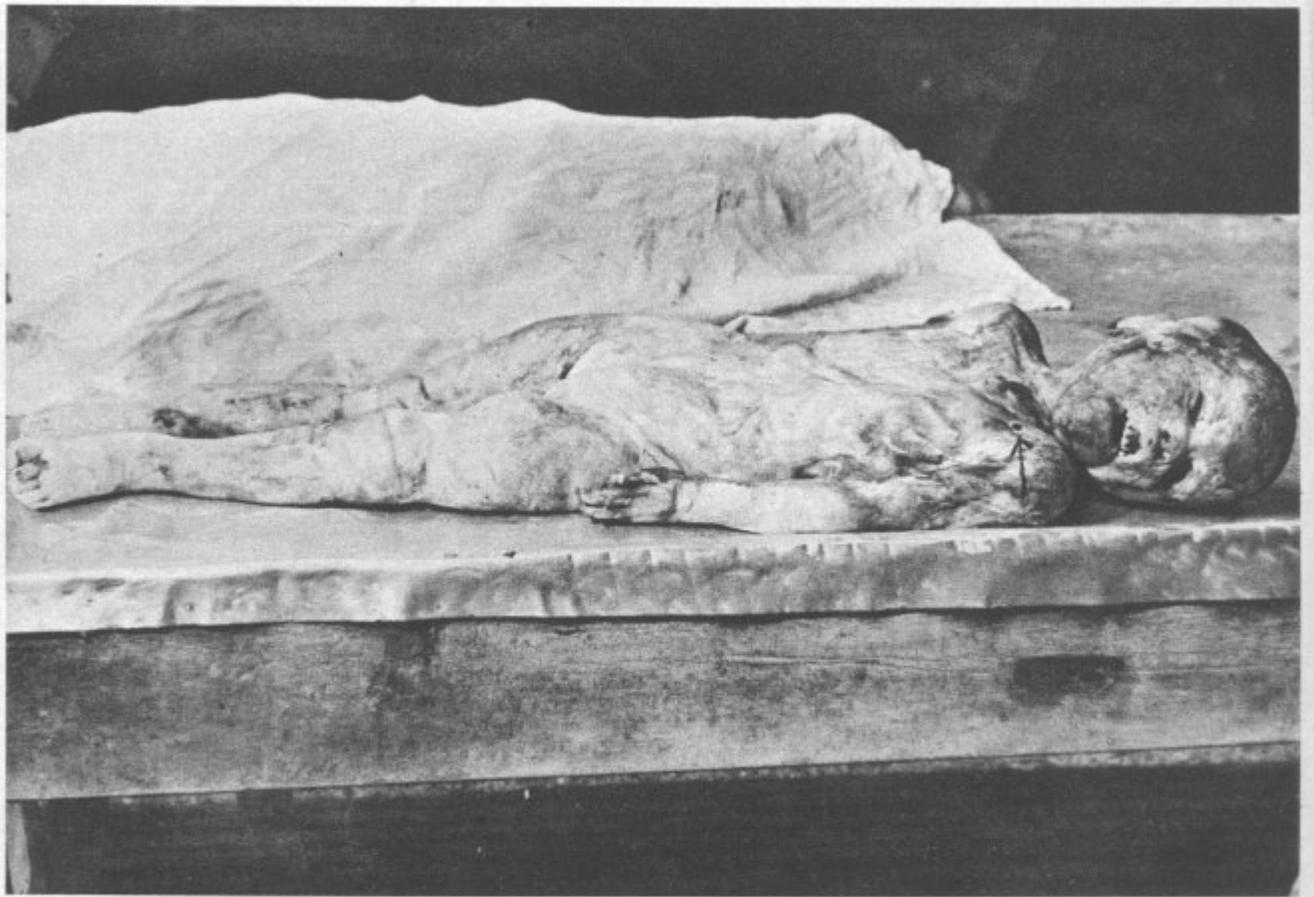
Jaentsch, disabled ex-soldier, belonging to the Rózepole murder case. Murder by Polish guards of 6 persons, lagging behind in a column of internees (family Schmolke with neighbours) 2 cripples, 3 women and one infant. In two cases the projectiles were secured — the one being part of an army rifle bullet, the other a pistol bullet. The picture shows Jaentsch with a right artificial leg and thigh, and a left artificial leg. Injuries: Bullet wound in head and thorax, and injury from blow on head.

Autopsy No. P. 32 (OKW/H. S. In.)



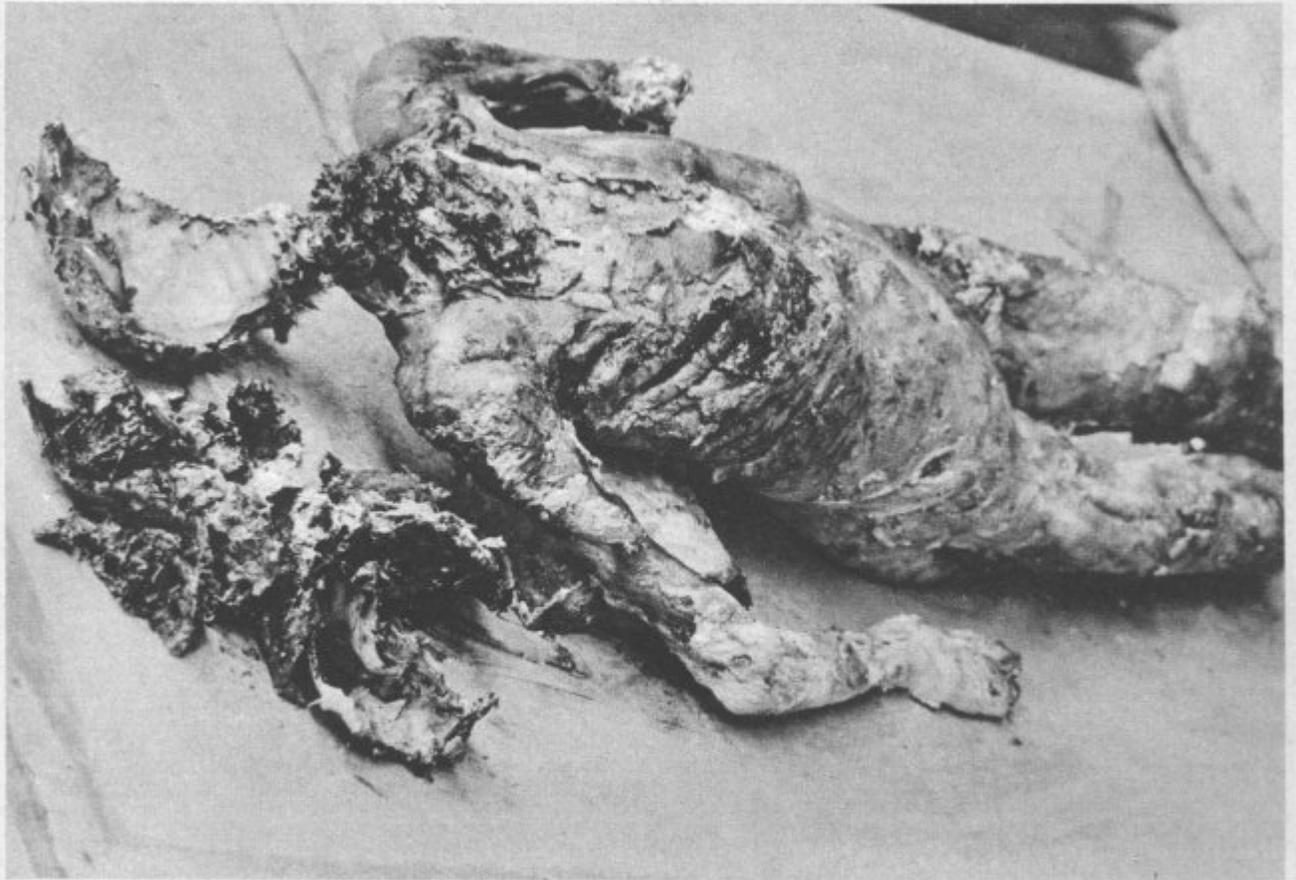
Lance-corporal Widera, murdered together with N. C. O. Ehret by Polish marauders in the village of Niewolno, District of Mogilno. Attempted severance of hand. In addition the following injuries have been ascertained: Stab in thorax caused by dagger, axe blow to cranium, a shot obviously fired at close range and penetrating cranium and trunk, and two shots through the arm. Guilt confessed.

Autopsy No. 114 (OKW/H. S. In.)



Prochnau, Erhard, 3 years old, belonging to the Eichdorf-Netzheim group of murders. The nurse Johanna Schwarz, aged 45, was murdered together with the child. Bullet left body through left subscapular fossa. Correspondingly the bullet entered the body at the right upper region of the scapula, at the same height of about 71 cm. The horizontal path of the bullet in such inconsiderable height proves that the boy was shot dead whilst in the arms of his nurse.

Autopsy No. Br. 76 (OKW./H. S. In.)



Renz, Günther, 9 years old, belonging to the Eichdorf-Netzheim group of murders. Assassination of 36 minority Germans, amongst them 3-year-old children and old men, 82 years of age. Murder committed by Polish military unit. Complete smashing of cranium caused by shot from army rifle. Together with this boy his 4-year-old sister and his 45-year-old father were murdered and simultaneously with these, but at another place, his 80-year-old grandmother.

Autopsy No. Br. 00 (ORW./H. S. In.)



Beyer, Kurt, 10 years old, belonging to the murder case of the family of the gardener Beyer. Together with the child were murdered: his 44-year-old father, Friedrich B., the brother, Heinz B., aged 21 years and the gardening boy Thiede, 22 years of age. Picture (a) shows one of the 2 pistol shots which penetrated through the thorax, neither of them of a serious nature. The aperture caused by the shot is marked for photographic purposes by powdering the skin, considerably discoloured through decomposition.—Picture (b) shows the completely smashed right forearm, possibly a bullet injury; in this case, however, the possibility of the injury having been caused by a blunt weapon cannot be excluded. In addition to this, an injury in the region of the left eyebrow has been ascertained (marked with arrow).—According to the evidence of witnesses corroborated in its entirety by forensic findings, the boy, who received his injuries in the dusk of the “Blood Sunday” on Sept. 3, 1939, remained in an open field side by side with the bodies of his relatives and died only on the following morning between 8 and 10 a. m.

Autopsy No. Br. 100 (OKW./H. S. In.) Picture (a)



Smashing of right forearm

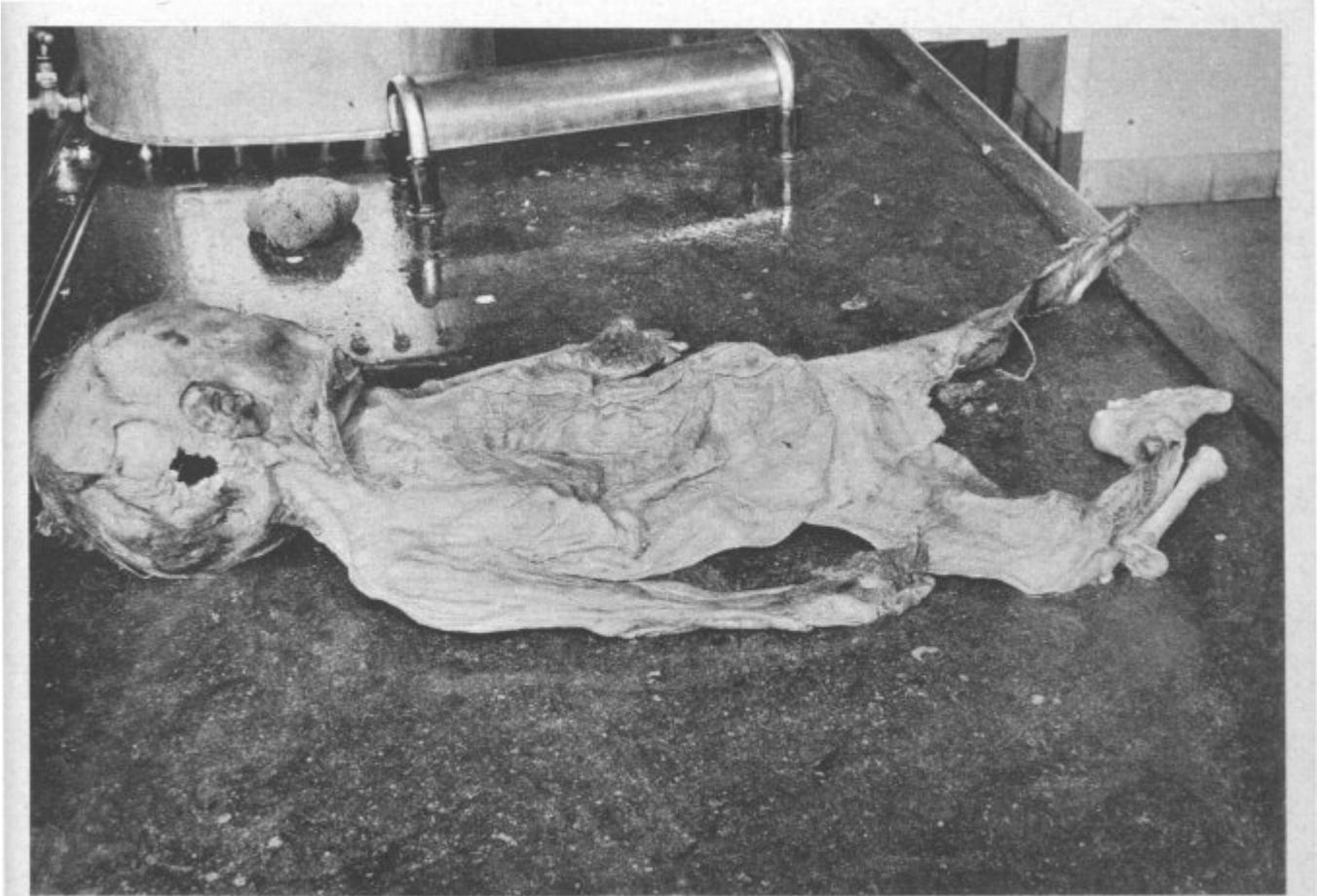
Autopsy No. Br. 100 (OKW./H. S. In.) Picture (b)

p. 302:



Busse, Walter, 7 years, belonging to the Eichdorf-Netzheim group. The boy's foster-mother, Frau Hanke, 40 years old, was murdered together with him. Pistol bullet entered head at vertex capitis and left head in region of left temple, i. e. in a sharply descending path. In view of the fact that the child was small for his age, it is to be assumed that the pistol shot was fired from above at the child standing in an upright position.

Autopsy No. Br. 74 (OKW/H. S. In.)



Schmolke, Kurt, 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ years old, belonging to the Rózepole murder case. Penetrating shot from left facial side to lateral cranial region. Rifle shot probable; no experience is however available as to the effect of army rifle bullets on the crania of infants and the assumption of a shot fired from a heavy pistol can therefore not be excluded.

Autopsy No. P 29 (OKW./H. S. In.) (Posen)



Schollenberg, Herbert, 14 years old, belonging to the household of Pastor Kutzer. Hands bound on back. An arrow shows the place in the back where the rifle bullet left the body. This rifle bullet was fired whilst the victim was in a recumbent position, after a pistol shot had been fired at the boy standing upright. — In the coffins can be seen other victims of this group of murders. The names of the victims, officially identified, are inscribed in chalk.

Autopsy No. Br. 118 (OKW/H. S. In.)



Frau Hilde Berger, 24 years old.
Egon Berger, infant, 4 months.
Hermann Berger, husband, 26 years.

Autopsy No. Br. 128 (OKW./H. S. In.)
Autopsy No. Br. 129 (OKW./H. S. In.)
Autopsy No. Br. 130 (OKW./In.)

Murdered at Wiesenau, Hohensalza district. All 3 persons killed in a cellar by throwing hand grenades, the infant being in the arms of its mother. The husband received moreover a *coup de grace* shot penetrating from the left side of the neck to the right acromiothoracic region.



Frau Sonnenberg, 25 years old, in an advanced stage of pregnancy, is seen lying in the background and the fugitive maid Bunkowski, Martha, 20 years of age, in the foreground, both in a common temporary coffin. Place of murder: Rudak, Thorn district. Both killed by rifle bullets. Around the ankles of Frau S. is fastened a rope, employed to drag the body out of the pigsty — the place where the murder had taken place.

Autopsy No. Br. 111 and Br. 112 (OKW./H. S. In.)



Dahms, Else, 19 years old, belonging to the Eichdorf-Netzheim group of murders. Murdered together with her employers Jeschke, man and wife, and the farm-hand Kurt Kempf. Bullets entered body in two places: firstly on the right side of neck, causing smashing of cranium—a rifle shot, and secondly entering at right dorsal side, showing a sharply ascending path and ultimately leaving body through right thoracic side. Attention should be drawn to the impression left on the skin by a brassiere, thus indicating the sex of the victim.

Autopsy No. Br. 84 (OKW./H. S. Ia.)

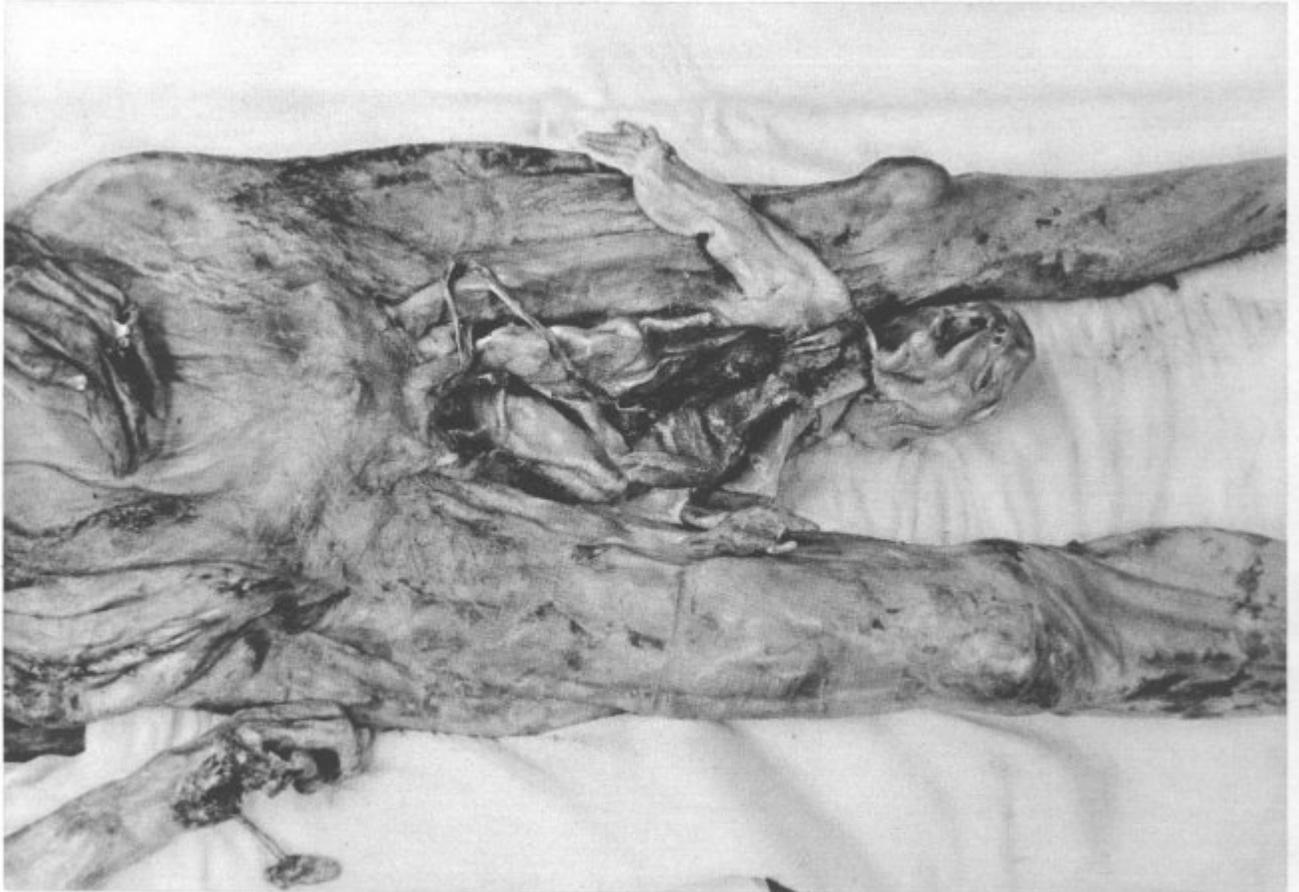
p. 308:



Kurt Kempf, 25 years, murdered at Wierzen, Hakenstein district. Together with her were assassinated her husband, 26 years, her children Hilde K., 9 years old, and Helene K., 7 1/2 years old. Furthermore the aged couple K., man and wife, aged 79 and 61 years respectively, and the farm-hand Theodor Dietze, 77 years, altogether 7 persons, killed by pistol and revolver, victims (marked 1), also smothering of death and fifth finger and complete absence of left stigmata (marked 2 and 3). This is the case of a woman in the last stages of pregnancy shortly before delivery of the child. Close to the body was found the child almost completely delivered. Evidently it was not a case of both after the death of the mother, due to the effects of decomposition, but the birth had obviously commenced during the death agonies.

Autopsy No. Br. 127 (OKW./H. S. Ia.)

p. 309:



Enlarged photograph of almost completely delivered embryo. Autopsy No. Br. 127 (OKW/H. S. In.) Picture (b)

p. 311:

SURVEY MAP OF MOST IMPORTANT PLACES OF MURDER IN FORMER POLAND



-- END OF BOOK --

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