

Jewish Genocide in Galicia

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2nd Edition

**With Appendix:
*Vernichtungslager 'Belzec'***



Robin O'Neil

Published by

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JEWISH GENOCIDE IN GALICIA

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ISBN

Frontispiece: The Rabka 4 + 1 - incorporating the original book cover of Rudolf Reder's 'Bełżec', 1946.

2nd Edition Part 1 2016: The Rabka Four + 1.
First published 2011 under the title 'The Rabka Four'.

Contents

Academic Excellence In Murder.....	i
Dedication	ii
Lives Remembered	iv
Note on Language.....	vi
The Hunting Grounds for the Rabka 4 + 1 (zbV) 1941-1944	x
Preface and Introduction	xi
Chapter 1 Introduction to the Protagonists.....	1
Chapter 2 Police in the Nazi State	28
Chapter 3 The Sipo-SD School: Establishment and Administration.....	39
Chapter 4 Operation Barbarossa.....	58
Chapter 5 Enter ‘the Dutchman’ Pieter Menten.....	63
Chapter 6 The Podhorodse Murders:.....	71
Chapter 7 Murder of the Lwow Professors.....	77
Chapter 8 Medical Practioners targeted by zbV	105
Chapter 9 Establishment of the Sipo-SD in east Galicia.	116
Chapter 10 The Leadership Return to the School.....	124
Chapter 11 Methodology of Murder.....	138
Chapter 12 Operational Actions within the School....	151

Chapter 13 The Nowy Sacz Actions	158
Chapter 14 The Jews of Jordanow.	176
Chapter 15 The Reichsführer SS purges the Rabka Four + 1	184
Chapter 16 SS-Hauptsturmführer Hans Krüger.....	195
Chapter 17 A Fact-finding Mission to the Soviet Union to investigate the Podhorodse Murders.....	202
Chapter 18 Dr Schöngarth's Final Contribution.....	228
Chapter 19 Lt. Americo S. Galle: USAF Bomber Command	233
Chapter 20 The Murder of Lt Americo Galle.....	243
Chapter 21 Trial and Retribution.	252
Chapter 22 Closing the Menten Affair, 1976 -1987 ...	275
Appendix 1 American Battle Monuments Commission	278
Appendix 2 <i>Vernichtungslager</i> 'Belzec'	280
Appendix 3 Just in Case: 500 Zloty bank notes.	327
Bibliography	329
Glossary	332
Photographic Acknowledgements	336
Index.....	339

Acknowledgements

To close friends, survivors of the Holocaust, Archivists, and Academia in general I pay due acknowledgment; the United States Embassy, London; to Krystyna Kynst, Melbourne, Australia; Sara Schon, Israel; the Authors: Malcolm MacPherson and Hans Knoop who brought the Podhorodse catastrophe to notice of the general public.¹

The Americo Galle investigation: Close and extended family of Americo S Galle; Records drawn from the National Museum of the Mighty Eighth Air Force, Savannah, Georgia / Helton s Hellcats, A Pictorial History of the 493rd.

To family and friends of the surviving crew of Aircraft: B-17G; AAF S/N 43-38107; Group 493; Sqdn 861: Lew Baxter; Dick Edgar; Bill Cox; R Dick Sipes; Merle Auerbach; William Brake Jenkins; Bill Massy; Herman Schroeder; Marvin Cooper

Sons of their fathers: Many children of prominent Nazi perpetrators still struggle with a terrible guilt legacy. What makes this unique in Germany and Austria is the notion of familial responsibility for crimes committed, even down the generations. Ironically, this idea of kin liability was in vogue during the Nazi period, and is common to many totalitarian regimes, but it is very rare to see it promulgated in a democracy. My sincere and warm thanks are extended to Pastor

¹ Knoop's compelling inside account of his investigation and pursuit of Menten. (See The Menten Affair, London 1978).

Werner Oder, the son of SS Untersturmführer Wilhelm Oder, who discusses with the author his father's activities at the height of Jewish decimation in the Rabka SS Training Academy, and elsewhere.

Finally, special thanks are extended to my long term editor, friend and mentor, Professor of the English language (USA) Joyce Field who I first met in the old east Galician town of Lwow² many years ago when the search for justice began.

Photographs and documents come from the author's own collection (A), the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw (HIW); United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM); the Yad Vashem Institute of National Remembrance (YV); Villa Hoge Boekel (VH); Robson Books (RB); Sir Martin Gilbert (A-MG); National Archives (NA); Littman Library (LM); Debach Museum (DM); Wikipedia Resources; New Statesman (NS); Krystyna Kinst (KK); Werner Oder (WO); De Telegraaf and Will Rutten. They are listed on page 336.

² After the First World War, it was Lwow in the new republic of Poland, but it reverted to Lemberg in 1940 when the Nazis marched in. Later, the Russians arrived they turned it into Lwow. Now it is the Ukrainian city of Lwow. (Yid. Lemberg; Ger., Lemberg; Pol., Lwow; Rus., Lwow; Latin, Leopoli), Lwow, Ukrainian). Hereafter Lwow.

Academic Excellence

In Murder

The Germans did it with success.
The Jews did it with disaster.



Deutsches Reich 1933 - 1943
Großdeutsches Reich 1943–1945

***Yidn, shreibt un farschreibt!*³**

It must all be recorded, with not a single
fact omitted... and when the time comes...
as it surely will – let the world read
and know what the murderers have done.⁴

³ In December 1941, during the evacuation of the Riga ghetto, the 81-year-old historian Simon Dubnow was shot. The story is told that Dubnow's last words were an admonition to his fellow Jews: 'Write and record!' (Yidn, shreibt un farschreibt) It was a phrase written on walls and scraps of paper in a last desperate act of defiance when the victims saw their immediate demise. These 'last words' can be found in many thousands of locations, including Fort IX, Kovno, Belzec and in the last transport bringing the Jewish workers of the 'death brigade' from Belzec to Sobibor where they were all shot on arrival.

Dedication

**Memorium For Sir Martin Gilbert:
25. 10. 1936 - 03. 02. 2015**



Fig 1: Sir Martin Gilbert memorium tree planting

Left to Right: Sir Martin, the late Professor John Klier, Dr Robin O’Neil, Caroline Harris, Herut Hoskin, Jon Boyd, Paul Neville, Angela Jayson, Petra Wöstefeld, and Rosalind Morris

⁴ ‘Oneg Shabbat’ Archives

Sir Martin Gilbert with his MA students 1997, who together, endured a journey of discovery and sadness. In the background is a Silver Birch tree brought back from the Parczew forest in Poland, which Sir Martin had just planted in the grounds of the Imperial War Museum, London. The tree was a gift to him by the students at the conclusion of their ‘Holocaust Journey.’

A major contribution by Sir Martin was his personally arranged Holocaust journey, taking his students systematically through Europe’s former Jewish community locations and places of infamy during the Second World War. It was a punishing schedule by any standard - virtually every night, over a ten-day period, spent in a different place - to say nothing of the emotional energy expended on visiting six death camps, key locations in Berlin, and numerous Nazi-erected Jewish ghettos.

This journey was capsulated in his book, *Holocaust Journey: Travelling in Search of the Past*, arguably the finest of all of Martin Gilbert’s many books about the Holocaust. The unusual format of a travel diary enabled him to bring out fully the history of each of the locations visited supported by a powerful selection of readings, photographs, and maps.

One of Martin’s endearing qualities was that he always had time for his students, even for the beginners in this field of study. Every request for information, or advice, was answered personally with supporting encouragement to that individual. He was generous in mind and spirit, and will be greatly missed...the end of an era!

Lives Remembered



Fig. 2: c.1926: With their three sons: Eleizer, Benjamin and Efraim both murdered by the SS 1942 at Rabka.⁵

⁵ Probably shot by SS-Oberscharführer Walter Proch supervised by SS Untersturmführer Wilhelm Oder.



Fig 3: Americo S. Galle. Murdered by SS Security Forces 1944⁶

⁶ Shot by SS Unterscharführer Herbert Fritz Willi Gernoth, Kriminal Sekretser (Sicherheitspolizei), on orders of Brigadierführer Schöngarth, Commander of the Security Police and the SD School Rabka.

Note on Language

The SS and the state bureaucracy employed elaborate titles and designations, which can be confusing to anyone but the specialist. As far as possible these designations have been simplified and wherever possible the German original has been used followed by the English translation in parentheses.

Terminology was a crucial device of the Nazis: As Raul Hilberg writes: *their policy was: 'never utter the words appropriate to the action'*. The euphemistic language spoken within the Nazi Police State conveyed a climate of 'order' and 'intention'. This is the language of deception that helped shape the pattern of society and pertinently explored by Hans Paechter and Viktor Klemperer.⁷ The Nazis thought up new terms and used old words contrary to their original meaning. By euphemistic presentation, they misled their enemies, victims, and those hovering on the periphery, to divert and obscure the most hideous of crimes.

It is very easy to be drawn into the Nazi code of euphemistic language, indeed it is difficult to avoid it and mean what we say. This double meaning was introduced as the system of genocide was perfected. Thus, from October 1941, onwards we find *Judenaussiedlung* (emigration of Jews), *Judenumsiedlung* (Jewish resettlement), and *Judenevakuierung* (evacuation) – all synonyms for mass murder. When Adolf Eichmann defined his purpose we find: *Aussiedling* (evacuation); *Verwertung der Arbeiterschaft* (utilisation of labour); *Sachverwertung* (seizure and utilisation of personal belongings); and *Einbringung verborgener Werte und*

⁷ See bibliography

Immobilien (confiscation of hidden assets and real estate).

When the instruments of murder moved from the euthanasia programme and concentration camps we find *abspritzen* (to spray – administering a lethal injection), or *Totbaden* (death baths). The SD perfected the euphemistic bureaucratic terminology as the persecution progressed: *Aktionen* (operations), *Säuberung* (cleansing), *Sonderbehandlung* (special treatment), *Ausschaltung* (elimination), or *Exekutivmassnahme* (executive measure).

After each mass execution in Auschwitz, camp Commandant Rudolf Höss submitted a report to the RSHA (Reich Main Security Office) in a disguised formula: ... *so und so viel Personen gesondert untergebracht worden seien* ... such and such a number of people separated, or segregated. These terms create the illusion of a bureaucratic paper chase, not genocide, where euphemistic ‘double-speak’ was an essential ingredient in the Nazi war against the Jews. The illusion of ‘plain speak’ contaminated, and indeed indoctrinated, the minor functionaries caught-up in State racial persecution policies. Any sense of moral perspective was abandoned to conceal the true meaning of the word employed.

Another aspect of this was the euphemistic jargon of the concentration camp guards, police, and male psychiatric nurses. They used such terms as ‘*not worth keeping*’, ‘*treat*’ the child, ‘*processed*’, ‘*authorisation*’, ‘*put on the grill*’, which all simply meant ‘to kill’. All those so engaged at every level of mass murder became used to communicating in this ‘sanitised’ language. Although it might appear a minor point, it had immense relevance in smoothing the day-to-day working in both the euthanasia institutions and the death camps.

The euphemistic language was constantly being refined. When Eichmann’s office was relieved of the task compiling statistical reports pertaining to *Operation Reinhardt*, these duties were passed over to Dr. Richard Korherr, the SS Chief statistician, who drafted a report for Himmler on the progress of the ‘Final Solution’. He noted that 1,449,692 Polish Jews had already received *Sonderbehandlung* (special treatment). Himmler returned the document and demanded a more appropriate phrase, *durchgeschleust* (passed through),

thereby suggesting that the numbers of Jews referred to in the report simply and safely passed through transit camps.

Himmler was a past master of euphemistic language and used it continually. The only time he appears to have dropped this camouflage was in his speech in Posen in October 1943, when he spoke directly to his SS in a protected environment. Historians too, have differed over the exact terminology appropriate to defining the Jewish catastrophe.

Geographic Aspects: east and east Galicia

Galicia is a historical and geographic region in Central Europe, once a small kingdom, that currently straddles the border between Poland and Ukraine.

The Austrians originally referred to Galicia as ‘Galicia-Lodomeria’ after they expropriated that territory from the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth during the First Partition of Poland in 1772. Over the years, the borders varied slightly, especially during the Napoleonic Wars, following which Krakow and the surrounding lands were eventually added to Galicia. Galicia became the largest province of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and bordered Moravia in the west and the Ottoman Empire to the south. For a time, Bukovina was included in Galicia; however, this area today forms a part of Romania. Galicia was returned to Poland when the Polish Republic was re-established after the First World War.

Today, the eastern half of Galicia is part of the Republic of the Ukraine, while the western half lies in the Polish Republic. The term Galicia therefore no longer describes an administrative or political region in either country. By far the largest proportion of the rural population in agricultural eastern pre-war Galicia was of Ukrainian nationality, followed by Poles and Jews, the latter dominating commerce and trade.

It was not until the German invasion of the Soviet Union that east Galicia was integrated into the General Government, an area where all manner of experiments directed at the Jewish population took place. It was also the area where the most affluent Jews and the

poorest lived alongside the wise men and the simple, the intelligentsia, artisans, beggars, and bankers alongside the Hasidim. The region was a centre and spiritual home of the Diaspora, which was to have its heart torn out.⁸

Regardless of their social standing, many found their final resting place in death camp Belzec and the pits of the Scheparowce forest. Largely annihilated, the Jews of Galicia and their culture never recovered ...and now the world of yesterday.

⁸ With the start of German Nazi occupation of Soviet Galicia in 1941, it was included into the Reich's General Government (under the Nazi-era occupation government of Poland), unlike eastern Ukraine which was formed into a separate Reichskommissariat Ukraine.

The Hunting Grounds for the Rabka 4 + 1 (zbV) 1941-1944



Fig 4: East & West Galicia 1941 – 1942

Preface and Introduction

THE RABKA FOUR + 1 INSTRUMENTS OF GENOCIDE AND GRAND LARCENY: ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE IN MURDER

The hands-on destruction of European Jewry was police led from start to finish.

A brief introduction to our ‘Rabka Four + 1’, opens with a brief summary of their beginnings and unfolds further with the passage of time. This was an exceptional period in our history and clearly, the very stuff of life was precariously balanced on the edge, for both sides. The Germans did it with success. The Jews did it with disaster.

This research focuses on the murderous activities of senior officers of the German Security Services who, at the outbreak of war in 1939, were brought together at the newly established Sipo-SD School at Zakopane and later Bad Rabka, Poland. In June 1941, all education facilities at the School were suspended in preparation for the war against Russia and the School leadership dispatched to other duties. Their activities continued in the provincial districts of east Galicia, where their unprecedented murderous actions wiped out the intellectual base of the Polish intelligentsia and Jewish community towns.

Between 1941 and 1944, the Nazis turned a girls’ school into a centre for training the *Einsatzgruppen* (death squads) and *Special Agents* operating throughout eastern Europe. They rounded up Jews and Poles and shot them in the woods behind the School. Children

used as live targets for machine-gun practice.

In June 1941, all education facilities of the School were suspended in preparation for the war against Russia. The School leadership was dispatched to operational duties in Poland. Their activities continued in the provincial districts of east Galicia, where their unprecedented murderous actions wiped out the intellectual base of the Polish intelligentsia and Jewish community towns.

For the duration of the war, the 'Rabka Four + 1', in some way or other, used the facilities of the establishment of the Sipo-SD School as a centre for their unlawful activities. All four + 1, protagonists remained in contact even after the war. Each is ultimately subjected to war crimes investigations and is appropriately dealt with within the War Crimes Judicial System.

The last act moves to Europe where Bomber Command operations over occupied territory in 1944, are at full stretch. Lt Galle's aircraft was shot down over occupied Europe. Most of the crew finished up as prisoners of war and survived. Lt Galle was reported as missing, after leaving his damaged aircraft on that fateful day. Not only do the records show that he was killed in action on the orders connected to the Rabka Four and the circumstances surrounding his death. Lieutenant Galle initially lay in an unmarked and unidentified grave in a foreign field but is now safely among his friends in an American War Cemetery at the Ardennes American Cemetery Neupre, Belgium. The main perpetrator of Lt Galle's demise paid the ultimate price

Chapter 1

Introduction to the Protagonists

The Rabka Four + 1):



Fig 5 The Rabka Four + 1 (USHMM)

- 1 SS: Brigadierführer Dr. Karl E Schöngarth
- 2 SS: Untersturmführer Wilhelm K Johannes Rosenbaum
- 3 SS: Schaführer Pieter Menten 'the Dutchman'
- 4 SS: Hauptsturmführer Hans Krüger

+1

- 5 SS: Untersturmführer Wilhelm Oder

THE PROTAGONISTS

Dr Eberhard Karl Schöngarth

Dr Eberhard Karl Schöngarth was born in Leipzig on 22 April 1903.

Schöngarth studied law, achieved a doctorate and first joined the Nazi Party in 1922, but left the same year. After serving in the army during 1924, he was appointed a university professor in Leibnitz.

Joined the NSDAP in 1933, and joined the SS on the 1 March 1933, as well as the Prussian Gestapo in 1935. From November 1935 to 1936, he was assigned to the press section in the Berlin Gestapo and during the first half of that year also acted as a political lawyer.

He was in charge of the Gestapo office in Arnshagen from May 1936, through 1937, and was promoted to SS-Untersturmführer on the 9 November 1936.

Accelerated Promotions

Assigned to the SD Hauptamt (later the RSHA) from November 1936 to October 1939, and promoted to SS-Obersturmführer on the 30 January 1938, and then to SS- Hauptsturmführer on 20 April 1938, and SS-Sturmbannführer on the 1 August 1938. He was further promoted to SS-Obersturmbannführer on Himmler's orders on the 10 September 1939.

Schöngarth headed a number of Gestapo offices in Bielefeld during 1937 -1938, then Dortmund in the first quarter of 1938. Senior Inspector of the Sipo and SD in Dresden from early October 1939, until posted to the General Government in January 1941, to supervise the newly re-constructed Sipo-SD School at Bad Rabka. Schöngarth was promoted to SS-Standartenführer on the 1 January 1940 and was also made an Oberst der Polizei on the 1 March 1941.

Schöngarth was based in Krakow. He was further promoted to SS-Oberführer on the 30 January 1941. And to Senior Commander of the Sipo and SD to mid-June 1943,

Schöngarth led an Einsatzgruppen in Poland and Russia,

Einsatzgruppe z.b.V that saw service in eastern Poland and western Belorussia. This force was responsible for murdering approximately 10,000 victims including the murder of the Lwow Professors. In the autumn of 1941, he returned to Krakow.

Dr Schöngarth was characterised by an outstanding fast intellectual grasp, strong willpower and an impressive appearance with a bulky figure, which commanded respect and obedience. He was energetic, very lively, a regular drinker and not without a sense of humour.

Dr Schöngarth experience and high position within the Security Services was his secondment to the Wannsee Conference on the 20 January 1942, where the 'Final Solution of the Jewish Question' was discussed. Dr Schöngarth was a fanatic enemy of the Jews, believed their extermination necessary, and wanted to harden his Sipo-SD Führers with the necessary 'steel hardness.'

Officers under his command demonstrate his uncompromising stance about the execution of the Jews in Lwow: that any SS officer would be shot for failing to carry out an order of execution, and that he would back any officer who shot his comrade for this failure.

Schöngarth was promoted to SS-Major General und Generalmajor der Polizei on the 30 January 1943, and in July of the same year, was transferred to SS Polizei Division in Greece where he served until July 1944.

From early July 1944, until the end of the war he was the Senior Commander of the Sipo and SD in Den Haag, Holland. After HSSPF Hans-Albin Rauter was wounded in an ambush by Dutch resistance, Schöngarth replaced him during March and April 1945.

Schöngarths eventual fate was sealed when Reichsführer –SS Heinrich Himmler issued his directive concerning the treatment of captured English and American flyers, as we shall see.

Dr Eberhard Schöngarth died as he had lived, 'by the sword.' His death was by the sword of justice, enacted in the city of Burgensteinfurt, Germany in the British zone of occupation. He was sentenced to death by hanging for the murder of an unknown airman (Americo S. Galle).

The sentence confirmed by the British Military Court penal

THE PROTAGONISTS

establishment at Hameln, and executed by hanging on the 15 May 1946.

Wilhelm Rosenbaum

Wilhelm Rosenbaum⁹ was born on 27 April 1915 in Prenzlauer Berg, Berlin. His father, Peter Rosenbaum, was a municipal worker at the central covered market at the Alexanderplatz. His mother died when Wilhelm was just one year old. The father re-married which brought forth the step-brother of Wilhelm Franz, born in 1910. He has been listed as missing since the Second World War. The second marriage was dissolved after three years.

In about 1917/18, his father married a third time. From this marriage comes the other step-brother Kurt, born in 1919.

Wilhelm had an unhappy childhood, experienced rejection and had to stand on his own two feet at a relatively early age. He spent his childhood with father and stepmother in Berlin, in a three-room apartment. Since this accommodation quickly proved insufficient, Wilhelm was found a place in a Catholic boarding school.

When he was 6 years old, he entered the *Volksschule*¹⁰ (elementary school) until the age of 11 years. He then moved onto the *Realschule* (secondary school) where he dropped out after the

⁹ I will refer to Rosenbaum as Wilhelm up until 1939. One of the plusses of going direct to the High Court records was that I found material not generally kept in police prosecution files, i.e., psychological assessment reports obtained by Court Medical psychologists, namely Dr. Gercke of the Hamburg Court. Dr. Gercke must have spent many hours interviewing Rosenbaum prior to sentencing.

¹⁰ Many of the Sipo-SD Commanders (Schöngarth and Krüger) came via this system. For the purposes of Rosenbaum ilk, there were 'Party Schools' where talented and 'morally qualified' boys of 12 years were selected by the HJ for admission to the leader Schools: Adolf-Hitler-Schulen: The minister of education ran '*Nationalpolitische Erziehungsanstalten*' which prepared pupils for the civil service, and for our purposes the Sipo-SD. The SS ran '*Heimschulen*' - community Schools. Finally, In addition, there was the special 'Führerschulen' administered by the NS where it trained its officials once a year at the Hohe Schule am Chiemsee. (Source - Nazi-Deutsch - contemporary German usage on Government, Military, and Economic Institutions, Heinz Paechter, New York, 1943).

third grade, at the age of 16 years. His School reports were poor. It was said, that this was due to bad, oppressing circumstances at home, holding back his development in every way.

The Stepmother despised, beat, harassed, and insulted him as well as his brother Franz. She looked upon them as '*Polackenkinder*' (Polish children); the women whom his father had married in the first and second marriage were '*Hurenweiber*' (whores). Wilhelm was addressed as '*Tadrig*'; Franz was addressed as '*the big one*'. Her favourite was her own child. The father was a weakling and did not dare to defend his two children, nor preserve the memory of his late wives from the stepmother. He was physically afraid of his third wife and believed that she would eventually kill him. The stepmother died in 1955 in a state of psychological confusion.

The father put his two sons through military Prussian rules. He taught Wilhelm the piano and the violin; Franz had to learn the cello. Both boys were punished and whacked, when mistakes occurred during practising. It also went for schoolwork, where the father acted as a private tutor this way. Whoever did not know his vowels or made spelling mistakes was beaten.

Eventually, Wilhelm could not stand this uncaring and unhappy childhood at home anymore. After his brother Franz had turned his back on his parent's house (following a suicide attempt in 1930), Wilhelm left his parent's house in October 1932; this was the end of his studies at the secondary School.

After having lived for a short period in his own room in the city, he joined the SA-sports School Prenden in November 1932. His apprenticeship to National Socialists (NS) had partly been accomplished, and was now in its final phase where he would be groomed for higher office.

Wilhelm had already encountered a National Socialist leaning in the School. Some teachers at the secondary School were nationalists, German-nationals and against the republic. A particular group of teachers was promoting co-operation within the Association for the Germanisation Abroad (VDA). Wilhelm also did his best to sell stickers and badges for the VDA. At the

THE PROTAGONISTS

beginning of 1930, when he was 15 years old, he joined the NS-pupil's league comprising of approximately 25 pupils of the elementary School and lead by a sympathetic teacher. They had a special 'Wolfsangel' badge. As far as Wilhelm can remember, the NS- pupils' league was particularly pushed and supported by the gym and vocal music teachers, who also propagated the VDA.

When Wilhelm joined the *Hitlerjugend*' (Hitler youth), in the autumn of 1930, he ended his membership and activities at the NS-pupils' league. From the period of his membership at the *Hitlerjugend*, he can remember that both his friends and he had to purchase uniforms and equipment on their own, which they did gradually with their hard-earned money. His parents did not mind him joining the National Socialist movement. They were, and especially his father, German-Nationalist-minded.

The population in the Berlin suburbs where he lived was mainly communist; therefore, the National Socialists encountered firm rejection and the SA people did not have an easy task.¹¹

Since there was an SA -Stormtrooper house close-by his parents' house, Wilhelm was able to observe confrontations that became violent. He felt - just like his brother Franz - that their political views were drawn towards the SA and National Socialism. On the 1 February 1932, both brothers joined the Berlin SA - Stormtroopers. This ended Wilhelm's membership of the *Hitlerjugend*.

From the 28 November 1932, until the 1 January 1933, Wilhelm was active at the SA-sports School at Prenden in Bernau. About 60-80 SA people had training in defence sports and pre-army practices. Wilhelm was only called in for guarding and as such, did not have anything to do with the defence sports.

Wilhelm actually wanted to join the *Reichswehr* (army of the Reich) and become a soldier. Following an interview, he was told

¹¹ The German Left-wing parties were all committed to a greater or lesser extent to a Marxist vision of things. This was, in comparison to National Socialism, a rational and well-articulated vision and that proved to be a weakness. Both Liberals and Marxists found it very difficult to arrive at an adequate analysis of the Nazi phenomenon.

ROBIN O'NEILL

that he was too weak and undeveloped; He was advised to re-apply in a year. On 6 February 1933, Wilhelm went to Berlin-Doberritz for voluntary work. His work comprised of agricultural labour, clearing hedges and gorses, etc. He was paid 0.25 RM a day.

On his eighteenth birthday, 27 April 1933, he was admitted to the NSDAP; his earlier request for admission had not been taken into consideration until then because of his age. He attended the *Reichsführerschule* (Führer School of the Reich) of the voluntary work service from 9 May, until 3 August 1933. As this School was just in its development stages, he was only told to do excavations and similar jobs. Nethertheless, a certain training - of a military and political influence - took place.

Wilhelm applied for work with the German Work Front and was accepted on 5 August 1933; he dealt with the postal dispatch office and other menial tasks. From 1 November 1934, until September 1935, he served voluntarily with the *Reichswehr*, namely the 12th infantry-regiment *Dessaue-Halberstadt*. He has unpleasant memories of this period. The training was hard and the soldiers were often harassed and excessively put through the mill. He left the *Reichswehr* as a Lance Corporal.

In October 1935, he was offered the opportunity to stay with the *Reichswehr* as a first-aid-man. He refused as he was 'fed-up' with the *Reichswehr*. His actual wish would have been to join the Guard Regiment in Berlin, which corresponded with the military splendour of his upbringing and longing. Nethertheless, his application was rejected.

With the assistance of the SA, Wilhelm found a job as clerk at the SS-Head Office. Again he was given menial tasks, probably just within his capabilities. He remained there until the spring 1936. On advice, he applied for, and was accepted by the Head Office of the *Staatspolizei*, Berlin. He worked for Department 1, (Management, and Law) as a police office clerk where he registered reports of weaponry and confiscation issues. He had no decision-making authority.

THE PROTAGONISTS

SS Career 1936.

Wilhelm Rosenbaum comes face to face and under the direct influence of the 'Final Solutions' mastermind: Obergruppenführer Richard Heydrich.

Based upon his employment at the Head Office of the security police, Wilhelm was taken on temporarily (on probation) by the SS on 1 July 1936, a critical time at the onset of Security Services amalgamations. At this time, he recalls an SS-Führer addressing him and his colleagues with the following words: *'Listen, you have to join the SS; you cannot walk around in these SA uniforms anymore!'* ; because of which Wilhelm signed a preparatory application for admission to the SS. Following the transfer, he had the SS rank of Unterscharführer; as he was already Oberscharführer with the SA, he was downgraded. He had to personally buy his SS-uniform and to attend various meetings for training. His supervisory officer from both the police and the SS - was Obergruppenführer Richard Heydrich. In July 1938, his SS -status was confirmed. This appointment must have been beyond his wildest dreams.

Wilhelm Rosenbaum had married Hedwig Bober in August 1937; on 22 June 1938, their daughter Ellen was born. The marriage was not a success and they were divorced in 1940, by mutual consent.

Rosenbaum meets up with Hans Krüger.

With the outbreak of war against Poland, Rosenbaum, as a member of the SS, was transferred to the Inspector of the Security Police in Oppein. He was issued with a grey SS-uniform of the Oberscharführer rank and joined the 'Dr Schafer' task force, which consisted of some 60-80 men. This task force was commanded by SS- Obersturmbannführer' Otto Sens. This unit was to fight partisans and find 'insurgents' and make them harmless. After a short stay in Oppein, the task force operated in Tschenstochau and then moved to Krakow. In Krakow Rosenbaum was transferred to Sipo-SD squad that had to shoot enemies of the Reich who had

been condemned by court martial. The officer in charge was Sipo-SD SS-Hauptsturmführer Hans Krüger.¹² Krüger, a ruthless and brutal man, obsessed with national-socialist ideas made an immediate impression on the 24-year-old Rosenbaum, as we shall see.

In early November 1939, Rosenbaum was moved to the department of the Commander-in-Chief of the Security Police and Sipo-SD (BdS) in Krakow, whose leader was SS-Obergruppenführer Dr. Karl Eberhard Schöngarth. Under the direct leadership of Krüger (Schöngarths deputy), Rosenbaum, and his squad were mobilised to force their way into Jewish homes to collect money and 'contributions' from the Jews of Krakow.

Rosenbaum encountered this first but lasting confrontation with the 'Jewish problem' after the invasion of Poland. So far, he was only influenced by the general anti-Jewish political agitation of the national socialists and had received an anti-Semitic education at home. He believed, based upon the brainwashing that he had received, that Judaism was ruling the entire world, explaining Hitler's war.

In December 1939, Rosenbaum was commissioned to take over the re-organisation of a School of the Commander-in-Chief of the Security Police (Sipo-SD) in Zakopane as Wirtschaftsführer (economic leader). The Commandant of this School was the already mentioned Hans Krüger.

In July 1940, Rosenbaum was at that time on holiday; - the School was transferred from Zakopane to Bad Rabka. He received orders to terminate his leave and go direct to Bad Rabka to take over duties of SS – Untersturmführer and Police Secretary to the newly located School. He was now deputy to Hans Krüger. The Rosenbaum - Krüger administration was short lived. Transfers, promotions, and sideways moves were numerous. Krüger was seconded to the office of Dr. Schöngarth in Krakow, Rosenbaum took his place but without promotion.

¹² Hans Krüger Sipo-SD Führer in Krakow just before he was to taken up duties in the Zakopane/Rabka Sipo-SD School.

THE PROTAGONISTS

SS Hauptsturmführer Hans Krüger

Hans Krüger had joined the SA in 1929, at the age of twenty. While growing up in his town of Poznan, he had seen the German-Polish 'cultural struggle' first hand; together with his parents, the Poles had expelled him in 1918. Krüger rose rapidly in the SA ranks. Instead of working in agriculture, for which he was specifically trained, he took over as leader of a SA 'stormtroop unit'.¹³ Shortly after the Nazis seized power in January 1933, Krüger was soon active in 'combating adversaries', and was appointed head of the Political Section in the Oranienburg concentration camp. After the Rohm Purge in June 1934, and the subsequent disarming of the SA, he was demoted, ending up as a section head in a labour office.

Krüger did not return to the Nazi apparatus until 1939, after screening by the HHE (Hitler-Hedrich- Executive), and before joining the Sipo-SD as Gestapo official in his native Poznan, and then Krakow. Here, too, his Nazi fanaticism and brutal ruthlessness did not go unnoticed, and the Krakow KdS named him director of the Sipo Academy in the town of Zakopane and Bad Rabka. There he trained Ukrainians and others as future Sipo personnel; men whom he would later command in Stanislawow. Particular emphasis was placed on training the 'V' Agents who had been working for the Nazi state in adjoining foreign lands.

During Krüger's era in the Stanislawow district, from July 1941 until late 1942, the greatest mass murder anywhere in the General Government would be perpetrated. He was the first Sipo-SD-Führer to organise mass murders in the region while it was under Hungarian occupation. In the autumn of 1941, seizing the initiative before other Sipo-SD leaders, he proceeded to execute Jews in legally unclear situations, e.g., Jews or half-Jews apprehended without the obligatory armband. Elsewhere at that time, such offences were still being penalised by fines. Krüger had other ideas, as we shall see.

¹³ See Dieter Pohl, *Hans Krüger, and the Murder of the Jews in the Stanislawow Region (Galicia)*. Shoah Resource Centre (Holocaust Studies 1/24.

Krüger's actions continued up until late 1942, when the Reich Auditor's Office (RAO) raided the Sipo-SD Stanislowow offices and seized a considerable amount of stolen property. The Political Secretary, who was responsible for the office, shot himself.

As we shall see, Krüger himself ultimately brought about his own transfer and demotion by disclosing his murderous deeds to a Polish noblewoman under arrest. He was later charged with betraying secret information and transferred to Paris where he saw out the war.

The Dutchman: Pieter Nicolaas Menten:

(26 May 1899 – 14 November 1987) was a former honorary member of the SS, war criminal and post-war an art collector.

Pieter Nicolaas Menten was born on the 26 May 1899, in Amsterdam into a wealthy Amsterdam family. He became interested in Poland through his father's business connections. He soon developed an extensive export trade in Dutch products to Poland. Menten moved to east Galicia in 1923 (then in Poland and later part of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic), where he became a wealthy landowner and executive. Described as mild-mannered and quiet, he developed a deep grudge against a prominent neighbouring Jewish family over a business dispute. Menten travelled back to the Netherlands in 1939, when Russia invaded eastern Poland, and returned in 1941 after the Nazi counter-occupation—this time as a member of the SS. Menten was involved in the massacre of Polish professors in Lwow and robbery of their property. According to witnesses, he helped shoot as many members of the offending family in Galicia as he could find, then turned on other Jews in the area.

He claimed descent from the founders of Van den Bergh's (Unilever), claiming that his father had been in Royal Dutch Petroleum but broke away after the Shell take-over. The truth was not to become apparent until well after the war. In 1980 at the conclusion of a protracted War Crimes Trial, it was disclosed that his predecessors had never had anything to do with Shell or Unilever.

THE PROTAGONISTS

His father had been a dealer in rags, waste paper, the company was named Menten & Stark, and his grandfather had been a butcher's assistant. Pieter had brother Dirk, two years younger, who had joined the family's waste paper business.

On his father's death in 1922, Menten broke away from the family empire and established a business in Danzig under the name 'Menten & Stark.' With his business activities and deals of a dubious nature, he became a millionaire overnight, and the largest timber trader between Holland and eastern Europe. Most of his acquired wealth in Danzig was the result of fraudulent activities and as a result, he fled with his wife to Lwow where they occupied a small flat.

In Lwow, Menten was introduced to Isaac Pistiner who had two large estates that he had purchased from Princess Maria Lubomirska. Both men went into partnership, Menten renting from Pistiner the timber rights and the hunting lodge of the Sopot estate and almost immediately acquired the stance of benefactor and employer of the local peasants. The 'Dutchman' or 'Petro Menten' as he was known throughout the Stryj valley became 'family' to Frieda and Isaac Pistiner and their eight children. This fatherly figure extended to relatives of the Pistiners', in particular to a young boy named Lieber (Bibi) Krumholz.

Krumholz had been born in Lwow, now in the western Ukraine that used to be eastern Galicia in pre-war Poland. His uncle, Isaac Pistiner, an industrialist who owned large forests in the Carpathian foothills, had a county house at Podhorodse—a village inhabited by Ukrainian peasants and Jews, where the Poles were the policemen, officials and foresters.

Pieter Menten befriended the young impressionable 'Bibi' Krumholz and they would often be seen together in their walks around the woods and fields in the Stryj valley. The Dutchman and Bibi Krumholz had become inseparable and remained so until Bibi Krumholz left Podhorodse for Palestine on the 24 October 1935. Bibi Krumholz took the name Chaviv Kanaan and kept in touch with his family by letter and postcards to his uncle Pieter Menten. A regular correspondence was maintained for years, and the dialogue

ended when Poland was partitioned in 1939.

In 1935, Poland's hyperinflation was nearly as bad as Germany's and provided rich opportunities for anyone with ready Dutch guilders. Pistiner, now sorely pressed for cash, was obliged to sell the Sopot estate to his partner Pieter Menten. Pieter Menten and his wife had become prominent among the Polish landowners and Jewish timber merchants around Lwow, and did many deals, some of a dubious nature with Isaac Pistiner. Also in 1935, Menten and Pistiner quarrelled, this time the basis of the dispute being a shady land and property fraud on Menten's holdings in the Stryj valley allegedly committed by Pistiner on Menten.



Fig 6: Pieter Menten (right) with the village foresters before the war (Will Rutten).

A bitter legal fight between the two men ensued and never abated. Meanwhile Menten had established his position in Lwow society. He became a naturalised Pole and the honorary Dutch consul for Krakow. It was in this capacity he met Princess Juliana of the Netherlands, arriving in 1937 for a Carpathian honeymoon with her German husband Prince Bernhard. From 1936, the Sipo-SD and the Abwehr had been penetrating and recruiting sympathisers of the OUN movement.

THE PROTAGONISTS

The Menten case reflects the procedures adopted by the SD when recruiting 'V'-agents. Pieter Menten is pertinent to this study for the following reasons: it discloses the methods of counterespionage operating by Sipo-SD and Abwehr on the borderlands of the Reich. As all agents have to undergo training at some stage, we may presume that Sipo-SD training establishments in Germany (probably Berlin Greenwald) had some impute to field officers so engaged.

+ ONE: SS Unterscharführer Wilhelm Oder ¹⁴ Profile:

Wilhelm Oder, was born 18 March 1905

On 18 March 1938, he joins the SS. On 5 May 1938, NSDAP. Membership No. 6,271, 713.

On 1 July 1940, he is seconded to 8th Totenkopf (skull & crossbones) SS Division.

On 5 November 1941, Oder is appointed to Einsatzgruppenführer (Task Force Leader) for the Rabka SS School. This is where he meets Commandant Rosenbaum's secretary Käthe (see photo above).

In 1943, After the Himmler purge of the senior SS officers, Wilhelm Oder is transferred to Radom as KdS commander (Kommandeur der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD) of the SD. He remains there until early 1945, when the approach of the Russians he flees to safer environs.

On 5 May 1945, SS Unterscharführer Oder is detained by the Russians in Prague. He subsequently escapes and flees to Hamburg where he goes into hiding.

On 19 October 1948, SS Unterscharführer Oder's extradition by

¹⁴ See: Jerry Klinger, *Eugenics and the Holocaust* Dr. Karl Brandt – Madison Grant - Wilhelm Oder, <http://www.jewishmag.com/> April 2012. For the interest of readers, Werner Oder has included photographs of these now historic documents in his book, *Battling with Demons (From ant-Semitism to Zionism the astonishing journey of the son of an Austrian war criminal)*. 2011.

the Polish government is blocked by the Odessa.¹⁵

Between 1948 – 1952 Wilhelm Oder is imprisoned in the same facility where the Commandant of Treblinka and Sobibor death camps, Franz Stangl, was also detained.

On 29 March 1951, Pastor Werner is born.



Fig. 7: SS Unterscharführer Oder in his Nazi uniform with his secretary Käthe circa 1942.

On 2 July 1952, former SS Unterscharführer Oder is arraigned in War Crimes Trial in Linz, Austria, indicted but found not guilty to murder but guilty to mistreatment of prisoners. He was released from custody the same day.

In 1970, Simon Wiesenthal re-opens the trial and on receipt of a summons, Wilhelm Oder dies of heart attack.

¹⁵ (Organization of Former SS Members ("Organization Der Ehemaligen SS-Angehörigen"), Odessa was an organization founded in 1944, with the express purpose of helping Nazi members flee Europe and escape justice.

THE PROTAGONISTS

What follows is an extraordinary account. Initially introduced and narrated by Werner Oder in his book *Battling with Demons*, and then by interview with the author. Werner recalls that his life has been full of dark secrets regarding the part his father played within the German Security Services at the Rabka SS/SD School, between 1941-1943), and thereafter...:

Family background & personal reminisces:



Fig 8. Pastor Werner Oder¹⁶

In discussions with the author: SS Unterscharführer Wilhelm Oder and his brother Hermann were born and grew up near Linz, Austria.¹⁷ Raised as Catholics, they and their family were never

¹⁶ Werner is an internationally renowned Lecturer and Bible teacher, inspiring and empowering people to receive hope through learning the lessons from history. He has been Senior Pastor of Tuckton Christian Centre for over thirty years.

¹⁷ Simon Wiesenthal began his search for Nazi war criminals almost immediately after the war ended. Wiesenthal began his search mistakenly looking for the wrong man, Herman Oder. He did not know that there were two Oder brothers. The trail had been deliberately confused to keep Wiesenthal off. Wilhelm Oder was finally, correctly identified. He was arrested by the Americans, 5 March 1948.

particularly religious. Culturally and religiously, they were weaned for generations on the societal milk of rabid anti-Semitism. Hatred of Jews was normal. It was the common nourishing, reassuring element that although they were not members of the elite of society, they were superior to the Jews.

Over many years, Werner delved into a world of dark conspiracy to uncover the truth: that his father and others, were complicit in the murder of approximately 2000 Jewish men, women and children during his duties as Chief firearms instructor and executioner.

Family Background:

Oder and his brother Hermann¹⁸ were born and grew up near Linz, Austria. Raised as Catholics, they and their family were never particularly religious. Culturally and religiously, they were weaned for generations on the societal milk of rabid anti-Semitism. Hatred of Jews was normal. It was the common nourishing, reassuring element that although they were not members of the elite of society, they were superior to the Jews.

There was an innate sense of anger and violence with the Oder brothers. The terrible economic hardships of the Great Depression, compounded by the break-up of Austrian Empire at the end of World War I, followed by societal chaos and social distress, the emergence of Nazism seemed the perfect solution to the Oders. Hitler had grown up near Linz. He called it his hometown. Adolf Eichmann had also lived in Linz.

The Oders were attracted to the aggressiveness of Nazism. They were very comfortable with its Fascist direction and especially

¹⁸ Simon Wiesenthal began his search for Nazi war criminals almost immediately after the war ended. Wiesenthal began his search mistakenly looking for the wrong man, Untersturmführer Herman Oder, SS No. 86, 051. He did not know that there were two Oder brothers. The trail had been deliberately confused to keep Wiesenthal off. Wilhelm Oder was finally, correctly identified. He arrested by the Americans, 5 March 1948.

THE PROTAGONISTS

comfortable with its racist anti-Semitism. Early on, they joined the Nazi party in Austria. With little reluctance, they were involved in the assassination of Austrian Chancellor Engelbert Dollfus in 1934. They were arrested and tried for their part in the murder. They were condemned to death.

Awaiting their execution, the firing squad readied the Oder brothers for death. At that moment, Hitler, in front of his German Legions, marched triumphantly into Austria. The crowds cheered wildly in the streets as Germany absorbed Austria in the Anschluss. Austria became part of the Third Reich. The execution of the Oders was stopped. They were released to freedom, to acclaim and honours.

On his birthday of the same year, 18 March, 1905, which he shared with Adolf Eichmann, Wilhelm Oder joined the SS STURM 52/5 in the small town of St. Pölten. No longer an underground SS soldier, he was among the Nazi agitators who began to attack Jewish properties on the night of November 9, 1938, in what became known as the infamous Kristallnacht¹⁹

On 1 July 1940, he joined the 8th Totenkopf Standarte, the division, which was formed in 1939, and sent for training. As a member of the Totenkopf Einsatzgruppe he wore the death head symbol on his collar and his ring. These symbols stated 'We carry the death head as a warning to our enemies.' As part of the Death Head Division's assignment, he transferred to Dachau in November 1940. Wilhelm was selected for the Waffen-SS who recognized his special qualities and sent him as a firearms specialist to the newly opened SD School at Rabka.

Job description: to teach the men how to kill Jews without feeling, without emotion. Oder's weapon of choice was a Walther PPK, calibre 765. Oder would take Jews out to a nearby field and

¹⁹ Kristallnacht, (German: 'Crystal Night'), also called Night of Broken Glass or November Pogroms, the night of 9 – 10 November 1938, when German Nazis attacked Jewish persons and property. The name Kristallnacht refers ironically to the litter of broken glass left in the streets after these pogroms. The violence continued during the day of 10 November and in some places acts of violence continued for several more days.

demonstrate a technique he had personally developed, how to kill Jews with a single shot. He learned that placing the Walther 10-20 centimetres from the nape of the victim's neck and firing was the most effective means of killing Jews quickly and efficiently.

Operations within the School

The technique Oder developed was called the '*Genickschuss method*'. Oder had the students repeat the killing procedures on new Jewish victims. If any of the volunteers showed reluctance, inability, or moral hesitation, he removed them from the course sending them to the Russian front as punishment. The Rabka School was the central training facility for SS and Ukrainian extermination squads under his supervision.²⁰ Although Unterscharführer Wilhelm Oder was on Commandant Rosenbaum's staff, he was directly answerable to Dr Schöngarth (BdS) Krakow. As a course instructor, Wilhelm Oder worked diligently, efficiently at his job from the autumn of 1941 until March of 1943, when he was transferred to Radom as KdS commander of the SD.

As the Russians pushed the German army back in 1945, they captured Wilhelm Oder in Poland. He escaped. Aided by the confusion of the ending war and the assistance of Nazi sympathizers, Wilhelm hid in Eichman's old foxhole in the Austrian mountains,

Former SS Unterscharführer Oder was brought to trial in 1952. Austrian Nazi sympathizers had done an excellent job destroying evidence, intimidating witness, covering the trail of all the guilty. Wilhelm Oder was only convicted of mistreating prisoners. He was sentenced to six months hard labour. He was never convicted of murder.

As referred to above, seventeen years later, in 1969, Simon

²⁰ The Genickschuss murder technique became the standard operational method of hand killing Jews in the German effort to exterminate European Jewry. For additional practice and teaching demonstrations, Oder would line Jewish children up and kill them with machine gun fire.

THE PROTAGONISTS

Wiesenthal finally uncovered incontrovertible evidence against Oder. Receiving the court summons, Wilhelm Oder suffered a fatal heart attack.

Wilhelm Oder, the man who pulled the trigger to murder, the man who coldly, efficiently, and who effectively taught others to pull the trigger and murder, died unrepentant. He died never having been convicted by the courts for his actual crimes.

Like many thousands of Nazi murderers, Oder escaped the hangman. A few generals, a few administrators, a few bureaucrats, a few doctors were executed by the Allies for Crimes against Humanity. The vast majority of the Nazi war criminals lived successful, protected, even respected lives, dying comfortably in old age surrounded by their families and friends. The details of their past was never spoken of.

*The question must be asked?: 'How do the children of the perpetrators overcome the burden of their parent's guilt and live with the yoke of silence...'*²¹

Pastor Werner Oder:

The Company My Father Kept: 'Tell me what company you keep and I will tell you what you are.'

Some people say that I judged my father too harshly, that he was a victim of his environment, and that he had no choice but co-operate or starve. There is some truth in this, as the force of National Socialism against which they had no defence has hijacked the people of his generation. At the same time, this does not negate the power of choice of the company you keep. John F. Kennedy said 'you are judged by the company you keep.' The company my father kept speaks as loud as the crimes he committed.

²¹ Dan Bar: *The Legacy of Silence with Children of the Third Reich*, NY 1989, 231

To piece together my father's social environment, we have to make some assumptions based upon the things we know. We know that he was a committed Nazi who disliked the Jews and an Austrian who served the Reich in a foreign country. This would automatically create an environment of a company of Kameraden who share the same Heimatland i.e. Austria, speak the same language, Austrian, and who hold to the same 'vision' in which the Jews are destined to perish.

They were all local men who lived in the relative small area of Upper Austria. In this respect, it is not too difficult to piece together my father's social environment.

Besides his fellow deputies other conspirator killers were at work in Rabka:

Maximilian Grabner who served in Katowice, about 130 miles north-west of Rabka. As Gestapo chief of Auschwitz, he was responsible for the systematic torture of hundreds of people.²²

Hermann Höfle²³ was born in Salzburg on 19 June, 1911. He joined the NSDAP on 1 August 1933, with party number 307,469. In 1937, he became SS-Sturmbannführer of SS-unit 1/76. Like my father, he trained at the officers' school in Dachau, after which he served in the Selbstschutz in Nowy Sacz in southern Poland, a few miles east of Rabka. He later participated in the genocide of Mogilew, Ukraine where Einsatzgruppe B murdered 45,467 people

²² Werner is of the opinion that Grabner trained his father.

²³ Hermann Julius Höfle pron. Also Hans (or) Hermann Hoeffle (1911 – 1962) was an Austrian-born *SS-Sturmbannführer* (Major). He was deputy to Odilo Globocnik in the Aktion Reinhardt programme, serving as his main deportation and extermination expert. As such he was heavily involved in crimes against humanity during the Holocaust.

THE PROTAGONISTS

Franz Stangl,²⁴ like my father, was a musician who played the zither. Given this skill and the close proximity of Stangl's hometown of Wels, I have no doubt that these two men knew each other well. As Commandant of Sobibor's and Treblinka death camps, he held the rank of SS-Obersturmführer, responsible for the death of almost a million people. Like my father, he was tracked down by Wiesenthal and arrested. Although imprisoned with my father, he managed to escape with the help of bishop Hudal's²⁵ ODESSA ratline. He was re-arrested in 1967 and given a life sentence for genocide. (He and my father both died of heart failure within less than a year of each other.)

Johann and Wilhelm Mauer, two sadistic murderers who killed 12,000 people were members of the Einsatzgruppen in Rabka and soul friends on their flight from Poland.

These are a few individuals of the company my father kept. (We shall never know about many others). Their character reveals to me the kind of person my father was, in the words of Miguel de Cervantes who said in 1567, 'Tell me what company you keep and I will tell you what you are.'

Some of these men admitted the killings while saying

²⁴ Franz Paul Stangl (1908 – 1971) Austrian-born SS commandant of the Sobibór and Treblinka extermination camps during the Operation Reinhardt phase of the Holocaust. He was arrested in Brazil in 1967, extradited and tried in West Germany for the mass murder of 900,000 Jews, and in 1970 was found guilty and sentenced to the maximum penalty, life imprisonment. He died of heart failure six months later.

²⁵ Alois Hudal (also known as Luigi Hudal; (1885 – 1963) was an Austrian titular bishop in the Roman Catholic church, based in Rome. For thirty years, he was the head of the Austrian-German congregation of Santa Maria dell'Anima in Rome and, until 1937, an influential representative of the Austrian Catholic Church. In his 1937 book, *The Foundations of National Socialism*, Hudal praised Adolf Hitler and his policies and indirectly attacked Vatican policies. After World War II, Hudal helped establish the ratlines, which allowed prominent Nazi German and other European former Axis officers and political leaders, among them accused war criminals, to escape Allied trials and denazification.

‘my conscience is clear, I only did my duty’ (Stangl), ‘I did it in the interest of my family’ (Grabner), ‘I only followed orders’ (others).

Like it or not, I had to learn to accept the fact that my father must have been, like his friends, a characterless individual who had no fear of God and no qualms in murdering innocent civilians. The historian and moralist Lord Acton (1834–1902) coined the phrase ‘power corrupts, absolute power corrupts absolutely’. The evil of National Socialism consisted in giving power to godless individuals, thereby corrupting the normally good moral standard, which resides in most human beings. It is said that you can choose your friends but you cannot choose your family. With this fact and with the information I uncovered, I had the privilege to make different decisions to the ones my ancestors made. However, this did not mean that it was easy or automatic. My psychological heritage had formidable power that was corrupting me even after the death of my father.

I could have made excuses as many do, blaming my parents or my environment for my behaviour. Don’t let yourself be victimised by the age you live in. It is not the times that will bring us down, any more than its society.....there is a tendency today to absolve individuals of moral responsibility and treat them as victims of social circumstance. You buy that and you pay with your soul.what limits people is lack of character.

I soon discovered that to live a different life I had to stop making the abuse my excuse. I had to face the issues and take responsibility for my behaviour and my lifestyle.

The Death of My Father

While I was serving my term in the military, I received the news of the death of my father. It had been well over fifteen years since I last saw him.

In his book, *The Murderers Among Us*, Simon Wiesen-

THE PROTAGONISTS

thal mentions that Wilhelm Oder was one of the first Nazis he sought to track down. For the next few years, a probe was conducted and he was finally put on trial in Linz. The court archives show that the witnesses against Wilhelm Oder were neutralised by positive testimonials, resulting in a relatively light sentence of six years hard labour. Within a few short months, he was free and living as a hero in his hometown, known as an early breeding ground for Hitler's Nazi movement, but it didn't end here.

Wiesenthal had collected further new evidence against my father who was facing a retrial. This time the ODESSA²⁶ was unable to help him due to scandalous trials that had shaken Austria's judicial system in the past. This time there would be no escape; father was facing a possible life sentence. The prospect of being tried again terrified him. Upon receiving the court orders in 1970, his heart failed him. He died suddenly at the age of 65.

I stood beside his open coffin, looking at the face of a man who was supposed to be my father. Surrounded by some of his former comrades, I stared at the gaunt features of a stranger, the father I never knew. I felt no emotions as far as I was concerned, as he never played a major part in my life. He left us many years ago, after which he never enquired as to the welfare of his children or assisted his former wife in raising them. He abandoned us as he did all the other women and the children he fathered. I felt no hatred for him yet sensed a strange pang of regret for never knowing him.

As the clods of earth fell upon the coffin, I realised that this was the final contact with the man they said was my father. The chapter of a fatherless childhood was closed. I wanted to say something; as a son, I felt I should. Some final

²⁶ ODESSA, the Organization of Former SS Members ('*Organization Der Ehemaligen SS-Angehörigen*'), was an organisation founded in 1944 with the express purpose of helping Nazi members flee Europe and escape justice.

word - maybe just to say the word 'Father' or maybe just to say goodbye but the words failed me. I turned on my heel and left the graveside without speaking to anyone, without looking back. It was sad that this man lived without us and died without us. Sadder still, he had lived without God and, as far as I know, died without God. I felt eternity had separated us, yet felt no sense of loss.

Sadly, I was never able to help him. His sudden death prevented me from doing so. He died, as far as I know, without being able to make his peace with God or man. Before he died, he had spent many a night, so my brother told me, screaming in horror of the nightmares that plagued him. These were undoubtedly triggered by the excuses he made and the things he had seen – and done.

He was buried in an unmarked grave that was soon levelled in a quest to prevent the graves of war criminals becoming a point of pilgrimage for equally deluded Nazi sympathisers who saw them as heroes. I am the only one that knows the site of his burial. The only reminders of his existence are the yellowing pages of his trial in the archives of Germany and Austria.

Plans to assassinate my father:

‘SWIADECTWO DOTYCZACE WILHELMA ODERA’²⁷

In January 2015, further enquiries uncovered eye witness evidence of executions at the rear of the Rabka School. Although this account is basically heresay, the source swore an affidavit to the veracity of this statement, which is considered reliable. The incident and details shown, are corroborated - see Chapter 11.

In about 1998, my uncle Jozef (1928-2008) told me about the events that took place during WWII in Rabka. The Nazi

²⁷ Testimony regarding Wilhelm Oder.

THE PROTAGONISTS

officer (Wilhelm) Oder was in charge in Rabka. My uncle was a partisan and during one of their missions they came close to the woods by "Tereska" (Theressanium building - now a school for visually impaired children) to make a reconnaissance of the German squads.

The ‘Genickschuss’ method



Fig 9. Vinnitsa Ukraine in 1942²⁸ Modus Operandi of execution as designated in School operational training.

²⁸ A photograph of a real life execution at Vinnitsa Ukraine in 1942, which had previously appeared in a magazine co-written by Pastor Werner Oder depicting the ‘*Genickschuss Experte*’ in action. Statement of Wilhelm Rosenbaum: Oder, Wozdolowicz, Jaworski and Proch (all ‘Zugführer’), were the expert killing instructors. Using Walther PPK, calibre 765 pistols, they would shoot Jews in the back of the neck at a distance of 10-20cm.

ROBIN O'NEILL

That is when he saw the Germans killing Jewish people. The way they did it was they dug a pit in the ground and the Jews stood in a row and then the officer (Wilhelm) Oder shot the people with a pistol. They were then, thrown into the pit and buried with a thin layer of earth and a layer of lime.

When the next ones were killed, the same procedure of covering with earth and lime was repeated. When they finished the execution, the ground was moving, as my uncle told me, since some of the people were only hurt by the bullet but not killed. The Germans would wait a while and then they would walk away. My uncle told me that once they had managed to dig up a few bodies. He didn't tell me who the people were. The partisans planned to assassinate the German officers, but this did not happen, but they knew that (Wilhelm) Oder was the head officer there. My uncle mentioned the name of (Wilhelm) Oder to me.(Name withheld for personal security).²⁹

²⁹ There is still pro Nazi sentiment operating in Europe.

Chapter 2

Police in the Nazi State³⁰

World War I (1914–1918) devastated Europe and created new countries. The years that followed saw the continent struggle to recover from the death or injury of tens of millions of soldiers and civilians, as well as catastrophic damage to property and industry.

In 1933, over 9 million Jews lived in Europe (1.7% of the total population)—working and raising families in the harsh reality of the worldwide economic depression. German Jews numbered about 500,000 or less than 1% of the national population.

When the Nazis came to power in January 1933, many police officers remained sceptical of the party and its intentions. Nazi agitation, especially in the latter years of the Weimar Republic, had been subversive and the police had been investigating both the Nazis and the Communists with vigour. Nevertheless, Hitler posed as a champion of law and order, claiming he would uphold traditional German values. The police and many other conservatives looked forward to the extension of police power promised by a strong centralised state, welcomed the end of factional politics, and agreed to end democracy.

The Nazi state in fact alleviated many of the frustrations the police experienced in the Weimar Republic. The Nazis shielded the police from public criticism by censoring the press. They ended street fighting by eliminating the Communist threat. Police manpower was even extended by the incorporation of Nazi

³⁰ See: with acknowledgement to www.ushmm.org.

paramilitary organizations as auxiliary police officers. The Nazis centralized and fully funded the police to better combat criminal gangs and promote state security. The Nazi state increased staff and training, and modernized police equipment. The Nazis offered the police the broadest latitude in arrests, incarceration, and the treatment of prisoners. The police moved to take 'preventive action,' that is, to make arrests without the evidence required for a conviction in court and indeed without court supervision at all.

Conservative police officers were initially satisfied with the results of their cooperation with the Nazi state. Crime did indeed go down and the operation of criminal gangs ended. Order was restored. However, there was a price. The Nazi state was not a restoration of the imperial tradition. It was at its core racist. The Nazis took control and transformed the traditional police forces of the Weimar Republic into an instrument of state repression and, eventually, of genocide.

The Nazi state fused the police with the SS and Security Service (Sicherheitsdienst; SD), two of the most radical and ideologically committed Nazi organizations. Heinrich Himmler, head of the SS, also became the chief of all German police forces. His associate, Reinhard Heydrich of the SD, became at the same time the head of the Security Police, charged with safeguarding the Nazi regime. Nazi ideology became part of all police activities. The police were central figures not just in maintaining public order, but also in combating the so-called racial enemies designated by the Nazi state. It was in this context that 'preventive police action' took on such terrible consequences. The SS, SD, and police were the primary perpetrators of the Holocaust within and under the RSHA.

Role of the RSHA SS-Reichssicherheitshaupt (RSHA – Reich Main Security Office)

The RSHA controlled the security services of Nazi Germany and the Nazi Party (NSDAP). Its activities included intelligence-gathering, criminal investigation, overseeing foreigners, monitoring public opinion, and Nazi indoctrination. Its stated duty was to find

POLICE IN THE NAZI STATES

and eliminate the ‘enemies of the Reich’. The list of ‘enemies’ included Jews, Communists, Freemasons, Pacifists, and Christian activists. In addition to dealing with identified enemies, the RSHA advocated expansionist policies for the Reich and the Germanisation of additional territory through settlement. Generalplan Ost (General Plan East), which was the secret Nazi plan to colonize Central and Eastern Europe exclusively with Germans, displacing inhabitants in the process through genocide and ethnic cleansing in order to obtain sufficient Lebensraum, stemmed from officials in the RSHA, among other Nazi organisations.

The RSHA was ‘particularly concerned with racial matters.’ An order issued by the RSHA on 20 May 1941, overtly demonstrates its utter complicity for the systematic extermination of Jews, namely since the order included instructions to block emigration of any and all Jews attempting to leave Belgium or France as part of the ‘imminent Final Solution of the Jewish question.’ Besides blocking emigration, the RSHA, working with Adolf Eichmann’s Reich Association of Jews in Germany, deliberately deceived Jews still living in Germany and those of other countries by promising them good living quarters, medical care, and food in Theresienstadt (or Terezin a concentration camp which was a way station to extermination facilities like Auschwitz) if they turned over their assets to the RSHA through a ‘phoney’ home-purchase plan.

The RSHA also oversaw the *Einsatzgruppen*, death squads that followed the invasion forces of the Wehrmacht Heer (German Army) into Eastern Europe. In its role as the national and NSDAP security service, the RSHA coordinated activities among a number of different agencies that had wide-ranging responsibilities within the Reich. Not infrequently, commanders of *Einsatzgruppen* and *Einsatzkommando* units were also desk officers in Main Office 1 of the RSHA.

Part of the RSHA’s efforts to encourage other nations (many of whom were occupied by the Germans) to hand over their Jews or entice them into the arms of the Nazis, included coercing them by assigning Jewish advisory officials, all of which was part and parcel to Eichmann’s goal of rounding up and transporting ‘Jews from

Slovakia and Hungary, Croatia and Romania.' Entry into the Second World War afforded the RSHA the power to act as an intermediary in the areas extended far beyond the Reich, which lent itself to solving 'emergency situations' and the RSHA's radicalised destructive goals like the Final Solution, were implemented thereupon with bureaucratic methodical cruelty as its power expanded.

The RSHA 'became a typical overblown bureaucracy. The complexity of RSHA was unequalled... with at least a hundred sub-sections'.

The organisation at its simplest was divided into seven offices (German: *Ämter*):

- Amt I, *Personnel and Organization*, originally headed by SS-Gruppenführer Dr. Werner Best. In 1940, he was succeeded by SS-Brigadeführer Bruno Streckenbach. In April 1944, Erich Ehrlinger took over as department chief.
- Amt II, *Administration, Law, and Finance*, headed by SS-Standartenführer Dr. Hans Nockemann.
- Amt III, *Inland-SD*, headed by SS-Gruppenführer Otto Ohlendorf, was the SS information gathering service for inside Germany. It also dealt with ethnic Germans outside of Germany's pre-war borders, and matters of culture.
- Amt IV, *Geheime Staatspolizei* (Gestapo), headed by SS-Gruppenführer Heinrich Müller. SS-Obersturmbannführer Adolf Eichmann, one of the main architects of the Holocaust, was head of the Amt IV sub-department called *Referat IV B4*.
- Amt V, *Kriminalpolizei* (Kripo), led by SS-Gruppenführer Arthur Nebe, and later by SS-Oberführer Friedrich Panzinger. This was the Criminal Police, which dealt with non-political serious crimes, such as rape, murder, and arson. Amt V was also known as the *Reichskriminalpolizeiamt*

POLICE IN THE NAZI STATES

(Reich Criminal Police Department or RKPA).

- Amt VI, *Ausland-SD*, led by SS-Brigadeführer Heinz Jost, and later by SS-Brigadeführer Walter Schellenberg. This was the foreign intelligence service of the SS.
- Amt VII, *Written Records*, overseen by SS-Brigadeführer Professor Dr. Franz Six and later by SS-Obersturmbannführer Paul Dittel. It was responsible for 'ideological' tasks. These included the creation of anti-Semitic, anti-Masonic propaganda, the sounding of public opinion, and monitoring of Nazi indoctrination by the public.

Amt IV, the Gestapo, and Amt V, the Kripo, together constituted the *Sicherheitspolizei* (Security Police) or SiPo. The SiPo did most of the work in rounding up Jews, Romany People and other people deemed to be enemies of the Reich and deporting them to the concentration and extermination camps in German Occupied Poland and Ukraine.

The RSHA also supplied security forces on an 'as needed' basis to local SS and Police Leaders. After the escape of prisoners from *Stalag Luft III* in March 1944, for example, it was RSHA personnel who facilitated the 'Stalag Luft III murders'.³¹

During the earlier part of the fighting in the Soviet Union, the RSHA also had operational control of certain *Waffen-SS* units which Himmler had withheld from the Army High Command (OKH); these units, the 1st and 2nd SS Infantry Brigades and the SS Cavalry Brigade, were formed from former *Standarten* of the *Totenkopfverbände* or concentration camp service. Their role was not to serve in combat, except in emergencies, but to carry out

³¹ The Stalag Luft III murders were war crimes perpetrated by members of the Gestapo following the 'Great Escape' of Allied prisoners of war from the German Air Force prison camp known as Stalag Luft III on 25 March, 1944. Of a total of 76 successful escapees, 73 were recaptured, mostly within days of the breakout, of whom 50 were executed on the personal orders of Adolf Hitler. See chapter 19 when we discuss air operations over Europe.

‘police and security operations’ in occupied territories like the *Einsatzgruppen*.

In 1936, when Himmler became the Chief of all the German Police, he immediately divided the Police into two branches: the *Ordnungspolizei* (Orpo) and the Criminal Investigation Department (*Kriminalpolizei* or Kripo). The *Kriminalpolizei* was further divided into two branches: the general CID (Kripo), and (2) Special Branch (*Sicherheitspolizei* or Sipo), out of which emerged the Gestapo (*Geheime Staatspolizei*). This joint command was headed by SS - Lieutenant General Richard Heydrich and became known thereafter, as Sipo and SD.

This combination of RSHA (Reichssicherhauptamt) leadership I have termed the ‘Himmler-Heydrich-Executive (HHE).³² This policy was to instigate the first and second phases of German political domination in the East. In the first phase commencing with the *Einsatzgruppen* push into Russia, and in the second phase, their unsure ‘Jewish solution’, which began to emerge in east Galicia in October 1941.³³

The pecking order of the Nazi Security Services came together in the first re-organisation of the security services in 1936. The intricacies and administration of these services deserve some attention to expose their relevant responsibilities.

Although this is not the sole purpose of this examination, some reference is necessary to clear the way to the fundamental understanding and theme of the SS and Sipo-SD in the prosecution

³² HHE: Himmler-Heydrich-Executive to identify the main protagonists of genocide within the RSHA (Reich Security Main Office).

³³ See Henry Friedlander, *The Origins of Genocide*, London, 1995. For zbV and its connection with the implementation of the ‘final solution’ in east Galicia See: Early Activities of Einsatzgruppen ‘C’ (not zbV), Holocaust and Genocide Studies, Vol. 2, No. 2, 221-241; See also Yehoshua Boechler, ‘Kommandostab Reichsführer-SS: Himmler’s Personal Murder Brigades in 1941’, Holocaust and Genocide Studies, Vol. 1, No. 1, 11-25. Both these papers refer to zbV but in their overall structure of several groups who penetrated Soviet territory in the opening phase of Barbarossa. This paper also deals with zbV but focuses on the personal group commanded by Dr Schöngarth who carried with him the Sipo-SD who would later be dispersed in east Galicia to carry out the ‘Final Solution’.

POLICE IN THE NAZI STATES

of National Socialism's anti-Jewish policies.

From a very small power base indeed, the Sipo-SD emerged as the principle cadre who organised, implemented and carried out the policies towards the 'final solution' of the 'Jewish Question'. From individual local offices, spread throughout the Galician District of the General Government, a handful of Sipo-SD officers aided and abetted by a vast bureaucratic web of willing and sympathetic quasi military and civilian helpers, were able to fulfil the Jewish policy requirements of the HHE.

The SD, the internal security arm of the SS, was an extension to, and secret organisation within, the SS system, which, after the seizure of power by the Nazis, had been the first to merge with the police agencies. Many of the so-called intellectual professionals within German society were inducted into the service and appointed to leading positions of the newly created Sipo-SD. This infusion from the outside into a hitherto closely guarded culture of the police service caused friction, resentment, and jealousies. Despite all these internal problems, by 1939, when the RSHA was created, they were one combined ideological arm of the Nazi state.³⁴

The Sipo-SD was the closest agency to the inner heart of the Nazi machine of government and in the forefront of its predatory genocidal activities. The Sipo-SD set-up the Judenrat and picked their leaders, and at the same time, fleeced them to pay for their own persecution and later destruction. When Theodor Dannecker lectured the Sipo-SD Academy at the Rabka SD academy he urged the specialist 'Jewish Affairs' students: *'Never give them a minute's rest, keep the leading Jews on tenterhooks through constant reprimands'*.³⁵ Eichmann reinforced this: *'in most cases you will only be successful if you play the Jews against each other in a Jewish political way'*.³⁶

The Sipo-SD were the creators and leaders of the

³⁴ For a comprehensive over-view of Sipo-SD, see George C. Browder, *Hitler's Enforcers*, Oxford U. P, 1996.

³⁵ Goetz Aly, *Political Prehistory*, Oxford, 2000, 56/57. (Dannecker organised deportation of the French, Greek and Hungarian Jews).

³⁶ Ibid.

Einsatzgruppen and associate cadres. Headed by Heydrich (later by Kaltenbrunner), their leaders were handpicked and would lead these predatory forces beyond the norm of acceptable standards of warfare, in their treatment of civilians and prisoners of war in a supposed modern civil society. Leaders they may have been, but the ultimate decisions over life or death, were in many cases left in the hands of their subordinates, the non-commissioned officers of Scharführer rank.

The early members of the SD, who came from the professions, kept a very low profile. As the Nazi state gained more legitimacy and the SD expanded, more candidates for the service openly sought involvement. These applicants tended to be academics and professionals from many walks of German life. A curious factor of the SD was that one could still remain in present employment and at the same time enter the SD service. An SD officer could be full-time or part-time, paid or unpaid. In practice this worked very well and much to the satisfaction of the HHE. Significantly, a part of their duties was to keep an eye on their fellow professional associates and report any dissension showing prejudicial attitudes to the State.

There were many professions represented in the service: lawyers, academics, and professors from the major universities, industrial moguls, high-ranking officers of the police etc. Many candidates had law degrees (Ohlendorf, an Einsatzgruppe leader had two PhD's), medical degrees and civil recognition. They had no statutory powers of arrest unlike their Gestapo counterparts.

As the HHE had undeniable complicity in the state's anti Jewish policies, they lured these willing men of academic excellence into the leadership corps of the SD. In their subsequent involvement with the *Einsatzgruppen* in the deaths of hundreds of thousands of civilians in eastern Europe, while wearing their SD uniform, they must be considered the main perpetrators and primarily responsible for what occurred. The SD was the premier service in all respects. To put it in context, the SS were not even on the first rung of the SD ladder!

The SD did not have the right to wear SS insignia. In the field,

POLICE IN THE NAZI STATES

the SD wore the generic green-grey army garb, with black trim identifying them as SD. There were many variances of field dress, which were usually dictated by individual preference as in the *Reinhardt* death camps. This oddity in itself goes some way in explaining the motley and ramshackle variances of dress of the SS-garrison at Belzec. In Belzec, there was an array of uniforms of all descriptions: SD, Police, Waffen-SS, Ukrainian, civilian dress, striped Sonderkomandos (upper camp) and the females in their flowery frocks engaged in the kitchen and laundry barracks.

There was such a degree of overlap between these combinations of SD, Gestapo and Sipo, that it was often difficult to establish the difference. For instance, Adolf Eichmann was an official of the Gestapo but wore the SD uniform. Gestapo officials serving in Germany mostly wore civilian dress, but those serving in the occupied territories usually wore SD uniform. Most of the personnel serving in the Einsatzgruppen, whether SD members or not, wore full Waffen SS service dress. Those police officers that held membership of the SD but by virtue of their police association preferred to wear police uniform, but signified their SD allegiances by wearing a small black diamond-shaped insignia on the lower left sleeve that contained the embroidered letters 'SD'. Those that had served in the Gestapo wore similar badges, but with a silver cord edging. Many of the photographs taken during the war period (many showing executions) are difficult to identify if the perpetrators were Gestapo, Waffen-SS, or SD, the only indication being the identifiable mark on the left sleeve.

Police Secondment.

It is generally agreed that no police force can operate without the will and consent of the people. The German police were no exception to this consensus, and remained a fully professional and proud service from its inception. That is, until the arrival of the Nazi police state (NPS), when wedges started to appear and open up an atmosphere of mistrust.

To persuade both the police and the public into the acceptance

of the 'New Order', the hierarchy of the state formulated its own rules and regulations. To a hard-pressed police service there were distinct advantages in this. Firstly, it untied their hands from cumbersome ethics when negotiating the intricacies of the Criminal Law and Procedure. Out went search warrants, judges' rules in the interrogation of suspects, bail applications, and complaints from any source against their activities in carrying out their duties. In came executive search orders, arrest and detention orders without proper grounds or reason. Gone were statutory appearances before the courts, replaced by commitment orders of indefinite periods to the newly established detention camps. This new turn of events was not completely acceptable to every police official, but the camaraderie and the subculture of the police service held them together, long enough to withstand the immediate pressures, but not long enough to extricate themselves from the deepening morass in which they were finding themselves. These officers, in the majority, who found themselves caught up in events of which they had no control, or escape, and certainly had no power to change the course of events.

In March 1938, the *Anschluss* occurred with the introduction of Nazism. Although there was an overwhelming welcome for the *New Order*, many ordinary free-thinking Austrians were not so happy. The HHE had done their preparatory intelligence work (V-Agents-Sipo-SD etc.) and were in a position to stamp on any dissent using their prepared lists for targeting those dissenters. The Austrian Police were high on the list. In Franz Stangl's office (who rose to fame as the Commandant of Sobibor death camp), three out of the five Detectives working there were arrested by the Gestapo (Sipo-SD) and removed to a concentration camp. In the Police headquarters in Linz, two senior officers were shot without arrest or trial. What is interesting about Stangl's recollections of those times is his actions that he took to head off trouble - he removed all the evidence from police files that implicated himself and his colleagues in anti-Nazi activity, with the calling in of past favours, had his name, backdated (by 2 years) entered on the list of members

POLICE IN THE NAZI STATES

of the NSDAP (Austria).

The Police and SD/SS were wary bedfellows who eyed each other with suspicion. There was no understanding of each other's culture. This may have been recognised by the HHE and the reason why the leadership of the death camps were all supervised by police officers. They had an unspoken understanding of how each other worked and how the job was to be accomplished. Added to which, this camaraderie bound them together, personally, socially and professionally.

Initially, when the amalgamations of the Police Institutes were fused under the HHE re-organisation of 1939 (RSHA), the police were generally compliant. However, as the SD began to penetrate their culture and professionalism, cracks started to appear in their relationship. Most officers remained in the service and gradually became enmeshed in the political process and the intrigues that followed. From here on, their participation in Nazi policies escalated, which led some of them to the killing fields of Poland but for these duties they had to be trained and where better than the premier academy at Rabka. The Rabka Police School was where it all happened and where the 'Rabka Four + One, wielded their power and protected their investments.

Chapter 3

The Sipo-SD School: Establishment and Administration.



Fig 10: SS/SD School 1942

(Befehlshaber der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD im GG Schule des Sicherheitspolizei blazend across the top of the building)

THE SIPO-SD SCHOOL

Between November 1941, and March 1943, several hundred Jewish men, women and children a month, were brought into the SS security training school from surrounding districts and kept imprisoned. During the daytime, selected numbers were taken out of their prison and used for training purposes by the SD/SS Ukrainian, Polish, and German students. Many were tortured, used for target practice and execution techniques. All were buried in mass graves at the rear of the School.³⁷

Emergence of the SD School in the Zakopane District of Krakow.

On 12 October 1939, on order of the Führer, a German Government was established in Krakow under Governor Dr. Hans Frank.³⁸ The General Government's task was to administer and fulfil the civil authority of those parts of Poland that at first did not belong to the Soviet Union, or were not attached to the German Reich. The entire area, was divided into four districts (later five - Galicia), each one with its own Government. The districts were sub-divided into county ranks and municipal ranks, Zakopane and Bad Rabka were within the Krakow district, which was an experimental field of National Socialism, where theories of master races to inferior people (*Untermenschen*) were realised.

The organisation of the SS and Police was of a growing and eventually of superior importance, assisting the National-Socialist leadership to fulfil their extermination programme against the Polish intelligentsia and Jews.³⁹

At district level (GG), the HSSPF (Krüger) administered the SSPF Commanders of the Security Police (KdS) and Public Affairs Police (KdO) The KdS had branch offices and border police commissionerships that dealt with local tasks of the security police

³⁷ Jewish Commission of Enquiry Report 7 June 1945.

³⁸ YVA. BDC 612 - Personal File.

³⁹ For a full appreciation of this complex administration, see Raol Hilberg, 'The Destruction of the European Jews', Holmes & Meir, London 1995, and vol. 1, 188-204.

on the spot.⁴⁰ The executive public authority relevant to Zakopane and Bad Rabka was the border police commissionerships (GPK) Zakopane, commanded by SS-Hauptsturmführer Robert Weissmann⁴¹ who also lectured at the SD School, Zakopane, and later Rabka, to Polish and Ukrainian security personnel and SS Führers. Weissmann's subject speciality was border control, partisan activity and dealing with the *Jewish Question*.⁴² Robert Weissmann worked very closely with Rosenbaum at the School and with SS Führer Hannam from Neu-Sandez. Weissmann was the main supply contractor to the School for Jewish murder who used the Rabka School as his execution site.

There were early indications of Jewish oppression by virtue of the Heydrich⁴³ pronouncement of 21 September, 1939, in which he directed that Jews were to be concentrated in the cities near main rail communications, and that Jewish Councils be formed to implement these resettlement transports which would take place in phases. A follow-up order by Heydrich directed that no Jew should be dissuaded from migrating to the towns or cities.⁴⁴ The early expulsions and movement of Jews from the Warthegau⁴⁵ to the General Government were made without objection, despite the massive increase of the Jewish population.

⁴⁰ SSPF in succession Krakow: Zech, Schedler, Scherner, and Thier. The BdS under Streckenbach (then Schöngarth) controlled the security services, which were departmentalised under the SSPF Scherner (then Schindhelm) as Dept IV. Within Dept IV: 1VA1 Leftish Polish Resistance Movement, Dept 1VA2, Polish Right Wing, Dept 1VA3 Border Police and Defence, Dept 1VA4 Jewish Dept.

⁴¹ Court of Freiburg-Breisgau (Germany) with sentences in 1965: Crimes: Mass Deportation and individual shooting men, women and Jewish children during the course of several resettlement operations in the area of Nowy Targ district. Forced mass shootings of Jews and prisoners in the Jewish cemetery in Nowy Targ workers. Shootings due to violations of the Decree on the residential restrictions for Jews in the General Government. Richard Arno Sehmisch: 4 and half years in prison. Robert Philipp Weissmann: 7 years in prison.

⁴² RAD (141 Js 856/61). Statement of Rosenbaum, 1187 - 1198.

⁴³ VVA. BDC 635 - Personal File.

⁴⁴ Raol Hilberg, *Documents of Destruction*, W.H. Allen, London 1972, 37.

⁴⁵ Nazi German Reichsgau formed from Polish territory annexed in 1939. It comprised the Greater Poland and adjacent areas.

German Occupation of Zakopane.

Central Zakopane was turned into an entertainment centre for senior officers of the SS/SD, Einsatzgruppen, and the Wehrmacht. All Jews were supposed to have been removed from the district by the end of November 1939, but two years later 47 Jews were still in the area. The Nazis had set them to work uncovering hidden Jewish 'treasures' in the town.⁴⁶

The Jewish population in Zakopane was comparatively small and were completely subservient to the German administration (Gestapo). We also know the names and numbers of Jews in Zakopane for the periods October, 1940 (after selections had been made to serve the SD at Rabka), and May 1941, compiled by Dr Adolf Statter, the leader of the Judenrat where it will be noticed the latter list was made up of selected families. Through the intermediary of the Jewish Council, Rosenbaum took male and female workers from the Jewish population for maintenance and cleaning work, care of the garden and all other rough work.

Immediately after the Nazi take-over, Zakopane's largest hotel, the *Palace*, was converted into the headquarters of the Gestapo.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Ben-Ami Report, see the *Rabka Memorial Book* located in the National Archives, Washington DC. The Leader of the Judenrat in Zakopane, Dr. Statter, was one of the truly most respected leaders of any Jewish Community. The final document of the Zakopane Judenrat is dated the 14 August 1942, and it notes the final action of the Judenrat. On that day the last act of the tragedy occurred - the deportation of the survivors to the Belzec death camps. Only two or three escaped and survived the war.

⁴⁷ Grenzpolizeikommissariat security commission in Zakopane: SS- Hauptsturmführer Robert Weissmann, SS- Untersturmführer Richard Sehmisch, SS- Untersturmführer Mertens (alias Maciejewicz), SS- Hauptscharführer: Rudolf Benewitz, Herbert Betscher, Arnold Sehmisch, Robert Kunisch, Hermann Proisky, Robert Tischer, Fritz Bayerlein, Heinrich Meier, Kurt Dressig, Johann Wilsch, Bohm, Kurt Wulkau, SS- Otto Gundlach, SS- Hermann Hischy, SS- Johann Rausch, SS- Josef Koenig, Oberkriminalassistenten: Franz Victorini, Martin Opitz, Mark Stevens, Karl Nanen, Fritz Wegner, Martin Schmidt, Franz Maiwald, Karl Nolke, Fritz Karhof, Wilhelm Schreder, Jergens and Fritz Brunner. Some 200 documents relating to the three years of the activity of the Judenrat in Zakopane and district have survived.

Part of it served as the ‘*labour bureau*’, where Jews were sent to register for forced labour.⁴⁸ The main hall on the first floor was reserved for dances and entertainment for the Nazi officers and other social activities. The cellar at the hotel served as an interrogation centre and prison for all those accused of disobeying Nazi laws. According to a number of Jewish witnesses who survived the war, as many as 300 Jews were murdered at this centre, many of them women and children.

The leading Nazi officials at the time were the Chief of Gestapo, Robert Weissmann, and his deputy Richard Samish. In late 1939, on the outskirts of Zakopane the Sipo- SD Academy was established in the Hotel ‘Stamary.’ On 20 April 1940, SS- 2nd Lieutenant Wilhelm Rosenbaum was appointed as Police Secretary at the School and deputy to the Commandant SS- Hauptsturmführer Hans Krüger.

Establishment of the School.⁴⁹

During the first months after the occupation of Poland, the Commander-in-Chief of the Security Police (BdS) SS-Brigadier Strechenbach⁵⁰ and then his successor, SS- Brigadier Dr. Eberhard

⁴⁸ One of the very few administrative departments in the GG under the Frank’s rule was the Departments of Labour. The Labour officer for the district of Neumarkt was located in Neu-Sandez.

⁴⁹ YVA. For a general overview of the established curriculum, see *Befehlsblatt des Chefs der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD*, no. 41, Berlin, 15 September 1942. First Sipo-SD course was held January 1935, at Berlin Grunwald.

⁵⁰ Polish intelligentsia particularly those Poles who had taken part in the referendum held in Silesia after the First World War and voted against Germany. Strechenbach and his EG, then turned their attention to the Jews before moving on to the town of Jaroslav. (Bruno Strechenbach later served on the Russian front where he was captured. He was tried by the Russians after the war and sentenced to a period of imprisonment. On his release, well after the war he was closely questioned on the Nazi leader’s orders for the implementation of the ‘Final Solution of the Jewish Question’.) Nowy-Targ was assigned to the Third Company of EG, commanded by Dr. E. Hasselberger. See Rabka and District Memorial Book of Rabka, including the Alexander Ben-Ami Report of the Zakopane Jewish Community, HMM, Washington, DC. Hereafter Ben-Ami.

THE SIPO-SD SCHOOL

Schöngarth,⁵¹ founded the Sipo-SD School close by the Slovak border in Zakopane, a winter resort at the bottom of the high Tatra. The purpose of the School was to train Ukrainian Nazi sympathisers, and ‘V’-Agents⁵² under the leadership of the Commandant, SS-Hauptsturmführer Krüger.

With the uneasy collaboration of the Soviet-German Pact, each side was pandering to the local populous, not because there was a genuine feeling of friendship, but as a stop-gap approach until the political and military situation stabilised. The Soviets treated the Ukrainians more harshly than the Poles, and at the same time attempted to destroy their centres militancy founded by Yevhen Konovalets.⁵³ In June 1940, many Ukrainian activists, vying for a ‘separate Ukraine’ had gone into hiding or fled to German occupied Poland. The Germans made a special effort to foster a national spirit amongst the Ukrainians over the border and in Western Galicia.⁵⁴ The Ukrainians were ideal for the Germans, with a little training; they would become an asset to their long-term plans.

There are four distinct phases of the SD School:⁵⁵

- 1 The emergence of the School at Zakopane November 1939 to July 1940.
- 2 The removal of the School to Bad Rabka, July 1940,

⁵¹ YVA. BDC 806 - Personal File.

⁵² V Agents - Individuals recruited by the German Security Services for espionage work at home and abroad. One of our protagonists, Pieter Menten is a good example of a V-Agent.

⁵³ Yevhen Konovalets (Ukrainian (June 14, 1891 – May 23, 1938) was a military commander of the UNR army and political leader of the Ukrainian nationalist movement. He is best known as the leader of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists between 1929 and 1938.

⁵⁴ PRO: WO 208/1734 (Soviet repression against the Ukrainians)

⁵⁵ SD School in Berlin Grunwald. First Course held January 1935. First Head, Dr. Gustav Adolf Scheel. Scheel formerly a medical student at Heidelberg in 1930. Joined the NS student league - SA and Party. In 1931 - 32, leader of German Studentschaft in Baden. 1934, Gauführer of Student League and entry into SD

until it was suspended in April 1941 prior to the German-Russian war.

- 3 The re-constitution of the School in November 1941 until spring 1943, the period subject to this survey.
- 4 Finally, after the disbandment of the School administration and transfer of Schöngarth and Rosenbaum who had been engaged in corruption, theft and murder, the School took on a more stable and permanent status under new management⁵⁶ In June 1944, the Sipo-SD School at Berlin Charlottenburg was moved to Rabka due to bombing in the city.⁵⁷ The Rabka School finally closed in January 1945 due to the advance of the Russian army.⁵⁸

Jurisdiction

The territory of Zakopane and Bad Rabka came within the command region of the KdS Krakow. The executive in the matter of

⁵⁶ Ibid. It is ironic that after all that has been referred to about the Rosenbaum era and the 'clear-out' after the SD investigation, Rosenbaum returned to the School for a Senior Police Inspectors course 3 January 1945. Because of the Russian advance the course was terminated on 17 January 1945, when the course students were sent to round up German deserters as we shall see. See statement of Wilhelm Teege, 13. 3. 1962, 858-865.

⁵⁷ Ibid. Statement of Alois Langen, 20. 6. 1961, 282-284. As SS-Sturmbannführer and teacher at Berlin Charlottenburg SD School moved to Rabka June 1944. The only staff member from the Rosenbaum era was the driver Bandura. Langden heard no rumours of past times.

⁵⁸ Ibid. Statements of Wilhelm Teege, 23. 6. 1961, 286-289, who was a teacher at the School in 1943 with the 8th Police Inspectors course and confirms that 10-15 Jews were still working on the School farm. He also states that about three weeks before he arrived in Rabka, the majority of Jews had been transported away (Plaszow), but there were searches still going on for those Jews that escaped. See Teege statement 858-865. See also Statement of Helmuth Armbricht, 243-246, attended course 15. 6. 1944 - 15. 12. 1944, who confirms the absence of Rosenbaum era staff and that there were no signs of Jews, execution sites, and heard no rumours of past events. He does refer to the shooting range where his course practiced with firearms. It appears that School staff had some knowledge of Rosenbaum's activities, but incoming students had none.

THE SIPO-SD SCHOOL

security and policing was within the jurisdiction of the Border 'Kommissariat' Zakopane whose executive commander at the time was SS-Hauptsturmführer Robert Weissmann. The executive administration of the Sipo-SD School in Zakopane and later Bad Rabka, were answerable to both the KdS and BdS in Krakow. In effect, the executive (Krüger, Voigtlander and Rosenbaum and later Herrmann) commanders of the Sicherheitspolizei School, were responsible both to Weissmann (Zakopane) and the KdS (Krakow). All budgetary matters for the administration and running of the School were also the responsibility of the KdS (Dr. Grosskopf). The KdS and the General Government met even budgetary funding for the BdS (Schöngarth's Office).

Curriculum and Examinations.

The curriculum of the Sipo-SD administration (RSHA) in Zakopane and Bad Rabka was wide: sophisticated, intensive and demanding. It was geared on four fronts:

- Commissioned;
- Non-commissioned personnel;
- V-Agents;
- Emergency Troops.

For the Commissioned Officers, the standards were high, and uncompromising to seek out the potential leaders within the National Socialist movement. Candidates were highly educated and drawn from a wide spectrum of German society, with emphasis on the Sipo-SD personnel, Senior Police Command, Higher Civil Service, Academia, highly qualified ethnic German and foreign V-Agents.

The subject matter for higher-grade personnel varied according to war conditions, but generally kept to a syllabus applicable to National Socialist ideals and may be summarised as follows:

- Ideological analysis: Freemasonry and associated Lodges
Home and Foreign.

Jewry, Zionists: Orthodoxy and Karataive.

Religious trends, Catholic, Protestant, Volk Sects.

Political enemies: Communism/Bolshevism, Unions, Leftist Organisations.

World View and Spheres of Life: Culture, Science, Race, Community Life.

Abwehr: Home and Foreign - European, Americas, Asia, and

Espionage: Industrial and Military, Foreign Jewry, Churches, Communists, Liberals, and Political movements.

There was considerable emphasis in character building, Ideology, and the understanding of Race as the basis of National Socialism's 'World View' and maintaining that purity of German bloodline.⁵⁹ Extended essays and personal presentations to be given in class were also a regular feature of each course.⁶⁰

All commissioned personnel were set in-course examinations to remove the weaker students. The average failure rate was high, sometimes 25% failed to qualify and were ordered to give up and return to normal duty.⁶¹ RSHA Central Office 2 set intermediate and final examinations, which were sent to the School under the usual conditions of security. After completion, the papers were marked by School staff and sent to the exam commission in Berlin for verification and a final mark.⁶²

For non-Commissioned personnel and emergency troops there were tests, but no demanding emphasis on examinations, the thrust of training was conditioned to the war requirements: 1941-3. For recruits, German or *Volksdeutsch* Instructors set the agenda to act

⁵⁹ Christopher Browning's *Ordinary Men* 177-183, centres on the training received by the Ordnungspolizei which is identical to the basic curriculum of all German training establishments in that period.

⁶⁰ RAD. Rosenbaum,

⁶¹ Ibid. Statement of Paul Enders, 290-291, attended course for admin Inspectors 15. 6. 1944 - 15. 12. 1944. Out of 86 students, only 24 passed the final exam. He considered Rabka a peaceful place and heard no rumours of the Rosenbaum era. Further corroboration comes from Heinz Bohm, statement 292-293, attended the same course.

⁶² Ibid.

THE SIPO-SD SCHOOL

within the conduct of *Operation Reinhardt* and general war conditions. Time was found however, for race related and Jewish subjects but they were not a priority.⁶³ Every recruit was kitted out in uniform (field grey) and given badges and buttons which were engraved with skull and cross-bones, photographed, fingerprinted and ‘*sworn*’ to the Reich.

The duties, which may be summarised as follows:

1. Basis military training: discipline: carrying out of ‘*orders*’ in German.
2. Drill: foot Drill, marching to German songs around the streets of Bad Rabka, comradeship in the drinking bars when off duty.
3. Anti-Jewish measures: ghetto clearing, personnel, buildings, and street searches, guarding of military establishments.
4. Firearms: practical and theory of all types, execution tactics, and procedures.
5. Border Controls.
6. Obligatory founding principles of National Socialism (Race, Blood, and Ideology).

Non-Commissioned Officers (Scharführer Rank):

1. as 1-6 above plus supervisory duties: preparation and conduct of executions.
2. Preparation of reports, written essays, and lectures on themes nominated by teaching staff.

Polish/Ukrainian V-Agents (spies) engaged in subversive activities at home and abroad:

⁶³ See Browning 178/9 for Ordnungspolizei subjects, which were very similar, and probably from the same source.

1. Practical survival in foreign lands.
2. Espionage: methods, photography, reports, codes, intelligence gathering, and SD contact agents.
3. Overview and understanding of the aims of National Socialism

Nominated visiting lecturers: Zionist Affairs: Kuno Schroeder,⁶⁴ and Adolf Eichmann.⁶⁵ Political Enemies: Werner Gottsch.⁶⁶ Marxism: Martin Wolf.⁶⁷ Rightist Movements: Horst Bohme.⁶⁸ Analysis of Spheres of Life: Reinhardt Hohn.⁶⁹ Food Economy: Otto Ohlendorf.⁷⁰ Crafts and Trades: Klaus Seibert.⁷¹ Abwehr, Heinz Jost.⁷²

In addition to the above, in every mess hall, security establishment throughout the Reich, SS pamphlets, journals,

⁶⁴ SS - Sturmschaführer Kuno Schroeder (colleague of Eichmann), Department 11, expert on Jewry.

⁶⁵ SS - Scharführer (technical) Adolf Eichmann, department 11. Jewish Affairs.

⁶⁶ SS - Hauptsturmführer Werner Gottsch, a business college graduate and favoured by Heydrich as a troubleshooter. Since 1934, moved between the Gestapo and SD engaged in the ideological intelligence service directed at political enemies.

⁶⁷ SS - Obersturmführer Martin Wolf, Marxist specialist and worked for the SD since 1934.

⁶⁸ SS - Hauptsturmführer Horst Bohme, a graduate from the Police Institute in Berlin Charlottenburg and a specialist on Rightist Movements since June, 1936.

⁶⁹ Dr. Reinhardt Hohn recruited to SD 1932, via university connections in Munich and Jena. In 1934 moved to Berlin University and built SD network of young intellectuals, focussing on criticisms of policies and practices that they wanted the leadership to reconsider.

⁷⁰ It is interesting to note the names of these specialists of the early SD, as they reappear in many groups in the Barbarossa campaign. Otto Ohlendorf (1908-51) In January 1935 entered the SD and worked under Professor Reinhardt Hohn. Was later Head of Amt 111 of the Reich and Einsatzgruppen D in southern Ukraine? He was an Idealist and left us many reports of EG operations. Hanged, along with three other EG Commanders, in Landsberg prison on 8.6.51.

⁷¹ Dr. Klaus Siebert, born 1904, studied agriculture in German universities. A widely travelled man with many personal contacts in Europe. In January 1935 became a salaried member of the SD.

⁷² After January 1935, and after Admiral Cannaris became head of the Abwehr, Werner Best headed the Abwehr-police, and Heinz Jost SD counterespionage.

THE SIPO-SD SCHOOL

newsletters expounding the 'Nazi World View'. It is interesting to note that in one journal circulated December 1941, entitled 'A Goal of this War: Europe Free of Jews.' Within the article on the back page: 'the word of the Führer , that a new war instigated by the Jews would not bring about the collapse of anti-Semitic Germany but on the contrary the end of the Jews, was now being carried out.'⁷³



Fig 11: Ukrainian students: Rabka Sipo-SD School 1942.

The definitive solution of the Jewish problem that is not only depriving them of power but also actually removing this parasitical race from the family of European peoples' was imminent. 'What appeared impossible two years ago was now becoming reality step by step: at the end of this war there would exist a Europe free of Jews.'⁷⁴ It can be no coincidence that in December 1942, the gas

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

vehicles were rolling up at Chelmno and the keys of the Belzec Extermination Camp were handed over to SS-Hauptsturmführer Christian Wirth.⁷⁵

Several hundred students passed out of the establishment every month to serve in the General Government and occupied areas. The School had its own security guard of 20-30 Ukrainians, Georgians and Azerbaijanis who were all armed and mounted guard in black and white 'pill-boxes' located around the premises.⁷⁶

The Executive

On 20 April 1940, SS-Untersturmführer Rosenbaum was appointed as Police secretary at the School, and deputy to the Commandant arranging board and lodging, salaries, welfare of conscripts and general administrative duties. Among other permanent staff were the brothers SS- Scharführer Wilhelm and Johann Maurer. The brothers, once officers in the Polish army and who spoke Ukrainian, were enlisted to train and instruct the Ukrainian personnel.⁷⁷ Their sister, Lisa Schumacher, nee Kaufmann, did the office work. The kitchen and feeding arrangements were organised by local Polish personnel, Paul Beck, was appointed overseer of the Jewish

⁷⁵ It is in the leadership that political indoctrination and rabid anti-Semitism are to be found. One man in particular, Police Superintendent Christian Wirth, exemplifies this. He was the central cog in the destruction process, even more so than his immediate superior, the designated overlord of Reinhardt, SS-*Brigadeführer* Odilo Globocnik. Unlike Himmler and his immediate following, who were driven by a pseudo-religious ideology, or a 'holy' mission, Wirth remains an enigma, a crude man with uncouth habits spurred on by an old-fashioned sense of 'duty' and a hatred for Jews. (See appendix re Belzec)

⁷⁶ Ibid. Statement of Friedrich August Glienke, 274-277, who headed the course for Polish Kriminalsekretäre (CID) and was in charge of Polish students. 1. 1943, until 17. 4. 1943, immediately after Rosenbaum had been moved. Glienke was privy to rumours of Rosenbaum's cruelty and murdered Jews, but there was an understanding within the School that the subject was not referred to. In the Rosenbaum era, this guard referred to would have also patrolled the Jewish camp.

⁷⁷ Norman and Amalie Salsitz, *Against All Odds*, (Holocaust Library, NY, 1990), 68. The Maurer brothers were to serve with Hans Krüger in Stanislavow when the murder of over 20,000 Jews took place.

THE SIPO-SD SCHOOL

workers. With his experience in practical things and a good portion of deceitfulness, Beck spoke a number of languages,⁷⁸ knew how to conduct himself and mediate between the ‘*Jew workers*’ and the SS/SD. Rosenbaum used Beck as an interpreter in all interrogations with Jews. Beck is central to the happenings in Bad Rabka until his demise in 1943, which was brought about by a brief telephone call from Dr. Schöngarth to the School, as we shall see. It is interesting to note, that both Hans Krüger and Wilhelm Rosenbaum were conversant with the Yiddish language. Lecturers in specialist subjects were drawn from offices within the General Government. Whilst the SD School settled into training the practicalities of the curriculum was being played out close-by.

Nowy-Targ Actions.

Near Zakopane was the town of Nowy Targ which was situated half way between Rabka and Zakopane. Like most Jews in Poland, those in Nowy-Targ refused to believe that Hitler would dare attack Poland in view of guarantees given to the latter by France and Great Britain. The Jews preferred to believe General Rydz-Shmigly, the Polish Chief of Staff, when he boasted that the prowess of the Polish Army would halt the Nazis in their tracks.⁷⁹

Nowy-Targ was in a precarious position because, only six months earlier (March 1939), Slovakia had proclaimed its independence, under the aegis of Nazi Germany. Nowy-Targ’s proximity to the border made it a prime and vulnerable target. And, indeed, the Germans entered Nowy-Targ on the first day of the war. The Polish troops retreated in disorder, commandeering all the vehicles in the area and leaving the population stranded to face the German forces.

Organised Nazi activity began with the arrival of the newly

⁷⁸ It was very common for Jews in Eastern and Central Europe to speak many languages - Yiddish, German, Polish, Russian, and Ukrainian. It is also interesting to know that, SS-Hauptsturmführer Hans Krüger and Wilhelm Rosenbaum were both Yiddish speakers.

⁷⁹ Nowy-Targ Memorial Book.

organised 'Einsatzgruppe'. This 2,700-man unit, commanded by SS-Gruppenführer Bruno Steckelbach, set about with their prepared lists to round up the Polish intelligentsia and dispatch them immediately to forced labour and open graves. Having overcome all resistance, Nowy-Targ was assigned to the Third Company, commanded by SD-Dr. E. Hasselberger. The main force of this Einsatzgruppe then moved on to Jaroslav leaving the town under German administration.⁸⁰

Anti-Jewish measures were then set in place: All Jewish enterprises were taken over and handed over to the Volksdeutsch.⁸¹ The other businesses were liquidated and their merchandise sent to Germany; all Jewish assets, business and personal, had to be declared; every Jew above the age of 10 had to wear the Jewish Star on an armband on the left sleeve; every Jew and Jewess had the name 'Israel' or 'Sarah' added in the town registry, Jews were forbidden to walk on the main streets and only allowed to shop at certain hours; the men were to cut off their beards and earlocks; Polish shops were closed to the Jews who were forced to bargain with the local Polish population for food, Jews were forced to sell all their belongings at a fraction of their worth. On 12 November 1939, all Jews were placed under the supervision of the Gestapo.⁸²

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Germans or people who could prove their German roots and spoke German but lived in Poland. They were very good at denouncing the Poles, especially those who were in the underground or helped the Jews. The Poles were in a precarious position in their relationship with the Germans and never held their full respect. In many respects the Poles were treated much the same, but with less fervour, as their Jewish neighbours. Unlike the Ukrainians who were allied to the Germans and were responsible for killing Jews and Poles alike, the Poles were not trained as executioners and were more likely to receive a bullet than discharge one as the evidence shows. We must remind ourselves that Poland lost 6 million people: 3 million Jews, 3 million Poles, and no other population in Europe were less supportive to Germans. There were exceptions: the '*Szmalcowniki*' who denounced Jews for money, and the '*Granatowa Policja*' (Blue Police - due to navy blue uniforms) which were responsible for order on the streets. The ghettos had a Jewish equivalent of such police. There was never any misunderstanding between the Germans and the Jews.

⁸² Nowy Targ Memorial Book.

THE SIPO-SD SCHOOL

The Germans wanted to clear the Podhale district of all its Jewish population, and nearby Nowy-Targ was selected as the site to which all Jews would be sent. Because Nowy-Targ had no closed ghetto, no Jewish police force (Ordnungsdienst) was set up.⁸³

The Jewish suffering was heightened by the behaviour of some Poles (the ‘szmalcowniki’), who denounced Jews for money and brought up fictitious accusations against any Jew they wanted out of the way.⁸⁴ Their accusations were sufficient for the Gestapo to send the Jews to the Palace Hotel (Gestapo headquarters), Zakopane, where they were brutally tortured and murdered.⁸⁵ While there were no organised roundups of Jews in Nowy-Targ until 1942, the SS/Sipo-SD had the right to kill on the spot. As in Rabka, which I will refer to later, if you were a Jew and had the same name as the School Commandant, it was considered an added disadvantage, and your life was forfeited immediately.⁸⁶ The unfortunate Jew named Weissmann and his family were shot because they bore the same name as the Chief of the Gestapo in Zakopane, Kriminal

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ These ‘szmalcowniki’ were considered traitors and criminals and were hunted down by the Polish underground and very often executed.

⁸⁵ The documents that survived the war show the demise of many named Zakopane Jews: the family of Maria Soborak; father shot in Rabka, brother shot in the ‘Palace’, the sisters Langner imprisoned and shot in the ‘Palace’, the Jews Dawid Blau, Adolf Golstein and Jozef Szmida all shot in the ‘Palace’. After the war a list of inscriptions were found scrawled on the Palace prison walls: Helena Gisman, Alicja Gut, 20 yrs, 9.8.1943, Fela Peterzein, Erika Grossmann, 6.9.1944, Aleksander Koeller, Barbara Gisman, Anna Guzik, Erwin Grossman, and Maria Strasser, 27. 10. 44. Other lists show (Most of the names are Polish, but other names may also be Jewish): Jozef Biel, Palace prisoner, killed in Auschwitz, Jozef Cukier shot in Dol. Chocholowska, Jozef Hauslinger, Palace prisoner, killed in Auschwitz, Feliks Klaper shot while escaping, Gustaw Klich Palace prisoner, killed in Auschwitz, Jozef Lachman, Palace prisoner, killed in Auschwitz, Ozjasz Oberlaender, shot in Zakopane, Rebbezin Baumel, shot in Nowy Targ.

⁸⁶ See B.F. Sabrin, *‘Alliance for Murder’*, (Sarpedon NY 1991), 5. Adolf David Hutler (Adolf Hitler), a Jewish resident of Trembowla, Tarnopol Region who was fortunate to survive and bare witness. As we shall see, if you had the name Rosenbaum or Weissmann, you were not so lucky.

CommissarSS-Hauptsturmführer Robert Weismann.⁸⁷

At the outbreak of hostilities of the German – Russian war, on 22 June 1941, Dr Schöngarth initiated his special *Einsatzgruppen*, zbV and with his personally selected team of Jewish affairs experts, entered Lwow where his unit committed the most atrocious murders including the murder of the Lwow Professors. After their initial incursion into east Galicia and the area secured, zbV group parted company: Schöngarth and Rosenbaum returned to Krakow where they re-activated the Sipo-SD School where our story continues with Rosenbaum is promoted to Commandant of the School.

Within the context of the '*Final Solution*', the happenings at the SS School in Rabka become very significant indeed.⁸⁸ As *the* central training establishment in the General Government it became the very centre for the dissemination of orders, planning, and practical instruction for Germans and non Germans of all ranks in realising the ideals of national-socialism. It would embrace the policies of destruction already commenced in Galicia, from the smallest Jewish community in the village of Podhorodse in the Stryj valley, to the larger Jewish communities of Stanislawow, Kolomyja, and Lwow. The experience gained from these earlier actions became the basis of planning for future Sipo-SD activities under the auspices of *Operation Reinhardt* in the ensuing months, notably in the large Ghettos of Krakow, Warsaw and Łódź and the resettlement transports to Bełżec.

There was another side to the School: all the major SS/SD officers engaged in the Jewish genocide were at one time or another in Rabka, if not for training, then for conferences, consultations, recreation etc. Well after the war, the Rabka SD School was officially recognised by the German restitution authorities and classified as a former concentration camp, which strictly speaking it was not. In July 1940, the SD School in Zakopane together with its permanent staff were moved to Bad Rabka. A number of Jewish workers employed at the School were selected by Wilhelm

⁸⁷ Ben-Ami.

⁸⁸ This paper is the first assessment of the Rabka SD School.

THE SIPO-SD SCHOOL

Rosenbaum and taken to the new premises.

Bad Rabka was a small health resort located on both sides of the Raba River and halfway between Krakow and Zakopane. At the outbreak of war there were approximately 7,000 inhabitants in town. The Jewish population was about 1,500, which increased during the early part of the war. Relatives and friends of the local Jews moved from the larger towns to the area less exposed to persecution as elsewhere. This was an age-old custom of the Jews who sought protection and comfort in numbers in times of stress.

Institutions and offices of the Reich Government and Wehrmacht established themselves in Rabka. Apart from the local Commander's office and the Government departments, there was a military convalescent home, children's homes and a German guesthouse. Rabka had all the trappings of a small town, served well by both road and rail. The adjoining railway station of Chabowka was a central junction for the larger towns in Poland also served Rabka.

The SD School initially occupied premises of a requisitioned Jewish religious institution for children, situated near the Chabowka railway station. In the late autumn of 1940, the School moved to new and much larger premises of the *Theresianum* - also called *Thereska*- a high School for girls. The four-story building was located in the northern part of the town called Slonna, on a tree-covered slope alongside the Slonna River, which flowed into the Raba River.

SS- Hauptsturmführer Hans Krüger remained at the School until November 1940, when he was transferred to Krakow to take up duties of deputy to SS- Brig. Führer Dr. Schöngarth of the SD. For a short period, SS Hauptsturmführer Rudolf Voigtlander took over, but within a few weeks, he too was transferred, and Wilhelm Rosenbaum was appointed Commandant of the School. He remained at the School until April, 1941, when he too was also recalled to Schöngarth's SD office in Krakow for preparatory work for the implementation of *Barbarossa*⁸⁹. The School activities were

⁸⁹ The earliest blueprints for the Russian campaign were known as 'Aufbau Ost',

suspended but retained a small staff to caretake the premises. The Sipo-SD did not recommence activities until November 1941, when both Rosenbaum and Schöngarth returned from Lwow and their murderous activities with zbV.⁹⁰

or Eastern Build upon 12 December 1940, as preparations for the invasion gathered momentum, the planners completed Directive No.21, authorising what was to be known as Operation Fritz. This directive, which set out the basic strategy and the date of 15 May1941, for the attack, was submitted to Hitler on 17 December 1940. Hitler made two changes, 1. The direction of the attack, and 2, the name of the operation would be 'Barbarossa'.

⁹⁰ At the end of July/early August. 1941.

Chapter 4

Operation Barbarossa⁹¹



Fig 12: Launch of Barbarossa June 1941

When Nazi Germany attacked Soviet Russia, the machine of destruction was freed from all restraints. On 22 June 1941, four

⁹¹ Operation *Barbarossa* was named after Frederick Barbarossa, the medieval Holy Roman Emperor. Hitler authorized the invasion on 18 December 1940 (Directive No. 21) for a start date of 15 May 1941, but this would not be met, and instead the invasion began on 22 June 1941.

battalions of the Security Police crossed the eastern border into the U.S.S.R. with orders to kill all Jews on the spot. In the newly taken cities and towns, Jews were caught en masse. They were placed before anti-tank ditches and prepared graves and mowed down with rifle salvos and fire. As the trails of blood ran deeper into Soviet territory, SS and Police reinforcements poured into the area, the army was pressed into service, and native helpers pitched in. The killings increased and efficiency became more pronounced. The victims were forced to lie in the ditches, the head of the man awaiting the bullet on the feet of the corpse below. Soon, gas-vans appeared on the scene to suffocate women and children. After two years of this carnage, the mass graves of the east contained the bodies of about 1,400,000 Jews.

Soviet/German Occupation of east Galicia.

During the Soviet occupation of east Galicia, the mainly Polish-Ukrainian (including Jews) had been subjected to Soviet style oppression in many forms. Like the Germans who were shortly to replace them, the Soviets installed their own style of government with devastating effect. Politically led by the NKVD, their first priority was (like the Germans) to rid themselves of the educated classes.

Although the policies of both occupiers were similar in all respects, that is, by removing the threatening classes, there was one subtle difference. Under Soviet occupation, the intelligentsia (Polish/Ukrainian/Jews) were simply removed to the Gulags of the Soviet interior. If you were a Jew and should you be able to survive the labour camps and the harsh conditions - you lived. The Soviets deported over one million persons from this district during their period of occupation.⁹² Only a few weeks before the Germans arrived in Stanislawow in June 1941, several transports had left

⁹² See Zoe Zajdlerowa, *The Dark Side of the Moon*, London, 1989, 55. Over one million were deported by the Soviets during their occupation. Mass deportations occurred: February, April and June 1940, June 1941.

OPERATION BARBAROSSA

Stanislawow on this long journey to deportation. Under German administration, the same tactics applied, but if you were Jewish - you died.

The Rabka Four come together and join the hunting party.

Special units known as *Einsatzkommandos* were established for this purpose by Heinrich Himmler, Reichsführer, chief of police and at the same time head of the infamous *Schutzstaffeln* (SS). These units, led by high-ranking SS and police officers were to follow the army; arrest prominent individuals according to the beforehand prepared proscription lists, and shoot them. Hitler and Himmler warned that actions performed by these special units were not subject of control by either prosecutors or courts of law and that any attempt at interfering with these activities would be decisively punished.

A major conference held on 21 May, 1941, between Heydrich and the Army Command (OKH), reviewed the security forces needed for the impending attack on the Soviet Union. The main principle to emerge, was an agreement with OKH of the defined responsibilities of the *Verfügungstruppe* (Emergency Troops) and the duties of the HSSPF units which would operate independently from, or alongside, the *Einsatzgruppen* against civilian populations, enemies of the state and particularly Jews.⁹³

In June 1941, the HHE decided to raise further emergency troops to deal with 'purification' duties behind *Einsatzgruppe* 'B' (shortly to be adjusted to 'C') on the Polish-Soviet borders into east Galicia. This appointment was given to the *Einsatzgruppen zur besonderen Verwendung*, or zbV, a group of Sipo-SD personnel, commanded by the Commander-in-Chief of the Security Police

⁹³ ZbV units by definition (special group) were used elsewhere, particularly in the opening phases of the invasion of Poland in September 1939. E.g., SS-Obergruppenführer Udo von Woyrsch at Kattowice whose zbV unit was responsible for murdering many thousands.

BdS-Krakow, SS-Lieutenant General Dr Karl Eberhard Schöngarth (professor of Law).⁹⁴ Dr Schöngarth was an officer privy to the inner decision making policies and was personally favoured by the HHE. His brief for the ensuing action was given to him personally by Himmler and before 'Barbarossa'.⁹⁵

Initially, zbV were to act as a follow-up support unit to the main force of EG 'C' (commanded by SS-Gruppenführer Otto Rasch), the Wehrmacht and units of the collaborating OUN (Ukrainian militia). The overall purpose of zbV was to tidy-up the rear areas by eradicating and crushing all political adversaries. To this end, Dr Schöngarth established a further six commando units which would act independently from his own command (zbV), which were designated to the areas of Slutsk, Pinsk, Brest-Litvosk, Bialystok, Vilna, Minsk and Rovno.⁹⁶ Dr Schöngarth reserved his own commando for actions in and around Lwow, and then disperses his commando to the major towns and cities in east Galicia where 'Special Offices for Jewish Affairs' (Judenreferent) were to be established.⁹⁷ We may define this period of operations up until the end of July 1941.

Although by the time, these groups had been organised (end of June), many thousands of Jews had already been murdered in the Russian occupied territories, but there was no talk of a wholesale destruction policy. There was also no talk of permanent Jewish 'resettlement' (Umsiedlung), 'evacuation' (Aussiedlung) and 'death camps' (Mortlager). However, there seems little doubt that in the background, there was something going on as Dr Schöngarth carried with him orders for some kind of possible ultimate 'solution' to the 'Jewish question'. Dr Schöngarth was a central Figure: with regard to 'Jewish affairs', which is endorsed by his presence at Wannsee on 20 January 1942, when the final seal of

⁹⁴ Confirmation of Schöngarth's zbV appointment can be seen: Affidavit Otto Ohlendorf, 5 November 1945, IMT 2620 PS.

⁹⁵ Krüger Verdict: Hans Krüger statement 8 January 1962.

⁹⁶ Yehoshua Buechler, '*Kommandostab Reichsführer-SS*', 13 (Holocaust and Genocide Studies. Vol. 1. No. 1, 11-25.

⁹⁷ PRO: WO 2890 IMT No. 2890, statement of Ohlendorf.

OPERATION BARBAROSSA

approval for the codified mass expulsion of European Jewry to the death camps was finalised.⁹⁸

From the evidence shown in post-war German testimonies and documents, we may deduce that the orders for the mass slaughter of Jews in the occupied Soviet territory of east Galicia had already been given before hostilities.⁹⁹ We have confirmation of this as set out in the order from Heydrich of 2 July 1941. Heydrich instructed the higher SS and police chiefs to brief the Einsatzgruppen commanders of how the war was to be conducted: to establish order and to liquidate the ruling elite of Bolshevik Russia (particularly Jews), as in other occupied regions. These orders dealt with Jews among the Russian prisoners of war - the summary execution of all Jews in Party and State positions. Also attached to this order (Operational Order Number 8), sent out by the Chief of the Security Police and SD (and carried by zbV), was the 'German Research Book' (88 list) which contained lists of addresses of the Polish intelligentsia and a 'special Research Book' for the USSR, in which were entered all the names of dissidents considered dangerous and a threat to German aspirations. To assist in carrying out these orders, were the collaborating Ukrainians and Poles who had all been specifically trained for this purpose in the SD Academy at Zakopane and Rabka.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ Krüger Verdict: statement of Hans Krüger. It is doubtful at this stage Schöngarth had not been up-dated. I am reasonably sure that if a decision had been made at this time of the 'FS', he would have known about it.

⁹⁹ Krüger Verdict. See also PRO: WO 3644. Document No. 3644, statement of Erwin Schulz who describes the Sipo-SD actions in Lwow.

¹⁰⁰ In May 1941, in the preparation of Barbarossa, the Nazis had assembled about 300 Ukrainian officers and Polish collaborators in the occupied territories and designated them various military units as 'Sonderführer' ('interpreters' and advisers). It was for this purpose, that the Zakopane/Rabka Sipo-SD Academy (as we shall see) were formed and used to train these men they were issued with German military uniforms, and instructed by Ukrainian/Polish speaking Sipo-SD instructors. Certainly, National Socialist ideology was high on the agenda, but the implementation of mass killings in east Galicia may have been inferred but was not spoken about. Schöngarth's secondment of Pieter Menten to zbV for dubious purposes was made under this provision.

Chapter 5

Enter ‘the Dutchman’ Pieter Menten¹⁰¹



Fig. 13: Pieter Menten (The Dutchman)

When he first appeared in Lwow, the Pistiners said that he epitomised Western culture—he smoked Egyptian cigarettes, carried a silver-topped walking stick, and spoke with an enduring accent; his wife possessed a beauty ‘off a movie screen’. In the

¹⁰¹ Some references to the Menten story hereafter are based on the book *The Menten Affair* first published by Robson Books in 1979, by the author Hans Knoop, and the book, *The Last Victim*, published by Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1984, by the author Malcolm MacPherson. Hereafter ‘Knoop’ and ‘MacPherson’.

ENTER 'THE DUTCHMAN'

uniform of the Sicherheitsdienst and with the rank of SS-Hauptscahrführer, Menten supervised the killing in Pistiner's garden, suggesting an actor in the wings of a theatre, about to enter onto the stage.¹⁰²

When Hitler invaded Poland on the 1 September 1939, the Mentens took refuge on their estate in Sopot near the town of Stryj, where they had expected the imminent arrival of German troops. Unknown to Pieter Menten, the Nazi-Soviet Pact provided for east Galicia's absorption into the USSR, and on the 17 September, 1939, the Soviets arrived in east Galicia aand immediately began confiscating Polish estates, distributing them to Ukrainian peasants and deporting the owners to labour camps.

Pieter Menten had been operating in the area as a spy (*V-Agent*) for the Sipco-SD and the Abwehr of the Wehrmacht in Berlin for some time¹⁰³, which had been well known to Soviet-Ukrainian sympathisers. It wasn't long before he was arrested by the NKVD and detained in the Stryj jail. With the help of friendly associates, he escaped and fled to Lwow where they sought the assistance of the Dutch Consul to get back to German occupied Poland.¹⁰⁴ On the 27 December 1939, the Mentens' arrived in Krakow, the centre of

¹⁰² Ainsztein, R, 'The Collector', New Statesman, 11.2.1981. The Jew Stieglitz stated in 1976, that a number of the paintings then in Menten's apartment had originated from Lwow where he had been engaged with Menten in the seizure of art from the Polish intelligencia between 1939-41. Stieglitz stated that he and Menten knew too much about each other and on no account would he (Stieglitz) return to Holland and give evidence. Knoop, 31. Dirk Menten corroborates that in his brother's Aerdenhout apartment there were many paintings that had been brought from Poland in 1943. Knoop, 28.

¹⁰³. The SD power and efficiency in Galicia was mainly due to the web of spies nurtured over several years before the war, especially during the opening phases of the war.

¹⁰⁴. Knoop 32-33. The Dutch Consul in Lwow was Jacob Jan Broen who remarked, 'He was really getting on thick with the Nazis and saluting them in the Nazi way...he told me that he had decided to stay in Krakow to get back his fortune that he had lost on Lwow'. In 1945, Broen was interviewed and confirmed that on Menten's arrival in Krakow in December 1939, he had only a few possessions, which shows that his subsequent acquisitions were obtained between December 1939 and when the Nazis banished him from Poland in 1943.

Germany's colonial rule over western Poland, and the hub of Nazi activity.

Jacob van Broen:

'Till the end of 1939 I was consul of the Netherlands in Lwow, as a successor to Dr Witkovsky. Because of the war activities in Poland I had to leave Lwow towards the end of December 1939. Shortly before my departure, P.N. Menten came to see me, asking me in my function as consul for a Dutch passport. Although I wasn't quite sure whether Menten still possessed Dutch nationality—this on the basis of a note in my files on Menten, written by my predecessor—I decided to issue him with a passport, mainly from considerations of humanity. Our party left Lwow on 27 December along with Mr and Mrs Menten, Menten's mother, and another Dutchman by the name of Jan Huig and wife. Our destination was the Netherlands, but our papers were only valid to Krakow. We were to get new travel documents there. Each member of our party was allowed no more than about 150 pounds of luggage. Mr Menten, too, could only take limited luggage. He had already told me before, weeping, that he'd lost everything, that his estate had been plundered by the Russians, and his house burned. When we arrived in Krakow, it soon became apparent that Menten was on good terms with the Germans. He was really getting thick with them, and saluting in the Nazi German way. Moreover, very soon afterwards he came to tell me he wasn't going on with us to the Netherlands, but had decided to stay in Krakow to try to earn back at least part of the fortune he had so recently lost.

I do not know that Mr Menten owned a house in Lwow before 1940. I do know, however, that from September 1939 to December of that year he resided in a very small room in Lwow; he lived in such small quarters that mother Menten had to share the couple's bedroom.'

ENTER 'THE DUTCHMAN'

Krakow was not a large city, so it was easier for the Germans to create a German majority there. All undesirable Polish elements had been removed, and only those Poles who showed allegiance to the Reich and who had been carefully vetted, remained as officials in the administration. The Germans had taken considerable efforts to restoring the facades and maintenance of the infrastructure. Finally, the '*Jewish Question*' was being resolved to everyone's satisfaction.



Fig 14: Pieter Menten in uniform of zbV Interpreter.

Pieter Menten immediately reported to the German authorities and offered his services to the Security Police (Sipo-SD). Sipo-SD in Krakow was commanded by SS-Oberführer Bruno Streckenbach (who was almost immediately replaced by Dr. Schöngarth), and it seems likely that Menten was able to gain access to Streckenbach because of his previous service with Nazi intelligence. This would explain why a few days after his arrival in Krakow he was seen in uniform of the SS with the rank of SS Hauptscharführer.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁵. Menten Verdict: Statement of Police Inspector Van Sonsbeek, arresting officer in 1945, when Menten was investigated for SS collaboration. Amongst incriminating documents of Menten's SD service was also found a photograph of Menten in uniform of SS-Sergeant. The photograph was taken in 1941, in the garden of 12, Aleja Grottera, Krakow, the residence of the former Dutch Consul in Krakow, De Bruin. See also Knoop, 34. This photograph was to be damning when Menten finally appeared before the Dutch Courts.

'The Dutchman', Pieter Menten, now part of the zbV team as an interpreter and art expert carries out a personal vendetta in east Galicia seeking vengeance to old acquaintances and business partners. At the same time, in addition to his murderous activities he acquires a large booty of art valuables, which he stores at the Rabka School and later decamps to Holland with his booty.

SS Hauptsturmführer Hans Krüger after the initial settling of accounts in Lwow commands his own SD unit in Stanislawow where he is engaged in setting standards for Jewish destruction. Krüger co-ordinates mass slaughter of the Jews and supervises rounding-up techniques for deportations to the death camp.¹⁰⁶

At the outbreak of hostilities, on 22 June 1941, the rapid advance of the Wehrmacht and Einsatzgruppe 'B' soon created a vacuum behind the front lines in the densely Jewish populated areas of east Galicia.¹⁰⁷ Immediately, the 'Einsatzgruppen' were re-organised and re-directed with the assistance of further back-up units of two additional support groups: the Ordnungspolizei (Orpo) and the Waffen-SS.¹⁰⁸ With the main thrust already successfully accomplished, the way was open for 'Schöngarths zbV, who were still in Krakow organising their unit:

¹⁰⁶ See The Holocaust in Stanislawow by W. Tannenzapf-originally published in 'Jidisze Cajtung' Numer 13(81) on the fourth anniversary of the ghetto liquidation, February 1947 (translated from Yiddish by the author 1996). Stanislawow was a city with 37,000 Jews - a Jewish city with a highly developed cultural life. Who in east Galicia had not heard of the Stanislawow Jewish theatre 'Goldfaden', with its symphony orchestra? Who does not know about the book, '*Mechajej Hakaraim*' by Rubin Fan, the Stanislawow writer? Jewish merchants, tradesmen, doctors, engineers, teachers, manufacturers - all played a dominant role in the city. There was once even a Jewish mayor and always a Jewish deputy mayor. Life pulsed in the dozens of Jewish national organisations, in the Jewish high school, in the Jewish workshops and factories, and in ten synagogues, now destroyed. Gone is the magnificent Jewish community of Stanislawow; except for a few hundred, who returned from Russia, and a few dozen who miraculously survived the ghetto days. This is the balance left of the 37,000 Jews.

¹⁰⁷ Because the Germans believed that Jews dominated the Soviet state, Heydrich ordered EG 'C' to encourage local pogroms against the Jews.

¹⁰⁸ Heydrich had reached an agreement with the Army Command (OKH) on the 21 May 1941, for the use of these units.

ENTER 'THE DUTCHMAN'

Initial group of Sipo-SD was the vanguard of Jewish destruction:¹⁰⁹
Specialist Jewish Affairs:

SS- Brigadierführer Dr Schöngarth¹¹⁰ Commander-in-Chief
BdS and zbV.
SS-Untersturmführer Oskar Brandt
SS-Untersturmführer Kuch
SS- Untersturmführer Grothjan
SS- Untersturmführer Kiptka¹¹¹
SS-Scharführer Horst Waldenburger
SS-Hauptsturmführer Dr Walter Kutschmann
SS-Scharführer Pieter Mentens¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ The composition of zbV (Einsatzkommando zbV zu Besonderer Verwendung) and the named Sipo-SD officers are shown in a number of sources. Dieter Pohl, *'Nationalsozialistische Judenverfolgung in Ostgalizien 1941-1944'*, Munich, 1996, 411-423 (hereafter Pohl/RO), Berlin Document Centre Personnel Files of the SS (Yad Vashem) -BDC, Stellebesetzung des KdS Krakow (Abschrift): Dienststelle; Kommandeur der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD für den District Krakow (1940-1943), Zentralkartell ergänz am: 23 October 1962, hereafter Krakow KdS (Yad Vashem).

The personnel 'cards' clearly show the progress of these officers from Krakow to their postings in east Galicia. Another interesting point: a number of these men were involved in the massacres committed in Poland late 1939 and further atrocities in May 1940. They were trained killers. Many on this list appear in the list of Sipo-SD stationed in east Galicia.

¹¹⁰ BDC 806.

¹¹¹ Menten Verdict. Malcolm MacPherson, *The Last Victim*, 1984, 98. (This faction/fictional account by MacPherson has been well researched but should not be relied on. Where I have sourced this material, it has been corroborated, usually by trial references. Through Kiptka, Menten met Wilhelm Rosenbaum at the Magrabianka SS Club in Rabka. Menten, Kiptka, and Dr Schöngarth had stayed at the residence in the winter of 1941.

¹¹² A number of SS-officers of Scharführer rank either were in the first transport, or joined up with the team later. Several were transferred in to the Sipo-SD offices when they were established. We are able to identify a number of them from the Stanislawow Office of Sipo-SD: Heinrich Schott (Jewish Affairs), Josef Daus, Kurt Giese, Hans Greve, Wilhelm Hehemann, Walter Lange, Otto Ruckerich, Kurt Wulkau, and the Mauer brothers, ethnic Germans who had served with Hans Krüger when he was Commandant of the Sipo-SD Training Academy at Bad Rabka (Rosenbaum had replaced Krüger as Commandant)

SS-Hauptsturmführer Hans Krüger¹¹³ Regional Commander
KdS east Galicia
SS-Obersturmbannführer Heim¹¹⁴ Deputy to Schöngarth
SS-Sturmbannführer Helmut Tanzmann Personnel
SS-Untersturmführer Wilhelm Rosenbaum¹¹⁵ Logistics
SS-Sonderführer Pieter Menten¹¹⁶ Interpreter

On 29 June, the city of Lwow fell to the Germans and the trigger for Dr Schöngarth to initiate his zbV unit to move towards Lwow with his specialist officers and to set up the framework of ensuing Nazi policies in the districts of east Galicia.¹¹⁷

Entry into Lwow.

Dr Schöngarth, with 230 men of Commando zbV marched into

These non-commissioned officers held the principal decisions over or 'life or death' in the coming actions.

¹¹³ Krüger Verdict.

¹¹⁴ PRO WO235/631. Heim and Menten teamed up together in the plunder of Jewish art in Lwow (statement of Dorothea Schöngarth).

¹¹⁵ In late August 1941, Rosenbaum returned with Dr Schöngarth to Krakow where he was the Head of the Sipo-SD Training Academy at Bad Rabka. Dr Schöngarth remained in Krakow to administer and supervise the Jewish destruction. He was the main perpetrator in the Krakow District consolidating 'AR', liaison with the HSSPF F.W. Krüger, SSPF Globocnik (Lublin), and the HHE in Berlin.

¹¹⁶ Ministry of Justice trial transcripts, 'The Netherlands v Pieter Menten 1977-1980 (hereafter Menten Verdict). A surprise witness at the Menten trial after the war was Hans Geisle who had been a member of zbV, and remembered Menten being added to the Commando as 'guest and interpreter.' There is further corroboration, surprisingly as it may seem, from Dorothea Schöngarth (wife of Dr Schöngarth), who after the war in the trials of both Menten and Rosenbaum gave evidence that her husband had taken Menten along because he had an antiques shop in Lwow. Her husband had given him a uniform to perform his duties as interpreter for the commando. She also stated which the court interpreted as a defensive line, which Menten was sent back to Krakow without his uniform as he and SS-Obersturmführer Heim were mixed up in shady antiques deals. (See Rosenbaum trial statement of Mrs Schöngarth RAD Az.1 141 Js 856/61, 141 Js 61/65), 2436-2444. See also PRO WO235/631.

¹¹⁷ Hilberg, *The Destruction*, vol. 1, 296.

ENTER 'THE DUTCHMAN'

Lwow on the heels of 'EG' 'C' in the afternoon of 2 July, and immediately began to fulfil their orders, to arrest and execute all members of the Polish intelligentsia and prominent Jews.¹¹⁸ Over 3,000 Ukrainian political intelligentsia had already either been murdered by the NKVD or left in the prisons.¹¹⁹ As soon as the Russians had withdrawn, Ukrainian nationalists (OUN) turned on the Jews in the city, murdering up to 10,000 in the wake of the German occupation.¹²⁰ One other task, which had been delegated to *zbV*, was the seizure of art objects and documents. For these purposes and taken along for the ride, the expertise of a civilian foreign Dutch national and art expert, Pieter Menten, was given the title of *Sonderführer* and the bogus rank of *SS-Scharführer*.¹²¹

¹¹⁸ The form of murder was based not on any individual trait but simply on membership of a certain group: the murder of the Polish intelligentsia had been a priority objective of German policy ever since they occupied Polish territories in 1939. Under the heading 'AB' (Allgemeine Befriedung: general pacification) SS Gruppenführer Bruno Streckenbach (Schöngarth's predecessor) had since the spring of 1940 organised the murder of 5000 university people, artists and intellectuals. At the time a colonel in the NKVD was attached to the Soviet liaison officer to Dr Hans Frank (GG), he can scarcely have been unaware of Operation AB.

¹¹⁹ Dr Otto Rasch (EG 'C') with the OUN and Wehrmacht, whose actions were approved by the High Command of the 17th Army, shot all Jewish males of military age. See also Operation Station Report USSR No. 10, 2.7.1941 (Arad, EG Reports, 2).

¹²⁰ Thomas Sandkühler, *Anti-Jewish Policy, and the Murder of the Jews in the District of Galicia, 1941/2* (National Socialist Extermination Policies, Oxford, 2000, 109).

¹²¹ The rank of *Sonderführer* may be described as a specialist officer functioning above his rank. In Krakow, Schöngarth and Menten were on first name terms and may be described as friends. Menten was thieving Jewish art for the benefit of the SS. When *zbV* was being put together, Schöngarth invited Menten to join *zbV* for the Lwow venture. Menten was never trained (like other *Sonderführers*) for this duty, but when in east Galicia, committed theft and atrocity, as we shall see. The information about Menten mainly comes from his trial notes (Menten Verdict), and from Mrs Dorothea Schöngarth in correspondence to the trial investigators to seek a pension after her husband had been convicted for the murder of Americo S. Galle, the American airman who had baled out over Holland and was shot by Schöngarth security department. Schöngarth was hanged for war crimes.

Chapter 6

The Podhorodse Murders:

Then you could hear the machine guns—a continuous rat-ta-ta-tat.’

The central pivotal point of the Menten story is undoubtedly the tenacious investigation by the Dutch journalist Hans Knoop. In 1976, Knoop received information from an informant that a big story was about to be broken in the Israel Press about a Dutch resident who had been a German collaborator in the last war. Following this, the Amsterdam daily *De Telegraaf*, acting on further information, interviewed Mr Menten and confirmed that he would be auctioning some of his art works. This publicity alerted the public to further rumours that Pieter Menten had been involved in Nazi atrocities in the Ukraine.

On 29 May 1976, Knoop, by appointment, visited Menten at his residence and when entering the property found a showplace of riches, a veritable museum. The walls were covered with paintings and Gobelin tapestries. Pieter Menten received the journalist politely and when Knoop put to him the nature of the information which was about to be published in the Israeli newspaper *Ha'aretz*, that he, Menten, as part of an SS extermination squad into the village of Podhorodse and several neighbouring villages, personally had selected various villagers and had killed them: revenge was his motive, for he had quarrelled with a business partner, Isaac Pistiner, a Jew. Menten denied any knowledge or association with the facts as set out. Knoop left, dismayed, and set on a course, which would

THE PODHORODSE MURDERS

lead him to the inner wilderness of the Stryj Valley, Ukraine, and many years of a bitter fight to establish the truth.

It would appear that the information had come, in the first instant, from an Israeli journalist, Chaviv Kanaan, who was personally involved. After the war Kanaan had changed his name from Lieber Krumholz to Chaviv Kanaan and was now telling the world about his early life as a 15-year-old boy in the Village of Podhorodse in the Stryj Valley, east Galicia (at the time Poland but now Ukraine). The boy Krumholz worked on his uncle's farm where he came into daily contact with the owner of an adjacent estate, Pieter Menten. There was a close business association with his uncle's family (the Pistiners) and the Menten estate. The association was that close that the young Kanaan referred to the owner as 'Uncle Pieter'. In 1935, young Lieber Krumholz left his home village and emigrated to Palestine where he started a new life. Contact with his family in Podhorodse was maintained until the beginning of the Second World War when Poland was partitioned between the Soviets and Germany, when all contact ceased until 1944.¹²²

Krumholz, now Kanaan, met Jacob Loebel, a family friend, who had recently arrived in Palestine from eastern Europe. Loebel brought bad news about the boy's family to the effect that they had all been murdered in a terrible onslaught and the man behind the murders was the family friend Pieter Menten. Loebel described Menten as a Gestapo Agent and that the background to these events was over bad business deals with his uncle, Isaac Pistiner.

Hans Knoop and Chaviv Kanaan eventually came together and set about building the evidence to support government action into the activities of Pieter Menten during the Nazi occupation of Poland and the atrocities committed in the Stryj Valley.

¹²² Knoop, 3

The Dutchman slips away from the main zbV group and visits old friends in the Villages of the Stryj Valley: Podhorodse. ¹²³

Very soon, after zbV arrived in Lwow and had dealt with the University professors (see later), Pieter Menten went on a shopping spree looking for major works of art for the benefit of his new clients—the senior Nazi command. Many journeys were made to and from the Sipo-SD School where he stored his loot under the watchful eye of the retained care-taking staff. In between his visits, he was out to settle old scores in the suburbs of the city and the Stryj Valley for times gone by. To assist him he was supplied with a team of Ukrainian militia and SD personnel from the Rabka School.

On 6 July, several Sipo-SD non-commissioned officers and Ukrainian militiamen (Banderovtsy—OUN), led by the Dutchman Pieter Menten¹²⁴ from zbV, arrived at Podhorodse, a small village in the Stryj Valley.¹²⁵ Immediately, local Ukrainians with shovels were ordered by Pieter Menten to go to the residence of Isaac Pistiner. On directions from Menten a pit was excavated near the rose garden. The Execution squad: SS Sonderführer Pieter Menten; Phillip Muller, Volksdeutsch supervisor; and a specialist execut-

¹²³ Menten Verdict: The Podhorodse murders were not part of any organised Sipo-SD action. It was a personal vendetta instigated by the zbV Sonderführer SS-Scharführer Pieter Menten. Menten, before the war was an agent of the SD Abwehr and the landed agent of a small group of villages in the Stryj valley. Menten had made it his business to return to the area to take revenge of some blighted property disagreements.

¹²⁴ Ibid: This is absolute proof of Menten's independent actions and culpability in mass murder outside of his military attachment to zbV, however bogus. Menten lived in this village for many years before the war, and was now extracting revenge on past enemies. He had used the confusion in Lwow to slip away, taking with him SD personnel. According to the witnesses, although not the leader of this group, he was giving all the orders.

¹²⁵ Ibid: Menten's (zbV) entry in this district, at this time, was well before the official action by Hans Krueger on the 1 September 1941, when he targeted this area for clearance. Menten had already done it. I am not sure that Menten's action was ever authorised.

THE PODHORODSE MURDERS

ioner (Holz Apfel) seconded from the Rabka SD School prepared their lists for the following day.

On the 7 July, all local male Ukrainian 'politicals' were rounded up and forced to the graveside. The remaining villagers were assembled and forced to watch as groups of prisoners were made to walk a plank and then shot into the grave on orders of Menten.¹²⁶ The remainder, the Jewish men of the village, were brought out one by one. Each walked the plank and each was shot into the pit. In less than 5 minutes, 23 Jewish men had been murdered for no other reason than that they were Jews and by personal vendetta.¹²⁷ All the Jewish women and children were released. Non-Jewish victims murdered in Podhorodse: Alexander Nowicki; Bronislaw Nowicki; Alfred Stephan (Bronislaw's brother); Vladimir Pistolak; Petro Starzinsky. The local villagers threw Kreutzers and Kopecks into the pit as homage to the dead. This coinage was later recovered from the pit when the bodies were exhumed by the Soviets well after the war.¹²⁸

The Jewish Victims resident in Podhorodse.:

Benzion Nauman — carpenter; Josel Nass — schoolteacher;
Moshe Halpern — postman; Uzik — dentist; Shabtai Katz;
Alfred Favel; Mendel Yeckel — butcher; Mordechai

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Menten Verdict: Statements of Tuzimek etc. as above. Some of the murdered Jews: Philip Wecker, (son-in-law of Isaac Pistiner) Benzion Neumann, Josel Nass, Moshe Halpern, Uzik, Shabtai Katz, Alfred Favel, Mendel Yeckel, Mordechai Londer, Voit Heeler, Pinchas Bernstein, Mr Greenberg, Geiweil Hellmar, Haim Jakov, Schlossberg and Schleiffer and Zuckerman.

¹²⁸ Menten Verdict: In one of the Menten trials after the war, Menten had tried to establish that it was impossible for him to have been in the Podhorodse area at this time as the Wehrmacht was heavily engaged there and that battles were being waged all around. Hans van der Leeuw, the researcher from the Rijks Institute for War Documentation who presented the Nazi Order of Battle from archives in Berlin, proving that Menten, as part of an SS-Einsatzgruppen, could easily have driven to Podhorodze on that day, rebutted this defence. However, I believe Menten must have been authorised unless he was taking advantage of the turmoil in Lwow at that time. It was important enough for him to make this detour, with or without authorisation.

ROBIN O'NEILL

Londner; Voit Heller; Pinchas Bernstein; Mr Greenberg; Geiwei Hellmar; Chaim Jacov; Schlossberg; Schleitter; Zuckerman; Phillip Wecker; plus 6 others.

On 27 August 1941, a small unit (again led by Menten) of zbV officers returned to the villages in the Stryj Valley and completed their unresolved business in the slaughter of 180 Jews (of all genders and age) in the village of Urycz, near Podhorodse, employing the 'pit-and-plank' technique.¹²⁹ Witnesses to these events were local villagers Michael Hauptmann and his cousin Abe Pollak, Polish-born Jews who vividly remember those horrible events of 27 Aug. 1941.

Both Pollak and Hauptmann ran from the scene and managed to escape the massacre that befell their families and their Jewish neighbours. Also escaping were the Schleiffers. These witnesses hid in a house a short distance from where the action was happening and recorded the events that would be the basis of Menten's trial well after the war. In this action, two hundred Jews had been herded together and in groups were ordered to walk over a long plank where, after a few paces, Menten ordered them to be shot. Abe Pollack:

'Armed Ukrainians were herding other Jews in our direction. Some had locked themselves in their houses, the doors had to be broken down, and the people dragged out kicking and screaming. I recognized Pieter Menten in a German uniform, along with two other Gestapo agents. They had mounted machine guns in front of them. I saw Ukrainians digging a pit some 15 yards from the guns. You could hear voices and crying. Later the guards began to take people out in small groups of ten and twelve. They pushed them onto planks set

¹²⁹ Ibid. This technique was taught at the Rabka School in late 1941 (see Krüger verdict). Of four Jews who watched this execution in concealment from a nearby attic, Michael Hauptmann, and Henryk Schleiffer survived to testify at Menten's trial after the war.

THE PODHORODSE MURDERS

over the pit. Then you could hear the machine guns — a continuous rat-ta-ta-tat.’

For the time being, The Menten affair remains on hold as he returns to duties with zbV. Later, we will hear the final throws of ‘the Menten Affair’.

Chapter 7

Murder of the Lwow Professors

At Lesienice (Lwow County), in July 1941 1000 Lwow Jews were shot to death in the Lesnitsky forest, 6 kilometres from Lwow.¹³⁰ There were a number of murder operations at that site. Elsewhere in Lwow County.¹³¹

1. Lwow City: During a murder, operation in June-July 1941 the Wehrmacht and Ukrainian police killed about 5,000 Lwow Jews.
2. At the end of October 1942, before the closure of the Lwow ghetto, 500 Jewish policemen were shot to death. About 100 Jewish artisans were imprisoned.
3. In November-December 1941, during the deportation of Lwow Jews to the ghetto a typhus epidemic raged in the city. The Germans carried out a selection among the Jews as a result of which about 3,000 old, sick, and disabled people were shot to death.
4. Lwow City: On 1 September 1942, in reaction to the killing of a German policeman, all the members of one Feldman family, Germans hanged all the other Jews

¹³⁰ Zygmunt Albert, *The Extermination of the Lwow Professors in July 1941*, in idem (ed.), *Kazn profesorow Lwowskich*, lipiec 1941.

¹³¹ Yad Vashem research has provided a broad picture of the Holocaust in the Former USSR and is based on sources from various data bases, which include concise information on the location of murder sites, the identity of the perpetrators, the number of victims and how the Jews were murdered.

MURDER OF THE LWOW PROFESSORS

who shared that family name, the head of the Judenrat, 175 Judenrat workers, and 12 Jewish policemen on the balconies of the ghetto with the assistance of Ukrainians.

5. In September 1941, on a German initiative and the participation of residents of Lwow a pogrom was carried out in the city in commemoration of the 1926 killing of the Ukrainian nationalist leader Petlyura. About 15,000 Jews were stopped on the street, tortured, and killed.
6. Lwow County: On 5 May 1942 2,000 Lwow ghetto Jews, mostly old and weak people, were shot on Piaski Hill.
7. In late 1941, 30 Jewish instructors from the Lwow Polytechnic Institute were brought to Piaski and shot. In 1943, in order to conceal the crime, Germans burned the bodies.
8. On 5-7 January 1943 about 5,000 Lwow Jews were shot on Piaski Hill, (according to another source, they were deported to the Bełżec camp). The Judenrat was abolished, and the ghetto was transformed into a forced labour camp for Jews.

On 1 September 1943, Germans began to liquidate the ghetto. This process took longer than planned due to resistance from the Jews. Many houses were burned down. During the liquidation, it was discovered that, in addition to the 12,000 Jews who had been working legally, another 20,000 Jews were living in the ghetto. About 3,000 Jews committed suicide, about 6,000 were deported to the Sobibor camp, and 2,000 were deported to the Yanowska camp in Lwow. Most of the Jews, 10,000 or more, were shot by Germans with the assistance of Ukrainian policemen on Piaski Hill.

The first major genocidal action that the Nazis carried out in Galicia was the murder of the Lwow professors in the first week of July 1941. Polish historian Zygmunt Albert describes this. SS Brigadenführer Dr. Eberhard Schöngarth, who brought his

Einsatzgruppe zbV unit to Lwow from Krakow, initiated the murders. SS Hauptsturmführer Hans Krüger and Pieter Menten were part of that unit. In July 1941, Dr Schöngarth and Hans Krüger set up a branch office of the regional command of the Sipo-SD in Stanislawow.

Officers from zbV, now in possession of the '88' list of prominent members of Lwow society began to comb the area. The first victim to succumb to the work of zbV was an ex Polish prime minister, Kazimierz Bartel, who was immediately shot.¹³² Professor Groer, of Lwow Medical Institute, and a witness, escaped death by chance and lived to testify to the Soviet Special Commission who investigated the crime after the war.¹³³

During the night of 3/4 July, 23 Professors from the two Lwow Universities, were arrested with their families and taken to the interrogation centre of 'Bursa Abragamovichev House', the headquarters of zbV. Some of the first victims were Professor Tadeuz Ostrowski a noted surgeon and art-collector Professor Jan Grek, an internal medicine expert an art-collector. Among those killed by the zbV during the next few days was every member of the Grek and Ostrowski families. During that night, a firing squad was detailed consisting of five ethnic German SD, and two Ukrainian police auxiliaries.¹³⁴

At 5am on the morning of 4 July, officers of zbV took the arrested professors and their families in trucks to the Wulecka hills

¹³² Albert Zygmunt, *Murder of the Lwow Professors in July 1941*, Wroclaw' Poland 1989, 69-99. Bartel had been earmarked by General Sikorski to take over as Ambassador to Moscow should the Soviets denounce the two treaties with Germany of August and September 1939. See also '*Soviet Polish Relations*', Vol. 1. No.93, 118.

¹³³ The Hamlyn Marcus Collection, *Soviet Government Statements on Nazi Atrocities* (London, nd). - Communiqués issued by the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission for ascertaining and investigating crimes committed by the German-Fascist invaders and their accomplices: 242-255. NB: These reports must be treated with care. See report concerning the 'Katyn' shootings (107-135) that is complete fabrication of the facts. However, the Lwow murders have been corroborated elsewhere and I am reasonably confident of their findings.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

MURDER OF THE LWOW PROFESSORS

where two Ukrainians dug a pit. All twenty-three professors and their families were then executed. The two Ukrainians were also executed and thrown on top of the other dead bodies.¹³⁵

These ‘Murders’ were so secret that nothing leaked out until after the war. However, direct corroboration of the Lwow professor murders was being enacted on about the 8 October 1943. The notorious Blobel Commando 1005 that was active in the Lwow area.

A witness to these murders was a resident from Lwow, named Golzmann, who also gave evidence to the ‘Soviet Special Commission’: he had seen 20 persons, including four professors, lawyers, and doctors, brought into the yard of No. 8, Arciszewski Street and soon thereafter removed together under guard.¹³⁶ These murders were carefully concealed from the outside and repeated enquiries from relatives and friends were ignored.

It wasn’t until the first week in October 1943, when the Blobel Commando 1005,¹³⁷ exhumed a number bodies at Wulecka¹³⁸ and

¹³⁵ These ‘Murders’ were so secret that nothing leaked out until after the war. However, direct corroboration of the Lwow professor murders was being enacted on about the 8 October 1943. The notorious Blobel Commando 1005 was active in the Lwow area. A surviving Jew of that Commando, Leon Weliczker (Wells), *The Janowska Road*, London, 1966), 197: ‘I was chosen to go with an ‘elite’ group. It was all hush, and we cannot figure out why. We go to a sector of the town called Wulka. We are put to digging in a small area of ground. In fifteen minutes, bodies become visible. We could tell they were very important people by their clothes and their jewellery. Some of them had been buried in tuxedos. We remove all the bodies and load them into an insulated truck, and then the pyre to be burnt, including the professors. (Abbreviated)’. The documents show that among these dead are Professor Kazimierz Bartel, Dr Ostrowski, Professor Stozek, T. Boy Zelenski, and others. There were 38 bodies- the very cream of Poland’s social and intellectual life. On the 9 October, we burn over 2,000 bodies.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ Paul Blobel was SS commander in Einsatzgruppen C, a mobile killing squad. He was arrested after the war and was one of the principal defendants in The Einsatzgruppen Case at Nuremberg. He was sentenced to death in 1948 and hanged at the Landsberg prison in Bavaria on June 8, 1951. His affidavit on the burning of bodies and obliterating the traces of bodies of Jews killed by the Einsatzgruppen was given at Nuremberg, June 18, 1947.

¹³⁸ In June 1942, Himmler ordered Standartenführer Paul Blobel to dig up and burn all corpses from locations where massacres had occurred.

burned them, that the fate of the professors were confirmed.

SS-Standartenführer Paul Blobel commander in Einsatzgruppen C, a mobile killing squad:

After I had been released from this command, I was to report to Berlin to SS Obergruppenführer Heydrich and Gruppenführer Müller, and in June 1942 I was entrusted by Gruppenführer Müller with the task of obliterating traces of executions carried out by the Einsatzgruppen in the East. My orders were that I should report in person to the commanders of the Security Police and SD, pass on Müller's orders verbally and supervise their implementation. This order was top secret and Gruppenführer Müller had given orders that owing to the need for strictest secrecy there was to be no correspondence in connection with this task.

The 'Soviet Special Commission' add two further witnesses in the names of Mundel and Korn who corroborated the findings.¹³⁹ What part Hans Krüger played in these murders cannot be ascertained. After the war, Krüger was closely questioned about these murders but declined to give any further information.¹⁴⁰ We do know that the whole episode was conducted under the direct orders and supervision of Dr Schöngarth.¹⁴¹ Pieter Menten is prominent

¹³⁹ Soviet Special Commission report, 244. Two witnesses are named, but which one made the statement is not recorded. The Commission resolved that 70 of the most prominent representatives of science, technology, and art were murdered.

¹⁴⁰ Wells, 201.

¹⁴¹ Krüger Verdict: final remarks, of Prosecuting Counsel, 1167-1174. After the war, Hans Krüger was interviewed whilst in detention in Munster. He was asked to name his fellow culprits in the Professors murder but he refused. Another witness to the professors' murder, and a witness in the Oberlander trial in East Germany, was Max Draheim, a senior police officer who was present at the execution of the professors. All Draheim could say was that the officer had the rank of SS -Untersturmführer -he couldn't recall his name. Many years later when Wiesenthal had obtained a photograph of Kutschmann, the witness Draheim was dead.

MURDER OF THE LWOW PROFESSORS

when delving into the facts surrounding the ‘professors’ murder. According to Simon Wiesenthal, in a letter to the author, stated, ‘it’s not at all unlikely that Menten played some role in those ‘professors’ murders’.¹⁴² For sure, the Lwow neighbours of the Ostrowsky’s confirmed that Menten became their neighbour just hours after the murder, and immediately had men working to remove the art collection to a warehouse near the railway station.¹⁴³

The house of Dr Tadeusz Ostrowsky, which was situated at Slowackiego Street, 3 (now called Saskasangsko), had been used as a safe house for fellow art collectors of the Lwow intelligentsia society whose art collection was said to be worth millions.¹⁴⁴ On the night of the 3/4 July, it was Menten who had selected this venue from the ‘88 list’. In the company of Horst Wallenberger (the identity of this officer is debatable); Menten removed the occupants from the apartment and took them to the zbV headquarters for interrogation. The following morning, Menten alone, returned to the apartment and requisitioned it. He also requisitioned the apartment of Jan Grek. Pieter Menten personally took possession of some of the most valuable art collections from these premises. After the professor’s murder, Menten organised the removal of this valuable collection to a warehouse near the railway station and from there to Krakow. As was the case in these times, only a proportion of this property was dealt within the regulations and sent on to Berlin for cataloguing and disposal. A few selected items, no doubt of exceptional value, found their way to a secluded warehouse at the rear of the Sipo-SD Rabka Academy.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴² Correspondence author-Wiesenthal 1997.

¹⁴³ See Hans Knoop, *Der Zak Menten*, Holland, 1987, 59.

¹⁴⁴ Menten also sealed six other apartments and seized valuable art property. This included the apartment of Professor Jan Grek. Menten posted an official bonding order (in Polish and German), a decree that made the premises Reich property. Jadwina Roswadowska, one of the few remaining members of the Ostrowsky family after the war, testified to having seen Menten’s nameplate on the door of her dead stepfather’s house, Knoop, 59.

¹⁴⁵ Rosenbaum Verdict: Jewish witnesses, Ettinger and Schon who were both retained during this time at the Academy. See also Malcom MacPherson, *The Last Victim*, London, 1984, 108.

One curious aspect of the Professors murder, was how they were able to remain in Lwow under Soviet control, when it was clearly their principle to deport all such intellectuals to the outer regions? How were these academics, from the highest of Lwow cultural and literary society, able to operate under the eyes of the NKVD (later KGB)? It is not a question that can be fully answered here, but it is enough to say, that some selected members of the Polish elite was being protected by the Soviets for political reasons, perhaps to play the 'Polish Card' at some indeterminate time.¹⁴⁶

Eyewitness Accounts:¹⁴⁷

The sole survivor, Professor Groër:

‘We were taken to the Abrahamowicz dormitory. The car was driven into the courtyard, brutally pushed we were crammed into the building and told to stand facing the wall. There were already many professors there. We were ordered to lower our heads. If someone moved, he was hit with a rifle butt or his head was struck with fists. Once, when a new group of captured men was brought in, I tried to turn my head but was immediately hit with a rifle butt and, henceforth, I refrained from such attempts. It was probably half an hour past midnight, and I stood motionless until 2 am.

More victims were brought in and told to stand against the wall. Every ten minutes or so we heard screams from the cellar and sounds of shots commented by one of the Germans: ‘Einer weniger’ (one less), which at that time I considered to be an attempt of terrorizing us. Every few minutes the name of a professor was called and the man was

¹⁴⁶ This is an interesting point and the nearest explanation I have found is in an article written by Bogdan Czaykowski (See *The Soviet Take-over of the Polish Eastern Provinces, 1939-41*, edited by Keith Sword, London, 1991), 102-130.

¹⁴⁷ Acknowledgement to Zygmunt Albert: *Kazn Profesorow Lwowskich*.

MURDER OF THE LWOW PROFESSORS

led to a room on the left. I remember well that Prof. Ostrowski was called, afterwards I was the tenth or perhaps twelfth to go as the next one when I found myself in a room where there were two officers, a younger one who arrested me and another one of a higher rank, a large, portly man. He immediately shouted at me: 'You dog, you are a German and have betrayed your German country'. You served the Bolsheviks! Why didn't you, when it was possible, depart with all the other Germans to the West? 'I began to explain, at first quietly and then louder, as the officer raised his voice, that although I was of German descent I considered myself a Pole. Secondly, even had I intended to go west, the Soviet authorities would not have permitted it because of my high social position as University Professor and well-known clinician - they considered me indispensable? I was then asked to explain the meaning of the visiting cards of British consuls found in my possession. I replied that I was married to a titled English lady and British consuls often visited us. He grew quieter, and apparently impressed he said: 'I'll have to speak to my boss, we shall see what can yet be done for you' and hurriedly left the room.

The younger officer who remained with me said quickly: 'That really depends only on him, since he has got no superior here. Tell him you have made an important medical discovery, which may be useful to the German Army. This could save you.' At that moment, the other officer returned. There was no time to say a word because they ordered me out of the room. I was taken to the opposite, i.e., left side of the corridor, allowed to sit down and smoke a cigarette. I was even given a glass of water.

Beside me there were standing professors Solowij and Rencki. After a while, one of the Gestapo men asked them how old they were. I think they said 73 and 76. I was certain that due to their age they would be set free. I also thought that my case was not quite hopeless. The officer who interrogated me came and told me to go into the yard and

walk, adding: 'Behave as though you were never arrested'. I began to walk round the yard smoking one cigarette after another. I kept my hands in my pockets. Some time went by. All at once, two Gestapo men entered the yard from the street. The building and the yard were of course guarded. The two saw me, rushed at me, slapped my face shouting furiously what business I had in the yard strolling with my hands in my pockets. I said I was told to behave as a non-arrested person. They grunted something, lost interest in me, and entered the building.

It was perhaps four o'clock in the morning when a group of 15 to 20 professors was led out of the building. Four professors headed the group: Nowicki, Pilat, Ostrowski and, I think, Stozek who carried the bleeding body of young Ruff. Witkiewicz followed them among others. When they passed the gate and disappeared on the Abrahamowicz Street, the Gestapo ordered Mrs. Ostrowska and perhaps also Mrs. Grek to wash the blood off the stairs.

Twenty minutes later, I heard some shots from the direction of the Wulecki Heights. Shortly afterwards a group of 20 to 30 persons was led into the yard through the same back door of the building and was told to stand in two-three rows facing the wall. Among them, I recognized only Assistant Professor Miczewski. Sometime later the Germans led out of the building Dobrzaniecki's service staff, Ostrowski's cook and a younger female servant, Grek's cook and domestic servant and the English teacher who stayed with the Ostrowski family.

The Gestapo chief, who had earlier interrogated me, asked them if they all belonged to the domestic service. Only the teacher replied negatively stating who she was. The German obviously annoyed ordered her to join at once the group facing the wall and told his comrade loudly that those (standing at the wall) were to be taken to prison, while those others (indicating the servants and me) are to go free. I noticed that the servants talked with the Gestapo man and a

MURDER OF THE LWOW PROFESSORS

civilian agent. The Gestapo man told the servants to return home, take their belongings and go wherever they wanted. They may look for work. All would be well now, no more Poland or Soviets, henceforth there would be only Germany forever.

When I was about to leave I went up to a Gestapo man and asked him if I could get back my photo camera. He pointed to a room where another German arranged all the plunder. Being afraid they may remember the 20 dollars I had, I gave these to the Gestapo man and he returned my belongings. As I was leaving the room, he rushed out saying: 'Listen, give us your address because another unit may come and take you in again. We shall make a note here, so you will be left alone and not bothered again'. He wrote down my address in his notebook, I left the building and went home. Later, the same morning, on my way to the clinic, I met near Prof. Ostrowski's apartment the Gestapo officer, who had arrested me on the previous night. Smiling he said: 'You were very lucky'. Several days later two German officers who were present at my arrest visited me. They wanted to buy my photo camera and carpets. During their visit I found out their names, one was Hacke, the other - Keller or Kohler. In the following two or three months, despite evicting me from my apartment, the Germans came several times, beguiling me out of various valuable objects, for instance, photo cameras which I have been collecting. Once I ventured to ask Keller what happened to the other professors. Waving his hand he said: 'They all were shot that night.'

Tadeusz Gumowski, an engineer, and his family lived at Nabelak Street 53. During the night from 3-4 July 3 1941, they were woken up by the Germans and Ukrainians who demanded to see their registration papers. He described the events:

'(...) I spent some time sitting in the garden. At the first light

of the day, I saw soldiers digging a hole on the slope of Wulecki Heights. Feeling apprehensive, I called my family and we watched the Germans through the window. The pit was dug in about 30 minutes. The prisoners were brought in batches of four from the direction of the 'Abrahamów buildings' (this was their name if I remember correctly) and made to stand in line facing us along the edge of the pit. The firing squad stood on the opposite side of the grave. A volley rang out and almost all fell into the pit. Prof. Witkiewicz crossed himself and collapsed. The men were not handcuffed. We counted the groups of four. If I remember correctly there were about five such groups. I think there were also three women. The whole action did not take long and other batches of four persons waited nearby. After the execution the ditch (grave) was quickly filled up, the earth stomped down. This was done by German soldiers. We, myself, my father, wife and sister, watched the execution in turn through field-glasses. At present my sister lives abroad, the other members of my family are dead. We watched from the same room and the same window. I recognized no one besides Prof. Witkiewicz. But the others recognized several persons including Professor Stozek and his sons, Professor Ostrowski and his wife, Professor Longchamps and probably his wife, and others. One of the ladies wore a blue shawl. There were probably three women. One of them, unable to walk, was dragged by two soldiers. My sister Zofia Nowak-Przygodzka, lives now in Paris VII, 31 rue Rousselet.

Approximately twenty persons were shot that night. None of them received a 'coup de grace after the volley. It is quite probable that some were buried alive. On the second or third day after the execution, I, my sister and my wife went towards the grave. It was rather indistinguishable and we found it only because we knew the exact spot. A bunch of flowers was on it and this may have been an indication to the Germans that the grave site was known; so, several days later, they excavated the bodies and took them away. I did

MURDER OF THE LWOW PROFESSORS

not see the exhumation. We assumed it took place, because we noticed that the grave was dug up (...)'.

Gumowski's sister, Dr. Zofia Nowak-Przygodzka, who moved to Paris after the war, stated:

‘(...) In Lwów I lived in a villa at 53 Nabelak street, next to the condominium of professors from the Institute of Technology, and also Prof. Witkiewicz. Our villa stood on a 12 meter high embankment, several hundred meters from the Wulecki Heights, where the Abrahamowicz Educational Institution and the II House of Technicians were.

That critical night I got up as usual to take a look at my little children. As always I went up to the window to look around. We have been living in constant fear because of German searches and arrests. Two nights before, they sought Prof. Witkiewicz in my house. He was arrested the same night together with two other professors from the Institute of Technology.

I noticed some unusual movement on the Wulecki Heights, several men were digging. I woke my parents and we began to watch, but taking care not to be seen.

After some time we saw people coming down on the left side of the hill in a file along a pathless tract. I noticed soldiers in German uniforms and a dozen or so civilians. Some women (perhaps three) were at the end of the column. One wore a shawl, which was well visible because it undulated in the breeze. The soldiers helped some persons to walk down. Several persons were then lined up along the pit, which just had been dug. We heard dry cracks (shots), and the persons dropped from the row into the pit.

Another group followed the first to be executed. Distinguished among them was a gray-haired man who crossed himself. The women were in the rear. The pit was filled up. Watching the execution we had no idea what it was all about. There was no mention about it anywhere next day.

ROBIN O'NEILL

We knew that to have witnessed it was dangerous to us. The execution was also watched from the neighbouring houses and it became known that professors were murdered.

Weeks later I ventured to go up the Wulecki Heights as though taking my children for a walk. I found the place of the execution. It hardly differed from the surroundings, the soil was slightly depressed, and grass grew as everywhere. I would not have found it had I not known the area well. I was told later that the Germans secretly exhumed the bodies'.

This is how Mrs. Lomnicka described the execution: After her husband was arrested:

'(...) sleep became impossible, I stood at the window for hours waiting for daybreak, wishing to go out and find out more about the raid. At dawn I saw from the window of our third floor apartment some movement on the Wulecki Heights. Silhouettes appeared, a group separated from the others who remained near the Abrahamowicz Institution, went down the slope and disappeared from sight behind the house of Dr. Nowak-Przygodzki. I sat on the couch wondering what was going on at such an early hour (4 AM). At this moment I heard the first shots and all became clear. I rushed to the staircase where the window looked out to the right and made a better observation possible. I saw that those who came down the hill stopped midway in a small dale. I recognized German soldiers and men in civilian suits.

There were also women; one figure gave the impression of being a priest in a cassock. One of the men wore a gray suit. He looked like my husband, but I quickly rejected the gruesome thought. They led up groups of five at a time and I saw how they collapsed after each volley of shots. I stood there 'frozen to the floor', semi-conscious, watching the ghastly spectacle. Two ladies from the neighbourhood were with me: Mrs. Janina Wieckowska, later to become the wife of judge Zenek in Kracow, and Mrs. Solecka, wife of a

MURDER OF THE LWOW PROFESSORS

secondary-School professor in Lwow at Kazimierzowska Street. Were those people the professors arrested that night? Was my husband among them? It was impossible to be certain because of the distance (...)'.

Maria ZaLeska, an artist who also lived at Nabelak Street, stated:

‘(...) those to be executed were brought down the hill in pairs. The place of execution was not directly in front of us but slightly to the right. It was a small depression among the trees. I saw three of them standing on the embankment. One group after another came down the hill. If I remember correctly, one person was dressed in black - it could have been a woman or a priest. My son, with whom I shared the field-glasses, watched other groups. I saw at the rear a slowly walking, lone woman. In our field of vision there were three soldiers from a special squad. The area was so narrow and steep that it is doubtful whether there were more than six.

If I remember correctly, the men I saw were hatless. I did not recognize anybody. We thought in horror that they might be executing Jews. Soon after the execution we were told that the grave was watched. I was there in winter or early summer, 1959. I knew nothing of the exhumation and was surprised that there was a depression where the grave was supposed to be and no embankment nearby. During that tragic night the events were also watched by my son - he was executed in Stutthof in 1944. In my opinion, most information could be obtained from Prof. Witkiewicz’s tenant and Dr. Ostrowski’s housemaids - but who knows where they are?

Here is some hearsay evidence:

‘the last to be shot was Mrs. Ostrowska who could barely walk suffering from a leg ailment. A woman with a bright

scarf was seen. Prof. Witkiewicz, easily recognized by his neighbours, was hatless. It was said that the Germans made the arrests assisted by Ukrainians, and that the list of those to be seized must have been prepared some time ago, because they also came to arrest Professor Dr. Leszczynski who had died already some time ago, as a victim of Soviets'.

Zofia Orlinska-Skowronowa related:

'(...) we lived in a villa with a small garden at 55 Nabelak Street, facing Wulecka Street and, for this reason, could see the Wulecki Heights from the window of my room on the second floor. On the tragic day I was awoken by a volley of shots from the direction of Wulecki Heights.

Approaching the window I saw a group of persons, about 36, walking in a file from Abrahamowicz Institution in groups of five or six, assisted by a German, towards the foot of the hill. They stopped on the flat part of the slope, a clearing, stood in a row with their backs to Wulecka Street, facing the Abrahamowicz Institution. My attention was drawn to the firing squad consisting of about ten soldiers in grey-green uniforms, who shot those standing in front using automatic weapons. As the bodies that collapsed could not be seen on the surface, it was obvious that a pit had been dug, but I do not know when and by whom.

I have also noticed that at the left side of the pit there was a small group of military men. They may have been German officers. The execution described above was repeated until all prisoners, including one woman, were killed. I recognized Professor Włodzimierz Stozek and his son Emanuel (called Mulek) among those executed. Concerning Emanuel, I remember a horrible moment: after the volley all persons except Mulek Stozek fell into the pit. He remained standing, but soon a single shot threw him into the common grave. He was dressed in a tobacco-brown coat and gray trousers. Prof. Stozek wore a dark overcoat.

MURDER OF THE LWOW PROFESSORS

I watched the execution through binoculars from about 3:30 to 4 a.m. Shortly afterwards, several soldiers - they may have been either from the firing squad or from the group standing nearby - filled the pit up (...)'.

But the most detailed statement describing the execution was made by the engineer Karol Cieszkowski:

'(...)during the night from 3-4 July about 10 p.m. I heard violent knocking on the door of the neighbouring house, i.e., 53c Nabelak Street, where Prof. Witkiewicz lived. Because no one opened the door, the intruders - I was told later - shot into the lock. --- At about thirty minutes past midnight the Germans came to our house and took away Professor Stozek - who lived on the ground floor - and his two sons. I do not know whether they went by car or were led away on foot. As I was very upset I could not sleep all night.

At 4 a.m. - I remember the time well because I was just checking my pulse by means of a phosphorescent watch - I heard some shots from the direction of Wulecki Heights. The day dawned. On the slope of the Wulecki Heights, well seen from the window of my corner room extending to the north, I saw some scores of civilians standing in a row and at a distance, right and left of them there were several smartly, one could say elegantly dressed German officers with revolvers in their hands. I did not count the civilians; there may have been about 40 to 50 persons. ---- Somewhere in the middle of the slope I saw on the edge of an excavated pit four civilians facing the slope with their backs to me. Behind them were four German soldiers armed with rifles. An officer was nearby. Probably at his command, the soldiers fired simultaneously and the four persons fell into the pit. --- Another batch of four was led down the path and the action was repeated. This went on until all civilians were brought down and murdered. The last to be shot down was an elderly woman in a long black dress. She was alone and walked

staggering. As she was led to the edge of the pit filled with corpses she reeled and was held up by an officer. A soldier shot her and she fell into the common grave.

As regards details of this execution, I recognized some persons with certainty, not only because I watched the proceedings through binoculars but some of them I knew very well and even with the naked eye I recognized their suits, characteristic movements, etc. I distinguished Prof. Stozek beyond question. He stood at the pit in his characteristic pose with his hands clasped behind his back. But I failed to see the professors Lomnicki, Pilat and Witkiewicz. I did not see or recognize professors Weigl and Krukowski. But I failed to see the execution of the first victims because I approached the window after the first shots were fired. Nor did I see any more women in addition to the one killed at the end.

I distinctly remember that four of the condemned came down the slope carrying an unconscious man. Another group of four came down slowly because one of them visibly limped. I suppose it might have been Prof. Bartel, but I failed to recognize him. I remember that when one of the groups of four stood at the edge of the pit, with their backs to the soldiers, one of the condemned turned to the killers and holding his hat in his hands (all condemned men took off their hats probably by order) began to remonstrate animatedly gesticulating. An officer standing at the side made a gesture as though telling him to turn round, and when the man obeyed, the soldiers shot him down.

I remember other details. A second before the order to 'fire' was given, one of the victims jumped into the pit, probably to save himself, and tried to get out immediately after the volley, but a soldier shot him; the man staggered and fell into the grave.

The pit was rectangular, divided by a non-excavated strip of earth, so that the victims standing on it fell, after being shot, forwards or backwards always into the pit. It happened

MURDER OF THE LWOW PROFESSORS

only once that one of Prof. Stozek's sons standing on this narrow strip at the end of the line of four did not - after the volley - fall into the pit, but his body was pushed down by soldiers.

After the execution the squad led by an officer remained at the pit. The soldiers took off their coats, rolled up their sleeves, picked up spades and began to fill up the grave. At first, they proceeded carefully because the earth was spattered with blood, which I saw as large red patches. From time to time the soldiers interrupted their work and listened to the officer who seemed to talk to them or explain something.

The execution was watched from my window by my father, my sister and a tenant. They all came to my room because being farthest to the north; it was nearest towards the Wulecki Heights. Watching the murders, my father did not say a word and afterwards never talked to me about them. But my sister and the tenant recognizing individual persons (for instance when Prof. Stozek's sons were led to the pit) cried: 'Oh, they are leading Mulek!'

Persons murdered on 4 July 1941 in the Wulecka-Hills

1. Prof. Dr Antoni Cieszynski, age 59 Chairman of Stomatology, UJK.¹⁴⁸
2. Prof. Dr Władysław Dobrzaniecki, age 44, head of Surgery, PSP.¹⁴⁹
3. Prof. Dr Jan Grek, age 66, , Chairman of. Internal Diseases, UJK
4. Maria Grekowa, age 57, wife of Prof. Grek
5. Doc. Dr Jerzy Grzedzielski, age 40, Chairman of Ophtalmology UJK
6. Prof. Dr Edward Hamerski, age 43, Chairman of Internal Diseases, AWL
7. Prof. Dr Henryk Hilarowicz, age 51, Chairman of Surgery, UJK.¹⁵⁰
8. Priest Dr teol. Władysław Komornicki, age 29, relative of Mrs Ostrowska
9. Eugeniusz Kostecki, age 36, husband of Prof. Dobrzaniecki's housekeeper
10. Prof. Dr Włodzimierz Krukowski, age 53, Chairman of Electrical Measurements, PL
11. Prof. Dr Roman Longchamps de Berier., age 59 Chairman of Civil Law, UJK
12. Bronisław Longchamps de Berier, age 25, PL-

¹⁴⁸ Antoni Cieszyński (31 May 1882 in Oels (Oleśnica), Silesia, Germany – 4 July 1941 in Lwów, Poland) was a Polish physician, dentist and surgeon. Antoni was a professor and head of the Institute of Stomatology at Lwów University. He became the editor and publisher of *Polska Dentystyka* in 1930; the journal was renamed *Polska Stomatologia* (Polish Stomatology) and *Słowiańska Stomatologia* (Slavic Stomatology).

¹⁴⁹ Władysław Dobrzaniecki (born September 24, 1897 in Zielinka near Borszczów – July 4, 1941 in Lwów, Poland - modern day Ukraine) was a Polish physician and surgeon. Władysław was since 1936 head of the Saint Zofia Children Hospital in Lwów, and since 1938 titular professor of surgery at the Lwów University. He was a precursor of plastic surgery in Poland.

¹⁵⁰ Henryk Hilarowicz (born 1890 in Warsaw, died 3/4 July 1941 in Lwów) was a Polish surgeon, and a professor at the Jan Kazimierz University in Lwów.

MURDER OF THE LWOW PROFESSORS

- graduate, son of Prof. Dr Roman Longchamps de Berier
13. Zygmunt Longchamps de Berier, age 23, PL-graduate, son of Prof. Dr Roman Longchamps de Berier
 14. Kazimierz Longchamps de Berier, age 18, Secondary school-graduate, son of Prof. Dr Roman Longchamps de Berier.¹⁵¹
 15. Prof. Dr Antoni Lomnicki, age 60, Chairman of Mathematics, PL¹⁵²
 16. Adam Miesowicz, age 19, Highschool graduate, grandson of Prof. Solowij
 17. Prof. Dr Witold Nowicki, age 63, Chairman of Pathological Anatomy, UJK
 18. Dr med. Jerzy Nowicki, age 27 , senior assistant of the Chair Hygiene, UJK, son of Prof. Witold Nowicki.
 19. Prof. Dr Tadeusz Ostrowski, age 60, Chairman of Surgery , UJK
 20. Jadwiga Ostrowska, age 59, wife of prof. Ostrowski
 21. Prof. Dr Stanislaw Pilat, age 60, Chairman of Petrol and Earth-Gas Technology ,PL
 22. Prof. Dr Stanislaw Progulski, age 67, Chairman of Pediatrics UJK
 23. Ing. Andrzej Progulski, age 29, son of Prof. Dr Stanislaw Progulski
 24. Prof. Dr Roman Rencki, age 67, Chairman of Internal Diseases, UJK
 25. Dr med. Stanislaw Ruff, age 69, , Chairman of Surgery, Jewish Hospital taken from Prof. Ostrowski's flat with his family

¹⁵¹ Roman Longchamps de B rier (1883–1941) was a Polish lawyer and university professor, one of the most notable specialists in civil law of his times and the last rector of the Jan Kazimierz University of Lwow.

¹⁵² Antoni Marian  omnicki (17 January 1881 – 4 July 1941) (now Lwow) was a Polish mathematician.

ROBIN O'NEILL

26. Anna Ruffowa, age 55, wife of dr Ruff
27. Ing. Adam Ruff, age 30, son of dr Ruff
28. Prof. Dr Włodzimierz Sieradzki, age 70, Chairman of Forensic Medicine, UJK
29. Prof. Dr Adam Solowij, age 82, ret, Chairman of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, PSP
30. Prof. Dr Włodzimierz Stozek, age 57, , Chairman of Mathematics PL¹⁵³
31. Ing. Eustachy Stozek, age 29, ass. PL, son of Prof. Dr Włodzimierz Stozek
32. Emanuel Stozek, age 24, PL-graduate, son of Prof. Dr Włodzimierz Stozek
33. Dr iur. Tadeusz Tapkowski, age 44, taken from professor Dobrzaniecki's flat
34. Prof. Dr Kazimierz Vetulani, age 52, Chairman of Theoretical Mechanics PL¹⁵⁴
35. Prof. Dr Kasper Weigel, age 61, , Chairman of Measurements PL
36. Mgr iur. Jozef Weigel, age 33, son of Prof. Dr Kasper Weigel
37. Prof. Dr Roman Witkiewicz, age 61, Chairman of Mechanical Measurements PL
38. Prof. Dr Tadeusz Boy-Zelenski, age 66, writer, Chairman of French Literature at the University, arrested in prof. Grek's flat.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵³ Włodzimierz Stozek (23 July 1883 – 3 or 4 July 1941) was a Polish mathematician of the Lwow School of Mathematics.

¹⁵⁴ He was born in 1889 in Lwow as a son of Roman Vetulani and Matylda Pisz. He was an older brother of Zygmunt, Tadeusz, Adam, Maria, and Elżbieta. He graduated Queen Sophia high school in Sanok. In 1935, Vetulani obtained his Ph.D. from Lwow Polytechnic. In the academic year 1939/1940, he was nominated ordinary professor.

¹⁵⁵ Tadeusz Kamil Marcjan Żeleński (better known by his pen name, Tadeusz Boy-Żeleński; 21 December 1874 – 4 July 1941) was a Polish stage writer, poet, critic above all, and translator of over 100 French literary classics into Polish. He was a paediatrician and gynaecologist by profession.

MURDER OF THE LWOW PROFESSORS

Persons murdered on 4 July 1941 in the courtyard of the hostel of Abramowicze:

Katarzyna Demko, age 34, teacher of English, taken from apartment of Prof. Ostrowski

Doc. Dr Stanislaw Maczewski, age 49, Chairman of Obsterics and Gynaecology, PSP

Maria Reymanowa, age 40, nurse taken from apartment of Prof. Ostrowski

Wolisch, age 40-45, businessman taken from Prof. Sieradzki's flat

Persons murdered on 12 July 1941:

Prof. Dr Henryk Korowicz, age 53, Chairman of Economics, AHZ¹⁵⁶

Prof. Dr Stanislaw Ruziewicz, age 53, Chairman of Mathematics, AHZ¹⁵⁷

Person murdered in prison on 26 July 1941:

Prof. Dr Kazimierz Bartel, age 59, Chairman of Design Geometry, PL, former prime minister of Polish Republic (three terms of office), who has been arrested already on 2 July 1941,¹⁵⁸

Extract from the war diary of Felix Landau (edited)¹⁵⁹ of his SS security duties in Lwow, July 1941. Felix Landau, SS-Hauptscharführer of the Security Police and SD Einsatzkommando

¹⁵⁶ Henryk Korowicz (born 1888 in Malinówka - July 12, 1941 in Lwow) – Polish economist, professor and rector of the Academy of Foreign Trade in Lwow.

¹⁵⁷ Stanisław Ruziewicz (29 August 1889 – 12 July 1941) was a Polish mathematician and one of the founders of the Lwow School of Mathematics.

¹⁵⁸ Prof. Dr. Kazimierz Bartel, former Prime Minister of Poland, former Rector of PL, Chairman of the Department of Geometry, PL

¹⁵⁹ Ernst Klee, Dressen, and Volker Riess: The Good Old Days,

ROBIN O'NEILL

Holder of the prestigious *Blutorden* decoration¹⁶⁰ On 31 August 1941, just at the start of the Russian campaign, he reported to an Einsatzkommando (EK).

Lemberg (Lwow)

30 June 1941, after a sleepless night I volunteered for a number of reasons to join an EK. By 9 o'clock. I had heard that I had been accepted.

As usual, our departure was delayed several times but at 17.00 hours, we finally left. At 22.30, we finally reached Krakow. The accommodation was good. No creature comforts whatsoever. You can actually become a soldier in just a few hours if you want to. We then passed through Przemyśl. The town was still burning. On the street, we saw shot-up German and Russian tanks. It was the first time I had seen two-tier Russian tanks.

1 July 1941

After a short time, we set off again towards Millnicze. It was becoming increasingly clear that the troops had recently been through. At 21.30 on 1 July 1941, we arrived in M. We stood around aimlessly without any plan. We quartered ourselves in a Russian military school. It was still burning here too. At 23.00 hours, we finally went to bed. I set up my bed and kipped down.

2 July 1941,

We were woken at 6.00 as at the front. There were women

¹⁶⁰ The Blood Order (German: Blutorden), officially known as the Decoration in Memory (of the Munich putsch) of 9 November 1923 (German: Medaille zur Erinnerung an den 9. November 1923), was one of the most prestigious decorations in the Nazi Party.

MURDER OF THE LWOW PROFESSORS

and children standing by burning houses and rummaging around in the rubble. During the journey, we came across more Ukrainian soldiers. As we got closer and closer to the Russians, the smell of decaying corpses got stronger and stronger.

At 4pm, we arrived in Lemberg (Lwow). First impressions: Warsaw harmless in comparison. Shortly after our arrival, we shot the first Jews. As usual, a few of the new officers became megalomaniacs; they really enter into the role wholeheartedly. We took over another military school in the Bolshevik quarter. Here the Russians must have been caught in their sleep. We quickly gathered the essentials. At midnight after the Jews had cleaned the building, we went to bed.

3 July 1941.

We were ordered to get ready. Einsatzkommando with steel helmets, carbines, thirty rounds of ammunition. We have just come back. Five hundred Jews were lined up ready to be shot. Beforehand, we paid our respects to the murdered German airmen and Ukrainians. Eight hundred people were murdered here in Lemberg. The scum did not even draw the line at children. In the children's home, they were nailed to the walls. Some of the occupants of a prison nailed to the wall. In all honesty, I would be happy to see my loved ones again. They mean more to me than I was ever prepared to admit to myself. So far, there hasn't been an execution. Today we were on alert all day. It should be happening tonight.

Things are tense. In this confusion, I have only written notes. I have little inclination to shoot defenseless people — even if they are only Jews. I would rather good honest open combat.

ROBIN O'NEILL

5 July 1941 (Murder of the Lwow Professors).

It is 11.00 am. I was up all of last night on guard duty. A small incident demonstrated to me the complete fanaticism of these people. One of the Poles tried to put up some resistance. He tried to snatch the carbine out of the hands of one of the men but did not succeed. A few minutes later, there was a crack of gunfire. It was all over. A short distance away a guard from the Wehrmacht was found shot dead.

One hour later, at 5am, a further thirty-two Poles, members of the Intelligentsia and Resistance, were shot about 200 metres from our quarters after they had dug their own graves. One of them simply would not die. The first layer of sand had already been thrown on the first group when a hand emerged from out of the sand, waved and pointed to a place, presumably his heart. A couple more shots rang out, then someone shouted – in fact the Pole himself – ‘shoot faster!’ What is a human being?

The stench of corpses is all-pervasive when you pass the burnt-out houses. We pass the time by sleeping.

During the afternoon some three hundred more Jews and Poles were finished off. In the evening, we went into town just for an hour. There we saw things that are almost impossible to describe. We drove past prison. You could already tell from a few streets away that a lot of killing had taken place here. We wanted to go in and visit it but did not have any gas masks with us so it was impossible to enter the rooms in the cellar or the cells. Then we set off back to our quarters. At a street corner, we saw some Jews covered in sand from head to foot. We looked at one another. We were all thinking the same thing. These Jews must have crawled out of the grave where the executed are buried. We stopped a Jew who was unsteady on his feet. We were wrong. The Ukrainians had taken some Jews up to the former GPU citadel. These Jews had apparently helped the GPU persecute the Ukrainians and the Germans. They had

MURDER OF THE LWOW PROFESSORS

rounded up 800 Jews there, who were also supposed to be shot by us tomorrow. They had now released them.

We continued going along the road. There were hundreds of Jews walking along the street with blood pouring down their faces, holes in their heads, their hands broken and their eyes hanging out of their sockets. They were covered in blood. Some of them were carrying others who had collapsed. We went to the citadel; there we saw things that few people have ever seen.

At the entrance of the citadel there were soldiers standing guard. They were holding clubs as thick as a man's wrist and were lashing out and hitting anyone who crossed their path. The Jews were pouring out of the entrance. There was lying one on top of the other like pigs whimpering. Jews kept streaming out of the citadel completely covered in blood. We stopped and tried to see who was in charge of the Kommando. 'Nobody.' Someone had let the Jews go. They were just being hit out of rage and hatred.

Nothing against that – only they should not let the Jews walk about in such a state. Finally, we learned from the soldiers that they had just visited some comrades in the hospital who had been brutally injured. They had had their fingernails torn out, ears cut off and their eyes gouged out.

6 July 1941

I had a terrible night last night. How true to life and intense a dream can be! The whole Warsaw affair, the reason why I am here, passed before my eyes so clearly there was nothing more I could wish for.

Once again, I am psychologically shattered, just as I was then. I feel as if I will not be able to do it - to see beyond it and forget what I have gone through.

12 July 1941

At 6.00 in the morning, I was suddenly awoken from a deep sleep. Report for an execution. Fine, so I'll just play executioner and then grave-digger, why not? Isn't it strange, you love battle and then have to shoot defenseless people? Twenty-three had to be shot, amongst them the two above-mentioned women. They are unbelievable. They even refused to accept a glass of water from us. I was detailed as marksman and had to shoot any runaways.

We drove one kilometre along the road out of town and then turned right into a wood. There were only six of us at that point and we had to find a suitable spot to shoot and bury them. After a few minutes, we found a place. The death candidates assembled with shovels to dig their own graves. Two of them were weeping. The others certainly have incredible courage. What on earth is running through their minds during those moments? I think that each of them harbours a small hope that somehow he won't be shot. The death candidates are organized into three shifts, as there are not many shovels. Strange, I am completely unmoved. No pity, nothing. That's the way it is and then it's all over.

And here I am today, a survivor standing in front of others in order to shoot them. Slowly the hole gets bigger and bigger; two of them are crying continuously. I keep them digging longer and longer; they don't think so much when they're digging. While they're working, they are in fact calmer. Valuables, watches and money, are put into a pile. When all of them have been brought to stand next to one another on a stretch of open ground, the two women are lined up at one end of the grave ready to be shot first. Two men had already been shot in the bushes by our KK [Kriminalkommissar] ... I did not see this, as I had to keep my eyes on the others. As the women walked to the grave, they were completely composed. They turned round. Six of us had to shoot them.

The job was assigned thus: three at the heart, three at the head. I took the heart. The shots were fired and the brains

MURDER OF THE LWOW PROFESSORS

whizzed through the air. Two in the head is too much. They almost tear it off. Almost all of them fell to the ground without a sound. Only with two of them it didn't work. They screamed and whimpered for a long time. Revolvers were no use. The two of us who were shooting together had no failures.

The penultimate group had to throw those who had already been shot into the mass grave then line up and fall in themselves. The last two had to place themselves at the front edge of the grave so that they would fall in at just the right spot. Then a few bodies were rearranged with a pickaxe and after that, we began the grave digging work.