

07/14/2002

KRÓL, Józef  
Polish Witnesses to the Holocaust Project  
Polish  
RG-50.488\*0158

In this interview, Józef Król, born May 14, 1922 in Kowal, talks about the events following World War II in 1945 when he returned to Warta and became a police officer. He describes the killings of two Jewish men, Mosze Szajniak and Meir Laub Rozenwald, in 1945 in Warta by a "political band" that roamed the cities and robbed citizens after the war.

Box 1, Tape 1

[01:] 01:01:00 – [01:] 09:50:01  
00:00 – 10:12

Józef Król identifies himself and states his date and place of birth, May 14, 1922 in Kowal; begins by describing the end of the war and what happened after he returned to Poland from Saxony, Germany where he had been a prisoner at a work camp during the War; describes his job with the police in Warta, the courses he took to be part of the police and what his duties were: mainly securing the streets and patrolling the city and countryside; describes Warta after the War and the prevalence of crime; says there were "political bands" that roamed the cities and stole from Warta's citizens; describes an incident in December 13, 1945 when the police station was disarmed by such a band: describes the band as being dressed as military, talks about how the band was led by someone called Captain Danger [*Kapitan Grozny - unclear if this is the actual last name or a mere title*], who disarmed the police station and forced the police officers to accompany them in their looting; states they went to the post office where the band took money, and in return left a receipt; describes how another part of the band met Mosze Szajniak, a Jew; states that Szajniak must have known that the band was looking for money; guesses that Szajniak proposed that he would give them money so they would leave him alone; states that Szajniak did not have money so he went to **Miskiewicz**; states that **Miskiewicz** did not give the money to Szajniak; describes how the band took Szajniak to a building called **Bobrowskiego**, placed him in front of the building, and shot him in the head; states that he was not present during the shooting but guarded the bodies of two Jews through that night, one being Mosze Szajniak and the other Meir Laub Rozenwald; explains that he knew Szajniak but did not know Rozenwald; explains that both men were involved in the sale of wheat and travelled to Łódź to sell their products; states that he knew Szajniak, that he had a family, wife and children, and was around 40 years old; comments that he does not know whether Szajniak was originally from Warta but states that Szajniak and his family were one of five or six Jewish families living in Warta after the war.

[01:] 09:50:02 – [01:] 16:50:05  
10:13 – 17:29

07/14/2002

Król describes in detail how the band disarmed the police station; says he cannot recall how many were in the band; says the raid lasted about two hours, during which the band went around stealing supplies such as sugar, chocolate and cigarettes; explains how he was forced to follow the band where they went, however, he states that at one point he and another police officer named **Stanisław Wozniak** escaped and returned to the police station; states that he found out about the killings while at the police station through citizens who came to the station; describes how he went and watched over the bodies of the two Jews to ensure that they would not be touched during the night; recalls that the two men were lying close to each other in the “Mały Rynek,” “Small Square,” next to **Bobrowskiego**; states that the two Jews were killed together outside of the building but does not know if they were killed concurrently or separately as he was not there to see it; states that he did not hear from any witnesses directly but knows there were witnesses because they came to the chief of police; states that the band killed the Jews in front of a crowd of people; states that the police never caught the band who killed the two Jews.

[01:] 16:50:06 – [01:] 26:30:01  
17:30 – 27:35

Król recounts that there were about five or six Jewish families in Warta; describes how they left Warta when they learned about the killings of Szajniak and Rozenwald; guesses that they heard about the killings and escaped; states that he did not see the families leave; states that Szajniak lived next to a wealthy Jewish man named **Monter** who escaped to the United Kingdom; states that he did not think that neither Szajniak nor Rozenwald were involved in a political group or the police or the reserve; states that the Jewish families in Warta were there for only a short period so they did not have time to get involved politically; states that many Jews did, however, serve in the police; describes how the band operated; states that he did not know any of them by name; states that they wore military clothes; states that they were eventually caught and eliminated; recalls his encounter with the band; says they identified themselves as the “**Boys from the Forest**” [context unclear]; states that he saw the receipt at the post office and it was stamped “**Fight without Rights**” [context unclear].

[01:] 26:30:02 – [01:] 31:34:01  
27:36 – 32:22

[Król and the interviewer go to the cemetery to the gravesite of Mosze Szajniak and Meir Laub Rozenwald] Król states that Poles from Warta buried the two Jews as there were no Jews left in Warta to bury them; states that he was not a witness to the burial [the tombstone states “Mosze Szajniak, Meir Laub Rozenwald – by miracle they survived the hell of World War II, returned to Warta, wanted to live and work, were shot on the street on Dec. 12, 1945”]; camera zooms in to an adjacent tombstone which states “Hirsz Gelbart, Son Gitli from Moszkowiczow, resident of Blaszek, at the age of 18 hung by the Germans in Warta on {date barely legible} 10. 08. 1948”; Król and the interviewer go to the street where the two Jews were shot; the original building is no longer there] Król describes how the Jews were lying face down next to each other by the building.