

MIELCZAREK, Janina
Polish Witnesses to the Holocaust Project
Polish
RG-50.488*0160

Box 1, Tape 1

In this interview, Janina Mielczarek, born on March 2, 1920, in Warta, talks about Jewish life in her native town under German occupation. She mainly discusses her witnessing several executions of Jews by hanging, which were carried out by German officers.

[01:] 00:37:00 – [01:] 10:37:59

She gives her full name, date and place of birth; mentions her living in Warta all her life; estimates the number of Jews living in Warta before the war as four hundred people; adds that there were not many more Poles; remembers a lot of Jews owning shops; does not remember any conflicts between Poles and Jews; remembers her and her family going to Konstantynów for two months in 1939; mentions running away from Germans to the countryside in 1944 or 1945; describes Germans treating Jews badly, beating them up and kicking them; focuses on an execution of a group of Jews by hanging; comments on the Germans gathering all citizens at the main square and organizing them into groups of Poles and Jews; remembers Germans forcing Jews to hang other Jews; describes the sequence of the execution; describes how the Jews were standing on boards with ropes on their necks; mentions the hanging of the rabbi and his son; discusses the Germans collecting and getting rid of Jewish corpses on the same day as the execution.

[01:] 10:38:00 – [01:] 20:00:59

She describes a party organized by the Germans after the execution; talks about cooking, serving the table and spitting into the Germans' plates; remembers Germans having fun, singing, laughing, and drinking; mentions seeing twenty-five to thirty German officers at the party; mentions the obligation of every citizen to be at the execution; remembers the execution of ten Jews; gives the name of one of the hanged Jews as **Majerowicz**; gives the name **Szmerling [Schmörling; Schmerling]** as being the German owner of the restaurant in which the party was taking place; mentions him being kind to Poles; describes her getting married in 1941; remembers her father being forced to point out Poles who would be taken to Germany; mentions her father and a great part of her family being taken to Germany; describes the Germans beating and humiliating Jews; discusses the Germans locking up Jews at the church and convent ground; comments on her throwing them bread through the fence.

[01:] 20:01:00 – [01:] 30:35:00

She remembers Jews being taken from the ghetto by a German truck; mentions three transports of Jews; describes the Jews being forced to get onto the truck and their screaming; adds that the execution took place in a village nearby; describes Jews being buried alive along with the dead in forests; mentions her uncle making a gallows at the Germans' request;

discusses another execution; mentions hanging an 18-year-old Jew two days after the first execution; remembers seeing bodies in 1944 which were covered with blood.