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**Summary from Radio Kielce**

**Episode 10: The Zygadlewicz family. Bodzentyn**

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<https://polacyratujacyzydow.com.pl/en/the-zygadlewicz-family-bodzentyn/>

**Stories about Poles**

Marianna Zygadlewicz

Kazimierz Zygadlewicz

**The people in the hiding**

Nachman (Józef) Rubinowicz

**The story told by**

Jadwiga Płonka, daughter of Marianna and Kazimierz Zygadlewicz

Ewa Rubinowicz Shahamorov, daughter of Józef Rubinowicz

Marianna and Kazimierz Zygadlewicz from Bodzentyn saved Nachman Rubinowicz's life during the Second World War. In 1983 they were awarded the "Righteous Among the Nations" medal.

"A Jew used to come to Bodzentyn even before the war. He had fallen in love with a Jewish woman from one of Bodzentyn richest families" – Jadwiga Płonka, Marianna and Kazimierz Zygadlewicz's daughter recalls what her aunt Marysia used to tell her.

The Jews started to settle in Bodzentyn in the second half of the 19th century, the Jewish community rapidly increased in number. Before the World War II about 1/3 of the town's population were Jews. The local Jews mainly dealt with trade and small-items production just like all other Jews who were living in Chęciny, Chmielnik and Daleszyce. Róża, a Jewess was born in Bodzentyn. She was the one Nachman Rubinowicz fell in love with. They got married and left for Lodz. The Rubinowiczs ran a family soap factory there. In 1939 Róża and Nachman Rubinowicz returned to Bodzentyn and rented a house from Marianna and Kazimierz Zygadlewicz as they hoped to wait for the war to end. Róża and Kazimierz had made friends already at the schools times.

The rumours had it that Jews were to be removed from Bodzentyn. Kazimierz Zygadlewicz helped the Rubinowiczs to have Aryan certificates. Róża and her daughter left for Warsaw. Nachman changed his name for name Józef and moved to Sandomierz where he was employed in the local shipyard. Józef was suspected of being a Jew and arrested however he managed to escape with a group of Christians. He returned to Bodzentyn and wandered in the local forest when noticed by a Bodzentyn resident who also informed Zygadlewicz.

"I went outside in the evening. I heard somebody whispering 'Kazik, Kazik'. I recognised the voice. The voice kept calling: Kazik, help me!" – Jadwiga Płonka recalls dad's stories. First, Kazimierz would bring Józef food. A hiding place was arranged later.

"First that was a coffin because Zygdlewicz's grandfather and father were coffin-makers. Then there was a hideout between the walls" – says Jadwiga Płonka. The hiding place was squeezed between the wall of the house and the wall of the carpentry workshop. There was just enough room to lie down. Only Marianna and Kazimierz knew about Józef's hiding place. When Józef recovered, he began to teach Kazimierz soap-making at home to help him maintain his family. Nachman spent 1.5 years in the Zygdlewicz's house hideout. When the war ended,

Józef found his wife and daughter. They moved to Łódź. They proposed Zygdlewicz a joint-venture – they were to reconstruct the Rubinowicze family soap factory. 1945 was the time of the tragedy – Józef's wife Róża was murdered by the nationalists. A few years later Józef remarried. In 1957 he left for Israel with his new wife and the two daughters. He stayed in Israel until the end of his life. Two years before his death he visited Poland, the family town of Łódź and met Marianna Zygdlewicz and her children. He used the opportunity to thank again for their help.

"The local people who survived the war were not that willing to speak about the past. They wanted to live, go ahead, work ..." –says Ewa Shahamorov, Nachman Rubinowicz's daughter who lives in Israel – "My dad would briefly tell us about the past. These were traumatic memories. Sometimes dad would scream at night. His nightmares used to wake him up. But for people such as Zygdlewicz, I would not have been born" –says Ewa Shahamorov."