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Summary from Radio Kielce

Episode 29: They were ready to help all – Maria and Adam Marcinkiewicz, Bartków, Samsonów Forest District, Zagnańsk commune

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<https://polacyratujacyzydow.com.pl/en/they-were-ready-to-help-all-maria-and-adam-marcinkiewicz-bartkow-samsonow-forest-district-zagnansk-commune/>

Stories about Poles

Maria Marcinkiewicz

Adam Marcinkiewicz

The people who stayed in the hiding

Elżbieta Suchorowska (née Wachtel)

Adam Suchorowski (son)

The story told by

Justyna Marcinkiewicz-Limon - Maria and Adam Marcinkiewicz's granddaughter

Maria Jerszyna was born in 1900. Whilst living in Rzeszów with her parents she developed close friendly relations with her school friend Elżbieta Wachtel, a Jewess. Both families were on friendly terms, Maria's father was a judge and Elżbieta's was an attorney of laws. At that time, neither of the girls thought that their childhood friendship would be crucial for their future, for saving one of the girl's life.

1920s. Elżbieta and a Polish Uhlán, Captain Tadeusz Suchorowski fall in love with each other. She converts to Catholicism. The wedding consent is issued by the captain's command. Unfortunately, both families are against the this marriage. Thus the ceremony was attended by uhlan's only ... In 1933, Elżbieta and Tadeusz's son Adam is born. A few years later, the beginning of the war separates the spouses. Tadeusz is called up, and Elżbieta stays in Rzeszów. She probably maintained constant contacts with her school friend Maria. When ghetto is created in the city, Maria's husband, Adam Marcinkiewicz comes to visit Elżbieta and her son. He took them to Bartków village in the Zagnańsk commune, to a forester's lodge, where he lived with his wife Maria and two children: Ewa and Andrzej. Elżbieta was presented and passed by as a cousin. Marcinkiewicz's children called her "aunt". She did not have a typical Semitic appearance and she was a Catholic, thus her fake identity is easily accepted. Her son, Adam Suchorowski made friends with Marcinkiewicz's children, they all lived as if he was one of the siblings. Elżbieta Suchorowska was involved in secret teaching organisation managed by Marcinkiewicz. She teaches French – the language she was fluent. Together with her son Adam, she lived with Marcinkiewicz from 8 January 1942 to 10 July 1946.

Elżbieta and Adam were not the only Jews who were offered assistance by Adam Marcinkiewicz, a forester of the Samsonów Forest District. In 1944, he also kept three other Jewish people in the hiding. There were about 20 Poles who also lived in the forester's lodge, they had been expelled from their abodes. At the occupation times, Adam Marcinkiewicz

bypassed German restrictions allocated wood for local Jews. He also collaborated with the Independent Poland Staff and thus offered accommodation for partisans, collected and stored weapons and ammunition, for them, provided food and clothing, had documents and job permits done for them. This information has been preserved in the statements written by various milieus' representatives after the war. These accounts were written in defence of Marcinkiewicz accused of cooperation with the Germans by communists and thus deprived of the forester's position.

In 1946 Elżbieta Suchorowska with her son and husband, who also survived the war left for Gdańsk. Tadeusz Suchorowski was seriously as the result of war injuries and died in the 1950s of the 20th century. The families maintained contact which were discontinued after the death of the Suchorowskis' son Adam."