

The Formation of the “Small Ghetto”

The “Small Ghetto” was made up of the smallest streets around the Old Market [*Stary Rynek*]. This market was known by the name “*Warszawski Ryneček*” [Warsaw Little Market Square]. The little streets were called Jaskrowska, Nadrzeczna, Garncarska, Kozia, Senatorska and Mostowa. These streets were encircled with barbed wire. Access was through ul. Garncarska, limited by a barrier. Outside, in the first shop, was the office of the SS, which carried out Degenhardt’s orders and which kept guard around the outside of the barbed wire in order to prevent any of the Jews from fleeing.

After the [working] Jews were transferred from the *Metalurgia* to the “Small Ghetto”, management structures once more began to be formed. The first to be established was the *Judenrat*, practically in the same composition as in the “Big Ghetto” - Chairman Leon Kopiński, Moryc Kopiński, Dawid-Nussen Berliner, Bernard Kurland, Dawid Borzykowski, the lawyer Jirmijahu [Jeremjasz] Gitler, Landau and others. The *Judenrat* headquarters was at ul. Garncarska 52.

The police were under the leadership of Parasol, as commander, and his deputy, the engineer Auerbach. The number of policemen comprised forty individuals. The police station was at ul. Kozia 12, which also held a temporary jail.

Two hospitals were opened. One was on ul. Garncarska, in the building where the aged care home had been, and was under the directorship of Dr Szperling. The other was on ul. Jaskrowska, under the leadership of Dr Kagan. There was also a dispensary on ul. Garncarska, right at the mouth of the gateway, run by Dr Wolberg.

The public kitchen was on ul. Nadrzeczna, run by Galster. On ul. Kozia, there were workshops and a washroom (for washing laundry). The storerooms of food products and clothing were on ul. Nadrzeczna, and the medicinal storerooms on ul. Mostowa.

The most important institution was the *Arbeitseinsatz* [labour deployment], which was scrupulously run by Bernard Kurland. His deputies were Zylberszac, M. Krauze and Fisz.

All Jews in the “Small Ghetto” were forced to work. Every day, new workplaces were added outside the ghetto and as well as inside it. By Degenhardt’s orders, every Jew had to be registered by the *Arbeitseinsatz* and wear a number. The numbers were produced in HASAG-Pelcery, in the toolmaking department. The number was in the shape of a square with a hole on top for a piece of string to attach it to one’s overcoat, jacket or dress. It bore a Star of David in the middle and, under the Star of David, was the number. Whoever lost their number or failed to wear it was terribly beaten by the SS and *Werkschutz* for this “offence”.

In the period between January and April 1943, the number of Jews in the “Small Ghetto” constantly increased. All those, [who had been] barracked at the workplaces, came into the “Small Ghetto”. Early every morning, they went to work and returned in the evening.

A large number of escapees from other camps also arrived, as well as people who had been hiding on the "Aryan side". During that same period, official notices from the German authorities appeared, to the effect that ghettos were being formed. All the Jews, who were on the "Aryan side", could come to the ghettos unmolested - they would work, be fed and be considered productive people.

These notices were interpreted in two different manners. The first opinion was that, under the influence of the International Red Cross in Switzerland and the intellectuals in Germany, there had been a change [of policy] regarding the "Jewish Question". The German regime wished to cover up the cruelties which it had committed, and make it known that the Jews existed. There were ghettos and everything was in order - as if nothing had happened. If a large number of Jews had perished, it was due to the natural phenomena of war, such as typhus, starvation, bombardments and similar reasons.

The second opinion was to the contrary - that the German authorities wished to fool the few Jews, who were hiding on the "Aryan side" and in the forests, into the small ghettos in order to murder them. Regretfully, it later emerged that it was the second opinion that had evaluated the factual situation realistically. This time, too, it was confirmed that chicanery and murder were the foundations of the Nazi occupation policies.