

A Polish Woman's Good Deed

Usually, the Poles cooperated openly and cynically with the Germans in destroying the Jewish population and they even rejoiced that they were able to come by robbed Jewish possessions and goods. But there were rare, exceptional occasions on which Polish individuals made efforts to save a Jew's life, even risking their own lives to do so.

Such was the case in the following incident:

Among the Jewish policemen in the Częstochowa ghetto, there was a certain Orensztajn, who came from a good family and never did anyone any harm. His sister and mother now live in Israel.

After the blood-bath¹, his wife (the daughter of Brandlewicz the tailor) stayed on as a seamstress on ul. Garibaldiiego.

One evening, Degenhardt came into the tailoring workshop and inquired as to whether she had the means to survive, now that her husband was no longer alive. He demanded an answer from her by the following day. Bewildered and in tears, she came running and begged me, because I worked on the Polish side, to deliver a letter for her to a Christian lady on [Aleja] Wolności. It could be that this Polish woman would save her.

On Sunday, I went with Grajcer the painter to do work for Unkelbach, Degenhardt's agent. When the master-painter had gone out to lunch, I went up to the "stróż" [Pol.; watchman] and asked him if he could deliver a letter for me. I was not aware he was a *Volksdeutsch* and that he could, immediately, turn me over to the Gestapo.

But he received twenty *złotych* from me and sent the letter with his daughter. Half an hour later, the Christian lady, a certain Flora, arrived in a state of agitation and told me not to send anyone to her anymore, and that she would come the next day to ul. Garibaldiiego to meet with Mrs Orensztajn.

The reunion took place on time and all was in order.

Mrs Orensztajn, dressed all in black, left with the Polish woman, who hid her in her house for two weeks. She subsequently travelled away to Warsaw.

Mrs Orensztajn survived the occupation and, to this day, lives in Australia.

¹ [TN: In which her husband was obviously killed.]