

The Book Committee

The ŻOB in Pilica

In 1942, a group of young Jews organised as part of the ŻOB in Pilica (near Częstochowa). It included members of *Ha'Shomer Ha'Tzair*, *Gordonia*, *Poalei Zion* [and] *Freiheit* - in total, 60 people. They all lived in Podgórze¹ (a village near Pilica) in huts and stables and maintained contact with people of the P.P.S.

The unit operated under the orders of Commander Rudolf.

The National Armed Forces (N.S.Z.) attacked the village, because they knew that a group of P.P.S. and Jews were there.

Together with the assault by the N.S.Z. troops, trouble also came from another side. Blum, the chief of the [local] *Judenrat*, notified the Gestapo that a group of people had attacked the village of Podgórze. As a consequence, the Gestapo surrounded the village. The P.P.S men managed to escape, whereas the N.S.Z. troops fell into the hands of the Germans.

At the second deportation from the Gorlice ghetto, members of the organisation fell upon the gendarmes in order to free the Jews, but they were dispersed - although they did manage to kill one gendarme.

Motek, from Radomsko, put on the gendarme's uniform and was the first to enter the ghetto. The whole group of sixty went in after him. They opened fire and a fierce battle ensued, in which Miryam Feder from Warsaw, who was wounded in the leg, distinguished herself.

After the deportation, the chief of the *Judenrat* Blum and one member of the Jewish police force remained in the ghetto. The Germans charged them with the task of liquidating the possessions in the ghetto and, when the work was nearing its end and Blum became afraid for his life, he declared his willingness to betray the group of partisans, if they let him live.

One of the Jewish police officers notified the group and its members fled to the forest. The Gestapo surrounded the forest and, after a skirmish, thirteen partisans lay dead. The rest fled to the "Small Ghetto" in Częstochowa, whilst Commander Rudolf put an end to his own life.

¹ [TN: There are several places with this name in Poland, but as yet we have not found one near Pilica.]

[Andrew Rajcher: Historians from the POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews have also look for this place, even on pre-War maps, and could not find it. They believe that the author was mistaken in the place name or that it was NOT near Pilica as stated.]