



A few Jews had turned up, a handful of survivors - emaciated, young Jews with fear in their eyes. The fear had remained from their years of slavery under the German murderers.

[After] just a few weeks, the number of Jews, arriving in Warta, was increasing by the day. Contact was made with the Polish ambassador in Moscow, Stanisław [sic Zygmunt] Modzelewski¹, and he was asked to notify the United Warter Relief in New York to send aid. They began receiving letters and the first assistance from the *landsleit* in New York. The hearts of the Jews saved in Warta became a little lighter.

A home was opened in town for the hundreds of homeless Jews, invalids and orphans. A reading circle and courses are created for the small number of young people, and a special school for the few surviving Jewish children. The greatest sacrifice, during the time of the Nazi occupation, were the Jewish children.

Among the surviving Jews in town, the joy was great, when they also saw [their] children again - the Mojsze'les and Szlojme'les - among the adults. The children were pale and emaciated, but the lively Jewish eyes in their little faces were gleaming - those eyes of the Jewish child, of which the great poet Chaim-Nachman Bialik sung so finely. Once again, living Jewish children were seen running about and frolicking, and once again, their infantile, ringing little voices were heard. The happiness was boundless. The children awoke in the survivors the faith that they would yet outlive their enemies, the evil Nazis, who were now being beaten on all fronts.

Meanwhile, the War continued following its course to the Polish-German borders. With every [new] day, the Soviet army on the one side, and the Allied armies on the other, moved forward. Gradually, the Allied armies began nearing each other. Hitler's legions were in the middle, like in a vice. There was already no escape for them.

The Jewish populace in the city grows ever larger. Jews arrive every day from the liberated camps, and also from Soviet Russia. The number of Jews in Warta already reaches 6,000. Cooperatives are opened for cobblers, tailors, carpenters, metalworkers and hairdressers.

After years of being in the camps or bunkers, hiding with Poles under Aryan papers, or even in the monasteries with monks and nuns, who taught them the new lessons of Christianity, the problem of Jewish education for the hundreds of children, who had been saved and turned up [in Warta], was a big one.

Many of them had become disturbed - these [mentally] ill children did not wish to be recognised as Jewish children by any means. Some even displayed open hatred to Jews, and

¹ [TN: Modzelewski was also from Częstochowa, or "Warta", as it is called in this book.]

were constantly yelling that they wanted to go back to the monastery, to the monks and nuns. To bring these children back to their Jewish consciousness, experienced and devoted teachers were required, with a particular affection for children.

One of these loyal pedagogues was Gołda. She had heard nothing of her husband and brother since that selection. She had almost despaired of ever seeing them alive again. In her sorrow and loneliness, in her longing and grief for her closest ones, Gołda devoted herself to the work of the Yiddish children's home, which had grown into a very prominent institution.

Jews came to Warta from all the liberated regions, but many of them immediately left Poland, due to the unrest in many cities - especially following the notorious pogrom in Kielce. Nevertheless, a Jewish community still remained in Warta, and it was necessary to continuously provide the children with food and teach them lessons, as required by the programme of a complete Yiddish schooling, from kindergarten and up to the highest classes.

There were few teachers and a great deal work. Gołda and the other teachers worked beyond their strengths. Although their feet were truly failing under them, they did not relinquish their posts, but loyally served the newly-arrived Jewish children in need of them. In particular, the children needed proper food. They were given an abundance of food. Gradually, the sick children recovered, physically and mentally.

For the children, the teachers were the fathers and mothers whom these lonely orphans had somewhere lost. The orphans do not know and will never know where their parents had ended up and whether they had even received a burial.

