

# FORT III

## IN POMIECHÓWEK: A SHORT HISTORY

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Photograph on the cover: view of the fort's barracks and Carnot wall, archival photograph Oct 1939 Feb 1941 and present-day photograph of 2021

Photo on the title page: Fort's entry gate, a view of 1945



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# Introduction

Dear Reader,

Here is the second, updated edition of our Pomiechówek Fort III history guide. This piece, like the previous one, is to assist you in understanding the history of the fortification since erection, with particular attention to World War II. This work has been supplemented with new information and important photographs which we have obtained during the last year. This represents only fragmentary knowledge that we now have. This knowledge will be certainly completed as new historical sources, including archival documents, are analysed.

But we hope that this guide will help you to understand the history of the fort, and the photographs will encourage you to visit.

We also recommend reading a new piece published by our Foundation, titled *Fort III w Pomiechówku – wyjątkowy obiekt architektury militarnej (Fort III in Pomiechówek: An Exceptional Military Architectural Object)* by Piotr Skonieczny. It introduces the history of the fort, with particular focus on its military features, and excellently complements this brochure.

Read current news on the fort on the website of the Fort III Pomiechówek Foundation on [www.forttrzecipomiechówek.org](http://www.forttrzecipomiechówek.org) and the Foundation's profile on Facebook: [@fundacjaforttrzecipomiechówek](https://www.facebook.com/fundacjaforttrzecipomiechówek).

If you know anything about the fort or the story of the prisoners, please share with us. Owing to the dedication of many people of good will and prisoners' families, we have already managed to collect several thousands of archival photos related to the fort and its prisoners. New, previously unknown photographs are being discovered. Working with the National Remembrance Institute, the Fort III Pomiechówek Foundation has been also compiling a Prisoner Database. Any information that expands it is highly valuable.

Together, we will not allow that only the inscriptions on dungeon wall are left after the prisoners condemned to death.

The Foundation and Author

# Chapter I: 1883–1939

## 1883–1887: Construction of Fort III in Pomiechówek

The military values of Modlin – at the confluence of three rivers: Vistula, Narew and Wkra – were noted already by King Charles X Gustav of Sweden during the Swedish Deluge. He was the one to establish the first fortified camp in the area of the present-day Modlin Fortress and the river crossing in Pomiechowo (1655–1656).

However, it was Napoleon I Bonaparte that decided to build a fortress in Modlin – just before the Duchy of Warsaw was established in 1807. The five-bastion fortress was designed by General Francois Chasseloup-Laubat. Since its original construction, the Modlin Fortress complex of fortifications was expanded several times, containing some elements of French, Russian, German and Polish strongholds.

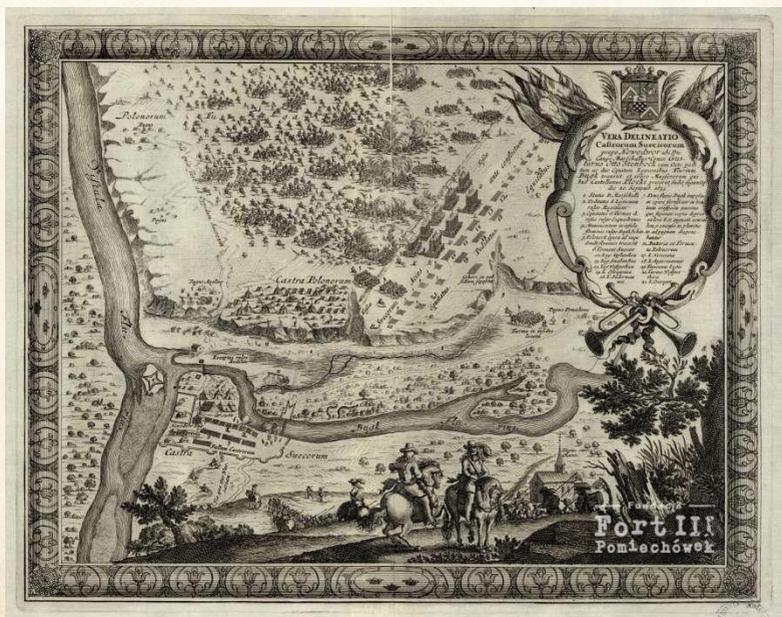
Under the Russian rule, Modlin was renamed Novogeorgievsk in 1834. To adapt the fortress to recent progress in military technology, Russian authorities decided to surround it with a chain of masonry-and-earth forts. In 1883, a ring of eight forts were built within 2-6-kilometre radius of the fortress, making up a 30 km line. First built were forts in the northern section of the stronghold: Fort I in Zakroczym, Fort II in Kosewo, and Fort III in Pomiechówek, being the largest one. They were built according to the 'F 1879' pentagonal footprint. As stand-alone works, they were surrounded with double embankment (for artillery and infantry), Carnot wall and a moat. Barracks, bunkers and magazines were hidden under the embankment. Roofs were about 2 m thick, or about 3 m with the earth embankment. The moats were to defend the caponiers on the counterscarp. Average cost of construction of a single fort was 600,000 rubles.

On 30 August 1884, Pomiechowo was visited by Tsar Alexander III of Russia (on his way to the Three Emperors' Convention in Skierniewice). He wanted to see the construction site of the new fort of the stronghold: *With the Minister of War*

Vannovsky, they went to Pomiechowo, stopped by the Orthodox church, and visited the fort that was being built. In the fort, the workers, all of them Russians, offered the Tsar with bread and salt on an engraved tray, with a miniature silver-covered salver. On the ordinance of local authorities, peasants also presented bread and salt, and children from popular schools, also on official orders, sang the Tsar's hymn.

The construction of new forts went on for five years. Fort II Kosewo and Fort III Pomiechówek, situated in Pomiechowo parish, were commissioned and ceremonially consecrated on 10 November 1887. The ceremony, described by Warsaw newspapers, was attended by Warsaw's General-Governor Josif Vladimirovich Hurko: *In the morning, on the date of the ceremony, his excellency Military Commander of the Warsaw Region came by special train, accompanied by his aid, General-Aide Count Musin-Puszkyn ... and other people. Having visited the Kosewo's fort, General-Aide Hurko went to fortifications in Pomiechowo, where there was a church service, after which a salvo was fired with the guns brought to the fort as a mark that the guns were ready for service. Then, in the casemates of the Pomiechowo fort, a breakfast was held, during which a greeting telegram was sent to the Minister of War. On the same day, his excellency chief governor of the country decided to return to Warsaw.*

During construction works it turned out that earth-and-masonry fortifications failed to meet defence requirements and could be effectively destroyed by modern artillery. Some masonry structures were then replaced with reinforced concrete.



Map with the location of Swedish and Polish forces prior to the battle near Nowy Dwór Maz., September 1655

The walls and floors were fortified with concrete. Two new concrete bunkers were built. The construction and subsequent upgrades cost 800,000 silver rubles, a high amount for the times.

### 1914–1918: Fort III during World War I

During World War I, Fort III was on the main line of German attack. The ‘Pomiechowo’ section was a key to capturing the entire Modlin Fortress, defended by 105,000-strong Russian garrison. It was due to the railway which ran through Pomiechówek, by which the Germans were able to bring to Modlin the then-heaviest siege mortar (420 mm calibre) – called ‘Big Bertha’ (*M-Gerät*). It was too heavy (150 tonnes) to be transported by road. The enormous barrel, mount and bearings of that howitzer were transported on railroad platforms being part of a special train. More than 100 people were needed to operate and support the gun.

In July 1915, when Warsaw was besieged by German troops, the Russian authorities decided to evacuate the capital city. The main point of defence was to



A breach in the Carnot wall as a result of German artillery shelling in August 1915, with German soldiers on the photograph

be Modlin Fortress. However, when Warsaw was taken, general Hans Hartwig von Beseler completely blocked the Modlin Fortress on 5 August 1915. The Fortress was stormed between 13 and 19 August, when the Germans forced their way to the inner line of Forts II and III. As a result of strong shellfire from Szczypiorno and Kosewko and determined attack, the Russian garrison surrendered. After short fight, the Germans took Fort III. In the evening, German troops attacked the embankments of the Modlin Citadel. The fortress fell at 7:00 pm. The initial capitulation document was signed by the commander, General Nikolai Bobyr, at 8:00 pm. Fight for the Pomiechowo section during the defence of the fortress was one of the most significant battles of the eastern front during that war.

When the Kingdom of Poland was proclaimed on 5 November 1916, soldiers of Brigade I – First Infantry Regiment of the Polish Legions, a company of engineers and a technical company were sent to the Modlin Fortress and to Fort III in Pomiechówek. Temporarily, from 1 December 1916 to 2 January 1917, the soldiers of the 4<sup>th</sup> Regiment of the Legions were stationed at the fort. Then they were moved to Zegrze and further on to Łomża.

In July 1917, the soldiers refused to pledge an oath of loyalty to the Kingdom of Poland and keep the brotherhood of arms with German and Austro-Hungarian troops. This resulted in their detention. Officers were sent to the Beniaminów Camp and privates to the prisoner-of-war camp in Szczypiorno.



German soldiers, August 1915

## 1918–1939: Fort III during the Second Republic of Poland

In December 1918, after 87 years, the Modlin Fortress was taken over by the Polish Army. In 1921–1926, soldiers of the 32<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment were stationed in the barracks of Fort III (they were part of the 8<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division), as well as soldiers of the 79<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment for a short time.



Guards of Fort III – commemorative tableau made for the name day of the commander, Capt. Józef Wójcik, 19 March 1933, photograph made available by Danuta Wichowska, granddaughter to Józef Dąbrowski, a prisoner of the fort

Since 1926, Fort III with Fort II Kosewo and the White and Red gunpowder magazines began to serve an important function as Auxiliary Magazine of Weaponry for the Main Magazine (GSU No. 1) in Warsaw. Combined storage volume was 222 railway cars, 15 t each. A sub-garrison was established based on a former



Russian garrison in Pomiechówek, occupied by soldiers and civilian workers. The magazine complex was connected by a narrow-gauge railway with the garrisons in Pomiechówek and Modlin Fortress. It stored small-arms and shelling munitions for the Modlin garrison and in the event of war. The military press separately covered the events and ceremonies in the Modlin garrison and Pomiechówek sub-garrison. The presence of officers and soldiers elevated the profile of the place, and contributed to eliciting patriotic attitudes among local community.

In 1936, a new concept of using the fortress and its defences was developed, recognising the significance of earthworks as stands of artillery batteries against tanks, protected with deep moats. No structures were allowed to be built in direct neighbourhood of the forts, regarded as fortified anti-tank areas. Several experimental armoured domes for observation and machine gun posts were installed in Modlin's forts, experimental military bunkers were built, and fortress weaponry was tested.

# Chapter II: 1939–1945

## September 1939: Defence of Fort III

On 1 September 1939, 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the 32<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment, commanded by Captain Jan Grizani, was stationed in Fort III. The initial days of the war in Pomiechówek were remembered by Józef Bojmowicz as follows: *The road from Pomiechówek to Warsaw was full of refugees and civilians. Bridges torn apart, roads smashed with bombs, with fallen carts, cars, horses along the way. Injured people lying in ditches, groaning.*

Armoured train no. 15 'Death' took part in the defence of Pomiechówek and Forts II and III. When the railway bridge on the Narew was destroyed, the train ran on the Modlin–Pomiechówek section. The bridge on the Wkra river was blown up on 11 September.

After the defence of Modlin was assumed by General Wiktor Thommée, on 13 September the Pomiechówek section was assigned to Brigade General Władysław Bończy-Uzdowski. For two weeks (from 14 to 28 September), Pomiechówek was defended by soldiers of the 36<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment of the Academic Legion (part of the 28<sup>th</sup> Armoured Division) under Lt. Col. Dipl. Karol Jan Ziemski<sup>1</sup>. The main point of defence of that section was Fort III garrisoned by Battalion I of the Regiment.



Capt. Bogusław Bernard Rytel, commander of Battalion I of the 36<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment of the Academic Legion, commander of fort's defence

1. One of the soldiers of the 36<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment of the Academic Legion was Sergeant Franciszek Gajowniczek, for whom Saint Maksymilian Maria Kolbe laid down his life in 1941 in KL Auschwitz.



Its last commander was appointed Captain Bogusław Bernard Rytel (previously the commander was Maj. German Piekarniak).

The final German storm was planned to take place on 28 September at 6:00 am. The last battle report from the injured Capt. Rytel on 3:00 am lists the modest Polish forces defending the fort:

*... I strengthened the gap between me and III/36<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment with the 6<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> Platoon. Please speed up the arrival of the 4<sup>th</sup>/72<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment. I defend my right flank with 1 officer, 44 riflemen and non-commissioned officers + two heavy machine guns and one grenade launcher. The enemy digs trenches in Pomiechówek village, does not advance. My only reserve now is 12 men ... and a platoon of division cyclists, 35-men strong, which departs to Modlin at dawn ... . Whirring machines are heard coming from Pomiechówek ... . Please send munitions for grenade launchers, because they were in military action and will be used where needed, but there is relatively little munitions ... .*

He did not manage to send another report, because on 5:50 am a massive 10-minute shelling took place, followed by attack of two German companies of the 94<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment. They reached the fort's moat, but were unable to force their way inside. The fire of the Polish defences (machine gun, grenade launchers and artillery) was still very strong. Only about 7:30 am, when German 3<sup>rd</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Companies set off towards Stanisławowo and bypassed the fort, the frontal companies came out with attack and stormed the moat. The defenders flew the white flag of surrender on the right-hand flank.

The garrison gained respect for its heroism which was appreciated even by the German command, and Fort III surrendered only when decision was taken to surrender the entire fortress – on 29 September 1939. The defenders' perseverance was also noted by the commanders of Army Warsaw. The last order of General Rómmel of 28 September 1939 reads: *All units of the division fought with utmost sacrifice, dedication and valour, but the brave 28<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment of the Academic Legion under the outstanding commander Lt. Col. Karol Ziemski was the core of the 28<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, around which the entire effort and resistance was concentrated<sup>2</sup>. The Regiment was honoured with the War Order of Virtuti Militari for its fighting in the September 1939 Campaign<sup>3</sup>.*

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2. Since 1940, Karol Ziemski was active in the resistance as officer of the Headquarters of the Home Army and deputy commander of the Warsaw Region. He took part in the Warsaw Uprising as the commander of the Northern Group defending the Old City. After the war he remained abroad. In 1964, General Władysław Anders appointed him a Brigade General.

3. The history of Fort III in 1883–1939 was developed based on publication by dr Piotr Oleńczak, *Osiem wieków w Dolinie Wkry, Pomiechowo i Pomiechówek, Zarys dziejów*, Pomiechówek 2015.



On 29 September 1939, the Modlin Fortress capitulated - on official orders, soldiers of the fort flew a white flag of surrender



The Germans marching in to the fort, German photograph, September 1939

## 1939–1945: German Occupation

The northern part of the Mazovian region became part of Nazi Germany. Based on Decree of 8 October 1939, the area was named a 'Ciechanów Governmental District' (*Regierungsbezirk Zichenau*) incorporated into East Prussia province (*Provinz Ostpreussen*). The province was governed by Upper President and Gauleiter Erich Koch.

The Gestapo station for the Ciechanów Governmental District (*Geheime Staatspolizei, Staatspolizeistelle Zichenau/Schröttersburg*) was headed by, in turn: SS-Obersturmbannführer Friedrich Rang (until the end of January 1940), SS-Sturmbannführer Hartmut Pulmer (until the end of 1942) and SS-Sturmbannführer Friedrich Schulz<sup>1</sup> (until January 1945). Since 1941, Gestapo was headquartered in Płock.

The Pomiechówek municipality, including Fort III, was incorporated into Germany, thus becoming a border area with the General Government (GG). Customs border running through the middle of the Kampinos Forest prevented free movement of people. A pass was required to cross the border watched by armed guards (*Grenzschutze*). Those attempting to illegally cross the border risked arrest or even death.



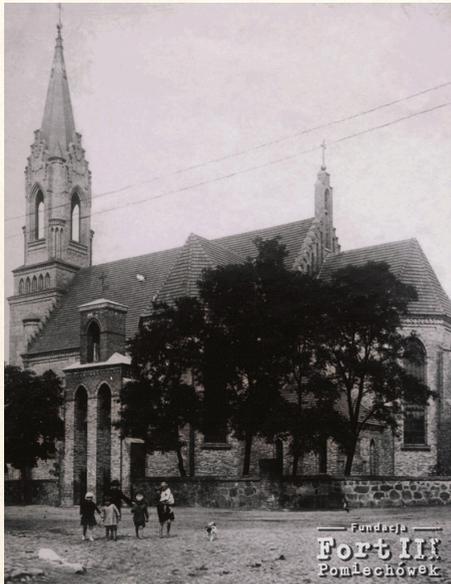
Map of the Ciechanów Governmental District, reproduced from: M. Grynberg, *Żydzi w Rejencji Ciechanowskiej 1939-1942*, PWN 1984, p. 11; Fort III is marked with red point

1. Schulz's activity on that position was recognised by his superiors. In the merits discussed in the promotion application in April 1944, the following information was provided: *It was during SS-Sturmbannführer Friedrich Schulz's service that we were able to arrest the main officers of the Polish resistance movement*, from: M. Przegiętka: *Akcja Gestapo przeciwko polskiej inteligencji w rejencji ciechanowskiej*, Warszawa 2020, p. 90.

## March–June 1941: Relocation Camp in Fort III

Mass relocations of the Poles and Jews was carried out according to the German 'Master Plan for the East' (*Generalplan Ost*). In the Ciechanów Governmental District, they started in December 1939 and were conducted in several stages<sup>2</sup>. In March 1941, farmers from eight municipalities of the Płońsk Poviát were displaced. The Poles were removed from their farms and landed estates, the Jews were deprived of business establishments and houses. They were taken away to the General Government through a round-up camp in Działdowo (German: *Soldau*). They were to be replaced by Baltic Germans.

The largest number of farmers were removed from the Sochocin municipality: Biele, Milewo, Strachowo, and Sochocin itself. The displacement action was coordinated by the military police and armed *Volksdeutsche* (local people of German descent). Residents of Sochocin remember the dramatic night to 6 March 1941, when almost a half of them were thrown out of their homes. Jews' lot was



The Sochocin church with the churchyard - the round-up place for the displaced residents of the town, photograph from the collection of the Town and Municipal Community Centre, Sochocin

the same. Amid general terror and children's cries, shaken out of sleep with shouts and banging on the door, the families were left several minutes to pack and leave their homes. On the square around the parish church, about 2,000 Poles and almost 500 Jews were rounded up. Filled with terror, they had no clue what was going to happen to them. From the morning to late afternoon of the following day, the displaced people were taken away to Fort III in Pomiechówek.

They were placed in underground barracks of Fort III that had served as munitions storage. Dark, concrete storage rooms were not fit for keeping people, especially families with children and old people. There was no access to water

2. *Generalplan Ost* – a plan of German settlement and Germanisation of the occupied areas of Central and Eastern Europe.



and sufficient food. The bed was made of straw, rotting from moisture. In such extremely unhealthy conditions, lice multiplied within several days and became a constant trouble to the displaced people. Mr Stanisław Łoniewski from Strachowo, remembered the moment of arriving in the fort: *When we arrived, the place was already full of people crammed in basements ... The conditions were terrible. We were sleeping on manure*<sup>3</sup>.

The Zmysłowski couple, Jerzy and Helena, were displaced with their daughter Elżbieta who was less than three weeks old. In such conditions, they fought for her life, begging in the kitchen for some water (the building of the 'necked caponier' / *Polish: kaponiera szyjowa*). Fellow inmates covered themselves with wet nappies to dry them up during their sleep with the warmth of their bodies.

During the day, the displaced people had some freedom of movement inside the fort walls watched by armed guards. Escapes, several of them successful, were attempted both by adults and children. Zdzisław Ciborski, a 10-years-old boy, got on the cart bringing food to the fort and, unnoticed, was driven out through the gate. Ms Walentyna Kubasiewicz was wounded during her escape attempt: *When I was lying in the cell – she said – a German called Lidke came to me and said: 'See, you Polish swine, you wanted to escape, but you will rot away in this place anyway'*<sup>4</sup>.

Ms Halina Bocian, then 17 years old, died when she attempted to escape. Her mother, who witnessed her death, said: *I saw a German called Hinc standing on the embankment ... raising his rifle and shooting ... I wanted to get to my daughter, but I was not allowed to. I only saw her carried on a stretcher*<sup>5</sup>.

The Jews were kept in separate rooms, including in a munitions bunker on the left side of the fort. The Germans treated them with particular brutality. They were harassed by the guards recruited from the local *Volksdeutsche*. After several days, the Jews and some Polish families were taken away to the Działdowo camp.

Mr Stanisław Łoniewski remembered those moments: *The Germans kept us in Pomiechówek for four, maybe five days. Then, they took us away. First, they started to drive away the Jews from cells on the right-hand side. They beat them fiercely in the process. I can hear the cries of those Jews to this day. I was a child, so I was strongly affected. I remember that I cuddled up to my mother and asked if they were going to beat us as well, and she said: 'I don't know, my little boy, I don't know, my love, maybe they won't beat us'*<sup>6</sup>.

The displaced people received help from their families and neighbours who organised food transports to the fort. Particular gratitude was owed to the family

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3. Stanisław Łoniewski: *Z moich wspomnień*, Pracownia Dokumentacji Dziejów Miasta MCK w Płońsku, Zeszyt XIII, Płońsk 2010.

4. Report of deposition by Walentyna Kubasiewicz, née Goszczyńska, of 21 March 1970, in: files of investigation of Regional Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes (OKBZH) in Warsaw into the crimes perpetrated in Pomiechówek, ref. Ds. 2/71.

5. Report of interview with Stanisława Bocian, née Kopczyńska, of 21 March 1970, in: files of investigation of OKBZH in Warsaw, ref. Ds. 2/71. Halina Bocian was buried in the parish cemetery in Pomiechowo.

6. Stanisław Łoniewski: *Z moich wspomnień*.

of Mr Waclaw Ciosek, the owner of the mill in Gutarzewo, who selflessly delivered bread, and then helped to survive those families which managed to return to their homes. It's worthwhile to emphasise that Mr Waclaw Ciosek, active in the Home Army (Polish: Armia Krajowa, abbreviated AK), was murdered in Fort III on 30 July 1944.

The Germans conducted a segregation of the displaced people brought into the fort. They selected young, strong men to provide forced labour in East Prussia.



A group of 14 men from Sochocin and nearby places, displaced to East Prussia to render forced labour, and employed in Organisation Todt.

Some families which were previously taken away to the Działdowo camp, returned to Pomiechówek after several weeks. Finally, in late 1941, all families which had been previously kept in the fort, mainly women and children, were released, but prohibited from returning to their farms. Ultimately, they were not deported to the General Government, but for most of them it was time of wandering, living with cousins and friends. The homes of many families were occupied by the Germans.

The displaced people, although living through dramatic moments in the camp, were not treated with such cruelty as the Jews and members of the resistance movement placed there in the following months.

## July–August 1941: Relocation Camp for Jewish Population in Fort III

After the people displaced from the Sochocin area left the fort, in July 1941 the Germans established a relocation camp for the Jewish population in Fort III. Most of the inmates were displaced from Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki (about 2000 people), Płońsk (about 1200 people) and Zakroczym (107 people), but also from Nowe Miasto, Raciąż, Ciechanów, Mława and Sierpc. These Jews had lived in ghettos and held no residence certificates. About 4000 people are estimated to be arrested and imprisoned in the fort as part of a verification action conducted by the Germans. The verification, accompanied by brutal beating, started in early July 1941. The first group was brought to Pomiechówek between 6 and 9 July.

Mr Abram Szul, resident of Nowy Dwór, a survivor, recalled the displacement time as follows: *... at the town square, they rounded up all people and made a selection of who held the identity document. I had one, my father had one, my brother didn't have it, because he was too young, as was my little sister. And my mother had lost it. Those who were to go to the ghetto, were gathered on one side of the square. The others who were to go to Pomiechówek, on the other side. We didn't know yet what was going to happen. My father said: 'You can't do anything. We'll go*



Fort III from the times of the relocation camp for displaced families - 1941,  
photo from the collection of the Jewish Historical Institute

together with mum, whatever will be, will be, but we'll be together.' We joined the group where my mum belonged. They made a huge mobilisation of carts from the entire district. They placed us on the carts and taken away to Pomiechówek<sup>7</sup>.

The photographs of the displaced people, kept in the Archive of the Jewish Historical Institute, and taken in 1941 in the fort, fail to convey the tragedy that happened there.

We can learn the ordeal of the Jewish population from inmates' accounts, who after six weeks in the fort's casemates were transferred to the Warsaw ghetto. The accounts are exceptionally valuable, since they were put to paper just after the events. One of the displaced people, living in Zakroczym, so recalled the moment of arrival: *The room where we were brought in, was a former gunpowder magazine. Huge cells with bare walls and asphalt floors. ... After one hour, a search of men and women began. Everyone was due to give something, and if they didn't have anything, they were beaten up till they lost their senses*<sup>8</sup>. The displaced people were placed in 16 cells of the main building of the barracks, about 200 people in each room. Terrible sanitary conditions, lack of water and food contributed to general emaciation and spread of infectious diseases, mainly typhus and dysentery. Medical aid was virtually absent, despite that pregnant women and old people were among those displaced. Those sick were isolated in cell 16, called the *Krankenzelle*. Some of them were shot dead by the Germans, the rest were left unattended. Families hid the sick, because all knew that transfer to the *Krankenzelle* meant death.

The accounts that have survived contain descriptions of abuse, rapes on women, humiliation and killing of the inmates, including children. All that was perpetrated by the supervising Germans. The unit was led by camp commander, most probably it was Zydler/Siedler, mentioned in several accounts, and his deputy was Szulc/Schulz. In addition to Gestapo officers, the unit comprised local *Volksdeutsche* and German colonists. *At night, they would take you to the hillock, drive near the graves that were dig within one day and shoot you* – said one of the survivors<sup>9</sup>. To keep order in the cells and on the yard, the Germans designated marshals recruited from among the Jews (*Jüdischer Ordnung Dienst*). Their leader, Majloch Hoppenblum, demonstrated brutality no lesser than the guards. The Germans used them to segregate sick people, among other things. Using this function, he robbed the fellow inmates, taking from them valuables and food in return for saving their lives. The poor who couldn't buy themselves out usually went to death.

7. Interview of 14 July 2011 with Abram Szul, b. 15 August 1926 in Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki, <https://novidvor.pl/viewtopic.php?f=31&t=1049> [accessed on 23 May 2020]. Mr Abram Szul ended up in Pomiechówek with his parents, Josek and Golda, and with his siblings: 12-years-old Lajb and six-years-old Bajla. He managed to escape from the fort with his siblings. He was the only survivor in his family, others died in KL Auschwitz-Birkenau.

8. Ringelblum Archives, vol. 13 *Ostatnim etapem przesiedlenia jest śmierć. Pomiechówek, Chełmno nad Nerem, Treblinka*, edited by E. Wiatr, B. Engelking, A. Skibińska, Warszawa 2013. Account of a Zakroczym resident of his exile in the Pomiechówek camp, p. 27.

9. *Ibidem*, Account of a Sierpc resident, p. 38.

The Jewish Councils from the neighbouring towns, mainly from Płońsk and Nowy Dwór, tried to help the inmates as they could, by supplying food to the fort. An exemplary role in this case was played by Mr Abraham Jakub Ramek, the President of the Płońsk Jewish Council. In addition to others' efforts, it was due to his intervention that Hoppenblum was removed from the fort, which improved the situation of the inmates. The local population also joined the food aid action. According to the account of Abram Błaszka, people would throw loafs of bread through the fence. Ms Szajndla Gutkowicz emphasised that those who went outside the fort to get water were generously given bread, milk *and whatever they had* by the local peasants.

Interventions by local Germans' organisations from Nowy Dwór, Płońsk and Zakroczym in the Warsaw ghetto led Commissioner Heinz Auerswald to give his consent for the inmates to be relocated from Fort III to the Warsaw ghetto<sup>10</sup>. After six weeks, on 14 August 1941, the Jews were carried by carts to the border of the Reich, near Legionowo. According to several accounts, when they arrived, the Germans set fire to the straw on the carts, forcing people to jump through the fire. During the escape, many of them, particularly the weak and the sick, died or sustained burns. Those who survived went to the Ludwisin ghetto, where they got help. About 200 people, mainly from Nowy Dwór, remained there, and 1200 of them arrived in Warsaw about 15–20 August. The exact number of the Jews who died in Fort III is impossible to establish. Several accounts were accompanied by lists which included a total of several hundreds of victim names, but these are only fragmentary.



A six-years-old Baila Szul - she died in KL Auschwitz-Birkenau, photograph made available by the Szul family

Deeply-moving direct accounts rendered by the displaced people who ended up in the Warsaw ghetto, were collected and put to paper by the associates of Dr Emanuel Ringelblum. Currently, they can be read in Volume 13 of *Konspiracyjne Archiwum Getta Warszawskiego* issued by the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw<sup>11</sup>.

10. Heinz Auerswald since May 1941 held the function of a Commissioner for the Jewish District (*Kommissar für den jüdischen Wohnbezirk*) in Warsaw.

11. *The Underground Archive of the Warsaw Ghetto (The Ringelblum Archive)* contains a total of 28,000 documents (manuscripts, prints, photographs). It is a unique source, included in the *Memory of the World* list of the most valuable written texts in the world.

## 1943–July 1944: A Police Prison in Fort III in Pomiechówek (*Polizeigefängnis Pomiechówek bei Modlin*)

After the Jews were taken away, the Germans conducted construction works in the fort. The Carnot wall was made higher and protected from the above with barbed wire. A single entry gate was left. The other one – on the right-hand side of the ‘necked caponier’ – was bricked up. A watchtower was placed over the caponier building. The courtyard was closed from both sides with gates leading to the backyard



Courtyard and building of ‘necked’ barracks, April 1945

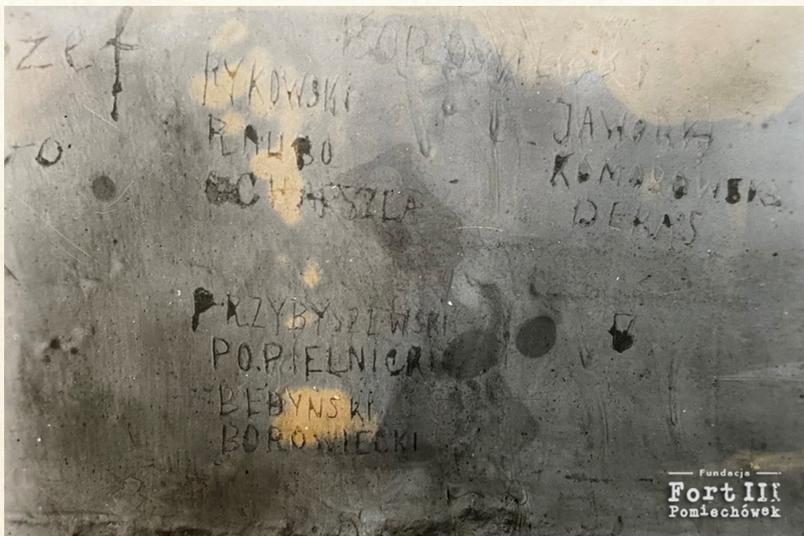
area. Walls were erected inside the barracks building, forming locked rooms/cells. The purpose was to adapt the fort for the function of a police prison. According to the survived documentation of Gestapo station in Ciechanów-Płock (*Geheime Staatspolizei, Staatspolizeistelle Zichenau/Schröttersburg*), Fort III started to serve this function in early 1943 (first prisoners were put there in late March / early April). The prison was liquidated in late July 1944. It was directly supervised by border police station in Modlin/Nowy Dwór (GPK- *Grenzpolizeikommissariat Modlin-Neuhof/Bugmünde*). Fort III also served the function of central prison

where sentences of the police summary court (*Standgericht*)<sup>1</sup> were enforced.

The prison was established in early 1943 (which was relatively late into the war) due to the general situation of the occupied Polish territory. Polish resistance activity and the development of its structures and sabotage actions raised a wave of mass arrests. Prisons in the main towns of the Ciechanów Governmental District were overcrowded. Investigations conducted by Gestapo were broad-based. The Germans needed more space to keep the detainees. Thus, the fort buildings with other facilities, which occupied about five hectares surrounded by high embankment, came to be the place of martyrdom and death of more than a dozen thousands of Polish citizens. Mr Józef Jezierski, a former prisoner in the fort, concluded: *Pomiechówek was a nailed-down coffin, perfectly isolated from the external world.*

## Conditions

An average of 50 to 60 prisoners were placed in cells located in underground rooms size 10 x 8 m. There were cases where there was even more inmates. Prisoners were closely packed, they couldn't freely sit or lie down. With no beds, all had to sleep on the concrete. The only bedding was a small amount of wet, rotting straw.



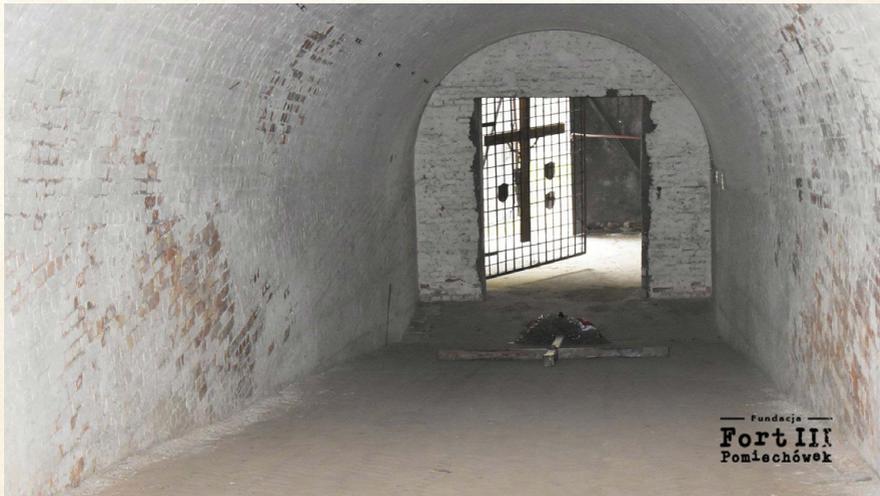
Fragment of the wall in cell '0' with carved out names of 10 lancers of the 11<sup>th</sup> Regiment from Ciechanów, executed on 30 July 1944, photograph made probably in April 1945, made available by Cezary Szymczak

1. Since 1943, the official name of the court was: *Das Standgericht für den Regierungsbezirk Zichenau und den Kreis Sudauen*. Its activity was focused mainly against members of the Polish resistance movement. The court was chaired by the head of the Gestapo station or his deputy. Death sentences were usually handed down. No appeal procedure was available. The murderous activity of those courts had nothing to do with the administration of justice.

The overcrowded rooms were dark and stuffy, which was intensified by the odour coming from the barrels where prisoners had to relieve themselves.

Through the middle of the casemates (deep into the entrance), there was a cell numbered '0' or called the *death cell*. It was a transition cell. Usually, it was filled with newly arrived prisoners waiting for execution or those to be taken out to concentration camps. Uncertain about their future or sensing death was near, they left the signs of their presence on the walls: scratched out their names, initials, dates – still readable now.

The prison administration and kitchen rooms were in the 'necked caponier' building, on the right-hand side of the entry gate. Separate kitchens for prisoners and guards were organised. The building was also probably occupied by the commander and Gestapo officers on duty arriving from Nowy Dwór. The prison crew comprised guards recruited from among local *Volksdeutsche*. Witnesses say that the right-hand side of the barracks housed the rooms for the guards and the bath, the latter also used for interrogation. The backyard of the fort, known among the prisoners as the *hillock*, was a place of mass executions. On one side of the execution yard, there was a small bunker with four corridors forming a cross. According to witnesses'



Cell '0' viewed from the inside towards the exit, May 2021, photograph by Krzysztof Szatkowski

accounts, the convicts had to take off their clothes there before they were executed. Gallows stood opposite to the bunker.

Mr Edmund Tomaszewski, a former prisoner, recalls: *You couldn't find a Gestapo officer in the camp to have even a bit of humanity. I know the following names: Czesław Pross [or Bross, DG's note], Lidke, Manz, Scherfer, ... Studziński, Lange, Plewko*<sup>2</sup>. In almost all accounts of the survived prisoners, there are

2. AIPN GK 912/613, *Files for Zakroczym: From the diary of Tomaszewski Edmund*, p. 47.

descriptions of harassment by the guards, often their pre-war neighbours. The account of Mr Zenon Pierścieniak says: *I remember ... that Czesław Bross ... was a guard. My cousin ... before the war attended elementary school in Zakroczym with Czesław Bross. ... I can recall that once I wanted to get a meal twice, because I was very exhausted from starvation. It was noticed by Bross ... he ordered me to bring and put a chopping block against the wall of the building and lie down on it. ... then he beat me on my head, back and buttocks. As a result of beating, I couldn't get back to the cell on my own*<sup>3</sup>.

Those prisoners which were not taken for interrogation were driven away from their cells to the courtyard at mealtimes. In the morning and in the evening, they would receive a piece of bread with coffee, for the supper: a watered-down soup made of rotting vegetables. These rations were so small that they constantly suffered from thirst and hunger. They had only 2–3 minutes available to eat. The soup, served without spoons, and the coffee were so hot that would burn their mouths and throats. Each time when they were driven out of the cells, the guards beat them with batons and sticks, and set dogs on them, which would painfully injure them.



German crew of the fort, photograph made probably in 1943, author unknown. Prisoners sitting along the barracks building eating a meal. It is the only photograph that depicts the torturers, photograph made available by Wanda Kraszewska

3. Deposition by Zenon Pierścieniak at the Poviát Prosecution Office in Płóńsk on 2 January 1970, in: files of the investigation carried out by OKBZH in Warsaw, Ds 104/67.

Witness accounts say that some prisoners were sent to various jobs within the fort and its neighbourhood. Strict isolation was applied against political prisoners. Two cells on the left-hand side of the barracks were dedicated to women. Ms Sabina Wrona said in her deposition: *Women in the camp had somewhat more freedom, because they worked ... in the kitchen or in the laundry. So, they had the opportunity to get to know about executions ... see the moment when prisoners were taken out. ... In the laundry ... we were washing the underwear taken off from the killed people ... sometimes we would recognise the clothes of male and female prisoners we had known*<sup>4</sup>.



The photo shows the entrance to the fort, Carnot wall with the section destroyed by shelling in 1915, on the right-hand side the caponier building, with barracks in the background, April 2021, a photograph from Foundation's own collection

## Prisoners

The prisoners came from all walks of life. Among them, there were members of Parliament, doctors, public officials, military officers, farmers, workers, representatives of various nationalities, mainly the Poles and Jews. The largest group of those murdered were activists of the Polish resistance movement, soldiers of the Home Army (Polish: Armia Krajowa, abbreviated AK), National Armed Forces, Polish Workers' Party, People's Guard. Due to close distance from the customs border with General Government, the inmates also included people charged with illegal trading, crossing of the border without a pass, escapees from forced labour.

The exact number of the inmates and those murdered in Fort III is impossible to establish. The prison records (logs of arrival, death records, etc.) were destroyed probably during the liquidation of the prison. Usually, 800 to 1000 inmates were present in the fort at any time. The turnover was high. Depending on the importance

4. Deposition of Ms Sabina Wrona before the Poviát Court in Bielsko-Biala of 2 September 1968, in: files of the investigation conducted by OKBZH in Warsaw, Ds 104/67.



and extent of investigation, the imprisonment would take up to several months. During that time, the prisoners, both women and men, were subjected to brutal interrogation. The places of so-called examination mentioned by the prisoners was the backyard of the fort (the hillock), the barracks rooms – on the right-hand side, and rooms in the building of the ‘necked caponier’. Prisoners were also taken for interrogation to Gestapo headquarters in Nowy Dwór. They lasted up to several days, and the beaten up people were brought back to the fort. An interpreter was present at interrogation. Upon conclusion of the interrogation, the prisoner had to sign the record.

Mr Hieronim Wszyński, a former prisoner, described his interrogation as follows: *Before I even got to look around, I felt a hail of hits with a stick and whip. I tried to cover my head, then they would beat me on my back and stomach ... I fell down, the torturers lifted me from the pavement ... threw me on the stool standing by the table. ... After some hits in my head I fainted. During the tortures, it was an ‘escape’ from pain, beating, and overwhelming fear. ... during the interrogation I prayed many times for fainting. I would be revived quickly with a bucket of water. I went through fifteen interrogations in Pomiechówek*<sup>5</sup>.

Another form of persecution was called the ‘stake punishment’. It consisted in suspending the prisoners, by their hands twisted back, on wheels mounted to the wall. In such position, with their feet almost losing contact with the pavement, the prisoners were standing on the corridor several days. These wheels are still mounted to the walls of the casemates.

Mr Władysław Grylak gave the following evidence: *... I learned from fellow inmates ... that a gestapo officer with ‘corpse-like’ face named Jerzy Scherfer ... used a leather-cord whip. ... the other who beat me during interrogations was Karol Went ... he used a stick for beating. Another gestapo officer was ... Plewko, he acted as interpreter ... he beat the prisoners with a stick ended with a metal tube*<sup>6</sup>. After interrogations, the beaten up people were brought back to their cells. The beating often resulted in broken arms, legs and ribs. Their bodies were so mutilated that they were unable to move. Consistent accounts of former prisoners describe shocking methods used by torturers to extort evidence.

Some witnesses recall that Dr Stanisław Dołner, a prison doctor summoned from Nowy Dwór, made decisions about moving the prisoners to the sick ward. However, no treatment was provided apart from the isolation of the sick. Mortality among those kept in prison was very high. They died as a result of mutilation during interrogations, hunger, spread of diseases caused by dramatic sanitary conditions. The doctor would issue a death certificate (*Totenschein*), each time providing natural

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5. Hieronim Teodor Wszyński, *Historia jednego życia*, Warszawa 2006, p. 75.

6. Deposition by Władysław Grylak of 11 July 1974, in: files of the investigation conducted by OKBZH in Warsaw, Ds 2/71.

causes for the death. The Germans designated Dr Józef Witwicki, a Home Army soldier from the Mława post, to provide help to his fellow prisoners. He was forced to assist during executions and certify the death of hanged or shot individuals. As a direct witness of crime, he provided the fellow prisoners with information on executions. Using the opportunity to move between the cells, he provided help to prisoners and was raising their spirits. Doctor Witwicki was murdered on 30 July 1944 during mass execution.



Prison corridor - present-day photo from the Foundation's own collection

Upon the conclusion of investigation, those who survived were sent to concentration camps or other prisons. Men were usually sent to KL Stutthof and KL Mauthausen, women – to KL Lublin (Majdanek), KL Auschwitz, and later on KL Ravensbrück.

Despite that Fort III was difficult to overrun and well guarded, several escapes have been recorded. The largest group of fugitives was nine people. According to the account by Teofil Wójcik, one of the escapees, they managed to get out from the cell through a newly installed ventilation opening in the ceiling. The following report from gestapo file has survived: *At night to 14 October 1943, nine prisoners got out and escaped from the police prison in Pomiechówek. On 20 October 1943, an order was issued to enter the names of the fugitives to the search register for Germany and General Government, and arrest warrants were issued at the same time. ... Due to the incident, the police inspector Brauer and criminal assistant Blechschmidt received disciplinary penalties*<sup>7</sup>. The names of escapees were also noted: Jews – Szymon (Symcha) Frost and Jakub Klin, and Poles – Stefan (Szczepan) Gozdek, Julian Lepecki, Ignacy Lis, Aleksander Łażewski, Władysław Szymanik, Jan Wójcik and Teofil Wójcik. During the manhunt, the Germans captured and hanged in reprisal Szymon Frost and Jan Wójcik. Aleksander Łażewski was shot dead during arrest attempt on 9 February 1944. The others survived in hiding to the end of war.

7. AIPN GK 629/2714, files of the case of Aleksander Łażewski.

# Durchschlag

33

Stapo -II A -5246/43

Schröttersburg, den Oktober 1943

1.) **V e r m e r k:** In der Nacht vom 13. zum 14.10.43 sind im Polizeigefängnis in Pomichowek 9 Häftlinge ausgebrochen und flüchtig geworden. Da die Namen der flüchtig gewordenen Häftlinge hier nicht bekannt waren, wurde am 20.10.43 in der gefährten Rücksprache zwischen II L mit Krim.-Obersekretär **L a n g e** angeordnet, dass ~~die Namen~~ vom Wachtführer des Polizeigefängnisses in Pomichowek die Namen der flüchtig gewordenen Häftlinge fernmündlich einzuholen sind. Ferner wurde hierbei angeordnet, dass die Flüchtigen, soweit sie nicht inzwischen wieder ergriffen sind, zur Festnahme im Deutschen Fahndungsbuch und im Fahndungsnachweis für das Generalgouvernement auszuschreiben sind. Der Wachtführer gab hierbei an, dass folgende Häftlinge ausgebrochen und flüchtig geworden sind:

a) **K l i n,** Jan, geb. 4.4.12 zu Warschau, Jude, ohne festen Wohnsitz.  
(sitzt für Vorgang II A 5246/43 ein)

b) **L i s,** Ignacy, geb. 28.9.09 in Rogowo, Pole, verh., wohnhaft in Kadlubowo, Kr. Flöhnen (sitzt für Vorgang II A-5246/43 ein)

c) **L e p e c k i,** Julian, geb. 17.6.25 zu Warschau, Pole, ledig, wohnhaft in Schusterfeld. (sitzt für Vorgang II A - 5246/43 ein)

d) **F r o s t,** Sienka (muss richtig Symcha heissen) geb. 25.12.20 zu Sadowitz (Zadawiec). Jude, ledig, ohne festen Wohnsitz. (sitzt für Vorgang II A - 5246/43 ein)

e) **W o j c i k,** Jan, geb. 28.8.98 zu Kowno (nicht 28.8.98 zu Kowno), Pole, verh., wohnh. in Kadlubowo, (sitzt für Vorgang II A -5246/43 ein)

f) **W o j c i k,** Jan, geb. ~~28.8.98~~ 19.3.20 zu Golawice, Pole, ledig, wohnhaft in Golawice, Kr. Ostenburg. (sitzt für Vorgang ~~II A~~ II B 2 -4992/43 ein)

g) **S z y m a n i k,** Wladyslaw, geb. Dez. 1917 zu Dybki, ledig, Pole, wohnh. in Dybki. (sitzt für Vorgang II A - 4774/43 ein)

h) **G o z d e k,** Stefan, 10.3.21 Nowo-Dabrowa, Pole, ledig, wohnh. Nowo-Dabrowa, (sitzt für Vorgang II A - ~~II~~ 3439/43 ein)

i) **L a z e w s k i,** Aleksander, geb. 8.12.23 zu Josefow, Pole, ledig, wohnhaft in Josefow. (sitzt für den Vorgang II A -5295/43).

Der flüchtige Jude **F r o s t** und der Pole Jan **W o j c i k** sind inzwischen wieder ergriffen und in das Pol.-Gefängnis Pomichowek eingeliefert worden.



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## Correspondence and External Contacts

Prisoners' post cards, sent from Fort III to the relatives, have been priceless mementoes. They bear the stamp of the Nowy Dwór (*Bugmünde*) post office. The Germans allowed official correspondence in the fort, although not every prisoner had that privilege. Censorship of the content didn't allow the inmates to inform about their actual situation, health condition, or events. The prisoners also wanted to spare the extra suffering their beloved ones, so they reassured them of their good health. Sometimes, it was encrypted information for those staying at liberty. In addition to official correspondence, secret notes were smuggled out of the prison (kites). Their content and post-war accounts show that families would go to the fort to get a visit, pass over a parcel with underwear, warm clothes, food. These parcels, if accepted, rarely ended up with their addresses.



A postcard sent officially from the fort on 5 September 1943 by Kazimierz Piankowski, made available by Wanda Kraszewska. K. Piankowski died on 22 June 1945 of emaciation on his way back home after liberation from KL Mauthausen.



## Executions

Fort III is a place of death of more than a dozen thousands of Polish citizens, killed in isolation or in mass executions, during which the Germans would kill even more than one hundred prisoners at a time. The largest group of executed people were soldiers of the Polish underground. Death sentences were handed down on sessions of a travelling police summary court, held in the fort or at Gestapo headquarters in Nowy Dwór. The accounts of former prisoners indicate that these sessions were reduced to reading out the charges to the defendant and asking if they pleaded guilty. The sentences were enforced usually on the same day, usually by hanging. This was accomplished on the so-called *hillock*, on the right-hand side of the front of the fort, where the Germans ordered the inmates to build gallows. No appeal procedure was available against the sentences of the summary court. It was criminal activity having nothing to do with the administration of justice.

Source documents in this regard are the files of the Gestapo station in Ciechanów-Płock, kept at the Archive of the Institute of National Remembrance in Warsaw<sup>1</sup>. Only few written sentences of summary courts survived to this day, and these documents are particularly valuable sources of information. They provide an indisputable evidence of responsibility of the Germans for the suffering of the population of the occupied territories.

Based on the preserved Gestapo files, we present below information about mass executions that took place in Fort III in Pomiechówek in 1943–1944.

### 31 May 1943

According to the documentation that has survived, it was the first mass execution in Fort III. On that day, the Germans hanged an unspecified number of inmates. The preserved list contains 42 names of executed soldiers of the Home Army from Płońsk, Nowe Miasto and Nasielsk. The document reads: *By sentence of the summary court for the Ciechanów Governmental District and Suwałki District, at a session held on 31/05/1943 at the police prison in Pomiechówek, they were sentenced to death by hanging. The sentence was enforced on the same day*<sup>2</sup>.

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1. *Geheime Staatspolizei, Staatspolizeistelle Zichenau/Schröttersburg*, ref. AIPN GK 629; this collection comprises more than 12,000 file units (portfolios), an archive of personal files, and daily reception logs (*Tagebücher*). It is a unique collection due to the quantity of preserved files.

2. AIPN GK 629/279, files in the case of Janusz Brzozowski and 112 other individuals suspected of membership of the Union of Armed Struggle–Home Army (ZWZ-AK) in the Płońsk Poviát region.

Investigation in the case of this group was conducted by Gestapo officers from Nowy Dwór. First arrests started in December 1942 and lasted until May 1943. During the investigation, the prisoners were kept in the local custody (*Hausgefängnis*). Upon the conclusion of interrogations, most of them were sent to the Działdowo camp (*AEL Soldau*). They would be brought to the fort and placed in a separate cell several days before execution.

A numerous groups of those killed in that execution were soldiers of AK's Nowe Miasto unit: Kazimierz Antoszkiewicz, Szczepan Biliński, Aleksander Galas, Waław Gorzkowski, Zygmunt Jankowski, Waław Jeżółkowski, Stefan Perliński i Hilary Pilitowski, and AK's Nasielsk unit: Wojciech Chojnacki, Stanisław Dąbrowski, Stanisław Jędraszko, Edward Królak, Tadeusz Kwiatkowski, Mieczysław Laskowski, Antoni Sas, Jerzy Suwiński and Józef Załęski. The following people from the Płońsk unit were killed: Feliks Cendrowski, Kazimierz Tyszka, brothers Bolesław and Jerzy Zielińscy, among others. In connection with AK activity, a Member of Polish Parliament Julian Łabęda (arrested and kept in the fort together with his wife and two daughters) was also sentenced to death and executed.

A witness described this execution as follows: *About two weeks after bringing in this group of prisoners, a gestapo non-commissioned officer ... ordered us to build two gallows. Then I saw the 'hillock' of the fort for the first time. It was an embankment over the bunkers-cells, forming a small square. ... After the gallows were built, Bleischmidt gave us spades and ordered ... to dig a large pit. I saw a large group of gestapo officers and the prison commander coming to the square near the gallows. I also noticed prisoners brought in close to the gallows. I didn't see what happened next. After some time, a guard took us out of the bunker to the square. He ordered us to cut off the ropes with hanged people. Then I saw that 12 people were hanged on each gallows. ... The guard shouted at us and ordered to hurry up. ... When we finished removing the bodies, ... I saw another group of prisoners brought towards the gallows, who came under the gallows on their own. ... in this second group, another 24 Poles were hanged<sup>3</sup>.*

The list of 42 convicts, compiled by Gestapo, does not contain the names of all executed people. Aleksander Suwiński, brother of the killed Jerzy Suwiński, gave the following evidence: *From among the prisoners taken out from my cell, prisoner Rzyński returned. He was in a state of absolute shock. The next day ... he told us that he saw 48 prisoners hanged on the 'hillock'. In the last moment ... we was pardoned. I learned that the clothes of all executed prisoners were brought from the 'hillock' to the prison laundry. ... There, among the clothes, I found the jacket of my brother Jerzy<sup>4</sup>.*

3. Deposition by Bolesław Witaszek of 29 July 1974, in: files of the investigation conducted by OKBZH in Warsaw, Ds 2/71.

4. Deposition by Aleksander Suwiński concerning the death of his brother Jerzy, in: files of the investigation conducted by OKBZH in Warsaw, Ds 2/71.

**Geheime Binnentel**  
Geschäftsbereich Personalabteilung  
III W - 436/43

Kanitzsburg, den 7. Juni 1943

**Geheim**

An die  
Abteilung (D) *436/43*  
Am 1. 6. 43

**Gehört:** Polnische "Adressaufzeichnung 43/43" in 2 Teile Flammen, hier 2 x 2 0 2 0 6 8 k i, Janusz und Adress.  
**Vorgang:** Mein Schreiben v. 29.5.43 - III W - 436/43 g und dort. Schreiben v. 28.5.43 - III D - 436/43 g.  
**Anliegen:** 74 Personalbogen und 74 1 P - Karte.

Als Anlage übersende ich 74 Personalbogen von zumtodesurteiligen polnischen Volksgenossen und bitte, gegen sie Kontakt mit dem Ziele der Hinweisung in ein Konzentrationslager zu ermitteln. Besagtenbogen mit dorriges Schreiben vom 24.5.43 - III D - 436/43 g stelle ich mit, dass dasamtliche 42 Polen bei der am 31.5.43 in Polizeistadt Posen durch städtisches Stadtrichterverfahren vor dem Kriegsgericht des Reg. Nr. 1. Stabsamt und dem Kreis Stabsamt zum Tode durch den Strang verurteilt wurden. Des Urteil werde noch am gleichen Tage in Polizeistadt Posen durch vollstreckt.

*(Kontakt mit dem Ziele ermitteln)*

Ich bitte, den Hinweis Antrag mit vorliegender Inschutznummer v. 24.5.43 - III W - 436/43 g gegen die Genannten zurückstellen.

- 1.) Grzegorz, Józef, Bronisław, geb.am 4.7.1916 in Kanitzsburg, ✓
- 2.) Grzegorz, Kazimierz, geb.am 2.11.1908 in Flammen, ✓
- 3.) Grzegorz, Kazimierz, geb.am 11.11.1909 in Flammen, ✓
- 4.) Grzegorz, Kazimierz, geb.am 5.10.1900 in Sosnowitz, ✓
- 5.) Grzegorz, Kazimierz, geb.am 13.12.1912 in Sosnowitz, ✓
- 6.) Grzegorz, Józef, geb.am 11.4.1907 in Sosnowitz, ✓
- 7.) Grzegorz, Stanisław, geb.am 24.7.1901 in Sosnowitz, ✓



- 8.) Kolodziej, Tadeusz, geb.am 16.1.1916 in Czerwik, ✓
- 9.) Kolodziej, Józef, geb.am 24.9.1905 in Zukoninek, ✓
- 10.) Kawczak, Franciszek, geb.am 19.2.1908 in Adamow, ✓
- 11.) Kwidziński, Józef, geb.am 24.2.1896 in Jagodna, ✓
- 12.) Krawczyński, Adam, geb.am 17.7.1907 in Koryciński, ✓
- 13.) Krawczyński, Mieczysław, geb.am 23.5.1912 in Sosnowitz, ✓
- 14.) Kurk, Stanisław, geb.am 1.2.1908 in Sosnowitz, ✓
- 15.) Kwasnik, Jan, geb.am 16.6.1911 in Sosnowitz, ✓
- 16.) Kucjan, Lucjan, geb.am 6.4.1902 in Chadziny-Burki, ✓
- 17.) Kulak, Edward, geb.am 4.11.1908 in Skoroński, ✓
- 18.) Kurka, Władysław, geb.am 26.10.1921 in Brzozna, ✓
- 19.) Kurka, Stefan, geb.am 15.11.1913 in Makolice, ✓
- 20.) Kurka, Aleksander, geb.am 3.2.1891 in Gietok, ✓
- 21.) Kurkiewicz, Kazimierz, geb.am 13.1.1896 in Sosnowitz, ✓
- 22.) Kurkowski, Hilary, geb.am 14.1.1909 in Sosnowitz, ✓
- 23.) Kurkowski, Stanisław, geb.am 25.12.1914 in Sosnowitz, ✓
- 24.) Kurkowski, Julian, geb.am 14.2.1899 in Sosnowitz, ✓
- 25.) Kurkowski, Stanisław, geb.am 3.9.1911 in Sosnowitz, ✓



- 26.) Kurkowski, Mierny, geb.am 2.2.1917 in Sosnowitz, ✓
- 27.) Kurkowski, Stanisław, geb.am 2.12.1907 in Sosnowitz, ✓
- 28.) Kurkowski, Zygmunt, geb.am 17.5.1915 in Detroit/USA, ✓
- 29.) Kurkowski, Kazimierz, geb.am 30.10.1908 in Sosnowitz, ✓
- 30.) Kurkowski, Aleksander, geb.am 2.7.1907 in Sosnowitz, ✓
- 31.) Kurkowski, Mierny, geb.am 10.10.1917 in Sosnowitz, ✓
- 32.) Kurkowski, Mierny, geb.am 29.9.1907 in Sosnowitz, ✓
- 33.) Kurkowski, Jan, geb.am 5.2.1904 in Sosnowitz, ✓
- 34.) Kurkowski, Henryk, geb.am 20.1.1916 in Sosnowitz, ✓
- 35.) Kurkowski, Feliks, geb.am 28.3.1905 in Sosnowitz, ✓
- 36.) Kurkowski, Leon, geb.am 24.4.1904 in Sosnowitz, ✓
- 37.) Kurkowski, Jan, geb.am 19.4.1914 in Sosnowitz, ✓
- 38.) Kurkowski, Andrzej, geb.am 16.5.1900 in Sosnowitz, ✓
- 39.) Kurkowski, Franciszek, geb.am 2.3.1900 in Sosnowitz, ✓
- 40.) Kurkowski, Teodor, geb.am 14.1.1905 in Sosnowitz, ✓
- 41.) Kurkowski, Józef, geb.am 14.3.1903 in Sosnowitz, ✓
- 42.) Kurkowski, Władysław, geb.am 20.1.1914 in Sosnowitz, ✓



AIPN GK 629/279, a list with the names of 42 prisoners hanged in the fort on 31 May 1943

## 25 June 1943

At a single session, on 25 June 1943, the summary court handed down the largest known number of 'guilty' sentences. One hundred and seventy-two members of the Polish resistance were killed, among them 169 members of the Polish Workers' Party and People's Guard (or people suspected of such membership) and 3 soldiers of the Home Army<sup>5</sup>. The sentence was enforced on the same day about 12:30 pm. Due to extremely poor sanitary conditions, emaciation and injuries sustained during interrogations, dysentery epidemic broke out in the fort. Fearing that the guards could be infected, the hanging of the convicts was reversed. All of them were probably shot dead.

In a post-war investigation, a former prisoner, Mr Bolesław Witaszek, gave the following evidence: *In June 1943 – I don't remember the exact date – the gestapo officer Bleischmidt ... ordered us to dig two large pits ... we were digging every day for probably more than four days. Following the completion of that work, probably already on the next day ... when I was sitting in the cell, I heard a large group of people marching, and dogs barking. ... Shortly after, we heard a burst of shots from machine guns. After some time ... a guard opened the door to our cell ... and ordered us to go out to the 'hillock' ... I saw ... human corpses partially covered with earth. Both pits were filled almost full ... so that not much earth was needed to cover them. ... Looking at the mass of those lying in the pits, I realised that ... an extensive execution took place in Pomiechówek*<sup>6</sup>.

Most victims of that execution were arrested in April 1943, during a dragnet operation in the villages of the Kampinos municipality: Bieliny, Zamość, some part of Górki Kampinoskie and Nowe Budy. It was a reprisal action. Gestapo explained the arrests with numerous assaults of armed gangs, including on the Zamczysko sawmill, in Piaski, on military police station in Tułowice. These people were the first inmates imprisoned in the fort. Few out of the 300 people arrested during the dragnet survived. Those who avoided death by firing squad, died mutilated during interrogations or caught dysentery and died without medical help. Releases were rare. They left women and orphaned children in the villages of the Kampinos municipality. This tragedy is still alive among victims' families.

5. AIPN GK 629/3275, files in the case of Stefan Małecki and others charged with activity in Communist PPR, GL organisation in the area of Kampinos municipality.

6. Deposition by Bolesław Witaszek, in: files of the investigation conducted by OKBZH in Warsaw, Ds 2/71.

Stapo .

B.Nr. II A 1- 423/43 g

Schröttersburg, den 28. Juni 1943

**Geheim**

1. Fernschreiben:

Dringend! Sofort vorlegen!  
=====

An den

Inspekteur der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD  
-z.Hd.von #Standartenführer Dr.C a n a r i s-  
O.V.i.A.-

in K ö n i g s b e r g / P r .

Betrifft: Standgerichtliche Aburteilung von 172  
Schutzangehörigen polnischen Volkstums,  
Hier: M a l e c k i und Andere.

Vorgang: Dort, FS. vom 23. und 26.6.1943 und meine  
FS-Berichte vom 22. und 25.6.1943-  
II A 1- 423/43 g- und mündliche Rücksprache  
in Bialystok.

Die Exekution der 172 Schutzangehörigen poln.  
Volkstums, die in der Sitzung des Standgerichts für  
den Reg.-Bezirk Zichenau und den Kreis Sudauen am  
25.6.1943 zum Tode verurteilt wurden, fand am 25.6.  
1943, 12,30 Uhr, statt.

Stapo.Zichenau/Schröttersburg  
B.Nr. II A 1-423/43 g  
gez.S c h u l z, #-Stubaf.



AIPN GK 629/3275, confirmation of the execution of the death sentence on 172 prisoners of the fort on 25 June 1943 at 12:30 pm

## 18 September 1943

Using a procedure of so-called special treatment (*Sonderbehandlung*) which sanctioned executions without court sentence, the Germans murdered Maciej Darowski, a 20-years-old Pole, in the fort<sup>7</sup>. The young pianist, forced to work in a tailor's shop (making uniforms for the Wehrmacht), was accused of sabotage. He was brought to the execution from the Plock prison. The family learned about the last hours of his life from the account of a relative imprisoned in the same facility: *Maciej received a piece of bread and was said by the Germans that he would be released. Hearing that ... he gave the piece of bread to someone else, ... happy that*

7. *Sonderbehandlung* – it was an euphemism used by the Germans to describe executions carried out without court sentence, only based on a decision from Gestapo station, upon prior authorisation from the Reich Security Main Office (RSHA – *Reichssicherheitshauptamt*). A telex was preserved in the files, in which Gestapo in Ciechanów-Plock applies for authorisation for executions in one of the concentration camps or *other isolated place*.

he would go home, and that he would no longer need bread in the prison<sup>8</sup>. Maciej Darowski was hanged on 18 September 1943 at 9:50 am.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
<b>Name:</b> (bei Frauen auch Geburtsname) Darowski										II		<b>Wohnung:</b> (Zeit der Eintragung, eintragen) - 12.7.43 - Schröttersburg, Horst-Wessel-Pl.22					<b>Defonahme:</b> ja		
<b>Dotname:</b> Maciej										A					<b>Bildnachricht:</b>				
<b>Geburtsort und -ort:</b> 4.10.23 Dombrowa															<b>Finger-Abdruckkarte:</b>				
<b>Beruf:</b> Schneider															<b>Schriftprobe:</b>				
<b>Familienstand:</b> ledig																			
<b>Staatsangehörigkeit:</b> Polen																			
<b>Deck-Name:</b> <b>Abreise:</b>																			
<b>Politische Einstellung:</b>					<b>Glaubensbekenntnis:</b> r.-k.														
<b>Datum der Aufstufung</b>		<b>S a c h v e r h a l t</b>													<b>Staatspolizeistelle</b> <b>Gefängniszeichen</b>				
12.7.43		D. wurde am 10.7.43 wegen Arbeitsabschlag festgenommen und in das Strafgefängnis Schröttersburg eingeliefert.													II-11-1007/4				
20.7.43		D. wird wegen seines Verhaltens einem KL. überstellt.																	
12.10.43		D. wurde am 18.9.43 auf Anordnung des RSHA. im Pol.-Gef. Pomiechowek durch den Strang hingerichtet.													 INSTYTUT PAMIĘCI NARODOWEJ				

AIPN GK 629/12996, a card for Maciej Darowski from Gestapo file, with a note of execution

## 1 November 1943

A numerous group of the prisoners kept in the fort were people arrested for ‘smuggling’, or illegal movement of goods through the customs border with the General Government. In nearby places, many organised groups were active, smuggling cattle across the Vistula river to Warsaw. Given the exploitative economic policies of the Germans, smuggling of rationed food from villages to cities became the only option for survival in cities faced with mounting wave of hunger.

During investigation, Gestapo aimed at proving the most serious guilt of the defendants, and in particular membership of illegal organisations and possessing arms. The file of the case against Stanisław Zakrzewski reads: *The investigations revealed that since the spring of 1942, large quantities of cattle were constantly transferred from the territory of the Reich to General Government by Polish smugglers and armed groups. Most of that cattle was used as food supply for the gangs operating in the border zone and General Government. In this way, large*

8. Deposition by Zofia Darowska, a sister to Maciej, of 20 March 1975, in: files of the investigation conducted by OKBZH in Warsaw, Ds. 2/71.

quantities of cattle were taken out of the German food industry, which resulted in huge losses. Under the investigation, 30 Poles involved in the smuggling were arrested<sup>9</sup>.

At the session of the summary court in Nowy Dwór on 1 November 1943, nine Poles of that group were sentenced to death. They were charged with possessing arms, smuggling cattle to General Government, and membership of a Communist organisation, so-called *Kuba-gang*. On the same day, they were hanged in the backyard of the fort, on the so-called *hillock*.

## 13 December 1943

As part of an extensive action against Communist organisations, in 1943 Gestapo stopped activists of the Polish Workers' Party (Polish: Polska Partia Robotnicza, abbreviated PPR) and members of assault groups of the People's Guard (Polish: Gwardia Ludowa, abbreviated GL). Thirty-two people were sentenced to death at the session of the summary court on 13 December 1943. On the same day at 2:30 pm, 30 men were hanged in the backyard of the fort. Two convicts, Jan Bandachowski and Czesław Lewandowski, were withdrawn in the last moment. Those hanged included, among others, members of PPR leadership: Jan Wilczyński – member of the Regional Committee, and members of powiat and municipal committees from Płock: Jan Orliński, Zygmunt Szewczykiewicz, Aleksander Małecki, Lucjan Piotrowski, Jan Sobiecki, and from Płońsk: Adam Ulicki and Lucjan Szyperski.

A numerous group were PPR activists from the Płock Poviát, including brothers Wawrzyniec and Szczepan Siedlich, Antoni Bandachowski, Henryk Malanowski, and others. Also the people who provided help to the People's Guard were killed – Jadwiga Jakubiak and Stefan Krupa. Those killed also included members of the GL's assault group: Edward Gajkowski, Tadeusz Grylak, Mieczysław Grzelak and Józef Hrehorowicz, as well as their commander Franciszek Lewandowski<sup>10</sup>.

Władysław Grylak, brother to Tadeusz Grylak murdered on the same day, recalled: *I saw a terrible picture. Somewhere on the side of the square on the hillock, I saw gallows with more than a dozen ropes, showing marks of cutting, hanging down from the crosspiece. ... underneath, I saw human corpses piled on top of each*

9. AIPN GK 629/10964, file in the case of Stanisław Zakrzewski and others. Gestapo tried to charge with Communist activity those suspected of belonging to the so-called *Kuba-gang*, but such claims are dubious. Probably, it was only a group dealing with the smuggling of cattle to General Government.

10. Jan Ptasieński *Na Północ od Warszawy, Szkice z dziejów ruchu oporu 1939–1945*, Warszawa 1984, pp. 129–131.

L i s t e

der durch das Standgericht für den Regierungsbezirk Zichenau und den Kreis Sudauen am 1.11.1943 zum Tode verurteilten Polen

- 1) Stanislaw Z a k c z e w s k i,  
geb.am 21.1.1915 in Mala-Wies,  
ledig, röm.kath., Landwirt,  
wohnh. in Mala-Wies, Krs.Plöhnen;
- 2) Antoni K a m i n s k i,  
geb.am 5.8.1921 in Mochty,  
ledig, röm.kath., Arbeiter,  
wohnh. in Mochty, Krs.Plöhnen;
- 3) Michael K o s t e c k i,  
geb.am 12.2.1919 in Aleksandrow,  
verheiratet, röm.kath., Landwirt,  
wohnh. in Aleksandrow, Gem.Kampinos,  
Krs.Sochaczew/GG.;
- 4) Stanislaw P o t o c k i,  
geb.am 13.10.1909 in Roztocka,  
verh., röm.kath., Arbeiter,  
wohnh. in Roztocka, Gem.Kampinos,  
Krs.Sochaczew/GG.;
- 5) Piotr P o t o c k i,  
geb.am 25.7.1903 in Roztocka,  
verh., röm.kath., Landarbeiter,  
wohnh. in Roztocka, Gem.Kampinos,  
Krs.Sochaczew/GG.;
- 6) Feliks P o t o c k i,  
geb.am 1.1.1907 in Roztocka,  
verh., röm.kath., Landarbeiter,  
wohnh. in Roztocka, Gem.Kampinos,  
Krs.Sochaczew/GG.;
- 7) Zygmunt G l o w a c k i,  
geb.am 4.10.1914 in Zakroszym,  
verh., röm.kath., Arbeiter,  
wohnh. in Otpatki b/zakroszym,  
Gem.Modlin, Krs.Plöhnen;
- 8) Waclaw C i u p a,  
geb.am 18.7.1924 in Mochty,  
ledig, röm.kath., Kiesschöpfer,  
wohnh. in Warschau, Freta 21/7;
- 9) Josef G o z d e k,  
geb.am 10.3.1921 in Nowa-Dabrowa,  
ledig, röm.kath., Arbeiter,  
wohnh. in Kiscinne, Gem.Kampinos,  
Krs.Sochaczew/GG.



other<sup>11</sup>. Son to Antoni Bandachowski, Jan, gave the following evidence: ... We were twenty metres from the gallows. I saw execution maybe not very clearly ... I saw my father standing on the bench under the gallows. But the moment he was hanged down ... No, I didn't see<sup>12</sup>.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Name: (bei Frauen auch Geburtsname) Wilczyński,										<b>II</b>		Wohnung: (Zeit der Eintragung eintragen) -17.6.43- Weißhütte, Krs. Schrottersburg,				Personalausht:			
Vorname: Jan,														Bildvermerk:					
Geburtsort u. -ort: 3.12.1912 in Baumkrone,														Finger-Abdruck- karte:					
Beruf: Landwirt,														Schriftprobe:					
Familienstand: verh.,																			
Staatsangehörigkeit: Polen,																			
Mutter-Name: Adress:																			
Politische Einstellung:					Staatsbe- kenntnis: röm.-kath.,														
Datum der Auftragung		<b>S a d v e r h a l t</b>												Staatspolizei- Gefängnisse					
17.6.43:		W. wurde am 10. 5. 1943 wegen illegaler Betätigung für die poln. komm. Partei PPR festgenommen.												IIA1-2265/43					
11.1.44		W. wurde wegen kommunistischer Betätigung am 13.12. 43 durch das Standgericht zum Tode verurteilt. Urteil am gleichen Tage vollstreckt.												II A 2265/43					
 INSTYTUT PAMIĘCI NARODOWEJ 6. St. Pr. 14																			

AIPN GK 629/12996, a card for Jan Wilczyński from Gestapo file, with a note of execution

## 4 February 1944

Deposition by Bolesław Czaplicki, a former prisoner of the fort, reads: *On that day, 'Hauptgestapo' came from Plock and summoned each of us to the commander's office to hear the report read out aloud. ... You could say either 'yes, that's right', or 'no'. Usually, everyone would say 'that's right' to avoid further beating.*

On 4 February 1944, the German summary court (*Standgericht*) for the Ciechanów Governmental District and Suwałki District handed down, in the police prison of Fort III in Pomiechówek, death sentences for more than 100 soldiers of the Home Army. The Germans hanged them on the same day in the backyard of

11. Deposition by Władysław Grylak of 11 July 1974, in: files of the investigation conducted by OKBZH in Warsaw, Ds 2/71.

12. Deposition by Jan Banachowski of 30 July 1974, in: files of the investigation conducted by OKBZH in Warsaw, Ds 2/71.

the fort. Witnesses' accounts say that the execution ended at dawn. Probably not all convicts were executed on that day. This is evidenced by records of the file of Czesław Markiewicz, commander of the Podolszyce AK post. They confirm that the sentence handed down against him on 4 February was enforced on 5 February 1944<sup>13</sup>.



AIPN GK 629/I/969, a police photograph of Czesław Markiewicz b. 28 Feb 1906

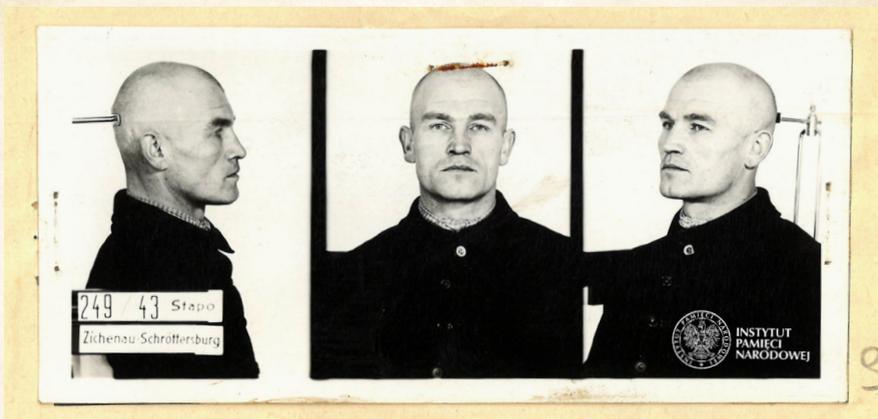
Gestapo files include a list of 24 hanged soldiers of AK's Płock-Sierpc Inspectorate. They were captured in a crackdown conducted by Gestapo since 1943 with the help of informers. Gestapo also captured materials that exposed members of the Płock AK unit when a liaison officer was stopped at the Bielsk post. In this way, Mateusz Fałkowski, the commander of the AK's Płock District, was captured. His arrest was followed by others. Brutal interrogations in Gestapo headquarters in Płock ended up with death sentences.

The list of convicts includes names of the soldiers of Kedyw sabotage units: Bolesław Kosowski – head of the Kedyw, Józef Przybyliński – the commander of the AK's Bielsk post, and Wincenty Woźnicki, Ludwik Parzuchowski and Bronisław Jankowski – soldiers of assault platoons and squads of the AK's Łęg post. The date of the execution and the fact that the victims included Kedyw soldiers indicate a connection of the execution with reprisal actions conducted by Gestapo after the assassination of Franz Kutchera, the SS and police commander in the Warsaw District<sup>14</sup>. These prisoners were brought in to the fort on 2 and 3 February.

Twenty-four names of the individuals included in that list is only a small group of those murdered as part of that execution. They also included: Mieczysław

13. AIPN GK 629/I/969, file in the case of Czesław Markiewicz.

14. Kutchera, called the butcher of Warsaw, was assassinated by Kedyw soldiers from AK Headquarters on 1 February 1944. In retaliation for his death, the Germans conducted a number of public executions on the streets of Warsaw. Kutchera's funeral was held on 4 February.

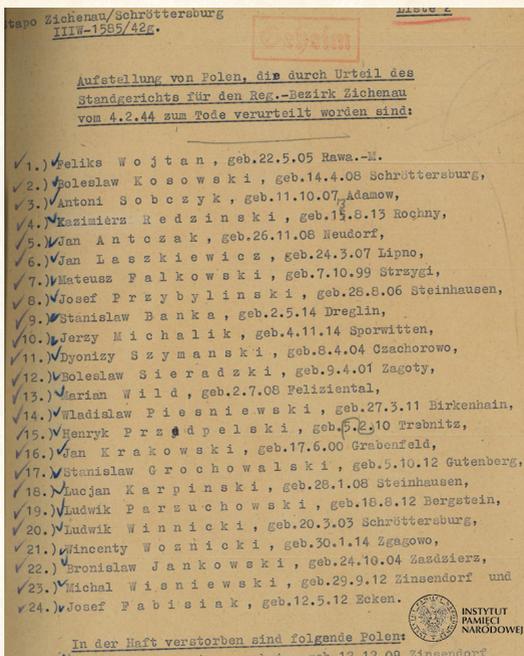


AIPN GK 629/I/831, a police photograph of Bolesław Kosowski b. 14 June 1908 - head of AK's Kedyw District Płock



AIPN GK 629/7182, a police photograph of Wincenty Woźnicki, b. 10 Jan 1914 - a soldier of Kedyw's sabotage squad

Teodorczyk – Head of Department III at the staff of the Command of Region North of AK's Warsaw Area, members of staff of the Płock District, AK: Jan Laszkiewicz – head of intelligence at Płock-Sierpc Inspectorate, previously co-founder of the Płock Secret Scouts' Troop, Jerzy Michalik, and many others. On that day, soldiers of AK's post in Borowiczki municipality were also killed: Stefan Garwacki, Jan Zaleski, Ludwik Lewalski and members of staff of AK's Zatory post in the Pułtusk municipality: commander Marceli Rzewnicki, Feliks Jakubowski, Zygmunt Zybiewski, and many others.



APIN GK 629/1907, a name list of 24 AK soldiers sentenced to death by the summary court on 4 February 1944

## 20 May 1944

Between February and May 1944, a series of arrests took place in AK's Płońsk-Pułtusk Inspectorate. Initially, they covered the AK post in Kroczewo. On 29 February, Head of the Inspectorate, capt. Adolf Rowicki, died in fight with Gestapo during a dragnet<sup>15</sup>. Zygmunt Piórkowski was arrested on the spot and imprisoned in the fort. Brutal interrogation led to other arrests. In March, the Germans captured Eugeniusz Żabowski – commander of the Płońsk District, and members of staff: Zbigniew Kadziński, Tadeusz Archutowski, and Tadeusz Guzanowski. On 22 March, Gestapo arrested six soldiers of AK's post in Zakroczym, among them the commander of the post, Jan Chilicki. Brutal interrogation lasted several months. On 20 May 1944, at a session in Fort III in Pomiechówek, the summary court handed down new death sentences. Gestapo files include a list of 21 convicted soldiers of the Inspectorate. The Germans decided to execute them in KL Stutthof.

15. The dragnet at the Inspectorate's headquarters in Rowicki's house in Wólka Smoszevska near Zakroczym was facilitated by informants. Also son to the inspector – Andrzej Rowicki, and Kazimierz Muchla, died in the fight. Their burial location is unknown. According to the account of one witness, they were allegedly carried towards the fort.

According to the files, the death sentence by hanging was executed in the camp on 21 June 1944<sup>16</sup>. The remaining 27 soldiers, not proved to hold leadership functions in the organisation, were sent to a concentration camp<sup>17</sup>.

**Chejnie Stansjonalni**  
**Stansjonalni**  
 B.W.R. IV 10 - 279/44 Kc  
 Schüttersburg, den 20. Mai 1944  
 Nr. 81/44  
**Cheim**  
 An das  
 Referat IV 6 b  
 in Hauesse.  
 Betrifft: Polen J o s o w i a k, Josef, geb. am 15.3.1921 in Boorbechen und andere.  
 Vorges.: Dort. Akts. B.W.R. IV 6 - 82/44 g.  
 " " B.W.R. IV 6 b - 112/44 g.  
 " " B.W.R. IV 6 b - 133/44 g.  
 " " B.W.R. IV 6 b - 153/44 g.  
 " " B.W.R. IV 6 b - 172/44 g. und  
 hies. vorl. Schutzhaftentwürfe vom 8.5.44 - B.W.R. IV 1 b 579/44 g.  
 Anlagen: Ergänzungsblätter, Personalbogen, ID-Karteikarten.  
 Die nachgenannten Schutzangehörigen poln. Volkstums wurden in der Sitzung des Ständerichtes für den Bez. Gen. Niesens und den Kreis Siedau am 20.5.44 in Pol.Gef. Pomiechówek zum Tode durch den -strang verurteilt. Ich bitte, die gegen sie angeordnete vorl. Inschutzhaftnahme aufzuheben und ihre Durchführung in KL Stutthof zwecks Urteilsvollstreckung zu veranlassen.  
 I  
 J o r k o w s k i, Zygmunt, geb. am 20.3.14 in "Goin-Dlucenienska,  
 Z a b o w s k i, Augustyn, geb. am 2.6.15 in Nyschowo,  
 K a d i n s k i, Wladyslaw, geb. am 5.9.24 in Schüttersburg,  
 K u s k o w s k i, Zygmunt, geb. am 14.1.17 in Siedau,  
 S a m o s k i, Konstanty, geb. am 23. 49, in Geraszecz-Belny,  
 C h i l i c k i, Jan, geb. am 27.7.1909 in Isteban,  
 Z d u n o w s k i, Stanislaw, geb. am 17.11.1916 in Baboschowo,  
 Z u b o w s k i, Tadeusz, geb. am 12.10.1916 in Korybie,  
 J o s o w i a k, Josef, geb. am 15.3.1921 in Boorbechen,  
 INSTITUTE PAMIĘCI NARODOWI

W a j a s k i, Kazimierz, geb. am 25.10.1902 in Kroosowo,  
 C o s i c k i, Mieczyslaw, geb. am 8.4.1918 in Niesensfeld,  
 M a l y s i a k, Zygmunt, geb. am 20.2.1918 in Laganak,  
 L e s e k, Josef, geb. am 3.3.1911 in Glankow,  
 Z i a s k i, Jan, geb. 24.6.1913 in Kowitech,  
 G u s n o w s k i, Tadeusz, geb. am 21.6.1914 in Baboschowo,  
 I d a k o w s k i, Michal, geb. am 29.9.1904 in Brees,  
 Z d u n o w s k i, Jan, geb. am 8.2.1919 in Baboschowo,  
 Z d u n o w s k i, Antoni, geb. am 27.1.1925 in Baboschowo,  
 Z d u n o w s k i, Antoni, geb. am 9.9.1901 in Sokolniki,  
 K o p e z i a s k i, Sylwester, geb. am 20.12.1924 in Baboschowo,  
 K o s l o w s k i, Josef, geb. am 22.9.1903 in Trostki.  
 Den nachgenannten konnte eine Mitgliedschaft zu poln. Widerstandsbewegungen nicht nachgewiesen werden. Ich bitte, die gegen sie angeordnete vorl. Inschutzhaftnahme wieder aufzuheben. Den Entlassungstag werde ich mitteilen.  
 B r o n o s z e w s k i, Edmund, geb. am 4.5.1923 in Zakroczyzn,  
 W l o d o w s k i, Zygmunt, geb. am 8.1.1924 in Sokolniki,  
 Z e m p l o w s k i, Stanislaw, geb. am 22.4.1898 in Pogorzowice.  
 Die nachgeführten Schutzangehörigen poln. Volkstums sind überführt und geständig, für die poln. Widerstandsbewegung "ZZZ" (Polnischer Aufständischen Verband) geworden, verpflichtet oder vereidigt worden zu sein bzw. hatten von dem Bestehen der Organisation Kenntnis und unterhielten Bindungen zu Funktionären des "ZZZ". Sie haben Mitgliedsbeiträge an die Organisation abgeführt und illegale poln. Zeitschriften zum Lesen und zum Weiterverbreiten erhalten.  
 Ich bitte, gegen sie Schutzhaft mit dem Ziele der Einweisung in

AIPN GK 629/2971, a name list of 21 prisoners sentenced to death by the summary court on 20 May 1944, the order says that the hanging shall be executed in KL Stutthof

## 26 May 1944

On that day, Adam Bomert, an AK soldier, was hanged in the fort. He lived in Gralewo and operated a shop selling imported foodstuffs and spices. He was a German of descent, entered to the German National List (DVL). He was arrested on 14 April 1944 and sentenced to death by the summary court on 24 May 1944, for his membership of the Polish resistance and the support he provided to the Home Army.

16. According to the account of Edmund Tomaszewski, one of the prisoners from that group sent to KL Stutthof, the camp's authorities ordered to murder 80 people in gas chamber, including those who arrived from Pomiechówek. He mentioned the names of Jan Chilicki and Jan Lasek. Collection of Photocopies of AIPN GK 912/613 Z *Pamiętnika Tomaszewskiego Edmunda z Zakroczyznia*, p. 74.  
 17. AIPN GK 629/2971, file in the case of Stefan Lipka.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Name: Bomert										Wohnung: Gerlewo, Krs. Płönnen,									
Vorname: Adam																			
Geboren: 9.4.1912 Wola-Briwilenska																			
Beruf: Kaufmann																			
Deckname: B a g n e t																			
Politische Einstellung:										Staatsangehörigkeit: DVL-Gruppe III					Schriftprobe:		Bildvermerk:		
2.6.44		B. wurde in der Sitzung des Standgerichts für den Reg. Bez. Zichenau und den Kreis Sudauen am 24.5.44 zum Tode durch den Strang verurteilt. Das Urteil wurde am 26.5.44 im Pol. Gef. Pomiechówek vollstreckt. Die gegen B. beantragte vorl. Inschutzhaftnahme wurde aufgehoben. Über die Aburteilung des B. wurde das Ref. IV 6 b und IV M in Kenntnis gesetzt.																	

AIPN GK 629/12996, a card from file for Adam Bomert executed on 26 May 1944 in the police prison in Fort III

## 30 July 1944

In connection with the front coming closer to Warsaw, the Germans decided to liquidate the prison in Fort III. In early July, probably 250–300 prisoners remained there. According to witnesses, on Saturday 29 July 1944, the Germans took away under escort a large group of prisoners to the Modlin railway station. The files which have survived show that they were due to be transferred to KL Stutthof. However, no transport arrived on that day, so the prisoners were taken back to the fort.

On Sunday, 30 July, the Germans released a small group of prisoners, including several women. All other prisoners were executed. They were probably shot dead. According to local residents, shooting from the fort was heard until evening. Bodies of the victims were buried in pits at the fort. The exact number of those murdered, and their names, have not been established.

The analysis of the files of the Gestapo post in Ciechanów-Płock that have survived and accounts by witnesses indicate dramatic events in the last dozen or so hours of prisoners' lives. The documents note that on that day, a summary court session was held, at which an unspecified number of members of the resistance

were sentenced to death. This is indicated by notes on the files of more than a dozen prisoners, including Józef Antczak, Waclaw Ciosek, Dr Józef Witwicki. Those murdered included nine soldiers of the 11<sup>th</sup> Lancers' Regiment from Ciechanów, who had been placed at the fort as hostages. It was the last mass execution carried out in the Police prison in Fort III in Pomiechówek known from Gestapo files.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Name: Witwicki										Wohnung: Mielau, Herbert-Norkusstr. 4 <i>22</i>									
Vorname: Josef																			
Geboren: 21.4.1902 in Cherson																			
Beruf: Arzt, Dr. med.																			
Nachname:																			
Familienstand: verh. <i>LP</i>																			
Politische Einstellung		2.8.44		Wurde durch das Standgericht für den Reg. Bezirk Zichenau am 30.7.44 zum Tode verurteilt. Urteilsvollstreckung am 30.7.44 in Pomiechówek.										IV 1 b-3109/43 g-62,43-W - 183					
Zeit		7.8.44.		Aufhebung der Schutzhaft wurde beantragt. - W. ist am 30.7.44 im Polizeigeängnis Pomiechówek verstorben.										IV 6 b - 36-44g.					

AIPN GK 629/12996, a card from Gestapo file for Dr Józef Witwicki

After all prisoners were murdered, the prison crew left the fort for some time. In late August and early September 1944, during the Warsaw Uprising, a labour camp was organised in the fort facilities. The Poles arrested near Warsaw were kept there. In the underground corridors of the fort, an inscription made by residents of Wołomin and Marki (Struga district) has been preserved to this day. The inmates were sent to work outside of the fort to dig trenches and cover up the tracks of crime. The number of those kept there varied. The fort also operated a camp for Wehrmacht soldiers who deserted the army. At the turn of January 1945, the camp was evacuated. The prisoners were driven towards Płońsk and Płock. Some of them managed to escape<sup>18</sup>. The lot of other evacuated people is unknown.

18. Deposition by Józef Ruskowski, former prisoner of that camp, of 6 August 1974, in: files of the investigation conducted by OKBZH in Warsaw, Ds. 2/71. According to his account, he was evacuated from the fort with a group of 1500 people. He managed to escape.

# Chapter III: 1945–2021

## Post-war Exhumations

### 1945–1966

First exhumations in Fort III in Pomiechówek started on 10 April 1945. They were directed by Jerzy Kowalski, the first governor of Pomiechówek appointed after the war, under pressure of local residents and victims' families. The exhumations were preceded by Holy Mass conducted with crowds of people who gathered in the fort area.

The bodies were recovered without the involvement of Polish Red Cross workers. The digging was ordered to German colonists and Volksdeutsche living in the area, who usually had not been involved in the crimes. Families from all over the Mazovian region came to Pomiechówek in search for the bodies of their relatives. A shocking account from the April exhumations was given by Mrs Helena Szarzycka: *I was present at the activity ... Bodies of 270 Polish men and 5 women, who had been shot dead, were recovered from that pit. Beside, in a smaller pit, six men murdered by the Germans were buried. Those six men had bags on their heads and they were tied up with barbed wire. ... they were prisoners who, according the account of an eye witness, Grzegorzcyk, were forced to ... bury those 275 prisoners in the large pit*<sup>1</sup>.

The body of Rev. Aleksander Cyryl Dardziński, the Guardian of the Capuchin order in Zakroczym was recognised by the family and fellow monks among the exhumed people. This courageous monk who had rendered huge services to the Zakroczym population was arrested on 25 July 1944. He was charged with supporting the AK. According to witnesses, bodies of five or six women were recovered from the death pits, of whom the following were recognised: Bogumiła

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1. Deposition by Helena Szarzycka of 7 May 1968, in: files of the investigation conducted by OKBZH in Warsaw, Ds 2/71.



Photographs from exhumation, made available from commemorative albums, April 1945

Endrych, Maria Jaworska, Janina Karłowicz and Zofia Krauze.

The identified bodies were collected by the families and buried in parish cemeteries. Other bodies that had not been recognised or collected by families, were buried in the fort, in a large grave on the right-hand side backyard of the fort, called the hillock. There, a temporary cemetery was established. The victims of the last execution from 30 July 1944 were mainly buried there. In fear of a potential outbreak of epidemic, recoveries from the other six identified graves were abandoned. After the exhumations, a Mass for the dead was held in Saint Anna Church in Pomiechowo.

The remains of the victims buried in the right-hand side backyard of the fort were recovered on 18–19 June 1948 during an exhumation conducted by workers of the Polish Red Cross. About 120 bodies were recovered at the time and transferred to the parish cemetery in Pomiechowo. Exhumation reports of those activities have survived. There is also a drawing showing where in the cemetery particular bodies were buried, with the report reference assigned to each of them.



Standing around the coffin with Rev. Cyryl: on the left-hand side his sister Zofia Dardzińska, on the right-hand side Friar Redemptus Jędrzejczak. The body of Rev. Cyryl was buried in monastic vaults in Zakroczym, photograph made available by Agnieszka Dardzińska-Głębocka

In the fort area, also the remains of soldiers of the Polish Army who died in 1939 were recovered. First, on 14 November 1946, during exhumation works conducted in Pomiechówek municipality, and then on 13 November 1966 – during construction works conducted in the fort. The recovered remains were buried in a mass grave in the Pomiechowo cemetery.



Temporary cemetery on the place of executions, so-called hillock - right-hand side backyard. On the photo, standing before the cross is Zofia Dardzińska, photograph made available by Agnieszka Dardzińska-Głębocka

## 2018-2020

WIn 2018–2020, the Combat and Martyrdom Commemoration Bureau, Institute of National Remembrance, conducted archeological and exhumation works in Fort III, aimed at detailed examination of the grave locations and exhumation of all the remains of the victims of the murderous activity of the 1941–1944 period that have still been buried in death pits. Due to extensive size of the area, the work was conducted in three stages.

First exhumations were conducted in October 2018 on the small, left-hand side backyard. During two weeks only, remains of 57 people were recovered, including 26 complete skeletons (16 men and 10 women) and post-exhumation remains originating from at least 31 other people. Some of the victims were killed with a shot in the rear of the head. Probably, these were victims of executions from 30 July 1944. The funeral ceremony took place on 15 December 2018. The coffins were buried in the fort area, in a temporary grave on the left-hand side backyard of the fort. Archaeological work conducted at the location ruled out the existence of prior burials.



2 November 2019 - the first All Souls' Day in Fort III. A small girl standing in front of the graves of the victims whose exhumed remains were buried on the left-hand side backyard

The next stage of the works, lasting from June to July 2019, covered the right-hand side backyard and a fragment of the infamous hillock. Remains of 43 adults and 3 children were recovered. On 5 September 2019, on the left-hand side backyard

of the fort, near the graves established following prior exhumations, another funeral ceremony was held. It had an official, national profile. It was attended by, among others, Mariusz Błaszczak, Minister of National Defence, and Dr Jarosław Szarek, President of the Institute of National Remembrance.



5 September 2019 - funeral of the victims whose remains have been exhumed in Fort III. On the photo, Mariusz Błaszczak, the Minister of National Defence, Polish Government. Photograph by Sławek Kaper, IPN, source: <https://ipn.gov.pl/aktualnosci/75781>

The last stage of the exhumation work lasted from 16 September to 21 December 2020. It aimed at finding and recovering isolated and mass graves in the eastern part of the fort, mainly on the right-hand side backyard, called the *hillock*. As a result of that work, 75 complete skeletons and a significant number of bone fragments remained after German exhumations aimed at covering up the tracks of their crimes. Some skeletons were incomplete. Also, the fireplace where the bodies of the murdered prisoners were reduced to ashes, and remains of a gallows 19 m long were found. In addition, the moat of the fort was examined near the place called the *execution wall*.

As a result of exhumation work lasting three years, complete remains of 146 people, fragments of skeletons of more than 130 people, and a huge number of isolated bones were buried in a temporary cemetery, on the left-hand side backyard of Fort III in Pomiechówek. In a close distance from the exhumed pit with the remains of Polish soldiers who died in the military campaign of September 1939 (the grave known from the photos of the time), another grave of the 1939 defenders of the fort was found.

On 17 December 2020, the victims were buried in the area of Fort III in Pomiechówek with military entourage, in accordance with military ceremonial procedure. Adam Siwek, Head of the Combat and Martyrdom Commemoration



Right-hand side backyard, so-called hillock - recovered remains of 8 soldiers who died in the defence of Fort III in September 1939, photograph published on the FB profile of the Combat and Martyrdom Commemoration Bureau, IPN



Exhumation works on the right-hand side backyard - October 2020

Bureau, said that in 2021 the Institute of National Remembrance, together with the Ministry of National Defence and the Mazovian Governor, would design a military cemetery in Fort III, where the remains of the victims of German crimes would be eventually buried. On 20 May 2021, the exhumed bones of eight soldiers of the Polish Army fighting in defence of the fort were ceremonially buried in the parish cemetery in Pomiechówek.



Man's golden ring with initials OW 25.3.17 engraved on the inner side, recovered during exhumations in the right-hand side backyard, November 2020

## Activities to Commemorate Fort III in Pomiechówek

On 7 May 1972, a popular-science session was held in Pomiechówek addressing German crimes in Fort III, titled '*Pomiechówek Indicts*'. It was organised by: Regional Executive Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party (PZPR), Regional Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes in Warsaw, and Poviát Committee of the Front of National Unity in Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki. More than 300 former prisoners of the fort were present at the session. An audio recording and photographic documentation of the conference has been preserved.

On 24 September 1972, at the square in front of the Elementary School in Pomiechówek, a monument was unveiled, commemorating the victims of World War II, including those murdered in Fort III. The monument bears the following inscription: *Homage and eternal remembrance to the patriots murdered by Hitler's fascists*. The unveiling ceremony brought together crowds of people. The monument was created by sculptor Antoni Ślęzak.

In 1952–2006, Fort III was an active storage facility for munitions of the Polish Army. It was closely guarded and inaccessible. For this reason, it started to

fade away from collective memory. After the years, it has been virtually forgotten. Since 2007, the fort has ceased to be used for military purposes and stood empty. It has become an asset of the Military Property Agency. It was closely guarded by security officers, which prevented theft and devastation. On 11 May 2009, Fort III in Pomiechówek was entered to the Register of Monuments.

Since the withdrawal of the military in 2007, Fort III has been commemorated by the Community Centre in Pomiechówek (now called PomPa Pomiechówek). From time to time, meetings addressing the history were held and Holy Masses celebrated in the fort. In 2018–2019, two academic conferences were held in Pomiechówek addressing the history of that place, organised by: the Institute of National Remembrance, PomPa Pomiechówek Centre, and Fort III Pomiechówek Foundation.

Since 2018, the National Education Bureau and the Archive of the Institute of National Remembrance (IPN), working with the Foundation, have led a notation programme, under which almost 40 interviews with the families of the fort's prisoners were recorded so far. In 2021, there was a premiere of a documentary produced in 2020 by the IPN, called *The Fort*, directed by Rafał Pękała, Marcin Maziarzewski. The film tells the story of Fort III, still largely unknown to the wider public.

Owing to the presence of and support from the Polish Army, Fort III in Pomiechówek is being restored to its historical look and profile. Soldiers of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Mazovian Engineers Regiment from Kazuń and the 65<sup>th</sup> Battalion of Light Infantry, 6<sup>th</sup> Mazovian Brigade of the Territorial Defence Force from Pomiechówek have helped in carrying out the maintenance work. Special mention for their work for the fort is owed to the command and soldiers of the Biało-brzezi 9<sup>th</sup> Brigade of Command Support, General Command of the Combined Armed Forces.



Soldiers of the Biało-brzezi 9<sup>th</sup> Brigade of Command Support, General Command of the Combined Armed Forces, doing maintenance work in the fort

## Fort III Pomiechówek Foundation

Since 2017, the Fort III Pomiechówek Foundation has conducted the fort studies in a structured and continuous way. Operating as a public-purpose NGO, it has set out as its main purpose taking all actions for the consolidation and preservation of memory of Fort III in Pomiechówek as a place of national remembrance. The foundation supports government activities for the preservation of national heritage for future generations of the Poles. It revives the memory of individual prisoners of the fort, restores and records their names, paying them the homage and remembrance they deserve.

The Foundation has worked with multiple governmental institutions: Ministry of National Defence, Institute of National Remembrance, Regional Monument Conservator, Academy of Fine Arts, as well as society organisations and scientific institutions.

Our most significant activities include:

- Establishment and maintenance of website on [www.forttrzecipomiechówek.org](http://www.forttrzecipomiechówek.org) and a FB profile [@fundacjaforttrzecipomiechówek](https://www.facebook.com/fundacjaforttrzecipomiechówek), where we collect and publish documents, photographs, maps, and other materials concerning the history of the fort. Currently, the collection includes several thousands of photographs and documents, making up a unique thematic database.
- In cooperation with the IPN Archive, we have established a Prisoner Database which now includes almost 2600 names, and has been growing.
- Integration of the community of the families of former prisoners and those interested in the history of the fort, by holding meetings, events, eg All Souls' Day, anniversary events.
- Agreement made with the Inter-University Institute of Conservation and Restoration of Works of Art, affiliated to the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw. The agreement governs a multi-annual research plan leading to the programme of comprehensive conservation and use of Fort III as a monument.
- Dissemination of awareness on the fort and its prisoners by holding regular guided history meetings and history lessons for schools, as part of which the fort is visited by several hundreds of people each year. The Foundation has prepared and published educational materials (brochures and guides), conducted an information action in newspapers and radio aimed at reaching the prisoners' families and archival documents – as part of projects supported financially by the Ministry of National Defence. In local newspapers (*Tygodnik Nowodworski* and its local issues), the

Foundation publishes, once a month, articles under an umbrella title, *News from Fort III in Pomiechówek*.

Tangible effect of these efforts are contacts from families of former prisoners (in Poland and abroad) who hold information about their relatives, and well as increased social awareness of the history of the fort.

The following appeal is still valid:

In 2021, the Ministry of National Defence and the Foundation of Pomiechówek Fort III carry out a project called, 'Fort III in Pomiechówek - Heritage, Education, Visiting'

**Heritage:**

- Do you want to learn the history of Fort III and the lot of its prisoners, or can you help us in this - please visit [www.forttrzcipomiechówek.org](http://www.forttrzcipomiechówek.org) or FB: [@fundacjaforttrzcipomiechówek](https://www.facebook.com/fundacjaforttrzcipomiechówek)

**Education:**

- Are you a teacher of primary or secondary school interested in taking part in educational project on Fort III (materials in history lessons, presentations, educational film, competitions) - write to [edukacja@forttrzcipomiechówek.org](mailto:edukacja@forttrzcipomiechówek.org), on FB: [@fundacjaforttrzcipomiechówek](https://www.facebook.com/fundacjaforttrzcipomiechówek) or call: +48 600 856 802

**Visiting:**

- Would you like to visit Fort III, learn its history and architecture - check notices on visiting dates on [www.forttrzcipomiechówek.org](http://www.forttrzcipomiechówek.org), on FB: [@fundacjaforttrzcipomiechówek](https://www.facebook.com/fundacjaforttrzcipomiechówek) or call: +48 22 828 08 94

Project with financial support of the Ministry of National Defence

**Fundacja Fort III Pomiechówek**

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## Chronology

- 1883**
- 30 August 1884** – construction of Fort III w Pomiechówek started
  - 10 October 1887** – visit by Emperor Alexander III at the construction site
  - 19 August 1915** – construction completed and fort consecrated
  - the Germans captured the fort in a military action of World War I
- December 1918** – fort taken over by the Polish Army
- 14–28 September 1939** – fort defended by I Battalion of the 36th Infantry Regiment of the Academic Legion, commanded by Capt. Bogusław Rytel
- 29 September 1939** – fort surrendered to the Germans
- March–April 1941** – camp for displaced Poles and Jews
- July–August 1941** – relocation camp for the Jewish population
- March–April 1943** – Gestapo prison established
- 31 May 1943** – first mass execution in the fort, as recorded in Gestapo files
- 25 June 1943** – execution of 172 Poles – residents of Kampinos municipality
- 1 November 1943** – execution of 9 Poles charged with membership of so-called *Kuba-gang*
- 13 December 1943** – execution of 30 Poles charged with Communist activity
- 4–5 February 1944** – execution of more than 100 Home Army (AK) soldiers
- 20 May 1944** – death sentences for 21 Home Army (AK) soldiers, enforced in KL Stutthof
- 30 July 1944** – last mass execution of about 300 prisoners and liquidation of the prison
- August–September 1944** – labour camp for the Poles and prison for German deserters
- 10 April 1945** – first post-war exhumations in the fort
- 14 November 1946** – exhumation of Polish Army soldiers who died in September 1939
- 18–19 June 1948** – exhumations conducted by the Polish Red Cross (PCK)
- 1952 – 2006** – fort operating as munitions magazine for the Polish Army
- 7 May 1972** – popular science session held, called *Pomiechówek Indicts*
- 24 September 1972** – monument unveiled in front of the Elementary School in Pomiechówek
- 2007** – the Army leaves the fort
- 11 May 2009** – fort entered to the Register of Monuments
- 9 November 2017** – Fort III Pomiechówek Foundation established
- October–November 2018** – 1<sup>st</sup> stage of archaeological works conducted by the IPN
- 27 October 2018** – conference held, titled *Discover Fort III in Pomiechówek*
- 15 December 2018** – burial of victim remains recovered on 1<sup>st</sup> stage of exhumations
- June–August 2019** – 2<sup>nd</sup> stage of archaeological works
- 5 September 2019** – ceremonial funeral of the victim remains recovered during the 2<sup>nd</sup> stage of exhumations
- 28 September 2019** – academic conference: *Fort III in Pomiechówek: Restoring the Memory of the Victims of German Terror*
- September–December 2020** – 3<sup>rd</sup> stage of archaeological works
- 17 December 2020** – ceremonial funeral of the victim remains recovered during the 3<sup>rd</sup> stage of exhumations
- 20 May 2021** – ceremony of burying at the parish cemetery in Pomiechowo the remains of eight soldiers who defended the fort in 1939.



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# Fort III in Pomiechówek: A Visiting Plan - Route I



Fundacja  
**Fort III**  
Pomiechówek



**1 Meeting point**  
Starting point of visiting

**2 Entry gate to the Fort**  
Building of 'necked' caponier  
Breach in the Carnot wall of 1915

**3 Courtyard in front of the barracks**  
Courtyard and building  
where prisoners were kept

**4 Meeting point**  
Inner buildings of the barracks  
Inscriptions carved out  
by the prisoners on walls

**5 Frontal concrete military stand defending the moat**  
On the outside - the place of  
executions / combat from  
September 1939  
Bulk of the infantry  
main embankment  
Wells draining the moat

**6 Metal gate**  
Entrance to / exit from the  
concrete communication  
postern in the counterscarp  
Bottom of the moat,  
fragment of the fort's grating

**7 Communication and storage postern**  
Exit to the execution square  
so-called 'changing room' where  
the prisoners had to undress  
before execution

**8 Backyard of the fort**  
the 'hillcock' - the main place  
of executions, mass murders  
of the prisoners  
place of exhumations  
conducted in 1945

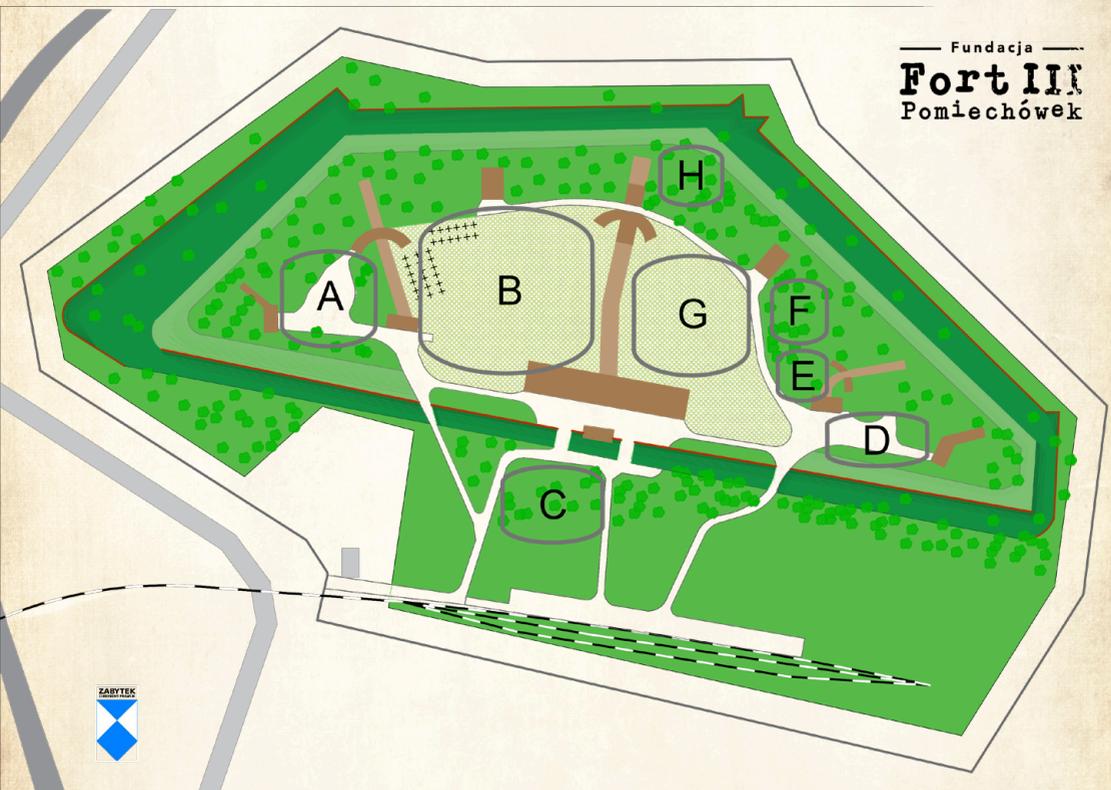
**9 Left-hand side (large) backyard of the fort**  
location of burial of exhumed  
victim remains

**10 Left-hand side munitons bunker**  
additional place where the  
Germans kept the Jews in 1941

**11 Small left-hand side backyard**  
place of execution  
of the last prisoners  
location of the first stage  
of exhumation works conducted  
by the IPN since 2018

Locations of archaeological works  
conducted by the IPN in 2018-2020

Fundacja  
**Fort III**  
Pomiechówek



Locations: A, B, C - Oct-Dec 2018

Locations: D, E - June-July 2019

Locations: F, G, H - Sept-Dec 2020

— Fundacja —

# Fort III Pomiechówek

[www.forttrzepomiechówek.org](http://www.forttrzepomiechówek.org)

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