

From Danek Gerthner's Memoirs about the Plundering of the Town Jews by the Ukrainians as Well as the Germans

The Ukrainian district administration was already taking pages from the Nazis' book. On July 29, 1941, it issued an order, signed by Engineer Hnatiuk, requiring all Jews over age twelve wear a yellow armband on their upper right arms. At this time, we called a meeting of all active party representatives in town and elected a standing committee, headed by Chayim Zvi Steiner. The committee, which stayed in existence until the bitter end, did much good during the tenure of the terrible German-Ukrainian regime. To rescue Jews, its members repeatedly put their own lives at risk. By the time it was over, almost all of them were murdered.

Several weeks before the order, the aforementioned district head, Winicki, demanded, in the name of the Nazi district chief (*Kreishauptmann*) Klaus-Peter Volkmann, that we renovate five totally decrepit villas and furnish them comfortably. However, Volkmann later told us this order only applied to one of the villas—that for his own use—and he soon released us from the job of preparing the rest for occupancy.

Mrs. Shtefurak, the wife of a Ukrainian physician, had taken responsibility for renovating and adapting the villas. She was dissatisfied with everything we did and repeatedly threatened to have all the Jews lined up against the wall and shot. This woman, who played a major role in the atrocities perpetrated in Kolomyja, Kosow, and the surrounding area, has many Jews on her conscience. The Germans also ordered us to restore a ruined villa owned by a Polish woman, "Bajka" Gichejowska, and to furnish it comfortably—solely because the owner had very close ties with the Germans. This woman was also the cause of much Jewish suffering.

The Germans now began to crack down. In accordance with a Gestapo order, all Jews had to hand in all gold and personal valuables by January 2, 1942. Jews in the possession of such objects after that date faced a possible death penalty. Some complied, others hid their last few belongings, and still others destroyed their own jewelry to keep it out of the German beasts' hands.

Naturally, almost everything handed over ended up in the German occupiers' own pockets.

From: **Gerthner J, Gerthner D, *Home is no More, the Destruction of the Jews of Kosow and Zabie*, Jerusalem, 2000, pp.70-72**