



Tour „In the footsteps of the Jewish population in Zelechow”



FORUM DIALOGU MIĘDZY NARODAMI



SZKOŁA DIALOGU

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The Jewish population settled in Zelechowin in the XVI century. Later, it constituted over 60% of inhabitants. They lived in the city center, while the Poles lived on its outskirts. In 1939 Zelechow tailed 9500 inhabitants, including 5530 Jews.

Route of the trip



FAMOUS JEWS FROM ZELECHOW

Izaak Meir Weissenberg



There are few distinguished figures, related to Jewish Zelechow. They were born here, but they gained education in big Polish cities and abroad.

Issac Weissenberg is the most famous inhabitant of Zelechow. This Jewish writer and playwright showed life of Polish and Jewish workers in small town in XX century. He lived and died in Warsaw. There is a street named after his name.

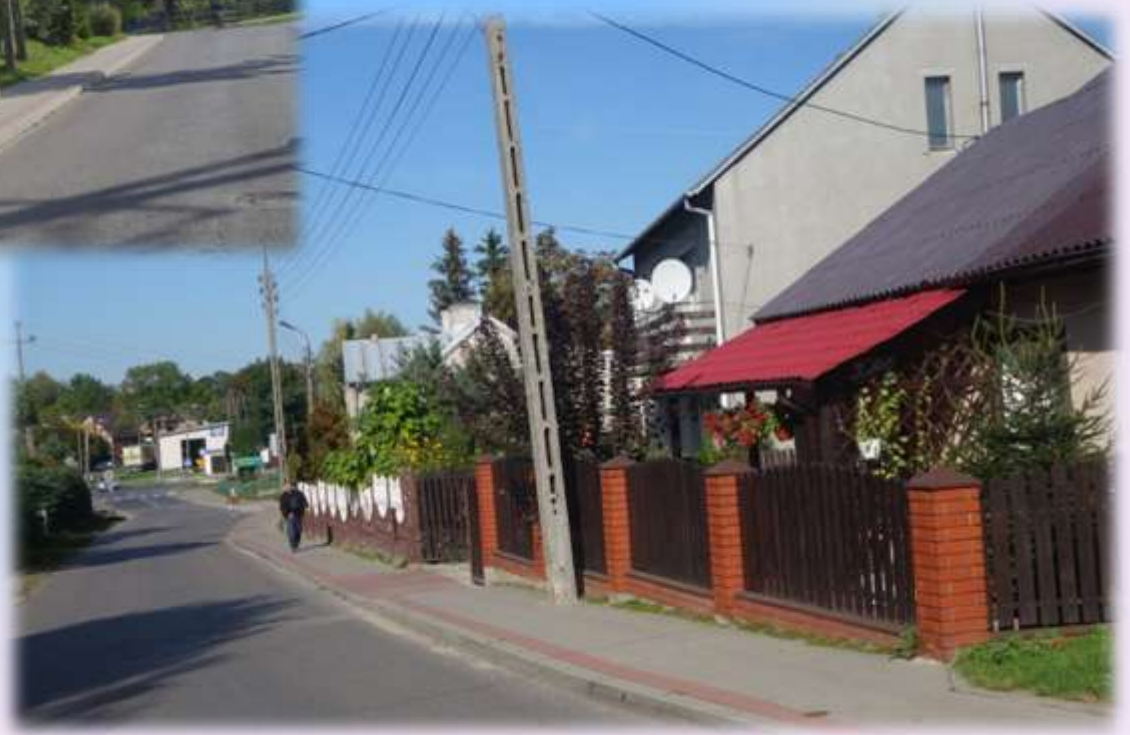
Gen. Orlicz – Dreszer Street in Zelechow.



Currently Weissenberg Street



Weissenberg Street in Zelechow



Jechiel Lerer

was also related to Weissenberg's literary circle in Warsaw. He died in the Treblinka death camp.



Jakub Rotbaum was a deserved theater director, an actor and a painter. He worked in many countries such as USA, Canada, Great Britain and France. He was also a theater director in many spectacles in Wroclaw's theatres. He died in 1994.



Paintings of Jakub Rotbaum

A young Jewish woman



Lea Rotbaum



Halina Birenbaum is a Polish-Israeli writer and poet.
Her mother Perl Grynsztein – Kijewska came from
Zelechów. In her childhood, when she lived in Warsaw
she visited her grandparents in Zelechów.
She survived holocaust. Now she lives in Israel.



Halina Birenbaum with family



Halina's Birenbaum mother – Pearl Kijewska (on the left) with her sister Ester in Zelechow.



Halina Birenbaum with Israeli youth on a trip to the Treblinka extermination camp next to matzevah commemorating the Jews from Zelechow.



Students from the Secondary School Complex from Zelechów 2010 with a tutor Alicja Bienias

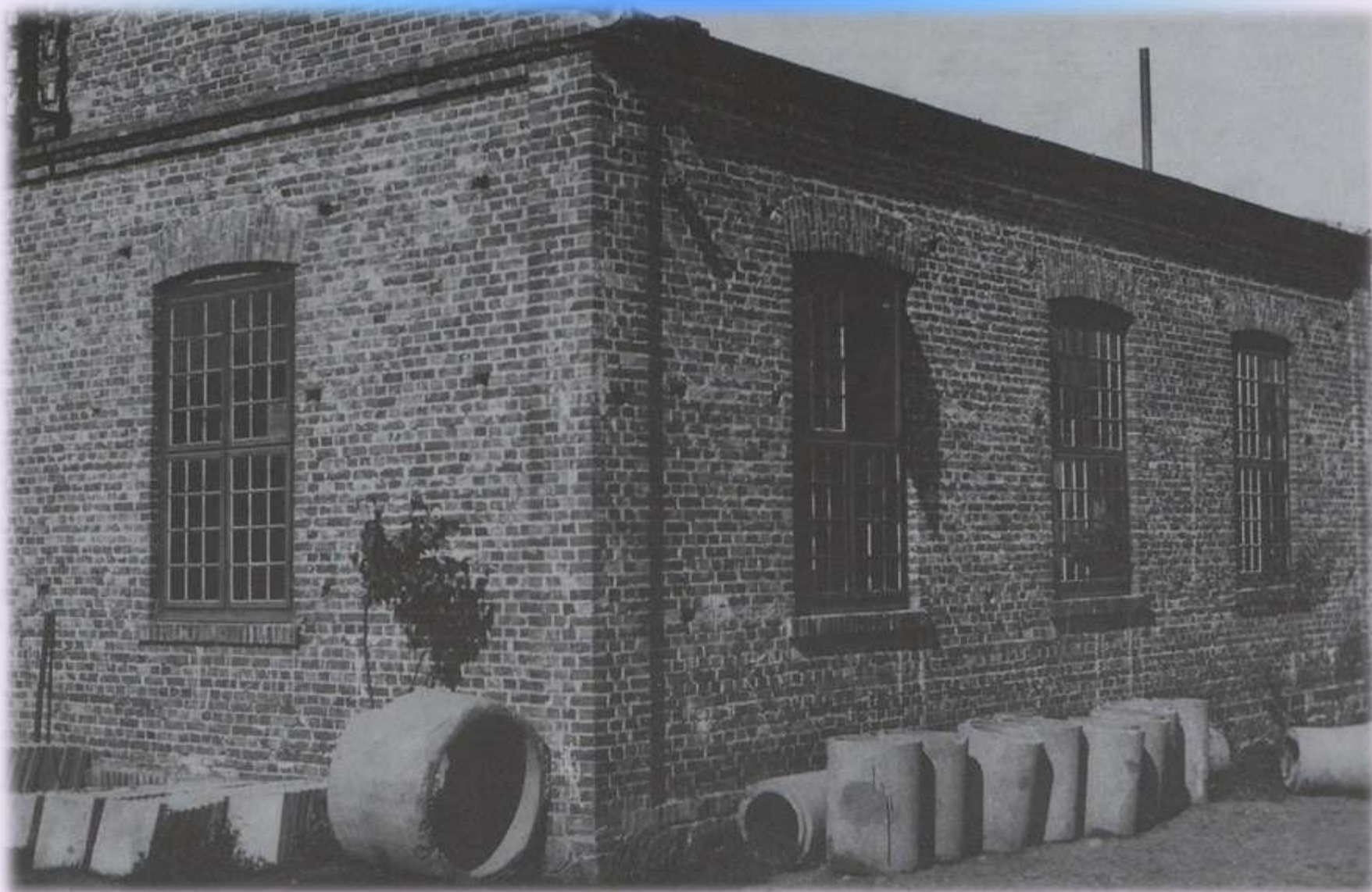


1. POWER PLANT

Built in 1927, old power plant was located on the gen. Orlicz – Deszer Street (now Weissenberg Street). It was founded by initiative of the authorities of city Zelechow.

It was built by the company from Warsaw, where most of the shares were owned by Jews. Srul Leber led the work at the power plant. Polish and Jewish labourers worked in it. After renovation, building of former power plant looks different than before WW2.

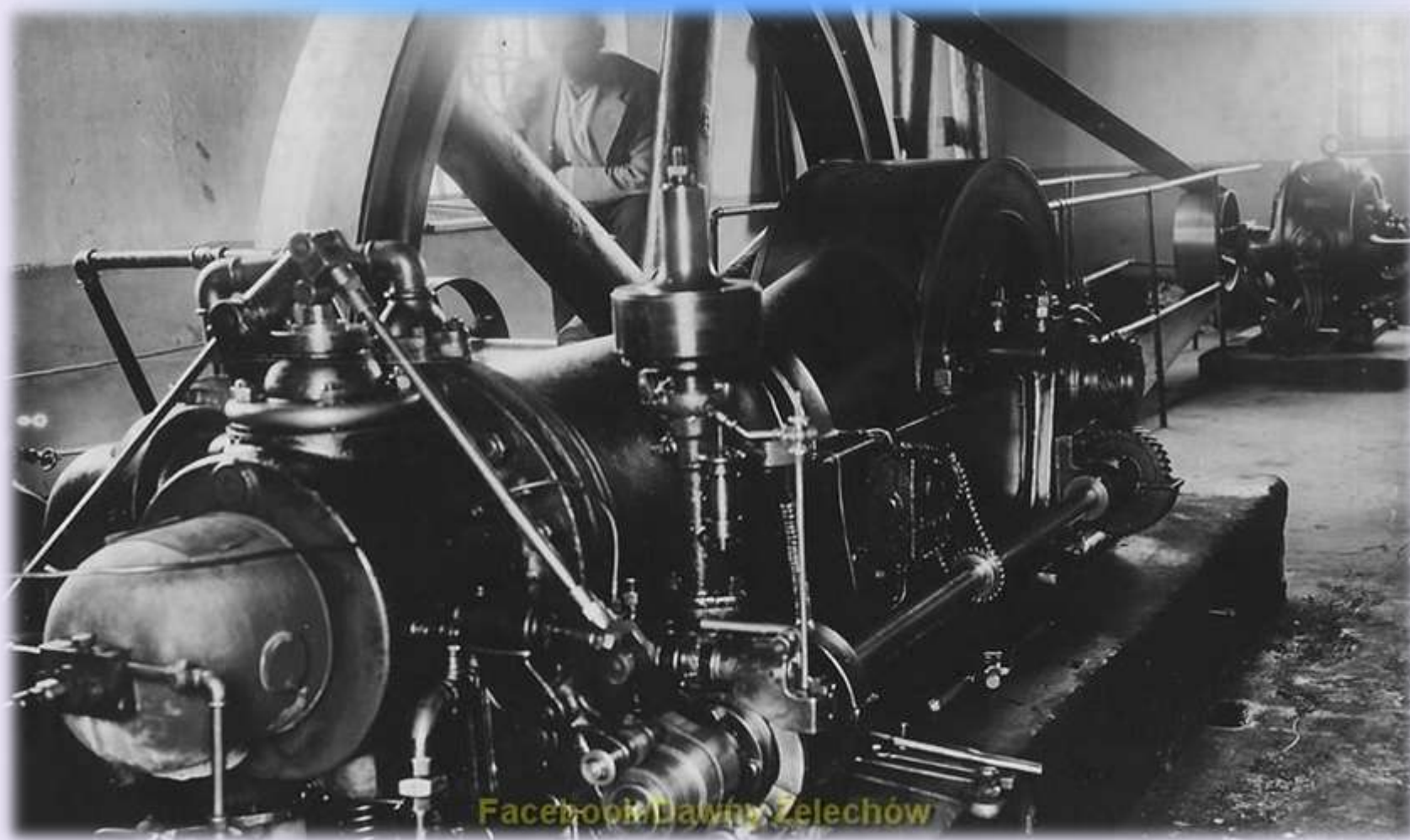
POWER PLANT, 1932



Employees of the power plant (in the middle sitting proxy - Srul Lerer)



Interior of power plant in Zelechów



Electricity bill from prower plant

STOWNIA W ŻELECHOWIE.

K-to

Pan *Import*

ul. *Bylica*

RACHUNEK

elektryczną zużyłą w *193* r.

Zużycie kWh	Ilość izb	Cena gr.	Należność	
			zł.	gr.
<i>13</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>79</i>		
maksymalna		79		
Ilości				
I	<i>3</i>	79		
II	<i>3</i>	40		
III	<i>1</i>	20		

osimy płacić
w terminie

Current appearance of the former power plant.



Current appearance of the former power plant.



2. ANIMAL MARKET

Trading was the main occupation of local Jews. On the square next to Saint Stanislaus Street (now Avenue of the Polish Army) there were sold and bought animals, that is why this square was called "pig market". Jews dominated in this square, but they did not participate only in the trade of pigs.

„Pig market” during the interwar period, on the right there’s a small power plant building.



Jewish horse trader on the „pig market”



„Pig market” - Street market on Tuesday in November 2015



3. POST-JEWISH HOUSES, HANDICRAFT

Part of Lelewel Street (formerly Officer Street) was located in the Jewish quarter. Few old Jewish houses have preserved over there. Jewish houses were divided into two major parts. On the street side were located craft workshops or shops, whereas families lived on another side of buildings.

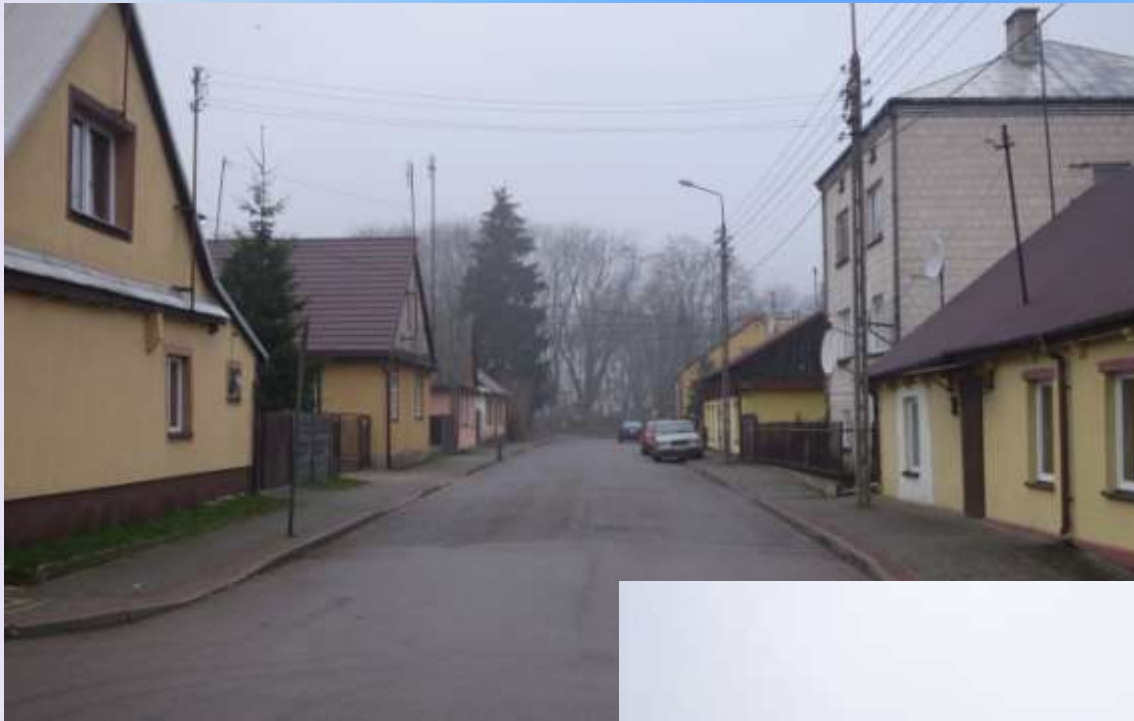
Second occupation of local Jews was handicraft. They performed all kinds of handicraft in the town. Most of them were tailors, cap makers, shoemakers and saddlers. Most of the bakeries in the city belonged to Jews.

Officer Street during the occupation (currently Lelewel Street).



Facebook/Dawny Żelechów

Lelewel Street now.



Jewish tailors in Zelechow



4. HOUSES OF THE LAST RABBIS

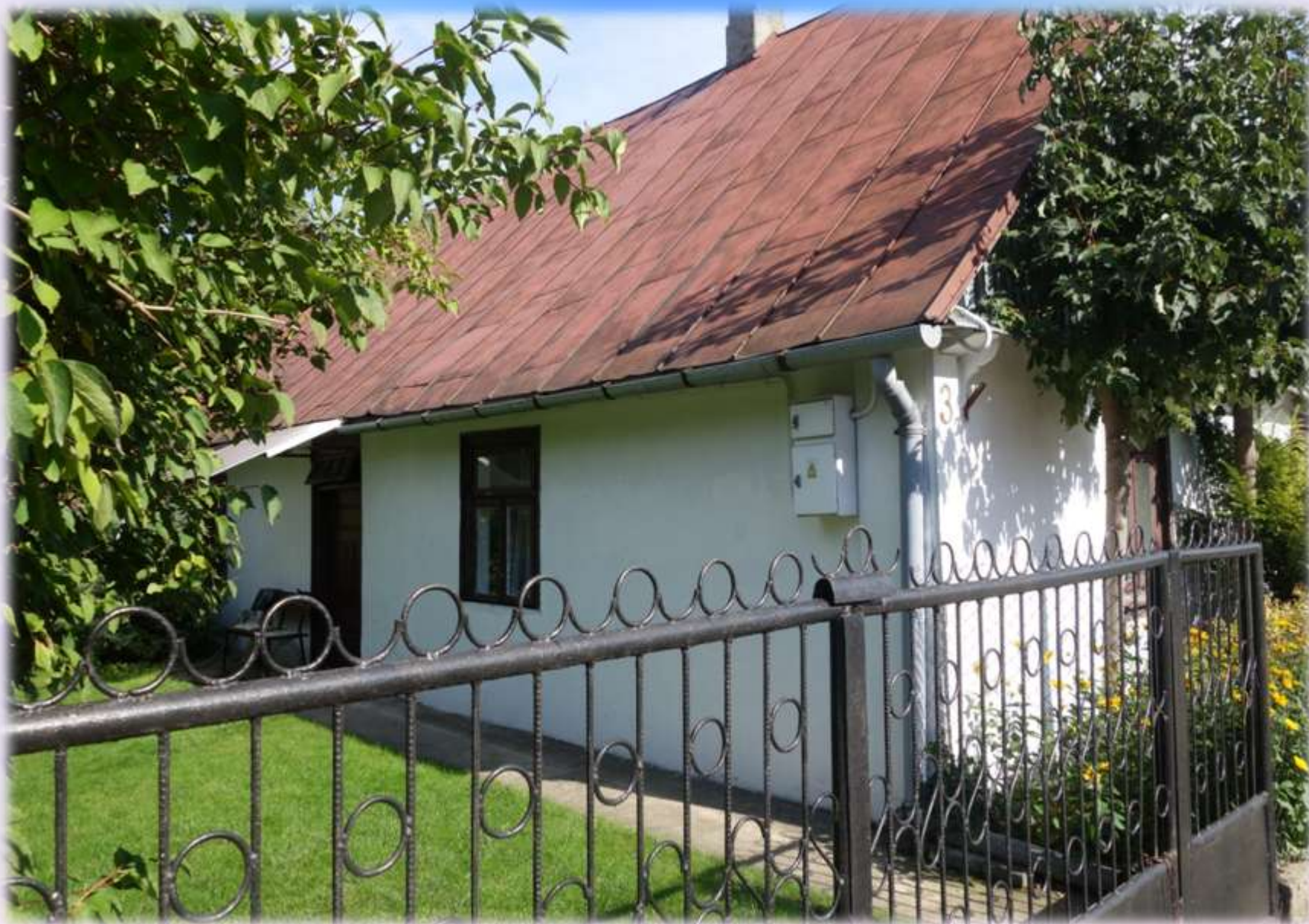
Before war, 2 rabbis lived in Zelechów. Abraham Goldberg lived on Berk Joselowicz Street (now Linden Street). Before war, his house was even longer, surrounded by big, beautiful garden. Rabbi's daughters sold this house to the father of current owner.

The second rabbi was Icek Dawid Przysucher, he lived on Zadybska Street (currently Traugutt Street). His house preserved too. This is a big, one-storey building next to a post office.

House of Rabbi Abraham Goldberg on Berk Joselowicz Street (currently Linden Street)



Linden Street



Icek Dawid Przysucher (with white beard) – second rabbi in Zelechow walking on the street



House of rabbi Icek Dawid Przysucher on Zadybska Street (currently Traugutt Street)



Current appearance of the building



5. PALACE AND ZADYBSKA STREETS

Pilsudski Street was called Palace Street before war, because it led to Szuster's family palace. It was the most beautiful street in Zelechow. On the both sides there were walkways with benches, lawns, flowers and nicely trimmed trees. Young people from Zelechow spent their free time here. Most Jewish youth were staying at the Palace Street on Saturday, but on Sunday it was dominated by Polish youth. On the Palace Street young people were going out on dates.

A place of rest and relaxation was also Zadybska Street, dominated by Jewish inhabitants. Jews were going for walks to the forest down the street. In the summer local Jews rented rooms from peasants next to the forest, and richer had their own houses. Currently, Letnisko is the name of southern outskirts of Zelechow, where Jewish families were going on summer vacations before war.

Zadybska Street leading from Zelechow to the nearby forest – place of walks of inhabitants



Currently Traugutt Street



The Palace Street during the interwar period, place of walks and other meetings





Currently Pilsudski Street



6. KAHAL

Pudly Street was called previously Wolowa Street and later Rabbi Majzels Street. The building of the Jewish community administration was located here.

In the 1930s, Jewish councilors were elected to the Municipal Council of Zelechow. They were about 1/3 of all councilors.

The head office of the Jewish community on Rabbi Meisels Street (storey building on the left)



Currently Pudly Street



The City Council of Zelechow in 1938 with Jewish councilors



6. MIKVAH

In the underground part of the building there was located ritual Jewish bath. The remaining parts of underground bath survived to the present times. They are located next to Municipal and Communal Culture Center on Pudlo Street.

The remains of Zelechow mikvah



The descendants of the Jewish inhabitants of Zelechow - not uncommon view in town.



7. SYNAGOGUE

On the square, next to the crossroads of the Palace Street (today Pilsudski Street) and Father Brzoski Street (now Staszic Street) since the XVIII century was located synagogue.

Jews built total of 3 objects there which served as synagogue.

The oldest synagogue was built in the first half of XVIII century.

It burnt during great fire which reached Zelechow in 1880.

Next synagogue was a modest, ground-floor, wooden building.

In 1885 on the local tailor – Mojsze Notese's initiative, there was built new synagogue. The work was financed by local Jews.

Moishe Notes has collected money, and supervised the work.

New synagogue in Zelechow was classified as one of the most beautiful in Poland.

Unfortunately, this beautiful temple was burnt down by Germans on September 16, 1939. In 1944 eventually demolished. After the war, City Park was created in this place. There is also located a memorial plaque commemorating the synagogue.

Memorial plaque in the city park, in place of the former synagogue



**Synagogue in it's days of glory, with cheder building
on the right side.**



Synagogue burnt by the Germans, picture from 1943.



Facebook/Dawny Zelechów

www.zsz-zelechow.com

Burnt synagogue - view from the church tower



Facebook/Dawny Zelechów

The city park was created in the place of synagogue.



Inside Zelechow cheder, located next to synagogue.



JEWISH CHILDREN IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Jewish children also attended to public schools. About 1910 a primary school was created in Zelechow.

Since 1922 Polish and Jewish children were taught together. On the Palace Street (now Pilsudski Street) next to city authorities building were located No. 1 and No. 2 elementary schools.

Both the buildings survived to the present day.

The first Jewish primary school in Zelechow with the teacher - Fania Ogolnik.



Polish and Jewish students and teachers of No.1 Primary School



The current appearance of the building.



No.1 Public School in Zelechow



8. MARKETPLACE

Zelechow marketplace was the greatest place of work in the city for local Jews. Dozens of shops and fair trade booths operated in the buildings around the market square and town hall. Before the war Zelechow marketplace was lively, especially on Tuesdays when fairs were held.

Nearly the whole area was inhabited by Jews.

The market was the economic center of Zelechow.



Western frontage of the market in 1915.



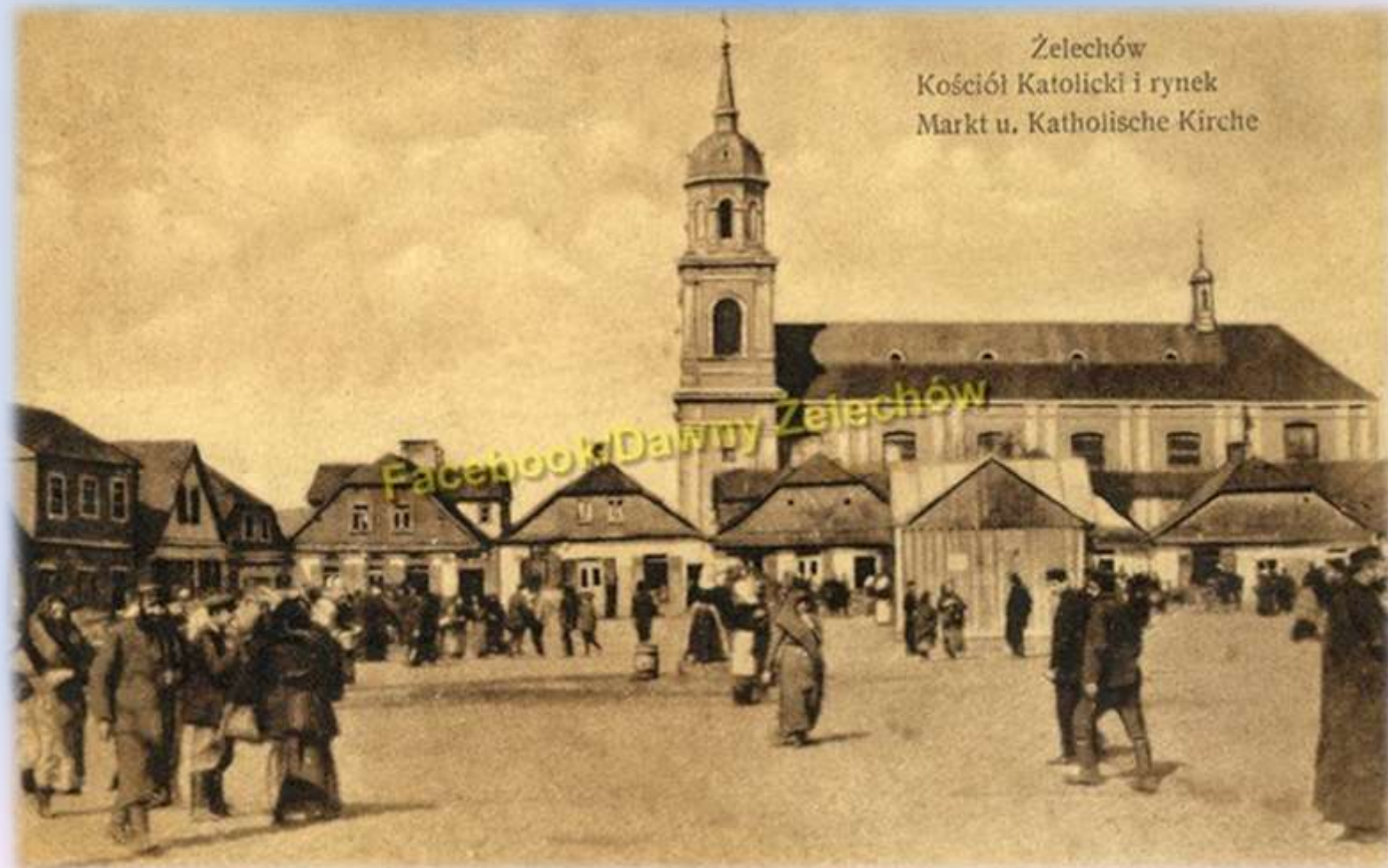
Jewish traders on the Zelechow market.



The market in Zelechow and its Jewish residents.



Northern frontage of market perpetuated on a postcard published by Miedzyrzecki's bookstore in Zelechów during the German occupation in 1915.



Current view of market



Until recently, the town hall looked like this.



Renovation of the town hall in 2015.



9. JATKOWA STREET

Before the war, the Jatkowa Street in Zelechow was a center of slaughter and beef trade. Jews bought cattle, calves and sheep in the entire area. Then they killed them and sold the meat in this place. In 1939 there were 29 primitive Jewish butcher shops.

To this day, this street has retained its name.



10. SHOE PLANT

On the Keblowska Street (now Chlopickiego Street) the Zelechow council, on the initiative of the mayor Ludwik Pudlo created in 1927 Shoe Manufacturing Plant for Unemployed. Shoes for the army were made here. The production was carried out manually.

In the factory 126-craftsmen found the work. Half of them were Jewish shoemakers. Polish and Jewish craftsmen worked together in this place.

Although rebuilt, factory building still stands today.

Factory of Shoes for Unemployed on Keblowska Street – Jewish shoemakers also worked here.



Workers of Factory of Shoes for Unemployed – first half of XX century.



Workers Factory of Shoes for Unemployed. Picture from 1932.



facebook/Dawny Zelechow

The current appearance of the building, Chlopickiego Street



11. JEWISH CEMETERY

Since 1802 Jewish cemetery is located at the crossroads of Reymont Street and Chlopickiego Street. Earlier, the dead Jews were buried in the square around the synagogue.

Currently, there are few tombstones. During the occupation the Germans robbed them to reinforce the area around the police station at Palace Street. Some residents of Zelechow also took gravestones from the Jewish cemetery to reinforce backyards and other places.

Jewish cemetery in Zelechow. Founded in 1802



Danowicz-Wierzbicki Family by the Symch Danowicz grave, 1938.



Grave of bookbinder Jidl Mendel. Jewish cemetery.



Wedding at the Zelechow Jewish cemetery during the occupation.



Few preserved gravestones.



Double tombstone is unique in the Zelechow cemetery. This tombstone was erected for two women who died in 1885.



In 2014 the cemetery was fenced and the memorial plaque was placed at the entrance.



In November 2015 new tombstones were erected on the grave of the Tzadik Ariele Kuznicer and a rabbi Aron ha-Kohen.

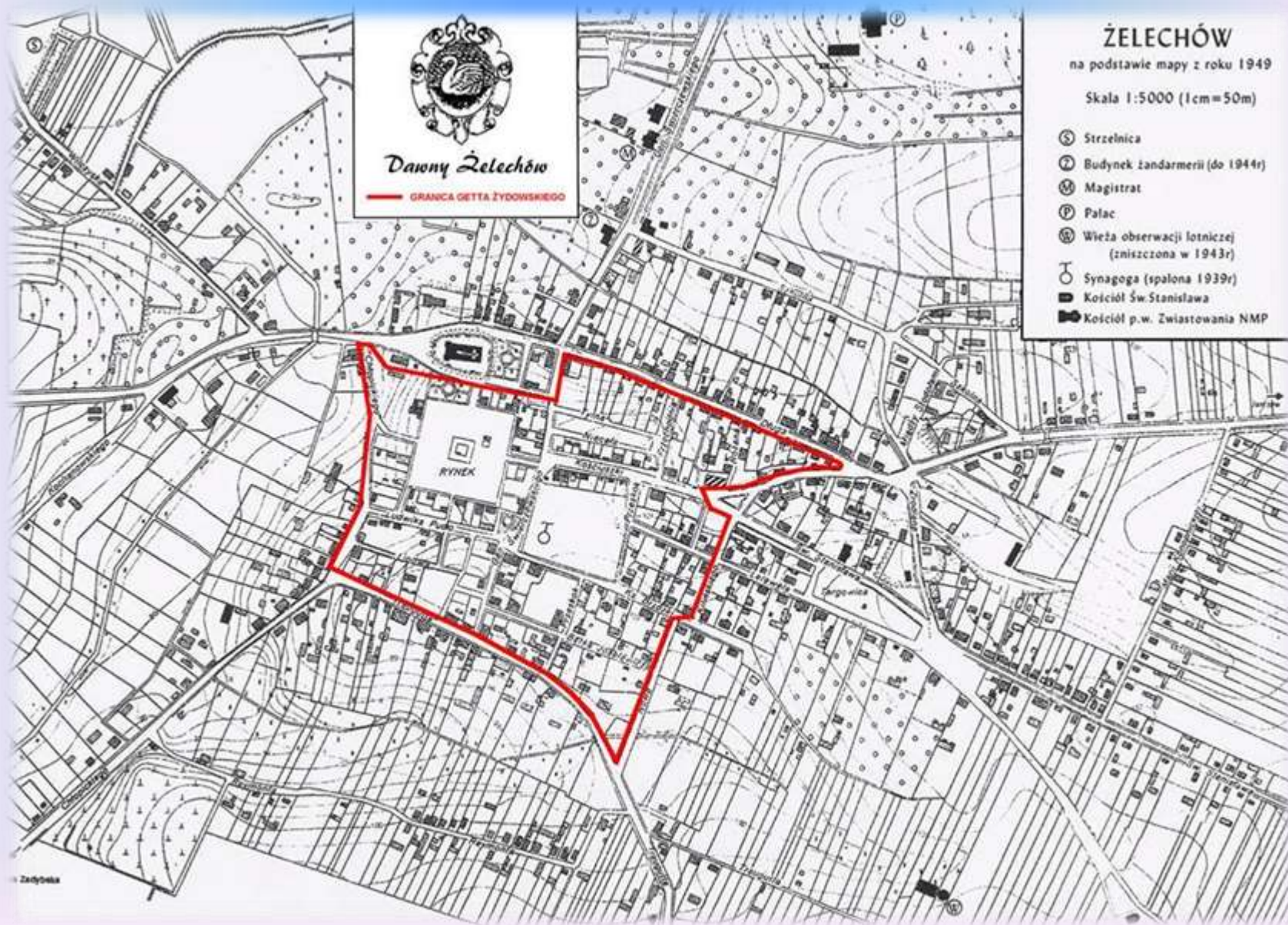


GHETTO IN ZELECHOW

During World War II, the Jewish population in Zelechow increased to about 13,000 because Jews from Warsaw and Lodz and the surrounding area came here.

In November of 1940 ghetto was established, which included the central part of the city. It was not fenced.

Borders of the ghetto in Żelechów



Pictures from ghetto.





Facebook/Dawny Żelechów

Distribution of food in the ghetto by the Jewish Social Self-organization.



Kitchen of the Jewish Social Self-organization in the building of former cheder.



Eastern border of ghetto – Senatorska Street



Currently Kościuszki Street



HOLOCAUST

On 30 September 1942 all local Jews were gathered in the square around the synagogue and deprived of their valuables. Then this population were driven to the railway station in Sobolew. Elders and children were brought by peasant carts.

In the Sobolew, the Jews were loaded into wagons and transported to the Treblinka death camp.

Gathering of Jews on 30 September 1942. Before being deported to the death camp - square around the synagogue



**Peasant carts prepared by the Germans to
deportation of Jews from the ghetto,
30 September 1942.**



Transport of Jewish children and elders to railway station in Sobolew.



Column of Jews from Zelechow ghetto led to the railway station in Sobolew.





Ruins of the ghetto, photo from 1943.



Facebook/Dawny Żelechów

Sources of information and pictures

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www.kirkuty.xip.pl/

Dawny Żelechów – Facebook, <https://pl-pl.facebook.com/Dawny.Zelechow>

Zdjęcia wykonane przez uczestników projektu.

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Za wsparcie w realizacji projektu

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