



WALDEMAR ŻMUDZKI

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TV Polonia
Szczepan Żaryn, editor
00-999 Warsaw,
Woronicza Street 17

Dear Sir,

I happened to tune in to a discussion panel on TV Polonia concerning the past and the unknown and uncharted history which has been obscured due the fifty years that have elapsed since the tragic events of World War Two, events that took place in the Eastern Borderlands, back then the territories of the 2nd Polish Republic. This is a fragment of history which is not widely known because of the politically-motivated conspiracy of silence and the moving of the borders. All the knowledge we have comes from descriptions and history classes, but this is not the full knowledge, because people were afraid to reminisce and talk to the younger generations about what they had been through and how they managed to survive.

It is mostly about the families which paid the highest price, the lives of individuals and entire families lost over little gestures and a modicum of charity for another man, who begged for a slice of bread and a glass of water, or anything at all to satisfy his hunger and get stronger as he kept running from the Holocaust. Such deeds often led to denunciations by *szmalcowniks*, of whom there were plenty in every village or town, which prof. Tomasz Strzembosz mentioned in the studio and which, in turn, prompts me to offer the following brief account for the sake of my family, who paid with their lives.

All of them were murdered, shot to death and then dumped in outbuildings which were then set on fire.

The events took place in 1943 in the village of Zaśkiewicze, or according to an alternative spelling, Zaskiewicze, or known by one other name, Nowe Zaszkiwicz [Zaszkiwicz Nowe?], in Włodzimierz Wołyński county (Wołyń, Ukraine).

Time has taken its toll, having blurred the memories of many details, and the direct witnesses have been long dead. I heard this story some twenty years ago, from a first-hand witness from my family who somehow survived because at that time he was not on the premises.

Today, there are no living witnesses from my family. Maybe the research of the Main Commission for the Investigation of Nazi Crimes against the Polish Nation might reveal some information provided by chance by some outside witnesses from that village, maybe [...] whom you have mentioned in your concluding remarks can find some information.

The details are as follows:

Grzegorz Żmudzki, my grandfather, died of natural causes in 1938. His wife – my grandmother – was Bronisława, her son was Stanisław, and he had a wife and two children, but I do not remember the names of either my aunt or the children. A random passer-by also probably died in this tragedy, a man with a child, of unknown nationality, and I would like to avoid adding any speculation, but in the ashes of the burned outbuildings seven skeletons were found. There were definitely five members of my family, because there was a direct witness who watched the events from a distance, hiding in the bushes near the buildings but outside the zone of pacification. He was a son and brother, the youngest of the siblings, a young man of almost 19 whose name was Felek (Feliks). He survived the massacre of his family but was later captured during an ambush and sent to a concentration camp, where he miraculously survived, too, for two and a half years.

Maybe the historical committee will manage to establish some new facts and find out more about the bestial murders and extermination of Polish citizens in the former territories of Polish Eastern Borderlands, including my family, the Żmudzczy, in the village of Zaskiewiczze. Maybe the Main Commission for the Investigation of Crimes against the Polish Nation can, based on various interviews, get to the witnesses who have survived and know some further details of this Hitlerite pacification.

I would like to donate to the Historical Committee, maybe to the Main Commission for the Investigation of Crimes against the Polish Nation, a priceless map from the World War Two period, in German, the property of some Nazi, an SS-man, which the Nazi Germany used during the war.



- *Europa, Völker und Staaten ht Sonderkarte 1*
- *Karpatenland (Ostgalizien und Bukowina) Sonderkarte 1*
- *Polen und Wołynien Sonderkarte 2*

This is a very old map, a bit damaged, but will undoubtedly be a very helpful document for the historians and researchers of the World War Two period.

As regards the map, let me add an interesting fact: it was found in the territories of present-day western Poland, in an attic, where it had been hidden between the rafter and the roof tiles by some German.

I would be grateful for a short reply about the historical value of this map and especially about any traces of research concerning the circumstances of the murder of the Żmudzki family.

My kindest regards,
Waldemar Żmudzki
[...]