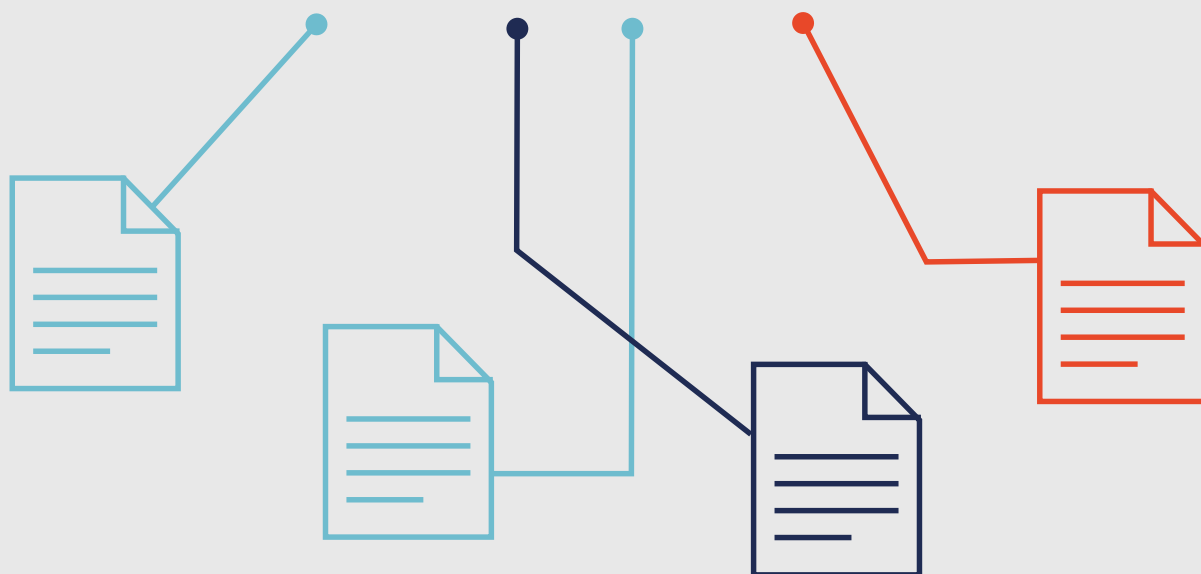




# **THE PILECKI INSTITUTE ARCHIVES: ACTIVATION**

**12–13 January 2021**

**A Hub for Exploring History**



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## Ladies and gentlemen,

One of the Pilecki Institute's most essential goals is to inspire research into the history of World War II and especially the study of the German and Soviet occupation of Poland in the years 1939–1945. In recent decades, historians of the 20th century have focused their interest on the issues of the Communist dictatorship to the detriment of the realities of wartime Poland.



The strongest foundation in the work of a historian is the source material. While this material cannot create history in and of itself and requires an appropriate analysis according to a specific research question, its significance remains so great that many historians strive to seek out new sources on which to base their work. Systematically speaking, access to archives and libraries is of paramount importance in the collection and furtherment of historical awareness, and allows situations to be avoided in which important works are rejected or sidelined due to a lack of time or finances to make the appropriate inquiries.

The Pilecki Institute Archives are an answer to this issue and this challenge. By cooperating with domestic and foreign centers to digitize documents en masse, we have been able to gather vast collections of source material amounting to several million scans. Anyone who has had to sacrifice hours for inquiring in and traveling between archives will acknowledge the benefit of material from international institutes compiled in one place, within arm's reach. The Pilecki Institute is the first such institute in Poland, and a unique case among similar European research institutions, to join these internationally renowned institutions that possess similar collections to our own.

Our archives contain a variety of digitized source material: documents, recordings of Witnesses to the Age, photographs, and texts. The entire catalog can be accessed online from anywhere in the world. Presently, around 5,000 archival units are available, amounting to more than a million scans, and that number will continue to grow as our digitizing work goes on.

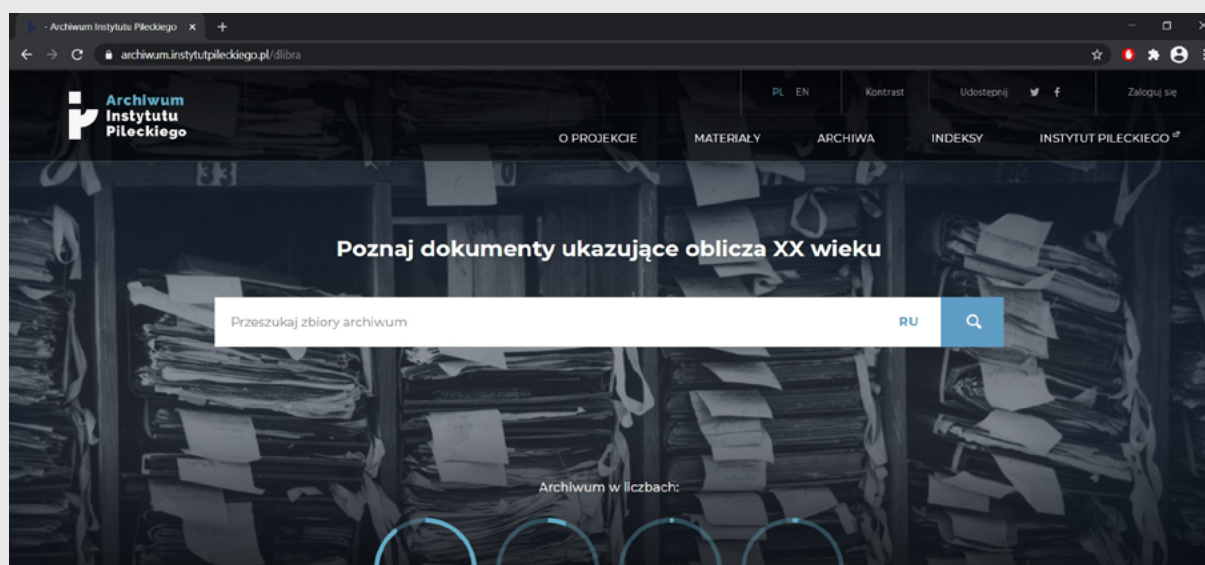
The Pilecki Institute Archives without doubt present Polish academia with a great opportunity to carve its name into the global edifice of historical research on World War II. A large portion of the collected material is entirely unknown, allowing many topics to be reexamined or even analyzed for the very first time, thereby enabling the further development of our historiography.

**Join us!**

*Wojciech Kozłowski  
Director of the Pilecki Institute*

## There is still so much to tell

Ever since its establishment, the Pilecki Institute has been collecting and sharing documents showing the history of 20th-century Poland, a history marked by experience of two totalitarianisms. Much of this material was scattered, undiscovered, or forgotten. In order to facilitate the work of researchers, we have created an innovative digital archive which enables easy access to the source material. We are striving to gather as many archives as possible in one place, so that it takes only a few clicks to learn about the fate of Poland and its citizens in the 20th century.



We intend to make up for years of neglect in gathering source material located outside Poland and concerning our history. We are conducting numerous digitization projects which will give researchers access to documents that are otherwise very difficult to access. We are striving to make the Pilecki Institute one of the leaders of the archival revolution in Poland, and we want to ensure that scholars researching the history of Poland during World War II do not have to travel thousands of kilometers to visit numerous cities, countries and even continents, to acquaint themselves with the necessary materials. We strive to include documents that were previously available only at the headquarters of foreign institutions: in the United States, Germany, Great Britain, Austria, and France. By gathering all this source material in one place, we also intend to create conditions for scholars that will make their workload more manageable and will make their research even more effective. We want our reading rooms in Warsaw and Berlin to be an attractive workplace not only for researchers and scholarship holders from Poland. Therefore, we are collecting archives both from abroad and from Poland, which will allow people interested in the subject of the Polish experience in confronting two totalitarianisms to examine them comprehensively and thoroughly.



We believe that there is still so much to be said about the experiences of Poland and Poles during World War II. With an estimated 90% of the materials in English archives concerning our history still not digitized, and moreover, not analyzed by Polish historians, we realize that the task we undertake is crucial for the development of research and requires a lot of effort. The resources located in Western archives are still waiting for examination in terms of the history of Poland in the 20th century. As an institution created for the purpose of interdisciplinary reflection on the most important issues of the 20th century, and above all on the experience of two totalitarianisms, we are therefore undertaking actions to safeguard and disseminate this heritage.

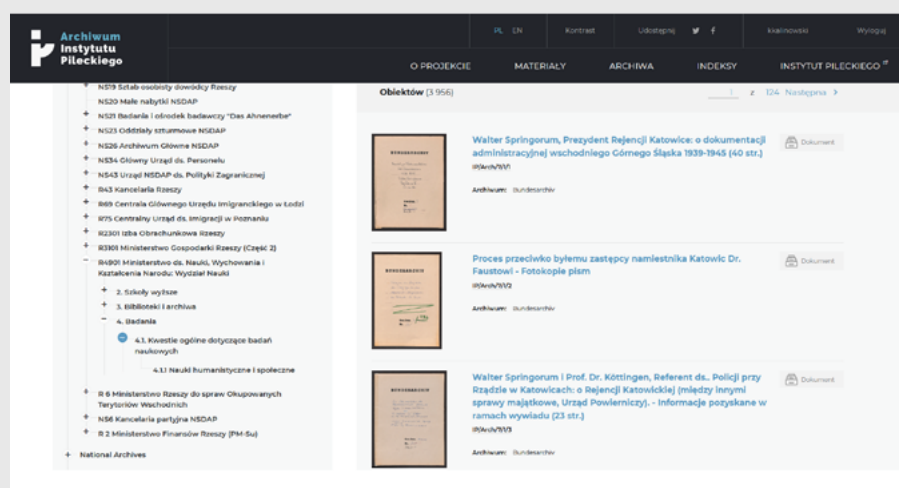
## How to use the digital archive?

The Pilecki Institute's digital archive is a treasury of knowledge on the fate of Poland and its citizens in the 20th century. It is also a collection of materials on World War II and the German and Soviet totalitarianisms. We have obtained documents from institutions, public archives, social organizations – both national and international – as well as from private collections. Some of the film sources have also been created as a result of our own projects. The analysis of such diverse material allows for comprehensive research to be conducted in one place.

The digital archive provides access to documents, film recordings, books, magazines and photographs; millions of scans of documents, thousands of hours of audio-visual material, hundreds of photos, dozens of books. Our collections are constantly growing.

In order to make it easier to navigate through such a huge number of sources, all materials published on [www.archiwum.institutpileckiego.pl](http://www.archiwum.institutpileckiego.pl) are precisely de-

scribed, thereby enabling everyone to quickly find the appropriate content. The extensive metadata system is based on descriptions from the archival inventories made available to us.



The full-text search engine searches both the descriptions and the contents of the documents that have been processed by the OCR program, thanks to which researchers can quickly find objects containing a specified phrase.

Documents made available in our digital archive are presented in the language in which they were created. Descriptions, on the other hand, are created in Polish, but contain the original names of fonds, series, or unit titles in order to facilitate navigation through the collection.

There are also two other ways to use the digital archive, based on the structure of the collection. The types of materials that bring together all the documents, films, books, photographs published in the archive in a given collection can be used. Similarly, the “archives” tab contains materials sorted according to the archival institutions of origin. Many of them have an additional hierarchical division into individual fonds and archival units.

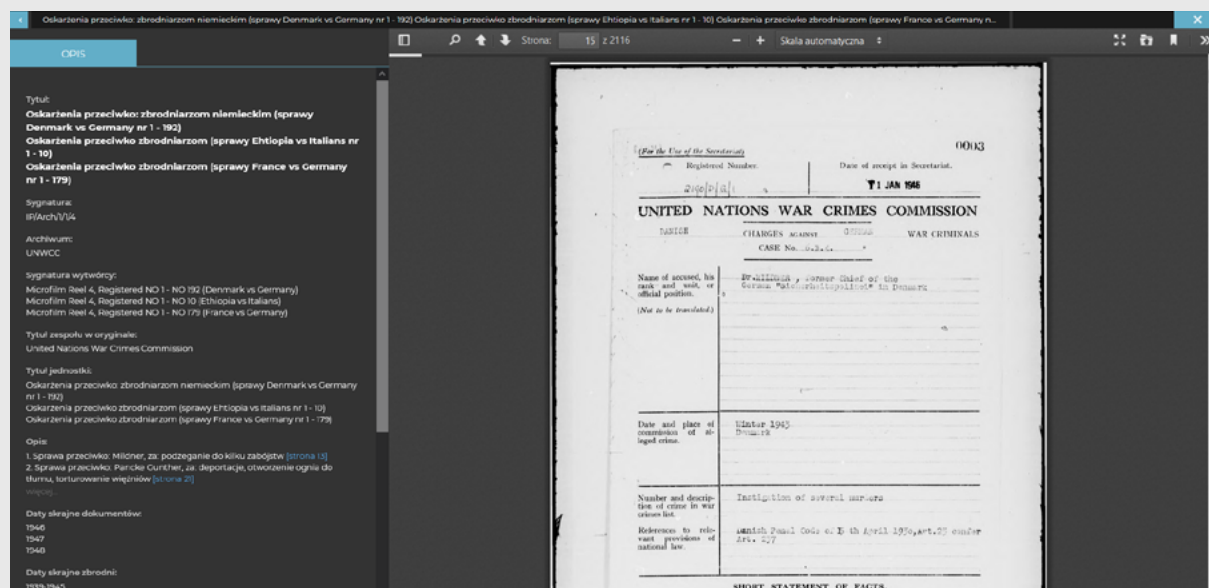
After reaching the desired object, its description will be displayed first. Access to the content will be possible only at the Library of the Pilecki Institute.

We encourage you to use the advanced search engine to narrow down your search results.

It is also possible to use the website in English.

## The Library

The Library’s website includes descriptions of the available collections, as well as the necessary information for planning a visit. The documents themselves can only be read in the reading room, which is part of the Library located at the headquarters of the Pilecki Institute in Warsaw and in our branch in Berlin. These are generally accessible places where we provide research materials free of charge to scholars and all interested parties. The Institute’s employees will help with general inquiries



regarding the collections, help users navigate our online catalogs, and enable access to materials subject to availability restrictions.

Most of the archival materials are in open access on computers in the Library. However, some of our collections, such as those from the Bundesarchiv or the KARTA Center [Ośrodek KARTA], are subject to restrictions resulting from agreements between the Institute and the transferring institutions. After arriving at the Library, visitors must sign relevant declarations granting access to documents exclusively on site. Information on access restrictions is included in the Library's regulations. Before the visit, we encourage you to familiarize yourself with the scope and structure of our archival, library and audio-visual resources, as well as with the visiting rules and regulations concerning the use of the collections.



Inside the seat of the Pilecki Institute at 17 Foksal Street, Warsaw. Photo: PM

Everyone interesting in using our collections is invited to the seat of the Pilecki Institute at 17 Foksal Street in Warsaw. The library is open from Monday to Friday from 9.00 am to 3.00 pm. It is necessary to make an appointment before visiting. This can be done by sending an e-mail to the following address: [czytelnia@instytutpileckiego.pl](mailto:czytelnia@instytutpileckiego.pl) or by calling (+48) 22 182 24 75.

The library of the Berlin branch of the Pilecki Institute is located at Pariser Platz 4a. It is open Tuesday through Friday from 10.30 am to 5.30 pm. Appointments can be made by sending an e-mail to [bibliothek@pileckiinstitut.de](mailto:bibliothek@pileckiinstitut.de) or by calling (+49) 30 275 78 955.

## Chronicles of Terror

Chronicles of Terror is one of the largest collections of testimonies of the civilian population of occupied Europe. The online database gathers the reports of individuals who experienced suffering at the hands of two totalitarian regimes during World War II. The testimonies contain the personal experiences of thousands of victims of totalitarian atrocities and their families.



Photo: Pilecki Institute

The materials available on the site come from many different archives. The largest collection consists of reports of witness testimonies concerning the crimes committed by the Germans during the occupation of Poland in 1939–1945, collected by the Main Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes in Poland and its legal successors. The Chronicles of Terror also contain the accounts of Poles who left the Soviet Union with Anders' Army, collected since 1943 by the Documents Bureau of the Polish Army in the East [Biuro Dokumentów Armii Polskiej na Wschodzie]. After the war, these documents were handed over to the American Hoover Institution. The archive also features testimonies about Poles who helped Jews during the occupation, collected since 1999 by the Committee for the Commemoration of Poles Saving Jews [Komitet dla Upamiętnienia Polaków Ratujących Żydów], as well as reports on the victims of the Katyń massacre, collected by the historian Jędrzej Tucholski, who used publications such as "Zorza. Rodzinny Tygodnik Katolików" [Aurora. Family Catholic Weekly] and other newspapers to conduct a nationwide campaign in the late 1980s to collect information about the victims of this Soviet-led massacre. The last collection consists of children's essays on their wartime experiences, sent to a competition announced in 1946 by the then Ministry of Education, currently stored in the Archives of Modern Records [Archiwum Akt Nowych] and other state archives.



Until recently, these testimonies were scattered and locked away in archives. Only now have they been made available to a wider body of readers, allowing them to uncover family and local histories. Needless to say, these documents are also of immense interest for scholars, journalists and people of culture. And, since they are being translated into English, we are in a position to successfully promote their international dissemination, thereby furthering knowledge of the dual occupation of Poland and serving to memorialize the victims of Nazi and Soviet totalitarianism.

The establishment of the Pilecki Institute's digital archive means that the Chronicles of Terror online database of testimonies will be modified. It will be continuously developed with a view to promoting the personal relations of Polish citizens, however, the full content of the testimonies contained therein will be available only in the Library of the Pilecki Institute.

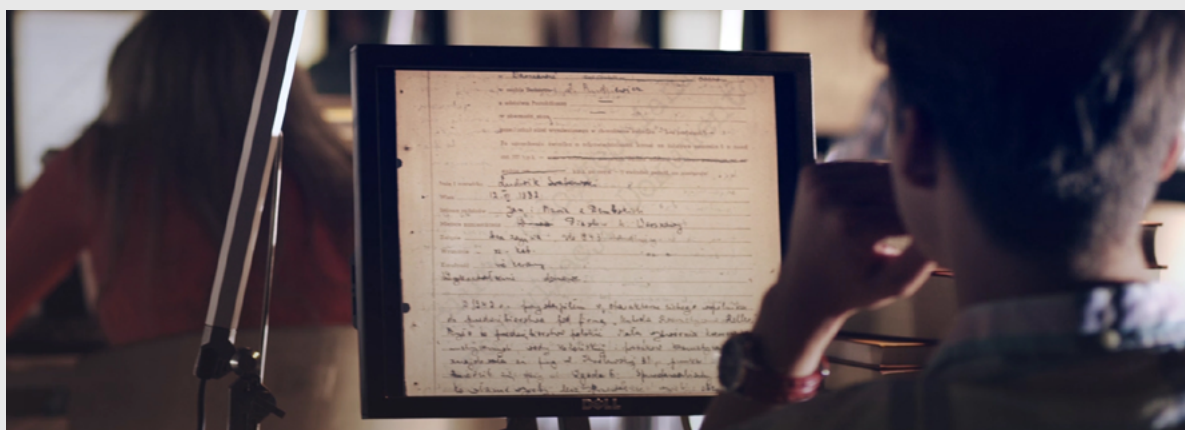


Photo: Pilecki Institute

## Archives of the Institute of National Remembrance [Archiwum Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej]



The most extensive collection of reports in the Chronicles of Terror database consists of the depositions of Polish citizens who testified before the Main Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes in Poland [Główna Komisja Badania Zbrodni Niemieckich] after World War II. These have been made available thanks to an agreement with the Institute of National Remembrance [Instytut Pamięci Narodowej].

The Commission was established in 1945 to document German crimes during the occupation. It operated throughout the country with a network of regional branches, and the evidence it collected was used to convict many German criminals. The Commission operated for over 40 years in the realities of a Communist state, a fact the testifying witnesses had to take into account. The tasks of the Commission were taken over in 1998 by the investigative department of the Institute of National Remembrance and extended to encompass an investigation of Communist terror.

The testimonies available on the Chronicles of Terror websites concern, among others, German crimes from the period of the Warsaw Uprising, occupation terror in the Radom district, and the Holocaust. Also available are the testimonies made during the first trial of KL Auschwitz-Birkenau camp personnel and the trial of Rudolf Höss. So far, almost 4,000 testimonies before the Commission have been made available.

## Archives of the Hoover Institution



Thanks to cooperation with the American Hoover Institution and the Archives of Modern Records, we have been able to include accounts of Polish citizens who left the Soviet Union with Anders' Army on the Chronicles of Terror website. These documents were collected by a specially appointed Independent Historical Department of the Polish Armed Forces [Samodzielny Referat Historyczny Polskich Sił Zbrojnych] at its headquarters in the USSR, which started operating shortly after the signing of the Sikorski-Mayski Agreement on 30 July 1941. In April 1943, the Department became part of the Documents Bureau of the newly established Polish Army in the East. The reports were collected as soon as prisoners were able to leave Soviet captivity and thus constitute a unique testimony to the USSR's attack on Poland on 17 September 1939, the atrocities of the two-year Soviet occupation and the tragic fate of Poles in exile. They include accounts of people arrested by the NKVD as "enemies of the people", tortured during interrogations and sentenced to many years in labor camps. People deported to the East describe long journeys in cattle cars, the difficult living conditions in exile, the backbreaking labor, starvation, and the deaths of loved ones. The reports were collected so that the whole world would know the truth about the crimes of Communist totalitarianism.

After the war, the Polish government in exile decided to find a safe place where the documents could be stored, fearing that they might be destroyed or taken by the Communist authorities in the country. The American Hoover Institution was chosen primarily because it had always been supportive to the cause of Polish independence; moreover, it was a private institution, and thus less exposed to possible pressure to donate the collections to the People's Republic of Poland. In this way, thousands of accounts of Polish citizens found their way to Stanford, California. So far, over 1,700 of them have already been made available on the Chronicles of Terror website.

## The Katyń Museum [Muzeum Katyńskie]



In 2019, the website published reports from the collection of Jędrzej Tucholski, stored in the archives of the Katyń Museum – the Martyrdom Section of the Polish Army Museum. In 1989, this long-time researcher of the

Katyń massacre used the “Zorza” weekly to announce an appeal with a request to send information about Polish officers murdered by the Soviets in 1940. The publication’s editorial office received several thousand letters over the course of ten months. For the first time in many years, open discourse about Katyń was possible. The documents sent by the relatives of the victims included not only information about the murdered officers, but also letters that prisoners detained in the camps in Kozelsk, Ostashkov and Starobelsk wrote to their families. This collection is an extraordinary testimony to the victims of the Soviet crime, as well as to the suffering of their families and the fight against the Katyń lie. The Chronicles of Terror website currently provides over 100 reports from the Katyń Museum.

## United Nations War Crimes Commission

In 2018, thanks to the kindness of the UN Secretariat, we received materials from the United Nations War Crimes Commission (UNWCC). These documents, stored in New York, were declassified only in 2017. Until then, they could only be viewed with the consent of the Secretary General of the United Nations. The Pilecki Institute is only the third institution that has obtained approval to release these materials (following the Wiener Library in London and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington).

The UNWCC operated in the years 1943–1948. The Commission’s goal was to identify war criminals who committed crimes during World War II and then to assist national governments in bringing them to justice. The Commission worked in parallel with the International Military Tribunal in Nuremberg and the International Military Tribunal for the Far East. It assisted in an unprecedented number of over 30,000 cases, sometimes despite opposition from politicians from the Allied countries who, for various reasons, preferred that the crimes of the Axis countries not be fully accounted for.

Over the course of its five years in operation, the Commission managed to collect invaluable materials, verified at an international level, documenting crimes committed not only by top officials of Axis nations, but also by lower-ranking soldiers. The UNWCC set new standards by prosecuting suspects for various types of crimes, such as genocide, mass executions, sexual violence, torture or the destruction and plunder of cultural goods.

The materials obtained from the UNWCC concern various geographical areas and historical events, crimes committed by individual perpetrators, soldiers and officers of the terror apparatus against individuals, families, guerrilla or national groups, as well as crimes planned and controlled by high-ranking representatives of the German regime, such as Hans Frank, Arthur Seyss-Inquart, Ludwig Fischer or Albert Speer. The documents also concern informal and organized groups of perpetrators, for example the personnel of specific concentration camps, of whom dozens or even hundreds of



people, whose personal details were already known at that stage, were investigated. In some cases, only the surname, first name or a description of the suspect's clothing or appearance was known. Such cases were also recorded in the hope that it would be possible to establish more details and identify the perpetrator over time.

With such an enormous scope of cases, the right to seek justice was emphasized both by entire countries and individuals, as well as by groups of victims of systematic genocide, for example the victims of concentration and extermination camps.

The documents obtained confirm the exceptional contribution of the Polish government-in-exile and its agencies in documenting and informing the world about Germany's crimes against Poles and Jews in occupied Poland during World War II. The dispatches and reports collected by the Polish Underground State, starting in 1940, were submitted to the UNWCC, providing irrefutable evidence of the mass crimes committed in the camps. These were the first pieces of evidence of the Holocaust.



Presentation of UNWCC documents obtained from the UN. Pictured: Irena Wiśniewska, a former prisoner at KL Auschwitz-Birkenau; Dr Wojciech Kozłowski, director of the Pilecki Institute; Prof. Magdalena Gawin, deputy minister of culture and national heritage

The materials collected by the UNWCC include, among others, a case against Hans Frank and 92 other people accused of crimes committed in KL Auschwitz-Birkenau (ref. IP/Arch/1/1/14, case no. 304/P/G/30), initiated by Poland on 1 September 1944, i.e. while the camp was still operating. The functioning of the camp and the genocide carried out there, including an estimated number of victims, are described in detail across several dozen pages. The case was accompanied by a sketch of the camp, a list containing the names of several dozen members of the camp's staff, as well as by a calendar with information concerning several transports and executions. The documents clearly state that all this knowledge was due to confidential reports from the Polish government in London.

Other notable cases are the accusation against Wilhelm Ernst von Palézieux, Hans Frank's art advisor (ref. IP/Arch/1/1/14, case no. 3116/P/G/47). He was responsible for the robbery of Polish cultural works, which were then intended to decorate the General Governor's private apartments. Palézieux was responsible for the removal

of paintings by Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael and Rembrandt, as well as Piotr Kmita's gold-embroidered chasuble (discovered by Americans in Hans Frank's personal luggage) from Kraków. Evidence from the UNWCC includes Palézieux's correspondence from the period of the occupation.

By providing researchers with the UNWCC's documentation, we hope that the information contained therein will become a permanent and important element of any discussion on the role of Poland in its fight for the settlement of the crimes committed by the German state.

**Access available starting:** January 2021

## The Federal Archives of Germany [Bundesarchiv]



The Federal Archives of Germany (Bundesarchiv, BA) possesses the largest archived collections in Germany. Its headquarters are located in Koblenz, and it has eight branches. BA was established in 1952, but has its origin in the Central Archives for the Bodies and Authorities of the German Reich, founded in Potsdam in 1919, which went on to be transformed into the Central Archives of the German Democratic Republic [Zentrales Staatsarchiv der DDR] after World War II. Some of the German collections were destroyed as a result of the hostilities, and others were confiscated by the Allies or the Soviets. Following the post-war division of the country, the German authorities decided to create their own central archive, and the collections were combined after the fall of the Berlin Wall. The oldest documents currently in the collections of the Bundesarchiv date from as early as the 15th century.

After having reached an agreement with BA, the Berlin branch of the Pilecki Institute has been conducting the mass digitization of the collections since 2019. We obtain and develop materials related to World War II, with particular emphasis on the German occupation of Poland. The documents we have gathered so far come from three branches of the Federal Archives located in Bayreuth, Ludwigsburg and Berlin-Lichterfelde. Thanks to the work of archivists from our Berlin branch, the Pilecki Institute has become the first Polish institution to provide materials from the Bundesarchiv. Below are short descriptions of all the fonds we have acquired thus far and which have already been included in our digital archive, or which will be included in the near future.



Entrance to the Bundesarchiv in Berlin-Lichterfelde. Photo: Pilecki-Institut Berlin



Entrance to the Bundesarchiv in Berlin-Lichterfelde. Photo: Pilecki-Institut Berlin

**B 162, Zentrale Stelle der Landesjustizverwaltungen zur Aufklärung national-sozialistischer Verbrechen** (Ludwigsburg Center for the Investigation of National Socialist Crimes)

This is a very extensive group of over 80,000 items from the BA's Ludwigsburg branch. It contains documents produced by the Center for the Investigation of National Socialist Crimes, established in 1958 to investigate and gather evidence against Nazi war criminals. It contains documentation from investigations conducted in Ludwigsburg, including numerous materials from the war and subsequent witness testimonies, as well as extremely interesting files from the trials themselves. As a result, the documents from Ludwigsburg are important for research not only on the history of World War II, but also on the way post-war Germany accounted for Nazi crimes. In 2020, we acquired the entire collection from Ludwigsburg. These materials will be made available in our digital archive on an ongoing basis.

### **Ost-Dokumentation** (Ost-Dok, Eastern Documentation)

The Pilecki Institute Archives contains three Ost-Dok groups: 8, 10 and 13. These contain accounts written after the war of Germans who lived in the areas east of the Odra and Nysa prior to 1939. The authors of the reports were members of various professions: inspectors, teachers, geodesists, pharmacists, foresters, clergymen, local authorities and officials. Their memoirs, written according to a specific template, relate to the period before 1939 and the first years of the war. Although the authors avoided presenting themselves in an unfavorable light and ignored many events, their reports are a valuable source for researching social history, Polish-German relations in the interwar period, and the history of German administration. They concern Pomerania, Greater Poland, Warmia and Mazury, Silesia, and central Poland.

### **R 70-POLEN, Deutsche Polizeidienststellen in Polen** (German Police Stations in Poland)

This group consists of 747 items predominantly concerning documents related to the organization and staffing of the German police apparatus in the General Government and the territories incorporated into the Third Reich. A significant part of the materials are the files of superior SS officers and police commandants in the General Government, and documents from the posts located in individual districts, the Wartheland, and Gdańsk-West Prussia. This group may be very useful in researching the German occupation in Poland, as it presents the activities of various German police formations and the actions they carried out. It includes, among others, reports on the activities of the Polish underground and Germany's fight to suppress it.

### **R 2, Reichsfinanzministerium** (Reich Ministry of Finance)

This group includes numerous files concerning, among others, the finances of the General Government and the acquisition of Polish property by the Germans, as well as interesting material that does not relate directly to financial matters, such as documents describing the relations between the Third Reich and Ukrainians, plans to establish the Reichsdorf University in Poznań, and SS and police files.



Photo: Bundesarchiv

**R 6, Reichsministerium für die besetzten Ostgebiete** (Reich Ministry for Occupied Eastern Territories)

The group contains many documents concerning the internal administration of the ministry, its functioning, legal affairs, education and science, as well as the department that used the work of foreigners in the economic exploitation of the eastern territories.

**R 19, Hauptamt Ordnungspolizei** (Headquarters of the Order Police)

Material includes numerous files related to the organization of the German terror apparatus in Poland. A significant part of the documents concerns the internal matters of this office, information on the training of members of the formation, promotions, leaves, accommodation and equipment.

**R 20, Truppen und Schulen der Ordnungspolizei** (Divisions and Training of the Order Police)

The group includes 234 items with information about the German repressions in Poland. The documents largely describe the functioning and activities of individual police regiments and battalions, as well as smaller training units. The files include many reports on the Holocaust and the ruthless battles with Polish partisans.

**R 43-II, Reichskanzlei** (Reich Chancellery)

Documents related to decisions taken at the highest level, including with regards to Poles and Jews.

**R 49, Reichskommissar für die Festigung deutschen Volkstums** (Reich Commissioner for the Consolidation of German Nationhood)

Material on actions taken to support Germanization in the occupied territories, looting and confiscation of property, as well as forced labor and deportation of people to forced labor in the Third Reich. The collection also contains lists of names of displaced persons.

**R 55, Reichsministerium für Volksaufklärung und Propaganda** (Reich Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda)

The materials cover not only the period of the war, but also the period prior to its outbreak. Many documents are devoted to radio and films, as well as cultural policy in the occupied territories. In addition, the group contains information about the discovery of the mass graves of Polish officers in Katyń and its usage in German propaganda.

**R 58, Reichssicherheitshauptamt** (RSHA, Reich Main Security Office)

The group consists of a total of 6,737 items, of which around 500, which we have successively acquired, directly concern Polish lands and Polish citizens. In addition to reports on the internal situation in the Third Reich and in the territories it occupied, the group contains many personal files and lists of people persecuted by the Gestapo (it should be noted, however, that not all of them are complete). In addition, it also contains a lot of useful information about SD reports and descriptions of the political, economic and social situation in Poland before 1 September 1939.

**R 59, Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle** (Coordination Center for Ethnic Germans)

The collection consists of more than 600 files and contains documents concerning the settlement of Germans in Poland and the German nationality list, including the files of Volksdeutsch citizens who received Reich citizenship after resettlement on its territory.

**R 69, Einwandererzentralstelle Litzmannstadt** (Central Office for Immigrants in Łódź)

This group contains files related to the functioning of the Central Office, especially those related to resettlement. It is worth noting that there are no inventories or personal records, and therefore these documents should be treated as supplementary to other materials.

**R 75, Umwandererzentralstelle Posen** (Central Office for Displaced Persons in Poznań)

This group is only fragmentary. The documents concern the deportation of Poles and Jews from Warthegau, and, to a lesser extent, from Pomerania and the Zamość



area. Several files contain materials related to the settlement of Volksdeutsche in the areas incorporated into the Reich.

**R 136, Reichswasserstraßenverwaltung im Reichsgau Danzig und im Memelland**  
(Administration of Reich Waterways in the Districts of Gdańsk and Klaipėda)

Files on administrative matters, construction, services, and personnel of various institutions and offices, as well as matters of personnel in the regions mentioned in the title.

**R 153, Publikationsstelle Berlin-Dahlem**

A group of documents from a secret German archive located in Berlin-Dahlem, whose main task was to provide scientists of various disciplines with materials on problems in the east, the so-called Ostforschung. The fonds includes references to Poland, including several expert opinions and scientific studies, as well as press cuttings from the interwar period, files from Polish libraries plundered during the war, and witness testimonies regarding the Katyń massacre.

**R 1501, Reichsministerium des Innern (Reich Ministry of the Interior)**

A very extensive set of documents from a broad period, namely from the mid-19th century to the second half of the 1970s. They concern the functioning of individual



Bundesarchiv (Lastenausgleichsarchiv) in Bayreuth. Photo: Bundesarchiv



departments and offices, many of which give details about the administration of the Third Reich, the Reich Civil Defense and the activities of various societies and associations.

**R 2301, Rechnungshof des Deutschen Reiches** (Court of Audit for the German Reich)

Documents concerning, among others, organizational, legal and administrative matters of the Accounting Chamber, employee matters (including over 3,000 personal files), small enterprises, and the Wehrmacht supply offices.

**R 3001, Reichsjustizministerium** (Reich Ministry of Justice)

Documents concerning the judiciary and judicial bodies, criminal law, prisons in the Reich and its annexed territories, and the functioning of the police, as well as internal financial, economic and military issues regarding, among others, members of the Wehrmacht.

**R 3101, Reichswirtschaftsministerium** (Reich Ministry of the Economy)

Material documenting both internal affairs and international economic relations with other countries and in the occupied territories. The group also includes two volumes of files on German plans to thwart the transport of the Polish gold deposit from France to Great Britain in 1940.

**R 4901, Reichsministerium für Wissenschaft, Erziehung und Volksbildung** (Reich Ministry of Science, Education and Culture)

Some of the documents from this group date back to the 19th century. The fonds also concerns the Reichsdorf University in Poznań, its faculties, departments and general functioning, the intention to establish a similar institution in Kraków, and the personal files of teachers. The group also includes several documents on the closure of the Jagiellonian University in 1939 and the Sonderaktion Krakau.

**NS 3, SS-Wirtschafts-Verwaltungshauptamt** (SS Main Economic and Administrative Office)

The group consists of nearly 2,000 items, almost 100 of which concern German concentration camps operating in Poland.

**NS 4-AU and NS 4-LU**

Groups containing documents related to KL Auschwitz and KL Lublin, predominantly fragmentary data on prisoners, staff and the functioning of the camps.

**NS 6, Partei-Kanzlei** (NSDAP Party Chancellery)

Documents on the internal affairs of the party, meetings with high-ranking persons in the state apparatus of the Third Reich, and various reports primarily from the occupied territories, including from the General Government.

### **NS 7, SS- und Polizeigerichtsbarkeit** (SS and police jurisdiction)

A group of 2,750 files, containing documents on the activities of the SS and German police in the Third Reich and occupied areas. The collection includes, among others, documents on the Polish and Ukrainian police in the General Government, Sonderdienst, SS courts and police in Kraków and Gdańsk, as well as criminal files of SS members, including Hans Krause, commandant of the Działdowo camp.

### **NS 19, Persönlicher Stab Reichsführer SS** (Personal Staff Reichsführer-SS)

A group of over 4,000 items, several hundred of which concern issues related to occupied Poland, including concentration camps, Operation Reinhardt, and SS offices and their functions. Some of the documents refer to Volksdeutsche, resettlement and corruption in some offices.

### **NS 20, Kleine Erwerbungen NSDAP, a fragmented group** (NSDAP small acquisitions)

A fragmented group containing various documents ranging from administrative to political matters, including materials about the Gliwice provocation of 31 August 1939.

### **NS 21, Forschungs- und Lehrgemeinschaft "Das Ahnenerbe"** (Research and Teaching Community of Ancestral Heritage)

Materials from the Nazi research organization founded in 1935, containing mainly pseudoscientists dealing with the prehistory of the Germanic spiritual legacy. The documents refer to numerous anthropological research conducted in Poland, including in Auschwitz and in Kashubia, as well as to the search for alleged Germanic influences in Polish architecture and the confiscation of Polish cultural goods.

### **NS 23, Sturmabteilungen der NSDAP** (NSDAP Storm Detachments)

Documents on the structures of the SS and SA and their functions, administrative issues, and orders issued. The group also includes personal files and lists of SS and SA members, including those operating in Poland, particularly in Silesia, Warthegau and in the areas of the General Government.

### **NS 26, Hauptarchiv der NSDAP** (NSDAP Central Archives)

The group contains materials mainly related to the history of Germany from the end of the 19th century, documents on Adolf Hitler, the Munich coup, the NSDAP supervision of various state institutions, the party's territorial structure and race issues.

### **NS 31, SS-Hauptamt (SS Central Office)**

Materials related to administrative matters and the functioning of the SS, orders and regulations, documents related to the broadly-understood concept of Germanization. Several files related to occupied Poland contain, among others, guidelines on the behavior of SS members towards Polish women and information about the Allgemeine SS in Poland.

### **NS 34, SS-Personalhauptamt (SS Central Office for Personnel)**

Orders, regulations and personal matters of SS members both in Germany and in the occupied territories. The group includes documents on Selbstschutz, including the adoption of new members from Pomerania, and then their inclusion in the SS.

### **NS 43, Außenpolitisches Amt der NSDAP (NSDAP Office of Foreign Affairs)**

Documents on the organization and functioning of the Nazi party. The group includes one volume of files relating to Polish-Ukrainian relations during World War II.

**Access available starting:** January 2021

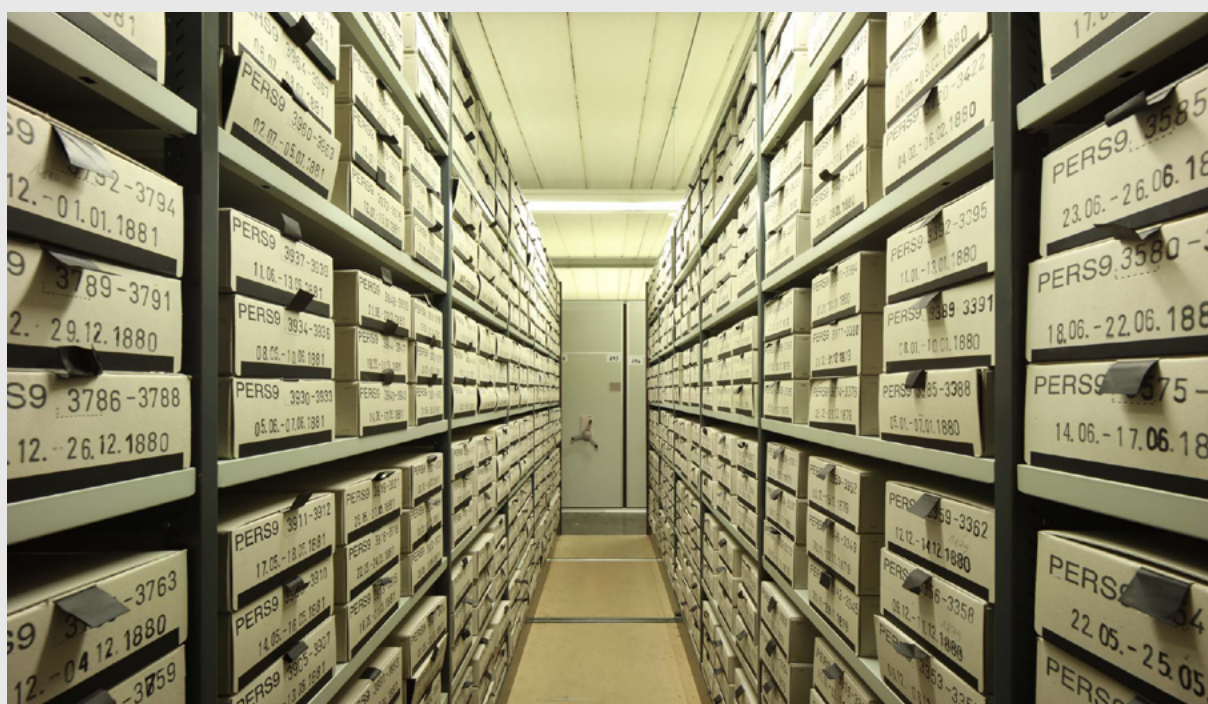


Photo: Bundesarchiv

## German regional archives

The capabilities of the archives in the Federal Republic of Germany are divided. In addition to the central Federal Archives – the Bundesarchiv, which collects documents from national institutions – each of the sixteen states has its own regional archive, which collect documents from the most important local institutions, including from local civil and judicial authorities. Thanks to the involvement of our Berlin branch, we have begun cooperation with these individual state archives. We have managed to obtain a significant number of documents from the State Archives of Hamburg [Staatsarchiv Hamburg] and the State Archives of Schleswig-Holstein [Landesarchiv Schleswig-Holstein], which make up an extremely valuable supplement to the materials obtained from the Bundesarchiv.



Schleswig. Photo: ARCO / W. Wirth

The State Archives of Hamburg archives and publicizes documents from institutions of the city and the state of Hamburg. It has a rich collection of regional press, historical photographs and maps related to the region. The materials we have obtained include court files from the local judiciary, the majority of which come from the Hamburg prosecutor's office and concern various investigations into Nazi war crimes committed in Poland.

The collections of the State Archives of Schleswig-Holstein include documents from institutions located in the modern federal state of Schleswig-Holstein, as well as from former local authorities, including the principalities of Schleswig, Holstein, Lauenburg and Lübeck. Extensive film and cartographic archives can also be found there. The materials we have obtained come from the local judiciary and concern investigations into Nazi war crimes committed in Poland and former East Prussia.



Hamburg. Photo: Axel Schmies / Novarc

**Access available starting:** Second half of 2021



## The National Archives

The National Archives is the official archive of Her Majesty's Government in the UK and was established in 2003 following a merger of the Public Record Office and the Historical Manuscripts Commission. The oldest documents in the collections of the National Archives date back to the 12th century.

We have been conducting research and obtaining collections from the National Archives since 2018. The documents we disclose were not broadly known and remained largely undiscovered until 2005. Most of them have so far been available only at the seat of the National Archives in London.

The materials we have obtained concern occupied Poland and Europe during World War II, consisting of 185 archival fonds, i.e. over 31,000 pages of documentation. Among them are internal correspondence of British authorities, press articles, and depositions from Polish and British interviews on the subject German and Soviet crimes, war damages, and economic realities.



Seat of The National Archives in London. Photo: Nick Ansell / PA Archive / PA Images

The most interesting materials include correspondence from British intelligence regarding the evacuation of Polish gold reserves and reports on Polish-Lithuanian relations during World War II, the latter of which include information on the mass executions of Polish hostages in Švenčionys in 1942 and the internment camps for Poles in Lithuania. We also provide an opportunity to access material from British intelligence regarding Polish-Soviet relations during World War II. These include reports on the talks surrounding the Sikorski–Mayski Agreement of 1941, drafts of the text of the agreement prepared by the Polish and Russian parties, documents relat-

ed to plans to establish a Polish army in the USSR, and lists of Poles who were to be released after the signing of the agreement. The documents also make references to interned Polish officers, prisoners in Ostashkov, Kozelsk and Starobelsk, and a related letter from Helena Sikorska, the wife of Władysław Sikorski, to Eleanor Roosevelt, the first lady of the United States, regarding the search for Polish officers interned in the USSR. Of similar significance is the collection from the Polish Navy dated 1939–1945, which contains materials on both Polish–British cooperation and documents directly related to Polish ships, including ORP Orzeł and ORP Wilk. as well as Polish ocean liners used as transporters during the war.

**Access available starting:** January 2021



Seat of The National Archives in London. Photo: Nick Ansell / PA Archive / PA Images

## The Polish Institute and Sikorski Museum



The Polish Institute and Sikorski Museum [Instytut Polski i Muzeum im. gen. Sikorskiego] was formally established on 2 May 1945, when it gathered together General Sikorski's archives and mementoes that were donated by his widow, Helena Sikorska. The Institute also includes the documents of the Polish Armed Forces Command [Dowództwo Polskich Sił Zbrojnych], provided by General Władysław Anders in 1947. In 1965, the Institute merged with the Polish Research Center [Polski Ośrodek Naukowy], established in London in 1939, and the name was changed to the current one.

The Institute's archives mostly contain documentation from World War II concerning the fate of Poland at that time. It is divided into three main sections: Files of Civil Authorities, Military Files and Collections of Persons and Properties. The abundance of materials stored in London makes the Institute one of the most important Polish institutions outside Poland, and every researcher of the history of World War II is encouraged to examine the documents there.

We have been obtaining licenses for digital copies of selected archival materials from the Polish Institute and Sikorski Museum since 2018. We have so far received, among others, documents related to the fate of Polish soldiers interned in Romania and groups describing the work of the Polish Embassy in the USSR. We have obtained materials documenting Jan Karski's mission and the destruction of Polish cultural property by the German occupier. The digital archive will also grant access to recently acquired documents describing the activities of the Citizens' Committee for Reconstruction of the Capital City of Warsaw [Komitet Obywatelskiego Odbudowy m.st. Warszawy], which operated in London in the years 1944–1947.

**Access available starting:** First half of 2021



Seat of the Polish Institute and Sikorski Museum in London. Photo: Krzysztof Bożejewicz / The Polish Institute and Sikorski Museum



# The Polish Underground Movement Study Trust

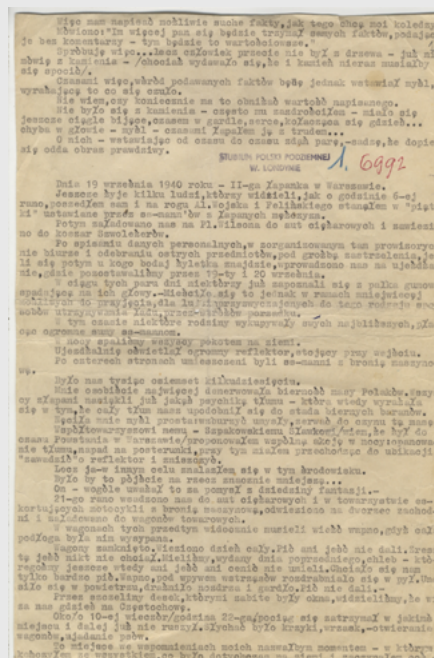


The Polish Underground Movement Study Trust [Studium Polski Podziemnej] was established in London in 1947 by former soldiers of the Home Army. It is one of the most important Polish institutions outside Poland, and has extremely valuable archival resources on the history of the Polish Underground State. In 1988, the Study Trust merged with the Polish Institute and Sikorski Museum, while continuing to operate independently.

Most of the Study Trust's archives were transferred after the war from the Staff of the Supreme Commander's Historical Subcommittee [Podkomisja Historyczna przy Sztabie Naczelnego Wodza]. In the 1950s, further materials were provided in the form of donations and deposits. The core of the archives is the documents of the Commander's 6th Division in London, to which the entire military communication with occupied Poland was subordinate, including the activity of the Grey Ranks, and the Social Department of the Ministry of the Interior [Dział Społeczny Ministerstwa Spraw Wewnętrznych] of the Polish government-in-exile. The collection of the Polish Underground Movement Study Trust also includes the files of the Home Army Verification Commission [Akta Komisji Weryfikacyjnych AK] (40,000 personal files), the underground press, posters, brochures, and regional and city maps of Poland.

We have been obtaining digital copies of selected archival materials from this institution since 2019. So far, we have received 22 archival fonds. These are predominantly materials concerning intelligence and courier activities organized by the Polish Underground State. Among the obtained intelligence documents are reports on the persecution of Jews in the General Government and the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, documents describing the general situation in occupied Poland, as well as Jan Karski's reports from the occupied country. Materials of particular importance for our Institute are the reports of Witold Pilecki on his mission in KL Auschwitz-Birkenau.

**Access available starting:** First half of 2021



A page from an original copy of the famous "Witold's Report", located in the collection of the Polish Underground Movement Study Trust. Photo: Krzysztof Bożejewicz / Polish Underground Movement Study Trust

# Swiss Federal Archives [Schweizerisches Bundesarchiv / Archives fédérales suisses]



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Confederation

Federal Department of Home Affairs FDHA  
Swiss Federal Archives SFA

The origins of the Swiss Federal Archives [Schweizerisches Bundesarchiv / Archives fédérales suisses] date back to the late 18th century, when the decision to create a national archive was taken. Its small collection gradually expanded, and the institution changed its seat many times, finally settling in Bern. In the 19th century, materials were mainly collected on the administration of justice and broadly understood legal issues. After World War I, the archive began to work intensively on researching Switzerland's relations with other nations. The significant increase in both the number of documents and users led to the reorganization of the archive in 1944 and the adoption of regulations that are still in force today.

We established cooperation with the Swiss Federal Archives in 2019, which allowed for the acquisition and digitization of selected materials. We have so far obtained key materials for researching aid provided by the Polish diplomatic corps in Switzerland. These documents concern the Ładoś Group, which was responsible for creating a system for the illegal production of Latin American passports in order to save Jews in German-occupied Europe. The collection includes, among others, the entire investigation conducted by the Swiss police in 1943 against the Honorary Consul of Paraguay, Rudolf Hügli. With these materials, it was possible to trace the illegal activities of the Polish diplomats in Bern, as well as to find information about their associates – members of Jewish organizations – and about the consuls of nations such as Haiti, Peru and Honduras, whose passports were being produced by the Ładoś Group. The documents prove that Polish diplomats in Switzerland played an important role in the efforts to save Jews during World War II.



Aleksander Ładoś. Photo: National Digital Archives

**Access available starting:** Second half of 2021

## The Sectoral State Archive of the Security Service of Ukraine [Галузевий Державний архів Служби безпеки України]



Галузевий  
Державний архів  
Служби безпеки України  
ssu.gov.ua

The Sectoral State Archive of the Security Service of Ukraine [Галузевий державний архів Служби безпеки України / Haluzevyy derzhavnyy arkhiv Sluzhby bezpeky Ukrainy], based in Kyiv, oversees the documentation of state security institutions from the eras of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and independent Ukraine. It was established in 1994, and reports directly to the President of Ukraine. The scope of its documentation covers the years 1918–2014, and its materials concern, among others, the resistance movement against Soviet totalitarianism, the revival of national ideas in Ukraine, the actions of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, political repression against the citizens of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and the preservation of the memory of the victims of the Great Famine. The archival resource consists of various types of materials: interrogation reports, letters, telegrams, intelligence reports, written in both Ukrainian and Russian. This variety of archives allows for multi-faceted research.

We have been conducting inquiries at the Sectoral State Archive of the Security Service of Ukraine and obtaining new materials since 2019, mainly documenting the repressions used by communist security authorities against Poles living in today's Ukraine. The documents we have obtained concern, among others, the Polish operation in the regions of Kiev, Odessa, Vinnytsia and Dnipropetrovsk. We also have reports on the intelligence activities of collaborators with the NKVD and documents on the repression of Polish citizens as a result of annexation of the eastern territories of the Second Polish Republic into the USSR.

**Access available starting:** Second half of 2021



Zbiory Wydzielonego Państwowego  
Archiwum SBU w Kijowie, fot. HDA-  
SBU

## Polish State Archives

A contract signed in 2019 between the Pilecki Institute and the Head Office of State Archives has allowed us to conclude agreements with all archives subordinate to this latter institute. As a result, we are able to access a lot of valuable materials, which will be made available in the Pilecki Institute Archives and become an invaluable source, especially for foreign researchers looking into the history of World War II.



ARCHIWA  
PAŃSTWOWE

### Archive of Modern Records [Archiwum Akt Nowych]

ARCHIWA  
PAŃSTWOWE  
ARCHIWUM AKT NOWYCH

The Archive of Modern Records [Archiwum Akt Nowych] is one of three centralized archives in Poland. It was established as the Military Archive [Archiwum Wojskowe] in 1919 following a decree issued by the then Head of State, Józef Piłsudski. The archive was transformed and given its present name in 1930. Its task is to collect and store archives produced, among others, by state authorities and administration, the judiciary, and independent central offices. The archive also contains many legacies of outstanding Poles and documents obtained from numerous social and political organizations. The majority of the materials relate to the period after 1916.



Seat of the Archive of Modern Acts in Warsaw. Photo: National Digital Archives

So far, we have obtained materials related to the interwar period and World War II from this archive, including reports on the general situation in the eastern provinces from 1920–1939, a collection of posters, leaflets and German brochures from the period of occupation, files on the help provided by Poles to the Jewish population during the occupation, documents on Polish representation in various



countries, e.g. in Germany, Turkey, France, Mexico, and Romania. We are currently digitizing the materials of the General Government of Kraków and the Government Delegation for Poland, both of which will be available in the Pilecki Institute Archives, where they will serve as an important item describing the apparatus of German repression in Poland during World War II and the activities of the Polish Underground State.

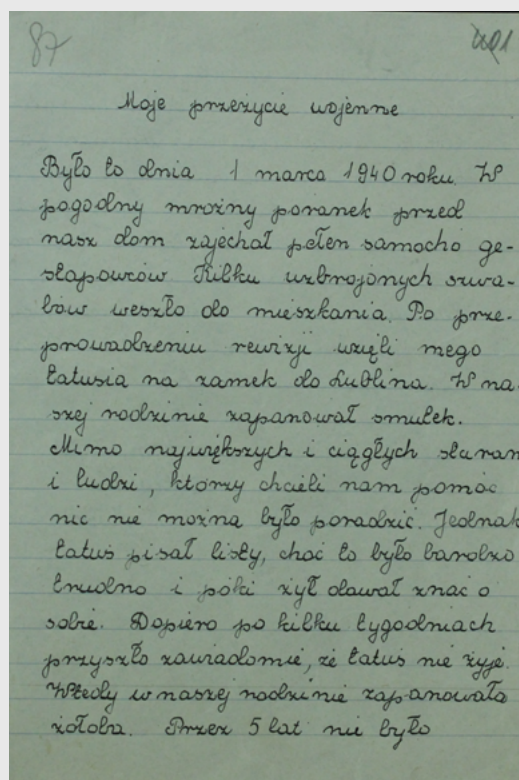
Among the most interesting materials that we have already obtained are documents from Polish legations and consulates during World War II, which illustrate various diplomatic and aid activities, such as those conducted by the Polish Legation in Bern and the Ładoś Group, which managed to save several thousand Jews by issuing false Latin American passports.

Other significant include documents made available as part of the Chronicles of Terror project, namely the collection of reports from the Committee for the Commemoration of Poles Saving Jews [Komitet dla Upamiętnienia Polaków Ratujących Żydów]. This committee was created at the turn of the 21st century and has collected hundreds of reports about Poles who saved Polish citizens of Jewish origin, as well as Jews from other nations, from extermination during the German occupation of Europe. The testimonies feature accounts of people honored with the title of Righteous Among the Nations, including Irena Sendler, the head of the children's section of the "Żegota" Council to Aid Jews, and others who remain unknown to this day. Some of the accounts were given by Holocaust survivors such as Stanisław Aronson, a Polish Jew, officer of the Home Army Directorate of Diversion [Kedyw] unit, who found shelter with a Polish farmer during his escape from a transport to KL Auschwitz.

Another collection available in the online Chronicles of Terror database includes six archival units containing essays by primary school students from the Lublin and Warsaw provinces. These essays were written in 1946 and show the war as seen through a child's eyes. These works provide insight into the psyche and experiences of the youngest Poles, who experienced life in the brutal realities of occupation during World War II.

**Access available starting:** Second half of 2021

The first page of an essay by Jan Gutek, Archive of Modern Records, file no. 2/283/0/1875



The first records of the activity of the archive in Warsaw date back to 1643. In 1792, the General Archive of the City of Warsaw [Archiwum Generalne Miasta Warszawy] was established. During the existence of the Duchy of Warsaw, this was divided into the Archives of Historical Records of Warsaw [Archiwum Akt Dawnych Warszawy], where municipal files related to the period up to 1810 were kept, and the Central Archives of the Magistrate [Archiwum Główne Magistratu], which collected later documentation. Much of the documentation was burned during the January Uprising. In 1917, the Central Archives of the Magistrate of the Capital City of Warsaw [Archiwum Główne Magistratu m.st. Warszawy] was established. After the Warsaw Uprising, the Germans set fire to one of the archives' buildings, which destroyed many valuable collections. Presently, the archive deals with the storage, processing and sharing of materials concerning Warsaw and the Mazovian province. It has branches in Grodzisk Mazowiecki, Łowicz, Mława, Ostów and Pułtusk, and oversees the Archives of Personal and Payroll Documentation [Archiwum Dokumentacji Osobowej i Płacowej] in Milanówek.

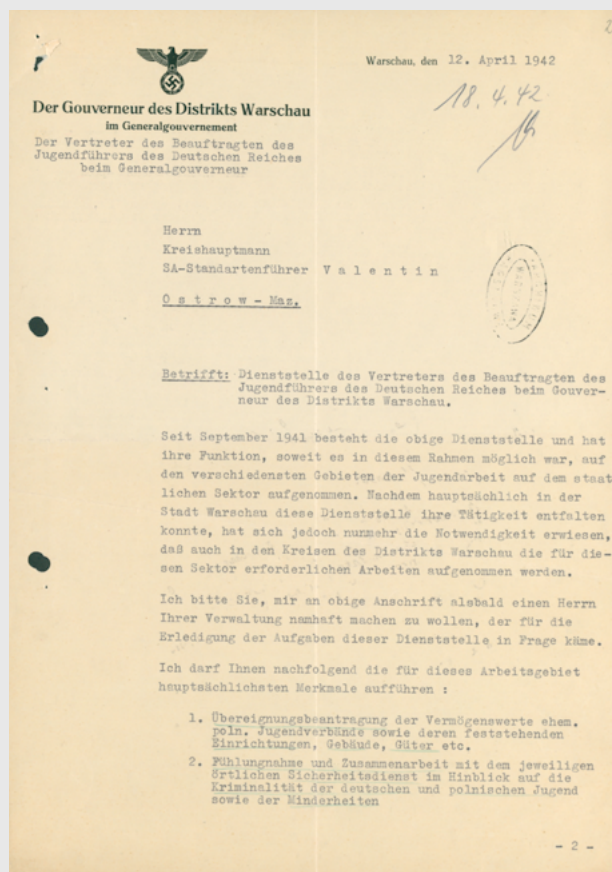
The materials we have obtained include, among others, documents from the German administration in the Mazovian province, files of the German courts in Żyrardów and Warsaw, and from the special court in Warsaw (Sondergericht Warschau), files from the Chamber of Health of the General Governorate [Izba Zdrowia Generalnego Gubernatorstwa] – containing information on the network of hospitals, sanatoriums, health centers, Red Cross unions, medical schools etc. – documents from the NSDAP stations in Ostrów Mazowiecka and Warsaw, containing the personal files of members of the German National Socialist Party and circulars on propaganda, documents of the Polish District Court in Warsaw containing files of post-war cases against persons who acted to the detriment of the Polish or Jewish population through cooperation with the occupier or who declared their affiliation to German nationality. We are also cooperating with the Archive of Personal and Payroll Documentation in Milanówek, which houses a huge collection of ID cards. The photos obtained therefrom are an important addition to the Chronicles of Terror database, as they allow us to give a face to the witnesses to history, the victims of two totalitarian regimes.

The most important archival materials obtained by the Pilecki Institute from the resources of the State Archives in Warsaw include the collection of the German



Part of a certificate belonging to Jan Makuch. Archive of Personal and Payroll Documentation in Milanówek

District Starost in Ostrów Mazowiecka [Kreishauptmannschaft Ostrau] and the collection of accounts of disabled persons from World War II. The files of the District Starost in Ostrów Mazowiecka from 1939–1945 contain orders from the occupying authorities regarding communication, reports from the German gendarmerie regarding the activity of the resistance movement and its sabotage missions, reports from the starost on the political and economic situation in the district and lists of the population sent for forced labor in the Third Reich. The collection of accounts of World War II disabled persons includes reports from the war and the occupation. These were created following a number of appeals in the years 1977–1992 by the Association for the Historical Committee of the Warsaw District Board for Polish War-Disabled Persons.



A letter from the district authorities in Warsaw to Karl Valentin, the Starost in Ostrów Mazowiecka [Kreishauptmannschaft Ostrau], from 12 April 1942, regarding the Hitlerjugend. State Archives in Warsaw, file no. 72/489/0/1/34

**Access available starting:** Second half of 2021

## State Archive in Częstochowa [Archiwum Państwowe w Częstochowie]



In 1950, a district branch of the State Archives in Katowice was established in Częstochowa, which became an independent archive first in 1975–1989, and then from 1994. It collects, organizes and shares documentation from the surrounding areas.

We have obtained digital copies of materials from 1939–1949 from this archive. These include files of the city and district of Częstochowa, containing materials on the situation of Polish and Jewish people under the German occupation. We also have access to the files of the Home Army Inspectorate in Częstochowa, including the organization's financial statements. A large part of the available material is a collection of posters and prints issued by the German occupational authorities from the Częstochowa district. The most important materials include lists of Poles murdered by the Germans in the Częstochowa district, drawn up by the Polish Red Cross.

**Access available starting:** First half of 2022



## State Archive in Kielce [Archiwum Państwowe w Kielcach]



This archive was established in 1919, but its origins date back to the 18th century and are related to the factory archives that were in operation in the Kielce region and date back to the 14th century. The 19th and 20th centuries left the most permanent mark on the archive. Currently, the State Archive in Kielce collects, compiles and makes available documents from the Kielce region. It is also involved in numerous projects to cultivate generations of memory through popularization, education, substantive assistance and sharing and adapting its offer to the current needs of society. The archive resources include the legacies of the activities of offices, unions, organizations, families and the areas between the Vistula and Pilica rivers. It also has a branch in Sandomierz.

From this archive, we have been able to obtain digital copies of primary school essays on the subject of the occupation in vicinity of Kielce and Radom, as well as a collection of Reichsdeutsch and Volksdeutsch questionnaires from the Radom district. These materials will help broaden knowledge about the repression apparatus in this area. The memories of children from World War II, made available in the Chronicles of Terror database, merit special attention. These are often very personal memories describing the fate of the child's own family. Moreover, some of them are general in nature and present the persecution of Poles and Jews by the German occupier. This material is a very valuable source for research on the impact of war on a child's psyche.



Siedziba AP w Kielcach, fot. AP w Kielcach

**Access available starting:** Second half of 2021

## National Archive in Kraków [Archiwum Narodowe w Krakowie]



In 1878, the National Archives of Town and Land Records [Archiwum Krajowe Aktów Grodzkich i Ziemskich] was established in Kraków. In the following years, its structure and name changed many times. In 1951, the archive was included in the network of archives subordinate to the Head Office of State Archives. In 2012, it was finally transformed into the State Archives in Krakow. It collects, organizes and

shares documentation from the Małopolska and Podhale regions. It has branches in Bochnia, Nowy Sącz, Tarnów, Nowy Targ and Spytkowice.

The Krakow Archives has made available to us an archival collection consisting of 64 units related to the Jewish Aleynhilf ("self-help") organization in Kraków. It contains personal questionnaires of Jews from the districts of Kraków, Lublin, Warsaw and Radom from 1940–1941.



Seat of the National Archives in Kraków. Photo: Lilianna Pochwalska

**Access available starting:** Second half of 2021

## State Archive in Lublin [Archiwum Państwowe w Lublinie]



Lublin's archival traditions date back to the 16th century, when the systematic collection of documents and books from local offices and courts began. In 1887, the partitioning Russian authorities liquidated the archive and transported its resources to Vilnius. The State Archive in Lublin was revived in 1918. During the German occupation, it was annexed into the German Archives Office. It resumed operations in July 1944. One of the most important achievements of the post-war period is the securing of files from the German administration, including materials related to the concentration camp at Majdanek, the prison at the Lublin Castle, the local Gestapo and gendarmerie, and the documents of the Lublin District Governor. The archive has branches in Chełm, Kraśnik and Radzyń Podlaski.

We have obtained many valuable documents related to World War II from the resources of the State Archives in Lublin. These concern the Polish Police stations in the Lublin district, the German Police Battalion in Zamość, the Reich Commissioner for the Consolidation of German Nationhood, the Coordination Center for Ethnic



State Archives in Lublin. Photo: Marek Krzykała

Germans [Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle], the SS Research Center for eastern affairs and the SS Police Command of the Lublin District. These materials will expand knowledge and facilitate research on the issue of the German terror apparatus in the Lublin district.

**Access available starting:** First half of 2021

## State Archive in Łódź [Archiwum Państwowe w Łodzi]



The origins of this archive reach back to the establishment in 1926 of the Archives of Historical Records of the City of Łódź [Archiwum Akt Dawnych m. Łodzi], which was transformed into the Municipal Archives [Archiwum Miejskie] in 1937. In 1948, a branch of the State Archives in Piotrków Trybunalski was established in Łódź, which in 1950 was transformed into a state archive. The main tasks of this facility are to collect, compile and share archival materials about Łódź and the surrounding areas. It has a branch office in Sieradz.

The archive in Łódź has given us access to material concerning mainly the situation of the Jewish population during the German occupation. These include documents of the Łódź Ghetto Judenrat, lists of people displaced to the ghetto, and correspondence regarding the resettlement of Jews. The largest part of the collection, consisting of about 2,000 archival units, are the documents of the German Board of the Łódź Ghetto from 1940–1944. We also have access to documents from the Executive Committee of the German Police in Łódź from 1939–1944.

**Access available starting:** First half of 2022

## State Archive in Radom [Archiwum Państwowe w Radomiu]



This archive was established via the merger of institutions founded at the turn of the 20th century. Its materials contain information about the earlier existence of the municipal archives and collections at local institutions and offices. During the partition of Poland, Radom, the capital of the Sandomierz Province, had thriving municipal and institutional archives, and the Archives of Historical Records [Archiwum Akt Dawnych] were also established in 1825. In 1920, owing to the importance of the institution, the authorities of the reborn Polish state issued a decree to establish the State Archives in Radom. During World War II, the archive did not cease to function, despite serious limitations in its activity, and its resources survived the war without major losses. After the war, files from the governor of the Radom district and other occupational offices, which the Germans did not manage to destroy or remove, were secured. In the post-

war period, the archive faced several issues related to its premises, but its intensive academic and popularization activities continued. In addition to the ongoing work related to the development and maintenance of resources and the provision of materials, the archive is currently digitizing its collections, improving its record-keeping and creating new indexes.



Inside the reading room of the State Archives in Radom.  
Photo: State Archives in Radom

The State Archives in Radom has provided us with digital copies of essays by primary school students from the Kielce and Radom regions. These essays were written in 1946 and contain the memories of children from World War II, representing a unique source of knowledge about the experience of the youngest Polish citizens during the German occupation. These have been made available in the Chronicles of Terror database. Additionally, we have also obtained a collection of posters from the German administration from 1939–1945, hung in the Radom district of the General Government. These materials allow for a broader insight into the methods of repression used by the occupant against Polish citizens.

**Access available starting:** Second half of 2021

## State Archive in Siedlce [Archiwum Państwowe w Siedlcach]



Established in 1950 as a district branch, initially overseen by the Archive of Modern Records [Archiwum Akt Nowych], and by the State Archives in Warsaw from 1952. This archive has been operating as an independent state institution since 1976. It collects, compiles and shares documents from selected districts of the Podlasie and Mazovian provinces.



The State Archive in Siedlce has made available, among others, files of the District Court and the Prosecutor's Office of the Special Criminal Court in Siedlce, containing documents related to criminal cases brought against individuals acting to the detriment of the Polish and Jewish population and accused of collaborating with the German occupier during World War II. Making them available to a wide audience will allow the broadening of knowledge about the terror apparatus in Podlasie and eastern Mazovia. One of the most interesting materials we have obtained is a collection of posters for the occupation administration from 1939–1944, from the occupied German districts of Siedlce and Sokołów-Węgrów, which provide insight into the propaganda used by the German occupier and the methods used to persecute the Polish and Jewish population.

**Access available starting:** Second half of 2021



Seat of the State Archives in Siedlce. Photo: State Archives in Siedlce



# Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum [Państwowe Muzeum Auschwitz-Birkenau]



Chaim Eiss. Photo: public domain

The Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum [Państwowe Muzeum Auschwitz-Birkenau], was founded by former inmates of the KL Auschwitz camp in 1947 and is located on the site of the German Nazi concentration and extermination camp which operated in 1940–1945. The museum archives works primarily concerning the history of KL Auschwitz and other concentration camps. The collections have been gathered from German camp documents, as well as from post-war accounts and testimonies. The archive also has copies of documents received from many overseas institutions.

Thanks to the kindness of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, we obtained digital copies of the so-called Eiss Archive in 2019. It is one of the largest col-

lections documenting the efforts of the Polish diplomatic mission in Bern to rescue Jews from the Holocaust. The archive consists of documents found many years after the war, which belonged to Chaim Eiss (1876–1943), one of the founders and leaders of the Agudat Yisrael movement. The archive documents the passport operation carried out by the Ładoś Group in Bern during World War II, aimed at saving Jews by issuing false Latin American passports. Chaim Eiss provided the Polish diplomats with lists of people in need and helped to smuggle the passports into the General Government. He died suddenly of a heart attack in November 1943. His archives include original Paraguayan passports, correspondence with the Polish Legation in Bern, photos of people for whom the passports were to be issued, as well as postcards with requests for help sent to him from the Warsaw Ghetto.

**Access available starting:** Second half of 2021



A passport in the name of Schefa Levie from the Eiss Archive

## Zygmunt Wojciechowski Western Institute [Instytut Zachodni im. Zygmunta Wojciechowskiego]



The idea to establish an institute to research the Polish–German community came about in 1943, proposed by activists from the underground “Ojczyzna” organization. At the end of 1944, a group of intellectuals headed by prof. Zygmunt Wojciechowski, initiated the creation of a research facility in Poznań, which was officially established in February 1945 as the Western Institute [Instytut Zachodni]. Initially, its purpose was to research the German occupation and analyze Polish–German relations. In the 1990s, the scope of the Institute’s work was extended to include research into the issues of integration and disintegration processes in Europe, the reunification of Germany, the role of Germany in the international environment and the issues of German heritage in the Recovered Territories.

Since 2019, we have been acquiring digital copies of selected materials from the archives of the Western Institute in Poznań. We currently have 22 archival units, documents produced by the German authorities concerning the General Government in the years 1941–1944. The materials include, among others, reports of the Warsaw gendarmerie from 1943, a collection of reports by the governor of the Warsaw district from 1942, materials on German resettlement actions in the Zamość region, monthly reports from starosts on the situation in some districts of the General Government in 1941. Of particular interest is an original German map of the General Government from 1941.

**Access available starting:** Second half of 2021



Seat of the Western Institute in Poznań. Photo: Western Institute

The KARTA Center [Ośrodek KARTA], established in 1982, is Poland's largest social archive. The Center collects various source material on the history of Poland and Poles in the 20th century. Their collections include the Eastern Archives [Archiwum Wschodnie], which contain collections of personal accounts of Polish citizens who experienced repression under the Communist regime. The Center also owns the Opposition Archive [Archiwum Opozycji], which includes materials on resistance to the Communist regime in the Polish People's Republic, the activities of the democratic opposition, the Solidarity Trade Union collection [Kolekcja NSZZ „Solidarność”] containing documents on the genesis of the union, as well as the Photo Archive [Archiwum Fotografii] and the Index of the Repressed [Indeks Represjonowanych] – the result of cooperation with the Russian historical and civil rights society Memorial [Stowarzyszenie Memoriał] – which represents an attempt at a comprehensive, personal documentation of the fate of Polish citizens who were repressed by the Soviet authorities in 1939–1956. The KARTA Center also has over 5,000 recordings of oral history.

In 2019, we were able to obtain the memoirs contained in the Eastern Archives of the KARTA Center, which describe the fates of Polish citizens who lived in the eastern territories of the Second Polish Republic and who faced repression at the hands of Soviet totalitarianism during World War II. The documents contain the testimonies of often unknown witnesses to history. They mainly consist of recollections, but also contain more novel forms of memory, such as amateur poetry, e.g. a poem by Zygmunt Sajdak about the Vorkuta Uprising, which broke out after Stalin's death. These documents provide an opportunity to paint a picture of the tragedy of deportation to the East faced by individuals and families, where hunger, torture and backbreaking labor were the order of the day. The sources relate the accounts of people from various social groups, allowing for much more multi-faceted research.

**Access available starting:** January 2021



Photo: KARTA Center



## Institute of the History of the Polish Peasant Movement [Zakład Historii Ruchu Ludowego]

The Institute of the History of the Polish Peasant Movement [Zakład Historii Ruchu Ludowego] has existed since 1960 and researches the history of the Polish peasant movement. Its collections are owned by the Development Foundation [Fundacja Rozwoju], which aims to initiate and support activities aimed at the protection and popularization of the values of Polish culture and national heritage with particular focus on the peasant movement. Following an agreement concluded in 2019, we have obtained documents related to the life and activity of Stanisław Kot and Franciszek Wilk, both of them distinguished activists for the peasantry.



Stanisław Kot. Photo:  
National Digital Archives

Stanisław Kot (1885–1975) was a professor at the Jagiellonian University and a member of the Supreme Council of the People's Party in the interwar period. During World War II, he was a minister in the Polish government-in-exile, and became the Polish ambassador to the USSR in 1941–1942 after the signing of the Sikorski–Mayski Pact. After being dismissed from the post of ambassador, he was again a member of the Council of Ministers until November 1944. After the war, he briefly returned to Poland and went on to become the Polish ambassador to Rome in 1945–1947 on behalf of the Provisional Government of National Unity. Then he stayed in exile until his death, actively participating in the activities of the Polish People's Party abroad.

The available documents present the activities of Stanisław Kot during his time as the Polish ambassador in the USSR. The group consists of diverse files, including his official and private correspondence and reports and extracts on life in Poland during the German occupation. A large group of files contain account, reports and correspondence on the organization and activities of the government-in-exile and Polish diplomatic missions in 1939–1945.

Franciszek Wilk (1914–1990) was one of the most prominent activists of the Polish peasant movement. At the beginning of World War II, he was involved in the formation of an underground



Franciszek Wilk. Photo:  
Institute of the History of the Polish  
Peasant Movement

peasant's group in Małopolska. In 1940, he was arrested by the NKVD and deported to the East. He spent some time as an official at the Polish embassy in the USSR, from which he was sent to Great Britain via the Middle East, where he was active in the exiled Polish People's Party until the end of his life.

The archives we have obtained include, among others, documents on the repatriation of Poles to their homeland after World War II, as well as materials documenting the underground peasant movements in eastern Małopolska in the first years of World War II, and the activities of Franciszek Wilk in Lebanon and Palestine.

**Access available starting:** First half of 2021



## Sue Ryder Museum [Muzeum Sue Ryder]



Lady Margaret Susan Ryder (1923–2000) was a distinguished charity activist from England who advocated strongly for Poland and Poles. During World War II, she looked after agents of the Silent Unseen. After 1945, she helped victims of the war, especially former prisoners of German concentration camps, for whom she organized recreation and rehabilitation trips to Great Britain. Around 8,000 people, mainly Poles, benefited from her assistance. Since the 1950s, Lady Ryder was actively involved in charity work in Poland, establishing social welfare homes and hospices. A total of 30 Sue Ryder houses were built in Poland, the first in 1957 in Konstancin. She also established numerous charity shops, mainly in Great Britain, to support the activities of her foundation. From 1978, she sat in the British House of Lords, assuming the title of Lady Ryder of Warsaw. The materials documenting her activities are stored at the Sue Ryder Museum [Muzeum Sue Ryder] in Warsaw, established in 2016.

Following an agreement concluded with the Sue Ryder Foundation in 2018, we have been involved in the development and digitization of archival materials related to Lady Ryder's activities. The Pilecki Institute Archives will contain the entire structured and digitized resource of the Sue Ryder Archive, consisting of about 500 archival units, that were previously unavailable to researchers. These include the biographies of former prisoners of concentration camps, Sue Ryder's correspondence with inmates, documentation on the activities of the Foundation and Sue Ryder homes in Poland, accounts of various people from World War II, and biographical materials on Lady Ryder. The most interesting available documents include the unpublished war correspondence of George Miller, a soldier-journalist, who wrote letters describing the everyday life of English soldiers between June 1940 and December 1945.

Access available starting: Second half of 2021



Sue Ryder in Cavendish. Photo:  
Sue Ryder Foundation

## Private archives

The Pilecki Institute emphasizes the importance of the individual experiences of the victims of German and Soviet crimes, and deviates from narratives that use only numbers in order to retrace the stories of people, families and local communities whose fate was dictated by totalitarianism. From the very beginning, we have encouraged private individuals to share their family's mementos from personal archives in order to disseminate those individual war stories that were known only to few. We believe that sharing such collections can shed new light on the study of the two totalitarianism systems and its victims, enriching research with a perspective of the personal, tragic experience of specific people who were drawn into the path of the war machine.

We are contacted by people who want to share their photos, letters, documents and other family souvenirs. Sometimes, these people reach out to us because they discover testimonies and memories of their loved ones among our archives and want us to supplement our collections with additional materials. We develop and digitize the documents obtained in this way, and after these works are completed, we publish them in the Pilecki Institute Archives. We encourage you to share your family records with us.

### Called by name [Zawołani po imieniu]

This is one of the Pilecki Institute's most important projects. Its purpose is to commemorate people of Polish nationality murdered for helping Jews during the German occupation. One of our tasks is the development and digitization of the personal stories of the murdered people, including photographs, documents and letters that are currently in their family's possession. The largest part of this collection are the photographs presenting people commemorated as part of the project, as well as their descendants. These archives are an invaluable resource, as they are often the only surviving record of the victims.

**Access available starting:** First half of 2021



Władysława and Stanisław Krysiwicz.  
Photo: Archive of Alicja Wojna

## Archive of Anna Lau-Gniadowska

A unique collection of translations from Lithuanian and Russian. This archive also contains documents related to World War II, including books on warfare in the city, Kennkarte identification documents, technical drawings of machine guns and copies of the underground press. Anna Lau-Gniadowska, who died in 2002, was one of the few translators of Lithuanian in the People's Republic of Poland; she also translated other works such as theater. The materials were provided by the translator's granddaughter and great-granddaughter.



Pictured, right: Anna Lau-Gniadowska

**Access available starting:** Second half of 2021

## Archive of Stanisława Makowska

Stanisława Makowska (1905–1978) was a nurse who was exiled to Siberia and then joined the ranks of Anders' Army. Her first husband, Jan Sybicki, a policeman, was arrested by the NKVD in 1940 and murdered in Tver. As the wife of a Polish policeman, she was deported to Kazakhstan a few months after her husband's arrest. Following the announcement of the "amnesty" for Polish deportees in the USSR,



Pictured: nurses in Anders' Army; far right: Stanisława Sybicka (Makowska)

she reported to the nascent Anders' Army, with whom she evacuated to Iran in April 1942. There, she gained professional qualifications, completing a nursing course in Tehran. Together with the Polish II Corps, she traveled the entire route through the Middle East, North Africa, to the Italian front. She served in the medical corps during the battles of Monte Cassino, Ancona, Bologna, Loreto and many others. The collection we have acquired



includes photographs documenting Stanisława Makowska's service in Anders' Army. Additionally, the online database Chronicles of Terror contains her account of her time in the USSR, recorded under her first husband's name, as Stanisława Sybicka. The materials were donated by her son, Ryszard Makowski.

**Access available starting:** First half of 2021



Certification of a nursing course completed by Stanisława Sybicka in Tehran in 1942

## Archive of Bolesław Świącicki pseud. "Bohusz"

A soldier of Brigade I of the Polish Legions during World War I, he took part in the defense of Lwów in 1918–1919 and in the Polish–Soviet war. He was awarded the Independence Cross for his merit in the fight for his country's freedom. His story includes a collection of photographs related to the Polish Legions, including portraits and group photos of soldiers, pictures of military exercises, everyday life as a soldier, and the villages he passed on road to war. His diary, which records the events of the war with the Soviets, is similarly noteworthy. The materials were provided by the great-grandson, Adam Guzowski.



Group photograph of the 3rd Tank Company from 1919

**Access available starting:** First half of 2021

## Archive of Rudolf Weigl

The legacy of the eminent Polish biologist Rudolf Weigl (1883–1957), the inventor of the typhus vaccine. The documents include, among others, the professor's diary from the period of the German occupation and photographs showing his private and professional life, including from the studio where the vaccine that saved millions of lives was invented. The materials were provided by the professor's granddaughter.

**Access available starting:** First half of 2021



Professor Rudolf Weigl in his laboratory



## Witnesses to the Age [Świadkowie Epoki]



The Witnesses to the Age project includes the Pilecki Institute's very own oral history archive. We visit people and record the experiences of individuals whose fate was intertwined with the tragic events of World War II, and later became a struggle with the Communist authorities of the People's Republic of Poland. In this way, unique source material is created to illustrate the struggle with the wartime occupants and totalitarian powers from an individual and personal perspective. We are thus brought into contact with an account of the direct participants of those events that are often marked by the trauma suffered during the occupation period. This creates unique materials that can be used in many fields and research.

The Witnesses to the Age project started in 2018, when we started recording our first reports. Since then, we have collected nearly 1,500 recordings and the collection is still growing. These are thousands of hours of stories told by the witnesses of history, ranging from professors and outstanding scientists to ordinary people who have simply never been asked before. Prisoners of concentration camps, Poles exiled to the East by the Soviets, people who rescued Jews from extermination, members of the Home Army and other underground organizations, Cursed Soldiers, anti-Communist activists, members of the Solidarity Trade Union, as well as ordinary citizens who tell their stories despite the horrific memories of the occupation and the Communist regime during which they strove to lead a normal life. These accounts represent a living history of 20th-century Poland, told by its authors and participants.

Our aim is to create the largest archive of oral history in Poland; furthermore, we want the Witnesses to the Age project to become a useful resource for people from outside Poland – primarily for historians, but also filmmakers, sociologists, psychologists, journalists and everyone who wants to know more about Poland's turbulent 20th-century history.

**Access available starting: January 2021**



Małgorzata Grygiel in conversation with Jan Güntner, the co-founder of the "Piwnica pod Baranami" cabaret. Photo: Pilecki Institute / Wojciech Bożek

## Pilecki Institute Library

Technological progress has fundamentally changed the expectations of library users, and many services have become available immediately thanks to the internet. In order to meet these expectations, the Pilecki Institute Library has become a hybrid, collecting books and magazines in both traditional printed and digital form, and also making numerous databases available. We also place electronic publications in our digital archive.

Our collection includes electronic editions of the latest publications from the Institute's own publishing house, which are also available in a traditional paper format. We are gradually bolstering our repository with scans of the oldest available publications from our collections and scans of the most necessary books for the academic work conducted by the Institute's employees, and which are impossible to obtain in a larger number of paper copies. In addition, the archive also includes electronic books that are not available in the databases provided by the library. These are often foreign-language publications, published for example in English or Russian. We also plan to share the magazines we acquire, including the collection of quarterlies from the KARTA Center [Ośrodek KARTA].

Our electronic publications are available in the most popular digital formats (EPUB and MOBI), as well as in PDF, allowing the user to choose the most suitable and convenient format. We have also started gathering audiobooks.

The library collection in the digital archive is available in both of the Institute's reading rooms without the need to log in. Users at the Pilecki Institute Archives in Warsaw have the opportunity to read the books on site in the reading room. Before your visit, we encourage you to use the library catalog available on the website [biblioteka.instytutpileckiego.pl](http://biblioteka.instytutpileckiego.pl). Users with an account at our library may also use these collections from outside the Institute.



Editions of the underground "Karta" from the 1980s. Photo: Michał Radwański / Ośrodek KARTA



Publications by the Pilecki Institute

**Koncepcja publikacji:** Krzysztof Wiśniewski

**Nadzór merytoryczny:** Monika Maniewska

**Autorzy tekstów:** Bartosz Bolesławski (Świadkowie Epoki), Ewelina Czarnowska (Bundesarchiv, Państwowe Muzeum Auschwitz-Birkenau, Schweizerisches Bundesarchiv), Katarzyna Jóźwik (Archiwa państwowe, Instytut Zachodni im. Zygmunta Wojciechowskiego, Muzeum Sue Ryder, The National Archives, Studium Polski Podziemnej), Karol Kalinowski (Jest jeszcze wiele do opowiedzenia, Zapisy Terroru), Aleksandra Korzycka (Archiwa państwowe, United Nations War Crimes Commission), Olga Lebedeva (Archiwa prywatne, Zakład Historii Ruchu Ludowego), Paweł Lesisz (Hałuzewyj derżawnyj archiw Służby безпеły Ukrainy, Ośrodek KARTA), Monika Maniewska (Archiwa państwowe, Państwowe Muzeum Auschwitz-Birkenau, Schweizerisches Bundesarchiv), Justyna Stępień (Biblioteka Instytutu Pileckiego), Paulina Wiśniewska (Archiwa prywatne), Konrad Woźniak (Niemieckie archiwa landowe), Bartłomiej Zygmunt (Instytut Polski i Muzeum im. gen. Sikorskiego, Studium Polski Podziemnej)

**Redakcja:** Marta Wilińska

**Współpraca redakcyjna:** Paulina Wiśniewska, Krzysztof Wiśniewski

**Fotoedycja:** Paulina Wiśniewska