

Institute of National Remembrance

<https://ipn.gov.pl/en/news/11149,quotThey-Kept-Holding-Handsquot-The-Story-of-the-Baranek-Family-in-the-village-o.html>

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"They Kept Holding Hands" – The Story of the Baranek Family in the village of Siedliska near Miechów

With the series of films entitled "Not Just the Ulmas", the Institute of National Remembrance would like to pay tribute to the victims of the Holocaust, as well as to the Poles who lost their lives to protect their Jewish fellow citizens during the criminal German occupation of Poland.



The film *They Kept Holding Hands* depicts the heroism of the Baranek family, who risked their lives to save their Jewish fellow citizens. They

paid the highest price for helping the Jews. Wincenty and Lucja, along with their sons, were murdered by the Germans on their own farm. It was part of a wider effort to catch Jews fleeing the Holocaust and intimidate local communities.

On 15 March 1943, a group of armed Germans surrounded the Baranek's home and led the household members out into the yard. Only Wincenty's foster mother, Katarzyna Baranek, managed to hide in the narrow gap between the stove and the wall. At the same time, local residents of Siedliska were forced to search the buildings to find the hiding Jews. The Germans murdered four Jews, as well as members of the Baranek family - Wincenty, his wife Lucia and his sons, 12-year-old Henryk and 10-year-old Tadeusz. They also knew that one other person had lived in the house. The occupiers announced to the villagers that they had 24 hours to bring the missing person to the gendarmerie headquarters in Miechow. They threatened that otherwise they would execute dozens of Siedliska residents and burn down the village. The terrorized people drove Katarzyna to the place indicated by the Germans. There she was murdered. The Germans ordered the bodies of the slain Jews to be buried near the barn. The Baranek family was allowed to be buried in Miechow's parish cemetery, but any funeral ceremonies were forbidden.

Watch other episodes of the series: Not just the Ulmas – Poles rescuing Jews

□ Playlist of the series □ <https://bit.ly/4baybxB>

Read about other stories of the series:

"Not Just the Ulmas" about Poles saving Jews

A Helper is a Helper, Even in KL Auschwitz. The Story of Romualda and Feliks Ciesielski

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