

Institute of National Remembrance

<https://ipn.gov.pl/en/news/11146,A-Helper-is-a-Helper-Even-in-KL-Auschwitz-The-Story-of-Romualda-and-Feliks-Ciesi.html>

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

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 *A Helper is a Helper, Even in KL Auschwitz* depicts the heroism of a married couple, the Ciesielskis, who risked their lives to save their Jewish fellow citizens. In an apartment in Cracow's Kazimierz district, a

neighborhood that had been home to a Jewish community for centuries, Romualda and Feliks Ciesielski decided to provide shelter for Jews fleeing the ghetto. Among those who found safe refuge in their home were: Edmund Fiszler and his wife Leonora, and the Horowic family of four. The couple supported those in need in many ways, risking their own lives. Probably as a result of denunciations, the Ciesielskis were arrested by Germans in the summer of 1942. During the investigation Romualda was beaten and tortured. She was sent to Auschwitz Concentration Camp, where she was subjected to experimental pseudo-medical tests. In the camp, however, she did not stop helping; she hid children, she organized extra rations for children and falsified children's birth certificates. She stayed in Auschwitz until she escaped from an evacuation transport in Jawiszowice in January 1945. Her husband Feliks was also imprisoned in Auschwitz. From there he was transported to Mauthausen concentration camp, where he was murdered on 18 March 1945.

I had lived at the Szarkowskis home, then at Mrs. Podhorska, then at Mr. Nowak's place. Then I lived with Lysakowski's family, then with Czapski's. There were many other apartments and other people -- a chain of risks, people and places. I passed from hand to hand; Ms. Pulawska to Ms. Pomorska, Ms. Pomorska to Ms. Podhorska, Ms. Podhorska to Ms. Jadachowa... I was also sponsored by Professor Tadeusz Stępniewski [...] I have mentioned only those people whom I remember by name. All of them exposed themselves and their families to mortal danger by saving me. In the game for my life -- there were the lives of 45 people at stake..., wrote Hanna Krall, a Polish writer and journalist of Jewish origin who had survived the Holocaust.

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

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

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