

The summary

The SS dates back to the period before the Munich Putsch, when a small unit was organized to protect Hitler. Shortly after the future Führer left the prison in Landsberg, however, he realized that he would not gain the leadership of the National Socialist movement without a dynamic formation that would gather its fanatics and give him an advantage in every dispute within this group. At the same time, he acted cautiously and began building such a unit, limiting its independence in advance and, just in case, weaving it into a labyrinth of intra-party dependencies.

After the National Socialists took power, in return for the unconditional execution of the Führer's orders, a number of concessions were made to the SS and its chief. One of them was the consent to organize armed and garrisoned SS units. Initially, they were not very numerous, but after the Polish campaign in 1939, Hitler agreed to create a de facto fourth type of army of the Third Reich - the Waffen SS. In this way, Himmler's aspirations to have his own SS army materialized, although it quickly turned out that expanding this type of units posed considerable problems. The most troublesome was the reluctance of the Wehrmacht generals and the resulting restrictive policy regarding recruitment to the Waffen SS. One way to circumvent the problem of the Waffen SS recruiting services was to accept into its ranks significant numbers of Volksdeutsch from all corners of Europe. The first cases of recruitment to the Waffen SS from the former Pomeranian Voivodeship of the Second Polish Republic concerned primarily ethnic Germans who lived there before the outbreak of the war. This took place at the end of 1939.

On the other hand, after the introduction of regulations regarding the submission of declarations on the German National List, the brutal and ruthless policy towards people of Polish origin in these areas led to mass entries into 3rd DVL group. Its representatives recognized by Gauleiter Albert Forster as the so-called the "intermediate layer" were obliged to serve in the German armed forces. It was also then that some of the men included in 3rd DVL group started to be sent to the Waffen SS. In the area of the former Pomeranian Voivodeship of the Second Polish Republic, there were also structures of the General SS, which gathered just over 10 000 people originating mainly from local Germans. Interestingly, since mid-1940, no larger Waffen SS units or units associated with them (such as SS-TV regiments) were stationed here. They appeared only in the last year of the war. There were also two important facilities for the Waffen SS, including the SS Training Ground "Gdańsk

West Prussia" and, in the area of the former Free City of Gdańsk, the SS and Police Penal Camp "Maćkowy".

In one of the chapters of this work, we also tried to determine the approximate course of training and service of Poles from the area we were interested in, having the 3rd DVL group, who ended up in the Waffen SS. Unfortunately, this was not possible in all cases, but the study shows that each of them ended up in twelve different SS divisions.

The work also includes a short description of phenomena such as holidays and exchange of correspondence between Poles conscripted into the Waffen SS and their families.

It is also interesting to compare the attitude of the leading Polish military command in exile towards Poles who were included in the ranks of the Waffen SS with the attitude of those placed in Poland by the Soviets. In exile, this was approached in a rational way, trying to strengthen the Polish Armed Forces in the West with as many former Wehrmacht and Waffen SS soldiers as possible, while also taking care to screen out various types of renegades and people suspected of involvement in crimes.

However, the Polish Committee of National Liberation (PKWN) and the Provisional Government of the Republic of Poland acted completely differently. The implementation of the August 1944 decree, which was supposed to meet society's expectations to some extent, was also used over time to search for "fascist criminals" among former Wehrmacht and Waffen SS soldiers, often despite the mandate of trust they received from the Polish authorities in exile. Also, the provisions regarding nationality verification and rehabilitation did not generally correspond to the conditions created by the German authorities in the territories incorporated into the Reich. Nevertheless, information about Poles from the 3rd DVL group, who joined the Waffen SS during the war, was carefully kept by the security apparatus of the Polish People's Republic for decades and used against them at every possible opportunity.