

**World War 2 began in the Post Office of the Free City Danzig (Gdansk)**

**DANZIG - GDANSK**



**1937**



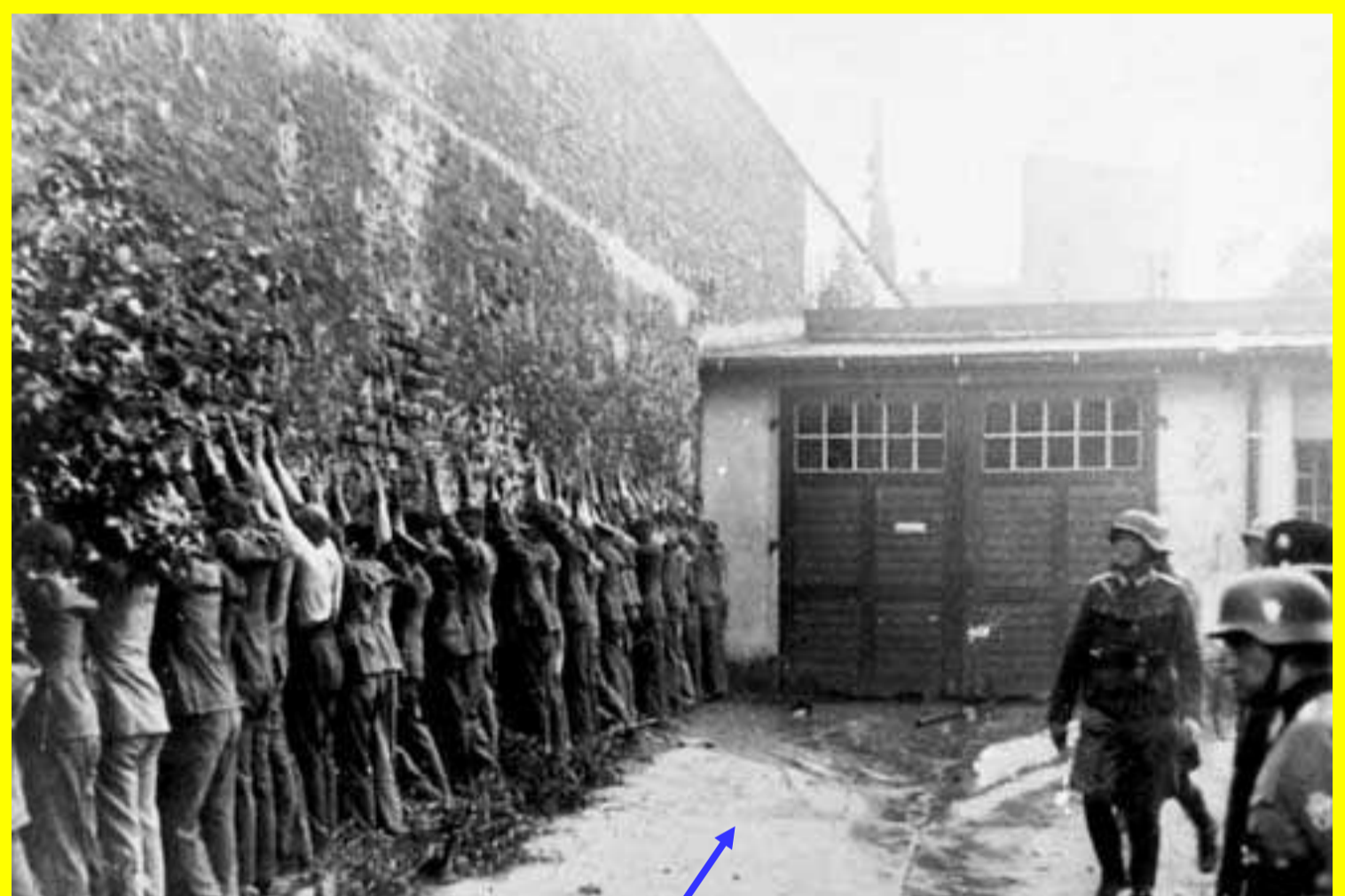
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**Although the war began with bombardment on Danzig by aerial assault and naval shelling, the first land battle of resistance was between the German SS and the Postal Workers of the Danzig Post Office. Yes, the brave Mailmen and Letter Carriers of Danzig were the first men to engage the Nazi war machine in combat, on the first day of World War 2.**

On 1 September 1939, inside the Post Office building there were 57 civilian postal employees and the building keeper, his wife, and his 10-year old daughter. The postal employees had a cache of weapons: 40 pistols, 3 light machine guns, and three chests of hand grenades. Their plan was to prevent Germans from taking the building for about 6 hours before a Polish Army relief force would arrive to secure the area. The first Nazi attack was repelled although Germans managed to break through the entrance and briefly enter the building at the cost of six casualties. The Nazi's second attack was also repelled. Later, German units were reinforced with two 75 mm artillery pieces, but this third attack was also resisted. After a two hour ceasefire the Nazi's demanded that the postal workers surrender, which they refused to do. In the meanwhile, the Germans received additional reinforcements: a 105 mm artillery piece, and a unit of sappers who dug under the walls and prepared a 600 kg explosive device. The bomb was set off collapsing part of the wall, and German forces under the cover of three artillery pieces attacked again, this time capturing most of the building with the exception of the basement. Using pumps and gasoline tanks and flame-throwers the Germans flooded the basement with burning gasoline. After three Postmen were burned alive (bringing the total Polish casualties to six killed in action), the rest decided to give up. The first two Poles to leave the building carrying a white surrender flag were shot by the Germans and even attacked with a flamethrower. The rest of the Polish Postmen were allowed to surrender and leave the burning building. Six people managed to escape from the building, although two of them were captured the following days. The other four remained in hiding and survived the war. Most of remaining prisoners were executed by firing squad .



**"DANZIG IS GERMAN"** : New postage stamp issued by Nazi Germany boasting about how the German Army defeated a small group of courageous Polish Postal Workers, thus achieving the annexation of Danzig during the invasion of Poland, at the onset of WW2.

Arrested defenders of the Polish Post Office in Danzig.

**NOTE :** These 2 images are not part of Victor Perantoni's collections.



**This "Free State Danzig" postcard has a swastika cancel on it which reads: "The Fuhrer has made us free on 1 Sept 1939". It was mailed to Victor's address in Italy 28 Sept 1939, during the time which Victor was staying in Switzerland in order to avoid Italian military service while hoping a return to his wine business in Lwow soon. A plan which became impossible for him to accomplish due to the long 5-year war, and subsequent cold war.**



**Gdansk 1948-49**

**Imperforate**

**This space reserved.**  
**Posting still in progress.**  
**Please come back soon.**

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**Posting still in progress.**  
**Please come back soon.**