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Kulski, Julian. *The Color of Courage: A Boy at War: The World War II Diary of Julian Kulski*. Los Angeles, CA: Aquila Polonica Publishing, 2016. 304 pp. \$29.95. (9781607720157).

Julian Kulski was ten years old in 1939, when war broke out over Poland. Following his liberation from a German POW camp in 1945, he created a sort of retroactive diary based on experiences reconstructed from memory.

The writing is youthfully straightforward with a sense of wonder over the growing horror. Son of prewar Deputy Mayor of Warsaw, Julian watched his genteel family life crumble under the occupation, as he describes one Nazi edict after another. Recruited into the Home Army, he began training for military tactics and weapons handling. Whether or not he was typical of other Poles of his class and privilege, Julian had Jewish friends; he himself claimed Jewish ancestry (great-great grandson of Rabbi Dov Beer Meisels.) The Polish resistance is presented here as largely sympathetic to the Jews, with whom he had clandestine dealings. He describes a harrowing secret mission to Warsaw Ghetto: “People moved like skeletons, scarecrows with sunken, glassy eyes.” He later witnessed the Ghetto revolt, in April 1943, from the Aryan side.

Nevertheless, his focus here is more on the gentile experience. Julian describes the shocking discovery of the Katyn massacre of 10,000 Polish officers by the Russians, and the punitive acts on Polish citizens. Half the diary is devoted to year 1944 and the Warsaw Uprising. Accounts of the Poles’ sophisticated planned attacks are riveting. There are maps and photos; readers are directed to YouTube links of footage from German and Polish propaganda reels.

Although this diary might do best in a general public library collection, Holocaust libraries might find this book useful for its insights into the role of the Polish underground.

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