

ŁOMŻA

The history of Łomża dates back to the tenth century. It received a municipal charter in 1418, and from the mid-sixteenth century, because it was granted the status of a royal town, it became an important political, cultural, religious and economic center of the Eastern Mazovia region. Jews who previously lived in Łomża were expelled in 1556 when the town granted the privilege *de non tolerandis Judaeis* [of not tolerating Jews]. They were not allowed to return until 1815. In the latter part of the nineteenth century, many Jews were involved in the grain and timber trades. By the twentieth century, Łomża had developed a politically and culturally active Jewish community represented by such institutions as a yeshiva, several Jewish schools, newspapers and political parties, and a Jewish hospital. On the eve of the Holocaust, Jews made up slightly over half the population of the town.

Łomża was in the part of Poland seized by the Soviets in 1939. In June 1941, it was occupied by the Germans, who imposed a ghetto two months later. Jews were forced to make shoes for the Germans and to clean the streets. From June to September 1941, 3,500 Jews were murdered in the nearby woods. In November 1942, the ghetto was liquidated and the Jews shipped to a camp in Zambrów, where some were murdered on the spot and others were sent to Treblinka.

Location

79 km W of Białystok
 53°11' / 22°04'
 Voivodship: Łomża

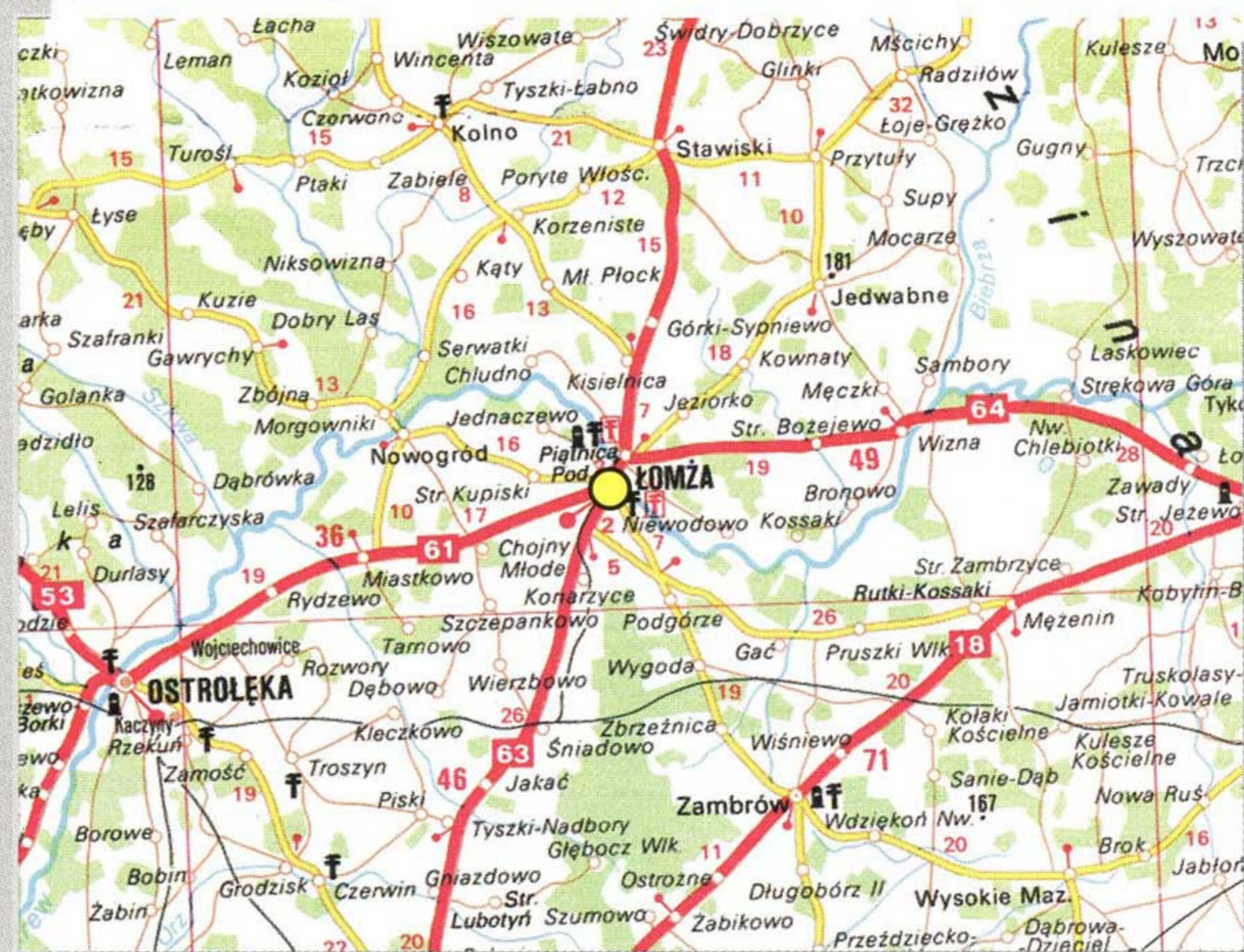
General Population, 1939

20,000 (55% Jewish)

General Population, 1994

54,800

ŁOMŻA, LOMZHE

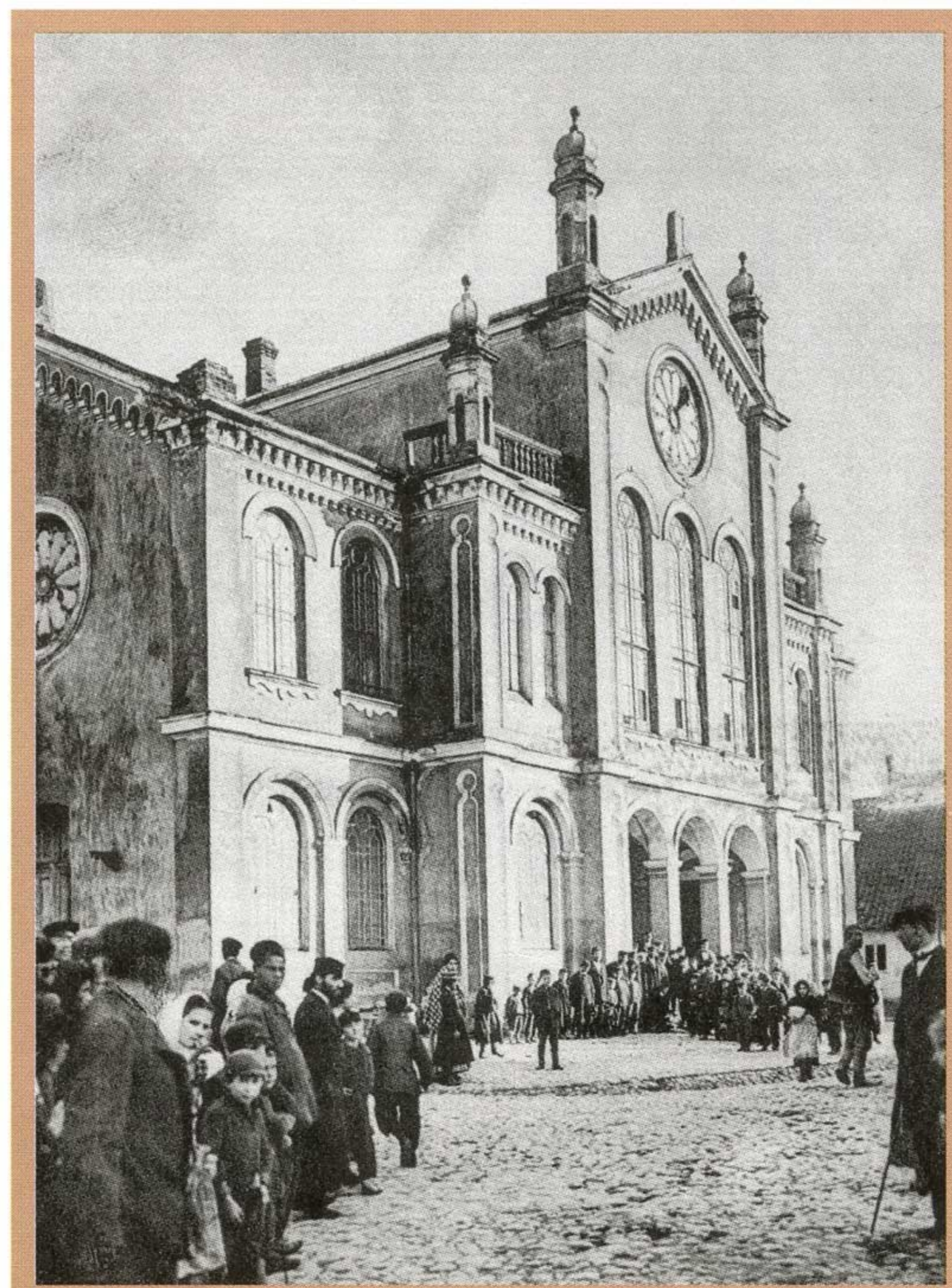


SYNAGOGUE

Corners of ul. Senatorska and Gielczyńska
 Great Synagogue built in 1880.
 Destroyed in September 1941.



1 Łomża today



2 Great Synagogue, c. 1917



■ Jewish cemetery, ul. Wąska 69

3

JEWISH CEMETERIES

ul. Wąska 69

New cemetery dates back to nineteenth century.
Remaining tombstones: 500+.

ul. Rybki

Old cemetery dates back to 1820.
Remaining tombstones: 200.

HOLOCAUST MEMORIALS

ul. Senatorska 8

Memorial plaque (site of former synagogue).

Village of Gielczyn

Memorial dedicated in 1989; commemorates place of execution of several thousand Jews, including Jews from Łomża.

ul. Wąska 69 (Jewish cemetery)

Monument.

DEPORTATIONS

Zambrów, Auschwitz-Birkenau, Treblinka.

SELECTED READING

Lewiński, Yom-Tov. *Sefer zikaron li-kehilat Łomża* (Łomża—In Memory of the Jewish Community). Tel Aviv: Former Residents of Łomża in Israel, 1952. (H)

Łomzhe: momentn un zikhroynes (Łomża: Moments and Memories). New York: United Łomzer Relief Committee, 1946. (Y)

Sabotka, H., ed. *Łomzhe; ir oyfkum un untergang* (The Rise and Fall of Łomża). New York: American Committee for the Book of Łomża, 1957. (Y)

Shapiro, Chaim. "Łomża: A Yeshiva Grew in Poland." *The Jewish Observer* 9/10 (1974): 13–16.

Silverman, Marlene, ed. *Landsmen*. Washington, D.C.: Suwalk-Łomża Interest Group for Jewish Genealogists, 1990–current (quarterly).



■ Holocaust memorial in nearby village of Gielczyn, 1989

4

BIBLIOGRAPHIC SOURCES

CAHJP; EDRD; EJ; GA; GUM3; GUM4; GUM5; GUM6; GYLA; HSL; JE; JGFF; JHT; LDL; LDS; LVY; PHP4; PJH; RJHS; SF



■ Łomża in the distance, c. 1916

5