

## CZESŁAW STRÓŻEK

Warsaw, 1 December 1945. Judge Halina Wereńko interviewed the person specified below as a witness. Having advised the witness of the criminal liability for making false declarations and of the wording of Art. 109 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, the judge swore the witness. The witness testified as follows:

---

Name and surname	Czesław Strózek
Age	37
Occupation	bookkeeper, presently unemployed
Nationality	Polish
Names of parents	Roch and Krystyna née Janiak
Criminal record	none
Place of residence	Warsaw [...]

---

Up to 5 August 1944 I lived at Skierniewicka Street 6 in Warsaw. On that day, at around 5 in the afternoon, Germans, SS men, came to our house and ordered all residents out, and later grouped them in the yard. They even asked whether all the residents were there; having received an affirmative answer, they drove our group to Skierniewicka Street. A few SS men stayed with our group, the rest went to the house at number four, and they also brought out all of the residents.

Then they grouped men in threes, women and children behind them. I was in the third [group of] three, my brother was walking slightly behind me. The Germans ordered us to put our hands in the air, this applied to women as well, and then they herded us down Skierniewicka Street in the direction of Wolska Street. An SS troop stood on the corner of Wolska and Skierniewicka streets. When they saw us, the SS men started to yell bandit and started to

take away watches from the Poles being herded. The Germans brought us to the yard of the "Ursus " factory from the side of Wolska Street. I can indicate the place where we were taken to on a drawing. (The witness made the below drawing).

[diagrammatic drawing]

We walked on the left side on Wolska Street, entering the "Ursus" factory yard through the third gate from Skierniewicka Street. By the entrance, the SS men took the remaining valuables away from us.

Having entered the yard, I saw a pile of corpses stretching from the gate up to the middle of the yard. Bundles lay next to the victims.

The pile of corpses was half a meter high in places and around twenty meters in diameter. The victims were of various ages, there were elderly people, children, men and women.

We walked with our hands in the air. The Germans started shooting at us. I got shot in my left arm and I immediately fell to the ground, people who had been walking next to me were collapsing on top of me. I know for sure that Kazimierz Daab, the house's supervisor, is dead.

What is more, I know that everyone from this group died, they were executed by the Germans. The entire Daab family: Kazimierz, his wife (I don't remember her first name), daughter Halina; the Żurowiński family: husband Henryk, wife, a child in her arms, a little boy Zbigniew, about 7 years of age; Jadwiga Kozłowska with her son Jan, about ten years old; Habros (I don't know the first name) with two little daughters; Smoleńska (I don't know the first name), an elderly person; Krystyna Strózek – my mother – and Tadeusz Strózek – my brother; the Habros family's subtenant, a young woman, a cashier at the Rowiński company (corner of Bracka and Chmielna Street), I don't know the first name; wife of our caretaker Cieślak (I don't know the first name). All of them had been residing at Skierniewicka Street 6 and 4.

After some time, while I was lying covered, I heard single shots. I figured that the German were killing off the wounded. A German came up to me, unbuttoned my overcoat and jacket and turned me face up. I held my breath and tried keep my body loose. I heard this German saying kaput about me, so I took a small breath.

The German killed two wounded people lying next to me with a pistol, at that moment I felt myself being splattered with blood. It was [missing], I kept still and waited for nightfall.

During that time the grounds of the factory were peaceful, one could only hear the sounds of fighting coming from Warsaw. I noticed that the Germans closed the gate and opened it from time to time. I believe they were checking that the Home Army soldiers did not sneak up on them from behind. Lying there, I noticed that an acquaintance of mine, Jan Witulski (I don't know his present address), who was lying closer to the building, started to get up. I signalled to him with a hand to crawl over to me. After an affectionate greeting, we began to make an escape plan. After a while we were joined by the caretaker of our house, Cieślak (I don't know his first name), the caretaker of the house at Skierniewicka Street 4 – or the caretaker's son, I don't know for sure (I don't know his name), and a boy of 13 or 14, whom I did not know.

When it got dark, we got to the factory building, we climbed through a window to the second yard, over one fence, then another, we got to a field – the so-called Sadurka – between Skierniewicka and Płocka streets. Crawling, we got to Dworska Street, and finally to Krzyżanowskiego Street, where an acquaintance of mine dressed my wounds.

We spent the night in a cart house on Dworska Street, from the side of Brühlowska [Bryłowska] Street, where we dug a shelter the following night. To be precise, I was not able to dig, because I was shot in my arm. The shelter was therefore dug by my comrades; we masked its entrance.

I wish to add that while I was lying there after the execution, and the Germans were checking whether all the executed people were dead, they had a conversation about an *amerikanische*. I believe that they had been checking papers and realised that they had executed an American citizen, someone who had been shot was calling out that he was German, and as far as I can tell there was a commotion following that statement; the Germans must have taken him with them.

I believe that around two hundred people were killed during the execution of my group. Three days ago I went to the execution site and on the factory fence I saw a plaque saying that six thousand people from Wawelberg's houses and from the nearby houses had been killed there. These Wawelberg's houses are located on Górczewska Street.

I spent about a week in the shelter we had dug for ourselves. After a few days spent there, Witulski said that he had to go look for his wife and children. I have not seen him since then, I don't know what has happened to him.

The caretaker of the house at Skierniewicka Street 4 had already left our group on the first night after we had escaped the "Ursus" factory yard. The young boy I didn't know went with him. Only Stanisław Cieślak, the caretaker of our house, stayed with me.

Around 10 August 1944, Cieślak, two other acquaintances, and I were taken away by "Ukrainians" from Sławińska Street; we were again threatened with execution. The "Ukrainians" separated the men from the women, they took away watches, and kept us for three hours in front of the fence of the municipal bakery on Prądyńskiego Street, threatening to execute us. The fence we were detained by is located from the side of the West Railway Station [Dworzec Zachodni]. The commanding officer came by and decided that we could go to the West Railway Station. From there, through the camp in Pruszków, I was displaced to Germany, from where I came back on 22 November 1945.

Cieślak and Stanisław Krajewski were taken by the Germans from the camp in Pruszków to work in Okęcie. This is why Cieślak was [back] in Warsaw earlier than I was.

Where Cieślak is presently, I don't know. I presume that information regarding Cieślak's whereabouts could be provided by the caretaker or by one of the employees of Jan Czyż's factory, the mechanical seal factory on the corner of Skierniewicka and Dworska Street; I don't remember the number, probably 5.

I present to the Citizen Judge detailed notes concerning my experiences during the uprising.

I wish to add to my testimony that when we were crossing the railway tracks on our way to the West Railway Station, "Ukrainians" were taking away money from Poles, moreover they selected younger and pretty women, around six of them, who they then took I don't know where.

One of the women taken had lived on Sławińska Street, two others were from Wesoła Street.

I don't know their names or more detailed addresses.

I have in my possession photographs showing German victims from the camp in Leipzig, which the Germans liquidated before leaving the camp during their retreat. These pictures

depict prisoners who had managed to escape being shot in the barracks, but died having fallen into electrical wires.

I don't know who these people were exactly, whether these were prisoners, prisoners of war or workers. I only know that this was the camp in Leipzig liquidated by the Germans, details concerning this fact could be provided by Poles who had been in the camp in Ludwigsburg near Stuttgart, which was named after Paderewski.

I don't know the names of the people who were in that camp, but I know that some of them knew about the camp in Leipzig, since they were the ones who had given me the photographs I am now presenting. The witness presented seven pictures depicting naked and clothed corpses, and bones of people who had been – as I have indicated above – in the camp in Leipzig.

The report was read out.

I wish to add that I am leaving Warsaw for 4-6 weeks.