



EDWARD KICZMACHOWSKI

On 6 September 1947 in Dębno, the Municipal Court in Dębno, represented by Judge A. Kowalski, with the participation of reporter Wł. Szczepankiewicz, interviewed the person specified below as a witness. Having advised the witness of the criminal liability for making false declarations and of the significance of the oath, the judge swore in the witness in accordance with art. 111, section 1 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, after which the witness testified as follows:

Name and surname	Edward Kiczmachowski
Age	28
Parents' names	Julian and Marianna, <i>née</i> Sudak
Place of residence	Mieszkowice
Occupation	Director of Peasants' Self-Help Co-operative
Criminal record	none
Relationship to the parties	none

I was taken to Auschwitz on a transport from Tarnów (second Tarnów transport) and I arrived on 18 August 1940. I was put into block 9 as a political prisoner. I was issued number 3414 and I remained at Auschwitz until 20 July 1942. On 20 July, I was sentenced to the Birkenau penal company. After doing six months on the penal company, I was released to the camp on 20 January 1943. Until 18 August 1943, I had worked at the SS canteen at Birkenau. On 18 August 1943, during an attempted escape, I was severely injured, and then I was transported to Auschwitz, back to death block number 11. On 13 October 1943, I was sentenced to death by the Political Department. On the same day, this sentence was revoked and instead I was sentenced to time at the Flossenbürg camp quarry, Bavaria, Germany, where I had remained until October 1945 and from where I escaped three weeks before the Americans took over.

On arriving at Auschwitz, I met SS-Unterscharführer Plagge (nicknamed "Pipe"), who prisoners said was the worst butcher and you had to be wary of him most. My first direct contact with Ludwig Plagge took place in 1941, at the beginning of summer. He beat me and kicked me then, accusing me of tardiness in the course of painting beds, and as regards Mendrzycki, a comrade of mine, Plagge sent him straight to the penal company, accusing him of smoking cigarettes, though under the circumstances obtaining at that time, smoking cigarettes was not possible. Back then, Plagge fulfilled the function of *Blockführer*. My second direct meeting with Plagge happened on the *Bauhef* [timber yard] *kommando* where he was already serving as *Kommandoführer* [work detail leader] in 1941 and 1942. It took place at *Oberscharführer* Stiller's office, where I served as a so-called *kalifaktor* [function prisoner]. Plagge ordered me to fire up the iron furnace red hot. This furnace was some 120 cm high and had a diameter of some 60 cm. After the furnace was fired up, Plagge brought two prisoners, numb from the cold, and sat them some 30 cm away from the burning furnace, so that after a few minutes the prisoners could not stand the heat and started to move away. In response, Plagge kicked them in the ribs and forced them to remain kneeling by the furnace. After a while, when these prisoners, drenched in sweat, were literally burning by this furnace, Plagge took them outside, where temperature had dipped to minus 28 degrees Celsius that day. He called me and ordered me to bring two buckets of water. Stalling, as I suspected his intentions, I tried to explain in an evasive manner that there was no water, and that it had frozen. Then, Plagge stormed in, beat me and kicked me, filled a bucket with cold water himself, and kept pouring it on these two prisoners. After this execution, these prisoners were not able to work any further. Plagge ordered them to lie on the snow by storeroom number [...], where they gave up the ghost that same day.

At that time, under Plagge, the mortality rate at the timber yard was the highest. There were daily around 100–200 people dead per one thousand.

I had contact with Ludwig Plagge for the third time at Birkenau in 1943. He was fulfilling the function of *Rapportführer* [report leader]. After receiving the daily report, armed with a small rifle, he would come with another *Blockführer* to the camp to Zablok 27, where the morgue was located. To this morgue, he would probably, as we could all hear the rifle shots, take elderly Jews, in pairs or groups of three, and execute them. There was only one case when I personally saw a transport of Jews marching to labor (Buna). One elderly Jew, unable to keep up with his comrades fell behind. Plagge was among the SS escort. He ordered



a *Blockführer*, a Silesian, to take this Jew away and execute him. This was probably in June 1943. The Silesian took the Jew and told me to fetch the block 15 clerk. After the clerk arrived, we headed for the morgue. As we were approaching it, the Silesian stood the Jew, stripped naked, on a heap of corpses and, taking no notice of us, shot him in the back of the head with a revolver, from six meters out, killing him on the spot. He ordered the block clerk to draw up a death certificate because the Jew used to be at this block. At that time, Plagge was the master of life and death at the camp. At Birkenau block 7, where twice a week he sent transports of prisoners to the crematory, he entertained himself at their cost in that he had them run and crawl through the thickest mud. The first to make it through was exempt from gassing. I watched these occurrences often from block 1, serving with the penal company, where block 7 was opposite to block 7 [?].

Auschwitz prisoners know exactly who the *Oberscharführer* nicknamed "Fajka" was.

Then, I met Plagge again at the Flossenbürg camp, Bavaria, where he had been transferred, probably already from Lublin. At Flossenbürg, Plagge's expertise was likely used in the course of burning corpses on pyres, because the crematorium alone could not handle all the incinerations. With his arrival, corpses started to be burned on pyres.

I recognized Plagge for the final time at the internment camp in Dachau in 1946 at the Flossenbürg trial, where I was subpoenaed as a witness, and where the Americans dismissed Plagge's guilt because of his short time at Flossenbürg.

I signed the report after it was read out.