



## HENRYK GEBEL

On 15 May 1948, in Warsaw, the member of the District Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes, Judge Halina Wereńko, interviewed the person specified below as an unsworn witness. Having been advised of the criminal liability, the witness testified as follows:

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Name and surname	Henryk Czesław Gebel
Date of birth	15 December 1903, in Nowy Targ
Names of parents	Franciszek and Katarzyna née Zięb
Religious affiliation	Roman Catholic
State and national affiliation	Polish
Education	Humanities Department, University of Poznań
Occupation	teacher in a state secondary school and high school
Place of residence	Warsaw, Narbutta Street 48, flat 9

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The outbreak of the Warsaw Uprising caught me in a flat on Narbutta Street 48 in Warsaw. On 1 August 1944, at 5 p.m., insurgents attacked the German barracks on the corner of Narbutta Street and Kazimierzowska Street, and the Mokotów prison from Narbutta Street. The insurgent action did not succeed, and around midnight of 1 and 2 August the area was taken over by the Germans.

On 2 August, at midday, an SS unit stationed in the *Stauferkaserne* walked into [my] house. All residents were told to immediately leave and our group was led under an escort to the courtyard of the barracks on Rakowiecka Street (the *Stauferkaserne*). The women were separated from the men and almost immediately released. The men had their IDs checked: elderly people and those employed in public institutions stood on the left (entering from

the barracks), others - on the right side of the yard. I was in the group on the left, my acquaintance, Mr Jan Wierzbicki, inspector of the Polish Red Cross in Warsaw, was in the second group. The commander of the SS unit, Patz, spoke to us announcing that men taken from those houses from which the Germans had been shot at would be executed, and shortly after they released a series of shots from heavy machine guns placed, as it turned out, on the observation points of the barracks (causing people to take fright and move back towards the wall). Then our group was placed in the left wing from the entrance, and the other in the right wing.

There were rumors that on 2 August a group men chosen from among those led in had been executed by the wall of the right wing. I did not see it myself. Some men were employed straight away. Initially, we were not given food (occasionally biscuits), only after a couple of days were women allowed to bring us diners from 12.00 to 2.00.

I don't know the surnames of the Germans from the SS units of the *Stauferkaserne*, apart from the commander of the unit, Patz. Jan Wierzbicki told me later that "Patz is from Poznań". Around 7, maybe 9 August (I don't remember the exact date), Jan Wierzbicki organized - with Patz's approval - a team of gravediggers. I helped him in that work after being released and assigned for work. It consisted of collecting those killed in the quadrangle from Madalińskiego Street to Andrzeja Boboli Street and from Puławska Street to Rakowiecka Street. The team had freedom of movement until the end of August. While burying, we made a list and a record with a description of all corpses, identified as much as was possible.

The members of the team were: Mazurkiewicz, employee of the Polish Red Cross, eng. Nawarski, Wende, Fetting, Łoziński, and over a dozen (up to 30) other people of various professions (I don't remember other surnames). The Germans allowed us to bury the corpses, to create a food storage from depots in that quadrangle, to organize a pharmacy (after liquidating Marczyński's pharmacy on Narbutta Street, as directed by Mr Marczyński himself, from which we later took almost all medicaments) at Kazimierzowska Street 85, to visit the sick from the civilian population, together with the medical doctor Twardowski, to start a bakery and a kitchen (the latter at Kazimierzowska Street 85), to use (our) truck, to transport the civilian population led out of Warsaw in the direction of the Warsaw West station, to bring to the transports walking on Rakowiecka Street hot soup, coffee, bread, medicines, bandages (we did not omit a single transport). Under the pretext of carrying the

sick away to Włochy, we carried away young men in our truck marked with the sign of the PRC, wishing to save them from being deported to Reich. The guards of the cars turned a blind eye thanks to the endeavors of Mr Wierzbicki and to measures used by him (gifts). A few times we also carted away in that car women from the houses at Kazimierzowska Street 79, 83, 85, and from the transports.

While working as a recorder in burying the corpses, I saw in the first half of August (I don't remember the date) how the Germans shot a young girl walking to the barracks with a dinner at 12.00.

Around 15 August, the Germans told us to take the corpse of a girl from Narbutta Street (next to the pharmacy), shot by the German soldiers because, despite warnings, she was looking through an open window.

Around 20 August, the Germans announced to us that the corpses of people executed in the yard (in a pit for calcium) on the corner of Kwiatowa Street and Narbutta Street had to be buried; I found with the team the corpses of three women and two men (as far as I remember) from the civilian population with signs of being shot; I even recognized the corpse of one of my acquaintances (a singer who I knew by sight).

I don't know in what circumstances they were shot.

Normally, we buried the corpses in a mass grave at Kazimierzowska Street 68 (a fenced square), but also elsewhere, for example at Sandomierska Street 17 we buried over a dozen of people in the yard, on Madalińskiego Street in the property of a gardener, on the square on Narbutta Street, on Madalińskiego Street in a yard. The population from this part of Warsaw was thrown out in groups. By 15 September, the last groups had been thrown out of our quadrangle. On 1 September (as far as I remember), our car departed with medical materials, with deposits from the dead, and with a group of civilian women from Szymanów. The German generals (I don't know their surnames or more precise data) arrested Mr Wierzbicki in the Wola district, took his car and things, and kept him together with the insurgents in the presbytery of St. Adalbert's church.

On 15 September, I was deported with the group of workers from the *Stauferkaserne*, as a working team, to Nadarzyn. We carried food from the storehouse and part of the



medicines. The food was partly given out to the poor population of Nadarzyn. Our group was able to disband. The Germans did not oppose this.

I have to remark that a part of those arrested in the *Stauferkaserne* had been deported before 15 September to Włochy, and later to Germany.

Finally, I have to underline that Mr Wierzbicki was the soul of this Red Cross action, which saved many from hunger, illness, deportation to Reich, and death. He inspired courage, devotion, and dedication in a team which was a mass of terrified, often inert people (apart from a few), himself giving the best example, so that it became a Samaritan family.

At this the report was concluded and read out.