



## STEFAN ZWIERZ

On 25 June 1946 in Łódź, Investigating Judge S. Krzyżanowska interviewed the person named below as an unsworn witness. Having been advised of the criminal liability for making false declarations, the witness testified as follows:

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Name and surname	Stefan Zwierz
Age	46
Names of parents	Jan and Teresa
Place of residence	Łódź, Orla Street 11
Occupation	Administrative employee
Religious affiliation	Roman Catholic
Criminal record	none
Relationship to the parties	none

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Starting on the second day of the Uprising (2 August 1944), all civilians were driven to the Stauferkaserne, initially from the houses in the closest proximity to the barracks and in the following days from farther away, too. The affected area eventually comprised Rakowiecka, Wołoska, Narbutta and Wiśniowa streets. During the first four days, the detained men were treated as hostages (women were released after a few hours).

On 4 August, groups of 15 people were selected on three separate occasions from the room where I was staying with some 150 other hostages. People were chosen randomly, as we stood against the walls of the room. Before the convicts were taken away, the following announcement, more or less, was made in German: "Today, Polish bandits killed so and so many Germans, in light of which many Poles from this room are selected for execution."

Those picked out were taken to the embankment and executed there. That's what those tasked with burying the dead told us.

I do not remember the names of those who did the burying, nor those buried. From among the first fifteen, I remember a shop assistant from Puławska Street 34 (the sweets shop) and an Orthodox priest, who was ordered to sing during the execution. On the evening of that day, around 7 or 8 p.m., a group of 40 men, their hands in the air, were rushed to the courtyard opposite our windows and executed half an hour later with two light machine guns, while those who showed signs of life were finished off with revolver shots. These were men from the corner house at the junction of aleja Niepodległości and Narbutta Street. The execution was carried out in front of our very eyes, by the wall just to the right of the main entrance on Rakowiecka Street (bullet traces are visible). On 5 and 6 August, we were flooded with leaflets saying that General Bór had given up resistance against the Germans and called [on the insurgents] to remain at their posts, their weapons pointed at the Russians (to be sure, the leaflets were not genuine). At the same time, the intensity of the terror had visibly abated, and after all those days we were even given some food (rotten ship's biscuits, marmalade and coffee). For the previous four days we had been kept without food. Women were allowed to bring food between 12 p.m. and 2 p.m. At the request of one hostage, a Polish Red Cross inspector by the name of Jan Wierzbicki (currently a Polish Red Cross inspector in Poznań), and in order to prevent an epidemic resulting from the decomposition of bodies in the streets, Lieutenant Patz, the commandant, permitted the formation of a team of Red Cross gravediggers. This group was obliged to report in person three times a day and threatened with collective responsibility if anybody escaped. The team comprised 18 people selected by Inspector Wierzbicki, mostly men from the house at Kazimierzowska Street 79, whom he knew because we [sic] used to live there. All of August we collected bodies of the dead from the following streets: Rakowiecka, Kazimierzowska, Wiśniowa, aleja Niepodległości, all the way to Madalińskiego Street. We buried them in a big mass grave that we had dug on the premises at Kazimierzowska Street 68 (around 140 people). Those killed and burnt in their houses we buried in courtyards, on the spot. We also took those who had been seriously wounded in the fighting to a makeshift hospital at the Sisters of the Immaculate Conception at Kazimierzowska Street 59. In Sandomierska Street (at nos. 21 and 23, I believe), we found the bodies of residents (including sick and elderly people, and children, each group a dozen or so) who had been murdered by Ukrainians.

Our team, despite the Red Cross armbands, was attacked by Ukrainians while carrying out its duties and was often targeted by Germans, which resulted in one fatality – Rosiczna – and one person getting severely wounded – Leśniak. The Germans also ordered us to get food under the Red Cross flag, holding members of the group at gunpoint. This took place on Kwiatowa Street, a few steps from insurgent posts, where we were told to roll out ten 20 kg barrels of herring from one house.

The Germans would check the identification documents of dead insurgents and then look for their families to liquidate them. One such case took place on Kwiatowa Street, where the wife of an insurgent and his little child were killed. In the further course of the displacement operation, around 15 August, the Germans removed all civilians, women and children included, and directed them west. At the same time, scores of people from other districts of Warsaw (e.g. Czerniaków) could be seen moving along Rakowiecka Street, driven to Pruszków. We gave out coffee, soup and medical dressings to the weakest and the sick. Meanwhile, men were detained at the Stauferkaserne and used for dismantling barricades in Różana Street and for removing nets that the insurgents had hung across aleja Niepodległości. One man who was severely injured in the process was brought to us by German soldiers to have his wounds dressed. We brought women in labor and the wounded to a makeshift hospital at Kazimierzowska Street 69 (the care facility of the Sisters of the Immaculate Conception had been burnt down).

In the second half of August, we undertook the task of burying the murdered priests and worshippers who had by chance been staying in the Jesuit Church of St. Andrzej Bobola near the end of Rakowiecka Street. On the premises, we found the mangled and charred bodies of a dozen or several dozen people murdered as early as the first days of the Uprising (probably as early as 1 August, murdered by the Germans, who drove their victims from the chapel to the boiler room and murdered them there, throwing in grenades and shooting from automatic weapons, and finally pouring petrol on the victims and burning them). While the Germans were looking for petrol, two priests managed to get out from under the corpses and escape. They took shelter in basements in a neighboring street. The prior of the monastery, Rev. Kosibowicz, was taken by the Germans to aleja Szucha. I believe that the names of these priests can be ascertained in the Jesuit monastery, where one of the priests is surely staying.

All the executions carried out at the Stauferkaserne and at Mokotów Prison on Rakowiecka Street were ordered by Lieutenant Patz, the commandant of the barracks, whom Alicja, the daughter of Inspector Wierzbicki, identified as a former teacher of German at the University of Poznań. He conducted inspections and often ordered individual executions at Mokotów Prison (Woyczyński). The executions were carried out by SS soldiers. Patz had an assistant of unspecified affiliation, partly dressed in military fashion. He was mostly preoccupied with stealing items from neighboring houses and basements. He had set up a suite for himself in the house at Kazimierzowska Street 85 (near its junction with Rakowiecka, where he resided with Patz and stashed spoils in the form of gold, precious stones, furs etc.). I believe that his name can currently be established because he was friends with a Polish woman whose name is known to Citizen Średzińska (currently residing at Kazimierzowska Street 79 or 85).

The following persons, among others, were witnesses to the above events:

1. Jan Wierzbicki, a Polish Red Cross inspector, Poznań
2. Alicja Wierzbicka, his daughter
3. Dominik Drzewoski, Warsaw, Kazimierzowska Street 70
4. Insp. Władysław Nawarski, Drzewoski knows his address
5. Mieczysław Grześkiewicz, ditto
6. Gebel, presently a school inspector, whose address can be obtained from the Ministry of Education.