



WŁADYSŁAW GRZELAK

Warsaw, 7 July 1949. A Member of the Main Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes in Poland, magister [MA] Norbert Szuman, heard as a witness the person specified below; the witness did not swear an oath. Having been advised of the criminal liability for making false declarations, the witness testified as follows:

Name and surname	Władysław Grzelak
Date and place of birth	14 May 1912, Warsaw
Names of parents	Jan and Zofia <i>née</i> Urbańska
Occupation of the father	paver
State affiliation and nationality	Polish
Religious affiliation	Roman Catholic
Education	elementary school
Occupation	construction supervisor
Place of residence	Warsaw, Powązkowska Street 70, flat 31
Criminal record	none

At the outbreak of the Warsaw Uprising I was in a flat in the house at Powązkowska Street 37. From that house and the adjoining ones the insurgents began their action against the Germans, and from the house at Powązkowska Street 44 and others they opened fire on two German officers, killing one of them on the spot. It was in the evening of the first day of the uprising. Later in the same evening the Germans surrounded that house and – as I learned from the inhabitants who survived, for instance Wacław Pamięta (residing in Wawrzyszew) – ordered all the inhabitants out, separated the men from the rest, led them

beyond the backwater which is situated around the bend of the road leading to the Bem Fort, and executed them there.

On the following day in the afternoon, the German soldiers told the men who were in the basement of our house to leave it, and marched us to the intersection of Elbląska Street and Powązkowska Street, where – along with men from Powązkowska Street, Spokojna Street, Młocińska Street and Konarskiego Street who had already been gathered there, some hundred men in total – we were tasked with clearing the street of the cars burnt by the insurgents. When we completed this task, contrary to what had been promised to us, we were not released but marched to the Bem Fort, where we were incarcerated for a few days in a shelter. On the first day, while on our way to the fort but already on its premises, one of the men from our group who was walking behind me was killed, and another one seriously wounded.

During our stay in the fort, an investigation was carried out as to whether we took part in the uprising, and then some of us – less than a half, including me – were released, and the rest, among others my friend Józef Dębowski (residing at Powązkowska Street 70), had to stay in the fort.

Upon release I went to the Military Cemetery, where I was employed as a gravedigger. On the cemetery premises, civilians were seeking shelter from the assaults of the “Ukrainians”, who were robbing and raping the local people, and after 21 August – when the inhabitants of Powązki were displaced and the houses set on fire – chance passers-by. I stayed in the cemetery until 15 September, and then I left Warsaw with my family and a group of friends.

At this the report was closed and read out.