

JÓZEF OSIŃSKI

Warsaw, 6 May 1946. Judge Halina Wereńko, delegated to the Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes, interviewed the person mentioned 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 took the oath on the basis of art. 109 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. The witness testified as follows:

Name	Józef Osiński
Names of parents	Marceli and Maria née Kozłowska
Date of birth	19 March 1886 in Garwolin
Occupation	guard at the Bristol company warehouse, Sokołowska Street 27
Education	did not attend school; can read and write a little
Place of residence	[...]
Religious affiliation	Roman Catholic
Criminal record	none
Marital status	married, son aged 32

During the Warsaw Uprising I was living with my family in Warsaw, at Płocka Street 67, as I still do today.

On the first day of the Uprising, at the behest of the Polish authorities, the civilians built two barricades; on the corner of Gostyńska and Płocka streets and on the corner of Zawiszy and Płocka streets. So our house was between the barricades.

During the first four days of Uprising, I stayed in the basement of our house along with other residents because of the shooting that continued all the time. From the bridge at

Górczewska Street and from Wolska Street the Germans were shooting at the insurgents hidden behind the barricades on our street.

On August 5 the insurgents withdrew, which me and my neighbours did not notice, otherwise we would have escaped together with the Polish army, as it was already a well known fact that the Germans were murdering Polish civilians. At 2:30 p.m. a group of about 30 Ukrainian soldiers rushed into the courtyard of our house. They blocked the street and the courtyard, then shouted to all the residents, in Polish, to go down into the courtyard. Everyone in the house came out.

There were 100 apartments in our house; in each apartment there could have been [three] people. There were definitely more women and children than men.

The Ukrainians steered our group towards Płocka Street which was guarded by Ukrainian soldiers. Groups of residents from other houses were driven down the middle of the street – we had to join them. Along the way, the Ukrainian soldiers took watches and jewellery from the people walking. Walking from Gostyńska Street to Płocka Street, on the even side is the house of the Jew who owned our house. That is how I know that that building, on the corner of Płocka and Gostyńska streets, had 700 residents. When I passed it I saw that it was guarded by Ukrainians with machine guns set up around it. The house had been set on fire, and volleys of gunfire rained onto the residents coming out. Also people attempting to escape the column driven down the middle of the street were shot without mercy by soldiers standing in the street and those escorting them.

Presently I never come upon any of the residents of the house at the corner of Płocka and Gostyńska streets, although I used to have a lot of acquaintances there. Whether anyone there survived, I do not know.

Me and our group were rounded up under the tunnel on Górczewska Street, next to the flyover. When I arrived there, I found myself in a group of more than 500 people. From this group, the SS-men made groups of several or about a dozen people go behind the tunnel, where an execution was taking place on the left and right side of Górczewska Street. On the right, victims were herded next to a burning house before being shot, and on the left was the field in front of the boiler factory (currently being renovated). In the field in front of the factory was a large ditch by which people were herded before being shot.

I stress that there were men, women and children being executed.

As those gathered in the tunnel on the flyover side were killed, new groups continued to arrive and the tunnel was constantly crowded. I realized that the executions concerned residents from three streets: Płocka, Gostyńska and Górczewska. My wife and I kept moving back. At one point, when a group evacuated from the Wolski Hospital arrived at the Górczewska Street flyover, the execution was halted, and those not executed yet in the tunnel were added to the group from the Wolski Hospital and they were all led together to the shed of the boiler factory (where shooting was taking place) down Moczydło Street. It was then that I heard from people that the execution on Górczewska Street had lasted from [missing].

In the shed on Moczydło Street, the Germans segregated those gathered – a group of approximately five to six thousand.

I stress that after our group and the group from the Wolski Hospital had been taken to the shed, three other groups were brought there, I do not know from which streets.

As I said before, the Germans segregated men, women, priests and medical personnel. After some time, an SS officer arrived and demanded that 20 men, volunteers for work, step out. When those 20 people had left, we heard a volley, drowned out by a shot from a “cow” gun [Nebelwerfer]. Then they demanded other groups of five people, ten to fifteen times, I think. The doctors went as one of the last groups.

I went in the last group of men, numbering about 30 people. After we left, the only people remaining in the factory hall were women and men who had presented Volksdeutsch papers. We were led out in front of the factory, set in threes, then led down Moczydło Street to the flyover on Górczewska Street and from there to the burning house on the right, behind the flyover. We were pushed ahead, the SS-men standing in the courtyard of the house followed every three and killed people by shooting them in the back of the head.

Leading people to the spot and shooting were SS-men.

I fell down without being wounded. Next to me was a corpse whose head was burning, the smell of burning hair hit me, but I suffered it, lying motionless. After some time, an SS-man shot at me, even though I was lying motionless, but the bullet only pierced the collar of my jacket and coat and did not hit me.

After an hour of lying down among the corpses, a second bullet passed right next to my face and only scorched me. I was lying bloodied with the blood of other victims. After our group was shot, the SS-men walked among the corpses to finish off those who were still alive.

The execution took place at around 5 p.m. When it got dark, the SS-men went away without leaving guards. I realized that there were several people still alive among those shot.

I cannot say how many people were shot near the burning house.

The corpses were lying in groups of four, five, on top of one another, some singly. The whole courtyard was a puddle of blood. A man named Golian (currently resident at Płocka Street 22, I do not know his first name) spoke, he was still alive, and Piekarek (currently resident at Górczewska Street 15, I do not know his first name either) and a few others.

I saw several people flee, namely Krysztoforski, Filipiak and Piekarek. Around midnight me, Golian and a 19-year-old boy, whose name and address I do not know, escaped the execution site by crawling among corpses. We then walked between the houses of the Koło district and Górczewska Street and came to Ulrychów, to the house of the sister of the injured boy who had escaped with us. But there, the people were afraid to let us into the apartment and we spent the rest of the night in the basement.

We arrived to Ulrychów at 1 a.m. on 6 August. The next day, at 5 a.m., we went to Jelonki, and from there to the village of Babice, to a friend of Golian's.

Only after four months did I find my wife, who had been sent by the Germans from Jelonki to the transit camp in Pruszków but managed to escape from the transport and found work in a pharmacy in Ursus.

My son Edmund was taken by the Germans from his place of work on Krakowskie Przedmieście on 1 August. An entire group of Polish citizens was held at the Bristol Hotel for three days, then marched to the camp in Pruszków and from there deported to Breslau in Germany. On the way from Hotel Bristol to Pruszków, the Germans [missing] the Poles, every other person was shot. My son told me that in Breslau they made the Poles dig trenches. When the front approached Breslau, the Germans forced Poles to reinforce the trenches under fire from Russian and Polish troops. During this period, out of a group of several hundred sent to this kind of forced labour, only a few dozen would return.

The report was read out.