



## FRANCISZEK SROKA

Report of the witness interview, drawn up in the commune of Odrowąż, district of Końskie, by the District Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes in Radom, Skrzysko-Kamienna Branch, by a member of the Commission, defender Wawrzyniec Ergietowski.

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<b>Name and surname</b>	Franciszek Sroka
<b>Father's name</b>	Jan
<b>Occupation</b>	farmer
<b>Place of residence</b>	Wielka Wieś, commune of Odrowąż

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Having been advised of the criminal liability for making false declarations, the witness testified as follows, without taking an oath:

At the beginning of February 1941, two men in civilian clothing were killed in the village of Wielka Wieś, commune of Odrowąż. I would like to clarify that they were agents of the Blue Police who worked for the Germans. On 18 February 1941, at 2.00 a.m., the Germans arrived in cars, surrounded the village and set fire to 17 houses in the area where the bodies of the murdered policemen had been lying a couple of days earlier. As deputy village leader I was summoned by the Germans, who then in my presence accused the village residents of sheltering partisans. I tried to explain to the Germans that since the village was located close to the forest, the policemen might have been murdered by someone from outside the village, who came from the forest. They didn't believe me and before my very eyes they herded 17 people (only seven of them were men, the rest were women and children) into one house, set fire to it, and burnt all of the people inside. In the 17 houses which I mentioned earlier, people were burnt and killed by bullets.

The victims included: 1) 22 people burnt, 2) 10 people shot, plus one wounded.

Wielka Wieś was surrounded on 14 November 1943 at about 2.00-3.00 a.m. They illuminated it [illegible]. They threw an incendiary projectile into one of the houses. An entire family consisting of four people was burnt in this house. Then they ordered the residents to get dressed. I would like to clarify that they searched for people in their houses and rounded them up as they were – barefoot, in their underwear etc., in one place. All those people herded together were gathered in the meadows. A car drove up with five naked corpses on top, and the group was ordered to recognize them. The victims were not known to the villagers. Out of all the people gathered there, 150 men were chosen and sentenced to death, the sentence was read out. A few minutes later the sentence was withdrawn, but men aged up to 40 – 35 men aged 17 to 40 – were detained. The detainees were transported to the village of Furmanów and subjected to an investigation. During the interrogation they were tortured, even beaten with flails in order to force a confession. The individuals who got beat up were then transported to the prison in Końskie, and then to Auschwitz. Only two of them came back, while the rest died.

The older men who did not get arrested were [illegible] and beaten, and even ordered to dismantle a country house which belonged to Franciszek Rurarz. This was a wooden house, located in an out-of-the-way place, and furnished. Machine guns were pointed at us from all sides and we were beaten mercilessly during this work.

This is all I have to say. The report was read out.

This report was fully confirmed by Jan Ogonowski, son of Wawrzyniec, resident of Wielka Wieś, commune of Odrowąż, a farmer by trade, who confirms this with his signature.