



KAROL CUGOWSKI

Warsaw, 11 April 1946. Judge Stanisław Rybiński, a delegate to the Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes, interviewed the person specified below as an unsworn witness. The witness was advised of the duty to speak the truth and the criminal liability for making false declarations, and then testified:

Name and surname	Karol Cugowski
Date of birth	30 January 1882
Names of parents	Feliks and Salomea <i>née</i> Stanowska
Occupation	state official, cashier in the Ministry of Forests
Education	high school
Place of residence	Reja Street 3
Religious affiliation	Roman Catholic
Criminal record	none

At the moment of the outbreak of the Warsaw Uprising, on 1 August 1944, I was living in house number 24 on Grójecka Street, together with my wife, my daughter, and my son Kazimierz, who was 30 years old at that time. My second son, Edmund, lived in Żoliborz then. During the first four days, there was no fighting near our house. The nearest military site on Grójecka Street was located in front of our house and was in German hands. Thus we were very surprised when on 5 August, at 5.00 a.m., 15 or 20 German SS soldiers burst into our house and ordered us to leave the house. When we went outside into the yard, one of them spoke to us in correct Polish demanding that the one who had shot at the German soldiers or had thrown a bottle with petrol admit it. That soldier gave us a few minutes for deliberation. Obviously nobody owned up, because none of us had shot or thrown a bottle with petrol. The



demand made to us was clearly provocative. When a few minutes had passed, the Germans separated women and children from us, they led the [younger] men into the yard at number 25, located on the opposite side of Grójecka Street. Having left us in the yard, they were talking among themselves, laughing, eating sweets. Then they told us – the men remaining in the yard – to approach two entrances located on the two opposite ends of the house. Those of us who did not want to obey their orders were dragged by the Germans by force. Whoever so much as stood on the first step of the stairs, he already received a shot in the back of the head, and falling rolled down into the basement. In this way the Germans shot around 50 men – not only my neighbors from that house, but also chance passers-by. When I was forced to go to the entrance to the basement, the standing soldier shot also at me, but hit the upper rim of my right ear. I tripped over those killed and wounded lying on the basement stairs in front of me, I lay motionless, trying to hide under those who fell after me. Everywhere by the entrance to the basement and on the stairs leading to it, moans and wheezes resounded. Soon afterwards, one of the Germans threw a grenade onto the pile of people, which wounded me in the right arm, and my eardrums broke from the bang. Next, I felt that a powder smelling of paraffin was being sprinkled over me. Fearing that I would start to burn with the others, being all covered in my and others' blood, I began to crawl further down and next, unnoticed by the Germans who stood upstairs, I moved from our basement to that of the neighboring house at number 26 on Grójecka Street, through a passage known to me. The Germans did not murder the people in the latter house. Some merciful woman took it upon herself to bandage my severely bleeding wound, but when I was half naked, she suddenly fled, because the Germans were approaching. I hid in the corner behind oddments there, and the Germans passing through the basement didn't notice me. Soon after, they ordered the residents of the house at number 26 to also go outside into the yard. I had to go outside as I was, naked to the waist, with a heavily bleeding wound on my right arm. The Germans jumped towards me, wishing to finish me off. However, I managed to explain that I had been wounded in the house at number 26, because I lived there. Then they left me and led me with others to the house at number 2 Spiska Street. There I met with my son Edmund, who had got through to Grójecka Street on the first day of the uprising, and was not able to get back to his, to Żoliborz. My son managed to find women who prepared a bandage for me, and then even brought a doctor from the hospital on Kaliska Street. We went from the house at number 2 on Spiska Street through the basements to the house located on the opposite end of the street. I lay there for three or four days.



Later, the Germans led us out into Zieleniak, where the "Ukrainians" were making an inspection every moment and took everything they found. I have to add that in the yard of our house, the Germans, before shooting us, demanded that we hand over our watches and I had to give away my silver watch. In Zieleniak, to which my son Edmund led me, being kicked from behind all the way by a uniformed "Ukrainian", I met my wife and my daughter. They led us to the Warsaw West station after two days. There, with a help of some railwayman, we managed to hide and avoid being deported to Pruszków. I left then with my wife and daughter for Piotrków, and my son parted ways with us already in Zieleniak. In Piotrków, I was treated in Holy Trinity Hospital. There they cut out a few bits of crushed bones. The wound has not healed yet, and the arm has remained inert above the elbow. In Piotrków, in the hospital, I was interrogated by Gestapo men. I explained to them that I had been accidentally wounded. They left me in peace.

Two neighbors in our house avoided death as I did. I don't know their names. They were wounded as I was. One had his lung shot through, the other was wounded in the cheek. Other neighbors lost their lives, among their number was also my son Kazimierz. In spring 1945, I looked for his corpse in the burnt basement of our house among other charred corpses and I did not find it.

The Germans, having murdered the men from our house, set it on fire, and then also set the house at number 26 Grójecka Street on fire. That is why they expelled the residents of the latter to the house at number 2 Spiska Street.

I didn't know and cannot give the names of any of the Germans or the "Ukrainians" who committed crimes against me and my son Kazimierz and my neighbors.

Read out.

My son Edmund Cugowski lives in the same house as I, Reja Street 3.