

ZOFIA SIEKIELSKA

Warsaw, 12 February 1946. Assistant Judge Antoni Krzętowski, delegated to the Department of the Main Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes, interviewed the person specified below as an unsworn witness. Having been instructed of the obligation to tell the truth and of the criminal liability for making false declarations, the witness testified as follows:

Name and surname	Zofia Siekielska
Names of parents	Stanisław and Antonina
Date of birth	5 January 1899
Place of residence	Warsaw [...]
Occupation	nurse
Education	state nursing diploma
Religious affiliation	Roman Catholic

I have worked in Karol and Maria Hospital in Warsaw since 1918, and I work there now as a nurse. I also worked there during the German occupation. The quarter where the hospital was situated was the area of insurgent fighting from the moment the uprising broke out.

I don't know whether there were any insurgents in the hospital itself, but in any case Germans were never fired at from our hospital.

The Germans came into the hospital for the first time on 6 August 1944. This happened in the morning: two German soldiers entered, and they asked right away whether we had any German soldiers in the hospital. Since we indeed had one, we directed them to him. This wounded German soldier expressed his good opinion about us, as a result of which the Germans did us no harm.

Still on the same day, a larger number of German soldiers accompanied by the men we called "Mongols" burst into the hospital. They wore German military uniforms, but the difference was that they had rope nets on their helmets, and apart from that, each of them had a large number of machine gun cartridge belts hanging on his person. Moreover, they were distinguished by the fact that they walked in a very characteristic manner, treading on the their tiptoes, very deftly. Their facial features and complexion revealed their Eastern origins. According to the information that was reaching our hospital from the people on the outside, this was the way the execution troops looked.

The "Mongols" stepped in front of the Germans, and when they burst into the hospital, there was a moment of silence, which was soon interrupted by loud cries, given by several different people as it seemed. These cries were a sign of horror and great fear rather than pain, and at the same time I heard several single shots.

At that time I was in a corridor of the internal ward, that is, between the surgical and the internal ward. I heard these cries and shots from the direction of the surgical ward. On hearing them, some German military man ran in the direction they were coming from, and a moment later the surgical ward became quiet.

I am unable to categorically say whether any of our patients were killed there at that time. However, a few days later, when the Germans, having first taken us to Wolski Hospital, let me go back to Karol and Maria Hospital for some things for the patients, I saw several beds in the surgical ward with mattresses drenched in blood. I saw four or five such beds there.

The Germans or these "Mongols" burst into the hospital yelling "bandits" (bandit). After the cries and shooting in the surgical ward had been silenced, they were acting calmly, although some of the "Mongols" demanded that we give our watches, rings or other jewellery over to them. A "Mongol" took away my gold watch and even ordered me to pin it to his uniform on his chest with a safety pin. Command over the entire operation was exercised by the Germans, however: they were the ones who were giving orders.

The Germans ordered us to gather on the asphalt road in front of the hospital; this pertained to doctors, nurses, the entire hospital staff in general and those of the patients who were able to walk on their own.

I know that the hospital was evacuated in three groups, however I don't know what the basis for the division into these groups was. I only suspect that these groups were led in the order of hospital wards, based on whom the Germans found in a given ward.

I was in the group from the surgical-internal ward of doctor Chroboni [elsewhere: Hroboni]. There were around twenty staff members and roughly as many wounded or ill patients. Obviously, these were the patients with less serious injuries, who were able to walk on their own. The Germans did not let us take the severely wounded patients with us. They were left in the hospital, lying side by side on mattresses.

On 6 August 1944 there could have been around two hundred of these seriously wounded patients in our hospital. I don't know what happened to them, although personally I believe that the Germans murdered them in the hospital.

A few days after the evacuation, when I was allowed by the Germans to go back to the hospital to take some linen for our little patients, I tried to pay attention to any clues that could give me a hint as to the fate of those patients, and generally as to the entire conduct of the Germans in the hospital, but the German accompanying me as an escort did not let me look around; he ordered me to only take the linen from the place which I had been ordered to indicate first. Thus it was difficult for me to notice anything.

Our group from Karol and Maria Hospital was brought to Wolski Hospital in Płocka Street. On the way we were three times halted on the streets, we were scrutinized questioningly, the Germans reloaded [their guns] or adjusted them. Moreover, later, I don't know why, the Germans were bringing out and then bringing back some containers to the yards of the houses at which we were halted. This all gave us the impression of some kind of a preparation, which could not mean anything good for us.

On the junction of Leszno, Młynarska, and Górczewska Streets, near the statue of Mary Mother of God, the Germans shot Dr Kmicikiewicz.

I only heard the shot, since I was busy with an ill child, but Nurse Maria Rządowska saw exactly how Dr Kmicikiewicz was executed. Later, after Dr Kmicikiewicz had been killed, at one of our further stops, some German military man rode up to us. I do not speak German, but people who understood German told me that this had been a military doctor, and to his

question our guards answered that we were bandits from the hospital. Hearing that, he gave an order to bring us to Wolski Hospital. The guards objected, allegedly telling him that they had different orders for us, but this doctor, leaving already, allegedly repeated the instruction that we were to be taken to Wolski Hospital. And indeed we were taken there. I imagine that had it not been for this order, we would have been executed somewhere.

Having reached Wolski Hospital, we, that is the staff, were assigned to do various tasks in the hospital, and the patients were accommodated [to the extent possible]. However, shortly after that the Germans demanded that ten patients with less severe injuries, who had come on their own, and ten hospital nurses, volunteer to go to Karol and Maria Hospital. Such a group did indeed volunteer, but at the junction of Leszno, Górczewska and Młynarska Streets, these ten patients with less severe injuries were separated from the nurses and they disappeared without a trace. The nurses, on the other hand, were taken to Karol and Maria Hospital, where they were supposed to take care of the children that had been left there, and on the following day they brought these children to Wolski Hospital.

I heard that two of these children had gotten killed in Karol and Maria Hospital, probably by stray bullets.

While in Wolski Hospital, still on the same day we were brought there, that is on 6 August 1944, I saw from a corridor window on the ground floor of the building what I believe was an execution of Poles.

Namely, I saw at one point five German soldiers standing in a line side by side, and each of them held, I believe, a gun in an outstretched hand. They were all aiming in one direction, and then I heard gunshot volleys fired, repeated three times, I believe.

This made a strong impression on me, since I had no doubt that this was an execution.

The Germans were standing there in the gate of a wooden or net fence joining two hospital buildings, and thus closing the hospital yard from one side, and were shooting volleys in the direction of the exterior of the hospital in the direction of Działdowska Street. The courtyard of a property adjacent to the hospital was located there.

I stayed in Wolski Hospital until the end of October 1944, and then together with Karol and Maria Hospital I was transferred to Milanówek, and then to Włodzimierzów near Piotrków.

Presently, since December 1945, I have been working in the outpatients' clinic of Karol and Maria Hospital in Warsaw, in the old location on Leszno Street. The hospital is not fully operative yet, only the outpatients' clinic is open. The rest of the hospital is presently being organized.

I wish to add that in the spring of 1945 someone wishing to set up a vegetable patch on Karol and Maria Hospital property found human corpses there. As a result of this discovery, an exhumation was organised in that location. Supposedly over thirty corpses were found there, including the corpses of two or three women.

I don't know who carried out the exhumation. Michał Kostyra, who has already been interviewed in this case, and potentially Maria Kozłowska, a physical worker of the hospital (residing in Karol and Maria Hospital at Leszno Street 136), should know the details of the exhumation.

The report was read out.