



STANISŁAW PIEGAT

The sixth day of the trial

Stanisław Piegat, 55 years old, residing in Wawer, no relationship to the parties.

Presiding judge: – Were you present in Wawer during that trial, and were you shot there?

Witness: – Yes, I was.

Presiding judge: – Please tell us what the trial looked like. From the moment you were arrested until the time when you were shot or when you managed to save yourself.

Witness: – It was 11 p.m. when they searched my house. They left and told us to go to sleep. Then other soldiers came at about 1.30 a.m.

Presiding judge: – What badges did they have? Green or brown?

Witness: – They wore green uniforms. They came at 1.30 a.m., ordered us to get dressed, and took us outside to the yard. They went upstairs and returned with two more people. They took us to the train station, where they lined us up against a wall, with our faces turned to it. From there, they took us to a tunnel and lined us up against another wall in the same manner as before. Then they took us to their headquarters and lined us up against a fence in two rows. From there, they escorted us inside the headquarters in groups of three, wrote down our names, surnames, age, and languages we spoke.

Presiding judge: – How many Germans were there in the headquarters?

Witness: – There were some officers, but I don't remember how many.

Presiding judge: – Are any of them present in this room?



Witness: – I recognize the one on the right. It's Daume. I remember his face. I went in with the last group of three and I was included in the group of ten who were to be shot first. I was the first in the row. When we were leaving, they were beating and kicking us.

Presiding judge: – What did they ask you?

Witness: – They didn't ask me anything; only what my name was, how old I was, and what languages I spoke. They stood in two rows and when we were leaving, they immediately started beating us. I was hit too, so hard that I stumbled, but I didn't fall over. They beat us with sticks and gun butts. I fell down the stairs, which had seven steps. I fell on the ground, but I quickly got up and joined the rest. I didn't stand in the right place, so a German approached me, grabbed me by the collar, and hit me with a stick. Before they passed the verdict, the soldiers were constantly grabbing rifles and aiming at us to let us know they would shoot us. Then they would lower the guns and aim them at us again. When they were beating us, they were laughing, joking, and acting like savages. Then the verdict was read out.

Presiding judge: – Who read it out?

Witness: – An officer came out, read out the verdict in German, and a non-commissioned officer repeated it in Polish, "For the murder of two German soldiers, you have been sentenced to death." We didn't expect that; we thought they could take us to Germany, but we didn't think they could sentence us to death. As soon as they announced it – they didn't even enter the room – they read out ten first names and took us back through the tunnel and the station to the place where the two men had been killed. They stopped us there and cast a light on us. I looked up and saw a man hanging right in front of the door. I was convinced they would take him off and hang us.

Presiding judge: – Who was hanging there?

Witness: – It was the owner. I knew him well because it was the fourth house from where I lived.

Presiding judge: – Were there any corpses of Germans?

Witness: – I didn't see any. That was at 7.15, and they took us at 1.30 a.m. Then they took us further. An officer checked if the fence posts were solid, but they weren't, so they took us further. Then they ordered us to stop and take off our hats. They cast a light on us, using car headlamps. I said goodbye to a friend of mine who worked for me as a barber. He complained,



but I said, "Well, Michał, we have to die, no one will show up and help us. I only hope they will hit the right spot so that we don't suffer." Then, they fired a salvo. I saw him collapse. I also collapsed to the ground; everyone fell down. I heard that people next to me were suffering. I took a deep breath and didn't feel any pain, so I realized they hadn't hit me. I clung to the ground and just lay there. A moment later, I heard single shots. I saw a German walking and holding a revolver in his right hand. In his left hand, he had a flashlight and he was checking who was still moving. He finished such men off. Then I heard them execute another group of ten and all the remaining groups, until the last one. I just lay there and didn't move.

Afterwards, everything fell silent. The trucks started leaving. I thought the corpses would be loaded onto the trucks and thrown into pits. I wondered what would happen to me because if I were placed at the bottom inside the truck, I would suffocate, but if I were placed on top, I might run away.

When they left and it got quiet, I wanted to check what was going on. I turned my head slowly. I checked both sides, but I didn't see anyone around, so I got up and ran to the back. There was nobody there. There was only a man from the group of nine who had been pardoned. He was looking for his brother-in-law who had been shot. When he saw me, he shouted, "Run away, run away!" I grabbed my hat, my identity card, which I was holding in my hand during the execution, and I escaped. I ran into the neighboring house to get warm because my hands were swollen from the cold. I spent over two hours in the cold. This is how I survived.

Presiding judge: – Did he ask you anything?

Witness: – He didn't ask me anything.

Presiding judge: – Who asked you questions?

Witness: – The non-commissioned officer who wrote down our names and surnames. They didn't ask us anything else.

Presiding judge: – Did they announce the verdict?

Witness: – Yes, at the headquarters. While we were being beaten, officers would approach the window and watch. Many of us had our heads cut – we had to stand and blood dropped down onto our necks.

Judge Grudziński: – When you entered the room, were the officers sitting at a table?



Witness: – There was a table. Some of them were walking; others were standing. There were officers. I saw defendant Daume pass by. One of them was sitting at the corner of the table; others were talking to each other. I approached the clerk who wrote down my name and surname. He was sitting alone and he spoke Polish well.

Judge Rybczyński: – He only wrote your name and surname down?

Witness: – Name, surname, age, if I was married, what languages I spoke.

Judge Rybczyński: – Were you beaten on the way to the police station?

Witness: – When I was going in, I wasn't, but they were beating me while taking me outside.

Judge Rybczyński: – Were you kicked and pushed down the stairs?

Witness: – Yes, I was kicked a few times on the head.

Judge Grudziński: – Were you lined up in rows in a single yard?

Witness: – Yes.

Judge Grudziński: – Was there any other group?

Witness: – Everyone was there.

Judge Grudziński: – Let me say it more clearly: was there a group of people who were to be released later on?

Witness: – Yes, there were nine of them.

Judge Grudziński: – Was defendant Daume among the officers who looked out through the window?

Witness: – I saw them come to the window and watch. If someone fell down, they were kicked, beaten, grabbed by the collar, and thrown to the ground. It wasn't that bad if we managed to keep standing.

Judge Grudziński: – How long did it last? How long did it take to register everyone? Three, four hours?

Witness: – Probably about two hours.



Judge Grudziński: – Is it possible that some of those officers did not see what was going on outside?

Witness: – Everyone saw how they abused us.

Judge Rybczyński: – What did the officer who came out to announce the verdict look like?

Witness: – He was tall and had a large face. After he announced the verdict, people begged, “Major, we’re innocent, we’re no bandits, we have wives and children.” People addressed the officer as major. I didn’t know anything about those things, but some people did.

Judge Rybczyński: – Was it loud? Could the people in the room hear the pleading and begging?

Witness: – It was close. Did the people in the room hear it? If the door was closed, they didn’t.

Judge Rybczyński: – Did they take the whole column outside?

Witness: – In groups of ten.

Judge Rybczyński: – And why was it that the witness was in the last group of three, but ended up in the first group of ten?

Witness: – We were lined up and I was standing at the end. When they took us out for execution, I found myself in the first group of ten.

Judge Rybczyński: – When was the owner of the restaurant hanged?

Witness: – I don’t know.

Judge Rybczyński: – The witness has said that he lived four houses away from the restaurant. Did you know that the soldiers had been shot?

Witness: – We immediately found out that the two Germans had been shot because our neighbor couldn’t get over it. He came to our house and told us two Germans had been killed. I don’t know when the restaurant owner was hanged. When we were being taken to be executed, they told us to stop for five minutes, look at the hanged man, and then they took us to the place of execution.

Prosecutor Siewierski: – Did those soldiers kick you inside the headquarters or outside?



Witness: – It happened on the porch. The Germans were lined up in two double rows. We had to walk between them. There were seven or eight steps down. When we were going down, they were kicking and beating us, and pushing us down the stairs.

Prosecutor Siewierski: – Was there an interrogation? Did they ask if you would confess to anything? Did they explain what you were being accused of?

Witness: – They didn't ask us anything. The soldiers only told us that two of their soldiers had been killed and that it would end badly for us.

Judge Rybczyński: – And what about the group of those nine?

Witness: – They were in the corridor.

Judge Rybczyński: – Were they beaten?

Witness: – No, they didn't beat them.

Judge Rybczyński: – Only those who had been listed were beaten?

Witness: – Yes. From the house where I live, one man was included in the group of the nine who were pardoned. A soldier told them, "You won't be executed, go and say thank you to the Major for pardoning you. You just have to bury your comrades."

Judge Rybczyński: – When did he say that?

Witness: – After we were taken away.

Judge Rybczyński: – Did that acquaintance tell you who had told them about the release?

Witness: – A soldier approached them in that corridor.

Judge Rybczyński: – But who announced the release?

Witness: – A soldier came and said, "You won't be executed, go and say thank you to the Major." They took off their hats and thanked him.

Judge Rybczyński: – What is the name of that acquaintance of yours?

Witness: – Strykowski.



Judge Rybczyński: – Did he tell you who had sent him to the group that was to be released?
A major or a colonel?

Witness: – He didn't tell me the details.

Judge Rybczyński: – Did the witness know that the nine men would be treated differently than the rest?

Witness: – I didn't know. I approached those nine men, but then a soldier directed me to another column.

Attorney Węgliński: – Perhaps you could tell the Tribunal how long you spent in the room where you provided them with your personal details.

Witness: – A few minutes.

Attorney Węgliński: – Was there anyone sitting next to the clerk?

Witness: – No, nobody was sitting next to him because he was sitting in the corner. The officers were walking on the other side. An officer was sitting further, but there was no one next to him.

Attorney Węgliński: – Did you see the defendant whom you remember among those who were walking there?

Witness: – Yes.

Attorney Węgliński: – Do you recall how many people, more or less, were gathered in front of the headquarters?

Witness: – Later on the major came out and said there were enough, *genug*.

Attorney Węgliński: – How many people, more or less, waited for interrogation? A hundred fifty or two hundred?

Witness: – There were many people; I can't give you the exact number.

Attorney Węgliński: – How far was it from the headquarters to the place of the execution?

Witness: – About a kilometer or five hundred meters.

Presiding judge: – I am ordering a recess until 4 p.m.