



## WŁADYSŁAW ZARAN

Warsaw, 27 June 1946. Judge Antoni Knoll, acting as a member of the Main Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes, interviewed the person named below, who testified as follows:

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My name is Władysław Zaran, son of Antoni and Marianna, born on 31 August 1895 in Ponożyce, district of Garwolin, religion – Roman Catholic, a ranger by profession, residing in Pyry near Warsaw, criminal record – none.

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I have been working as a ranger in the Kabacki Forest, in the area of Pyry, for the past 22 years. If I remember correctly, executions commenced in my area of administration in March 1941. The first took place in March of that year.

I don't know how many people were shot dead then, for I was not present at the execution. I only saw eight vehicles, of which six were trucks. The vehicles arrived from the direction of Natolin, and drove away towards the Warsaw–Piaseczno road.

I cannot determine how many people were killed during this execution. The place where the execution was carried out lies outside my area of administration, in that of ranger Cieślak (section XV), now deceased.

If I remember correctly, the next mass execution took place some time later, in April 1943. I remember the year exactly, however I cannot give the month with absolute certainty. I can only state that it was in the spring, for people were still working in the forest planting trees.

Between the execution held in 1941 and that carried out in the spring of 1943, individual executions also took place – their locations are known to myself and I can point them out. All of the victims who were shot individually were brought in under the escort of German gendarmes from Warsaw.



There were 19 such executions in total.

I would like to explain that the term 'individual' as used by myself also applies to the killings of up to six people. Poles formed the majority of those shot dead during these 19 executions. In three instances I saw the bodies of the murder victims. These were individual executions.

I did not determine the surnames of those killed.

They were all dressed in civilian cloths, one had light-coloured overalls, one wore a fur coat, which was subsequently given by the gendarmes to the undertaker Antoni Gawarkiewicz (residing in Pyry), while another had a summer suit, the colour of which I don't recall.

After the execution, the bodies were buried by Stodulski, the two brothers Gawarkiewicz, and Szarański (residing in Pyry, in the building which houses the police station).

All of these individual executions were carried out by the German Gendarmerie. I don't know whether any sentences were read out to the condemned persons before they were killed.

In one instance I saw that the suspect had his hands tied behind his back.

In April 1943 constable Gromelski warned me that an execution would take place in the Kabacki Forest from the side of Pyry. Since I was curious as to who would be shot and how the execution would be conducted, I asked him to inform me of the location and time. After dinner on that day the following entered the forest: the commander of the blue police station, Dąbkowski, constable Gromelski, and four undertakers: Stodulski, the two brothers Gawarkiewicz, and a fourth man whose surname I do not remember. They dug a grave that was more or less square. Having completed their task, they went home.

Early the next day, at approximately half past four, there arrived two trucks – one with the condemned persons, and the other with blue policemen. A third vehicle then arrived, and this carried a few gendarmes, one of whom – I think – was an officer, whose name – if I remember correctly – was Lipscher.

I was not present at the execution itself, being at a distance of some two hundred metres from the spot. From this point I could not see anything, for the forest was [thickly] covered with brushwood.

As I learned from the undertakers, the execution was carried out by the blue policemen, who were reluctant, but performed the task on Lipscher's order. The victims were finished off by the gendarmes – this I also know from the undertakers. Twenty people perished in this execution. The undertakers told me that amongst those murdered were three or four Jews. Reportedly, they were buried in their clothes.

I don't know who the victims were. In the main, they were young people. The gendarmes told the undertakers that they might take the victims' personal items if they so wished. Some of them took such items from the clothing.

I don't know how the condemned persons behaved during the execution.

The next execution took place in June or July of the same year. Ten people were then shot dead. The vehicles came from the direction of Warsaw through Dąbrówka: two trucks and one motorcar. This execution was also performed by the blue police.

I don't know whether Lipscher was present.

I also don't know whether the victims were handcuffed.

I was not present at the execution itself, like before being at a distance of some 200 metres from the spot.

I don't know whether sentences were read out to the condemned persons before they were shot.

Furthermore, I don't know if the undertakers received any items afterwards.

The third execution took place shortly after the second. Fourteen people were then shot dead.

I don't recall the time that elapsed between the second and third executions. The vehicles also arrived from the Warsaw. I was not present at this execution either, I only saw bodies lying in a pit. This time only Poles were executed. The condemned persons were dressed in civilian clothes. This execution was carried out by blue policemen, too.

Standing at a certain distance from the execution spot, I heard the cry "Long live" before the shots were fired, but I did not hear what this pertained to. The undertakers said different things about this cry – some said that it was in honour of Poland, while others that it was in honour of Hitler. I don't know which interpretation is correct.

The undertakers, as I saw, took shoes off of the bodies when they thought they would be appropriate. The gendarmes left before the bodies were covered with earth.

I don't know where the policemen that acted as the firing squad came from. During the last execution I was told that the police were from Pruszków.

I don't remember who told me this.

I don't know the surnames of the police officers. Only Dąbkowski and Gromelski were present from the local police, but they did not take part in the execution, and only guarded the area. Gromelski told me that the condemned persons were taken from Pawiak prison.

I don't know the reason for their shooting. The Germans called them bandits. I know Lipscher's surname from the station commander, Dąbkowski, whom Lipscher frequently visited.

I don't know whether these visits were official or private.

Gromelski informed me about the executions privately. The thing was to know the spots, so that the graves could be found in the future.

I don't know why Stodulski, the Gawarkiewicz brothers, and Szarański were summoned from amongst the local residents to dig the graves. They were summoned by commander Dąbkowski. If I heard correctly, Stodulski is some kind of relative of Dąbkowski. As regards Szarański, he did not have a good reputation in Pyry, for it was said that he was a thief. As concerns the Gawarkiewicz brothers, I can say nothing about them; all I know is that the wife of one of them, namely of Antoni Gawarkiewicz, worked at the police station, and now works at the Citizens' Militia station. I assume that this influenced the fact that they were summoned to dig the graves for the murder victims.

When after the last execution I walked up to a grave that had not yet been covered up with earth, I saw that one of undertakers was removing footwear from the victims. I don't remember which one of the undertakers it was. I think that it was Szarański.

As regards my testimony to the effect that police from Pruszków took part in the third execution, I would like to explain that I heard this from Gromelski. I don't know where he knew this from.



Dąbkowski does not currently live in Pyry. I don't know his current whereabouts. I heard that following the appearance of Polish and Russian armies he was arrested, but I don't know his fate.

I know nothing more regarding the present case.

The report was read out, and the interview closed.