



ŁUCJA SKIBIŃSKA

Warsaw, 29 January 1946. A judge delegated to the Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes interviewed the person named below as a witness. Having been advised of the criminal liability for making false declarations, the witness testified as follows:

Name and surname	Łucja Skibińska
Date of birth	13 December 1874
Religion	Roman Catholic
Parents' names	Konstanty and Wiktoria
Occupation	old-age pensioner, a judge's widow
Place of residence	Warsaw, Kamionkowska Street 52
Criminal record	none

When the Warsaw Uprising broke out I lived on the outskirts of Wola (Księcia Janusza Street), and remained there until 17 August, when I was forcibly evacuated from Warsaw. I did not leave home alone until the evacuation, and did not myself directly witness the mass murders. I only saw burning houses, and later on, when I was forced to leave Warsaw, a great number of bodies by the roadside. I only learned from the neighbours of our house about the bestial acts perpetrated by the Germans on defenceless Polish civilians. A relative of my cousins, the Balzams, whom the Germans executed by firing squad, told me about how this terrorist act happened. The Balzams lived in their own house at Wolska Street 143. There were two of them, husband and wife. In the first half of August, around the tenth, SS men surrounded the Balzams' house and ordered all the residents to leave the building. When the commandant [...] of the house approached them in the courtyard, he was shot dead. Next the SS men started shooting at everyone who exited the building. In this way they killed a great number of people. Only a few people managed to avoid death by sheer chance. The



Balzams, Stanisław and Helena, were shot dead together with the others. The person who told me this had luckily avoided death.

I must add that during the uprising the "Ukrainians" who were serving in the German army took two young girls from our house – to clean potatoes, or so they said. Both of them returned on the same day, but one started complaining that she had been taken advantage of.

When in the beginning of 1945 I returned to Warsaw and went to where the Balzams' house had stood, I saw blackened human remains – heads, arms and ribs – among the rubble.

Before the uprising, in 1943, the Germans had murdered my only son, Jerzy Skibiński (born on 6 June 1910), a lawyer with a university education and an officer of the light cavalry regiment. My son took part in the campaign of 1939, avoided captivity, and returned home in October. When officers were summoned to register, he complied, but when the Germans started deporting these officers to Germany, he went into hiding and moved to the commune of Sulejówek near Warsaw, where he took up farming.

On 13 November 1943, my son came to Warsaw in order to take care of some business and do some shopping. I was not present in Warsaw at the time. My son stayed in our flat at Noakowskiego Street 22, and on the same day, as he was returning home at 19.00, he was arrested at a gate near the house; he didn't manage to enter the flat. The Germans who arrested my son had hid near the gate and were stopping everyone who entered; they didn't allow the caretaker to inform me about his arrest. When one of our neighbours, Ms Kajzer (I don't know her first name), learned of this, she notified my cousin, Stanisław Sobieszczęński (I don't know his present address). Neither do I know the address of Ms Kajzer. Sobieszczęński informed me about what had happened.

I returned to Warsaw two days later and started making efforts to get my son released. I sent an application to the Gestapo. I also contacted a middleman by the surname of Bieniek, who at the time lived at Widok Street 3. I don't know his first name, nor do I know his current whereabouts. I sold everything that I could and gathered up 70 thousand zlotys to ransom my son. The Gardeners' Union, of which my son was a member, also made efforts, but they were unsuccessful. On 18 November a poster was hung up around the city, on which my son figured as a hostage, while on 24 or 25 November another poster was put up, and this contained the information that my son had been shot by firing squad.



Neither I nor my son's wife received his body or his personal effects. Bieniek kept leading me on even after the second poster was published, saying that my son would return. He even promised that he would get him back for Christmas. In the end he called me and said there was nothing he could do. He did not give me back the money that I had handed over to him. Even though I had prepared 50 thousand zlotys more to pay him when he had secured my son's return. To date I have been unable to determine where the public execution during which my son was murdered took place.

I have read the report.