



LEON USZKIEWICZ

Warsaw, 31 December 1947. Judge Halina Wereńko, a member of the District 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	Leon Uszkiewicz
Parents' names	Florian and Aurelia, née Salatyńska
Date of birth	18 February 1905, Pogoręda, district of Grodno
Religion	Roman Catholic
Citizenship and nationality	Polish
Occupation	Department Director at the Ministry of Health
Address	Pruszków, Tworki Hospital

On 7 August 1944, due to the fact that German forces were approaching from the direction of Chłodna Street, Ogrodowa Street, and the Ghetto, I left the house at Żelazna Street 81 and proceeded to the Old Town, making my way to the John of God Hospital at Bonifraterska Street.

At the time, a hospital for some 300 wounded was being set up at John of God. From amongst the local physicians, Prof. Falkowski, Dr F. Szumigaj, and Dr Lidia Wiśniewska were present there. The following non-local physicians had also arrived: Dr Strojek, Krauze, Tomaszewski, for a part of the time Dr Sadowski, and Dr Tarnawski. Initially, the sanitary chief of the Old Town was Dr Sadowski (currently living in Ciechocinek), while later on this position was taken by Dr Tarnawski (currently living in Rabka). The John of God Hospital had been previously prepared to accept patients. Other first-aid posts and hospitals in the Old Town were created when I was already working at John of God. Despite numerous identification

signs (Red Cross symbols), the John of God Hospital was shelled by the Germans from the first day of the uprising. And thus, for example, on 1 August three mentally ill patients perished in cells on the side of Bonifraterska Street.

On 13 August destructive artillery shelling commenced, accompanied by bombing (the hospital had already been bombed previously). On 20 August, while providing assistance to the wounded and to patients, Dr Jankowska was killed. When the Germans entered the premises (25–26 August), up to 200 wounded and sick remained at John of God.

While I was in Pruszków in the second half of September 1944, I talked with a railwayman (I don't remember his surname) who during the uprising had been a patient at John of God, sick with dysentery. He told me that after the Germans occupied the facility on 26 August, some of the patients who were able to walk (he among them) were ordered to leave Warsaw in the direction of Żoliborz. He didn't know what fate befell the wounded who were left at the John of God Hospital.

Around 13 August the staff commenced the evacuation of the less severely wounded from John of God to hospitals at Długa Street 7, Freta Street 10, and at Podwale Street 25 – "Pod Krzywą Latarnią". Dr Tarnawski continued to work as the sanitary chief, while Prof. Falkowski was appointed the director of all newly created hospitals considered as a continuation of John of God. Due to his bad physical condition, I deputised for him in matters concerning technical affairs and supplies. At the time, a hospital was set up at Freta Street 10, on the premises of St Jacek's Church, where the less severely wounded were placed in the naves, and the gravely wounded in the chapter-house and the corridor. This hospital was administered primarily and continuously by Dr F. Szumigaj. Around 20 August, the number of wounded combined with the civilian population might have totalled some 600; the number of less gravely wounded fluctuated. The mortality rate was high.

In the final period before the Germans entered, following the evacuation of the less severely wounded to Śródmieście, some one hundred wounded might have remained in the Old Town.

At a guess, the hospital at Długa Street 7 had around 250 wounded. The main surgeons there were Dr Stroński and Dr Tomaszewski. The operating theatre was located in a cellar on the side of Kilińskiego Street, while the dispensary was situated on the ground floor on the side of Długa Street; the wounded were on the first floor, the ground floor, and in the cellars

(in particular on the side of Długa Street). Some 400 wounded might have been sheltering there before the Germans approached. Approximately 50 wounded might have been present in the house at Długa Street 8 and 10.

The "Pod Krzywą Latarnią" Hospital was created after 13 August at Podwale Street 25. It might have housed up to 150 wounded in its three cramped halls. One of the patients was Dr Tomaszewski, who was cared for by his wife, a physician. The staff included Dr Sadowski (currently living in Ciechocinek, Social Insurance). At Podwale Street, opposite the "Pod Krzywą Latarnią" Hospital, a few smaller hospitals had been set up in the cellars and on the ground floors of three or four houses. During the last night, from 1 to 2 September, these might have been sheltering some 150 wounded in total.

A smaller hospital, with approximately 50 wounded, was located in the house at Kilińskiego Street 1/5. This facility did not have a dedicated doctor. A larger hospital had been set up at the corner of Długa and Miodowa Streets. This was administered by Dr Brom (I don't know his surname, nor his current address) and had, in the main, been evacuated.

When the Germans approached, there were no physicians in the hospitals; all of them had left earlier. The wounded from all the locations mentioned above were not transported through the camp in Pruszków. I would estimate that during the period preceding the evacuation the number of wounded in hospitals in the Old Town was approximately 2 thousand; following the evacuation, at the time the Germans entered, there might have been some 800 people. During the night from 1 to 2 September I performed the final inspection of the hospitals at Podwale Street and Długa Street together with Halina Wiśniewska, whom Dr Tarnawski had tasked with exercising supervision over medical facilities on behalf of the Home Army before he himself left for the Śródmieście district.

In the early morning of 2 September I visited the hospital at Freta Street 10. When returning to Długa Street 7, I took cover against the air-raids – which were repeated every ten minutes – in one of the cellars at the corner of Długa and Freta streets. After I exited the shelter, I saw German soldiers and Russian-speaking soldiers in the street. They did not let me into the hospital, instead directing me to Kilińskiego Street, where an evacuation column was being formed. More and more groups of people were added to the column. I saw German soldiers throwing grenades and shooting into the cellars at Podwale Street. The soldiers pillaged our



group and the sent us to the Wola district, to St Wojciech's Church. At Chłodna Street I saw how soldiers in German uniforms, Vlasovtsy judging by their appearance, abducted two young women; they did not return to our group.

At this point the report was brought to a close and read out.