

ALEKSANDRA MATYSIAK

Warsaw, 17 January 1946. Member of the District Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes, Judge Halina Wereńko, interviewed the person specified below as an unsworn witness. Having been advised of the criminal liability for making false testimonies and of the wording of Art. 107 and 115 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, the witness testified as follows:

Name and surname	Aleksandra Julia Matysiak née Kaczanowska
Names of parents	Aleksander and Weronika
Age	52
Place of residence	[...]
Religion	Roman Catholic
Education	–
Occupation	factory worker

At the time of the uprising I lived in Warsaw at Elekcyjna Street 8.

On 5 August 1944 before 10 a.m. I heard shots.

During that time the fighting was in the vicinity of Działdowska Street, so it was far from us.

A few minutes after I heard the shots, several soldiers in German uniforms came into our yard. An SS-man armed with a light machine gun with a grenade in his hand burst into my apartment. He was excited, he was yelling raus and did not even let me take my purse with documents lying on the table.

Together with my niece, Halina Pogorzelska, we came out onto Elekcyjna Street. In front of the house and in the street were many soldiers in German uniforms speaking Russian – the

"Ukrainians". I saw the "Ukrainians" shoving people and throwing them out of their homes. A group of around eighty residents of our house was herded by the "Ukrainians" and a few SS-men down Elekcyjna Street in the direction of Wolska Street.

On the corner of Wolska and Elekcyjna Streets, on the even numbered side, in a plot where a burnt-down house used to stand, I saw machine guns set on stands, with the "Ukrainians" hanging around them. I counted three machine guns. Opposite that plot is Sowińskiego Park. I saw that near the netted fence of the park, from the side of Wolska Street, corpses lay on the entire pavement, someone on top of the other, some separately, and in various positions. There might have been around one hundred and fifty of them.

Our group was taken to the pavement in the front of the magistrate house at Elekcyjna Street 1/3, right on the corner of Wolska Street, where several single corpses lay; among them I recognized the bodies of a few people I knew by sight as residents of the houses at Elekcyjna Street 4 and 6. I figured that they had been executed there.

Our house was more or less as big as the houses at Elekcyjna Streets 4 and 6, so in those houses there could have been up to one hundred and fifty persons. I later saw that Teofil Kucharski, a resident of the house at Elekcyjna Street 1/3, having survived the execution, got up from among the corpses lying in Wolska Street.

The moment I reached the fence, I saw that the German soldiers were walking around the houses at Elekcyjna Street 4, 6 and 8, throwing flammable materials through doors and windows, and immediately after they did so fire would erupt.

Before they started shooting, I collapsed to the ground and lost consciousness. When I came round, I realised that four dead bodies and a little boy, still alive, were lying on top of me. The boy must have moved and thus drawn a soldier's attention, because I heard a shot, a moan, and then there were five corpses on top of me.

I also saw a soldier walking around among the executed people, looking for movement or moaning, in order to kill whoever was still alive with a pistol shot from up close. After some time he stopped in Wolska Street, still observing the site, shooting from afar at those still moving. The magistrate house in Elekcyjna Street 1/3 (on the corner of Wolska Street) was on fire; it had probably been set on fire while I was on the ground, unconscious.

Burning planks were falling on the corpses, fire was spreading to their clothes. When the corpses that were on top of me started to burn, and I felt the heat, I started to slowly crawl towards the fence, using the moments when the soldier in Wolska Street was moving away. Having reached the fence, I discovered that my neighbour Józefa Marczak was alive and was pretending to be dead, lying among corpses just like I was.

From among the residents of our house whom I knew, the following persons were executed: Wieluńska with her daughter Halina; Jan and Helena Gołębiowski with their son Edward; Stefan and Wacława Nowakowski with their son Zbigniew; Mr and Mrs Kuren with their four children; Mr and Mrs Zawieski with their sons Henryk and Kazimierz; Jan and Janina Sochanowski with their daughter Eugenia and son Ryszard; Zofia Pluta with her son Eugeniusz; Michalina Sas with her sons Zdzisław and Jan; Stanisław and Marianna Drewin with their son Tadeusz; Leon and Zofia Gierkowski with their daughters Jadwiga and Alina; Kazimierz Marczak with his son Jan and daughter Teresa; Mr and Mrs Gawart with their son Krzysztof; Barbara Morawska with her son Ryszard; Witold and Stanisława Kaliński; Natalia Dukowska with her daughter Józefa; Sławoszevska with her son; Mr and Mrs Pakuła with their sons Jerzy and Marian; Jan and Genowefa Buczyński; Michalina Sałajczyk; Małgorzata Marcelewicz; Elżbieta Wiktorzak; Lucyna Ruszczak with her daughters Danuta and Alfreda; Marianna Nowakowska with her son Andrzej; Boguszevska; Konstanty Kucharski with his wife Władysława and brother Czesław; Janina Fitos with her daughters Barbara and Marianna; Faratowska; Janina Pogorzelska with her daughter Halina.

It was already after nightfall when a German soldier lifted me up by my arm, saying in German that he would not execute me. After a while Józefa Marczak also got up, and the German soldier brought us to the corner of Wolska and Elekcyjna Streets, where a group of people dragged from among the corpses as we had been or from basements had already been standing.

I did not know anyone in that group, and I have not met them since.

We were herded through Wola and halted on an embankment in front of Saint Lawrence Church. Soldiers set a machine gun up in front of the embankment, and I was sure they were going to execute us. But a car came driving with some senior German officer inside, who said something to the Germans accompanying us, and then they brought us into the church.

There were already up to forty people in the church. The Germans gave an order for ten men from among those present to volunteer to remove corpses. It was already totally dark when the men came back. They said that they were moving corpses from Elekcyjna Street to Sowińskiego Park, where they were burnt on three pyres.

At that the report was concluded and read out.