



## FELIKS OWCZAREK

Warsaw, 22 June 1946. Investigating Judge Halina Wereńko, delegated to the Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes, heard the person named below as a witness. Having advised the witness of the criminal liability for making false declarations and of the significance of the oath, the Judge took an oath therefrom, following which the witness testified as follows:

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<b>Name and surname</b>	Feliks Owczarek
<b>Parents' names</b>	Piotr and Agnieszka, <i>née</i> Bogut
<b>Date of birth</b>	11 November 1912 in Wilanów
<b>Occupation</b>	farmer
<b>Education</b>	five classes of elementary school
<b>Place of residence</b>	village of Wilanów
<b>Religion</b>	Roman Catholic
<b>Criminal record</b>	none

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In March 1941, the German authorities erected barracks by the lake in Stary Wilanów, behind the Vistula embankment. In autumn of the same year, it may have been in the beginning of October, Soviet prisoners of war were brought there. I live in very close proximity to the barracks. My barn is only some ten meters distant from where the first barrack stood.

On the first day after the arrival of the prisoners, two of them – a cavalry soldier (he had red insets on his uniform) and a civilian – tried to escape. The civilian ran towards Czerniaków. But the soldier was captured, and all the way back to the barrack – some 150 meters – a German soldier prodded him with his bayonet. At the gate of the barrack, this soldier grabbed a rifle from one of the sentries and finished the prisoner off. The next day I saw three dead POWs



being carried out of the barrack. Every other day, being instructed by the village leader or a male nurse from the camp, I would transport the bodies of the dead to the cemetery in Wilanów, to a mass grave dug near the cemetery fence. I carted some one hundred corpses in all. Other farmers besides me were also forced to help remove the bodies.

In total, some 400 POWs were brought to the camp, while in the spring of 1942 (it could have been April) the majority of the survivors – some 70 men – were driven off in three trucks in the direction of Warsaw. Only the healthy prisoners were taken away from the camp. The remainder, eight in total, were weak and unable to get onto the trucks unaided; the Germans shot them in the courtyard of the camp; I witnessed this myself, observing the execution through a crack in the barn wall. I carted off the corpses to the joint grave in the cemetery.

If I remember correctly, the camp was guarded by a Wehrmacht unit. I do not know the surnames of any of the Germans from this detachment. The camp commandant was a sergeant, and I would be able to recognize him; he was ginger-haired, freckled, short, and stout.

Before the harvest – maybe in July 1942 – the Germans (I do not know their unit) brought in some 400 Jews from Otwock, Kępa, Falenica and Warsaw. They were all men, with the sole exception of Kneberg's wife. Initially, these Jews were guarded by Polish policemen from the local station, while later on the Jewish militia took charge. German gendarmes from the unit stationed at Dworkowa Street in Warsaw would drive up to the camp two or three times a week. Immediately upon their arrival, the Jews would be forced to assemble in the courtyard of the barracks. One of the gendarmes – a frequent visitor, usually dressed in black (I do not know his surname) – would stand in front of the inmates with a whip in his hand. He would look closely at the Jews and then select a few victims, whom he would proceed to beat with the whip, giving at least 20 lashes to each. The recipient of such a whipping would die either instantaneously, or soon after. Not only the black-dressed German would give floggings, for I frequently saw other Germans, in green uniforms, beating the Jews for no reason at all.

I did not witness any executions of Jews. The dead would be buried by other Jews from the camp behind the barbed wire, by the lake. To date, 15 mounds are still visible; others have grown over with grass.



I think that twenty something people died because of the floggings. Before the harvest in 1942, the gendarmes from Dworkowa Street turned up at the camp and instructed the sick to come forward, saying that they would be sent home. The Germans returned the next day, and of the one hundred Jews who stepped forward, they selected 36, whom they then executed near Natolin.

I know this from a Jewish militiaman.

When this execution was taking place, I was driving my cart along the road to Powsin, just passing the school. One of the 36 who were taken to be executed survived, and appeared near my cart. The police arrived and wanted to escort the Jew back to the German gendarmes. A policeman by the surname of Sokolik (reportedly, he is now deceased) tried to persuade the Jew to go with him. Finally, after two and a half hours, the Jew went mad and was led away to the execution spot, where the German gendarmes shot him dead.

During the liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto (I do not remember the date), some of the Jews from the camp in Wilanów were transported to Kępa Falenicka, where there was a camp for Jews, while others were taken to the Ghetto in Warsaw. I think that more than two hundred of them were removed from the camp in Wilanów at the time. In Kępa Falenicka, the Jews were murdered en masse, although I do not know the details. Only eight people remained in the camp in Wilanów: two Jewish commandants, both carrying the surname of Górewicz, from Otwock (they used to run a boarding house there), Kneberg with his wife, from Warsaw, Doctor Jerzy Romaszewski, and three laborers. In the summer of 1943, on a Thursday, I do not remember the date, gendarmes arrived at the camp accompanied by the camp inspector, Lipszyc, who had recently taken the place of Frank (the brother of the former Governor of the General Government), and ordered the Jews to arrange themselves in front of the barrack. The Jews who were present, seven in all, complied, whereupon the Germans shot them.

The previous day the eighth inmate, Dr Jerzy Romaszewski, had taken my advice and fled the camp. He survived and currently lives in Łódź, at Piotrkowska Street 14; his father-in-law resides in Miedzeszyn, but I do not know his surname.

The Germans took the Jews' belongings to their vehicle, and instructed the village leader to get rid of the bodies. The barracks were subsequently taken down by a Polish company, and the boards and other materials carried away in trucks. In the spring of 1943, when the Jewish



camp was still in existence, gendarmes from Dworkowa Street would drive up in a black, private motor car – frequently twice daily, but on occasion only a few times per week – with one or two Polish men, or Jews and Jewesses caught outside the Ghetto, whom they would execute behind the embankment.

I do not remember the dates of individual executions. They took place throughout the summer. Towards the end of summer or in the autumn of 1943, Home Army soldiers assassinated the Volksdeutscher Kilanowski, who had organized the abovementioned executions together with the gendarmes from Dworkowa Street; thereafter the executions ceased. During the final killing they shot Dr Koltun from Marszałkowska Street, together with his wife; his female servant and nurse had been executed a few hours earlier.

Dr Koltun's body was recognized by one of his female patients (I do not know her surname).

Apart from Dr Koltun, none of the other people murdered by the Germans were recognized in Wilanów. The victims of the execution were young boys, no more than 25 years of age. Having carried out a shooting, the gendarmes would take the victims' clothes and identity cards, so that it was impossible to identify the bodies.