

Jan Michalak RG-50.488.0078 born on July 26, 1919 in Siedlce. Interview date 07/08/1999, length 56 min.

Localities : Siedlce, Treblinka, Kałuszyn, Cegłów, Warsaw, Łosice, Opole

Names : Henryk Tapon, Fabisz, Julian Grobelny, Bartoszewski, Czesław Osiński

Organizations/ Institutions: Społem (agricultural co-op where the witness worked), PPS (Polish Socialist Party), PPR (Polish Workers Party), Communist Party, Ludowcy (Polish Peasant Party), ONR (Obóz Narodowo Radykalny) , AK (Armia Krajowa), Żegota, PPWRN (Armed branch of PPS)

Jan Michalak eyewitnessed

Jews were forced to carry heavy logs (telephone posts) and were beaten with sticks when they faltered.

Jews were forced to wear the Star of David patch.

A Jewish man was shot dead for not wearing the Star of David patch.

The synagogue was burned.

Any Jew who stood up (they were forced to sit) during assembly for liquidation of the ghetto, was shot by Latvians.

Jews who were falling from exhaustion during the march to the trains were shot dead

Interviewee saw the German officer Fabish, pointing out Jews to be shot by the Latvian guards.

Interviewee saw a German soldier killing an elderly Jew who was picking up a small dead child off the ground.

He witnessed the Execution of about 50 Jews who were converts to Christianity. These people did not wear the Star of David patch. They were executed at the Jewish cemetery on the day of the liquidation of the ghetto.

Resistance

During the Time Jan worked in Społem, Poles from western Poland started to arrive to Siedlce. These people were from different political parties: PPS, PPR. Communists, Ludowcy, ONR. These Poles were being placed throughout the region indifferent businesses that were still in polish hands. Jan joined PPS. As a driver he travelled to Warsaw to bring underground pamphlets back to Siedlce and Kaluszyn. Sometimes, he drove Mr. Julian Grobelny, the leader of the Żegota (an organization for helping Jews). The leader in PPS was Czesław Osiński who was the commander of PPWRN (the armed branch of PPS). That unit reported to AK for their armed actions. Osinski live in a village called Opole. Jan found out from Mr. Bartoszewski (in Warsaw) after the war that Grobelny was the leader of Żegota.

Summary provided by Sam Ponczak.