

HORODECKA, Izabella  
Polish Witnesses to the Holocaust Project  
Polish  
RG-50.488\*0199

Box 1, Tape 1

In this interview, Izabella Horodecka (née Malkiewicz), born on May 1, 1908, in Moscow, talks about her wartime experiences as a nurse and a member of the Polish resistance in Warsaw. She comments on her duties as a nurse for the Red Cross in a military hospital and the subsequent evacuation of the hospital. She discusses the invasion of the Russian troops and the imprisonment of the medical staff.

Horodecka also talks about her involvement with the underground organizations “Wachlarz” and “993/W.” She comments on her participating in several operations and using the name Teresa **Zawilska** and the alias “Teresa” for them. In addition, she discusses the daily life in occupied Warsaw and the inhuman living conditions in the ghetto. She remembers the organization of the uprising in the Warsaw ghetto and supplying weapons for it. She also discusses her apartment being a place of shelter for Jewish people and meeting point for the commanders of the Polish Home Army, “Armia Krajowa,” (AK).

[01:] 01:00:00 – [01:] 10:52:59

She talks about her childhood in Moscow; comments on her family’s escape from Moscow to **Wilno** (present-day Vilnius, Lithuania) in 1918; discusses her family moving to Warsaw in 1919; mentions her training to become a nurse practitioner and her volunteering as an operating room (OR) nurse for the Ujazdowski hospital; remembers the mobilization on August 24, 1939, the beginning of the war and her working as an OR nurse between September 1 and September 9, 1939; describes the extremely difficult conditions in the hospital, the number of injured people, and the exhaustion of the doctors and nurses; comments on the evacuation of the hospital; discusses the escape route to the Polish-Romanian border through Mińsk Mazowiecki, Łuck, Brześć, Pińsk, and Kopycznica.

[01:] 10:53:00 – [01:] 20:35:59

She remembers waiting at the Romanian border in Zaleszczyki (present-day Zalešchyky, Ukraine) and the sudden order to return to Trembowla (present-day Trembovlja, Ukraine) to found a military hospital there; talks about the invasion by the Russian troops, the confiscation of the military hospital, and the imprisonment of the entire staff of 150 people; mentions her volunteering as a nurse along with Dr. **Jastrzębski** to avoid imprisonment; talks about the fate of the arrested nurses and paramedics and the killing of doctors in Katyń (present-day Belarus).

[01:] 20:36:00 – [01:] 28:30:59

She talks about her return to Warsaw with the Red Cross along with 25 injured people and their arriving there on November 7; describes life in occupied Warsaw; focuses on her work in the café Artystów Filmowych and in the office of construction manager Jan **Przybylski** where she became involved with the underground organization “Wachlarz” in spring 1941;

discusses **Przybylski** having several branches in the eastern provinces of Poland, like Brześć, Pińsk, Baranowice and Mińsk (present-day Belarus) and his delivering weapons to these places along with the construction material; discusses her duty of preparing documents, permits, IDs, etc.; remembers the arrest of the office head and the secretary **Jadwiga Wojtkowska** and their [?] deportation to Auschwitz; talks about the arrest and early release of Mr. **Nowicki**; discusses the dissolution of the organization “Wachlarz” after being betrayed by **Karkstein [Karksztajn]**, which led to the imprisonment of around 400 people; comments on her being transferred to the group “993/W” with which she participated in 23 operations; mentions the aim of the group as to execute the death sentences which had been decided by the special civil court, “Cywilny Sąd Specjalny,” (CSS).

**[01:] 28:31:00 – [01:] 36:00:00**

She talks about the attack on **Józef Staszauer [Strassauer]**, the Jewish owner of a coffeehouse and working member of the AK who was also a Gestapo agent at the same time; mentions **Staszauer** being responsible for the arrest of “**Wiktor**” and Stasia **Zybertówna [Zybert]**; focuses on some Jews working for the Gestapo and reporting Jews in hiding and members of the AK; describes the sequence of the attack on **Staszauer** and names other participants, like “**Nina**,” “**Zosia**,” “**Naprawa**” and “**Rys**”; talks about the location of the attack as the victim’s café in Mazowiecka Street; discusses her involvement in bringing a gun to the commander “**Naprawa**” and being responsible for the commander’s documents and for getting rid of the weapon.

Box 1, Tape 2

**[02:] 01:01:00 – [02:] 09:32:59**

She resumes discussing the organization and the sequence of the attack in the café; mentions eight people being shot in the operation, such as **Staszauer** and his wife, a few Germans, and an innocent actress who was an acquaintance of hers and worked at the bar there; discusses two members of “993/W,” “**Nina**” and “**Naprawa**,” being wounded.

**[02:] 09:33:00 – [02:] 20:37:59**

She talks about the attack on **Leitgeber [Lajdgeber]**, a Pole of German origin who was a Gestapo agent and blackmailed Jews for money; discusses how **Leitgeber** had the Jewish proprietors arrested after confiscating their assets; comments on his being sentenced to death by the CSS for torturing inmates; remembers the challenges of getting access to the defendant, as he was living in a German area; talks about the execution of the operation in **Leitgeber’s** apartment in Jaworzyńska Street in February 1944; comments on her participation in the operation, which consisted of delivering weapons; focuses on the sequence of the attack; mentions her colleague “**Dan**” being wounded during the execution; discusses how **Leitgeber** survived the attack and was killed in summer 1944 by a different group.

**[02:] 20:38:00 – [02:] 29:57:59**

She comments on the Warsaw ghetto, which she used to cross in the tram on her way to the Powązkowski cemetery; mentions the tramway crossing the ghetto without stopping and passengers being able to witness the inhuman conditions there; talks about the children

looking skinny, hungry, and sick and lying on the sidewalks; tells about the ghetto uprising and the weapons being brought into the ghetto by an underground organization; mentions the Jewish woman Maria **Kamińska**, who owned the tailor shop "Gloria" and was staying with her.

[02:] 29:58:00 – [02:] 36:32:00

She resumes discussing the Jewish woman Maria **Kamińska** who stayed with her for a couple of months and in whose house other women had earlier found shelter; mentions Ms. **Halina** who moved into Maria **Kamińska's** apartment and stayed there until the end of the war.

Box 1, Tape 3

[03:] 01:00:00 – [03:] 09:28:59

She comments on her cousin Antoni **Terlecki** who stayed with her during the war; talks about two Gestapo agents who came to her house and arrested her cousin, whom they considered being a Jew in hiding; mentions that one agent was a Jew; discusses her cousin's arrest and release; comments on the employment of Jews by the Gestapo to help the Germans identify Jews; discusses the Jews' hope to save their life by cooperating with the Germans.

[03:] 09:29:00 – [03:] 19:15:59

She talks again about Ms. **Halina**; remembers people unknown to her coming to the apartment and looking for shelter; comments on the number of Jews staying in her apartment during the occupation; discusses the number of people who survived in hiding; remembers her Jewish friend Tola **Fragma**, whom she knew through her nurse practitioner classes, unexpectedly contacting her after the dissolution of the ghetto and asking her for money; mentions a meeting after the suppression of the Warsaw uprising in the AK hospital in Krogulec; talks about the attack in the Ukraine in March 1944; discusses her Russian skills; focuses on the organization of the attack along with "**Zakalec**" whose mother was from the Ukraine; talks about their preparing the attack; mentions the Ukrainian Gestapo agents **Pohotovka** [**Pohotolka**] and **Szyło** who were also members of the Ukrainian Committee being the victims of the operation.

[03:] 19:16:00 – [03:] 28:30:59

She describes the organization and the sequence of the attack in the office of the Ukrainian Committee; talks about her involvement in the operation which consisted of showing **Pohotovka's** office to the **Bąk** brothers and taking the weapons to the arsenal afterwards; mentions the names "**Zakalec**," "**Leon**" and "**Klawisz**" as people also involved in the attack; says that **Pohotovka** and **Szyło** were shot.

[03:] 28:31:00 – [03:] 36:32:00

She remembers returning from the attack and having problems getting rid of the weapons; mentions her apartment in Waleczna Street 18 being the meeting place of the AK; discusses the AK organizing the meetings on Sunday and their discussing and planning different operations then; comments on her not participating in these meetings; talks about her having

the leadership role for the women and her being involved in the preparations of the operations.