

URBANIAK, Marianna
Polish Witnesses to the Holocaust Project
Polish
RG-50.488*0220

Box 1, Tape 1

In this interview, Marianna Urbaniak, born in 1925 in the village of Lutomirów, near Chełmno, describes her memories of seeing bodies of semi-conscious Jews “spilling out” of rear doors of trucks. She believes the trucks were “gas chambers” in which people were gassed while being carried to the camp in Chełmno.

[01:] 00:32:01 – [01:] 07:44:15

Marianna Urbaniak gives her date and place of birth as December 13, 1925, in the village Lutomirów; talks about her residing there at the time of the German occupation; discusses her currently residing in Rzuchów, a nearby town; describes how on one occasion, while she was picking beets on a farm owned by a German, she saw a back door of a truck open; refers to the truck as a “gas chamber”; talks about seeing semi-conscious people spilling out of the truck on the ground; comments on the gendarmes, who arrived from a nearby camp in Chełmno, and threw the people back into the truck; discusses the truck continuing to its destination; says that she never again witnessed people spilling from the trucks; comments on the local people from the village knowing that these “gas vans” carried Jews every day and brought them to the nearby forest in Chełmno.

[01:] 07:44:16 – [01:] 14:36:10

She talks about the camp in Chełmno; comments on her going to Chełmno, about three kilometers away from Lutomirów, to take care of formal affairs at the local offices, or to work for the Germans living there; refers to the camp as a “ghetto” that was located in the local castle and is currently a museum; comments on a high fence that was around the castle and avoided seeing anything inside; discusses Jews being brought to Chełmno by train and being walked to the castle from the station; talks about the Jews being escorted by the gendarmes and walking quietly; assumes that they imagined they were brought there to work in the castle; says that she never saw people being loaded onto the trucks; mentions that she cannot describe the trucks in detail after all these years.