

1944 Witnesses from Shumsk

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Created by the Soviet Union at the end of World War II to document German crimes during the occupation, the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission compiled testimonial information gathered from the evidence of neighbors, eyewitnesses, and survivors. Regional commissions contributed their reports to a centralized commission in Moscow. These reports were microfilmed in Moscow by Yad Vashem in 1990. For more information on the Commission, see <https://www.jewishgen.org/InfoFiles/Extraordinary.htm>.

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Act

Shumsk, October 12, 1944

The Facilitation Commission of Shumsk District, Tarnopol Region, concerning the determination and investigation of the crimes by the German-Fascist invaders and their accomplices, composed of: Comrade Vasiliy Semenovitch ANTONOV, chairman-secretary of the Shumsk District Committee of the Communist Party of Bolsheviks; Comrade Aleksandr Fomitsh KOSTYUK, deputy chairman of the District Executive Committee; Doctor Aleksandr Antonov TUMINSKIY, head of the district hospital; O. Ioann Timotiyevitch, archpriest; Comrade Nikolay Vasilyevitch AVERYANOV, senior tax inspector of the District Financial Department; and Comrade Ivan Petrovich FIRSYUK, builder-technician of communal services, formed the following action:

During the period from October 10 to 12 of this year inclusive, the commission conducted an inspection of the crimes by the German-Fascist invaders. An examination established that, at the distance of 1 km from Shumsk, in the southwestern direction, in a hollow, near the Viliya River, three graves located next to each other were discovered; one of them—the main one—35 meters long, 7.30 meters wide, and 3.30 meters deep, as well as two additional, each 10 meters long, 8.50 meters wide, and 3.30 meters deep. After their excavations, 2,047 corpses were discovered in the main grave, in one of the additional—203, and in another, 182—a total of 2,432 corpses. The discovered corpses of men, women, and children were mixed among them and disposed in the main grave—in 7 parallel rows, one under the other, and in additional rows in this order—4 rows.

In most cases, the corpses in these graves are without clothes and underwear, being in the state of a total posthumous decomposition. In the area of the back, they have traces of bullet injuries. Furthermore, some corpses have a number of additional bone injuries

in the form of fractures of ribs, bone fissures of the cranium, and fractures of bone extremities. In the opinion of the forensic medical examination, the injuries were caused by the automatic-type firearms. These corpses, in which other bone damage was noticed, were subject to a violent premortal assault. Several children's corpses, where evident injuries were not detected, were also found in one of the graves.

Medical evidence in court finds that they died from suffocation while alive.

Owing to the fact that it was not possible to identify all the corpses described above, all of them were examined in the presence of commission members. This was concluded by the expert medical testimony in court, which is attached to this document.

Testimonies of witnesses: 1. Sobishkoda Vladislav Vikentyevich, 2. Burshteyn Mariya Mikhaylovna, 3. Sikorskaya Konstantsiya Grigoryevna, 4. Shrayer Shlema Davidevich, 5. Burshteyn Yakov Mikhaylovich,

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6. Shishkovskiy Ilya Filipovich, residing in the small town of Shumsk, as well as 7. Rencha Valeriya Rafalevicha, 8. Shevchuka Vasiliya Mianevicha, 9. Bandarchuka Vasitsiya Stepanevicha, 10. Letetskaya Mariya Fedorovna, 11. Letetskiy Sider Polikarpovich residing in Lepesovka village, where from August 12 through 20, 1942, mass executions of peaceful Soviet citizens were carried out. The executions were carried out by the German gendarmerie: PICH/ German/—gendarmerie commander, BLESK /German/—gendarme, and other persons: OBERHAUSER /German/—farmer, GEKKER Alfred /German/—farmer, TOTSKIY /Leonid/ /Ukrainian/ --district chief, DOBROVOLSKIY Genrikh /Ukrainian/—policeman, and KRAVCHUK/ Ukrainian/ Gestapo employee.

The district commission, on the basis of testimonies, considers the abovementioned persons—who participated in the mass executions of peaceful citizens—responsible for the crimes on peaceful Soviet citizens.

- Appendix:
1. Act of forensic medical examination
 2. Testimonies of witnesses
 3. Plan of the locality where executions took place

COMMISSION CHAIRMAN:	[signature]	ANTONOV
COMMISSION MEMBERS:	[signature]	KOSTYUK
	[signature]	TUMINSKIY
	[signature]	TIMOTIYEVICH
	[signature]	AVERYANOV
	[signature]	FIRSYUK