

ANTONI SADKIEWICZ

[Warsaw,] 4 April 1945

Testimony of Antoni Sadkiewicz, no. S.12 118, b. 6 February 1881 in Modlin, a railwayman, resident of Mokotowska Street 8, flat 5, regarding his internment at concentration camps in the Free City of Danzig and Germany between 1 September 1939 and 2 April 1942.

On 31 August 1939, I was on a train to Gdynia in my professional capacity as a porter with the Polish Railways. At 10 p.m., I arrived in Gdynia. Since the express train remained in Gdynia, on 1 September 1939 I got on a cargo train to Warsaw. Between Wielki Kack and Osowa, the train was halted by the Germans. All the passengers and railway staff were taken to Bischofsberg, where we remained for a week, and then to Neufahrwasser, for ten days. Next, I was sent for forced labor in the fields of a German farm near Tczew, where I broke my arm during work, and after two weeks I was sent to Westerplatte, where I cleaned rubble, and then to the Stutthof camp (30 kilometers from Danzig, in a forest by the Baltic sea). I arrived at Stutthof on 4 January 1940. There, I was kept in so-called quarantine for eight months. It was a sealed area inside the camp, separated with barbed wire, where we received particularly cruel treatment; we did clean-up work only.

It is difficult to describe everything in detail. I will give examples of some everyday occurrences: SS men, together with block seniors and German criminals, stormed the barracks, fired shots, and ordered us to jump on and off the beds and tables, and then we ran around the barracks, while the Germans stood along our route and beat us with rods. Beating and torturing were commonplace. We ran all day long, without a respite. Whoever fainted was thrown under a cold shower, regardless of the weather. Many died already in the shower, while the rest came down with pneumonia.

Every day a dozen or so people died in our block, not including those who were sick and were taken to the so-called *lazarett*, from where they never returned. Abuse was meted out to us in particular by our block senior, Mantel, a Silesian, allegedly a former Polish policeman. We paved the yards. We had to run while carrying the rocks, during which we were constantly beaten. Daily, we received $\frac{3}{4}$ liter of Swedish turnip soup, without bread, for lunch, black coffee without bread for breakfast, and coffee with a little bread for supper.

After eight months in quarantine, I was transferred to the camp and worked building the road and in the field. In fall 1940, together with a group of prisoners, I was transported to Dachau. There, I worked building roads and in herb plantations. The treatment we received was the same: we were beaten and rushed with rods.

Once, in the plantations, I took a Swedish turnip, out of hunger. It was found on me. I had to carry it between my teeth from my labor site to the camp. As a punishment, I was tied to a special table. SS men beat me with rods covered with leather. Such blows cut the skin and muscles to the bone. I was hit ten times, and since I was too battered to pick myself up, I was beaten in the head, neck, and back. After punishments were carried out, everybody had to do a few squats, had his back iodized, and had to go back to work.

I suffered from ulcers and blood infection all the time, and my legs were frostbitten.

I spent some time at the hospital camp. There, I witnessed the medical treatment of patients. German orderlies, enlisted from among criminal prisoners, stood the sick in a shower and poured water from buckets down their throats. Those severely sick were taken to gas chambers.

During the last couple of months in Dachau, I had three ribs broken. I was sick and I tried to remain at the hospital room. The German block senior noticed this and beat me up ferociously, breaking my ribs. As a result of the actions of my wife, who collected all the documents confirming that I was a railwayman, I was released on 7 March 1942. However, I was so severely sick that I could only depart the camp on 2 April. Before I left, I had to give a pledge not to tell anybody about the treatment and routine at the camp. I was released on condition that I would report for work at the railway.

I returned to Warsaw in April 1942.

I have testified truthfully and read the testimony before signing it.

Recorded by B. [signature illegible], M.A.