



MARIAN KASPRZYŃSKI

1. Personal data:

Wachtmeister Marian Kasprzyński, born on 8 March 1893, farmer, military settler, married.

2. Date and circumstances of arrest:

I was arrested and deported as a military settler on charges of engaging in political work.

3. Name of the camp, prison, or forced labor site:

During the night of 10 February 1940 my entire family and I were arrested in our own flat and deported for forest labor to the North, to Połdniewiec [?], Gorky Oblast.

4. Description of the camp, prison etc.:

The housing conditions were very hard; our entire 5-person family lived in a so-called cabin, in 2 square meters. There were several tiers of cabins – 50 in total – in a single barrack, and the hygienic conditions and co-existence of all the people, that is children, babies, adults and elderly people, proved very difficult.

5. The composition of prisoners-of-war, inmates, exiles:

The moral standing of particular families was good, exemplary even, although the Soviet authorities tried all means to loosen family bonds by deporting single members of given families to other camps or separating families, that is, taking children to their orphanage facilities. There were more teenagers and children than adults and the elderly.

The intellectual level of the arrestees varied from higher to lower education.

The arrested military people were considered enemies of the Soviet authorities.

6. Life in the camp, prison:

The working conditions were very hard. Children from 14 years of age and all older people had to work at logging, under very harsh weather conditions. The temperatures fell to 50

degrees below zero, and the snow cover was one and a half meters high. The majority of the prisoners didn't have winter clothes, and as a result there were various diseases and people were unable to meet the work quota, which was set at 5 meters of firewood, for which one would receive 6 rubles 25 kopecks. In order to stay alive, that is, to scrape a living, one would have to earn ten rubles per day. It was not possible to meet the prescribed work quota by any means, and the strongest men earned up to three rubles per day. Therefore people had to sell their last wearable clothes to the kolkhoz inhabitants in order to obtain any foodstuffs for themselves and their families.

This cohabitation led to the establishment of very cordial relations between the prisoners.

There wasn't any cultural life, as everyone was preoccupied with one thing all the time – where and how to get food for the family.

7. The NKVD's attitude towards Poles:

The NKVD was very antagonistic and hostile. For failure to meet the work quotas or for falling ill we were incarcerated in cold jails and given only water and 200 grams of bread. A legitimate illness meant running a high temperature.

The Communist propaganda was very active. We didn't have any information about Poland. At Communist rallies – our presence at which was mandatory – foul and extremely rude speeches were being delivered, invariably anti-Polish or anti-religious in character.

8. Medical assistance, hospitals, mortality rate:

Such conditions led to the outbreak of typhoid fever epidemics, which resulted in the mortality rate reaching about 40 percent. The medical assistance was very poor.

The majority of deportees came from the districts of Równe, Sarny, and Baranowicze.

The following people died: Lieutenant Sowiński from Równe district, Colonel Mielnik from Toruń, Lieutenant Rojan from Równe, Wachtmeister Kaczmarek from Osada Krechowiecka, Równe district, Berdych and his wife from Bojanówka settlement, Równe district, my son Tadeusz, and many others.



9. Was there any possibility to get in contact with one's country and family?

I didn't have any contact with my country or family.

10. When were you released and how did you manage to join the army?

I was released in August 1941, and in October of the same year I left with my family for Kuybyshev, from where the Polish authorities sent me to Osh, Kyrgyzstan, where my son and I volunteered for the Polish army.