

BAZYLI RADŁOWSKI

Bazyli Radłowski, born in 1919, a shoemaker, unmarried.

On 28 April 1941 I was mobilized into the USSR army. It was the day of mobilization for men born in 1917, 1918 and 1919. On 4 May they brought us to Unich and on the next day, labor started normally. We were working from 5 a.m. to 7 p.m. and there was one-hour break with lunch included. The camp was situated in the forest, in a very marshy terrain. We were suffering from rheumatism and other diseases because it was cold and damp, and each one of us had only a torn blanket. Food was very poor: soup two times a day and 400 grams of bread. And whoever had an opportunity to buy some food was punished, and the food was taken away from him.

I was there for about two months. Later, as a shoemaker, I was transported to Oryol, to the cobbler's workshops. There was even more work there: we had morning call at 4 a.m. and work from 5 a.m. to 8 p.m., with a one-hour lunch break included. One time, I and my colleague, Stanisław Janik, talked about our experiences in Poland with some Soviet soldiers and they told their lieutenant, named Patochnikov, about it. He called me and my colleague to his tent, took out his gun, aimed it at us and said that if one of us would say anything about Poland to the Soviet soldiers one more time, he would shoot us down like dogs. He kept us there for about an hour, often knocking our heads with the gun barrel. Suddenly, he hit my colleague so hard in his forehead that he started bleeding. Lieutenant Patochnikov ordered him to stand at attention and was looking at him as he bled and not letting him wipe the blood away.

There was very weak contact with our country. I even wrote a letter home and threw it secretly into the mailbox on the street, but I couldn't receive a letter from home because Lieutenant Patochnikov collected all letters from the mailman and he destroyed those which were from Poland. My seven colleagues and I have never got any from him. When we were transported from Tambov to Borisoglebsk I met Second Lieutenant Pelerman on the way. He was going from the labor camp to the Polish army, and that was when I found out about the

organization of the Polish Army. Second Lieutenant Pelerman helped me to escape from the Soviet army and get to the Polish Army.

Voting was organized this way: an unknown Soviet was distributing voting cards and ordering us to throw them into the ballot box; a person who threw in his card was crossed off the voting list. People who were sick were brought on the farm cart.