



MARIA KONOPLAŃSKA

Platoon Commander Maria Konoplańska, 20 years old.

I was deported from Wilno on 14 June 1941, together with my father and mother.

Until the amnesty I stayed in Altai Krai, Barnaul Oblast. At first I worked in a brickyard, and later in a sovkhoz (working in the fields).

The conditions were difficult. We worked from sunup to sundown, and our extremely meager remuneration was only enough to pay for the daily ration of bread (500 grams for laborers) and soup for dinner. Ten people had to live in one room, and we slept on the floor.

Generally, there was medical assistance, but they didn't care about keeping us Poles healthy. Real medical treatment was reserved for those who suffered from infectious diseases and therefore constituted a threat to the local populace. You were exempted from work only if you ran a high fever.

The majority of the exiles were intelligent people, mostly Roman Catholics, although there was a small percentage of Jews. Mutual relations were good. There wasn't any cultural life.

We didn't have any contact with our country.

After the amnesty, towards the end of October, I left for Kyrgyzstan, Dzhambul Oblast. I was en route until the middle of December. We travelled in awful hygienic conditions, suffering from hunger. There were epidemics of typhoid fever, measles, dysentery. The conditions in the kolkhoz were also very harsh. Those who worked received 400 grams of flour and nothing more. It was extremely difficult to buy anything. Those who didn't work received 200 grams of flour. Our flats were windowless and very cold. Obtaining firewood verged on the impossible, and various diseases spread in the kolkhoz. Quite a lot of people died there,



including the Bojanowicz family. In the middle of March we went from there to Gortshakovo, where we (the entire family) were admitted into the army.