

PIOTR ŚWIATOGÓR

1. Personal data (name and surname, rank, field post office number, age, profession, marital status):

Gunner Piotr Światogór, 24 years of age, worker, single; field post no 160.

2. Date and circumstances of the arrest:

I was arrested together with my family on 13 April 1940 in Stołpce.

3. Name of the camp, prison and place of forced labor:

They brought us to the location in Severo-Kazakstanskaya Oblast, Oktyabrsky district, Marievka village.

4. Description of the camp, prison, etc. (terrain, buildings, housing conditions, hygiene):

It was a lowland area, without forest cover. We lived in houses made of clay. There was an imposed tax at the rate of 80 rubles for the use of the mud hut. Inside the accommodation, there was virtually nothing. During heavy rains the water accumulated inside the mud hut. Sanitary conditions were deplorable.

5. The composition of the inmates, [POWs], the exiles (nationality, type of crime, the mental and moral level, mutual relations, etc.):

The whole village consisted of exiles, mostly from Poland, and to a lesser extent citizens of the USSR. Although nationalities varied, Poles dominated for the most part. For the crime of sanity [?] they took my father to the labor works, who was deported to Siberia on 1 November 1939, and sentenced to eight years of imprisonment. Supervisors treated us very badly, as manifested in frequent change of our residence under the cover of night and putting people in jail.

6. Life in the camp, prison, etc. (the course of an average day, working conditions, quotas, payment, food, clothing, mutual relations, and cultural life):

Life in the camp was monotonous and gloomy. An ambition of every exile was to get a piece of bread. The work was compulsory, from dawn until night. I was hired along with 20 exiles

in the construction of governmental houses. The work was hard. Rate of pay per day was three rubles. We fed ourselves from our daily pay buying essentials for high prices at the labor camps. They did not sell us any clothes. Friendship was manifested in the desire to help those in dire need; that included people disadvantaged by illness or by a small number of workers in a large family, of which there were many cases.

The NKVD during the interrogations would beat refugees. I was sentenced to permanent displacement. They would organize communist meetings, during which they would talk constantly about Stalin and his benevolence and would tell us that we would never see Poland again, Poland would no longer exist, and that we were now citizens of the USSR.

8. Medical care, hospitals, deaths (please name the deceased):

There was no medical care provided by the Soviet authorities. One female doctor, who was with us in the aforementioned village, helped Poles. When I got seriously ill, she treated me and I owe my recovery her. Fatal incidents happened daily. I cannot remember the names of the deceased. The local hospital was closed to ill Poles. They only took sick Soviets.

9. Was it possible to keep in touch with your home country and family? If yes, what contacts were permitted?

Contact with our country was hypothetical. Soviets made it difficult to communicate with our country; letters and parcels were rare. Even when the parcel was received, inside, instead of the content sent by the recipient [speaker probably meant sender], there was sand or waste potatoes. The culprits of these crimes were the Soviets.

10. When were you released, and how did you get through to the Polish Army?

With the implementation of the Polish-Soviet agreement I was released from unconfined exile. After having passed the registration [judged] by the committee, the authorities of the NKVD sent me to Buzuluk to complete all formalities, and on 26 September 1941 I joined the Polish Army.

Place of stay, 16 March 1943.