

## **STEFAN FRĄCZAK**

### **1. Personal data:**

Platoon Officer Stefan Frączak, born in 1901, intelligence work, married.

### **2. Date and circumstances of the arrest:**

17 September 1939.

### **3. Name of the camp and prison:**

Stołpce, Brześć nad Bugiem and Minsk, Pechora camps.

### **4. Description of the camp, prison:**

Cramped, no beds; we slept on the floor, without blankets or straw mattresses. In the camps we lived under the open sky until we were given tents, while the temperature fell to 60 degrees below zero. Later on, after receiving the tents, lots of people slept in each one, so we slept alongside one another on our sides, but by then on bunk beds, in dirt, with lice and bedbugs.

### **5. Social composition of POWs, prisoners, deportees:**

The prisoners were mostly Poles (60 percent), 15 percent of them were Jews and 25 percent were Belarusians; there were also Romanians, Ukrainians and Soviets in the camps.

### **6. Life in the prison:**

The food we received in the camp depended on how much of the quota we completed. In prison we were given 600 grams of bread in the morning and some water; for dinner – a liter of some miserable soup. In the evening – half a liter of soup, usually with fish or oil.

### **7. Attitude of the NKVD towards Poles:**

Very hostile. They claimed that we would never see Poland again and that they would destroy us, that no trace would be left of us. The interrogations by the NKVD were difficult and people were tortured. I was almost executed by shooting twice on the order of the NKVD investigating authorities.

**8. Mutual help, hospitals, mortality:**

Poles helped one another a lot. There were hospitals in the camps and prisons. As for mortality, 19 Poles died in the prison in Minsk, and 18 Poles died in camp hospitals.

**9. Was it possible to keep in touch with the home country and your family?**

No.

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

I was released on 1 September 1941 and I reported in person to the army, to the 10th Division.

31 January 1943