

JÓZEF KACEWICZ

1. Personal data (name, surname, rank, age, occupation, marital status):

Corporal Józef Kacewicz, 25 years old, farmer.

2. Date and circumstances of arrest:

Arrested on 17 March 1940, in Mosarz village, Postawy district, Wilno voivodeship.

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

Prison: Stara Wilejka, Połock; labor camp in Komi ASSR.

4. Description of the camp, prison:

Location of the camp: initially taiga, then tundra. Wooden buildings, terrible living conditions, hygiene at a very low level.

5. Compositions of prisoners, POWs, exiles:

Exclusively Poles at the beginning, with Russian office staff. Later: Poles, Ukrainians, Russians, Uzbeks, and other ethnic minorities. Intellectual standing was very high, although strained, among the Poles, whereas very low among other nationalities. Relations among the Poles were very good, and average among Russians (it depended on the attitude towards Poles).

6. Life in the camp, prison:

I lived in a prison – actually two prisons – for six months. I stayed at a labor camp from 23 August 1940. Food was poor; initially we had our own clothing, later – supplied. Social life among Poles was good, but among the Russians – varied. Cultural life – none.

7. Attitude of the local NKVD towards the Poles:

Very brutal; tortures were used. Interrogation methods: various, peaceful at the start, then harsh and violent, including throwing punches to the face, cursing, kicking in the veins on the back of our knees, and even putting us in punishment or isolation cells.

8. Medical assistance, hospitals, mortality:

Medical assistance was bearable.

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

Contact with the country and family – none.

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

I was released on 4 October 1941. I got into the Polish army with the help of Polish authorities.