

KAZIMIERA MAZURUK

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Class 6

Wisznice, Włodawa district, Lublin voivodeship

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My experiences from the German occupation

The war I am describing, I do not remember exactly how it started, I only know that Polish troops and supply wagons passed through our village, and a lot of Polish families living by the Narew River (the right tributary of the Bug River) came to our village. Then they all withdrew and our enemies – the Germans – entered in 1939. After entering, they set up a camp in a neighboring village, Motwica, and they came for horses, bikes and carts. It was also then that my daddy (it was in June 1941) had to hand over his horse to the terrible German camp. But we were lucky at the time, because the Germans also took the drivers for these horses, and my father managed to avoid this recruitment somehow. It was then that I trembled with fear, hugging my mum at the sight of the threatening faces of the Germans, and at the same time, disgust and anger for these villains awoke in me.

Then from time to time I saw the blood-red glow of fires caused by German bombs, which spread havoc among people, as the Germans took revenge on Poles for the smallest thing. The Germans, wanting to force the Polish nation to do extraordinary things – and if it failed to do so, apply terrible penalties – imposed huge quotas on the farmers. I remember many times the Germans, not receiving a certain percentage of the quota, came to the village and then a terrible execution took place. Some of the inhabitants fled to the forest and did not come back again due to the destruction of property and the death penalty, and those who stayed were exposed to punishment, beatings, and sometimes to life in the concentration camp at Majdanek, in Treblinka, etc. Whenever I saw the cars carrying SS men, I prayed fervently to God for the fortunate salvation of my family from these torturers, and my prayers were answered because the Germans left without looking into our house.

It was in 1942, in May. Daddy and I were coming back from Biała Podlaska. Unfortunately, there was no car, because [those] were taken [by] the German army. So we went on foot,