

## NATALIA DROGOSZ

Class VI

Łopuszno, 14 October 1946

### The moment best remembered from the years of the occupation

One day in September 1939, German armies entered Łopuszno. Blood poured from Polish hearts and our faces were clouded over. Our eyes filled with tears which then rolled down our cheeks, burning as if trails of sparks. We could hear the roar of German aircraft flying overhead. The boom of German cannons could be heard all around. We saw green uniforms and heard German being spoken. The Germans had swastikas on their caps and sleeves. The first thing they did was to destroy everything that was Polish. They ripped off the Polish eagles and destroyed or defiled them, or simply shot them through. They also tore down Polish banners and flags. We were not allowed to sing Polish songs.

The gendarmes took up residence in Łopuszno in a large building which was the property of squire Dobiecki. Beneath this house was a dungeon, in which many Polish patriots were imprisoned. Not a day passed without the gendarmes bringing in a truck full of Poles there. They were packed into the narrow, dark and damp prison cells, where they were cruelly tortured. The desperate groans and cries of Poles echoed from the cells, however no one could save them, for such a brave soul would have sealed his own fate. After being tortured terribly, they were taken to a nearby copse and executed by firing squad. They murdered a dozen or so Poles. These people were killed because they loved the Polish land.

A great many graves were dug throughout the Polish lands, showing us just how many people had died in defense of the homeland. This was a very difficult time for the Polish nation. The Germans requisitioned cattle, wheat and potatoes from farmers, hoping to bring the population to its knees through starvation.

Schoolchildren studied in very difficult conditions. Our large school building was taken over by the Germans. From then on, only German children were taught there. They destroyed our study aids. They wanted to completely deprive us of all means of education. They ordered that our books from the school library be delivered to the Inspectorate in Kielce. Our class

teacher handed out the better books to the children, while the rest – worn out, without covers – were packed up and sent to Kielce.

We gathered in small, modest and damp rooms. They were stuffy and unhealthy, and together with our class teacher we breathed in the moldy dust. We listened closely to our teacher. We were happy that at least we had not been forbidden to speak Polish.

The Germans harassed the people, burning down villages and cities. They destroyed the village of Skałka because they learned that the residents were supplying food to the partisans, who intended to fight with the Germans. One day early in the morning, trucks full of Gestapo men drove through Łopuszno and headed straight for Skałka. They tormented the children there, and rounded up the elderly in one building, which they then doused with petrol and burned down. Only those survived who hid in the nearby ponds. They all witnessed the Germans' cruelty at first hand. The Germans rounded up thousands of people and ravaged the fields, spilling a river of Polish blood.

The war left many orphans in its wake. We are now allowed to sing Polish songs. During the occupation, Poland was a land of tears and blood. A new Poland is now being built, full of life. May God help her!