



WIKTOR HULISZ

Platoon sergeant Wiktor Hulisz, 28 years old, unmarried.

Having fought the Bolsheviks near the village of Kołki on 19 and 20 September, we marched for two days and reached the village of Radoszyn, located 20 kilometers from Kovel. On 23 September, in Radoszyn, the chief of the battalion agreed to surrender, since it was pointless to continue fighting. We surrendered at 5.00 p.m. on 23 September. The Bolsheviks immediately started sneering: where is your Poland and your officers? After we laid down our arms, they surrounded us and escorted us to Kovel, where we slept for one night. Once we had been searched, they gave each of us 400 grams of bread, and marched us to the railway station. We were loaded onto a train and sent to Rivne. Officers were arrested and detained in a prison in Kovel. Having arrived at Rivne, we were supposed to receive passes and be released home, but this too was a lie. When a crowd had gathered at the station, one Polish railroad worker accompanied by a Russian man appeared and ordered us to go to the town of Zdolbuniv, where we were supposed to get passes and be released home. Wanting to get these passes, all of the soldiers made their way to Zdolbuniv, either by truck or on foot. All remaining soldiers who had served in the Polish army were being assembled there. We were surrounded by a circle of prison guards and could not go anywhere. They gave us no food and did not allow us to buy any either. A train came to the station in the evening and they started loading us into wagons, lying to us again that we would be sent home. About 70 to 80 men were put into each of the wagons, which were normally meant for 30–40 people. The number of people in the wagons made it impossible to sit down. Once the wagons had been loaded, the doors were locked and secured with screws. Despite our begging, we were allowed to relieve ourselves only inside the wagon. We were then transported from Zdolbuniv to Shepetivka. Our stay at Shepetivka was not long, it lasted from 25 September to 5 October. Living conditions were very poor, practically unbearable. Soldiers would get 100 grams of bread a day. Once every three days we would be given a cooked meal: a quarter of a liter of soup made of kasha, with no fat whatsoever. The soldiers were so numerous



that we had to wait for soup between 5.00 a.m. and 5.00 p.m. We slept on a cement floor, many soldiers started catching colds and getting sick. By the end of our stay at Shepetivka, we were completely exhausted. Soldiers would pick up acorns and make themselves coffee in order to restore their strength. On 5 October 1939 we were sent from Shepetivka and marched to Poland. On 9 October we arrived at Ostroh. We were detained in the barracks of the 19th Cavalry Regiment, but the rooms intended for sleeping were occupied by the NKVD men, while we were crammed into stables and forced to sleep in manure. Every starving man began looking for potatoes and cabbage in order to cook and eat something, while the guards laughed at us. At this point there were already many communist sympathizers. We were marched from Ostroh to Rivne [?]. Then we were loaded into wagons and sent to various labor camps. My first camp was Busk, near Lwów, where we worked building a road between Lwów and Kiev. We lived in a building which had served as a horse stable. There was a roof over our heads, but when it rained, water was everywhere. Windowpanes were smashed, so the wind came into the building through every crack. There was no floor, we had to walk over horse manure. We took it outside ourselves, in order to tidy up a bit. The smell of burning and of mold was everywhere, the filthy walls were not whitewashed, and we had no light. During the rains, the mud in front of the building reached above our ankles, and there was no way to walk other than right through it. Located 10 meters from the barrack was a waste dump, where all the rubbish was thrown. The rubbish would rot and produce an awful stench, which was very difficult to bear. Next to the waste dump was a toilet, and all kinds of foul smells would come from there into the barrack through the cracks. A horse stable stood on the other side of the barrack and heaps of horse manure were lying in front of it, also causing a foul odor. Bunk beds were made for us, and we slept on boards, for there was no straw. There was a shortage of water, we had barely enough of it to cook some meals with. No water was left over for washing, so we had to go several days without washing ourselves. Everything was dirty and grimy, there was no way to wash our underwear, so [fragment missing].