

## ANTONI GÓRSKI

Warsaw, 10 February 1945

To the Warsaw Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes

Attached please find a memoir from my time at the Auschwitz camp between 15 August 1940 and 11 December 1941, to be used at your discretion. At the same time, I am ready to provide detailed information pertaining to the Auschwitz camp.

Antoni Górski

Praga, Otwocka Street 7, flat 27

Antoni Stanisław Górski

b. 18 August 1914 in Warsaw, married, 1 child, a farmer, completed 6 grades of secondary school and a radio technician's course in Kielce, skilled radio operator and radio engineer. In 1936 and 1937, I ran workshops at Trębacka Street 2 and 3.

Below, I provide a handful of recollections from my time at the Auschwitz concentration camp, where I was interned for sixteen months, having arrived on the first Warsaw transport on 15 August 1940.

### 1. Location of the Auschwitz camp

At the foot of the Silesian Beskid, near the road leading from Bielsko to Katowice, lies the town of Oświęcim, which the Germans call Auschwitz. Three kilometers outside the town, by that very road, there used to be Polish Army barracks. At that location, after certain adjustments, the Hitlerite barbarians planted their SS flags with the skull and crossbones, marking the trail of tears of hundreds of thousands of martyrs who never made it back alive.

### 2. Climate

As if in cahoots with the barbarians, playing no small part in killing people was the peculiar local climate. In summer, during a hot day, black leaden clouds would suddenly shroud the horizon, a chilly wind would strike, and a cruel rain would sting the numb limbs of a *heftling*

[prisoner] dressed in ragged pajamas. Such temperature fluctuations would occur a few times a day. Then, in winter, the freezing cold would cut a swath through the ranks of hungry prisoners, who had no caps or coats.

### 3. The establishment of the camp

A few hundred prisoners transferred from the Montelupich prison in Kraków and some Silesians who had been arrested began this camp, one of the toughest concentration camps in the Reich, on 14 June 1940.

### 4. Custody, supervision, and the Kapos.

The commandant, *fuhrers*, and guards had to be ruthless, skilled, tried and true murderers with skulls and lightning bolts. Notorious criminals, who had spent almost their entire lives in all the camps of the Reich, were brought here as our immediate butchers and, using the title of *Kapo*, fulfilled their duties exceptionally well, falling over themselves when it came to contriving complex tortures.

### 5. Roll calls

The famous German rigor and order were greatly intensified here and saw many people depart up the crematorium chimney. After the morning bell, before marching off to work, prisoners formed rows, according to their block assignment, in the roll-call yard (on average, there were between 700 and 800 prisoners in each block). First, the prisoners fell in, aligned themselves, and formed up; counting off followed (obviously in German) and the block was then handed over: from the deputy block senior to the block senior, who in turn handed it over to the *blockführer* [block leader], and he, like those before him, carried out an inspection (dispensing lavish blows in the face and, his favorite, kicks in a kidney or the testicles). All *blockführers* reported on the number in their block to the *Rapportführer* [report leader], and he – having added all the numbers – reported to the commandant, who was always late. Then, there was some petty speech and the prisoners marched off to work in columns. After lunch, prisoners again gathered in the yard, just as after the morning bell, for a similar afternoon roll call. In the evening, after work, everybody returned to the yard, falling in in the same fashion as at the previous roll calls, the only difference being that prisoners worked

at different locations: some groups worked even several kilometers outside the camp and were seriously late most of the time. Everybody had to turn up for the roll call. If the scenario was favorable, the evening roll call lasted 45 minutes, but more often than not these lovers of order counted one or two prisoners too many, or sometimes, after the final count and submitting final reports to the commandant, a prisoner would appear from around the corner...Then, it was already clear that someone was going to be sent to the penal company. The fact that rainy days outnumbered sunny ones was used by the Hitlerite bandits, as they purposefully made the prisoners stand in the basic position, with bare heads, and were in no rush to wrap up the roll call. How many times we would go to sleep without supper... After a year, the afternoon roll call was scrapped, so one was only held in the morning and in the evening, and the prisoners worked all day long. Also, punishment by whipping was organized after the evening roll call, with everybody forced to watch the wretched convict and the Germans reveling in their sadism. It sometimes happened that, during a roll call, a prisoner was declared missing. Then, the siren would ring out ominously, the soldiers would fan out, and all the prisoners were left standing in the basic position (alternatively crouching or half-crouching) for up to several hours. In such cases, there were many casualties to be removed from the yard, and in the winter months, even the shortest roll calls resulted in deaths.

## 6. Camp garments

After taking off his civilian clothes, which were placed in a storeroom in a paper bag, the prisoner, shaved and already beaten, is issued underwear and a pajama with white and blue stripes made of some nettle, wooden clogs or Dutch canal boots, a hat, a white scrap to write the prison number on, and another one, colored, triangle-shaped, which is placed above the number. The triangle may be red – for political prisoners; green – for criminals; purple – for Bible students; pink – for pederasts; black – for those unwilling to work; red with a black blot in the middle – for priests; red and yellow, which overlapped to form the Star of David – for Jews. These badges are worn on the left side on the jacket and on the right leg of the trousers, above the knee. No pockets. The penal company (SK) prisoners additionally wore a black circular patch below the number, and some transports had some lettering as the lowermost element which read *Im Lgr* (in the camp for life). For possessing weapons or attempted escape, a red spot was added on the back. In winter, they issued earmuffs and gloves, and, if available, also coats and caps. Prisoners were allowed to wear sweaters sent from home.

## 7. Alimentation and serving food

After the morning cleaning, cauldrons were brought into the room and unsweetened coffee was served, each prisoner receiving a small cup. The coffee was served very fast and whatever remained was quickly thrown out, so it never once happened that everybody got some. There was one hour scheduled for lunch, and during this hour you could only do one of the following three things: either collect the meal, or run to the hospital to have your wounds dressed, or line up for the toilet. The soup, served from one pot, was as a rule barely thicker than water, with Swedish turnip, awo [?], cabbage, barley soup, carrot. Once a week, it was thicker. Sometimes, when an international commission visited, the lunch was richer. At first, in accordance with the regulations,  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a liter was to be served, but there was half a liter in a bowl. Then, when the quality of soups had greatly deteriorated, the regulations stated that a liter should be served, and again, everybody received  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a liter.

The shortfall and cheating resulted from the fact that the lunch was always served by the room orderly or his deputy, and they had many friends and persons they were indebted to, even when it came to receiving punishment. Nobody complained, because we knew what that would have led to: sooner or later, the person serving the lunch would have, one way or another, taken revenge. The supper was served after the evening roll call: between 200 and 250 grams of bread, some marmalade or stinky cheese or a piece of sausage or kishka of suspicious origin, plus a small cup of coffee. Sometimes, there were potatoes in skins; also in the soup there were at first peeled potatoes, but later they were unpeeled. Scrapping the afternoon roll call meant moving the lunch up to supper time, and no evening portion of coffee, and during lunchtime there was a 30-minute break; when it was cold, we were sometimes brought a cup of coffee each, but most of the time we were not. After I was released, the food reportedly got even worse, but they allowed for food packages to be sent.

The canteen was called so probably as a way for the vile Gestapo men to squeeze every last penny out of the starving prisoner, as they sold him valueless items for big money. There was hardly ever any food there, anyway, and the salads were rotten: they were lousy beetroots drenched in vinegar that you ate with your face twisted in disgust, even though you were hungry. When nobody wanted to buy these salads, they stopped selling cigarettes and only issued three cigarettes with each salad sold. Additionally, the canteen offered razor blades, penknives (the possession of which was punishable by time with the penal company),

lighters (the same punishment), cologne, pencils, etc., all of which were items forbidden at the camp and out of keeping with the needs of the prisoners, who, hungry, went to the canteen all the time and left with no money but with some valueless trash, a German ersatz.

### 8. Hunger

Hunger was the most pressing problem at the camp, and one that was very skillfully arranged by the Hitlerite butchers. Those who came from other prisons were at first very content with the quantity of food, but changed their minds within a week because the drudgery and its intensity required bigger portions. One would lose weight almost overnight. In a bathhouse, the condition of the prisoners could be seen best: they were skeletons covered with skin, which itself was as though deflated, without a single sinew. Raw Swedish turnip and carrot were gourmet foods, and all you did was look for an opportunity to pilfer some. Many ate raw potatoes, clover flowers, bean pods – in a word, things that one would never have thought could be eaten in such a state. Near garbage containers, especially by the kitchen, there was a tangle of bodies rummaging around, fighting for the best position and scuffling for some piece of rag covered with ash. By the windows of the block where the *Kapos* lived, scores of prisoners, their heads down, were on the lookout for a trampled bread crust or ham rind, or a cigarette stub that might have been thrown out. Those who tended the pigs made very decent money from selling their food to fellow prisoners. Bran, potatoes with bran – even cold – were very much in demand. The more adroit ones would catch a dog, and then, if you knew the right people, you could buy a portion of delicious dog meat for a few marks. In a word, a starving prisoner would eat everything, as much as he could get. Once, I managed to buy four liters of a rather thick soup, for six marks, from a *Kapo's* favorite. Even though I had already eaten the lunch proper, the bucket was empty in a few minutes. One of my comrades bought a full firkin of salad (around 8 liters) and ate almost everything himself. It cost him his life. There were many similar cases. An utterly emaciated prisoner suddenly swelled, and then his days were numbered.

### 9. Necessity to work, type of works performed

It was unthinkable that someone should be without work. Even terminally ill people had to work with others: working in tempo, beaten with rods and knouts, in a rush, without respite. One could think that this is unendurable, impossible. Yes, it was, and this is why the groups

returning from labor always carried scores of prisoners beaten to death or injured during work. A few Kapos had a group of people for particular work, the breakdown was into groups of a hundred, which were further subdivided into twenties or tens. *Vorarbeiters* [foremen] supervised the smaller groups and helped their *Kapos* dispense corporal punishment. After the morning roll call, having formed rows of fours in our groups of a hundred, we marched off to the labor site, our own band playing and the most prominent of our butchers with us. Some groups remained at the camp, where they worked in the kitchen, peeled potatoes, mended clothes, or worked expanding blocks for prisoners or erecting new ones. This last group was the most numerous. Working outside the camp were groups assigned to workshops, timber, livestock, or farming jobs. The groups working a few kilometers outside the camp were surrounded by an SS cordon armed with rifles and *rozpylacze*. Since the villages and towns within a ten-kilometer radius had been depopulated, the prisoners dismantled the houses and carried the materials thus obtained to the camp on their shoulders. Trains arrived at the railway siding bringing building materials and other cargo, which was then unloaded by special groups. Carts were pulled by eight prisoners, while platforms were pulled by fifteen. Horses were only used for ploughing the land.

The most valuable jobs at the camp were those performed indoors. Prisoners would go to any lengths to get there, by all means necessary. The worst and hardest were all jobs done outdoors, due to weather conditions and the risk of falling out of favor, since one was always visible and it was impossible to take a breather even for a second.

#### 10. Tidiness, cleaning oneself up, toilets

Cleanliness at the camp was a high priority, for the camp was controlled by Western men. And so, at first, we had showers once a week, then every two weeks, sometimes less frequently than once a month. During showers, the water was not heated at all when it was freezing cold outside, and sometimes it was scalding hot so nobody would take a shower. This entire bathing farce was so short, anyway, that the fastest prisoner had hardly undressed when he had to get dressed again.

I had not even heard stories of people who could be that lousy. Apparently, I was among the least lousy prisoners. Day after day, whenever I had time, I was killing off the bugs, and every day, the number of the lice I killed must have been way above a hundred. Every stitch

of underwear and clothing was infested by strings of lice, which fiercely gnawed at the ailing skin. There were also a lot of fleas. It took the deaths of two SS men from spotted typhus for the camp authorities to delouse the camp, which lasted for a week and was, admittedly, very meticulous.

There were no bathrooms at the blocks. Around the blocks, there were some twenty firkins with water which had to suffice for seven hundred people to clean themselves up with, and there was little time. In the winter, there was ice instead of water, but sometimes you could use snow. Even during the most freezing cold, everybody had to leave the block without their shirts, and after they washed themselves they had to wait until their night bedding was made up. When there were around ten thousand people at the camp, there were three toilets which could serve up to a few prisoners at a time, and hence the very long lines all the way until the evening bell. This was actually a site where terrible tragedies took place because every other prisoner suffered from *durchfall* [dysentery]. At night, you were not allowed to take one step outside the block because the searchlights and rifles installed at the towers situated at the end of the street would not have let anyone through. Hence, at night, you were allowed to use the toilet at the block. It worked fine for two to three hours until the lavatories were full and you walked up to your ankles in feces and urine. The prisoners walked barefoot, and when they returned, they trod on the faces of their sleeping comrades. During work, it was prohibited to relieve yourself, unless you pleaded with a soldier or *Kapo*. Time granted to use the toilet was also limited. Toward the end of my time at the camp, a sewage system was installed at some of the blocks and internal toilets were built.

## 11. Cells

Initially, there were only four multi-story buildings, the rest being single story. One block took up one story. In one-story blocks, running through the middle was a corridor, from which you could access individual cells. Each cell accommodated between seventy-five and two hundred-fifty prisoners, who ate and slept there. Whenever food was served, there was a muster at the cell and meals were served according to numbers or names, or in rows. Everything was accompanied by great noise, and acts of violence were not uncommon. After the supper, everybody left the cell so that mattresses could be laid on the floor. Both during the day and at night, the cell is ruled by the orderly, who is the oracle and the master of his

charges. He is trigger-happy with his hands, armed with a bullwhip or an ordinary rod, and irrespective of that, he has various helpers. Both in winter and in summer, the windows are open so the room will be aired out. It is prohibited to stay in the cell except when you sleep or eat, or on Sundays, if you do not work and thoroughly clean up your environs.

## 12. Sleeping

Half an hour before the evening bell, mattresses filled with a little thatch were laid on the floor in the cell, and then they crammed the prisoners inside, throwing blankets and rushing them, saying there was no time, in order to provoke a stampede. After removing the outerwear, usually wet, and using it, together with the boots, to support the head, the prisoners crammed themselves into small nooks. There were three or four prisoners per one mattress, lying there as though sardines in a tin. There was one blanket per two prisoners. When the prisoners were positioning themselves, arguments always ensued, because someone lay on his back, while someone else sprawled out or had two blankets. Such arguments ended with the room leader jumping on the victim with both his feet and trampling him, not minding his face and other sensitive spots.

As soon as the bell rang, lights went out and one was not allowed to utter a word, and whoever did whisper something would not make it to the morning, or if he did, he was soundly beaten. And then, journeys to the toilet began, which lasted until the morning bell. On average, a prisoner would leave six or seven times per night, the draft pulled the door out of your hands, and a sweating prisoner made his way, treading on his comrades and pissing on their faces. These were the beautiful nights in the camp. Toward the end of my internment, three-storied bunk beds began to be used. Those who died at night were taken out to the corridor, or you just slept next to them until the morning.

## 13. Diseases and the hospital

Among the most serious diseases at the camp was undoubtedly *durchfall*, that is dysentery, whose symptom was massive diarrhea with blood. The sick person was not always able to contain the attack. It was a very serious disease, almost incurable; the sick person instantly lost weight, strength, and skin color, and died in a terrible condition. The disease was probably caused by watery soups and unpeeled potatoes.

Another common disease was phlegmon, which developed around the legs, waist, pelvis, sometimes arms. Phlegmon was curable in thirty percent of cases, but those who survived were invalids.

Heart and lungs diseases, starvation edema, blisters, and permanent wounds were the usual diseases that took the rest of the sick.

A doctor would only see you during the evening roll call, and dressings were only applied at noon. There were long lines of people everywhere, but nowhere was everybody examined and there was a limit under camp regulations on how many patients could be admitted to the hospital.

The head doctor—orderly appointed from among the Polish prisoners was Dr. Dering. Some have said that he was cruel, not helping everyone. But I know that he did a lot, treading on thin ice with the authorities, although those who did not push their way through to him hold a personal grudge. Actually, everybody standing in the line was fit for hospital treatment, but there were not three hundred places or more but only ten or twelve. Who to admit? The one that is in agony, the one that is heavily wounded, or the one that is less severely wounded? There were no easy solutions. Whoever made it to the emergency room was first and foremost put on a diet immediately and his food rations were trimmed as much as possible. There were hardly any medications, just some universal pills, an ointment for all kinds of diseases, and paper bandages.

I almost forgot to mention skin diseases, the most popular of which were scabies, eczema, and pediculosis, sometimes all devastating one wretched prisoner at the same time.

#### 14. Mortality, crematorium

In November and October 1940 and in January 1941, camp conditions were the most severe, with the mortality rate at 84%. Warsaw was at that time flooded with telegrams from Auschwitz, their number decreasing slightly toward the beginning of spring. If a man died at night next to another prisoner, both covered with one blanket, he was moved to the corridor immediately before the morning bell, his clothes were removed, and he would have a number written on his chest. After the bell, the clothes were moved to the clothes storeroom and the prisoner was taken on a blanket to the front of the hospital, where he was briefly

examined and loaded in a coffin with another comrade. If a prisoner died working, he was taken to the camp and put at the end of the row formed by the block prisoners, and then the degenerate Hitlerites would kick him or trample on his face, laughing at the expression it bore. After the roll call, the deceased prisoner was moved to the front of the hospital, where he was undressed by the hospital staff.

At the time when the mortality rate was at its peak, a special group of prisoners operated (as a transporting unit) whose task was to carry people to the crematorium, all day long (a group of 40 people). Coffins were only used for moving the bodies, two per one coffin. The crematorium was located outside the gate, so when you were passing, a guard prodded each corpse with a special poker to see if the prisoner was really dead.

The crematorium was visible from afar, its chimney like that of a brickworks, only square. After you entered the hall, there was a room to the left where dissections and other operations were performed, while to the right there was something resembling a chapel – a little cell with a wooden catafalque, a presentable room prepared for the families in the unlikely event that they should be granted permission to see the body. Further, there was a little corridor to the right leading to a big room, where the corpses removed from the coffins were kept. Opposite the hall's main entrance was the entrance to a big room where two huge furnaces were located, two grates each. Each furnace chamber was covered with a heavy iron lid which moved on pulleys. A troughed trolley was used to insert the body into the chamber, where it remained for between 15 and 25 minutes, and then the remains were removed, the unburned bones were crushed with a wooden hammer and poured into a tin casket, on which the number and the name of the deceased prisoner was imprinted. From the outside, the crematorium was in the ground, like a basement. In a special room, there were long rows of caskets. Initially, at the request of the family, the casket with the ashes was sent out, but later it was discarded.

## 15. Punishments

It did not take much to earn a punishment. Let me mention just a few selected infractions, such as having on your person cigarettes, a penknife, a lighter, or a knife during work. Further, smoking at work, talking to a prisoner with the penal company, a request from the family to release the prisoner, etc. Before the prisoner received the punishment proper for

a particular infraction, he was shoved, kicked, and beaten, each Hitlerite murderer proving himself against a defenseless man. Bruised and battered, the prisoner then stood before the butchers. The most serious punishments included flogging, which was always carried out in front of everybody. A special table with a top slanted downward and with collar ties between the legs served as a podium, which the victim had to bring in and then take away himself. After the prisoner was undressed and held down by two butchers, another two, athletically built, holding two-meter whips with steel caps, flogged him in turns, the victim additionally forced to count the strikes in German. Another punishment was as follows: the prisoner's bare hands were tied behind his back with a chain or a strong twine, the loose chain was pulled up, together with the prisoner, through a hook fixed to the ceiling, or a stool was removed from under the prisoner's feet, and the victim was left hanging by his twisted arms. This lasted between fifteen minutes and an hour. After this punishment, the prisoner's arms trembled for several days and he had a fever. Hanging prisoners up on a chain, the barbarians toyed with their victims in various ways. Sometimes, the punishment was doing time in the bunker (dark room), where full portions of food were served every three days and prisoners were paid constant visits from the degenerate Germans, who were happy to use their shod boots and other instruments. For stealing food from a fellow prisoner, the thief had a plate fixed to his back and chest, and the *Lageralteste* [camp senior] was dragging him all day long, everybody spitting on him and beating him. Whipping was carried out everywhere, without the participation of the others. Beatings happened everywhere, and everyone wielding any power did it, using whatever happened to be handy: a whip, a rod, a belt, or part of a shaft, and the recommended number of twenty five strikes was in practice a few times higher. Being hit in the face was a form of flattery, it was tasteful and seen as a necessity. I can say without exaggeration that during my time at the camp there were maybe five days when nobody hit me. Sometimes for the slightest infraction you were assigned to the penal company (SK).

## 16. Penal company (SK)

It was easy to get assigned to the penal company. All prisoners from the penal company were strictly isolated from the others, both at the block and during work. If you spoke to a prisoner from the penal company, you would join that unit in no time. The work done by the SK prisoners was the hardest, picked out on purpose. The *Kapos* and the *Vorarbeiters*

were more distinguished and more sadistic. The pace of work was much higher and the "joyful games" with defenseless prisoners more sophisticated. The shortest assignment to the penal company was six weeks, while the longest was five months, on average. The prisoners with additional lettering under the black patch which read *Im Lager* were interned indefinitely, forever, which meant that they were quickly terminated, one way or another. The fenced off and tightly screened yard of the penal company was the site of hundreds of thousands of crimes, executions, etc. In the bunkers, hundreds of thousands of Russian and Polish soldiers brought to the camp perished, tortured by the German barbarians and killed with a shot in the neck. The attic of the penal company saw various tortures, such as hanging on poles, etc. After receiving punishment, the wretched prisoners returned to the camp with serious injuries, crippled. Actually, anyone who lasted five months with the penal company was a truly unique case.

### 17. Block 11 (*Korperschwach*)

When the mortality at the camp reached its peak, the camp authorities – it is not certain at whose insistence – set up a special block for emaciated prisoners exempt from work. From each block, they picked a dozen or a few dozen prisoners who were severely sick, frostbitten, and completely unfit for work. They were moved to the new block. None of those prisoners worked, but they had to comply with the block's regulations. After the morning bell and breakfast, there were musters in rooms, and then, one by one, the prisoners ran to the front of the building to gather there. You would stand in the yard in front of the block, like you normally would for a roll call, but the most severely sick prisoners who could not drag their feet were allowed to stay in the cells. Coats, decent clogs, and hats were confiscated. After the roll call, the prisoners returned to their cells. There, windows wide open, the prisoners, ordered into five or six rows, stood quivering with cold and rubbing each other. From time to time, the block elder or some SS man would storm into the room and do a number on the prisoners as a warm-up. For instance, they crammed everybody into one end of the room, and then they grabbed the outermost ones and threw them onto the heads of the crowd. This created a pile of sick, groaning prisoners crushing each other. Smoking was strictly prohibited, but in a cell there was always someone who had a cigarette, which would be found in the course of an inspection. Then, everybody was laid on the floor and beaten, one by one, starting with the room orderly. When the entire block was at fault, the block leader

took everybody outside and mounted a peach of a show for the SS men watching, as they burst into hysteric laughter. When the number of prisoners from other blocks increased, a special commission ordered a purge. Those expelled to the camp soon joined the ranks of angels.

Block 14 was like a branch of block 11, accommodating the prisoners who were so sick they could not walk at all. There, nobody assembled in the roll call yard, the sick lay on the thatch by the walls.

### **18. Jews and other nationalities at the camp**

The camp was mostly populated by Poles. At first, many Jews were brought in, then they came less often, and one year into my internment they stopped being brought in at all. But there were also no Jews in the camp, nor were any released at that time. For a few months, the Jews were kept with everyone else, and then they were separated and later assigned to the penal company. Later, as a rule, all incoming Jews were sent directly to the penal company. During work, they were murdered in a specific way. They had a special roller built for hardening roads: it was made of iron, filled in, 1.4 meters in diameter and 2.5 or 3-meter wide. The roll had huge shafts with bars. Between sixteen and thirty Jews had to push it, hardening highways, roads, or the recently-graveled roll call yard. The roller would sink down and the Jews, dead tired, had to pull it up. When they had killed off too many Jews with the roller and there were none left, they brought in Poles as help. The roller was operated in tempo, at a run.

Only around 15 percent of prisoners at the camp were Germans, they were mostly criminals transferred from other camps. They enjoyed much better conditions than we, the Poles, did. They were housed in a separate block, always got more food, and of course all halfway-decent jobs were taken by the Germans.

There were not many Czechs at the camp, maybe a few dozen.

The fortunes of priests at the camp were changing. There was a time when they were marked with an additional blot inside a red triangle, and then they worked with the Jews operating the roller. In a later period, they were sent to such camps as Dachau, where they were allegedly allowed to pray in a special chapel.

## 19. The first Warsaw transport

On Monday, 12 August 1940, Hitlerite hunters organized a huge roundup in downtown Warsaw between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. I was walking down Aleje Ujazdowskie toward Belweder, there were just a few passers-by. Crossing Matejki Street, I noticed in front of me three soldiers checking the ID of some man, and then one of them walked him to the wall at the corner. I wanted to turn into Matejki Street, but I saw plenty of military there, so I kept walking straight. Two soldiers shouted at me, '*Polen*'. I nodded my head in confirmation and quickly produced my ID and certificate of employment. They did not even bother looking, instead one of them took me to a sizeable group already gathered at the corner of Piusa Street. It was 10:15 a.m.

After a half an hour's wait, a large group of people from the Main Station passed by, and then we were rushed together with them down Górnioślaska Street, to the barracks in Szwoleżerów Street. More groups of passers-by arrested in the streets kept coming in until 4 p.m. Then, a few typists arrived with typewriters, accompanied by a number of personages from the barbarian circles. Individual persons were released, while the rest were filed and then rushed to the dressage arena. There, lying side by side on sawdust soaked with feces, we awaited a decision for two nights. We considered many scenarios. We were not allowed to stand up, and if you wanted to talk to somebody, you had to crawl, or – when the soldiers turned away – lope off on the sly. If a soldier spotted some movement, he dashed toward the victim and beat them with the butt of his rifle. Around fifteen hundred people were detained in the dressage arena. Once, two carts with bread were brought, which was then thrown to the lying people.

On 14 August, from 10 a.m., prisoners began to be ferried off in a column of a few vans and armed motorcycles. Prisoners, assembled in lines of forty, jumped into the vans, crushing one another and being rushed by the horsewhips of the Hitlerite butchers. Bearing a welt as wide as a rope and kicked from behind, I slipped into the van. Behind me, there were three heavily-armed SS men covering the exit. A few military vans, accompanied by motorcycles with machine guns fixed to the sidecars, were speeding through the city. Terrified people were watching, shaking their heads. Passing Marszałkowska Street, I threw out a second note for my wife (I gave the first one to a released prisoner). I was transported to the Western Railway Station [Dworzec Zachodni], to a cargo train which was waiting there. We

entered the wagons in the same fashion as we did the vans. Inside, fifty loaves of bread were lying. They carefully counted off fifty of us, the doors slammed shut and were momentarily sealed.

At 15:20, the train departed, its destination unknown. When one of the prisoners smashed a window, everybody felt the urge to escape. Only a few sick and old people begged us not to do that because they could not jump through the window and the Germans would stop the train and execute them. Some were singing merrily. The conviction prevailed that they were taking us for labor. At the railway crossing near Milanówek, I threw out the third note for my wife (all three were delivered).

Somewhere near Skierniewice, two prisoners from an adjacent wagon jumped through a window. They slid down a little bank and ran toward the sheaves in the field, situated perpendicular to the tracks. An incredible commotion broke out, machine gun and pistol fire was heard everywhere. The train braked abruptly. A pack of SS men burst out of the train, they fanned out and started shooting indiscriminately. One of the escapees fell down, never to get up. The other was chased by some non-commissioned officer and when he was just behind him, the fugitive went down. Then, the soldier fired a few shots in the prisoners' heads and they were taken back to the wagon from which they had escaped. All of their fellow prisoners were given twenty-five whip blows each, the doors were locked, and the train resumed its journey. It stopped again when another prisoner escaped, but this time, luck was on his side: he slid down a large bank into thick bushes and escaped along the tracks in the opposite direction.

This journey through the heat of August was utter torture, relief was nowhere to be found, not a drop of water to drink. When the train stopped in Częstochowa, the prisoners wailed, begging for some water, but all that was in vain.

In the morning, after the train was shunted multiple times, it was directed to some railway siding. Through the window, I could see dismantled barracks and houses being knocked down. Some distance away from the track stood a cordon of gendarmes and SS men armed with *rozpylacze*. They started to unlock the doors and chase the prisoners out using horsewhips. The prisoners from the Pawiak prison, who were on the transport with us, dropped all their luggage and tripped over it. In complete chaos, the company was formed and taken to the camp, which was located a couple hundred meters away.

After we were carefully counted, we passed through the gate with a sign which read ARBEIT MACHT FREI. Passing through that gate were around 1,300 people rounded up in the streets and 500 prisoners from the Pawiak prison. After the last prisoner passed through, names started to be read out, in alphabetical order, and people were assembled into one great column. At first, I thought I was in a looney farm because I had never seen clothes with white and blue stripes, like night pajamas. However, the good *Kapos* soon explained to me, very emphatically, that this was a concentration camp. They also pointed to a high chimney, from which smoke was rising. Those good *Kapos* walked from one prisoner to another, looked at our hands, and in a most insolent fashion snatched the better of the watches or took away our fountain pens. After a few hours, we were shown some mercy and we got a drop of water.

After all the names were read out, the camp commandant gave a nice little speech, which was translated by a *dolmetscher* [interpreter], and in which it was clearly stated that we would be staying at the camp until the end of the war. An attractive prospect, but what for? Why? After some preparations, the entire company marched toward the bathhouse, where we changed. The column was led by a priest, who was girded with a string and carried a broom. Beckoned, I ran to the first table, where I was told to relinquish food supplies (unfortunately, I had already thrown them over the fence to a hungry prisoner); at the second table, I gave up my lighter, and at the third I surrendered my wedding ring, watch, and money, which were lodged at a depository. Then, all my clothes were taken and I received a number, which now was to be my number proper. Then, I ran to the bathhouse, where a doctor asked me only if I was suffering from a venereal disease, and I took a shower. Then – already wearing new clothes – I ran out of the bathhouse, where some giant grabbed me and shoved me toward a large group of people who also had their new clothes already on. After a while, we were marching across a yard to a building marked with the number 8. The giant later turned out to be my block elder, a Silesian, a sadist by nature. At the block, I was given an earthen bowl of soup made from green bean pods. How tasty this first soup was – but not as much as the next ones.

The entire first Warsaw transport had numbers between 1400 and 3200. Next day, after breakfast and the roll call, we were taught various commands, terms, ways of counting – in a word, the entire camp regulations. After lunch, as training, we ran barefoot for a few hours along highways and roads, where there was no gravel between bare stones. And so, for three weeks, every single day, we were ground down in the yard, taught the regulations, and put through the camp training. This training was the first general torture. The butchers knew

very well we were Varsovians, and the word "Warsaw" made them livid and they tried to tire us out to the fullest. Simply put, we had ended up in the lion's den. We were all considered to be members of the Warsaw underground, who cruelly liquidated German citizens, and it was only thanks to the courage and skillfulness of the brilliant Hitlerites that we had been captured and transported here under escort. I lost count of how many times I was beaten up for lying that I had been captured in a street, completely innocent, without a shred of evidence. Whenever I could, I tried to explain that back in Warsaw, street roundups were commonplace. They were outraged, and I would always receive the heaviest punch. And so, with a clear conscience (if a German even had one), these Hitlerite butchers ground us down brilliantly, outdoing one another in inventing sophisticated schemes. This recruit training saw many casualties, particularly among sick and plump individuals.

After almost a month, I was assigned to work. I was so grateful to God that I could work while many others still languished in the yard, beaten and kicked. Like everybody else, I ran without shoes, so I injured my foot and was miraculously admitted to the new block for prisoners with leg conditions. On my second day in that block, I contracted *durchfall*: I ingested carbon for two days, and I ate nothing. I signed up to see a doctor and, unexpectedly, he saw me and twenty four others who suffered from severe dysentery. Since that was a time when the disease was reaching pandemic proportions and the Germans still did not know this condition, they did not care too much about our group, treating us like guinea pigs. It takes an unlucky man like me to recover after these two days, right when a military commission came, a very thorough one, and we had to defecate onto a sheet of paper in the presence of an SS man. How I sweated there, while the poor SS man breathed down my neck, rushing me and making threats. I already pictured myself being taken to the penal company. Luckily, I managed to divert his attention and I took some feces from a sick comrade. That way, I ended up in a special cell with beds, where I stayed for two weeks under observation. Whenever they collected blood or feces, I took some from a comrade. After two weeks, they discharged me and I returned to the camp, but I had starved big time.

## 20. Second Warsaw transport

While I was under observation, in the middle of September, around midnight, I saw from the room's windows a large transport arrive. Next day, I learned that this was the second Warsaw transport, assigned numbers from 3900 to 5700, so it was the same quota as with

our transport, these people having been captured in the same circumstances. Roundups had been carried out in Żolibż and Praga, in the region of Radzymińska Street and Kawęczyńska Street, the only difference being that this time people were arrested in their flats. Some of the prisoners were from the Pawiak prison.

The second transport was luckier than we were because they got their own shoes to walk in, and the training in the yard lasted much shorter and was milder.

After returning to the camp, I got a job in the hosiery shop, where socks for SS men, and later also for us, were mended. Again, I thanked God for his mercy. But, since nothing is permanent in this world, I was sent back to the camp and assigned to the hardest labor, which was operating wheelbarrows during foundation works. The reason for this misadventure was the fact that in order to change the money I got from home, I bought around twenty sets of rolling paper and I took them to the shop to sell them to others and get some change. The camp commandant arrived, ordered an inspection, and, having found me out, ordered that I be lined up for a report and expelled me. After a week, I was taken to the commandant's office, having been taught how to report. Signaled by the interpreter, I came in and spluttered the report formula in one breath. I gave a detailed account of everything. He summoned the prisoners working at the canteen, and, although they vouched for me, he picked on them for something, too, and removed them from their posts, while I was sentenced to five Sundays of penal labor, just because I had been ordered to report. My comrades were saying that I was born under a lucky star because the commandant was not usually so lenient.

Somehow, I once again got assigned to a new working unit, which was tasked with dismantling barracks outside the camp. Again I felt relief at the prospect of less beating. The labor was very hard, as you had to pull the building down in a hurry and were then rushed to move the materials to the camp. Even the commandant himself conceded that the job was really hard. From time to time, we were given a piece of bread or half a bowl of soup, which, in turn, sparked envy and people were vying for our job. Whoever had already received this assignment would cling to it really tightly so as not to be made redundant. But it was really hard luck that I was smashed by a huge beam with a protruding nail, which pierced my kidney region. I could not get up and my comrades carried me to the camp. Next day, deemed weak, I was removed from our group. I was ordered to clean roof tiles and crush bricks.

## 21. Third and fourth Warsaw transport

Around mid-October, a couple hundred prisoners were transported from the Pawiak prison and given numbers around 6300. This transport, as well as the subsequent Warsaw transports, were extremely lucky in that they were not put through the training like we were, but instead they were sent straight to work, though this work was heavier than normal. The fourth Warsaw transport arrived in November and was assigned numbers around 8700. The long autumn cut a swath through the increasingly feeble prisoners, who wore very scanty clothes and had no coats or caps.

## 22. The transport of Germans from Dachau

At the end of November or at the beginning of December, a couple hundred German prisoners arrived from Dachau. These prisoners brought scabies with them, which from then on would come down hard on us. We, in return, gave them a hefty portion of lice, which we had in abundance. Initially, during their first days, they made friends with us, and then we told each other about the conditions at the respective camps. The discipline and tortures at ours amazed them, and, without any exaggeration, they were saying that in the entire Reich there was no camp as hard and as horrible as the Auschwitz camp. We, in our turn, listening to their stories about the Dachau camp, thought of it as a sanatorium and dreamed of being transferred there.

I was chased away from crushing bricks and assigned to carrying corpses. In any case, ever since the accident involving the beam, I had worked outdoors all the time, but no longer outside the camp. It was difficult to hold down a job: now they would assign you a different unit, now they would expel you for some trifle. And so, changing working units all the time, I survived until Christmas. In light of the piercing cold I had to endure during paving works, I came up with an idea thanks to which I could, more or less undisturbed, survive outdoors, physically active, completely independent. After a four-meter-high wall was built around the camp, another construction was erected parallel to it, on the inside: it was a three-meter-high fence made from barbed wire attached to insulators fixed to concrete posts. At night, the wires of this fence were electrified to make any escape more difficult. Five meters from the electric fence, also parallel to it, cement posts were installed to which insulators and wires were supposed to be fixed. A few electricians were tasked with drilling holes in

the posts and fixing insulators. Since the electricians' *Kapo* was always outside the camp, I removed a few insulators from a post, put them in a pocket and walked around the camp all day long, stopping from time to time to see if Swedish turnip or carrot was being brought to the potato room. I was delighted with my new job and I wanted to kiss the porcelain insulators for helping me so well to get through these difficult days. Unfortunately, I did not last too long in this job, either. One of my comrades, beaten up severely at work, begged me to persuade the electricians' *Kapo* to hire him. What choice did I have? Next day, I had to take him on board, asking for his discretion, which was in our best interest. And yet, two days later, when I removed the insulators from their hiding place and went on a walk around the camp, I noticed that there were too many of us working. When I stopped and counted those who worked and their helpers, their number was no less than 72. I walked on in a foul mood until noon, knowing that disaster was imminent and I had no new job. Just after noon, the *Kapo* summoned me to the basement, where I met almost all of my helpers. What could I do, I lay on the stool voluntarily, without a word. Did he whack me hard! He not only struck me as much as he pleased, because I was not counting, I did not feel like it, but in the end he also pushed me onto smashed window panes so that my entire face and arms were gashed. It does not always pay to volunteer first, especially when the executioner is not tired. This fantastic job of mine lasted eight days, eight beautiful days.

### 23. Christmas

A few weeks before, everybody received a postcard to send home: it functioned as a permission to send one food package of one kilo, for Christmas. I posted my card, too. When Christmas was approaching, every day, sometimes even more than once, I checked the numbers of the prisoners who had received packages. A Christmas tree with bloody lights was installed in the roll-call yard.

On Christmas Eve, the roll call was held at noon, and the next one was on 26 December. After the Christmas Eve roll call, we were given free time and each prisoner cleaned up his environs and visited sick comrades in other blocks, so in a word, there was no inspection. It was quiet, and no SS man disturbed this grand calm.

Since I had miraculously kept a tiny bit of Christmas wafer, I, too, was dashing around like crazy to exchange fraternal kisses with my comrades and wish them all the best over this

tiny crumb. When I returned to my block, almost everybody in the cell was standing by the walls. In the middle, there were some tables covered with a bedsheet. In the middle of the table, there was a small plate, on which there was a little bit of Christmas wafer. It was a real mystery how this wafer ended up on the table – the SS men who issued the packages checked them very meticulously, and since almost every one contained some wafer, they threw it on the ground and trampled on it emphatically. Suddenly, someone called out that the camp commandant was approaching the block. Wait, *Achtung*. The commandant burst into our cell with some helpers of his and began the speech for the occasion, saying that we should come to terms with the inevitable, etc. Suddenly, he broke off in the middle of a sentence, his eyes riveted on the wafer, which reigned supreme at the moment, went pale, then red, and finally, in a sneering fashion, artificial smile on his lips, he pointed to the caldron with a watery soup and said thus: "Worship this one, this is your God; this other one surely won't feed you". He twirled around and left very quickly and did not continue his tour that day. We listened to these words in complete silence and solemnity, for the poor commandant must really have concluded that there were higher, unconquerable forces. We were given a loaf of bread each. What mercy. I ate the entire kilogram in fifteen minutes.

During the dividing of the Christmas wafer, not a single man could hold back his tears. Oh, how sad it was. After supper, having really satisfied my hunger, I came up to the Christmas tree, which stood at the end of the corridor, decorated through the efforts of the prisoners of our block. It was a beautiful Christmas tree, and sitting on a stool by it one of my comrades was playing a melody on a little harmonica: Hush, baby Jesus, my little pearl, hush my little delight... Others sang with him, quietly, without shouting above each other, solemnly. When I surveyed these faces, these eyes in which tears welled up, I ran so as not to bellow like a slaughtered ox, withdrawing to the most remote corner...

Long into the night, sighs and quiet sobs from under the blankets could be heard. The next day, we were allowed to move freely around the block, so fellow prisoners from other blocks came to visit us. My friend got two packages and I got nothing. After lunch, prisoners sang carols in the blocks all the way until the evening. And so, freedom and a festive atmosphere marked the first day of Christmas. But on the next day, there was already a roll call and more SS men patrolled the camp.

## 24. The transport to Mauthausen

When drafting volunteers to work at the Mauthausen quarry was unsuccessful – even though after three years you were allowed to be joined by your wife and continue work as a civilian stonemason – the resourceful Kapos and block seniors picked their non-favorites or simply grabbed prisoners who were running late in the evening by the canteen. Then, they submitted the numbers of these prisoners, declaring them volunteers. Toward the end of December or just after the New Year, said transport to Mauthausen departed, and since they were a couple dozen men short, they picked some from the penal company who had the *Im Lgr* sign.

## 25. The Radom *im Lager* transport

More or less around the same time, before the Mauthausen transport, some 500 prisoners from Radom were brought in, who were sent straight to the penal company. After a couple of days, I spotted them shoveling snow, and from the bruises on their faces I figured why they did not move around the camp. All of them were tagged with the *Im Lgr* signs. After a month, there were no longer any prisoner from that transport at the camp.

## 26. The transport to Hamburg

Thanks to the generosity of my block senior, who deemed me almost unfit for work, I was transferred to block 11, together with thirty-some other prisoners. There, I learned for the first time that my present weight was 38 kilograms (normally, I weighed 76 kilos). At the new block, I was again deemed fit enough to carry cauldrons from the kitchen to the block. My legs and hands were terribly frostbitten, to the point that I was sick of eating, since the odious reek made me nauseous. With these hands, on which, additionally, hot coffee from the cauldrons spilled, and wearing wooden clogs with lumps of snow stuck to them, I had to carry those 60-kilo weights, both of them. And whenever I fell, spilling some coffee or soup, I had to pay the usual price. My only comfort was that after I served the soup they gave me the cauldron to clean. Then I would forget the toil involved in carrying it and readily lick up every single drop of the precious soup, not missing one spot. While there was never anybody to help me carry the cauldron, I had to ward off a swarm of those eager to lick it.

After three weeks, there was a purge and I ended up in the camp, where I did foundation works, leveled off the roads, moved the soil for an embankment in wheelbarrows, and did many other similar jobs outdoors. Toward the end of April, during a roll call (or maybe it was a special muster) some larger commission came, which paced along each row and picked mostly the stronger and fitter of the prisoners, whose numbers were then noted down. Three days after this inspection, those selected were dressed in the Dachau uniforms and ferried to Hamburg, to work on the docks and clean up the ruins after the bombardments. The Hamburg commandant was quite surprised when he realized he had been sent cripples with frostbitten hands, etc. This is because the fit and strong prisoners selected were usually favorites of the *Kapos* and block seniors, who then switched their numbers thanks to their connections in the office. My sick comrade was woken up at night against his will and had to get ready for the transport, and six days after arriving in Hamburg, he died. The camp conditions in Hamburg were incomparably better than at the bloody Auschwitz.

## 27. Mass executions

Death warrants were coming in from the Gestapo's bureaus, and when their number reached a couple dozen, the Hitlerite butchers would pick one of our national holidays (19 March, 3 May, 11 November) to carry out a mass execution. The first executions were performed in front of almost all the prisoners. Behind the camp kitchen, there were huge pits, which were created after gravel was dug up, and this is where the convicts, dressed in the Dachau prison uniforms, were taken after the evening roll call. Coffins were already waiting, in which the bodies were to be transported to the crematorium. On a signal, the SS men fired at the convicted prisoners, kicking them and pushing them into the pits. Then, they finished their victims from close range, and after that, the murdered were taken to the crematorium. After a few months, these executions took on a more European form. A special SS platoon wearing helmets and armed with rifles, under the command of a non-commissioned officer who was holding some files, entered the penal company. The prisoners whose names had been read out were brought there and then stood on the sand against a black screen, and then a salvo was fired.

## 28. Escapes and collective responsibility

When the first prisoner escaped, at night, clipping the wire just by a firing post, we spent a few hours half-crouching in the yard on the next day. When the next prisoner escaped,

the Hitlerite butchers went to his hometown, where they captured thirty-six men, executed them in front of the locals, and took their bodies to the camp, where they were incinerated in the crematorium.

They used various methods. A comrade of mine, going for labor in the morning, borrowed my better shoes and some bread. I did not suspect anything. At the lunchtime roll call, one prisoner was declared missing, so a recount was ordered and it turned out that the person missing was from our block. We were told to form groups according to cells and each room orderly went down the list of names. It was my friend who was missing. With the siren wailing, the soldiers fanned out, checking every nook and cranny around. In the meantime, the hierarchy gathered around our group, debating what to do with us. They asked about the escaped prisoner's friends. A few more seconds and we would have been off to the bunker, but a scream coming from the direction of the lumberyard drew the butchers away. Janek was brought in, dripping with blood. They quickly found a huge drum, put a large paper hat on Janek's head, and gave him a post with a sign which read, "*Ich bin wieder da*" [I'm back]. Then, he was stood on the sand embankment, where he remained for around half an hour beating the drum emphatically. Then, he was marched in front of all the blocks and flogged. Then, it was announced that thanks to the commandant's generosity he was sentenced to 32 days in the bunker. He was taken to the penal company's dungeons. Four days later, when I was moving bodies to the crematorium, I saw him lying on the floor, severely beaten and bruised. A month before his attempted escape, Janek had gotten a letter from his wife, in which she wrote that she had given birth to his first son. He was so proud, he wanted to see him so badly.

From that moment onward, it was no longer the entire camp that was held responsible for an escape but the fugitive's working unit or room. Then, ten prisoners were chosen, and later, when escapes would not stop, it was fifteen or twenty. Sometimes, the prisoners were taken to the bunker, where they were usually executed within a couple of days, and after a few weeks, the fugitive was brought back to the camp. If a prisoner was considering an escape, he did not share his plans with anybody because he would have been denounced. Many people were sent to the penal company for discussing ways of escaping from the camp. One of the *Kapos*, some German baron, went with a few SS men to Katowice, where he escaped via a watchmaker's shop. The SS men who had been with him were locked up in the bunker for a few days.

## 29. The first van to the SK

Spring, just like fall, was very bleak, and constant rains and impermeable soil meant that thick mud developed. Prisoners, smeared and soaked, wore wet clothes for several days.

I still worked outdoors, praying to somehow land a job inside. As a radio engineer, I dreamed of working in the radio shop, and one of my comrades, an engineer, promised to put in a word for me with the electricians' *Kapo*. I had been waiting a long time until one day I spotted him with the penal company. It turned out that all the radio engineers had been assigned to the penal company because a soldier saw the needle of a transmitter indicating London. A few days later they were drafting radio engineers, but I did not come forward. They grabbed me at the block but I said the office must have made a mistake, because I was a farmer. I took a bit of heat but I dodged this rather dangerous job.

The weak and the sick formed a huge column, used for carrying bricks and other materials from trains. I worked in this group for some two months until one day I tried my luck, and when the *Kapo* of the camp was looking for a volunteer, I signed up for an unknown job. It turned out that they needed a sweeper for cleaning the streets. I was given wheelbarrows, a broom, and a shovel, and I was assigned to a Polish *Kapo*.

This was my best job at the camp, so I clung to it desperately. All day long, I swept the streets and removed garbage to the dump in wheelbarrows. It did not mean they did not beat me during this work, but I landed relatively few punches in that job. I worked there for three months.

After the war broke out between Russia and Germany, tightly covered vans kept coming in all night long and at lunchtime. We were very surprised and curious but the mystery was not solved anytime soon. One night, some people of unknown identity were brought in vans, who were taken to the penal company after a shower. From fragments of rags and clothing, we figured out that they were Russians. After a few weeks, a large transport of Russians arrived at night. We later heard their conversations through the window. The captives, murdered in a bestial way, were ferried off at night, in an unknown direction.

## 30. Killing with injections

Sometime around June, we were told that those suffering from severe lung condition and other contagious diseases would be transported to a camp in the mountains, where the

air was good and the work was light. Many volunteered for this transport, including a few comrades of mine. A medical commission, including the camp commandant, examined the sick, who departed a few days later. As it later turned out, there were around 300 prisoners on that transport, all of whom were killed with injections.

### 31. The transport of invalids to Leipzig

In the middle of July, it was announced that all invalids, both those disabled in war and those incapacitated at the camp, who suffered from serious conditions, could sign up for a transport to Leipzig. Rysiek, my best friend who I was inseparable from during my entire time at the camp, joined the invalids because he had phlegmon in his right leg following some disciplinary action. After treatment, the leg was bent and shorter. Other than that, he was fine and he worked indoors, so he had every chance of surviving the camp. We were not always at the same block, having been separated, but thanks to our cleverness and friendship, everyday either of us knew where the other was and what he did. After they were examined by the commission, more or less the same as previously, they were dressed in their own clothes and marched off the camp around midnight. I saw Rysiek as he limped on, a wide smile on his face. My best friend departed, but we had made a vow that whoever got out first would notify the other's family about their time at the camp. After I was released, as soon as I was strong enough, I went to see his sister, and she showed me a telegram which read that Rysiek had died in Auschwitz in the second half of September – which is absolutely impossible. If he had been at the camp, he would have notified me for sure. Only later did I learn that the entire transport of around 500 invalids was suffocated in Birkenau, near Auschwitz.

### 32. Dividing the camp, setting up a new camp for captives

In September, transports of Russian prisoners of war to the penal company intensified, and carts with corpses would go out also during the day. The camp authorities separated our camp with a high electric fence, so that nine buildings made up the *Kriegsgefanenarbeitslager* [POWs' camp] and the remaining buildings, situated on the right side of the fence, were our concentration camp.

One kilometer outside the camp, a special bathhouse and dressing room were set up, from which naked prisoners were driven to the camp in groups of four. Some of the captives

were set aside and sent to the penal company, since they were said to be the NKVD men, but later it turned out they were ordinary prisoners who stood out with better body build and health.

The POWs at the camp were tortured no less intensively than we were. The food they would get was even worse and there was less of it. The mortality rate at that camp was truly astonishing, and new transports kept arriving. After I was released, the camp was moved to a newly-built establishment near Auschwitz, which was made of light concrete. There, the remaining POWs were exterminated very quickly.

### 33. Engineering the Soła river and working gravel

One of the hardest jobs was engineering the Soła river. It caused many casualties. This was a daylong job, in water reaching your armpits, and the warm-up tempo for the soaked prisoners was rather quick. If a prisoner was moving too slowly, an amicable *Kapo* would get on his shoulders and order that he be taken on a stroll in the river. When the poor prisoner could walk no more and he tripped, then the *Kapo* pushed him underwater, so he could see how the water tasted, kept him like that for a couple of minutes, and then the prisoner, unconscious, was carried to the shore, where he was given the kiss of life, but sometimes he was left without any help. Working gravel was done in a more or less similar fashion if there was water. In any case, the work was very hard and the returning groups carried many dead every day.

### 34. An accident during weeding beetroots

A few large groups of a hundred would go to work a few kilometers outside the camp to weed beetroots and Swedish turnip. We worked just by the tracks. Once, a German Red Cross train was passing slowly, carrying soldiers wounded in battle. A comrade of mine rose from his knees and, gesticulating in a bizarre fashion, started to shout and laugh, saying that the Krauts would soon go to hell. Driven mad, the SS men and *Kapos* waded into us, crushing and kicking everybody. We brought a lot of the dead back to the camp, where the commandant was already waiting, who then, without wasting too many words, sent one hundred people to the penal company. It was the hundred to which that prisoner belonged. As regards the rest of us, the *Kapos* and SS men had it in for us all week long.

### 35. Workshops

To have a job in the workshops was the dream of the masses. Each of us was eager to work there, be it a skilled worker or a non-skilled one. There was a strict limit on the number of prisoners allowed in the workshops, and when somebody died or fell ill, your connections helped you get in. Many good specialists died working outdoors and the workshops were manned with favorites, who had gotten there one way or another. When the camp for the POWs was set up, the street sweepers' unit was downsized because the area to clean was reduced. I had nothing to pay my *Kapo* with, so I was fired. For a few days, I would line up with my former group and after the muster I moved wheelbarrows around the camp. The *Kapo* bumped into me a few times and took away the wheelbarrows and other tools from me. Then, I was helped by a comrade of mine who was posted at the gate, collecting bikes from SS men. He told me to come to the gate after the roll call to help him clean the bikes. This job was unofficial and I was not subordinated to anybody. My comrades envied me a job that easy, which was also very safe because it was done under the supervision of the butchers themselves. After the morning roll call, everybody formed groups and marched off to their labor sites. The defilade took place in the yard before one of the senior prisoners, who recorded the numbers in a report, and then you defiladed before the commandant and the band. It was a really bad piece of luck that the commandant himself was to receive reports and take down the numbers. When I saw the commandant in the yard and the *Kapos* everywhere, it was impossible to slink away, my heart was in my mouth... In the meantime, one after another, the groups were coming up to the commandant and reporting their *kommandos* and the number of workers. I lined up with the sweepers, but their *Kapo* moved me aside, laughing, so I came up to a few other groups, begging them to take me in – all in vain. Finally, I came back and stood with the sweepers. They pointed their fingers at me and laughed their heads off. I thought I would go crazy, the pounding in my head almost exploded my skull, in a moment the entire camp would be watching a show starring myself. The sweepers were already marching toward the commandant, looking at me. When it was time, I sprang into the basic position, turned right, and, soaked with sweat, moved forward with a springy step, and approached the commandant going in a long semicircle, maintaining the regulation distance and taking off my cap in an exceptionally effective fashion. I stopped in front of the commandant, turned in his direction, and said, with a low and serious voice, that this was the bike cleaners' *kommando* (*Farradputzer*), which numbered one. I looked the bloody commandant in the

face as he examined me, and the prisoner taking the notes took a moment, not knowing where to put me down. He asked if such a *kommando* existed, to which I replied, all the time looking at the commandant, that there was one, indeed. The commandant nodded his head. Hundreds of prisoners were watching, and afterward, there was no end to the congratulations I received. A few days later, the deputy commandant gave me his bike to clean and said something; I replied that I did not understand and he smacked me in the face and said he did not want to see me at the gate again. I wandered around for a few days and then the *Scharführer* from the gunsmith's shop said he needed a gunsmith. I knew nothing about weapons beyond what I had learned serving in the military, and since I had served in the communications regiment, I could only, more or less, take apart a rifle. Given the need and the necessity to find a job in view of the approaching winter, I ignored the fact that nobody at the camp had identified himself as a gunsmith. After a short exam, which came off excellently (I believe in miracles), I worked with another prisoner under lock and key in a huge cell. Our predecessors were dead, having disappeared in mysterious circumstances. I resigned myself to the fact that there was no escaping the chimney and I kept working, thanking God for his heavenly mercy.

### 36. Building new blocks

The most numerous of all the working units was the bricklayers' group. This group even enjoyed some privileges, such as additional rations of bread or soup. I worked in this unit for a few weeks until my strength gave out. Under the supervision of a Polish prisoner-engineer, new living quarters for prisoners were being raised. For his work on that front, the engineer was released from the camp and then he returned a couple of times to conduct an inspection. The new buildings were spacious and more comfortable than the old blocks.

### 37. New block amenities

New block amenities included, in the first place, a sewer system, spacious and rather comfortable toilets, and washrooms with a lot of faucets. The floors were made of a mixture tinted with a red paste, three-tiered bunks were introduced, as well as cupboards for small items and tables with benches to sit on during lunch. We, the old camp prisoners used to the former hardships, felt somewhat out of place in the new blocks, where this time it was cleanliness and special regulations that gave us a hard time.

### 38. The Red Cross international commissions

On a few occasions, the camp was visited by international commissions, which were given a tour of the camp in a very skillful way, as they were only shown things that were actually not there. With the festively-dressed band playing, the commission was led down streets sprinkled with white sand to the canteen, the kitchen (the lunch was so tasty that day), and to the most presentable block. Near other blocks, to prevent any curious individuals from peeping in, signs were installed which warned against the spotted typhus epidemic inside. Groups of the sick, which sometimes spent long hours in the freezing cold of minus twenty degrees Celsius, buckets of water poured on them from above, were moved to the rear part of the camp. Groups which had to work in the open were dressed in clean clothes.

### 39. Special penal labor on Sundays

For lesser infractions or for having your number taken down by a *Kapo* for a moment's rest during work, you were sentenced to a few Sundays of special penal labor, together with the penal company. Since it was Sunday, many SS men came to watch our work, and every one of them had something to say or to explain to the victim he targeted. Whatever these Hitlerite barbarians did, it was in cooperation with the rest of their comrades, in a jocular atmosphere.

### 40. Mass graves and constant executions in the SK

We saw vans drive through the gate of the penal company, and later entire transports of Russian POWs and Poles from other military camps, who were placed in the bunkers under the penal company. There, the degenerate Hitlerites, armed with horsewhips, pistols, and other instruments of torture, brought a gruesome martyr's death to hundreds of thousands of people. When the usual carts pulled by the prisoners struggled to keep up with removing the murdered, a special tractor with two trailers was assigned, which operated all day long, ferrying the corpses off the camp. Being designated to the freedom block, I worked in a group of around fifty or forty prisoners; in the morning, we would march four kilometers outside the camp in order to dig up huge pits beyond the depopulated villages, among forests and fields. Usually, they were pits fifteen meters

wide, twenty-five meters long, and more than three meters deep. The tractor with trailers loaded with corpses to the brim came a few times a day, the murdered were thrown into the pits, and when the heap was one meter short of reaching the surface, lime and soil were poured onto the bodies and the surface was then leveled. During those few weeks when I worked at the graves, 25,000 people murdered in the penal company had been buried that way.

A small shed by the road was our refuge for half an hour during which we drank coffee. Once, an SS man found there a middle-sized painting of the Black Madonna of Częstochowa. Laughing profusely and jumping with joy at laying his hands on such a precious item; he placed the painting on the shed, walked some eight meters away, and started to shoot. We stood in silence watching, happy that the lousy blasphemer could not hit the painting. After he emptied the magazine, he called to the other SS men, who then took their turns. After each of them had fired a few shots, it turned out that all of them had missed. The painting stood on the shed, left unscathed by the bullets of the blasphemers. A quiet prayer rippled through the awestruck prisoners.

#### 41. Freedom block

Unexpectedly, my name was read out after the evening roll call as one to be transferred to the freedom block. Initially, prisoners were released straight from the blocks, but this strategy proved off the mark, since prisoners, typically bearing marks from the camp discipline, were set free, becoming living proof of what the Hitlerite system was. A new, special block was set up, called the freedom block, which was separated from the rest.

The quarantine in the freedom block lasted from two to four weeks. In extraordinary cases, if the prisoner to be released suffered from more severe conditions or injuries, he would spend up to several weeks in the block. This block also housed prisoners who were incarcerated at the camp for between three and six weeks for failing to report to work, escaping from the workplace, or extending their leave. Rods or horsewhips were not used in this block, and blows were most often dealt with a hand. We were not escorted to work at the point of a rifle, the only personnel assigned being a few SS men with pistols. And, most importantly, whoever had cigarettes could smoke them even during work. At first, the freedom block was

block 1, then 19a, and most recently – when I was about to be released – block 11a, a story above the penal company.

#### 42. Freedom commission, bathing, one's own clothes

One day before my release, in the morning, we formed a row, came outside, and stood by the wall. On command, we had to defecate on a paper and then show the content to the SS man who was watching us. Next day, naked, we stood before a military commission, in the basic position, showing the spaces between our fingers, our legs. I stood before the commission. God, and what if they don't clear me, what if they find something! When I stood with my back to the officer who examined me closely, I suddenly felt a cold finger on my right shoulder. My legs wobbled, and he mumbled something and told me to step away. I thought that was it, but the good doctor explained that he had ordered putting a plaster on the small wound I had on my shoulder. My cankered legs were well powdered and my wounds and ulcers went unnoticed. After the examination, I scurried to the bathhouse, this time not rushed by anybody. Then, I ran to the attic, where my clothes hung in a paper bag. Because I was arrested in August, I had a sports outfit, while the December air was properly cold. But who would have minded the cold. The very thought that in a few hours I would see my folks kept me warm.

#### 43. The pact and the farewell speech

I collected my watch and money from the storeroom, while my wedding ring was only shown to me – I was told that gold was being confiscated. Next, we spent around an hour and a half in front of the commandant's office outside the gate, waiting to be dismissed. We were read the terms of release and provisions, which we were to unconditionally observe. These provisions were more or less as follows: that we would not make any claims against the authorities for any personal items lost in the deposit; next, that we would be helping the Germans identify the enemies of Germany and never go against the German nation; and that as soon as we arrived at our hometowns, we would report at the local Gestapo bureau and the *Arbeitsamt*; and that we would work for the good of all Germans. After signing the document, the commandant came, examined us carefully, and gave the farewell speech, which he concluded by saying that if anybody should ask about what the Auschwitz camp was like, we were to kindly tell him he could come, and then he would see for himself.

#### 44. At the Auschwitz depot

After the commandant's speech, one of the SS men took our *entlassungsscheins* [release certificates] and we marched toward the depot. We carried one of our comrades who had passed out for lack of strength. At the depot, the SS man who was escorting us handed the release documents to each of us. We were surrounded by people who gave us cigarettes, bread, whatever they had. After half an hour, this group of former Auschwitz prisoners, which numbered fifty or sixty people, departed in the direction of Warsaw.

#### 45. In Katowice

At the Katowice station, we had to change trains, the one to Warsaw being scheduled to arrive within an hour. I went to see the city. Outside the station, a young man approached, looked at me, and said I must be coming from a camp. I was afraid of everybody, I thought everybody was a secret Gestapo agent. The young man wanted to give me money, I refused, so he gave me a voucher for a bread roll and said that opposite the station, in a German restaurant, there was a waiter, Teofil or Adolf, and if I told him I was from Auschwitz, he would sell me some soup. The room was bulging at the seams, it was noisy and packed full of German soldiers and trainmen. We ate the soup at a record-breaking pace, and after a moment the waiter gave each of us another plate. We grabbed big bites of bread. At one point, I noticed that complete silence had descended on the room. I raised my eyes from the plate and looked at the table opposite. They were watching us. They were watching us from everywhere. I felt embarrassed, I remembered that people use knives.

#### 46. On the train

We did not board the same wagon, for fear that the Gestapo might be waiting at the station to tell us to get back because there was maybe a mistake. There were two or three of us in one compartment, as we were nearing our beloved Warsaw. The other passengers gave us whatever they had as gifts.

#### 47. Warsaw

Around 3 a.m., we arrived at the Main Station [Dworzec Główny]. Most of my comrades were of the opinion that we should immediately, already that night, report at Szucha Avenue, and

go home only then. My three comrades from Praga and I, ignoring the outrage of the others, got on a train to the Eastern Station [Dworzec Zachodni] because I was not sure if I would get to see my folks after entering through the gate in Szucha Avenue.

#### 48. Crossing the threshold

After I left the Eastern Station, I was walking down the streets of Praga, checking if some gendarme was not coming from around the corner to turn me back. The gate. I rang the bell. The old caretaker, shuffling forward and coughing, asks who's there. I give my name. He wants to hear it again. I ask him to open already. He opened the gate and grabbed me by the neck, kissing me as if I was his child. I was really moved by the old-timer. I knocked at my door and window, my wife asked a few times who was there, and I – silent – stood there and gazed at my wife, wondering if this was a dream or a true miracle. Now I believed that it had passed, that I was free.

#### 49. Reporting

Next day, after a good night's sleep, having eaten well, washed ourselves, and rested, dressed in winter clothes, we went to Szucha Avenue around noon. We passed a big yard, into a large hall, and there we received an entry pass and got to the second floor, room 113. We fielded a few records-related questions and were ordered to report to the *Arbeitsamt*. Next week, an officer at the *Arbeitsamt* was surprised that I looked so well.

I did look well, I was fat, almost round, and as soft as a puffball, turgid. If my belly was prodded with a finger, a small concavity developed, which then gradually leveled off. A couple dozen ulcers on each leg healed slowly. At night, I was drenched in my own sweat, I was sweating buckets. And then nightmares would ruin my sleep for a few months. I would suddenly awaken, spluttering some camp formulas. Scores of people would visit, asking about their relatives, but I treated them with reserve, as if they were with the Gestapo intelligence. I was anxious in the extreme, a lunatic almost. I was slowly recovering.

After three months, I was well. A year after I returned, my bones started to act up. It turned out that I was suffering from spinal curvature, damage to the pelvis minor, and blood clots (hematomas), which from time to time caused the paralysis of certain muscles. After my return, another two transports were released, and after the final transport, there were no

more wholesale releases, just individuals. In total, 315 prisoners were released according to standard procedures and returned to Warsaw. As soon as the tables turned on the Germans, they ceased to release prisoners altogether, and they surely regretted, those Hitlerite barbarians, that they had let go of so many witnesses to their atrocities.

Death to the Hitlerite barbarians.

Warsaw, 10 February 1945

*Schutzhäftling Pole*

Górski Antoni

Camp no 2 191, block B

Warsaw, Praga, Otwocka Street 7, flat 27

Below, as a supplement to my memoir about my time at the Auschwitz concentration camp, which I submitted on 10 February 1945 to the Warsaw Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes, is a list of the Hitlerite butchers and other German patsies, and a list of the prisoners who were at the camp with me and whom I knew, as well as a description of what happened to them.

The list of butchers:

FRITZ – camp commandant in 1940 and 1941, dry, aged around 48, a particular sadist, allegedly killed in Warsaw in the Schicht factory in 1942.

PALICZ – *Rapportführer* [report leader], rather plump, with fat legs, a typical Kraut with a round, shining face, aged around 37, the man for the bunker stuff.

LALKA ['doll'] – *Scharführer*, slim, fit, around 23, always carried a horsewhip and walked with a wolfdog, he would torture the defenseless prisoner in a sophisticated fashion, using the dog and the whip

WIECZOREK – *Lagerältester* [camp senior] *I*, big as a seaman, athletically built, a hardened criminal, aged around 46, reportedly of Polish origins, but he never spoke Polish, he beat prisoners very scrupulously, bald, with a wrinkled face.

BRODZIŃSKI or BRODNIEWICZ – *Lageraltester II*, shorter than the previous one, a brunet, swarthy, handsome, also one of the first to arrive from Germany as a hardened criminal, but he was definitely a Pole, he spoke Polish when there were no Germans around. He was strict handing out punishment, but he had mercy on the severely sick and was then fair. Around 40 years of age.

MIKI – Kapo and *Lageraltester*, tall, with a slim face, around 36, had spent 11 years at various camps, spoke Polish with a rural accent and as though lisping a little, a comedian but also a cruel sadist who beat prisoners in a frenzied manner.

RUDI – Kapo enlisted from the criminals who arrived later, tall, swarthy brunet with blue eyes, around 22, liked to beat prisoners with an oaken rod he always had on him, attacking people from behind without a warning.

ADOLF – tall, reddish-blond, a hothead, a five-star scumbag and a sadist with respect to punishment, around 35, usually worked out of the *Industriehof*.

KAROLEK – block senior at block 8, a Silesian, a big blond around 35, at first a cruel sadist, and later, after he was sent to the SK himself for drunkenness, he improved.

His deputy, a man from Karaków, outperformed his comrade; of average height, dark-haired, around 24.

PAULEK – room orderly at room four, a short and slim Silesian, around 27, kind of retarded, a cruel sadist who lost it when he beat somebody and clobbered the victim in a frenzy.

SZKANDERA – room orderly at room 8, tall, resembling a greyhound, with a huge, thin, bony face with a protruding mandible, around 38, a former Polish policeman brought on the first Warsaw transport. A lousy sadist who murdered a lot of people.

WIŚNIEWSKI or WIŚNIOWSKI – room orderly at block 8, a short blond, around 32, slim, with prominent cheekbones.

ŁAGODA – a Pole from the first Warsaw transport, worked as a helper of the bricklayers' Kapo; he was a bricklayer himself, during work he could assert himself and properly beat his comrades on the slightest pretext. At his block, 10a, he worked cleaning the bathroom, where he achieved distinction on the front of murdering. Released in March 1942. He has a house at the corner of Otwocka and Łomżańska Street in Praga.

GURBIEL – room orderly at block 11 (*Korperschwach*), a Pole from the second Warsaw transport, a good boy at first, but when he had served as a room orderly for a while, he cruelly tortured the sick, happily using his arms and legs. He is a comrade of mine, maybe he had to do it, but maybe a bowl of soup should not have been enough to persuade him to become an orderly. He lives in Żolibóz, at Mickiewicza Street 16.

Deputy block senior or *Schreiber* [clerk] at block 3a, allegedly Deputy Justice Minister, a Pole, at the turn of 1940, slim, well-built, tall, around 30. He aided mightily in dispensing the Hitlerite justice.

And many others, whose names and nicknames I do not recall, but I will always recognize them in photos.

The list of prisoners whom I knew:

WOJCIECHOWSKI – a lawyer, son of the president of the Republic of Poland, brought on the first Warsaw transport, down with *durchfall* a couple of times, died in spring 1941 at the infirmary.

SKUPIŃSKI – a judge of a Warsaw court, died of exhaustion in fall 1940.

GRUSZCZYŃSKI – lawyer, tortured in the yard after a prisoner escaped from the block; died in summer 1941.

GIEYSZTOR – commandant of the fire department in Warsaw, died of bad metabolic conversion, not ingesting any food in winter 1940.

NIEPOKOJCZYCKI – director of the City Trams in Warsaw, he was at the camp in 1941, they said he had died in the hospital.

TOŁŁOCZKO – a radio engineer, worked at the radio workshop, sent to the SK with the entire personnel, then transported on the invalids' transport to Leipzig in July 1941, but most likely gassed in a chamber together with the entire transport.

DĄBROWSKI, Ryszard – around 27, short, dark hair, blue eyes; also ferried off on the invalids' transport.

WOYDYNO – son of a general, around 18, very sick, reported by Gurbiel at block 11, died a few days later in the yard in winter 1941.

STAŻAK – with the Ministry of Communications, a famous figure during the Sanation period, died of a heart condition in fall 1941.

CHRÓŚCIELEWSKI – a lawyer, died in the block for the sick in winter 1940

SAWICKI – an officer with the Commerce Bank [Bank Handlowy] in Warsaw, brought from the Montelupich prison in Kraków, died in the block for the sick in 1940.

WARCHOŁ – station master at the Wołomin or Tłuszcz station, died after he was beaten up for stealing Christmas packages from his comrades at block 8.

WARCHOŁ – his son, died around the same time, in the SK, for withdrawing money from the depository in the name of another prisoner.

KŁOS – a Varsovian, young, slim, down with *durchfall* all the time, died in the hospital in 1940.

ŻELICHOWSKI, Antoni – a clerk, forcibly transported to Hamburg in a very bad condition, died on the sixth day after arriving in Hamburg.

WYSOCKI, Adam – worked for a very long time in the hospital and played in the band. A former member of the Dana choir. He returned to Warsaw before I did.

JARDACZ – an artist, released before me, later disappeared in Warsaw without a trace. At Auschwitz, he gave funny talks and sang satirical songs.

SAWAN-NOWAKOWSKI – released two weeks before me.

BORKOWSKI – one of the partners in the Borkowski Brothers company, allegedly released in exchange for money after three months at Auschwitz.

SOLA – a clerk, died in the block for the sick as a result of beating and kidney disease.

BARLICKI – an MP, worked in the hosiery shop, later in the potato room, was in a rather good shape, but in spring 1941 he disappeared.

FRANKIEWICZ – a journalist from Łódź, he was the sweepers' Kapo, took great care of the priests, hiring them for the vacant posts.

DERING, Dr. – head Polish doctor at the hospital, he was there with his brother.

URBANIAK – warrant officer from the communications regiment, brought in on the Radom transport, sent to the SK, where he was murdered after a few days.

STOJEK-STOJKOWSKI – master corporal from the communications regiment, brought on the same transport, he survived two more weeks, give or take.

SCHREIBER – an old manufacturer of furnaces mostly used by the military, beaten a few times by PAULEK, died one night in winter 1941.

BANASIAK or BARTOSIAK, Teofil – brought in on the first Warsaw transport, from my first to my last day at the camp he worked as the main corpse carrier, almost all bodies passed through him. He was the person who gave me the detailed information about the murdered and where they died.

GEDYCH, Jurek – a resident of my house, brought on the second Warsaw transport, most likely died from exhaustion in the block for the sick just after Christmas in 1940.

NOWAK – a clerk, used to work in our radio shop in Trębacka Street, he was extremely exhausted and probably sent on the invalids' transport to a gas chamber.

WALC – a lawyer, brought on the first Warsaw transport, died in the block for the sick in February 1941.

KURYLUK – not his real name, a student from Gdańsk, worked in Warsaw in the Syrena travel company, around 29. Died from exhaustion in winter 1940.

KUC – principal of the Żeromski state secondary school in Kielce, survived some three months at the camp, died of a heart condition and exhaustion in fall 1941.

ŚWIĄTEK – a sergeant with the communications regiment, deported to Hamburg in April 1941.

MARCINKOWSKI – a sergeant with the communications regiment, one of the best radio operators, brought in in summer 1941, worked as an interpreter in the storerooms, he was doing kind of well.

BIMBO – a midget, circus artist, a very good lad aged around 30, worked as a mascot at the gate, prisoners owed him a lot, he was helpful and popular. He was at the camp with his younger brother. He came from Bochnia, near Kraków.

PATEJUK – brought in on the Lublin transport, a soldier from the communications regiment, aged around 27.

PENDYK – a soldier with the communications regiment, worked with the electricians.

CHASZCZEWSKI – a warrant officer with the communications regiment, worked at the sewers, had a mental breakdown, died in November 1941.

ANTONIEWICZ – owner of a furniture store in Warsaw, in Widok Street, brought on the first Warsaw transport, he had suffered from *durchfall* for a long time, died in winter 1940.

KIESZKOWSKI – administrator of the Paszków property and the assets of the Agricultural Bank [Bank Rolny], brought on the first Warsaw transport, beaten up, he was sick for a long time, I have not seen him since spring 1941.

STRÓŻYŃSKI, Józek – around 30 years of age, son of a sergeant from the communications regiment, the internment took a very heavy toll on him, released in spring 1942.

CHRÓŚCIELEWSKI, Edmund – around 28 years of age, spent around seven months at the camp, released in spring 1941.

JAWORSKI, Feliks – around 50 years of age, he was brought in the second Warsaw transport, he was sick a lot, released after fifteen months, in December 1942.

PIETRZAK, Mieczysław – arrived in the second Warsaw transport, released after fifteen months in December 1941, residing at Białostocka Street 25.

WESTRYCH – a *volksdeutsch*, resident of Pyry near Warsaw, spent a couple of months at the camp, released, he was killed near Piaseczno in 1943.

IPHORSKI – released from Auschwitz after a few months, worked for the Gestapo, killed in Warsaw, where he was director of the Jar theater.

PŁUŻYCZKA – agricultural worker from the Tarczyn area, he arrived on the second Warsaw transport and was deported to Hamburg, then to Dachau, released after twenty months, very sick.

SUSKI – owner of the soap store in Łochowska Street, he arrived on the second Warsaw transport and was deported to Hamburg, released in spring 1942.

GÓRKSI, Stanisław – arrived on the second Warsaw transport, had a long-term legs condition and most likely died in the block for the sick in winter 1941.

WISŁOCKI – a cousin of a doctor from St. Roch Hospital in Warsaw, arrived on the Radom transport in summer 1941.

And many others, whose names I cannot recall right now, but I would always recognize their photographs.

Antoni Górski