



ZOFIA FOK

1. Personal data:

Volunteer Zofia Fok, born on 16 February 1905 in Winniki near Lwów, Roman Catholic, married, [illegible].

2. Date and circumstances of arrest:

My last place of residence in Poland: Nowogródek, which is where my husband was arrested. Five days after my husband's arrest I left with my mother and children for Lwów. In order to get some information about my husband, I returned to Nowogródek on one of the first days of April. On my way back, in Nowojelnia, where I was spending the night at my friends' place, I was arrested and deported to Russia.

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

I was taken to Kazakhstan, the Aktobe Oblast, Voroshilov kolkhoz. After two months of working in the kolkhoz, I went to a village called Donskoy. Except for the brief break (I took a trip to the city with my friend's son who required medical attention), I stayed there until my departure south.

4. Description of the camp, prison:

Living conditions in the village were poor. We lived in huts. One hut often served as home to several families, as was the case with us. There were three grown-up people and four small children living in one small room. When one of us fell ill, all the others were exposed, and those who were sick had no peace and quiet.

5. Composition of the prisoners-of-war, prisoners, exiles; life in the camp, prison:

The exiles were of different nationalities: Poles, Belarussians, Jews. People differed in terms of their intellectual level, but these differences didn't affect their mutual relations. Those who were uneducated sought help and advice from the intelligentsia. Not one day passed without someone coming from a nearby kolkhoz to get medical advice (there was



a doctor among us) or to bring us some news. We maintained regular contact, cheering each other up.

In the kolkhoz we performed various types of agricultural work, dug clay, made heating fuel from animal dung and so forth. It was different in the village, where we worked as caretakers, housekeepers and seamstresses. The work was hard and our pay was very low. As regards our diet, we suffered from the lack of fat, sugar, fruit and vegetables. We wore whatever clothes we had until they were worn out.

7. The NKVD's attitude towards Poles:

The NKVD was hostile to us. Mistaken in their view of Poland, they tried to convince us of the benefits of the Soviet system.

8. Medical assistance, hospitals, mortality rate:

The mortality rate was high. Some exiles died of hunger, some of cold, and some of sickness. Those who were sick often had to do without a doctor and medicaments. Children suffered most. I heard about a household where two sick children died simply because of poor nourishment and the lack of medicaments.

9. What, if any, was your contact with the home country and your family?

I maintained contact with the home country and my family through letters. Long-awaited and full of substance, we received them once or twice a month.

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

At the end of May 1942, I left Donskoy and traveled to Jalal-Abad and then, in July of that year, to Iran where, in Pahlevi, I joined the Polish army which was being raised there at the time.

4 February 1943

