



FELIKS MACIEJEWSKI

Senior rifleman Feliks Maciejewski

After a long period spent wandering around in the regions where my family lived, I had had enough of it and decided to leave. On the way I paid a visit to my friend in Brześć, but the militia raided his flat that day and I was arrested. I was temporarily put in jail, and they launched an investigation. Five days later they sent me to the prison set up in the Bridgettine Convent, then after a month I was moved to the so-called Red prison, when my torments truly began. They would interrogate me all night long, but wouldn't tell me anything, and tortured me thus for nine months. One morning they summoned us one by one. [Illegible] cell, there were two NKVD men who read out: *as sotsial'no opasnyy element srok tri goda lagerey* [as a socially resistant element – three years in the camps]. And they ordered me to sign it.

On the second day they loaded us into wagons and our journey began. On the way we received salty fish and bread – a loaf per six people, but we received neither water nor any hot soup. Five days later, they moved us to different wagons and then our misery began, as we shared them with Bolsheviks and other bandits. They bothered us a great deal. Theft became prevalent: they threw themselves on clothes, shoes and even bread as [illegible].

It continued like this the whole way to Kotlas. There, in turn, we were plagued by cold and hunger. We slept in tents, without blankets or mattresses, and the temperatures fell to 70 degrees below zero. From there we were sent to a mine in Ukhta, where they imposed those wretched work quotas on us. And so day-by-day we were getting closer to death, and the conditions were getting worse. Out of hunger, people [illegible] and various diseases.

One morning we were standing by the gate when suddenly it was announced over a loudspeaker that the Germans were already in Russia, and some time later we learned of the Polish-Soviet Agreement. They began to release us, though only one by one. I received 45 rubles and some bread and set off on a long journey to Totskoye.