

ADAM PAWŁOWSKI

1. [Personal details:]

Private Adam Pawłowski, 32 years old, private forester.

2. [Date and circumstance of arrest:]

Arrested and deported on 26 February 1940 from the Stanisławów estate, Wasiliszki commune, Szczuczyn district, nowogródzkie voivodeship.

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

I was deported to a labor camp in Gorky Oblast, 17th Gorky labor camp. On 24 April 1940, I was deported to the Urals, to the Molotovsk oblast, Hainsk raion, Chyornaya lagpunkt, Vierkhnyaya Chyornaya labor camp.

4. [Description of the camp, prison:]

The labor camp was in the forest bordering the Chyornaya River, huge taigas and barracks surrounded with barbed wire. The living conditions were very bad. The buildings were poorly heated and full of bedbugs, cockroaches, and lice, everything was dirty. We couldn't use the bath more than once every two weeks.

5. [The composition of POWs, prisoners, exiles:]

There were 328 people in the labor camp, mostly Poles and a few Belarusians, Ukrainians. Judges, attorneys, policemen, teachers, priests, district authorities, forestry workers. Activists from Poland. Good mutual relations.

6. [Life in the camp, prison:]

Wake-up time (*padyom*) was at 5 a.m., and then breakfast made from a sort of cooked feed, as if it was for calves, without any bread. At 6 a.m. we were chased out to work in the forest. The quota was set from 4 to 12 cubic meters per person, wood for burning was 12 cubic meters per person and all other materials were from 4 to 10 cubic meters. Work continued till 9 p.m. Remuneration: those who filled the quota got 700 grams of bread and those who didn't got only 300 grams.

Food: in the morning, a cooked feed-like liquid made from rye flour; dinner – a little piece of bread if not eaten at breakfast; supper – whole oat groats, without any grease or vegetables.

Clothing: *fifayka* jacket [kufayka] (*pindzak*), trousers and slippers made of birch bark. There were no cultural events, only quotas and more quotas.

7. [The NKVD's attitude towards Poles:]

During the interrogation they tried to persuade us to sign some kind of declaration, saying that our punishment would be less severe. They were telling us to forget Poland, that it's lost forever, that it's buried twenty fathoms deep in the ground with a giant stone over it. And when I said "Even though we will be no more, Poland was and will be bigger still, and will stretch from sea to sea", the camp commandant slapped me so hard in the face that I collapsed to the ground. Colonel Trepko stood up for me, but it only resulted in the punishment cell for both of us.

8. [Medical assistance, hospitals, mortality rate:]

There was no medical aid; in our camp many died because of hunger and scurvy: Łasica, Zankiewicz, Wojciechowski, Zając, Barwiński, Jastrzębski and many others whose names I can't recall.

9. [Was there any chance to get in contact with one's country and family?]

I didn't have any contact with my country or my family until my release.

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

I was set free on 28 August 1941, and upon my release I learned that my family was in the same raion, in the Dziedovka settlement. I went to them and from there we set off. The journey was difficult, because we were 750 kilometers from railways and we couldn't go by river, because boats could navigate only in spring, in May. So we bought some wood for six rubles for a cubic meter, made rafts and sailed down from Dziedovka settlement with 127 families. Only five families refused to sail with us. We all sailed down the Chorna River, then along the Vishana River, Kama River and Volga River and finally reached Kuybyshev. The journey went on for 11 weeks and many people died of hunger or drowned. In Kuybyshev, we learned that there was a Polish outpost in the city. They directed us from Kuybyshev to

Bukhara. From Bukhara they sent us to Kazakhstan, to Chkalov kolkhoz, Jambylska oblast, Korday raion. I worked in the kolkhoz till 24 February 1942. On 26 February 1942, I joined the army's 28th Infantry Regiment, 10th Division, in Lugovoy, Jambylska oblast.

10 March 1943