

AFANAZY GAWRYLUK

I was arrested on 13 June 1940 [in the village of] Szczebra for belonging to an organization.

I was held in prison in Lwów for six months, where there were 60 of us men in a single cell. We received some soup twice a day, 600 grams of bread, and tea with no sugar in the morning. The soup was rather watery. We slept on the floor, next to one another on our sides, so that if someone wanted to turn onto their other side we all had to do it at the same time. We also had some pleasant play three times a day: killing lice. Despite this, we went outside by day for just a 10-minute walk around a fenced-off area. I was summoned for interrogation 20 times, and each time I was beaten with fists below the ribs, and on the neck and throat.

After six months I was transferred to a camp in Starobilsk. There were twenty thousand of us there, a thousand of us in a single barrack, and we slept on bunk beds. The food was the same as in the prison. I stayed there until 1 April 1941. On 2 April I was sentenced to five years, and taken away to the distant north. The journey took a month, I travelled locked in a freight car. We received some bread and salty fish during the journey, but no water. There were 38 people in the railcar.

We were sent to work as soon as we arrived in the north. They gave us boots made of tires. If you had your own leather boots, they stole them from you and gave you rubber boots. The work was quite hard, I carried dirt in wheelbarrows over a distance of 50 to 300 meters. The quota was two to five cubic meters and you had to dig it by yourself. In exchange, you were given soup twice a day and 750 grams of bread. If you did not meet the quota, you received only 300 grams of bread, soup once a day, and some *kipiatok* [boiling water]. The soup was made of some salty fish. You worked 12 hours without a rest and when you got back from work you went to sleep in the clothes you had worn at work. There were no days off, if you were sick, they never acknowledged it, so you had to go to work anyway. I worked until total exhaustion.

Following the Polish-Soviet agreement, I was released from the labor camp in Komi ASSR. I returned from the labor camp by train, travelling two to three days at a time without any bread or even warm water. I went directly to the place where a Polish army

was being organized in Kermine, where I was drafted into the 7th Division, 7th Light Artillery Regiment.

Bombardier Afanazy Gawryluk