

KAZIMIERZ ŁUCENIA

Class 7

Horodło, 17 June 1946

During the slaughter of Poles

It was in 1943 and 1944, during the slaughter of Poles. We went to Stęrzyce, where there was a Polish institute. There were terrible attacks by the Ukrainians. Mom was wounded the next day. The Polish police was disarmed and we went to Bielin where a Polish partisan unit was being formed.

There were happy and sad days. Happy days were for example when the Poles won a wonderful victory over the Germans and Ukrainians. Even though there were few Poles and many enemies, the Poles came out victorious.

But there were also sad days. It was Easter Saturday. I went to the church to have [our food] blessed and then went back home. Less than half an hour had passed and we saw a fleet of planes just starting to bomb Bielin. How the people screamed, the horses whinnied, the cattle lowed! But the booming and whistling drowned it all out. I cannot describe it. Everyone stopped where they were standing. I managed to run from the house to the orchard and I fell down on the ground there. Bielin was on fire, the smoke was blinding and the bullets and shrapnel whistled. That lasted some two hours.

The planes flew away and a clamour went up: the crying of women, the commands of the elders, everything mixed together. Some ran away to the forest, others stayed. It was quiet for the rest of the day. We went to see the burned horses, cows, fruit, there were several hundred of them. And that is how we spent that frightful and sad day.

The next day, that is Easter Sunday, the planes came back. But there were more of them this time. We were lucky enough to survive it, but we fled to the forest after the first pass. Only a few people stayed in the village. The Germans soon came to Bielin, but the Poles heroically resisted. When more tanks and planes came, the Poles had to retreat. That was how the Germans took village after village.

One time, the Germans raided unexpectedly. They took my father, our horses, all of our baggage and killed our cow. We had only the clothes that we were wearing, but they almost killed us because they even shot at the house. We crossed the Bug river when the Germans broke the partisans.