



BEREK BALTER

Field Bakery no. 101

Official stamp, 5 March 1943

1. Personal data:

Rifleman Berek Balter, born on 15 January 1909, a baker by occupation, married, education – 4 classes of elementary school.

2. Date and circumstances of arrest:

I was arrested on 20 June 1940 in Brześć nad Bugiem.

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

I was detained for two months in the prison in Brześć nad Bugiem, whereafter they deported me to *Sidiór*, in the north of the USSR, where I was forced to work in the forests.

4. Description of the camp:

The camp in the north of the USSR comprised barracks made from planks; I slept on a mean bed without even a straw mattress. The building was infested with rats, bugs and lice.

5. Prisoners by nationality:

The prisoners of the camps in which I was detained were Poles.

6. Life in the camp:

We worked to fulfill norms specified by the camp administration: we had to cut up three cubic meters of birch, carry the wood over half a kilometer, and arrange it in meters. We were not allowed to rest – there were no holidays and no Sundays off. Our reward would be 500 grams of bread and two portions of hot food (half a liter each) per day. I was unable to carry out the norm demanded of me.



7. Attitude of the authorities, NKVD towards Poles:

If we failed to fulfill the quota, we would be beaten and locked up in a punishment cell; in addition, our ration would be reduced to 300 grams of bread and half a liter of fasting soup.

8. Medical care and the mortality rate:

The doctors were Poles, but they were unable to provide any assistance due to a lack of medical supplies.

9. Was it at all possible to keep in touch with the home country and your family? If yes, then what contacts were permitted?

Usually, we were not allowed to write letters, although sometimes this was permitted, albeit under strict control.

10. When were you released and how did you get through to the Polish Army?

On 1 September 1941, I was released on the basis of the amnesty and left for Totskoye, where I enlisted in the Polish Army.