

STANISŁAW SANKOWSKI

Questionnaire filled out by a former Soviet prisoner of war

1. Personal data:

Platoon Officer Cadet Stanisław Sankowski, born on 8 May 1906, teacher, married.

2. Date and circumstances of arrest:

Taken captive on 17 September 1939 in Baranowicze, together with the whole unit.

3. Name of the camp:

Until 1 October 1939: in Kozelsk; until 7 May 1940: in Krivoy Rog; until 23 June 1941: near Gródek Jagielloński, and later in Starobilsk.

4. Description of the camp, prison:

Despite the winter, the barracks were made of single planks, fenced with double barbed wire, with four towers at each corner.

5. The composition of prisoners of war, inmates, exiles:

Only prisoners of war, mostly privates.

6. Life in the camp, prison etc.:

We were forced to do hard work. Whoever did not work, did not receive food. Forced attendance at agitation meetings and anti-religious meetings, criticizing military superiors (officers) and the Polish government. It was forbidden to wear badges, emblems, or even epaulettes. Resisters were locked up and taken away. When an eagle was found during the search, the NKVDs would throw it on the ground and trample it.

7. The NKVD's attitude towards the Polish people:

Very hostile, especially during the first months. Jews, Ukrainians, and Belarusians were favored, there were even cases of granting 10-day leaves, but never for Polish people. An

attempt was made to force the prisoners to admit to a different nationality through various promises, there were even cases when the prisoner of war was registered as having Ukrainian or Belarusian nationality against his will.

8. Medical assistance, hospitals, mortality rate:

Relatively good, but dependent on the NKVD authorities. There was a set "quota" of people who could be released from work. Even the sick ones were forced to work if the quota was exceeded.

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

Until 22 June 1941, I exchanged letters with my family.

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

On 24 August 1941, after [being examined by] a military commission in Starobilsk, I was sent back to Tock [Totskoye].