

## ANTONI BARANOWSKI

**Cadet Antoni Baranowski, born in 1905, master carpenter, married.**

[I was] arrested on 8 November 1940 and imprisoned in [illegible] on Kazimierzowska Street until 5 April 1941, after which I was deported to the Starobielsk gulag.

In a cell intended for 20 prisoners, there were [now] over 120 people. There were Poles, Jews, Ukrainians and also Russians in the cell. Interpersonal relations—good. The prison guards were very unfavorably disposed towards us. Indeed, on Christmas Eve, we got a good whipping for our Christmas packages—they dragged some people out into the corridor where they gave them a thrashing. There was no hygiene at all. I was locked up in the Starobielsk gulag for three months, we were allowed a walk once a day, for one hour.

Next, they put us in the Ural [illegible] Karelino. We were located there in barracks, and slept on bare boards. We did 12 hours of work and sometimes 24. Our work involved breaking, weighing and loading [rocks] onto wagons. The work was very hard, there was no question of making the quota, so we got some watery soup twice a day and 350 g of bread. We were particularly surprised by the mosquitoes that bit us savagely during our work. We were not given any clothing. Camaraderie [was] good.

There was some medical assistance, but only when this person was already a goner. There was a hospital and a so-called *slabosilka* [for those too weak to work]. There were fatalities, but I do not remember the names.

I did not have any communication with the homeland.

I was released on 1 September 1941, I was sent to Turinska, where I worked for a month, after which we were called up to the army and sent to Sverdlovsk, where a Polish army was allegedly being organized. Here 300 of us gathered and we made our way towards Kuybyshev. On the way we found out that a Polish army unit was being organized in Buzuluk, so there we went on the same transport. In Buzuluk we were informed that there was nothing left there anymore and that an army was being formed in Tashkent. Because the train did not stop in Tashkent, we lost all hope. The transport stopped at the station

in Kogan, where news reached us that they were taking us to dig canals on the Amu-Darya instead of going to the army. On the way, we began to feel the lack of food and we had to follow the direction we were ordered. We sat by the river Amu-Darya for three days without food. We were threatened that if we did not load ourselves onto the barges, we would not get any food. As soon as we got on the barges, we received 5 kg of bread per head. The trip was supposed to take five days, but we traveled nine days without getting any food along the way. After arriving at Nukus, our destination, we were dropped off on an island, where we sat for one whole day. The transport commander made an agreement with the Soviet authorities and we got a kilogram of bread. Some Polish cuisine was organized here, and we received soup and 600 grams of bread once a day. After a week, we were placed in collective farms where we picked *khlopoka* [cottonwood], in exchange for 600 g of flour per person. We worked here for three weeks, after which we heard about the formation of the Polish army. The Soviet authorities put us on the barges and we headed for Qarshi [?]. We received 700 g of bread for eight days, but in fact we travelled 14 days in harsh conditions. After arriving in Qarshi [?], we were directed to Bukhara, where we were again placed in collective farms. We spent seven weeks at the farm, after which we were notified to appear at the conscription commission in the main town of the region. After the commission, seven days later, we were called up for the army. About 150 of us formed a group in this small town and went on foot to Bukhara. We stayed there for nine days, after which we were sent to Guzor and joined the ranks of the Polish army on 15 February 1942.