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Prisoners of war russian empire

Archive 1914-1918: during the First World War, 10 million people, soldiers or civilians, were captured and sent to detention camps. The belligerent countries involved provide a list of prisoners for the ICRC, which makes index cards for each prisoner and prisoner. Now, you can search through all 5 million of them. Read more... What is available online? All individual ICRC records relating to the First World War (prisoner index files and their related lists) have been digitized and can now be accessed directly on this site. Nevertheless, some imperfections remain in indexing certain lists, such as references contained in the civil internees list of Central Powers, for example. This error will be fixed as soon as our technical capabilities and resources are available. Thank you for your patience and understanding. Soviet prisoners of war RU Soviet interns in Poland in 1919 - 1921 As a result of the defeat of central countries, prisoners of war, interns and those who were forcibly taken to labor camps - citizens of the former Russian empire - began to return to their homelands (Russia, Ukraine, Poland, the Baltic states). The first groups on the land of the Kingdom of Poland, freed from German occupation, had already emerged in mid-November 1918, the period of the establishment of an independent Polish state center of power. The Russians rushed home mainly using communication routes through Poland, from west to east. The first stage for them, before their journey further east, was Warsaw, the main railway hub, where they gathered at the post-German barracks in Powązki. Inter alia's first transport of Russian prisoners of war departed Kalisz for Warsaw immediately after the German evacuation on November 14. The transport was used by Russians to travel home after being detained at the POW camp in Szczypiorno. In general, on the days of 14–16 November 1918 alone, 14 thousand prisoners of war were sent from Kalisz. The process of evacuating Russian prisoners of war and labor from Germany to the east took place spontaneously and unchally from the German authorities. Thus they seek to rid themselves of those they no longer want to hold, especially given the difficulties with the provisions and, as Poland suspects, they are also motivated by a desire to destabilize the situation in revving Poland. From 15 November 1918 to 20 January 1919 a total of 281 thousand Russians reached Poland. At the request of the Polish authorities, the Triple Entente countries banned, starting January 22, 1919, directing transportation with Russian prisoners of war and laborers to the east through Polish territory. At this time the Polish-Soviet war began, which was initially not very intense, which is also why the number of prisoners of war on both sides is not very large. In November 1919 (i.e. during the the battle is suspended and the prognosis is underway in there were 7,096 Bolshevik prisoners of war in Poland (this is the number given in Polish military documents since then). This issue was not touched during the talks in Mikashevichy. The Poles sought to ensure proper living conditions for Bolshevik prisoners of war in the camps. It's not always possible. It should be noted that, during the autumn and winter periods at the turn of 1919 and 1920, some camps experienced difficulties in food supplies and sanitary conditions for their prisoners. This was noticed, inter alia, by the Polish press and the Sejm, whose delegation visited individual POW camps and presented its report at an open-air conference. As a result of the intervention of lawmakers, in the spring of 1920, the TUNT situation clearly improved in the camps, and the Bolshevik TUNT was directed to work in agriculture and state institutions. In this way their living conditions (both alimentary and sanitary) increase significantly. Extensive problems with Bolshevik prisoners of war began for polish authorities only after the victorious Battle of Warsaw. As a result more than 40 thousand Red Army soldiers eventually interned in Poland, and continued military action added significantly to this number. After the Polish-Bolshevik battle was over (i.e. after October 18, 1920), Poland ended with ca. 80,000 Soviet prisoners of war. A further 25 or so thousand Soviet prisoners of war have volunteered for the anti-Bolshevik military detachment formed in Poland. The Poles have had extensive difficulties in dealing with their fate, especially regarding autumn and winter. Thus the Polish authorities are also faced with other important issues that require urgent attention. These included the issue of 50 thousand interns and their families from former military detachments allied with Russia and Ukraine who, towards the end of November 1920, again found themselves in Poland. Problems arise to ensure large numbers of prisoners of war and prisoners of lodging and sanitation, medical and alimentary care. The first official document concluded between Poland and Soviet Russia, which mentioned concern for prisoners of war, was an agreement signed on September 6, 1920 in Berlin by representatives of the Polish and Russian Red Cross. It was intended to be done through the intermediary delegation appointed by the Polish and Russian Red Cross. In Poland Stefania Sempolowska was responsible for Bolshevik prisoners of war and civilian prisoners, however, in Soviet Russia caring for Polish prisoners was to be the domain of Katarzyna Pieszkowa. Under the ceasefire agreement dated October 12, 1920, the Joint Commission would soon be appointed (they finally appeared in May 1921). Prior to the signing of the Riga repatriation agreement on February 24, 1921, efforts were made in managing the exchange of prisoners of war based on the list of It was soon proven that none of the two parties were prepared for the quick exchange of TUNT. Ensuring Ensure living conditions and alimenter, as well as medical and sanitary care for ca. 150 thousand prisoners and prisoners of war (not just Soviet one) in 1919 - 1921 was a difficult task for the emerging Polish state. An important factor that needs to be faced is the epidemic of infectious diseases rampant not only among the military, but also experienced by civilian populations. After being captured, prisoners of war are subjected to mandatory sanitary procedures (bathing, underwear changes, disinfection of clothing) as well as medical examinations. Sick prisoners of war were not sent to camps in the country's hinterland but placed in special wards of hospitals at the front, and then in special hospitals for prisoners of war. Medical care is also available at each POW camp. Medics run hospitals, pharmacies and hospitals, usually with isolation wards. In 1919, when ca. 29 thousand prisoners and prisoners of war are held in camps around Poland (including 7 - 8,000 Soviet prisoners), the system operates rather effectively although, even then, it is not entirely possible to control the spread of infectious diseases. After the situation at the camp in Brest when, as a result of the epidemic, about 15 thousand prisoners of war died (including about 500 Bolshevik TER), the camp was closed. His victims also included Polish medics, such as the camp's chief doctor Brest died of typhus tutam. Furthermore the difficult sanitary and alimentary situation, as well as the return of the epidemic of infectious diseases in POW camps in Poland occurred in late autumn 1920. At that time there was a sharp rise in the number of prisoners of war and prisoners, and their situation was greatly affected, interfaithly, by the loss of a large number of specialist sanitary and medical equipment during the polish withdrawal of the summer of 1920, as well as the destruction of most of the countries where the Red Army detachment passed. The capture of former allies in battle with the Bolsheviks gave rise to the need to transfer Soviet prisoners of war to other camps. They are transported in inadequate conditions during severe winters, leading to subsequent epidemics of cholera, typhus, influenza and dysentery. During the worst months of the epidemic, at the turn of 1920 and 1921, in the main POW camps, 1,682 people died in Strzałkowo in November and 1,558 in December, while 561 died in Tuchola in January. After that the situation in the camps was brought under control. During the entire duration of the Soviet prisoner of war's stay in the camp at Strzałkowo (June 1919 – October 1921) 7,000 – 8,000 of them were killed there and, in Tuchola (late August 1920 – mid-October 1921) – about 2,000. On the basis of many preserved sources it is possible to determine that, during their stay in Poland, about 14 - 16 thousand Soviet prisoners of war lost their lives in Polish captivity. They were buried in mass graves in camp-side cemeteries. During the entire period they are under the care of Polish Poles in accordance with repatriation arrangements from mid-March to mid-October 1921, 65,797 Soviet prisoners of war were sent from Poland and, in early 1922 - a further 965. Also 2,001 civilians returned to Soviet Russia. About 1,000 people said they would remain in Poland. In addition to this number, about 1,000 former Red Army soldiers returned from Polish captivity to other countries. Zbigniew Karpus a Polish prisoner of war in soviet captivity of the Republic of Poland, reviving after the war of 1918 - 1921 was not a party to the 1907 Hague Convention governing the problems of TAWAN, but it respected its provisions. It also refers to the Polish-Bolshevik war, which de facto began on January 4, 1919 near Vilnius, and ended de iure by the peace treaty that entered into Riga on March 18, 1921. Ending the war, both sides to repatriation arrangements dated February 24, 1921 recognized that pow status also applies to all those who served in the Polish armed formations that fought against the Bolsheviks on Russian territory in 1917 - 1920. The conditions under which the Polish Army formed and fought impeded the precise determination of the amount of losses. It is accepted that, from 1 November 1918 to 31 December 1920, 19,841 soldiers fell and 27,214 died of injury or illness (a total of 47,055). But 54,281 of them actually died. The decisive majority are captured, a small number completely disappear without a trace, and there are deserters, who change sides. The 44,000 Polish Army soldiers listed as missing ended up in Soviet permanent captivity. Many more were actually detained but of the many who escaped or were returned after changes on the front, and they do not count in this category. The most populous group of Polish Army soldiers who simultaneously – on January 11, 1920 – entered Soviet captivity, belonging to the 5th Rifle Division. It was formed in 1919 in Siberia from Poland living there and Russian soldiers of Polish nationality were freed from captivity and mobilized to the German and Austro-Hungarian armed forces during World War I. Many Poles belonging to the Russian Army also belonged to this division and were demobilized after the 1917 revolution. From the fall of 1919 the division fulfilled the role of reserve guard during the ongoing battle of admiral Kolchak's forces and the Czechoslovakian Legion/Corpus who withdrew east along the trans-Siberian railway. In a desperate situation on January 10, 1920, at Kata station (formerly Klukiennajaja) the division capitalized against the Bolsheviks on the condition of honor. About 8,000 soldiers along with Colonel Walerian Czuma, Commander of the Polish Army in Eastern Russia and Siberia, laid down their arms. The rest tore east with their arms in their hands, to Harbin, from where they returned to It's by sea. They formed the core of the Siberian Brigade - assigned to the 5th Army General General Sikorski fought by Vistula and Wkra - taking part in the Battle of Warsaw. The Soviet Command honored the terms of the capitulation treaty that ended on January 10, 1920. Only the soldier's family remains free, and without food supplies. Young officers are locked in prisoner of war camps while older ones, from the rank of captain and above, are imprisoned. This includes Colonel Czuma. The position of civilians and prisoners of war is tragic because - contrary to capitulation agreements - they looted even their personal belongings and documents. From the general army who did not agree to be included in the Red Army, a detachment of work was formed, which was sent to work in coal or to repair railway infrastructure. In accordance with the terms of the repatriation agreement, the prisoner of war exchange began in mid-March 1921. It happened at two border points: at the Negoreloe railway station near Koydanov (on the Soviet side) - Stolpce (on the Polish side), as well as at Zdobunów station (for both sides, it is located in Poland). The longest repatriation procedure was for prisoners of war of the 5th Rifle Division and their families from Siberia. First, most often under bare skies, they wait for transportation for weeks at last, and then they travel by train in very primitive conditions sometimes even for several months, receiving a poor food ration (generally a quarter pound of bread a day). This resulted in mass infection (e.g. in January 1922, 60% of poachers were sick), and death on the route back to the country. Soviet authorities tried to detain qualified businessmen, which is why they impeded their repatriation. Diplomacy was necessary to intervene in the case of many, for example Colonel Czuma only returned to Poland on January 22, 1922. From March to July 1921, 10,694 poachers arrived in Poland via Negoreloe, and through Zdobuniv – 5,762. From July to December of the same year 12,119 and 3,791 POACHERS returned to the country, respectively. The numbers will clearly drop. From January to July 1922, 2,473 soldiers returned from Soviet captivity. In total, from March 1921, when the campaign began, until mid-1922, 34,839 prisoners of war returned to Poland. After adding those who simultaneously returned from Soviet camps, prisons, labor divisions, hospitals and during transportation (there may be several hundred of them), we have about 35,500 prisoners of war who have returned to the country. By November 1922, when the campaign for practical returns was concluded, several hundred more prisoners of war may have arrived. The repatriation was voluntary so a small number of prisoners (about 2,000 - 3,000) decided to remain in Russia for different reasons. According to data of the Polish Central Committee Office of the Communist Party of Russia from March 1, 1922, approximately prisoners of war do not want to return, which equates to about 3,000 3,000 This resulted in a total of about 38,500 - 39,000 prisoners being repatriated. The attitude of soviet political and military forces towards Polish prisoners of war changed depending on the course of the war. However, the Bolsheviks generally regarded Polish society (and the Polish Army) as communities where the proletariat of towns and villages fought against reactive elements. That is also why the most diverse actions were carried out with the aim of leading to the internal destruction of the Polish armed forces, attracting the general army to one side (derived from the masses of peasants and laborers) and, with their cooperation, leading to the outbreak of the revolution in Poland. The positions and activities of prisoners of war who qualified as anti-Soviet, were ruthlessly overrun. In addition to a very powerful propaganda campaign, on the one hand, a whole range of repressive measures are implemented and, on the other - incentives and promises of social-life privilege. The fate of the Polish prisoners was relatively bearable until the spring of 1920 when there were several of them and they were mostly exploited in agricultural work in the European part of Russia (the fate of the 5th Division has been described separately). At the height of the Polish-Bolshevik war, the EFT situation deteriorated significantly - there were more of them, they were subjected to all kinds of abuse, looted, starved, forced to work for a dozen or more hours a day (in coal, deforestation, loading and unloading of train cars and ships, railway construction). In the fall the camps experienced an epidemic of typhus tutak, dysentery and scurvy. Sanitary conditions are very poor, there is no running water, there is no waste, prisoners are bathed in baths once a month, their clothes are changed once every few months, insects are everywhere. Food often comes down to pounds of bread a day and, due to a lack of wood or fuel, no soup or heated rooms. The Bolsheviks attempted to form the 1st Polish Red Army in 1920 using POW-deserters and forcibly mobilized prisoners of war, which, along with other categories of incorporated reached about 1,000. After a ceasefire in October 1920, it was officially disbanded, and its soldiers were subjected to intense ideological training so that, upon returning to Poland, they would spread communist ideals or carry out antinational activities. Although official Soviet orders ordered generous treatment of prisoners of war, based on class assumptions and intelligence requirements, this was not always the case in practice. A series of incidents of prisoner of war killings are known, particularly from those considered enemies of the class, soon after taking them captive, or mass crimes on the surrender of helpless soldiers. There have been numerous incidents of prisoner of war killings in Siemion Budiorny's First Cavalry Force. Dominant display His army is that the cavalry cannot be burdened with prisoners of war because, because of this, it will lose its greatest asset, which is the rapid rate of action. One of the most heinous crimes was committed by the Budiorny cavalry on August 17, 1920 by Zadwórze (east of L'viv) in which more than 300 defenders were killed by Sabres and bullets. This same doctrine and practice occurred in the Corpus 3rd cavalry, consisting mainly of the Cossacks, led by Comcor Gaya Gai Bzhishkyan. This formation, moving in the summer of 1920 in the northern wing of the Bolshevik army, advanced further, attempting to cross the Vistula near Plock and avoid Warsaw from the west. After launching a Polish counterattack, it tried desperately to get through to the east. On August 22 near the army of Mława Gaya killed 150 prisoners of war from the Polish 49th Infantry Regiment in the most ruthless way. Within the scope of the repression of the head of the 5th Army, General Władysław Sikorski ordered not to take POWs from this formation. On August 24 at the site where polish soldiers had perished, 200 Cossacks were executed. About 44,000 Polish soldiers remain in Soviet captivity. Taking into account that between 35,500 - 36,000 returned to the country, a maximum of 3,000 remain in Soviet Russia voluntarily, it can be assumed that we know the fate of ca. 39,000 Polish soldiers - Soviet prisoners of war, 5,000 prisoners of war are out of balance. Thus we do not know: whether they were killed or died in transit among pow assembly points or during transport to camps, or whether they were killed in camps or prisons, died in camps or during repatriation transport, or whether they died in unknown circumstances. To at least clarify in part what happened to them, it is necessary to conduct archives research in Russia and Ukraine. Waldemar Rezmer Soviet POWs RU (pdf, 228.17 KB) 18.08.2020 09:00 09:00

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