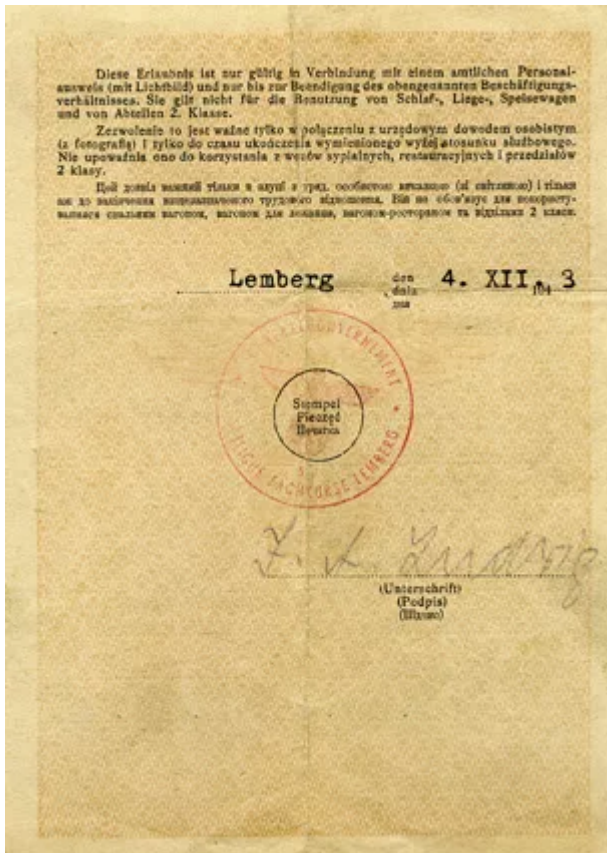


Staszek Podhaniuk's Travel Permit



This is Staszek's German Rail travel permit.

1943 I started working at the sawmill, Holzwerke, later renamed to Delta Flugzenhalen und Barackenbau.

At first I was employed as a simple worker: hammering in nails, cleaning, doing everything. One of the girls working in the office was a Jewess from my street who appeared as a Volksdeutsch, had the right papers, her hair dyed light blonde, blue eyes, and she was from the same house as Tamara. Then I worked in accounting but we were stationed together. There were those wooden houses on the premises, because those were all formerly Jewish-owned sawmills that the Germans had requisitioned. And I lived in one such pseudo-villa, in the loft, and she lived right next to me. She had a son who was four years old then. Her husband was killed by the Germans shortly after they marched into Lwow. She fled and she couldn't stay with that son because he looked like ten Jews together: dark, big dark eyes, curly hair, and was circumcised, so she found some woman she knew in the countryside whom she paid for hiding the son. Then she ran out of money and could not longer pay and one day the woman came with the son and left him there, said could no longer keep him. And she took the boy to where we lived. She locked him away in one of the rooms, didn't allow him to go out because there were various kids wandering around the sawmill and someone could notice he was circumcised. He sat by the window all day and one time he stuffed something into his nose, a tragedy, she had to call someone to take it out. And a rumor quickly spread she was hiding a Jewish child. She ran away in the night, they caught her on the road and shot them - her and the boy.

Later, because the front was approaching, many of the Germans working at the office, especially the young ones, were taken to the front, the older ones were left in place, and I was moved to the front office, where I learned to type with two fingers on a typewriter, in German. I didn't know German too well at the time, and those wood industry-related terms were complete black magic to me. They put me in charge of the files. I had those 'geheim' - 'confidential' stamps, for instance, because that was classified stuff.

In March 1944, when the Soviets were already very close, at 2 AM the sawmill was evacuated. It was a harsh winter, we roamed for eight days and eight nights and finally they took us across the San to Jaroslaw, a town ca. 100 km west of Lwow. On the San I saw Polish navy-blue police for the first time in years, the Ukrainians had different uniforms. When I saw the navy-blue policeman, I felt like giving him a kiss. Those were the same kind of thugs as the Ukrainians though perhaps they didn't participate on this scale in the murders. When we reached Jaroslaw, they sent us to various sawmills owned by the Delta company, the branch office was in Cracow, the main office in Breslau.

I was sent to Grybow, a small town near Nowy Sacz, a town, 160 km south-west of Jaroslaw. When I was there, Staszek suddenly turned up, who didn't know what was going on with me but who learned the sawmill had been evacuated. They also fled the Soviets. He went to Chabowka, a village 90 km west of Grybow together with his mother, because his father went to Czestochowa, a city 170 km north-west of Grybow, where he was put in charge of a school near the city. Staszek, in turn, got a job on the railways. Chabowka was an important interchange between Zakopane, Cracow and Nowy Sacz, it was called the eastern railway. And he started looking for me. Later, when he came for me, I fled from Grybow. It must have been the summer or autumn of 1944.