

Tomasz Miedzinski



This is me after coming back from the army. The photo was taken in Horodenka in the 1940s. I got into a forced labor camp in the village of Lisowce, between the Dniester and Zbruch rivers. It was a camp for the Jews that had survived the liquidation of the ghettos in the Tarnopol region. There were several of these camps: Kamionka, Borki Wielkie, Lisowce, Rozanowka, Holowczynce. After a few weeks, three of us escaped from the camp. My two companions were murdered by Banderovtsy. I was alone. I heard that there were partisan units. And I started to search for them. I met two divisions that didn't want to take me on, because 'Jews are cowards'. In the end I wound up in a group of partisans that was all that was left of the scattered army of Sydir Kovpak. He was the leader of a huge partisan group that had made it as far as the Carpathians and only there been smashed. It was with that group that I saw liberation. One day we got news that Horodenka had

been occupied by Soviet troops. So a few of us decided to cross the Dniester, either on foot or with the Soviet soldiers, who were traveling in motor vehicles or on carts. We were a few dozen kilometers from Horodenka, and we wanted to see if anyone had survived there. I had had no contact with anyone from Horodenka since fall 1942, when I escaped from there. I had tended to avoid such contacts so that no-one should recognize me, God forbid, and denounce me. I returned to Horodenka in mid-1944. A group of Jews who had survived collected; Jews who had been hidden by Ukrainian families, some of them had come back from the front. My cousin Josel the son of Icek, my father's eldest brother, came back to Horodenka wounded. He had nobody left either, and we lived together. Now he lives in Israel.