

Excerpt from the article *Ostrowiec under the German Nazis* by Shlomo (Szlama/Solomon) Lerman, from the Argentinian Ostrowiec Yizkor book 1949, pages 185 and 186.

The article, written in Yiddish by Shlomo, was narrated by his only surviving brother, Yekhiel Mayer Lerman. Translation by Adriana Lerman, granddaughter of Shlomo Lerman.

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“My son was not in the factory. Suddenly, I see from a distance that the commander of the *lager* [camp], Efraim Schaffel, was going to the ghetto, where we had been earlier, to get different things. I ran up to him and asked him if it was at all possible for me to try to get my son Levi out of the ghetto. He promised me that he would [do what he could]. There were also 150 men there whom they wanted to deport. He called my son Levi, but they [the Nazis] did not allow him to be taken out.

When Levi heard that they were looking for him, he climbed down from the first landing, jumped right into Herr Schaffel's car, and headed back to the factory. After three days, they made a new selection of the people who would remain working in the steelworks factory, and those who would go to the Glowatzki brick factory [Jaeger brick factory].

Later, an order was issued saying that those older people who had already lagged behind in their work should not come in to work at all. They chose some men, I was among them, and we were no longer permitted to go back to work. Everyone already knew what it meant not to go to work.

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They also built a horse barrack in Częstochowa, and they took us over there.

Sometime later, another order was issued: Any *Judenlager* [labor camp of Jews] that had fewer than 2,000 workers would be shut down. The Germans of the Ostrovitz factory became interested in the matter, and got permission to acquire two thousand men in their factory. It goes without saying that they had in mind their own interests in making money from the Jews, and so they brought in more Jews from Radom and Plaszow to reach the total number of 2,000 people.

That number also included those who had been selected not to go to work. I was included in that, and also went back to the factory with everyone else.

On April 1, 1944, an order was issued that a *Selektzia* [selection] was going to be made. The weakest in the factory and the brickyard, a total of 60 people, were chosen and sent to Firle, near Radom. And the same cars would immediately bring back their clothes ...

Two weeks later, the SS men came to the *lager* and they took Commandant Efraim Schaffel along with the commandant of the Jewish police, Ber Blumenfeld. About three days later, we found out that they had both been executed. The deputy commandant of the *lager* A. Zaifman remained, and the deputy commandant of the Jewish police, Puczic, remained as well.

Things got worse. They did not allow bringing bread into the *lager*. They continually searched the workers to see if someone had bought one extra piece of bread to add to his portion that the German from the factory had given to him. Things were very bad. And so it continued until June 1, 1944.

Suddenly, we learned that the Russia was already near Lemberg, Lublin region.”