

Adapted extracts of the explanation of the links quoted from Mathias Gal who was a prisoner in the Vapniarca camp.



'This link shows the roll calls (appells). Here they received their daily orders, which were often accompanied by very real threats of a shot to the head if they did not do exactly as they were ordered'.



'As the Nazis retreated, the Vapniarca prison had to be closed down. As the section shows, the prison gates opened, and the prisoners were either released or sent to the next prison. Gyula Frenkel was taken to a new prison camp in Grosulovo, together with the remaining 600 prisoners. In March of the same year, he was sent to Targu-Liu prison where he remained until his release on 23 August, 1944'.



'Following the Nazi defeat at Stalingrad, life in the camp became easier. The Romanian government decided to end the Jewish deportations to Transnistria, thus saving the rest of the Jewish population. This new atmosphere allowed an element of culture to develop in the prison camp. There was a choir, which performed Beethoven's 9th Symphony. In this link, Frenkel expresses the new mood and the hope that accompanied it'.



'The journey to the camp lasted 8 days. The prisoners were crammed into cattle cars like animals. In September 1942, they were one of the many groups to be taken on the journey to death in Transnistria'.



'This section depicts the prisoners transporting bags of fodder to the annex of the prison kitchen. Their daily ration constituted 200 grams of bread and a warm fodder meal twice a day. In the winter months they collected snow from the yard and melted as much as they could, to help them prepare the food in the kitchen'.



'This section illustrates how their diet affected them. Immediately after eating the fodder, they had to run to the ditch. They could not digest this type of food, and the prisoners suffered many health complications as a result'.



'These were the cramped quarters they were piled into every evening. The windows were broken, there were no beds, and the place was overrun by typhus-infected lice. In front of the buildings was a field of grass that they ate from time to time. Beyond the field was a building that served as the kitchen, alongside which ran the ditch where they relieved themselves. At Vapniarca they felt that death was a certainty – the only question was whether they would starve, be shot, contract typhus or succumb to another illness that seemed to disable all of them'.



'The guards used dogs to threaten them and make their lives even more intolerable'.



'Some of the prisoners became paralyzed and could only walk with the help of crutches. The doctor prisoners amongst them were of the opinion that the fodder they were given was actually poisoning them, causing paralysis and eventual death. They decided that they wouldn't eat the fodder anymore. The government sent doctors who confirmed the diagnosis of the doctor prisoners. As a result, their provisions changed. They were even allowed to receive small food parcels from relatives'.



'This section depicts the camp gate. The prison was encircled by three rows of barbed wire fence and several guard towers'.



'There was only one source of drinking water for more than 1500 prisoners. The fountain didn't flow, but rather dripped water. Here they crowded together and patiently waited their turn in the hope of getting half a can of water to drink'.



'They slept one on top of the other, packed like sardines row after row. When they woke up after another restless night, they just hoped to avoid the lice and mites crawling around them so that they wouldn't catch typhus. Each morning they would be given their duties, and escorted by armed guards to make sure they carried them out'.