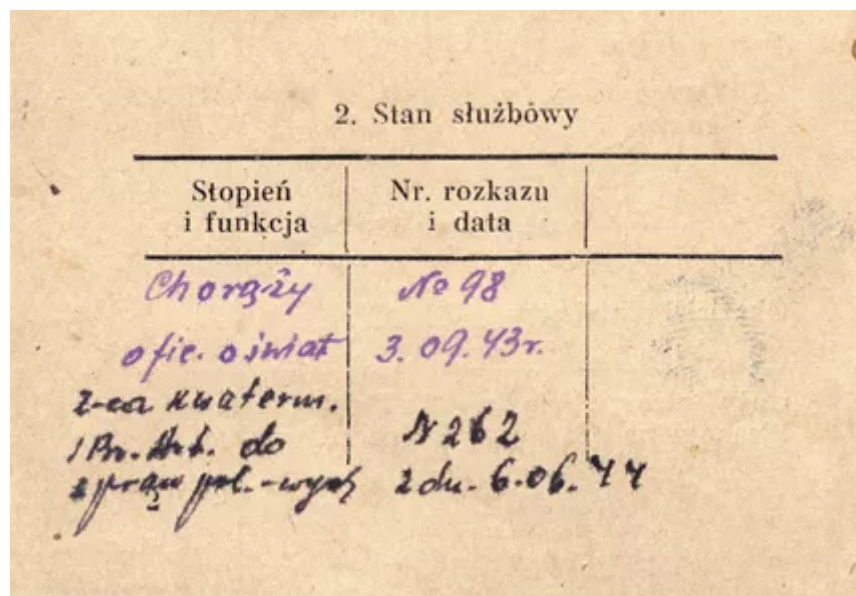


Leon Lifsches's ID From The 1st Kosciuszko Infantry Division.



This is my ID from the 1st Kosciuszko Infantry Division, issued in 1943.

In 1942 me and a whole group of people, we hopped on a train carrying Polish soldiers released from camps, and we rode towards the Anders' army, towards Tashkent. Eventually I found myself in a place near Bukhara where they told us to pull our pants down and said, 'about turn!' End of story, they checked whether we were circumcised. By that time, Jews were no longer admitted into the Anders' army.

Some people went to Fergana, me and some other people went to Tashkent, but my brother Henryk was no longer there, having left with the Anders' army. Michal lived in the Kyrgyz Republic, worked in a kolkhoz. I got a job in Tashkent as a dyer in a cooperative, Iziek worked in a state textile factory, also in Tashkent. We lived in an Uzbek quarter, called Barkhan, with a Russian lady who had also been evacuated, in very primitive conditions.

We received support from the MOPR Central Committee. There was a large group of Jews in Tashkent at the time, several hundred people. Tashkent had a sizeable Jewish minority in itself, plus there were many of us, the émigrés. We were a large, strong communist group, kind of affiliated with the MOPR Central Committee. The party itself had been banned.

We were in Tashkent until 12th May 1943, after which date we left the city to join the 1st Division. Me and Iziek fought in the Battle of Lenino, and my brother was killed virtually a couple of steps away from me.

I was the second in command of the regiment's medical company. I personally took part in taking wounded soldiers away from the front line under enemy fire. During one such excursion to the front line I was heavily wounded. I went through several hospitals between October and May, and eventually found myself in a Polish hospital in Moscow, where I underwent the final surgery.

After being released from the hospital, I was sent back to the front, to the headquarters, in Lutsk, Ukraine, and from there I went with the army as an officer, already wounded in battle, with the back units. I took part in the liberation of Lublin, and then in the liberation of Warsaw.