

ŚWIĘTOJAŃSKA, Anna
Polish Witnesses to the Holocaust Project
Polish
RG-50.488*0014

In this interview Anna Świętojańska (neè **Komodowska**), who was born in 1912 in Bełżec gives a brief account of the camp “Koło” which was created on the grounds of the manor, which formerly belonged to **Moraczewski** family. This was a temporary detention camp for Jews and Gypsies who were eventually exterminated in the concentration camp in Bełżec .

Box 1, Tape 1

[01:] 00:01:09 - 01: 20:05:07

[01:] 00:01:09 – [01:] 10:20:18
01:04 - 10:38

Anna Świętojańska (neè **Komodowska**) born in 1912 in Bełżec introduces herself and says that she worked on a farm during the war; she doesn't remember the exact year when the war started but she recalls marching armies, escorts of Jews and convoys of cattle; she recalls Gypsies given a bath in a nearby lake; she doesn't know who was making them bathe; she remembers little of what was happening around her because she mainly took care of her house; she remembers that Gypsies were gathered in a camp, which was called “**Kółko**” , they were begging the passersby for food; when asked she explains that she saw the Gypsies bathed when she was going to church on Sunday; she says that the church was closed and turned into a warehouse soon after; when asked about the trains she mentions seeing transports and hearing screams from the inside of the carts; she didn't know who was inside; when asked, she explains that she used to go and do the washing in the river next to the train tracks; she saw the transports going to Bełżec from there but she doesn't remember if any were coming back; she was mainly preoccupied with her own affairs, such as work and herding cows; when asked she answers that Jews were not running away from the transports because the windows were boarded shut; she could see the train from a close distance and she could hear moaning of people; she underscores not knowing who they were; she adds that trains were long and that they were going slow; when asked about Gypsies, she doesn't know where they were initially coming from but in the end they were escorted to the Bełżec concentration camp, they didn't have any luggage, they were begging for bread but the guards were beating anyone who tried to offer help; when asked she adds that the Gypsies were

on foot; she is not sure who was leading them; according to her unarmed civilians were the leaders; when asked she answers that she saw a convoy of Gypsies only once in summer; she adds that it was also summertime when the Gypsies were bathed; she recalls that they were kept in the detention camp for quite a while and they probably slept in the barn.

[01:] 10:20:18- [01:] 20:05:07
10:38-20:47

When asked, she answers again that she saw the Gypsies bathed while going to the mass at a local church; she adds that they were later taken away from the camp **Kolo**; she recalls that others saw Gypsies bathed in cold lake water daily, they were beaten with whips; when asked about **Kolo** she explains that this was a camp for Gypsies, it was located far from the concentration camp in Bełżec; camp **Kolo** was built on the grounds of a local estate, it was fenced off and guarded by the “blacks”; when asked she explains that there was an easy access to the camp from the road but the guards were beating those, who tried to bring bread to the Gypsies; when asked she explains that one could see the barn and the grounds from the road, there were many Gypsies there, she doesn’t know how many exactly; when asked she is not sure what happened to them later; she remembers seeing a convoy of Jews while on her way to church and from the widows of her house; when asked she adds that the Jews had some luggage and they were coming from the direction of Narol; when asked she explains that they had no carts, the Jews were begging for bread but German guards were chasing away anyone who tried to offer help; this also took place in summer; when asked about the sequel of events, she says that first the Jews and then the Gypsies were kept at **Kolo**; when asked about Moraczewski family, the owners of the estate in Bełżec, she is not sure what happened to them; she assumes that they ran away before the war just like a rich rabbi and his family from Narol; she never heard of a man named **Kinas** [Chinas], she doesn’t know the camp guard named **Kilian** personally, because he lived far away from her house.

[01:] 00:01:09 - 01: 20:05:07

[No restrictions; Time coded by Agnieszka McClure on 08/04/2010]