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1. Kovel is a railroad junction in the northern portion of Western Ukraine at the intersection of the Brest-Kazatin, Lublin-Karosten-Kiev and Lvov-Kamien-Koszyrski trunk lines. Due to its favorable location, the station was selected for a transloading point. However, since the existing passenger and freight stations were not adequate for the additional traffic a new, large transloading station was constructed. * Since Dorohusk in Polish territory and Yagodin in the U.S.S.R. are believed to be border crossing points without transloading facilities, it appears that the standard-gauge track runs as far as Kovel. The transloading installations in Kovel are capable of handling the transloading of westbound trains operating on the Yagodin-Dorohusk-Chelm line. According to a Polish-Soviet agreement, a daily quota of three trains in both directions are scheduled to pass through the Yagodin border crossing point. ** Trains dispatched to Yagodin from Soviet Zone border crossing points are reported only occasionally.

2. The new transloading point at Kovel was referred to by German PWs and Soviet soldiers as the Kashirka (or Kishirka) railroad station. Construction on the installation was started by PWs in 1945 and completed in July 1946. The installation, which is 1.5 km long and 1 km wide, is divided into four sections containing about 400 wooden storage sheds with floors 30 x 30 meters each. A loading ramp 3 to 4 meters wide runs along the front of the storage sheds. Field railroad tracks run along the rear of the storage sheds. Between two rows of storage sheds are one standard-gauge and one Soviet-gauge track plus a Soviet-gauge track for railroad cranes. Each of the four sections was equipped with 5 to 7 railroad cranes; the fourth section had an additional 75-ton gantry crane manufactured by the Ardelt Plant, Fuerstenwalde. Between every two storage sheds was an open air storage site. ***

3. From summer 1945 to late 1946 scrap and iron items, including German guns such as field howitzers, howitzers, AT guns and tanks, were transloaded. In late 1945 equipment and machinery of the Walther, Suhl and Gustloff ordnance factories and of the

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Lauchhammer firm were observed. The transloading of fertilizers was started in the fall of 1946. From January to March 1947, about 40 trains carrying optical equipment such as lenses, scales, field glasses and measuring instruments manufactured by the Zeiss firm in Jena were observed in addition to various types of machinery. From March to December 1947 four trains with prefabricated houses, machinery, and grain arrived daily. German uniforms, footwear, underwear, gas masks, gas-protection suits, gas equipment and official documents from the Reichskanzlei (Reich Chancellory) stored in the sheds were loaded for shipping. Between December 1947 and May 1948, 90 percent of all shipments were scrap from the Soviet Zone of Germany. In December and January at first four and then eight trains of 40 to 60 cars each arrived daily. Two German car loads were transloaded into one Soviet car. Fifty percent of the arriving scrap came from bombed German factories or wrecked aircraft. In early 1948 large quantities of ball bearings for tanks wrapped in paper arrived. Some freight cars with rails were attached to each train. In early 1948 a tank park consisting of hundreds of T-34 tanks located at the outskirts of Kovel was cleared. The tanks were loaded and allegedly shipped to Gorki.
From May to November 1948 the number of scrap shipments decreased. Prefabricated houses manufactured in the Soviet Zone of Germany were transloaded during that period. In 1949, 80 percent of the arriving trains contained fertilizers, 10 percent scrap, and the remaining 10 percent prefabricated houses, trucks, and wooden boxes of all sizes containing machinery.
Since May 1949 all the scrap piled up in the area of the installation during the previous years has been shipped. In May and June 1949 large quantities of Soviet shells were transloaded on Soviet-gauge freight cars. The shipping of dismantled machinery of all sizes from the Soviet Zone of Germany piled up in 120 to 150 sheds since 1947 was started in May 1949. Other sheds stored pipes with diameters of 10 to 14 cm. Eighty to 110 sheds were filled with glazed tiles from Germany. One third of the sheds was empty. Only cotton and Soviet tobacco was shipped from the U.S.S.R. to the Soviet Zone of Germany. A standard Soviet freight car was loaded with about 44 and a large Soviet freight car with about 80 bales of cotton, weighing 190 to 200 kg each.

4. When enough Soviet-gauge freight cars were available, transloading from standard to Soviet-gauge took place immediately. Frequently, however, there were not enough Soviet-gauge cars on hand to effect an immediate transfer of goods. The transloading was done either by hand or with a crane. Three hundred to 350 PW's were employed for this work, a detail of 12 to 15 working with one crane. The transloading of one train took 5 to 6 hours. On the average, four to eight trains were transloaded daily, but 12 to 16 trains could be handled in case of necessity by working day and night. A standard car loaded with cotton was transloaded by six men in 30 minutes, while a large Soviet freight car required one hour for the same crew. If Soviet-gauge freight cars were not available, the goods were stored in the sheds or piled on the open-air storage sites.

5. Conversion of freight cars from standard to Soviet-gauge or vice versa was done to a small extent. The car to be converted was lifted by a crane and then the axles were exchanged. Four cars could be converted that way by a detail of four to six PWs daily. Six to eight such details were employed.

6. No information about this transloading point has been received since June 1949, because the German personnel of the locomotive columns have been relieved by Russian personnel at the Polish-Soviet border and are no longer permitted to enter Russian territory.

7. The Brest Litovsk-Chelm railroad line formerly crossed the Polish-Soviet border. The Poles operated this line from Chelm to Wlodawa and the Soviets from Brest Litovsk to Leplowka. After an exchange of territory arranged between the Soviets and the Poles, the Brest Litovsk-Chelm railroad line now runs exclusively on Soviet territory. This line has no strategic importance whatsoever.

* [redacted] Comment. For sketch of the Kovel transloading point, see Annex 1.

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*** [redacted] Comment. For schematic sketch of the installation, see Annex 2.

2 Annexes: Two sketches on ditto.

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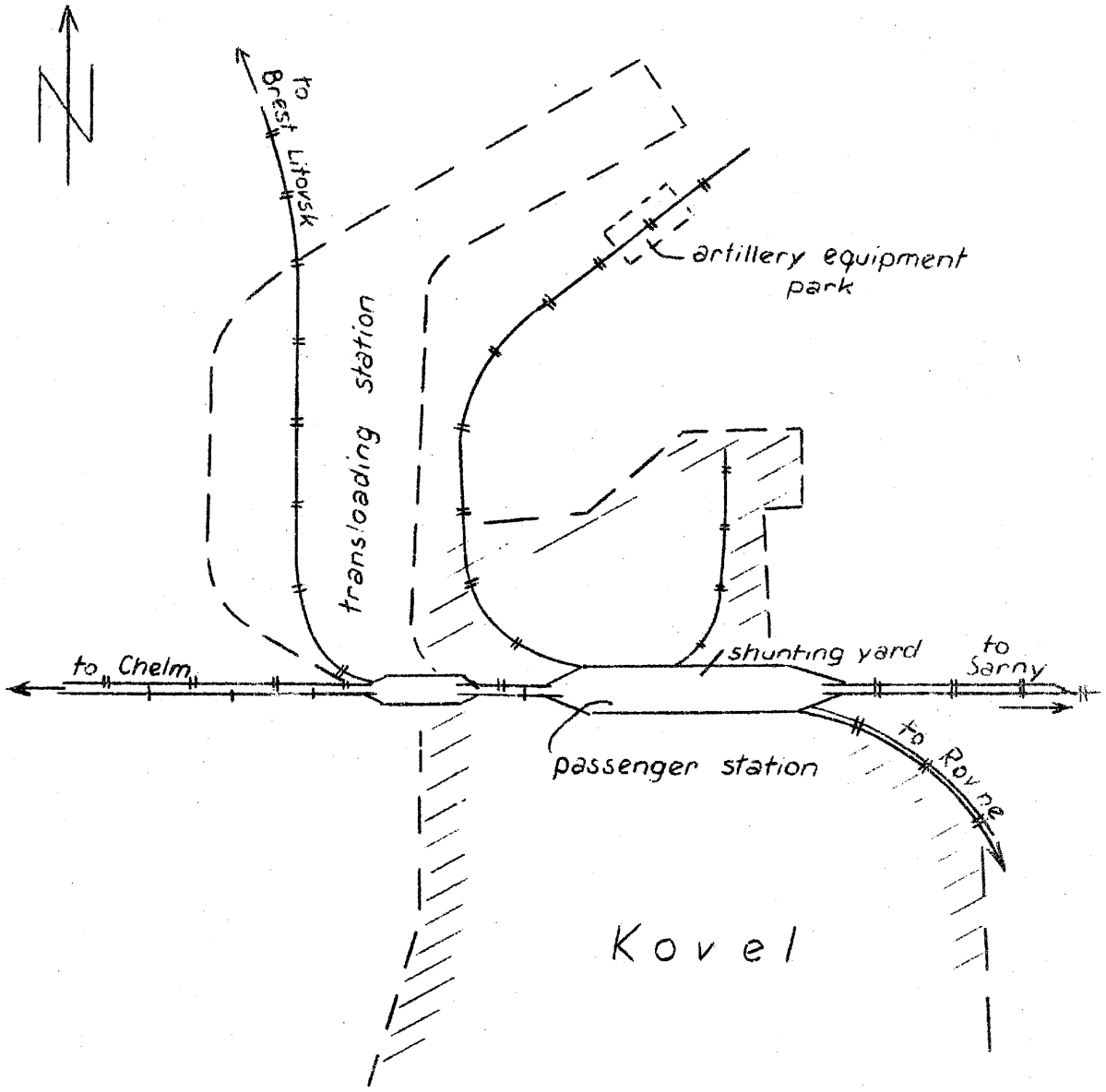
Railroad System of Kovel



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Transloading Station at Kovel