

FORTIFICATIONS IN MEMORIES

„Never forget how easy we lost our freedom and how difficultly and with great effort and many victims we fought for getting it back.”

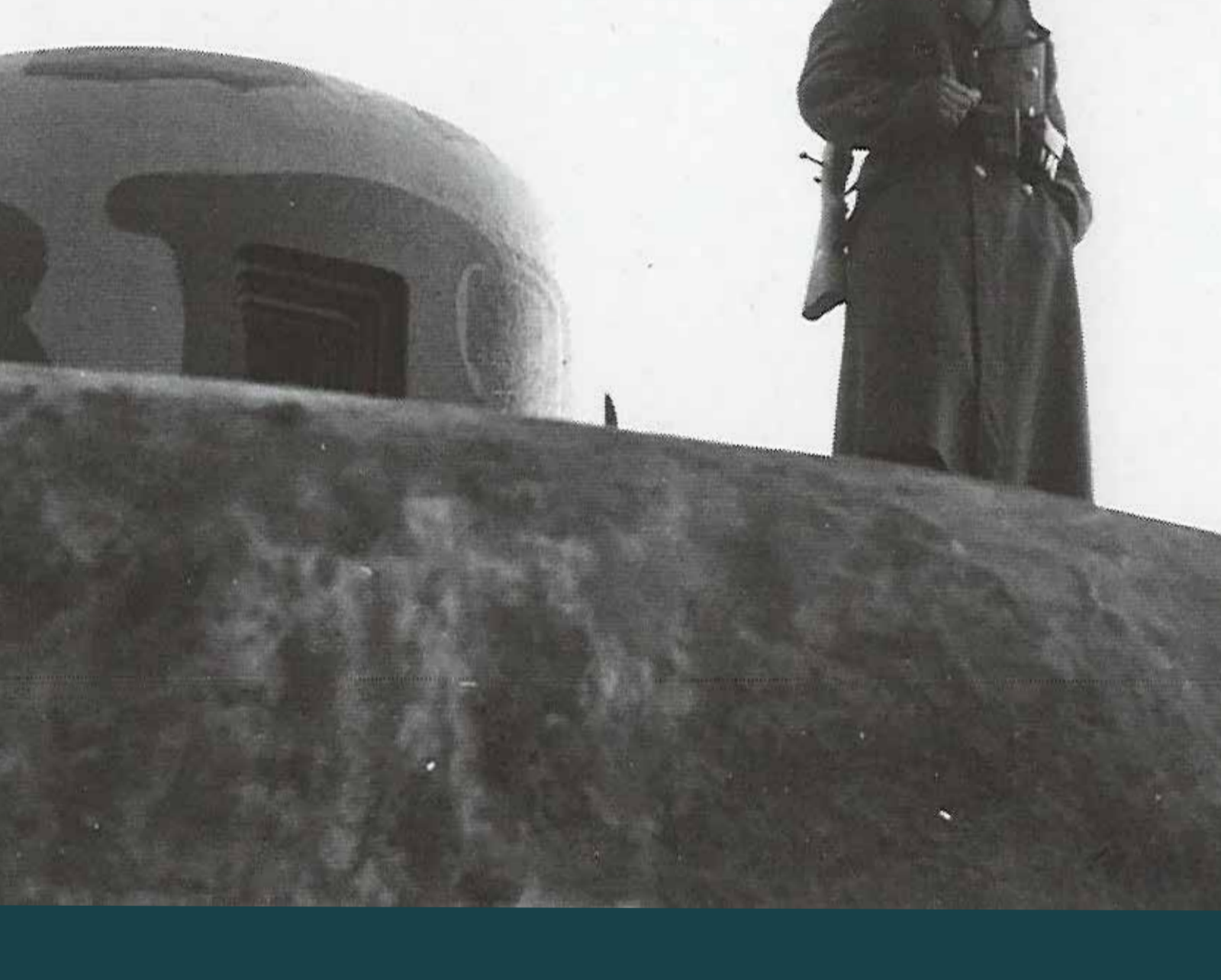


On 10th of August 1937 Josef Balcařík, lieutenant of infantry comes to his new battalion.

“I was assigned to the detached guard company to Zbečník near Hronov. Our duty was guard service on the construction of infantry log cabins from Jírová Mountain through Zbečník, Radechová, Slavíkov to Pavlišov.

„We were dependent on each other in the borderlands. The headquarters of our company, along with the provisional quarters for the troops, was located in the inn of František Draboň in Zbečník. The peace and satisfaction were also contributed to by the fact that the local people treated us very well. We lived in a purely Czech environment, and moreover, Zbečník was a small village where everyone knew everyone. In a while we have felt completely like at home, too.”

„I was delocated from Zbečník between 1937/1938 to the course for special reasons which took part in Brdy. We were said we would learn to handle with fortress guns and so I was surprised a bit when I found out where the course is. Just at the place I found out that there is built infantry log cabin in the shooting range there. It looked like objects whose construction we guarded in the border. Just in this log cabin we got most practical knowledge and we got perfect knowledge about handling fortress guns.”



Mood of worker Antonín Žid at the construction of infantry log cabin.

„In the spring 1938 I came to the employment office in Náchod and I got emergency benefits for some time – 10 crowns a week. That office sent me to constructing firms which worked on fortresses.

Many Slovaks and local German men beside Czechs worked at those constructions. It was logical that Germany wanted to find out everything as many as possible data about those constructions. Of course the succeeded many things, but still army management wanted to have so called messengers among the workers, which can be called as scouts or pricked ears. But in the other hand I would like to tell that besides my patriotism I was attracted to these works with another thing – high unemployment which was in the border. Work at fortification was very well paid.”

„Talking about my work, construction of Náchod as well as Trutnov line was done practically during the day and night to be finished in time. It is necessary to realize that people relationships were connected. Czech male was married with German female and on the contrary, so there was no border line. It was a case of my relatives. I got a task to watch situation at the construction outside as well as inside. I should have watched if there is someone who is too interested in the construction of fortress objects. But when I visited to my friends in the other side – in Germany, I was said there: “What kind of fools you are there, we can see what you do there and we know everything.” It was said in the autumn 1938 before border clearance.”

“To be at work in time (working hours were from 6:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.) I went to the part of construction Hronov – Jestřebí Mountain by bicycle every day. I set out early in the morning (4:00 a.m.) in every weather. I worked at firm Ing. Josef Filip,

