

RG-50.120 *0257 3 Tapes
ROZENBLAT, GAD

I

- 1.00 He was born 15/5/1919 in Ignatovka in the Ukraine, near Lozicht and Zofyuvka. Tells the history of the two towns that were founded by Jews in the early 19th century. The population was all Jewish and subsisted on agriculture and leather manufacturing.
- 1.04 Describes Jewish organizations in town. Beitar, Bund, Hechalutz, Zabotinsky and Begin visited.
- 1.06 Father was head of Jewish community. He had relatives in Israel. He studied in a cheder and in a Polish school. When he was 13 he went to Lutzk to a yeshiva for 4 years. He went back to Ignatovka in 1935 and became active in Beitar.
- 1.09 In 1939 he wanted to go to Israel but did not have enough money. He worked as a teacher in a nearby village.
- 1.10 Describes life in village. He had 4 brothers. Father had a grocery store. Brothers worked in agriculture. Describes economic conditions of the community. 30 to 40 families emigrated to Argentina, Brazil and Cuba and worked in agriculture there.
- 1.34 Lutzk and Rovno were 2 large cities nearby. Many messengers from Israel visited. describes the newspapers they read, and their library.
- 1.42 Talks about the Russian occupation. People lost their property, all Zionist organizations were stopped. Property owners and Zionists were sent to Siberia. He went to Lemberg, others went to Vilnius.
- 1.49 Describes life under communist rule.
- 1.54 Refugees arrived and told their stories but were not believed.
- 2.10 What they knew about the political situation in Palestine in 1938.
- 2.13 1941 war came to the Ukraine. Describes bombardments and the retreat of the Russian army. The Russian army left ammunition in the forest and the Ukrainians took it and threatened the Jews.
- 2.26 Describes the organization of the Judenrat and the Jewish police. Examples of some who behaved badly.
- 2.30 His brother got an order to go to a work camp but he went instead. Describes.

- 2.31 Population was ordered to give up their cattle and lost their lively hoods and started to sell their belongings.
- 2.36 2 months later German and Ukrainian group came from Lutzk to reorganize the leather industry. The German commander, Klinger, protected Jews from the Ukrainians and the SS. When Klinger was killed the situation became worse.
- 2.45 Feelings of the Jewish population. 2 different thoughts about survival. One to lay low until the end of Nazism and the second way was to fight the Germans and to escape.
- 2.52 Over 100 refugees were in the village. Describes how they survived and the social and religious life under the German administration. After a year, a group of young people decided to organize into a partisan group.
- 3.13 All Jews were ordered to assemble and were taken to the ghetto in Sofiovka. The Ukrainians terrorized and killed many. He escaped and hid out. 4500 were killed by German guards.
- 3.22 He organized a group of 10 young men, to fight and revenge the slaughter and gentiles who hunted and delivered Jews to the Germans were rewarded.
- 3.30 Describes searching for finding Philluk Alexander, a Polish communist, who showed him where the Russians had abandoned their weapons. He got weapons for his group; they left the village by stayed nearby and Philluk trained them. On Yom Kippur there was a second slaughter in the ghetto. He wanted to attack the Ukrainian police station, but people in the ghetto convinced him not to.
- 3.45 Describes how they got weapons from the guards and peasants. They got maps of the forest which enabled them to move from lace to place. They built bunkers 10 km from the village. Describes how they got provisions.
- 3.50 Describes revenge actions against those who gave away Jews in hiding.
- 3.55 Met a group of Russian paratroopers and asked for their help in having Russians accept toe partisan group.
- II
- 4.00 Describes becoming part of a Russian partisan group. Describes their actions sabotaging train stations. They got a typewriter and published news from the front that they heard on the radio.
- 4.07 They tried to convince Jews in the ghetto to escape. The last 1500 were killed on Yom Kippur.

- 4.10 Describes partisan actions. There were 26 in his group, including Russians. They took provisions from the village peasants.
- 4.13 On Nov. 22, 1942, Germans attacked them and after a battle retreated. His group decided to retreat from the area.
- 4.21 The large partisan group separated. Philluk stayed with the Russian group and his own group left and found their way to villages in White Russia. They met a Polish partisan group, but did not want to join them because of Polish anti-Semitism.
- 4.31 They met and joined a Jewish partisan group for Kolki. They went north and joined the large Marchevitz armored group. They went with them to Koperkovsin [?]. Describes an attack by the Germans, the ensuing battle and their retreat. In Dec. '42 they met the Russian Kulpak group. They decided to break up the Jewish partisan group because they did not have enough military experience and weapons. He and his friends joined the 9th division of the Russian group. Describes initiation and rules of the Kulpak group.
- 4.43 Describes the artillery group he joined. They were like a regular army. They had medical and news services. The Germans continued to attack them. They got to Lushkertzi [?] and saw the village in flames. They retreated to Buczacz and attacked Germans in a stone house. Describes a fierce battle with many casualties. He escaped to Tonich forest to Volen in the west Ukraine. Retreating Germans had left their weapons there.
- 5.08 He went to the village Lachowitce. Describes village. There were 50-60 wounded in the large group who were evacuated by airplane to Russia.
- 5.21 Germans discovered them and bombarded the area. In Jan '43 they left the forest and went towards Volyn. They passed Zofyuvka. He and his group carried out a revenge action against two Volksdeutsche who had given away Jews, also shot down a group of Ukrainian Cossacks.
- 5.30 Describes incident with partisan who was shot because he got drunk and because of him an action had to be aborted.
- 5.36 Describes action to stop navigation of Germans on the river. They sunk 4 boats.
- 5.39 Describes their attack on the village of Bragin occupied by the Germans.
- 5.43 They were told to destroy the German unit in the Carpats who controlled the oil industry there. They got there in Dec. '43. Describes fights between Polish and Ukrainian villagers.

- 5.58 They were told that there were Jewish youth from Zofyuvka in the forest.
- 6.01 In June '43 he sent a letter with a Polish messenger to the group of Jews from the villages who were hiding in the forest, asking them to join the partisans. 20 youth joined them.
- 6.07 Describes their advance towards the Carpats and the numerous battles they fought. They fought a large battle near the city Delatin. The Germans withdrew, and they released 400 Jews who were in a camp there.
- 6.13 Describes how they took care of the rescued Jews. They young people joined them and they formed the 7th company of partisans.
- 6.22 Describes the march towards the Carpats. They were bombarded and shot at, and had many casualties.
- 6.39 Describes the hardships and dangers in the Carpats.
- 6.40 Tells of incident when he was told by his commander to hack a German SS to pieces. He refused.
- 6.49 The treatment of Jews in his partisan unit was good, unlike incidents in other partisan groups. The reason was that they were part of the Soviet army, under strict discipline.
- 6.53 When they got to the Hungarian border, some Jewish partisans went over to Hungary, where at that time Jews were safe.
- 6.57 Describes the cat and mouse fights in the Carpats. Of the original 2000 partisans, only 750 survived. Mentions again the action of destroying the German oil refineries.

III

- 7.00 They decided to get out of the Carpats. Aug. '43 they broke through German lines. Describes fierce battle and heavy casualties. Only 18 out of his group of 75 survived. He hid out in a peasant's house.
- 7.18 Peasants took them in carriages to the forest of Stanislawow where others joined them.
- 7.20 Sept. '43 they returned to their old unit. Describes heavy fighting. In Jan.'44 he was wounded in battle, crawled to safety and was taken by carriage to Lodz.
- 7:42 He was then taken by train to a military hospital in Kiev, then at his request to the partisan hospital. He received 2 medals.

- 7.52 He became member of the Party and director of a government cooperative.
- 8.00 Describes organization of partisan groups. 64 partisans in 7 divisions. Later wrote a book about it.
- 8.12 In May he went to Rorna [Korna?], met people there and heard about the camps.
- 8.18 His part in planning the escape. Talks about Abba Kovner and the escape from Vilnius.
- 8.25 End of '44 he got married, got exit permit and went to Lublin. Groups organized to get to Palestine. Thousands were moved to Romania with false papers.
- 8.34 Describes 3 groups who organized for aliya, former partisans, camp survivors, and people who had hid out.
- 8.39 His meetings with the poet Katzenelson.
- 8.43 Rescue of children after the war.
- 8.48 End of March left for Bucharest April '45, organized a group of partisans for aliya.
- 8.53 Talks about Abba Kovner and the revenge group and their plan to poison wells in cities in Germany. The reasons for revenge and his own acts of revenge.
- 9.20 Sept. '45 he got to Israel, worked in the Tel Aviv municipality, then 8 months in the army. Published books.
- 9.25 The reaction of Israelis to the newcomers.
- 9.37 His own dealings with his war experiences.