

RG-50.226 #0002 1 Tape  
BRAYTER, RIVA ISSAKOVNA

- 1.00 Born 10 Sept. 1919 in Nemirov, Vinnitsa oblast. Maiden name was Milshteyn. Her father was killed soon after her birth by 'bandits', although Riva says there were no pogroms in Nemirov. She had an older brother. Mother was uneducated, her father, a religious man who didn't think girls should read.
- 1.03 In 1932 forced collectivization began in Nemirov. So-called Kulaks had everything taken from. Difficult for all.
- 1.09 Riva studies bookkeeping and then began in Vinnitsa in shoe firm. Worked there 4 years.
- 1.10 Discusses outbreak of war. People first wanted to evacuate area, but no trains were available. Riva returns to Nemirov. Germans arrived in July. Judenrat established. Ghetto set up.
- 1.14 Riva's uncle appointed to Judenrat. He warned them one day that the next days Jews would be killed, that the ditches in which they would be thrown had already been dug. On hearing this, Riva and her mother fled ghetto and headed towards Vinnitsa. Stopped in nearby village. Stayed with a former co-worker of mother.
- 1.18 Husband of mother's friend went to nemirov to see whether the killing actually took place. He reported back that all the Jews in Nemirov had been killed.
- 1.19 Riva and mother go to Vinnitsa. Along the way, they were helped by local people who fed them and gave them a place to stay. Peasants did this for many people.
- 1.20 Stayed with an aunt in Vinnitsa. In spring of 1942 there were reports that the Germans would now kill the Jews in Vinnitsa. Hearing this, Riva and her mother return to Nemirov.
- 1.23 Riva and her mother go to live with a Ukrainian peasant whom her mother had helped during the turbulent collectivization period. Stayed there about a month. Riva then decides she can't simply sit around in hiding.
- 1.28 Riva goes to Vinnitsa and asks a former co-worker to give her false documents – a new identity which she can use to leave area. Riva tells interviewer that as blonde with long braids she looked like a Ukrainian peasant girl and wouldn't be taken as a Jew.
- 1.30 Sets off in Aug. or Sept 1942, with no particular destination. Taken in frequently by local peasants and given food. Arrives in Khmel'nitskaya oblast. Stop at peasant house and stays, working in fields, barns.

- 1.32 Gets a job in Gorodok, near city of Khmel'nitskiy, as bookkeeper in a local sugar refinery. Works there for about a month. Is then called to the local gendarmerie and told she is suspected of being Jewish.

[Break]

- 2.00 Riva denies this, but is put in prison. While she was in prison, mass shootings of Jews began in Gorodok and other villages nearby – Nov. 1942. From prison also took prisoners to be killed. Riva was protected for some reason by prison official.
- 2.05 Goes to various villages, gets food from villagers. Goes in direction of Zhitomir. Stays in house of old peasants and stays with them doing chores.
- 2.18 Riva is hired by a nearby German police post to be a cook. Once she cooks for visiting SS officers. One drunken SS threatens her, she runs away, but later a German officer persuades her to return to her job, assuring her she will be safe.
- 2.23 Riva is approached by two partisans, who accuse her of being a German. She explains situation. They give her task of stealing bullets and grenades from police post where she works.
- 2.31 Each day at work she was able to pick up bullets and a hand grenade – since she was often left alone in room where supplies were kept.

[Break]

- 3.06 Riva goes into woods, leading two Ukrainian policemen [Schutzmann] working for the Germans who decide they want to join the partisans. But partisans believe this is a ruse and are about to kill them. But soon are convinced that Riva is genuine. The others are shot.
- 3.13 Riva stays with partisan unit. Unit's job was blowing up rail lines, other 'divisive' actions. Name of unit was Khrushchev.
- 3.20 Describes fighting between Ukrainian factions and relations between Poles in area and Ukrainians.
- 3.24 Talks about German treatment of Gypsies, who they said were the same as Jews.
- 3.26 Says that her partisan unit had many Ossetians, Uzbeks, Armenians – former prisoners of war who had escaped from German camps.
- 3.28 Partisan unit joins with advancing Red Army in Ternopol oblast. Female partisans relieved of duty. Riva returns to old couple she had worked for in Khmel'nitskaya Oblast.

3.31 In May [probably 1944] she returns to her home in Vinnitsa oblast, which had been liberated by the Red Army. She finds her mother. She goes to live in Kiev, towards the end of 1945.

[Break]

4.00 Describes how Ukrainian family had given refuge to her mother.

4.05 Discusses life after war.

4.07 Interviewer asks about anti-Semitism in present day Ukraine. Riva talks about need for additional monument in area to Jews who were killed.

4.18 Shows pictures of mother and Gonchar family, which saved her mother.

END OF TAPE