

Interview with Yelizaveta Karpar.

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01.00.25.

I was born in 1921 in the town Zvenigorodka. My parents had 5 children. My father was a worker and my mom was a housewife. When I was 7 years old I began to study in Ukrainian school. I finished 10th class in 1938. Then I took the teacher's courses. After it I worked in the village Yurkovka as a teacher. I worked there before the beginning of the war. When the war began I worked at school and also I studied in Kiev institute. Zvenigorodka had a very quiet life before the war. All people were friendly to each other and most of them were Jews.

01.05.30.

In 1939, when the Germans began the war against Poland, many young Jews escaped from Poland and West Ukraine toward our area. Some of them went to wage war but others began to live in Zvenigorodka. These people told us many ugly stories about German soldiers.

01.08.52.

My father did not want to evacuate from Zvenigorodka like many other people. He believed that German soldiers could not hurt him and his family because it was a simple family but not communists. Same wrong opinion about Germans was shared by a few other Jewish families of our town.

01.10.40.

The German Army arrived in our town July 29. In a couple of months was organized an Ukrainian nationalist group of Zvenigorodka. People from the group wanted independence for Ukraine. But very soon all 80 members this group were killed by the Germans.

01.17.10.

The Germans made a Jewish ghetto in our town. All winter we lived and worked in the ghetto. There were more than five thousand Jews in our town and so we had 3 ghetto blocks. The Germans and the Ukrainian police never allowed us to leave ghetto except to visit the market after 2 p.m., because people from the camp needed some food.

01.19.00.

One day my girlfriends and I went to the market. We did not know why police took us to jail. We had spent a day there and were so lucky that we could leave that ugly place and that the Germans did not hurt us.

01.20.00.

At once as the Germans arrived in Zvenigorodka they began to rob us. They wanted the clothes and the gold from us and also they took from us everything valuable they could find. At first there was a small Jewish hospital in Zvenigorodka where we had free medical help. But soon that hospital was closed by German soldiers.

01.21.00.

One day the Germans gave the order to Jewish young people to gather together. As I was young I did it too. Nobody from us knew what to expect and although Germans said we were going to work, nobody believed them. Soon we guessed Germans told lies because they took us to the special camp.

02.03.00.

From time to time the Germans killed the people from the camp. They hated all Jews but most of all they hated and killed the men.

02.05.00.

August 23, 1943, I worked in the forest together with other people. We heard shots around us. Then one our guard approached us and ordered us to follow him. So we went through the forest not having any ideas where we were going. But soon we saw many police with weapons in front of the forest and we guessed what was going to happen. My girlfriends and I decided to escape from forest through the bushes. Some of us were killed but some were lucky to escape.

02.08.50.

When I escaped from the forest I met one man with name Boria Pintar'. He told me I have to go quickly from this place because Germans looked for people who did escape from the forest. Also Boria gave me a basket in order to I could look like a person from the village. By the way I looked like an Ukrainian girl because I had light – brown skin. So with this basket I went toward the village. There I heard a conversation between two women from the village and I understood that Germans caught many Jews who did escape from the forest. Also I understood from the women's conversation that my mom was alive and she lived exactly in this village. One friend of my mom gave shelter for her.

02.10.50.

I found my mom and I was with her one day. But I understood I could not spend with her much time because it was dangerous. So I left the house and went toward another village. I approached the village Pochapincy on August 24. I asked permission for the night and one woman was kind to me. Also I asked her to give me more simple clothes than I had.

02.14.20.

When I left the house I met one girl who had also escaped from a camp. We decided to go together toward Kiev. One day we met a woman with a small child. She invited us to live with her in her house.

02.17.40.

We understood we could not live in a village not working. So we went to the country soviet to ask for some job. But a chairman of the country soviet did not give a job for us. More over he said as we had not any documents, would be better for us to not look for a job in the collective farm. We understood why he said it. Our village was full of police and it would be better for us to hide from them.

02.19.00.

After we were not successful finding a job, we returned to the house where we lived. The woman from the house helped me. She found a place where I could work. One old man from the village had a cow and he needed help because his daughters were taken to Germany. I lived in his house and helped him a couple of months. After it I began to work in another family. I lived there a few months. The owner of that house was a Ukrainian policeman and I was lucky because he did not guess who I was. He thought I was Ukrainian. His wife was a good woman and she was kind to me.

02.23.20.

One day a woman returned from the village Komarivka and began to speak to me. She asked me if I was a Jew. I answered no but she did not believe me because one person from the village told her who I was. So the woman insisted to hear the truth. Then I answered yes I was Jew. When woman heard the truth she was scared but she did not take me to the police. A reason was that the woman had sympathy for me. In a few weeks the woman told her husband about me and he was scared too. He said I had to go because if another police would know who I was they would burn his house.

02.26.40.

All Germans were expelled from our village on February 17. The Russian soldiers decided I was German and I was taken for interrogation. I tried to explain who I was but

nobody believed me. Unexpectedly the door of the room opened and I saw a familiar man. This was the partisan Ivan who knew me and my parents. Ivan told about me and the Russian people believed him.

02.29.05.

On February 23, my sister and my mom found me. After meeting I returned to the place where I lived before but my mom and sister decided to find my other sister. In March I returned to Zvenigorodka.

02.32.00.

I began to work in a children's home and I worked there 7 years. I went with another person from place to place and put orphans to children's home.

02.32.40

In 1947 I married and also in 1947 I began to study in Uman' institute because my boss from job insisted I had to have an education. I was a German teacher but in the institute I studied English because only English was offered to me. As for me I did not care because all I needed was only the paper about my education but not knowledge of the language. I worked as a teacher in the school for 40 years.

03.03.30.

Very often I have nightmares about the war. One day the director of a school asked me to make a special lesson about war. I prepared for the lesson but as I began to tell about wartime I began to cry and I could not continue the lesson. And even now each time when I try to read or watch TV about the war I begin to cry. The reason is I have terrible memories about the war.

