

RG-50.226 #0041

**ZAMENSKAYA, FIRA**

- 1.00 Born 1925. Family of 4. Maiden name was Cherepinskiy. There was a younger brother in the family, born in 1929. Family lived in Shpola, which used to be part of Kiev oblast but is now in Cherkask oblast. Eighty percent of population was Jewish.
- 1.01 Father was a worker in agriculture. Mother was a housewife. Fira started in a Ukrainian school in 1933. Family not religious, although observed holidays.
- 1.04 As a child heard stories about Jewish persecution in Germany in the 1930's.
- 1.08 During first days of war, Fira's family left Shpola and tried to flee eastward in the family's wagon. But they were overtaken by German troops. German troops occupied Shpola on July 30 1941. When Germans overtook family on the road to Poltava, they did not mistreat them in any way, but ordered them to return to ShPola.
- 1.10 Soon a ghetto was established in Shpola. Most of the guards and police were Ukrainian. A Jew - named Gofman - under the direction of Ukrainians assigned ghetto to work each day - street cleaning, wood cutting, various jobs.
- 1.13 Ghetto resident were allowed to go to town market to sell belongings for food. Guards were largely local people.
- 1.15 There were police raids from time to time in ghetto. Once in 1941 there was a raid during which German guards sorted ghetto residents by gender and physical condition. A group of men in good physical condition wee marched off, supposedly to work, but they never returned.
- 1.19 After occupation began, Fira's father was given refuge by the director of a state farm [Sovkhoz] where he had occasionally worked. Fira's brother was taken in by a relative of the director who lived in Ternopol oblast. The relative, Bondarenko, and his wife raised Fira's brother during the war years at risk to themselves.
- 1.25 While Fira's father was working on the state farm, someone gave away his Jewish identity to the Germans, and he was taken to a concentration camp.
- 1.26 Fira and a friend worked for 3 days at the police headquarters doing cleaning jobs. One day a German officer told the girls that there would be a round-up that night at the ghetto and that people would be taken away and shot. He told them to try to hide elsewhere. They told their mothers, and they all left the town and were given refuge by a Ukrainian woman in the countryside. They later went to the town of Zlatopol.
- 1.29 In Zlatopol, Fira found that her aunt and cousins had been shot there. They didn't know what to do. The went to a local 'camp' where Jews lived and were sent on work detail. There were many religious older people in the camp.
- 1.31 In the fall of 1942 local police carried out a round-up [oblava] at the camp.

[Break]

- 2.00 Women, children, old men were loaded on to trucks. Fira, seeing a gap in the fence surround the camp, ran through it and escaped. Her mother was also loaded on to a truck.
- 2.04 Fira returns to Shpola. Is hidden in a barn by a neighbor, and finds her mother hiding in the same barn. It turns out that her mother had jumped from the truck the police had put her in and also returned to Shpola.
- 2.06 Stayed with neighbor 2 weeks. Then were asked to leave - the family was afraid. They were given directions to a state farm where they would be hidden. Farm was located about 60 km from Shpola. She worked on the farm.
- 2.23 One day, Ukrainian police and Germans left the area as Soviet troops advanced. On March 8, 1943 Soviet troops liberated state farm. She found out her mother and father both perished. Doesn't know where, how, or when.
- 2.32 Fira married in 1952. Husband died in 1971. She worked in a kindergarten 40 years.