

RG-50.378*019 1 of 1 tape

Lyvbov Abramovich

- 1.00 [Tape opens with village street scene in which Abramovich asks local resident – who seems to be slightly drunk – about location of various houses and about changes that have occurred around site which use to be her house.]
- 1.05 Town of Slanim bombed 2nd day after war began. She ran with her child. Met by first Wermacht troops, who paid no attention to them. She, husband and child went to house of relative in Slanim.
- 1.10 Discusses house and family before the war – when area was part of Poland.
- 1.13[?] Father had a small store. Fairly religious. She had 2 brothers. She welcomed arrival of Soviet rule in Sept. 1939, but quickly was disappointed.
- 1.18 Discusses Jewish school she attended until the seventh grade. Teaching language Polish. A number of other schools where teaching was in Hebrew and Yiddish. All these Jewish schools were closed with the advent of Soviet rule in 1939.
- 1.22 Discusses her youth and membership in Jewish organization Hashomer Hatzair. Married a Slanim resident when she was 21, in 1939.
- 1.24 Describes religious life of her family. Says Slanim at this time was 80% Jewish, and the town came to a standstill on major Jewish holidays.

[break]

- 2.00 Views of village.
- 2.01 Scene of house where Abramovich and family came after their house was destroyed by bombs in the first days of the war. Her husband was seized from this house on 17 July 1941. Taken with other able-bodied Jewish men to nearby square, beaten, then taken away in trucks. Later Germans announced that these men had been sent to work and would return soon.
- 2.06 In fact, these 1200 men never returned and for decades there was no indication where they were killed and buried. Not long ago, a Soviet citizen who had been a member of the ‘polizei’ and who had participated in the seizing of the Jews wrote – from Canada or the US – disclosing the location where the men had been buried. The area found, and now a memorial stands on this spot.
- 2.08 Discusses how her 1 year old baby died during the first days of the war from diphtheria and a lung ailment.

- 2.11 In Nov. 1941 a 'pogrom' began. Jews confined to their houses. Many people tried to hide. Abramovich hid in attic of nearby house – watched people, including her parents, and a brother, taken and loaded into trucks. They were taken to nearby area, where they were shot by local and Latvian polizei.
- 2.17 Abramovich goes to live with brother of husband, as doctor. As a doctor – whose mother-in-law was also a doctor – he was spared by the Germans who needed his services.
- 2.19 Abramovich meets of friend from days when she had been in pro-Soviet Komsomol organization – prior to Soviet 1939 take-over. He tells her to get a job with gendarmerie in Slonim and gather information and work packing ammunition.
- 2.22 She steals bullets and carries them home. She is without fear, having lost her family and feeling nothing could happen to her that would be worse. But retains will to live. Wanted to join partisans.
- 2.25 [Scene in square in Slonim. Abramovich speaking. Difficult to hear over traffic noises.]

[break]

- 3.00 [Suburban scene.] [Scene on wooded road Monument in the woods.] Abramovich says shoes, clothing had been in area. Her husband died and was buried.
- 3.10 Abramovich shows and describes place where ghetto residents killed in 3rd 'pogrom'. Describes arrival of police, SS troops, and Latvians. There was underground in ghetto with weapons. Some opened fire on Germans. Germans burned houses. Abramovich still able to hide, but soon found by Germans in attic. Driven to a nearby prison, from where they were taken out in groups and shot. When graves full, remaining Jews were put in small ghetto – some 800 persons. Abramovich escaped and joined partisans.
- 3.19 Abramovich says that in Slonim about 50,000 Jews died. Many of them were Polish Jews who had fled to Slonim from Bialystok and other Polish cities after Germans attacked Poland.
- 3.23 Describes life in ghetto. She had ties with partisans in woods. Describes transferring weapons parts she had taken from barracks where she worked.
- 3.27 Describes family that helped smuggle weapons to partisans.

[break]

- 4.02 On one occasion there was fire fight when Germans discovered wagon of weapons being transferred to partisans.
- 4.06 Partisans later told Jewish ghetto, confederates to leave ghetto and join them in the woods. Abramovich and some others escape from ghetto. Go 2 or 3 km. Meet wagon in woods – go to partisans, along with weapons.
- 4.13 Joins Voroshilov unit.
- 4.15 Shows house where she cleaned ammunition – and stole some and supplied them to partisans. Abramovich says that after war the gebietskommissar Ern of Slonim discovered in Germany. He was imprisoned in Hamburg. She was asked to participate in trial. Ern lived in house in garden, and she saw him everyday. She describes court delegation that came to Slonim to investigate after war.
- 4.28 [break]
- 5.00 [Lyuba is standing in front of yellow house.] She says it is site in ghetto in which she lived until July 1942. From attic of house, saw how ghetto was burned. From there was driven to a prison courtyard. From there, Jews taken by truck taken to place where shot.
- 5.03 Describes life in ghetto.
- 5.11 Scene shows barn-like building where Jews worked cleaning weapons and ammunition left behind by retreating Soviet troops. Here, Lyuba says, Jews helped partisans, stealing weapons and parts for underground.
- 5.17 In answer to question, describes function of Judenrat.
- 5.25 Scene of gravestones, most in Hebrew, one in Belorussian.
- [break]
- 6.00 Scene of the Jewish cemetery in Slonim. Old stones missing. Few years before 1995, local authorities wanted to build supermarket in area, and removed many gravestones. Later this process stopped when local Jews protested. New stones established in 1994.
- 6.07 Shows place where Jews buried after ‘pogrom’ 24 Nov. 1941. Jews had been gathered on square, brought in trucks. Drunken police – Lithuanians, Poles, Belorussians – shot Jews who fell in already dug ditches. A few people were able to crawl out of ditch and later describe what had happened. All Lyuba’s relatives buried here.
- 6.15 [Long scene of surrounding area.]

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