

RG-50.378 #027 1 Tape
Pukhovitskiy, Arkadiy Isakovich

- 1.00 Born 7 Nov. 1923 in Bitebsk oblast in the village of Hashniki. Father worked in fishing cooperative. Mother was a seamstress. In 1940 Arkadiy began work as a third grade teacher. He had a younger brother and sister. Mother died at age 40.
- 1.08 Interviewer asks about family's religious life.
- 1.15 Describes town of Chashniki.
- 1.19 Interviewer asks about Stalinist repressions and purges of late 1930s. Number of persons arrested – for being Bund members. Few Jews suffered – mostly Polish people in area.
- 1.24 Relations between Jews and non-Jews very good. Many of his Russian childhood friends spoke Yiddish.
- 1.28 Discusses Jewish refugees from Poland arriving in Chashniki prior to war. Family believed war would come. Many military in area.

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- 2.00 Many Jews did not fear arrival of Germans. Had either experienced or heard about treatment of local Jews by Germans in WWI.
- 2.02 Discusses outbreak of war. Family tried to move east to Vitebsk, but fast arrival of Germans prevented this. Arkadiy himself was visiting a relative in Minsk on day of German attack – 22 June 1941. On June 24, Minsk bombed. Relatives house burned.
- 2.12 Returns to Chashniki. Germans already there. Jews forbidden to leave the town; forced to wear yellow stars. Jewish administrator appointed. Had to provide work parties.
- 2.23 Formal ghetto with barbed-wire fence not established. Jews lived in their usual houses, but had restrictions on their movements. At first food was sufficient. There were large supplies of barley in the town. Jews carried on exchanges with non-Jews who could move around and secure food.

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- 3.00 Discusses his work at turf-drying facility. Not guarded. There were few Germans in Chashniki. Most of the administration put in the hands of local gov't and local police.

- 3.02 There was no individual killing of Jews. Mass shooting, however, took place late – Feb. 13-14, 1942.
- 3.03 Before mass shooting, local people treated Jews well. Jews heard, however, that Jews were being killed in nearby towns. But felt that there was no place to go, no place to hide. There were no thoughts of flight or resistance. No one had heard about partisan presence in the area.
- 3.13 Discusses day Jews were shot – Feb. 13, 1942. He was home with a boil – couldn't work. Jews led to a church building which had been used as a club. Pukhovitskiy meanwhile hid in an attic with his mother and sister. But Germans came into house and were about to search it. His mother pushed Pukhovitskiy out of the window, saying "save yourself". He fell in the snow and then ran. Given food by local friend. Crossed frozen lake to nearby village. Goes to town of Gribin.
- 3.20 Told in Gribin that partisan units are nearby, in next rayon. He seeks them out.
- 3.25 Describes meeting with partisans and local commanders.
- 3.26 Interviewer asks about shootings of Jews in February. P. describes what he heard later. Mainly, Germans carried out shooting.

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- 4.00 During February round-up of Jews, his mother and sister taken from the hiding place in the attic. But a local policeman, who knew his father, freed his mother and sister and showed them how to go to a nearby town, Zhereno. But she was killed later. He heard his father was later killed. Sister was also killed. The monument erected after the war on the site where the shootings were carried out says there were 1,800 victims. This number includes non-Jews who were killed in Chashniki.
- 4.09 Discusses partisan unit he joined. Describes a brief encounter with German troops. Joined later by an increasing number of civilians. Carried out various actions against Germans and police. He was assigned to an explosives detail and also and intelligence scouting unit. P. was able to move east and cross front to join Soviet army forces. He was given some training and sent back to carry out operations behind German lines.
- 4.21 At request of partisan commander, he returns to regular army and joins Soviet army – in November 1942. Assigned to an airfield. Later, when his unit had advanced into Germany, he captured 11 German soldiers. Because of his knowledge of Yiddish and a bit of German, he became an't interpreter. Finished was as interpreter and served in Germany until 1946.

4.27 After war went to Mogilev as a teacher. As a party member and began to teach in a factory school. Later entered banking system and worked there 46 years.

END OF TAPE