

Klara Litvak Eydina, interviewed Nov. 16, 1995

Family

Klara b. 1932 in Odessa; only child

Father: Grigorii Iosifovich Litvak b. 1908 in Krivoye Ozero ("Lake") [north of Odessa and near the Romanian border]; house painter, made wine barrels at State Farm

Mother: Dora Romanovna Litvak [no maiden name] b. 1911 in Krivoye Ozero; managed a produce store

Maternal grandfather a rabbi [no name]

WWII

At beginning of war, Klara and parents are in Krivoye Ozero

Father immediately drafted

Klara describes almost 3 years during Romanian-German occupation of moving from village to village, periodic roundups of Jews, hiding, narrow escapes with her mother and grandmother, including:

When father drafted, director of State Farm (Pantelemon, a.k.a. "Pantiusha"), a family friend, hid Klara, Dora and grandmother in cellar; but he did not help them evacuate in time so they were apprehended when Romanians [German allies] entered Krivoye Ozero; but a State Farm driver told the Romanians that Klara, Dora and grandmother were not Jews and they were released

One day they were taken out to be shot, but the Romanian soldier let them go; they hid in a barn; another acquaintance hid them in his garden

A Jewish tailor, Shlakhman, who made uniforms for Germans and Romanians, employed fellow Jews, including Dora

Fall 1941, the SS came to Krivoye Ozero and took Dora as a cook but shortly thereafter she was exposed as a Jew, fled and went back to Shlakhman; Klara describes another incident when Shlakhman's Jews were almost shot but Dora reminded SS that Shlakhman made their uniforms and they were spared

Klara describes ghastly condition of Jews expelled from Kishinev

Klara, Dora, and grandmother went to village of Burilovo (?) where collective farm director hid Klara in his chimney, but they were exposed

Fled to village of Mazurovka, where partisans refused to take them

Fled to village of Mikhailovka, where a woman hid them in a barn, but a roundup of Jews forces Klara to flee back to Mazurovka

Grandmother taken to concentration camp at Akmechetka; she tries to escape, is brought back, beaten with a birch rod and dies

In Mazurovka, wife of school principal hides Klara and Dora in house adjoining school in 1942-43; Klara describes an "Anne Frank" type hiding, but in her case they were not betrayed, even though Germans threatened to punish those who hid Jews; Klara calls this woman a hero

Liberation and postwar

Region liberated in 1944 by General Lebedev; Klara and Dora returned to Krivoye Ozero;
father in army, still alive; family reunited; after war, family moves to Odessa
No one wanted to talk about war, plus Stalinism prevented it
Klara worked in mayor's office and saw discrimination against Jews
Left USSR [time not indicated] for Australia where at time of interview she lives with
daughter and grandchildren

Summary by: Joseph Bradley, December 10, 2018