

Summary of Oral History: Rina Starikova

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Rina Starikova, born in 1924, is Jewish. She was born in the village of Kryzhopil, Vinnytsia region, then the family moved to Tomashpil. She says that her parents were workers, had average income. They lived in a Jewish town. At home, they communicated in Yiddish, they also knew Ukrainian and Russian. They were religious, had Jewish books. Rina went to a state Jewish school until the 7th grade, then until the 10th grade she went to a Ukrainian school. They had friendly relations with Ukrainians.

She recalls that they learned about Hitler before the start of the war from refugees from Poland and Western Ukraine, and in June 1941, on the second day after the prom, the war broke out and all hopes collapsed.

She tells about efforts to evacuate. The village of Vapniarka was located 18 km away, where there was a railway junction, the bombardment began there. The family had to leave in a cart in the direction of Uman. In Ternivka, Uman region, there were German troops, so they decided to turn back. On the way they saw burnt houses, especially in Jewish towns. First they reached Tulchyn, where their aunt lived. There they hid in the field for the night, rested at their aunt's house. Then they went to Tomashpil and learned from Ukrainians that the local Jews had been gathered and shot at the Jewish cemetery. They returned to Tulchyn again. There they were met by the Romanians who took away her father. They beat and robbed him, but he returned alive. Germans were walking around the city, so the family hid with the aunt, where they stayed for 2-3 weeks, but still decided to return to Tomashpil. The interviewee recalls that they left right on time, because the next day the Jews of Tulchyn were sent to the concentration camp in Pechory. The aunt was shot when she tried to run home to get her things, the uncle and a little daughter died of hunger. After two years in the camp, her son Sasha, the interviewee's cousin, escaped and saved himself. She partly tells about his fate. She also knows that the uncle and his family were burned alive in Odessa. Grandmother, having learned about this, went blind.

Next, the interviewee tells about the time in the ghetto (quarters surrounded by barbed wire), which they got into when they returned to Tomashpil. The ghetto was guarded by Ukrainian polizei. The Jews had to wear a six-pointed yellow star. They could leave the ghetto only to go to work, they hardly fed them, Ukrainians helped with food. Later, the men were taken to a concentration camp in Mykolaiv region. (the father was able to return). Others were taken for field work, housed in barracks. Once Rina escaped together with others in 1942, but they were all caught and sent to prison, abused. She remembers that in any weather, even in the heat, they wore padded jackets to at least somehow protect themselves from blows. The interviewee spent 3 years in the ghetto, worked hard there.

In March 1944, the Soviet army liberated the village, and the Germans did not destroy their ghetto. She then tells about life after the war. Her mother worked as a

seamstress, earned to buy some food. The interviewee helped in the hospital, then studied and worked as a teacher. She married a Jew who fought and reached Berlin. She herself did not experience anti-Semitic sentiments, but her husband said that he had confronted some, in particular, he was not given a job, and they also said that the Jews did not fight in the war. Her brother talked about anti-Semitism in Western Ukraine.

Parents: Osher Pensyonovych Starykov, Roza Izrailovna Hurvyts

She gives the names of her relatives

Herman Urman and Klara Burshtein are a couple of Jews who managed to escape in Tomashpil