

RG-50.510 #0001
GENCHERMAN, YAKOV

- 001 Title: The Shooting of Jews in the Village of Nagartavna in Sept. 1941
- 002 Discusses his parents. Parents wanted to emigrate to the US in 1920s but lack of funds and the fact they had small children prevented this. Lived in Padizhina in Vinnitsa Oblast. In 1923 moved to southeastern Ukraine with other Jews who were trying to escape the violence and pogroms which were frequent in Vinnitsa Oblast. Settled in Nagartav, later name Beegnizovatoye, in Nikolaevskaya Oblast - a Jewish settlement. Area was wheat growing. Jewish life was normal, religion was practiced, life fairly prosperous.
- 023 Things changed with forced collectivization. Land and animals taken from peasants. Especially bad time was in 1933, the deliberately created famine.
- 031 Jewish school closed in 1937. This was start of Bolshevik anti-semitic program. Yakov's father Leser at this time was a leading tractor driver in the villages. Worked 7 days a week - 12-14 hours a day. Mother, Riva, worked as housewife, educated her four children. The oldest was Khaya, born 1919 - now lives in Israel, then brother Motel [1921] - wounded during war. Now living in Germany. Younger brother Tolya [Anatoliy] 1928.
- 047 Discusses outbreak of war. Family tried to cross Dnieper to escape east, but were forced to return home by German troops. German troops and Ukrainian guards assembled Jews, took all their valuables and marched them off in groups to a nearby ravine. And shot them. Thousands of people killed, Gencherman was told about these events in 1944 by an eye witness, one Tereshchenko.
- 075 Soviets never mentioned this massacre, and did not respond to requests to move remains from ravine. Only in 1956 got permission to move remains to Jewish cemetery.
- 115 Discusses his own experiences during war. He was drafted during first days of war and sent to infantry school. Graduated in June 1942 as lieutenant. Sent to Stalingrad front. Discusses operations in Stalingrad. Yakov slightly wounded twice. But fought on until defeat of Germans in Feb. 1943.
- 190 Sent to Kursk - Orel area, where huge tank battle took place. Seriously wounded in July 1943 and spent time in various hospitals. Later received pension because of wounds.
- 198 Gencherman was told that Jewish soldiers were not being considered for promotion - which is why he was not promoted.
- 228 After war, in 1945, Gencherman entered institute in Odessa - refrigeration engineering institute. Finished in 1950. Sent to Kherson, where he worked for 35 years. Married in 1950 - died in 1994.

247 Discusses anti-semitism in Ukraine and former USSR after fall of communist regime. Discusses history of anti-semitism in Soviet period - particularly in 1930s. Still exists in Ukraine - tolerated by government. Worse in western portions of Ukraine.

295 Came to US in April 1997. Family came also.