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Moldova Documentation Project  
Russian  
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Box 1, Tape 1

In this interview, Irina Lukyanovna Skakun talks about her family's attempt to escape to Ukraine, their arrest, and life in the concentration camp in the Ukrainian village of **Groslovo**. Ms. Skakun describes the camp guards and the interrogations. She focuses on food, labor, and the cell where her family lived. She comments on people who came to make injections and focuses on how her family members were constantly ill after living in the camp. In addition, she talks about another family's background and remembers many cases of cruel behavior by the guards. She discusses the fate of the Jews from the camp and tells about a Jewish boy who managed to stay alive.

**[01:] 00:43:00 – [01:] 06:18:13**

She states that in the beginning of World War II she was in her home-village of Kazaneshty, in the **Telenezhsky** region of Bessarabia (present-day Moldova); talks about the massive migration of people to the east; describes her family's escape to Ukraine; comments on the troubles they had while trying to get there; talks about how fast the German invasion was; explains that she stayed in the village **Rudnitsa**, in the **Vinnitsa** region until April 1942, before the whole family was arrested by the German gendarmes, explains how after their arrest the German gendarmes registered them in Tiraspol and moved them to the Ukrainian village of **Groslovo** (present-day Velikomikhailovka) in the Odessa region; comments on the absolute uncertainty about the future; explains that they were put in a concentration camp with different nationalities (Gypsies, Ukrainians, Gagauzes, among others).

**[01:] 06:08:14 – [01:] 17:52:22**

She talks about people in white robes checking them occasionally and making some injections; explains that prisoners were forced to go outside; describes how many people were fainting; focuses on the fact that there were a lot of children in the camp; states that she was ten at that time; describes her father's occupation before the war; describes the place where her family lived before the arrest; describes the arrest itself; explains that all valuable property was taken away; comments on the transport first to Tiraspol and then to Groslovo; describes the interrogation at Tiraspol; describes the cell they had to live in; talks about the arrivals of other people from Kharkov, Bessarabia, Gagauza; explains that she remembers perfectly the **Izhelantovs** family that lived with them; states that she remembers all their names: **Vladimir, Valentin, Lilya, Vera**; tells that the father of this family was Moldovan and the mother was Russian.

**[01:] 17:52:23 – [01:] 27:15:00**

She comments on the living conditions at the camp in Groslovo; describes what kind of food they ate; focuses on how terrible and unsanitary the food was; explains that the local villagers threw parcels of food over the fence; comments on the guards; tells that they were mostly Romanian; describes a rumor that all Gypsies and old Jewish people in that camp were shot dead before her family arrived and that other Jews were taken away to an unknown destination;

focuses on the beatings that occurred in the camp; describes living in the cell next to the interrogation chamber; comments on the cries and screams she heard; remembers a Gypsy woman who was beaten so bad that she could not bear the beatings anymore and tried to hang herself; remembers hearing that following their horrible beatings and mockeries of a Jewish woman named **Genya** the guards had her executed.

**[01:] 27:15:01 – [01:] 31:11:24**

She comments on the people in white robes who came to the camp to give the inmates injections of an unknown substance; remembers them speaking various languages (Russian, German, Romanian); comments on hiding from them; talks about a Gypsy family that did not have a cell to live in, so they lived outside even in the winter; explains that even though all her family members survived the concentration camp, they all have become handicapped in some form; explains that her niece, who was three months old when they arrived at the camp, lived a rather short life and was constantly ill; focuses on the fact that all her family members are still handicapped.

**[01:] 31:11:25 – [01:] 35:11:25**

She explains that the Red Army freed them in April 1944; comments on her brother's and parents' illnesses and deaths; states that she and her sisters suffer illnesses time after time; states that there were about 200 people in the camp; explains that a considerable number of people were brought to the labor camp in Tiraspol; explains that the camp commandant took her sister to work in his house; describes how the labor in the vegetable garden was under surveillance; states that people who were taken to Tiraspol never returned to the concentration camp.

**[01:] 35:12:00 – [01:] 39:51:00**

She remembers a Jewish boy at the camp, who changed his name to a Russian one (Nikolay); tells about the committees to figure out Jews in the camp; explains that her family said that he was their son in order to save him; comments on his friendship with her brothers; remembers that once a Romanian guard hit him very hard with a lash and told him to go to the committee; explains that the boy cried because of the pain, and the guard spared him from going to the committee which saved the Jewish boy's life; discusses the committee, its activity, and composition.