

VANCEA, Gheorghe
Romanian Documentation Project
Romanian
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Box 1, Tape 1

In this interview, Gheorghe Vancea discusses the anti-Jewish propaganda in the parts of Romania that were under the Austro-Hungarian rule. In addition, he talks about the Jewish ghettos in Sighetul Marmatiei and about the round-up of Jews that was organized by the Hungarian soldiers at the beginning of World War II.

[01:] 00:54:05 – [01:] 11:23:06

He gives his personal dates and his birthplace being in Nanesti village, **Barsana**, Maramures County, where he stayed until the end of World War II; comments on the withdrawal of the occupying forces from the territory in autumn 1944; focuses on Jewish life, Jewish businesses, and Jewish farms in his village; remembers the deportation of the local Jews from Nanesti to the ghettos in Sighetul Marmatiei in spring 1944, on Easter Sunday; discusses the Jews being rounded-up by the occupying forces and deported to the ghettos on horse-drawn carriages; comments on the location of the ghetto; discusses the Jews being placed in an area within the town and being surrounded with barbed wire and wooden panels; comments on the Jews' subsequent fate; remembers the story of two Jewish girls, who were around 20 years old and hid in the forest nearby the village for a couple of days; assumes that local people helped them; discusses the girls' getting scared and turning themselves in after a while; talks about a few young men returning after the deportation in fall; assumes that those boys were forced to work in labor camps and managed to survive there; says that he was just a child back then and did not understand much of what was going on; remembers seeing the Hungarian soldiers round up entire families and force the village people to give them carriages to take the Jews away; talks about the plundering of Jewish homes a few weeks after the deportation.

[01:] 11:23:07 – [01:] 16:07:05

He remembers seeing the ghetto in Sighetul Marmatiei with his own eyes, as his father took him along in one of his trips to the town; thinks that many of the Jewish families hoped that they would eventually come back to their homes and that their situation would be a temporary one; discusses families from all over the area being brought to live in the ghetto in uncomfortable, extreme conditions.

[01:] 16:07:06 – [01:] 21:03:15

He talks about the powerful antisemitic propaganda at that time, which was mainly connected to the Legionary Movement in Romania; discusses the propaganda in his village conducted mostly by the Hungarian occupying army; mentions having heard of some Jewish families in Budapest who used their wealth to save themselves; elaborates

on the power of the propaganda by the Hungarian occupying army in his village, since there was no radio to listen to and the newspapers that reported on the battlefield were Hungarian; comments on the only Hungarian living in the village who was the teacher in the village school; mentions the German and Hungarian troops passing his village to Bessarabia between 1940 and 1941; remembers seeing the same troops passing his village in the opposite direction between 1944 and 1945, probably since they were pushed back by the Russian troops.