

Summary of Oral History: Kateryna Boiko

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Kateryna Boiko, born in 1923, lived in the village of Ternivka. She was there in 1941.

The village had a large Jewish town, the Jews ran shops.

When the Jews were shot, the women took part in burying the bodies. On that day, she and fellow villagers were working in a field near the "Greek" Forest, when at 10 a.m they were taken by carts to the grave of the Jews that had been shot at night (about 2 km away from the village.) The bodies of those killed were not seen, because men covered them with dirt. Men and girls were forced to further cover the corpses. The pit was wide, so to fill it up in the middle, they had to get into the pit, and they felt that they were walking on people's bodies. The pit was so large that people were brought from all over the village to fill it up.

Later, five more carts with Jews arrived (all of them were local Jews from Ternivka). There were women, children and the elderly. They were forced to take off their clothes, which were then taken away on a cart. A German, Hemel searched for and confiscated money. The girls who filled the pit up were taken away. The interviewee says that they fled to the forest in fear, heard gunshots from there, and later they were called to fill the pit up again. Approaching the pit, they saw scattered things near it, torn money.

When they were returning home, they saw three more carts carrying Jews. They had to go back to clear the pit for them. The interviewee witnessed a local Jewish teacher being beaten for refusing to undress and shouting at the girls, "Why are you lying down here?!" She also remembers a screaming girl holding two little twins. When they were shot, the girls were taken away to the forest, and then called to fill up the grave.

4-5 German polizei [Police] took part in the process, there were no local collaborators.

The Germans took all the belongings out of the Jewish houses.

Some Jews managed to hide and escape beyond the Bug [River], where Romanians were, they were not killed there. Kateryna's family hid a Jewish pharmacist, he was released from the pit, but his wife was shot. Later he went off somewhere. After the war came his son, who was at the front. She recalls the name "Frants" ("Franz").

At the time of this interview, there was only one Jew left in the village.