

**RG-50.589.1058**

**Witness 192R, Rostov-on-Don.**

**Summary by: Joseph Bradley**

The interviewee (192R) was born December 23, 1927 in the village of Blagodatne (Благодатне), Shchorskii raion (presently Krinichanskii raion), Dneprpetrovskaia oblast, Ukraine. His parents worked on the local collective farm where his father was a bookkeeper. Before the war, only Ukrainians lived on the collective farm.

In Fall, 1941, the Germans rapidly conquered the territory and then moved eastward, allowing the Ukrainian farmers to continue working on the collective farm. A group of 32 fleeing from the Donbas, among them Jews, sought refuge on the collective farm. 192R helped his father to save the Jews by forging certificates that verified that the refugees were members of the collective farm. 192R forged the stamp on the certificates. One night the Germans interrogated 192R's father, who convinced the Germans that the Jews were Russians or Tatars and that the collective farm needed more workers in order to feed the German army. During the intermittent round-ups, 192R and his family hid the Jews, just in case.

As the Germans were retreating in 1943, 192R and his brother were caught in a round-up and taken to a concentration camp for POWs near the village of Loshkarevka (Лощкарівка). Soviet planes bombed the camp, and 192R and his brother escaped. Separated from his brother, 192R hid in a haystack as a German patrol appeared. Captured, 192R was accused of being a partisan and taken away to most certain execution. However, the soldier, a Czech, told him to run away.

192R returned home; he joined the Soviet army in 1944 and served in the Far East until 1952. At the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Soviet victory in 2005, 192R was recognized for his efforts to save Jews during the war.

At the end of the interview, 192R shows the French interviewers photographs, documents, medals and a book called *The Book of the Righteous (Kniga pravednikov)*. [It is unclear whether this was recognition by the Russian government or by Yad Vashem, or both.]