

Interviews conducted on July 16, 2005 in Tulchin by A. Sokolova with participation by a man and a woman; and on July 10, 2006 in Tulchin by N. Evseenko and A. Kushkova

RG-50.632.0038

Summary

Murakhovskaia, Polina Iakovlevna, born in 1943 in Pechora (Pechera) camp

Her house is 105 years old. It had been a Jewish home; there was a store at the front. She had added to it, then her sister who is now in Israel had added to it. Her family was prosperous.

On this street resided mostly Jews. Kapsonivka was not far away. She remembers very narrow streets where Jews lived after the war.

In Tulchin the Jews spoke Yiddish before and after the war. For the most part, only Jews lived in Tulchin – rich and poor. The poor lived in Kaptsanivka. A very rich Jew, Glikman, lived in Tulchin. Famous people such as Baratynski and Pushkin came here. Jews were tradesmen, shoemakers, tailors.

She devotes her time to writing about Pechora concentration camp. She seeks to find righteous people. She recently found a righteous woman. Her radio program on the subject was to take place the next day at two o'clock.

She found whole villages of righteous people – villages of Tarasovka, Kholodivka. She received a letter from Israel confirming this.

Jews also lived in nearby villages including Kirsanovka and Gorishkovka. She has written about this. Her uncle and his wife lived in Gorishkovka. Before the war in the village of Gorishkovka there were 75 Jewish farms. It had two kolkhozes – on Jewish and one Ukrainian. The two kolkhozes were on friendly relations. Ukrainian residents in the village saved Jews during the war.

Her son is a rabbi in Yaroslavl.

Her son sent her a book "One Hundred Jewish villages."

Some of the nicknames given to Jews were: Haim Tsop, Mon'ka Pysher, Leva Ponosnik

Her parents had built a house in Kaptsanivka. They lost everything when they were taken to Pechora camp. Her brothers and sisters perished at the Pechora camp. Her grandmothers and grandfather also died at Pechora camp. Her father died at the front after Pechora.

She is from a family of Kohens on her mother's side. Her mother's maiden name was **Shveibish**. Her relatives have left for Israel, America, Germany. Only she remains in Tulchin.

Her stepfather was a Polish Jew. His name was Hilbaruch Mendelevich Adler. Her parents observed all Jewish holidays. Her stepfather was particularly religious. He escaped from Poland after it was captured and was imprisoned in Yekaterinburg. There he learned to be a stonemason. After Khrushchev, he found out that he had a surviving brother in Germany; and that his sister was saved by a Polish woman who has converted her to Christianity; she was now in America. In 1978, after her mother died, her stepfather moved to Israel, but he did not succeed in meeting his brother sister and died there.

She still speaks some Yiddish. Her older son also still remembers some Yiddish. But the younger son, a rabbi, who lives in America does not speak Yiddish at all. She has not yet met her two granddaughters.

During the war, when she and her family were sent to Pechora camp, their Ukrainian neighbors took all of the valuables from their house and from other Jewish homes. After the war her mother begged the neighbors to return at least some of their property, but it was never returned.

Only around 300 people survived the Pechora concentration camp. These people were from Shpikov, Vratslav, Tulchin. They were in Pechora from December 7, 1941 to March 16, 1944.

Pechora camp was built by the Germans on the site of a sanatorium. Four kilometers from the sanatorium are buried those who died at the camp.

After the war there were still many Jews here. They celebrated Rosh Ha-Shona.

Her children are very interested in Jewish history. They found a lot of interesting things at the old Jewish cemetery. Some Israelis came and gave money to clean the old Jewish cemetery. They found the grave of a grandson of Baal Shem Tov. Some old Jews here remember his other ancestors.

Old Jews say there were some houses with underground passages and cellars where Jews hid during the pogroms.

At the last Passover she attended there were around 80 people – many of the participants were half Jewish.

A female rabbi officiated. They all used to receive parcels from America. These are very helpful to her; they include rice, grain, cooking oil, canned goods.

She has a prayer book in Russian. It was brought to her by her children.
She keeps a kosher home, with separate milk and meat dishes.

Language:

Russian
Yiddish

Geographic Name:

Tulchin (Ukraine)
Pechera (Ukraine)
Shpikov (Shpykiv) (Ukraine)
Vratslav (Ukraine)