

File 42

Record Type:
Oral History

Neiman, Leonid Moiseevich, born in 1930 in town of Gorodkovka

There were three synagogues in Gorodovka. It used to have Jewish kolkhozes (collective farms). His uncle worked at a kolkhoz. His grandmother made leather coats. Jews worked at artels as shoemakers and tailors.

Parents used to arrange marriages for their children. There was a "shatchen" (matchmaker). There was also one "feldsher" (doctor's assistant) who was better than any doctor. There were also Jewish fortune tellers. Klezmer music was played at weddings. There was a "chuppah" at weddings. Weddings were large and lasted for two days.

During the war he and his mother were taken by the Germans to the Gorodovka ghetto. Ukrainians used to help them. After the war Ukrainian neighbors returned their property when he and his mother came back.

Many Jews left for Odessa. He lived in Odessa from 1946 to 1960. He went to a synagogue there even under the Communists. He fasted on Judgment day. He also remembers "Peisakh" (Passover), Purim, and "Sukes" (Sukkot) holidays. His grandmother had separate dishes for Passover.

After the war and liberation by the Soviets, there were no synagogues left. There was only one large house where old Jews went to pray. It had been an empty house; the Jews purchased it and prayed there.

Many of his relatives left for Germany. One son is in Australia. His deceased first wife was from Odessa. Their daughter is in Australia. His second wife has also died; he is left alone and is thinking of leaving. His one son is married to a Ukrainian woman; his other son in Australia is married to a Polish woman. There is no difference between us and them. Many Jews left for Israel, Germany, America. He is the only Jew left on his street.

Interview conducted on July 23, 2005 by O. Gabe and A. Sokolova

RG Number:
RG-50.632*00042

Language:
Russian
Yiddish

Geographic Name:

Tulchin (Ukraine)

Gorodkovka (Horodkivka) (Ukraine)

Odessa