

Ivan Zhirko was born on February 1st, 1927 in a village Svitaya Volya where he lived all his life.

Their village was called shtetl, because a lot of Jews lived there.

Russians only worked in the fields; Jews were shoemakers, tool makers, owned little stores, etc. They had good relationships with everybody, it was a good life.

He remembered the following names: Belynsky - a store manager;

Froiko made horseshoes, his son was a barber. Shuttle had 7 stores and a restaurant and a meat factory, people from other villages used to come to Svitaya Volya to buy food and other necessities.

When war started and Poland was defeated they heard that Germans were coming, one German woman who lived in their village organized police. People started hiding and moving to partisans; Ivan joined partisans - group Hovanshina when he was 17.

Germans were in the village in 1919, They treated people Ok then.

Germans came on motorcycles, partisans were attacking them.

SS soldiers first started eliminating communists, party leaders, and local "government".

He remembered that he heard that Jews were killed in Poland and in Radivo village.

He remembered that there were about 50 policemen all from near by villages:

Telehan, Bobrovich, Yan, Turnoye. Policemen wore black uniforms with brown bands, they had rifles, they beat people with sticks. Germans recruited local young men 19-25 into their police by promising houses, and good life, after the war.

Ivan thinks that Germans let Jews live and work through the first winter. However Jews did not have a place to escape, nobody tried to hide them among partisans.

Ivan remembered only one Jew partisan, Shukin, he was in charge of food supplies.

One day Jewish men were taken to the synagogue, he heard sounds of shootings in the morning, then they gathered Jewish women and shot them in a different place near old airport, and they shot them naked, they were looking for gold. Jews were convoyed primarily by policemen and shot by Germans.

One Jew Gilka, wasn't in the village during roundups, but after 2 weeks of hiding in Bobrovo, Korson reported him; and then partisans came and killed Korson.

One Jew was left, he had a pharmacy and then he was killed a week later, two Germans on horses, convoyed a young Jewish woman and him. Ivan and other people saw bodies.

Germans sent villages to roadworks, as they were building road to Telehani. During that time he saw Hungarian Jews on wagons convoyed by brutal Germans. Hungarian Jewish men about 50 stayed for 2-3 days to do roadwork and Ivan talked to some of them they had special signs that they were Jews. Policemen sold Jewish homes not for money but for a pig or a cow, only two homes left until now. People took everything from the homes of killed Jews; he saw people that came from Glinnaya, Zemnaya and were taking as much as they could; Ivan did not want to take anything.

When Germans started capitulating, policemen went with them, they went to Telehani and then to Germany, they burned their own homes and other homes, especially homes with straw roofs.

After the war Raiser and Naha who left the village in 1940 came from Israel and put a tombstone on the Jewish graves.