

Rogov, Zinoviy Ilyich

Russian Vets

Interview date Aug 29/2012

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Duration 23:07

- 00 00 (Background conversation) (Introduce yourself) 00 18
- 00 18 My name is Rogov, Zinoviy Ilyich. I was born on July 28, 1928 in Polotsk. (What happened after that?) I'm going to tell you right now. 00 39
- 00 39 Back in the '30s of the last century my family moved to the suburbs of Leningrad, station Pargolovo. We lived in Pargolovo, 200 m away from the railway station. 01 07
- 01 07 4 km from where we lived, Pargolovo military airdrome was located. Pargolovo's population, including the surrounding area, was 25,000 people. That was quite a big suburb nearest Leningrad. 01 42
- 01 42 When the war began I was 12 years old. On June 22, '41, the day was hot, very hot. My mother sent me to buy vegetables, I don't remember, which ones. She was cooking our dinner. She worked alternate day's shifts. 02 15
- 02 15 She sent me to the Railway Station Square to buy some vegetables. There were such crowds in the Railway Station Square that there was no room to move. The summer cottage season had obviously begun. 02 36
- 02 36 I didn't use to go there. I would play lapta and cops and robbers, I also would play wooden toy airplanes. There wasn't room to move in the Railway Station Square, so crowded it was. 03 00
- 03 00 What did people do? They discussed the beginning of the war. At 6 pm, according to the Railway Station Square clock... the square was small and oval... the clock showed 6pm sharp. 03 27
- 03 27 German airplanes came I still don't know where from. Dive bombers, their dive bombers, Focke-Wulf 88, they went straight, flyby, in the direction of Pargolovo airdrome. 03 53
- 03 53 The Messerschmitts started firing. The sound of explosions was heard from the airdrome. There must have been burning airplanes and open gas canisters there. 04 12
- 04 12 The Messerschmitts escorting the dive bombers started shooting short bursts of fire at the people gathered in the square. Well, the dead were silent. But wounded people started screaming. 04 34
- 04 34 A panic started. Scared to death I started running to the nearby dune where I hid in a very old trench. I could see very clearly what was happening there. 05 00
- 05 00 I survived, without a single scratch. A suburb train arrived at the station. The train stopped, the engineer didn't know what was going on. It stopped, the people poured onto the platform and into the square. 05 27

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- 05 27 That was where a big bloodshed took place. The Messerschmitts increased their shooting. On the 21st of August, the Nazi troops crossed the main Leningrad-Moscow highway and railways in Chudovo area. 06 02
- 06 02 They crossed them in Chudovo area. They started moving northward in the direction of Shlisselburg, former Petrokrepost. On the 31st of August, they burnt down Badaevsky warehouses. Badaevsky warehouses were on fire for 3 days and nights. 06 30
- 06 30 Messerschmitts shot the fire engines that had come to the warehouses. They didn't let the fire subside. Badaevsky warehouses were on fire for 3 days and nights. Leningrad's 5-year emergency storage was burnt down there. 06 58
- 06 58 That's what happened on August 31st. Advancing northward they captured Chudovo and Shlisselburg, former Petrokrepost by September 12. They approached the lake Ladozhskoye. 07 24
- 07 24 At the same time they approached the Gulf of Finland in the southern area of Strelnya. The Finns stopped at the river Sestra. According to the Soviet historians, they were stopped by the Soviet troops. 07 51
- 07 51 It was more likely that the Finns stopped themselves, as they had no plans blocking Leningrad. That's my idea. So the blockade ring was closed by September 12. 08 17
- 08 17 The blockade ring around Leningrad was closed. The blockade of Leningrad started on September 12th. Living in the suburbs, our family survived the blockade. We had a land plot where we grew potatoes. Our cow was "mobilized" by the army, sorry. The army needed food. 08 56
- 08 56 We had bran and cake leftovers after the cow was taken away from us. Those were winter stocks for the cow. And so that's how we survived the blockade. We were in blockade for 6 months. 09 14
- 09 14 After that came the time for evacuation on the ice of the lake Ladozhskoye. That's one of the most tragic experiences of my life. We were evacuated in March, '42 when the trucks drove with their axis in water. 09 38
- 09 38 Some of the trucks sank into ice holes. However we crossed the lake Ladozhskoye safely. And that's where the evacuation started. This is the end of my story about the blockade with its bread rations of 125 g for dependants, clerks and children, starting November. 10 14
- 10 14 (What did you do during the 6 months of the blockade?) During the 6 months of the blockade... right after the blockade began... on September 1st I went to school, grade 5. We came to school on September 1st. 10 40
- 10 40 We were given shovels and sent to dig trenches or rather not trenches but anti-tank ditches. We dug them near the aspen grove. After that the rains began and we were let go to harvest vegetables. 11 01

Rogov, Zinoviy Ilyich	Russian Vets	Interview date Aug 29/2012
11 01	We harvested vegetables at farm "Prigorodny" until the winter began. That's what we did during the blockade. (Did air raids continue?) 11 13	
11 13	Air raids were every day, every day. There's something I didn't mention. When the Germans gained absolute air superiority they started stirring up their favourite subject of anti-Semitism. 11 46	
11 46	Leaflets started pouring down on our heads (says Russian rhymes deriding Jews). "All Kikes are supervisors", "Kill Kikes and political supervisors" or "Russian soldier, turn Kikes to Palestine". However, they so miscalculated! 12 12	
12 12	After all the bloodshed killing innocent civilians, as I have mentioned before, and a major bloodshed, playing the anti-Semitic card was not possible any more. Residents of Leningrad and Pargolovo especially, knew their enemy: not the Jews, those "all the Kikes are supervisors"...12 49	
12 49	Not all the supervisors were Jews..My father was a worker, and not just another worker: he was one of the first Stakhanovites. After all, residents of Leningrad and Pargolovo knew who was their actual enemy. 13 12	
13 12	They knew their actual enemies were the Germans not the Jews. The Germans who killed so many people. During the 6 months of the blockade, there wasn't a single anti-Semitic incident in Pargolovo, not a single! 13 43	
13 43	We lived like everyone else: every single night there were air raids. Columns of German bombers flew to throw bombs on Leningrad. Every single night! They didn't come in the daytime. But they bombed Leningrad every single night. 14 08	
14 08	You know, every time I heard a sound of a far away explosion, I had a feeling that the next bomb would hit our house. But thanks to our lucky stars that never happened. (did you encounter anti-Semitism?)14 27	
14 27	During the war? Never. On the part of residents of Pargolovo? Never. Only on the part of the Germans. I cited the short texts of the German leaflets. (After the war?) After the war I became a Soviet Army officer. 14 50	
14 50	There wasn't any anti-Semitism in the army, I never sensed anti-Semitism in the army. (After leaving blockaded Leningrad) Well, that's quite a complicated story. We were on a train. We were on the right shore of the lake Ladozhskoye. 15 19	
15 19	We stayed there for 3 days and nights. There was a mix of rain and snow. We had an acquaintance by the name of Reppa, a Finn, and deputy head of Pargolovo's Executive Committee. He was in charge of the train going to the lake Ladozhskoye. 15 56	
15 56	After waiting for a train to Kabonna, at the lake Ladozhskoye, Reppa came up to us saying: "There's nothing to wait for. A train will be provided to deport Finns and Germans from Leningrad". 16 22	

Rogov, Zinoviy Ilyich	Russian Vets	Interview date Aug 29/2012
16 22	"Just board the train and go: you have an evacuation pass. Nothing threatens you. You're Jews, there's nothing to threaten you. Take care of your children. They may catch a cold and die here. "16 46	
16 46	We got on the train. When we reached Cherepovets, my father went to pick up food for our family with his evacuation pass. He was told that... he went into the station and was told that the train would not leave until an hour later. 17 10	
17 10	However, the train left literally 15 minutes later. He missed the train. And so we were left among those who were being deported, without our evacuation pass. A Finn named Lechtelinen had run away. My mother spoke with the train commander, telling him that she was a Jewess. 17 39	
17 39	But he answered: "No, you will go to this train's destination point. Maybe Lachtelinen is your husband". And so we went as far as Krasnoyarsk. In Krasnoyarsk, our train car was uncoupled at Pugach. Horse carts were provided by farmers to take us to a glass making factory named after 13 fighters. 18 29	
18 29	My father was looking for us up till August. We arrived there in May. He was looking for us up till August. He went here and there asking around. He didn't know what our train's destination had been. All he knew was that Finns and Germans were on board of the train. 18 58	
18 58	He was asking around everywhere. He was told that the train had gone to Danilovo, while in reality we had gone to station Buy. And so he was asking around in every town and village. It wasn't until late August or early September that he found us.	
19 21	It was only after he found us that we were removed from the "list". We were on a special list: once a month we were due to walk from the glass making factory to Yemelianovo, which was an about 20 km walk, for me and mother to report to the authorities. 19 43	
19 43	And my mother and I walked there all covered with mosquitoes. And so we went there to report to the authorities once a month. As soon as father came to us, we were removed from the special list. We went to station Atar, Kazakhstan. 20 05	
20 05	(What happened after that?) After that my father was drafted to serve in the labour army: he was 51 at the time. He was drafted to the labour army. The labour army sent him to Kemerovo or Novokuznetsk, not sure now. 20 34	
20 34	However he never worked as a miner. He worked at a mechanic shop, he knew the turner's work. He told us that once he found a herring head in a dump. He cleaned and gobbled it up. 21 01	
21 01	When the so called "buyers" came to them, those army representatives who recruited volunteers, they lined everyone up and asked: "Those who want to volunteer to go to the front, please step forward?" 21 27	

Rogov, Zinoviy Ilyich	Russian Vets	Interview date Aug 29/2012
21 27	He stepped forward. "Who served in artillery?" He stepped forward: during WWI he served, he fought in artillery. That's how he got to the front to serve as an artillery man. He fought his way from Pskov to Konigsberg. He was awarded Order of Glory, 3 rd class. 21 56	
21 56	(Tell us about your medals). Well (laughs) those are mainly commemorative anniversary medals. Here's one valuable medal, where is it? This one is the most valuable. This is the badge of a Leningrad blockade survivor.22 25	
22 25	This one is also valuable. This medal bar is for the 250 th anniversary of Leningrad. It was given to those who worked during the blockade. My school nominated my peers and me for this award for digging trenches, and for harvesting. 22 55	
22 55	And so I was awarded with this... here it is. The rest of the medals are commemorative anniversary medals. 23 04 (Background conversation)23 07	
End of file		
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00 00	(You mentioned that you were an officer) In '47 I graduated from Leningrad Artillery Preparatory College. I was sent to Konigsberg, as it was called at the time. Later it was renamed to Kaliningrad, capital of the region. 00 26	
00 26	I was sent to the 1 st Moscow Guards College, rocket artillery. Here it is: all the students were given the Guards badge. In '50 I became a Red Army officer. This is a very interesting story. 00 55	
00 55	At that time "kosmopolites" were the talk of the country: the "rootless cosmopolites", etc. When we were about to graduate... I was a battery master sergeant, that was a training battery. 01 21	
01 21	I had a privilege over private soldiers. I graduated as a class 2 officer: I had one "4" in topography (I had made a mistake, well it didn't matter) However I had a privilege. 01 45	
01 45	Unexpectedly we were sent to separate rooms. When we gathered in the 2 nd battery's room... the lists were posted saying who goes to which room...we saw that only students with prevailing mark "3" and the Jews were on the list. 02 14	
02 14	The door opened and there started the district selection process there. There was nothing to choose. All appointments were for the Far East. I had a friend by the name of Misha Chertok. I knew that his father was a general in the Far East. 02 41	
02 41	I saw him in Leningrad on several occasions. Misha was a rascal guy. They had a luxury 2 bedroom apartment in Kirovsky Prospekt. I was a quiet guy. General Chertok used to ask me... he wore civilian's cloths... "Watch over Misha". He knew that we were friends. 03 11	

Rogov, Zinoviy Ilyich

Russian Vets

Interview date Aug 29/2012

- 03 11 "Watch over Misha". I go "How do you mean watch over him?" "Make sure he doesn't bring girls to where he lives". His father was concerned about that (laughs). 03 21
- 03 21 And so when I ended up in the Far East, we reported to general Chertok. He was Artillery Chief of Staff in Primorsky Military District. We were given cards: blue and red. I don't remember what my card's colour was. 03 53
- 03 53 At least I got the card. I was denied service in Port Arthur or Port Dalniy. Everyone was eager to serve there – in Port Arthur and Port Dalniy, because the Chinese Yuans were used to buy things and the Soviet roubles could be saved. 04 19
- 04 19 And so I took the liberty to approach general Chertok. I asked him: "Comrade general, do you remember me?" He goes "Sure I remember you". "Is there a way to get to Port Arthur or Port Dalniy?" – I was so naïve as to ask him that question. 04 49
- 04 49 He goes: "It's impossible. Do you know where Misha has gone?". I graduated from Rocket Artillery College in Kaliningrad and Misha graduated from High Power Artillery College in Odessa. 05 04
- 05 04 I go "No, I don't know where Misha has gone". He goes: "Misha has gone to the islands. I haven't done anything in this respect, and I'm not going to. It's just impossible." That's what he told me. 05 25
- 05 25 I go: "Where would you recommend me to go?" He goes: "There is Razdolnoye. And I recommend you to go there". When I came to Razdolnoye, I saw what it was like there. 05 40
- 05 40 It was just a highway, 13 km long, north-south. 2.5 motorized divisions and one more artillery break-through division were stationed there. That's where I served for almost 10 years. 06 12
- 06 12 (What happened after that?) After that I quit. I was seriously ill. That was in Batumi. I was in Trans-Caucasian Military District. I got seriously ill. The unit was disbanded. I was in reserve. 06 46
- 06 46 I was denied demobilization all the time. Later I found out what the reason was: the clerk who handled my personal file provided the information that I was a party member, division chief of staff, a young officer – and so they denied. 07 23
- 07 23 I got seriously ill with lambliosis. I wrote a report and sent it to the party central committee in Moscow: "if Motherland does not need me – that's how I put it: "Motherland" – please release me". That's it. 10 days later...our division commander was Hitagurov, you may have heard about him...08 10
- 08 10 He was a brother of a famous person Hitagurova. He was our division commander. Everyone in the Far East knew this name. 10 days later I was

Rogov, Zinoviy Ilyich

Russian Vets

Interview date Aug 29/2012

- woken up... I was recovering from my illness...I was woken up: "Division commander wants you on the phone". 08 41
- 08 41 I answered the phone. He said: "Your request has been allowed. You are going to be released". That's it. I recovered there. I had an interesting illness: Lambliosis. I recovered, was released and left for Leningrad. 09 09
- 09 09 (What did you do as civilian?) I was assistant... well, at first, I started as traffic safety engineer, then a transport column manager, and finally, I was assistant manager for 1st motor transport amalgamation: "Lentorgbytttrans". 09 34
- 09 34 That's all my history. (Tell us about extinguishing incendiary bombs). How I extinguished incendiary bombs? (Laughing) I used to grab an incendiary bomb and throw it away from myself. (Was it dangerous?) At that time nothing was dangerous for me. 10 12
- 10 12 I was either stupid or just because I was young. That's it. (Providing care for wounded soldiers in a hospital). I don't remember, honestly. (should young people know what you have gone through, particularly in respect of the Jewish veterans?) 10 58
- 10 58 You know, I'm going to tell you what. People ask me: "Why don't you write a book?" I answer: "My task is to educate, to tell the story of how it was". One day I was at a bus stop. A Jew was sitting there too. I saw that he was a Jew. 11 38
- 11 38 He was reading a Russian newspaper "Voice of Community". I asked him: "Is the newspaper interesting?" He said: "Yes, it is, very much interesting". I knew by his accent that he was a Polish Jew. 11 55
- 11 55 He said: "It's a very Interesting newspaper! Some people say that the Jews didn't fight. It turns out they did and how they did!" Can you imagine how proud I was both of the newspaper, of Mark and of myself. 12 15
- 12 15 (Who is Mark Groisberg? And what does you association do?) I have already told about that. Mark does a great job. I have been collaborating with him from the first issue of his newspaper. 12 43
- 12 43 The year was 1994, if my memory doesn't fail me. That's when his first issue was released. My poem "Chanukah" was on its last page. Right, Mark? Right. "Chanukah". Ever since, I have been writing, not often however, once a year, but still writing. 13 20
- 13 20 I had a column... rather we had a column: "They fought for their Motherland". The column has been renamed: "They fought against Nazism". It tells about partisan movement of the Jews. 13 47
- 13 47 Both Soviet Jews and the Jews from other countries. I think that the information is interesting for our readers. (Your association's educational activity) What do you mean "association"? (Organization) Or organization? (What does the organization do in this respect?) 14 25

Rogov, Zinoviy Ilyich

Russian Vets

Interview date Aug 29/2012

14 25 Our organization has done a great job. An anti-Semitic person by the name of Jangerov turned out to be here in Montreal. You may have heard that name. He published a news paper "We". 14 47

14 47 He wanted to win our veterans over to his organization. We pay our fees: \$25.00. He guaranteed \$10.00. Just to win them over to his side. However our organization hasn't wavered. It resisted. On the contrary, we sensed..., well we realized... Anti-Semitic articles started appearing in his newspaper. 15 34

15 34 Graffiti started appearing...with swastikas and anti-Semitic slogans, like swastikas: "We, the Russians, have come!" That was not good. And we started fighting hard against the organization and the newspaper. 16 14

16 14 Eventually, we won. Jangerov had to leave. Currently he is...for some time he was in Czechia, and currently he is someplace in Ukraine. (Thank you)16 44

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Duration 1:17

00 00 (About your organization's activities) Beside what I've already spoken about, our veterans' organization led by Mark Groisberg, conducts educational activities among students. We meet on a regular basis with school students. 00 39

00 39 "Dream School"... and... I forgot the name..."Literacy", "The Russian Lyceum". We tell them about those years and what happened during the war. The audience applauds us and our stories. (Thank you) 01 17

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Duration 0 34

00 To wrap up my story I would like to add that we established and manufactured this badge in commemoration of the 65th anniversary of the Victory. Here it is: 65th anniversary of Victory over Nazi Germany. This is our organization's badge. (Thank you) 00 34

End of interview.