

№ 217

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Village of Boromlia,
Trostanets raion, Sumy oblast
10 Radianska Street

Sumy oblast, Trostanets raion
с. Боромля вулиця Радянська 10
Leukha, Mykhailo Maksymovych
Veteran of the war and labor,
pensioner. 74 years old

We were a family of six. In 1921, there was a poor grain harvest. My father came from the war, and there was famine and poverty. A saw in hand, he went around offering his services for cutting timber. Thus, we survived while waiting for the day when we would be given land based on the number of mouths to feed [*na idoka*]. My father entered the Committee of Not-Well-Off Peasants (*KNS*). It was not long that we were able to look into my father's eyes. Our dear father died suddenly from an illness. We began to pasture cows, my older and middle brothers, and our 78-year-old grandfather made bast shoes from hemp. We gave half the land to middling peasants (*seredniaky*), and mother with the third younger son looked after the house and the garden, and we were making a living somehow; we earned money and bought a pinto horse for 15 rubles, and we plowed and sowed. When collectivization appeared out of nowhere, mother as a poor householder was the first to sign up to the "Soz" [probably *sovkhos*, a Soviet/State farm]. Despite this, they imposed on us the surrender of grain; the first time we complied; the second it was not possible. A son of our grandfather and his father came to our house with an official; in our attic there were two sacks of three poods of rye and wheat. They climbed up and took them away. Mother cried and asked, - "Siriozha, leave something for your father and my children, they are your nephews." They threatened her with a pistol [*nagan*], put the sacks on a cart and drove away. Mother, crying, said, "Father-in-law, go after your son." Grandfather Yagor went to his son; the son gave a portion to the harvesters. The father asked the son [to give him

something], but he did not give him anything; the grandfather soon died, they told my mother.

People gave over their good horses to the collective, but enemies mixed rat poison into chaff and molasses, the horses fell like flies, and people went to the soap-making hut [using horse parts]; there they sucked on bones, and there they died. I write the painful truth. My brother Sasha caught a chill and soon died, poor thing. Mum and my youngest brother miraculously survived by eating oak bark and other weeds [dyer's broom].

If I am asked to, I will contribute from my pension [to this project]. Unfortunately, it is difficult to bring awareness to the people in the village. In our village of Boromlia, there are seven thousand people. The people need a monument. Who knows how many thousands died in our village; before the 1930s, we had 12,000 people.

You, Volodymyr Antonovych, write your memorials so that my ten grandsons can read my remembrances and your books. Wishing you great success in your work.
Written by Leukha, Mikhailo Maksymovych, who remains alive.

All the best. 22.3.89