

Interviewee: Maria Bojecko, born in 1924, in the village of Troshyanets', Okhtyrskyi raion, Poltava (Sumy) oblast.

Interviewer(s): Ariadna Okhrymovych:

Date: January 21, 2011

Description: William Pidzamecky

00:00:36 – Interviewee introduces herself.

00:01:00 – Interviewee describes her family and the death of her brother.

00:01:18 – Interviewee describes her father going to work with horses at the collective farm after they took away all the farm animals.

00:01:40 – Interviewee explains that the punishment for mistakes on the collective farm was exile to Siberia.

00:01:50 – Interviewee explains that her father was paid with a bag of wheat which was made into porridge.

00:02:25 – Interviewee describes how her brother died from hunger and that she was swollen from hunger.

00:02:35 – Interviewee explains that people's animals and land were taken away to force them to join the collective farms.

00:03:25 – Interviewee describes the death of her brother, grandmother, and aunt and how they were subsequently buried in the garden.

00:04:10 – Interviewee reiterates how her father was compelled to join the collective farm in order to save her from starvation.

00:05:00 – Interviewee explains that her cousins, children of the aunt who died, were given away and raised by Russians.

00:05:14 – BREAK IN INTERVIEW.

00:05:18 – Interviewee confesses her inability to remember events.

00:05:25 – Interviewee mentions that she had been captured by the Germans during World War II and never returned home.

00:05:35 – Interviewee mentions she was 8 years old, and her brother was 10 years old during the Holodomor.

00:05:45 – Interviewee describes how her grandfather was arrested and was sentenced to two years in prison. Upon returning from prison, he was extremely malnourished.

00:06:55 – Interviewee explains that after his incarceration her grandfather remained in Poltava and managed to buy a horse which he used to earn money transporting people.

00:07:40 – Interviewee describes her visits to Poltava with her mother and how they would give her grandfather milk and cheese.

00:08:16 – Interviewee reiterates information relating to the deaths of her grandmother, aunt, and brother as well as how her family made porridge from the wheat brought home from the collective farm.

00:08:37 – Interviewee describes how people with bloated bodies were seen dying along the road.

00:08:50 – Interviewee describes how a cart would come by to collect the bodies, even those that were still alive, which were then thrown into a pit and buried.

00:09:10 – Interviewee describes how her mother went to the bazaar and bartered with jewellery for food.

00:10:00 – Interviewee reiterates her story about her father working for the collective farm as well as the story of her grandfather being arrested.

00:11:38 – Interviewee explains that her family was of average wealth since her father was the youngest brother and thus, inherited the least.

00:12:14 – Interviewee describes how her father took her and her mother to Khaltai (unknown location) where they built a sunken house in a barren landscape.

00:13:10 – Interviewee describes the size of her village near Troshyanets'.

00:13:51 – BREAK IN INTERVIEW.

00:13:55 – Interviewee describes how the entirety of her village died during the Holodomor and that it was dangerous to leave your house for fear of being kidnapped, killed, and eaten by your neighbours.

00:14:38 – Interviewee explains that those that died at home were collected on carts and buried in pits.

00:15:20 – Interview about Holodomor ends.

00:15:22 – Interviewee expresses her unwillingness to talk much more about the topic and repeats some of her previous statements including that she was 18 years old when she was taken to Germany.

00:15:47 – Interview describes life with the German family that was tasked with looking after her and that they received a large stipend for each child they took in.

00:17:00 – Interview describes meeting her husband and life after World War II including moving to Canada in 1951.

00:19:52 – End of interview.