

Alexander Bloschinsky

AB - When the Famine started, people began to starve. In our village there were two activists, who were revolutionaries during the Revolution; they fought for "freedom, equality and brotherhood." They saw that people were starving. The grain had already been collected, but on the collective farm, in the storehouse, there was grain that was to be used for sowing. These two Communists, one was named Serhiy Ruban, the other was Lukyan Khotynenko, decided to give a portion of this grain to the villagers, 5 kg or so each, so that people could survive this Famine. Obviously, they were tried in the village, and they were kicked out of the Party, but they weren't arrested, because of their service during the Revolution.

Interviewer - They were arrested but not tried?

AB - No they were tried, and kicked out of the Party. But unlike many others, they weren't executed.

My mother had to go to work on the collective farm. My little brother was a little more than a year old. My mother had to leave him in the day nursery and go to work. The woman who took care of the nursery had four sons and a youngest daughter. We had a cow and when my mother went to work she would give a liter of milk to the nursery for my brother, Borys. The woman who ran the nursery would take the milk for her daughter, and water down the milk for my brother. And my brother got a weakened stomach, there was no doctor, and he died. I remember this. I know that we still had milk, but I don't remember having bread.

Interviewer - You had a cow?

AB - Yes, we had a cow, everyone did - these were all poor peasants. But you know that under the Soviets, if you had a cow, you had to turn in a certain amount of liters of milk every day or once a week, if you had chickens, you had to hand in a certain amount of eggs per week or month.

Interviewer - And there would be very little left for you?

AB - Yes, obviously. As I said, those two, although they may have been Communists, they were also patriots, because they handed out that sowing grain - that's what saved the village.