

The testimony of Ida Maidenberg Dekhtyar

[This testimony is part of the Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation collection held at the University of Southern California. The foundation was established by filmmaker Steven Spielberg after completing "Schindler's List" in 1994. Its goal was to capture video testimonies from holocaust survivors before they died and their stories lost forever. More information appears at the end of this document, or at <http://vhaonline.usc.edu/login.aspx>]



Ida in Tiraspol, 1996, when Mike visited her. Her testimony was taken a year later.

INTRODUCTION: Ida Maidenberg Dekhtyar was the daughter of Joseph Maidenberg and Sarah Blecher. Her older brother was Amnon. Her grandfather was Solomon, the patriarch whose seven children represent the Maidenberg family's main descendant lines. She was interviewed in Tiraspol, Moldova, Aug. 6, 1997. The interview was conducted in Russian. The interviewer was Lev Bakal.

What follows is a translation obtained by Mike Maidenberg and edited by him. It is arranged so as to remove an awkward question-and-answer format. Nevertheless it follows the original narrative.

Mike had met Ida on his trip to Ukraine and Moldova in 1996. Ida was born in 1921 in Beltsy, also spelled Bălți, now in Moldova but then a part of Romania, in the district known as Bessarabia. She died in 2000 in Germany, probably Leipzig, where she had emigrated with her family.

THE TESTIMONY:

Growing up in Beltsy

When I lived in Beltsy I was very young, a child. It seemed to me that Beltsy was the most beautiful place on the earth, and moreover there were no more beautiful places like our street. And that time it was also a district city. It was a nice city.

The people who lived there were mainly local people, citizens, local population. There were Romanians, as well as Russians; there were also Ukrainians and Jews.

There were many Jews. I don't know how many. But I know there were a lot, because there were also synagogues where the Jews prayed, and in general, the Jewish holidays were celebrated.

I lived in Nikolayevskaya street. They called it by its old name, Redgile Karo, or Ferdinand. Strada Redgile Ferdinand. King Ferdinand Street. I remember the number of the house. It was 84.

We inherited the house from our grandfather [this would be Sarah Blecher's father]. He willed it to my mother. It was a semidetached house. On one side there were three rooms, and a kitchen, and on the other side there were two rooms with a corridor and a kitchen. It was not a new house, because it was in the ownership of my grandfather. It was a brick house.

Our family consisted of four people: mother and father, my brother and me. My father's name was Joseph. Joseph Solomonovich. My mother's name was Sarah. Both mother and father were born in the year 1885.

My father Joseph

Father was born in Ukraine. When they got married the Dniester hadn't been the border line yet. It was all the Russian Empire. They were married before the revolution.

My father was from Dzygovka, Yampol district now. It was a borough, a Jewish borough. [Not clear if Ida used the word "shtetl", but this is the clear meaning.]

Many Jews lived there. Certainly there were villages all around. Dzygovka was situated in the middle, so that there were villages around it. There were villages around this borough.

It was in the Yampol district of Vinnitsa region. The Dniester River was not far, but not close either. It flowed through the town of Yampol. It was a distance from Yampol to Dzygovka [15.2 kilometers, or 9.4 miles.]

My father loved to work the land

My father was a teacher, but he loved to work in the fields so much. And he worked there, because after the October Revolution [1917], they effected agrarian reform. And those who wanted to acquire land were given six

hectares each. And father, as he was enthusiastic about land, and it was provided for free, he couldn't help but take it.

There were some people who said "I want nothing to do with that," but he said, "How could you not take it? It is land. Property." Many took it. My father took it. He was fond of agronomy, he studied it. We grew agricultural products in these six hectares, and there was a vineyard there, a piece of a vineyard, and he took care of it, because he knew something about it.

He was not an agronomist by profession. He had an incomplete education, but he loved it, and he studied it as well. He had the help of family at harvest. He also hired workers to help at harvest time.

My mother was typical of the women of those times. But she was educated. She said that she passed two grades. it was Tsarist Russia, not Romania. She knew the Russian language and I also a little bit that time.

We spoke Yiddish at home, my parents observed holidays, I loved Passover

At home we spoke Yiddish. My father even knew Hebrew. He had studied in some cheders as well as Russian schools.

We celebrated, my father celebrated, religious holidays. He was not a zealot, but he observed traditions. And he wanted his children to know these traditions. So we observed the holidays. They were so beautiful. The most memorable was Passover. Because there were two days, two evenings. There was the Seder. Everyone observed it. And we ate matzah.

When father was a child in Ukraine, he told us, he was sent to cheder. He knew the prayers, he could read the Seder and knew what it was about. I remember him telling us about the Prophet Elijah, who wanted to come in and it was necessary to open the door. The glasses were filled with wine; because the Prophet Elijah was coming in. The door was opened and someone said something, maybe the prayer, as well.

And I looked and it seemed to my childish eyes that yes, the wine in the glass went down. Ha-ha-ha. Yes, he had sipped.

My father went to synagogue, and mother. Though mother didn't observe sometimes, for sure she observed the holidays. Holidays were celebrated so beautifully . The Passover dinner was so gorgeous, and the prayers. Everybody observed properly.

Passover was in the spring and in spite of difficulties with money, there was always a new outfit for the children, new boots, new clothes.

My brother Amnon

There were four of us in our family. My brother Amnon was older. He was a typical adventurous boy. He always came with torn trousers, because he climbed over the fence and caught a nail. Such a scamp he was. But generally, he was very kind and he is very kind, so generous.

He studied in a Romanian elementary school, then in a Jewish gymnasium.

As for me, before the war there were no social groups for the young. We would hang around with friends. I loved to read books, literature. We gathered together, we were young and danced. Usually in someone's flat. Friends would come, we would play records, dance and sing. We also went to the cinema and theater.

I remember my brother splicing together torn theater tickets so we could get in. He was so adventurous, with his friends.

Going to the Jewish theater

As for the cinema, I remember that it was the silent cinema first and then the talking one. It was a bit expensive.

Theater groups came on tours. And there was even the local one. Its troop lived in Beltsy, it was the Jewish theater. Dina Kenich and Zhina Zlataya performed there, and there were some other famous ones. It was quite expensive, but I had a friend whose father was a make-up person. So, they had a pass for two persons. I could go with them from time to time.

The plays were in Yiddish. Beautiful songs were sung as well, and there was such melodrama! Nobody could stay indifferent. Sometimes we even cried, or laughed. There was always a comic who made people laugh. It was the Jewish theater.

There were plays by Sholom Aleichem. Tevye the dairyman. Hershel from Ostropol.

My education

I went to school for four grades. These were compulsory in Romania. Even so, many people didn't want to send their children. They wanted them to learn a trade, be an apprentice. But four grades were compulsory.

I finished elementary school, then I went to a school where dressmaking was taught. Then when I had finished this school Bessarabia was freed and there were the Russian schools already there. I began to study at the Russian school, the ninth grade, then the tenth one. I was able to pass the tenth before the war.

We were taught it in Russian. It was not so difficult because my parents were from Russia. And my mother was from Bessarabia, my father was from Ukraine, Dzygovka.

I spoke Russian well, but Yiddish is still my mother tongue. My brother also speaks Russian and Yiddish, and he even knows Hebrew, because he was sent to the Jewish gymnasium.

In elementary school, we were not separated by nationality. There were Jews, Russians, Romanians. Of course there was a Talmud Torah, where only the Jews went. In general, schools were for all.

I made friends with others in the school, but our neighbors were mostly Jewish. We lived in a Jewish district.

I remember my school friends, but so many died during the war.

When the borders opened before the war, my maternal grandmother came. It was in 1940. Her name was Perlya Maidenberg. She lived with us and then died not long before the war. She was rather elderly.

June, 1941, the onset of war: bombing, panic, escape

I remember the start of the war. It was Saturday evening, a time when many celebrations took place, parades and wedding ceremonies. Everybody knew that the times were tense, but nobody knew that the war would be started. And that very night, overnight into Sunday, at four in the morning, we heard the window glasses start to rattle. We thought it was an earthquake, because earthquakes took place often.

We ran out into the street to see if it was an earthquake. We went to stand in the middle of the street. Some military men were in front of us. And we saw that these men were very alert and completely equipped, and they ran. They knew that something was wrong, something bad had happened. But the war had not been declared yet.

I remember that everybody went to work. My father went to work; he was a foreman in a state-farm named after Shchors. He went to work that day. Because it didn't matter, war or not war. I remember. He went to work.

Beltsy had been bombarded, as early as four in the morning. We knew it was war by 11:00 or 12:00. Molotov made an announcement about treacherous attacks.

The war started and father worked five kilometers from the city. I was just with my mother and the bombing had started. And we didn't know. The people were running, we didn't know where to run. And kids were crying that they didn't want to die. And father was not with us. And we see father approaching. He always was so very energetic and hard-working and it seemed to us that the war was over, if our father was near.

Father dug a trench where we spent the night, then we fled east

And really, he dug a trench in the yard, in the yard, a trench. And we spent a night there. In the morning the bombarding seemed to be stopped, but nevertheless we considered leaving the city before the bombarding was renewed. We locked the door, took all the belongings we could bring with us and left. I had an aunt in a small town of Alexandreny, it was called. We thought it was a small town and wouldn't be exposed to bombing. We went there to wait and see.

Alexandreny was not far from Beltsy. My mother's sister lived there. We had a horse and cart, and that's how we got there.

My brother was not with us. He was studying at an institute in Kishinev, the Moldavian Institute. He had an exemption from duty. All students did.

Everybody was running away. People passing by Beltsy, passing by Alexandreny told us, "Your city, your street, your district as well as your house are ruined, totally destroyed". So we had to move further. It was a point of no return.

In Alexandreny, my mother's sister Bella lived with her husband and children. Poor Aunt Bella wanted to escape badly, but her husband, he was older. He said, "Where will I, an old man, die? In some strange land? What shall be, shall be at home. We lived here till now and we will stay." I remember that she was crying bitterly that he was staying.

We were trying to cross the Dniester, to get to Dzygovka in Ukraine

So we went further, closer to the Dniester because my father was from Ukraine, from Dzygovka. We had to cross the Dniester.

From Alexandreny we went closer to the Dniester, to Soroky first, because we had relatives there. But there was no ferry connection in Soroky; we were told that there was a crossing in Kosoutzy [evidently today's Cosăuți, Moldova, across the river from Yampol, Ukraine]. We still had our horse and cart. Other people moved on foot, carrying all their luggage.

We were told that in Kosoutzy a bridge was being built and it would be finished soon. And so we went to Kosoutzy. And there was no bridge there. The construction was in full swing, but it was unknown when it would be finished. But we had to leave the place immediately. And people crossed the river with boats.

Each boat held only four persons. And people wanted to escape, they understood the threat. When a boat approached they all rushed, and many drowned during this crossing attempt. But we waited. My mother had just been discharged from hospital. And so we sat until evening.

Suddenly, my brother appeared; he put us in a boat and left

Then, towards nighttime we saw my brother approaching. He knew which way we went, knew from relatives where we had been, and he came. And as we spoke a motor boat came from the opposite bank of the river, and he had time to place us in this motor boat, and we had a huge luggage which we were able to load as well.

And then he went back to the institute. Later they evacuated to Buguruslan [central Russia], the whole institute.

He sent us across the river. He watched us cross. Then he left. And we didn't know what happened to him until the end of the war.

When we left our house, we took just took those belongings which we could carry in our hands. I don't remember if we took food. We just ran away. When you run away, you don't think about food. We could only think of saving ourselves.

We crossed the Dniester to the city of Yampol. My father's sister lived in Yampol. And we came to her. Her name was Malkeh. Then we moved to Dzygovka, my father's home village. I don't remember how we got there. We had left the horse and cart on the other bank of the Dniester.

There were just the three of us. So we went to live in Dzygovka where his uncle lived and where he was born. [This uncle is probably Joseph's mother's brother Hersh.] In this Dzygovka we stayed till the end of the war.

What Dzygovka was like

It was a small place, but there were very good people. They welcomed us. We lived as we could, finding food to eat. The population was mainly tradesmen, tailors. Dzygovka was surrounded by villages. It was in the middle, and people from the villages came to buy what the tailors called "kashketniki." It was a hat, a forage cap called "kashket." Everybody wore one. The tailors made these forage caps. And they earned a living doing this.

They were Jews. Jews lived there and around. They took water from a spring-well. From one and the same spring-well the water was taken by both people of Dzygovka and nearby villages. There were lots of villages around. It was necessary to do something to get some food, so I started to tailor. Someone brought stuff to tailor and I made it. So, we earned a living.

We couldn't leave Dzygovka. The Germans had been there, and the Romanians. We were in the rear. In the beginning it was the Ukrainian militia in this Dzygovka. Or police, it was called. I don't know. Of course, we lived in fear. Some people were shot.

The Romanians built the ghetto, but the commandant was a decent man

Some months after we came, the Romanians came. And they put in a commandant. And the Jewish village chief was put in as well as commandant. And this Romanian commandant, he was retired, not like the previous one, a gendarme. I don't remember his last name.

He treated us well. He was a faithful man, respectful. He lived in the same district, but in a nice house. There were neighbors living all around, Jewish neighbors. When he was moving in his carriage, the neighbors could jump in and sit behind. And the coachman motioned to them with the whip, and he said, "Slaz, don't touch, let them ride". This was our commandant.

Now the village chief was from the Jews. I remember him because he great influence on how all in Dzygovka stayed alive. His name was Nakhemia. I don't know his last name. Nobody called him by his last name. People just knew his name

We lived in fear that today we stayed alive and another day we didn't know what would happen. This is how we lived.

Hiding from the police or SS

One day they came somewhere from gendarmerie or SS and ordered all the Jews to gather at roll call in the square. And we thought there could only be one reason for that. So I hid away in the chimneystack. You know, where the smoke is.

It was in the garret. I was 20, I was grown up, but due to lack of food I was so small and tiny. In the garret it was difficult to find me. There was a complete chimneystack, almost like a small house. I got in there and there was a cloud of smoke out of the stack.

My father and mother were elderly. We were afraid that all the young people would be taken away. The whole family hid away, took shelter in that place.

Running from the village to escape an extermination squad

In all the surrounding locations the Jews were being killed. Dzygovka was the only place left untouched. And we all also expected that we would be threatened. Well, one day that Nakhemia came with his deputy, Zambur was his name, and said that nobody should stay in their homes the next day, because the extermination squad was going to arrive there in the morning. Well, everybody knew what that meant. So we ran away. We left everything behind and escaped from the place.

It was the village chief himself who advised us to run from the extermination squad. Nobody stayed at home.

Now the village chief himself, I don't know about him. We were told he was connected with guerrillas, because he helped so much. I don't know. Or maybe he also hid away then. I don't know how he hid away. I just remember he told us to hide away because the extermination squad would arrive next morning.

We escaped. We ran away. We were told to run not less than eight kilometers from that place. And we did run away. And with children.

There were some local boys there. These boys were special, they were like some kind of spies. They weren't afraid of anything. They went back to see what had happened. They got there somehow. Their parents were full of anxiety. When they come back they said that the squad was still there, plundering. They were not going to leave. We waited, waited, waited. It was getting dark

Was the squad Germans? Probably. I don't know, I just knew that it was an extermination squad. It was known that we were the only Jews left alive in this area. Everywhere else executions had been held. Dzygovka was the only place left untouched. One old woman said that Dzygovka was blessed [by a

great rabbi, Ida told Mike in 1996], that one time Cossacks had come and she survived and we will survive as well in our turn.

It was dark, but the boys again got there. They said that there was no squad. It had gone, but there were some people from surrounding villages who had come to steal. And we decided to return, because we would need time to get back. The squad had gone and these people from other villages could be on the way as well. And so we came back. All doors were flung open and we saw them stealing.

Still, because we lived in this Dzygovka, everybody survived. I tailored, father was involved in agricultural works, so we lived.

Rescuing other Jews

One day we saw a column of men being marched. The Jewish men were exhausted. I don't know if they were being convoyed by Germans or Romanians, I don't remember which soldiers. They were passing along the road. There were soldiers with machine guns, and dogs.

The people of Dzygovka were very good people. They came to see the convoy, they helped so much. They were tradesmen, they earned something and they immediately started to throw bread, food. The dogs were set on, but nobody paid attention, they threw to them. So the convoy passed by.

But at night one of our neighbors knocked our door. She was a widow with two small girls, very poor. Her name was Rakhel. She said that at night when the column was being convoyed, she had stolen two men out of this column, when the column stopped for the night to sleep in a barn.

These boys spied out where they were staying, and spread the word. So this poor woman with two girls, a widow, took two men. She said she was helped by another woman.

The barn had some loose planks. Somehow they were able to make a hole and get two out. They took one man. The other lived with us till the end, till the victory. His name was Shimon. He was from Bukovina, from Chernovitsy.

Nobody knew where the convoy was going, they were not told. Maybe to be killed or to factories. Nobody knew. This Shimon said that his wife died of typhus. And probably he had something. We accepted him, he lived with us and probably I caught something from him. This disease was passed by lice. I got typhus too.

Typhus: saved by deception, garlic and milk

The moment I got typhus I had to hide away, because the Romanians would take me away to prevent spreading of the disease.

There was one doctor, also from Bukovina, from amongst the refugees. Very good doctor and very good and smart as a person. He came and told me that I had typhus. If the authorities found out they would immediately take me to Yampol and that was a place of no return. And so I lay in a closet. I was ill, and I lay hidden.

Somebody probably reported to them, because they came and asked where the ill person was and where she lay.

We lived with an old woman. We said that here is the ill person, this old woman. They pointed out the old woman. I was somewhere where they could not see me. When the old woman was pointed out, they said, she is old, leave her alone.

And I suffered from typhus for six weeks. The doctor from Bukovina treated me, without any medications. Without any medications.

He had me drink milk that was mixed with garlic. Garlic and milk. Garlic and milk. Since that time I love garlic and milk. Because they saved me from death.

The death of Malkeh

My father's sister and her husband moved from Yampol to Dzygovka, to live. [This would be Malkeh and Elly Balaban]

When the ghetto was built it was surrounded by a razor wire fence. We all had to have a yellow star on our clothes.

This razor wire kept us in, but not completely. Because, the fair, the market was on the other side, in the square. So, the people from the surrounding villages had to go to sell their products. So, they tore the wire to go to the other side, the market square, where they sold.

And these symbols, the yellow stars, after a while nobody paid attention. We took them off.

Now Malkeh and some other women wanted to go to Yampol to see what had become of their homes, their belongings and property. Her husband begged her not to go. He said, we live in a ghetto but it is safe. We don't have the right to go outside.

She had a daughter who studied and left home. [Ida does not mention the fate of this daughter, whose name was Rukhel. She would have been a teenager. How she left home and where she went is unknown.]

But still Aunt Malkeh went. She didn't come back. Later we were told that on their way they were stopped by, I don't know, gendarmes or Germans, and they killed these women. She stayed alive and pleaded on her knees to let her live. They shot her anyway.

They killed her because she was a Jew, and because she was not allowed to go outside the ghetto.

We learned this from one of the women who was able to hide away when she saw the soldiers. There were sunflowers along the road, and she rushed there and hid. And she saw everything that happened, how they were shot, how my aunt pleaded with them to let her live.

Dzygovka as a refuge for other Jews

There were many local people in the ghetto. People from other death camps found out that there was such a place, Dzygovka, where Jews were able to live. And they came. I remember when two girls came. They looked like skeletons covered with skin. They said that they tried a couple of times to escape their camp. They finally crept away, and found out where Dzygovka was. Here the people supported them so much, and provided meals. I saw them after the war, so strong and beautiful.

They came from camps in Bershad and Tulchin.

The reputation of Dzygovka was known all around the area. When someone died, Nakhemia didn't eliminate the name from the list, did not register the death. Instead when someone came to find salvation here, they lived under the names of the deceased.

The Romanian commandant's attitude was tolerant. There were no killings. Of course we tried to keep our distance from the Romanians. We never encountered Germans. We didn't even know what they looked like. If there had been Germans there I wouldn't be alive now.

It was just Romanians there. The commandant was retired and already elderly. He said he was from Ploesti. Maybe he knew Jews there. Generally he didn't interfere, unless if he knew that someone caught a disease. He didn't want to infect the soldiers.

The work the Jews of Dzygovka performed

They sent us to agricultural works, in the field. We grew some kind of industrial crop. I didn't know anything about it, but I went. I couldn't stay home. There was also maintenance work for the guards, and we served them, mopped the floor, did repairs. But mainly we worked in the field.

We Jews from Bessarabia could communicate with the guards, but it made no difference.

Freedom, the arrival of the Red Army, March 1944

When I was freed the war was not over. The military men came. The commandant had already gone. The Romanians left early in the morning. They knew. They ran away.

We heard shots. The boys sneaked all around. They said, "You know the front line is near." On one side Romanians were located and the other side Russians. They were Russians in uniforms, but there were some Russians without uniforms. They scouted through the place. They knew everything.

It was the Soviet Army. From our side Romanians were shooting and from the other side, from the Russian side, the Russians fired. Some of them were without uniforms. But they were all together. And they were not far. And we heard that they were closer and closer and closer.

We woke up and everybody was so afraid. There were no more authorities. We were so helpless. We gathered in our house, many people, and waited for the dawn.

It was all so scary. It was like three in the morning. We kept hearing shooting. At three the Red army soldiers came. The fighting was taking place in our Dzygovka, in the main street. Later in the morning we saw the Russian soldiers there, and many of them were without uniform. We saw

that the place where the Romanian guards were stationed, the doors were flung open.

The soldiers who were without uniform were a penal battalion. They were also armed, but wore civilian clothes. They were penalized and they were sent to the point of the front lines. But they fought like real soldiers.

Once we were freed, we tried to cross the Dniester, to Bessarabia. It was March, 1944. We crossed and re-crossed the Dniester. We stayed in Yampol, where my aunt who had been shot lived. My father and mother lived for some time there.

We went to Soroky. [Located across the Dniester from Yampol, in then Romania.] Kishinev hadn't been freed yet. The whole government resided in Soroky, all the ministries were there. It was very hard to get to Kishinev, because there were problems with transportation, no trains at all, only autos. All autos were commandeered.

We knew that in Beltsy our house had been destroyed. There were no relatives there.

The relatives who stayed in Alexandreny were barricaded in synagogues and burned alive. I have a hard time talking about this. My aunts, they were like mothers to me. When I remember how they were burnt alive...They were in the synagogue, they poured gasoline and burned it down. My Aunt Bella died there, and her husband. And many others, children and grandchildren

Return to Kishinev

My brother found out that we were in Soroky. He had been evacuated together with his institute. He thought we were not alive. He had not seen us since we got in the boat in June, 1941.

The institute was supposed to be the future of the republic. Neither teachers nor students were taken into the army. My brother knew foreign languages. He did translation at the institute.

Somehow, I don't know how, he found traces of us, and came to Soroky. He didn't know everything that had happened. But he found us in Soroky.

Kishinev was freed, and the institute where my brother studied moved back. So we came to Kishinev and stayed there. In Kishinev there were many empty houses, people ran away. But we couldn't go just anywhere because people were coming back. My brother said, "Let's walk and look." We walked along the street until we found one abandoned. We moved in.

My father and mother came. My father found a job very fast. He worked as a teacher. My mother never worked. And I, I entered the Moldavian teacher's institute. I became a teacher of geography.

My brother did become a military man. He served in Kishinev. Later he was demobilized.

My mother and father died in Kishinev, and were buried there.

My life in Kishinev

I studied in the institute, and I met my husband there. His name is my last name: Dekhtyar. Yakov Dekhtyar [usually called Yasha]. He was from Bendery. He was evacuated during the war, not under occupation. After the war he returned to Moldavia and entered the institute. His department was physics and math.

We were married in 1946. I lost my first child. In 1948 I gave birth to Mila, Lyudmila Yakovlevna. She was born in Kishinev.

Her life was typical. She was a good girl, studied well, was very active. Then she entered the institute, department of physics and math. Here in

Tiraspol, she got acquainted with her husband, who also studied physics and math. They got married, and stayed in Tiraspol. They had a son, Vadik.

Mila's husband's name is Voskoboynik.

Vadim was born in 1971. He studied to become a doctor, but didn't work as a doctor. He has a daughter. I'm already a grand-grandmother...

After Mila I gave a birth to Polina, in 1952.

Polina attended music school. She graduated summa cum laude. She was always an excellent student. She didn't want to go to medical school. She attended music school, then entered the academy of music and graduated from it, here in Tiraspol. She is a piano teacher now.

In my childhood I was fond of music. My mother wanted so much for me to play piano. But we were not so rich that we could have an instrument. I went to a teacher and clinked around a little, but later quit.

Polina is married. She has two beautiful boys, touch wood! I do not want to put an evil eye upon them.

Her last name is Uchitel. And when I called her by phone and asked for Uchitel they told me "Don't tell us the speciality, tell us the last name!" And I said that it was such last name, Uchitel. [Note "Uchitel" in Russian means "teacher".]

He graduated from the technical college. He got the position of foreman in a cotton plant. The plant is mostly idle now. His name is Semyon. Their children are Sasha, Alexander and Rostik, Rostislav.

Sasha has graduated from the teachers' institute, in physics and math. The younger one maybe will follow the music way, because he is an excellent school student.

My legacy to future generations

What can I say? I can say that such things must not repeat ever, there must be no wars so that people would leave their homes where they were born and lived, and to wander in strange places, along the roads, and take shelter in all sorts of places. I wish that such things would never happen and war would never happen. So I lived, but young people should enjoy living, study, be active and work. And let them never come through what we had to come through due to the war.

Do my children know what hell I went through during the war?

Yes. I told them everything.

Photos included with Ida's testimony. Five photos appear. Evidently Ida provided these to the interviewer. The photos and Ida's commentary are below.



This is the picture of my mother and father, my parents. The picture was taken before the revolution, when they were young. They were bride and groom, or newlyweds.



This is my father. He stands together with his grandson [Edward]. The photo was taken in 1963.



This is a picture of my brother Amnon, taken in 1970. [He is with Luda.]



This picture was taken in 1946. I was a student and pictured among the group of my fellow students. I'm in the first row, first from the left.



This picture was taken in 1977. I'm on the left. My son-in-law Viktor stands near me with my daughter, Lyudmila. In front is Vadik, my grandson.

Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation

Inspired by his experience making *Schindler's List*, Steven Spielberg established the Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation in 1994 to gather video

testimonies from survivors and other witnesses of the Holocaust. While most of those who gave testimony were Jewish survivors, the Foundation also interviewed homosexual survivors, Jehovah's Witness survivors, liberators and liberation witnesses, political prisoners, rescuers and aid providers, Roma and Sinti (Gypsy) survivors, survivors of Eugenics policies, and war crimes trials participants.

Within several years, the Foundation's Visual History Archive held over 51,000 video testimonies in 34 languages, representing 58 countries; it is the largest archive of its kind in the world. With the inclusion of witnesses from other genocides, the Archive now contains nearly 52,000 testimonies in 39 languages from 61 countries

In January 2006, the Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation became part of the Dana and David Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles, where the testimonies in the Visual History Archive will be preserved in perpetuity. The change of name to the USC Shoah Foundation—The Institute for Visual History and Education reflects the broadened mission of the Institute: to overcome prejudice, intolerance, and bigotry—and the suffering they cause—through the educational use of the Institute's visual history testimonies. Today the Institute reaches educators, students, researchers, and scholars on every continent, and supports efforts to collect testimony from the survivors and witnesses of other genocides.