

**The following are portions of an interview of Bessie Zoglin by Lillian Sanders in 1977. Some grammatical changes have been made for clarity.**

We were on the outskirts of town. Poppa went across the rail road tracks and rented a house. You had to go as far as the depot and cross. There was another section of the city that belonged to Gomel. It was mostly goyim there. One of his customers who lost her husband had a big home. She was a pretty well-to-do woman, a goy, and she rented a house to poppa. We had much more space than we had in the other house. It was on the outskirts of the city. For poppa it was easier to work. He had a special room for his place to work and he always had two men that he was teaching. He was a very good mechanic, see. He was known for such.

One day there was a band of chuliganis that wanted to get into our house where we lived. They wanted to go in and rob the house. But the woman who owned the house lived there too. She had a room there. And she came to the door and she said 'You're not going to come in.' They wanted to tear the whole place down. They wanted to get in. We were all in the attic. My brother, Himie - he was a little baby - started yelling and momma took a piece of soft bread and stuck it in his mouth. He almost choked. They asked where we are. She said, 'they all took a taxi and went to the city.' And they looked around to see if she wasn't lying. We had to be still, like church mice.

After they left, momma took the children and went to our old house. I remained, because we had the Torah there. I had to watch that. I stood near the gate and people passed by. You could tell they were looking for something. Momma was telling me that as they were driving they threw stones at them, people from the neighborhood. We were the only Jewish family in the neighborhood.

We weren't hurt but I saw what was going on. Since I was blonde I could run all over the streets and not be recognized as Jewish. So I had a chance to see all those things. The Cossacks would beat up on people. They tore all the pillows and the feathers were all over the town. The Cossacks would come on a horse and he would switch the whip from left and right. He didn't care, women, children, anybody who'd come along. They were sent by the Russian Tsar.

The revolutionary movement had a mass meeting in an isolated place and the Cossacks found out about that and they came and they were beating up on the Jews something terrible. They had 5 people, 2 women and 3 men, put up against a big entrance of a shop where they fix cars. There was a wide opening for people to go in and the cars to go out. They put them up against the wall and shot those 2 women and 3 men. Jewish people. And that left a terrible impression on me.

**Paul Zoglin note: there are some timeline inconsistencies in this story. According to other parts of the interview the move to the outskirts of town was in 1907 which would have been after the 1905 pogrom. It's unclear if Bessie got her dates wrong or if this event was not during the 1905 pogrom.**