

“Holocaust in Proskurov” is a section of a thesis, “The History of Jews in Proskurov, Ukraine” by Diana Voskobonik, History Department, Union College, Schenectady, N.Y. Published in 2002.

Note: The author donated all the eyewitness tape recordings and letters to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) in Washington, DC.

HOLOCAUST IN PROSKUROV

On July 7, 1941, the German Army Group South marched into Proskurov.¹ In 1926, nearly 32,000 inhabitants resided in Proskurov, 13,408 (42%) of whom were Jews.² On the eve of the war, approximately 60,000 people lived in the city.³ From June 22 to July 7, those few Jewish families, who believed the rumors that Nazis would harm Communists and the Jews, and who, also, had access to transportation, left the city.⁴ Some university students, who studied elsewhere in the Soviet Union, returned home to Proskurov. Those Jewish families from small towns and villages, who had relatives in the city and believed that the war would end quickly, came to Proskurov.⁵ Able-bodied men, aged nineteen to thirty-six, volunteered for military service and were drafted into the Red Army.⁶ On June 22, sixty-five women in Proskurov volunteered to serve in the medical corps.⁷ On the day of the German invasion of the city, approximately 13,000 Jews stayed in Proskurov.

Proskurov became one of the twenty-six administrative district centers in the Volhynian-Podolian general region of the Reichskommissariat Eastern Ukraine. Felshtin, Cherny Ostrov and Friedrichvovka, within 25 km of the city, and adjacent villages and kolkhozes were incorporated into the district center of Proskurov, numbering a total of 260,600 inhabitants in March 1942.⁸ The Reichskommissar of Ukraine, Erich Koch, appointed Schmerbeck as the Gebietskommissar of Proskurov.⁹ Schmerbeck made his residence in The House of Officers on Aleksandrovskaaya Street.¹⁰ He was directly responsible for organizing and carrying out the Nazi policies in his district, formulated by the Third Reich.

On July 7, 1941, a few Jews came out of their houses to welcome the Germans. David Kozak was severely beaten but not killed for the failure to take off his hat and to bow in front of a Nazi.¹¹ Others were beaten, tortured or killed on the streets. Most Jews refrained from leaving their homes. They hid in shelters constructed at their homes in the early 1900's during the Russian pogroms.

In the summer of 1941, a self-organized Western Ukrainian Bukovina Battalion, headed by Peter Voinovsky, assaulted Jews in Proskurov oblast.¹² Etya Tsalevich from Felshtin, a sixteen-year-old Jewish girl at that time, described:

German troops passed our village and then they were followed by a police detachment of Western Ukrainians who “put the place in order.” Jewish pogroms began... Once I was with the family of Abram Bukievker. We were having dinner. Four policemen came in. They began unmercifully beating the father of the family and his two sons, one 19 and the other my age, 16. They tied their hands, took them into the street and shot them just around the corner. When they were being taken away, the mother began crying in a terrible voice. A policeman fired at her several times. He shot her arm and shoulder. She fell down and did not see how her husband and sons were shot. The same happened with a few other Jewish families. I don't need to mention plundering and beatings.¹³

In Proskurov, Shurim Shpak was whipped to death in the dining room of his own house. His daughter was dropped into an outdoor toilet and shot.¹⁴

According to the Operational Situation Report USSR No 24, on July 16, 1941, Einsatzkommando 4b “at work” in Tarnopol, planned to proceed to Proskurov.¹⁵ On August 7, Einsatzgruppe C reported that the location of Einsatzkommando 6 was in Proskurov.¹⁶ On July 30, Einsatzgruppe C reported that, “In Proskurov the entire [Soviet] documentation is either destroyed or removed. All officials have disappeared.”¹⁷ The report also stated that 146 persons were shot in Proskurov.¹⁸ Neither the identity of the murdered people nor the

reason for the execution was stated. From the first day of their arrival, Nazis beat, tortured, and killed Jews randomly on the streets of Proskurov; they cut off the beards of old men and took photographs.¹⁹

Some indigenous Ukrainians in Proskurov were appalled. Many Gentiles plundered Jewish homes and those shops, which were administered by Jews before the War. Gentile children broke windows in the synagogue. The forbidden “zhid” reemerged in Ukrainian speech.²⁰ Former schoolmates, co-workers and neighbors of the Jews joined an auxiliary police force, *Schutzmannschaften*, recruited by the Gestapo on voluntary basis. Grischenko, a high school military-instruction teacher became the head of the *Schutzmannschaften* in Proskurov.²¹ The policeman Pastukh was well-known for his brutality to Jewish infants.²² Every policeman received daily pay and free provisions for his wife and children.²³ The auxiliary police guarded the Jewish ghettos and labor camps after their establishment, rounded-up and shot Jews during executions. They reaped the possessions of those people whom they killed.²⁴

A Judenrat was set up in Proskurov. Liza Lindenboym became the chairwoman of the Judenrat.²⁵ Born in 1903, Liza Lindenboym was a very attractive thirty-eight year-old woman. Before the war, she worked as a secretary in a poultry plant. She had one son of about 18 years of age. The circumstances of Liza Lindenboym’s appointment to the Judenrat are not known. She became responsible for the implementation of all the directives issued by Schmerbeck. She appointed ten other Jewish men and women to serve on the Jewish Council. The main obligation of the Judenrat was to provide Jewish forced laborers to the Germans. Many Jews hated Liza Lindenboym.²⁶ Most of the survivors maintained that no Jewish police existed in Proskurov. Iosif Groysman stated that “Jewish policemen” assembled Jews for work. The Judenrat had no power vis-à-vis Germans.²⁷

The Jews were ordered to sew a Star of David, black outline on a yellow circle, eight centimeters in diameter, onto the front and back of every piece of clothing.²⁸ At the same time, Schmerbeck ordered Jews to assemble in a ghetto, two blocks on Kupecheskaya and Remeslennaya Streets near the open market, surrounded by a tall row of barbed wire with one gate. Persons failing to appear would be shot.²⁹ Ukrainian policemen supervised the assembly.³⁰ The majority of the people did not resist going. The barbed wire gave Jews a false sense of security. It “protected” them from the Nazis and hostile Ukrainians. The majority of the residents on Kupecheskaya and Remeslennaya Streets were Jews. They remained in their houses. Jews from other parts of the city moved in with them. Three to five families crowded into each house, fifteen to twenty people to one room. No one remained “homeless” and no one was allowed to leave the ghetto without a permit. Ukrainian policemen guarded the ghetto.³¹

The first ghetto existed less than four months. Jews worked as forced laborers. The work included harvest collection, fruit concentration, demolition of the Jewish cemetery, clearing of the ruined houses, shoveling snow in the winter, and other jobs outside the ghetto. Unless they possessed their own tools, all of the work was performed manually. Ukrainian and Lithuanian policemen guarded the Jews on the way to and from work. They beat men and women of all ages with whips and, occasionally, shot those who were unable to work any longer.³² Shoemakers, tailors, tanners, welders, coopers and other skilled workers labored inside the ghetto, and many of them had permission to work in the shops outside the barbed wire, supervised by the Nazis. Children of the specialists worked with their parents.³³ A Jewish doctor, Khromoy, was forced to work in the German infirmary.³⁴ The very old Jews, the sick, and the toddlers lived in constant fear of the Germans and policemen when the able-bodied Jews left for work.

Forced laborers received 200 grams of bread, daily.³⁵ The non-working Jews were not entitled to food. Skilled laborers, also not entitled to food, received food in compensation for their work from local and Nazi Gentiles. Townspeople and villagers traded food at the barbed wire for clothing, utensils, and any commodities, which the Jews still owned. Both sides risked being beaten or shot. Volodymyr Lanko, a Ukrainian agronomist, helped many people in the ghetto.³⁶ Young people crawled out of the ghetto at night and begged their former Gentile neighbors for food. The barbed wire hardly presented an overwhelming physical barrier to

young people and the Stars of David were easy to remove, however, during daylight, the local policemen knew their Jews by face and would shoot anyone without a permit. The Jews who did not live in the city before the War and those youths who had “Gentile” facial features had a better chance of smuggling themselves in and out of the ghetto.³⁷

In the first ghetto, radios and newspapers were confiscated. News passed through the barbed wire by word of mouth. Ukrainian pottery-makers, who traveled from town to town, carried letters and messages. The Jews in Proskurov knew that everywhere in the oblast other Jews were subjected to the same conditions. In the fall of 1941, the Nazis shot a Jewish *minyán* in the center of the ghetto.³⁸ Nazi officers and administrators raped Jewish women. To protect themselves, Jewish girls smeared their underwear with lipstick. Germans cringed from the site of “blood.” Following the orders of Schmerbeck, Liza Lindenboym collected gold, jewelry and valuables from the Jews. The Jews perceived the collection of valuables as a “contribution” to stay alive. Young people got married and women bore children. They believed that they would survive.³⁹

The first mass murder took place on November 4, 1941.⁴⁰ Schmerbeck ordered the Judenrat to distribute a limited number of “work certificates” to the skilled workers. The certificates contained two words: “*Jude*,” and a trade, Schmerbeck’s signature, and no names. Not every specialist received a work certificate. On November 4, 1941, after the skilled laborers left the barbed wire for work, their wives, parents, and children woke up surrounded by the SS. The members of the Judenrat circulated on the street, ordering Jews to come out with their belongings, documents, and jewelry, for a resettlement to Kamenets-Podolsky. If they fail to come out, they threatened a pogrom.⁴¹ The majority of the people hid in shelters at their houses. Those who came outside and hundreds who were discovered were driven on foot to the textile factory on Kamenetskaya Street. Those who tried to resist or to escape on the way to the factory were shot by SS and policemen.⁴²

Inside the textile factory, Jews left their documents, valuables, and other belongings, successively, on the long tables, which lined the hallway. Early during the day, the people remained fully clothed. Later, they were forced to undress at the factory.⁴³ Nazis and policemen drove the Jews on foot out of the factory, down the Kamenetskaya Street, to the outskirts in Ruzhichnoye. Here, behind the two cemeteries, those Jews who were still clothed were forced to undress. The Nazis and policemen with machine-guns and dogs lined up wailing people in a long line to the edge of a natural ravine. At the edge of it, they shot rows of fifteen to twenty people in the back of the head or in the back of the neck.⁴⁴ Most executioners were drunk.⁴⁵ After the war, Soviets found 5,300 corpses, some hugging and others clutching tight onto child corpses at Ruzhichnoye.⁴⁶ Everyone in Proskurov heard and saw that the Jews were driven to an execution that day. Some indigenous Gentiles rejoiced and plundered abandoned Jewish homes.⁴⁷ Others were powerless to help. Approximately twenty Jews remained at the textile factory in the evening on November 4. The names of the known survivors include the Bover family of four, Hana Gritsershteyn, Nora Faynshteyn, Abram and his son Mikhail Melamud.⁴⁸ Six thousand Jews from Proskurov were killed. A very small number of Jews fled from Proskurov soon after the first pogrom, including the Bover family with the help of their gentile friend Lemeshev.

Two days after the first pogrom, Schmerbeck ordered the partitioning of the first ghetto into an “old” ghetto, which remained behind the barbed wire, and a “second” ghetto, which moved across the street between Remeslennaya and Kupecheskaya Streets and Aptekarskaya and Sobornaya Streets. The skilled workers moved into the second ghetto. The Judenrat continued to function in both. The remaining specialists from neighboring towns were resettled into the second ghetto. The remaining Jews from the old ghetto shoveled snow on the motorway throughout the winter of 1941-1942.⁴⁹ Germans confiscated winter clothing from Jews, Gentiles, and Soviet POWs. Ukrainians continued to toss food over the barbed wire of the old ghetto. During the first winter some Jews were killed at work, others died from exhaustion, still others died from hunger and cold.⁵⁰

In the spring and the summer of 1942, it became easier to obtain food because of vegetation. Germans confiscated horses from kolkhozes in Proskurov oblast and conscripted approximately seventy Jews, selected by

the Judenrat, to drive the horses to the Donbass front line. Israel Groysman and Veniamin Grinberg were two of the conscripts. Israel Groysman was killed en route.⁵¹

Concurrently, throughout 1942, Nazis gathered and concentrated young Jewish men and women remaining in Proskurov oblast in several camps along the motorway from Proskurov to Vinnitsa. They used these people as forced laborers and hired Ukrainian workers for wages to do construction work, as a part of the Todt Organization motorway reconstruction project.⁵² While the Handbook of the Organisation Todt lists nominal wages for Jewish workers, and Vladimir Goykher, a survivor of Letichev ghetto stated that they were paid “several times,”⁵³ the survivors from Proskurov labor camps stated that they did not get paid.⁵⁴

One of such labor camps was set up in a horse stable in the village of Matkovtsy, in late February 1942. Two hundred to three hundred people from Felshtin, aged fifteen to forty-five, and nearly two thousand other Jews from the oblast were gathered here. In addition to the daily killings of the sick and the feeble at work, a “large group” of Jews from the camp was executed at the Matkovtsy woods in the late summer of 1942. David Bershteyn, then a ten-year old boy from Felshtin, was the only one who succeeded in running away from that execution.⁵⁵

Another labor camp, set up in the horse stables at Leznevo in May 1942, consisted of approximately one thousand Jews from Proskurov, Gorodok, Cherny Ostrov, Zinkov, Yarmolintsy and Vinkovtsy.⁵⁶ The Commandant of the camp, Bockamer, and his Assistant Commandant, Schmutzler, personally whipped and beat the Jews on and off the motorway. In July 1942, approximately thirty Jewish joiners and metalworkers, including Iosif Groysman, were transferred from Leznevo to work in a nearby garage. The work varied from fixing trucks to building wooden egg cases. No one guarded or killed the inmates at the garage. They were supervised by a German engineer who treated them humanely. At the petition of a different German engineer, Hana Gritsershteyn was transferred from Leznevo to work as a nurse for local policemen. Small groups of inmates from Leznevo were allowed to visit the Proskurov ghettos on Sundays. They always came back to the camp, for the fear of reprisals against others.⁵⁷ Nevertheless, a few Jews escaped. Ilya Abramovich arranged the escape of his brother Matvey and later fled himself.⁵⁸

A third labor camp was set up on Aleksandrovskaia Street of Proskurov in the building of the School No 6. More than two thousand Jews from outside the city and no dwellers from Proskurov ghettos were interned at this camp, supervised by Herr Kröll. They, too, worked on construction. Veniamin Grinberg escaped School No 6 in November 1942. Also, in November 1942, the remaining Jews from Matkovtsy were transferred to School No 6.⁵⁹

All three labor camps were surrounded by barbed wire. Lice, typhus, and other diseases infested the camps. The sick were shot individually and in groups after the healthy left for work in the camps.⁶⁰ The Jews existed mainly at the mercy of local peasants who frequently smuggled them food. Inside the camps and on the motorway, Ukrainian and Lithuanian Schutzmaenner guarded the Jews. As a rule, ten Jews were shot in reprisal for one escapee. German engineers and foremen gave out work-related orders and supervised projects.⁶¹ The chief engineer of the district center of Proskurov, Colonel Lorentz, helped a few Jews in the labor camps and was shot by Nazis in 1944.⁶²

The Jews in the old ghetto were ravished by typhus and famine fever in November, 1942. Doctor Khromoy took care of the sick, although no medicines were available. Famine fever did not spread to the second ghetto. Escapees from nearby camps, ghettos, and executions temporarily hid in Proskurov. The Oksman family, which escaped the pogrom in Mikhalpol, found refuge in the old ghetto. Elya Millis, a tailor from Medzhibozh, gave shelter to Moishe Einhorn in the second ghetto. The Detun family gave shelter to Veniamin Grinberg. David Bershteyn from Felshtin also hid in Proskurov, temporarily.⁶³ Nazis promised death to any Gentile family in whose house a Jew were found.⁶⁴ Thus even Ukrainians who sympathized with the plight of the Jews were afraid to let them hide in their homes.

Rumors about an imminent pogrom spread in Proskurov in late fall 1942. Five persons from a previously wealthy Blekhman family paid their Gentile acquaintance Danil to rent a house on the “free” territory in Proskurov, and hid in a hole dug in the cellar of the house, covered with straw, for four months, with

two other persons.⁶⁵ The Jews who had no valuables left relied on trusted Gentile friends. The mother of Etya B. forced her thirteen year-old daughter to run and hide with a young Ukrainian couple, Sabina and Aleksey, whom she trusted.⁶⁶ Approximately eighty to one hundred Jews fled the ghetto before the second pogrom and hid with Ukrainian friends. Many of them did not survive in hiding and were discovered and shot with their hosts.⁶⁷ Only those Jews who had no family left attempted to flee in the snow to Transnistria, ninety kilometers east from Proskurov, on the eve of the second pogrom.

The Jews in Proskurov had no weapons to generate an uprising. Many able-bodied Jewish men and women wanted to join underground partisan brigades, which they believed to exist in the woods.⁶⁸ In August 1942, the underground group headed by Petro Semeniuk sabotaged a train headed to Germany with Ukrainian youths conscripted for labor, who, subsequently, returned to their homes. Before April 1943, the same underground group freed 150 Soviet POWs from the Rakovo POW camp near Proskurov.⁶⁹ After the war, E. Lantsman testified that in Proskurov “the shooting lasted several hours. Jews killed three SS men and five policemen recruited from the local population. Several young people succeeded in breaking through to the forest and escaping.”⁷⁰ However, it is unclear when and under what circumstances this incident took place.

There is no consensus on the exact date of the second pogrom. More than seven thousand people who remained in the two ghettos of Proskurov, who remained in the labor camps, and from the nearby Nikolayev village were killed. The murder lasted more than one week.⁷¹ Most likely, it began on the night of November 30 - December 1. SS-men, Lithuanian Schutzmaenner, and local policemen broke into the homes of the Jews in the old ghetto and into the homes of the specialists. Crying, beatings, shouts, pleading, and shootings accompanied the round-up of the Jews. People were driven to the execution pits dug in the village of Leznevo, daily.⁷² Mikhail Orlov, a local policeman, testified after the war that Germans “shot them [Jews] point-blank in the back of the head and threw the children alive into pits.”⁷³ The testimony of Etya Tsalevich is the only account of a survivor of the mass murder at Leznevo:

At the end of December 1942 came my turn to get shot. On Saturday a party of about 100 people was taken out of the camp [school No 6] and driven to Leznevo. By now we knew well that our deaths were imminent. In Leznevo we were put in a large cold shed near the dug out pits. It was already evening. No shootings were carried out on Sundays, the policemen-executioners rested and perhaps prayed to G-d. Thus we could live another day until Monday.

Early on Monday morning the trucks with new people arrived. These were the remaining Jews of Proskurov ghetto. They came as entire families with children. They were still well dressed and carried suitcases, bags, and bundles with belongings. They were told that they would be resettled to another place but were brought to the pits.⁷⁴

Most likely, the Jews did not buy into the deception but were ordered to bring their belongings.

They began to shoot the newcomers first although we arrived nearly one day before them, probably, because they stood nearer to the door of the shed. They were ordered to come out of the shed and to strip naked in front of its wall. It was ordered to undress the children as well. They threw all the clothes into a heap. The heap became larger and larger. Then the policemen ordered all the adults to line up and [they] separated the children from them, except infants whom the mothers held in their arms. The policemen passed between the rows [of Jews] and forced [them] to take rings off their hands, examined the mouths of the Jews and knocked out the gold-tooth crowns. Many people took out their dentures and gave them up themselves. If someone could not take a ring off, the policemen chopped off his/her fingers. The policemen were very covetous of gold and they could not allow any Jewish man or woman to fall into a pit with a gold ring on a hand or a gold tooth in a mouth.

The adults and the juveniles were shot in the same pit, each separately. They shot them in the back of the head. By force, they ripped away young children and infants from their mothers and simply threw them into another pit. When there were about 10-20 children, one policeman fired a machine gun [at them], and they threw in the next kids. Many children were not even killed. They froze [to death] in the pit either untouched by a bullet or wounded.

When we were led out of the shed, I looked into the pit with children[;] they were stirring, crying and screaming... As the execution of the Jews of Proskurov ghetto continued, I could not always hear the shots, human wailing [drowned them out]. The screaming and the crying of women, the weeping of children, the swearing of men were unbearable to hear. We forgot for a moment that our turn followed these Jews.⁷⁵

Not to undress in front of the murderers and not to be shot in the back of the head, a few Jewish girls hung themselves in the attic of the shed. A few others tried but could not bring themselves to commit suicide.⁷⁶

When the murder of the Jews from the ghetto was finished, they started with us. I was led to the pit. A ladder (trap) lowered into the pit, everyone was to walk down this ladder and lie down head to head in rows. When one row filled up, others lay down. On the lowest rung of the ladder stood a policeman and shot everyone in the back of the head. As I stood near the ladder, I heard this policeman ask another, "take my place, my finger is stiffened and can not work." He turned to climb out of the pit but saw me and said again, "Well, this is my neighbor, I must finish her off myself." He was Bronislav Zhukovskiy.⁷⁷

Bronislav Zhukovskiy, whose family suffered from Soviet repressions, joined the Felshtin police unit in July 1941. Etya Tsalevich knew Zhukovskiy from her home town.⁷⁸

I did not lie down immediately where I was supposed to, but began to cry and to plead not to get shot. Zhukovskiy shouted, "Lie down, your life is over." I closed my eyes and threw myself onto corpses. I heard a shot...⁷⁹

Etya Tsalevich was not shot to death. She lost consciousness. In the dead of the night, as she began to suffocate, Etya freed herself from the human corpses on top of her and climbed out of the pit. Covered in blood and dressed in clothes from the heap left by those who were now dead, Etya Tsalevich crawled from the execution place to the village of Leznevo. She was saved by a Ukrainian family of Darya Shershun and her son Vladimir Shershun who met Etya for the first time that night.⁸⁰ We may never know how many more people climbed out of the pit alive; how many of them were dragged back to the pit or shot when they tried to climb out; how many Jews died from wounds, suffocated or froze to death in the pit. The mass grave remained uncovered throughout the winter months.⁸¹

NOTES

¹ According to Ukrainian historians (Shkrobot, 47), Germans occupied Proskurov on July 8, 1941. However, survivors state the occupation date as July 7, 1941. Yefim Lerner, personal interview concerning his late wife Sima Lerner (Blekhman), a holocaust survivor, audiocassette, New York, 16 December, 2000; Tatyana Uzenkel, letter to the author, December 2000.

² "Proskurov, Encyclopaedia Judaica, Jerusalem, Encyclopaedia Judaica, 16 vols. (New York: the MacMillan Company, 1971).

³ Sonya Shteyner, telephone interview, 4 October, 2000; Rahel Sigal. According to Gersh Ivankovitsner, the city population was 90,000 people. Perhaps, there were anywhere from 60,000-90,000 people.

⁴ The exact number of evacuees is not known. The following individuals or their relatives stated to me that the following persons fled from Proskurov, June 22-July 7: the family of Shopse Shteyner and his daughter Bazya Shteyner with children; the family of Boris Froysheter; the family of Chaim Royzen; the family of Grigoriy Sheynberg; the family of Samuil Margulis; Reva Sigal and her parents; Fanya Shnayder and her parents; Yakov Birman and his parents; Vera Grinberg and her parents; Roman Inker and his parents; Meir Sheydvaser and his parents; Bronya Parnes and her daughter Rita (now Inker); Rahel Sigal (Tsessarskiy), her mother and brother; the mother of Iosif Groysman and his three sisters; Sheyndl Grinberg (the mother of Veniamin Grinberg); Maria Roymburg. For the best analysis of the reasons why the majority of the Jews did not evacuate from Ukraine, see

Altshuler, Mordechai. Escape and Evacuation of Soviet Jews. The Holocaust in the Soviet Union. Ed. Lucjan Dobroszycki and Jeffrey S. Gurock. New York: M. E. Sharpe. 1993. 77-104. Also see Hilberg, 107-109.

⁵ Tova Perlshtein, Kupel: In Memory of My Shtetl and the Dear Ones who Died There, unpublished ts., trans. Eliav Bar-Hai (Tel Aviv), Ophira Druch and Joel Cehn (Oakland, CA), collection of Ben Weinstock, 4; Klara Melamud, telephone interview concerning her husband Mikhail Melamud, holocaust survivor, 21 January, 2001.

⁶ "Soviet Union," Encyclopedia of the Holocaust, 1990

⁷ Shkrobot, 46.

⁸ Reichskommissariat für die Ukraine and Einsatzstab Rosenberg records from the Central State Archive of Higher Administration of Ukraine, USHMM archives RG-31.002M, (original in Central State Archive of Higher Administration of Ukraine Fond 3206 (Reichskommissariat für den Ukraine, Rovno) Opis 1, delo 58).

⁹ Reichskommissariat für die Ukraine and Einsatzstab Rosenberg records.

¹⁰ Iosif Groysman, interview, dir. Maks Voskoboynik, audiocassette, San Francisco, 2 January, 2001; Lyusya Blekhman, 17 May 1998;

¹¹ Iosif Groysman, 2 January 2001.

¹² Ivan Matveychuk, "New Generation of Executioners," trans. David Tsal, Novoye Russkoye Slovo 27 Dec. 1996: 15, A Nazi Memorial Opened and Honored in the Ukraine, March 17, 2001 <<http://remember.org/ideas/bukovina.html>>

¹³ Etya Tsalevich, testimony, RG 03-3734, Yad Vashem Archives, Israel 1974, 2-3.

¹⁴ Sonya Shteyner, telephone interview, 4 October 2000.

¹⁵ Operational Situation Report USSR No. 24, The Einsatzgruppen Reports, ed. Yitzak Arad, Shmuel Krakowski and Shmuel Spector (New York: Holocaust Library, 1989) 29-33, March 17, 2001 <<http://www.pgonline.com/electriczen/osr24.html>>

¹⁶ Ereignismeldung UdSSR, Nr. 45, Berlin, August 7, 1941, RG.000431-444, YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, trans. Kathrin Klotz, 000434.

¹⁷ Operational Situation Report USSR No. 38, The Einsatzgruppen Reports, ed. Yitzak Arad, Shmuel Krakowski and Shmuel Spector (New York: Holocaust Library, 1989) 58-60, March 17, 2001 <<http://www.pgonline.com/electriczen/osr38.html>>

¹⁸ Operational Situation Report USSR No. 38.

¹⁹ Lyusya Blekhman, 17 May 1998; Iosif Groysman, 2 January, 2001. Survivors from the other towns in Proskurov oblast, too, testify that Germans committed atrocities and took photographs in the first days of the occupation: David A. Chapin and Ben Weinstock, The Road From Letichev: The History and Culture of a Forgotten Jewish Community in Eastern Europe (San Jose: Writer's Showcase presented by Writer's Digest, 2000) 673-744.

²⁰ Lyusya Blekman, 17 May, 1998.

²¹ Lyusya Blekman, 17 May, 1998.

²² Hana Vaiskop (maiden name Gritsershteyn), testimony, RG 03-3766, Yad Vashem Archives, Israel, 1973, 5-6.

²³ Minister of Citizenship and Immigration v. Serge Kisluk, 3-4.

²⁴ Leonid Vorona, telephone interview, 17 December, 2000.

²⁵ Lyusya Blekman, personal interview, 14 October, 2000.

²⁶ Hana Vaiskop, 5.

²⁷ Etya B. letter to the author, 8 January, 2000; Lyusya Blekman, 14 October, 2000; Iosif Groysman; Veniamin Grinberg.

²⁸ Moishe Einhorn, "In the Medzhibozh Ghetto," trans. Moshe Furst, The Road from Letichev, comp. David A. Chapin and Ben Weinstock (San Jose: Writer's Showcase presented by Writer's Digest, 2000) 693.

²⁹ Tatyana Uzenkel; Lyusya Blekman, 17 May, 1998; Iosif Groysman.

³⁰ Iosif Groysman described one incident indicative of the fact that the Nazis poorly identified Jews: The baker of the only restaurant in town, on the corner of Aleksandrovskaia and Aptekarskaia Streets, was a bearded Gentile man. Sometime in 1941 he was approached by two Nazis on a street and questioned whether he was a Jew. The Gentile baker did not understand German and failed to respond. The two Nazis assumed that the man was a Jew only because of his beard. They grabbed his beard and ripped it out, leaving the baker bleeding on the street. As a rule, the Nazis did not perpetrate random violence against Gentiles in Proskurov. The baker was abused "by mistake." When the Jews were assembled to the ghetto, Ukrainians assisted the Nazis in identifying the Jews (Groysman, 2 January, 2001).

³¹ Lyusya Blekman, 17 May 1998; Iosif Groysman; Moishe Einhorn, 693.

³² Etya B.; Lyusya Blekman, 17 May, 1998; Iosif Groysman.

³³ Lazar Bover, letter to the author, 15 December, 2000; Klara Melamud.

³⁴ Hana Vaiskop, 9.

³⁵ Moishe Einhorn, 693.

³⁶ Hana Vaiskop, 9.

³⁷ Lyusya Blekman, 17 May 1998; Yefim Lerner. The survivors from other towns in Proskurov oblast described a similar situation in their towns. David A. Chapin and Ben Weinstock, 673-744.

³⁸ Iosif Groysman.

³⁹ Etya B.; Lyusya Blekhman, 17 May, 1998; Iosif Groysman; Yefim Lerner; Klara Melamud; Tatyana Uzenkel; Semyon Gluzman, 734.

⁴⁰ Hana Vaiskop states that the first pogrom began on November 4, 1941. Tatyana Uzenkel states that the first pogrom happened in November. Mikhail Melamud states the date as November 6, 1941 (Klara Melamud). Since he was seven years old at the time and Hana Vaiskop was a high school graduate, I decided to go with the date provided by Hana Vaiskop. Ukrainian historians state that the first pogrom happened in November but do not indicate the date (Shkrobot, 47).

⁴¹ Iosif Groysman.

⁴² Hana Vaiskop, 4.

⁴³ Klara Melamud; Hana Vaiskop, 4.

⁴⁴ Lazar Bover.

⁴⁵ Hana Vaiskop, 5.

⁴⁶ The Act of the Judicial-Medical Committee for Investigation of the German-Fascist Atrocities in Proskurov, Kamenets-Podolsky oblast. The Soviet State Extraordinary Commission to Investigate Nazi Crimes Committed on the Soviet Territory. USHMM archives. RG-22.002M. Reel 2. (original in the State Archives of the Russian Federation (GARF). Fond 7021, opis 9, delo 813).

⁴⁷ Hana Vaiskop, 5; Lyusya Blekhman, 17 May 1998, and Iosif Groysman also testified that the locals plundered Jewish homes on the day of the pogrom.

⁴⁸ Lazar Bover; Iosif Groysman; Klara Melamud; Hana Vaiskop.

⁴⁹ Moishe Einhorn, 693.

⁵⁰ Iosif Groysman; Although in Letichev and Zinkov (neighboring towns) there were no pogroms in the fall 1941, the Jews of those towns survived the first winter similarly to the remaining Jews in Proskurov. Vladimir Goykher, 710-714; Semyon Gluzman, 730-736.

⁵¹ Iosif Groysman; Veniamin Grinberg. The survivors from other towns in Proskurov also mention the conscription of people to drive the horses in the spring of 1942. David A. Chapin and Ben Weinstock, 673-744; Eva Oksman, audiocassette, donated to the author, January, 2001.

⁵² Veniamin Grinberg; Vladimir Goykher, 712-714; Moyshe Rekhtman, "Hard Labor in the Letichev Camp," testimony on file in USHMM, The Road from Letichev, comp. David A. Chapin and Ben Weinstock (San Jose: Writer's Showcase presented by Writer's Digest, 2000) 701-702.

⁵³ Footnoted in David A. Chapin and Ben Weinstock, 767, footnote 69; Vladimir Goykher, 713-714.

⁵⁴ Iosif Groysman; Veniamin Grinberg.

⁵⁵ Etya Tsalevich, 4-5.

⁵⁶ Iosif Groysman states that there were anywhere from 1,000 to 3,000 Jews in the camp. According to Ilya Abramovich, there were a few hundred people.

⁵⁷ Ilya Abramovich, 34; Iosif Groysman; Hana Vaiskop, 6.

⁵⁸ Ilya Abramovich, 34-37; Iosif Groysman, Hana Vaiskop, 6.

⁵⁹ Veniamin Grinberg; Etya Tsalevich 5-6.

⁶⁰ Ilya Abramovich, 35.

⁶¹ Etya (Galya) Tsalevich, telephone interview, 26 December, 2000.

⁶² Hana Vaiskop, 7.

⁶³ Moishe Einhorn, 693; Veniamin Grinberg; Eva Oksman; Etya Tsalevich.

⁶⁴ Etya B.; Lyusya Blekhman; Moishe Einhorn, 694; Klara Melamud; Eva Oksman; Lubov Sherman; Leonid Vorona.

⁶⁵ Lyusya Blekhman, 17 May 1998; 14 October, 2000.

⁶⁶ Etya B.

⁶⁷ Lyusya Blekhman, 17 May 1998.

⁶⁸ Iosif Groysman.

⁶⁹ Shkrobot, 48-53; 65,000 Soviet POWs were starved to death, shot, or tortured to death in the POW camp in Rakovo by the Germans (The Soviet State Extraordinary Commission to Investigate Nazi Crimes Committed on the Soviet Territory, USHMM archives, RG-22.002M, Reel 2).

⁷⁰ "Resistance in Yarmolitsy," The Black Book, the Ruthless Murder of Jews by German-Fascist Invaders Throughout the Temporarily-Occupied Regions of The Soviet Union and in the Death Camps of Poland During the War of 1941-1945, ed. Ilya Ehrenburg and Vasily Grossman, trans. John Glad and James S. Levine (New York: Holocaust Library, 1980) 26.

⁷¹ Sto Evreyskikh Mestecek Ukrainy, Podolia [One Hundred Jewish places in Ukraine, Podolia], comp. and ed. Veniamin Lukin and Boris Khaymovich, ser. 1 (Jerusalem-Saint Petersburg, 1997) 184.

⁷² There is no consensus on the first day of the second pogrom. According to Mikhail Melamud, the pogrom began on November 30, 1942 (Klara Melamud). The same date is listed in the Encyclopedia Judaica ("Proskurov," Encyclopaedia Judaica, 1970). Tatyana Uzenkel and Veniamin Grinberg state that the second pogrom began in November 1942. Hana Vaiskop states that it began on December 3. Iosif Groysman states the date as December 5, however, he was in the Leznevo garage-labor camp when the pogrom began. According to Etya Tsalevich, the pogrom began in late December 1942. Hana Vaiskop and Veniamin Grinberg state that the pogrom began at night. Since, according to the consensus, the pogrom lasted more than a week, I decided to state November 30, 1942, as the first night of the pogrom.

⁷³ Mikhail S. Orlov, protocol of interrogation, May 10, 1944, the Soviet State Extraordinary Commission to Investigate Nazi Crimes Committed on the Soviet Territory, USHMM archives, RG-22.002M, Reel 2, (original in the State Archives of the Russian Federation (GARF), fond 7021, opis 9, delo 813).

⁷⁴ Etya Tsalevich, 6.

⁷⁵ Etya Tsalevich, 6-7.

⁷⁶ Etya Tsalevich, 7-8.

⁷⁷ Etya Tsalevich, 8.

⁷⁸ Etya Tsalevich, 3; Etya Tsalevich, 26 December, 2000.

⁷⁹ Etya Tsalevich, 8.

⁸⁰ Etya Tsalevich, 10-12.

⁸¹ Tatyana Uzenkel.