

Postcard From Mieczyslaw Najman's Neighbor



This is a postcard I received from my former neighbor in Drohobycz. There was already talk about the killing of Jews. But what happened to my family I learned only towards the end of the war when I wrote to a neighbor of ours. I asked the neighbors whether my mother and brother had received my letters. I later met the neighbors' sons, they joined the army, told me everything, from A to Z what happened to my family. It was 1944. And officially the Holocaust didn't take place, everything was kept secret. No one knew what was going on. It was the Ukrainians who denounced my brother when we went to the front. The Germans had put him to work. He was returning from work in the night, after curfew, a German went by, the neighbor got to the fence in a leap and says, 'A Jew, he's a Jew!' My brother tried to negotiate the fence and that's where they shot him, Filip, my younger brother. I had documents that my family had been murdered, end of story, that I was left alone in the world, that's what the paper said, the family murdered, the house burned down? When the Germans came, my brother-in-law, Friedman, went into hiding, poor guy. Someone informed them that there, in the hay, a Jew was hiding. He had his wife and kids with himself. The gendarme stabbed the hay with a bayonet to see whether there was anyone inside, and the child didn't cry, afraid not to betray its father. And they didn't find him. But a time came when his wife and children were shot on the street for being Jews. The second sister also hid, somewhere else. And my mother, with one more sister, went, as they called in Drohobycz, 'for the oil' - to steal from the pipe. That's how they earned money. Some Ukrainians saw it but there was no problem. But one day one of those Ukrainians got drunk and told the Germans. They came, killed them outright, all of them. I was told all of that when I was in the military. All my people, sisters, brothers, cousins, all killed. The whole family wasted away, exterminated, to the root, eradicated.