

Borukh Ilyich Livshits And Fanya Lvovna Livshits



This photo shows my maternal grandfather and grandmother , Borukh Ilyich Livshits and Fanya Lvovna Livshits (before marriage - Lipkinà). This photo was made in 1915. My maternal grandfather was Borukh Livshits. Grandmother's name was Fanya. Unfortunately, I never knew my grandmother or grandfather, therefore I can only relate what my mother told me. In 1934, during a time of famine, my grandparents moved to Ukraine, to the village of Bolshaya Lovcha near Krivoi Rog.

Grandfather worked on a collective farm. Grandmother raised their seven children. There was never enough money. Grandfather usually found time for entertainment outside the family. Grandmother, thus, had an incredibly hard time. When the war began, mother's parents were still living in Bolshaya Lovcha. The wife of mother's brother Yasha [born in 1914] lived with them. She was pregnant. Her name was Raya. When the Germans came, things were terrible. At first they forced all the Jews to work at physically hard labor. Young girls were sent to dig trenches. Then came the sad end. The village of Kukolovka was completely destroyed by Germans - all Jews were executed. At one point the Germans gathered everybody, and the Jews thought that they were going to be shot. They said farewell to each other, but they were forced to dig a ditch for other people, who were shot that very day. They were present at that execution and were then compelled to bury the bodies of the executed people, some of whom were still alive ? But this all happened in a neighboring village. They said that grandfather came home absolutely grey-haired, he could hardly speak. Then came the turn of Bolshaya Lovcha. Absolutely all people of Jewish nationality were executed as well as people of different origin who sympathized with and helped the Jews. The execution was carried out by Germans as well as by Ukrainians who were on their side. Among the Ukrainians were those who had lived side by side for years with the people they executed. In 1972, when I was in my ninth year at school, my mother decided to go to the place where her parents had been executed. Mother, Daddy and I went to Krivoi Rog. We rented a room there. Very quickly the news of our arrival spread through town. A woman who managed to escape the execution came to see us. She had been a very small girl at that time. There was another man, whose mother had been executed on the very same day as Mom's parents. His mother had been an activist, she even made a speech before her execution. I can not tell you precisely what year that was ? The rainy season had started but we still went to Bolshaya Lovcha. We dropped into houses where elderly people lived and asked them how all that had happened. We found a very old Ukrainian lady -- 102 years of age. She remembered mother's parents, and told us about them. Unfortunately, we were unable to get to the place of execution. There was no taxi available. Because of the rains the road became impassable. But mother was very upset that she was unable to pay her last tribute to her parents.