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Pidvolochysk

Ternopil oblast

No. 74 Lenin Street

Voznytsia, Natalia S.

In the newspaper *Silski Visti*, I read that the memorial book “The 1933 Famine” is being created, with the memories of witnesses of the 1933 famine. At that time, I lived in the village of Chetvertynivka, in Trostianets raion, Vinnytsa oblast (my maiden name was Makukh, Natalia Semenivna, now I live in the town of Pidvolochysk, Ternopil oblast, as pensioner Voznytsia, Natalia Semenivna). I was then eleven years old. Our family consisted of six people: my father, mother, grandmother (my mother’s mother) and three children, including me. Of the six people, only I survived. That was a terrible famine. Nothing meant anything to a person, only something to eat. People ate the flowers from the acacia trees, the leaves of cherry trees, went to the gardens and collected rotten potatoes and baked potato pancakes [bliny] from them. They ate all kinds of inedible things. Some were skinny as a stick from hunger, others swelled up. I was then a kid; I was swollen—my legs were heavy like boots, I could not walk. Puss leaked from the broken skin like water. It is very difficult to discuss what our generation endured; today’s youth know nothing like it; and I hope that no one will ever know again a famine like the one in 1933. Sometimes you would go around looking for just a piece of bread or a loaf or a roll. There are people who would pick it up, and other people, particularly young people, would kick it like a soccer ball. But that piece of bread was so dear in 1933 because there was none at that time. A brigade was created to suck up the grain. It was made up of activists from the village and a representative from the raion. They ordered each household head to hand over 10 centiliters of grain, and if he gave only 8 and the brigade went to that household and saw that two centiliters had not been surrendered, then they took away everything they found; nobody asked on what the family would live. And this is not fiction—these are the facts of our history. This brigade would find a little bit of grain in a pan, a pot, a bag—everything was taken away. Then on what could people live? Whole families died of starvation. Two or three bodies were buried in one pit. No one was making coffins; everyone was waiting for their own death, if not today, then tomorrow. Now it is horrible to remember that time, but we endured all of this. And I never thought that I would see the day when all this would be revealed and a Monument to the Victims of the famine in 1933 would be erected.

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