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Commission for Compiling the Chronicle of the Great Patriotic War.

Transcript of interview with Com. Kazantseva, Anna Evdokimovna

The interview was conducted by R.I. Golubeva, senior researcher and doctor of historical sciences.

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Worker at the felt boots factory that was evacuated from the town of Luga.

Born in 1900, Russian, non-party member, a native of the Novgorod region.

City of Riga.

December 28, 1944

The Germans took me from a forest near the village of Rogavka.¹ Then, they sent me to Luga.

Before the war, I was a collective farmer in the village of Chavino.² When the Germans came in August 1941, we hid in the forest. It was in the village Rogavka, Leningradskii Raion, Novgorod Oblast³. There were also Red Army units in the forest. The Germans surrounded us and captured everyone. When they were leading us along the road, there was a stream, my husband stepped aside. A German started shouting: "Don't step out of line!" but [my husband] didn't hear him, he was a bit deaf. The Germans began to kick my husband and beat him in the head with the butt of a rifle, calling him a partisan. They beat him up so badly that he languished for a year, he was coughing up blood, and he died in Luga. He was a collective farmer, he was 44 years old. I had three children, I was pregnant, after his death, I gave birth to my fourth child.

The Germans drove us to Luga, sent us to work at a brick factory, and then at the factory for disabled people "Rassvet," where they made felt boots. The factory's workers and equipment were subsequently sent to Riga.

Life in Luga was hard. My kids collected trash from garbage containers, as well as rotten potatoes that were in the landfill. The children received 150 grams of bread a day and nothing else. Our clothes were worn out, and my kids and I went about almost naked and barefoot. The children were badly emaciated, could barely stand on their feet, walked about as if drunk, I looked awful.

They compelled us to go to Riga.⁴ I cried, they strong-armed me. In Riga, the older children and I worked at the factory, my 9-year-old girl stayed at home with the

¹ Spelled Rogatka in the transcript, Rogavka, 73 km ENE of Luga, was one of several villages amalgamated into Tesovo-Netyl'skii in September 1939. It continued to be referred to by locals as Rogavka, as the train station maintained its name after fusion.

² Today Chauni, Chavino was 71 km ENE of Luga, and 7 km south of Rogavka.

³ Novgorod Oblast was created on July 5, 1944. Before then the territory formed part of Leningrad Oblast.

⁴ Riga is almost 400 km from Luga.

toddler. I didn't breastfeed, because I worked 10 hours on a machine, they wouldn't let me go home. The Germans badly beat my older son, who was 12 1/2 years old. Someone had broken a thermometer on some machine, and the Germans suspected him and beat him up. Once, I was carrying a log from the factory, the Germans beat me up so that I was sick for two days.

We lived behind barbed-wire in a ghetto, then they removed the wire. A lot of people suffered in the ghetto, many were killed and hanged.

Before the arrival of the Red Army, we hid in a basement, for about 3 weeks the factory wasn't working. ~~The men did not hide.~~ The ghetto was cordoned off 3 times, but they didn't take us.