Meyer Goldstein's Mother In Law Makhliah Zhitnitskaya Working In Novosibirsk During The War

Sewing workshop in Novosibirsk that sewed uniforms for the army. In the center is my mother-in-law, Makhlya Zhitnitskaya. My mother was in Yangiyul in evacuation, and she got married there. She knew her second husband, Shlyoma Sklyar, even before the war, they worked together as confectioners. But on their way to evacuation his wife died on the train, and my mother became his close friend. Many people could not survive evacuation. My mother's sister Ita was in evacuation together with her in Yangiyul, and there she died. Her sister Vekha got married before the war, they lived outside Cherkassy. She had a daughter. During evacuation they got into a different place. So, the girl was run over by a car in front of her mother. Vekha's husband could not live through that and committed suicide, so Vekha (Vera) was left alone. Esther [my mother's sister] was in Magnitogorsk, working at the canteen of a military plant. For women evacuation was extremely hard to bear. They worked for themselves, for their brothers, husbands and devoted everything to the soldiers. They did not eat enough, did not sleep enough, they were freezing in Siberia (they came from the south of Ukraine), but they did their best to advance our victory. In 1951 I married Klara Matveyevna Zhitnitskaya, born in 1926. My wife comes from Korsun. Our parents were familiar with each other. Her mother, Makhlya Zhitnitskaya, was a tailor and worked in the tailors' artel. Her family worked in Korsun all the time, and just like all other Jewish families was assimilated, but they kept some holidays and traditions. Klara graduated from a pedagogical institute and worked as a teacher in one of the Korsun schools. We met during one of my visits to Korsun; I think it was in spring. When we married it was a hard time. We did not have a Jewish wedding. Anti-Semitism was blossoming in our country. It had absolutely no influence on me at work. But in the streets, in queues, in public transportation and in general people would stare or tease. And there were articles in newspapers and feuilletons with typically Jewish names like

'Abram Abramovich'. When you read, you immediately knew who you were reading about: if it was a Russian, his name was Ivanov, if a Ukrainian - Shevchenko, if Jewish - Abrashka, Surka or something like that. I guess those anti-Semites melted with satisfaction.