VASILE STRATAN

Image: General Inspectorate of the Gendarmerie, file No. 97/1944, page 25.

Vasile Stratan was a Roma from Pietriș village, Dolhesti commune, Fălciu county (now administratively located in Iași County, Romania). Deported to Transnistria in September 1942, together with his family, **Stratan is a hero on account of organising the escaping of 34 Roma from the Covalevca (Kovalivka/Covaliovka) camp** in Transnistria, Odessa region.

In the pictured table of the Fălciu Legion of Gendarmes, Stratan is listed second, along with his two brothers, Dumitru Stratan and Ghiorghe Stratan Tudora, as having fled from the camp in Transnistria. A Roma survivor from Gulia, Suceava county, Radu Alexandrina was also deported to the Covalevca camp. Interviewed by Adrian-Nicolae Furtună in 2009, **Alexandrina recalling a man by the name of Vasile Stratan** said, "There were Roma from Zece Prăjini. One Roma I called by the name of Vasile Stratan, had three brothers... All Ursari Roma. They had with them a big pillow full of money, Romanian money, which had little value. When those Roma from Zece Prăjini, when they play, as on television,they sing and weep with their instruments." (Furtună, AN, 2012, p. 140) Though Alexandrina fails to correctly remember where Stratan is from, he nonetheless recalls an individual by that name.

Two nieces of Stratan, Valentina Stratan and Lenţica Dura, were also interviewed by Adrian-Nicolae Furtună, in 2012. They call the escape organised by Vasile Stratan, in which their father also participated. Dura remembers how her father fled to Romania and returned thereafter with money to organise the escape of his entire family. The following is an excerpt from the interview between Dura and Furtună:

DURA. All of his four brothers were sent to Transnistria, including their wives and children. He was lucky. He managed to escape, and left us there, in Bug, travelling from

Covalevca to Pietriș. We had an uncle living in a village near Pietriș, where he sold his cows and oxen. With the money he returned to Bug so that we too could escape, as we needed to bribe soldiers to escape through the fields.

FURTUNĂ. But how did he manage to escape from Bug?

DURA. In hiding, in the front of the train, where the locomotive was held.

FURTUNĂ. In the locomotive?

DURA.Yes, in the locomotive. He gave some money to the train driver and he hid him there. They didn't search there. That's how he got to Romania."

Source:

Adrian-Nicolae Furtună (2018) "Rromii din România şi Holocaustul: istorie, teorie, cultură. Rroma from Romania and the Holocaust: history, theory, culture. E Rroma Rumuniatar thaj o Holokausto: historia, teorie, kultura", Dykhta! Publishing House, p. 272.

This biography has been written by Adrian-Nicolae Furtună