

# Bessie Topilko

(nee Hewko)

Interview with Marie Lesoway



**This is an excerpt of an interview recorded on audio tape and later digitized.**

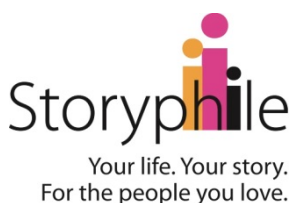


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# Bessie Topilko

Tape 1 of 2



<b>Interview Subject:</b>	Bessie (nee Hewko) Topilko BT in this transcript.
<b>Interviewer:</b>	Marie Lesoway ML in this transcript.
<b>Date:</b>	May 1, 1987
<b>Place:</b>	at Bessie's home in Edmonton, Alberta
<b>Length:</b>	1:32
<b>Language:</b>	mostly Ukrainian, with a bit of English
<b>Word Count:</b>	10,247
<b>Transcription and Translation:</b>	Marie Lesoway
<b>Notes:</b>	Underlined text indicates words spoken in English. Bessie Topilko is Marie Lesoway's maternal great aunt. The baba referred to in the interview is Marie's great-grandmother and Bessie's mother, Teklia (nee Bandura) Hewko.

## Childhood Amusements

### Toys and Games

00:17:40 BT There were no toys. No toys of any kind. I don't remember that there were any toys to play with. We played tag in the yard ("*lapalysie po podviru*"). And we had some sort of ball ("*bala*") that we would throw against the barn wall.

00:17:58 ML Was it a store-bought ball?



- 00:18:00 BT Yes, it was a store-bought one, you could say. This was already later. We had a ball—like a handball. And we played and ran around, played hide-and-seek (“*khovalysie*”)—games, sort of. But as for toys, I don’t recall that there was even a single toy.
- 18:20 ML Did you ever make your own toys? From stones or buttons or anything like that?
- 18:29 BT Mostly we made toys from clay. We’d make things, shaping the clay—and getting all dirty. We’d roll out horses and things. It was like playing with plastiscine. We’d bake mudpies, and taste them. (“*lakis’ pa-i pychem, kushaim z bolota, pa-i.*”)
- 18:48 ML (Laughs.) Baba scolded you, when you got all dirty?
- 18:50 BT Oh yes. (Laughs.) Because you had to haul water and wash clothes by hand. It wasn’t like now.
- 19:00 ML Did you use a special clay for playing with? Did you have to dig it up from somewhere?
- 19:08 BT No, whatever we found is what we used.
- 19:18 ML In the winter, did you have little sleighs (*sanchatka*) to play with?
- 19:20 BT There was a little sleigh, a homemade one.
- 19:26 ML Did you use it for sliding (*sovhatysia*)? Or was it just for hauling firewood and such? Did the children actually play with it?
- 19:30 BT The sleigh was for hauling firewood. (“*Drova vozyly.*”) As for sliding, there were no skates. (“*Ne bulo skeitiv.*”) We’d slide around in our leather shoes, and even then we’d get scolded. Baba and Dido would say, “Don’t do that or you’ll rip your shoes!” There was no money to buy new ones.