

DULKA, Pranas
Lithuania Documentation Project
Lithuanian
RG-50.473*0008

Box 1, Tape 1

In this interview, Pranas Dulka, a farmer, born on October 3, 1908, resident of Dubrovka (Dubrovka, Dobruvka) village in the Semeliškės district, discusses the life and fate of the Jews in Semeliškės. He names several Jewish acquaintances and shop or business owners. Dulka describes the start of the war and the rounding-up of Jews in Semeliškės. While he did not witness the massacre, Dulka provides witness testimony about the march of Jewish victims to the killing site, and says that he refused to participate in the killing when it was offered. He provides the names of two perpetrators, one of whom committed suicide shortly after the massacre. Dulka briefly describes the sale of Jewish belongings and homes in Semeliškės.

[01:] 00:40:22 – [01:] 04:22:20
00:36 – 04:26

He introduces himself as Pranas Dulka, born on October 3, 1908 in Dubrovka village, Trakai county, Semeliškės district (in southeastern Lithuania); explains that the distance from Semeliškės to Dubrovka was 4.5 kilometers; talks about his family saying that his father died three years after he was born; says that he lived alone with his mother until she remarried a man named **Vladas Mažulis [Mažolis]** who perished in the Lithuanian army; says that he was a farmer, joined the army, and got married; talks for a while about the difficulties on the collective farm and about the economic situation during the period of Smetona (Antanas Smetona was President of Lithuania in 1919-1920 and again from 1926-1940); discusses taxes and work on the farm which included keeping an orchard, bees, and animals; states that they lived freely in those times.

[01:] 04:22:21 – [01:] 10:38:15
04:27 – 10:57

The interviewer asks him about his relationship with the Jews in Semeliškės; illustrates this by talking in detail about business and other deals with Jews; talks about Jewish bread; names the Jews he remembers: **Mordchelis Kavolis**, **Jankelis** who owned flax combs, **Šliomkė [Šliumkė]**, **Ginzburgas**, **Staža**, **Chaima**, **Perečka**, **Klepkus**, **Kvasnikas**, **Neikė [Naikė]**, who lives in Israel, and **Altukas**; says that **Altukas** would rent land, that **Hirša [Irša]** and **Stažas** owned expensive shops; says that **Ginzburgas** was wealthy and when his son wanted to marry a Catholic girl, he forbade it and then the son committed suicide; says that **Morcchelis** was a blacksmith; says that he interacted most frequently with **Rachmilke**, who owned a shop, **Rivoris**, whose surname he does not remember and who made collars, and **Ginzburgas** and **Hirša**; says that the Jews trusted him.

[01:] 10:38:16 – [01:] 14:45:23
10:58 – 15:15

He explains that a week before the start of the war he saw how Russians with tanks and cars were driving past Peliūnai heading West; says that they drove throughout the night and day and that the locals said that the Russians were going to attack the Germans; explains that on Saturday he was going toward Žašliai [*it takes him a long time to remember the name of the place*] and that he saw mortars in the forest; says that on Sunday he heard explosions and that they were told at church that the war had begun; recalls that Sunday evening the Germans flew over Vilnius and bombed it; repeats that there were lots of soldiers, horses, and mortars in the forests; says that there was no time to discuss the German invasion with the Jews beforehand.

[01:] 14:45:24 – [01:] 19:55:08
15:16 – 20:37

He states that the Germans arrived in Semeliškės on Monday and that the Jews were despondent; discusses how Mrs. **Hiršvienė [Hiršienė]**, (wife of Mr. **Hirša**), said that the Jews were being punished because it was written in the Bible that Jews persecuted Jesus; says that **Šliomka** escaped the massacre as did **Berka**; adds that **Berka** was not a decent person because during farm collectivization he refused to sell bread to certain people; admits that he does not know how **Berka** survived the war; says that he heard **Berka** escaped to Israel; explains that when the war began in Semeliškės, at first, he went into hiding, and then there was a decree issued ordering residents to wear medals; says that there were those who organized themselves to aid the Germans; explains again that the Germans ordered people to wear medals, though he does not know exactly when this decree was issued; says that **Bauša [Balša]** murdered two Jewish women and one of his (Dulka's) neighbors because they got into an argument about Jewish gold; adds that **Bauša** was sentenced and when he returned from prison, he was killed by Jews.

[01:] 19:55:09 – [01:] 24:08:16
20:38 – 25:01

He reveals that **Bauša** and his neighbor took gold from Jews and that they would offer shelter and safety if they received gold as payment; says that the two men would take the gold and betray the Jews by taking them to be killed; mentions that the surname of his neighbor was **Dulkė**; admits that he does not know for certain if those men hid Jews; when asked about the persecution of Jews, he says that he witnessed how Jews were rounded up in a fenced-in area near the Eastern Orthodox church in Semeliškės; mentions that he felt bad for the daughters of **Jankelis** because they told him that the Jews would be killed; says that the newspaper the "Lietuvos ūkininkas" (Lithuanian Farmer) wrote articles saying that Hitler was a violent person and that he was persecuting Jews; outlines the timeline of events [*this takes time and is followed by a pause.*]

[01:] 24:08:17 – [01:] 29:35:21
25:02 – 30:42

He mentions that Jews from Semeliškės and from other locations were rounded up near the Eastern Orthodox church before the massacre and that they were held for three days without food; recalls that there was no way to approach them and give them food; describes how Mrs. **Hiršvienė** walked along the fence asking for bread but that he was unable to give her anything because a non-local Lithuanian was standing guard with a whip; says that the Jews were guarded also by other local and non-local Lithuanian policemen; mentions that he does not recall their names; explains that the policemen approached him and others to volunteer to shoot Jews; says that he declined; says that the belongings of the Jewish victims were sold at the Eastern Orthodox church and that people bought goods; recalls that the mother of **Bauša** bought a pillow; explains that the belongings being sold were primarily clothes; states that he did not purchase anything; explains that the sale of Jewish belongings did not occur on the same day as the massacre because the killings began at about twelve or one o'clock in the afternoon and continued until nightfall; mentions that **Berka** defiled the corpses of murdered Lithuanian partisans, among them **Bauša**.

[01:] 29:35:22 – [01:] 35:50:07
30:43 – 37:13

He explains that that sale of the belongings of the Jewish victims began the day after the massacre and continued for several days; repeats that most of the items for sale were clothes and that this occurred at the back of the Eastern Orthodox church near a home; remembers that the policeman who stood guard with a whip sold the Jewish belongings; admits that he does not remember the name of this policeman; says that that things were placed in a pile; *[there is a pause while he is thinking]* describes the size of the pile of goods as about half a meter high and a few meters long; says that people went to the sale and that he saw it at a distance; asserts that he did not notice people wearing the clothes of Jewish victims afterwards; only repeats that the mother of **Bauša** bought a down pillow; *[He is quiet while thinking]* reveals that the policeman who guarded and sold Jewish belongings left and disappeared shortly thereafter.

Box 1, Tape 2

[02:] 00:07:10 – [02:] 00:40:20
00:00 – 00:34

[A conversation in English takes place behind the scenes]

[02:] 00:40:21 – [02:] 06:00:09
00:35 – 06:09

He says that the policeman who sold the belongings of the Jewish victims was a non-local Lithuanian; says that he does not remember his name but offers to find out and send the interviewer a letter with his name; says that the policeman stayed in Semeliškės for a short while and maintained order in the town; reveals that **Kasciukevičius [Kasiukevičius]** encouraged him

to go shoot Jews; adds that after the massacre **Kasciukevičius** committed suicide in the churchyard; recalls that **Kasciukevičius** was a policeman and that he did not reside in Semeliškės before the war; explains that **Kasciukevičius** very straightforwardly proposed that he participate in the killings and that he did not offer anything to entice him; says he does not know how many people he collected and how many went willingly to kill Jews; says that he heard there was a German at the massacre site and that the German was giving commands and shooting the victims in the pits who were not yet dead; mentions that the grave was covered with earth and fluorine; says that he went to take a look at the grave the day after the massacre.

[02:] 06:00:10 – [02:] 09:51:10

06:08 – 10:08

He says that when he went to take a look at the mass grave it was covered with earth; mentions that he does not remember the exact date of the massacre; describes how the victims were taken to the killing site; mentions that he and three others walked behind them watching; says that the others went to the forest to continue watching but he refused; recalls that **Juozas Linkevičius**, who lives in Lentvaris, went to watch the massacre; says that on the day of the massacre he went home from Semeliškės and was digging potatoes with his wife; describes hearing the shots fired and that the sound echoed through the forest; adds that the shots were heard every fifteen minutes; estimates that the massacre lasted about three hours.

[02:] 09:51:11 – [02:] 15:10:17

10:09 – 15:40

He says that the Jews were present in Semeliškės before the massacre; talks about how the Jews were taken saying that at first they did not believe they would be killed, but as soon as they turned on to another road, they began screaming; explains that he and a few others were walking behind the Jews but that they were not close; says that the Jews were being led by men dressed in police uniforms; further states that he was walking about 30 meters behind the group of Jews; the interviewer infers that he could have recognized people at such a relatively short distance; he maintains that the Jews were not beaten as they were rounded up and taken, but that they were beaten at the massacre site; explains that he found out about these details from the people who watched the killings; recounts the process of the killings: the victims were undressed, made to lie down, beaten, their eyes were covered, they were taken to the graves and then shot; refuses to give the names of the people who actually witnessed the massacre but promises to write a letter to the interviewer with the information.

[02:] 15:10:18 – [02:] 20:21:08

15:41 – 21:04

He explains that after the massacre, the Jewish homes stood empty for a while, and then the Germans sold them to people, and later the Russians took them; says that the home of **Šachna** burned down, the home of **Šliomka** was sold, that the Jewish synagogue was sold by the Germans to a man who built a house there; adds that **Bartkevičius** and **Markūnas** lived in the home of **Kasrilka** and **Rimoris [Rivoris]**, which then burned down; maintains that he does not

know what happened to the furniture and other things in the homes of the Jews; asserts that he does not know, did not look, and was not interested; says that shops were opened in the homes of **Staža** and **Ginzburgas**, that apples were sold in the home of **Kvasnikas**, and that **Berka** moved into the home of **Chaima**.

[02:] 20:21:09 – [02:] 26:00:16
21:05 – 26:57

He states that **Kasciukevičius** committed suicide shortly after the massacre of the Jews; says that one Sunday he went to church and saw his body lying on the ground a few meters from the gates of the churchyard; recalls that a few people gathered to look at him but that people did not feel sorry for him because he was a strict policeman and he murdered Jews; mentions that he does not know where **Kasciukevičius** lived and that he arrived in Semeliškės after the Germans arrived; mentions two men who were policemen before the war: **Sarafinka [Sarasinka]** and **Šležys**; describes them as men from Semeliškės who signed up to help the Germans; [*silence; interview ends*].