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EIGELIENĖ, Ona
Lithuania Documentation Project
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In this interview, Ona Eigeliienė, who was born in 1919 in Aknystų Manor, describes what she witnessed there when the Jews from the nearby town of Debeikiai were brought to work at the manor. She describes how badly the Jews were fed, mentions that she and other people, who lived at the manor, assisted them with the food. She recounts some moments that left a great impact on her: a Jew falling on his knees in front of a Lithuanian partisan begging for his life; Lithuanians killing a Jew and ordering the other Jews to dig a pit for him; young and beautiful Jewish women from Utena, who were also brought to the manor, screaming at night; an elderly Jewish woman, who was left in the town, when her son was taken to the manor to work, but was later taken to be executed with the others; an explosion caused by a Lithuanian policeman in a sauna, where the Jews of Debeikiai had been locked up and the sight of many injured Jews, lying on the floor covered in blood, when the Germans came to take them to a hospital. She retells an alleged incident of rape that she had heard from her aunt who lived in Vyžuonys about a pretty Jewish girl, who was left behind when all the rest were taken to be executed and later was shot by a Lithuanian partisan. She has also witnessed the Jews of Vyžuonys being taken away to be executed and incidentally attended an auction, in which Jewish property was sold. She says that the Jews of Debeikiai and Vyžuonys were executed in Rašė near Utena (now a part of Utena).

Box 1, Tape 1

[01:] 00:41:24 – [01:] 05:00:21
00:00 – 05:12

The interviewee introduces herself as Ona Eigeliienė, born in 1919 in Aknystų Manor (in Anykščiai district) to a family of workers; says she lived on the manor until 1942 when she got married and that she went to school in Debeikiai; says that there were more Jews than Lithuanians in Debeikiai before the war; adds that all the Jewish houses were torn down and that only some stone houses are left now like the building where the butcher's shop used to be; recalls that the Jews would come to the manor to buy eggs; explains that her father earned only 10 Litas a month for his work at the manor and they had to sell eggs to survive; says that when the Germans came, the Jews were sent to the manor to work; reports that they received very poor portions of food; explains that she was responsible for baking the bread for them and that only 100 g of bread and half a liter of milk was earmarked for one person a day; says that she gave more to the Jews whom she knew; says that other people from the manor also helped the Jews out; says that the Jews tried hard and that they believed that if they did their jobs well, they would be spared; when asked if the Jews were brought to the manor in families, she confirms that the children and the elderly also lived in the manor, but only the adults worked.

[01:] 05:00:22 – [01:] 09:00:20

05:13 – 09:22

She says that the Jews stayed at the manor until the fall when the farming ended; recalls how the women cried when the Jews were being taken away and how the “katai” (executioners) came with horses and wrapped in black coats because it was raining; recalls that one Jewish man fell on his knees in front of a “katas” and begged him to spare his life, but the “katas” ordered him to go away or he would shoot; explains that the “katai” were Lithuanian, but she didn’t know them and adds that “there were none of those in Debeikiai”; says that the Jews were put into horse-drawn carts and taken away; reports that as soon as they said good-bye to the Debeikiai Jews, her family had to leave for Vyžuonys (a town in Utena district) to attend the funeral of her father’s brother; reports that the Jews of Vyžuonys were locked up in a distillery and that they prayed all night long but the next morning they were put on to carts and taken away, as well; recalls one man, who put down a pillow on the cart, sat his elderly mother and pregnant wife on it, and kneeled in front of them on the cart [*her eyes well up*]; affirms that the Jews knew they were going to be executed; states that the Jews of Vyžuonys were executed in Rašė near Utena (now a part of Utena); recalls how back in Aknystų manor she saw how so-called “partisans” [*“katai” or executioners*], who were very loud – and possibly drunk – shot one Jewish man; adds that they ordered other Jews to dig out a pit and bring the wounded man to the pit; speculates that he may have been alive because she heard the “partisans” shouting “lie down, you toad” and then shot into the pit and buried it; when asked who was the Jew who was killed, she responds that everybody called him **Kliuonkė [Klionkė]**, but she doesn’t know his real surname; recalls that he was sickly man with a hunched back and a limp; explains that all this took place at night; says that “everything happened in the night.”

[01:] 09:00:21 – [01:] 13:48:15
09:23 – 14:22

The interviewer asks her to explicate what happened in the night, and she tells a story of sixty young Jewish girls from Utena who were brought to the manor to work; recalls that they wore light dresses and were not used to working at all; says that one night she could hear them shrieking fiercely all night long; claims she does not know what was being done to them; reports that the next morning they were sent to work as usual; when asked what those Jewish girls told her about that night, she replies that the girls could not be approached; explains that she sometimes managed to talk in secret to the Debeikiai Jews whom she knew, but nobody from the manor could talk to the girls from Utena; notes that some of them didn’t even know Lithuanian; repeats again that there were no “partisans” in Debeikiai but there were some in Vyžuonys; points out that none of them are alive today; mentions a partisan named **Šermukšnis** from Vyžuonys, whose “leg went dry” and he couldn’t walk anymore; goes on to talk about the Jews of Debeikiai who were locked up in a sauna in a homestead not too far from the manor when a grenade was thrown inside the sauna; states that when her mother heard about this incident, she prepared food and sent her and her brother to bring it to the Jews; describes the sight that she witnessed upon arrival: some **clovers** were scattered on the floor and people were lying on them covered in blood; explains that later the Germans came and took them all to the hospital; says that none of the Jews died and all of them returned to work at the manor; adds that nobody ate the food that she and her brother had brought, since people were injured and frightened; recalls that only one Jew had not been injured and he explained that he hid in a vat and that’s why

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nothing happened to him; when asked again where the Jews who were injured were lying, she says that they were lying on the floor in the house on the homestead; notes that she doesn't know how they got there from the sauna, where the explosion happened.

[01:] 13:48:16 – [01:] 17:54:12
14:23 – 18:38

She recalls that as the Jews were about to be taken away from Aknystų manor, the rabbi came to her mother Rinkevičienė and asked her to shelter his “gods” (religious items) and to give them to the next rabbi, but her mother responded that he should “carry his gods wherever he goes”; when asked about the rabbi of Debeikiai, she says that he was married and had children but she doesn't know his last name; explains that it was the custom to use nicknames and first names, like **Nuokamas, Elija, Garbariukas**; when asked by the interviewer to return to the incident at the sauna and asked how many injured were there, she replies that she doesn't know, but there was an “entire line”; says that she knew all the Jews from Debeikiai; recalls how the store owners would let her family buy on credit when they didn't have money; says that the Jews from the Aknystų Manor were taken to Rašė as well; states that first the Jewish girls from Utena were taken away, then, soon after the Jews of Debeikiai; reports that not a single one was left behind; recalls how her aunt had told her that in Vyžuonys the “partisans” kept one Jewish girl for themselves when they took away everybody else; reports that the aunt saw her in the morning standing by a house and asked her what she was waiting for, and the Jewish girl replied that she was waiting for the “partisans” to come and liberate her; reports that her aunt saw a “partisan” come over and shoot her as she was standing; when asked why the partisans had left her behind, she responds that probably they wanted to use her; notes that she was pretty and rich.

[01:] 17:54:13 – [01:] 22:06:00
18:39 – 23:00

When asked what happened to the Jewish property, she replies that the Jews of Debeikiai were poor; says that there were some rich Jews in Vyžuonys; recalls how she was walking with her aunt in Vyžuonys after the execution of the Jews, and saw an auction; explains that the partisans were selling the Jewish property themselves; states that there were plenty of buyers because they were selling it cheap; adds that people knew they were buying things that belonged to the Jews; says that she and her aunt did not even go to work that day because they were too horrified by the sight; when asked if the priest in Debeikiai mentioned anything about the torture and killing of Jews in the church, she replies that he did not; when asked who joined the partisans in Debeikiai, she mentions **Muzeikis** and **Kaulinis**; says that they both fled to America, but none of them are alive today; notes that they did not shoot the Jews, but only “took part in the uprising.”

[01:] 22:06:01 – [01:] 24:34:18
23:01 – 25:36

When asked who threw the grenade into the sauna, she replies that it was some policeman whose surname she cannot remember; says that there were no Germans who participated in torturing the Jews but that everything was organized by Lithuanians; states that the Germans only arrived to take the injured Jews to the hospital; opines that nevertheless the Germans ordered the killings,

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but they did not participate themselves; talks about an elderly woman named **Garbarienė**, whose son was taken to the manor to work, but she was left in Debeikiai since she was too old; recalls how she used to look through her window and people would hand her food; says that as the other Jews were about to be taken to be executed, she was also brought to the manor; adds that when she was brought to the manor her forehead had been cut; reports that she was taken to be executed with the others; describes that they were taken in families and that their things remained behind; says that she doesn't know what happened to their property but thinks that the locals may have appropriated it; notes again that the Jews of Debeikiai were not rich.