

RG50-473*0088

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Lithuania Documentation Project
Lithuanian
RG-50.473*0088

In this interview, Marytė Tiesnienė, born in 1924 and a local Jew of Pašvitiniai, describes her experiences living in a ghetto and being saved by a killer. She talks about her family's various relocations after her town was burnt down and describes living in the Žagarės ghetto. She discusses the day when all of the Jews were taken into a square, beaten over the head, and herded into trucks to be shot, and how she was saved by an old Lithuanian friend who then brought her to a family she had previously worked for and whose father had killed other Jews. She describes the lengths the family went to save her, including finding a woman who agreed to testify to being her non-Jewish mother. She also talks about the fact that the same man, **Liutikas**, who saved her, killed her brother later, and she ruminates over whether he was a good human being or not.

[01] 00:31:18 - [01] 00:01:37:04

00:00:26 – 00:01:34

Q: Mrs., tell me please your place of birth. Where were you born and when? Well, so you were here—

A: Should I say it now?

Q: What? We're filming already? Your name and your surname.

A: Well, which one now—the real one or—or the present one?

Q: Well, tell me all of them.

A: I am Merė Šneiderytė, born in Pašvitinys on the 7th of October, 1924.

Q: Now, how did your parents earn their living? What did they do?

A: My parents earned their living by, well—my father would go around the villages and buy flax, then take it to the station and sell it. Like that. And my mother had two cows and delivered milk to dairy farms. We had a ten-acre garden. So that's how we earned our living. We sold cucumbers by a hundred, like people did in the past. That's how it was. I had a brother, three years my senior and he worked as a carrier at a shop, owned by a Jew named Dorfanas.

[01] 01:37:04 - [01] 04:09:19

00:01:34 – 00:04:13

Q: How many Jewish families were there in Pašvitinys?

A: Well, you know, there were maybe twelve, maybe ten of them. Very few. The town is small.

Q: Were there more Jewish or Lithuanian families?

A: No, there were more Lithuanians. Very few Jews. You see, we went to a Lithuanian school. There were maybe six or eight of us, Jewish children. And there was no money to hire a teacher for us, so we went to a Lithuanian school.

Q: Well, and what about—was there a school at the synagogue for children?

A: No, no. At first there was, but later, when I was supposed to go, it was not there anymore. That's how.

Q: Well, but there was a rabbi and a synagogue in the city, right?

A: There was a rabbi. He killed the chickens—we didn't kill the chickens ourselves.

Q: Well, it wasn't the rabbi himself who killed the chickens, right?

A: Well, a butcher, or how was he called.

Q: A butcher, I see.

A: But there was a rabbi as well.

Q: Well, so which families do you remember?

A: Oh well, I remember the Dubovičius, Liurija families, I also remember Ryvisas. Well, and who else? You know, [I cannot recall] right away. Well, Ryvisas, Liurija, Dorfanas, Dubovičius families. Well, and one more. I forget now. I cannot tell you. Well, and us – Šneideris was our surname. And our neighbors were—I cannot remember their surname. I have sclerosis; I don't know how to say anything.

Q: You cannot recall it?

A: I cannot recall it.

Q: I see, I see. Well, tell me now. So when the war was still approaching, did you know or feel anything before the war? Did you know that war was coming?

A: We burned right before the war. The entire Pašvitinys town burned down. And we didn't have where to live. So they put us there—well, wherever one could find, like somebody's home, for example. Then, when the Germans came, we were moved to a store in Pašvitinys – a long and white concrete building. There was such a store, and they put us there. They made some bunks to sleep on. And we stayed there until we were moved to Žagarė town.

[01] 04:09:19 – [01] 06:18:12

00:04:13 – 00:06:27

Q: So they started hustling you when the Germans arrived, or before the Germans had arrived?

A: No, we didn't see the Germans. The Lithuanians themselves – the ones who were partisans, policemen. They hustled us. We stayed with Krištanavičius for a little while. He took us in for two weeks, so that my father and my brother would help him work. My mother helped to milk the cows. He, Zenius Krištanavičius, was a landowner. But then it was announced that a German supposedly had been shot in Pakruojis town, and therefore a hundred Jews had to be executed. Well, so that's when we were hustled into the store that I mentioned. It still exists today. Last year we went there with my children, just to take a look.

Q: What month was it? How much time had passed since the start of the war?

A: Well, maybe a month or so had passed and—well, the war started in June, right?

Q: In June.

A: Well, and we were taken to Žagarė in July, or maybe the beginning of August.

Q: You were brought to Žagarė.

A: Yeah. They sent farmers with horses—in their carts they brought us here. And then we were hustled into a synagogue, given a speech and accommodated.

Q: What were you told?

A: What were we told? Statkus, who was very eloquent, said, "Don't be scared, you will not see a devil more scary than me." He uttered those words. But nothing else. Well, there were guards everywhere. We couldn't leave anywhere. At five thirty we had to go and buy skimmed milk at the dairy farm. There was also a time set for [buying] bread. There was a star here on the back, and another yellow hexagon. For everybody. Well, and that's how we lived. In the fall some farmer would take us to pick potatoes for him. So we brought home a potato or two. Like that. But it was tough. The local [Jews], from Žagarė, were better off. But we were brought after the fire and we were very poor.

[01] 06:18:12 – [01] 08:06:24

00:06:27 – 00:08:20

Q: Well, so now I want to ask about living in Pašvitinys. So now the war starts, right? You are living with your family. The war starts. And when did all the troubles start? Well the first—the first attack—how was it?

A: Well, the partisans stared right away: "you are Jews, there is no room for you here." Right away, Jewish girls were sent to clean the headquarters. Things like that. But they didn't beat anybody. You couldn't say that. No. But they just didn't act as if with normal people.

Q: But you still lived in your house?

A: No. Our house also burned down. We lived with neighbors.

RG50-473*0088

Q: Ah, yours also burned down. And when did your house burn down?

A: Well, it burned down—

Q: The war hadn't started yet?

A: Before the war, June 15th.

Q: The war hadn't started yet? Oh.

A: At that point it hadn't yet started. Then still—then it was good. Farmers would bring food to eat. There was milk, cheese, butter, bread. Like that. Later when Germans came, then—

Q: So when yours burned down, you went straight to live with your neighbors?

A: Yes. With our neighbors.

Q: With whom did you live?

A: Well, there was a Jew named Tobijas. We stayed with them.

Q: So were these your relatives?

A: No, not relatives. They simply had a free room. We four stayed there. Me, my brother, father, and mom. So we stayed with them.

Q: Well, and then when the war started, they already started moving you. So then—

A: So then we started being taken from place to place. Then we were already moved. Then from that Tobijas's house we went to those Kristanavičius family. We were there for about a week, maybe two. And then—to that store and from the store to Žagarė.

[01] 08:06:24 – [01] 09:21:15

00:08:20 – 00:09:38

Q: So were you also brought to clean the headquarters?

A: Yes, we went. There were some who would wipe their feet [on the floor and say]: “still not clean, still needs to be washed.” And everyone was familiar to me. We had gone to dances together. But they had changed, those people. I couldn't believe it.

Q: So why did they change so much? What do you think?

A: Well, I don't know. Maybe they didn't like our ethnicity, maybe something like that? That I don't know.

Q: Well, but until then you went even to dances. You said you even went to dances together.

A: Well, we—it was when Smetona was in power. Well, that was also Russian times, and the time of Smetona. So I remember it. I am already seventy—going on my seventy seventh year. Well, and we danced together and everything. There was this one Latvian guy, this Janis **Tiltinis** who would bring [me] to dance and everything. Then, when [the Germans] came, he put on a uniform. He carried a gun and well—and went on to hustle [us].

Q: So Janis Tiltinis was one. What other locals were there, who were “white strippers”?

A: There was Vytautas **Tomkevičius**, Janis Tiltinis. And... Dumša, I just remember the last name, the first name I can’t remember. There were a lot, you know.

[01] 09:21:15 – [01] 11:01:00

00:09:38 – 00:11:21

Q: What kind of uniforms did they have?

A: They had nice uniforms, like the ones the riflemen (members of the Lithuanian Riflemen Union, or Lietuvos Šaulių sąjunga) have today. In those days the riflemen had grey uniforms.

Q: So they most likely still had those uniforms from the time of Smetona, right?

A: Well, that I can’t tell you. That I do not know.

Q: Well, so you girls, were sent to clean the headquarters, right?

A: Yes. They would send us to clean the office. Well, and we would put everything in order and were allowed to go home. After that they wouldn’t do anything, I cannot say they did.

Q: Did the guards take you, or did you go by yourselves?

A: No, they let us go back by ourselves.

Q: So they came, summoned you, and they would say how many—

A: Yeah. They would come, would say this and this many today need to come to clean, and we would go, and we would clean. What could we do?

Q: Well, how was it with the men—with the men and young guys?

A: Well [they did] nothing to them, not here. Only when they brought us to Žagarė.

Q: And over there in Pašvitinys the men were not sent to work at all?

A: No, no. We only stayed there for about two months. From June to the beginning of August or the end of July. I cannot tell you exactly. Like that.

Q: And how did they put you in that store in Pašvitinys?

A: Well, there they crowded us into that store. They made bunks for us to lie on. And we would climb on them and lie there. We made food outside together – all of us, who were there. And that's how—some Lithuanians would bring us some food too. So that's how [we lived] in that store. But, you know, we couldn't stay there over the winter, as there was no heating.

[01] 11:01:00 – [01] 14:24:03

00:11:21 – 00:14:53

Q: So when you were living in that store, what were you thinking – what did you think was waiting for you?

A: Well, what could we think? The thought was that we would be sent to work. That was the understanding. After that, when we arrived at Žagarė, everything seemed completely different.

Q: What were the people called who brought you there, who hustled you?

A: They were called “white strippers”. Like that.

Q: Well, now tell me please: in Žagarė—in Pašvitinys, you know—no Jews were killed there?

A: No. Not one Jew was brought out to be killed. At least I didn't hear of it.

Q: Well, and things, belongings – weren't they taken away?

A: Well, as I said, all of our things had burned up.

Q: So yours burned, and what about other people's?

A: Other people's things they did take away. And in Žagarė, well there they herded us – well, into the fenced-in ghetto. And later when they gathered us in that square—now when you drive now by that square— How did you drive here? From the direction of Kruopiai?

Q: We drove from—

A: Through Joniškis?

Q: Yes. We drove from the direction of Kruopiai.

A: From the direction of Kruopiai. Well, so know when you drive, you'll pass a large square. So that was where—now the trees there have been cut down—so we were all brought to that square. And they surrounded us – those SS men. Well, and then we were given a speech, by a German named **Monteufelis**, also by **Bakšys, Kolokša**. The latter was their leader. They gave a speech, the essence of which basically was that they would take us to work, and we shouldn't worry. And the men, who had us surrounded, were all already drunk. One started shooting and the others started shooting as well. So many people were wounded. And my mother was wounded in

her leg, right here [points to her leg]. I untied my scarf and tied it around her leg. They had shot through the actual bone.

Q: So they started shooting on their own accord?

A: They started shooting there. And then they ordered everyone to lie down on the ground. And they started hitting people with sticks over their heads. They didn't let you raise your head, and that was it. Well, and then the trucks [were brought in]. They threw everyone into those trucks. Some climbed in themselves, they climbed in and— And they were taken to a park, where trenches had already been dug out and— I still remember the investigation later, when I was taken by the Russians to Šiauliai with another man to be interrogated. Well, I don't remember his surname. Zynius. Zyrius was his name. So he was there at the trenches. He said it was terrifying at the trenches, what went on there. They ordered everyone to undress until they were naked. I wasn't there at the trenches. So that's that.

Q: So when the “white strippers” started shooting, were there any people killed?

A: There were some people who were shot. As I said, my mother was shot in the leg. Another child was lying dead over there. And there was a man who was also shot. You see there were in all about 4,000 of us brought there. It was really brutal.

[01] 14:24:03 – [01] 16:09:19

00:14:53 – 00:16:43

Q: So who was there? The Jews were brought the from the Žagarė ghetto, right?

A: From Žagarė, from Pašvitinys, from Linkuva, from Joniškis, from Žeimelis. They were brought from everywhere.

Q: Four thousand people?

A: Yes, that's how it was. It went all day – from the morning, when they ordered us to be at the meeting probably before nine. We went there and they started – they drove and drove, until just around the sunset. When I was brought to Liutikas family— So the Liutikas family— Now I will explain about the Liutikas family— Here in Žagarė – my brother was nineteen years old – all of [men of his age] were gathered—50 or maybe 49 of them—and taken to a synagogue. They held them there for a couple of days. My mother brought food. And then they were ordered outside, taken near the cemetery to be executed. They were ordered to dig out trenches and they were shot. But my brother was really sturdy, tall, and he would work – he used to work for a farmer named Kazlauskas. Well, he was hardy. And he—when they shot **Josifas Liurija**, he had to be carried to the trench.

Q: Who shot him?

A: Well, all of them. My Liutikas was there, the one who—the one who saved me. So him, my brother— Later I'll explain. I was at the same place as my brother. So, you know, my brother,

put his foot fast on the ground, threw his friend over his shoulder, carried him over and threw him into that trench.

[01] 16:09:19 – [01] 19:35:03

00:16:43 – 00:20:17

Q: Already dead?

A: Well, yes. He said, “warm blood was running down from my shoulder.” And my Liutikas, with whom I stayed for four years, he was among those who were shooting. And that Liutikas— My brother says—how it came into his head I don’t know— “I am a foundling, I was only raised by Jews,” he says, in other words. And he says, “don’t shoot me.” Then he started saying, he said: “I know how to do all types of work.” So Liutikas said, “well, if you know how to do all types of work,” he said, “so I should take you with me for a few weeks,” he said, “to plow the fields.” Liutikas had a farmstead in the Strėliai village, while he himself lived here, in Žagarė. Well, and then my brother wrote a letter, that Mrs. Liutikienė was to bring to the ghetto. You see, her husband, Liutikas, was the assistant chief of the police. So she brought the note [to me]. [It said], in short, that he was alive and that he was trying to save me. And then Liutikienė started coming to us in the ghetto and taking me to wash the floor, wipe the dust and so on. Like that. And she was very pleased with me. And then, when that shooting happened, then, you see, there was a place for me to go to. And so that Beleckas— Well the Beleckas story goes like this: he was a cinema mechanic, and would come to Pašvitinys to show movies. And then, after that he would put on music and we would go dancing. He would invite me to dance. And they would pass my street on their way to Linkuva—they passed the street I lived on. Well, he would take me home. I was already seventeen years old. Well, and— And then later what happened, was that we were brought here to Žagarė. There was already strengthened security. We were no longer allowed to go anywhere. The guards were always near. You go to buy some bread, there are guards everywhere. I was walking on Pakalnės Street— we were located at No. 4 on Pakalnės Street—and I saw Vladas Beleckas walking around. I wanted to say something to him, but he said, “don’t speak,” he says, “go,” he says, “when I come back from Paupis,” he says, “then you come with me.” You know, he wanted me to walk behind him, so that he could talk to me. He says, “you know what,” he says, “you know, they’re going to take you tomorrow to work,” he says, “but I’ll come in the night,” he says, “to take you, and I’ll take you to my father’s farm.” His father had a farm in Linkuva. “No,” I said, “don’t come.” And when I got back, I was afraid to tell my parents. It would have caused panic. We were four families living there. But I didn’t say anything. And then he came in the night, and he brought with him a young Jewish man—a local from Pašvitinys, named Dorfanas—to convince me, to, you know, to come with him, let him take me. But I was scared. I hid behind my mother’s back, “no,” I say, “whatever has to happen, will happen,” I say, “let them take us to work.” You know, nobody thought they were going to shoot us.

[01] 19:35:03 – [01] 21:03:02

00:20:17 – 00:21:48

Q: But Beleckas already knew they were going to shoot?

A: What?

Q: Beleckas already knew they were going to shoot?

A: Well, how could he not have known? Why else did he have a gun, a uniform? Why?

Q: Oh, so he was also a “white striper”, that Beleckas?

A: Yes! You see, that’s how it is in life. And how can you even explain something like this to someone? No one would believe you. You know, and he—I didn’t go. And then, when they laid us down in that marketplace, in that square there, well you know, he found me. He took me by the hand, and my scarf—I had used my scarf to bandage my mom’s leg. Hair strewn about, the biggest braid. And he took me over to a lieutenant, and he said to that lieutenant, he says, “she’s,” he says, “not a Jew,” he says, “she’s a foundling, Jews just raised her.” He says, “her mother had her with someone and couldn’t support her.” Well, and the lieutenant says, “well, does she maybe know any prayers?” And you see we had gone to a Lithuanian school, each morning we had to say prayers. ‘Hail Mary,’ then ‘Our Father.’ I knew all of them and said them all. That lieutenant says, “okay, but where will you stay now, who will take you?” He asks, “do you have somewhere to go?” I say, “I have somewhere to go.” So I was taken to the Liutikas family. And I was already familiar with Liutikienė. I had already been going there—

[01] 21:03:02 – [01] 25:41:15

00:21:48 – 00:26:38

Q: She would take you for work, you mean.

A: Yes, yes. Well, and that’s how it started. Then Liutikas started putting all his effort, saying, “we have two sons; we will take you; we will save you.” But after that there was more, you know. Right away there were complaints from Pašvitinys. That it wasn’t right, in other words, that “she’s a Jew.” That it was not right about that Navickienė— So they took me, you know, and locked me in a prison, in Žagarė. They kept me there seven days, in that prison. Rats would crawl over my head there. So the Liutikas family brought me a bunk bed to lie on. They would also bring me food, the Liutikas family.

Q: Were you alone in that prison, were there more people there?

A: I was alone, all by myself.

Q: You were alone.

A: And then in the other [cell] there was this **Ulmanis**, a communist, as they say.

Q: So you were in one cell, and—

A: Yeah. And that Ulmanis was in another cell. And so many rats were there! They brought me a stick to defend myself from the rats. So I would sit up through the nights there. And one day the guard came over to me, he says, “I was ordered to take you to this one empty classroom at the school,” he says, “you can sit there during the day.” And then in the evening back to the prison. Well, and I would sit there on the windowsill, and the children were running around. And even

my neighbor, **Dantienė**, recounted to me [later], “we always talked about you: oh, this is a Jew, she’s Jewish.” And a priest would come to teach religion. Kavaliauskas, the priest. And he says: “what are you kids looking at?” “Oh she’s Jewish,” and this and that. And he approached the guard, named Balandis—I think it was Balandis at that point—who would stand next and guard me, next to that prison. Well, and he [the priest] says, “let me in.” He was let in. He asked me questions - what, how. I told him everything, just like I’m telling you now. He says, “so it will go like this: If something happens, say you want to go to confession. You know your prayers.” Well, and that’s how things were left. He says, “I’ll come in the evening.” Well, and he comes in the evening. He brought a piece of cake for me to eat. Liutikas family came and brought dinner. And he starts discussing with Liutikas. He asks me: “Who do you know in Pašvitinys?” I say, “I know a lot of people – I grew up there.” Well, and I say, “Navickienė, and the Beleckas, and the **Ginevičius**, and the Korsakas, and, well, Kazlauskas and Baltaitis families. Well, I had plenty of acquaintances. And he asks me, “Do you know the vicar?” I say, “I know **Teišerskis**, I know him, well, not personally.” Well, and you know, that Kavaliauskas called that Teišerskis. And that Teišerskas started to look for people. So he found Navickienė, you know. And she agreed to swear that I was her [daughter] – [she did it] in the court, there was a trial. And they before the trial they summoned me to the police. I almost fainted from fear. Well, and that German said—he, well, he didn’t speak in German, he spoke Lithuanian, he must have been a Lithuanian German—he says, “there’s no other way to deal with this than to go to trial; you will need witnesses.” Well, and then that Teišerskis—he had already renounced his priesthood and married this doctor Valiulytė; and Navickienė was there at the trial; Beleckienė was there as the midwife. Supposedly when Navickienė gave birth, she was present as the midwife. So that was the case that was put together. Well, and that’s how they saved me. This, you know— This is very, very, very—

Q: So they had to find you a fictitious mother, right?

A: Well, yes. They found one. We would always get together. But now she’s dead.

Q: So who was this woman who played the part of your mother?

A: Ona Navickienė. So now they’ve given an award of honor to her daughter, Motiejūnienė. She went to Vilnius. And she was honored.

Q: On, so Motiejūnienė is Navickytė (the daughter of Navickienė), right?

A: Yes. Navickaitė.

Q: I see, I see.

A: So there. That’s my story.

[01] 25:41:15 – [01] 27:57:24

00:26:38 – 00:29:00

Q: So you stayed in Pašvitinys after that?

A: No!

Q: Then where?

A: With the Liutikas family.

Q: And where was that?

A: Here in Žagarė, Strėliai village. At the Liutikas family's farmstead, in the countryside.

Q: So how—

A: My brother stayed there for some time. Then after he had finished working, Liutikas sent two soldiers. And they took him out and shot him in a nearby park. I didn't go to see that. But there were others who went. Other neighbors saw how he was shot, right here [point to her head], in the feet and in the stomach. And this—

Q: What soldiers came? Germans or—

A: No, no. Our SS men, ours. Ours. Germans had their uniforms, and our men had their own uniforms. So like that. I spent all the time with the Liutikas family. He was a very good person. But I couldn't save him.

Q: What happened to him?

A: Well, he was arrested. He didn't have a chance to run away. He didn't have a chance to cross the border.

Q: Well, so he was arrested. And how did everything end for him?

A: Well, it ended for him like this. You see I still get together now with Liutikas brother's daughter. I go to Klaipėda to visit her. She was here in Strėliai as well. They had a farm here. There were cows, pigs. And we would feed them together. Like that this—

Q: So they took him and what? Was he convicted?

A: He was convicted. And they put him in a basement. And I went there. The war was still going on. Liutikienė came to see me. They didn't have a chance to cross the border. So she came to me. How she drove - she told me, one car drove her, and then she walked from Kretinga to me. But— a I wanted to approach the basement—he was reaching out with his hand, shouting, “Marytė! Marytė!” But the guard didn't let me go closer. He pushed me to the side, and that's it. And I never saw him again. He was tried and sent to Russia.

[01] 27:57:24 – [01] 30:18:20

00:29:00 – 00:31:27

Q: And he never came back?

A: He came back.

Q: He came back?

A: He came back. He came back, but I never met with him again. But what was going on there, what happened to him, that— The daughter of Liutikas brother, Vainauskienė—she lives in Klaipėda now, Vaidotų street; I went to see her—so, you see, her father Steponas [and Liutikas], were taken away shot by somebody. They don't know the grave or anything. Probably the partisans— So that's my life.

Q: Well, and can you say that Liutikas was a good person, if, as you said, he shot that—who was the person who was carried by your brother?

A: Liurija.

Q: He killed Liurija. So what type of good person can he be?

A: Well he killed a lot of people! Not just that one. He was also present at the trenches. I wasn't at the trenches. But he was, Liutikas. I would lay there at night, with a gun hanging above, trying to put the baby to sleep—Liudukas was still little then— and he [Liutikas] says, “Marytė, sleep, sleep. Don't be scared. That gun has killed more than one person.” You see how life is? And who can believe it? No one can believe it. And that's how it is. Now I am laughing. But before, I couldn't understand it at all. But now I have no nerves left. I could cry and cry. Well, that's how it was.

Q: Well, and when they took your brother out, did you know that—

A: I knew. We said goodbye to each other. They didn't do anything to me, but they took my brother away. They said, “you need to be taken somewhere.” See, my brother had a wound right here [points to her leg]. He had an unhealing wound.

Q: From what?

A: Well, maybe some bullet hit him or something. Or maybe out of shock. I don't know from where. We would bandage it, wash it. There wasn't any medicine or anything. Very— The daughter of Liutikas' brother was really—well, a really good woman. So like that. But you think that Liutikas was bad as well? He saved one—

[01] 30:18:20 – [01] 33:27:12

00:31:27 – 00:34:44

Q: I don't know. These things are hard to even understand for me. I mean, he saved one, but—

A: And yes, you know, that's how it was. So at interrogation—I went—I was invited by a **Bondorenka** to come to Šiauliai, to the intelligence. They invite me to the room 213 or something like that. Well, I would go. And they asked me about Liutikas. So I say, “he's good.

He saved me, he kept me safe for four years.” “He saved one,” they said, “but he shot 10.” The same punishment, and that’s it. That’s what the officer said. [Laung pause.] Horrible, horrible, horrible. And I don’t know how my children see this today. That I don’t understand.

Q: Well, now tell me this—I still want to ask about [what happened] before the square, but when you already lived in Žagarė—did it ever happen that anyone from the ghetto was killed? Was anyone killed before the events at the square?

A: Well, I told you about those young men, who were taken away. But more than that— Oh, before that, you mean? You see, I wasn’t at Žagarė yet, but there were these Jews by the name of **Braudė**, who were taken away and shot. They were supposedly really wealthy.

Q: But you weren’t there at that time?

A: No, no. We weren’t there yet. It was just talked about.

Q: Well, now, when you were driven to Žagarė from Pašvitinys, where did you live?

A: In the ghetto. Everything was already arranged for us to live with this **Glasas**, a Jew. Four families stayed there.

Q: So that was the home of Glasas, right?

A: Yes, Glasas’ huse, Pakalnės street No. 4. And that house is still there.

Q: Well, and did they steal, did they take belongings from Jews?

A: Well, we didn’t have anything. Maybe they did take it away from the local ones. We didn’t really know any of the people there. There’s a newspaper, where there’s a picture of me next to Pakalnės street No. 4. There is— later I’ll show it to you.

Q: Well, and then after that, in the square, when that lieutenant was there who was brought near you. Was he German or Lithuanian?

A: Lithuanian. He was Lithuanian.

Q: Was he a local, had you seen him before, or did he come from somewhere else?

A: There were only six Germans. Only six Germans: **Kolokša, Manteufelis, Bakšis [Bakšys]** and the other ones’ last names I can’t remember.

Q: Kolokša was also German?

A: Yes.

Q: It’s a Lithuanian last name.

A: He was the head of them all.

Q: Kolokša?

A: He had this beautiful tall hat. He was so—

Q: So only the leaders were [Germans], right? There were no [German] soldiers to see?

A: No, no.

Q: The soldiers didn't shoot?

A: I didn't see any soldiers, just those six. Only after did I find out. I just saw those, those who were speaking from the platform. But I saw no privates—no soldiers of that rank.

[01] 33:27:12 – [01] 36:30:05

00:34:44 – 00:37:54

Q: Well, Vidas, let's stop for a second. [Long pause.] My friend wants to ask one other thing.

A: Well?

Q: Now could you explain: at that square in Žagarė—there was the speech, and then there was the shooting, then everybody was made to lie down—were you there with both your father and mother?

A: Yeah. But my father fled. He fled to Kaunas. He was very light-colored, blue eyes. And no one recognized him. He fled to Kaunas—to Paneriai, where were they—

Q: In Viliampolė?

A: Yes, yes. I only found that out after the war. When I went to Pašvitinys to my—well, my people. I went to see my old neighbors.

Q: So at what moment did he run away?

A: Well, at the time of that shooting. He didn't look anything like a Jew.

Q: And how did you find out that he was in the Kaunas ghetto?

A: Well I told you. Later we went to see the Krištanavičius family. And Kristanavičius' sister Antanina came and told me. We met her there. She says, "I was passing by," she said, where they had been fenced off, she says, "someone called to me. I turn around and it's **Sruliukas**." **Srolis** was his name. "I came closer, and he asked for me to bring bread. Well, so, as long as I could, I would bring him bread." But she was scared. So it was like that.

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Q: Well, and then what. So he in the ghetto. What ended up happening to him?

A: Well, so he was shot there. So there he remains.

Q: But maybe he was taken to a labor camp?

A: Well, then what—

Q: Because from Kaunas, well a lot were taken to labor camps, they were driven to Dachau.

A: [Shrugs.] Well, no. He would have somehow— No, no, no.

Q: And your mother?

A: My mother, I told you, lies here in the park. They shot her leg in front of my eyes. She couldn't get up, couldn't do anything. It's terrible.

Q: So when that Beleckas took you away, did you say goodbye to your mother?

A: We said goodbye, we said goodbye. She reached out her hand to Kiss Beleckas' hand, "just you save my child, just save my child." Awful.

[01] 36:30:05

00:37:54

End of tape.

Partial transcription reviewed, and complete translation provided by: Milda Morkyte

Date: 11/29/2010

There are no restrictions on this interview.