

GUDAITIS, Vytautas
Lithuania Documentation Project
Lithuanian
RG-50.473*0125

In this interview, Vytautas Gudaitis, born in 1931 in Klydžionys village (Alytus region), talks about the massacre of Jewish women and children that took place on his parents' land—30 meters away from his family's house—that he himself has witnessed. He provides the numbers – of men, women and children, and the elderly and the sick – who were murdered; specifies the length of the trench that they were buried in and mentions that people from surrounding areas were forced to dig the trench and later to fill it in. He describes the process of the execution. He claims to have heard people saying that after the massacre a pillar of phosphorus could be seen over the grave at night.

Box 1, Tape 1

[00:] 00:30:20 – [00:] 05:38:07
00:42 – 06:02

He introduces himself as Vytautas Gudaitis, born in 1931 in the village of Klydžionys (Alytus region); when asked about the Jews who lived in his village, he responds that there were only two who had lived there—one of whom went by the last name of **Donskis**—but both had moved out to the town of Butrimonys before the war started; confirms that there were a lot of Jews living in Butrimonys before the war; when asked about their fate, he responds that they were all executed; mentions that he himself witnessed the Jews being killed in Klydžionys; says that the massacre took place on his family's property; recalls that people were summoned from all the surrounding areas and forced to dig a trench next to his family's home; explains that the home was located next to a river and hidden away from any spectators; states that his father tried to object but was threatened; says he was told he would have to dig out a grave for himself if he continued to protest; specifies that the trench was located about 30 meters away from his family's house; when asked about the date of the massacre, he responds that it was Sunday, probably the beginning of September; says that he was herding the cows at home that day; says the number of the victims was 975; recalls that all of them were made to lie down; adds that they were guarded by two or three people; wonders aloud why nobody tried to resist them; says that the victims were led to the trench in groups and shot.

[00:] 05:38:08 – [00:] 10:18:05
06:03 – 10:53

He claims that 45 Jewish men had been shot and covered with soil in the morning before everyone else was massacred; says that later only women and children were killed; adds that there was another trench nearby and that the elderly and the sick were thrown directly from carts into that trench; reports that there were 170 or 270 people buried in the second trench; when asked about the length of the trench, he responds that it was about 40 meters long; when asked

who was shooting, he responds that he does not know but that he heard the term “smogikai” (“the hitmen”); says that people said they were German but he is not sure whether that is true; recalls that they were dressed in black and that people said they were drunk; says that he does not know how many of them were there, but maybe around 20; when asked how many people were in the groups lined up to be shot, he responds that he does not know, but maybe 30, 40 or even 50; says that the massacre started around noon and lasted until evening.

[00:] 10:18:06 – [00:] 14:26:22
10:54 – 15:13

When asked about his parents’ reaction to the killing, he responds that they were horrified; says that the trenches were filled in by the same workers who had dug them earlier; adds that the burying of bodies lasted several days; says that after the massacre he did not go over to the trench; reports that he heard men says that they saw pillars of phosphorus rising from the grave up to the sky at night, but that his father would not wake the children up to see the pillars; claims that the land where the grave is has not been cultivated since; asserts that he does not know any names of the perpetrators and says he assumes that they were not local; when asked about the dress of the guards, he responds that they were wearing Lithuanian police uniforms.