

# United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Interview with Bronius Vilutis

**RG-50.473\*0187**

**English**

The following transcript is the result of a recorded interview. The recording is the primary source document, not this transcript. It has not been checked for spelling nor verified for accuracy. This document should not be quoted or used without first checking it against the interview.

The interview is part of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's collection of oral testimonies. Information about access and usage rights can be found in the catalog record.

00:45 Interviewer: First, I would like to ask you to introduce yourself. What is your name?

00:53 Interviewee: My name is Regina Voitekhovitch. When I was a child and before marriage my last name was Gratulevitch Regina.

01:03 Interviewer: Tell me, please, in what year were you born?

01:06 Interviewee: I was born in 1932. On March 1.

01:11 Interviewer: And where?

01:12 Interviewee: In Svencioneliai. In the city where I live right now.

01:20 Interviewer: Tell me, please, where did you live when the Second World War started and the Germans came?

01:27 Interviewee: We lived -- My father worked at a railway station as a master. So when you drive there, there is a highway crossing. There stood a railway house. We lived in that house and that is how I saw everything -- everything was passing through that crossing near our house. And the house was very close to the railway and near the highway crossing.

02:00 Interviewer: You say that you saw everything. What do you mean by 'everything'?

02:05 Interviewee: I saw -- What did I see? I saw when Russians were leaving. When ((Schaule)), their company, how they were shooting. And I did not even recognize everyone but only one. I was very shocked... because I saw ((Ksenza)) in Siauliai clothes and he was killing the people. What were they guilty for, those two Russian soldiers? And when my mother saw me and that I was watching, she started shouting ((Ksions Pukenos)) and pulled me inside and closed in a cellar. But I had such a character, and I am still the same now, like a boy, I ran outside anyways. I was watching. But those were killed already. I did not see ((Schaule)) anymore.

03:14 Interviewer: ((Pukenos)) -- is it a last name?

03:16 Interviewee: ((Pukenos)) is his last name. ((Ksenza)). I do not remember the name, only remember he was ((Pukenos)).

03:25 Interviewer: Tell me, please, how many ((Schaulies)) were there?

03:29 Interviewee: Well, you know, I should tell you I did not count but definitely more than ten because when they sat inside that pipe and near the pipe from where the water was coming - the group, you know, was not small.

03:48 Interviewer: How many Russians were there?

03:50 Interviewee: Two.

The following transcript is the result of a recorded interview. The recording is the primary source document, not this transcript. It has not been checked for spelling nor verified for accuracy. This document should not be quoted or used without first checking it against the interview.

The interview is part of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's collection of oral testimonies. Information about access and usage rights can be found in the catalog record.

03:54 Interviewer: Well who exactly -- Did you see how exactly those two were shot?

03:59 Interviewee: Yes. Russians were running away. They had... how to call those... had guns on their shoulders and were running away into the forest because there was a forest at the top. And they were shooting those Russians. And the Russians were killed and buried there on the hill. I cannot tell you who buried them because my parents did not let me go. They were afraid I could get into the same situation. But when they were buried, we took care of the grave and were bringing flowers because they were human beings. Whatever is the nationality, he is a human. I do not differentiate nationalities, I have compassion for people. I have compassion for people as I am Polish, I am a human just like other nationalities are humans as well.

05:00 Interviewer: Tell me, please, what else did you see when you were-- when you lived in that railway house?

05:10 Interviewee: Well what I saw... then I will start telling now... when they were driven -- for the first time eleven Jews were transported in a car and there in a forest they -- but I won't find that place now because the road was built on ((Januleshka)) and the forest turned aside from it. The first eleven [Jews] were shot. Then I saw how they were bringing not only Švenčionėliai Jews, but also from Belarus (Vidzy, Pastavy, Lyntupy) and all were brought on horses... On... well on horses.

06:05 Interviewer: Where were they taken?

06:07 Interviewee: They were transported [to a place] behind the bridge across the river where something like a ghetto was built for them, or not really a ghetto or was it called differently. We called 'ghetto' a ((Koltynennaia)) street where all Jews who lived in Švenčionėliai were gathered. But those were taken to barracks. There were barracks because Polish troops were located in that place before and the barracks were left after them. And all Jews were taken to those barracks. All children and all -- All children, of course, were crying. And we were crying together with the children because we knew it was not a good sign that they were taken there.

07:00 Interviewer: Tell me, please, how did you know that those Jews, who were transported on horses, that they were from other towns?

07:07 Interviewee: When they were coming on horses, the people stood... And they shout 'We are from Pastavy. We are from...' Oh I forgot that town again... Lyntupy. They were naming the town they came from. We knew all Švenčionėliai [Jews] because we lived here. Every Jew had his own store and we used to go there so we knew all our Švenčionėliai [Jews].

07:49 Interviewer: Did you see yourself when your Švenčionėliai Jews were driven?

07:54 Interviewee: Yes, I did.

07:57 Interviewer: How was it? Tell me, please --

07:59 Interviewee: -- I cried very much. Children were transported [on a horse] while they were driven on foot.

The following transcript is the result of a recorded interview. The recording is the primary source document, not this transcript. It has not been checked for spelling nor verified for accuracy. This document should not be quoted or used without first checking it against the interview.

08:08 Interviewer: Were there men or women?

08:11 Interviewee: Both men and women. Families. And children of those families from other towns as well. Families. Not like only men or women or children, no. Families.

08:25 Interviewer: Did you recognize anyone you knew?

08:29 Interviewee: yes

08:30 Interviewer: Tell me, please --

08:32 Interviewee: I was crying with them -- They were driven and [nobody] was pushed away from the street and the horse. I walked for a long time because we were friends with one of the girls. We lived nearby -- we lived on one side of the rail way and they lived on the other side. They kept a store and she was very beautiful. We were friends with that girl and I went to see her off. I was not pushed away [from the horse], nobody shouted. Nothing.

09:08 Interviewer: Who was driving them?

09:10 Interviewee: There was a so-called organization named ((Schauliai))... and the police.

09:20 Interviewer: Were they in a uniform and with guns?

09:23 Interviewee: Yes. They were in uniforms and each had a gun.

09:28 Interviewer: Tell me, please, was the uniform of the ((Schauliai)) and the police different?

09:32 Interviewee: Yes. The uniform was different.

09:34 Interviewer: How was it different?

09:36 Interviewee: The uniform of ((Schauliai)) was greener while the policemen's was closer to black, dark... dark blue.

09:49 Interviewer: Did they have any other signs on their uniforms?

09:52 Interviewee: I only remember the uniform of ((Schauliai)). On their hand they had a cross and two stripes. But I remember that as in a fog.

10:11 Interviewer: What was the distance between the house where you lived and the road where they were driven?

10:18 Interviewee: -- And the road? One meter or one and a half. We lived almost on the road. Along the road were passing trains. Now that road is wider and covered with asphalt. Before it was only a sand. It was just a road.

10:45 Interviewer: You said these Švenčionėliai Jews were driven and transported. From where and to

The following transcript is the result of a recorded interview. The recording is the primary source document, not this transcript. It has not been checked for spelling nor verified for accuracy. This document should not be quoted or used without first checking it against the interview.

where?

10:54 Interviewee: They were already coming from the ghetto. Before in Švenčionėliai all [Jews] were driven into a street and a ghetto was created. On ((Koltinennaia)) street. And from that ((Koltinennaia)) street they were gathered and taken to barracks.

11:18 Interviewer: Did you see that ghetto on the ((Koltinenu)) Street?

11:21 Interviewee: Yes, I did.

11:23 Interviewer: How did it look like?

11:25 Interviewee: It was simply the houses and they could not leave it from anywhere. On one side there was a barbed wire obstacle and small doors. If they were let out from there, a police was guarding them. Not ((Schauliai)) but the police. The other side was the same

11:48 Interviewer: Did you know that --

11:49 Interviewee: -- but from there nobody could leave.

11:52 Interviewer: How long were they kept in that ghetto on the ((Koltinennaia)) Street?

11:56 Interviewee: On that ((Koltinennaia)) Street? Well, you know... to recall the exact time... Maybe a month, not more.

12:08 Interviewer: Did you know any of those policemen or those ((Schauliai))? Were there any familiar to you faces?

12:17 Interviewee: No... the policemen came from somewhere else. Some were saying they came from Panevėžys, others were saying from somewhere else, but not from Švenčionėliai. I recognized only one ((Schauliai)) -- ((Ksenza Pukenos)). But he was not from Švenčionėliai, he was a resident of another town but all his relatives lived here.

12:55 Interviewer: Tell me, please, how long were Jews kept in those barracks?

13:01 Interviewee: In barracks they were -- there was a river not far from those barracks. They were guarded to the river ((...)) to wash the clothes. On the other side of the river people stood and talked. But I never went there, I was not allowed to. And I could not run away.

13:24 Interviewer: And how long did they stay in those barracks?

13:27 Interviewee: In those barracks -- I cannot say for sure but around a month, that is for sure.

13:35 Interviewer: What happened next?

13:37 Interviewee: After that, men were driven from Švenčionėliai and my father was there and dug that hole, prepared for the shooting. Because the Jews did not know what for the hole was there and the people from Švenčionėliai were taken there to dig it. My father was there and my brother was taken

The following transcript is the result of a recorded interview. The recording is the primary source document, not this transcript. It has not been checked for spelling nor verified for accuracy. This document should not be quoted or used without first checking it against the interview.

there as well. But my brother managed to escape somehow and ran to our relatives in the village. He was not coming home for almost a month because of the fear. But my father dug the hole for the shooting and later all men and teenagers were taken from Švenčionėliai again to fill up the ditch after those Jews were shot. When my father returned from there, he only cried. He did not talk to anyone and did not eat the whole week. He told the following – when they were filling up the hole, the blood was leaking through and the whole hole was shaking. There was a Jew, I do not know him but later a woman (she is dead now, she lived behind ((Januleshka))), she said that he at night -- because they were shot and buried right away -- that at night -- because they were shot late at night and not for one day -- but he somehow survived and crawled out and came to their village. Antaveshe village. But those people are not alive anymore, they were already old back then. They kept him the whole war. But in general no one escaped, no single person. The shooting was horrible. First of all, on ((...)) street, there is a big forest there right now, and the ((...)) street goes like this. Then down there runs the river. The forest was little and it could be seen how they were taken to that hole and the fire. I only heard them shouting A-A-A-A and the gun raffle. After few minutes another group of people was brought and that was happening all the time. I climbed to the attic at the ((...)) street, sat on a fireplace and watched everything. Nobody, not even my parents, could find me because they thought I would go there. I was everywhere.

16:50 Interviewer: Tell me, please, how many groups, approximately, did you see while sitting on that fireplace inside that attic?

16:56 Interviewee: You know what, I did not count. I have not thought about counting.

16:59 Interviewer: Well could there be two groups? Or ten?

17:03 Interviewee: Oh, many. They were shooting for two or three days. Not one day.

17:12 Interviewer: For how long, approximately, did you stay on that roof?

17:16 Interviewee: the whole day until it became dark. And then I was afraid I would not get down.

17:27 Interviewer: Did you stay on that roof for one day or several days?

17:29 Interviewee: One day. My parents locked me after that.

17:34 Interviewer: Could you hear the shooting during other days?

17:37 Interviewee: The shooting - from the house where I lived.

17:40 Interviewer: What was the approximate distance between the house where you sat on the roof and the hole?

17:46 Interviewee: -- That hole? How far... well half a kilometer.

17:51 Interviewer: And from your house to the hole?

17:54 Interviewee: One kilometer and a half. But the scream and the shooting were so loud that the whole town heard it, not only us who lived nearby. The whole town. If there was a house right here, it

The following transcript is the result of a recorded interview. The recording is the primary source document, not this transcript. It has not been checked for spelling nor verified for accuracy. This document should not be quoted or used without first checking it against the interview.

could be heard here as well.

18:08 Interviewer: Tell me, please, while sitting on that roof could you somehow identify what kind of people were there – men, women, or children?

18:18 Interviewee: Only by their voice. Women were crying. Crying very loudly. Children were crying horribly. Men as well. They knew where they were going. They saw everyone was shot. They knew they were going to die. Not so many people can face death without a single sound.

18:43 Interviewer: Could you hear any orders or anything like that from that distance?

18:48 Interviewee: No. The order was to be quiet.

18:54 Interviewer: Could you see those who were shooting?

18:57 Interviewee: I saw them all when they finished the shooting and drove back in a truck. All drunk without an exception. But no familiar faces.

19:11 Interviewer: How were they dressed?

19:13 Interviewee: ((Schauli)) in ((Schauliai)) clothes. They all were drunk. Drunk and sang.

19:24 Interviewer: What did they sing?

19:25 Interviewee: I do not remember that. They sang some songs. They did not drive quietly.

19:31 Interviewer: In what language were they singing?

19:33 Interviewee: In Lithuanian..

19:40 Interviewer: And you knew exactly they were the people who were shooting?

19:44 Interviewee: Exactly.

19:45 Interviewer: How did you know that?

19:48 Interviewee: Even a little child knew. They went there and, after shooting everyone, they were coming back. How one would not understand? Drunk and singing. And the shooting was over. Nobody was shooting. Police started coming to houses and taking all men. They said to take shovels. Therefore I say even a little child could understand and I was eleven years old already.

20:26 Interviewer: When they were going that way [to the forest], were they singing as well?

20:29 Interviewee: No. They drove quietly. Everything was quiet.

20:35 Interviewer: I also wanted to ask. You said the shooting lasted for three days...

20:40 Interviewee: -- probably, not less than that.

The following transcript is the result of a recorded interview. The recording is the primary source document, not this transcript. It has not been checked for spelling nor verified for accuracy. This document should not be quoted or used without first checking it against the interview.

The interview is part of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's collection of oral testimonies. Information about access and usage rights can be found in the catalog record.

20:42 Interviewer: Uh... then when was the hole filled up? Was it filled up every day or --

20:48 Interviewee: -- No.

20:49 Interviewer: -- or only when

20:50 Interviewee: After everyone was shot, only then it was filled up. As I said, everyone was lying in blood there, all were injured. Father said that the hole was shaking like this.

21:11 Interviewer: Did you see the hole?

21:15 Interviewee: Who would have let us go? To be shot there?

21:19 Interviewer: No, I mean after the shooting. After it was filled up.

21:23 Interviewee: No, no. I have not gone there for a long time. I can say I only went to see it when the Russians came. It was in 1945. Only then we went there.

21:48 Interviewer: Tell me, from the rood where you sat, could you see the hole itself?

21:54 Interviewee: No. It was in such place that it could not be seen. Maybe if one had binoculars then it could be seen. But I could not see myself.

22:12 Interviewer: Was it possible to somehow differentiate how were dressed the people who were taken there?

22:21 Interviewee: They were in clothes when they were taken to the hole, but next to it they were undressing.

22:28 Interviewer: And did you see how they were undressing?

22:30 Interviewee: I did not, but the person -- he is dead now, as I said he died in Poland -- he told me that he was in forest and watched everything. They were undressing and their clothes were carried... if they did not undress, then from where they would go the clothes.

22:49 Interviewer: Did you see how their clothes were carried?

22:51 Interviewee: yes. It was transported in trucks. I was very interested where they were taking it. Those trucks, GAPs (Gorky Automobile Plant), were driving very slowly back then and I quietly, barefoot, followed them. I saw they went to synagogue. Windows there were low. I climbed up to the windows and watched how they threw all clothes and then distributed. People were walking and giving it away. But the majority of the people were from the city, nobody was from Švenčionėliai. Probably from villages. The best clothes they gave to their people. But everything was dropped in there -- I saw that myself, I watched through the window.

23:50 Interviewer: Did you see one truck with clothes or more?

The following transcript is the result of a recorded interview. The recording is the primary source document, not this transcript. It has not been checked for spelling nor verified for accuracy. This document should not be quoted or used without first checking it against the interview.

The interview is part of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's collection of oral testimonies. Information about access and usage rights can be found in the catalog record.



23:53 Interviewee: Oh more, not one... When I followed them and climbed up to the window – there were clothes [inside] already, the synagogue was not empty. Probably they transported it very early when I was still sleeping. I saw it after I sneaked out from my parents so that they do not catch me.

24:24 Interviewer: Tell me, please, maybe you somehow remember what kind of clothes were there?

24:30 Interviewee: No, you know... There were different types of clothes. Both men's and women's, but whether there were coats or dresses or something – I had to go closer to see it. And through the window I only saw how and where the clothes were dumped.

24:54 Interviewer: Who was bringing those clothes and who was disembarking them?

24:59 Interviewee: Those who brought them were disembarking as well. Police officers. I did not see any civilians there.

25:07 Interviewer: And those ((Schaui)) who went on a truck to shoot...

25:13 Interviewee: yes.

25:14 Interviewer: Was there only one truck or more?

25:17 Interviewee: no, they were coming in one truck. But the way they were coming in it... not like it was packed, but only one truck. And in the same truck they came back.

25:33 Interviewer: What happened to Jewish property – houses, furniture?

25:48 Interviewee: When the houses were left empty, Jewish houses, the residents of Švenčionėliai -- here where the ghetto was on ((Koltinennaia)) Street, already started breaking windows and taking out... They were taking out jam... ((Baranauskas)) came from some village on a horse and took all the furniture, beds, and jam. Basically, everything was taken out. But when in 1945 the Russia came, the Russians, people started telling who stole what – this one took that. And many Jews, who ran away, returned. There were those who joined the Russian army. There was Rabinowitz – he was driving around and taking away, confiscating what was stolen and giving back to those Jews who returned, who ran away to Russia or wherever. They were given things back. While houses – everything came down to the government. For example, on ((Koltinennaia)) Street, where everything happened – Germans burned everything when they were leaving. The street where I lived, where the railway house was, they burned it as well. There is only a sign left. Almost whole Švenčionėliai was burned.

27:43 Interviewer: Tell me, please, after the shooting in church, were ((Ksenzy)) saying anything about it?

27:54 Interviewee: What could be said there... and to whom if ((Ksenzy)) were killed... were shot. If you drive from Švenčionėliai to Vilnius, on the left side in the field you will see a cross. ((Ksenzy)) were shot there. 20 people were shot there. A poor student was walking to ((Švenči)) from Švenčionėliai and he was also shot. And he was shot because somewhere there behind the ((Švenčionės)) Russian partisans killed ((Beck)), some German General. So they shot everyone.

28:49 Interviewer: How did it happen? How was it happening?

The following transcript is the result of a recorded interview. The recording is the primary source document, not this transcript. It has not been checked for spelling nor verified for accuracy. This document should not be quoted or used without first checking it against the interview.

28:52 Interviewee: They came home and took everyone like to a job. And ((Ksenzy)) was betrayed by a cleric because he was jealous. They were two Poles. We cried a lot with my sister and went to church to leave flowers.

29:12 Interviewer: Did you see how they were taken?

29:15 Interviewee: I did not see how they were taken but I saw how they were shot and how my sister and I were putting their brain back into their heads. When people were told that they were being taken to some works, everyone was taking a cup and everything. There was a ditch – everything was put into it and then it were told to run. People ran. The husband of my mother's cousin Obolevich died there as well, he was shot. And ((Ksenzy)) could not run anymore because their feet were stabbed with bayonets and beaten. And when were told so, my sister and I joined hands and ran away. From there we walked and saw ((Ksenzy)) lying face down in sand. We started putting them up and someone told our mother, some man, 'Run, yours are playing there. They will be killed.' When our mother came, we already put their brain together and turned ((Ksenzy)). A man from Švenčionėliai was coming and said, 'Hurry up, run into the corn - there were cornfields on the other side. They are coming! They will kill you!' And just after we jumped into the fields, cars came and they were checking everyone – were they alive or dead.

31:00 Interviewer: Who came?

31:02 Interviewee: Who came? ((Schauli)).

31:09 Interviewer: And who killed ((Ksenzy)) and those people?

31:15 Interviewee: those people and ((Ksenzy)) — I did not see. I cannot say – either police officers or ((Schauli)). Because I did not see. We only found out after they all were killed.

31:30 Interviewer: Did you hear that shooting?

31:33 Interviewee: No, I did not.

31:38 Interviewer: When those ((Schauliai)) came, how long did they stay in that field?

31:43 Interviewee: they did not stay for too long. They checked everyone and saw that everyone was dead. And my uncle Obolevitch, probably after it was told to run – he ran into the forest while we were sitting in corn fields. He was in a coat and it was summer – hot, but as it was said that people were being taken to work, people dressed accordingly. And he was dragged.

32:11 Interviewer: Did you see how he was dragged?

32:13 Interviewee: yes.

32:14 Interviewer: Tell me, please, were any Germans involved in all those events and shootings?

32:26 Interviewee: I did not see a single person in German uniform. I only saw [German uniform] when Estonians appeared in our Švenčionėliai. They had German hats and there were corpses' heads on

The following transcript is the result of a recorded interview. The recording is the primary source document, not this transcript. It has not been checked for spelling nor verified for accuracy. This document should not be quoted or used without first checking it against the interview.

those hats. Then we knew that something would happen if Estonians came. They walked through all apartments and gathered women - only women, no men - to take to Germany for a work. Once an Estonian came to my mother and said, "You better leave the house and do not show up." He said nothing else. But she went to milk a cow and while she was milking it, second Estonian came and took her away. But my sister and I stalked them to the school where all those people were taken to. Mother told us to bring clothes. We packed a whole bag and dragged it along the streets... oh how old were we. We came and a woman told us that our mother ran away. We had to drag all those clothes back. Mother was not coming for five days. Across the street lived a woman, our good acquaintance, and our mother stayed at her house all five days. When the transport left to Germany, only then mother came home. But in general - a lot of women were taken to Germany to work. They were taken with children.

34:20 Interviewer: Did you see that train yourself?

34:25 Interviewee: I saw it. I came to it. I could not believe that our mother ran away. We had no signal from her. We were, as people say, in a dark hole.

34:41 Interviewer: And those wagons, were they full of people or were they empty?

34:44 Interviewee: They were full of people. And those wagons were not like passenger wagons, but, as we used to call them, piggish, a cattle shed. They were full of people with very small windows. We approached every single wagon and asked, 'Is Gratulevitch here?'

35:15 Interviewer: Were there Estonians near the wagon?

35:18 Interviewee: There were no Estonians, only police. Estonians were only gathering people.

35:28 Interviewer: How do you know they were Estonians?

35:32 Interviewee: Because one of them said they were Estonians. The one who told my mom to run away. He said that Estonians came and as he told us, perhaps he was a good person and was forced to go there, if you only see out hat, know that something would happen. Because the scariest thing was the Estonian army of Germans.

36:08 Interviewer: Did you hear how that Estonian was talking? What was the language he spoke?

36:14 Interviewee: He? He spoke broken Lithuanian language... but it was possible to understand him.

36:31 Interviewer: Where did those Estonians disappear after?

36:34 Interviewee: We did not know where they left, we did not ask.

36:39 Interviewer: How long did they stay in your Švenčionėliai?

36:42 Interviewee: Well they were appearing in Švenčionėliai. They did not stay for weeks. They were coming, doing what they needed, and leaving after that.

36:54 Interviewer: What else were they doing besides taking women away?

The following transcript is the result of a recorded interview. The recording is the primary source document, not this transcript. It has not been checked for spelling nor verified for accuracy. This document should not be quoted or used without first checking it against the interview.

The interview is part of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's collection of oral testimonies. Information about access and usage rights can be found in the catalog record.

36:59 Interviewee: I will tell you only that if now my brain could be changed to that child's brain, probably I would have explored everything. But back then – if we were not bothered and we heard nothing, everything was like through fingers.

37:19 Interviewer: Tell me, did you see yourself how the train left with those women?

37:23 Interviewee: No because it was at night. The train left at night.

37:39 Interviewer: I want to return to the episode when you were telling how you saw Švenčionėliai Jews being taken to the barracks. You said you had a friend.

37:53 Interviewee: yes.

37:54 Interviewer: Maybe you remember her first name and her last name?

37:56 Interviewee: No. I had a picture of her and her mother, but when that happened, we burned everything because we were afraid that, you know, everyone was saying, “Gratulevicheva is friends with kikes”, I mean Jews. We had that picture and it was always with me. Once when we went to bed, the mother tore it apart. I do not remember the name. So many years passed, I will forget mine soon.

38:40 Interviewer: Tell me, please, when you were sitting on the roof, were you there alone or someone else was there with you?

38:48 Interviewee: No, there were two more girls with me.

38:52 Interviewer: Two friends or..?

38:53 Interviewee: Yes, two friends. From the ((...)) street. One of them died recently, last year. She was born in the same year as me. The second moved to Poland, Mikhailovskaia.

39:13 Interviewer: Does she live in Poland now?

39:13 Interviewee: No, she died already.

39:14 Interviewer: Also died...

39:15 Interviewee: She was older.

39:18 Interviewer: At the very beginning of your memories you said that you saw how eleven Jews were taken somewhere.

39:26 Interviewee: 11 Jews — at the beginning when there was no ghetto yet, there was nothing. Jews lived in houses. And then they were captured, taken away. The son of Olchakova was taken, he was chubby. So those eleven Jews were told they were being taken to the work but instead they were shot in a forest. Why – nobody knew anything.

40:04 Interviewer: Who took them? Did you see how they were taken out?

The following transcript is the result of a recorded interview. The recording is the primary source document, not this transcript. It has not been checked for spelling nor verified for accuracy. This document should not be quoted or used without first checking it against the interview.

The interview is part of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's collection of oral testimonies. Information about access and usage rights can be found in the catalog record.

40:07 Interviewee: I only saw how they were riding on a horse – all eleven of them together with one policeman. Only one. Maybe [others] waited in the forest but we saw one only as though that they were taken to a work. I remember how that Olchakova came to my mother and asked - I do not remember the name now – something like Haem or what was the name, she said that [they] were taken to a work and asked: "Tell me, Levicheva, could it be true?" "Why not, free labor." And in the evening we found out that they were shot.

40:53 Interviewer: Could you hear any shots?

40:56 Interviewee: No.

40:58 Interviewer: So they were taken on dray-cart, as I understood.

41:01 Interviewee: Yes, yes, on a dray-cart.

41:02 Interviewer: And you say there were eleven of them. Did you count yourself or heard from people?

41:07 Interviewee: I did not count but later, when [they] were taken away, I knew all the Jews and people were saying – from this house, from this house, from this house.

41:20 Interviewer: How far did you stay when they were taken on dray-cart?

41:23 Interviewee: Well as I am saying, the railway house was standing almost on the street. And that was the way I stood.

41:31 Interviewer: Did you see any familiar faces in that dray-cart?

41:36 Interviewee: Well as I am saying, all of them were from Švenčionėliai. All were familiar.

41:42 Interviewer: So did you see that from your house Or from some other place?

41:46 Interviewee: I stood near the house on the street. So here is my house and here is the street. And I stood right here.

42:04 Interviewer: Were they shot in the same place where others were shot later?

42:07 Interviewee: No, no. I do not even know now and before I knew everything. Recently the ((Janulishka)) road was covered with an asphalt. In some places it was expanded deeper into the forest and so where it is now — I do not know. Because the daughter of my cousin visited me two or three years ago – she was writing a book. So we traveled around and I took them to the place where our house was – they were taking pictures. My sister refused but I went everywhere [with them]. Then we met a man and I asked him: ((...)) And he took us through some paths. Everything is organized there – a fence is built and a monument is erected at the place where those eleven [Jews] were shot. But if you asked me now – kill me but I do not know. Where the big one – I know. There is a road behind the bridge, and there is a sign.

The following transcript is the result of a recorded interview. The recording is the primary source document, not this transcript. It has not been checked for spelling nor verified for accuracy. This document should not be quoted or used without first checking it against the interview.

The interview is part of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's collection of oral testimonies. Information about access and usage rights can be found in the catalog record.