

VALOTKA, Teodoras
Lithuania Documentation Project
Lithuanian
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Tape 1 of 1

In this interview, Teodoras Valotka, born in 1929 and a local of Biržai (Biržus), discusses seeing wagons of Jews go by to be shot in a mass shooting. He particularly remembers waving to a classmate, neither of them knowing what was going to happen. He goes on to talk about his father's experience as a digger of the trench into which the Jews were shot and also about the selling of Jewish clothing in town. He specifically remembers when his neighbor yelled at a woman who tried to buy some of the clothing, saying that it was not right.

[01:] 00:33:23 – [01:] 07:22:02

He introduces himself as born on 1929 in the outskirts of Biržai, near Nemunėlio Radviliškiai; explains that the beginning of the war was very calm and his town was not affected for a couple of weeks; remembers first seeing a German bike group [*motorbike squad?*]; mentions seeing “Vaterland” written on the bikes; remembers when the bikers—who were soldiers—first raided a store and gave everything out to civilians; says they gave out everyday items and money; explains the store was a co-op previously owned by a Jew, **Elijah Nankinas [Tankinas]**; remembers hearing about the shooting of the local government members; names some of the victims: **Artorga Samulionis**, Mažuika; recalls about seven people were shot; estimates there were about 17 Jewish families in the town; remembers the day he saw all of the Jews being carted to a mass shooting; remembers three carriages, and in one of them, three boys from his class: **Itsakas Brėgeris**, **Itsakas Haita [High-tuh]**, and **Nankinas**; describes **Brėgeris** and himself waving to each other, neither having any notion of what was about to happen; remembers returning home and finding his mother upset, and her explaining his father was sent with about eight other men to dig trenches; explains they did not know who the trenches were for and feared they were digging their own graves; remembers the men had to stay during the shooting and cover the bodies afterward; mentions most adults in the town were scared during the war but stayed quiet.

[01:] 07:22:03 – [01:] 22:32:19

He talks about the selling of Jewish clothing outside of a local store; remembers how a woman bought an item and his neighbor, **Ona Makšimienė**, got mad at her, saying it was wrong to buy the belongings of the murdered people; guesses there were not many buyers; describes the clothing as high-quality: suits, dresses; mentions about an hour went by between him seeing the carriages and hearing shots; supposes all of the town Jews were killed during this shooting except for **Šmėrelis Nankinas**, who ran away but was later found and shot; talks about the people who drove the carriages and names some of them: **Paliukas**, **Akulavičius**; says they had

weapons but were dressed as civilians; remembers his father returning after two hours; says his father described the Jews lined up and that they were calm, asking each other, "What for?"; says the Jews had been forced to take their clothing off before being shot; says his father and the other diggers were allowed to take this clothing afterwards, but recalls they chose not to; mentions the houses of the Jews; says the majority remained vacant and most were burnt down during the war because they were near the German war zone; recalls childhood memories of when he was friends with the children of **Akulavičius**; says he does not think any events tied with the killing of Jews were ever mentioned in church; says he heard Father **Vinkšnelis [Vingšnelis]** was the head of the revolutionary movement; mentions some revolutionaries wore white bands ("white-strippers") which sometimes had the letters "**LAF**"; names one of the revolutionaries: **Mykolas Zdagys [Dagys]**; says he never saw any anti-Jewish propaganda; says most of the people in his town did not have radios until the war, and did not have ready access to newspapers.