

PALČEVSKIS, Jāzeps
Latvia Documentation Project
Russian
RG-50.568*0009

Box 1, Tape 1

In this interview Jāzeps Palčevskis, resident of Daugavpils, talks about the murder of local Jews by Germans and their collaborators in 1941.

[01:] 00:01:00 – [01:] 00:02:39

He introduces himself as Jāzeps Palčevskis, born in January 25, 1933; talks about his family and their life in Daugavpils before the war; his father worked in a workshop at a factory, his mother was a housewife; he had two elder brothers; his grandmother kept two cows; mentions that his father was arrested and imprisoned shortly after the arrival of Germans in his town; his father perished in prison.

[01:] 00:02:40 – [01:] 00:05:09

He remembers seeing the first German planes one day while walking to the lake with his brothers and a friend named Anton **Pirožoks**; mentions that later on Germans started bombing Daugavpils.

[01:] 00:05:10 – [01:] 00:09:29

He talks about starting (a Latvian?) school in September of 1940 and transferring to a Russian school after the Soviet army entered the city in June, 1940; points out that there were a few Jewish students in his school; comments briefly about his Jewish neighbors: **Mottya** [**Mostya**] and **Chaim** and their families; discusses how immediately upon seizure of Daugavpils, the Germans started rounding up all Jews and Communists; mentions how one neighbor named **Chamayev**, a Christian, was arrested because he looked like a Jew; remembers seeing a Jewish child wearing a yellow star in the street later that day; says that Jews were not allowed to walk on pedestrian sidewalks.

[01:] 00:09:30 – [01:] 00:16:24

He discusses going with friends to Zolotaya Gora (Golden Mountain) and watching from a distance how murdered Jews were being buried; he comments about how local men were digging the ground while policemen and German soldiers were watching; mentions that policemen were local residents; names **Shpak** as one living nearby; they spoke Latvian, **Lingalian**, and Russian, wore ordinary clothes but with special stripes on the sleeves; points out that the clothes and the shoes of the murdered Jews were placed in separate stacks of hay; remembers seeing a few locals

run their fingers through the sand in search for gold items left by Jews; remembers hearing of gold items later being sold in the market; comments that before Jews were to be shot, Germans would round up local men to use them for digging trenches to bury dead Jews.

[01:] 00:16:25 – [01:] 00:21:49

He remembers seeing corpses of Soviet POWs dumped one on top of another near Varshavskaya rail station; estimates that killings of Jews on Zolotaya Gora took place within August–September 1941; discusses how the killing went on for a few weeks, two to three times a week; remembers that all shootings were done at night; recalls hearing cries, moaning; describes that Jews were brought in groups of about 300; comments about how two Jews ran away from the column and escaped to the forest; mentions that policemen were frequently drunk.

[01:] 00:21:50 – [01:] 00:23:49

He comments on the period after the return of the Soviet army to Daugavpils in 1944; discusses an investigation about what had happened at Zolotaya Gora; describes the subsequent exhumation and relocation of bones of Jews killed at Zolotaya Gora to Pogulyanka; explains that Jews were killed not on Zolotaya Gora itself, but 200 to 300 meters away.

[01:] 00:23:50 – [01:] 00:27:39

He comments on the events at Zolotaya Gora; assumes that the women and teenagers who were looking for gold items were relatives or friends of the policemen; describes the trenches where Jews were buried as having been about three meters wide and 30 to 40 meters long; mentions barrels with liquid chemicals which were later used to treat the area, supposedly to prevent epidemics.

[01:] 00:27:40 – [01:] 00:30:20

He mentions that none of the Jews he knew survived the war; mentions that since the 1990s the Jewish Committee of Daugavpils has been holding events in Pogulyanka in memory of Jews who had been murdered during World War II.