

What happened to the Jews of Papilė?



http://www.holocaustatlas.lt/EN/#a_atlas/search/bendri=Papile.vietove=.aukos=.from_year=0.from_month=0.from_day=.to_year=0.to_month=0.to_day=.killers=/page/1/item/106/

Mass Murder of Jews from the Šiauliai region in Žagarė

About massacre

“In late July, 1941, the activists made a list of Jews who stayed in Žagarė and began to transfer them to the ghetto. The Jews who lived in nearby *shtetls* were also moved to the ghetto of Žagarė. The area chosen for the ghetto adjoined the market place and included Daukanto, Vilniaus, Malūno, Pakalnio and Gedimino streets. Non-Jewish residents of these streets were moved to other neighborhoods. On August 22 chief of the Šiauliai region Jonas Noreika informed local authorities and mayors of smaller towns of the Šiauliai region that according to the order of the Šiauliai *Gebietskommissar* all the region’s Jews and half-Jews were obliged to move to Žagarė by August 29. The transfer began with Jews from Šiauliai, Joniškis, Kuršėnai, Žeimelis and other localities. On August 25 the mayor of Žagarė informed the regional chief of Šiauliai that the ghetto occupied an area of 12,135 square meters and had a population of 715 Jews.

“By August 29, 949 Jews from other localities in the Šiauliai region had been moved to Žagarė: from Tryškiai women and children; Šiaulėnai 60–70 families; Šaukėnai women and children; Radviliškis women and children; Pašvintinys 70 people; Papilė women and children; Kuršėnai a few hundred (about 50 carriages with women, children and old people); Gruzdziai women, children and old people; and from Joniškis 150 people. On September 20, 5,566 people (2,402 Jews and 3,164 non-Jews) resided in Žagarė.

“In the last days of September 1941, several local ethnic Lithuanians were marched to the town park (formerly Count Naryshkin’s Park) where they were forced to dig a ditch in the shape of an L (120 meters long, 2 to 3 meters wide and 2 meters deep). On the morning of October 2, Jews from the Žagarė ghetto were ordered to gather in the market square. Commandant Mannteuffel addressed the crowd in German, assuring them that they would all be given work to do. The Jewish men, women, children and elderly people had to form separate lines. When the German whistle, white arbanders and policemen from Žagarė and other towns began to surround the square. Panic arose among the Jews and some tried to escape. The arbanders shot into the crowd and beat them. Scores of killed and wounded people were left on the square. The survivors were forced to lie down on the ground where they had to stay until several trucks arrived. Jews were then transported to Naryshkin Park.

“Money, jewelry and other valuables were seized from the Jews as they marched to the murder site. At the ditch the victims had to remove everything except their underwear before they were forced to lie down in the pit and were shot. The executioners were self-defense unit from Šiauliai, led by lieutenant R. Kološka, and white arbanders from Linkuva. The Žagarė white arbanders guarded the ghetto and led the victims to their deaths. Several German SS men who had arrived from Šiauliai supervised the killings and also participated in them.

“The mass murder continued until very late at night. On the following day another group of Jews who had been discovered and seized were brought to the park and murdered in the same ditch.

“The report issued by German Security Police Chief and the SD in Lithuania SS-*Standartenführer* Karl Jäger stated that on October 2, 1941, 2,236 Jews (663 men, 1,107 women and 496 children) were killed in Žagarė. During the panic which arose at the market square before the executions, 150 Jews were killed and seven white arbanders who guarded them were wounded. The Soviet special commission, who examined the mass grave in 1944 found 2,402 corpses (530 men, 1,223 women, 625 children and 24 infants).”

Address: **Žagarė town, Kęstučio g. street, Joniškis district**

Victim number: **2236-2402**

Honors given to Noreika

<http://atminimas.kvb.lt/asmenvardis.php?asm=GENEROLAS%20V%CBTRA,%20tikrasis%20vardas%20%96%20kpt.%20Jonas%20Noreika>

In 2010 the primary school in Šukoniai in the Pakruojis region was named for him.

Library of the Academy of Sciences in Vilnius has a plaque installed for him in the front of the building.

A symbolic grave and a statue to him were set up in the Antakalnis Cemetery in Vilnius right next to the memorial to the victims of January 13th 1991.

In Kaunas, there is a street named for him: Generolo Vėtros gatvė