



## JEWISH MASS GRAVES OF LATVIA

### *Latgale Region*





## Lo Tishkach Foundation European Jewish Cemeteries Initiative

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Set up in 2006, the Lo Tishkach Foundation European Jewish Cemeteries Initiative aims to collate all known data on Europe's Jewish burial grounds and to incorporate this vast source of information in an online database so that it is readily and easily accessible to everyone.

This database now stands at over 11,000 individual records of cemeteries and mass graves and when complete may well contain details on close to 20,000 sites.

As a not-for-profit project founded by the Conference of European Rabbis with the support of the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (Claims Conference), Lo Tishkach relies on the generous support of its sponsors to enable us to continue our work in preserving Jewish heritage in Europe.

From mid 2012 the supervision of the project is by the Union of Jewish Religious Organizations of Ukraine on behalf of the Conference of European Rabbis in order to bring strategic planning and operational control closer to the Northern and Eastern Europe locations where much of the field work is taking place.

The database management, quality control and legal research has relocated to Antwerp for continuing proximity to the concentration of political representation around the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council of Europe.

This report on the Latgale Region represents only a fraction of hundreds of Jewish cemeteries and mass graves in Latvia and many more thousands across Europe.

### HOW TO HELP

Your support will enable us to further spread the geographical reach of this project, ensuring that all Europe's Jewish burial grounds are located and documented and that steps are taken to identify and preserve these valuable sites. Donations can be made to: Conference of European Rabbis, Reference: Lo Tishkach, Barclays Bank Plc, Edgware Rd Branch, London WC2, Account Number: 76537088, Sort Code: 20-65-63, IBAN: GB71 BARC 2065 6376 5370 88, SWIFT Number: BARCCGB22.

US-based and European donors can find details of tax-efficient giving through the King Baudouin Foundation on the 'Donations' page of our website or by contacting us at the addresses above.

# JEWISH MASS GRAVES OF LATVIA:

## LATGALE REGION



FRONT COVER IMAGES (clockwise from top): Varaklani Jewish Mass Grave, Zilupe Jewish Mass Grave II (Near Zabolocki Village), Vilaka Jewish Mass Grave, Dagda Jewish Mass Grave, Aglona Jewish Mass Grave

Image p. 14: Rezekne Jewish Mass Grave II (At the Jewish cemetery)

Image p. 55: Preili Jewish Mass Grave

Original version of Latvia map (p. 10) © Wikimedia Commons under GNU Free Documentation License.

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# FOREWORD

The first Jews settled in Latvia in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century and by the eve of World War II, there were about 93,000 Jews living in the country. Jewish burial grounds existed in almost every town or borough where there was a Jewish community and currently, more than fifty of these sites are known. Most of the burial grounds were rented from the municipalities, as historically, Jews were restricted in owning real estate property.

Nazi troops occupied Latvia in early July of 1941. Currently, about two hundred mass execution sites of Jews have been identified in Latvia. More than 75,000 Latvian Jews, as well as about 24,000 Jews deported from other European countries, were exterminated here.

After the war, in many places where Jews had once lived, no one has left, and there was nobody to look after the Jewish cemeteries. The tombstones often were used by the local non-Jewish population for construction and other needs; a number of cemeteries were raised by the authorities and turned into parks or built over. It was only possible in a few towns for the handful of remaining Jews to try to take care of the cemeteries to the best of their abilities.

The majority of the mass graves remained unmarked for the entire Soviet period, and only in a few places the local authorities erected memorial signs, although these did not specify that those murdered at these sites were Holocaust victims.

Jewish life in Latvia revived from virtual non-existence during the late 1980's, with the liberalisation of the political system of the USSR. Among the goals of re-established Jewish communities, one of the main ones was the preservation of Jewish heritage and memory. Over the last twenty years, extensive research has been undertaken and currently, most of the mass graves are surveyed and marked; the cemeteries have been surveyed, and at some sites, restoration work has been conducted.

The participation of the Latvian Jewish community in the Lo Tishkach project was important for us both in evaluating the current state of Jewish burial places and in making an in-depth research of some of these sites, as well as in enabling the young generation of Latvian Jews to be in touch with their roots and the Jewish history of the region.

We hope that this project will contribute to the development and advance of the Latvian Jewish community, providing a new dimension of understanding the importance of preserving our cultural and spiritual heritage.



Arkady Suharenko  
Chairman of the Latvian Council of Jewish Communities

# FOREWORD

Do we need to know where Latvian Jews were buried centuries ago? And why should we, as people living in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, bother about particular sites and cemeteries destroyed long before we born? Aren't there more practical needs and problems worth expending the energies of young people? These are the questions that certainly come to the minds of many who hear about the European Jewish Cemeteries Initiative.

I will not try to answer them. Some things are impossible to explain - and one should hardly try. I am sure that most people will not need these explanations and simply feel deep respect and gratitude to those who made this important project a reality.

Latvian Jews make up an important part of European Jewry. I will not enumerate names of outstanding rabbis and warriors, we remember them. At least part of them, let's be frank.

And, like elsewhere in Europe, Latvian Jews make an important part of the history of my country, Latvia. Many - by far too many - people today tend to forget this. Or at least not to recall.

History, in the sense of the description and explanation of events of the past, depends on political fashion. But history in the sense of collective memory is much less so. Cemeteries and burial grounds embody, an ultimate truth. When they are forgotten, truth is forgotten.

Modern liberal philosophy teaches us that each person is unique and valuable. Meanwhile, each of us is a link in an endless chain from our ancestors to our descendants.

Some day, a moment comes when you realize these ties with the past - and with the future. And you wish to come to the place where your forefathers were buried. You need this to come to terms with your own life. And it is sad if you don't know where to come. This is the fate of many Latvian Jews, particularly those whose family trees were brutally cut down by the Holocaust. Many of these people, including those living now in Jerusalem, New York or Brussels, will now know where to go - thanks to Lo Tishkach and the enthusiasm of young Latvian Jews. I thank Lo Tishkach and its young activists on behalf of these people. And I add my own.



Boriss Cilevičs  
Member of Latvian Parliament  
Chair of Latvia-Israel Parliamentary Co-operation Group

# THE LATGALE REGION PROJECT

**T**his report on the Jewish mass graves of the Latgale region of Latvia, is part of a number of education and research projects undertaken by the Lo Tishkach Foundation in the spring and summer of 2012.

Set up in 2006, the Lo Tishkach Foundation European Jewish Cemeteries and Holocaust Mass Graves Initiative aims to collate all known data on Europe's Jewish cemeteries and mass graves, and to incorporate this vast source of information in an online database so that it is readily and easily accessible to everyone. This database now stands at over 11,000 individual records of cemeteries and mass graves and when complete may well contain details on close to 20,000 sites.

Much of the core information for this project was gathered from multiple sources but our records cannot be truly accurate and up-to-date without details of the situation on the ground.

With the support of the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (Claims Conference) for Lo Tishkach educational projects in the former Soviet Union, this material is now available for the Latgale region in Latvia.

During the spring and summer months of 2012, Thirty Nine mass graves in Latgale were located, visited, surveyed and photographed, creating a unique record of the region's Jewish heritage. Moreover, the surveys took place within the context of broad educational seminars for local youth and students in Latvia, building skills in leadership and volunteerism and raising awareness of Jewish history, heritage and identity.

This publication presents a summary of the data collected to provide a representation of the true state of Jewish cemeteries and Holocaust mass grave sites in Latvia today. Where necessary, the data shown in these reports catalogues and specifies also the vital work needed to preserve these sites. We are aware that this work is only the first stage in preservation and we therefore ask our readers and friends to assist us in finding the necessary resources to protect these sites. More detailed reports on each site, including a wider selection of photographs, can be found through the database on our website at [www.lo-tishkach.org](http://www.lo-tishkach.org).

In the past, concerned individuals and organisations have sought to protect and preserve individual cemeteries based on historical and family links to these sites. Their devotion to the protection of Jewish heritage has been invaluable in the preservation of many Jewish cemeteries and Holocaust mass grave sites across Europe.

But today, with the absence of Jewish communities in most villages and former shtetls and the speed of economic development in much of post-Soviet Central and Eastern Europe, we cannot afford to choose individual sites, ignoring the many other places that may lie within just a short radius.

Remnants and records of Jewish burial sites are disappearing fast. All of these sites must be visited and this vital information catalogued before it is too late.

That is the basis of the Lo Tishkach project; to preserve the historical record in all places where Jews once lived.

This project is one of many which took place in Eastern Europe in 2011-12 and which included all Latvia's regions as well as Lithuania and a number of Ukrainian oblasts carrying on our work already undertaken in the Kyiv, Odesa and Dnipropetrovsk oblasts in Ukraine and the Masovian Voivodeship in eastern Poland. These survey reports will eventually complete a true and detailed mapping process of all European Jewish burial sites.



We are aware that this work is only the first stage in preservation and therefore ask our readers and friends to assist us in securing the necessary resources to protect these sites.

The sheer number of Jewish cemeteries and mass graves in Latvia and indeed throughout Central and Eastern Europe demonstrates the scale of Jewish life which was wiped out in the Holocaust. It stands as an everlasting testament to the vibrancy of Jewish communities over many centuries in Europe and is a physical reminder that we should not forget.

The Lo Tishkach Foundation European Jewish Cemeteries Initiative is indebted to the many members of the Jewish Community of Latvia and abroad who made this project possible.

We wish to express our special thanks to the project's local coordinator, Gita Umanovska, Executive Director of the Jewish Community of Latvia and to its fieldwork coordinator, Irina Olekshishina. Our gratitude also goes to various experts who provided much of the educational material in the pre-survey seminars and to the intense research work undertaken enabling the surveys to take place; Ilya Lensky, Director of the "Jews in Latvia" museum in Riga and researcher, Eytan Shlomo Stackelberg. We are also very much indebted to the assistance provided by Meyer Meler in providing us with material he has gathered together over many years about the history of Jewish burial grounds in Latvia. Field work and research activity for this project was undertaken by dozens of young people from Latvia's Jewish communities.

The Lo Tishkach Foundation also acknowledges the financial support and political will of its founders and continuing sponsors—the Conference on Jewish Material Claims against Germany and the Conference of European Rabbis, without which our work would not be possible.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E. Bindinger'.

Elimelech Bindinger  
Program Manager  
Lo Tishkach Foundation

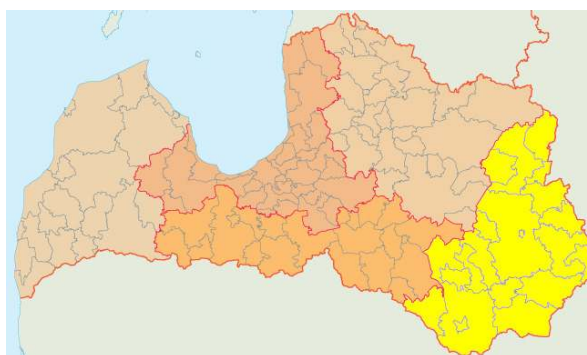
# JEWISH COMMUNITIES IN LATGALE

## Early History: The Origin of Jews in Latgale

The first Jews came to Latgale in the sixteenth century as they fled from Muscovy and the repression of Ivan the Terrible. The families settled in the present-day Kraslava district. When Latgale was acquired by Poland in 1562, the more favorable Polish laws for Jews took force in Latgale. A larger number of Jews came to Latgale in the 1600's as refugees from Poland. That is a century later than in Kurzeme or Vidzeme. They fled mistreatment in Ukraine and Belorussia during the time of the uprising of Bogdan Hmelnicki. They set up communities in Krustpils, Daugavpils and Kraslava. These Jews spoke Yiddish, which had been widely used in Poland and were religiously Orthodox (much more so than the German Jews) and strictly observed the Jewish traditions.

Jews in Latgale worked as customs collectors on the country's borders and were merchants in cities and traders in the rural areas. Most of them worked in trades and crafts and small commerce although some worked in agriculture. By end of the 1600's Latgale had about 5000 Jews. In 1784 there were 3698 Jews registered as permanent residents.

In comparison to the Jews of Kurzeme those who came to Latgale were less educated people. They spoke a Polish-influenced Hebrew and were strict in their observance of religion in their traditional life. The cultural center of these Jews was in Vilna whose rabbis conducted the religious matters of Latgale's Jews.



MAP OF THE REGIONS OF LATVIA; LOCATION OF THE LATGALE REGION INDICATED IN YELLOW

In Latgale since Jews could not own land they concentrated on crafts, trade and commerce. Some were in agriculture. Jewish occupations included: tanners, tailors, blacksmiths, locksmiths, shoemakers, watchmakers, glaziers, bakers, carpenters, butchers, weavers, fullers, storekeepers, merchants, pharmacists, and doctors. More enterprising Jews ran inns and pubs, produced alcohol and made beer. Some Jews also made their living by distributing goods to remote rural areas as peddlers carrying their merchandise in a box or on their back or with a horse.

There were Jews who rented the estates of the Polish noblemen. These renters tried to run the estates rationally in order to earn good money. Peasants on these estates were more exploited. This caused dissatisfaction and even hatred of these Jews. The same issue occurred for Jewish money-lenders or creditors.

The situation of the local Jews was determined by their legal division into two classes: merchants and middle-class people. The former obtained the right to take part in the elections of city councils. In the late 18th century about one-half of the urban residents in Latgale were Jews. In Daugavpils, 1373 of the city's 2200 residents were Jews.

The decree issued by Catherine II in 1791 that restricted Jews to the Pale of Settlement affected Latgale in a peculiar way. The movement of Jews from rural areas to towns and villages was forcibly stimulated. The life of town-dwellers was particularly difficult. A significant factor in the history of 19th century Latgale is the development of Jewish economic power where Jews were business owners, traders, moneylenders and even beer hall owners. But there were many Jews of modest means and many Jews who were quite poor.

## 19th Century

As of 1804 Jews residing in Latgale were restricted solely to cities and villages. The aim was to drive Jews out of farming and agricultural commerce in order to assist their Polish and Russian competitors. The Jews who were forced to live in the towns frequently found themselves in need because it was difficult to find work. They lived in cramped quarters, often fell ill and were at the times the poorest Jews in Latvia. But they endured all of these difficulties, and developed large families. They maintained a strong religious practice and faith in their Jewish national identity, regarding it as a God-given duty.

In 1839 of 4313 inhabitants in Daugavpils city, 2111 were Jews. The city had 7 Jewish prayer houses.

Until 1844, in Latgale, the Jews had their own self-governing institutions, the kagali which collected taxes, maintained order, supervised observance of civil and religious law. In 1848 there were about 11,000 Jews in Latgale with 7,471 Jews in the Daugavpils district.

Latgale, as a part of the Vitebsk guberniya or province, was within the Pale of Settlement which is why it had more Jews than Courland or Livonia where Jews were forbidden from permanent residence. In the latter, they could stay for only a six-month period to conduct trade or commerce. In 1897 there were 47,832 Jews in Latgale. The total population of Jews in the Vitebsk guberniya was 240,000.

In middle of the 19th century there were about 15,000 to 20,000 Jews in Latgale but the numbers increased significantly to 64,256 in 1897. The Jewish population continued to increase until shortly before WWI when the number had grown to about 80,000. In prewar Latgale Jews were in the majority in every major city in Latgale and in many towns while the rural population was mostly Latvian. The war caused a general depopulation of Latvia and many of its inhabitants became refugees. The number of Jews declined significantly during the war.

## Independent Latvia

In the first years of independent Latvia, Latgale had the largest concentration of Jews. In 1920 there were about 30,000 Jews in Latgale out of a total Jewish population of 79,368 in Latvia. But the population shift over two decades would result in Riga having the majority of Latvian Jews.

Of the largest towns in Latgale, Daugavpils, Rezekne and Kraslava all were heavily Jewish. In Daugavpils before the war 55% of its inhabitants were Jews. In 1920 11,824 of the total 28,938 were Jews. The city had 30 synagogues. Kraslava, the second largest town in the Daugavpils district, had a majority of Jews.

In 1925 there was still a high percentage of Jews in cities and towns. For example in Daugavpils (Dvinsk or Dunaburg) 40.8% of the inhabitants were Jewish while in Rezekne the figure was 41.5% and in Ludza 40.6%.

By 1935 the number of Jews in Latgale had decreased to 27,974 Jews in Latgale (29.9%).

## Cultural Autonomy

The most significant aspect of Jewish life in independent Latvia is that Jews had cultural autonomy. It was the only country in world with such an arrangement. Lithuania had a system with substantial differences.

Z. Michelson has noted: "nowhere in the world was there a more impressive and far-reaching resurrection of the Hebrew language and culture between the two world wars" like in the Baltic States (including Israel). He remarked that "the Jewish community in Latvia did not have conditions of a long-standing cultural network yet it contributed so much to the Hebrew cultural renaissance despite its size. This was largely due to the cultural autonomy accorded to it by independent Latvia". <sup>(footnote 1)</sup>

One of best sources for the Jewish view of conditions for Jews in Latvia is the report (written in 1941 by Latvian Jews in America). It was submitted to the U.S. Department of State by the American Jewish Committee Research Institute. This report states: "The Latvian constitution...established the equality of all citizens before the law without specifying details. When admitted into the League of Nations, Latvia pledged fair treatment of her minorities and lived up to her obligations."... "religious freedom never constituted a problem, either under the democratic rule or under the authoritarian regime established on May 15, 1934." (footnote 2)

#### Revisionism

Latvia is considered by many to be the cradle of Revisionism. The youth group Betar was started there. In 1923 Vladimir Jabotinsky visited Riga, Daugavpils, Rezekne, Ludza, and Liepaja. Jabotinsky was enthusiastic about his visit to the Baltic. In Riga he was greeted at the railway station by a large crowd and he was received enthusiastically by the university student academic society Hasmonaea (which was Zionist). He was impressed with conditions for Jews in Latvia describing it as an "oasis" and he liked the young society that was evolving there. He also wrote later: "when I was in Lithuania and Latvia I saw a young generation that is worth believing in. I will try to organize them for the cause." He returned to Latvia in 1925 as part of his lecture tour of Eastern Europe.

#### Political Life

Hebrew parties were very effective in municipal elections. In Latgale Jewish candidates had the greatest success. In some cities such as Ludza and Rezekne Jewish figures held as much as 50% of the seats. Jews were the mayors of various towns in Latgale.

Leonard Latkovski, Ph.D

Professor of History and International Studies  
Director, Latgale Research Center  
Hood College  
Frederick, Maryland, USA

#### Footnotes:

- 1) Z. Michaeli (Z. Michelson), "Jewish Cultural Autonomy and the Jewish School System" in M. Bobe, *Jews in Latvia*, Tel Aviv, 1971. p. 186.
- 2) The American Jewish Committee, Research Institute on Peace and Post-war Problems, "Jews in Latvia" in *Jewish Communities of Nazi-Occupied Europe*, July 1944. US Department of State, Decimal File

# USING THE CATALOGUE

**T**he Lo Tishkach Foundation sees as its principal function the preservation of the historical and physical record of Jewish cemeteries and mass graves throughout Europe. The burial grounds featured in this report are therefore graded by Lo Tishkach according to objective physical factors which determine the nature of the threat to their present and future existence. The level and type of assistance needed is also stated.

These factors fall under three distinct categories:

- *Identification:* Jewish cemeteries must either be identifiable as such or, in the event of their destruction, should be identified with a marker. Mass graves should be marked with a memorial mentioning the Jewish victims.
- *Demarcation/protection:* The boundaries of both Jewish cemeteries and mass graves should be demarcated and securely walled or fenced.
- *Maintenance:* All sites should receive at least occasional care.

**SERIOUSLY THREATENED:** Cemeteries and mass graves that do not meet the necessary criteria in any of the above categories are coded RED. Sites that meet one of the above criteria only and which, according to Lo Tishkach, are seriously threatened, are also coded red.

**THREATENED:** Cemeteries and mass graves that fulfil two of the above criteria, particularly those that are clearly identifiable but lack either protection or maintenance, are colour-coded AMBER. Sites that have been built upon but which feature an identifying marker are also coded amber, as are mass graves that are identified, protected and maintained, but which feature no details of the Jewish victims.

**NOT UNDER THREAT:** Identifiable cemeteries and appropriately identified mass graves with demarcated, protected boundaries that receive maintenance (even if, in the view of Lo Tishkach, this is insufficient) are colour-coded GREEN.



מצבת זכרון  
חרוטה בלבינו  
דמויות מולות מעצמו  
על ספינו נשינו וזקנינו  
ועל הרבנים דקהלתם  
שאשרפו ונשרפו מהחיות  
הפאשיסטיים  
בהדמייתנו





# CATALOGUE OF MASS GRAVES

## AGLONA JEWISH MASS GRAVE

Other names: Eglūna

LO TISHKACH ID NO.: 12186

ADDRESS: Somersetas Str., Aglona, Aglona municipality, Latgale, LATVIA



**EXECUTION DATE:** July - August 1941  
**ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PEOPLE BURIED:** 364, of whom 96 were Jews  
**CURRENT SIZE:** 15 x 24 Perimeter - Linear Meters  
**PRESENT USE:** Memorial

**DETAILS OF ACCESS:** The mass grave is located within the town of Aglona, at Somersetas Str. It is near highway P62, at the shore of Cirīšs lake.

**LOCATION & DEMARCATION:** The mass grave is located in an isolated urban setting, by the lake. A 30 meter long lane leads to the mass grave site. There is a metal sign with inscription at the beginning of the lane. The inscription reads: "Brāļu kapi / Братское кладбище" (Translation: Mass grave). The memorial is surrounded with a metal gauze fence. The exact location of the mass grave is unknown.

**GRAVES, GRAVESTONES, MEMORIAL MARKERS & STRUCTURES:** A Soviet memorial was erected in 1964 to commemorate the fallen Red Army soldiers (268 people) and Soviet activists. One of the memorial plaques reads: "Victims of German fascist terror" and mentions 16 non-Jewish names, and the Jews are mentioned with the inscription "and other 80 people". (According to other sources, 96 Jews were murdered here).

In 2007, the Council of Jewish communities of Latvia with financial support of the European Union placed a memorial stone with an inscription in Latvian: "Šajā mežā 1941. gada jūlijā un augustā tika noslepkavoti 96 Somersetas un apkārtnes ebreji: Trukšānu, Lurje, Kaganu, Ovsejkinu, Dimanšteinu, Zilberbrandtu ģimenes un citi." (Translation: In this forest in August 1941, 96 Jews from Somerset and the vicinity were killed: the families Trushkan, Lurye, Ovseykin, Dimanstein, Zilberbrandt and others.)

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:** The first execution, totaling fifty Jews, took place mid-July 1941. A total of eight ditches were dug. During July and August, victims (both Jews and non-Jews) were brought here and shot. Jews killed here came from Somersete, Vishki, Dagda, Graveri and other neighbouring settlements.

**CURRENT STATE:** The mass grave site is owned by the local municipality. Overall condition of the site is good. The mass grave is properly maintained.

**FURTHER DETAILS:** Somersetas ielā 34, Aglona, Aglonas novads, LV-5304; +371 65324573, +371 65324569; padome@aglona.lv

## ALUKSNE JEWISH MASS GRAVE I (FRATERNAL CEMETERY)

Other names: Aluliina | Marinburķ | Aluliin | Mariburķ | Marienburg

LO TISHKACH ID NO.: 10833

ADDRESS: Pils Street 31, Aluksne, Aluksne municipality, Latgale, LATVIA



**EXECUTION DATE:** August 12, 1941  
**ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PEOPLE BURIED:** 549 people, of whom 167 were Jews  
**CURRENT SIZE:** 1,300 meters<sup>2</sup>  
**PRESENT USE:** Memorial

**DETAILS OF ACCESS:** The mass grave is located in the cemetery of fallen soldiers at Pils Street 31, opposite the New Castle of Aluksne. No road sign marks the site.

**LOCATION & DEMARCATION:** The mass grave site is situated in an urban location, on flat land. It is part of the municipal cemetery, the Aluksne bralju kapi (translation: Cemetery of the Brethren). There is no fence around the mass grave, but there is a memorial plate located on a monument that holds an inscription in Russian.

**GRAVES, GRAVESTONES, MEMORIAL MARKERS & STRUCTURES:** This is the reburial site for the victims - the fallen soldiers of 1919 and 1944. In the years 1962-1963, remains of 167 Jews, killed in a pine forest called Sisenu in Aluksne, were reburied here. There is a Soviet-era memorial, a grey stone wall with plaques. There is also a statue of a sorrowful woman. The memorial plate contains an inscription in Russian: "Here lie 167 civilians from Aluksne district who fell victim to fascist terror – children, women, elderly people".

**JEWISH COMMUNITY ESTABLISHED:** Late 19<sup>th</sup> century  
**PRE-WAR JEWISH POPULATION:** 10 - 1,000  
**CURRENT JEWISH POPULATION:** None

**HISTORY OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY:** In 1920, there were 233 Jews in Aluksne (11% of the total population), in 1925 - 164 (5%), in 1930 - 184 (5%), in 1935 - 176 (4%), in 1940 - about 100 Jews (2%).

The Jews began settling here in the early 1890's. They were mostly engaged in trade. In the 1920's - 1930's, a Jewish library and a theatre group operated. In the 1930's, a considerable number of Jews moved to Riga. Most Jewish kids went to Latvian secondary school, but some studied in a cheder. The first rabbi of Aluksne was Yosef Kovnat.

On August 12, 1941 about 180 Jews were shot in Aluksne.

**CURRENT STATE:** The mass grave site is owned by the local municipality. Overall condition of the site is good. The mass grave is properly maintained.

**FURTHER DETAILS:** Alūksnes novada dome, Dārza ielā 11, Alūksnē, LV-4301; +371 64381499; dome@aluksne.lv

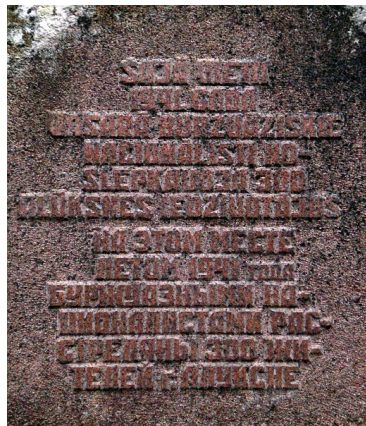


## ALUKSNE JEWISH MASS GRAVE II (SISENU FOREST)

Other names: Aluliina | Marinburķ | Aluliin | Mariburķ | Marienburg

LO TISHKACH ID NO.: 10834

ADDRESS: Town outskirts, Aluksne, Aluksne municipality, Latgale, LATVIA



**EXECUTION DATE:** August 12, 1941  
**ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PEOPLE BURIED:** 300 (or 191), of whom 167 were Jews  
**CURRENT SIZE:** 120 meters<sup>2</sup>  
**PRESENT USE:** Memorial

**DETAILS OF ACCESS:** To reach the site, go down Pleskavas Street for about 600 meters, then walk for 300 meters into the forest.

**LOCATION & DEMARCATION:** The mass grave site is situated in an isolated suburban location, on flat land. There is no fence around the site, but there is a memorial sign and monument.

**GRAVES, GRAVESTONES, MEMORIAL MARKERS & STRUCTURES:** There is a grey vertical stone with an inscription in Latvian. The inscription reads: "Šajā vietā 1941. gada vasarā buržuāziskie nacionālisti noslepkavoja 300 Alūksnes iedzīvotājus." (Translation: "At this site in summer 1941 the Bourgeois nationalists shot 300 residents of Aluksne.") The victims were killed in July, 1941. Jews, Latvians, Russians, and Gypsies were among those murdered. Reburial was made in 1962-63 in the cemetery of fallen soldiers in Aluksne.

**JEWISH COMMUNITY ESTABLISHED:** Late 19<sup>th</sup> century  
**PRE-WAR JEWISH POPULATION:** 10 - 1,000  
**CURRENT JEWISH POPULATION:** None

**HISTORY OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY:** In 1920, there were 233 Jews in Aluksne (11% of the total population), in 1925 - 164 (5%), in 1930 - 184 (5%), in 1935 - 176 (4%), in 1940 - about 100 Jews (2%). The Jews began settling here in the early 1890's. They were mostly engaged in trade. In the 1920's - 1930's, a Jewish library and a theatre group operated. In the 1930's, a considerable number of Jews moved to Riga. Most Jewish kids went to Latvian secondary school, but some studied in a cheder. The first rabbi of Aluksne was Yosef Kovnat. On August 12, 1941 about 180 Jews were shot in Aluksne.

**CURRENT STATE:** The mass grave site is owned by the local municipality. Overall condition of the site is in fair condition.

**FURTHER DETAILS:** Alūksnes novada dome, Dārza ielā 11, Alūksnē, LV-4301; +371 64381499; dome@aluksne.lv

## APE JEWISH MASS GRAVE

Other names: Hoppenhof | Hopa | Ape

LO TISHKACH ID NO.: 10835

ADDRESS: Vaidavas Street 21, Ape, Ape municipality, Latgale, LATVIA



**EXECUTION DATE:** August 13, 1941  
**ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PEOPLE BURIED:** over 400, of whom 96 were Jews  
**CURRENT SIZE:** 1625 meters<sup>2</sup>  
**PRESENT USE:** Memorial

**DETAILS OF ACCESS:** There is a sign on the corner of Vaidavas and Turgus Streets which directs travelers to the site, located at Vaidavas Street 21. Access is open to all.

**LOCATION & DEMARCATION:** The mass grave territory is surrounded by trees and bushes. The site is in fair condition. A restoration of the whole mass grave was done by the Russian Foundation "Memorial" in 2004.

**GRAVES, GRAVESTONES, MEMORIAL MARKERS & STRUCTURES:** This mass grave is the reburial site of Jews killed in August 1941. In 1941 the Jews were arrested and imprisoned at an old store. They were taken to the execution site on foot, 3 km outside of the city, by the road Riga-Pskov, near the Mezha cemetery. There were 22 children among the victims.

When in 1965-67 local residents were plundering the remains, the authorities decided to rebury the Jews. Wulf Faivelson, who survived the Holocaust, erected the first two Jewish memorial signs on June 6, 1991. During the restoration in 2004 only one memorial sign was renewed with the same inscription in Latvian: "Ninety-six Jews. Victims of 1941 fascistic terror." A personal memorial sign dedicated to Faivelson's parents remains without renovation.

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**JEWISH COMMUNITY ESTABLISHED:** Late 19<sup>th</sup> century  
**CURRENT JEWISH POPULATION:** None

**HISTORY OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY:** The town of Ape was part of the Russian Empire since 1721, Latvian Republic from 1916 to 1940, and Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic in the years 1940 - 1991.

In the early 20th century, there were about 200 Jews in Ape; in 1920 - 120 (16% of the total population), in 1925 - 99 (10%), in 1930 - 90 (9,5%), in 1935 - 82 Jews (8,9%).

By the time Ape was occupied by Nazi troops, on July 5, 1941, only few Jews had evacuated to eastern regions of the USSR. All the remaining Jews from Ape were shot in the summer of 1941.

**CURRENT STATE:** The mass grave territory is owned by local municipality. Overall condition of the site is acceptable, it is properly maintained.

**FURTHER DETAILS:** Apes novada dome - Stacijas iela 2, Ape, Apes novads, LV-4337; Latvia, +371 64307220; administracija@ape.lv



## BALVI JEWISH MASS GRAVE (CELMINU FOREST)

Other names: Balwa | Bolwen | Baloffsk | Bolva | Боловск

LO TISHKACH ID NO.: 12187

ADDRESS: Town outskirts, Balvi, Balvi municipality, Latgale, LATVIA



**EXECUTION DATE:** August 9, 1941  
**ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PEOPLE BURIED:** Several hundred people, of whom over 300 were Jews  
**CURRENT SIZE:** 10 x 20 Perimeter - Linear Meters  
**PRESENT USE:** Memorial

**DETAILS OF ACCESS:** The site is located along the Balvi - Silaciems road. To reach the site, continue along the road for 1 km after the Kurna river, then go left into the forest, for 200 meters. Access is open to all.

**LOCATION & DEMARCATION:** The mass grave is situated in the forest outside Balvi, in an isolated location on flat land. The territory is surrounded by a wooden fence and a hedge.

**GRAVES, GRAVESTONES, MEMORIAL MARKERS & STRUCTURES:** There is a monument in the shape of a tombstone with a plate and inscription in Russian. The monument was erected after WWII by the relatives of those killed. The inscription reads: "Eternal memory to the deceased Jewish population on Balvi, shot by German invaders on August 9, 1941. From relatives".

In August 1941, the local Jews were arrested and taken to the city quarter where the synagogue was located. The people were taken to the execution site by cars and on foot.

**JEWISH COMMUNITY ESTABLISHED:** Late 19<sup>th</sup> century  
**CURRENT JEWISH POPULATION:** None

**HISTORY OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY:** Jews from surrounding villages, mainly from Verpuleva, began to settle in Balvi after the introduction of the "Temporary Rules" in 1882, which prohibited Jews to live in the countryside.

In 1919, twenty six Jews from Balvi served in the Latgale Rifles Regiment of the Latvian army, some of them as volunteers, and took part in the war against the Bolsheviks. One of these soldiers, Jacob Zilberbrand, became an officer. A Jewish house in Balvi was also used as a military hospital. In 1920, there were 441 Jews in Balvi (54% of the total population); in 1935 - 379 (19%). Most of the Jews were involved in trade and Jews owned about half of the shops and enterprises in the town.

Until July 2, 1941, Soviet authorities prohibited evacuation from Balvi and only gave permission to evacuate when the German troops were 20 kilometers away from the town. On the same day, the town was occupied.

Balvi Jews who failed to leave the town, were placed in a ghetto in the so-called Gypsy Quarter and on August 9 of the same year, were executed in the Tselmink forest, 6 km outside the town.

A list of Balvi war victims records the names of 362 people and includes the names of 20 who died on the front as soldiers of the Red Army. Only one Jew from those remaining in Balvi survived, since he was protected by the local priest.

In 1946, two Jewish families lived in Balvi. Today, there are no Jews in the town. Most of the town's Jews (around 19% of the population) perished in the Stahlecker phase of the Holocaust in August 1941.

**CURRENT STATE:** The mass grave territory is owned by local municipality. Overall condition of the site is acceptable, vegetation is regularly cleared.

**FURTHER DETAILS:** Balvu novads pašvaldība - Bērzpils iela 1a, Balvi, Balvu novads, LV-4501; +371 64522453; dome@balvi.lv



## DAGDA JEWISH MASS GRAVE

Other name: Dagden

LO TISHKACH ID NO.: 10828

ADDRESS: Plavu Street, 7, Dagda, Dagda municipality, Latgale, LATVIA



**EXECUTION DATE:** Summer 1941  
**ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PEOPLE BURIED:** Over 10 within the cemetery, and 120 outside  
**CURRENT SIZE:** 50 meters<sup>2</sup>  
**PRESENT USE:** Memorial

**DETAILS OF ACCESS:** The site is located within town, opposite Meza Street, on the territory of the Jewish cemetery.

**LOCATION & DEMARCATION:** There are two mass grave sites, one within Jewish cemetery, and another one beyond the cemetery fence. A metal gauze fence surrounds the memorial stele.

**GRAVES, GRAVESTONES, MEMORIAL MARKERS & STRUCTURES:** There are two obelisks of black granite, erected in Soviet times.

The inscription on Mass Grave №1 (outside the cemetery boundary) reads in Russian: "Здесь 1 августа 1941 г. зверски убиты немецко-фашистскими захватчиками и их пособниками 120 мирных жителей м. Дагды, в том числе женщины и дети". (Translation: Here on August 1, 1941 the German fascist invaders and their collaborators brutally killed 120 civilians of Dagda, including women and children). On the other side of the obelisk there is an inscription in Yiddish (with spelling mistakes).

The Mass Grave №2 (within the cemetery) bears an inscription in Russian: "Здесь в июле 1941 г. зверски убиты немецко-фашистскими захватчиками и их пособниками мирные жители м. Дагда Э. и Х. Гордин, Я. Сегаль, И. Каган и дочь, сем. Льгов-Букенгольц, Р. Израилит, С. Каган и др." (Translation: Here in July 1941 the German fascist invaders and their collaborators brutally killed civilians of Dagda: E. and Kh.Gordin, Y.Segal, I.Kagan and daughter, the Lgov-Buckenholtz family, R.Israelit, S.Kagan and others.)

**JEWISH COMMUNITY ESTABLISHED:** Early 19<sup>th</sup> century  
**CURRENT JEWISH POPULATION:** None

**HISTORY OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY:** The first reliable data on the Jewish population in Dagda dates back to 1847 when 77 Jews were recorded as living in the town.

In 1897, the Jewish population had already reached 1,026 Jews, making up 68% of the total population.

In 1935, 589 Jews (53% of the population) lived in Dagda. Out of the 209 houses in the town, 121 belonged to Jews who also owned almost all the shops and workshops (85 of 89).

After Ulman's Putsch in 1934, the economic activity of the Jews diminished, because of the establishment of a regional peasants' cooperative which became a serious competitor to the Jewish merchants. The town also suffered from fires; in the autumn of 1933, 20 Jewish houses and 15 shops burned down.

On July 25, 1941, some of Dagda's Jews were sent to the Daugavpils ghetto and those who remained in the town were shot on August 1, 1941 at the Jewish cemetery.

**CURRENT STATE:** The mass grave territory is owned by the local municipality. Overall condition of the site is acceptable, vegetation is regularly cleared, and the territory is clean.

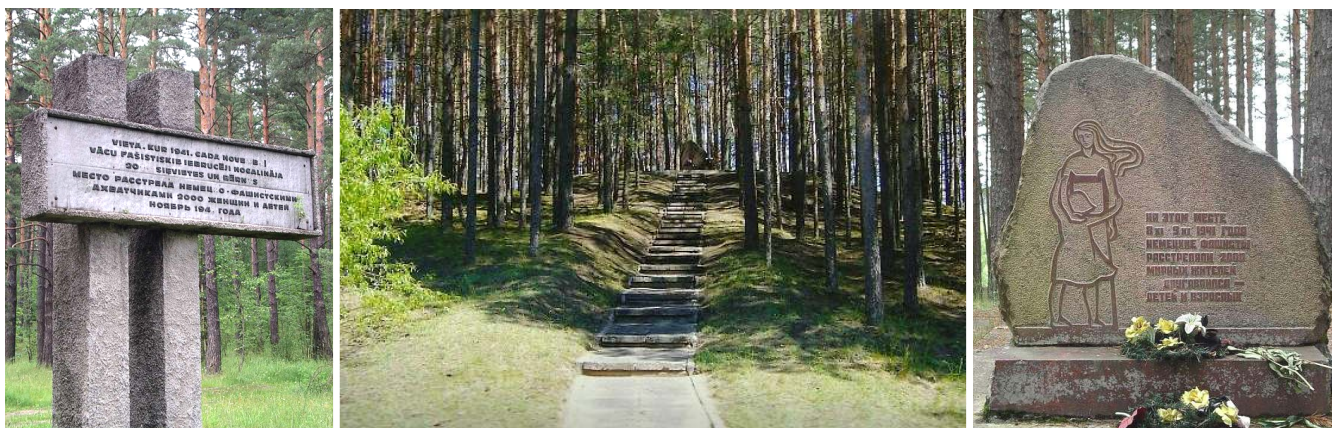
**FURTHER DETAILS:** Dagdas novada pašvaldība - Alejas iela 4, Dagda, Dagdas novads, LV-5674; +371 656 81436; dome@dagda.lv

## DAUGAVPILS JEWISH MASS GRAVE I (MEZHCIEMS)

Other names: Daugpilis | Dünaburg | Dvinsk | Dyneburg | Džvinsk | Даугавпилс

LO TISHKACH ID NO.: 10664

ADDRESS: Town outskirts, Daugavpils, Daugavpils City, Latgale, LATVIA



**EXECUTION DATE:** November 8-9, 1941  
**ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PEOPLE BURIED:** 1,134  
**CURRENT SIZE:** 250 meters<sup>2</sup>  
**PRESENT USE:** Memorial

**DETAILS OF ACCESS:** To reach the site, go from Daugavpils along the railroad towards Riga, continue along Liepziedu Str. for about 700 meters after the crossroads with Ventas Str. The mass grave is located next to Mezhciems railway station, to the right, in the forest.

**LOCATION & DEMARCATION:** The mass grave is located in an isolated urban location, on flat land. Marking the site is a road sign in the form of two concrete poles with a plate which reads: "Execution site of 2000 women and children, shot by German fascist invaders. November 1941". The mass grave has no fence or gate.

**GRAVES, GRAVESTONES, MEMORIAL MARKERS & STRUCTURES:** There is a monument in the forest, on top of the hill, with an image of a woman with child, and an inscription in Russian: "In this place on 8th and 9th November of 1941, 2000 inhabitants of Daugavpils were shot, both adults and children". The monument was erected in Soviet times, exact date is unknown.

**JEWISH COMMUNITY ESTABLISHED:** Mid-18<sup>th</sup> century  
**CURRENT JEWISH POPULATION:** 400

**HISTORY OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY:** Documents dating from 1772 mention 136 Jewish taxpayers in the town. The first reliable data on the number of Jewish population dates back to 1784, when 1,773 Jews were registered. Then known as Dinaburg, the city was then the largest population centre in Latvia. From 1784 onwards, the city had a large and active Jewish population with prominent personalities and from 1785, Jews held elected posts in the local government structure. In 1815, 1,559 Jews lived in the city, making up 57% of the total population. In 1823, Jews expelled from the villages of the Vitebsk gubernia began to arrive in the city with Jewish artisans and merchants attracted by the location of the important Dinaburg castle, which became an important source of income for many Jews. This was to make the city one of the most prominent Jewish centres in the Russian Empire. According to the Russian census of 1897, out of the total population of 69,700, Jews constituted 32,400 (44%). As part of the Russian Empire, the town was called Dvinsk (1893-1920). It was renamed Daugavpils in 1920 as part of the newly-created independent Latvia. The city was the site of the Battle of Daugavpils from 1919 to 1920. Daugavpils was part of the Soviet Union from 1940-41 and 1944-1991 and occupied from 1941-44.

By the time of the liberation of Daugavpils by the Red Army, only 20 Jews remained who had been hidden by local people.

After WWII, about 500 Holocaust survivors returned to Daugavpils together with Jews from other parts of the Soviet Union and the synagogue was reconstituted. Currently, the town is home to about 400 Jews. Daugavpils' Jewish Community and Daugavpils' Jewish Religious Community operate in the town (both organizations are members of the Council of Jewish Communities of Latvia). There is a functioning synagogue and a museum of the history of the Jews of Latgale. Various other Jewish organizations are active in the region.

**CURRENT STATE:** The mass grave territory is owned by local municipality. Overall condition of the site is acceptable and some restoration has been undertaken.

**FURTHER DETAILS:** Daugavpils pilsetas dome - Krišjana Valdemara iela 1, Daugavpils, LV-5401; +371 654 04344, +371 654 04399; info@daugavpils.lv



## DAUGAVPILS JEWISH MASS GRAVE II (MEMORIAL TO GHETTO VICTIMS)

Other names: Daugpilis | Dünaburg | Dvinsk | Dyneburg | Džvinsk | Даугавпилс

LO TISHKACH ID NO.: 10665

ADDRESS: Mezciems forest, Daugavpils, Daugavpils City, Latgale, LATVIA



**EXECUTION DATE:** November 8-9, 1941  
**ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PEOPLE BURIED:** 15,000  
**CURRENT SIZE:** 1,000 meters<sup>2</sup>  
**PRESENT USE:** Memorial

**DETAILS OF ACCESS:** To reach the mass grave site, take Daugavas Street, turn onto road P67 and drive towards Riga for about 900 metres.

**LOCATION & DEMARCATION:** The mass grave is located in an isolated suburban location, on flat land. There is a road sign with the following Latvian inscription: "Ebreju tautas genocīda upuru piemiņas vieta" (Translation: Memorial to the victims of Jewish people genocide).

**GRAVES, GRAVESTONES, MEMORIAL MARKERS & STRUCTURES:** The memorial was established on November 10, 1991. It contains several stones with the names of European countries and numbers of Jews murdered there. One of the stones bears an inscription "Daugavpils - 15 Thousand". There is also an obelisk "In memory of ghetto victims". In the centre of the memorial there is a stone with an image of the Star of David which reads in Yiddish: "In the memory of the children of Israel". The architect of the memorial is a sculptor Oleg Marinokha.

The shootings continued from July 1941 until late 1943. Both Jews (a major part) and representatives of other nationalities were murdered here. It is impossible to define the exact number of victims. Jews had been kept in a ghetto and taken in groups at different dates to the shooting site. In autumn 1943, a group of Jews were brought here and ordered to exhume and burn the corpses.

In the 1950's, part of the mass graves were discovered. The remains of victims were reburied at the Communal cemetery of Daugavpils. In the late 1980's, more remains were found. The local Jewish community carried out the excavation works. On July 9, 1989, these remains were reburied where today stands the Memorial to Victims of Fascism.

**JEWISH COMMUNITY ESTABLISHED:** Mid-18<sup>th</sup> century  
**CURRENT JEWISH POPULATION:** 400

**HISTORY OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY:** Documents dating from 1772 mention 136 Jewish taxpayers in the town. The first reliable data on the number of Jewish population dates back to 1784, when 1,773 Jews were registered. Then known as Dinaburg, the city was then the largest population centre in Latvia. In 1815, 1,559 Jews lived in the city, making up 57% of the total population.

In 1823, Jews expelled from the villages of the Vitebsk gubernia began to arrive in the city with Jewish artisans and merchants attracted by the location of the important Dinaburg castle, which became an important source of income for many Jews. This was to make the city one of the most prominent Jewish centres in the Russian Empire.

After WWII, about 500 Holocaust survivors returned to Daugavpils together with Jews from other parts of the Soviet Union and the synagogue was reconstituted. Currently, the town is home to about 400 Jews. Daugavpils' Jewish Community and Daugavpils' Jewish Religious Community operate in the town (both organizations are members of the Council of Jewish Communities of Latvia). There is a functioning synagogue and a museum of the history of the Jews of Latgale. Various other Jewish organizations are active in the region.

**CURRENT STATE:** The mass grave territory is owned by local municipality. The site is in good condition and is well maintained.

**FURTHER DETAILS:** Daugavpils pilsetas dome - Krišjana Valdemara iela 1, Daugavpils, LV-5401; +371 654 04344, +371 654 04399; info@daugavpils.lv

## DAUGAVPILS JEWISH MASS GRAVE III (RAILWAY GARDEN)

Other names: Daugpilis | Dünaburg | Dvinsk | Dyneburg | Džvinsk | Даугавпилс

LO TISHKACH ID NO.: 10666

ADDRESS: I precu stacija Street 30a (Railway Station I), Daugavpils, Daugavpils City, Latgale, LATVIA



**EXECUTION DATE:** July 1941  
**ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PEOPLE BURIED:** About 15,000, of whom 1,000 were Jews  
**CURRENT SIZE:** 15 x 12 Perimeter - Linear Meters  
**PRESENT USE:** Memorial

**DETAILS OF ACCESS:** The mass grave is located within Daugavpils, in Gajok city district. A road sign marks the site.

**LOCATION & DEMARCATION:** The mass grave is located in an isolated suburban location, on flat land. The territory is not fenced. Access is open to all.

**GRAVES, GRAVESTONES, MEMORIAL MARKERS & STRUCTURES:** There is a monument with an inscription in Russian: "Here lie the soldiers and commanders of the Soviet army, who were murdered by the German - Nazi invaders during 1941 - 1945. Eternal memory to the deceased."

In 2007, the Council of Latvian Jewish communities erected a memorial sign made of two black granite steles bearing inscriptions in Latvian, Russian, English and Yiddish: "In July 1941, the Nazis murdered over 1,000 Jews from Daugavpils at this site".

Approximately 15,000 people from Daugavpils were killed and buried here from 1941 to 1945. 1,500 of them were Jews. A number of other people were also killed here under the P. Stucka Soviet regime. No reburials were made.

**JEWISH COMMUNITY ESTABLISHED:** Mid-18<sup>th</sup> century  
**CURRENT JEWISH POPULATION:** 400

**HISTORY OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY:** Documents dating from 1772 mention 136 Jewish taxpayers in the town. The first reliable data on the number of Jewish population dates back to 1784, when 1,773 Jews were registered. Then known as Dinaburg, the city was then the largest population centre in Latvia. From 1784 onwards, the city had a large and active Jewish population with prominent personalities and from 1785, Jews held elected posts in the local government structure. In 1815, 1,559 Jews lived in the city, making up 57% of the total population. In 1823, Jews expelled from the villages of the Vitebsk gubernia began to arrive in the city with Jewish artisans and merchants attracted by the location of the important Dinaburg castle, which became an important source of income for many Jews. This was to make the city one of the most prominent Jewish centres in the Russian Empire. According to the Russian census of 1897, out of the total population of 69,700, Jews constituted 32,400 (44%). As part of the Russian Empire, the town was called Dvinsk (1893-1920). It was renamed Daugavpils in 1920 as part of the newly-created independent Latvia. The city was the site of the Battle of Daugavpils from 1919 to 1920. Daugavpils was part of the Soviet Union from 1940-41 and 1944-1991 and occupied from 1941-44.

By the time of the liberation of Daugavpils by the Red Army, only 20 Jews remained who had been hidden by local people. After WWII, about 500 Holocaust survivors returned to Daugavpils together with Jews from other parts of the Soviet Union and the synagogue was reconstituted. Currently, the town is home to about 400 Jews. Daugavpils' Jewish Community and Daugavpils' Jewish Religious Community operate in the town (both organizations are members of the Council of Jewish Communities of Latvia). There is a functioning synagogue and a museum of the history of the Jews of Latgale. Various other Jewish organizations are active in the region.

**CURRENT STATE:** The mass grave territory is owned by the local municipality. The territory is clean.

**FURTHER DETAILS:** A fence surrounding the site should be erected. Contact Lo-Tishkach to find out how to help.



## DAUGAVPILS JEWISH MASS GRAVE IV (COMMUNAL CEMETERY)

Other names: Daugpilis | Dünaburg | Dvinsk | Dyneburg | Džvinsk | Даугавпилс

LO TISHKACH ID NO.: 10667

ADDRESS: 18 Novembra Street, 220, Daugavpils, Daugavpils City, Latgale, LATVIA



**REBURIAL DATE:** 1970's  
**ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PEOPLE BURIED:** 15 families  
**CURRENT SIZE:** 3 x 2 Perimeter - Linear Meters  
**PRESENT USE:** Memorial

**DETAILS OF ACCESS:** The mass grave is part of municipal cemetery of Daugavpils, it is situated near "Komunalie Kapi" tram station. A road sign marks the site.

**LOCATION & DEMARCATION:** The mass grave is located in the Jewish part of the communal cemetery, on flat land. The territory is surrounded with a hedge. Access is open to all.

**GRAVES, GRAVESTONES, MEMORIAL MARKERS & STRUCTURES:** There is a low horizontal granite plate with an inscription in Russian and Yiddish: "Here lie 15 Jewish families, shot by German invaders in the years 1941-1945".

The human remains were found in the 1950's at Mezhiems Mass Grave, where prisoners of Daugavpils ghetto had been shot. The remains were initially reburied at the Old Jewish Cemetery in Daugavpils. When the Old cemetery was closed in the late 1970's, the grave was moved to the Communal cemetery. However it is unknown whether remains were reburied or just the monument moved to another location.

**JEWISH COMMUNITY ESTABLISHED:** Mid-18<sup>th</sup> century  
**CURRENT JEWISH POPULATION:** 400

**HISTORY OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY:** Documents dating from 1772 mention 136 Jewish taxpayers in the town. The first reliable data on the number of Jewish population dates back to 1784, when 1,773 Jews were registered. Then known as Dinaburg, the city was then the largest population centre in Latvia. From 1784 onwards, the city had a large and active Jewish population with prominent personalities and from 1785, Jews held elected posts in the local government structure. In 1815, 1,559 Jews lived in the city, making up 57% of the total population. In 1823, Jews expelled from the villages of the Vitebsk gubernia began to arrive in the city with Jewish artisans and merchants attracted by the location of the important Dinaburg castle, which became an important source of income for many Jews. This was to make the city one of the most prominent Jewish centres in the Russian Empire. According to the Russian census of 1897, out of the total population of 69,700, Jews constituted 32,400 (44%). As part of the Russian Empire, the town was called Dvinsk (1893-1920). It was renamed Daugavpils in 1920 as part of the newly-created independent Latvia. The city was the site of the Battle of Daugavpils from 1919 to 1920. Daugavpils was part of the Soviet Union from 1940-41 and 1944-1991 and occupied from 1941-44.

By the time of the liberation of Daugavpils by the Red Army, only 20 Jews remained who had been hidden by local people.

After WWII, about 500 Holocaust survivors returned to Daugavpils together with Jews from other parts of the Soviet Union and the synagogue was reconstituted. Currently, the town is home to about 400 Jews. Daugavpils' Jewish Community and Daugavpils' Jewish Religious Community operate in the town (both organizations are members of the Council of Jewish Communities of Latvia). There is a functioning synagogue and a museum of the history of the Jews of Latgale. Various other Jewish organizations are active in the region.

**CURRENT STATE:** The mass grave territory is owned by local municipality. The site is in good condition and is properly maintained.

**FURTHER DETAILS:** Daugavpils pilsetas dome - Krišjana Valdemara iela 1, Daugavpils, LV-5401; +371 654 04344, +371 654 04399; info@daugavpils.lv

## DAUGAVPILS JEWISH MASS GRAVE V (NAZI VICTIMS MEMORIAL)

Other names: Daugpilis | Dünaburg | Dvinsk | Dyneburg | Dźvinsk | Даугавпилс

LO TISHKACH ID NO.: 10668

ADDRESS: Mezciems Forest, Daugavpils, Daugavpils City, Latgale, LATVIA



<b>EXECUTION DATE:</b>	1941 - 1944
<b>ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PEOPLE BURIED:</b>	Unknown
<b>CURRENT SIZE:</b>	85 x 200 Perimeter - Linear Meters
<b>PRESENT USE:</b>	Memorial

**DETAILS OF ACCESS:** To reach the site, go along Daugavas Str. and continue on Cerinu Str. until the sign "Fašisma terora upuru kapi" (Cemetery of victims of fascist terror).

**LOCATION & DEMARCATION:** The mass grave is situated in an isolated suburban location, on flat land. The territory is surrounded with a hedge, and a non-locking gate. The inscription on the gate reads: "In this forest, in the years 1941 - 1944 the fascist invaders murdered over 100,000 people". Access to the site is open to all.

**GRAVES, GRAVESTONES, MEMORIAL MARKERS & STRUCTURES:** The memorial was established in the 1950's. In 1960, a multi-figure monument was erected here. It was covered with copper, but the metal was stolen in the early 1990's. For a long time the remains of the monument stood on the pedestal. In 2005, local authorities put a white stele instead. In 1989, remains of Jewish victims were reburied here.

In the late 1980's, several ditches with human remains were found in Mezciems. Jewish activists with the help of local municipal authorities continued the excavation works for two weeks. The remains were put in twenty five coffins and on July 9, 1989 were reburied at the memorial to Nazi victims. The number of people reburied here is unknown.

At the site of reburial, the Council of Jewish communities of Latvia erected two granite plates in 2007. The plates bear the following inscription in Latvian, Russian, English and Hebrew: "The remains of prisoners of the Daugavpils ghetto are buried here".

<b>JEWISH COMMUNITY ESTABLISHED:</b>	Mid-18 <sup>th</sup> century
<b>CURRENT JEWISH POPULATION:</b>	400

**HISTORY OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY:** Documents dating from 1772 mention 136 Jewish taxpayers in the town. The first reliable data on the number of Jewish population dates back to 1784, when 1,773 Jews were registered. Then known as Dinaburg, the city was then the largest population centre in Latvia. From 1784 onwards, the city had a large and active Jewish population with prominent personalities and from 1785, Jews held elected posts in the local government structure. In 1815, 1,559 Jews lived in the city, making up 57% of the total population. In 1823, Jews expelled from the villages of the Vitebsk gubernia began to arrive in the city with Jewish artisans and merchants attracted by the location of the important Dinaburg castle, which became an important source of income for many Jews. This was to make the city one of the most prominent Jewish centres in the Russian Empire. By the time of the liberation of Daugavpils by the Red Army, only 20 Jews remained who had been hidden by local people.

After WWII, about 500 Holocaust survivors returned to Daugavpils together with Jews from other parts of the Soviet Union and the synagogue was reconstituted. Currently, the town is home to about 400 Jews. Daugavpils' Jewish Community and Daugavpils' Jewish Religious Community operate in the town (both organizations are members of the Council of Jewish Communities of Latvia). There is a functioning synagogue and a museum of the history of the Jews of Latgale. Various other Jewish organizations are active in the region.

**CURRENT STATE:** The mass grave territory is owned by the local municipality. The site is in fair condition and is properly maintained.

**FURTHER DETAILS:** Daugavpils pilsetas dome - Krišjana Valdemara iela 1, Daugavpils, LV-5401; +371 654 04344, +371 654 04399; info@daugavpils.lv

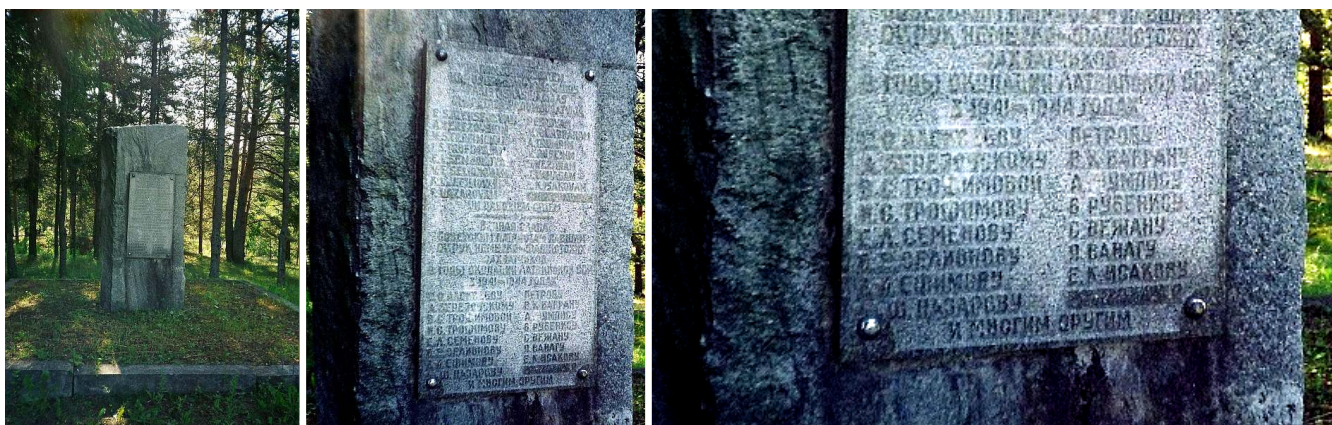


# ILUKSTE JEWISH MASS GRAVE

Other names: Ilukszta | Илуксть | Illuxt | Alukste | Ilukst

LO TISHKACH ID NO.: 10844

ADDRESS: Town outskirts, Ilukste, Daugavpils municipality, Latgale, LATVIA



**EXECUTION DATE:** July 20-22, 1943  
**ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PEOPLE BURIED:** Over 100, of whom 90 were Jews  
**CURRENT SIZE:** 16 meters<sup>2</sup>  
**PRESENT USE:** Memorial

**DETAILS OF ACCESS:** In order to reach the site, go along Daugavas Str. and proceed to Cerinu Str. until the sign “Fašisma terora upuru kapi” (Cemetery of victims of fascist terror).

**LOCATION & DEMARCATION:** The location itself is referred to as “Ilukstes mezs” (Ilukste forest). There are no road signs marking the site. To get there, drive to the end of Smilsu Street in Ilukste, then take the road from Ilukste to Daugavpils and continue for 1 km until the Pilsetnieki farmyard. Access to the site is open to all.

**GRAVES, GRAVESTONES, MEMORIAL MARKERS & STRUCTURES:** A monument at the site bears the following inscription in Russian and Latvian: “Eternal memory to Soviet citizens, murdered by German fascist occupiers during occupation of Latvian SSR in 1941-1945”. Following this is a list of surnames, as well as a distinction of those unknown listed as “and others”. None of the surnames are Jewish, and local people say that the “others” refer to Jewish victims.

There were three sessions of execution. At first, eight Jews from Lithuania were murdered - the ones who had dug the ditch. A total of sixty Jews from Ilukste were shot here, as well as thirty Jewish refugees from Lithuania, and some other civilians and prisoners of war.

**JEWISH COMMUNITY ESTABLISHED:** Late 18<sup>th</sup> century  
**CURRENT JEWISH POPULATION:** -

**HISTORY OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY:** In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Jews were not allowed to settle in Ilukste. The first two Jewish tailors settled in Ilukste in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. In 1832, the first ‘shoyhet’ (ritual slaughterer) was invited to the town, and in 1845, a synagogue and a mikvah were built.

In the years 1847 - 55, the rabbi in Ilukste was Moishe-Avrom from Brisk, in 1856 - 63 - Baykish (follower of the Hassidic movement). In 1897, the Jewish community of Ilukste numbered 842 people (23% of the total population), in 1910 - 1016 (28,6%), in 1920 - 4 (0,8%), in 1925 - 30 (3%), in 1930 - 58 (5%), in 1935 - 71 (5%).

During WWI Jews fled from Ilukste. In the 1920’s, the community reemerged. Jews owned eight businesses in the town. In late June 1941, Ilukste was invaded by German troops. In July 1941, 507 Jews were murdered, including 330 refugees from Lithuania.

**CURRENT STATE:** The mass grave territory is owned by the local municipality. Vegetation has been cleaned

**FURTHER DETAILS:** No wall or gate surround the mass grave site. A fence should be erected. Contact Lo-Tishkach to find out how to help.

## KARSAVA JEWISH MASS GRAVE

Other names: Karsau | Korsowka | Korsove | Korsovke | Корсовка

LO TISHKACH ID NO.: 10765

ADDRESS: Town outskirts, Karsava, Karsava municipality, Latgale, LATVIA



**EXECUTION DATE:** August 21, 1941  
**ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PEOPLE BURIED:** Over 400  
**CURRENT SIZE:** 400 meters<sup>2</sup>  
**PRESENT USE:** Memorial

**DETAILS OF ACCESS:** To reach the site, go for about 4 km from the city centre; first along the road P48, pass by the Jewish cemetery, at the crossroads bear right, and go towards Bieleni.

**LOCATION & DEMARCATION:** The mass grave is located in the forest on the outskirts of Karsava, on a hillside. The territory is not fenced. Access is open to all.

**GRAVES, GRAVESTONES, MEMORIAL MARKERS & STRUCTURES:** A red granite monument at the site bears the following inscription: "Вечная память евреям Корсовки, невинным жертвам, зверски убитым и сожженным 21 августа 1941 года гитлеровскими фашистами." (Translation: Eternal memory to the Jews of Korsovka, the innocent victims, brutally killed and burned by Nazis on August 21, 1941.)

**JEWISH COMMUNITY ESTABLISHED:** 1820

**CURRENT JEWISH POPULATION:** -

**HISTORY OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY:** The Jewish community was established in what was then known as Korsovka by merchants coming from surrounding shtetls. By the late 1830's, the number of Jews in the town reached 700. The first rabbi of the town was Wolf Tsiyuni, a scion of the famous Lucin dynasty. In 1843, Shadursky, the Polish landlord of this area, expelled all the Jews except for four merchants and their families. Complaints sent to the governor of Vitebsk did not help, although the governor did prevent Shadursky's attempt to plough over the Jewish cemetery.

The Jews settled in Rezhitsa and Viliaka and some moved to the agricultural colony in Ekaterinoslav gubernia. Jews again settled in Korsovka twenty years later. The "Temporary Rules" of 1882 restricted the growth of the community. These restrictions were lifted in 1903. By 1914, the number of Jews in Korsovka had increased to 2,400 (60%).

During the war with the Bolsheviks in 1919, sporadic groups of Latvian peasants looted Jewish shops and homes and two Jews were killed. During the first Latvian Republic, Jews always represented a majority on the local administration with eight out of fifteen members in the City Duma. From 1920 to 1934, the mayors of Karsava were Jews. In 1924, activists from the Latvian National Club tried to organize anti-Jewish riots in Karsava, but were beaten up by Jews and had to flee the town. Other anti-semitic acts occurred in the 1930's when drunk soldiers of the Latvian army attacked local Jews. They were arrested before there were any serious results. In the early days of WWII, half of the Jewish population left Karsava. Two hundred Jews were also mobilized in the Latvian Division of the Red Army. The town's rabbi, Aryeh-Dov Olshvang died in the evacuation. The Karsava ghetto was established on several streets around Sports Street. On August 23, 1941, the ghetto's inhabitants were shot in Naudas Kalns, 3km outside the town. Only four Jews survived, three of them rescued by Alfred Bankovic.

After 1944, 10-20 Jewish families settled in Karsava. A minyan gathered in one of the houses and a shochet come from Ludza. The last burial in the Jewish cemetery, which was restored after the war, was in 1980.

**CURRENT STATE:** The mass grave territory is owned by the local municipality. It is occasionally cleaned by relatives of the victims or local residents. There is no regular caretaker.

**FURTHER DETAILS:** Kārsavas novada pašvaldība - Vienības 53, Kārsava, Kārsavas novads, LV-5717 +371 65781390 +371 65781395 dome@karsava.lv



## KAUNATA JEWISH MASS GRAVE

Other names: Kovnat | Kownat | Kownata

LO TISHKACH ID NO.: 10780

ADDRESS: Town outskirts, Kaunata, Rezekne municipality, Latgale, LATVIA



**EXECUTION DATE:** Late July 1941  
**ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PEOPLE BURIED:** About 100  
**CURRENT SIZE:** Unknown  
**PRESENT USE:** Memorial

**DETAILS OF ACCESS:** The mass grave is located at crossroads near the Raznas lake. Access is open to all.  
**LOCATION & DEMARCATION:** The site is situated in a suburban location, on flat land. It is not fenced. Adjacent territory is used for industrial and commercial purposes.  
**GRAVES, GRAVESTONES, MEMORIAL MARKERS & STRUCTURES:** The Council of Jewish Communities of Latvia erected a granite monument in 2007 with an image of the Star of David and an inscription that reads: "Here in late July 1941 the Nazis killed about 100 Jews from Kaunata and vicinity."  
The shootings at this site continued for several days in July 1941. Jews were taken from the ghetto, which consisted of four houses within the town.

**JEWISH COMMUNITY ESTABLISHED:** Early 20<sup>th</sup> century  
**CURRENT JEWISH POPULATION:** -

**HISTORY OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY:** Kaunata is a village in the district of Rezekne (Latvia). It was founded in the early 20th century as Kovnaty shtetl in Vitebsk province. In 1918-40 it was part of the Republic of Latvia, in 1940-91 - Latvian SSR.  
In 1920, there were 66 Jews in Kaunata (38% of the total population), in 1925 - 67, in 1935 - 63 (37%).  
In June 1941 there were circa fifty Jews in the village. They were shot in September 1941 by Latvian policemen.

**CURRENT STATE:** The mass grave territory is owned by the local municipality. Some restoration work has been undertaken.  
**FURTHER DETAILS:** Rezeknes novada pašvaldība - Atbrīvošanas aleja 95; Rezekne, LV-4601; +371 64622238; info@rdc.lv

## KRASLAVA JEWISH MASS GRAVE I (AUGUSTOVKA)

Other names: Kraslawe | Kreslau | Kreslavka

LO TISHKACH ID NO.: 10764

ADDRESS: Udrisu Street, Kraslava, Kraslava municipality, Latgale, LATVIA



**EXECUTION DATE:** August 3, 1941  
**ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PEOPLE BURIED:** 144  
**CURRENT SIZE:** 500 meters<sup>2</sup>  
**PRESENT USE:** Memorial

**DETAILS OF ACCESS:** In order to reach the site, take the Rigas Str., proceed to the Augusta Str., turn right to the Udrisu Str., go for about 600 meters. The mass grave is located in the ravine in the forest.

**LOCATION & DEMARCATION:** The mass grave is located in the forest on the outskirts of Kraslava, on flat land. The territory is not fenced. Access is open to all.

**GRAVES, GRAVESTONES, MEMORIAL MARKERS & STRUCTURES:** There is a Soviet stele of concrete with an inscription in Yiddish, Latvian and Russian, as well as a Star of David.

The inscription: "אייביקער אנדייקונג די געשאסענע יידן; MŪŽIGA piemiņa fašisma upuriem; Вечная память жертвам фашизма; 1941"  
Translation: "Eternal memory to the victims of Nazism".

The Jews of Kraslava were arrested on August 2, 1941, and on the following day were taken in groups to the Avgustovski ravine. The shootings at the mass grave continued for about 2 hours. The graves were not preserved. In 1944 the bodies were exhumed and burnt.

**JEWISH COMMUNITY ESTABLISHED:** 1764  
**CURRENT JEWISH POPULATION:** 10 - 1,000

**HISTORY OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY:** The community was founded by few dozen Jewish families from Vilnius in 1764. Until the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, all the Jews in Latgale region were registered in the Kraslava community. In 1897, Jews made up 51% of the total number of 4,051 persons in Kraslava. In the 1935 census, there were 1,444 Jews (34% of the total). During the Russian revolution of 1905 in Russia, two members of a Russian Jewish revolutionary organization killed the head of the police in Kraslava. One of these terrorists escaped across the border, another - Eliyahu Elchik, was sentenced to death, later commuted to life imprisonment. He was released in 1917. One of first leaders of the Kraslava town council was Moisei Rabinovich, who designed the Kraslava coat-of-arms. In the 1920's eight of the twenty deputies on the city council were Jews who worked together as one faction, despite belonging to different political parties. In 1933, a few local farmers tried to organize an attack on the Jews on a market day but they were thwarted by Jewish self-defense activists, thereby preventing a pogrom. (Another version of this story says that it was avoided because of cavalry troops sent to Kraslava by the government). In 1934, the town's newly-elected mayor started to express anti-Semitic views and to oppress the local Jews. With the beginning of WWII, around 200 Jews managed to escape to Russia, 89 of which joined the Red Army. Fifty-two of these Jews died at the front.

When the German army occupied Kraslava in July 1941, some of the local Jews were executed in the town, others were transported to the ghetto in Daugavpils and mostly killed there.

After WWII, around 40 Jewish families returned to Kraslava. The synagogue was opened and the cemetery operated. In the course of time, most of these Jews moved to Riga or emigrated and the census of 2001 shows only 21 Jews still living in the town though there is no organized community.

**CURRENT STATE:** The mass grave territory is owned by local municipality. Overall condition of the site is unacceptable. The site suffers from a serious vegetation threat, with forestation overgrowing the site.

**FURTHER DETAILS:** Vegetation needs to be cleared and a perimeter fence erected surrounding the site. Contact Lo Tishkach to find out how to help.