# Tel Litvinsky Massacre 1948: Battle for a British Camp near Jaffa

**In mid-April 1948, as British forces withdrew from the Tel Litvinsky camp east of Jaffa, Zionist militias attacked the camp, where Arabs were living, killing 90 Palestinians according to Palestinian massacre lists. In the fighting for the same camp, fighters from the village of al-Safiriyya and Yemeni volunteers were killed.** [1] [2] [3]

The massacre took place days before the fall of Jaffa on 25 April 1948, [4] and it is one of the Zionist massacres against the Palestinian people.

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## The Tel Litvinsky massacre at a glance

| Item | Details |
|---|---|
| Date | 14–16 April 1948 [1] [3] |
| Place | The former British camp of Tel Litvinsky, east of Jaffa, on the road to Lydda airport [4] [3] |
| Perpetrator | Zionist militias [1] [2] |

| Item | Details |
|---|---|
| Toll according to massacre lists | 90 killed [1] [2] |
| Named martyrs | Ahmad Hasan al-Yamani, Mahmoud Husayn Muhammad Ali Awad and Hubaysh al-Yamani [3] [5] |
| Context | The British evacuation of the camp and the battles for the villages of Jaffa in April 1948 [3] |

## Tel Litvinsky camp

Tel Litvinsky was a British military base east of Jaffa, on the road that passed through the village of Salama toward Lydda airport. [4] It was surrounded by several villages of the Jaffa district, among them al-Safiriyya. [3]

As the Mandate neared its end, British forces evacuated the camp on the night of 14/15 April 1948, and fighting broke out between Palestinian fighters and Zionist forces for control of it. [3]

## The massacre as the lists record it

The massacre list published by the Palestinian National Information Center (WAFA), and that of Palestine Remembered, record that on 16 April 1948 “a Jewish gang attacked a former British army camp where Arabs lived, killing 90 Arabs.” [1] [2]

Neither list names the victims or identifies the militia responsible. [1] [2]

## The battle for the camp: the night of 14/15 April 1948

Palestinian historian Dr. Muhammad Aql writes that the fighters of al-Safiriyya took part in the attempt to take the Tel Litvinsky camp after the British evacuated it on the night of 14/15 April 1948, “and some of them fell as martyrs in the battle of honour.” [3]

Among the fighters were Arab volunteers who had come to defend Palestine, including Yemenis who fought alongside the people of Salama. [5] The battle ended with Zionist forces in control of the camp. [3]

## The martyrs

| Martyr | Date | Notes |
|---|---|---|
| Ahmad Hasan al-Yamani | 14 April 1948 | Killed in the battle for Tel Litvinsky camp [3] |
| Mahmoud Husayn Muhammad Ali Awad | 15 April 1948 | From al-Safiriyya, and buried there [3] |
| Hubaysh al-Yamani (Ahmad Hubaysh) | 15 April 1948 | A Yemeni volunteer who fought with the people of Salama, buried in al-Safiriyya [3] [5] |

We found no detailed source documenting the names of the ninety victims recorded in the massacre lists, or showing whether they were civilians or fighters.

## Conclusion

In the days before the fall of Jaffa, the British camp of Tel Litvinsky became a scene of bloodshed. Palestinian lists record 90 Arabs killed there, and fighters from al-Safiriyya and volunteers from Yemen fell in the battles for it. Days later Jaffa fell and the people of the surrounding villages were driven out, and the names of most of the victims remain unknown.

## Frequently asked questions about the Tel Litvinsky massacre

### When did the Tel Litvinsky massacre take place?

The massacre lists date it to 16 April 1948, while the battle for the camp took place on the night of 14/15 April 1948.

### Where was Tel Litvinsky camp?

East of Jaffa, on the road through the village of Salama toward Lydda airport.

### How many people were killed in the Tel Litvinsky massacre?

90 according to the WAFA and Palestine Remembered lists; we found no source documenting their names.

### Who are the known martyrs of the battle of Tel Litvinsky?

Ahmad Hasan al-Yamani, Mahmoud Husayn Muhammad Ali Awad of al-Safiriyya, and the Yemeni volunteer Hubaysh al-Yamani.

### Why did fighting break out over Tel Litvinsky camp?

Because British forces evacuated the camp on the night of 14/15 April 1948, and fighting broke out for control of it.

## Sources and references

Arabic-language sources are listed with translated titles.


1. “Zionist and Israeli Massacres against the Palestinian People,” Palestinian National Information Center – WAFA.
2. “Zionist Massacres between 1947 and 1996,” Palestine Remembered.
3. Dr. Muhammad Aql, “The Story of the Depopulated Village of al-Safiriyya (Jaffa District),” Arab48, 16 October 2020, republished by Palestine Remembered.
4. “They Nearly Entered Tel Aviv but for British Intervention: The Story of the Palestinian Village of Salama’s Resistance,” Arabic Post, 20 August 2024.
5. “Yemeni Martyrs Who Fell in the 1948 Palestine War,” Palestinian National Information Center – WAFA.