

...What Really Happened continued

and each person was shot through the neck, one at a time. Dr. Liebmann and a strong farmer were made to throw all the bodies into a mass grave, and then, they too, were executed. Following the executions, Gypsies were called to throw dirt over the bodies.

On November 14th, another 70 people were taken from their homes. Once again, the majority of these were female. Interned at the Gemeindehaus, the prisoners were tortured; women and young girls were raped.

For two nights, the prisoners were locked into a tiny room, so tightly that breathing became difficult. When they were finally called out (one at a time), their hands were tied and they were brought to their place of execution. One among them, farmhand Ludwig Schwarz, became so distraught when his name was called, that he suddenly and quite unexpectedly threw himself at the armed guard. Schwarz pushed the guard to the ground, jumped over him, and ran out into the yard. He was immediately fired upon by the other Partisan guards, but was only wounded in the hand. Schwarz jumped over the fence and disappeared into the night. He remained in hiding for three months, until he was able to flee the area with his family.

On November 17th, a third blockade was implemented and, again 50 Germans were imprisoned at the Gemeindehaus. During the night of November 18th, they were executed at a place called "Römerschanze", on the road to Werbaß.

The next day, the Partisans herded 17 more German men and women together and, during the night, shot them on the highway by the Mill. The dead were left lying as they had fallen but one woman was only wounded and lay among the corpses. Those that heard her painful moans were forbidden to help until death brought an end to her suffering around noon the next day.

On another day in the month of November, three old men from Werbaß were shot, simply because the new authorities there wanted to see German blood flow. These victims were Jakob Wächter, Heinrich Mehl and Enzmingler.

In December 1944, another 15 men were taken from the community. They were brought to Mitrowitz to work on railroads and never returned. The following May (1945), the surviving Germans in Klein-Ker were sent to concentration camps, including Batschki-Jarek, were most died.

Subotitza

Subotitza was one of the largest cities in the country. Although it was a bunjewatzisch (Croatian Catholic)-Hungarian community, a large German population lived in the surrounding area. In the fall of 1944, the Partisan military regime established two camps in this city. The first camp served as a transit camp ("Durchgangslager") to accommodate the constant flow of returning evacuees. The other camp was a slave labor camp. All returnees had their papers checked in the transit camp and, if they were found to be German, were sent to a concentration camp. Most women and children were sent to Sekitsch, but those able to work were kept in the Subotitza camp or another nearby labor camp.

At various times, the labor camp in Subotitza housed as many as 4,000 prisoners. These prisoners were obliged to perform the most diversified and debasing of tasks. Living conditions were no different here than at any other labor camp in the Batschka: not fit for animals, much less for human beings.

Mrs. M. Bogner, from Erdevik in Syrmia, was among the internees at Subotitza. Mrs. Bogner and her children were evacuated by the retreating German army in the fall of 1944. However, she made a fatal mistake, along with many other Germans from Yugoslavia. She assumed it was safe to return home once the war in Europe had ended in May 1945. Mrs. Bogner survived to report the prevailing methods and conditions in the annihilation areas in the North and Middle Batschka:

"We arrived on June 6th, 1945 in Subotitza, coming from East Germany. We Germans were immediately separated from the other nationalities and divided into special groups of men, women, children, and the disabled. The young women who would not allow themselves to be separated from their children, were beaten, kicked, knocked down and locked up. Those that did not freely hand over their money and valuables were shot to death where they stood. On the very day of our arrival, I personally witnessed 25 such executions, whose victims, without exception, were women who would not be parted from their children. Among those killed that first day were: Frau Nusspl from Palanka, the 23-year-old Maria Kirschner from Hodschag, the 19-year-old Katharina Beuschl from Wekerle, the 27-year-old Eva Beck and the 28-year-old Katharina Müller both from Ruma, the 17-year-old Maria Fischer from Krndija, the 33-year-old Rosalia Berger from Pasua.

