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## **BELOW SNINA ROCK**

### **Pod Sninským Kamenom**

Vladimír Slimák  
1964

BELOW SNINA ROCK.....	1
From the Oldest History.....	2
Charcoal making in Hamre by Snina.....	3
Excerpt From the Monograph of the Former Zemplín County.....	5
The Stepmother Republic.....	6
Facts and testimonies of the suffering of the people.....	9
EVACUATION.....	10
Part Two.....	12
Liberation.....	12
A New Life Begins.....	12
Liberation by the Soviet Army.....	12
The Years After the Front.....	13
Vihorlat, the People's Enterprise, Snina.....	14
Snina – Mesto.....	16
With the Eyes of a Snina Physician.....	17
A New Era of Health Service Begins.....	19
The Stormy Development of the Educational System.....	21
The Commander of the Liberation Armies Among Us.....	23
Honorary Citizen of Snina, S. M. Machlin.....	24
What the Future Holds.....	24
Part Five Natural Beauties.....	25
Nature in the Vicinity of Snina.....	25
Protected Territories and Natural Formations.....	27
Below Snina Rock [Credits].....	29
Photograph Directory.....	30
SETTLEMENTS, PLACE NAMES, SURNAMES, BATTLEFIELDS, MILITARY FIGURES.....	33
Settlements (Villages, Towns, Cities).....	33
Place Names.....	35
Ancillary Place Names.....	36
Surnames.....	36
World War II Battlefields.....	37
WWII Military Figures.....	38
WWII Military Units.....	38
Technical Translation and Editor Notes:.....	39

[7]

## From the Oldest History

The precise date of the founding of Snina remains unknown. The beginnings of the town of Snina were never historically described, but the oldest written documents that mention Snina existed beginning in the 14th century (the year 1373). About the creation of Snina there are several possibilities, all of which however are imprecise, since little was ever written of the history of Snina, which makes it more difficult for example, than the history of larger towns, of which documents have already been written.

The most detailed [information] is [from] documents only from the end of the 18th century, when Joseph Rholl moved to Snina from Rolova Huta outside of Margecany.

*[Note: The hamlet of Rolova Huta (=Rol's Foundry) is 2 miles east of the small town of Margecany, which is about 20 miles northwest of Kos'ice, at the confluence of the Hornad and Hnilec Rivers.]*

Snina expanded during the 15th century and obtained certain town privileges. However, Snina never matured into a medieval town in the true sense of the word.

How did the name of the community come about? A residential center of the Humenne district was called „Sina“ and that word was written as „Zina“. The name likely originated as the historian Matej Bel described in his volume about the origin of the community of Snina. In his description, he notes that the Sinai Mountains mentioned in the Bible resemble Snina Rock. Consequentially, the hill above Snina also received a similar name from the Bible. According to this, the community presumably would also have received the name Sina. A similar assertion is presented by the historian Kaprinay and additionally another historian, Szirmay concurs.

An alternative explanation exists, however, according to which the famous Russian historian Nestor writes that in the 9th century in our land lived a certain mighty tribe which was named *Warana*. This tribe was ruled by three brothers, who were named Rurik, Truwor and Sin. The tribe eventually moved from our land beyond the Carpathians to the vicinity of Kiev and laid the foundations of the Russian empire. Since this mighty Slavic tribe existed here, in the east, so – it is assumed -- the community Snina, or *Sina*, received its name from prince *Sin*. In a similar manner, the village Vranov from the large Slavic tribe *Warana*, (not – as is claimed – because there were a lot of crows there). According to this, then, Snina already existed in the 9th century as an “oppidum,” which means a town – a small town.

The ancient inhabitants of Snina already long ago and before the coming of the Magyars had given themselves appellations [titles or names] according to their own names for individual plots. The people divided their township into individual parts and the name designations were made by their owners. For example: Curko's hollow, Dialek's, Hrešek's, Milopcin's hollow, etc. In the time of its founding, Snina had around 130 inhabitants, which was at that time was a relatively large number. In the year 1568 it had 75 homes and 310 inhabitants; in the year 1585, it had 210 inhabitants.

[9]

In the year 1728, [Snina had] 120 homes and 500 residents; in the year 1877, 2,326 residents; in the year 1905, 507 homes and 2,750 residents. However, let us return to Joseph Rholla, who himself lived in Snina, where he had built a manor-house and in the courtyard erected a statue of Hercules, which was cast in the foundry in Zemplinske Hamry in the year 1841. This statue still stands in the courtyard of the Snina manor-house to this day. The year before, which was 1840, the iron-works in Jozef's Valley consisted of one smaller high furnace and one so-called Slovak

furnace. From the year 1856 along with this furnace, two forging ovens were in operation, a “pearl”[?] forge, one tool forge (a forge for the production of various tools, as for example axes or mattocks, which usually were sold at once locally), [such that] yearly production of raw iron achieved in these years was about 4,000-6,000 Viennese cents, and the output of iron bars about 3,000-3,800 Viennese cents for various iron tools. By the year 1855 by the forging ovens was in occasional operation along with one pressure furnace with wood gas [methane?], where raw iron was forged by a more progressive method – by injection. By the end of the 60s of the 19th century, the iron-works in Joseph’s Valley already found themselves in decline.

[Translator’s Note: Joseph’s Valley (named after Joseph Rholl) was the original name for the “factory town” that later became Joseph’s Forges, then Snina Forges, and then today’s village of Zemplinske Hamry (Zemplin Forges), 3 miles southeast of Bela nad Cirochou and 4 miles south of Snina.]

During the economic crisis of the years 1858-1861, the iron-works in Joseph’s Forge felt certain competitive pressures from the larger and relatively more advanced iron factories in Slovakia. In the year 1868, when in Joseph’s Valley already had two high ovens, only one was in operation and then only for 8 weeks, during which time only 672 Viennese cents of raw iron were produced and 328 Viennese cents of castings. The plant was already by then in financial and technical decline and, during a market crisis that began in the year 1873, the metal works in Joseph’s Forge closed. Before the war Snina had one other rarity. It had the largest expanse of municipal land holdings in the country because the territory of Snina included, aside from the settlement Snina Forges, a large township of the mountain village Valas’kovce, the residents of which were relocated to Humenne.

## **Charcoal making in Hamre by Snina**

Until 1956 to the small town of Snina belonged also the settlement Sninske Hamre (Note: It became independent in the year 1956 as Zemplinske Hamre, V. S.). Hamre arose as a typical workers’ settlement during the period of early capitalism in our country. Its beginning can be dated to the year 1809 in connection with commercial interests of Stefan Rholl, who came to this corner of Zemplin from Gemer at the end of the 18th century and purchased for himself in Snina an estate. As an estate holder and entrepreneur he had prospected for gold and silver in various sites in the northern foothills of the Vihorlatu mountain range. The search uncovered iron ore and silicates in the northwest

### **[11]**

foothills of the highest Snina Rock. Rholl, coming from an old Dutch entrepreneurial family, which already in the 16th century was operating businesses in Gemer and in Spis, imported -- for the purpose of smelting ore as well as glass -- miners, smelters, charcoal burners, and other workers from the surroundings of Gelnica, Margecany, Rolova Huta and other places, who in this new location permanently settled and became the founders and first inhabitants of the contemporary Hamre. Later imported were several workers’ families also from other districts who were fully assimilated with the Hamreans.

The immigrants were housed as boarders (the “lord quartered ones”) in the landlord’s stone-walled lodgings (“walled huts”) with wide, low rooms. Four families lived under one roof. Walled lodgings were erected in the woods, one alongside each “forge,” of which there were five – approximately around the present day homes of: 1 Novobilský, 2 Demcák, 3 Lukác, 4 Matošek, 5 Štefan Barnik.

A “hut man” [=foreman?] did a survey in the woods and indicated where a mineshaft should be to be dug. Such “hut men” were old Kamenár, Komár and Kyslík. Later were excavated pits as large as a “shanty,” then from the sides was mined the iron ore. Good ore was carted from the

tunnel and the waste was used to cover up excavated sites. By approximately 1904 the first forge around Novobilsky was installed and they excavated 160 wagonloads of ore, which was transported in carts to the railway station in Humenne.

In order to better control the workmen, Rholl permitted them to clear the forest and in that place to build wooden cottages of the village type; he reserved to himself, however, the right of ownership in the plots of land and concurrent with this [ownership of] the cottages.

The method of burning charcoal the Hámreans brought with them from Gemer or from Spis', since the burning of charcoal at Hamre already existed at the beginning of their founding of a smelter ["huta"] -- as a side product, later for the production of glass in a local glassworks -- of which represents the name of the settlement, "Hutta" up to the year 1844, when it was renamed to Szinna Hamor [Snina Forge] or Vas Hamor [Iron Forge] or, for short, just Hamor [the Forge].

The first mention of the settlement name was Jozefova Dolina (Joseph's Valley; German: Josefthal; Magyar: Jozsef volgy). A stimulus for a further renaming was the circumstance that, in the year 1841, Stefan Rholl had built the small casting foundry "Hercules" -- according to local naming, "Maša" -- where ore was refined and where they made cast iron stoves, pots and pans ("drajfusy" [?] and "s'erpenky"[?]), crude sheets by drying, and by pressure[?] were drawn out "rafy" -- hoops for carts. Also at the "High end," by Vazár's house, was a "walled hut" with a sawmill. Private forge teamsters carted the goods and castings with teams of horses and, mainly, with yokes of oxen as far as 100 km to Satorljauhely ([Slovak:] Nové Mesto pod Šiatrom) [today just over the border in Hungary]. The round trip journey there and back took one week.

## [12]

"Maša" existed from the beginning of the eighties of the 19th century and wages in it was the only source of income of the Hámreans. Work on "Maša" was organized so that everyone changed jobs every two weeks: one group cut wood and made charcoal, the second group worked in the casting foundry and the third group mined ore. By such a method, all Hámreans mastered the mentioned crafts.

After the closing of the factory in Hámre, there came unemployment with its accompanying symptoms -- economic depression and poverty. Everyone undertook what [opportunities] were available, in order to find a little sustenance. For example, soft iron twisted into pieces was hidden in the woods and sold it to a blacksmith for food. Those, who had a cottage, began to plough the birch wood around it and to adapt to farming. Some, who had not have yet built a cottage or a ploughed piece of land, emigrated to various locations of the world. During this time began the Hamre emigration to foreign lands, first of all to the United States of America, where Hámreans were performing the most difficult jobs. According to statistical data, in the year 1819 the number of inhabitants in Hámre equaled 128; in the year 1877, 417; but as a consequence of emigration this number in the years 1898-1903 declined to 323, and this even despite the fact that the average number of births was then 20-22 persons annually.

Hamre citizens were always mainly laborers and recognized specialists, whether as foundry men, charcoal burners, or woodcutters. Only women did minor farming work. This agriculture could not sustain them, as it only partially provided potatoes and beans. The charcoal burners and their families were not self-sufficient and were dependent on trade for the purchase of the great majority of their food. In Hámre, all men burned charcoal, and by the seventies charcoal making became their main employment. The last charcoal was burnt [produced] in the year 1946.

[13]

## Excerpt From the Monograph of the Former Zemplín County

(Printed in 1903-1905)

Zemplin County had an area of 6,301 km<sup>2</sup>, of which 5,040 km<sup>2</sup> were in highland areas. The highland of Zemplin County is generally grouped into four regions, namely: the Zemplín Beskyds, which otherwise they also call the Stropkov-Snina range, the Zemplín Vihorlat range, the Prešov-Tokaj trachyte chain, and the separately standing foothills.

In the Kenosha period and toward the end of the Tertiary period ([Magyar:] "harmadkor"), between the upper Eocene and the upper Miocene, there were on the territory of present-day Zemplin County mighty volcanic eruptions. A remnant of this volcanic activity is Vihorlat. The range of Vihorlat is composed of augite or alternately called augite-andesite-trachyte. It arose in the Sarmatian period of the Miocene system, and therefore it is the very last product of the cycle of trachyte eruption. The main ridge of this mountain range forms an angle, on whose tip, at a distance of around 7,000 meters from the summit of Vihorlat, protrudes the 1,007 high very prominent Snina Rock, from which -- relatively close to each other -- two mighty stone masses jut out towards the sky. The basic composition of these are nearly horizontal-lying layers of trachyte, in thickness 60-80 meters, and their steep cliffs resemble a primeval castle. Very interesting is a cluster of hills on the border of the county, consisting of the peaks Motrogon, Jedlinka, Snina Rock, Tetkov, and Roch, which are the remains of a single volcanic crater and which encircle [the lake] Morske oko [=Eye of the Sea], lying at an altitude of 618 m above sea level.

The communities of Zemplin County: Zemplin County has an area of 6,269 km<sup>2</sup> and according to the last census it has 327,993 residents. It has a county seat and 450 communities, of which 24 are designated as larger. The communities are partitioned into eleven districts, which are divided into 79 area administrations. The districts are: The Middle Bodrog district, Sec'ovce district, Humenne, Michalovce, Šarošpaták, Šatoraljaujhely, district Serenc, Snina, Stropkov, Tokaj and district Vranov.

**SNINA** (page 112, Hungarian: Szinna): A small community, in the little valley of the Cirocha [River]. It is the seat of a Humenne Roman-Catholic deaconry. It contains 507 homes and 2,750 residents, with a Roman-Catholic majority. It has its own post office and telegraph station; a railway station, which [connects to] Humenne. In the more distant past it was a small town ([Magyar:] "mezovaros") and already from the beginning of the 15th Century, as the property of the Grugeths [Drugeths], it belonged to the Humenne estate. In the year

[15]

1487 mention was also made of the local monastery of the order of the Holy Templars. In later times, the landowners were Count Csáky, Joseph Roll and his son, Stefan. At that time, the wife of Louis Benovsky had here major property and the beautiful manor house that the Count Lord Stefan Roll had built here at the beginning of the last century. After the death of Stefan Rolla, the property passed to his son-in-law, Theodore Csáky, from whom a count from Flanders bought it. Then the property passed into the ownership of Stefan Ockaj and several years later to his sister Elizabeth Benovsky.

The manor house, the son-in-law of the present owner, Count Schaumburg-Lippe, furnished it in lordly comfort and it stands in a beautiful park, to which belongs also a zoological game preserve ([Magyar:] "vadaskert"). In the park in front of the manor house, above a fountain, stands the cast iron statue of Hercules, which in year 1841 was made in the metalworks in Joseph's Valley, which belonged to this community. The local Roman Catholic Church was built in the year 1736. Later the artistic painter Ignatius Roskovics painted in the church frescos and altarpieces, which are remarkable in their beauty, as well as their artistic value. In the community, which is a seat of

public administration, is a state school, a police barracks and pay station, a savings association, and a steam mill. In the township is the massive rock formation, Snina Rock, which from distance looks like an immense castle. From there by a half-hour trip spreads out the famous Morské oko [Eye of the Sea lake], which is heavily visited by tourists.

Agriculture and the cattle breeding (page 172): In [Zemplin] county three-field farming ([Magyar:] "harmasnyomasu rendszer") generally predominates, but in some sectors and particularly in northerly districts among small farmers there is in large part the occurrence of free farming without any system whatsoever: Farmers here, at the expense of yield and quality of soil, seed some parts of their grounds from year for year with the same crop. For example, in the Snina district, this method of free farming generally predominates, so that in the entire territory of the district, we do not find organized [commercial] agriculture, because the majority of estate land form forests.

**[16] ? MISSING**

**[17]**

## **The Stepmother Republic**

It is necessary to say that great poverty and national oppression had their reaction even in Snina and in its surroundings, where revolutionary tempers predominated, especially under the influence of the Great October Socialist revolution and the rise of the Slovak Soviet Republic in Presov. It remains an indisputable fact that the revolutionary mood and revolutionary actions of the Zemplin proletariat in this time were great and influenced the revolutionary moods of other towns.

In Snina this situation was reflected in that the people began to revolt, and several workmen and landless [peasants] led it in an organized way. Here, for example, they arranged a camp of people, in which they discussed the freedom of the people and the Czechoslovak Republic [CSR]. The answer by the officials was the calling in of a military unit. At the railway station an armored train arrived with soldiers, who began to arrest insurrection organizers. Many of those fled to the hills and the farming poor sympathized with them. Accidents occurred, as 20-year old George Pcola-Vidrik was caught and shot in the local graveyard. There would also have been further executions, but in this period already came to power the Czechoslovak authorities of the first republic. And if the Slovak Soviet Republic died, its tenure was sufficient for this, so that the proletariat knew what was necessary to do and what to fight for. Further development in the entire CSR caused the proletariat difficult times. With the formation of the CSR, the people achieved national freedom, but it did not get rid of exploitation. While the earls disappeared and the partial allotment of estate land to the benefit of military disabled persons and widows of those fallen in battle, the ongoing struggles for everyday bread and work remained. There was no industry.

After the formation of the first CSR, the entire industry in the Snina district was comprised of one old sawmill in Stakcin, which employed 30-40 people, and one sawmill in Snina, where 100-150 people were employed. The sawmill in Snina was established in the year 1911 on grounds that were taken by force from farmers, who hopelessly defended themselves against the expropriation of the soil.

The Snina district, to the discredit of all former regimes, belonged among the most economically and culturally backward districts of the bourgeois republic.

While the people in this corner of the republic lived in poverty and in need of cottages of wood covered with county [?] straw or with shingles fashioned with their own hands, capitalists mined

from their forests and carried off fortunes of hundreds of millions. Indeed, almost all the wealth in the district belonged to estate-holders and to various corporations with headquarters in foreign countries. Not even

[18] ? MISSING

[19] ? MISSING

[21]

10% of the large owners of woodlands and tillable soil of the district were citizens of the CSR, but they were foreigners.

In the period of the years 1918-1919, the forest wealth in the Snina district belonged to these magnates:

Stakcín, Pcoliné, Starina & surroundings	Count Wenheim
Ruský Potok & surroundings	Count Gejza Andrassy
Ostrožnica	Hugo Furster
Ulic, Klenová, Kalná, Roztoka, Ruská Volová and Brezovec	Baron Tille Winkler
Kolonica – partially	Baron Imrich Vajda
Pichne, Stakcínska Roztoka	Rudolf Rádler
Hostovice & surroundings	Baron Karol Škoda
Runina & surroundings	Václav Kredba and Mudroch
Dúbrava, Ubla, Šmigovec, Michailov. Zboj and Nová Sedlica.	Count Rudolf Serényi
Dlhé nad Cirochou	Baron Michal Károlyi
Snina & surroundings	Jozef Degenfeld and after him the international capitalist company OFA a Thonet

51% of all the agricultural land and forests were in the hands of large estate owners.

Owing to this cruel exploitation and the always gradually increasing poverty, fathers and sons had to depart from below the Polonina [Poland] under great hardships to wander to alluring countries – America, later to Canada, Argentina, Belgium, and France.

Mass emigration from the former Snina district reached a culmination in the years 1926-1933. According to verified data, during this period 5-6 people emigrated per day, which equaled more than 2,000 people annually. Most of the emigrants were from the Ulicka-Ublianka valley, where poverty was the highest. During the period 1920-1938, emigration from this district reached 20,000 people.

It may be difficult to believe the fact that in the entire former Snina district in the year 1929, after a full 11 years of existence of the CSR, there was no electric lighting. The bourgeoisie did not manage to liquidate the pervasive backwardness of the local region, but it did deepen the difference between the western and the eastern part of the republic. The planned electrification, which was realized after liberation [Russian Liberation, 1944-45] in the entire territory of the republic, was not even a topic of consideration in government circles, and only a minor objective of the

[23]

then lesser ruling class. The systematic electrification of the district was gradually begun only after liberation, because the electric generating station, which the private firm Soukup and Herškovic built and supplied current [electricity] beginning in the year 1929 was only for public

lighting of the "main street" in Snina and for the most well-to-do inhabitants in the evening period, when the electric generator was in operation.

A similar situation also occurred in the telephone sector. In the year 1928 there was not in the whole district a telephone connection outside Snina and Stakcin. In an effort to "undo" this shortcoming, the former District Office in Snina published an instruction for the voiding of the so-called "poor man funds" of individual villages and to use these monies, which should have been distributed support the poor, to the building of a telephone connection to the office of each village notary.

Great poverty was multiplied by the years of great economic crisis, which suddenly arose at end of the year 1929 and the beginning of the year 1930 and in its full fury seized all Czechoslovakia. The consequences of the depression palpably reached the working class and the small farmer class of this district. Above the people below the Polonina began to appear the specter of famine. The situation in hunger-threatened villages of the district became at the beginning of the year 1933 already so serious that the district office by resolution number 133/1933/28, on instruction of the Regional Office in Bratislava, released funds for the buying of salt for hunger-threatened citizens. In the framework of this charity was released for:

Administrative district Snina	for 2,000 kg of salt 3,200 Czechoslovak crowns
Administrative district Klenová	for 2,500 kg of salt 4,000 Czechoslovak crowns
Administrative district Starina	for 1,500 kg of salt 2,400 Czechoslovak crowns
Administrative district Veľka Polana	for 1,500 kg of salt 2,400 Czechoslovak crowns
Administrative district Papín	for 1,000 kg of salt 1,600 Czechoslovak crowns
Administrative district Pcoline	for 500 kg of salt 800 Czechoslovak crowns
Administrative district Ulic	for 3,400 kg of salt 5,440 Czechoslovak crowns
Administrative district Ubla	<u>for 2,500 kg of salt 4,000 Czechoslovak crowns</u>
Total:	for 19,400 kg of salt 23,840 Czechoslovak crowns

For the purchase of footwear was released in that same year from resources of the district the sum 5,500 Czechoslovak crowns.

People did not have the means for either salt or shoes. Thus "managed" the capitalist and exploitative regime of the "humane republic".

On the other hand, it is necessary to mention the fact -- which is very symptomatic of the conditions then -- that the lords in the district did not seriously concern themselves with these social problems, which is clear from this, that with resolution number 73/1933 the district committee released thousands in funds for the buying of common trout roe for stocking of the stream in Ostrožnica, which served as recreation for the leaders of the district as well as their official guests.

#### [25]

Discontent from poverty and famine culminated in strikes and demonstrations in Pcolina, Stakcin and Ubla, which were nipped in the bud with military interventions. It is perhaps not necessary to mention the fact that the communist party organized this movement of opposition against the bourgeois regime even in this region.

The years of crisis and stagnation in the woodworking industry crawled like a shadow from the Snina region, too, and so the District Work Distribution Center in Snina in the year 1938 shows 7,138 unemployed. The plague of unemployment crushed the local people steadily.



## **Facts and testimonies of the suffering of the people**

Our people, as long as they had the financial resources, acquired for themselves the most essential needs, such as salt, kerosene, and matches, in barter trade in their own or neighboring community. If one needed to purchase other goods, especially of an industrial nature, one had to travel to "the city," to Humenne. Frequently it happened that, for frugal reasons, one went to Humenne and back on foot, in order to save the crowns that it would have been necessary to pay for the train. The majority of goods shopkeepers carted in from Humenne by horse-drawn wagons. A great rarity was the purchase of sugar. Creamed coffee, as a rarity, was drunk [only] on Easter.

Also characteristic was the fact that during the whole duration of the previous republic, in the entire district -- outside of Snina -- there was not even one bakery, nor one butcher shop. No wonder that the consumption of meat, animal fat and sugar did not even amount to 1 kg per resident annually.

Notice that even here is demonstrated the bad management of the exploiters fully exposed. It is not entirely even possible to name in detail all the "accomplishments" of the bourgeois governments that replaced each other during the 20 year duration of the republic. But not even one of them brought benefit to the people, solved its problems, cared about its pain, and therefore not even one found for it an effective remedy.

The bourgeoisie followed the well-known slogan: "Divide and conquer!" For that [reason] there were created so many political parties, for that [reason] they sowed hatred among Czechs, Slovaks, and Ukrainians. Here the intent was clear. To distract the attention of the people to other directions, so that the people do not detect the true cause of their misery and do away with the usurpers, just as the great Russian nation did under the leadership of the party of the Bolsheviks.

### **[26]**

A report of the district office from the year 1938, [report] #1277, which they sent from the former District Representative Office in Snina to the Regional Office in Bratislava, fills in the economic situation of the former Snina district.

"As a consequence of unfavorable economic circumstances, a part of the population of the district found itself in permanent joblessness. For the purpose of capturing the full momentum of the work market, the district representative office established for the Snina district a District Work Distribution Center, of which the goal is to procure employment for those unemployed having lost work without fault owing to the stagnation in the wood-working industry. In the course of a year 7,183 unemployed [persons] had reported.

The attention of the local district government was devoted to the unemployed and to the famine-threatened residents. For the amelioration of poverty, the Regional Office in Bratislava contributed 30, 000 Kcs toward the buying of food for the famine-threatened residents. Corn was bought, which was given out for equivalent work on public roads. The district could not contribute anything directly for this goal due to the lack of financial resources."

As the record thus illustrates, the district office was really not able to contribute anything for the amelioration of poverty, but to the children of legionnaires, who fought against the Red army, it gave support (although legionnaires were not entitled to support) of 4,200 Kcs, and besides this it took care of the room and board of 49 children of these families. In the mentioned report about that it says: "The district Snina has 49 villages with 32,811 residents. In this district are 1,580 children bequeathed to a stranger's care, from which only 16 children (the children of legionnaires) are placed in state children's homes due to lack of free space and on the other hand

for this, because the responsible communities are not in a condition to contribute at all to the up-bringing for the placed children."

In a word, not even this was absolutely necessary and the little man solicited help only with much difficulty, which in the end he did not even receive. Here is another example. It is the minutes written in Snina, the 14th of February 1935, and -- as the title reveals -- it pertains to a complaint submitted by George Gerboc-Kolesár, a resident of Snina, to the President's Office in Prague on several community matters. The signatories are: for the Regional Office, Dr. John Chmelo, counselor of political administration; for the community, John Savka, community mayor; Eugen Rosin, secretary; and the complainant, George Gerboc-Kolesár.

In the minutes, among other things, is written: "As a fact, the complainant -- and besides him also others of the undersigned -- submitted an appeal against the budget in the year 1934 at the community office, which [appeal], however, probably due to carelessness was not presented to the district office."

Or: „It was discovered that, on the 7th day of November, 1934, the village received an allotment of regional contributions of 29,956 Kcs, and this sum the treasurer of the community received only the 20th of November, 1934. The mayor of the community explains this matter thus, that the community treasury is insured only for 10,000 crowns, so that the said sum was put into a deposit of the Farmer's Mutual treasury.“

And still: "From the minutes of the community delegation from the 31st day of May, 1927, it is stated that the community delegation under [statute] # 19/27 approved by a voice vote 6,000 Kcs interest-free for the district chief for the buying of a personal automobile, but this loan was not till now returned by the district chief.“

[28]

## EVACUATION

During the so-called Slovak state, Snina was a border town, since the community of Stakcín belonged to Horthy's Hungary. Stakcin was much destroyed during the frontal events in the Second World War and the resistance of the people toward the occupation and their hatred was great. In isolated Snina there was not an open partisan movement.

[Note: The Snina region, from Stakcin eastward was seized by Hungary along with the Carpatho-Ukraine in 1939. It became a territory within Hungary until the end of World War 2, when it was reconstituted back into Czechoslovakia.]

At the outbreak of the Slovak National uprising, many Sninans were members of two East Slovak divisions, which had themselves attached to partisans and opened a route through the Carpathians to the Soviet military. In the [mountain] range of the Vihorlat appeared in summer of the year 1944 the first partisan groups, which were organized against the Tiso army, but the soldiers were not willing to fight against their brothers -- Slovaks and Russians.

The organizing of the partisan movement reached to the community Pcoliné-Pichne, not far from Snina. The partisans occupied the community by the 12th of August, 1944, and subsequently they camped in the nearby woods, so that -- with the cooperation of the local inhabitants -- they created an independent partisan division. There were large [military] actions near the community in September 1944, when German units disarmed members of Slovak divisions. In the vicinity of the community, members of the Prokopinkov partizan detachment attempted to punch through the German front lines and to fight their way through to the Soviet army, and soldiers under the leadership of Lieutenant Colonel Vogol [?] went over to the partisan method of fighting. Many citizens of Pichne provided aid to the partisan movement.

After major fire-fights and actions with the fascists, the time came for the retreat of the partisans, and the fascists began to prepare for evacuation of the population.

Meanwhile, the population of Snina lived through great suffering. On the 19th of September the first Allied aircraft appeared over Snina and released the first bombs, which, however, were dropped into a field below Sirkán [hills]. The people carted their crops from the fields, potatoes and cabbage, but this work was made more difficult by the raids of aircraft. Later, there were also the famous Russian "protectors", who often flew in and searched for the positions of the fascists.

The civilian population hid in store-rooms and cellars. Sometimes it was not possible to show oneself on the street even for several hours or days. Troublesome were the air raids, whose mission was to disrupt the retreat plans of the Germans. In their ranks arose chaos and the fascists were enraged. Large numbers of dead soldiers that were carted in from the Carpathian forests to a field hospital in Snina (it was set up in the manor-house) only confirmed that defeat after defeat befalls the Germans.

On one day, it was in October, 25 Anglo-American airplanes flew over Snina, however they did not hit their planned objective, the Snina rail station.

### [29]

As a result, the people found themselves in the fields and roads, where they remained during the entire period of bombardment, which resulted in the loss of human lives. It was a cold and damp November, when the fascists began to drive the people from their homes. Many of those hid themselves in the nearby forests and some remained hidden in barns. The predominant part of the population, however, was evacuated to the west as far as the regions of Liptov and Považie. Meanwhile, in Snina the passing through of the front was anticipated. On the eve of their withdrawal, the fascists blew up the concrete bridge over the river Cirocha.

Particularly interesting are those situations where citizens successfully broke through to the Soviet Army. For example, a group of five men, Štefan Hudák, Joseph Špitálik, George Haburaj, George Halanka and Pavol Karla, upon their crossing over to the Soviet army, met with one of its commanders. After explaining the situation, they became members of the First Czechoslovak Army Corps and gave the liberating armies valuable information about the movement of the occupiers. They informed the leaders of the Soviet army very well about the numbers and position of the Germans, about the state of their armament and fighting morale. In great detail they described the deployment of the Germans in the spaces of the former saw-mill, where the heaviest canon had been placed. The liberating armies, just on the basis of these reports, with precise hits destroyed and pulverized it and other artillery groupings of the enemy.

Pavol Karla accompanied the Soviet soldiers through the entire township and he led them -- showing the route by a roundabout way -- as far as to the village Modra nad Cirochou, where the enemy could be outflanked. This, however, did not succeed, because Karla, stepping on a mine, was wounded.

It is possible to cite a whole series of examples about the pattern of assistance of the citizens gave to the partisans as well as to the liberation armies. In the end, however, the Germans succeeded in taking many citizens with them, and they dragged some families to the west only with what they had on their persons. Mothers with babes in arms many times slept in yards or barns. There were instances when small children got sick and died along the road and many families were divided by events of front. Frontline actions caught some in Liptov, near Liptovský Mikuláš, in Okolicne and surrounding villages, where the front stood for six weeks.

Sninans in the Czechoslovak Army fought heroically and very bravely. Some of them laid down their lives for the liberation of our homeland. Many pushed victoriously alongside the Soviet Army into Žilina, Ružomberok, Ostrava, and finally into Prague.

After the end of the war, the evacuated Sninans began to return again home. For many all that remained was only what they had on their persons. It was necessary to hunt for everything, from a roof overhead to clothing and salt. In Snina and in the surroundings restoration activities began; many people remained without shelter. Immediately after the front there was in Snina a strong KSS [Communist Party of Slovakia] organization, which had about 100 members.

### **[30]**

The first chairman of the local people's committee was the communist George Gerboc-Kolesár, whom the commander of the liberation armies of Snina, Marshal Grecko, personally appointed to this office. But on the scene arrives also the Democratic Party, which wanted to win the poor over to its side, in order to be able to govern further and to return this region again to the times of the bourgeois republic. However, as previously described, the immediate future, the enemies of the people did not succeed in this policy and goal.

### **[31]**

## **Part Two**

### **Liberation**

#### **A New Life Begins**

### **[32] Blank**

### **[33]**

#### **Liberation by the Soviet Army**

The liberation of eastern Slovakia by the Soviet Army in autumn and in winter of 1944 was preceded by a year of great victories of the Soviet armed forces on all sections of the Soviet-German front.

Neither the fortifications erected previously by the Slovak divisions on the northern border of Czechoslovakia nor the Arpád line in the Carpathian forests could permanently hold back Soviet soldiers in their victorious advance. The most important role in the liberation of eastern Slovakia during the November actions had the 1st Volunteer Army under the leadership of Major General A. A. Grecko. In the first half of November, the troops of the 1st Volunteer Army liberated the northeastern most sector of our republic, the area between the upper flow of the Laborec and the Uh [Rivers]. The population of many settlements of the Medzilaborec and Snina districts, which distinguished itself by close co-operation with the partisan group "Capajeva," was now freely in contact with their Soviet liberators.

The zone from which the troops of the 1st Volunteer Army expelled the fascist mercenaries extended from the Czechoslovak-Polish border to the area south of Sobrance and was nearly 80 kilometers wide. The front line at which in the middle of November 1944 stood the troops of the 1st Volunteer Army advanced from the border village Certižné to Medzilaborce, from there along the southwestern slopes of the Magura Ridge [just east of Medzilaborce] to Nižna Jablonka and further to the south as far as Stakcín. Soviet soldiers firmly held their position also in the eastern part of the Vihorlat Hills, between Stakcín and Remetské Hámre. The front of the 1st Volunteer Army ran further into the fields of the Eastern Slovak Lowland by the valley of the brook Okna, through Vyšná Rybnica and Jasenov, through Ruskovce, from where it turned east toward the settlements Horna, Tibava and Komarovce. South from Sobrance, the left-flank units of the 1st Volunteer Army occupied their position along Sobrance Creek as far as the settlement Svätuš. The front remained in this sector six weeks. During this time, on the soil of our township, and as

far as Stakcín, Kolonica and Snina were played out heavy battles with the German occupiers. The population, protecting themselves from direct attacks, fled into the forests, where they survived this entire period in bunkers and shacks. Many of the inhabitants, disregarding the danger that threatened them, passed through the front line to the side of the Soviet Army and with their reports informed the command of the Soviet units of the positions of the fascist occupiers.

[35]

The commander of the 1<sup>st</sup> Volunteer Army, Major General Grecko, issued a battle order on November 20, 1944, at his command post in Ulic, in which he determined for his troops the tasks for the next attack. The stated tasks demanded of the 1<sup>st</sup> Volunteer Army a bold and decisive advance of all troops. The Soviet soldiers, who with unparalleled heroism had broken up the enemy defense in the Carpathians, were this time prepared to do battle with the fascists on behalf of the freedom of the Czechoslovak people.

On 20 November 1944 at midnight, the troops of the 1st Volunteer Army went in full fighting readiness, prepared to attack. At the observation post of the commander of the army at the edge of the Vihorlat range not far from the village of Podhorod and Strihovce, unit commanders and staff officers received a report about their own situation and that of enemy troops. Autumn rains were making the preparations of the army for attack much more difficult and soldiers had to expend much strength on repair of the soaked trenches.

On 23 November 1944, at 8:30 in the morning the artillery of 1st Volunteer Army opened fire on enemy positions. For fifty minutes they poured down on the known centers of the enemy defense and on the trench system of the enemy dozens of artillery shells and mines. At 0920 hours, troops darted into the attack. In the whole belt of the attack, the enemy put up strong opposition to the attacking Soviet troops, who, supported by self-propelled artillery and mine throwers, boldly penetrated the enemy trenches and positions. In the difficult actions of this day were liberated the communities: Ruskovce, Gajdoš, Sobrance, Nižná Rybnica, Vyšné Revistia, Komarovce, Ostrov, Blatná Polianka. Stubborn fights were conducted over other communities. The advance of the troops in the direction of Michalovce created favorable conditions for the liquidation of enemy defenses in the Vihorlat mountain range. After an equally difficult struggle, on 25 November 1944, the troops of the 3rd Mountain Division with commander General J. Vedenin liberated Snina. In the morning hours, citizens welcomed the first Soviet liberators.

[Note: The text actually says that the artillery bombardment started at 9:30 and lasted 50 minutes, followed by the infantry attack at 9:20, making no sense. The 9:20 is clear and unlikely to be a typo; however, the „pol desiatej“ (=half of the tenth hour) might well be an error in place of „pol deviatej“ (=half of the ninth hour or 8:30). That's what I have assumed.]

## The Years After the Front

After the front passed, Snina again became the seat of the district. Economic repercussions of the Second World War were awful. Those who returned from the evacuation areas had absolutely nothing, and many farmsteads had been destroyed, burned or otherwise damaged. In Snina there was no farm intact, indeed not even a fence in a garden, could be said was any good. Only the effort of the people to provide themselves daily sustenance. There were almost no provisions.

The extent of war damages on the territory of the former district Snina was considerable. 918 homes were totally destroyed and 2,217 homes heavily damaged.

[37]

11 villages had been 90% destroyed and 14 villages at 50%; 55 bridges were destroyed; 250 citizens were killed; and after the war 180 people were seriously injured by land mines alone.

The post-war aid of various institutions and organizations had to intervene soon with their own deliveries of food, clothing, medicine, and other goods. True, the profiteers abounded, into their pockets funneled the money for quantities of various products, with which was supplied from the black market and which should have been distributed among the people. The activity of restoration began, and the rampaging of the Democratic Party activities was very destructive on the thinking and performance of the people. It was necessary to repair war-damaged houses, and the state provided loans for demolished villages. The wounds of war were healed only with difficulty, and it was necessary to expend great effort in order to introduce some kind of order in this chaos.

In the years 1946-1947, people began to leave for jobs in the Czech Lands. Very slowly appeared the first newly constructed family homes from wages earned in factories outside Snina and from profits of the first farm produce sold. During 1948, mainly after February, there was already solid discussion about the construction of a factory in Snina which would solve with definitive effectiveness the employment of the population and raise the standard of living of the people under Snina Rock. Local activists tried to bring about construction of the factory as soon as possible and these especially were officials of the party and of local organs, who enthusiastically were clearing the way for the quickest possible laying of the foundation of the new enterprise. This was realized on 1<sup>st</sup> day of May, 1949, when they laid the foundations for the Kovo-Snina building, later today's Vihorlat Snina People's Enterprise. The first employees began to be hired from villages outside of Snina and the first trainees for the new plant went off to a Czech factory. Additionally the construction of the housing development for employees of the new factory was begun, which was met without great understanding by some of the local population when it affected their plots of land. True, particularly the young gradually understood what it was about and into the People's Enterprise Vihorlat Snina training center entered the first apprentices. And thus was subsequently born the first masters of the engineering craft from the local ranks.

[39]

### **Vihorlat, the People's Enterprise, Snina**

When today anywhere Snina is spoken of, a person immediately thinks the idea of the national enterprise Vihorlat Snina, which is very closely tied to the recent past and mainly to the present of Snina. Today, already, the big engineering works has given to the small and backward hamlet new life, which shows itself at every turn. The enterprise Vihorlat Snina became an independent manufacturing-business unit in the year 1963, by which a great trust was given to the workers of Snina Vihorlat, because they had proven that they knew how to work well and it is possible also in the future to count on the further economic successes of the enterprise.

The beginnings of the plant reach back to the year 1951, when production was begun on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of July. This [idea], that in Snina a factory should stand, began to be spoken of already in the year 1948, after the victory of the working class in our republic. True, few believed, but it was the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia [KSC] that decided on the industrialization of Slovakia, and so also in Snina they did a ceremonial ground-breaking for the new engineering plant on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of May 1949. Thus was begun construction of the plant, which continued during great difficulties. The first technicians came, masters who offered their expertise to the workers. Little by little grew the first barracks, which served also as offices.

It was begun with construction of the social building [and] a railway siding, and slowly spread the functional furnishing of the building. In the year 1950 construction continued, now on the first manufacturing shop floor, so that by 1951 production could begin. The work force is predominantly of local origin from the nearby surroundings. In Snina a state-owned sawmill is still operating in the vicinity of the plant, which was until this time the only industrial enterprise in this

district and employed around 150 people. For the successful launch of service on July 1, people from the surroundings of Snina were apprenticed in several Czech plants. Production begins at a set time and the production program also begins to be clarified.

For the employees of the plant, construction began on more housing units in a residential center, a commercial network is expanded, and the foundations have been laid also for a large common house with an auditorium with a capacity of 550 seats. The common house has a library, a reading-room, an auditorium, and in its second part is set the restaurant "Družba" [Friendship] with a hotel and wine cellar. In the following years, the People's Enterprise Vihorlat Snina became a famous export factory for cast machinery, for the production of boilers for central heating, of cranes, of crane tracks, and of agricultural machinery. Its products are exported to nearly 30 countries around the world and [its] largest customers are the USSR and the remaining people's democratic countries,

#### [41]

but customers also include Norway, Sweden, Chile, Afghanistan, Kuwait, Iraq, and other states. After good economic results, the People's Enterprise Vihorlat Snina celebrated in the year 1961 the tenth anniversary of the beginning of production in its plant. The year 1962 was the year of greatest success for Vihorlat Snina. In this year, the enterprise acquires also for the first time the red flag of the Ministry of the Interior for Engineering and of the Central Committee of the Machinist Trade Union, and -- after extraordinary initiative and sacrifice at work -- it gains the honorary designation "Plant of the 12th Party Congress of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia."

From the People's Enterprise Vihorlat Snina many installations go abroad and its products are exhibited at international trade fairs in Brno, in Leipzig, Poznan, Yugoslavia, in Turkey, Athens, Budapest, and elsewhere.

Alongside this booming enterprise, proportionately grows also the residential section and construction of housing development II is beginning, a new day-care center and nursery school are established and construction has begun on an all-sports stadium with a capacity of several thousand spectators. Also in a separate plant they are building new shop floors and complexes, as well as social facilities. A great success of the People's Enterprise Vihorlat Snina is the erecting and putting into service of a new foundry for the Automobile Plant People's Enterprise Mladá Boleslav [in northern Bohemia]. That foundry already today is casting parts for the new passenger automobile Škoda, which is exported abroad and is intended also for the domestic market. A noteworthy aspect of the Snina's Vihorlat complex is that inside operates the Vihorlat-made largest press for the casting of metal under pressure in the CSSR, at compression strength of 1,600 tons and injection strength of 100 tons. This press inspired great admiration also at foreign firms and among visitors to the International Trade Fair at Brno, where it was exhibited. Cheerful are also the future prospects for People's Enterprise Vihorlat Snina, which -- as an independent manufacturing-economic unit affiliated with the plants Vihorlat Praha-Holešovice, Prakovce, and Vihorlat Michalovce -- will contribute with its own production tasks to the national economy in future years.

The cultural life of workers at People's Enterprise Vihorlat Snina is organized in the ROH ["Revoluc'ne odborove hnutie" = Revolutionary Trade Union Movement] Cultural Collective, where at the workers' disposal is a cinema with a wide screen, various social pastimes, and cultural activities organized in circles. Very active are the dance, theatrical, musical variety and others circles, which also travel to surrounding communities and plants in the Humenne district.

The Physical Fitness Association has around 1,000 organized members which have very well developed soccer, volleyball, wrestling, handball, table tennis, basketball, and so on.

As we are speak about the People's Enterprise Vihorlat Snina, we cannot forget even its youngest shift – the machinist trade school, which also has a more than ten-year tradition. Under the hands of experienced masters and well-trained workers, each year a young cadres of specialists emerge: lathe operators, grinders, assemblers, electricians and others, not only for the single plant Vihorlat, but also for others machine works,

**[43]**

such as the East Slovak Ironworks [near Kos'ice], the East Slovak Machine Works[?], Transporta Medzilaborce, and others. The machine shop school is among the best trade schools in Slovakia.

Snina's Vihorlat, as a manufacturing-economic unit, is a many-times holder of the red flag of the Ministry of Engineering and the Central Committee of the Citizens Party. The workers of this People's Enterprise are prepared to fulfill future exacting tasks. The prospects of the plant into future years are therefore cheerful, and -- with good economic results -- will proportionately bloom henceforth along with the social life of its workers in Snina and in the whole surroundings.

**[45]**

In the specialist trade school at People's Enterprise Vihorlat grows each year the number of new pupils, whom masters and trained workers look after.

**[49]**

## **Snina – Mesto**

It is not necessary to think this over: Whether Snina and in its surroundings were uplifted during the last twenty years, or remained at the level of the times of the former republic. It is necessary, however, for us to recall some facts which speak well about this, of what kind of mile-long life steps marched forward in Snina and in its surroundings. In the year 1962 the Local National Committee was promoted to a Municipal National Committee, and this was deserved, as Snina obtained the character of a town and possesses the characteristic features of all towns that have lived through turbulent growth. From a dusty village it became an industrial town with 10,000 inhabitants, and after the modern plant Vihorlat – in which thousands of workers found employment – a whole rank of significant structures were erected in Snina. During the First Republic, there were around 500 homes in Snina, mostly wooden cottages covered with thatch, and only a few were brick. On the average 7 people lived in one building. During one year in this period at the most 3 to 4 homes were built, and they were for permanent state employees, who collected a monthly salary. Today there are 2,242 housing units in Snina, and since the end of the war in all 1,632 housing units were built. Out of that, 912 were state housing construction and 720 were private housing construction.

During the former republic and during the so-called Slovak State, there were no asphalt roads in Snina. Sidewalks were built only along the main street for a length of 1 km. Now Snina has 4,050 connected meters of walkway. During the preceding regime, there was neither sewer system nor water supply and now all Snina has sewer drainage and a tap water system is installed 27 km in length. Regarding the development of the health care system and the development of the school system we shall write in another place. The single town Snina provides work opportunity for more than 5,000 people. In the town there is almost no family which could not have a television set or radio, and at present there are in Snina around 550 television licensees. Gradually more and more the Municipal National Council became concerned about the education of people and their health. Yearly the state pays out to living pensioners in our town in excess of 2 million crowns, and besides that from the budget of the Municipal National Council is paid out each year an amount 130,000 Kcs for social assistance. In



Snina there is no homestead that could not be connected with electricity. The people dress well and eat substantially, they live culturally and class-consciously they organize their life in harmony with the needs and tasks of the further political, economic, and cultural development of our society.

**[51]**

Let us look also beyond Snina, to villages with new schools, with shops, on new roads, along which people transport themselves by means of the most modern buses. The commercial network and services have their center in Snina and the Communal Services of the Town of Snina was formed as an independent enterprise in the year 1959. It originated from a former budgeted organization at the Local National Council that had a window glazier's shop, a soft drinks store, a radio repair shop, a photo services shop, etc. Gradually were arranged further services, such as a taxi service, a garden supply store, a tailoring shop, a "Bridal" shop, and similarly. Gradually, with each year, newer and newer services grew, and their quality also is improving. Equally are offered services to citizens in the framework of a communal enterprise in Ubla, at a distance from Snina of 28 km, and even in Ulic, which is 36 km away. The network of communal services is expanding as far as 45 km to the distant village Zboj and other villages. All this is reality, which still a mere two decades ago would have struck the people from beyond Snina as a far off dream.

**MISSING TWO PAGES BETWEEN 50 AND 55 – rescan**

**[52]? MISSING**

**[53]? MISSING**

**[56]**

## **With the Eyes of a Snina Physician**

First as an introduction we must state that not even the bourgeois-democratic first Czechoslovak republic, which originated in the year 1918 after the First World War on the wreckage of the Austria-Hungarian monarchy, brought a turnaround in the health care policy of the newly risen state of Czechs and Slovaks. Concern about the health of the people, about protection of the health of the population, about treatment, about development of the mental and physical strengths and abilities of the nation remained a topic of private interest, a subject of business enterprise for the class of physicians and other health care workers.

The range and quality of health care services were adapted exclusively to the interests of the ruling class. By material and financial means, this permitted only well-to-do people to be able to purchase and pay well for needed medical attention. Without offense, it is possible objectively to state that even in the health care sector the usual laws and conditions apply, as in every market. Health care services were bought for very much money. He who didn't have didn't buy. And so the predominant part of the nation, shunted off by the capitalistic system to the edge of poverty, without sufficient economic security, was almost completely excluded from benefits bought with much money.

We know that there existed social insurance for laborers and other categories of workers. This was, however, likewise marked and differentiated with capitalistic interests, and therefore it was only formally superficial. Social insurance granted to the laboring class was only the simplest, most basic, least expensive possibilities and benefits, hardly guaranteeing to protect life in sickness and upon injury.

At the same time you must realize, that the capitalistic system scarcely recognized the concept of prevention, the meaning of prophylactic health care.

The health condition of the population was more than sad. About this testify the high number of infant mortalities, the high mortality of mothers at childbirth, the catastrophic death rate for contagious diseases, for pneumonic tuberculosis. Every second or third baby suffered rickets – the “English disease” from incorrect and insufficient nourishment with irreparable consequences for the later bodily and mental development of the child. Youth was thus marked with bodily and mental defects, and people died in the prime of life, at a relatively young age.

Preventative inoculation of children against contagious illnesses was unknown. A single disease exclusively was vaccinated against, smallpox. Probably the only reason for this was that it protected the privileged rich strata of the nation from the possibility of infection.

**[58]**

Babies and small children died en masse from diphtheria; before the eyes of despairing parents, the treacherous disease suffocated them. Whooping cough, scarlet fever, and intestinal typhoid fever directly cut down their victims. Pneumonic tuberculosis was an outright plague, a broom of mankind.

Preventative care for mother and child was an unknown concept. Advisory clinics did not exist. The network of health care services and facilities was unbelievably thin, the number of doctors very low, and they were concentrated predominantly in the towns. The category of mid-level health care workers did not exist, except for midwives. They were older women with very inadequate qualification, offering first aid at childbirth. So in Snina's district -- with 48 villages -- there were, up to the year 1945, seven of them. Women gave birth at home under conditions unfit for humans. And our region is perhaps the best, most convincing witness and testimony of unfavorable phenomena and conditions of the capitalistic economy during the first Czechoslovak Republic and during the so-called Slovak State.

The state budget in this capitalistic era addressed health care concerns with a tiny sum. In the year 1937 the health care budget for Snina's district equaled around 50,000 Kcs. Today the sum for the reduced district, for the diminished territory of Snina, is almost 10 million crowns. Can there be any more convincing proof for the humanitarian mission of socialistic health care? As we already have said, curative care was offered only for a bribe and in tiny measure in the budget of social insurance. On the other hand, the doctors lived in the towns, and so each health care concern for the predominant part of the people was almost unavailable.

The number of health service workers and facilities was tiny. Health education was not becoming a reality at all. The hygiene of work, of lodging, of food preparation, of clothing, the hygiene of working and living conditions did not have a social character; it responded exclusively only to the interests of the rich strata of the nation. All the old and older citizens, for example of Snina, of Stakcin, well remember the conditions that prevailed here. And here and there worked maybe 250-300 people under conditions unbelievably bad and degrading. There did not exist here any kind of protection of health at work; it was done under conditions extraordinarily difficult and damaging to health. We have in good memory the conditions in laborers homes, apartments, in barracks. A dwelling consisted at most of two rooms – a kitchen and [main] room. This was already the maximum, a luxury. Such favor belonged already only to extraordinarily deserving laborers as also to their families. Dwellings with small windows, often without a floor, damp, without light, without furniture, without water. In a single room measuring 4x4 meters squeezed them in, 10-12 people slept and ate. The laborer scarcely earned [enough] to cover of the most minimal basic living needs. Therefore children in their 12<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup> year had to look for the possibility of some kind of small earnings.

**[60]**

## **A New Era of Health Service Begins**

Such and still worse living conditions welcomed the year 1945. The Košice government laid out the principle: "The government will take care that all workers are safeguarded for the case of illness, accident and disability. In the forefront of health and social care will stand universal health protection of mothers and children. The sanatorium, daycare centers, convalescent homes, the spa will become the place of treatment, of rest for working people of the towns and villages." From this program of our first government followed the goal of its health care policy: State-managed and executed universal protection of health available to all of our population. Already in this year there was unambiguously published the slogan, filled with real content: "The people have a right to health."

And this slogan and health policy of the party and government are becoming real from that time truly revolutionarily in our district. The issue of health of the local population became the first-order obligation and concern of our government and party organs. From that time, from the year 1945, all organs of the party and of the government, of the Ministry of Health Care concern themselves with the health of all of our citizens from the cradle, from pregnancy until the end of life.

From the liberation and especially since the year 1948, work in the health sector has become quite humane, joyful, and successful. From this time our health service underwent a true rebirth and unbelievable expansion, responding to the new concern about the health of the people in the people's democratic state. The times of haphazardness and chaos in health care service ceased and was replaced by goal-consciousness and planned execution with the unparalleled financial support of the party and the government. The goal and centerpiece became concern about the physical and mental health of the working man.

We will document with several numbers and data. Until the year 1937 we had three doctors, in the year 1948 likewise three doctors, while in the year 1964, we recorded the reduced locale of Snina, which corresponds to the former Snina district, 40 doctors.

The concept of a pediatric nurse was unknown in our area in the year 1937. In the year 1948, we had for the first time in history three pediatric nurses; in the year 1964, 52. Up to the year 1945 we had not even one health nurse; in the year 1948 we had 4; today there are 70 in the Snina region.

The number of all workers in the health care service of the Snina district in the year 1937 was 7; in the year 1948, 17; in the year 1964, 290.

### **[62]**

In the year 1937 to 1948 we had only two physicians' zones. In the year 1964 they had 11 territorial physicians' zones and 3 workplace physicians' zones.

In the year 1937 we had in the Snina district territory of one advice clinic, today we have 31 of them.

During the first Czechoslovak Republic and during the so-called Slovak state, we did not recognize the concept of an ambulance service. In the year 1946 we received the first ambulance. Today among us 14 ambulance vehicles take care of moving the sick and transporting health care workers.

In the year 1951 we began to use the newly-constructed building of the polyclinic in Snina. Here we have concentrated four area doctors, three dentists, and various specialists: an internist, a

surgeon, a gynecologist, a pediatrician, a phthiseologist [i.e., tuberculosis specialist], an eye doctor, a skin doctor; here other x-ray, laboratory, and physical services are offered.

In the year 1963 our population received as a gift a beautiful newly-constructed hospital building for Snina with 180 beds. There are four departments: surgical, internal medicine, pediatrics, and obstetrics-gynecological. Thus the hospital and polyclinic form, together with the territorial and workplace zones, an ideal network of health services facilities, competent and prepared to offer the local people well specialized and qualified health care services. A great number of health care workers, a dense network of health care facilities did not happen without penetrating changes in the development of our conditions.

Revolutionary transformations occurred in the most important and most current indices of concern for the health of the people. The changes are joyful, astounding, surprising, and quite revolutionary. They attest to this, that the motto, "The people have a right to life," really was filled to capacity, that it was transformed into action, into a living program. Our people live more richly, more happily, longer and more wholesomely. Thus, for example, per 1,000 inhabitants among us in the year 1937 around 19 people died, in the year 1948 already only 11 people, and in the year 1964 the death rate among us was 7 people per 1000 inhabitants. Only the health care specialist, the only person dedicated to it, knows how to evaluate precisely and evaluate what these declining numbers mean. It means this much that nearly 400 people annually will remain in alive, while during the first Czechoslovak Republic -- due to unfavorable health care conditions -- would have had to perish.

We know that the mortality of children -- of infants in the first twelve months of life -- is one of the most important indices of the economic, cultural, and health care maturity of a people. Let us speak about this sector of our work in a clear voice the joyful numbers, more than praising our state institution. So in the year 1937 precisely 200 infants died, in the year 1948 only 122 infants, in the year 1963 -- after a continuing gradual decline -- only 24 infants died.

### **[63]**

This means that in the year 1937 infant mortality was 175 per thousand. This gigantic number declined in the year 1963 to 27 per thousand. This huge and beautiful success was attained just with these conditions which to us guarantee the motto: "The people have a right to health."

And does it not testify to the superiority of socialistic health services over the capitalistic system, that -- in such a neglected district as is Snina's -- from the year 1945 a sudden turn-around occurred and permanent decline in the overall death rate from 19 in the year 1937 to 7 per 1000 inhabitants in the year 1963?

With similar laudatory language speaks the index about the natural increase of the inhabitants in our reduced district. While in the year 1937 not even 5 % of childbirths happened in a hospital, so we note with pride that by the year 1963 nearly 90 % of all childbirths occurred in the hospital.

The number of doctor office visits in the year 1963 is about 2,000% higher than in the year 1937. What kind of explanatory comments [is one able] to apply to this tale of numbers? In the year 1937 no one demanded and maybe even no one desired of health care workers have educational accomplishments and experience. The strengthening and raising of health care consciousness was unwelcome and poorly aimed. Today with hundreds of lectures, radio broadcasts, talks, [and] interviews we spread health care awareness; we are improving the living and working conditions of the population.

### **[64]**

## The Stormy Development of the Educational System

Let us return to the past and peer into the history of our educational system in the former Snina district, primarily in Snina. The educational system during the former Czechoslovak Republic offered education only to a tiny minority of the population. Even when school attendance was mandatory, only the children of the rich, of craftsmen, and the like regularly attended school. The children of laborers, of peasant farmers, and of cottagers were already from a tender age employed, because their parents did not produce enough from their private wages to cover the livelihood of the family.

It is no wonder that also in the former Snina district, even in the year 1930, from a total count of 32,811 for the population, 8,329 inhabitants were illiterate. The struggle over the public school between the church and the state was sharpened [by the fact] that in the entire district in the first 10-15 years of the duration of the Czechoslovak Republic, outside of Stakcin and Snina there were only church schools. Construction of schools in the district was so minimal, that during the entire time of duration of the 1<sup>st</sup> Czechoslovak Republic there were only two schools built, those in Smolník and Michajlov; while the state paid out for their construction only a tiny part of the construction cost, the residents paid off the balance.

The picture of this reality may complete for us also the budget of the former Burger School in Snina, which was the only one in the district and its budget in the year 1934 represented the sum of 12,260 Kcs, which was the entire amount paid to the community. The state did not pay any amount into the aforementioned budget. This bad situation in the educational system fills in further with a report from the former district head in Snina, #11,132/1938, which states verbatim: "The school system in the district is at a very low standard. For 7,600 school-age children, instead of the needed 161 classrooms, there are only 86. Of the existing classrooms, only 38 are satisfactory. It is therefore necessary to build 114 new classrooms. The present classrooms are set mostly in private, plainly unsuitable buildings."

No better was the condition in the cadre's infiltration of the schools. The schools were occupied by teachers who were transferred into the district as punishment.

In the Ukrainian communities, instruction was in Slovak or Czech [language] according to what kind of teacher was teaching.

Attendance of pupils at school was limited mostly to the winter months. Pupils were without textbooks, teaching needs and aids. In such conditions, the school could not offer its pupils a basic education, and therefore schoolchildren departed from school without the necessary learning for life.

The entire Snina district was during the so-called Humane Republic without a burgher school. Only on 01 September 1933, there was established in Snina a branch of the Burgher School in Humenne with four classes.

### [67]

This barely grew to 6 grades up to the year 1939. The school was set in private buildings on several locations. Although construction of a building for this school was begun relatively early in the year 1934, it was completed only by today's system in the year 1948.

Apart from the mentioned school, there was in Snina also a folk school with 8 grades, set in its own building.

Conditions of the schools were not unimproved even during the so-called Slovak State. A considerable part of the former Snina district [Ed: east of Stakcin] was occupied and incorporated into Hungary, and the rest of the communities were incorporated into Humenne's district.

The entire turnaround in the educational system came about after liberation of our homeland by the glorious Soviet Army. With a decree of the Slovak National Council regarding the nationalization of the educational system, the state took over full responsibility for schooling. First of all was removal of the war-inflicted damages to our school system. The schools were supplied with new equipment. The state fully funded the school budgets, and the flowering of our schools was noticeable from day to day.

For students in the Ukrainian communities a burgher's school was established in the year 1945 with instruction by Ukrainian language in Snina, so that by the year 1945 in Snina there were three schools. The number of students in all three schools rapidly increased with each year. By the year 1953 there was a reorganization of the schools. The former burgher's school with instruction in the Slovak language merged with the folk school and an eight-grade middle school was created with 21 classes, in which 790 pupils were placed. The former burgher's school with instruction in the Ukrainian language merged with part of the secondary school from Humenne, and thus formed a school of the higher degree in Snina – the Eleven-grade Middle School.

Further growth of schools was mandated by the construction of a new engineering plant Vihorlat in Snina.

The number of students constantly grew and the school space became inadequate. Consequentially, construction of a new school building was accelerated in the area of the housing development, which was put into operation on 01 September 1956. About a year later, the eight-grade middle school was divided into two schools, namely the 1<sup>st</sup> District Middle School with 17 classes and the 2nd District Middle School with 15 classes.

In the following years Snina recorded additional school establishments. A specialist school was established here for the training of workers for the Vihorlat plant. In the year 1960 a four-year industrial school for machinists opened and in the same year a farming specialist trade school opened for the training of workers for the agricultural industry of the district. In the year 1959 a folk school with 10 classes was established. In the year 1963, a media specialist trade school was established, which was set up in the building of the local post office.

It is possible to say that our town can by right be called a town of schools, because in the present era there are in our town these schools: 3 nursery schools (with 7 sections with a count of 230 children) which take care of

**[69]**

the children of working mothers, 3 nine-year elementary schools offering basic education (for 2,270 students sorted into 74 classes with an overall count of 96 teachers), one general education school (with 11 classes and one evening class, with 315 pupils and 15 teachers), 1 industrial machinist school (with 14 daytime classes and 18 evening classes, distributed over several locations; in the daytime classes are placed 490 pupils and are instructing here 27 teachers).

Besides the aforementioned schools, there are 3 trade schools. A specialist trade school at the People's Enterprise Vihorlat with 827 students, divided into 31 classes, with 17 instructional teachers, an agricultural specialist trade school with 100 students arranged into 4 classes with 4 teachers, and a media trade school with 193 apprentices arranged into 7 classes, in which masters predominantly lead. In total in Snina then there are distributed in the schools 3,075 pupils, with 136 teachers. In the specialist trade schools there are 1,120 apprentices taught by 24 teachers.

For the aforementioned schools these structures were built: The nine-grade elementary schools have three new buildings of their own with 43 classrooms. One nursery school has a new modern building, in which are placed 4 departments. In the year 1965 construction began for a 20-class school for the middle industrial machinist school with an expense of 12 million crowns and construction of a new building for a nursery school.

The successes attained in our school system could be realized only in a state, where the people themselves manage the fates of their tomorrow. About such successes of our culture life and of the beneficial effect of state school even the best sons of our people hardly ever dreamed.

[71]

## **The Commander of the Liberation Armies Among Us**

To Vihorlat Snina came to visit the commander of the Kremlin, General Andrej Jakovlevic Vedenin, who as commander of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Mountain Artillery Corps liberated also Snina. His corps fought bravely in hills of the Caucasus and the Crimea and then was transferred into the hills of the Carpathians, where it fought for life and death against the enemy.

A. J. Vedenin visited among the workers of Vihorlat, in order to familiarize himself with their work and the results which they attained during the tenure of their young plant. He visited the workshops and all the other workplaces, where he talked lively about everything that he saw in eastern Slovakia and did not hide his admiration toward the results of the work of the workers of Vihorlat. He, as commander of the corps which liberated the first village on the territory of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic - Kalinov, had in living memory the struggle for liberation of all of Snina's district, beginning with Ruske, through Snina to Humenne, through Dargov and Košice. Then his corps continued further through Ostrava and Olomouc. Ultimately, the heroes of the Carpathian did not enter into Prague, because they stopped their advance not far from the capital. It was already the end of the war.

After a visit of the workplaces of Vihorlat, Major General A. J. Vedenin met with the best workers and bosses of the plant in a comradely discussion. Here all became more closely acquainted with his experiences, with his wit, but also with [his] admiration toward our working people. The dear guest expressed great delight over how our people are changing the face of their beautiful homeland. He assured those present that the Soviet Union is a mighty force fighting for world peace and it will manage to give to each aggressor a crushing blow, such as it was in the case of the defeat of Hitler's Germany. Comrade Vedenin met in Snina with members of the 128th division who live today in Snina, and this welcome was very hearty. "It was a good division," – said the commander of the Kremlin and he returned again to memories of the difficult struggle in the sector of the Carpathians. There was much of this, which would still be necessary to relate, and the workers of Vihorlat had a many requests for the remembrances of the heroic general.

To the workers of Vihorlat he gave a small diagram of the fighting operations at the village Kalinov, which form the most difficult chapter in the chronicle of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Artillery Corps. Directing the fighting operation at Kalinov village was the commander of the 128th division, General Koldubov, who later -- in the battles near Ostrava -- became a hero of the Soviet Union. Perhaps the most beautiful moment at the victory in the township of the village Kalinov was when the Czechoslovak soldiers, seeing that they were on [their] native soil, began to embrace each other and filled [their] pockets with the soil, for which

[72]

so fiercely they fought and many of them laid down their lives. Many soldiers wept and handfuls of earth they tied up in handkerchiefs.

These are only memories told in snatches, because time ran mercilessly. Major General A. J. Vedenin is, however, constantly in the embrace of the great esteem of the workers of the enterprise, who expressed to him thanks for the liberation. On this occasion the former commander of the 3rd Mountain Artillery Corps inscribed greetings in the chronicle of the People's Enterprise Vihorlat and wished on this occasion much success to the further building of the enterprise and to the entire Czechoslovak Socialist Republic. His corps received, in honor of the victorious crossing through the Carpathian Mountains, the honorary name "Carpathian." On this occasion we call to mind all of its heroic commanders, officers, and soldiers, who had their role model in Major General A. J. Vedenin. Eternal thanks and glory to the heroes, who fought for the freedom of our homeland! Honor to the memory of those who in this struggle laid down their life!

[74]

### **Honorary Citizen of Snina, S. M. Machlin**

In preparation for the 20th anniversary of the liberation of Snina, the Council of the Municipal People's Committee invited for a visit of the town comrade S. M. Machlin, who as commander of a military patrol entered first on her territory.

The visit occurred in December and the welcome was very hearty. The guest visited all the places in the vicinity that he remembered. He led discussions; with sincerity he answered all questions. He visited the memorial places in Svidnik and in Dukla. At the People's Enterprise Vihorlat, he also had a discussion and spoke in detail about many things of which the workers of Vihorlat asked him.

For unforgettable brotherhood and memory, he was – at an extraordinary session of the Council of the Municipal People's Committee in Snina -- named him an honorary citizen of the town. A hearty greeting to brave citizen S. M. Machlin!

[76] Missing

[77] Missing

[79]

### **What the Future Holds**

Whereas at present we are summarizing the nice consequences of the growth of the whole of this district, already the future is being planned for the next 20 years. The state institute for regional planning in Prague (branch office in Bratislava) produced in the year 1963 a focused territorial plan for Snina, and in this preliminary proposal there are already noted several fine factors, which will be counted on in the build-up of the entire Snina district in the coming years. It is obvious that these plans are constantly being improved and adapted to a more thorough and more economical design. In essence, however, remains the reality that Snina up to the year 1980, and in mid-stage to the year 1970, will rapidly grow.

It is possible to depend on this growth especially on the basis of the fact that construction of the East Slovak Ironworks will spread itself out also the People's Enterprise Vihorlat Snina, and so new work opportunities will be created.

Even when Snina stopped being the seat of an area, its significance as an economic and cultural center of a large reduced district remained. Local area factories, business organizations, schools, and health institutions provide work opportunities and services not only to local inhabitants, but also to the entire wide vicinity. The territory of this workplace circle is almost



coincident with the former area with a total of 40 villages, where more than 36,000 inhabitants now live. In view of this, that in this district there is great natural growth of the population and, therefore, that here is a great stable reserve of workforces, it is being counted on that today's factories will expand further and that others will also be established, particularly employing the female work force.

In the year 1965, the Forest Plant Stakcin relocated its main site into Snina. Also in the town began the activities of the state farming organizations, which will make a significant contribution to the development of agricultural production.

According to the calculated totals of the overview plan, Snina should grow to 18,000 inhabitants, for whom it will be necessary to build 3,650 flats and appropriate associated civic facilities.

From the above it can be seen that Snina -- and alongside her the whole district and adjacent villages -- also expects great expansion. Construction will continue in the villages and the standard of living of the population will be raised. If they managed in the past 20 years to achieve such great changes in this region, we must not doubt that the coming years will register further expansion of the region and of the people below Snina Rock.

#### **[81]**

In the year 1965, construction of a wood processing plant began in Ulic, planned to employ 300 people. In Ubla a workshop for the production of buttons and electrical plugs was planned to be built, employing 200 workers. These enterprises will be built in the framework of government decree #1105-61 regarding aid for the Ulic-Ubla valley.

Snina will be equipped gradually, beginning in 1965, with a new commercial network, namely "Settlement II", including a House of Services for the development of communal services to be built. Construction has begun on the Middle Industrial Machinist School and a dormitory with 480 beds. Construction will continue on roads, public lighting, a sports center, recreation areas, and a swimming pool.

**[82] ? Missing**

**[83]**

## **Part Five Natural Beauties**

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**[85]**

### **Nature in the Vicinity of Snina**

Snina and her surroundings have a very diverse palette of their outdoors, but up until now it has not been fully utilized. The oldest Sninans talk about the quantity of game, particularly large game, which was found here. Nature was giving to the oldest settlers of Snina their livelihood already in the more distant times, whether it was the hunting of animals, or the harvesting of wood, or the burning of charcoal, all this was giving the possibility of earnings, when far and wide in the surrounding area there was no factory.

Until today there have remained in Snina's countryside many untouched beauties. It is rich in forest produce and in mushrooms, but a great part of this countryside still is inaccessible and not utilized. Beautiful forests, mountains and valleys are not yet fully known and many of them hide in themselves undiscovered minerals. The best-known place in this district countryside is Morské oko [the Eye of the Sea] below Snina Rock and Snina Rock itself at 1,007 meters above sea level. In its proximity, members of the Municipal People's Committee and of the angler's club

built not far north of Snina Rock in the area called Cichá, two artificial fish ponds on the hillside behind the Vihorlat plant which today serve for recreation. Near the fish ponds is built a chalet with refreshment opportunities.

A favorite place for tourist excursions from Snina is Snina Rock and the Eye of the Sea lying below it. Through the summit of Snina Rock along the main ridge of Vihorlat runs the border of the areas Humenne and Michalovce. Snina Rock seen from a distance with its interesting silhouette evokes an imposing view, because it consists of two giant rock rectangles. The higher, Great Rock, 1,007m above sea level, spans the main ridge and the area border; the lower, Little Rock, 998 m above sea level, is to the northwest, in the territory of the Humenné area. On the summit of Snina Rock grow in huge numbers the Vihorlat kostrava[?] sheep, which inhabit the summit and the steep rocks.

A tour to Snina Rock begins at the railway station, with the new sign [following] along the path of the former mountain railroad on the left bank of the Cirocha opposite the heating plant, then into old Snina and we walk around the manor-house on the wagon road in the direction toward Zemplinske Hamre. From Zemplinske Hamre it is possible to get to Snina by bus via Belá nad Cirochou. Beyond the upper outskirts of the village boundary it is possible to take a tour into the forest with an ascent to the ridge of Vihorlat. The footpath leads mostly by beechwoods and small islands of brush. At the end of the hike we move below the rocks and stones that form and surround Snina Rock. First we move onto the lower Little Rock and then we step onto the massive formation of the Big Rock.

#### [87]

Here then the signs lead further to the Eye of the Sea, which is spread as if in the lap of this entire mountain massif. The ascent to Snina Rock from Zemplinske Hamre takes a little more than 1 1/2 hours.

At the Eye of the Sea [Lake] tourists are found regularly each year, and in recent years there is the popular youth trip to the Eye of the Sea from the Humenne and Michalovce areas, organized by Czechoslovak Youth[?]. The Eye of the Sea under Vihorlat exceeds even the beauty of some Tatra mountain lakes. It is 1,300 m long and in places 40 m deep. Accommodations are being enlarged every year, and -- in the plan of construction for the recreational district Vihorlat-Morske Oko -- even more hotels should be built here with the opportunity for lodging and meals. From Snina it is possible to undertake tours to other nearby and distant surroundings.

The most famous tourist spot after the Snina Rock and the Eye of the Sea area is Ruské. The natural environment of the area is abundant in woodland fruits and mushrooms, but touring it is most beautiful especially in winter, since there are remarkable ski conditions, some of the best in eastern Slovakia. .

Snow remains above Ruské until the end of April; while Vihorlat protects it from the south, from the north it is exposed to cold air. The most beautiful terrain is on the snow-covered slopes of Plaša -- 1,163 m above sea level, to the east of the village. Plaša is a botanically interesting peak. We find here a diverse flora (flowers), in which predominates the flora of the Eastern Carpathians. The ascent from Ruské to the summit of Plaša along the forest trail takes more than 2 hours. A forest road leads to the border peak Beskyd -- 1,015 m above sea level.

In Ruské several ski events of even region-wide significance have already been organized and it will be counted on for this purpose in the future more and more. Its terrain is utilized well by tourists and the skiing division of the Physical Fitness Association Vihorlat Snina, which organizes ski trips to here. At the foot of the hill Sirkan, not far from the housing development in Snina, a new ski tow 360 m long was put into operation in the year 1965, which serves skiing and recreational purposes not only for Snina but for the entire vicinity. Vihorlat, the People's Enterprise Snina, also owns the recreational center Trist, which is about 45 minutes away from the railway station Dlhé nad Cirochou.

Snina and its surroundings have a great future from the viewpoint of travel activity. The construction of other recreational districts is anticipated here, with the building of ski tows and such. This high point of the republic will open her arms to visitors even more and its people will further reveal her beauties.

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## Protected Territories and Natural Formations

Except for the [mountain] range Vihorlat and the border forest ridges, the Humenné region spreads itself out in uniform flysch [sandstone and shale] territory, which is rather little explored. Especially the northeastern part is very important for its [scientific] knowledge. Little is also known about old memorable trees of the area, apart from three mighty linden trees in the community Certižné. The district of Vihorlat is being considered the creation of a protected landscape district, important as an East-Slovak relaxation and recreational wilderness center and equally for its climatic and water conservation significance.

**Sokol** – Township territory, Humenné – Nature reserve; An important territory with bountiful drought-loving vegetation, especially in a group of the main ridge. Here is the northernmost habitat of flat[?] oak in Slovakia.

**Vonarské sliene (The Vonar Clays)** – Township territory, Modra nad Cirochou – Protected natural formation; The erosion ravine of the brook, Vonarský Ditch, has exposed undulating sandy-shale layers, which serve as an example of tectonically refolded strata.

**Stakcinsky les – (The Stakcín Forest)** – Township territory, Stakcín – Protected find; user: State Forests, forest works Snina, forester unit Stakcín; number of forestry division and growths: 121/e (part), 121/f (part), 121/g (part); total acreage: 1 hectare [10,000 square meters]. Oak-hrab[?] growth with abundant occurrence of the rare Carpathian plant species purple ceremice[?].

**Havešová** – Township territory, Kalná Roztoka – Nature reserve; proprietor: State Forests, forest works Snina, forester unit Kalná Roztoka; number of forestry division and growths: 59 a-1 and unproductive 204-210. Rare forest growths of primeval character on the southern and northern slope of the flysch mountain range. The collection of the forest community's oak-beech, beech-fir, and linden-maple in the local optimal conditions is marked also by beautiful exemplars of mountain maple, slender ash, and mountain elm.

**Plaša** – Township territory, Ruské – Nature reserve; proprietor: State Forests, works Snina and Ulic, forester unit Ruské and Runina – forester unit Ruské 133 a [and] c; 134 a [and] b; meadow number 350 and 352 half; Runina 136 a. The highest part of the border ridge of the Carpathians, where on a flysch foundation are preserved old forest growths, predominantly beech, of various types.

**Stužica** – Township territory, Nová Sedlica - Nature reserve; proprietor: State Forests, forest works Ulic, forester unit Nová Sedlica, number of forest division and growths 152 a-g; in acreage, 746.50 hectares. The collection, primeval forest growths, are biotops[?] of rare animal species. Several animals from this reservation are described as a completely new forms, until now unknown.

[94]

**Rožok** – Township territory, Ulic – Protected region; proprietor: State forests, forest plant Ulic-Krivé; number of division and growths: 151 a-d; in acreage, 67.13 hectares. Part of an old (more than 220-year) beech growth of primeval type with old oak tree trunks, in which nests the rare northern long-tailed owl.

**Kosmatecká (Alder Grove)** – Township territory, Ubla -- Protected habitat; Mountain alder-tree grove of special character, in which growth of rare animal species are found.

**Sninský kamen – (Snina Rock)** – Township territory, Snina – Nature reserve; the more than 1,000 m high andesite summit rises above the vast Vihorlat forests and its rocks and stony scree are the site of many botanically very important varieties.

**Riaba Stone** – Township territory, Nova Sedlica – Nature reserve; proprietor: State Forests, forest works Ulic, forester unit Nová Sedlica; number of forestry division and growths: 153 a, 201 a-d, 202 a-d; in overall acreage, 94.97 hectares. The flora in the vicinity of the Riaba Stone is extraordinarily rich.

Besides the mentioned nature reservations and protected districts, we have other noteworthy things in this region, such as the mineral springs near the community Pcoliné, in the township of the community Zboj, and -- to the north-west from the community Bela nad Cirochou – the so-called Salty Well.

There are in the surroundings rare monuments of folk architecture, such as the little wooden churches in Topola, in Zboj, Ulicske Krive, in Nová Sedlica, and in Ruský Potok.

From the viewpoint of travel activity and tourism greater attention is deserved the vicinity of the Jesenovský and Brekovský castle, where plans are to continue the exploration of the stalactite caves.

The richness of forest fruits, especially mushrooms mark the entire district, but primarily Kolonický Hill, Hostovický Hill, the vicinity of Zvala, and the northern foot of Snina Rock.

[95]

### **Below Snina Rock [Credits]**

Published by the Municipal People's Committee in Snina – Edition authorized by the Regional People's Committee in Košice under State Cultural [statute] number 5487, 1964

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HANDWRITTEN: home of the Butkos

**- END -**  
**(references and guides follow)**

## Photograph Directory

**[8] Photograph caption:** Statue of Hercules, which Joseph Rholl, proprietor of the metal works, cast in the foundry in Zemplinske Hamry in year 1841 and dedicated to his wife. The statue was attached to an old gravitational aqueduct and from the maw of the three-headed dragon water constantly flowed.

**[10] Photograph Caption:** Historical scene from 1912, which shows the panorama of Snina more than a half-century ago.

**[11] Photograph Caption:** Historical scene from the year 1912, which shows the panorama of Snina more than half a century ago.

**[14] Photograph Caption:** View of Snina, its old section from the first post-war years. In the background is the building of the Institute of National Health, which was erected as one of the first buildings after the war.

**[20] Photograph Caption:** People found themselves in a hopeless plight during the years 1944-1945, immediately after the passing of the war front. The scene shows the situation during this period in the villages Velká Polana and Ruské.

**[22] Photograph Caption:** The oldest architecture of old-Slavic homes, which were built in the largest numbers during the 18th century in the communities below the Carpathians.

**[24] Photograph Caption:** [Unreadable]

**[25] Photograph Caption:** Until today are preserved in Snina the oldest houses, which are more than 100 years old and are one of the last [things] which serve as evidence about the not-distant past.

**[27] Photograph Caption:** The bridge across the Cirocha [River], which was built in the year 1935 and was later destroyed during the retreat of the Germans, on the 24th of November, 1944.

**[30] Photograph Caption:** Among the heavily damaged communities included Stakcín. In the picture is a family that remained in only the poorest of conditions and among the wreckage of war to began to build a new life.

**[34] Photograph Caption:** A historic event was the festive send-off of the first bus from Snina.

**[36] Photograph Caption** An important role in the post-front years 1947-1948 was restoration activity, which they planned first of all new houses for citizens stricken by the war. This scene is from the village Cukalovce, where the private firm Palo Krátky from Prešov did the work.

**[38] Photograph Caption:** On 9<sup>th</sup> day of October Lieutenant Piotr Andrejevic Gladyš fell in the fight against the occupiers on the edge of the Soviet-Czechoslovak border. After nineteen years, his parents came to look on the burial place of their son. In the first picture, the inscription on the monument; in the second, the parents with an escort of representatives of the workers at People's Enterprise Vihorlat at the grave.

**[40] Photograph Caption:** On 1 May 1949 people participated with joy in the May Day pageant, and this became particularly historically memorable in the annals of Snina. The ceremonial ground-breaking of the foundations of today's machine factory Vihorlat took place.

**[42] Photograph Caption:** Ceremonial ground breaking of the foundations for the People's Enterprise Vihorlat Snina, 1<sup>st</sup> of May, 1949.

**[43] Photograph Caption:** Presses for casting metal under pressure are a precision product and for this in the People's Enterprise Vihorlat Snina have already trained a whole rank of specialists.

**[44] Photograph Caption:** Even such a part -- weighing, let us say, 10 tons -- is necessary to the installation of the great injecting press for the casting of metal under pressure.

**[46] Photograph (1) Caption:** The Vihorlat plant grows steadily. On June 19, 1962, the manager at that time, Engineer John Veles, conducted the ceremonial groundbreaking of the foundations of a new shop floor, which is today almost near completion and will open further possibilities of employment for the people below Snina Rock.

**[46] Photograph (2) Caption** The red flag of the Ministry of Interior for Engineering and of the machinist trade union was already several times the trophy of the work collective at the People's Enterprise Vihorlat Snina.

**[47] Photograph Caption:** At the present time, cranes form the main product of People's Enterprise Vihorlat, which are supplied for the largest constructions of CSSR.

**[48] Photograph Caption:** The universal agricultural trailer UV - 2 was developed by the innovator Ladislav Šponták in the People's Enterprise Snina and inspired great admiration, especially at the fourth International Trade Fair in Brno.

**[50] Photograph Caption:** ..... complex of buildings and facilities of the factory club ROH with various cultural spaces; a restaurant with hotel forms one part. [INCOMPLETE Image, rescan]

**[51] Photograph Caption:** ...housing development...[partial text]

**[54]? Photograph Caption:** The historic manor house in Snina, the former seat of counts, in the captivity of the centuries-old trees of a large park. Today it serves the public interest.

**[55] [?] Photograph Caption:**

The building of the Central Industrial Machinist School in Snina. Originally it served the District National Council.

**[57] Photograph Caption:** The new section of Snina, with Snina Rock in the background and with the Second Elementary School in the foreground.

**[59] Photograph Caption:** Such schools, as are now being built today in Snina and its surroundings, were never constructed in the past. As for example, this new school-house in Stakcin.

**[61] Photograph Caption:** The educational system expanded greatly especially in Snina itself. The modern, nine-grade elementary school in the housing development of the People's Enterprise Vihorlat.

**[65] Photograph Caption:** The edifice of the 180-bed hospital in Snina.

**[66] Photograph Caption:** In the machinist trade school at the People's Enterprise Vihorlat Snina, the trainees manufacture teaching aids for themselves.

**[68] Photograph Caption:** And people began to live modernly.

**[70] Photograph Caption:** In the entrance section of the plant Vihorlat Snina.

**[73] Photograph Caption:** S. M. Machlin (in the middle), the former commander of the group of soldiers of the Soviet Army who first entered into Snina.

**[74] Photograph Caption:** [Unreadable, RESCAN]

**[75] Photograph Caption:** Former commander of the 3rd Corps.....[Unreadable, rescan]

**[80] Photograph Caption:** [Handwritten Note from L. J. Berestein. Not Translated]

**[80, prior] Photograph Caption:** In August 1964 – after 20 years came to the places of the former fights against the occupiers comrade Leonid Jefimovic Berenstein, partizan commander, and during his visit to the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic he visited also the People's Enterprise Vihorlat, where he inscribed also some sincere words for commemoration in the plant chronicle.

**[82] Photograph Caption:** This is the most easterly located electrical generating station in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic. It belongs to the People's Enterprise Vihorlat Snina.

**[86] Photograph Caption:** In the woods below Snina Rock were many deer, but the war destroyed many of them.

**[88] Photograph Caption:** [probably Zboj] Old Orthodox churches also belong to the oldest cultural monuments of the people below Snina Rock and so remain well-preserved in many communities.

**[89] Photograph Caption:** At Rybníky in Bystrá a new cottage was built, which serves as recreation for the workers of all Snina.

**[90] Photograph Caption:** Silhouette of Snina Rock.

**[91] Photograph Caption:** At the Eye of the Sea [Lake] below Snina Rock.



## **SETTLEMENTS, PLACE NAMES, SURNAMES, BATTLEFIELDS, MILITARY FIGURES**

### **Settlements (Villages, Towns, Cities)**

Bela nad Cirochou  
Bratislava  
Bystrá  
cSR  
cukalovce  
Gelnica  
Hámre  
Humenné  
Jedlinka  
Josefsthal  
Kalná Roztoka  
Klenová  
Liptov  
Margecany  
Michajlov  
Michalovce  
Modra nad Cirochou  
Nová Sedlica  
Nové Mesto pod šiatrom  
Ostrožnica  
Papín  
Pcolina  
Pcoliné  
Považie  
Prague  
Rolova Huta  
Ruské  
Ruský Potok  
Rybníky  
šarošpatak  
šátoraljaujhely  
Satorljaujhely  
Secovce  
Serenc  
Sina  
Smolník  
Snina  
Stakcin  
Stropkov  
Stužica  
Szinna Hamor  
Tokaj  
Topola  
Ubla  
Ulic  
Uliske Krive  
Valaškovce  
Velka Polana  
Vranov

Warana  
Zboj  
Zemplinske Hamry  
Zvala

## Place Names

Beskyd Hills	
Brekovského hradu	Brekovský castle
Cichá	
Curkova jama	Curko's hollow
Dialkovo jama	Dialek's Hollow
Dlhé nad Cirochou	
Gelnica	
Havešová	
Hostovický vrch	Hostovický Hill
Hrešková jama	Hrešek's Hollow
Jedlinka,	
Jesenovského hradu	Jesenovský castle
Josefsthal	
Jozefova Dolina	
Jozef volgy	
Kolonický vrch	Kolonický Hil
Kosmatecká Alder Grove	
Margecany	
Margecany,	
Medzibodrožský okres	Middle Bodrog district
Milopčinova jama	Milopcin's hollow
Morské oko	Eye of the Sea lake
Motrogon	
Novobilsky	
Okolicne	
Plaša	
Prešov-Tokaj	
Prešov-Tokaj trachyte chain	
Riaba skala	Riaba Stone
Roch	
Rolovej Huty	Rolova Huta
Rolovej Huty	Rolova Huta
Rožok	
Sirkan hill	
<b>Sninským Kamenom</b>	Snina Rock
Sokol	
<b>Stakčínsky les</b>	Stakcín Forest
Stropkov-Snina range	
Tetkov	
Trist	
Vas Hamor	
Vihorlat	
Vonar Clays	
Vonarský Ditch	
Zemplínske Beskydy	Zemplín Beskyds
Zemplínskej župy	Zemplin County
Zemplínskych Hámroch	Zemplinske Hamre

## **Ancillary Place Names**

Afghanistan  
America  
Argentina  
Athens  
Belgium  
Boleslav [in northern Bohemia]  
Brno, in Leipzig  
Budapest  
Canada  
Chile  
France  
Gemer (county)  
Iraq  
Kuwait  
Medzilaborec  
Norway  
Polonina (Poland)  
Poznan, Yugoslavia  
Praha-Holešovice  
Prakovce  
Satorljaujhely Nové Mesto pod šiatrom  
Spis (county)  
Sweden  
Turkey  
USSR  
Vranov

## **Surnames**

Andrássy, Count Gejza  
Barnik, štefan  
Benovsky Elizabeth, Louis  
Berenstein Leonid Jefimovic  
Csáky Count landowners  
Csáky Theodore  
Degenfeld Jozef  
Demcák, 3  
Drugeth  
Furster Hugo  
Gerbec-Kolesár George  
Gerbec-Kolesár George, First chairman of the local people's committee  
Haburaj George  
Halanka George  
Hercules  
Hudák štefan  
Kamenár  
Karla Pavol  
Károlyi Baron Michal  
Komár  
Kredba Václav, Mudroch  
KSS [Communist Party of Slovakia]  
Kyslík  
Lukác  
Matošek

Novobilský  
Ockaj, Stefan, landowner  
Pcola-Vidrik, George  
Rädler, Rudolf  
Rholl, Stefan (landowner, of Dutch heritage)  
Roll Joseph, landowner  
Rosin Eugen, secretary  
Roskovics Ignatius , painter  
Rurik  
Savka John, mayor  
Schaumburg-Lippe, Count, landowner  
Serényi Count Rudolf  
Šin  
Škoda, Baron Karol  
špitálik Joseph  
Šponták Ladislav  
Ockaj, Stefan  
Truwor  
Vajda, Baron Imrich  
Veles, John  
Wenheim, Count  
Winkler, Baron Tille

## **World War II Battlefields**

Arpád, line in the Carpathian forests  
Blatná  
Blatná Polianka  
certižné  
Cirocha river  
Dargov  
Gajdoš,  
Horna  
Humenne  
Jasenov  
Kalinov  
Kolonica  
Komarovce  
Košice  
Liptov  
Magura Ridge [just east of Medzilaborce]  
Medzilaborce  
Nižna Jablonka  
Nižná Rybnica  
Olomouc  
Ostrava  
Ostrov  
Podhorod  
Polianka  
Považie  
Prague  
Remetské Hámre  
Ruske  
Ruskovce  
Ružomberok  
Sirkan

Snina  
Sobrance  
Stakcín  
Strihovce  
Svätuš  
Tibava  
Ulic  
Vihorlat Hills, between Stakcín and Remetské Hámre  
Vyšná Rybnica  
Vyšné Revistia  
žilina

### **WWII Military Figures**

Gladyš, Piotr Andrejevic, Lieutenant, Russian Soldier  
Grecko, Marshal, ANDREI, Major General 1st Volunteer Army, liberation army commander  
Halanka, George, Snina Patriot  
Karla, Pavol, Snina Patriot  
Koldubov, General commander of the 128th division,  
Machlin, S. M., Commander of a military patrol  
Tiso  
Vedenin, Andrej Jakovlevic, Major General, Commander of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Mountain Artillery Corps  
Vogol, Lieutenant Colonel, Soviet Army

### **WWII Military Units**

128th division  
1st Volunteer Army  
3rd Mountain Artillery Corps  
3rd Mountain Division (Russia)  
Capajeva partisan group  
First Czechoslovak Army Corps  
Prokopinkov Partizan Detachment

## **Technical Translation and Editor Notes**

1. Several pages were missing from the original document provided and are so noted. These are in the process of being acquired and this translation will be re-issued when these updates become available. It is however anticipated that only a couple of the missing pages contain information of substance. It is not expected that this missing information will add or detract in any significant way from the intent or substance of the writing.
2. Clarifying remarks or words by the translator are bounded by [brackets.]
3. Original document page numbers are bounded by brackets i.e., [12].
4. Photographs will be posted as time and space permits.
5. The noted wooden churches of Zboj and Nova Sedlica have since been removed to Skanzens at Bardejovske Kupele and Humenne, respectively.
6. English-language grammar rules have been used in the translation where appropriate. Certain passages were translated without conformance to English grammar rules in order to remain faithful to the writer's intent.

**- DOCUMENT END-**