

The Horror Days of 1945

This book is the
Diary
of
Heinrich Scheidler

last mayor
the community
PREILAND
Neisse district, Upper Silesia



*"... from the last few days and the trip
of a scattered trek
from home through Czechoslovakia
to Regensburg in Bavaria. "*



Preiland, Scheidler-Hof



Heinrich Scheidler, 1934



Daughters Luzi and Gertrud Scheidler



Luzi on her favorite horse in front of the courtyard kitchen window



Germany 1945 – The red line shows the route of the trek.



Occupation of Germany after 1947

The horror days of 1945

January was coming to an end. The spiritual councilor Pastor Schinke from Bielau had ended the apartment blessings in Preiland when the news of the Russian attack on our home borders got worse and worse. There were already repeated orders from the Caritas Association and the Neisse district office to ask all old people, women with children and all employed persons to leave their homeland in the special trains provided for this purpose in the direction of Czechoslovakia near Austria. City council member Josef Langer and I went from house to house and repeatedly asked people to leave their homes under these favorable conditions, but very few made use of this offer. Nobody wanted to leave home. Meanwhile the situation became more and more threatening. There was heavy fighting in Brieg, and the Russians had already crossed the Oder near Grottkau. We had all believed that the Oder would stop them. Now the 20th Panzer Division was deployed, which has always been successful up to now, and the Russians also had to retreat a few kilometers. Unfortunately, the Division can be withdrawn due to a lack of fuel. The division headquarters was in the carpet factory in our village.

After a few weeks of rest in February, the flow of refugees from Upper Silesia began. Thousands of them traveled through our village, by car, bike and on foot. The first came from the Grottkau district and looked for accommodation with us. Since the lessons in the school had been stopped, I had made the classrooms available to them in addition to the hall in the inn. The teacher Ms. Teichmann, the innkeeper Ms. Poflak and several young girls volunteered and prepared the collected potatoes, the bread and the meat that I had bought for the refugees every day. At the beginning of March, the thunder of the cannons came closer and closer. For days, days and nights the thunder rolled so that windows and doors trembled. During this time, 400 captured Russians and 124 guards came to our village and wanted to have accommodation, if possible, together in one place. Since we had already accommodated 200 soldiers with horses and wagons and the many refugees, I was only able to provide them with the barn at Kirsehner Franz (house no. 18) and the opportunity to cook in the mill. • In between, the community business had to be continued. The phone rang repeatedly at night and so all recruits and the Volksstum people were called. Since no one was at my place, I had to go myself and drum them out of their sleep because they had to present themselves in the district town the next day. Horses were also called up in this way. It was a coming and going day and night.

At the beginning of March the situation became more and more threatening, the Russian army was already shooting into our district town Neisse, which was 7 km from our village. The first terrible news also came from the villages beyond. For this reason, on March 12th, I shared with the municipal councils' teachers Winge and Josef Langer (house no. 68) all the horses and cart drivers in the village, which families each would have to take with them if the village were to be evacuated. Since our village consisted of only one third farmers and two thirds civil servants, employees and workers, the division was not an

easy task. I announced the decision on the notice board. With a few exceptions, everything had worked fine on the whole.

I myself had five families on two wagons with three horses: In addition to my family, there was also a refugee family from Oderwiese near Krappitz named Fritzek, who had been with us for two months, my cousin, Schneider Scheidler and his family, Frau Hertha Hoffmann from the carpet factory, her mother and sister, and Mrs. Fritz Hoffmann.

In mid-March we drove fertilizer when the weather was nice, while German and Russian planes circled over us and shot at each other. Seven kilometers away, our district town Neisse was already on fire in every nook and cranny. In this chaos, the farmer was still doing his field work without being in the least aware that all of this was no longer of any use.

On March 14th the order came that an anti-tank barrier had to be built near Josef Klose (house no. 45) in the village. The Wehrmacht helped for the first two days, then the community had to go on on its own. Wood was brought in from the Altwetter mountains, then earth was dug and stones were brought in.

And so came March 17th.

It was 9:30 in the evening when the phone rang again. It was a call from the district office with the order that the village must be vacated by 3 a.m. So yes !!!

There was no time to think twice. I immediately alerted the fire brigade and made it known to everyone that we would be clearing the village from 12 to 1 a.m. I wanted to prevent a mess and avoid getting among all the others, because that night many had to evacuate the villages. Since I had the order to stay in the village, I handed the leadership of the trek via Giersdorf towards Freiwaldau in the Sudetenland to the local farmer leader Max Putze (house no. 16).

Although most of them had arranged for an eventual evacuation, no one seriously wanted to believe in it and the dismay was great. Since everyone was hoping to return soon and not everything that was valuable or that was particularly dear to the heart could be taken away, a lot has already been hidden, buried or walled up beforehand.

My family drove out of the yard gate at 12:30 a.m. in the pitch black and pouring rain. The sky over Neisse was reddened from the burning city and in the distance the thunder of the guns rolled incessantly. I will never forget this hour in my life. I can never record the painful feelings that cut through my heart. This can only be measured by someone who has experienced something similar himself.

An hour later the village was full of troops with vehicles of all kinds and almost every house was occupied.

March 18th

It was a Sunday, but everything was desolate and empty; no giccke called to the service. The military had taken cover because of the danger of flying and the village seemed to be deserted. I fed my cows and pigs early in the morning and milked the cows. It was an unusual job, but it had to work. Later a few soldiers took care of it, and they also liked to do it. After eating something, I went to see the village. Only a few of the civilians stayed behind: the farmer Josef Birnbrich, he was on leave from the Volkssturm in the neighboring village and from dart, the member of the council, Josef Langer, and the master miller Leonhard Meyer. This was from Rednitzhemhoch near Nuremberg and had leased the mill for 10 years. He had brought his family to safety and wanted to endure himself as long as he could. He asked me what he should do, because he still had 1,000 quintals of flour ready and 5,000 quintals of grain in the silo; no backer wanted anything. I promised him that I would report his concern to the district administration office so that I might be able to get the things away.

In the afternoon I wanted to see where the refugees from our place have gone. I thought she was in the Sudetenland a long time ago, but the leadership had failed. I found them in Großkunzendorf, close to the border with the Sudetenland, firmly wedged into many other treks. But then they still made it to Alt-Rotwasser in the Sudetenland and had good quarters.

When I returned, an airplane was circling over the village. It opened the hatch and dumped 6 small bombs. I was able to get to safety at Schwarz Konrad (house no. 33) in time when it pattered on the roofs around me. A bomb had torn down half the roof of the Jakob bakery because a field kitchen had been vacant and uncovered in the courtyard.

In the evening a dead woman was brought to the fire station. She was traveling with her husband from Neisse to Ziegenhals when she was killed by an aerial bomb. Her husband was badly injured.

I retired to my quarters. That was the church office, in my house. I lived and slept there. During the night I was roused from my sleep because there was a drum on all the doors. They were fugitive Estonian soldiers who wanted shelter and were not allowed in by the Germans.

March 19th

In the morning I wanted to fetch straw to feed the cattle in the barn, but couldn't get any out because everything was full of Estonian troops. They said they had fought together with a German division in Opole and Friedland, but were trapped by the Russians and could only save themselves by fleeing quickly. In total there were only 800 men left of the Estonian division, all of whom came to our village.

At lunchtime I went away on my bike. I wanted to see how far the trek had come. In Alt-Rotwasser (Sudetenland) I met my brother-in-law, the farmer Josef Christ, and asked him where my Farnilie is. He said:

They are already world ahead. " I then met her in Friedeberg, a small town in the Sudetenland. There the two Farnilien Hoffmann unloaded their things and went on by train. When I found out that the trek could move into quarters in Gurschdorf, I drove back home via Weidenau. Before Weidenau I met a trek 4 to 5 kilometers in length. Many hundreds of vehicles drawn by horses or cows. My God, I thought, where are all the people supposed to be housed? They were people from Novag, Stephansdorf and other villages. The villages of Kalkau, Bauke, Blumenthal, Grunau, Mohrau and Bielau were almost deserted and it felt scary to me when I drove through. It was already dark from Bielau to Preiland. The Russians fired shrapnel that burst apart like fireworks in the air.

March 20th

The day passed without any significant incidents. I checked the village repeatedly to see whether the soldiers were feeding the cattle well. Towards evening I was with Langer, member of the local council, when an officer from the field police came and asked me if he had a couple of people to drive away the cattle in the neighboring village of Heidau; but I couldn't help him either. I told him. that there is still a lot of flour and grains in the mill . That should definitely be removed. He said: "The district administrator is in Groi3kunuzendorf. I'm going now, if you want, come with me and report it to him. I'll bring you back afterwards. " I went with them and reported to the district administrator that 1,000 quintals of flour and 5,000 quintals of grain were still stored in the mill, which absolutely had to be removed. The district administrator shrugged his shoulders and said: "Mr. Mayor, we have no fuel." But it must have been removed by the Germans later, because when the miller came near home, everything was gone, but the Russians weren't there yet.

March 21st

In the neighboring village of Heidau, all cattle have been driven towards the Sudetenland. Much must have run away because you saw cattle running around in the fields. More than 10 of them came to our village as well. Gentlemen and homeless everything was floating around.

Even the soldiers couldn't use it, for they had enough pigs to slaughter. According to the last cattle count, there were still around 500 head of cattle in our village. Our community was a medium-sized place, the Neisse district had a little more than 100 communities, that would be around 40,000 to 50,000 head of cattle in one district alone. The province of Silesia had 51 districts. How many values in cattle alone have been lost in one province?

March 22nd

In the morning I went to council member Langer and asked him to represent me while I was away, because I wanted to see how far our trek had come. Shortly before noon I set off on my bike; Via Graßkuzendorf, Friedeberg, to Gurschdorf. There I found out after a long back and forth at the town hall that they were staying in the inn. When I arrived Dart I was told that they had left this morning in the direction of Lindewiese. So I went back on my way. Behind Friedeberg I met Josef Scheidler (house no. 4) who was harrowing in a field there, but he couldn't give me any information either. When I arrived in Lindewiese, where there were a lot of refugees, I couldn't get any information from the Gerneindeamt or anywhere else. By chance I met the farmer Paul Heurich (house no.9) and the switch keeper Karl Wilde (house no.70), both of whom explained where the Preiländer had gone to when I asked, that most of them are here in the village and did not want to go any further they are kicked out. My family was always at the front with their teams and would certainly be over the mountain behind Ramsau. I said goodbye quickly because it was getting dark and drove on in the direction indicated. In Spornhau, a village behind Ramsau, I finally met her. They had already moved into quarters and so I stayed there.

March 23rd

Spornhau is one of the highest villages in the Sudetenland. Therefore everything was still full of ice and snow and the paths were icy and slippery. I therefore decided to have a horse shod first and then drove on through the mountains via Goldenstein towards Hansdorf. Towards evening we were in Lauterdorf, a village outside Hansdorf. The village is half an hour from the main road high in the mountains. To get there, we had to pull the wagons one by one up the mountain with a leader. There we got quarters, but only for one night, as many more refugees were expected. There we met the farmer Josef Sommer, as the first of the whole trek, with his family and a large group of people, as well as 4 horses, a foal and two wagons and also the Seifert family with a wagon, a horse and a cow. We got together and my cousin, the tailor Scheidler, took over the leadership of the trek, which now consisted of 9 horses, 42 people and 5 wagons. This was then to be reported everywhere when ordering the quarters or if food was received.

March 24th

At 7 o'clock in the morning it was tense and the trek continued. I accompanied him to the main road and then drove back to my home village, but not without having agreed beforehand that they should report everywhere and indicate the direction of travel so that I could find them more easily when I followed. I had a long way to go, more than 50 kilometers with some steep mountains. It was 3:30 p.m. when I was 5 kilometers from my home village in Lentsch. There I was stopped by an officer patrol asking where I was going. I said I wanted to go to Preiland. The officer replied to me: "You are not allowed to go there

anymore, the Russian has been shooting in there since yesterday." I said: "I have to go there again, I'm the mayor and I live right at the beginning of the village. I drive from Markersdorf through the forest, nobody sees me there. " The officer said, "But on your own responsibility." His warning was not entirely unjustified because it could have turned out very badly for me; but I had a good guardian angel.

German tanks had arrived on the Lentschberg and were aiming their guns over our home village. In the forest I came across 3 soldiers. One said they had a machine gun left and if I wanted I could have one. I replied that I didn't need any and drove on. There were 4 discarded bicycles between the forest and Freiwaldauer Biele. When I pushed my bike over the Bielesteg, an airplane circled over me at a height of about 1,000 meters. Unsuspecting, I went on. Between Biele and Mühlgraben I got back on my bike and had not yet ridden 60 meters when 4 artillery shells struck exactly at the same height as I was. It was aimed precisely, now just 20 meters too far to the right. I immediately threw myself against the fence and pretended to be dead until the plane had gone. So it was meant for me. I was really scared and became more cautious. Then I got back on my bike and drove the 100 meters through the school alley to the village. My neighbor Paul Meier had a dead soldier under the shed; nothing moved on Dorfstrasse. At my homestead the gate was open and a grenade had punched a big hole on the roof of the barn. All the doors in the house were open and the windows were darkened. Alies indicated a quick escape. In the horse stable were the 2 beds in which soldiers had slept as a precaution, because it was safer than up in the room. A calf stood by and ate Strch.

All the cattle in the cowshed were still tied up and roared with hunger and thirst. I wanted to tie up the cattle so that they could look for food and water for themselves, but then thought that if the enemy sees the movement, I will endanger the village even more. So I left it down and parted with a bleeding heart. I wanted to find something to eat, but couldn't find anything. I looked in a sack, went to my office, which was still locked, gathered up as much as I could carry and tied the sack onto the bike. Then I said goodbye to home and drove off.

I reached the forest without incident. The carpenter Franz Mai (house number 48), a man with a serious heart condition, was standing all alone at the forestry department, which is behind the forest. I said to him: "But Franz, what are you doing here alone?" "Oh Heinrich," he said, "I have to die. My wife is gone with Frau Hanke ", who was his stepdaughter," and the children. I wanted to go too, but I can't. I wanted to go home again, but it doesn't work anymore ". I said to him: "Go to the forestry and lie down and when you feel better you go home." After the unrest he died at home. 500 meters further I met the master plumber Grieger from Altwette when he was pushing his bike up the mountain in Markersdorf. "Oh," he said, "it's good that you are coming, at least I don't have to go alone. I'm going after my family, they went to my sister-in-law in Borkendorf, they're waiting for me. I actually wanted to stay at home. I didn't want to leave at all. We had slaughtered a pig and the meat was salted in the cellar. Yesterday and today the

Russians shot 70 times into the village and during the day I spent most of the day under the railway underpass because it is safe there. During that time the German soldiers stole all of my meat. Now I have nothing more to eat, what do I still do at home? " He let go of a powerful cannonade of abuse. When he had calmed down again, he said: "You can stay with us in Barkendorf overnight and you will continue tomorrow. ' I Agreed. Farnilie Grieger received me kindly. I also got supper. Afterwards we talked a little more and then went to the Rube. In the distance the thunder of cannons rumbled and there was a constant coming and going in the village.

March 25th

At 4 a.m. everything was mobile. I packed my sack on my bike and drove over the mountains towards the Sudetenland without having breakfast. At 9 o'clock I was in Oberlindewiese. There I went to a bakery and bought bread and coffee because I was very hungry. Afterwards I went to church. The bells called for the service, because it was Sunday and Mary's day. After the service I met my brother-in-law Josef Christ. We talked for a while and I told him the news from home and where I will find my family. He said he would have liked to go on, but his sister was sick and couldn't stand the long drive.

Then we went over the mountains to Hansdorf. Around noon I drove through Hansdorf towards Hahnstadt. After about 20 kilometers I started asking the authorities about the Scheidler trek in every place I passed and found out in Eisenberg that he had been registered here and had continued this morning. So they weren't even allowed to take a Sunday rest.

The roads were nice and dry and I arrived in Hohenstadt at around 4 a.m. in wonderful weather. I also found my family among the many refugee vehicles in a free space. After supper and talking for a long time, we went to rest in a barn. We were on one side and the horses on the other. You sleep everywhere when you are tired. My daughter Luzia slept on the wagon with our dog, a faithful guardian.

March 26th

After breakfast and after the horses had been taken care of, I first had to have my two-year-old horse shod, because it was already lame and had run out. Then we drove off together again and came to Mährisch-Trübau, with interruptions of course, because the horses had to turn around fed and watered on the way. Win also satisfied our hunger during this stay, but mostly in the ditch, like the gypsies.

We were able to bring the horses and wagons down to a building, while we were lodged with a baker across the street. Win had to stay there for three days because a horse was lame. During this time a large trek from our neighboring village Altwette drove through.

March 29th (Maundy Thursday)

That day we came to Crönau, a beautiful closed village. Win also had a good quantier, the same one in which Josef Nonnast from Bielau was housed one day later. In Cnönau there were large farms with well-off farmers.

March 30th (Good Friday)

Today was Good Friday and so we decided to hold the holiday in Crönau. In the morning we went to church and in the afternoon to the holy grave. The church, too, was beautifully and richly furnished according to the location.

March 31st

At 7.30 a.m. our funeral procession moved on over the Schönhengstgau towards Zwittau. There is not only sunshine in life, there are also Holy Weeks; and we had it. As usual, we had our lunch break in a forest, in a quiet place where we also found water for the horses. Towards evening we came to the village of Stangendorf. We had to wait a long time there until we finally got quarters. Stangendorf was a big village, it was already very busy with refugees. Our hostels were initially very suspicious and cautious, but gradually became friendlier and I have to say it was one of the best accommodations. Since it was Easter, we stayed there on Sunday and Monday. We also got to know the worries and griefs of our innkeepers, because everyone probably has them and we forgot our suffering for a few days.

April 3rd

At 7:30 am we said goodbye to our good hosts and drove out of the village over a steep mountain on which we had to pull and push all the wagons in four horses. In the course of the afternoon we came to the border of the Protectorate, where our tickets were checked and we were channeled through one by one. We entered Czechoslovakia with a certain amount of suspicion and unease. Towards evening we reached Politschka, a small town where we were housed in a large, newly built schoolhouse. The big school yard was full of the many refugees and wagons. It looked like a fair. We also got some bread, sausage and butter. We housed our horses in a barn 10 minutes away. Here too there was oats, hackles and hay.

April 4th

After tensing, it went on according to plan at 7.30 a.m. It was a good road with few bumps, so we made good progress. Towards evening we reached the little town of Lisko and were also accommodated in a

school here, but this time without food. But it was worse for our teams, because we had to drive around for a good hour until we found accommodation in a village 2 kilometers away. It was a shed that we first had to make ready for occupancy for half an hour. After feeding the horses, with the exception of the guards for the vehicles, we had to go back to our quarters. There was one guard on each vehicle; with the other one it was my daughter Luzia and the dog.

We could only communicate with people through gestures, because they didn't understand German and we didn't understand Czech.

April 5th

After we had breakfast, we had to go the long way to look after the horses. So we couldn't move on until 8 a.m.

At around 10 am, the team leader Seifert reported that he had to stop because he was losing a tire from the bike. That too! Fortunately there was a village with a blacksmith shop nearby. The blacksmith repaired the damage in an hour.

On the same day we moved into a guest house in Kunzendorf, a small village. The accommodation was not very good there because it was cold and unfriendly. The wagons were on a farm and the horses were in an open shed next to them. We had to cover one side of the shed with tarpaulin so that the horses were at least somewhat protected against drafts. The horses were our most valuable asset and we were in a country whose people were not exactly friendly towards us.

April 6th

Around 7 o'clock we moved on again on the main road. Around noon we came to Deutschbrod, a medium-sized town. There we reported to the Citizens Registration Office and were referred to Stecken, a larger village in the direction of Iglau. On this part of the journey the road rose again quite a bit, so that everyone had to push, sometimes for miles. As we were feeding the horses, a storm came up so that we could not bring any hay because it flew away immediately and we had to save.

The girls, King Maria, my daughter Luzia and the young woman Seifert mostly drove away as scouts, be it to explore the route, to make quarters or to harass people for a bundle of hay or other horse fodder. The mills were also very popular in this regard, and rarely for free. We often bought oats and bran. On the surface you could imagine it very easily and romantically, but how much effort and how many kilometers of drive did it cost and sometimes what rebuff.

In the meantime we came to Lerchendorf, a small village 4 km from Stecken, to which we should go. Here we were stopped by the mayor's daughter with the message: If you are on the Scheidler trek, you have to stay with us, because everything is already overcrowded in Stecken. That suited us all too well, because

people and horses were tired. When the mayor, a very friendly German man, came, he referred summers and Seiferts to the property there and us to the empty street inn. The innkeeper, a Czech who lived a kilometer away, brought us the key half an hour later and opened the dining room. Even if you didn't understand him, you could read in his expression that he would have preferred to see us in the afterlife than in his dining room. He just couldn't do what he wanted, because there was nothing to be done against the authorities. The next day he came with his wife and cleared out the furniture except for a few wobbly chairs and locked the other rooms. Well, he really didn't need to be afraid of us; we didn't come to pillage.

We weren't allowed to go any further, we should wait until further information comes from Jihlava. We made up the stable and put the horses in. Then we unloaded both cars, took everything into the dining room and made ourselves as homely as we could. There was also a small stove in the dining room and so we had everything we needed for the time being. During all this my wife had kindled a funny fire and half an hour later, as always on the journey, the famous potato soup was ready to eat. We were all happy to have a warm room and our own home again after a long time.

April 7th

Our quarters were directly on the main road that connected the cities of Deutschbrad and Iglau in a dead straight direction from east to west and with many bumps uphill and downhill. We were surrounded on three sides by the forest, which was only broken up in a few places by the arable land. A hundred yards to the east was a solitary courtyard, and another two hundred yards farther. All three were inhabited by Germans. To the south was the small village, half German and half Czech. Some distance away was a small estate that belonged to a Czech. Scheibeldorf, a beautiful purely Czech village, was three kilometers south of us. Even if the village had a German name, not a single German was among the residents. This village was also subordinate to the German mayor of our lark village.

April 8th

It was Sunday again and a wonderful day too. Almost all of us went to the church service 4 kilometers away, where we were supposed to be staying, and especially remembered our misery and our abandoned homeland.

After the service I met many friends from our neighboring village Bielau, who were quartered there with 340 people and many cars under the leadership of Chief Inspector Fiedler. The teacher Hiller was quartermaster general and he complained to me of his suffering. He said: "I would like to be self-employed do, because every day you struggle and drive many kilometers ahead to accommodate all the

people. But it is never good enough, because there is always murmur: he gets good quarters and we get the bad. " I told him that I could understand him, because accommodating so many people and teams often means two villages when the places are small, since there are already so many refugees anyway.

In the next few days five farmers separated from this trek and drove on towards Jihlava. These included the farmers Stenzel Herrmann, Nonnast and Tienelt.

April 9th

Today we received a cubic meter of firewood from the forest for each quarter from the mayor. We also picked it up immediately and chopped it up. We had all the tools we needed for this.

All those who were housed on your estate had poor quarters. They therefore moved to Scheibelsdorf, where they found accommodation partly in the school and partly with the farmers. For the next few days, we looked for work. The neighboring estate Stecken had a large plot of land next to our quarters. I plowed and harrowed it with our team. My sons, Alexander 15 years of Chris - tian 14 years, I have helped. We got oats, hay and straw for the horses. Finally, we got a hundredweight of wheat, a hundredweight of rye and the horses in the manor's forge shod. During the week I went to Scheibelsdorf to see how everyone was accommodated. Sommers and Seiferts stayed with a farmer, helped with the field work and received very good food. König, Scheidler August and Schwarzer had found accommodation at the school with their families. The deputy mayor brought them bread and other groceries every day, so that they were very satisfied and did not have to suffer hardship. So everyone was well taken care of.

My daughters Gertrud and Luzia helped with the farmer Hetwer on the farm next to us. They did all the work there and Luzia even drove with a team of oxen. The people had about 10 hectares of arable land. The soil there was not particularly good, partly weathered, stony and with a rocky subsoil. The farmer was alone with his wife, three small children and their old parents. They were good people and had their business in perfect order.

The Germans were in the minority compared to the Czechs, and even if outwardly the coexistence seemed to be in perfect harmony, a stranger was hardly noticeable, a certain tension that everyone tried to hide as well as possible. When I was once again in sticks to have my horse shod in the manor's forge, I asked an old woman who was driving her cows to the field: "Well, mother, how are you?" Then she said, "Not good, we've been here for over 300 years, but we've never been particularly good." A week later, here too, all Germans had received secret instructions to pack their things and prepare their wagons for an escape. So there too!

Although we were homeless ourselves, we were heartily sorry for the good people. A woman cried and said: "What should I do alone with my children, my husband is in the field?"

Of the. Farmer Hetwer quickly slaughtered two pigs. The third he offered us, which we gladly took. I shared it with my cousin the tailor and salted it; so we were helped again.

The farmer didn't want to leave. He wanted to go into the forest with his family and wait until the unrest was over. Poor people, how will you have fared?

A threatening thundercloud was in the sky. You didn't know how it would discharge. Woe if you let go of the immense fire without resistance through the crowded streets. You poor unsuspecting people, how will you have fared?

April 19th

It was Thursday, on that day all the trek leaders in Jihlava had a meeting at which it was announced that all treks had to have left Czechoslovakia by April 25th. On this day we then prepared everything for the onward journey.

April 20th

Early in the morning there was a feverish work, the wagons loaded and the horses harnessed. We had given the others in Scheibelsdorf the day before by phone. After saying goodbye to the good people, we started uphill again at around 10 a.m. in a southerly direction. We drove east to Stecken, then turned right to the south. We arrived in Windig-Jenikau in the evening without incident. We stayed there until the mayor came and gave us quarters. Meanwhile a cold rain came and we all froze. We moved into an open shed at a builder, which we first had to make ready for occupancy. In the front a wagon was pushed forward and a tarpaulin was hung so that the horses were at least somewhat protected. Our warehouse was next door to the chopping machine. A strong bar was attached to the wall of the shed with a chain that we had with us. The bar was looped around with the chain a few times and through the large links we put the toggles of the horses' tie chains. In this way we prevented damage to the shed wall. This construction was easy to install anywhere.

In the kitchen my wife could cook the famous potato soup, but everything else took place in God's free nature. The people didn't speak German and we didn't speak Czech.

April 21st

It was Sunday again. We would have loved to go to church, but that day we had the longest way to go. We wanted to go over to Austria because that was closest to us. So we just got ready for the onward journey. Since we couldn't turn the wagons in the courtyard, we first had to pull them backwards with the horses to the main road. After the collection, it continued as usual in the following order: my son Christian drove the first car, my wife sat next to it and the dog in the middle while I operated the brakes. My

daughter Gertrud drove the second car, while my already Alexander operated the brakes. A Pole each drove in Sommers' and Seifert's cars.

On the way, a horse from Sammer's wagon fell ill. We could therefore only drive slowly and had to take an hour's break in a village. Everyone was walking in the villages, only we were on the run, like hunted game. We arrived in the village of Böhmisch-Gieshübel around 5 o'clock. When the mayor came, he just yelled into the farmsteads that were supposed to take us in and went on his way. We were housed in an inn and our horses were sheltered by a farmer. Here, too, we first had to clear out an old shed and make it ready for occupancy.

The people were rude and nobody cared about us. Ms. Hildegard Weisser came down during the night and had to be taken to the hospital in Pilgram by a medical vehicle for delivery.

April 22nd

During the night 8 to 10 cm of snow had fallen. There was a steep mountain just behind the village. I was worried about how to get over the mountain because the horses all had blunt irons. We tensed at 8 o'clock and when we got to the mountain, the snow started to thaw, so that we could get over in four horses without any difficulties. On this day we came to Liebeckswasser without any obstacles and without any other mountains worth mentioning. Here we were accommodated in an inn. The horses were in a barn. The innkeeper's son spoke German quite well, so at least one could communicate with the people.

April 23

At 7 o'clock we packed and we left the place around 8 o'clock. Here the school building was full of refugees who had been in town for a whole year.

On this day we overtook the trek from Bielau in a village; one of the wagons had broken a wheel. Thank God we hadn't suffered such damage before.

In the late afternoon we drove through the town of Kamenitz ad Linde. Two kilometers further we quartered in a small village. First we were supposed to go to a barrack camp, but everything was already overcrowded there. We had to turn around again and drive back to the village on the dirt roads, it had rained a lot. After some searching, a farmer let us into his homestead and gave us space for us and our horses. When I offered him a good cigar, he became quite friendly. At least we had a roof over our heads again and could eat our food in the kitchen. One could be amazed what makes tobacco like that.

April 24th

At 7:30 a.m. it was tense. We gathered on the street and drove back to Kamenitz to get back on the right track. On the way, our scouts brought us hay and bran from a mill several times. The roads were not particularly good that day. Towards evening we landed in a village called Retschütz. We were housed in a barn with a farmer. In this courtyard, German soldiers also had a small magazine with all kinds of tools. Here, too, the horses stood in an open shed, which we first had to make roostable. We camped next door in the barn.

April 25th

At 7 o'clock, Sommer and I first had to go to the forge and have the horses shod. So we could only harness at 8 o'clock. The people were grumpy and obviously didn't see us well. But they must have been happy to see us drive away, and so it balances out. At 11 o'clock we got into a mighty thunderstorm. Half an hour later an American aviator almost threw a large box of leaflets on our heads. It went down about 200 meters in front of us close to the path and crashed into pieces.

Around noon we drove across the Vltava near Moldaustein. There was a castle up there on a mountain. Behind it we passed several large lakes. It was the most beautiful and most romantic area on our way. Around 5 o'clock we came to a wide main road and drove on this to the town of Frchnbruck. Dart we met the trek from Bieiau again. Half of the trek stayed in Frohnbruck, the other half had to go on because they couldn't all be accommodated in the town. After waiting for a while, we had to drive back a little and were directed to an inn. Dart had a nice stable, but oh dear, or was half full of sawdust that we had to clear out for a night. We then moved into the guest room. If we didn't have a bed, at least we had a room for a long time.

April 26th

At 7.30 a.m. we went out to the town on a flat country road in the best possible weather. It was almost the only stage on which we didn't have to conquer a mountain. At lunchtime we stopped for an hour and a half as usual. When we had eaten and the horses had their feed, it went on again. In the afternoon we drove past the city of Budweis in an arc of about six kilometers. We could just as easily have driven through the city, but left it because we heard that riots had already broken out in the city.

At 6 o'clock in the evening our scouts followed us. We should repent, for they had two kilo - meter get back a quarter. As difficult as it was to turn around in the forest, we succeeded and we drove back to a single lying good. In the manor I met an SS sergeant, whom I asked where the boss or the manager was. He explained to me that he was both, because there was nobody but this group of SS men on the estate. There was enough space and so we could stay. We put our horses in a huge empty stable and were able

to feed them with plenty of hay, of which there was more than enough. Then we moved into our quarters in the servants' house, which was also empty. The SS group lived in the manor house. When we had strengthened ourselves, we went to rest. We and the horses were tired because we had covered 42 kilometers that day.

April 27th

As we didn't have far to go to the Austrian border, we decided to take a day of rest to rest ourselves and the horses. We had enough hay and also got a sack of oats from the sergeant. No matter how much hay you wanted to give the horses, they wouldn't really eat. They all started getting sick. They had the gland and that was no wonder, because the water, here well water, there from a ditch and always cold and above all the drafty accommodations, only rarely a warm stable; even the healthiest animal cannot withstand this in the long run.

The estate was 175 hectares in size and was in an open field. The buildings around the large courtyard were in good condition. Everything was empty, the stables, the tool sheds and the barns. There was still hay and about 100 quintals of oats left on the bulk floor. The estate belonged to a Count von Schwarzenberg. -

The soldiers drove manure in the fields to keep their horses moving. We have greased and repaired our wagons and replenished the hay supplies.

April 28th

At 8 o'clock we moved on through a forest towards the border. Around noon we came across the border on a bad, stony road and drove into a village. Since this village was already heavily populated with refugees and it was still too early to make quarters, we drove on. Towards evening we came through a cut in the Czechoslovak border into the Czech village called Nettalitz. The wagons were set up in an open space and we and the horses moved into an inn.

April 29th

At 8 a.m. we drove on again and arrived at the Austrian border at 9:30 a.m. Village we gather. After checking our ticket, we were able to continue the journey. An hour later we came to a wonderful valley. To the right on the mountain slopes were many thousands of cherry trees in full bloom. It was a lovely sight. At least a ray of sunshine on our way of the cross. In the next larger village we stopped for lunch and fed the horses while it was raining heavily. We wanted to wait for it to stop, but it didn't get better so we drove on in the rain. After an hour we had to pull the wagons up a high mountain again in four-in-hand. It kept raining and it was cold.

Around 4 o'clock the tailor came with the good news that although they had already searched 3 villages for accommodation, they had finally found one. It was high in the mountains and we still had a good hour to drive. Well, at least there was hope for good accommodation again. After three quarters of an hour we had to pull the wagons up to the mountainous village of Pzyslop in four horses. There we moved into a small room with a farmer that my daughter Luzia had already heated. You felt really good there. Only the horses had too small a stable.

The village consisted of 8 owners, mostly small farmers. The field brought little income. Each also had a few sheep, which a shepherd tended every day in the stony meadows and forests. The people also grew flax, among other things. They spun the flax made from it half with sheep's wool into a solid, woolly thread that was used to make many items of clothing. People rarely came into contact with the demanding outside world and lived happily ever after. It was therefore understandable that they saw us as troublemakers. They were good people and we soon made friends with them. Sometimes I watched her work and it felt like my great-grandmother's time.

April 30th

We were of the opinion that we were safe and therefore, after a quiet, good night's sleep, we got ready to go to church at the Kirchdorf Tisch at 7.30 a.m. Since we could not find the way on our own, we joined some local residents. The way went almost an hour and a half through a dense forest over several ridges. After the service we looked around the area. It was a beautiful village and, like everyone else, full of refugees.

Make the lunch, which was a little better today on Sunday, several planes thundered over our otherwise quiet village. A few seconds later there was a crash from the direction of the neighboring village. On the same day we learned that a trek from Leobschütz, located in Upper Silesia, had been shot at in the neighboring village, killing some people and several horses. How painful it may have been for the bereaved to leave their loved ones far from home and not to know where the path leads. We stayed in the place Monday and Tuesday as well. As in all places where we stayed for several days, we baked our bread from the flour that we had taken from home.

Since the planes made the area more and more unsafe, we decided to continue on Wednesday evening and use the night. When we woke up early, however, 10 cm of snow had fallen and so we could not leave because of the many mountains and the bad roads. When the weather cleared up again over the next few days and the snow went away, we set the departure for Friday evening.

May 4th

At 4 o'clock in the afternoon we got everything ready for our onward journey. We pulled the wagons out of cover under which we had placed them because of the danger of flying and hitched the horses. At 5 o'clock we said goodbye to the good people. Accompanied by her dear wishes for a happy onward journey, we went down to the village.

On the main road we drove through the village of GraB-Zmitsch. In the next village we met Mayor Schneider from our neighboring village Mohrau with his family, horses and wagons. After passing through several villages we stood at the foot of a very long and high mountain. It was starting to get dark. From here we had to harness four horses to a wagon, pull the same up a few hundred meters and then catch up with the others. It went on like this until we had covered the 6 km long distance. A tough achievement for the horses. Here we stopped for an hour, ate and fed the horses. It had become pitch black and in the thick coniferous forest one could no longer distinguish anything. In the distance there was a strong thunder of guns. While the guns flashed, you could see the way for a few seconds. We had to rely entirely on the horses as we drove on. The road was very narrow and there was a deep ditch on either side; In addition, it was now going steeply downhill and one person had to brake on each car. Those behind kept shouting: "Go slower, you can't see anything. ... where are you guys actually?"

When the forest thinned sometimes, you could see isolated houses from time to time. This went on for a few hours until we suddenly stood in front of the house front of a larger village. We stopped because we didn't know where to go. We wanted to cover the horses, but there was a strong storm and didn't leave the blankets lying around, and it started to rain and was very cold. It was 1 o'clock in the morning and we were standing in a strange and unknown village. We scanned the front door of the house and lo and behold, a gate opened. We opened it. We quickly fetched the wagons and drove them under the driveway so that the horses were also protected. We kept looking. We had no light except for matches.

We found an empty stall. We quickly unhitched the horses and put them in the stable. We gave them food and then found a place for ourselves in a barn with a lot of straw.

May 5th

When we woke up early, it was 8 o'clock. While we were feeding the horses, the coffee for breakfast, which my wife had made in the kitchen of our unknown host, was ready. It then turned out that we had broken into an inn; hence the empty stable. Judging by the way he looked, the innkeeper wasn't very happy about our break-in. We didn't bother him for long either. An hour later we were back on the road, ready to drive. The village was called Stein and is located 20 kilometers west of Krumau.

Again it went in the direction South. At about noon we were in the small village of Quitashin. Village we were stopped by the mayor and were not allowed to continue because of the proximity to the front. But we wanted to go through the American front in the direction of Bavaria, Thuringia, Saxony and from there back to our beloved home Silesia. We finally wanted to have peace and quiet, we had experienced enough, enough seen and begged enough.

Other refugee vehicles from the Leabschütz district stopped in front of us. They too thought like us and wanted to go home.

We immediately looked for quarters and were lucky. A compassionate farmer opened his barn and made it available to us. The horses came on the right side, two wagons in the middle and everyone on the left side. So everything was accommodated; how long did we not know.

The farmer had 50 hectares of land. Of this, a third was arable, a third meadow and pasture and a third forest. The field was very stony, but the cattle were relatively well fed. The village was 800 meters above sea level and therefore the harvest was also quite low. The people, however, were satisfied. The farmer sometimes let us feed with his hay store.

May 6th

It was a Sunday. After we had breakfast and fed the horses, we made up and went to the church service in the parish village of Stein. It was a mountainous hour to get there. Although the church was large, it could be seen that it was crowded with refugees. Every one of our fellow sufferers may well have sent a heartfelt prayer to heaven, as we have, for rescue from this emergency.

In the afternoon I visited the small village. Among other things, I also met a family who was related to the farmer Richard König from our home village. She belonged to the trek from the village of Leisnitz, district of Leobschütz.

From a hill behind the village one could see the heavy impacts of the American artillery.

The next few days passed without any special events. The women baked bread, washed, and mended the laundry.

On May 8th [1945] Germany surrendered and hostilities ceased.

On May 9th,

an American scout car with a machine gun attached, drove cautiously through our town, peering in all directions.

May 10th

Even if our horses were sick with the gland and did not want to eat the best hay properly, it was gradually running out. The farmer advised us to go to the market town Plan, there was a large store of provisions and maybe we could get something to buy now. We borrowed a small car from the builder. My fellow sufferer Sommer provided us with the horse boy Gunther Kirsch with two horses and I made the guide and companion at the same time. As a sign of our peaceful convictions, we attached a pole with a white parliamentarian flag to the front of the car and drove off. On the way we drove through several American-occupied villages and came to the market town of Plan. I immediately went to the mayor's office and put forward my wishes. There I was told that everything had been confiscated from the Americans and that they did not yet know what to do next. So I was released and back on the streets. The way was not completely in vain, however, because on the way we were thrown a few packs of cigarettes from some Americans, which we accepted with the kindest "Thank you".

On the way we passed a large lake. The terrain was hilly and stony and the field was not particularly fertile. My daughters, Gertrud and Luzia helped out almost every day with the construction work in the fields, picking stones, poking potatoes or whatever else there was to do. In return, they got food and two hundred pounds of oats for the horses.

The straw was very scarce for everyone. For this reason, coniferous twigs were mostly used, which the servants had to chop off in winter and spring.

May 11th

On that day we learned that the Americans had opened a camp in Hörlitz, a larger town 5 kilometers from us, and released it to the population. That's why we made our way there, because we could use a lot. There were many people there, dragging mountains of goods away. There were shoes, boots, underwear and all kinds of military equipment. We chose what we needed, packed everything on our bikes and drove back to our quarters. We couldn't take a lot anyway, because where should we put it, and a lot of it would just have been unnecessary ballast for our uncertain journey. Seifert's Pole and a Pole from Sommers had also picked up things and prepared large parcels. A Pole from Sommer's group had already pulled away. The other two also began to mutiny and no longer wanted to feed the horses. They got into an argument with the farmer Sommer, in the course of which they threatened and killed Sommer.

May 12th

In the late morning the Poles got ready for their return journey, packed their packages and drove with them in a car that was just passing by in the direction of Stein. As soon as they were gone, Frau Schwarz said: "I'm missing a box. I've got my husband's suit and a couple of drawers in there. The Poles certainly

took that away with them. When my husband comes home he has nothing to wear. Mr. Scheidler, would you be so kind as to go to see the Poles? Much confession can be achieved. " I immediately drove to read the poles in the direction of stone. On the way I drove past them and pretended not to be interested in them, but noticed from their expressions that they had a clear conscience. I couldn't do anything on my own without the police, all the more since other Poles from our neighborhood were there too. I drove as far as Stein and, since there was no longer a German police force, I went to the American headquarters. Nothing was done, although it would have been easy as the Poles passed a few minutes later. They were happy to have gotten away with intact skin while I stood there speechless. In my opinion, everything that is German was declared fair game.

There is a saying that injustice is seldom good. It was the same with the Poles. A year later we learned that these Poles had returned to our home village and that the other Poles had stolen everything from them there.

At the same time, our tailor was also in Stein with his bike to go shopping at a bakery. When he left the shop, however, his bike was no longer to be found. - It had already found another gentleman. There was nothing else left for him

left than to walk home. He still didn't want to believe it at home, because he asked everyone if we hadn't allowed ourselves a joke and taken his bike away from him. We now had one less scout.

May 13th

It was Sunday again, but as bleak for us as any other day. We went back to the church service in Stein to find some consolation in the church and to ask for a happy onward journey.

Around noon we visited the fellow sufferers from the Leisnitz trek. They said that the refugees should drive as far as Budweis. There they would be loaded onto the train and taken to the Silesian border. That sounded pretty good, but I didn't believe this story because it had already been heard that many treks in the Czech Republic were supposed to have been plundered. Even American-guarded treks were said to have been shot at.

If they weren't loaded in Ceske Budejovice, they intended to drive through the Chekoi on their own and possibly offer resistance. They were of the opinion that they could get through with around 80 cars. We should join them. The next day they wanted to ride their bikes to the large camp table to find out about all the details. I should go too. I promised them that too, but to drive through the Czech Republic on my own was too adventurous for me, all the more since we were defeated and were no longer allowed to own weapons.

An hour later, I drove to Schwarzhoch with my colleague Sommer. There should be a large camp six kilometers further on the way to the Bavarian border that we wanted to drive. The camp began two kilometers before Schwarzhoch and stretched out to the place in an unmanageable width. There were

vehicles of all kinds and many thousands of soldiers in the camp awaiting their release waited. We rode through the camp on bicycles, perhaps to meet an acquaintance among the soldiers; but in vain. Some had made a camp under the vehicles, others had built a tent and still others had stuck branches in the earth and looked for protection behind them.

We went on to Schwarzenhoch. I wanted to find out at the commandant's office when we would get permission to continue our journey. There we were told: "Not yet. You have to wait. "

On the way back we walked through the camp on the right side. At the very back there were many refugees with their cars. In the field they had driven stakes in the ground, nailed poles to them, and tied the horses to them. The people had fastened tarpaulins behind the wagons and were lying behind them. What a picture of desolation; at least we had a roof over our heads.

When we were a bit behind the camp, a Pole came and asked if we were Germans. We confirmed that. He said or was a concentration camp man and was told that or could easily take his bike away from any German he met. Or wanted to have Sommer's bike right away. I told him that was out of the question and that we would go to the headquarters in Schwarzenhoch to report this insolence. The Pole went with them. It was almost half an hour back to Schwarzenhoch. At the headquarters I told the German officer everything that happened. This said:

"It is out of the question. After all, not just any foreigner can come and take away a German's bike. Well, we're not there yet. " He also explained this to the American officer in English. Turning to the Pole, he said: "You do not have the right to simply take away a German's bicycle. We'll get you home, but not this way, but by train. " We were thus released. Sommer was happy that he could keep his bike. I always had to speak for him because he had bad hearing. Now we drove back for the second time, but this time without incident.

I had a horse that asked Druze particularly hard. If it lay, it no longer knew how to get up alone. So I went to the mayor and asked him to give me a certificate for the purchase of a military horse, which was now available when the Wehrmacht was dissolved. Mine would not be able to withstand the hardships much longer, especially in these mountains.

May 14th

Around noon I accompanied my fellow sufferer from the Leisnitz trek by bike to Stein. From Stein we drove over the mountains to Tisch, the same way we had come on our night drive. Now, in daylight, one could only really see the difficulty of the path.

On the way we talked about the fastest and safest way to get back home. I advised against driving through Czechoslovakia because the news got worse and worse. I was sure that this was just the beginning and that it would get more and more insecure.

The camp in Tisch was not as big as in Schwarzhoch, but here too there were many refugees and several thousand soldiers waiting to be released.

We first went to the camp administration, where many other trek leaders were already. There each person wrote down how many people, horses and wagons his trek had. Except that we should wait further, we did not find out anything.

While we were touring the camp, I met a good friend, the farmer's son Bimbrinch from Dümstein, a neighboring village of Preiland. The joy of the unexpected reunion was great on both sides. We told each other about our plight. He was a soldier and, like so many others, was waiting to be released. After a while he asked me if I knew where his parents were, but unfortunately I couldn't give him any information about that either. He said that he had two good horses that he wanted to take home, but didn't yet know how to get through by then. We later said goodbye very warmly with the wish to see each other again soon in our homeland. But what use are all good wishes if they don't come true? It was the same here. A year later we learned from his cousin that his parents had received the sad news from a comrade that their son had died of a serious illness in Russia.

I was alone on the way back. On the way, I learned that there was a provisions store in Krumlov and that hay was being sold there. When I got back to our quarters in the evening, I had made the decision to go there the next day with a team.

I then discussed everything else with my comrade Sommer.

May 15th

At 7 a.m. we borrowed a car from our landlord and drove off towards Krumau at 7:20 a.m. Sommer and his horse, eboy Kirsch, rode the cart while I rode my bike. I wanted to be in front of the car in Český Krumlov to do everything necessary so that we could recharge immediately.

In Krumau it was 25 km of mountainous path. The traces of an unfortunate lost war could be seen almost all along the way. Overturned cars, weapons, ammunition, equipment on both sides of the route; all a mess, next to the many thousands of refugees, displaced persons and homeless people. That was the sweat and the painstakingly saved grasses of the German people.

In Český Krumlov, too, there were several large camps with troops waiting to be released. Everything, wherever you looked, was in the process of dissolving. I looked for the provisions management and bought 20 quintals of hay. I paid, got a receipt and waited until the team came in summer. Krumau is a small mountainous town on the Czech border with Austria. When the team came, we drove up a steep hill far beyond the city to load our hay there. When we had twenty one hundredweight balloons on the wagon, we made our way home again. But no sooner had we left the camp than the car broke down. A support was broken at the front of the ladder. We must have overloaded the weak car a little. Now good

advice was expensive. I went to a nearby house and borrowed a hatchet and pliers. With a thick branch that we chopped off from a bush and a piece of wire, we got the car back in order.

Sommer now had to drive very carefully to reach the quarter. On the way we met a great trek. The people had lived in a forest for days and no more knew what to do than we did; they too wanted to go home.

May 16th

Around 5 a.m. I set out on my bike to look for a military unit with horses. I drove towards Stein and inquired about it everywhere. About 5 km north of Stein camped a battalion with heavy horses. I wanted to buy a horse. Horses were only available for food and we needed them ourselves. Although many horses had already been given up, no one could promise me. Everyone referred me to the battalion commander, who should not be back in camp until tomorrow. So I went home again, thinking of asking again tomorrow.

May 17th

I started again early. This time I took my daughter Luzia with her. We were lucky, the battalion command was there and could bring my request to him. He said that he had already given up too many horses and could not let me have any, but that there were still some available in Gloger's company. He even gave us a written order to the commanding officer to surrender a horse, showed us the direction and gave us the name of the village Hagelschlag. We thanked them and immediately set off; first by bike, then on foot, always uphill. First it went up the main road, then left on a rocky path to the small village of Hagelschlag, for an hour and a half. When we arrived in Hail, the company leader did not want to give us a horse because, as he said, he needed the horses himself. In the end, however, we got one, because he did not know how to act against the orders of his superior.

He asked us where we were from, to which we replied: "From Preiband at Neisse." "So so! he said, "do you know the Gloger bank in Neisse?" Of course we knew it; and he told us that he was its boss. There was great joy that we were so close compatriots and had to meet in the Austrian mountains. While we were talking for a long time about our homeland, the driver arrived with the horse. We received the horse, said goodbye warmly with the hope of seeing us again soon at home and set off on our way.

I took both bicycles and Luzia led the horse. It was a strong chestnut, about 10 years old, with slightly flat hooves and walking very slowly. Well, nobody likes to give away the best, but in the end it helped us a lot. In the evening we arrived at the quarters after a walk of three hours.

May 18th

In the morning we had our horses shod where necessary and prepared our wagons.

In the course of the afternoon, King Maria and my daughter Luzia drove to the camp in Schwarzenhoch. They wanted to see if they would find an acquaintance among the many sobdates. Mainly, however, they should inquire at the commandant's office when we could finally continue in the direction of Passau. Towards evening they came back with good news. An officer in the commandant's office had promised them that if we were there at 4:30 a.m. tomorrow, we would get a passport to Passau. It all seemed a bit strange to me, but what not to do when you are in need.

A moment later worked feverishly to bring to all right - gen, so we could losfahron the next morning. The stable was cleaned and everything was arranged as we found it. We didn't want to leave a bad souvenir with our hostess father. After the same evening we said goodbye to him and his family with heartfelt thanks. We stayed here for a full two weeks. Now our way of the cross broke again and we drove on into the unknown.

May 19th

In the night around 12 o'clock we started to feed and clean the horses. One horse was seriously ill with the gland and could not get up on its own. Everyone had to help so that we could get it on our feet. At 2 o'clock we hitched the horses. Since the road climbed steeply from the village, we drove away with four horses from the start. Then we picked up the other cars in the same way. This procedure took longer than we thought and although we hurried very quickly, and everything went on quickly afterwards, we got a quarter

Arrives at the warehouse an hour later than planned. The girls immediately went to the headquarters, but everything was locked tight and no one was there. We waited a quarter of an hour and then went back there, but it stayed the same.

Instead of the same certificate, several Americans came after another quarter of an hour and gestured to us that we should turn back. We didn't know what was going on. All the ranting and protesting didn't help, we had to turn back. An American soldier stood at our head and we had to follow him.

Since our tailor spoke English, he asked the soldier where he was going with us. The latter explained to him that he had orders to take us to a Russian camp via Krumau in Budweis.

This information was a blow to us that far surpassed anything that had been tremendous so far.

According to much news that we received, thousands of refugees in Czechoslovakia had already been looted down to their shirts. The men were dragged on to Russband and the children, women and old men stood on the street, exposed to the arbitrariness of everyone. That should now also be our lot. Our procession was like a real funeral procession. Nobody spoke a word for hours. Everyone was preoccupied with their thoughts. What else should we have in store? Is there no ray of hope?

Our guard did not drive us. If we drove slowly, he also walked slowly. Once he even said that he wanted to go to sleep and that we should go. We were concerned with the idea of escape, but it was not put into practice.

In Höritz, a small town, was a steeply sloping street. We had to brake so hard that the front wheels slipped and the horses still had to stop.

We took our first rest one kilometer after Höritz. The horses were hungry and tired because we had been out all night. Except for the horses, however, almost no one ate anything. Everyone was way too excited and preoccupied with their thoughts. Our guard was lying in a ditch about 200 meters in front of us, asleep.

Half an hour later we shaggy and stopped at around 11 o'clock in a village where we had lunch. The sun was hot from the sky and we were thirsty and also a little hungry.

After almost two hours, our security guard warned us to leave. He too had grown tired and borrowed a bike from us. Now he always drove away from the front. Around 2 o'clock we were at the first houses in Český Krumlov. There came a little thunderstorm and we stopped for a quarter of an hour. In the meadows next door everything was full of military vehicles and horses. We drove into the city and stopped at the bridge that leads over the Vltava to the city center. People kept coming towards us, on foot, with bicycles or with prams, and everyone asked: "What are you going to do? You're going straight to the Russians! We came from there and you want to be there. Everything will be taken away from you." The security guard wanted to deliver us to the Russian camp behind Krumau, because it was too far to Ceske Budejovice and this camp was only ten minutes away.

While we stopped, he and the tailor had gone ahead to scout the camp. I had them called back and explained to the security guard that we would not go any further. He said in a threatening tone that he would shoot us. I pointed my hand at his rifle and indicated that we wouldn't go any further. Another security guard was standing next to us at the Moldau Bridge. He heard the argument, came over and, since he understood a little German, asked what was going on. I explained to him that this security guard was supposed to join the Russians and we didn't want to. It was only then that I remembered what I actually wanted. I told him that I wanted to speak to the commandant. Both guards discussed and we, the tailor and I, got permission to go to the headquarters with our guard. I am not ashamed to say that I especially prayed to the Lord God on this path and made a small promise to him if we would be saved from this plight. As I walked through the city next to this American with his saddle gun in place, I felt like a felon who was being led to his execution.

Except for an interpreter, there was no one at the headquarters. I told her our story of how we had been promised a passport in Schwarzenhoch and then wanted to move us to a Russian camp in Ceske Budejovice. After she had also said that we would not drive a step further, she asked to issue us a passport to Passau. She explained to us that no one had the right to take us to a Russian camp without our consent. After she had also told our security guard, he was dismissed. She said to us that today, on

Whitsunday, and on the special days, nobody was in the commandant's office and that we should come back on Tuesday to apply for a PaB.

We didn't want to stay here that long and at least go to the next village in the direction of Passau. So we asked her if she could tell us the direction we should take. Immediately she presented us with a map and we chose the village of Wetter, four kilometers away. We thanked them warmly and went relieved to our car with the good news.

Everyone was very happy, but not all of them recognized the abyss we were facing. It would not only have meant the pleasure of our belongings, but above all our families would have been torn apart. We were 38 people together and how few would be alive today after five years as I write this down?

We started our trek immediately to get out of the danger zone. Over the Vltava bridge, through the city center, we drove about three kilometers on a beautiful road along the banks of the Vltava. On the right side the rocks rose more than 100 meters. A very romantic piece of the way, and again the clear sky. We could have singed for joy. Our funeral procession had turned into a joyous procession; and yet we didn't know where to go, we were just homeless after all.

At the end of the beautiful street there was a factory on the Vltava. From here the path turned right. It was another one and a half kilometers with a ten to fifteen percent gradient to the village of Wetter. We had to pull up all the cars in four carriages and that worked only step by step. Meanwhile, the sky had covered itself again and a heavy thunderstorm was rushing down.

Meanwhile, my daughter Luzia came back from the mayor and said:

"We get quarters for the people in a former labor camp, but it's bad for the horses. There are only a few small farmers here. I will go ahead one more time and ask the farmers myself. "

With a lot of effort and soaked to the skin, we finally got the cars upstairs and pulled them up in a row at the labor camp. The people had long since looked for their quarters when Luzia came back. She had found quarters for the horses ten minutes further in the village. Since they were all small farmers and had little space, we had to make a shelter for the horses ourselves. We only went to our quarters after we had fed. Here the oven was already heated and we could dry our wet babies. Then we went to the big cleaning, because we first had to clean the barrack and make it habitable. Bedsteads, tables and benches were available and whatever else we lacked we took from the other uninhabited barracks. Only a few were concerned with refugees. After we had prepared everything as best we could, we went to rest. Another person slept on each wagon. On ours it was Luzia and the dog again.

May 20th

Early in the morning we fed the horses, then we had breakfast and at 9 o'clock we went to the five minutes ent - fernte church for worship. Today was Pentecost Sunday. The church was almost new. A

wonderful building, almost a little too big for this village. It was bright inside and was well equipped. The greatest impression was made on me by the lovely works of mercy, which were depicted in life-size around the church, in colorful stained glass. It almost all fit together. Likewise, the hospitality of the poor mountain dwellers was also impressed afterwards. This Pentecost test was not a happy one for us, but also not a sad one, because we had to thank our Lord God for our salvation.

The village was very elongated and mountainous. The inhabitants were civil servants, employees, workers and a few small farmers.

In the afternoon we went back to church, because at 2 o'clock there was the sermon and the holy blessing. Afterwards we were glad that we were in the warm room, because it rained continuously. We thought with sadness of the four thousand who had no roof over their heads.

May 21st

When I tried to feed the horses, one of them was lying down and couldn't get up on its own. I had to go back to the quarters and get some people to help.

At 9 o'clock we went to the service again. When I returned to the quarters, I was told that some of our people were sick and could not eat anything. As the day went on, more and more people got sick. I saw our planned continuation of the journey on Wednesday in jeopardy. The disease, which made itself felt through vomiting, dizziness and diarrhea, could only come, in my opinion, from the unclean barracks. We had to see that we could get out of here as soon as possible. I didn't know how yet, at least I couldn't think of it until Wednesday and things could get worse during that time.

Today was a wonderful day. Everyone who could went for a walk. In the course of the afternoon I went to the mayor and had an emergency certificate issued for the eventual purchase of another military horse, because I was sure that I would lose my sick horse in any case. In passing we talked about the beautiful church in the village. The mayor said: "The church has been standing for fifteen years. The church couldn't afford it because it is poor. Eighty-five percent of the owners of the factory down on the Vltava River and fifteen percent of the community built it. That too was difficult for the community. " I said he must have been a good Catholic if he cared so much for the church and the community. "No," he replied, "that wasn't a Catholic, that was an atheist." I couldn't stop being amazed. This benefactor must have believed that the Church was the best place to educate his hardworking workers. How beautifully the stained glass of physical mercy went with it. I thought to myself that they should be in place in every company so that everyone would be an example of how one should behave towards one's fellow human beings, especially in this day and age. Perhaps that would be a contribution to peace in the world.

The following night a man, probably also a refugee, wanted to tamper with Sommer's car. But he hadn't expected the attention of the 14-year-old horse boy Günther Kirsch. When he was about to get on the car, he accidentally touched Kirsch's leg. Kirsch woke up and threatened the thief loudly with an ax lying next

to him. As a result, the dog on our wagon barked and the guards in the other wagons were also perked up. The thief had no choice but to run away.

May 22nd

Today it seemed to be another beautiful day. After I had breakfast and looked after the horses, I got my bike ready to go to Cesky Krumlov. Because of a passport, I wanted to go to the headquarters again. In case I could get a horse, I tied a rope to my bike so I could bring it home. Actually, I didn't want to drive alone and take someone with me, but almost everyone was sick. Nobody wanted to get up and everyone looked at me with a pale face and oh — I am — miserable — expression from their bed. So then I drove alone. In Krumau I met the district court enforcement officer from the Neisse district office, who last lived in Ziegenhals. He had been in Český Krumlov for several months and had little hope of returning home. Everything at the headquarters was full of people. It was a constant going in and out. Many, like me, wanted a passport. To my horror I heard that except in urgent cases, no passports will be issued.

I pushed my way through the crowd and got into the main office. I stopped there and waited until someone spoke to me. Among other things, the interpreter was in the office. She recognized me and told me to wait a moment. In the meantime she explained our situation to an American, apparently to the commanding officer. I was then asked how many people, horses and wagons our trek consists of. After answering all of the questions, I received the passport.

Again, I had achieved that we had come one step closer to our goal, whatever. The fact that the horse issue was blocked could no longer reduce my satisfaction. On the pass it was stated that we should be in Passau in ten days. That was another 120 km, so we could take our time. I hoped that our sick would get well again as soon as possible when we got out of the contaminated barracks.

May 23rd

After the horses had been fed and we had eaten, everyone began to prepare for departure. Even if everyone was still quite weak, no one wanted to let it show. Everyone had the thought "Just get away from here" in their heads.

We hitched up the horses and pulled the wagons up to the main street. Since there was a steep ridge to climb from there, the wagons were pulled up again individually and in four-carriages. It went very slowly, because everyone had to help push. One had to stay behind the wagon with a large stone and, if the horses stopped, put it behind the wheel immediately. It was hard work up to the top, but that was also achieved together. Once at the top, King Maria and my daughter Luzia again drove ahead with their bicycles to explore the area. We arranged ourselves and then drove slowly behind them. After an hour they stopped

as if in a valley and gave the horses some young grass to eat. These were delicacies for the animals and they were already waiting for them.

After another hour King Maria came back and exclaimed very excitedly: "Mr. Scheidler, Luzia has caught a horse!" To which I replied that it couldn't be possible. "Indeed!" she replied, "She caught a horse in a village. Some soldiers helped her. " She hastily added that we should come quickly. When I asked her what the horse looked like, she said: "It's almost like the sick Lotte." She couldn't say more about it; she just had no horse mind.

We hurried to go as fast as the bad roads would allow. At around 11 a.m. we were finally in the village. Indeed! Luzia stood there with a horse. It was tied to a fence and had a bundle of hay in front of it. When I asked my daughter how she had managed it, she said, "It was just going around the village. When I tried to catch it, it started squeaking and beating. A car with Ukrainian soldiers happened to pass by. I asked them to help me, which they also gladly did. I gave them the rope that I had tied to the bike. They slowly approached the horse from the front until they could throw the rope over his head. "

The horse was an abandoned military horse and had neither a rope nor a halter on. A resident of the village came and said that maybe we were scared: "We tried to catch the horse yesterday. It hit someone on the leg, so we let it go. "

Luzia was very happy that she was able to catch a horse just today, on her 22nd birthday. We all clearly benefited from this, all the more so as I could not get one despite the urgency certificate.

We hitched up the horse with the utmost calm and caution and hung the sick Lotte on the side of the hand. Then it went on with renewed vigor. The new horse pulled so well that we made rapid progress and from then on we always had to wait for the others.

In the next village, it was now 12 o'clock, we stopped for lunch. From here we knew how to carry the four-carriages up a mountain again. When we were upstairs, the sick Lotte lay down in the open street and could only get back on her feet with great difficulty. So I said to Luzia: "Go ahead again and see if you can find a horse butcher. Then I will hand the horse over immediately. " It was difficult for me to part with a loyal animal that we had brought with us from home, but there was really no point in torturing it any further.

The rest of the way was pretty flat. Towards evening we reached the small village of Platten, where we took up quarters. Meanwhile, the Luzia was back with the news that four kilometers further, in the city of Friedberg, was a roB butcher. Then I sent my sons Alexander and Christian with the horse and let them know that I would pick up the money for them when I drove by tomorrow.

The quarters were as usual. The horses stood in an old shed and we lay on top of it in the hayloft. If you acted a little rough, the whole building wobbled. Our innkeepers were good people and were not reluctant to see us. Although their field was not particularly productive, the people were content and had their hearts in the right place.

May 24th

We had slept well that night, definitely better than in the contaminated barracks. When we had fed the horses and had our morning coffee, Frau Sommer came and said: "I found out that: there is a mill near here. If you want, you can borrow a car and drive there." I agreed and took a sack of rye that we had got in sticks for our work and went with me. It was about two kilometers to a small mill with a daily output of a few hundredweight. At first the miller didn't want to give us any flour. He said he didn't finish any. Even after some asking and begging, we got our flour and drove back gladly.

In our quarters we hitched up the horses, said goodbye and then moved on southwards. The way was good until we came to Friedberg, a small town on the Vltava. We stopped there. Meanwhile, Luzia had been to the horse slaughterer and had received twenty marks and three pounds of meat for the horse. We never needed to eat horse meat, but we liked it. It does not now mean "need teaches to pray" it also means "hunger is the best cook". While we were still stopping, the girls came back from scouts along the way. Luzia said to me: "Dad, we can't go any further here, we have to turn around. Behind the city is a high bridge over the Vltava. But it is completely shot and without a railing. See it for yourself." I went there myself to inspect the bridge. On the roadway, iron gratings thirty centimeters high and sixty centimeters wide were bolted together over the entire length of the bridge. Two layers of such grids were drawn so far apart that even the large military vehicles could drive over them. There was no railing left. We had no other option to get over so we had to risk it. We had to leave us completely on the calm horses. We had, because they had long since lost their courage.

So we drove to the bridge. There were also two Americans there to help. The horses were loosened at the front of the drawbar and pulled apart. Every American led a horse. I held the drawbar and walked between the grates. So we balanced each car individually over the bridge. With God's help and a large part of fear, because it was really very dangerous, we had overcome that too.

Now it started to rain and we had a mighty mountain in front of us. So we hitched four horses to a wagon again and moved them one by one up about five hundred to six hundred meters. Then the next car was brought up and pulled up and so on. It went on like this for almost three hours. Although the road was not bad, there were places where the four horses barely managed to move the wagon forward. When we finally got to the top, we fed the horses and were hungry ourselves because we had completely forgotten about lunch. We rested in the forest and rested.

After an hour we drove on and came to a small village. We were on the Sankt Thomas mountain, a thousand meters above sea level. Here the vegetation was already weak. The trees were very low and only a little rye, oats and potatoes grew in the fields.

There lived a count who presumably owned everything. Nearby was an old castle that looked out across the country. In the village itself was an inn and a beautiful, spacious church. We took up quarters in the inn and put the horses there too. The accommodation for the horses was makeshift, without straw, because the

people didn't have any. As we moved in, a cloudy rain rushed down. Everything was full of water, including our shed.

When we had looked after the horses, it occurred to me that today, May 24th, the day of the pledge of St. Urbanus had. In our home parish it was not allowed to work on that day. We had worked hard just today. Who would like to celebrate the day of the pledge, which has existed for a hundred years, in our home village today? I insert a short description of this holiday of our marriage congregation here:

On May 24th, at 12 noon, two people appointed by the mayor went from farm to farm to see whether everyone was at home and whether work was also down. After oral practice, no one was previously allowed to go beyond the municipal boundaries and no wagons were allowed to drive through there.

At 1 o'clock the bell rang. That was the end of work and the holiday began. At 2 o'clock the whole congregation in festive robes gathered in front of the church to organize a procession. In front of the cross, in the midst of all the church flags, the procession moved out to the village, praying and singing and with the solemn ringing of bells. They moved across the fields and on the other side of the village back to the church. Meanwhile the pastor had come from the parish village and gave the blessing. Afterwards there was an opportunity to confess.

Actually, the holiday ended at 1 a.m. the next day. More recently, however, eternal adoration had been introduced, and so the holiday ended with prayer and blessing at 6 o'clock in the evening.

How long this pledge lasted, no one knew because there were no documents about it. For whatever reason the holiday sore was introduced, one could perhaps get from a song with the title "Oh man, remember the times that have already passed." close that was sung that day. According to this, storms, floods, frost and vermin would be the reasons for this.

At the beginning of May 1944, I asked our Archpriest, he would like to be so friendly and send a request to the District Office for permission to hold our vow procession. He did that too, but when the day came, it wasn't

Approval there. We then carried out our procession, as we do every year.

Two weeks later I was back at the district office and asked the responsible officer why we had not received a permit. He said to me: "You know that all processions have been banned by the government." I knew that. I also confirmed his acceptance that we had held the procession anyway. He then replied: "But you were lucky that no one reported you."

I think our Lord's Spiritual Council may still tremble today when he thinks about it, although he was innocent and at most suspected something of the lack of approval.

A procession of almost 400 people with the ringing of church bells through the village, across the fields, along two imperial roads and back to the village, could really not remain a secret. In order to do justice to the holiday, we went to the spacious church next to the inn. We prayed the Rosenkranz and sang some

songs. Then we went to rest. Our night quarters were the inn and our camp was the hard floorboards. Luzia slept with the dog on the wagon, which was in a meadow next to the church.

May 25th

At 8 o'clock in the morning we got ready to leave again. It was very fresh, you could say cold. It had rained during the night. Win drove through an inhospitable area with poor soil. We turned into a woad and now it went downhill for a long time until we came back to a good road. Around noon we drove past a long troop camp at Wegscheidt's. Everything was in the great outdoors, in rain, storm and cold. From here on the path went up and down again. Several times we drove by by soldiers' graves. Here one saw again many cars and Wehrmacht goods that had been centrifuged.

In the evening we came to a small village in which we took up quarters with great difficulty and hardship. Sommens drove ten minutes to the right of the village. We stayed in a small shed right on the street. We slept beside the horses without straw and blank earth.

All night long, disbanded troops marched in droves, with handcarts or with horses, towards their marriage.

May 26th

Sometimes things started early in the morning, because we had another long mountain ahead of us. In the next larger village we had to go to a blacksmith's shop and have a horse shod. On the further way we came through the town of Waldkirchen, which was almost completely destroyed. From here one could see the terrible traces of the war everywhere. Even the little villages were not spared.

At around 11 a.m. we drove through the larger town of Röhrenbach and came to the colony belonging to the town half an hour later. We stopped there for lunch to strengthen ourselves and the animals. After an hour, win drove on. The path went steeply downhill and ten minutes later there were win in a woad on the Bavarian border. An American officer stood there and gestured for us to hold. I went to him and showed him our PaB. I was speechless when he made repulsive movements with his hand. When I started scolding and protesting, he led me to a telegraph pole with a sign that said the border had been closed since Friday noon, i.e. for 24 hours. For the passage we would have needed a new PaB, which had to be applied for in Krumau.

If win had suspected that, we would have hurried more quickly. It was useless, we just had to turn around and stood there again, perplexed. Many fellow sufferers camped in the forest and waited for the border to open. What should we do, the small colony on the border already had enough refugees.

Ten minutes later, Luzia came back and said she had found quarters. So at least we found shelter again. The builder showed me a meadow and gave me a scythe. So I could cut the fodder for the horses.

In the afternoon I went to the tailoring - of from to see whether not let find a way to get cock across the border. We couldn't find a way, because the ravines were too narrow for our wagons.

Since there was no passport issue on Monday, we wanted to wait until Tuesday to apply for a new passport in Krurnau. Our situation was not particularly rosy. We were almost at the end of all possibilities and still had to hope.

May 27th

At 8 o'clock, as it was Sunday, we went to the service in Röhrenbach to ask for rescue from our plight.

In our quarter village there was a small chapel on a village green under a thick linden tree, in which a May service was held in the afternoon at around 2 o'clock. Next to it stood a small bench under the linden tree, where people came together and the news of the day was discussed. An idyllic spot, a piece of home for the local residents.

May 28th

Aw morning, after I had looked after the horses and had breakfast, I drove to the border again to see if something new might have happened. The picture was the same as yesterday. The border was still closed and the refugees, people from all eastern countries, were still camped in the forest. I returned disgruntled. When I got to the village green, there were three gentlemen there; the mayor and two members of parliament from Röhnenbach, to which the colony belonged. They told us that we had to evacuate the Donf within an hour. I told them that we wanted to wait until they got a new passport and asked them where we should go. The citizen responded: "Woke up on our Donfflur wind em new camp and you should go there." That too! They didn't even want to give me quarters. It seemed we were being treated like lepers.

After some practice I asked the surety: "Listen, don't you know any way that you could practice the limit? Have a pass, yes, we are now suffering a day late and it will be a few days before we get a new pass. " After a while of silence, he gave me three villages, the names of which I noted down. He further said to me: "... and when you come through the third village, report to the small farmer who lives on the left outside the village. Explain everything to him and ask him to show you the way. If you have any objections, please refer to me. "

That was well spoken. I thanked the gentlemen for this tip. My impression was that this way out was the most satisfactory solution for both parties.

Inside the next stuide it rumbled in our quantier like in an anthill. Win prepared us again for the departure. It wasn't difficult for me to say goodbye. It was like people who didn't like to see us.

I instructed crying daughter Luzia about everything and sent her out. She was given the task of preparing everything and paving the way for us. King Mania went with us to tell us about the unforeseen.

We drove back to Röhnenbach and then turned left. We stopped in a forest to replace the wood for the brakes on a wagon. That wasn't particularly difficult for us, because it had to happen often. We also drove through rich areas and had enough hand tools with us.

Nothing unusual was observed on the way down and we reached the village without any obstacles. There we met Luzia, who told us that the man was ready to take us across the border. But he didn't have time yet and we should drive into the forest and wait for him there.

So Win drove into the forest and saw three men removing an armored fence. That was not unusual, because we had already seen hundreds of armored bulls on our way, in every Donr and in every forest.

One of the three asked us where we were going. "Practicing the limit," I replied. He told us, "If you keep going for ten minutes, you'll be with the Arnenicans." During our conversation he offered to show us the right way. We had three bicycles on the second car and they caught his eye. He said: "My son would have liked to have a bike, but you can't buy one." I offered him:

"If you can get us across the border unhindered, you can have one." He was ready at once and went ahead.

The path turned right behind it. Win then came on a way too narrow for our cars, almost untravelled, past a house to a slope. Once there, I stopped the trek and drove the first wagon through the next isolated homestead. At the dung heap, the car just barely passed between the house and the manure site. We then drove steeply downhill to a meadow where we stopped again. It was stifling heat on this southern slope, the beasts stung and the horses became restless. When our guide made inquiries with the farmer, it turned out that we were on the wrong path and could not widen. Win wanted to turn around, but it didn't work. The two men who hitched win behind were unable to pull the car back up the slope. In this attempt there is also a drawing sheet. Even with four horses harnessing the win, the slope could not be tackled.

Bavaria lay five hundred meters on the opposite slope and we couldn't go any further. Despite screaming and screaming, we got stuck. After a while we cleared the wheels of the cart with a spade. Everyone had to help with pushing. So it went slowly ahead and we were able to turn the car and bring it back onto the grass path. We then drove carefully through the courtyard, pulling two horses. Because of the incline we had to drive in four carriages and could not prevent that we had to turn in the front left and thereby tore down the walls of the manure heap for the farmer. Damage that could not be avoided in this situation. We also had to pull all the other wagons back in four horses to get on the slightly better route. In the meantime, a good two hours had passed and we were really struggling.

Ten minutes later we reached a village where we stopped. We drove on at intervals of one to two hundred meters. We karnen onto the main road and after about a kilometer we turned left, where we again led on a poor road beneath a forest, in which we stopped several times. Win stood close to the border on the river Ohe, over which an old wooden bridge led. Here I handed our Füh - rer the vensprochene Fahrrad. Then we fed the horses and put the torn harness back in order.

In the meantime I went out with the tailor to scout out the further route. We checked the old wooden bridge to see whether it would carry our heavy wagons. Behind the bridge the path rose steeply again and I was concerned that we would get the car up there. The other five hundred meters led the way, only slightly uphill, to a single farm near the forest. There the people were just coming home from working in the fields and we asked them to stay overnight. They had heard us driving around on the Austrian side for a long time and couldn't bring about Heinz to turn us away. They felt sorry for us and agreed. That was to be credited to them, because they had been feeding a Hungarian family with two horses for months. In the summer they got a little further quarters in another single courtyard. We, the tailor and I, went back to the flag witnesses and each hitched four horses to a wagon. Everyone now had to push and so it was almost like trotting up the mountain. Heinz was easier for me again, since everything was now working out. We drove up the cars one by one and parked them in the thick forest next to our quarters. We camped in the barn next to the horses. In the courtyard there was fresh, running tap water. We freed ourselves from the travel dust and ate our supper in the farmhouse parlor. The people were really nice. They even gave us milk and bread. We didn't succeed, but we didn't want to turn it down either.

The farmer's wife told us that she had been feeding a Hungarian fern with two horses for months without these somewhat paid or even helping out in the countryside. We could therefore easily understand that refugees were often not welcomed and welcomed, because it was feared that they would only live from the sweat of others.

May 29th

In the morning, when everything was taken care of, I went out with the tailor to find out the way. The roads were bad and mountainous, we were in the Bavarian Forest.

When we came back the horses were already tense. We said goodbye to the good people and moved on the country road. There were long mountains to be overcome on bad roads. The sun burned down relentlessly that day. The horses were sweating, their flanks were beating and the vermin did not leave them alone. Even if we sometimes took a break, it was neither pleasant for us nor for the animals. Every now and then, Americans came by, looked from behind and at the wagons, and asked if we had German soldiers with

us. Hundreds of them were seen walking through the woods without release papers and on their way home. Towards evening we took up quarters in a village whose name I no longer remember. We put two horses in an inn and two with a farmer, with whom we also had our quarters. We slept on the upper threshing floor.

We have seen this type of barn construction very often, where the driveway was at the bottom on the broad side and on the gable side you could drive through the barn through a driveway at the top. That had the advantage that the car was over the threshing floor and not so many people were needed to unload. In the yard of our farmer there was a stone trough about six meters long and one meter wide and just as deep, through which fresh water continuously flowed in via a pipe. Like almost everywhere else, this farm was much too small in relation to the size of the business.

As for people, I don't remember much kindness. We didn't bother them more than unnecessarily and they didn't have to give us anything because, thank God, we still had everything ourselves. Since we wanted to eat a warm potato soup at least once a day, our only wish against them was to be able to put our pot on their stove for half an hour. As usual, we ate our meals in the great outdoors.

But I really can't blame people for it, because it's just not pleasant when you are often disturbed in your usual peace and quiet.

May 30th

At 8 o'clock, win moved on again. Nothing special had happened at this stage. As is so often the case, one saw the traces of heavy fighting in town and country, like two shot down tanks in a field we were driving past.

Since we didn't want to go any further that day because of the great heat, we ended up in a small village and also found accommodation with a larger farmer there. Here, too, the horses stood in a shed and we slept on the upper threshing floor. The people of the Bauernhohes were all busy harvesting the hay in the meadows.

May 31st

and we took a day off. So at 8 o'clock we got ready to go to church in the neighboring village. During the half-hour walk you could see the traces of the war everywhere. It was particularly bad in the church village. Now the kinche itself was little damaged. Now all the windows were broken and the wind whistled through everywhere. There was still room for a lot of people in the church, so that one could believe that taking part

in the service was not particularly pleasant. During the procession to the neighboring village it started to rain.

That was the first Feast of Corpus Christi far from home. How beautiful and how solemn it was always when a band played alongside the strong choir and when the many people and all the clubs marched up.

While we were celebrating Corpus Christi here, we did not yet know that our beautiful parish church, one can safely say the most beautiful of the whole district, was now a heap of ruins. We had just always seen the ruins in Bavaria and had no idea that things were still much worse back home. The fight for our homeland had lasted eight weeks and each house was taken individually.

June 1st

Today was Corpus Christi Thursday. Today we couldn't go any further. A horse that no longer stood had to turn shod. So I had to look for a smithy with an emergency, so I went to a small town. Even though I asked all over the place, I couldn't find what I was looking for. They sent me on for half an hour, I didn't find a smithy on the Stnaße. The blacksmith ordered me for the next morning.

June 2nd

Since the forge in question was almost in the same direction as we wanted, we tensed up early and set off at 7 a.m. We drove through the town, stopped outside and went to the forge. An hour and a half later we were able to continue on bad roads. We had many climbs on our way again. From a sawmill in a deep valley, we had to pull the four-in-hand wagons up a mountain for half an hour. On the further way we passed a mill. There we could buy a hundredweight of bran for our horses.

Towards evening the girls had bought us a Quantier in the very high Donf Innzell. We drove into the barn by horse and cart and took Quantier. The horses stood downstairs and slept upstairs. In the summer, look further into the closed village.

June 3rd

Today was Corpus Christi Saturday. It seemed to be a glorious day and everyone poured into the church in festive garb. The church stood a little higher and you could look down into the valley from all four sides. The church was a beautiful building with a light interior and, like the Donf, was completely untouched by the knee.

Participation was better than on Thursday, but the wonderful weather must have contributed to that.

The procession moved through the Dorf, then continued on a footpath that rejoined the main street at an acute angle far out. The second altar was also at this corner. A car with two American officers passed by on Hauptstraße. They remained standing until the priest had left with the holy of holies, and only then did they continue to look inconspicuously. About three hundred yards away, a local burrow came by with two horses and a cart. This did not drive slowly, but as fast as he could and apparently with the greatest possible noise.

Although it is not nice to speak in the presence of the Holy of Holies, I could not hold back my displeasure. I nudged the man next to me and said, "The Americans have behaved as inconspicuously as possible so as not to disturb the procession, and so this farmer comes with his cart on the cobbled street with gross disregard for the glory of God and to the annoyance of everyone Individual. " Overhearing my displeasure with this native's behavior, he referred to the Americans and said:

"That's nothing at all yet. There was a funeral here from two weeks ago. As the long funeral procession went through the village, at least 20 American trucks came driving. They all held it until the funeral procession was over, for at least a quarter of an hour. Only then did they continue. "

Respect! The Americans must first come to us Germans to show us how to behave in the presence of the Holy of Holies or in the face of the death of an enemy. Sad but true.

June 4th

In the morning, as soon as possible, we turned our backs on this village and drove on in the Bavarian Forest. Incidentally, nothing in particular was suitable on this trip. As usual, our scouts were several villages ahead.

In the late afternoon Luzia came back and reported: "Dad, we have already asked three villages about a Quartier, but no one accepts us. I don't drive anymore. " Then I said a bit bitterly: "Should we be better like the hi. Family? They didn't get any quarters either. "

Win moved on on the street and were given quarters again towards evening. At least a roof over your head; we didn't want more.

It was often depressing as a homeless person from village to village and door to door to beg for accommodation and to be turned away everywhere, sometimes even with very unfriendly words. We didn't want a furnished room, living space, or stable for the horses. We were happy with a shed or a barn room.

We didn't want to stay for days or weeks, but for a single night, but that too was refused. We weren't among savage heathen peoples or among the wicked but, or perhaps unfortunately, among Christians. We spent the night in a small donf in a shed attached to the barn. In fact, the farmer was kind enough to give me some sewing straps. So I was able to put the torn crockery back in order.

June 5th

At 8 o'clock we moved on on a hilly road and in the evening came to the village of Niederwinkling, where we also stayed with a farmer in a large barn. Here I had to have a horse shod again. The blacksmiths didn't like to do that either, they said they had no nails.

June 7th

That day we reached a village, the name of which I no longer remember, where we were barely accommodated in a shed.

June 6th

We set out again early in the morning and arrived at the beautiful blue Danube around 11 a.m. It is called the blue Danube, but the water is not blue, it is grass green.

Oberhalb von Regensburg the rain flows into the Danube. One recognizes the huge difference to the Danube waters from afar.

Here in Deggendorf, where we were now, you could really see the devastation caused by the war. The port and the railway systems were almost completely destroyed. Now we have lunched and were also given a few hundredweight of oats to buy from a provisions office.

Since we wanted to cut off the route, we did not go to Passau, but got a passport to Regensburg from the local commandant's office. Towards evening we reached the Donf Niederachdorf, where we also moved into Quantier. This village is also a popular pilgrimage site with a steamboat landing stage.

Here we had the horses in two different places. Since a horse went lame, I had to go to a smithy again.

June 8th

Always driving up the Danube, one could see the towers of Regensburg from afar. Around noon we reached the village of Tegernheim, five kilometers from Regensburg. Now we applied for a place to stay, because from here we wanted to get a passport to continue our journey in the direction of Hof, Thuringia, Saxony and Schiesien. Our hosts were very nice and we are still in contact with them today. We were lying with horse and cart in a barn, the roof of which had large holes from the bombs. Then it rained for a few more days, so that several puddles formed and we had to change camp a few times. Still, I have to say it was good quarters. When I have sometimes spoken of a good Quantier, I am not referring to a furnished room with all amenities and a bathroom. No, we were happy when we could sleep on hay and straw and had a roof over our heads. I call a good quantizer any place where people welcomed us in a friendly manner and tried to make our lot easier, even if only morally, through their disposition. We will always fondly remember such people.

June 9th

Today I sent the Luzia to the military government in Regensburg to get a new passport for the onward journey, but we were not given permission for this. So we had no choice but to look around for work and accommodation. We probably helped the farmers for several days, but that was nothing in the long run. I tried to get people and horses to work on the north side of the Danube from a larger farmer, but I couldn't find anything suitable. We therefore inquired of the property administration of Prince von Thumn und Taxis in Regensburg and were referred to an estate called Pürklgut. Since the property in question was south of the Danube, it caused us difficulties insofar as the only bridge in Regensburg that was spared during the war was closed to civil traffic. Therefore, on June 15, we drove about 10 km down the Danube, had all of our teams crossed over on a ferry and thus arrived at the estate. Here we were accommodated in two rooms of an inn, the Pünklguter Keller. The horses came into the manor stable. The next day we started to work with pennies and cars. We were welcomed with joy because we were needed. The estate had almost no people, because the prisoners they had during the war had long since left.

The estate and the Burgweinting farm had 466 hectares. There were now three harnessed workhorses in the stable. There were four tractors in the garage, but none of them had any fuel. On the other hand, no spring orders had yet been placed and there were over 2,000 bomb craters in the fields with a diameter of up to 15 meters and a depth of up to 4 meters. They worked tirelessly day and night and after a year all fields were restored to the point where they could be completely cultivated.