

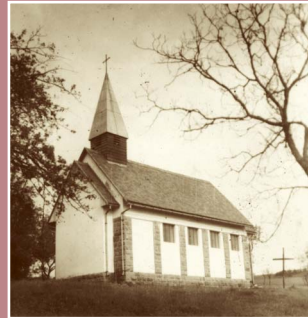
The view of the newly built houses from the 1950s (MM Valašské Kloubouky)

of Vizovice. Three groups proceeded in the circle from the villages of Tichov, Pozdýchov and Vysoké Pole towards Ploština. The journey through the mountains took less than an hour.

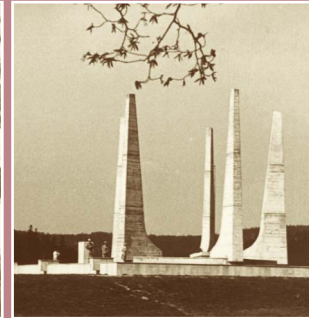
The group of Gestapo, SS, ordinary police and Slovak Hlinka's guards, total number about 200 men, left behind many dead people. In the evening of 19th April 1945 Josef Vařák was shot at Bratřejov, many people were killed in Újezd and at Rylisky. Partisans managed to escape but local civilians stayed thinking that they would be spared at the end of the war. The two informers were identifying houses and people who had been helping partisans. By the evening 23 men and one woman were killed in burning houses, 15 of them were from Ploština, 5 from Tichov, 1 from Pozdýchov and 1 from



Members of the anti-partisan Nazi unit Josef at the time of their training in Slovakia in 1944 (Museum Ploština)



At the place of the burnt-down settlement a chapel was built by the people from surrounding villages in 1947 (MM Valašské Kloubouky)



The monument from 1975 is a landmark to be seen from the distance (MM Valašské Kloubouky)



The partisans from the Prlov group from Jasenná (memorial hall in Prlov)



The survivors, Mr. and Mrs. Šašin, with children during the lecture at the elementary school in Újezd at Valašské Kloubouky, 2014

Lačnov. Other 4 men were killed outside Ploština. Heavily burnt Jan Machů escaped from the burning house and became the only one surviving the tragedy.

In 1946 and 1947 houses were rebuilt of bricks and the church was built to commemorate the Ploština suffering. At the time of the 30th anniversary of the event a massive iron-concrete memorial was built here. There is an exposition presenting the Ploština tragedy and partisan fightings in Moravia in one of the houses.

Photo on the front page: The Ploština locals in 1920s (Museum Ploština).

More information: www.muzeum-zlin.cz,
www.obec-drnovice.cz



PLOŠTINA

19th April 1945

Southern Valašsko is a distinctive ethnographic and cultural region with a beautiful scenery of the Beskydy Mnt., the White Carpathians and the Vizovice Hills on the southern border with Slovakia. The hilly region is covered with forests, small settlements, solitary wooden houses and log cabins.



Evropský zemědělský fond pro rozvoj venkova: Evropa investuje do venkovských oblastí



Log cabins in Ploština were documented during a regional all-terrain research by dr. Chodek from National Ethnological Institute of the Academy of Science, Prague

After the Slovak National Uprising had been suppressed, more and more anti-partisan repressions were carried out in the territory of The Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. Geographical conditions of the territory of Eastern Moravia were ideal for activities of paratroop droppings from the Soviet Union. Without the help of local inhabitants these sabotage groups wouldn't be able to operate in this region. The First Czechoslovak brigade of partisans named after Jan Žižka was transferred into the surroundings of Prlov and Ploština, later led by Major Dajan Bajanovič Murzin. It is estimated that there were around 1300 partisans operating in the region of the Vizovice Hills and the Beskydy.

Many German police offices, security services and raid units of Wehrmacht were established in the region searching for partisan groups and their helpers everywhere. The special commando no. 31 consisting of five units, led by Hans Schrader, was operating in the area of Vsetín, Zlín and Valašské Meziříčí from October 1944 to 4th May 1945 when they were captured by Soviet Army near Havlíčkův Brod. One of the units consisting of German soldiers, Hungarian volunteers and ordinary police was based in Vizovice and led by Erich Wienecke. Their



The house no. 23 and a hayshed (on the left) were several Ploština men died in flames (Ethnological institution of the Academy of Science, Prague)

effort wasn't usually successful but ended by the death of many innocent people.

In this region there was also a 70-member unit of German soldiers named Josef, which was set up in the autumn 1944 in Slovakia. This unit belonged to fighter unions SS (South-East) led by Otto Skorzeny. Their mission was based in destroying all the resistance anti-fascist activities by the form of partisan fighting and to train Sudeten and Slovak Germans, Austrians and Slovaks to sabotage and make terroristic attacks behind



The Partisans from the brigade of Jan Žižka of Trocnov with their leader (Black General) Dajan Bajanovič Murzin, a bearded man located in the middle (Memorial hall in Prlov)



During the first mourning ceremony symbolic crosses were erected for the victims from Ploština (MM Valašské Klobouky)

the fighting line. Experienced dr. Walter Pawlofski, ing. Werner Tutter and Felix Sonnerger were in charge of this unit. All of them were responsible for extermination activities against partisans and civilians in the area around Turčianské Teplice. In December 1944 they murdered 23 people in the village of Šípkov, in February 1944 7 people in the village of Becúrovo, in March 1944 9 people in the village of Zlatníky and in the beginning of April 1945 they murdered at least 5 people in the village of Nimnica, before they moved to Vizovice in the middle of April 1945.



Mrs. Rašík from Rylisky survived the investigation, but several of her neighbours died in flames (MM Valašské Klobouky)

In spring 1945 two paid Gestapo informers penetrated the partisan groups (František Machů from Zlámánek and Oldřich Baťa from Zlín, possibly even several Slovak members of the unit Josef), who brought important information about the whereabouts and the number of members of the partisan groups to Gestapo. On 18th April both informers deserted to inform Robert Holzheuer – a Gestapo commissioner who sent a patrol to inform Otto Skorzeny about the situation in the partisan group. The following day a punitive expedition of the police commando SS and special units Josef together with both informers set out