

Farewell to my Hometown, Selz, Fifty Years Ago

By Rafael Jundt

One final time I stood there
Peering into the Kutchurgan vale.
Below me lay Selz, my village
Like a queen, though in travail.

With her vineyards and fruitful fields
Where the Liman does glide,
There was the village, Selz,
Known far and wide.

With its beautiful church and its dwellings
In fun magnificence it lay.
There, as in a dream
My youth had passed away.

Then came the days of hardship,
I had to leave you there.
From place to place I wandered
It was more than I could bear.

And you, my beloved Selz,
You stayed behind me alone.
You could not come along with me
And I could not go home.

Rafael Jundt

For the 50th Anniversary of the flight from Selz on the Dniester

The sun beamed over the hillsides down to Selz, but it was not the same as usual. It appeared to have tears in its eyes, as did all of the people who on March 25, 1844 had to leave their beloved hometown, Selz near Odessa.

Our first goal was to reach the ferries at Ovidiopol with our teams of horses. The way went through the villages, Gredeniza and Treuiza, where we spent the night. On the second day, we got to Biljaewka, and on March 27, we finally arrived at Franzfeld by way of Majaki. Here it was impossible to proceed. The roads were softened up by the rain; dirt and mud were everywhere, and so we stayed in Franzfeld until April 5, 1944, when we were ordered back to Majake, to the ferry over the Dniester. Some of the inhabitants of Selz managed to cross the Dniester on April 6, and go farther towards the west. They were very lucky, because during the night from the 6th to the 7th of April, the ferry was fired at and captured by partisans and the Red Army, so that many Selzers

had to stay on the east side. They were arrested by the NKWD and brought as prisoners of war to other places in Siberia.

But the Selzers who managed to flee, drove their teams of horses through Bessarabia, Rumania, Hungary, and Poland (Warthegau) and from there farther to Potsdam, Brandenburg and to Westhavelland. However, they too fell into the hands of the NKDV in April, 1945. They were transported back to Russia in cattle cars and in this manner, many Selzers met each other again in prisons and work camps in Siberia, Kasachstan, and central Asia.