

A BRIEF HISTORY OF TCHERVONOARMEYSK

Formerly known by the Germans as Pulin
Volhynia, Ukraine

by

Volodymyr Davyduk, educator and historian

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This article appeared in a special brochure in commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the town of Tchernovonoarmeysk (Pulin) while I was there in the fall of 2010. It was written by Volodymyr Davyduk, a Ukrainian educator and historian. The article was translated by Dasha Kravchuk and edited by me. Though some changes were made in sentence structures and organization of the material to make it more readable, the essential content of the article remains intact. -- Donald N. Miller

The first known historical reference to Tchernovonoarmeysk appeared in the *Polish Chamber of Inventory* in the middle of the 12th C. The settlement was originally called Tchorolisys. (1)

Tchorolisys was a very ancient inhabited locality in what is now known as the Tchernovonoarmeysk District. It was called *Tchorliv Lis* or devil's forest. It was so called because the Slavic people associated it with the pagan deity, *Tchornobog* (black god). In short, it was considered to be a devil's land or the territory of the pagans.

The area was covered with an old primeval forest so thick that it was almost impassable. It was covered with a lot of bogs and swamps and was comprised of many lowlands.

At the beginning of the 13th century Tchorolisys was in possession of the Zhitomir castle barons. Later, this settlement was conquered by Polish-Latvian noblemen and probably took on the name of one of them. Then Tchorolisys became a

possession of some Ovruch lords, which at that time were seated in Tschernyahiv (Tschernjachow).

According to historians, Tchorolis were situated on the one of the main roads, which leads from Kiev to the west. The road ran from Kiev to Zhitomir through Kamyanka, Vilska, Old Alexandrovka, Chortolis, and Sokoliv to Novograd-Volynskiy. This road is still in existence and is presently called the "Old Way." This road was referred to as the "Terrible Batyi Way." It was the route along which the Mongol Tatar conquerors led their captives and moved their pillage.

PULINY

In 1578 this settlement was referred to in various international treaties as Puliny, thus this is considered to be the founding date of the settlement. The word *Puliny* takes its roots from the word "Pul" and "in." Since this is only a suffix, it suggests that the origin of the name comes from another source.

In legends which were collected on the territory of the Volodar-Volynskyy district, it is concluded that this name originated from the family name of Puliny, probably that of a Polish nobleman, who had settled in Tchorolis. It is significant to note that people with such a surname still live in the neighboring villages and that a village, named Puliny-Huta, still exists.



The first time we read about Puliny in one of the documents is in the Zhitomir city authorities *Event Book* at the end of the 16th century. Here it is noted that a landlord by the name of Vasyl Ivanovyych Ily'nskyy had borrowed some money on November 4, 1578 from several other landlords and had given as collateral his mason in Puliny for three years. After three years the mortgage was paid and the estate was redeemed. (2)

In another interesting document in the same book, we find that Friedrich Tushkevych Lagoyiskyy, a landlord in Puliny, lodged a complaint against Oleksandr Pronskyi, "... that on Friday, August 26, 1583 he sent Ryzhanskyi, a village constable with a lot of assistants, servants, and vassals to attack Puliny. They harvested all the sown land and took it away and what they couldn't take with them, they trampled. The servants of the Puliny estate, who went to defend the crops, were beaten. They also took away the oxen, together with the carriages, and other things on the field, robbed them and sent everything to their estate in Gryzhany. " (3)

In the 18th century the peasants of Puliny took part in an uprising against the Polish noblemen. In 1702-1704 the peasants rebelled under the leadership of

Semen Paliy. They rose to the fight with Kovalenko as the commanding officer. In another rebellion in 1768, known as "Koliivshchina," the active participants were inhabitants of Puliny.. The register of the court case indicates that they executed.

In the second half of the 18th century Puliny belonged to a Kiev officer by the name of Jan Ganskyy and his wife Sofia. After their death the village changed hands to their son, Vazlav Ganskyy. Sofia and Jan Ganskyy were buried in the Puliny Polish cemetery in a family vault. But in time the cemetery, the burial vault, and the graves of the Puliny noblemen Ganskyy disappeared.

In 1795 (*Editor's Note*: The date when this area came under Russian control) the population of Puliny was 565 people. Of these, there were two clergy families, 10 gentry families, and 76 inhabitant families.

Most of the people were farmers. Others were engaged in trades. Seven persons sewed clothes, eight were engaged in woodwork, five worked as blacksmiths, and four as weavers.

Even though the land, mainly clay and sandy loam, was not very productive, the peasants of Puliny were required to pay high taxes to Ganskyy. They paid this in cash and with products. Many peasants felt abused by Ganskyy and the other Polish landlords. But Ganskyy and the landlords also made many contributions to society.

In the "Description of Customs of August II Rule," a Polish gentry by the name of Kitovych, writes that, "... Sofia and Jan Ganskyy began to build a small town, Puliny, erected a church, and put in order an estate."

After the death of Sofia the villages of Puliny and Verhivnya passed into possession of her son, Vazlav Ganskyy, who in 1811 was chosen as a provincial marshal. Vazlav founded the village of Vazlavpil near Puliny (presently Yasna Polyana) and populated it with the "old believers" of the Orthodox Church. He also changed his residence from Puliny to Verhivnya, where he built a palace and decorated it with a garden in English style.

Vazlav Ganskyy was married to Evelina Rjhyvutska, the daughter of the provincial governor, who later became the wife of the famous French writer, Onore de Balzak. Vazlav was very wealthy. He owned "...a few thousand peasants and

21,000 arpents of land, which were in the estates of Puliny, Verhivnya, and Gornostaipol."

In 1845, when the Tsar Mykola I passed through Volyn and stopped at Puliny, a peasant by the name of T. Kalynskyy lodged a complaint with him about a certain Polish landlord. The peasants expected the Tsar to take action against the landlord, but instead he ordered that the instigators of this complaint be punished. As a result, the 10 peasants who had signed the letter of complaint, including T. Kalynskyy, were imprisoned.

In the mid-1800s, by the order of the Kiev governor general, D. G. Bibikov, an archeological commission was established to study the ancient history in the Volyn province. It inspected the sketches of the old monuments and their descriptions in Puliny, as well. The artist and the poet, Taras Shevchenko was the part of the commission.



According to academician Petr Zhur in his book, "Thoughts on Fire,"... Shevchenko left Zhitomir for Pochayev not later than October 10, 1846. The postal route in the region at this time was defined as Zhitomir – Novograd-Volynskyy - Korets - Ostrog - Dubno - Kremenets - Pochayiv. There were intermediate postal stations in Vilska, Pulina, Sokoliv, and Nesolona on the way of the 85-verst route between Zhitomir and Novograd – Volynskyy. In late October, Shevchenko returned back the same way." So, the great poet was in Pulina on at least two occasions.

There was a landowner in Pulina by the name of K. Kachkovsky, who owned nearly a thousand acres of land. He had seven acres of pastureland, 760 acres of

field land, and 272 acres of unusable land. Annually the peasant farmers in the area were required to pay up to 1,180 rubles in taxes to Kachkovsky. But because of the high taxes, the peasants were unable to make a living from their own small holdings, and consequently went to work for the landlords. This eventually led to serfdom, the dispossession of their land, and eventually to the abolition of serfdom in 1861.

The population at this time was mainly engaged in agriculture: winter wheat, rye, barley, potatoes, and industrial crops, such as flax, tobacco, and hops. Hops farms had spread out and had occupied significant territories of land. The first plantation of hops was established in Puliny in the 1865-1870s by the Czech colonists.

But following the abolition of slavery, the industrial development in Puliny increased considerably. There was also a candle and match factory, a metal furniture factory, and two metalwork shops in Puliny, where agricultural tools were repaired. The largest was the match factory.

From 1907 to 1912 several iron foundries were established, which made agricultural machinery. There was also a steam mill in Puliny and a brick factory, where bricks, roofing tile and pottery vessels were produced. The Puliny iron foundry employed 18 people. In one year the company used about 6,000 pounds of iron, which indicates something of its size.

Not to be outdone was the production of beer. In 1908 the Puliny beer factory No.7, the owner of which was Yanets, produced 1,618 buckets of beer, which sold for 85 kopeks each. Brewery No. 5, which belonged to Bilek, produced 807 buckets of beer.

On the first day of every month, there were markets/fairs in Puliny, which sold work tools, clothing, bread, cattle, horses, and produce.

The population of the village steadily grew from 130 households in 1870 to 334 in 1899, with a total population of 2,125.

In 1888 there were 468 Jews living in Puliny, and by 1900 the number had increased to 1,225, which comprised 38% of the total population of Puliny. In 1893 a Jewish elementary school was opened in Puliny. The school was mostly attended by the children of well-off Jewish families.

In 1878 a district hospital for two beds and a pharmacy was established in Puliny. In 1907 a larger hospital was built, which was served by two doctors.

A shortage of arable land, dispossession from the land and the hard, working conditions caused a peasant uprising against the landlords. During the revolution of 1905-1907 years, the peasants destroyed landowners' crops and hayfields. The peasants were the most active in May 1906, when in return the guards tried to take away their cattle. The poor peasants pelted them with stones.

Some farmers, seeking for a better life, moved to Siberia. During the period from 1906 to 1912, 16 peasant families resettled to Siberia, which comprised 82 people.



Many residents of Puliny participated in the Russian-Japanese War in 1905. The soldiers from Puliny were seen off to the war from the maple tree that grew near the agricultural equipment center.

In 1913 there were 61 people employed as weavers, four as rope makers, 14 as barrel makers, 20 as wheel makers, 26 as trunk makers, three as hoop makers, five as turners, two as carriage makers, 89 as shoemakers, two as leather makers, 15 as eye flap makers, 115 as blacksmiths, 35 as locksmiths, 32-34 as agricultural implement makers, 34 as tailors, two as hat makers, two as jacket makers, six as pottery makers, three as brick-makers, one as a tile-maker, and five were engaged in uprooting stumps. In general 15% of households were engaged in small businesses. (4)

A district administration office, the Court, a Catholic church, an Orthodox church, a Baptist (German) Church, four Jewish synagogues, a chapel and two inns were located in the center of Puliny. There was also a photo studio, the owner of which was Leonti Kondratsky, and a book shop, whose owner was Herschi Bera.

Water was obtained from the city well and delivered by hand and wagon all over town. One bucket of water cost two kopeks.

There were 207 households and 2,834 inhabitants in Puliny in 1906. Among them were many landowners, peasants, and dozens of jobbers, one policeman, 10 guards, one warden, two magistrates, two rabbis, one catholic priest and one pastor.

The First World War brought renewed suffering to the Puliny people. On the eve of the war, the population of Puliny was 4,630, but the number was soon diminished. At the beginning of the war, about half of the working population was mobilized to the battlefield. The prices for the articles of daily necessity increased dramatically, particularly the cost for rye flour, salt and matches. The price for one pud of rye flour (16 kg) increased 1.5 times, and one pud of salt almost doubled in price. Salary prices also increased. All of this had an effect on small businesses, many of which were closed. During the First World War, the peasants were mobilized to assist with military supplies. Villagers were required to carry military cargos, to repair roads, deliver grain, hay and foodstuff.

In the spring of 1915 an epidemic of cholera, typhus, and smallpox spread throughout the area. There was little that people could do, except apply home remedies. The herb treatment was the main means of disease control.

More than 100 people from Puliny died in the war and many returned home crippled.

PULINY DISTRICT

The village of Puliny became a district center in 1866. (5). The district office building was located opposite the present fire station. At the beginning of the 20th century, the Puliny district office and the courthouse was in the center of Puliny. In front of the district office building there was a monument in honor of the Emperor Alexander II.

In 1908-1912 construction of the old pebble road (now Lenin Street) began. This street led to the district office building.

The number of full-time workers in the district and village governments was very small. Practically all of the administrative activities were carried out by two elected persons: the district chairman (the elder) and the district clerk. It was called the Puliny Administrative Board.

The major responsibilities of the Puliny district administrative board were:

1. The development of trade and industry and the persecution of violators of craft laws.
2. The supervision of military services, execution of government procedures (issuances of notifications, distribution of announcements, storage of documentation, etc.)
3. The judicial supervision of legality of the law and the order, and
4. The supervision of land usage.

The clerk had numerous responsibilities and was competent in many matters. He served as an adviser, a lawyer, and an economist.

All financial costs were covered by local taxes. In 1876 the residents of Puliny and the parish (political division) paid the following taxes: soul tax: one rubel and 70 kopeks per person, state land taxes: 46 kopecks per person. The residents of Puliny also paid a state land tax of 4.5 kopecks per arpent of land, as well as state territorial tax duties of 3.5 kopecks per arpent. Clergy paid two kopeks per arpent.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PARISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

In January 1920 a general meeting of the Puliny district teachers took place. The following items appeared on the agenda:

1. The establishment of the political division of Narosvity.
2. The organization of district culture workers' union.

To improve the school system, Puliny created the position of an Education Department Head. Kypryyan Kosenko, the elected official, paid considerable attention to the need to improve the financial state of the schools in the parish of Puliny. By his petition the Executive Committee gave the necessary funds to the Puliny school for the purchase of 800 blackboards and two puds of nails. He

personally participated in school reparation works. He also obtained some funds from the Zhitomir district educational department for the rent of apartments for teachers.

PULINY IN 1917 – 1935

The victory of the 1917 October Revolution was greeted in Puliny with considerable enthusiasm, including fierce fighting among the various faction groups. The civil war took place from January 1918 to June 1920. During this period, the Soviet forces and the forces of the Central Rada were at war with one another with varying degrees of success. The region was over run with Austrian-German invaders, protégées of the bourgeois-nationalist directory, the Petlura army and also Polish troops.

The liberation of Puliny took place in June 1920. When the congress deputies arrived to meet with the local authorities, some well-off peasants decided to frustrate the meeting. Counter-revolutionary forces came to Puliny. A battle ensued and at midday about 250 bandits killed the police and surrounded the building where the congress took place. The rebellion was suppressed by a platoon of the Red Army 54th Cavalry Regiment.

After the civil war a peaceful life was established in the Puliny region. In May 1921 the agricultural commune, "New Way" was established. There were attempts made to overcome the devastation of the land, to provide employment for demobilized soldiers, and to care for the orphans.

In September 1921 three elementary schools were opened in Puliny with a student body of 235 students and the employment of seven teachers. A new nine-bed hospital was also opened with two doctors and two medical assistants. Two years later, the hospital was increased to 16 beds and a local dentist.

In 1923 a district committee of the Communist Party began acting. Soon after the district Komsomol organization (Communist youth organization) was established.

In 1924 the first electricity was provided to the village by the local power company. In early June 1925, a consumer Stock Company appeared in Puliny, as well as, three additional stores. Two years later there were six stores and a warehouse.

In 1925 the Puliny village consisted of 626 households with population of 3,301 people. The nationalities represented were as follows: Ukrainians 2,026, Jews 1,350, Germans 759, Poles 42, Czechs 21, and Russians 21

In September 1926 a farm association was established, which included 193 member farms. On September 26, 1926 the first agricultural exhibition was held in Puliny. There was a tractor, a thresher machine with a motor, and other machinery and tools at the exhibition. Besides the equipment there were thoroughbred cattle and samples of harvested crops. The winners got valuable gifts, which consisted of pieces of fabric.

In 1927 the Jewish Village Council was established in Puliny, which operated until 1941. A collective farm made up of the Jewish population was organized in 1929. There were eight Komsomols among the active participants. The organizer and the leader of the first Jewish collective farm was I. A. Weinstock.

The first collective farm in Puliny was organized in 1929. It was called the "New Way." In 1930-1931 three more collective farms were established. The "Machine Tractor Station" (MTS), established in 1932 played an important role in the economic development of collective farm system. At that time there were 21 tractors at MTS and a few years later the number of tractors has grown by five times.

The collectivization of agriculture resulted in a sharp class struggle. The kulaks (so-called well-off peasants) resorted to weapons and killed six activists of the Village Council in Puliny. The Communists responded by setting fires to the farmers' fields and dwellings. In 1928 the machine tractor company was burnt in Puliny. The resistance of the well-off peasants was eventually suppressed.

The process of collectivization took until 1934 to be completed. At the end of the second Five-Year-Plan 112 households in Puliny moved from their farms to the village.

On the 30th of April 1930 the All-Ukrainian Central Executive Committee adopted a decree on the formation *Pulin National District*, which consisted of 30 German village councils. It was one of eight German national districts at that time in Ukraine and intended by the Soviet Government to curry the favor of the Germans. It accorded limited self-government to the Germans and allowed them

to continue to operate their schools and press, and to engage in various cultural activities.

The year 1932 was a year of great challenges. This was one of the most difficult periods in the history of Puliny. It was the year of the *Great Famine*. Despite the fact that Puliny was located in the border zone, it was not exempt. In the area there were numerous cases of cannibalism. During this time the number of death greatly exceeded the number of births.

In 1935 the German National District was dissolved by the Soviets and Puliny was renamed to Tschervonoarmeysk. (meaning, Red Army).

PULINY CATHOLIC CHURCH

The Catholic church, which for a long time existed on the territory of Puliny (Tschervonoarmeysk), was built by the local landlord, Johann Ganskyy, and the Catholic area dean, Vizentiy Yanovskyy, from Ovruch in 1796. It was erected in honor of St. John Nehyiomutsena. The building was a wooden structure with a stone foundation. The outside and inside of the church was faced with wood and painted with oil drawings. The roof was made of tin and also painted. Above the roof there was a dome, with a metal, gilded cross at the top. The main altar faced east. The front side was to the west.

In the middle of the church there were seven windows at the top. The doors at the main altar, with columns, were carved and painted with oil. The altar was made from bricks with a stone foundation. To the right of the altar there was a wooden sacristy for storing vestments, and to the left, there was a room for church materials. There was an altar pulpit to the right. In the church there were two small altars: one to the right of the entrance, wooden, with the icon of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The second, a small one, was located to the left of the entrance, with an icon of St. Stanislaus Bishop Martyr.

In the church there was also a plated crucifixion of Jesus Christ. In the middle of the church there were ten prayer benches and two small ones, near the great altar. The inhabitants of Puliny and surrounding villages were fascinated by the melodic sounds of two large bells and one small one, which were placed on an elegant bell tower near the church. The believers were fascinated with music of pipe organ, which was also in the sanctuary.

Among the church inventory there were 800 different items: golden and silver, gold-plated and silver-plated, from cast iron, copper, glass, iron, wood, and also two orders of St. Anne. Among the various items, there were dozens of garments of various colors: white, red, and purple, green, black. There were also mantles of the same colors. In the description there were carpets, banners with icons and without them, and also requiem books.

The birth registers were kept in the church and also the marriage and death registers, as well as the confession registers. The confession registers, in particular, were kept there from 1799 on.

The church expenses were 400 rubles per year. The income depended on donations from the believers and the produce of 57 acres of land. The profit was spent for the needs of the church, servant's salaries and maintenance costs. The area near the church was green with numerous trees. This made this corner of Puliny very attractive and comfortable. Near the church there was a cemetery. It kept the family crypts, monuments, and art gravestones. Some graves were decorated with an openwork chain fence.

Today the cemetery is no longer in existence. In its place the sanctuary of another faith has been built. From the above described Catholic church nothing is left, except a small folder of materials about the transfer of property by church priest Anthony Lipovych to the administrator of the sanctuary. The church building and the churchyard were totally ruined. But the reminiscences remain among the people.

TCHERVONOARMEYSK

In the decree from October 1935 of *Ukrainian SSR Central Executive Committee Presidium*, we read: "Because of the weak economic situation of Marhalevskyy (Polish) and Pulinskyy (German) districts, inconvenience in mechanical service of collective farms, as well as lack of administrative control, the Presidium of the CEC Ukrainian SSR decided:

1. To disband the Marhlevskyy and Pulinskyy districts.
2. To form a new administrative district in Puliny, comprised of the present Pulinskyy, Novograd-Volynskyy, Marhlevskyy areas, and to re-name Puliny to Tchernovonoarmeysk and to name the new area Chervonoarmiiskyy (meaning Red Army). This regulation changed the name of the settlement on the map of Ukraine.



In 1935 resettlement of the Polish and German population started. From the Tchernovonoarmeysk district alone 1,000 families (4,462 souls) were resettled.

By social characteristics, the families that were resettled were divided into the following categories:

- Well-off, 206 families,
- Independent farmers, 113 families,
- Collective farmers, 681 families.

These families were registered according to lists approved by the committees on resettlement. Also, reserves of others to be resettled were created. In the Tchernovonoarmeysk region, that number was 152 families. Initially, the settlers were promised that they could take with them their cattle and also what they would need on a collective farm, but in the end, they were limited in what they could take. The population of Tchernovonoarmeysk was relocated to the Karaganda region in Kazakhstan. They were sent by eight trainloads from the Zhitomir railway station. Those subjected to resettlement were:

- Families of fugitives abroad (10)

- Families of those who had contacted the German Consulate (310)
- Families of repressed persons (13)
- Families of counter-revolutionaries (12)
- Former political criminals (54)
- Former well-off peasants (16)
- Persons who were suspected of spying and sabotage (12)
- Religious activists (43)
- Other anti-Soviet elements (160)
- Former members of the CPSU (b) (2).

Many people resisted the resettlement. Evidence is found in various archival documents, such as the following: *"In the village of Novyy Zavod, an immigrant was arrested who went from house to house of settlers agitating for the meeting of women, to organize a protest against the relocation."* (6)

It is difficult to count all those who were resettled to Siberia, Kazakhstan and Central Asia, because there are no lists of the settlers. Furthermore, it was only the beginning. By the end of 30s all the national-territorial units were dismantled, national schools eliminated, cultural institutions, and churches closed. Further, it is difficult to calculate the number of people who were repressed and executed during Stalin's repressions of 1934 to 1941, but it is estimated that approximately 2,000 people from Puliny were involved.

As a result of territorial changes, resettlement policies, and repressions, the population was significantly reduced. Thus, on January 1, 1939, according to the census of the population in the Tchernovoarmeysk region, the population was 31,656 people, which was 20, 258 less than earlier.

During the second and third Five Year plan, four collective farms of Tchernovoarmeysk were merged into two. They became farms with a diversified economy, consisting of 115 pairs of horses, 980 cattle, 420 pigs, and 530 sheep. On the fields of collective farms they grew corn, flax, potatoes, and vegetables. The best workers received 100 kilograms of flax fiber and 5.2 centners (?) of flax seeds from each hectare. During this time mechanical equipment became better and greater in number. The station had 70 HTZ tractors, five CHTZ tractors, 35 combines, 16 flax gathering machines, and 28 threshing machines.

In 1936 new working methods were introduced to prepare for spring sowing in Tchernovoarmeysk. The efforts paid off. The tractor brigade of machine-tractor

station in charge of M. Y. Steparuk, took in considerably greater yields and saved 1,733 kg of fuel. The best workers studied in agricultural courses and became experienced workers in brigades on the collective farms.

A new cultural center, a new administrative and many new trading centers were built in Tchernovonoarmeysk in the late 1930s. In 1935 the regional printing center began to work and in 1936 the construction of the district executive committee building had started. The Cultural Center, with a seating capacity for 360 people, was built in 1938.

On September 22, 1937 Tchernovonoarmeysk and the Tchernovonoarmeysk district became a part of Zhitomir region. Earlier, they were a part of the Kiev region. The district included 47 settlements. During the first and the second Five-Year plans fundamental changes occurred in the life of Tchernovonoarmeysk residents. Electricity appeared in the district centers and the center streets were paved. Six new stores were opened; also a canteen, and five domestic workshops. A new kindergarten made room for 35 children. Medical services improved with a new hospital for 60 beds, a new pharmacy, and a children's medical center.

A new two-storied school was also built in 1937. The school authorities paid great attention to work with young people in order to train them in patriotism.

In 1940 many farm brigades gathered in a good harvest. They were appropriately recognized and rewarded.

TCHERVONOARMEYSK DURING WARTIME

The Great Patriotic War was a huge challenge for the people of Tchernovonoarmeysk and for all of Ukraine. On the 22d of June, 1941, German Nazi aircraft bombed Zhitomir. It was a liberation war of the Soviet people against the hated enemy, the German fascism. In those days many workers in various enterprises, institutions and collective farms, expressed their willingness to fight with all might to overcome the enemy.

The workers and technicians of Tchernovonoarmeysk Machine Tractor Station (MTS) unanimously decided to be ready to defend their native Land. Four hundred and forty-seven residents of Tchernovonoarmeysk fought for the independence of the motherland in the battles of the war.

In early July 1941 there were battles in the district not far from Tchervonoarmeysk. Here, troops of the 5th Army in charge of M.I. Potapov fought against Hitler's army. Tchervonoarmeysk resident T. F. Formanyuk, who was in the 218th Engineering Battalion of the 5th Army, recalls the heavy battles: "There were fierce battles in our area," he recounted. "We held our defense for over a week. After this battle several thousands of our soldiers were killed, but the enemies suffered and had losses as well. Even when we had to retreat, we believed that it would not be too long before the enemy would be driven from our land."

But the forces were unequal, and in July 16, 1941 Tchervonoarmeysk was occupied by German fascist troops. In Tchervonoarmeysk the district control center was in charge of Brandt and his German assistant, Felske. To support the "new order", police stations were organized in Tchervonoarmeysk and in the villages. The first chief of police in Tchervonoarmeysk was Polishchuk.

THE JEWISH GHETTO IN TCHERVONOARMEYSK

From the first days of occupation, the Nazis began a planned extermination of the Jewish population in Tchervonoarmeysk. Beginning the second half of July 1941, mass shootings of Jews were systematically carried out by "Sondercommander-4a", by police battalions, and by the SS units.

According to one report, "(One) day, we were all loaded into a truck, and were told that we were to build a road. The trucks went to the main highway that runs from Kiev to Lviv. Near the village of Yagodinka, the trucks turned left, and after the Jewish cemetery, to the right. The trucks stopped. We were in a field.

"I saw that there were two pits dug. In one of them, the smaller one, I saw barely covered women's hair. Earlier the Germans had gathered up the beautiful Russian and Jewish girls. They were told that they would be sent to Germany to work. 'So that's where those girls were,' I thought!

"When we arrived at the location for the shooting, Frytcher had already arrived there by bike. He grabbed me. I could not stand. Uncle Nicholas wrapped me up in a coat and said to the policeman that I accidentally landed there and I was his cousin. The shooting began. Old men were thrown directly into the pit. Some people had golden teeth and rings. The policemen cut the fingers off with the

rings, kicked out the golden teeth, and then shot the people. Many were thrown into the pit alive. The German soldiers finished off the people, shooting straight into the pit

“My father was holding his ear by his hand. There was a large wound. The ear was hanging on by the skin. My father was shot four times.”

The Jewish ghettos were organized into 19 settlements of the region. The ghetto in Tchernovonoarmeysk was located in the center of town, near the hospital. It was surrounded by barbed wire and connected to several small houses. A few families lived in the huts, "crowded and hungry." Sometimes there was no place to sit and to lie. There were almost no men there; basically they were shot by that time (July 1941). Practically, there was no food. Also the residents of the town were also starving. People changed valuable things for a piece of bread. There was not enough water.



According to another account, “On December 27, 1941 at 5:00 o’clock in the morning a terrible column of the Jews from Tchernovonoarmeysk began its final path towards the village of Yagodinka.

"Above the pit there were Germans and policemen with automatic weapons. There was no way to run anywhere. People were hunted by dogs. This was something awful. All this stands in front of my eyes. Noise, screams and tears. It is impossible to describe. People were screaming, calling their children by names. There were women with babies; children were thrown alive into the pit. The sun rose when we were at the pit, and it ended a few hours later.

"A dozens of Jewish girls were digging the pits. When dug, they were told to go. The Germans put the boards on the pits and ordered the Jews to stand there. In front of them were the smaller children and adults behind. After this the soldier began to shoot. At the end the diggers were shot as well. The pits were raked and all the soldiers left. On the second day the blood came out from the earth."
(7)

According to the Census, as of the 1st of October 1941, 25 872 people inhabited the Pulin area. Compared to an earlier numbering of the people, the population had decreased by 5,754 people.

In 1965, in a single grave near the village Yagodynka, 487 people were dug up and reburied. But this is only part of the story. According to data published in Israel, 1,414 Jews were killed in the Tchernovonoarmeysk area during the German occupation.

Documentary evidence about the ghetto in Tchernovonoarmeysk was found in the book, "I will not forget, I will not forgive!" by Mark Borisovich Mieshko, published in Israel. He himself, a 13-year old boy, with his mother went through those terrible, inhuman times and was the only one who miraculously escaped during the shooting.

"We also were to be killed," writes Borisovich, "but my mother knew how to escape. She covered her and my mouth and nose with the fabric cloth of her skirt, wet with urine. They brought us together with the dead to the pit, threw out the corpses, and the car drove away. My mother and I survived." After that they were caught and sent to Tchernovonoarmeysk ghetto.

When someone died in the ghetto, two or three people who could carry the corpse, buried the dead on the territory of the Polish cemetery. It was not allowed a name to be written on the table. Such was the life in the ghetto until December 27, 1941.

GERMAN OCCUPATION

From the first days of occupation our people were forced to support the German Army with a large quantity of agricultural products. The chiefs of the villages and the police identified Communists, Komsomol members, the Jews and handed them over to the death squads.

A prisoner of war, Yozef Frabel, a soldier in the 6th squadron of the second Slovak division, reported, "I have witnessed incredible brutality and rigidity in what the German soldiers and officers do to our over soldiers and civilians. I am an eyewitness to the fact that in the town Puliny the Germans shot 330 Soviet citizens. Most of those killed were women and children."

The protest against the occupation of the Germans was made evident in the resistance movement, which began in the early days of Nazi occupation. For almost two years Tchervonoarmeysk was under Nazi oppression that caused immense damage. Fascists destroyed the MTS and many commercial premises of private owners. The school was converted into the barracks of the soldiers. Tchervonoarmeysk was finally set free by the 4th Guard Tank Corps Kantemyrivs'ka on December 29, 1943. Not far from the town five tanks, 18 horse drawn carts, nine cars, about 500 Nazi soldiers, 20 enemy officers, 50 trucks, 170 horses and a lot of military equipment was destroyed.

The tank T-34, number 74 of the 13th armored Brigade (Russian army), was one of the first which broke through into Tchervonoarmeysk. It's commander was junior lieutenant Sergey G. Borisov. From Tchervonoarmeysk the crew was sent to barricade the highway at the railway bridge near Martynivka. The crewmembers were the Russians, Alexander Gavrilin tank radio operator, mechanic and driver, Alexander Kartashov, commander of the tower, and Alexander Rumyantsev, archer. The 148th Infantry Division, commanded by Major General M.P. Yakimov and subsections of the 361st Infantry Division, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel F. I. Dyachkov, also played a part in the release of Tchervonoarmeysk .

While liberating Tchervonoarmeysk, a number of brave soviet soldiers were killed: Russian, Uzbeks, Azerbaijanians, Kazaks, and others. Immediately after the liberation the people of Tchervonoarmeysk started to rebuild the economy, and the cultural and educational institutions.

The workers of MTS assembled and repaired the tractors. By the spring of 1944, in time for seeding, there were 25 tractors, 24 plows, 13 seeders, and two trucks in Tchervonoarmeysk already. Also, nine tractor brigades were fully equipped. Farmers gave seeds of wheat and their own tools from their personal savings. The farmers showed enthusiasm in their work, particularly the women, during the spring sowing and the harvest of 1944. The women mowed hay, collected the harvest and worked as engineers. The tractor drivers of Tchervonoarmeysk MTS worked at an increased performance of 238% of the annual work plan. And the tractor brigade performed at a level of 180% of their annual plan. Collective farmers gathered in the harvest in 20 days, a significantly shorter time than usual.

The workers of Tchervonoarmeysk donated 68,000 rubles to the construction of the tank columns, "Soviet Zhitomir." They helped soldiers and families of veterans of the war, provided fuel, and repaired the damaged buildings. Organizations and institutions assisted in the repair of the hospital. The mill of Tchervonoarmeysk was also rebuilt by local citizens.

The local newspaper, "Kolgospna Nyva," under the motto, "All for the battle field, everything for the victory," did a great job in keeping the people abreast of the progress of rebuilding. The first issue was printed in March 23, 1944.

In the months of February and March in 1944 there were tractor driving courses at Tchervonoarmeysk MTS. Twenty-eight girls enrolled.

The inhabitants of Tchervonoarmeysk will long remember the morning of May 9, 1945 – Victory Day, the day of the surrender of Nazi Germany. On this occasion a large rally and mass celebrations was held in the regional center in commemoration of the victory.

Footnotes

(1) We find this information in the collection of books written by Yablonski "Zhidla diyova" Book XXII, Warsaw, 1897. The information is also supported by the regional Polish magazine "Koznik Volynskyi" book III, Rivne, 1939. .

(2) Note found in the Zhitomir city authorities *Event Book*, by Vasyl Ivanovych Ily"n'skyy, p. 35

(3) Zhitomir *Event Book*, August 31, 1583

(4) Statistics from the book, *The Domestic Industry of Volyinska Gubernia*, 1914,

(5) When the Germans arrived around 1861, the “y” was dropped and the settlement was simply referred to as Pulin.

(6) ODA Zhitomir Oblast State Administration FY 87, op.1 p. 111)

(7) Shpir V.S., *Memories of Orynovskoyi*.