# MONOGRAF OF
# THE VILLAGE OF
# VOLOCA

BY TOADER IONICA

*Translated by J. Ungrin*

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# About Toador Ionica

Little is known about Toador Ionica other than what can be gleamed from the Monograf. "Google" only has references to this Monograf. To begin with, we look at the name. We have not come across the family name "Ionica" in thousands of records of the Voloca church covering births, marriages and deaths, over the period 1800 and 1920. The author, as you will read, uses many ways of naming people. Names like Mitruca, son of Nicholai, are sometimes all we are given. This leads one to ask if Ionica was just a very local family usage stemming from, for example, "Toader, son of Ionica" and that there was a more common Volocan family name like Paulencu or Penteliciuc or Ungurean or…., that has just been dropped. The author's first name is spelled both "Teodor" and "Toader" at various places in the Romanian version of the document.

There are a number of hints, not always consistent, to indicate that Toader Ionica was born in Voloca about 1905-1908. In Chapter 2.9 he tells us that he and his father were attempting to watch artillery from the top of a hill in Voloca in the fall of 1914 and the young boy attempted, unsuccessfully, to use binoculars. We can guess he was then 6-7 years of age. In Chapter 1.24 we find that his father was Gheorge Ionica and that his father was a talented player of the fluier. Unfortunately, Gheorge went to war in late 1917 and was killed shortly thereafter. Teodor was then left with just his mother. There is never a hint of any other siblings. Also in Chapter 1.24 we find that his mother was Domnica Gheorge Ionica and that he learned a lot of Romanian songs from her.

Toader Ionica attended primary school in Voloca and then continued on to study in Chernauti, the district capital. While in "liceu" (approximately equivalent to high-school) he began to direct choirs of various sizes in Voloca, traveling back to the village several times a week. Chapter 2.16 details his efforts with the choirs in full detail. In Chapter 2.18 he lists his education as "graduated classical liceu" and "graduated Faculty of Law and State Affairs and became a functionary and a professor". When the Russians took over northern Bucovina in 1940, he became a refugee but returned several years later.

The path of his life then becomes a bit more difficult to follow. Toader returned to Voloca for some periods of his life, as we learn at various points, and he wrote chapters of the Monograf in a series of bursts, sometimes perhaps even during stays in Voloca. In the 1980s he was able to do some traveling further afield and he tells us in Chapter 2.7 that he was in Brasilia in 1983. He "wrote" the Monograf before the easy availability of word processors and it appears as if he dictated the stories to someone. We have learned from Mihail Onufreiciuc, who gave us the great gift of posting this work on Blogspot.com, that sometime around the end of WW II, Toader Ionica had been involved in a train accident and had lost the use of both his hands. He apparently dictated the Monograf to his wife who then "wrote" it. Mihail Onufreiciuc also supplied us with the information that Toader Ionica died in 2000 or 2001. He would have been in his early 80's at that time.

The original Romanian-language version of the Monograf was given by Toader Ionica to Radu Onufreiciuc, the grandfather of Mihai. We would like to dedicate this translation to the memory of Radu who passed away in 2008. Without his efforts and those of Mihai, his brother Ciprian and especially Mihai's wife, Georgiana, who prepared the Romanian document for publication, we would all have missed the enjoyment of this important history of Voloca.

# Translators Foreword

This excellent history of Voloca appeared on the web in Romanian in March of 2008. Since, to my knowledge, little in detail has been published in English on the village, it proved a goldmine to me. All four of my grandparents were born in the village (paternal – Ungurian from House 340, Penteliciuc from House 400; maternal - Hlopina from House 427 and Onufreiciuc from House 171) and immigrated to Canada with their parents and grandparents while quite young in the 1899-1910 period. I learned to communicate with them in Romanian but never did learn to read or write the language. Translating what I began to tentatively scan offered a significant challenge.

Numerous problems have arisen during the translation attempt. The first is the lack of a solid background and expertise in Romanian. I spoke a local, rural, unwritten dialect (40-50 years ago) and have had little practice since. The second problem concerns the dialect of the language. Ionica has written in the dialect of Moldova – the dictionary available at the beginning of this attempt was printed in Bucharest, much further south. Many "rural" words he uses do not exist in my dictionary and only a reasonable memory has saved me on many occasions. A third complication concerns the alphabet – Romanian has several additional accented letters – a long "a", a long "i", a "t" that reads as "tsi", and an "s" that is like a "shi". No attempt has been made to replicate these letters in the translated version. The accents have simply been omitted in the Romanian words in the translated document. One additional problem with these accented letters is how and when they are used. About 40% (but not 100%) of the time that Ionica, in his Moldovian spelling, uses the long "a" in a word, my dictionary* has the word spelled with a long "i". Some Moldovian words that have two long "a"s may be in the dictionary with one of each – at either location. Both the dictionary and parts of the Monograf were produced in the late 1960s.

We have attempted to produce a translation as opposed to a re-write of the Monograf. This has undoubtedly caused some awkward sentence structures but that is the nature of Ionica's writing. He tended to repeat fairly often some ideas he wanted to emphasize. The exact same sentence appears several times within the document and sometimes within the same chapter. He also had a habit of generating overly-long lists of examples – some of these I have converted to "point form" for ease of reading. That was his style and the least we can do is thank him for the history.

I must acknowledge here the proof-reading provided by my wife, Rosemary (a non-Romanian – in fact, of London, England origin). Because of the large number of Romanian words intentionally left in the document, the spell-checking programs were being driven mad. Typos etc can only be caught by careful reading. Numerous translation errors may have entered in this translation. This is an amateur effort, by an amateur translator. I apologize for errors and ask to be alerted of any serious ones by those of you who may read this and who have a better grasp of the languages involved. On numerous occasions, personal explanatory information has been inserted. This is denoted with a **TN** – Translators Note.

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* - (Dictionar de Buzunar, Roman-Englez si Englez-Roman (Pocket Dictionary – actually far too large for a pocket.) Credited to Andrei Bantas and published Editura Stintifica, Bucuresti, 1969). Several, web-based, Romanian-English dictionaries were also consulted but what we lack is a good Moldovian-English version.

# PART I

## 1.1
# The people who historically lived in our regions
# The establishment of the Romanian people

Many persons have asked questions as to who occupied our regions hundreds and thousands of years ago. To begin with, it is necessary to consider the order of how things occur in general. In the more ancient past societies were not organized as they are now. There were no states delineated by fixed borders in this region because the population existed as tribes in flux who often intermixed among themselves. They were nomad peoples or hordes who scoured and stretched over large areas in search of appropriate places for food and shelter. They lived many years by hunting, by fishing, by collecting wild fruit and occasionally by raiding or robbing others. They remained at one location as long as there was sufficient food and then they moved to other areas. Sometimes they moved by choice and sometimes by need as they were being crowded by other migratory people who themselves were searching for areas with abundant food. Because of this, in historic times there were no national states with a stable population who occupied a named territory delineated by precise borders capable of having a stable government. Thus, in earlier times, the land was controlled by whoever was the strongest invader. This was the situation in our region- indeed it was also the situation elsewhere.

The people who populated our area long before Christ, and who established themselves first here were the Tracii-families of ancient tribes originating in Indo-Europe who spread to a space centered on our region (and including Morovia and Struma, southern Poland, Slovakia, eastern Hungary, southern Ukraine and north-eastern Bulgaria).

The Tracii were occupied mostly in agriculture as they settled down in these areas. Life was simple during this time and they occupied themselves with shelter and food whereas before it had been a question of struggle and defense of lives and possessions (animals, tools and provisions.) During this period also appeared in our region in sequence, the Sctii about 700 B.C., the Agatirsii about 600 B.C., the Celtii about 400 B.C. and the Batarnii towards the end of the third century B.C.

Settlers following the Tracii were the Geto-Dacii, who stabilized the region we occupy, as workers of the land, and raised cattle. With all the mixtures of the migrating peoples it very often occurred that it was not possible to construct long-lasting structures, nevertheless the Geto-Dacii were able to evolve in this region an organization of state that was to play a major role in history. In addition to agriculture and animal husbandry, the Dacii extended their learning into the working of bronze, gold and copper. With time, the period of the Dacii saw a great blossoming particularly during the period of Decebal.

The settlements of the Dacii were in two forms – fortresses and villages. The first were more fortified, located in higher places and positioned for ease of access and defense near courses of water in the

mountains. In the villages, the Dacii lived in smaller shelters, approximately 2 by 4 meters. The walls were made from braided branches; near the Danube the roofs were of straw or reeds. The villages were crowded and relatively small, and were manned with sentries for defense. They were located near the top of a hill or near the shore of a lake to allow easy access and defense if needed.

The dead were cremated and the ashes were buried. Wood was used for many items of the household including beds, cattle troughs, wagons, ploughs etc. Iron was very little used in the beginning.

The Dacii learned and used the art of pottery. Before pottery they used eating utensils made of wood. Water was carried in wooden buckets. The villages occupied about two hectares and the number of houses did not normally exceed one hundred. Good roads did not exist in the villages, indeed only crooked and unregulated paths existed. The Dacii cultivated wheat, rye, millet, canepa (hemp) and flax. Later they also cultivated grapes.

The fortresses of the Dacii in the mountains were very well constructed with the residence of the Chief protected by four square towers with strong stone walls up to 3 m in thickness. These walls were constructed from large blocks of limestone and were tied together with large wooden pegs which were almost the size of logs. In these fortresses the inhabitants would conceal caches of provisions and spoils collected during the course of battles. The weapons and main implements used in war were axes and later, short, curved swords and knives. Later in time, they also employed flat swords, scimitars, and lances in battle.

During this period, the men, and more so their wives, enjoyed wearing decorations and ornaments. The decorations were made by local craftsmen or would be bought by interactions with the Greeks or other nationalities. They included rings, beads, bracelets, necklaces and mirrors fabricated with gold, silver, bronze and copper.

Dacia, the area that was settled by the Geti and the Dacii (Geto-Dacii) coincided to a large extent with the present day territory of Romania (it can almost be said that it is corresponds exactly to the territory of Romania at the end of WWI). The Geto-Dacii occupied this territory originally; they spoke the same tongue and had the same original culture. The difference between the Geti and the Dacii was the place from which they originated – only this and nothing else. The Geti had been the masters over the land to the south and east of the Carpati Mountains, that is to say, south Moldova, Dobrogea and Muntenea. Meanwhile, the Dacii had ruled central Moldova, the western Carpati, Ardeal, the central Carpati, Banat and Oltenia. The Greeks named the people Geti when they encountered them through interactions in the Greek colonies of Histria, Tomia and Callatis. The Romans named them Dacii dating back to their first contacts with the Roman Empire when they shared a common border of the Danube.

The ruler Burebista established himself and decided to use a peaceful route to unite the Geto-Dacii population which consisted of a number of tribes. Burebista was the leader of the Geti and, assisted by the high priest Deceneu, was able to impose his authority over the Dacii. He imposed a severe discipline over them banning situations that resulted from the overuses of drink. It was not too difficult for Burebista to convince the Geto-Dacii to unite because on the horizon they could see a great peril- the Romans were approaching the Danube and this great power and warlike force presented a formidable threat for the Geto-Dacii region. With all that he had conceived and succeeded in achieving, Burebista showed that clearly his personality had many different talents. Foreseeing the immediate danger presented by the powerful Roman army, he assembled and organized a suitable army with which he could face the strong invaders. Meanwhile, the Romans began to pay attention to these actions and intentions of Burebista and readied an armed force with which to attack Dacia. The plans were not implemented because Caesar, who was to lead this campaign of war, was assassinated in 44 B.C.

Destiny determined that Burebista would suffer a similar fate as he was removed from leadership and killed by a conspiracy under mysterious circumstances. Clearly there were others who were unhappy or had local ambitions. These unfortunate events weakened and dismembered the Geto-Dacii state while the union was not yet well cemented. With the assassination of Caesar, the concerns about the Romans were no longer present, at least for the moment.

Nevertheless, even though the Geto-Dacii state assembled by Burebista dissolved in large part, looking back at events, the highly-talented Burebista showed great foresight in establishing a capital for the state of Dacia at Sarmisegetusa (Gradistea Muscelului). This capital in the mountains of Dacia was at a very suitable location and at a high enough elevation to observe, and to make accessibility difficult for, enemies. Over the next period, the leading roles were carried out by tribes of Dacia because to them fell this duty since the Geti had lost a part of their territory on the right side of the Danube and had been weakened somewhat in Dobrogea. These events occurred largely during the period of rule of the Emperor August Octavian in the years 29-28 B.C. At this time the Romans had reached the Danube and were in control of Dobrogea and the mouth of the Danube.

After the defeat of the Geti, their political organization along the lower Danube weakened to the point of dissolution. In theses areas the Romans established their rule. From that time forward, the center of power in Geto-Dacia remained in the regions controlled by the tribes of the Dacii based in the new capital of Sarmisegetusa. These groups settled down to raise cattle, deer, sheep and pigs. For travel and transport they used horses. They would also be occupied with hunting, fishing and bee-keeping. Within the fortresses, different trades were practiced, the most important of these being iron working and carpentry.

The population of Geto-Dacia would clothe themselves with clothing made of wool with underclothing of hemp and linen. During the winter, they would use furs. The clothing of the villagers in the mountains resembled that of the original Dacii tribes as depicted (carved) on the Traian columns. Writing was an unknown ability to the Geto-Dacii at that time.

Trade was conducted with the Greeks, Romans and the Macedonians whose currencies they also used at the beginning. Later, they struck their own coinage.

Partly because of the incursions of the Dacii into the Roman territories but mostly the desire of the Romans to expand their areas of control, two major conflicts broke out between the Dacii and the Romans during the rules of Decebal and Traian over the years 101-102 A.D. and 105-106 A.D. Both conflicts were very fierce. The first battle occurred at Tapac, where the army of Decebal was defeated. This happened in the spring of the year 101 A.D. The second conflict between the Dacii and the Romans took place over the years 105-106 A.D. with great losses on the part of the Dacii. On this occasion, the Emperor Traian attacked the army of Decebal on a number of fronts. Decebal's army fought well and emerged heroic but following the main battle found that it had to retreat in the face of the enemy to the fortress at Sarmisegetusa with the hope of putting up a resistance and stopping the advance. The effort was valiant but after a short siege, Sarmisegetusa fell. The Romans emerged victorious because of their superior numbers and technology but the courage of the Dacii was never less than that of the Romans.

Concerning Decebal, the historian Dio-Cassius wrote that he was crafty in all the battles and skillful, as shown by the fact that he knew the best times to attack to gain advantage but also knew when to retreat. Skillful in his planning, he was also brave in battle and knew how to gain a victory and how to escape properly from a possible defeat. For these reasons, he was for the Romans an opponent to fear.

## 1.2
# The establishment of the Romanian people

The heroic death of Decebal and the fall of Sarmisegetusa into the hands of the Romans brought to an end the second war between the Dacii and the Romans. Many of the Dacii fell gallantly in the battles and a large number of them were taken into captivity. Meanwhile, their homeland, Dacia, was transformed into a province of the Roman Empire. Immediately after the conquest, Emperor Traian involved himself closely in the organization of the province, colonizing it with Romans brought from elsewhere in the Empire. He immediately utilized them for the construction of good roads, improvements in the towns, the construction of fortifications and the establishment of a new footing for the economy. There were established exchange rates for items like gold, silver, copper, iron, salt and other items. Skilled workers and tradesmen were brought in from elsewhere in the Empire as well as merchants. In addition, attention was paid to agriculture so that within a short time the new Roman province of Dacia was developing from all points of view and was beginning to have a flourishing economy.

Before very long, the culture of the Romans began to have an impact everywhere. Latin became the working language for all the inhabitants of Dacia both for the defeated peoples and for the Romans. In truth, the Dacii adopted readily the different customs of the Romans in particular, their faith. Thus, the Romanization of Dacia slowly evolved.

Even from the first years of the colonization of Dacia, the Roman element remained omnipresent and powerful. This was due to the presence of the Roman army, functionaries brought from elsewhere in the Empire, craftsmen and workers of all skills as well as the merchants. Besides these, there came other Romans attracted by the wellbeing and the life of a rapidly-expanding economy. The general aboriginal population, as it could not remain isolated from this theatre of construction and reconstruction, had, of necessity, to accept the domination of the victors and had to participate in the works and manifestations imposed by the new situation. The lives and labors of the two groups came closer together and they tried to understand each other and work together and thus to harmoniously live together. It was a natural evolution.

Thus from the combination of elements of the conquered with those of the Romans there began to emerge a new people. The process took place over a long period and from this admixture was born the Romanian population. In this manner then, the Romanian nation evolved directly from our Dacii ancestors who were born in this area as well as from the conquering Romans.

After what I have briefly discussed above about our origins, it is necessary to make a review in simple points which can be easily followed by all Romanians and especially by my co-inhabitants of Voloca about whom I am thinking when I outline these points.

- Today's Romanians are descended directly from the Dacii-Romanians.
- The language spoken by Romanians is a romance language and has as its origin Latin (other outside influences play a smaller role).
- The Romanian nation arose in this area from Dacii ancestors who lived and settled here from the most ancient periods of time.
- The Geto-Dacii from whom we are descended were the sole aboriginal rulers of this region.
- The cradle of the Romanian people is Transylvania because that is the heart of where the Dacii region was situated.
- We did not migrate here from another region nor were we brought here or driven here by the winds of misery as was the case of other migratory peoples (for example the barbarian hordes). Here we were born and here we have always existed.
- We never subjugated any other nation nor trampled over the territory of strangers nor have we ripped the body of another country. On the contrary – our nation was invaded and devastated many times and our territory was torn by numerous grasping enemies.

For the lands that have been left to us by our distant ancestors there have been many savage battles with all the invading enemies. The number of martyrs and heroes is infinitely large. We must not forget their sacrifices.

For the future, we have before us a sacred duty – we must leave to those who follow us an independent, rich and beautiful country, not one completed with territory taken from strangers, but one complete with borders, of course, which enclose all our Romanian brothers together in one place. With the thought of establishing this in our future, all that we have left is to teach those who follow us so that they can be valiant in protecting and keeping what past generations have left them. It is necessary to develop this in the new generation and especially in those who are attracted to higher culture and higher levels of education. Only with people well informed and those of well-prepared higher character and higher morals can great deeds be achieved. A well-established culture can form a valuable force of defense in times of difficulty.

## 1.3
# The period of establishment of the Romanian peoples was long and difficult

The rapprochement between the Roman conquerors and the defeated Dacii did not occur in one single day. A long period of time was required before they could understand each other and begin to intermix. Moreover, they both needed to know the cultures, the customs, the faiths, the clothing as well as the ways of life and foods which each employed as well as other factors. The also needed to learn how each of these things affected the lives of the conquered Dacii as well as how they would be accepted by the Romans who had invaded.

Just after the occupation of the Romans in Dacia, they found a land in unrest and attempts were made to revolt by the occupied Dacii aided by the "free Dacii", in particular those from further to the north called the Costobi. These still-unconquered tribes lived throughout Muremures and Bucovina in the north-east section of Moldova. Also during this period, there were attacks along the border of Roman Dacia by the Sarmati and the Roxolani. The Roman Emperors Traian and Hadrian placed large importance on the colonization and organization of Dacia but the strength of the Romans was now beginning to weaken and in the end they had to retreat from Dacia in 271 A.D. during the reign of Emperor Aurelean. The main reason was the weakening and decadence of the Roman Empire which was also experiencing internal unrest and misunderstandings. This was in addition to the increasing attacks of the various migratory nations – for example, the Macromanii and the Bastarnii. An immediate consequence of the instability in the political system was the stagnation of the economy. Anarchy within the military and repeated raiding by the invaders, in the end, brought about ruin and poverty.

The "free Dacii" (for example the Costobocii and the Carpii) were never subjugated by the Romans and after the retreat of the Romans from Dacia, these people re-united with the Romanized Dacii and in time they too became Romanized. We spoke above about the "free Dacii" – these were the Dacii who remained outside the borders of the Roman state.

As time passed, the attacks on the Roman Empire continued to be carried out by the Gotilii, the Herulilii, the Gepizilii, and the Bastarnilii. To some extent, this explains the retreat from Dacia in 271 A.D. of the Romans as they were forever being harassed and attacked by numerous barbarian groups. The new northern border for the Roman Empire came to be defined by the Danube River. Therefore, the Roman army, authorities, rich merchants and wealthy citizens retreated beyond the Danube, being tied to the Roman administration. The main population, namely the villagers, herdsmen, junior craftsmen and smaller shopkeepers as well as the veterans and other similar classes of people remained behind.

The population of Romanized, native Dacii was fairly substantial. These unassuming but numerous people were of mixed origins and in this period were mostly tied to the land on which they worked and on which eventually

their future depended. Nevertheless, the Romanized Dacii north of the Danube did not remain completely isolated from the Romans who had withdrawn to an area south of the Danube and continued to have some contact with them.

The Romanized Dacii, during the progress of these changes, re-established their interactions with the Costobocii and the Carpii. They intermarried and intermixed quickly as the years passed. They fought together to retain their territory in the face of invaders and when the invaders were too numerous and too strong, the native population of Dacia retreated to the forests and mountains from which they emerged when the invading hordes had left.

Periods of leisure and respite were very rare – other barbaric hordes continued to ever invade through this region. The process of transformation of the Romanized Dacii continued with an increase in the Roman ways. A new language emerged during the period, having as its base Latin, but which became a more common language of the people. It was spoken by the Romanized Dacii and evolved after many centuries into the language today spoken by the Romanians.

Life was unspeakably difficult for the residents of Dacia during these times. There was never a period to construct permanent villages, towns or other structures. The migratory hordes arrived almost continuously from the east and devastated whatever was in their path. These turbulent times lasted for more than 1000 years.

How did they resist these constant hostilities and how did the population, which consisted mostly of the Dacii, escape with their lives from these unending attacks and unending sufferings? An absolute miracle! All of these barbaric hordes who imposed themselves one by one and who also fought amongst themselves eventually disappeared without a trace. The Romanian nation, which was born and which was formed in these extremely inhospitable conditions, emerged to the light of victory and entered into history with a glorious past and eagerness to play a role equal to that of other nations.

Before they could enter into this history, they had to endure a struggle lasting 1000 years. The history recorded about the Romanian nation over this period is very sparse. The first political structure organized was a "cnezatele" (senate) about the 14$^{th}$ century and it established a principality. It had the effect of founding a "state" of Moldovans and the Muntenei headed by a "hospodar" (**TN**:– a unique Romanian term used for leaders of this region).

In 1600 Mihai Viteazul organized a temporary union of Muntenia with Ardeal and Moldova.

The year 1859 saw the union of Moldova and Muntenia realized under the leadership of Alexandru Ioan Cuza and in 1918 was finally realized a union of all Romanians into a single national state, united and independent under the rule of Ferdinand I.

To ensure its existence, the Romanian nation has had to struggle for centuries against the waves of invaders. The sacrifices that they had to pay for this independence are immense – a cost in lives of gallant men that numbers in the hundreds of thousands. The loss in material possessions was also extremely large and heavy to bear.

Note that when we come to the section on accomplishments further on, we will look further at the history of Moldova and Bucovina.

## 1.4
# The village of Voloca in ancient times
# The first inhabitants. History and legends

Little is known about the date of the founding of Voloca. For clues of its first beginnings, we must resort to the stories of the oldest citizens of the village.

The first settlement of the earliest people was located further east of the present site. This site, on a flat area now called the Cozmin clearing, was the place where, until the middle of the 20th century, there stood three large crosses and, in front of them, an old water well. At this location was constructed the first church in the village and it is highly probable that the village square was also located next to it at that time. Until the start of WW II, old and young Volocans, husbands and wives, young men, young women and children would all come to pray at the well with these three crosses. In the front of the crowd would come the priests, followed by the young men and women carrying the "prapuri" or church banners and crosses. Following them was the rest of the cortege. There would be an important church service made there and the surrounding ground would be blessed. Also at this place would be said prayers at the times of drought. The villagers would pray that the Heavenly Father might heed them and send rain to the land. These customs, carried forward from the distant past, were practiced also in recent years with great religious fervor.

When we refer to the villagers of the distant past, we must mention that they led simple and modest lives with very strong religious beliefs. They would work the land with great difficulty using only wooden ploughs and other primitive tools. They were harassed by barbarian hordes or other enemies and often needed to flee and to hide in the woods because of the dangers of the invaders. The incursions of the enemy meant that heavy hostilities would often result. The villagers were in a constant rush and had often to leave their homes taking with them only what they could gather close at hand. When they returned after the hordes of enemy had left, they often found nothing left. All would be devastated or burned and the young boys and men had to begin again to labor and with great turmoil and difficulty they would scrape together new homes from the ruins.

In this distant past, life was a total uncertainty because of the wars and also because of the devastation. The enemy did not spare anything; they plundered, they preyed, they killed, and they set fire to anything that was left. So very harsh was life and so bitter were the days of the ancient ancestors of our co-villagers! Testimony and history shows, however, that they survived. The people lived every day with fear in their bones because at any moment the invading enemies might appear to crush their homes and crops. There existed an almost-constant state of conflict. Truly, this land was soaked with the blood of hundreds of thousands of human lives. These wars and battles that took place in the area meant that there was no place where anyone could set foot without standing on a clump of earth that had not been bathed by human blood.

As soon as these invasions decreased in number and people could finally enjoy a period of peace, they set to work again, doing again whatever their tasks might be. To start with, they began to work the soil, which was rich and easy to work because it was level. Nearby, they were able to find good places to pasture their cattle as well as extended meadows for making hay. Thus, they occupied themselves with the raising of livestock from which they could harvest milk, skins, wool and other produce. In addition, they had oxen that were used to plough or to pull wagons in the summer and sleighs in the winter.

Nearby there were extended forests of beech and oak from which they could provide themselves with firewood as well as with wood for the construction of their households. The wood was plentiful and hence was used in the construction of houses, barns, sheds and other yard buildings. It was widely used for many additional items such as: tables, chairs, cupboards, ploughs, kegs, troughs, washtubs, barrels, gates, wagons, looms, forks, reels, shovels, rakes, threshing tools, sickles, spades and wheelbarrows.

During the winter the men would work in the forests or “la zdrub” (in the bush), as it was said. The forests at that time were very extended and rich, not only in tall and beautiful trees but also in animal life and wild birds. The men would also go hunting and return with meat and skins. Many of the villagers would be occupied in different trades, becoming carpenters, wheelwrights, coopers, great-coat makers, jacket makers, moccasin or sandal makers, etc. The women made the clothing necessary for their family members from hemp and wool (cotton was introduced much later). They spun, wove, sewed, and looked after the children and the house. From their strong and hard-working hands came many wondrous items: cloth, towels, table linen, shoulder bags, belts, heavy trousers, shirts, etc.

The handiworks made by our ancestors were simple and modest but with the passage of time they became more sophisticated and attractive. The diversity came about after an extended period of time and when life itself was more secure.

During all the periods of resistance, all the hopes of the people rested in God. Truly, the population at that time was very devout in their beliefs and attended church faithfully. Their religion was the Orthodox Christian faith.

During the early days, there was no school in the village but the people quickly built a church situated in the middle of the clearing in the Cozmins. It was built of wood cut in the Cozmin Forest. It was a small structure and was built where, during our time, there survived three crosses with a well in front of them. Since the population of the village was not very large, the church was able to accommodate all.

Before we continue with the story of the developments at the new site, we need to mention that in the northern area, near the top of the Linsa Hill, just where it slopes towards the banks of the Dereluilu River, have come to light many times human bones when Ioan Bojescul of Voloca was digging there. These must have belonged to our ancient ancestors. It appears there was an ancient cemetery there that was located in connection with the first village built near the opening in the Cozmin Forest. This information was communicated to me by a fellow

Volocan by the name of Nicholai Manaila, who was a neighbor of Ioan Bojescul and who worked there with him many times when they were planting and hoeing.

The dress of the population at that time was simple and similar to that of their Dacian ancestors. Around the hemp "camesa" (shirt) they would wind a wide belt made of wool or of leather. Over the "ismene" (long underpants) they wore thicker trousers or "bernevice" made of wool, depending on whether it was summer or winter. Over their shirts they would dress in a sheepskin jacket and on their feet, they would wear moccasins or sandals. On their heads in the summer they would wear a brimmed hat while in the winter this was replaced by a "cusma" or fur hat. In the winter, over their sheepskin jackets they would wear a woven jacket or even a great coat, depending on how cold the temperature was. Men would not cut their hair but wore long locks and had beards and mustaches.

The women wore long shirts and wrap-around skirts that were wrapped at the waist with a broad band. Their shirts were embroidered with flower patterns. Married women braided their hair and covered it with a "brobade" or kerchief. During cold periods of the year, they too would clothe themselves with vests, heavy jackets or even great coats. To color or dye their handiworks, they used natural dyes extracted from plants, flowers or bark.

The customs of the villagers at that time were simple in keeping with their simple lives. They observed the holidays and Lenten periods prescribed by the church. With great concern, they observed the dates and customs passed on to them by those before them. In particular, the most important observances of their lives were those tied to the customs no one would dare to alter – those were the ones tied to births, marriages and deaths. Some people continued to believe in superstition, exorcism, magic, curses, etc.

According to some of the oldest people in the village, the place that was the first location for the Volocans was known by the name of Cozmin or the Cozmin clearing – a name that has remained in vogue up to the present days. About one kilometer east of the well, where the three crosses existed, is where the Cozmin railroad station was built for the Suceave-Chernauti-Lvov railroad line. This station was destroyed by bombing at the start of WW II. The battle between "Stefan cel Mare" (Stefan the Great) and the Poles in the year 1497 occurred around that place, and more specifically, at the place called the Cozmin Forest. It occurred at the steep slope that falls in a serpentine from the south towards the north.

Since the particular area bore the name of Cozmin, we can deduce that the village also had the ancient name of Cozmin. Only after the occupants had relocated, moving about 4 kilometers to the southwest, because the first location was too exposed to the attacks of the enemies, did the new location become known as Voloca.

There are also those who believe that the first location of the village was at Horodiste, a place located to the south of the Cozmin clearing past the Linsa Hill and about 4 kilometers away. There were found, at that location, indications that there had existed a settlement as well as a fortification. There was also found at that

location in 1817 a 'treasure' consisting of nine silver coins, one of which bore the image of a mythical Roman figure. This Byzantine treasure from the 7th century was sent to Vienna. (Reference – "An Investigation By The Juniema Society from Chernauti Tetina Rosa and Horodista-Voloca", by Dionisie Olinescu in the journal Familia, Vol. 24 26 June 1887, page 285.) When the possibility arises to do some fieldwork and to allow the advice of the archivist of Voloca, we may be able to determine the exact location where the first settlement was located.

Assuming that the first location was on the Cozmin clearing, one must believe that it would have been a difficult decision for those people to leave that beautiful place and the favorable prospects of life there. The soil was good and bountiful, they were blessed with springs of excellent drinking water and they were situated near a main road that went from lower Moldova, through Suceava, near Siret and then on through the Cozmin on to Lvov and further to countries of the north. It was a road along which a lot of commerce was carried out. With this road the people had very good connections not only with Siret and Suceava but also with Chernauti. Towards the south, at a distance of about 150 m they had the Derelui River on which they could locate a grinding mill, or a fulling mill and that was a water source to serve the needs of cattle, or in which to bleach their cloth and wash their clothes. Beyond the Derelui were meadows for hay and forests of beech, hornbeam, elm and oak.

It would appear then to have been a place very suited to human settlement but unfortunately it was also very exposed to raiders, predators and attackers who came so often through these parts.

Through this region traveled King Albert with his army and through here also traveled several times King Sobietchi with his forces when he invaded Moldova. These armies caused numerous losses and laid waste to much. When the Tartars came from the east, as well as other invading hordes, they also traveled through here and killed or captured many young men. Sometimes bandits scoured through this region and preyed on the population. They were often deserters or robbers who moved along the great road preceding the actual armies or invading hordes. It is clear that for a settlement to be long-lasting, it must be secure and sure of its tomorrows and periods of calm. – the very elements that were missing from that location in the Cozmin and for which it was eventually abandoned and replaced with a location somewhat less rich and beautiful but yet more secure and less obvious to the eyes of invaders.

The terrain was variable with many hills and valleys – the soil was poorer and the roads were missing or were impractical to a large extent. Communication with the town of Chernauti became more difficult.

The villagers had endured many hardships and invasions over time but one day a tremendous disaster came. This occurred on a Sunday morning when most people were at church. On this Sunday it just so happened that many wedding couples had come to the church for marriage ceremonies. Just at the start of the marriage services, they were hit by a surprise attack by barbaric invaders. When the population observed the pagan horde rapidly approaching at a gallop, they all began to flee – men, women, wedding attendants, young girls, young

men and even grooms and brides. They all fled towards the south, in the direction of the forests. Those who could not flee or were caught unawares in their homes were either killed or taken as captives. This event is remembered as “the invasion of the Tartars”. These pagans spread great misery onto the population because they killed men, destroyed all they could find, and also took the cattle and grain with them before setting fire to what was left. The old people relate with great grief and hurt the terrible disaster that occurred on that day.

The legends say that all those who fled that Sunday ran directly into the woods to hiding places known only to them and stopped finally at an opening in the woods near the Moacerei Hill. Here there was a well-protected area where they rested – those involved with the weddings as well as all those others who had fled. During the flight from the invaders, several brides inadvertently dropped some “barbanoc” (perrywinkle) in the clearing. It rooted and expanded to cover the entire area in the forest. This species has remained over the ages at this site as a reminder of the horrible events of that infamous Sunday. This opening on the Moacerei is resplendent is green “barbanoc” with its strong rounded leaves and little blue flowers. I myself have seen the plants there and have picked some as have many of my co-villagers both during my time of growing up in this village and later. This is at the place called the Moacerei clearing.

The people at this time in the distant past stopped at the clearing after their escape to rest and contemplate. Perhaps it was at that very moment that they realized and decided that they needed to abandon Cozmin and settle in a more hospitable place. It does appear that from that day they decided to relocate the village about 4 kilometers to the south-west, to a place bordered by woods at that time and there they moved and resettled.

They cut down a lot of the forest that bordered immediately on the edges of the new village site. The forest was cleared back from the village and the area that remained after the clearing was transformed into a pasture – a place for grazing of the cattle and flocks of sheep of the residents.

The new place chosen by the people was isolated and well positioned among the higher hills. Towards the north it was bordered by the Derelui River, which flowed towards the east and passed near the valley of the Cozmin. After they had carefully inspected the location, they began to bring to this place things that had escaped the raid and anything else they could salvage from the old site in the Cozmin. Very little was in fact found after the retreat of the invading hordes. What is known, however, is that the church remained unburned by the will of God and was able to be relocated on the side of the hill now known as “the hill of the church”. Being good Christians and devout people, our forefathers had as a first priority the building of the church at this new location. Somewhat further to the east, they reserved a good location for the cemetery.

Near the area of the hill and the church, people began to construct also their houses. All that they had and all that they were able to find were carried there. Materials for the house construction were readily available because they were located adjacent to the forest. Slowly, slowly, the new settlement took shape. The population established itself very well and here the former residents of Cozmin remained until today. The new location was not, however, called Cozmin but instead, came to be known as Voloca.

With the passage of time, the village grew and began to extend in all directions – indeed even towards Cozmin, the location whose name we still use today for the area have land which they cultivate. There is even a commune called “Paliul Cozmin” (the Cozmin sector).

The new location of the town was well chosen. It was situated at an elevation from which one could easily observe the incursion and advances of any enemies. Not far from the church (towards the north-east) there was a very large and tall pine tree called the Gordei Pine. From this location a lookout could watch and see into the far distance, especially towards the east, where there was the large route on which the invading groups traveled. From this post on high, the lookout could alert the villagers if a danger was observed. This point of observation was excellent and of great value for the people.

In general, the invaders did not venture or depart far from the main road. They avoided places not easily assessable as well as thick woods. The new site was well chosen; the proof lies in the fact that once our forefathers planted their roots there they were never uprooted from there to other places.

Even though the village with its inhabitants was moved closer to the forests, the former area around Cozmin was not abandoned because it was very good for agricultural use. Some of the least-destroyed houses were repaired and used as temporary shelters during the times when people would come to work the land. Here they would bring with them cattle, ploughs and seeds, which they could store in the shelters. After the completion of the farm work, they would return to the village.

The houses at the new site were more solid and better built and the households were more versatile. Wood, as a construction material, was plentiful and was available to everyone. In time, the more industrious and knowledgeable built very sturdy and well-constructed houses since the site was well situated and far from the route of the invaders.

By custom, the house walls were made of wood. They were chinked with mud and straw and the roof was covered with shingles or reeds. Near the house, people would build a barn, a shed and a pen, where they would house the animals, tools and firewood. The yard and the garden would be protected by a fence made of saplings.

Later, when the invaders had ceased their activities and the area came to a period of peace, the households tended to become larger. Some houses now had two rooms and an attached lean-to while near the barn one would find a shed for hay storage, a grain-storage bin, a sty for pigs or fowl and a large corral. Some of the more daring would also build a root cellar. The village developed at the beginning since the population was fairly small and the people did not have much money. Overall, they had little need for money. What they needed, they would produce themselves. They did not generally purchase things- nor did they produce many things that they would have in surplus. Since the village was part of the estate of the Putna monastery, the

residents of Voloca were obliged to work for a specific number of days per year for the needs of the monastery. The villagers would produce honey, beeswax and silk for the monastery as well as other goods.

The occupations and way of life did not change substantially from what they had been in the past. The clothing remained the same, other than that it evolved to a more stylish form from an artistic point of view. Even their tools began to have improved forms. When a person has a life that is more relaxed and rested, he then has the time to create better and more attractive items.

Faith in God remained as the main shield against bad happenings. The church played a large role in the lives of the villagers. With regard to customs and observances, these continued for a long period essentially unchanged. Only when the Bejenari began to control the Bastinari did the situation begin to change to some degree. It is well known that the people from Maramures overwhelmed and controlled the natives of Moldova a number of times during the periods of colonization. A large group under the control of Dragos Voda came during the years 1352-1353 and another group led by Bogdan I came in 1359 when Moldova was founded. All those who came from Maramures to Moldova settled themselves in this region and amalgamated with the local native population of Romanized Dacii. At this point we need to emphasize that the population of Voloca has come to be an admixture of native Moldovans with people from Maramures. Certainly, those who came from Maramures came to this region somewhat later. They were attracted to the richness of the region in pasture lands and in good agricultural soil and were often encouraged by their relatives who had settled earlier in the region. The number of settlers who came from Maramures to Voloca is substantial. After their arrival, the region had a large change as did the lives of the villagers. The new settlers brought with them new cattle, wagons, work tools, clothing and bedding. It was a true re-settlement without any thought of returning to the area from which they had come.

The new people from Maramures were different from the Bastinari, both in dress and in language as well as in customs. The differences were not, however, too great and they were soon able to understand each other. They were also similar in many ways. Both groups had been well involved in the husbandry of cattle and both understood the tilling of the soil. After they had settled, the newcomers adapted without great difficulty to the location and to the Bastinari population. With time, they all intermixed. With the coming of the people from Maramures, not only the population of Voloca experienced an increase, but also the size of the herds of oxen, cattle and sheep.

The clothing of the newcomers, with only minor differences was the same as that of the Bastinari and was made from hemp and wool. The foods were also prepared in the same ways in the homes of the people. They would buy very little in the way of clothing and all wore moccasins or sandals.

The richer people would plough their land with a wooden plough while those of smaller means, who had smaller plots, would work them with hoes or spades. People would raise for food millet, buckwheat, and rye or barley. For the cattle, they would cultivate oats. In some places, they would also grow wheat. Corn and potatoes

were introduced somewhat later. The standard foods of people consisted of rye bread (or sometimes made with barley) and millet mamalaga (later made with cornmeal) and they certainly made use of milk, cheese, eggs, meat, beans, onion, garlic, parsley, beets, cabbage, turnips, etc. – and later in time, potatoes. They also ate fruit, having grown fruit-bearing trees.

The villagers of Voloca devoted themselves to work and became hard workers and proud householders. In addition to working the land and raising cattle or cutting wood in the forests and hunting, they began to cultivate orchards. In early times, one could find through the village apples and wild pears. Many young saplings were grafted with valued species of fruit trees. Almost every householder planted near his house for apples, pears, sweet cherries, Morello cherries, plums, prune plums and at least one nut tree. Borrowing ideas from each other, almost all grew attractive orchards with tasty fruit. From other species and great care, the villagers produced many trees with high-quality, tasty and attractive fruit. Some of the fruit was consumed within the household, both fresh and dried, but a good portion was much valued by the markets in town.

Some of the householders also became involved in beekeeping since the village was located near extended meadows with many grasses and wild flowers – in addition, forests were also near by. Only about 150 years earlier had the area to the south of the village been cleared for the purpose of preparing a pasture for the village livestock.

The forests had been reduced from near the village through cutting not only because people needed a pasture area but also because the village was suffering from the incursions of the wild animals (bears, wolves and wild boars) that were causing much loss and damage. There was a time when the village was not only immediately adjacent to the forest, it was so bounded on three sides by forests that the villagers could see nothing but wilderness. The forests at that time occupied a large fraction of the landscape and the wildlife there lived and multiplied as they wished. This is how it was about two or three hundred years ago.

As a good indication of the comfort levels that the people of Voloca had achieved after the village was separated from the woods and free of the raids of the wild animals, there were now very few times that the men would go hunting. Their guns would remain for long periods mounted on their pegs. The men were heavily involved with work in the fields because they had to tend land not only for crops but also for hay and pasture. They had to labor not only for their families but also for the monastery. The poorer people continued to work in the forests and to hunt. The forest workers produced firewood as well as construction materials for the building of houses, barns, bridges, etc. Many of them became good builders and were knowledgeable in making different implements and items needed in a household.

In past times, many households would also utilize silk worms. From the time of our ancestors and forefathers have remained beautiful raw-silk head dresses as well as runner cloths of floss silk. Silk was used, in particular, in the making of head scarves or kerchiefs.

The head of the household was the husband. He was the one that decided what needed to be done and had total responsibility for the household. He fixed things, did the selling and buying and had the ultimate say in all matters. The husbands were often autocratic and severe and demanded obedience from all.

The women were subservient in all things to the husband. Without his agreement, they could do nothing. When the couple went somewhere together, for instance to church, visiting neighbors, into town for a dance or a celebration, the husband would always walk in front and behind him followed his wife with perhaps a child in arms or carrying a shoulder pack on her back. These were the customs at the time and no one objected whatsoever.

The joy and objects of contentment for the women were the children that they would raise and care for. They would also look after the needs of the house, prepare meals, sew and wash clothes, take care of animals kept in the yard, tend to the garden, etc.

The work of the men was largely in the fields, the woods and the hay meadows. They would also take grain to the mill, or go to town. To them came the heavier tasks and those requiring travel away from the household. The children grew up with strict rules and obeyed the parents and their dictates. The sons were mostly under the guidance of their fathers. The older ones had the tasks of helping their fathers to plough and weed and to cut and stack hay or prepare sheaves. They would also assist in loading wagons, cutting trees in the woods and any other duties that normally fell to the head of the household. The youngest also helped as much as they could and would shepherd the lambs, geese and pigs or would go with the cattle to the community pasture.

The oldest daughters would help their mothers with food preparation, spinning, weaving and sewing and often also with the care of the younger children. They needed to learn and practice these roles that they, in turn, would play as wives, mothers and homekeepers. They would work alongside their mothers in the cleaning up and care of the yard animals and in the care of the vegetable garden.

It appears then that all of the members of the family contributed, to the limits of their abilities and knowledge, to the work and tasks necessary for the smooth running of a household.

When a household had a need for implements or iron tools, the men would go to the gypsies, who would settle on occasion on the edges of the village. There, at the gypsy camp they could buy spades, shovels, pot-support hardware, axes, adzes, hammers, nails, knives, etc. The implements and tools were simple and cheap, useful nevertheless because, when needed, they were available. Factories or large fabrication shops did not exist – there were only small handiwork shops and even of these very few. Furthermore, these existed perhaps elsewhere but not in our village or towns.

There existed no health organization for the village. There were no doctors or trained people to attend to personal health care. The role of midwife was taken on by older women who had experience in childbirth. There

were no medications available nor were there any possibilities to assist the villagers. If someone fell ill, they would wait for the illness to disappear on its own, hoping that the sickness would clear, but much too often, the illness would not disappear and the sufferer would die. Nevertheless, people did not attempt to escape the illness immediately regardless of the cost. Some would however seek the help of women who would exorcise the illness and would pay them so that they could escape death. They might pay them with money or food. If it happened sometimes that the person so exorcised did escape death, then the faith in the power of exorcism increased. If it happened that the person would die, people would simply say that it had been the will of God.

In addition to the different exorcisms, there were spells and magic charms available for love, for cursing people, or for overturning these spells. This set of beliefs persisted for perhaps one hundred years and over this period superstition and belief in exorcism became deeply rooted in the minds of people who in that era were lacking in schooling and culture. A long and sustained battle was needed to eliminate these superstitions but indeed, some persisted and are believed even today by a fraction of the population. It is with great difficulty that a belief, even one unfounded or mistaken, is removed from the minds of people after it has become deeply rooted in their minds. Certain elements of these beliefs remain to which only a strong culture can respond. Through knowledge and education one can come to a good result, although this requires tact and an extended period of time.

Returning now to the relocation of the villagers from Cozmin to the place where Voloca now stands, we should bring some clarification to the rebuilding of the church that was carried to the new location. That church was built on the ‘church hill’ more to the east of the present one by a distance of about 200 meters. This rebuilt church (made of wood) was used until the end of the 19$^{th}$ century. Before WW I you could recognize the place where it was constructed and there existed still a part of its foundations. At the location of what had been the altar, the villagers built a beautiful stone cross. (They may have even used stone that had originally been part of the foundations for the cross.) To the east of the church, was the first cemetery of the new village site – the area that now is referred to as the ‘old cemetery of the village’.

During the time period that we have been discussing, there was no school in the village. The only person who could read at that time was the priest. Even in the towns, one would not find schools organized by the state to operate in some regular manner. Circumstances did not allow a normal progression for the process of learning. There were not an adequate number of school openings nor were there any teachers or professors especially prepared for this purpose. In addition, no school pedagogy existed. Indeed, even in the more developed countries education was not conducted in the organized manner that we see today.

Whatever books were produced during that period of time, were produced by the monasteries. These were not, however, produced for the villagers but for the priests, for the sons of the “boieri” or rich landowners and for the offices of the landlords. For the rest, they had no access to reading and books. This was true even for some of the sons of the rich landowners.

During these distant and fickle times, the principal concern and occupation was work to gain sufficient food – a secondary goal was to improve life and to gain some riches. We repeat again, the prime objectives were work and the battle for existence. All week the villagers would work hard for themselves as well as the monastery. Sunday, being a holiday, they went to church in the morning and in the afternoon they rested. At the church they would listen to the service and pray. This was the only place where they could hear and learn something. When they would hear the readings from the Apostles and the Scriptures or would hear the sermon, the faithful would hear and know what was written in the religious books. By going to church they would learn the prayers and the behaviors valuable for life. By listening to the sermons, the people came to learn the moral concepts that they needed to follow in their lives. The believers of that period of time were very preoccupied with the Hereafter and were fearful of sinning. All knew that those who committed good deeds would be received in Heaven (after death), while those who committed bad deeds would be thrown into Hell – a place with the Devil and a place where they would suffer most terrible tortures. These certainties set people to thinking and made them reflect on their deeds. For these slowly-evolving people, it appears that their faith had a good outcome.

People in the village would calculate with the use of a "raboj" or tally. This was a type of wooden stick on which they made a specific series of notches. With the aid of these they kept a record of the needs of the household. They could not use written records amongst themselves but the information and obligations would be transmitted orally. An agreement sealed with a drink was one of the highest rank and would always be highly honored.

Legends, songs and ballads were passed down from father to son to be passed on orally or by speakers at weddings, during caroling or at other customary or celebratory times. This 'passing down' was also done for events associated with the calendar or the seasons. People would determine events according to the sun, moon and stars and it should be said that they did very well with this method. The oldest people in the village also had very good memories. They knew when all the holidays were due to be observed and could forecast changes in the weather by various signs without failure. Living in the middle of nature, they developed many senses of observation to be able to tune themselves very precisely with the changing weather.

They practiced a custom whereby the older people would visit during the holiday periods, especially during the winter, at the houses of neighbors and would there discuss the needs of the household. During these visits the older people, who were more knowledgeable, would tell them a tale or two from their experience about certain events and about deeds done in the country or effects of edicts by the landlords. They would also predict what kind of weather or developments were likely to come. How they were able to predict what was to come after their time remains a mystery since it is well known that they lived very isolated in the world and without the wonders of communication that would be discovered much later. This is true even though you could not find a single one among them who could read even a bit. Truly, they could not read, but there were many people who produced many gems of wisdom. Almost all of the things predicted by them have turned out to be true. Their descendants, nephews and grandnephews were able to see these predictions come true.

There passed a century before the time came for the villages to have schools that could allow knowledge to be spread by books. However, knowledge has brought not only an opening of the world and progress, but also atomic and hydrogen bombs which bring a terrible disaster for mankind.

To frame these stories of the village of Voloca in the history of Moldova and Bucovina, we must respond to the question as to how old this village is and since when it has been known by this name. We note that the name is mentioned during the time of Petru Schiopu and hence it appears that this settlement existed by the end of the 16th century and perhaps even somewhat earlier. Petru Schiopu slept overnight in Moldova
On three occasions between the years 1574 and 1591 and at that time this village existed and was known. Based on these facts, it would appear that the village of Voloca was founded about two centuries after the colonization of Moldova in 1359 by Bogdan I and some two centuries and a bit before the rape of Bucovina (**TN**: – by the Austrians in 1775). Thus, the date of the founding of the village can be placed as about 1570 and in this way we can calculate its age.

The lives of the villagers of Voloca were similar to those of other inhabitants of Moldova whether they lived during periods of peace or periods of war.

Having established the approximate date of the founding of Voloca at its new location, it is necessary to determine the period of time that the first inhabitants spent in Cozmin. Lacking a precise dateline, we will bracket that time to begin after the colonization of Bogdan I or perhaps somewhat later, and extending to the desertion of that location and the founding of Voloca at its new site.

According to the estimates of the historians, the population within middle Moldova, and especially in the south, was very small. Sometimes in that area the population completely disappeared because of the ravages of wars and invaders who drove all the people elsewhere. This unpopulated region was occupied by people from Maramures of Romanized Dacii origins who were brought here by Dragos and Bogdan. From the admixture, which followed from the intermarrying of the Romanized Dacii (later Moldavians) with the Romanized Dacii from Maramures, was formed the new population of Moldova. From this very population came also the residents of Cozmin, the first villagers of what was later Voloca. The battle that occurred in 1497 in the Cozmin Forest between the Moldavians led by Stefan the Great (also a Saint) and the Poles led by King Albert took place with the participation of men from Cozmin – men who were to be the ancestors of Voloca. This battle, which occurred between the two armed forces, occurred on the Feast of St. Dumitru, 26 October 1497.

In this discussion we have covered the past. The villagers of Voloca had to endure many sufferings and difficulties. They had to fight off many enemies and experience many shortages and hardships. Some of these people have been mentioned previously during the course of these stories. We need to mention that these people had also to survive, on many occasions, famine, invasions of locusts, years of drought, changes of overlords, cholera, earthquakes and floods. They also experienced solar eclipses and other celestial signs and all of these occurred while they were in the midst of wars and attacks by enemies or barbaric invasions – in the very midst

of events that left great destruction, devastation and immense human losses whether they be in deaths or those taken in captivity.

Because these people did not know better, they were tormented and made fearful by many superstitions. They feared the darkening of the sun, the Devil in their future existence and they feared being sent to Hell. There were some people who claimed to have seen the Devil and to have had a terrible experience. Belief in evil spirits was deeply rooted into people and many tales involving the Devil were spread among the population. They created great fears among the children who enhanced and spread the tales further with fantasies of devils, ghosts, phantoms, spirits, zombies, etc. Even though the stories involved devils and solar eclipses had few harmful consequences, the results of famine, cholera, floods and other natural phenomena had very grave consequences.

We will discuss these events and phenomena more completely in another chapter.

## 1.5
# Struggles and endless invasions, difficulties and suffering without an end in sight

(**TN**:- The name, or title, "Voda" is used often in this chapter – it denotes something equivalent to "Governor" or "Ruler" – It has been left here un-translated to retain the flavor of the story and subtle variations in meaning that are still unclear to the translator.)

Numerous events and occurrences in the distant past were recorded by "chroniclers". Many of these, as well as others, were remembered by the elders and have been transmitted via the oral tradition from father to son, from generation to generation. This is how those, who could not read, were able to know about events in the past. Remembering well, they would relate when, in the period of Stefan the Great (also a Saint), there was a great earthquake in the area. It occurred at noon, when the Ruler was seated at the table. According to the chronicler, Grigori Ureche, who recorded the event, the earthquake occurred on 29 August 1491.

In 1517, when Stefan Voda, son of Bogdan III-the Blind One, ruled this region, a great sign appeared in the sky towards the north. It was in the form of a person and it was visible for a long time before it disappeared into thin air. Shortly after the appearance of this sign, actually, within one month, a great earthquake occurred on a Monday. This event was also recorded by Grigori Ureche. There are many oral tales about this event as well.

Similarly, in 1539, during the rule of Stefan Voda Lacusta, there was a great famine in the land of Moldova and in Hungary because of the plague of locusts that appeared and devoured all the crops. After this invasion, Stefan Voda was remembered in stories as Stefan Voda Lacusta.

In 1558, when the ruler was Alexandru Lapusneanu, there was a very bad winter and many people died. "It was such a bad winter and it was so cold that many farm animals as well as beasts in the forest froze" (Grigori Ureche). Also in that year (1558), Alexandru Lapusneanu, wishing to enter into the favor of the Turks, promised the Sultan that he would dismantle all of the fortifications within Moldova. The Sultan had decided to weaken the country to its foundations so that it could not defend itself. He proclaimed that whoever succeeded in dismantling the fortifications of Moldova would be appointed governor over it. Alexandru Lapusneanu, hearing this proclamation, filled all the fortresses with timber and set fire to them, thereby destroying them. He left only Hotin as a shelter free from this carnage.

In 1577, during the reign of Peter Schiopu, a star with a tail, that was also called a comet, appeared in the sky. This was a sign forewarning that something terrible was about to occur – it might be a war, a famine, a terrible plague or something else.

In 1585, still during the rule of Peter Schiopu, a great drought occurred throughout the country of Moldova. During it, all of the rivers, streams and lakes went dry. Where one might earlier fish, one could now plough, and in almost all places the gardens failed. The trees were dying in the drought and the animals, which normally grazed, were being fed leaves, if any could be found. There was so much dust around that when the wind blew, it would leave drifts of powdered dust along the fences and graves that resembled snow drifts in the winter. When the fall came, the rains finally came but they continued unending and the famine of the poor continued and widened over the land (Grigori Ureche).

On a Friday during the Great Lent before Easter in 1648, there occurred an extremely-frightening darkening during which the sun could not be seen. This was during the rule of Vasilie Lupu. Also in 1648, the locusts invaded. They approached in the shape of a sickle from the south. One would see a cloud in the sky – a cloud more like a mist. People first thought that it might be a terrible rainstorm. Immediately the sky began to darken from the density of the locusts. Those that flew the highest were at a height of 5-6 m above the ground. A second layer flew at about the height of a person and the lowest layer flew just above the ground. They would fly next to people without any fear of sounds or anything. They would move forward along the ground in two layers with the highest ones about 5 m above the ground and were always in a dense and continuous mass. One wave would pass through for about an hour and then, half an hour later, a second wave would start. And so it continued, wave after wave of locusts, throughout the day and into the night. When they would fall to the ground to feed, they would swarm like bees – layer would fall over layer. Wave after wave would pass by and they would fall until they lost the heat of the sun and then they would settle until the time came to move again. Many would fall and die, and where they did so the ground became black and rotten. No leaves, straw, grass or traces of crops remained. This invasion continued for several days and they continued to fly by, both high and low. The year after that, they returned, but in reduced numbers.

The Tartars made a great invasion and destructive raid in 1650 during the rule of Vasilie Lupu.
"The Tartars invaded the countryside, plundering, killing, and setting fire to mansions and houses. They also captured many as slaves. At that time the famous landowner, Murguret, was murdered at Chernauti and Iasi, the capital of Moldova at that time, was burned. The Tartar hordes, led by their Khan arrived together with the Cossacks led by Hmilnitchi, the son-in-law of Vasilie Lupu. During that invasion, the Tartars crushed all of southern Moldova and some of the regions of central Moldova (Hotinul, Dorohoi, Soroca, Chernauti, Balti, Suceava, Iasi, Orhei, Lapusna, Falciu, and all the way to the Tigheciuli Forest.) Arriving without warning, the Tartar and Cossack hordes caught everyone in their homes with all their herds and breeding stock of which there were numerous ones at that time throughout the country. These, the raiders took without number and, in addition, they raided many of the estates of the rich landlords. Villages and towns were all pillaged and burned by these Tartar invaders. At that time they burned to the ground the town of Iasi, leaving only the odd house standing. All the splendid structures and estates throughout the town were reduced to ashes in mere hours. After the departure of the Tartars, the countryside remained desolate and in many areas, uninhabited." (**TN:** – Source of quotation is not given.)

Around 1653, a scoundrel by the name of Ditinca began to gain notoriety. This man, openly and without shame, traveled around the Hotinul and Chernauti districts preying on people and ordering them about. Stefan Voda (Gheorgi Stefan) sent Bucioc Stolnicul to the region with a troop of armed servants. This group was able to defeat and rout the followers of Ditinca.

In the month of June, in 1656, the sun was darkened just at noon causing great fears. Many people, not aware of the dangers and worrying about the event, watched the eclipse for an extended period. Many lost their eyesight for the rest of their lives. This event occurred during the rule of Gheorgi Stefan Voda.

During the time of Stefanita Lupu, son of Vasilie Lupu, around 1659-1660, there was a great famine and the population was reduced to eating dried and crushed "papura" (rushes) to survive. Because of this famine, Stefanita Lupu is also referred to in history as Papura Voda.

During the rule of Dumitru Cantacuzino, which was over the period from 1674-1675, there was a great disaster with much grief and harm to the countryside. The ruler, originally from Greece, was appointed after having served a post in Constantinople. Sitting in his residence in Iasi and fearing that invaders would attack, he sent a message to the Tartars inviting them to overwinter in the countryside, thereby hoping to placate them. Since Dumitru Voda Cantacuzino was a very fearful and timid person, who also had little sympathy for the local population, he allowed the Tartars to spend the winter in Moldova.

The Tartars arrived in the countryside like a pack of wolves into a flock of sheep and settled down to winter-over throughout the villages. They placed a huge burden on the villagers and had no mercy on the poor population which were, in effect, with no protection or with no help available from a ruler or governor. Thus was the lot of the poor people in the face of these grave circumstances. The Tartars were as preying wolves – they preyed on, robbed, beat and harassed the Christian population. They did not eat what the residents of the households would eat, but instead insisted on beef or lamb. No one could satisfy them or their horses. They would feed their horses a bag of grain each day – in fact, more than they could consume. The horses would leave and scatter much of their grain about. If the young village men attempted to scavenge the grain thrown on the ground, the Tartars would often make them pay for all the grain they had salvaged in their containers. They consumed all the food and animals and took everything down to the last threads of string. In addition, they took many as captives – women, girls and children. The poor population remained only with their lives – badly impoverished, beaten, and devastated. The most discouraging and bitter fact to accept was that they had no one to petition or inform of the ordeals and murders that happened in Moldova at the hands of the Tartars. Only in the spring did the Tartars finally leave their territory.

In 1674, during the rule of Dumitru Cantacuzino a terrible plague hit the entire area. It lasted from June to January of the following year. There were so many deaths that they could not be buried individually but were instead tossed into mass graves. Not long after that, Dumitru Voda was deposed and taken to "Czarigrad" – Istanbul.

Meanwhile the Germans (Neamti), who had occupied and been left alone near the fortifications at Neamtu and Suceava, were scavenging in the vicinities of the fortifications because of food shortages. The Moldovans, therefore, stood with both their fronts and backs towards the fortifications and would often have attacks from both directions. After a time, the Germans at Neamtu, having no food, left the fortress there and traveled to Suceava to join their compatriots there. They remained there at Suceava and could not be removed, retaining control for almost two years.

The impoverished population was reaching dire straits, being threatened from the south by the Turks and Tartars, and from the north by the "svezi" (Swedes). They pleaded for help from all Christians in Europe and from the Papacy in Rome. The Visier (Ruler in Constantinople) agreed that it was finally the time for peace for his poor subjects- albeit after they had suffered great losses and ruin. He placed certain conditions on this peace, however. One of these concerned the removal of the Germans from Suceava, where they had remained. For the Germans to leave the fortifications in Moldova, Dumitru Voda was told that he would have to destroy all fortifications and citadels so that an army could not use them in the future. It must be admitted, however, that this decree was more the result of scheming and the agreements of Dumitru Voda than the will of the Ruler in Constantinople.

Panaiotache Usere was sent along with a Turkish Aga (Military Officer), other rich landlords and numerous men to destroy the citadels. They damaged the tombs that they found in the various places and took the rich and expensive items they found for their private enrichment. At that time, they destroyed the citadels at Suceava, Neamtu and Hotinul.

The Moldovans had many terrible battles with various nationalities and with the barbarian hordes. They suffered and endured many attacks from many directions but the worst, the cruelest and most savage were those by the Tartars. Many villages in Moldova were so plundered and depopulated by the Tartar invasions that they had to be repopulated by villagers brought from other parts and other defeated areas. Some that had been cast out of other regions also settled here.

The life of Moldovans, especially those who lived in the eastern part of the country or those who bordered the Tartats, was extremely difficult and bitter since the Tartars ruined everything they found; they murdered, they burned, they took as hostages children and young people who they sold as slaves in Istanbul. The Tartars were so terrible that the entire world had a deadly fear of them. The chronicler, Neculce, wrote that from Iasu to Camenita the entire area remained devoid of people since the overwintering of the Tartars in the days of Dumitru Voda Cantacuzino (1675).

In the year 1683, when the ruler in Moldova was Duca Voda, an army was formed and began to march against the Germans as ordered by the Visier in Constantinople. He had summoned also the Cossacks from the Ukraine to help and they came with Hanul and the Tartars. The Tartars, passing once more through the land and set

loose again in the villages, created much havoc with the estates of the rich as well as with the commoners and much was destroyed in their path. (The dates in this chapter are those recorded by the chroniclers Ureche and Neculce.)

On the road to Beciu (Vienna), the Tartars met Serban Voda who was also traveling towards the Germans with his army from Muntenia. The Visier at that time was Cara Mustafa Pasa. The siege lasted from 05 July to 02 September in 1683. The fortification was finally rescued by King Ioan Sobietchi and the Turks had to return home without a victory. Hearing the news of King Sobietchi and the Germans and the news that he had reached Vienna before the Turks and had rescued the fortress, the Tartars now turned on the Turks and began to kill and capture them in the Podolia region. Those Turks who could escape and hide in the fortification at Camenita survived, but of the remaining Turks, many were killed while others scattered every which way. Of those who had fled, many became bandits throughout northern Moldova and especially in the area near Chernauti. Because of these bandits people began to head for the mountains for shelter. Both the rich landlords and the poorer land owners had great fears of them. The bandits invaded the towns, and in particular, the villages, raiding and killing people without mercy. They traveled in armed groups that raided and murdered many.

The land of Moldova was invaded, devastated, destroyed many times by the Tartars even before the time of Stefan the Great (also a Saint). For example:

- Towards the end of 1439 and the start of 1440, they burned the towns of Vaslu and Barlad.
- They also attacked and invaded Moldova during the time of Stefan the Great (also a Saint) over the years 1469-1470 and again in 1476.
- In the spring of 1510, the Tartars attacked Moldova anew, raiding and burning. During this incursion Iasi was burned.
- During the summer of 1513, they again attacked Moldova – these attacks happened during the rule of Bogdan, the Blind One.
- The Tartars also attacked Moldava in 1518, during the rule of Stefanita Voda, the successor of Bogdan, the Blind One.
- Similarly, in 1538, during the rule of Petru Rarea, the Tartars attacked Moldova in alliance with the Turks and the Poles.
- In June 1574, after the defeat of Ioan Voda at Roscani, the Tartars attacked Moldova once again.
- In January 1717, the Tartars, requested to help by Mahai Racovita, invaded Moldova taking no notice of the reason for which they had been summoned.
- In 1758, The Tartars from Buceag attacked and devastated a large part of Moldova. This was the last incursion of the Tartars in Moldova.

If we put into our deliberations also the other attacks and invasions of the Tartars in 1650, 1675 and 1683, we can conclude that these hordes trod very many times on our country. They committed many robberies, many murders, many invasions and laid waste to much territory in Moldova. It is clear also that many of the

depopulating attacks were against Northern Moldova, in particular, the region around Chernauti – the very area that includes Voloca.

During this epoch of ferment, Moldova was attacked several times from the east also by the Cossacks. They too made many damaging invasions of the country. Furthermore, the Cossacks forced themselves into the internal affairs of Moldova and interfered in the processes of selecting the rulers of the country.

It must be admitted that the rivalry between the different pretenders to the throne in Moldova facilitated the incursions of the Cossacks into our land. They did this so that they could interfere into our affairs. The appeals to the Cossacks for help by a given pretender to the throne invariably resulted in a high price to be paid; they did not normally leave from the country as a group, but in ones and twos and at their own pace. They would perform not only what had been requested, but would also help themselves to whatever they wanted. In this way there were great losses and damages to the country, and since they took many slaves, the northern part of Moldova became almost desolate. The invasions and attacks by the Tartars and Cossacks as well as their interference into the determination of the governors resulted in the ruin and impoverishment of the country. Their oppression had exactly those effects. In addition, over all the population there was the constant fear of uncertainty.

From all the things that have been discussed above, it is immediately obvious that the life of a Moldovan was unspeakably difficult and bitter. On top of all this was the uncertainty of the future. During this turmoil, the country could not progress – the people could not establish prosperous households, nor a life with some hope of rest and contentment. The settlements in the towns and villages could not become stable and well built. Moldova was always in a temporary state – it carried on simply on a day-to-day basis.

Faced with the hordes from the east and fighting heavily with them, we could not progress. Nevertheless, with the shelter accorded by our Lord, Moldova did build large towns, strong citadels, wondrous cathedrals, and beautiful palaces.

Even on its northern boundary, Moldova did not have an easy time. From that direction often the Poles made raids, incursions, and invasions. They also interfered into Moldavian affairs, influencing the choice of governors despite the fact that Moldova had come to their assistance on numerous occasions. They attacked our poor people many times and always had plans to invade and conquer our country.

The most important of the many battles with the Poles was the one at the Cozmin Forest in 1497, during the rule of Stefan the Great (also a Saint), that ended with the defeat of the Polish forces. Chroniclers of Moldova write "they (the Poles) were so seized by fear after their experience in the Cozmin Forest that even 100 years after the event, they feared passing through that area just in case the local population discovered their passage and would turn the forest against them, shaming them worse than King Albert. They would return to their homes by a different route." (**TN:** No reference given for quotation.)

With this victory, our leader, Stefan the Great, gained his revenge for the events at Colomeia and for the underhanded cunning of King Albert who, at the beginning, claimed to be coming to liberate Chilia and the Alba citadel, but instead, turned into an aggressor.

The Moldovans had fewer wars with the Ungars (Hungarians), their nearest neighbors. One of the more-significant armed conflicts between the Moldovans and the Hungarians took place at Baia in 1467 between the forces of Stefan the Great and those of Matei Corvin. This was the last occasion on which the Hungarians tried to claim sovereignty over Moldova with an armed force.

Later, Stefan made peace with Matei Corvin and the countries lived in peace. After the deaths of these two leaders, the Hungarians did again attack Moldova. They concentrated their efforts, however, on the political affairs of Ardeal. They had some conflicts with Austria and later, serious wars with the Turks. While the Romanians in Moldova did not suffer directly from the Hungarians, those in Ardeal had a great deal of suffering and war because of them.

To the south, the kingdom of Romania faced a very strong neighbor. These were the Turks who began to appear in Europe in 1354, led by Orchan I (1326-1359), when they overran the Byzantine fortress at Gallipoli. After that date, they began to conquer other sections of the Byzantine Empire, finally achieving victory in Constantinople in 1453. From that day on, the Byzantine Empire ceased to exist.

The first battle with the Turks was during the rule of Vlaicu Voda near the end of 1369. It took place between his forces from Muntenia and the Turks. The Turks were defeated and driven back across the Danube. This was the first incursion of the Turks into the Romanian nation. Another leader of Muntenia, Mircea cel Batran (Mircea, the Old One) had numerous serious encounters with the Turks and on many occasions, scored prestigious victories over them. Romania, being a neighbor of the Turks, was to experience many attacks and incursions from the Turks and even Moldova was not spared.

The battles that the masters of Moldova had to carry out with the Turks were numerous, extremely difficult, and required huge and long periods of sacrifice. They were as follows:

- The first attacks of the Turks on Moldova occurred in 1420 during the period of Alexandru cel Bun (Alexandru the Good One), when the Turkish forces attacked the citadel at Alba
- They invaded again into Moldova in 1429 and again in 1454.
- In 1475, the Turks once more invaded Moldova. That battle occurred at Vaslu and Stefan the Great scored a brilliant victory over the Turks there.
- Another extremely-intense battle between the forces of Stefan and the Turks occurred during the time of Sultan Mohamed II at the Alba Valley, near Razboeni, in 1476. On this occasion, the Moldovians were defeated.
- In 1484, Sultan Baizaid II attacked Moldova and occupied Chilia and the Alba citadel.

- In 1485, the Turks attacked Moldova anew, causes huge losses and devastation in the countryside.
- Another attack occurred in 1486. After this latter attack, Stefan decided that he must sue for peace with the Turks and had to pay a ransom of 3000 Venetian Florins.
- In 1538, the Turks attacked Moldova and entered Suceava. This was during the rule of Peter Rares.
- In 1574, the Turks attacked Moldova during the time of Ioan Voda cel Viteaz (Ioan the Brave).
- In 1616, during the time of Alexandru Movila, the Turks once more attacked Moldova. On this occasion, they took the master captive.
- There were additional attacks in 1620 and 1711, both of which had extreme consequences for the countryside.

The consequences resulting from the incursions by the Ottomans into Moldova unfortunately continued to grow and along with this growth came an increase in the size of taxation or ransom payments. It reached a total of 65000 Ducats in 1593. This placed an extremely heavy burden on the country.

All of this was followed by the Phanariot period with foreign governors, who favored the Turks so that they could ensure domination. (**TN:** The Phanariots, were a Greek-origin group who, while living in Constantinople, had a great influence on the Ottoman Empire governance.)

Situated on Moldovian territory, the poor residents were caught in battles between the Turks and Austrians (1716-1718) and between the Turks and the Russians in 1770, 1778 and 1806. Furthermore over this period, Bucovina was torn from its home as part of Moldova by the Austrians in 1775 and later, in 1812, all of Moldova was sacrificed. This occurred with the signing of a peace pact between the Russians and the Turks – Basarabia, that part of Moldova between the Prut and Nistru Rivers, was ceded to the Russians.

Thus it was during this epoch – the Turks, Russians and Austrians all battled each other but the Moldovians paid the price.

## 1.6
# Where does the village name "Voloca" come from?

Many villagers have wanted to know from where the name Voloca comes for our village – that is to say, from what expression did it originate or what can the word signify. Others have wanted to know who chose this name and why this particular name and not any other. I will attempt, in the following discussion, to answer each of these questions one by one. This question, which I felt was a very interesting one, has taken me a long time to investigate and untangle. For this, I have also had to resort to history for help.

When our distant ancestors found that they had to leave Cozmin, where in ancient times the village square was located, and moved to the place where the village now sits, this place was not known as Voloca. It was an uninhabited area and, for the most part, was covered with forest. It also had meadows, and clearings. Some of the hills and valleys in the immediate region had names and some of those names have been retained to this very day. Examples are: Lisna, Borodaci, Poieni, Pohriciuc, Buda, Berezva and others. These names, some originally Slavic, remained from the times of the very first of our ancestors, who first gathered here with the Slavs. The Slavs, in their expansion to the south (towards Bulgaria and Serbia), remained for a period in our region.

The Slavs remained in our region for several hundred years during the 6$^{th}$ to 9$^{th}$ centuries (about 300 years) and later they migrated towards the south, beyond the Danube. It must not be forgotten that part of their ways were left with us and became intermixed with the ways of our ancestors. This is how we can explain why we have in our language expressions of Slavic origin as well as places and bodies of water with Slavic names. For example: Bogdan, Dobre, cazanie (sermon), precistanie (certainty?), culiser (the stick for stirring "mamaliga"), pranic(?), zamnic (?), masleanca (?), vecernie (vespers), vornic (high steward), pravila (?), staroste (?), Bistrita, Cerna and Crasna. The admixing with Slavic neighbors also occurred later in history, even after the formation of the state of Moldova. Some Slavs moved and settled in the north of Moldova, others were brought here. Yet another group was transplanted here when Bucovina and Galacia were temporarily united, while they were both provinces of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

The population of Slavic origin who moved here voluntarily or forcefully from other parts consisted mainly of Ukrainians and Poles. From this contact between the aboriginals and Slavs flowed a number of different results for us – results which will be described further during the course of our story.

Sometimes we do not pause long enough to recognize, in what interests us, the factors and influences that the Slavs played in the naming of our country and, indeed, in the naming of our village.

Our country is bordered to the north, east and south by people of Slavic origin and names – Poles, Russians, Bulgarians and Serbs. These neighbors called the inhabitants of our region "Volohi". Our neighbors to the north called our country "Volska zmelea", meaning the country of the "Volohi". This fact is reported by our esteemed chronologist Miron Costin in his book "De neanul Moldovenilor" (About the Nation of Moldova). In addition, the Slavs to the east called the Romanized Dacii by the name "Volohi". In the illustrated history of the Slavs, the territory occupied by the Romanians is labeled "Volohia". Similarly, Dumitru Cantemir, a respected scholar, and a one-time ruler of Moldova, confirms in his Hronicul (Chronicle) that Romanians were called "Volohi". A historian of our era, C.C. Giurescu also agrees with this story.

In many books, our country is named "Valahia" and the inhabitants are called "Valahi". In German-language books, the area is denoted as "Walachei". Later in time, this name remained for part of the south of the country – Muntenia – which bore the name "Valahia".

Villages established before Voloca or in the near vicinity often have a large Ukrainian or Ukrainianized population – that is one where the population is quite mixed. These neighbors of Slavic origin also would call our ancestors who lived in this village "Volohi" and the village was called "Voloha" or sometimes "Oloca". The letter "h" was transformed and replaced in time with "k", making the word easier to pronounce and the name then evolved to Voloca.

Thus the name, Voloha, or Voloca of later times, was named by the neighbors as the place or location of the "Volohi" – that is, the village where the "Volohi" lived.

I have heard the villagers of Cucurul refer to the residents of Voloca also as "Oliceni". It is interesting to note that in the first decades of the 20$^{th}$ century, if a resident of Voloca spoke to someone from Cucurul or to a Ukrainian, in Romanian, and if that person did not understand Romanian he would respond (in Ukrainian) "ia ne zniau po Volotski" which translates in Romanian "eu nu stiu voloceste" (I do not know the language of Voloca). Note that he would not say he did not know Romanian but instead he did not know Volocan. This fact is sufficient to conclude in favor of the argument we have been putting forth.

Before our ancestors came to the place where our town now sits, the location was uninhabited and did not carry its present name. After it was populated, the neighbors called it Voloca to denote the place where the "Volohi" lived, that is to say, the Romanians. Volocans were thus "baptized" by their neighbors both in their name as well as the name of the village since from that time it was called Voloca – a village settled by Romanians or a Romanian place. The Volohi were of Dacii-Roman origins or, it can be said, Romanians were, in other words, Moldovians, which signified the name for the entire region. The Volocans were Moldovians, who were established in the upper regions of the country. During that period, the country of Moldova had as its seat of power, Suceava.

While it might be suggested that the village name may have a connection with the expression “voloc”, an instrument for fishing, we need have no doubts. (**TN**:- “voloc” was not found in any dictionarary). It is a well-recognized fact that the village was not established by a fishing population since there existed no body of water around it in which one could fish nor were there any people here who fished- we cannot establish any ties whatsoever to this word.

Through the middle of the village, on the north side, flows a little stream. It flows towards the south and it called the Olicica. One might say, in analogy with the village name, that it might be called the Volocuta. This is because, as we said earlier, the village was sometimes called Oloca by neighbors (with the residents called Oliceni) – otherwise said, the Olicica flowed through Oloca. (**TN:** -A play on the word endings for a diminutive - it translates poorly, if at all).

I have heard the residents of Cucurul, neighbors of the village of Voloca, call our villagers Olicei and believe there are still many older people who remember this well from the times there may have been mild confrontations on the village common.

As I indicated earlier, Voloha evolved to Voloca over time with the replacement of the letter “h” by the letter “k”. Owing to the fact that Bucovina was raped by the Austrians in 1775, during the entire period of their occupation – almost a century and a half – the village had a designation of Woloka. Once they had started this, the Austrians wrote this spelling into their decrees including the period after WW I. After the administration of the country finally reverted to Romanians, the name of the village became written with a “c” according to the Romanian pronunciation rules – hence we now have Voloca.

## 1.7
# Voloca before and after 1775

The first inhabitants of the village of Voloca were of Dacii descent. They were descended from the free Dacii called Costoboci. The Costoboci were "Romanized" somewhat later through normal contact with the other Dacii, located further south, who had lived under the domination of the Romans. During the first millennium, when the process of forming the various Romanian peoples occurred, the times were turbulent, insecure and full of wars and raids. This did not allow our forefathers to have peaceful lives with fixed and stable territories – instead they were constantly harassed and in danger. For these reasons they spent most of their lives in the forests and mountains in order to survive.

As time progressed and became less stressful, our Volocan ancestors settled themselves in the region of the Cozmin hills in a beautiful flat area and on the banks of a river later to be named the Derelui. This was not far from a major route that runs from Suceava and continues further towards Chernauti and later towards Lvov in Poland. They were settled here in the Cozmin region when the era of Stefan the Great (also a Saint) came about. We see now in present day Voloca many inhabitants whose ancestors fought in the ranks of the army of Stefan especially in the wars against the Turks and particularly in the Battle of the Cozmin Forest of 26 October 1497. Later the villagers moved the village centre further from the great route because they often had problems with evildoers and attacks. They moved more to the south and higher into the woods, where it was easier to defend, and away from the conflicts that cost them many losses, raids, kidnappings, and deaths or wounded people. Here they laid the cornerstone of a new settlement which they named Voloca - a name that the village carries to this very day.

In time, the village of Voloca as well as the rest of Bucovina formed part of the country of Moldovia at least until the year 1775. Here the lives of the inhabitants continued in the manner that was customary throughout the region of Moldovia. This was their language, these were their customs, their religious beliefs, their clothing and ways of life.

The villagers had households, some with larger and some with smaller areas on which they would work, although some did not. The majority of the available land was owned by large landowners to whom the peasants were obliged to give many days of statutory labor. They were indebted to these large landlords called "bioeri". From these obligations followed much hardship and injustice. They were required to work many days for the bioeri without pay yet when they were granted something it was completely out of line with the work provided. The lives of the peasants were very difficult during the period of the bioeri. All of them aspired for a better life, for justice, for freedom but this did not appear to be happening nor could they see an end in sight.

There passed many years filled with great suffering before their dreams of better lives were revived. Some bioeri had a sense of honour and justice but most of them were bad, greedy and hard-hearted. Although they

suffered torments and deprivation throughout their lives, the villagers keep their beliefs and customs over these times and carried on in the customs of their parents and ancestors.

Looking back, it is a certain fact that the ancestors of the present generation were Romanians before the year 1775. They were residents of the upper part of Moldovia and rarely interacted with those of the central region or those of the far south. In times of peace they tilled the land, raised cattle, took good care of their small holdings and raised their families. They lived a simple modest life not completely devoid of happiness. They attended weddings, baptisms, village dances, building bees and festivals where the elders and the more talented told fables and recalled the history of lives in the distant past. Others, more gifted, sang the "doina" and played the "caval" (a long pipe), the fluire (shorter flute), the "telinca" (whistle similar to a recorder), the "cimpoi" (Romanian bagpipe) or other instruments. There were also among them some who could play beautiful music using a leaf from a tree. All of them were at one with the land which provided them with their daily food and with the forests which provided them with material for homes and some foraging in times of difficulty. However, the relaxed life would not last long in these times of uncertainty and difficult events.

Too often they had the hardships of the calls to defend the country and the men were required to arm. They were summoned by the call of the horn and the alpenhorn to assemble and meet the challenge of invaders. In the resulting conflicts with the invading enemy many fell wounded, falling to the earth from which they would not arise. If nevertheless they were overwhelmed by the size of the invading force then they sought refuge in the woods and in the mountains. When it happened that they had to retreat, the dangers and losses were very great. The youngest boys were left behind and sought to collect the cattle as best they could. Sometimes, however, overtaken by the events, they were unable to salvage anything. For these reasons we must understand that the households in this period were largely in poor condition, worked on in haste and not strengthened and well established. The bioeri on the other hand had more settled estates but even these were not free of raiding when the enemy invaded. Nevertheless, for the bioeri life was somewhat easier. They normally had larger and more fertile land, more cattle, and stronger and more established houses. The lands of the bioeri were, however, worked by workers who were generally obligated to do so.

Commerce was not fully developed in this time period. People exchanged produce between themselves, trading goods for goods. They produced what was essential for life – a life that was very simple. Almost everything that was needed to satisfy their personal needs they produced by themselves, including their living quarters, food and clothing.

If life was then simple and hard overall, we must remember that beyond the borders of the country it was poorer and more difficult. This was the life of our ancestors in Voloca.

The village in which our ancestors lived was situated on the north-eastern edge of the country. This area was often attacked and devastated by its enemies. Because of this, their period saw more bad times than good. They

were often to take the brunt of different enemy attacks and were never able to enjoy life but led a harsh and bitter existence.

Many of our ancestors served as archers in the service of Stefan Voda in battles which they had to carry out against the enemy. The Battle of the Cozmin Forest, which took place near the edge of our village, ended with the defeat of King Albert by the army of our ruler. The invader who came with grand ideas of conquering the country paid instead a heavy price. For this historic battle of 26 October 1497, the Volocans were naturally not found wanting since they were closely involved, being inhabitants of the immediate locale. To provide stability in every manner against invading armies, our protectors constructed at the above named place a fortified castle which they used as a springboard for protecting the inhabitants. Thus in Moldovia came about the castles of Horodista and Tetina. The former was constructed towards the south-east border of our village, while the latter was built near the town of Chernauti. Our countrymen know that high on the Horodista Hill a castle existed in the olden times. This castle had a puzzling connection with that at Tetina since its existence was not known to anyone other than the locals. The castles also served as points of observation, being constructed on the highest points around. In times of trouble, soldiers would seek shelter in these fortifications and would offer sufficient resistance to the invaders who would then lose time harassing them and the fortifications. In this way the authorities gained precious time that allowed them to assemble and organize an army and to choose a battle location more to their liking.

The elders of Voloca remembered that on the hill of Horodista a castle once existed. If someone plowed a bit deeper at that location, the plough would bring up bricks and rocks. These facts confirm the existence of the castle about which we have written above. The outlines of the fortifications at Horodista can still be seen today. It was constructed of stone and brick.

Lower down from the hill, in the woods, exists even today a well not far from the location of the fortifications. This well was known as the well of Sobietchi, who had been a King of Poland but who did not conquer the country with his army. It is claimed that near the well there were found some large slabs of rock with inscriptions on them. Some of the elders claim that on one of these slabs was mounted a sword of Sobietchi. Others claim that the sword was thrust into a tree.

According to legends, it is said that a Polish king was drowned with his armor at Bahna, which at that time was a marshy field or a salt marsh. This event would have happened after a battle which they would have lost near the fortifications at Horodista. It is not known for certain that this fortification near the Cozmin Forest is where Stefan had a battle with the Poles in 1497.

When Bucovina was raided by the Austrians in 1775, the pain was unspeakably great. Brothers were separated and in addition the governor Al.Gr.Ghica, who protested on behalf of the suffering peoples of Moldovia, was decapitated. In addition to these shameful acts by a large power on a much smaller country, a northern section of Moldovia was occupied and annexed by the enemy. After this date of horrible memory (taking place in 1775)

many things were to change in Bucovina, which was the new name given to the province by the Hapsburg emperor who took over the region and its beautiful beech forests.

There were new borders established and the Romanian laws were replaced by Austrian ones. They appointed new functionaries who administered the new province and all systems were organized after the Austrian administration pattern. The official language of the state was decreed to be German - they altered and organized the schools such that, in addition to Romanian being taught, one was also obliged to learn subjects in German.

These many changes, foreign to the lives of the Romanians, caused great hardships. All over the territory they brought much pain, difficulty and many tears. Volocans, being part of the territory, suffered the same results, seeing themselves torn from their precious Moldovia. Being Romanians, followers and archers of St. Stefan the Great, they wept with grief to see themselves ripped from the heart of their mother, Moldovia. They were left at least with a small morsel of consolation in that the bones of St. Stefan Voda the Great, who had been the ruler of their ancestors, still rested with them at Putna. The gravesite of Stefan itself fell prey to the Austrians with that part of the country over which he had ruled for a long time after his extended life as a good and just ruler. A good sign remained that, even in this dark time, separated countrymen envisioned and awaited the reunion of the lands of Bucovina with that of Moldovia. They believed that there would come a miracle and a better time when brother countrymen would all be together again and no borders would exist between them.

There passed years and years and generation after generation who still did not lose the fervent hope of a reunification but it never came about. Many Romanians in Bucovina closed their eyes for the final time without seeing their dreams fulfilled but the seed of hope was never lost. Almost a century and a half passed and the Bukovian Romanians kept in their hearts this hope, this ideal – reunion with their mother country Moldovia. At the time that Bucovina was occupied, new masters were appointed to manage the affairs of the province. They were assisted by foreign officials, brought in from neighboring countries, who understood German. The Austrians installed soldiers in the towns and police officers in the villages. Romanians began to lose their language, their customs, their habits, and their religion and even at school they were required to learn in German.

Bukovinian Romanians could find no way to avoid learning the language because without the approval of the Austrians no one could occupy a position in the civic administration regardless of how minor it might be. Later one needed to know the language even in the army. Thus after a period of time the German language was introduced in all aspects of schools, in the civic administration and finally throughout the army. Slowly and gradually the foreign procedures of the invaders became entrenched throughout the territory of Bucovina.

Most exposed to this process were the populations of the towns as well as the families of the rich boieri who were attracted or sweetened with the prospects of a new culture. Also these people were in more constant contact with the Austrian authorities and with the new ruling administration. The citizens of the villages were more isolated and were thus more sheltered from these influences. Nevertheless, with time, the influence of the

German language had an effect also in the villages because even into the primary schools in the villages the German language was introduced.

The German language was also brought into the villages by the increasing number of foreigners installed in different functions such as: the police, tax collectors, community secretary, post masters, and teachers all of whom had to function in the German language. New craftsmen and tradesman also came – almost all of them Jews. As with all the other villages, our village suffered this fate and was being dragged into the new order.

Throughout all this however, Voloca remained a Romanian holdout. The inhabitants maintained and defended their language strongly as well as Romanian customs, ways and dress. Furthermore a few of the foreign families, at least those who were Christians, were so assimilated into the village that one could not distinguish them from their co-villagers (especially true for Poles and Ukrainians). With time people tolerated the new situation which existed for many years after the tearing apart of Bucovina. Put another way, of those who initially were initially resigned to these difficult times, later remained not a one.

Just as with a wound, no matter how hurtful or deep it may be, eventually it heals. The population was forced to adapt and accept the new situation because they had no other alternative. Eventually they accepted the Austrian authority and almost considered themselves subjects.

There came about however a marked improvement with the ascension of Emperor Josef II who, visiting this region, promised the countrymen that he would disenfranchise the boiere system. He took the side of the villagers with a number of measures started by himself and followed up by checking to see if they were implemented or not. He also imposed sanctions on many of the guilty and unjust people. He left a beautiful monument in memory of the soldiers, according to the stories of the elders. There remains a beautiful recollection of the visit of Josef II to the country, namely the restoration of rights to people. Through certain functionaries he had put in place, he keep track periodically to confirm that his dictates were being carried out. He was an enlightened ruler with good intentions.

Josef II raised up the Romanians of Ardeal making them equal to other nationalities (Hungarians, Saxons and Szeklers) in 1781. Likewise, the villagers, and especially the women, remember fondly the acts of his mother, Maria Teresa. Many girls were endowed with necklaces made of silver coins from her good will.

## 1.8
# The village of Voloca and its inhabitants over time, in great detail

The center of the village of Voloca is located on the slopes of two hills. High on one hill is found the church. The part that is west-facing is called Clipanei Valley while the easterly-facing is called Gropanei Valley. The hills to the south west of the Gropani are called the Caliceanca.

On the eastern boundary, Voloca is bounded by the Cozminul Valley and by Dumbrava Rosie while to the west, one sees Cucuriul Mare and Corovia. In all these villages the population is of mixed ancestry –alongside Moldovians live Ruthenians (**TN:** what, in Canada, Ukrainians were often called), Poles, Germans and Jews. After WWII there came also a population of Russians.

In Voloca, the population remains almost all Romanian. The small elements of other ethnic backgrounds that arrived over the course of time have totally disappeared. By way of example is the fact that in the village, in the hills to the east of the Caliceance, was a place that, in the past, was called the Russian Corner, but even there now everyone speaks Romanian and no one appears to speak Russian or any other foreign language. The elders in the village recall that as far back as they can remember in the village, only the Moldovian (Romanian) language has been spoken. In what now constitutes the "Russian Corner" it is recalled that in the area were brought many Ruthenian (Ukrainian) families with the intent of denationalizing the Moldovians (or real residents of Voloca). The native people there called the Ruthenians (Ukrainians), Russians. During this period, there resulted an assimilation of these people with the Moldovian people of Voloca. The names of those families still here are; Holovachi, Guz, Culiuc, Dohei, Hrezliuc, Guraliuc and others. Alongside these families are others who carry names with "foreign" endings –these are: Onofreiciuc, Ostaficiuc, Paulencu, Penteleiciuc, Zahariciuc and others. These families were originally of Moldovian descent but they changed the names during the time of the Austrian rule. We will discuss these name changes for a number of families and the scope of change later in another section.

We mention here also the Romanian names in the village that have endured over time; Bodnariu, Bejenaru, Bojescul, Cazacu, Ceuca, Cocea, Dincorn, Galan, Gheorghita, Gorda, Hancu, Jemna, Lungu, Lupascu, Manaila, Mihalceanu, Movileanu, Nichita, Pitei, Rotaru, Salahor, Spataru, Strut,Titian, Tirlion, Tocari,Todireanu, Ungureanu,Valeanu, Varzari, etc.

Right from the beginning, Voloca residents were Moldovians or Romanians who resulted from a intermarrying of the Dacii and Romans. Many years after the original Moldovians came the people from Maramuris, who completed the admixture. In appearance and dress, the Volocans resemble very well their ancestors, the Dacii. For many centuries the population that settled here was pure Moldovian or Romanian. The infiltration of strangers came about later, in particular, after the invasion and rape of Bucovina by the Austrians in 1775. From

this resulted an increase of outsiders in the village but the population that is fully Romanian has survived to our period of time.

Voloca is a large and beautiful commune. The households (estates) are substantial. Until the start of WW II the homes were largely farm houses. After that date, Volocans began to construct houses in a new style, more urban or 'Germanic' as they were called. In the past, in addition to the 'farm-style' house, there would be a barn with a loft, a shed for pigs, another for chickens, a hay storage area and a corral for the larger cattle, all located close by. The houses were made of logs and were chinked and smoothed inside with dirt and outside were whitewashed. The barn and sheds were similarly treated with dirt and whitewash. The village was clean and the households well cared for. Near the houses and crossroads were located wells. On the topic of roads, the situation was not quite as advanced. Only the main road that went through the middle of the village from the bridge over the Derelui and up towards the school and then out to the forest past Calciceanca was established in a finished manner and graveled. The rest were narrow, twisted and had lots of 'potholes'. For this reason, when it rained, there was a lot of mud and travel along them became a struggle where the wheels of the wagons would sink in places up to the axles.

The households were surrounded by fences made of beautifully braided hazel saplings with the more affluent ones having a solid fence made of boards.

The village is actually made up of many districts, each having been given a name. The following names were used: Dealul Bechericii (hill of the church), Spachiul, Calcineanca, Gropana, Borodaci, Buda, Tatini, Berzva, Dumbrava, La Comoara (the treasure), Hrustauti, Lisna, Cozmin, Bahna, Turci (of the Turks) Holma, Staniste, Pohriciuc, Pohrea, Poarta Padurii (gate to the woods), Moacera, Horodistea, La Mai, Dechiarca, Poiana Cucului (hilltop of the Cuckoo), Clipna, Pe Proape (graveyard?), Pe Lan (the field), Rutca, Schinca, In Deal (in the hill), and La Cruce (Holeriste) (at the cross of the cholera victims).

To the south of the village of Voloca existed, in the past, a fabulous forest that was well known and was widely acclaimed in many outside villages. It was claimed that it had been in existence since the time of Stefan Voda. The forest contained many lofty oaks, beeches and a few hornbeam (ironwood) trees, which I remember seeing as a child. During WWI the forest was badly damaged and then, during WW II, it was denuded. During WW I the forest was the theatre of a critical battle and many oaks were cut, nevertheless there remained some that stood until the early parts of WW II (1940) when one could still see the glory of the forest. After that date, and especially during the occupation of 1940-1941, there was a devastating cutting after which nothing remained. This devastating cut was a sin and a disaster both for the forest and for the population. An apocalyptical hardship was placed on both the population and on the poor animals.
In latter years (1970), in the location of this forest of large and beautiful oak and beech, is growing a young forest that will, only over centuries, allow one to glimpse what existed before.

The elders of the village claimed that this extraordinary forest was planted during the reign of Stefan the Great, who put in a prohibition against cultivation on this area and had it planted. From his planting, grew this forest of oaks. All this greatness that is seen was because of the planning and visions of the people of Bucovina, directed by Stefan Voda. Nowhere else in all of Romania was it possible to see such a forest of old oaks with healthy trees of such height, straightness and thickness. This was the crown jewel of Dumbrava Rosie, noted in ancient books and remembered fondly by the old residents. Now some areas are under cultivation but are not used with the correct purpose.

More to the south-east is the Cozmin Forest, where the important battle between the Moldovians of Stefan and the troops of King Albert took place in October 1497 on the day of the Feast of St. Dumitrie.

The area of the village of Voloca is large. In the past, the larger areas were hayfields, groves of trees, hillside pasture areas for grazing sheep and cattle and wooded areas (Moacera). The arable land was about a quarter less then now, but it was of good quality. Thus were the areas of Turtile and Cozmin. The esteemed I. Salahor certainly has good reason to promote this region as having the best fields and being the granary of the village. Also in the village were large gardens with very good soil. On these fields much was produced.

The fields, being well tilled, were able to feed all the inhabitants. Some households had sufficient surplus grains to allow them to sell to others who did not have enough – this was arranged at the village market. The land was fertilized with the manure from the barns that was carried out to the fields in the winter. Most of the fields were planted with corn that produced two big ears per plant. Between the rows of corn were planted seeds of pumpkins and beans or occasionally “canepa” (hemp) or forage beets for cattle.

The second rotation of crop was potatoes. In the village there existed a good variety of potatoes that would grow to the size of fists. After potatoes followed rye, very good for bread. With regard to wheat, very little was cultivated. Wheat flour was bought mostly by people in town when they needed it for the holidays or other occasions. People said that bread made with rye flour is more nourishing, better and tastier than wheat bread. Furthermore, the straw of rye was better than that of wheat. The rye would grow so tall where the ground was fertile, that you could not see a man standing in it. The hills and meadows had the best pastures. Near the peaks was made the highest quality hay. For this reason, Volocans grew many horned cattle and sheep. As a fourth crop, barley followed. It was good for the straw and also as fodder for raising pigs and cattle. Where the ground was less fertile, oats would be seeded – it was good for feeding horses.

The most extended common area was to the south of the village, namely near the common grazing ground of the Caliceanca, extending to the east all the way to Holna, Stanstea, Pohriciucul and Sesul Poharei. This region of land was reserved for the grazing of cattle and was separated from the grazing ground of Cucuriul Mare by a muddy road that leads to Moacera (Road of the Tartars). To fit the needs of livestock, they developed wells and lakes in the upper reaches of the Borodaci River.

In this fertile area grazed many cattle and sheep. In these areas, three stages of settlement evolved. The lands bordered on the forests. Starting in 1944, the regions Pohriciucul and Sesul Poharei were forested and protected by the state.

The grazing area of the Clipanei Valley was not as great, but nevertheless it was a beautiful area with smaller hills and along the edge of it flowed the Derelui River, which was good for husbanding cattle as well as having areas for baths. In the memoirs of I. Salahor, he recalls that, when he was a child, the Derelui had sufficient water in it that it could only be crossed at a few fording points. Along the Derelui were located many mills that ground corn and rye not only for our village but for other nearby ones. In many rainy years the river would swell to such a size that it would wash out the bridges that were normally high enough. Occasionally, floods would result with serious consequences. When the height of the crest reached 4-5 m, it would carry to the valley everything that was in its path. Truthfully, from the start of this century, the Derelui has been a wide and deep river with calm waters and a gravelly bed that has waters excellent for raising cattle and bathing. When I was a child in the village, I was quite afraid to cross it when I went to visit my Aunts in Cuciurul Mare and I needed always my mother to hold my hand. Many times we had to enter the water directly since the bridge had been washed and carried away down the valley from its original placement.

In the last several years, the waters of the Derelui have begun to reduce, although, in the immediate past summer, it has returned.

Many of us question why the waters have decreased in the river. Once it powered mills, while in recent years, it has become very small. Certainly there are rainy years that occur, as well as periods of low rainfall. This cycle can explain, to a certain extent, the variation in the levels in successive years. But as to the overall gradual decrease, one must look to other causes.

Since the decrease in the waters has continued, we must look for the cause elsewhere. The entire drainage basin has been influenced thus – it was a region at one time rich in forests that would attract the rains and that retained the moisture. Once the forests towards Storojinet (Cuciur) were cut, as well as those towards Dombrava Rosie and Adancata, the waters began immediately to shrink. Not only are the rains smaller because of this cutting, but not being shaded, the evaporation rate is much greater, thus allowing more ways for the water to be lost.

The path of the river has narrowed substantially; the banks have come closer to each other from settling and slumping and give the impression that although in areas the river is deeper, at the lower serpentine of the river the water is much siltier. Thus has evolved the Delului that was known for hundreds of years in the past, going back to the times of the Tartar invasions when they gave the river its name (Dere in the language of the Tartars meant “river”.)

When there is a large period of rainfall, the Derelui still becomes a torrent with much water and sediment. It tears at the banks that are now too narrow and rips out the bridges, after which it retreats to being a small stream

that it remains, as it was indeed last year. Nor do its banks accommodate shady areas as they did in the past – it all seems a shame.

The Volocans enjoyed broad peaks and beautiful meadows with sheltered areas near the woods where small cottages or "bordei" were constructed. Living in these cottages, they pastured and raised their cattle - times were good for them. All summer and late into the fall the cattle wandered freely in the good air and luscious pasture. This is how it was at Moacera, where many Volocans spent an extended youth. Moacera extended, in part, to the south, towards the village. It was edged also by a fine forest of beech and oak that reached towards Cucuriul Mare and Dumbrava Rosie; finally, to the east, it extended to the Cozmin Forest.

The Linsa Hill was the highest of the peaks and from the top one could see Chernauti. On the south-west slope on this hill almost nothing grew – at all times it remained bare and free of vegetation. Here and there were seen small tufts of grass, mostly very dry, which no one harvested and on which even the cattle would not graze. At the foot of the hill grew very luscious grass from which was made hay of high quality. In this area were also established a number of estates with large orchards that grew all types of fruit including: apples, pears, plums, prune plums, nuts and cherries. In this section of the village, our fellow countryman Procopie Semeniuc (son of Isaia) built a beautiful residence. Later in life, he decided, perhaps unwisely, to leave the home and to settle, first in Craiova and later, in Timisoara. Many times he hoped to return to the village and to his residence, but his dream was not fulfilled. Not once was he able to return to see his grand residence. He closed his eyes once and for all with his wishes left behind unfulfilled.

Also recalling with regret that beautiful grass at the foot of the Linsa hill that was great for feeding cattle, is our fellow countryman I. Salahor. The grass was full of many types of little blossoms, which resulted in the fabulous hay. This hay was reserved only for the young cows, for those that had calves, and for those that gave the best milk.

Another hill near the village that was not quite as high was Buda, located more to the east. It stretches as a spine towards the south and drops down to the Borodaci. Also there, grows a grass from which people make hay for feeding the cattle.

Another of the bigger hills is Horodistea. It begins at the edge of the village near the Borodaci River and continues in the direction you would go to the Cozmin Forest. Near the top, it opens up to a wider area where a number of residences are located. From this flat area, the hill continues until it merges with another flat area that is covered by tall trees. For this extended hill is given the name Horodistea. Older people from the village claim that on this hill was once, in the distant past, a ruin. When farmers plowed very deep in this place, the plow would unearth bricks and stones. This probably was not during the period of 1940 to 1944 when northern Bucovina and all of Basarabia was occupied by the Soviet Army. Their security procedures would have prevented historic items from being searched for as well as any other interesting objects.

The hill known as La Comoara also rises in the eastern part of the village. It begins near the bridge across the Borodaci and is traversed by the road that joins the village of Voloca with the commune of Hrusauti. At the top of the hill is a flat area that marks the start of the commune of Hrustauti. In that commune live many families, who have lovely households. There is also a school there, a dispensary and a food store. There is an area also where household items can be obtained. In the recent past, a good road was built to join the commune of Hrustauti with Voloca and also with another road on the side of the hill that goes on to the Cozmin valley and beyond to Chernauti. Along these roads many new houses have been built.

More to the south of the Calicean Hill, is the Pohrici Hill that, at one time, served as a grazing common. It is now forested. Between these two hills flow a number of streams, some larger and some smaller ones. Their sources lie within the boundaries of Voloca. The largest of these streams is the Borodaci. I. Salahor asserts that a mill existed, at one time, on this stream and that, until recently, one could see where it had been built. The course of the river begins in the woods. It then flows from the south towards the north. A smaller tributary to this stream is the Hrisauti that flows from the east towards the west and that empties into the Borodaci near the bridge across it.

The Olicica stream flows through Voloca. It's source is at Gheorgiti where, according to the older people, there were once seven wells located just below the Gordeni Hill. When major droughts have occurred and water could not be found in other wells, people would have to carry water from Georghiti. Even during the great drought of 1946-1947, people obtained water from there. Regardless of how much water people drew from these wells, the springs continued to flow. The Olicica, which originates from these springs, also joins into the Borodaci. The Borodaci, in turn, flows down the valley beyond the village and then joins the Derelui. Their combined waters then flow further to the Prut River, which the Derelui joins at the village of Ostrita, just below the city of Chernauti.

Throughout the village of Voloca, at main crossroads, in fields and meadows and in the woods, we find wells with cold, potable water for tired and thirsty travelers. There they can rest in the shade of a few trees, or even in the shade of a large grove. At these wells one can find "vedre" (~ 10 liter buckets) for lifting out the water and utensils for drinking. One would find "ghizdele" (lined cribbing) often made of wood to maintain good water. There existed also in the village a well with salty water. In was located in the Costanoai Valley and was good for cooking broadbeans, peas and beans since the water boiled very quickly.

A bridge, known as the Mocsalu Bridge, was built over the Trasnai stream. The elders in the village recall this bridge as having been built by Moscali soldiers. (**TN**: Russians) This occurred during the period when the Russian Czar helped Austria during the time of the 1848 revolution. Just beyond the bridge, the road divided in two, one part going to the south-east, towards Pohriciuc, and the other part veering to the right and the south-west, towards Holna and then on towards Pohrea and Poarta Padurii (The Gateway to the Forest). At the Pohrea Hill, the road from Pohrociuc rejoined the road from Holna and then carried on towards Nuscori, Poarta Padurii,

Moacera and Dumbrava Rosie. The main road that came through the village over the Calicean Hill and united with these two roads (from Holna and Pohriciuc) was named the "Road of the Tartars".

In some places throughout the fields, we can see even today up-raisings of the ground in rectangular shapes. It is believed that these were places of defense built by the archers of Stefan the Great. These defensive structures had water-filled ditches around them.

The road that begins at the bridge on the Borodaci and goes off to the right, later bends toward the Horodista Hill. It then enters the woods and continues towards the Cozmin Forest. High up into the forest, one could see, in past times, five large, old oak trees on the side of the hill overlooking the slope that runs from Suceava to Chernauti. In the side of one of these oaks there was a large cavity into which, in times of rain, several children could shelter together when they were shepherding cattle at the nearby pasture. They could sit in the cavity as if in a man-made "coliba" or hut. Also in this part of the woods there exists a well with a large spring. This is where a small stream starts to flow down through the woods to join eventually into the Hrusauti.

In the past this well was known as the "well of Sobietchi". On a large oak near the well, a "spada" or sword, the length of a man and the width of a hand, was attached with iron clamps. During WW I (1914-1918), which saw heavy fighting in the area, the sword disappeared and no one knows what happened to it. Even the great oak tree no longer exists. During the war, the forest around there suffered greatly because of damage and cutting. The old people say that they heard from their parents and grandparents that the sword was found at that location when the well was first dug. Near the well there was once also a beautiful cross. It was the custom to build a large cross near all the wells in the fields and in the village so that the "Necuratul" (**TN**: the unclean one – the Devil) would not come near them.

Connection of Voloca with the village of Cucuriul Mare and the train station of that same name was made via a road that began in the north part of Voloca (in the Groapa district) and crossed over the Derelui. A bridge was built over the Derelui in 1914-1915 by the Olanii, members of the Austrian cavalry – it carries today the name Podul Onanii (the Olanii Bridge). This bridge was a very good one and was necessary both for the army and the villagers, but it did not last long. Because of landslides, the banks of the Derelui began to close in and broke the bridge which was tied to them. As the banks moved inwards, the center of the bridge rose like a spire until it collapsed. The bridge was rebuilt a number of times, but it could not withstand the problems even though it was built with girders and thick planks and had been well-constructed.

Still during WW I, but nearer the end, a number of roads were chosen to connect the village with the train station near Cucuriul Mare. These originated in the vicinity of the new cemetery. The choices made did not produce good results. The road grade was too steep and the ascent was too un-nerving. The road had been constructed by Italian prisoners of war. Many of them died during this undertaking because of the famine that was beginning to exist everywhere.

For connecting the village of Voloca with Chernauti, there was a large road that began at the village center. It was a continuation of the "Road of the Tartars" but went to the north. The road proceeded towards the bridge on the Derelui but then, bending towards the east, it would go along the Cozmin until it reached the well with the three crosses. There it began to climb. About 200 m further on it crossed the train tracks and then climbed until it reached the top of the Corovie Hill. From there it dropped down to the valley and finally joined the main Suceava-Chernauti road. In time, the section of the climb that ran from a point near the well (where the three crosses existed) to the point where the road joined the road from Corovia, was abandoned. A new, better route was established. It followed an ancient road from the Cozmin crosses towards the train station at Cozmin (that was destroyed in WW II) and then continued from there on to Sargit. After gravelling, it became a very good road for transport. Via this route, it avoided the steep climb and, at the same time, shortened the use of a 'local' road because it more quickly reached the higher–quality road used by international traffic.

Regardless of whether we write about the villagers of Voloca in the distant past or those at the start of the present (20th) century, or those of present day (**TN:** ~1970), they always were and are Romanians. By nature they are peaceful, hard-working, and maintain high-moral values. Few of them were householders with large land holdings. A few of them did however own more than 10 "falci". (**TN:** one falca = 14 300 square meters or ~3.5 acres. Shortly we will also use "prajina" as a measure of land area. 1 facla ~ 70 prajina. A prajina = 180-210 square meters or 1/20 of an acre.) These families were considered to be the richest and the 'upper-class' in the village. Some examples of such people were: Iluta, son of Nicholai Paulencu; and Iluti's son Nicholai; Tanasi, son of Mihalutoaie Penteleiciuc; Nicholai, son of Ioan Penteleiciuc; Ioan Dohie; and Mitruta, son of Bogatului (the Rich One).

There were many people who owned 5-6 "falci" of land. Even these were regarded as 'top-rankers'. The majority of families owned 2-3 "falci" of land. There were also those who owned only 1-2 "falci". Finally, there were a significant number of families, who were somewhat poorer, with even less land – less than a "falca" - some perhaps with only a few tens of "prajini".

Those with a significant amount of land would work the land and raise livestock. Those with lesser holdings would try to dabble also with a trade as might fit them. For example, they could try coat making, wheel wrighting, carpentry, etc. The poorest would look for work on a day-to-day basis, would become musicians, or became workers in the woods – this is how the majority earned enough to survive. In general, being a diligent and industrious type of people, they earned their everyday needs through honest work. There were a number of cases in the village when poor persons were able to buy land with their hard-earned wages and were able to upgrade their status in life.

If we consider some earlier times, such as before the start of WW I, according to I. Salahor, there were a number of families in the village who were Poles, Germans or Jews. These people had originally been brought in (**TN**: by the Austrians) to 'denationalize' the Moldovans and, more particularly, the Volocans. In the end, the opposite happened – that is to say, with the passage of time the Poles and Germans became Moldovans. Only by

their names are they still recognizable as 'outsiders'- for example: Chimcinschi, Dubinschi, and Milosinschi. These families travel throughout the village dressed as locals and speak the language of Moldova. One family has even changed its name from Milisinschi to Mihaita. Some of the adults in the German households still know German but they also speak Romanian very fluently. Their children, who go to the school in the village, do not understand much German and are much better at Romanian which they use to interact with the other children in the village. The young ethnic-German
men have married Moldovan girls and, with time, have forsaken German dress in favor of that of the local Moldovans.

The Germans were good householders as well as excellent craftsmen. They were highly skilled and many Volocans were able to learn many useful techniques from them. They were good builders, blacksmiths and carpenters, as well as good farmers. They generally got along well with the other Volocans.

About three Polish families continued to use their national dress and followed their own faith until about 1920. They would travel to a church in Cucurul Mare where more Polish and German families lived and where they would have their own clergy, who was clean-shaven and short-haired. After about 1920, these three families slowly began to attend our church and to accept our faith.

Alexandru Paschevici married off his daughter to the son of Vasilie (son of Gasitei), who was a policeman in Chernauti, while Robert Bobinschi took as a wife the sister of Ion Gorda. Robert Bobinschi became a high-quality shoemaker as did his father, but he later gave up his German mode of dress and began to dress as a local.

The lawyer son of Moise changed both his faith and his dress mode – he even learned to speak the language of Moldova. Nevertheless, this caused quite a commotion in their community – this will be discussed further in another chapter.

All of these non-native people had shops or operated inns. One had a mill, one was a shoemaker, one manned a post office and one was a glazier. The glazier also had a little shop with glass products. I believe Maier Marcus was the most prosperous. He operated the largest "ratosol" (café or bistro) in town, near the brick gateway. A large crowd would often gather at his establishment on Sunday or holidays. Other inns in the village with good reputations were the Iosub, Bendix, Moisi, Gardeni and others that were located in various sectors of the village. One would correctly surmise that Volocans had enough inns where they could spend their money, squandering their time and health. There, they could also darken their minds and lose their souls – and often most of their wealth.

Before the start of WW I, there was only one single Romanian-run shop – the one operated by Spiridon Porfirean. After a period of time, when he became better established, Spiridon Porfirean opened a "crasma" (restaurant/pub) in front of which he placed a large sign that read "Restaurant National". On the sign he also had painted a Romanian in national costume holding in his hand the Romanian tri-color flag. To understand the

significance of this sign at the period of time that it was painted, we must understand how inflamed with patriotism the Volocans then were. At that time, Voloca was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

Beautiful examples of the love of Romanian ways and devotion to them could be found in the activities that arose from the hearts of those in the Arcasul Society. This group, consisting of many youths and householders from Voloca, fought and actively worked to maintain awareness of the national identity on several intellectual fronts.

Porfirean's establishment would not attract great crowds but was patronized mostly by teachers, some priests and police officers and also numerous youths and adults who were members of the Arcasul Society. Most people went to the establishments of Marcus Maier or his cohorts. Some people claimed that the whiskey served by Porfirean was not as potent as that served by Marcus or by Iosef Singer. Who knows, he may have been diluting it so as to make a better profit. Nevertheless, all people agreed that Porfirean worked very hard at trying to maintain a business. He then had the idea one day to purchase a gramophone to attract more business. The results of this idea were good because, after a short while, more people began to frequent his establishment. Those who wanted to drink, did so, but all enjoyed the gramophone and, more so, the singers to whose music they could listen.

After WWI, during a more favorable period, Spiridon Porfirean constructed a mill, in partnership with Gheorgi Salahor, near the bridge across the Olicici. After a time, Georghi Salahor left the partnership and Porfirean remained the sole owner of the mill. Porfirean hoped to earn good profits with his mill. His hopes were initially fulfilled because the Volocans, being good Romanians, supported his endeavor. The Hiba motor that Porfirean owned had too low a horsepower rating and did not have sufficient drive power. In other words, the motor was weak and, if it was used to grind groats or coarse meal, it worked well enough, but not for meal or flour fine enough for "mamaliga". For groats or coarse meal, the rotating grindstone is held higher and requires less power. During the time it rotates on the whole kernels it acts as if it is on ball bearings and it then cracks the grains only down to quarters or eighths. For grinding flour, the rotating stone must be lowered more and the stone has more resistance and is harder to turn. This explains the reason that Porfirean's mill could not be used for making cornmeal suitable for "mamaliga". He would keep the grindstone high so that the motor did not labor or stall.

Many Volocans, after they had ground flour at his mill, did not want to go back. They were unhappy with the quality of the grind made by him. Others, being kinder and being blessed with more patience (and being loyal Romanians) would return and ask him to please grind a finer product. Porfirean would agree, giving at the start a finer grind, but when the engine struggled and showed signs of stalling, he would immediately decrease the load. People would sample the ground meal that emerged under the stone and would often express displeasure. For this reason, he would often lose his most loyal customers. After a while, the mill was purchased by a man by the name of Laba. Sometime around 1932, Porfirean passed on to 'the better place'.

On the edge of the village, towards the Clipani Valley and almost in the Caliceanu Valley, there was a grazing area where, from time to time, gypsies would camp. They made different tools needed in a household such as: hammers, drills, chisels, axes, etc. In addition, they would sharpen various cutting tools, put handles on scythes, make sickles, etc. Their products were rudimentary and primitive but they were good enough for the era and people would happily deal with them.

At that time, industry had not yet developed and the work of the gypsies was both needed and valued. They learned also to produce ploughs, hoes, spades and rakes. They would do the iron mongering needed for wagons and would make and install the iron rims on wheels. Their women would go begging for items in the village, would do palm readings and, once in a while, it might happen that they developed light fingers and "pinched" the odd item from a household.

Some of the more industrious and more disciplined gypsies, working with more ambition, would be able to earn a household for themselves. They began to move around in the village well-groomed, cleaner and better dressed – one could not recognize that they were gypsies. There were cases when a gypsy would marry a girl from the village – one from a poorer family. Many of the children from these unions could not be physically identified as of gypsy parentage.

As time progressed, gypsies did not return to the village, nor are there any visiting now. Some simply left, some died and some were assimilated. I should add, that some of the gypsies were excellent musicians (fiddlers). (**TN**: The author neglects to mention, or perhaps was unaware of, the Soviet policies on gypsies during this era- their scarcity is not surprising.)

Between the two world wars, the blacksmiths in the village were Poles and they were called "colali". In this role were Alexandru Paschevici and his brothers. From their shop, a number of village men learned the trade: Pricopi, son of Nica Onufreiciuc; Alex Melnciiuc; and Ioan Milosinschi. The last of this trio, a man of Polish ancestry, became a Romanian.

The largest portion of the population of the village resides in the central area, along two main roads, one from Clipani and one from Gropani. These two roads are separated by the spine of a hill, known as the Church Hill. This hill is known as the Church Hill because high on the western edge of the hill is where the church resides. It is one of the largest and most interesting wooden churches in Bucovina. It was constructed over 1828-1829 and has been declared a historic monument.

The spine of the hill starts in the western part of the village at the Spaciulu Hill and continues to the east until it reaches the Borodaci River. It reaches its crest at the church and then, as it spreads towards the east, it broadens out and slopes downward until it levels out at the Borodaci. On this hill, the old church from Cozmin was first located. Also located here was the first village cemetery, situated to the south and west of the church on a meadow. When this cemetery became filled, the villagers opened a second one further west of the church, more

specifically towards the south-west slope of the Spaciulu Hill. At that time, they named it the 'new cemetery'. It was a beautiful place and very appropriate for the purpose is was used. With the passing of the years, the number of graves increased greatly. Even this 'new cemetery' became old and full and needed to be closed. A third cemetery was then opened further to the east of the oldest one.

Voloca has had a significant population that has grown with the passage of time. At the start of the 20th century, the village had about 1250 households. When the population in the center became quite dense, many Volocans began to establish households in the commune of Hrusauti and then in Horodistea – both areas located east of the village, with Horodistea somewhat more south-east. In his collection of memories, Ion Salahor estimates that in earlier times there were about 250 households in Hrusauti and about 200 in Horodistea.

These two communes were somewhat isolated and far from the village center. They also had no school or church. About 1930, or perhaps a bit later, there was a school built in Hrusauti. It is still there. A church was never built there, however, because of the events that occurred after 1940. Initially, there was a foundation laid, but it remained that way well into our era. The Soviet occupation completely changed the situation, however.

Using the data from the annual-review calendar of the churches in Bucovina for the year 1937, the population of Voloca consisted of 1132 households and 4263 persons. In 1943, using the numbers of Nicholai Manoila, the number of households had increased to 1345, but the numbers of persons had decreased to 3940.

We wrote earlier that in the village there were a number of families who were richer and who held larger tracts of good quality land. Most of these families lived in the Clipani Valley. They were the leaders of the village and had the most showy and complete households. There were also a number of good and prosperous households in the Gropani Valley, but not as many as in the Clipani. Mayors selected from these areas were: Toader Bojascu; Pr. Popovici; Mitruca, son of Malintei; Nicuta, son of Gutoaie, and others.

In the Gropani sector, there was a hill people referred to as the Caliceana. Many poorer families lived there. They owned small parcels of very poor land. Some had only a few "prajini" of land and very poor-condition houses. I think that area earned the title Caliceana from the poverty (sariceana) which existed there – Caliceana from saraiceana. (**TN:** - again a play on words that does not translate easily)

In general, the households in the village were attractive, well cared for, with large clean houses and with all the outbuildings in good condition. Both the people and their livestock had good dwellings. The villagers of Voloca had built spacious barns, sheds, pens, hay shelters, wells and all that is needed for a household.

The feed for their livestock – hay, straw, corncobs, alfalfa or clover, - all were well prepared and protected from the rain in the summer and the snowfall in the winter. The yards were large and well looked after with fences made of panels of braided hazel saplings supported by oak posts. The saplings used grew abundantly along the roads or on the banks of the Derelui or Borodaci Rivers.

I saw a fence of this type braided with great skill and ultimate care in the village at the household of Ionica, son of Petruta Salahor. About 1919-1920, when I used to walk to primary school in the village, I would walk by that fence. I am not quite sure what exactly drew me near there. It was truly beautifully-braided, gathered in a number of places with cross ties and was finished at the top with a well-designed border. The last time I saw this fence was in 1967. If it was made in 1912, as the owner, I. Salahor claimed, by 1967 it was 55 years old. It was almost the same age as I was. This is how people did things long ago – beautifully-made and built to last.

No one makes fences like that one anymore. Not only are they not being made, but those that existed were destroyed when the roads were widened. The households that did replace them, did so with fences having concrete posts and wooden boards. Many houses use live fences or hedges using shrubs that give a pleasant appearance. Certainly, ordinary fences also existed long ago – made simply with boards – but they used oak posts. At many households, there was a gateway with a covered roof that would be shingled. It was called a "brama".

Many households would have a well with a "carlig" or hook, others were equipped with a windlass that used a chain or a rope and a crank, while still others used a wheel. There were even some that still used the ancient, balance-pole technique.

In recent years, the numbers of wells has increased greatly and they have become more attractive and are better constructed. In earlier times, they would be lined with boards or stone. Now many are much deeper, are lined with concrete tubes and have above-ground structures made of wood, with great craftsmanship. The holes are covered with metal plates and are well enclosed. The windlass with the chain for the bucket can be rotated with the help of a wooden wheel, which is often worked from wood and carved beautifully. There are wells even in places one would not think that water exists. They have found often that even these wells have abundant good water. It is true that some are quite deep - an example is the well dug by Gheorgi Paulencu on the hill near Spachiu. Generation after generation carried water up that hill on their backs and now they have it next to the house. The "coromasla" (pivoted beam for hauling up dirt) has been given to the museum.

A topic close to the souls of Volocans is their love of caring for, and raising of, livestock. For this undertaking, one needs to build good, warm shelters for the animals near the house and must feed them well. The more-established farmers would have mechanized mowers with which they would cut straw or "strujenii" (corn stalks). The stalks would be crushed and were then added to bran, salt, and boiled pumpkin, or possibly potatoes, to form a feed. This mashed fodder was nutritious and readily eaten by the cattle. Un-mashed stalks could not be eaten except for the leaves and chaff – the rest remained uneaten. The main fodder consisted of hay and clover or alfalfa. During the summer, the cattle would graze and would only receive a small portion of hay in the morning. A Volocan would spend his entire life tilling the soil and raising a few head of livestock. Some had many animals, others just a few.

During the spring, summer, and fall, the men were heavily occupied with work in the fields and around the home. Winter was a bit more relaxed. Then, they would shift the manure out to the fields, repair tools, and those who knew how, would do some carpentry or trades. Those more in need would go to work in the woods and would spend most of the winter cutting firewood or wood for construction. Many of the poorer villagers lived solely by working in the woods. Some would be occupied with transport – carrying wood from the forests to the towns. Some of these woodcutters would learn to use the wood to make different items needed for the households. They made: handles for shovels, axes and forks; wooden forks, rakes, grain cradles, flails, spindles, sleighs, baskets, looms, ice boxes, drying racks, and even wagon wheels. Some of them made items so skillfully, one would think they were artisans, not something else. These products proved to be a great boon to the villagers.

All the villagers had good products and attractive items for their homes. Not only that, when they would go to town to sell their products and handiwork, they would often be sought out above all the other vendors who came from other villages. It was commonly known that Volocans would bring to market such good quality and beautiful products that they would be a pleasure to see. Anyone interested in buying a quality product would seek out a Volocan vendor. Until the Volocans were sold out, the others could not sell anything. No one could compete with the Volocans. They would also sell their products faster than the vendors from other villagers and still earn a good price. I reported above that works brought to the market by Volocans were often sought out and I have also indicated the reasons – they were good, durable and always beautifully made.

One should explain why Volocans worked so well and produced such attractive work, and why they did so and not others. My answers will be based on observations of their ways and many years of experience. They have high-quality souls as well.

Taken as a group, Volocans are a hard-working people with a love for beauty. Regardless of what they are working at, they put all of their efforts into it. They work with great attention to quality and detail, endeavoring to produce with their hands good, well-made and attractive products. They are, in general, respected for working well – wherever and whenever. They do not do sloppy work. They never cheat anyone, and those who buy their products are never shortchanged. This is how the reputation of their products developed and in this way they gained their good reputation.

When they took on a task, or began to make something, Volocans thought it out carefully, decided how the job should be done and then, they could work without a waste of materials. I have observed many of them and I have seen the attentiveness, the precision and the joy with which they work. Another thing – while they work, they would sing or would whistle a tune. Their habit was to perform their work accompanied by songs. Their existence seemed to revolve around each moment that they were able to work with their hands. Even the most insignificant detail had to be finished properly, be attractive and polished, and look as if it had been crafted with a hot wire or trimmed with a sharp knife.

When, in the end, the work was finished, the worker would examine his handiwork as if it were alive - as if it were his loved one. Reassured and satisfied, we would then set it aside. Now the work was finished, the craftsman felt happiness that he had completed a task to the best of his abilities. Without doubt, he was a creator of art – truly modest and unsung, but nevertheless an artist.

When the occasion arose that a new house needed to be constructed, Volocans all knew what needed to be done and that they were the best at doing it. It was well recognized in neighboring villages that the best carpenters for house construction and shingling could only be found in Voloca. This statement is strongly supported by my co-villager, Ioan Salahor. He asserts that no one shingled better than the craftsmen from our village and that they were often sought out by people from our neighboring villages and even from villages further away. (**TN:** Bukovinian homes were often constructed with substantial upper story windows for light – these dormer windows were often covered with smoothly-curved roofs that would need an excellent shingler.)

To illustrate further the widely-acclaimed reputation of the villagers of Voloca, we must discuss also the love of work and creativity of the women of Voloca. From the outset, we can affirm their reputations were equal to the high reputations of their menfolk and, more than once, exceeded them in the details of their delicate products. Furthermore, when we speak of artistry, the women were never outclassed by the men.

There were many cases when the two members of the couple would produce, with great skills, everything that they needed in their household. Beginning with a perfectly-constructed armoire, they would then furnish the house only with hand-made items. The husband would be in love with his work, but also with his wife and, inspired by her, did everything he could for the house. In turn she, trying hard to please her beloved husband, happily and with great satisfaction decorated the interior of the house with her handiworks – items that were truly beautiful and artistic. But, she was not satisfied simply with that. She also dressed her husband and children handsomely with the concern that they should appear smartly dressed, not only at home, but wherever they were seen.

The tasks of a bride or a new housewife required her to master many different skills. The housewife had the tasks of helping her husband and raising the children as well as producing, through her handiwork, some of the income of the household.

In the town markets, the whitest cloth, the most decorated shirts, the most beautiful satchels and skirts, and also the best sashes - decorated with flowers and favored patterns – all these were all found only at the stalls of the ladies from Voloca. They would also bring for sale black or white coats, made with the very best cloth. In addition, they sold fabrics, made of linen and the finest hemp fibers, sewn so well and beautifully and whitened in such a way that no other women could be found to compete. The unit of measurement for cloth length was the human hand.

Wall hangings and bench coverings from Voloca have been renowned as being both a pleasure to view but also for their interesting designs. These were the most sought-after items at the market, but they were rarely available for sale. In times past, the wool for these items ("scortare") was colored with dyes prepared from different plants, flowers and bark. These natural dyes had great durability. I was recently shown a bedcover that was made more than 100 years ago.

The women would make blankets or bed coverings from wool or hemp. They would also produce sacks, and large or small towels that had many uses in the house or could be taken to market for sale. In making all of these products, Volocan women displayed good knowledge, honesty, a willingness to work hard and a love of beauty. As with their husbands, the village women worked with the ambition of likewise producing high-quality and beautiful products.

There also existed in the village some older ladies who knew not only how to decorate ladies' blouses beautifully, but also how to decorate Easter eggs with an unequalled beauty. In the end, one could ask – what did the women of Voloca not know how to do? In all areas, they were great and knowledgeable craftspeople. For this reason, many young men from Cucuriul, Corovia, Ciahor and other villages came to Voloca to seek girls they could marry. In addition to having these skills, they were, of course, also very beautiful.

Before we close this chapter, I must record the fact that in Voloca one would also find very good musicians – we would even have to say, musicians with elite skills. When neighboring villages held church festivals or had weddings, the people from there would come to Voloca to engage fiddlers and dulcimer players. Renowned fiddlers were: Nistor, son of Andries – as well as his father; another was Ionica, son of Toderica Rahovei; Nistor, son of Ionica Toderica, as well as Nistor's son; Petea Tigunul (Of the Gypsy); Ioan Cocea and others.

Voloca had some very good makers of greatcoats. Similarly, people would come to our village to search for moccasins or sandals that were made here. Renowned for this during his time and up to WW I, was Matruca, son of Tambalarulu. Matruca's sons, Nicolai and Toader continued the tradition based on his knowledge and skills. I knew these two men very well since they were my neighbors. Often I watched as they prepared their materials for the moccasins. They would read the grain of the leather, twist it in their hands, and work it with such craftsmanship that the final product came out like a piece of jewelry. They would have an excellent shape and perfect symmetry. It was such a joy to watch them that one just wanted to continue doing so. They would make moccasins with a single or a double seam. The ones with the double seams were more expensive. I have never seen better-prepared or sewn moccasins than those that came out of their hands. In fact, I have never seen their equal in museums nor in the footwear worn by the traveling Serbian theatre performers when they visited either as vocal soloists or as dance groups.

The villagers of Voloca were not only excellent workers, but they were also good singers and dancers. They were capable on a large number of musical instruments. They could play: the "fluir" (flute), the "fluieras" (a simpler version of the flute), the "drumba" (Jew's Harp), "frunza" (**TN**: a leaf, held between the palms and

blown across, as we sometimes do with a blade of grass), “telinca” (a small flute), “surla” (the bugle), and the “trompeta” (the trumpet) – in addition to the “scripca” (the fiddle) and the “timbale” (hammer dulcimer). In the old days, we also had a number of people in Voloca who could play the “cimpoi” (Romanian version of a bagpipe). The “cimpoi” disappeared as a musical instrument, many years ago. Some people were blessed with pleasant voices and knew how to sing the “doina” (a sad Romanian lament) and other traditional songs.

On the topic of dancers, I must again assert we have the largest groups of the happiest and most beautiful dancers. Our men were not only handsome, sturdy and tall (almost like large pines) but our girls were their equals in appearance, liveliness and beauty.

Many more interesting things could be written about Voloca – we will leave them for other chapters.

Some readers of this story will accuse me of not being subjective enough in my judgment and of being too extravagant in my praises of the villagers of Voloca, my own co-villagers. It is true that, if this chapter had been written by a total stranger, the praises would not have been so heavy and warm. A stranger would have been more restrained, more objective and more detached. He would have saved his highest praises only for those things he understood best. In areas where I have lost subjectivity and have exceeded the bounds in my praises, I beg your tolerance.

Indeed, not all Volocan men are equally good and hardy – only most of them. Similarly, not all of the women or girls are housekeepers of the first rank. There is a well-known proverb that says “there is no forest that exists without dried-out patches”. There is one fact, however, that I must assert: the vast majority of the people of Voloca are properly-behaved people, are people of discipline, are hardworking and are blessed with different talents. They are truly people of valor.

I intended to describe for you what I have seen and what I have found in these people that is noble, pleasing, dignified and interesting. The large majority set the template, and I have concentrated on them. About the others, I have written little, nor have I had the time to do so. If necessary, I will do so. Some unpleasant shortcomings of some groups, I have criticized with complete toughness in other chapters. This I did because it seemed to me the activities discussed were leading to a dangerous path. Bad behavior does not need to be overlooked or hidden – it must be challenged and corrected whenever possible.

What has been written in this chapter refers mainly to the Voloca of times past. The village has been described in this chapter in full detail with its evolution and legends reaching almost to the start of WW II. In the main, the story extends to the middle of the 20$^{th}$ century.

After WW II, Voloca and the northern part of Buovina fell under the occupation of the Soviets and the situation became completely different. The situation is not so different for us here in the village with this political regime

but nevertheless, it has certain particular effects that we will discuss elsewhere. Closing this chapter, we can still say that Voloca even now continues to progress.

**1.9**

# Inhabitants of the village of Voloca
# In 1774, Voloca was part of the estate of the Putna Monastery

At that date there were in the village 53 houses and 49 residents (or tithe payers?) Their names were:

1 Onofrei – carpenter
2 Patras son of Toader
3 Onofrei - the Russian
4 Anton son in law of Mariutei
5 Nicholai son of Ostafi
6 Ion Pavliuc
7 Andries – a fiddler
8 Matei Pavliuc
9 Vasili son of Pavliuc
10 Gheorge Tocar
11 Vasilie son of (Tocar)
12 Ion son of Ursul
13 Ursul Tocar
14 Vasile Buza
15 Ion son of Georghita
16 Nikita Mitian
17 Nicholai son of (Mitian)
18 Hlopina
19 Stefan, immigrant or refugee
20 Toader son of Vasile
21 Ilas, his brother
22 Costandin, brother in law of Simion
23 Vasile son in law of Nechitei
24 Antohi Hubar
25 Ion, wheelwright
26 Ursul son of Lupasco
27 Andronic Manaila
28 Grigoras son of Lupasco
29 Enache son of Onul
30 Nicholai son of Lupasco
31 Andries Panteleiciuc
32 Toader son of Panteleiciuc

33 Andries, his nephew,
34 Andries, son of Lupasco
35 Ion son of Andries
36 Ion son of Mihail
37 Simion son of Lupasco
38 Andrei son of Simion
39 Andries son of Onofrei
40 Onofrei son of Lupasco
41 Ion son of Matei
42 Matei
43 Vasilie his son
44 Andries (caskmaker)
45 Ivan, Russian
46 Maxim, taxman
47 Ivancu, Russian
48 Vasile, carpenter
49 Simion Holovaci

In addition to those noted above in the village were also
A priest – Popa Nicholai
A church reader – Toader
A church clerk/collector of money - Ion
A Jew – Leiba, son of David, the administrator

The situation above has its basis in the Census of the population of Moldovia from the years 1772-1773 and 1774. (sin=son, zet= son in law, sin ego= his son, brat ego= his brother, bejenar=refugee or emigrant, vataman =money agent, collector of debts, scutelnic= tax agent, money exchanger and general functionary)
Many of the family names met in the table above exist even today. In our village these include: Holovaci, Hlopina, Mitian, Nichita, Ostafie, Patras, Andries and others.

(**TN:** What this sub-set from the census is meant to convey in not clear.)

## 1.10
# The management of the commune through the ages

Even from the very earliest days, the village was led or administered by a "vornic" or mayor. He was the supreme chief of the commune and had very large powers. The management of all the commune fell into his responsibilities. With time, the tasks of the commune became too numerous, and he could not singly carry out all of them. At that point the position of "baivornic" (deputy mayor) or helper of the mayor was established. For more important public matters, the mayor was assisted by a commune council. The councilors were advisors with whom the mayor would discuss and decide what needed to be done.

Both the mayor and the councilors were elected from the ranks of those villagers of voting age. In times past, the minimum voting age was set at 24 years. After 1923, the age of majority was lowered to 21 years. Women did not participate in the election because they did not have the right to vote.

The mayor would be the holder of the commune seal and carried it with him in a purse on his belt. If he did not know how to sign his name, in place of his signature, he would leave an inked fingerprint. Most of the councilors and villagers could not read and they also did not know how to sign their names, since in these distant days there was no school in the village.

Reading and a knowledge of books arrived later for the villagers, and quite slowly – mostly during the second half of the 19$^{th}$ century. Nevertheless, there were many in the village, who could not read at the beginning of the 20$^{th}$ century.

In affairs requiring writing, the mayor was assisted by a commune secretary also known as a "pisar". This person needed, at a minimum, to be able to read and write. In the earliest of times, when they could find no one in the village who was literate, sometimes this commune function was performed by the church reader or "dascal." Later, when the village affairs had grown in complexity and there was a need for a more literate person, that person might be brought in from a nearby town. Sometimes it would happen that they would bring in Jews to fill these positions. In time, they would often settle permanently in the village.

In addition to the mayor, there were others appointed and sworn in. These people might have the tasks of cleaning and providing heat to various buildings and also had the task of summoning villagers to the council meeting place for various reasons. The appointees would accompany the mayor through the village and beat the drums at the crossroads so as to bring to the attention of the villagers various decrees or announcements from the governor or the King. In a similar manner, they accompanied the tax collectors or financial agents during the collection of ransom payments. They would also accompany the "sacfesturul" (bailiff ??) and seize "fanti"

(items as fines??) from the people who did not pay their dues or send their children to school. They took as security many different household items, in particular, clothing and bedding.

Watchmen were appointed to guard the village. They patrolled the village during the night, either alone or accompanying the mayor. They were obliged to warn and inform people about all potential dangers, such as the presence of an arsonist or a band of evil-doers.

The watchmen would also guard the church each night, usually in pairs, checking for the presence of thieves and sounding an alarm in the case of fire. In the past, there would occasionally be bands of thieves who would steal items from the church. The watchmen were recruited from the ranks of the villagers; they were not paid and changed every night. All the capable and mature men from the village were obliged to serve turns as watchmen for the church. In times of heavy rain or snowfall, they had a little "coliba" or shelter near the gate of the church that they could use. They would use the church bells to sound an alarm.

For guarding the fields "jitarii" (field guardsmen) were appointed. They would patrol through the crop fields and watch so that no one stole the crops or harmed the livestock. A patrol man would be posted at the gate opening to the fields. He had the duty to observe whoever entered or left and would check what the person was carrying or had in his wagon. It was also his duty to open and close the gates leading to the fields.

An eye was kept on the gate to the fields until recent times, especially at the ones leading to the grain fields. A similar gate was also in existence at the entrance to the Turkish quarter of the village, near the Ratus.

The mortuary was located next to the church. It was the place where people found deceased, or those who had drowned or been killed, were placed awaiting autopsies.

In the past, the mayor fulfilled not only the role of chief commune administrator, but also acted as the local judge. He had the power to hear cases and to render judgments. The mayor thus needed a wide range of competency.

As a sign of his powers, the mayor carried a substantial staff or cane, which, on occasion, he used to administer justice. No one ever had the thought of pleading or crying for mercy so that they could get a lesser punishment. The litigants in a dispute would be summoned or brought to the council building by the village officers. In some cases, the accusation would be announced throughout the village. This announcement meant that someone was being accused of a crime requiring a trial in front of the mayor. This method of judgment was still being used around the start of the 20$^{th}$ century, indeed, it continued to be used even after WW I until about 1940 and again between 1941 and 1944.

The mayor, with the help of the councilors of the commune and the secretary, resolved all the problems that were the responsibility of the commune administration such as:

- the upkeep and construction of the school, the church and other public buildings,
- improving and graveling the roads and building and repairing bridges on the roads,
- organizing the security of the entire territory of the commune,
- aligning roads and digging sanitation ditches,
- leasing commune properties for grazing or planting,
- selling surplus commune properties,
- organizing events and recreation in the village,
- responding to correspondence from higher authorities,
- guarding public property,
- setting the rates and collecting commune taxes,
- issuing certificates and paperwork for the villagers,
- hiring personnel for the needs of the commune, etc.

Of the mayors who were at some time in charge of the commune, we list below those that we remember: Toader Bojescul; Pricopie Hlopina; Nicholai, son of Gotoaie Onofreiciuc; Toader Paulencu; Dumitru, son of Malintei Penteleiciuc; Gheorgi Dubinschi; Nicholae Gorda; Nicholai son of Ilie Paulencu; Toader, son of Vasilie Penteleiciuc; Pricopie Popovici; and Simion Guraliuc.

We list as follows also some of the commune secretaries: Hotinceanu, Buzdugan, Vasilie Paulencu, and Toader Tocari. Some of them had sufficient qualifications to also function in the role of commune notary. The only notary with university training was Ioan Nichiforel. In Voloca, as secretary, we also had a Jew named Duvit or David, just before WW I. Later, another Jew, Burah Reiner, was named secretary – he committed grave irregularities.

The old commune offices were on a clearing toward the Clipani valley, near the road that goes towards the Derelui River and then continues on towards Cozmin and Chernauti. As I recall, it had two rooms; one a larger one in which the secretary worked and the meetings were held, and a second smaller one which was the mayor's office. At the back, towards the north, was a smaller, darkened room that served as a lock-up. In the old days, the mayor would take someone who had committed a crime and would put him in the lock-up for 1-3 "doba". A "doba" lasted 24 hours.

The selection of the mayor took place somewhat in the following manner; on a Sunday or perhaps a holiday, the men of the village would gather at the commune office. From amongst themselves they would select a few of the older and most respected men – trying to get at least one person from each sector of the village. These men would then discuss who they believed would be a good choice to propose as a candidate for mayor. After they came to a consensus, they would proceed to the entrance of the commune office with the candidate and there, in a loud voice, the spokesman would ask those assembled if the proposed candidate would be a good mayor. If

the choice was a good man and one they would accept, they would shout back that he was a good choice, shouting also "Ura" (hurrah), three times while raising their hats or caps into the air.

If, on the other hand, the candidate was not acceptable to those assembled, then another candidate would be proposed, using the same selection process, until a candidate was acclaimed.

In dealing with communications and public announcements, the mayor would use a commune official, who would walk about the village and shout a summons for people to assemble so that he could inform them of the particular communication or announcement. Sometimes this method of informing the villagers did not work very well because the shouts of the official might only be heard by a few. Hence, some people were not made aware of the communication. One of the brighter villagers came up with the proposal that they should provide the official with a drum, which he could then beat at crossroads, at a village gathering for a "hora" or dance, or even in the far corners of the village where there might be numerous houses. This would attract the attention of the villagers and, in this manner, the official could communicate the announcements or decrees of the mayor. In the end, this is how most announcements were communicated.

After the official had shouted his announcements at one locale, he would proceed to the next, would again beat his drum to summon people, and would repeat his shout. In this manner, the official would traverse the entire village with the drum on his back. The people who had heard the announcements would also communicate them to others.

When people began to be able to read (**TN:** Text actually reads "gained knowledge from books".) they would use written announcements that would be posted at the commune office, the school, the church, the co-operative, the cultural centre, and in any other place where people would normally congregate. Announcements put out by the mayor's office and posted at predetermined locations generally pertained to the management of the commune, the repair of roads, the construction of bridges or the convening of meetings.

On the occasion of very urgent or important communications, they would use a procedure rarely allowed – the ringing of the church bells. This occurred in 1914 to announce the start of WW I. This procedure was also allowed in the case of a major fire, when several houses might be affected, or if there was a major threat to the church. In some rare cases it might be used to signal a calamity. In normal circumstances, this method of alerting people was not used.

In the current era, radio and television constitute a rapid path for communicating announcements to the public. With the assistance of station managers, both local and central, as well as the use of public bulletin boards, the public can quickly be made aware of different decisions, announcements and urgent communications.

## 1.11
# The dialect of Voloca and the changes it has suffered in different eras

The language of Voloca originates from an old Moldovan language that used to be spoken in the "upper country" (Northern Moldova) in very early times. It is a well-recognized fact that the Moldovan language (Romanian) evolved, as did the people, and that it is based on both the language of the Dacii and that of the Romans – Latin. It is therefore regarded as a Romance language.

The Dacii components of the language have almost disappeared and are very hard to recognize. The present Romanian language is still very rich in the Latin component and its presence is easily recognizable. We will list here a few Latin words that are used in the Romanian language:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| parentes = parinti (parents) | frater = frate (brother) | soror = sora (sister) |
| nepotes = nepoti (nephews) | socer = socra (mother-in-law) | gener = generi (son-in-law) |
| filius = fiu (son) | filia = fica (daughter) | cognatus = cumnat (brother-in-law) |
| vacca = vac (cow) | ovis = ovaz (oats) | canis = caine (dog) |
| lactis = lapte (milk) | fructus = fruct (fruit) | arare = a ara (to plow) |
| seminare = a semena (to seed) | colligere = a culege (to harvest) | homo = om (man) |
| lupus = lup (wolf) | leo = leu (lion) | ieporis = iepure (rabbit) |
| barba = barba (beard) | caput = cap (head) | dens, dentis = dentis (teeth) |
| facies = fata (face) | frons, frontis = frunte (brow) | pectus = peipt (chest) |
| mensa = masa (table) | farina = faina (flour) | |

The Moldovan language (Romanian) was formed and developed over many centuries before it reached its present state of perfection. Over this time, it endured outside influences since our people came into contact with other different peoples.

The northern part of Moldova, also called the "upper part of the country", was raped by Austria in 1775 and was renamed Bucovina. Voloca is also located in this region and it became a difficult task for the Moldovans to maintain their language in this arrangement.

With the passage of time, the language spoken in Voloca began to differ from that spoken in the rest of Moldova, largely because of the influences it endured over the course of history. Whoever reads the old chronicles of Voloca will quickly recognize the large similarity between the language of old Moldova and the specific dialect of Voloca.

I will try to show, in turn, what influence on the language these outside contacts have had, and how they came about. To go back to the beginning, the language of Moldova (Romanian) was mainly influenced, during its period of formation, by the Slavic language. For this reason one finds in the speech of Moldovans, even at the beginning, Slavic words and these also occur in the Volocan dialect. The Slavic influence continued to have an effect into later times via the church and the administration of the state, largely through the writings and church services.

(**TN**: Language continually evolves and there has been a trend to 'cleanse' the language at times – most of the examples given below are not found in my own, nor in web, dictionaries – the same holds true for the section further below on German-based words – some translations are given via my very rudimentary knowledge of Ukrainian and German. The Romanian version of the German word may have a vastly different spelling – dictionary values are limited).

Examples of Slavic words incorporated into Romanian are;
blagovistenie (blessings), cazanie (sermon), culiser ("mamaliga" stirrer), masleanca (?), praznic (funeral masa), precistanie (?), pravila (haberdashery), privdor (?), staret (an abbot), pranic (?), utrenic (matins or morning church service), vecernic (?), vornic (?), conet-sfarsit (?).

This situation continued until the start of 1775, when the northern part of Moldova was incorporated into the Austrian Empire. As soon as this official attachment with Austria took place, a new influence began to be felt on the language of Bucovina, as this part of Moldova was to be called, after the annexation.

The dialect in Voloca began to feel the influence, and to be sprinkled with words, of German origin. In particular, were the words used in the process of administration, in schools, in the army and particularly in typed books and/or correspondence.

In the administrative areas, the influence was felt immediately, because the official language of the state was German. All people holding office had to understand and speak German. All decrees were published in German. All official documents, information bulletins and technical publications had to be published in German. Schooling became mandatory and all schools had to operate in German. All teachers had to know German – even the children in primary school had to learn their lessons in German. Because of the all-encompassing use of German, the language of Moldovans in Bucovina, and equally in Voloca, endured a great influence that had deep consequences.

To allow you to appreciate the change, I will give you a bit of the language before 1775 and another after the annexation of Bucovina to Austria. I will also tell you following this, of other periods of time and other influences.

To begin, I give below a few examples of German words which entered the dialect of Voloca:

vachmaistru (?), fraiter (?), tugsfir (?), jitarca (?), streh (?), strof(?), tug (German zug- train), banhof (train station), gherichthof (law court), stairamt (?), musai (?), obaler (pay ?), a mildui, ferslus (**TN**: actual German spelling is verschluss – meaning a lock or fastener), denunc (?), prospont (?), bizat (?), bizitstirung (?), turic (?), putui (?), Suvix (?), tambra (?), hacui (?), grundbuch (dictionary), sparcasie (general store), spanui (?), farbe (paint), sina (?), halba (half ?), stofa (?), cartofi (potatoes) and snitel (schnitzel).

The large number of German words that entered the language shows the magnitude of the change that continued to occur until the end of WW I. The influence slowed after the Union that occurred in 1918, but the introduced words remained in the language for an extended time until corrections began to be made and the words were thrown out and replaced with Romanian ones. Nevertheless, the odd one remained and is still in common use.

In a manner similar to what occurred with the German influences on the language, other languages including Ukrainian and Polish had effects that were felt. These influences occurred because of expressions taken from the speech of our neighboring villagers or from the Poles who settled in our village. These influences were insignificant in comparison to the effect of the German language incorporation.

After the Great Union of 1918, the dialect of Voloca regained the powerful influence of the Romanian language, since Romanian became the official language of the state. This influence was felt through its use in the region of administration, in schools and in the army. From that time on, Romanian was spoken everywhere. All non-Romanian administrators were asked to learn Romanian. German was no longer used in the primary school, but was left as one possible choice for the foreign languages one might study in the higher grades. In the army, people would speak only Romanian and all military communications were in Romanian.

Thus, in a relatively short time, German words were extracted from the vocabulary and replaced by Romanian words. This procedure of cleansing the language of Bucovina, and likewise the dialect of Voloca, took place over the period 1920-1930. The administrators all had to learn Romanian, the laws were written in Romanian, and it was the language spoken by the villagers and in the army. This process of cleansing the language of foreign elements took place because Romanian was being spoken throughout the country. A significant contribution to this was the fact that all books and newspapers were published in Romanian.

During the period from 1930-1940, the process of purification of the Romanian language was brought to its final stages. By that time the language spoken in Voloca, or better said, the dialect of Voloca, was very near that of other Romanians – the true Romanian language that was understood throughout the entire territory of Romania.

After WW II, the situation once again changed and the dialect of Voloca came under the influence of another powerful factor – in this case it was the Russian language, and to a smaller extent, Ukrainian. Whoever would venture into the village, and I refer here to Volocans from Romania, could easily observe that the dialect of Voloca changed greatly and became sprinkled with Russian words. In particular, one would hear the younger

people with a very mixed vocabulary that had many words, and even entire sentences, that were adopted from Russian.

The present day influence of Russian is greater and more powerful than even German was. It is used exclusively in all administration and schools, in the army, by workers in factories, - where many villagers of Voloca are employed, in publications, in Russian newspapers and books, on radio and television, etc. It is used in all local shops, in offices, the train station, the hospital, on streetcars or in the market. Russian and Ukrainian are used to such an extent that a "real" Volocan is again obliged to learn as a state language, another one that is replacing the Romanian language.

The impact of the Russian language is so much greater because there is an organized state effort that has been implemented with the idea of estranging people from Romanian and with the aim of eliminating the Romanian language. The authorities no longer refer to the residents as Romanians but only as Volocans. In school people speak only Russian, similarly in the army and in the factories. Wherever you turn or wherever you go, all you hear is Russian. Anyone who does not speak Russian must have an interpreter or they cannot do anything.

Only in the private homes and in the smaller areas of the village does one hear the dialect of Voloca, but even this dialect is not as attractive and as pure as it once was. When one leaves their immediate neighborhood, one must use Russian or Ukrainian. This situation has had an overwhelming influence on the dialect of the village.

The dialect of Voloca also incorporated some words of Magyar (Hungarian) origin. These words came to us via the people of Maramures who settled in the village, and mixed in with the aboriginals. This influence is quite far back in time but, during the war, (we mean here WW I), many Bukovinians in the army were in Ardeal and in Hungary or served as part of Hungarian army units. On this occasion, they learned a few Hungarian words and in this manner, they introduced some words into the dialect of Voloca. In general, the influence of the Hungarian language on the dialect of Voloca was of minor importance and was very weakly felt. This was in spite of the fact that, during WW I, a number of Hungarian troops were stationed in the village for an extended period. With the passage of time, almost all of the Hungarian words have disappeared from normal usage.

What immediately becomes clear is that the political situation plays a very important role in the question of language within any territory. The group that controls and governs an area, seeks to impose its authority along with their language. For reasons of geography, and situated in an area where the governing powers have changed often, Voloca has been exposed, on many occasions, to many influences. It has been its destiny, its misfortune and its role in history. Voloca's situation of today and the direction it is proceeding is disturbing and it is unclear where the road leads. Only our descendants will be able to answer this question, but even for them it will take a long time.

I finish with a few words of Turkish origin that have at one time entered the language (**TN**: No attempt made to translate foreign words at all from here on in this chapter): haram, sacagiu, chirigiu, pasalac, basma, divan, hatar, zeflemea, bucluc – these entered our language during the long period of contact with the Turks.

Finally, a few old words used in the past in our language: chizmatarnic, asijderea, neasezare, sobor, zarva, grumaz, pristani, strambatate, hula, a huli, de izvoana, jalba, a nazui, a se burzului, a izbandi, a jacui, hojma, fistecare, a se bizui, megies, sfada, a guirui, a fagadui, a zadara, zalog, a sudui, a propozi, molcom, sarampoi, a oblici, a afla, a zari, a pojarai, a pozvoli.

## 1.12
# The food of Voloca – preparation of meals.

In the distant past the food of the villagers of Voloca was simple and relatively poor. The basic meals consisted of "bors" (soup) and "mamaliga" (boiled corn meal). The "bors" was made with potatoes, with beans or weeds (**TN**: stinging nettles, for example). The "bors" was eaten from one single, common pot. Sometimes the "bors" was supplemented with some cream or an egg. On important days, a higher quality "bors" which was called "zeama" was made that contained in addition to potatoes, homemade noodles, cream and perhaps even a piece of meat. If it was available, even a piece of smoked joint would be added. Into the "bors" or "zeama", onions and parsnips would be added. These early meals, simple and rather poor, evolved with time.

Incidentally, just over 100 years ago, very few hogs were butchered in the village. I was told by an elder, Constantin Rahovei, that around 1860-1870 it would have been an unusual year if 20-25 pigs were butchered. People would eat mostly milk and milk-based products – milk, both sweet and soured, cottage cheese, and cream were eaten together with sugar added to "sarbusca", which was eaten with cakes and corn bread.

Lenten periods were strictly observed. Neither adults nor children were allowed to eat "de frupt" or animal-based products. During Lent a "bors" was eaten that was based on beans or potatoes, unembellished except for sour "bors", which might have some rye bran. Besides "bors", people would have pickled cucumbers, or pickled cabbage, which were eaten with mashed beans or mashed potatoes. Whole potatoes were eaten boiled or cooked with oil extracted from the seeds of pumpkins. To these was added "mujdei" (mashed garlic). For meals many mushrooms were also used. In the summertime, they would be used fresh and eaten with crushed garlic or cream, whereas in the winter, they would be added to the "bors" or cooked with oil. The mushrooms most used were "cerlenci", "hribi" and "pepinci". "Gilechi" were also eaten but only baked and with mashed garlic. Occasionally people would also eat cooked peas or "bors" made of lentils.

Before they began to eat "mamaliga" made out of corn meal, Volocans ate a "mamaliga" made of "pasat" or millet. Also eaten were roasted or boiled broad beans. People would also make cabbage rolls filled with groats (barley or oats with the husk removed) and oil.

During the Great Lent a large amount of "covasa" was eaten. This had a well-liked sour taste. Not neglected during the winter holidays and during Lent were the dried fruits. During the summer and fall people would dry apples, pears, plums and carob, which were eaten during the winter. In a similar way, people would collect nuts for the winter. Poppies were cultivated to use in poppy-seed cakes. From all these foods, one can deduce that the Volocans were, on the whole, largely lacto-vegetarians. Pork was eaten fairly rarely, while of beef no one would partake, because it was a sin. Only other nationalities would eat beef. If a cow died, whatever the reason, it must be buried. No one was even allowed to make soap from the carcass.

I mentioned two meals that many younger Volocans may never have eaten or even heard about – "sarbusca" and "covasa". The first was considered to be an animal-products dish and it was made during the "caslegile" (non-Lenten period, see 1.19 later) from the juice drained after making cottage cheese (whey). The whey was heated and when it began to curdle, corn meal was added and the two were mixed together. The mixture was then cooked until it resembled a porridge. It would have a sour taste that was stronger when fresh than when aged. It was usually eaten warm. "Covasa" also had a porridge appearance and was sour like "sarbusca" but it was considered to be a food suitable for Lent because it had no component of animal-based products. In a "bors" base was added some wheat flour and a bit of cornmeal. To this was added yeast and the entire mixture was allowed to ferment. This porridge-like mixture was then boiled, resulting in a product with a very much enjoyed taste. "Sarbusca" was often used to feed the workers in the fields. "Covasa" was made during the Great Lent – particularly for St. Toader.

Volocans kept many sheep and they learned to make a cheese from sheep's milk that was both very good and very tasty. During the "caslegile" of the fall much cheese made from sheep's milk was eaten. In another usage they would make "lapte acru" (soured milk), which would last over the Christmas Lent.

In addition to sheep cheese, people would preserve cheese from cow's milk. Both of these would be stored in salt in little casks. From the cream that was not consumed in "bors" or "zeama", they would make a butter that they would not eat but instead used as a 'cream' for their hair. Some of this was taken to the towns for sale.

All four of the Lenten periods of the year would be observed – the Great Lent, the Lent of St. Peter, the Lent of St. Mary and the Christmas Lent. For all these Lenten periods people had a lot of foods to avoid, but they did not feel deprived. The available meals were still varied and wholesome, even though it was Lent. Meals of many kinds were made that pleased and nourished the population, especially on the eves of Christmas and Epiphany. These included: rolls of corn meal inside cabbage leaves and fried in oil, peas, lentils, broad beans, mushrooms, apples, pears, prunes, greens dressed with oil, cucumbers, beans with oil, potatoes, boiled whole or mashed with oil, boiled wheat with sugar, a milk extracted from the seeds of the hemp plant, cooked sweet squash, and also pies made with potatoes or pumpkin as well as cornmeal and pastries cooked with cabbage.

During "caslegile" people would eat animal-based products only on Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday. Monday, Wednesday and Friday the meals were as during Lent. On the days when animal products were allowed, milk, both sweet and sour, was consumed along with cottage cheese, either salted or with cream, cheese from sheep's milk, and certainly whey and "sarbusca". Chicken meat was consumed at important feasts, at baptism celebrations, at weddings and sometimes at memorial dinners. On a few occasions, smoked pork or head cheese would also be served.

Occasionally people would make a spread or paste ("papa") consisting of cream, with a bit or cornmeal and an egg or two. During the year, apart from Lenten periods, boiled eggs would be eaten with "mujdei". Another paste that was made, used eggs and pork fat and, if it could be fortified with a bit of meat, so much the better -

this was considered to be a luxury food. “Mamaliga” accompanied all these foods. On rare occasions, bread was baked from rye or barley flour. Cakes of cornbread were common especially during those periods of the year requiring hard work. “Colaci”, “pasca”, small “pasca” and baked goods filled with cheese were baked with wheat flour. This is how the menu developed over the years.

At Easter, Ispas and Palm Sunday people would make “nafura” (unleaved bread taken to church for blessing), “pasca” and small “pasca” from the very finest of wheat flour. On Easter, it was a sin to eat “mamaliga”!! Even the poor, lowly “mamaliga” had a day when it was free from being consumed.

We reiterate that the absolute daily staple was “bors”, be it made during Lent or using animal products, be it simple or “dressed up”, with meat or without, made with potatoes, beans or mushrooms – but always “bors” and – with it was “mamaliga”. These two items formed the backbone of the meal. To them, other items could be added to complete the menu – most of which we have discussed above. The poorest people would eat stinging nettles (“urzica”) in the spring time. In addition to cucumbers and cabbage, people would pickle a mixture of cucumbers, cooked beans in the pod, cooked carrots, horseradish, etc. This pickled mixture was known as “muraturi”. The “muraturi” were both very good and very tasty.

As I understand, people in the very distant past did not cultivate many root or leaf vegetables. They did not recognize their nutritional value, nor often did they know how to prepare them. Often, the main items grown in the gardens were onions, garlic and parsley. It is said that even these were introduced to the region by some visitors who suggested the villagers grow and use them after their example. Much later were introduced such vegetables as: beets, carrots and radishes; even much later, people began to cultivate plantain, tomatoes and sweet peppers. It is true that for quite some time hot peppers had been grown “to stiffen” the “bors”. In many gardens one would also find turnips and horseradish, which are self-seeding plants.

After WW I the foods of Voloca diversified, they became richer and much improved. These are the factors that had the major impact on the evolution:

- Troops who were billeted throughout the village during the war had “mess halls” which baked and prepared food for the soldiers. The soldiers would return to their billets with some of the food, which the housewives would sample, or even that the children would consume, in return for cheese, milk, eggs etc.
- Volocans returning from various battle fronts would show their wives or mothers how to make certain meals they had eaten at the places where they had been stationed.
- After the war, many Volocans would send their children to schools in the towns. There they lived perhaps with hosts or in a dormitory where they had occasion to see and eat foods other than those they had eaten at home. Those who were interested, would teach their mothers how to prepare them.
- People became more interested in learning and education, from which they were able to learn some additional things. In the highest grades, they would learn to prepare foods from a good teacher and the girls would learn and then apply their knowledge.

- Many would go to work for a school director or a priest and again, would have the occasion to see and eat other foods.
- Those Volocans that had a higher social status would not leave the house with pickled cucumbers, cottage cheese and "mamaliga" in their packs that they might eat when they went to Kislingers in town. Instead, they could eat there a good soup, goulash, or a steak or schnitzel if they so wished. In turn, they asked their wives to make items like this at home. Sometimes, as a treat, they would take their wives with them into town to let them sample these tasty products.
- The women would also meet together more often, perhaps over a meal, and would learn from each other how to cook certain things.
- The young intellectuals, teachers, etc., elevated from the ranks of the village, also contributed to this advance with their knowledge from schools, private homes and fancy kitchens.
- In the last years, cook books have been developed that the rural population can see and read and from which the housewives learn and produce pleasing products.

These were the factors that improved the food of Volocans and although, there may be even more reasons, I will end with the above ones, which I consider as enough to convince you.

With this, we arrive at the threshold of WW II.

## 1.13
# Clothing and dress of Voloca: Household industry and Craftspeople

Even back at the time of the beginnings of the village, the clothing of the Volocans was the national costume, put together in the home and produced by the individual housewife. The women would plant "canepa" (hemp) or "in" (flax), which they would harvest and bring to a stream or a lake to soak. When the hemp was well soaked, it would be spread along the shore and dried. Taken home, the hemp stalks then had to be "beaten" and broken. After this operation, one would extract the fibers of hemp. These were then gathered and 'combed' yielding "fuiori, calti, and bucii", which had to be spun. (**TN**: No specific translations have been found for these Romanian terms – assumed to be classes of fiber based on thickness or length – one dictionary entry does translate "calti" as oakum. Modern hemp varieties and fiber extraction methods do not give a clue. Sorely missing also is a diagram of an 1800's Bukovinian loom.)

In the early days, before the introduction of cotton, spun "fuiorul" was prepared as the warp (for a loom) while the "caltii" were spun for the weft. Using a warp yarn of "fuiori", bound with a yarn spun from "caltii", one obtained a cloth that was rather coarse and yellowish. To begin the weaving process, the spun hemp was unwound from the spinning spindles and was formed into hanks or "calupuri". These hanks needed to be swished in water for many hours to clean them and to remove the discoloring. This task was usually done around the time of the Great Lent.

After the cleansing of the hanks, they were put on to a winder and the yarn was wound into balls. The balls of "fuiori" yarn were used as the warp strings and those made of the "caltii" were used as the weft. For the weaving process, a shuttle was wound completely with the yarn so that it would not get tangled. It was then attached to a rod. The other end of the shuttle was 'threaded' through the warp strings, brought around the back and returned. It was then tied to the next layer. The cloth was woven with the aid of a wooden frame (a loom). So that it did not fray because of the friction with the 'teeth' at the back and therefore break, the shuttle was greased with a type of paste made of "mamaliga" and called "maja". The cloth made in this was called 'our cloth' – that is, it was woven completely from home grown materials as opposed to cloth from a later era that was woven with a warp of cotton imported from Canada (!!!) and which used a weft of "fuiori" yarn made from hemp. The cloth that used a cotton warp was finer and whiter.

The cloth used long ago was always the home-grown one. From it, the housewife would make "camasi" (the long Romanian shirts), "ismene" (the Romanian pants), and all that they needed in the house for themselves, their husbands and their children.

From this woven material, although it was rather coarse, one could make towels and bags. If one used "bucii" (the shortest and finest) fibers, one could make bedding coverings. In the same way were also made "laicere"

(rugs and wall covers) which the women wove in alternating colors - woven partly in white and partly black-colored yarn.

After the cloth was removed from the loom, it was cut into lengths of 12-13 m and was given over for bleaching. The weaving was done in the spring time, while the bleaching took place in the summer. In our villages the cloth was tamped or beaten gently in our large tub and was then laid out on the grass in the sunshine. It was not allowed to dry completely but when it was still slightly moist, it was gathered up and again returned to the tub that was filled with water heated by the sunshine and was again tamped. After this, it was again stretched out on the grass – this procedure would continue all day. After about three weeks of this bleaching, the cloth would become white and clean and good for further work. The women would fold and stretch the cloth numerous times and then make a bolt of it, a "valatuc". The cloth was folded once more so that the bolt did not unfold. In this form, it was then stored in a trunk.

In the distant past, people would wear clothes made exclusively of 'our cloth'. Around the start of the 20th century, the more affluent ladies began to use a cloth made with a warp of cotton. As time passed, this became more commonplace and soon no one was making "camasi" with 'our cloth', possibly with the exception of the very poor – this remained true until about 1920.

For the warm periods of the year, housewives could make from cloth all the clothing necessary for the family. For the cooler and cold weather, another type of clothing was needed to keep one warm. For this purpose, the villagers kept around their farmyards a few sheep from which they obtained not only milk, cheese and meat – all very good as food, but also wool from which they could weave very many items good for clothing as well as for under coverings and covers for beds. Also of wool, the women could make all the other items needed to improve the appearance of the inside of the house. Well understood, all of this developed very slowly over many years. At the beginning, the items produced were simple and only practice over time produced the many diverse products. Sewing and the stitched items from the distant past did not appear as attractive as the items we see now.

In the spring, after the sheep were shorn, the wool was well washed and then it was carded. During the carding, the "parul" (hairs) and "canura" were separated. (**TN**: A sheep's fleece consists of straight hairs called kemp in English, and the wool fibres which has many bends or crimps that give it its insulating properties.) From the hairs, one could spin a thinner yarn that could be used in weaving for "catrinca" (Romanian wrap-around shirts), "braie" (sashes for the waist) and "traiste" (satchels). One could also spin a thicker yarn for use in weaving material for "sumane" (great coats), "mantele" (cloaks), "covoare" (bedding under covers), "toluri" (bed blankets), "berniveci" (heavy trousers) and "paretari" (decorated wall hangings)

The spinning, carding and weaving of the wool was done in a manner similar to the making of hemp cloth, except that the cloth was not bleached. From the "camuri" a more solid cloth was made. The spun wool, which was made into hanks with a 'spinner' (**TN**: wool spinners - in English - call this a 'niddy-noddy'), was dyed in

different colors and afterwards was given over to be used. In ancient times, they used only natural colors obtained from different plants or flowers and from bark. These colors were attractive and durable and furthermore, they were quite cheap to obtain. With the development of the chemical industries, more colors began to appear. These colors were easy to obtain and hence, with the passage of time, women stopped using the natural colors and began to use only the new colors.

The industrious housewives quickly adopted the use of wool from which they made "catrinta", "braie", "braie de traiste" (satchel belts), 'covoare", "sumane", "paturi" (blankets), "pasle" (insulating cloths), etc. From that time forward, they had items with which to dress the entire family during cold periods and likewise they had bedding materials to cover themselves in bed.

Also available were hides or skins from which people learned to make attractive and warm "caciula" (fur hats), good cloaks or a "bondita" (sheepskin vest) for when it was extremely cold. They would make also a "pieptare" (shirt front) from skins – these were mostly worn by men.

Also from fleeces, using the hair or the wool, women learned to knit stockings and mittens - or even jerseys from a form of gloss silk known as "boronciuc". During the cold of winter, it was not sufficient simply to have a coat, a great coat and a fur hat - one also needed good footwear. For this purpose, sometimes cattle would be butchered. From the hides, the women learned to sew at first "opinci" (leather moccasins or sandals), and later "ciobote" (shoes), "calavari" (thigh-length boots), "bocanci" (hob-nailed boots), and "gheti" (light shoes). Finally, after a period, people came to an easier life and were able to be dressed better and more attractively.

Whatever was normally necessary within the household in the nature of clothing, was produced by the housewives, each in her own home. On the other hand, great coats, sheepskin coats, moccasins and boots were not necessarily made in every home. For these tasks, certain women within the village became specialists and became known as "sumanari" (maker of great coats), "cojocari" (cloak maker), "ciobatari" (shoe maker), etc. These persons would work on behalf of the entire village. With this came the birth of the trades or craftspeople.

Specializing in one of the above mentioned crafts, and doing always this type of work, it became necessary for others to take their places and do the everyday tasks they would normally need to do. Also for the first time, now people began to make more of certain things than was necessary to meet the needs of their own household. These people began to sell their surplus, or even to make products especially for sale. Thus evolved slowly the introduction of manufacturing or 'factory' households that produced items mostly for sale. Together with this production came the birth of commerce and bargaining.

In the more distant past, only exchange was practiced, that is to say – effort for effort, or goods for goods, but later arrived the sale of goods for money and the need for a monetary system. At the start, everything was simple, or should we even say, very simple. Everything was as it appeared. Only after the passage of hundreds or perhaps thousands of years did one arrive at the perfected practices used today.

Until this point, we have discussed what the women did in their homes with regard to clothing the members of the family and decorating the inside of the houses. Now we shall turn to showing what the husbands contributed to the enhancement and beautification of the households. We must recognize that the men also tried hard to make their contribution and to add value. To do this, the men took to working with wood, with hides and with metals. From wood, a man could carve for his wife a good field fork or a garden hoe to help her in the production of hemp, flax and wool for spinning. He would also make her the spinning spindles and her loom. These items, all of which were necessary, were not left rough hewn and simply shaped with an axe or a hatchet, but were worked finely and were finished with floral or other attractive designs using a carving knife. Furthermore, the men tried to make these items as straight as possible and yet as delicate and attractive as possible so that the women would use them with pleasure.

And, of course, the man himself would need a rake, a field fork, a hay fork, a wheel barrow and many other things that he would hurriedly have to make while still keeping them both useful and good. There were many tasks around the house and a deserving husband did not spend much time sitting around daydreaming.

There was once a most talented man, blessed with great patience and with a great taste for beauty. This person produced beautiful crosses for the church and for placement at the gravesites. He also made beautiful crucifixes and icons and many other items. This man, who lived a long time ago in Voloca, was Naicu (Ion Onciulencu), a widely-acclaimed master carver of wood, and a maker of crosses and crucifixes. Another excellent worker of wood was Nistor, son of Lidoarei.

Matruca, son of Tambalarului (the dulcimer player) made many beautiful moccasins or sandals from hides as did later his sons, Nicholai and Toader. Others made fancy money belts, or waist belts, or purses. There was also in our village at one time a man, who made beautiful thigh-length boots. These, however, fell out of fashion and were no longer worn after WW I.

Nicholai, son of Martuca, son of Tambalarului, and especially Traian, the son of Spatarului, began to make finger rings, ear rings, and knives with carvings of wood and bone. Their items were not quite objects of art, being that they were beginners and had but primitive tools. Nevertheless, their works were appreciated in the village since they were inexpensive, available, and met the desires of the customers – who were themselves not very sophisticated at this point of history.

Pricopi, son of Nica and Alexa Melniciuc, a young man from the village, became a blacksmith and made many items needed for the households. He also repaired ploughshares, forged-iron parts for wagons, put rims on wagon wheels, etc.

In the more distant past, the lives of people were simple and so were their plans. As a result, so also were the items produced by their efforts. Apart from these labors, too often they had to deal also with the problems of

invasions and wars. Often, they had little time to think about adornments, as all their time was spent keeping up with life, with their families and with whatever they might be blessed to possess. Life was very uncertain. The rate of progress at which the Volocans proceeded over that time, knowing the problems that stood in their way, was not very great. Work that was accomplished around the house or in the fields, was done in haste and was often rudimentary.

However, as time progressed, when life was more stable and easier, work was done with more patience. The people began to have the opportunities and the leisure time available to enrich their lives and to make more attractive, better and even artistic items that incorporated carvings, indentations and beautiful in-lays. This occurred, for example, in cutting items, spinning spindles, and other similar items. In this time of relative peace, numerous highly-reputed trades flourished. “Stoleri” (printers), “dulgheri” (carpenters), “constructori de case” (house builders), “rotari”(wheelwrights), “dogari” (coopers) and “blehari” (lead workers) appeared on the scene. These tradesmen complemented the other craftspeople in the village, who were there from other households, such as the great coat makers, the coat makers, and the shoe makers.

In each case, the works of these tradespeople were excellent and well done and could now be regarded as becoming true works of art. One could look for examples of such items in a house as the dishes, the cupboards, the spoons and the ladles. With time, the clothing evolved from being simply items that were necessary, to articles of decoration. In this classification we can list the shirts, skirts, sheepskin jackets and the vests of girls and women sewn or embroidered with flowers in vivid colors, sometimes with silk, sometimes with beads, but done with unequalled craftsmanship. All these decorative items, when they began to appear, indicated periods of greater leisure and relative richness. It gives the favorable impression that man finally has found the leisure time to think of beautiful things. Soon, there also developed many adoring customers for these amazing items that the craftsmen would attempt to make.

The works of the hands of the women of Voloca were always well crafted and beautiful. As well, they were long-lasting and well regarded in neighboring villages. This included all their sewing and embroidery work, their weavings, and all their finished products and spinning. Likewise, the Volocan craftsmen, dedicated and earnest in their work, were employed by people from very far away villages.

We had indicated at the beginning of this section that villagers supplied whatever they needed for themselves, by themselves. This situation could not exist forever. Such are the ways of progress, but they always require a price to be paid in return. Work that is repetitive and lasts a long time brings specialization and this, in turn, leads to progress. The more times a person does a task, the more he improves at it with time. Always this has been so. After people had met their personal needs, they would sell what they produced. This is to say, they began to make goods for wages or for sale. To establish themselves, and to show themselves to be better than others, they would bring out for sale their best and most-beautifully crafted items. This is how it was in the past and this is how it remains.

At the start of this section, I stated that Volocans were dressed in the 'national' dress or costume. This was true. They wore this costume every working day, not just for parades or if they were traveling elsewhere. Their dress is the dress of the Dacii from whom they are descended. The dress of the Volocans is old, actually we need say ancient, born in this region, and has remained here from generation to generation. It is a dress that is made from products produced in the village and prepared by villagers' hands. Nothing purchased, nothing imported. For this very reason, the dress or costume of Voloca is the national dress.

You should gather from what has been written here, that there is no room for even a single thought that Volocans were anything but highly endowed and had a large 'pull in their hearts' towards excellent and beautiful products of work. In this village were found not only farm villagers, skilled in all the needs of the household, but also women who were skilled craftspeople and men renowned in all areas of the trades. Their numbers were so large that Voloca could be called a village of craftspeople and skilled workers. Other facts will confirm the reality of this statement and further evidence will appear in other sections of this monograf.

A revealing testimony to the villagers is the whole village itself, with all its households and with all that is found in its durability and beauty.

## 1.14
# The heating and lighting of homes in the distant past

The houses of our ancestors in the distant past were rough dwellings or “bordei” compared to our present homes. They were small and squat, coarsely constructed of wood and had a single room with perhaps a “tinda” (lean-to or porch) attached.

In the summer, times were easier since more life was spent outdoors, occupied with work, hunting or perhaps even rest. Winter time, however, was much more difficult. All the members of the family would need to gather in the “bordei” to escape the cold and, at night, to sleep. They required a fire and for this purpose they made a fire pit along one wall leaving an opening above to allow the smoke to escape. They would warm themselves around this fire, dry their clothes with it, and would prepare the food around it. To keep the children from being burned by the fire, they began to make the fireplace a bit higher up the wall. They also began to build a chimney to direct the smoke and a roof opening through which the smoke exited the chimney and the house. At many times, the houses had two fireplaces feeding one chimney. When they began to realize that the chimney was being heated by the heat of the fire, a platform, raised above the ground, was made at the back of the funnel to serve as a place for children, the elders, and the ill to sit and keep warm. This is how the “cuptor” or bake oven was born. After many years, no one really knows how many, someone had the idea that it would be useful to have a cavity made below the “cuptor” so that fire could be made there. This was a great invention because, in this way, the entire structure of the “cuptor” was heated. Because of this, it became warmer in the house and the children were more shielded from the cold and chills.

At some time in the distant past, people began to bake a loaf of bread in the fireplace, or a meatpie, but this would only last them for a day. They then decided to heat the “cuptor” hot enough to be able to bake a larger number of pies and thus to have them for many days. This was again a big advance in that time of history.

Obtaining wood was not difficult because there were numerous large wooded areas around – in addition, the village was located at the edge of a forest. The population was small and the village was extended at that time and it was believed that the supply of wood from the forests would be everlasting.

More difficult was the task of lighting a fire, since there existed no matches or lighters or any other way that one could obtain a flame with which to start a fire. To start a fire, one had to find hidden embers under the ashes or glowing coals. If all of these were extinguished, one needed to travel, who knows how far, to find a neighbor from whom he could borrow burning coals or lit embers, on which he would blow all the way home to keep them from dieing out.

People also had another method of lighting a fire which involved rubbing together two pieces of dry wood until they became very hot and would burst into flame. In this case, the fire was obtained only with great anxiety and much effort.

A huge jump in the progress of civilization was made when man first found the process of starting a fire with a steel, a flint and tinder. For certain, to arrive at this point took many years. Perhaps it began at some time when someone accidentally struck a rock with his axe and saw a spark jump. He was startled, perhaps with emotion, perhaps with joy, and he wondered how he could use this spark to produce a fire. He thought for a long time and questioned in his mind what he could find to use that could be easily lit with a spark or two. He may have tried perhaps dried grass, or dry leaves, or tree bark and after many attempts he arrived at using tinder, or tree moss, which grows on most of the trees. Great must have been his joy when he realized that he could produce a fire anytime, as long as he had a steel, a flint and tinder.

It is true that one can start a fire using the sun and a lens, but from where would someone get one of these? These also did not exist at that time. Since lighting a fire was difficult and wood was plentiful, the fire burned continuously in the fireplaces.

Many hundreds and hundreds of year passed before matches existed. I have written this story so that people would know how our ancestors lived at that time. The legends of the borrowing of fire and helping out others have existed for a long time.

Nevertheless, the homes did not get very warm particularly as they began to get larger. For that reason, in addition to the fireplace with the oven, another big step was made when people installed, alongside the fireplace, a stove (kitchen range). This constituted a great invention in the life of man – another jump toward progress. In this way, the house was guaranteed not only sufficient heat, but one could prepare meals much easier and quicker. This was the situation when I arrived on the scene.

Lighting inside the houses in the old days was produced using the melted fat from animals, which was poured into a shallow bowl or vessel and into which was introduced a wick of cloth. In this way, all our ancient ancestors produced lighting into their rooms. The light was dim, but for those times in the distant past, this did the job.

In the summer, when there was much work to do, people had the light of the sun when they did their work and at night they had no need for lighting. They worked from the break of dawn until nightfall and this was enough. It was more difficult at night in the winter – long nights as well – since then the men did not have as much work to do. Their main tasks were to tend to the cattle and keep the household supplied with wood. The women stayed mostly indoors, having to care for the children and prepare meals. The rest of the time they would spin linen or wool- work that they could do even in that dim light. Nevertheless, in the winter, the activities were greatly reduced and only the women were fully occupied. The men would go to bed early but by habit they

would arise early. The men would go outside to clear away the snow, make a good path to the well and the barn, cut the wood, feed the cattle and bring in water. The housewife tended to jobs in the house – washing, preparing food, sweeping, dressing the children, sewing, etc.

Lighting with melted fat lasted until about the midpoint of the 19th century when glass lamps or "opiate" appeared, which used coal oil ("naft"). The lamp was a glass container or vessel with a top through which was passed a wick. One end of the wick would hang down into the vessel, into the coal oil, while the other end protruded upwards through the centre of the cap. The wick would draw (suck up) the coal oil which, when lit, would produce a relatively weak light. It was, however, much more useful and practical than the light produced by the melted fat in a bowl. These lamps or "opiate" were used for an extended period of time, their usage ending around the end of the 19th century. These lamps had their locations well defined on a shelf on the shoulder of the chimney. From there, the lamp spread light throughout the house. Only behind the chimney did the room remain unlit. On the bake oven itself, it was semi-dark.

The glass lamps did not have a long life because they were often broken, either through the play of the children, or because they might be bumped accidentally during the hurried movements of the housewife, whereby they would fall to the ground. They would quickly break and until the family could buy another lamp in town, the family remained in the dark. Somewhere along the way, a more clever person had the idea to make the lamp vessel of tin metal so that it would not break when it fell. His idea being a good one, it was put into practice and was adopted by others. This is how we arrived at the present tin lamps which were somewhat larger but also of a stronger build. They never break from a simple fall and, furthermore, give a somewhat brighter light.

When people began to realize that the tin lamps were better, they stopped using the glass ones. By the beginning of the 20th century, in most cases, the lamps were made of tin. In the homes of the more urban residents, they were the only ones used. Furthermore, many of these had a larger capacity and wicks, resulting in a somewhat larger flame. Probably also around the start of the 20th century, kerosene lanterns began to appear, but these were owned almost exclusively by people like priests or school directors. In most normal households, these were not yet used. The rich had sufficient funds to buy these luxury items – not so the humble villagers who had not the income for something like that.

In my own house I lived through the last usage of the glass lamp and then the use of the tin ones - up to the start of WW I. I remember the great shortage of coal oil, salt and matches. We made a great saving by staying in the house many times with the dark room lit only by the odd candle and the glow of the fire in the stove or the fireplace. Nevertheless, our mother and grandmother continued to spin quite well and made the most of this dim light, while we children slept under the covers at the fireplace or over the bake oven. When we would awake in the morning, the spindles would be full of yarn.

After the war, even the rural people began to buy lanterns and so, in this period, they began to replace lamps with lanterns as well. Over the next decade, tin lamps began to disappear as people came to recognize that

lanterns were not a luxury but instead were necessary items. Thus is made progress. Even these lanterns did not remain in their primitive forms- they were made bigger, more attractive and could shed more light. Now they exist in all homes.

The path of progress continues to march on and as time passes and things change, the end of these lanterns is also coming and they are slowly being replaced by electric light bulbs.

## 1.15
# The houses and households of Voloca

Before we describe the houses and households of some Volocans during our era, it is necessary to return to the past and to learn and understand how the households appeared at the time of first settlement of this area. In the absence of absolute knowledge of the past, we will at least do a comparative view to show how a village would start and what types of households could be established in the distant past. Everyone would be able to note and list the big differences between a household of that era and one from this period. We need here to recognize that what occurred was an evolution that took place over an extended period of time. On the other hand, we need to note that even today's village does not remain static but is changing and, in the future, will appear completely different (as a town). This transformation or evolution, as well as being natural, is a sign of the ways of progress. All things in the world go through these evolutions. All things age with time and look to be renovated – this has happened all through the past up till now. This is a truth that no one can dispute.

These rules of change faced our Volocans ancestors as well, when they settled first on the Cozmin hills and, later, on the present site of Voloca. They started first with small shelters or "bordei" and needed to survive with these for a long time period, before they reached a point of having houses and households that were settled, large, comfortable, attractive and furnished with items to meet their needs.

In the past, the village appeared as a modest settlement that was not very extended and contained both smaller and larger "bordei". By comparison, in our era, we see an extended village with many large households and well-built houses, each of which appears very pleasing, very rich, and very showy. There passed hundreds of years until the residents arrived at the capability to erect better-constructed homes, which would be comparable to those that we see now.

The problem of construction materials was not difficult to solve at the start. For a habitable "bordei", one needed to gather some wood, easy to find in those days, as well as some reeds, bulrushes and leaves to cover the wood. The early wooden logs were chinked with mud and smoothed first on the inside, and, after that dried, on the outside. For a roof, some longer poles, not too thick, were tied together and covered with dirt. A weaving of saplings served as a door. An opening in the walls served as a window – window panes did not exist and when it became cold, the openings in the walls were stopped up. In the ceiling, a hole was left to allow the smoke to escape. This was the primitive "bordei" – very simple and containing but a single room. Life was difficult without even a single trace of comfort.

A new, advanced phase in the construction of a shelter or "bordei" came when people began to make a two-room structure. The first room, called the "tinda" (entrance room or porch), served as a place for keeping tools, arms, and perhaps even food. The furniture was still sparse and simple:  some wooden pegs pounded into the

walls, and some straight log segments as stools. The floor was dirt on which was placed grass and leaves, and placed over them were some additional items on which they could sleep. Often the heavier outer clothing served dual purpose – clothing and as sleeping covers. During the winter, they would make a fire and it would continue to burn at all times.

From the primitive "bordei" described above, our ancestors arrived, after another extended period, to better "bordei", built more slowly, in a measured manner, and with better tools. These "bordei" still had only two rooms, but were built with better-prepared logs – being hewn to shape rather than simply cut down and used. The rooms (the "tinda" and the main room) were well chinked with dirt and plastered, and the floor was better prepared (probably tamped with clay). The doors were straighter, made from wood that had been split and hewn, and along the side walls were placed benches that were made of poles joined together and on which the occupants could sit, place their possessions, or on which, at night, they could sleep.

Somewhat later, there appeared a bed, consisting of four stakes or poles set into the ground. Two pairs of these were joined by crosspieces and across these were placed longer poles to form a surface. Around this time appeared a fireplace or hearth as well as the use of steels, flints and tinder.

The residences of the people were often temporary and the construction was comparatively flimsy, as the stability of life was uncertain. Things could not have been otherwise, even if they had so desired. Nor would it have been of any great benefit in those turbulent times, unstable because of never-ending battles with the Tartars, the Turks, the Poles and the Cossacks. At that time the village was located on the Cozmin hills where it had been started by the aboriginal Moldovans.

The attacks and incursions of the enemies and their invasions were frequent and were accompanied by rapes, killings, looting and burning. When an impending invasion was signaled, the young men would depart for the forests and the mountains. When they would return to their village, often they would return to nothing. All would be devastated, burned and destroyed so that they would again have to remake new houses and rebuild their households. In some cases, the residents of the destroyed villages would not even return to their hearths but would search a new location in a more welcoming locale, which was better positioned and eventually, better to defend.

If after this turbulent period, an extended, more peaceful period came about, the people would begin to build larger and more solid homes. In place of simply building a "bordei", the more wealthy, more skilled, and more capable of them began to construct better homes, which we could now really call "casa" or houses. These houses were more carefully built, used carefully-prepared logs and could begin to add more improvements. Some of these consisted still of a single room and a "tinda", while others, still only a few however, advanced to two rooms and a "tinda". The number of family members began to grow and along with that so did the family 'earning power'. The villagers began to build, in addition to the house, a shelter for poultry and even for larger animals. It now became necessary to build a "cotet" (covered pen), an "ocol" (corral), or a "gradj" (barn). I

believe that the first livestock kept around the house were chickens, followed by perhaps a pig, a dog and eventually a cow or a horse. All of these animals needed good protection and shelter because otherwise they would easily be attacked by wolves, foxes and other wild animals. They also needed to be protected and guarded from potential troublemakers. For this purpose, someone came up with the good idea of surrounding the household yard with a fence, be it even just a row of brambles.

In this way, slowly man began to expand and to consolidate his household. This progress did not happen as quickly as it might today. The work was difficult and the progress was slow – a significant change that took place over many decades – over the lifetime of a person. When it happened that someone a bit more clever came up with a significant improvement, the other villagers would seek to duplicate this and so people would learn from each other to improve their situations for the better.

After the passage of a great deal of time, not only the houses, but also the barns began to become more attractive and better constructed. People had made "sandrama" (ramshackle sheds) in which they kept their tools for work and other items. They now began to construct sheds, better covered pens for the hens and pigs and perhaps even a "butca" (dog house) for the dog.

If the source of water was too far from the house, with time came the idea of digging a well near the house. Starting from a well that was lined with timbers and board cribbing, they progressed to a stone-lined well and eventually to today's concrete-lined ones.

The feed for the animals was kept in the loft of the barn or under the shelter of a shed. These types of improvement came with the passage of the years and man now reached a level where he could build a true household resembling those of our era. This is how they labored before our time, when they first settled at this location.

The houses were not made according to one single design, nor were they all equal in size or in quality of construction. All of these factors depended on the tastes of the owner, his needs, his cleverness and, most importantly, his means. The houses were also not all built at the same time, nor were they built by the same tradesmen. For these reasons, we find the variation in the house styles in the village.

A more well-to-do country house, as it appeared in the era between the two world wars, i.e. 1920-1940, consisted of a building with two rooms and a "tinda", all constructed of logs plastered with mud and covered with "dranita" (wooden shingles). For the foundations, they would use some long, thick timbers of wood, under which were placed large flat rocks. Over these large timbers, which outlined a large rectangle, were placed cross-wise two other long timbers, which now divided the rectangular base into three sections. Furthest to the west would be the "casuta" (little house or kitchen), in the middle was the "tinda" and to the east, "casa mare" (the main house), which was also known as the 'house towards the valley'. This last name comes from the fact

that all the houses were built facing the south to be able to receive the maximum sunlight (**Translators addition**: "and that Voloca is overall built on a hill dropping off towards the east").

Once the foundations were in place for these three rooms, the building up of the house walls got under way. They would assemble the logs in such a manner that the walls were kept straight and would grow vertically at the same rate of progress. The resulting house would have an entrance door that led to the "tinda". The "tinda" would have two doors, one that joined it to the 'kitchen', and the other one to the 'main house'. The doors were constructed out of pine boards.

In the "casuta" was a relatively large window in the front (south) wall, while in the "casa mare" there were usually placed three windows, two on the front (south) and one on the east wall. Once the house was built, roofed and shingled, the work party would mix up a "bind" – a straw-based mixture that would hold together the mud or dirt as a plaster. (**TN**: A key ingredient used in western Canada to form this mixture, following a Volocan recipe, was several shovel loads of fresh cow patties – this is not described here.) The walls were plastered smooth with this mixture by a working group called a "claca" or a bee. After this, a final smoothing was done. After the plaster had dried, the upper sections of the walls up to the ceiling were whitewashed while the lower section was plastered with clay. Very few of the houses had an actual floor, only the larger ones. The rest, which comprised the majority, would have dirt floors (again probably tamped with clay). The windows, which were made as one piece, were held by a hinge on the east side and have four panes, generally quite small, to begin with. Later, it became a style to use larger windows and to build them so they would open in the middle, in two parts. They continued usually to have four panes, with the lower two being larger but, occasionally, they were built with six equal-sized panes.

Into the walls, thick wooden pegs were driven both inside and outside. The height of the walls was about 2.25 m. Inside, hanging from the pegs would be their clothing, their "palaria" (hats), satchels, and towels for drying off after washing. In the 'main house', on the pegs, would be hung different household tools, jugs, storage jars, and bunches of fresh flowers or sweet basil ("busuioc"). On the pegs outside, were hung other storage jars.

In the 'kitchen' people would build a 'bake oven' with a hearth and would place an iron stove. In the 'bake oven' they would bake pies, "malai" (corn bread), "alivenci" (**TN**: a corn-meal based delicacy), bread, pastries and baked goods. Sometimes they would use the oven to bake pots filled with "galuste" (cabbage rolls), or "friptura" (a roast of meat), or they would dry corn cobs, fruit or mushrooms. In the hearth of the 'bake oven' might be hung pots boiling the "zeama" (a holiday-quality "bors" –see 1.13), and "mlesnita" (barley cooked with milk). Along the west and south walls of the 'kitchen' would be benches, used during the day for sitting and on which, at night, one could sleep. Also there, sometimes, was a small bed for sleeping and usually a small table and a cupboard. Rather than a cupboard, some homes simply used two shelves – one that held the "strachine" (big bowls), the spoons, and the special wooden board for cutting "mamaliga". Above would be a second shelf for various items.

In the 'house towards the valley' would be two benches, located on the south and towards the east wall; on the west wall near the door, again, two shelves and a cupboard. Along the north wall, was located a bed made of boards, which were placed over two crosspieces that were attached in pairs to four wooden posts which were driven into the ground. In a few cases, there would be a small stove, or a "cuptor", in the 'main house'. In this part of the house, was also the long table with two "osloane" (movable benches), while above the bed would be a hope chest. There would also be the "grinda" (a shelf for the hope chest), "scoartsa" (rugs), bed covers, "valatucuri" (bolts of fabric) and the "calapuri" (hanks of spun wool). There was also another shelf for clothes and pillows. On the east wall were hung the "iconi" (holy pictures).

In the "tinda", at the back was a bench on which one would keep bags of grain, flour, wheat, flax and beans. Against one wall, some homes might also have a large chest or larder. Behind the door of the "tinda" was kept the axe, the large saw and the large "cociorva", a shovel-shaped, long-handled wooden tool used for placing bread into the bake oven and removing it when baked. The door to the outside would have a closure made of wood, which at later times was replaced by an iron one.

In the loft of the house, all of the corncobs would be placed to dry and under the eaves were kept nuts, dried fruit, pumpkin seeds, and other produce or items. From the roof supports near the chimney, were hung meat, sausages and bacon for smoking. Many homes with a chimney and a hearth were built in the village – later some only had the chimney in the "tinda".

In the vicinity of the houses, a covered pig sty was often made as well as a shelter for chickens. Both of these were made of wood and were covered with wooden shingles. The walls were chinked and plastered with dirt and were floored with boards or board slabs. These buildings were built at some distance from the house. The other large building constructed was the barn with a "hajul" (hay loft) or possibly a shed with a "studola" (covered area). The barn was constructed in the same manner as the house, using the same materials, and was covered with shingles. The walls were chinked and plastered with mud and were then whitewashed.

For feeding the cattle housed in the barn, there was a manger into which the farmers would fork hay, alfalfa, corn stalks, etc. The pigs would have a trough. In some of the pens, the position of the trough was fixed, but the end would extend outside and was provided with a hinged door through which the food would be poured - the cover would then be closed. In some households, there was also a corral for the cattle.

Near the house was also a storage granary, where people could store their corn for air drying. The cobs were held under the barn loft or indoors on the shelves in the "tinda". They would be strung together and tied together with "panuse" (corn husks).

A shed with a covering roof was built on four tall poles. It covered the sheaves and cattle feed that did not fit in the loft of the barn or in the covered shed out of the rain. The shingled roof of the shed was adjustable – it could be raised or lowered according to the needs of the farmer and the amount of straw that was under it.

Sheds were built over the lumber, over the firewood, over the "maiul" (grain crusher) and the field forks as well as over the men, who would be sawing trees into boards or firewood. The sheds could also be used to protect the wagon or the sleigh.

Some houses had "sandrama" (ramshackle sheds) – perhaps at the rear of the house, or against the outer wall of the 'kitchen'. Here would be placed many household items and work tools such as the loom, "zolnita" (the wash tub), barrels, etc. We must not forget the dog house – made of wood and shingled.

Some well-to-do households made the kitchen into a more comfortable sleeping area and, to compensate for this, they made a separate outside cooking area – a 'summer kitchen'. This looked like a miniature house consisting of two rooms, one, a type of "tinda' for bags of food and other items, and the second, a room with a stove and a bake oven, where meals would be prepared. In this 'summer kitchen' one could also sleep, since it normally also had a bed.

The furniture was modest. The bed was made out of boards. On it slept the mother, the father and the smaller children. The elderly slept on the warm "cuptor" shelf. The bed coverings were simple – blankets made of coarse hemp or of wool, or even clothes no longer in use. Long pillows filled with chicken feathers completed the bedding. Besides the bed, there were also benches, country-style stools, a small table in the 'kitchen' as well as a large one in the 'house on the valley side'. In some houses there were also cupboards. A small ash-removal tool, a fire poker and a broom, which stood in the recess to the left of the door, completed the furniture of the 'kitchen'.

The households of Voloca were completed with a large garden located near the house – an orchard yielded different fruits and immediately beside the house, one found the vegetable garden with rows of onions, garlic, parsnips, beets, carrots, etc. When the housewife was a young woman, or when there were young girls in the family, the garden was never short of flowers. Those seeded included basil, mint, carnations, dahlias, lilac, roses, dandelions, peonies, etc.

In this article, I have described the houses and households as they appeared before the start of WW II. New residences from the second half of the 20$^{th}$ century have changed greatly – they now have a much more urban appearance.

## 1.16
# The predictions of our Volocan ancestors on things to come

To understand the lives of the villagers as we see them now, we need to return to the past to try to get a view of their lives in eras past. In that way, we will be able to appreciate better the difficulties of that time, the path leading to our time, and the actual status of civilization with all its harvests.

It is very hard to assemble an accurate mirror, which can show us the exact state of the village at any given time. We do not dispute the accuracy of historic sources but unfortunately, no one has left us a good written description of the village. Therefore, we must limit ourselves to the stories and predictions of the old people, which we heard when we were children. We will attempt to create the scene, with the aid of these surrounding memories, which were left to us from our parents and our parents' parents. If some parts of this tale seem a fantasy, we will have to use our judgment – if history supports it, then all the better for us.

We can not blame anyone because they did not leave a written record describing the village of the past. No one knew how to read, with the possible exception of the very rich, the clergy and the highest persons in governance. To have left a record, they would have needed to import writers and people who were more knowledgeable. Some of these people lived and were employed as secretaries at the commune offices of larger places. They would write and produce all the proclamations, diplomatic correspondence and keep records.

But even though nothing written has been left for us from that period of time, the reason is not simply because most people could not read or write. The fact is that no one then believed that this needed to be recorded, or that someone would find it of value in the future. This thinking can be explained that even today, with all our book knowledge, with all kinds of technical capabilities and without any shortages, we do the very same thing and, therefore, we should rightly be condemned. How many among us think that they should leave for those in the future a record of what we see, what we hear, all that happens in our daily lives and in our village, our town or our country? We are thankful and we appreciate, sometimes more and sometimes less, our surroundings, thinking that all we see or hear is ordinary and is understood, not only by us, but by the whole world. Do we take time to record the good things we have? No, in fact we do not. The situation, we are seeing and the period we are living in, does not last forever. Our life is short and fleeting and, what we have experienced and understood as real, changes greatly after our deaths. When our children and grandchildren appear on the scene, life will be totally different. They will recognize and know very well things from their era, but they will not have written information from which to know how it had been during the times of their grandparents and great-grandparents. We see how useful and valuable it would be to have a record of our ancestors. Similarly, we see that it is necessary and useful to chronicle and describe the situations and significant facts of each era – written by those who are there to see and live them.

Other occasions about which we have lost opportunities to provide written historical records are wars, earthquakes, or attacks by the barbaric hordes - or even records of the difficult and uncertain life in those turbulent times. Another problem, however, existed. Even if something had been written up, it could easily have been lost or destroyed in those tumultuous periods.

We have written earlier (see 1.10) the manner in which our ancestors were organized and how this came about. In this chapter, we will look at what they thought and how they viewed life. From what we will learn about them, we will see that they were often preoccupied with the future and with what would happen to mankind, in the future.

The people lived isolated, far from each other, and even the villages were far apart from each other with very few ties to the towns. They were missing means of communication and of getting information. There were no newspapers, no reviews or telephones, and very little in the way of radios or television. Very few were the occasions when they would receive important news of an event from somewhere far afield. The village lived within itself, for itself, dealing with the joys and the difficulties of the local inhabitants. The residents of Voloca knew of the happenings in their village and the problems and these matters would interest and occupy them. For this reason, people would gather on holidays and during the evenings of work days to tell others about their happenings, or to discuss certain items.

The elders of the village, in particular, would go to visit the neighbors and engage them in conversation. They would linger a long while and the hosts would often invite them to stay for a meal. If the story-telling and discussions took a long time and nightfall caught up with them, the visitor would sleep on one of the neighbor's benches, when sleep caught up with him. Many days or nights, occasionally for several days at once, were spent by our ancestors visiting and talking about events in the past, or predicting the events to come. The children in the houses normally rested and slept near the warm oven area of the chimney – from there they would listen to the stories and predictions of the elders. All of them kept very silent, without complaining. They might exchange a few whispers explaining things, but mostly, they listened.

**(TN**: Note that what they were allowed to hear occurred before the present-day warnings of "Parental Supervision Advised".)

They listened in both wonder and dread to the things that they heard from the mouths of their parents and ancestors. The elders would talk about famines; about wars; many occasions of great blood letting; about cholera that spreads throughout the population; about the locusts that eat all the crops; about the darkening of the sun; about the great droughts when the water springs all dry up and the population dies of thirst and all things dry up; about shakings of the earth; and about many other misfortunes which can befall the population. They would also continue on about other disasters that will come to the earth, when people will be cruel, untruthful, prone to lying, greedy, confrontational and will prey on each other. They predicted that there would

come, sometime in the future, de-populating disasters and events that will drive people mad, leaving them crueler than the wild beasts. Meanwhile, respect, honesty and shame will disappear from the earth.

In addition, they predicted that birds will fly through the air carrying in their beaks flaming torches, which they will heave towards people and sear their flesh. Live on earth will become so difficult, and everything around will become so horrible, that those who can no longer bear the situation will crawl on their knees and elbows through the cemeteries, begging the dead to awake from their graves so as to make room for them – those alive will no longer be able to stand the horror and terror.

The children sitting behind the bake oven, hearing these predictions, were horrified greatly and asked whether they would live to see those days. It was a most terrifying question and one to which there existed no answer.

These children, who listened to the predictions from the mouths of their ancestors, became our parents or even our great grandparents. To these questions, one can now give the answer and, to a large part, the answer is in the affirmative. Those children of that time were able to see, in their lifetimes, the beginnings of those dire predictions.

At the end of their predictions, the elders would say that if the people did not mend their ways, leaving behind their bad habits, these predictions indicate the ultimate end will come. A violent firestorm will envelop the entire land and all that it finds on it.

How did these people of that time period come to think this way, since they could not travel around much, nor could they read about this - how did they know these things were going to occur in the future? This is a question that is still unanswered – it falls now to us to try to answer this.

Many of the things that they predicted have, in fact, occurred or are occurring – we have seen them and have lived them. From our point of view, we can see that they were correct and accurate in their predictions. How did they see in advance what was to come? Were those with experience able to read the signs of the times, from which they could read what was to come? To understand these signs, and to read and interpret them, one does not need the alphabet and perhaps, is even better off without it. Man's mind and good judgment are better tools for reading them. Innate intelligence and imagination, imbedded in a good person – one who is honest, respected, one who loves the truth and practices truth in his everyday life, will allow him to predict the future, to a large extent. He may not be able to predict all details, but in what is the essential part, he will be correct and clear.

I have heard the tales listed below from my mother who, as a child, listened fearfully to the ancestors of her era that came to her parents' house and told their stories and predictions. There were some people who bent the truth a bit about what they heard, but time has defeated them and has cheated them. The greatest sin lies in not believing.

The things she heard were as follows:

- " But the dead will not arise from their graves and the live ones will have to return, crawling on their knees and elbows, to their homes, crying and wailing,
- Looking towards the east, they will see a great lake towards which they will try to turn so as to quench their thirst and cool your fevers, but the water shall retreat from their path and the heat of the fires shall be more intense. They will endure great sorrow and weeping, and their laments will reach to the sky, filling the air.
- The land shall be scorched with fire and all will be consumed so that nothing will be left alive.
- Dishonesty, cheating and lying, will become so common and so dominant in the world, that honesty will be abandoned.
- The rich will neglect the poor and cheat them of their due, while the powerful will avoid the weak, keeping them out of sight.
- Endless invasions and dominations by others will come.
- In the land, neither mercy, nor caring nor shame will exist. Harshness and cruelty will evolve and, in their ways, will seek to destroy all they you may have.
- The land will sink to immoral behavior and "pierzani ?", without concerns for those who are to follow.
- Catastrophic earthquakes will occur.
- There will be bloody wars between kingdoms and between rulers of people.
- People will perish by the million, without any fault on their part.
- There will be a great shortage of things in the world.
- Enemies will appear among the people and will ravage them.
- Brothers will become enemies and children will send their parents to trial and prison.
- 'Lying' shall install itself on a throne of gold and from there it will seek to control people and issue edicts. Its advisor will be 'cunningness'.
- True and proper beliefs will be ground under foot and truth will not again be seen.
- You will see many other signals in the future, but people will not believe them. This will indicate that 'The End' is near.
- The Unclean Spirit of Iuda (the Anti-Christ) will be put as the Ruler over people and will darken their minds, so that they will not be able to understand anything. Oh Lord, Dear Lord- what a terrible ending- what terrifying events and what a violent end awaits us."

The children, listening from behind the seat on the bake oven and hearing these things in absolute horror, would ask each other – When and how will all these things happen? Our ancestors would respond that perhaps Almighty God would take pity on them or that they would die before they would have to face this time of horror.

Many children who heard these words, died long time ago and even many of their descendants have taken the path to eternity, although a few may still be alive.

Have these predictions, in fact, come to pass? To a large measure, yes. Examples are:

- There have been crushing wars that have grasped the earth and lasted for years.
- People have perished by the million, and other millions have been left crippled, widowed and orphaned.
- Entire regions have been left uninhabited and famine has stretched over huge areas.
- Entire countries have been destroyed by the fury of war.
- Towns and villages have been devastated, their valued buildings knocked down and burned, and some have been flooded and have sunk to the bottoms of the seas and oceans.
- There have been enormous earthquakes, which have swallowed settlements complete with their inhabitants, and great floods that have caused enormous losses.
- We have had great droughts, which have been followed by deadly famines.
- The bombs at Hiroshima and Nagasaki destroyed, in an instant, hundreds of thousands of human lives - innocent victims, as well as anything else that was alive in those two cities. Such a sudden and destructive fire had never been seen before since the beginning of time. And still, there are some who praise this crime that has seen no equal, indicating just how low mankind can reach.
- Armed attacks from the sky on towns, population centers, and even forests – where soldiers are believed to be hiding – take place even today. Hundreds of thousands of people have fallen during this time and even the young animals in the jungles have fallen victim. Meanwhile, the ground has remained trampled and denuded of its greatness – the great forests.
- The predictions have also come true concerning the poor and the sick compared to the rich and the strong.
- Immorality is in evidence throughout the lands – miniskirts, hippies, drug addicts and transvestites.
- Atomic and hydrogen weapons threaten us.
- Enemies and unbelievers among the population continue to exist.
- Small states continue to be trampled by larger ones.

(**TN**: Thus ends this chapter of woe!)

## 1.17
# The Cemetery at Holeriste
### (Translates as "of the Cholera" victims)

Above the village, on the margin of the flats near the Calciceanca, near the borders with Cuciuril Mare, is an area called Holeriste. Many times in the past, the entire flat area served as a common ground for the village of Voloca. This situation continued through to the start of the 20th century when children would bring cattle to pasture there. It was part of the grazing common closest to the village.

On the area called Holoriste, one could observe in earlier times before WW I, some separate areas washed off by the rain, where plusher grass grew for grazing. These areas had a regular pattern to them and were spaced in a uniform manner but, because of time and the effects of rain, it was hard to distinguish the original layout. They were almost level with the surrounding ground.

Asking once of my parents what the origin of the areas was, they had almost forgotten, but told me that there had been, a long time ago, a cemetery there in which many villagers from Voloca who had died of holera (cholera) had been buried and for that reason, the name that applies until today for the place is "la Holeriste' (Place of the Cholera Victims).

The first victims of cholera in the village were buried in the old cemetery (see chapter1.8), which is located towards the east from the church but, as the numbers of victims grew enormously, the bodies were carried off and buried high in the Calciceani, near the village boundary, in the hope that the spreading of cholera would be avoided in this way. This was a superstition because the cholera continued to take lives without a stoppage.

In this location, villagers put up a wooden cross, as a sign, to indicate the place where the victims of cholera were buried. Because of the weather and rain, this wooden cross degraded and became rotten with the passing years but the villagers always replaced it with a new one. Therefore, on the hill, one could see always a memorial to remind the villagers of Volaca of this terrible sickness, which occurred and devastated the village. Terrible was the time when people neglected the care of the dead and did not continue to care for the graves. Great grief existed in that period, when they felt that no one would survive.

After WW I, the grave outlines began to disappear, the origins became wiped out, and they began to blend with the surrounding ground. Rain, the grazing of cattle there, and the actions of soldiers who battled there and followed orders in the time of war, all contributed to remove the traces of the Holeriste cemetery on Calciceanca. But the crosses remain always to serve as a reminder that, at that place, a cemetery once stood.

When I visited the village in the summer of 1967, I visited the site where my ancestors are resting, and I began thinking back to the far past. The idea occurred to me that it would be good to place there a simple but durable

and long-lasting annotated monument and to raise there a large cross using steel and concrete to serve as a memorial for those buried there. It would also serve to refresh the memories in the future of the tragedy that at one time struck the village. My impression is that this idea was not looked at very favorably. Furthermore, the persons who might have helped to realize the concept have since died but I am still hopeful it may come about.

In recent times, the younger generation does not, in general, call the area Holeriste but instead refer to it as the "On the Hill with the Cross". They do not recognize the significance of the cross and do not know what occurred in the old days, or what occurred at that place. In addition, the land is ploughed and planted with grains and potatoes and there does not exist even a trace from which one can recognize that once there existed, at that place, a cemetery.

## 1.18
# The customs and habits of our elders

The Volocans had many customs that were related to holidays, to the changes of the seasons, to the lives of the families, and many other things. The customs were observed piously from generation to generation and never the thought occurred that they should change. Thus, the customs lasted through generations of our ancestors. The largest number of, and most-enjoyed, beautiful customs, were those involved with the celebrations of the Christmas holidays and New Year - holidays that were awaited with great joy by not only the adults, but especially by the younger ones.

Before anything else, the householders had to worry about preparing all the needed provisions, in particular, firewood, flour, a good pig to butcher, a few flasks of "holerca" (homemade white lightening) and all the little things needed for the carolers. The housewives would make a great cleaning and tidying up of the house, after which they concentrated on tasty baking, especially pies with meat and dairy products. These were much anticipated and desired after a Lenten period of six weeks. In that period of the past, even the children observed the Lenten period together with their parents. The Christmas Lent was observed until the eve of the birth of Christ. On Christmas Eve, the housewives prepared a repast specializing in the flavors of Lent; boiled wheat (**TN**: – often with honey and poppy seed), broadbeans fried with onions and oil, cooked apples and pears, and cakes cooked with poppy seed.

The small children (around 5-6 year olds) could not get settled down – they were excitedly getting underfoot preparing to go out to sing carols. They were dressed up in warm clothes and carried on their backs a satchel in which they could carry apples, nuts and sweet buns or little braided breads ("colacheii"). If they earned coins, these they took great care of and placed in a little purse in their pockets. If the winter was mild and the roads were easy, the small carolers lasted a longer time. The smallest were hoisted to the windows in the arms of one of the parents or by an older brother or sister. The slightly bigger children, who could walk further, were sometimes accompanied from house to house by parents to protect against the dogs. This caroling ended eventually from weariness of walking, defeat by tiredness, or a need for sleep. After the setting of the sun, the older children would start to go caroling – these often were in groups of two or three.

The carols that were sung by the small children at the windows were short and often consisted of only a few phrases, and even these were spoken in haste by carolers, who quickly became weary and short of breath from tiredness. The older children sang carols with more phrases that could be much better understood. As a custom, their carols proclaimed and celebrated the birth of Our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

After dark, the teens would begin to arrive with the star "steaua" and the young men with the "boteiul". These latter came with the "fluir" (flutes) and "fluieras" (smaller flutes). The young men walked in larger groups with a fiddler. For a period, there was also a trumpeter who was in a group – he was the son of Galatu, son of

Busuioc. Also in that musical group was a clarinet, played by the talented Pricopi, son of Artemon Semeniuc. These teams of carolers, that is to say, the boys with the star and the older boys, who walked around with the fiddler or the clarinet, sang from house to house in the village almost the entire night. If late in the night you stopped quietly somewhere on the hills, the sounds of these carols you would hear were 'out of this world'. The village resonated with various melodies, many of them very beautiful, as the many voices kept the village awake and happy. All these songs would interweave into a harmony and produced a huge chorus as if they came from a thousand voices. It was a great joy to proclaim to mankind that today in Bethlehem, The Savior was born.

The makeup of the caroling groups was agreed to long before the holidays. Almost immediately after the day honoring St. Nicholas, the young boys and the teens would discuss and agree with whom they would go to walk with the "steaua" or with the "buteiul". The young girls would do likewise. There were sometimes some ruffians, who would conceal themselves in hidden places, and from there would throw snowballs and break the "steaua" of the small children or younger kids. This was a rather ugly situation that often would end in a fight or some scandal. Sometimes the ruffians would even get to sleep at the police station for a few nights.

Few people would butcher their pig for Christmas. Most would wait to do this just before New Year so that they could have fresh meat, bacon and sausage for the Feast of St. Vasilie. This holiday was approached by the residents of Voloca with even greater preparations. There were actually three holidays celebrated on this one day. This day tied together the Baptism of Christ (according to the old calendar), the Feast of St. Vasile and finally, New Year's Day. For this reason, the villagers assembled and prepared with many foods, with various drinks, and with money to welcome those who came on that day with "uratul" "malanca", "irozii", "buhaiul" ( the bull), "capra" (the goat) and other groups. (**TN:** Although heard about in childhood, I could find no dictionary translations for some of these "dress-up" pageants – probably all rural slang. John Goodes provides a background to some of these in his book "Where Money Grew on Trees".) All of these groups began to wander through the village on the eve of St. Vasilie, usually quite early. The older children and young men, gathered in groups of 2-3, would walk through the village performing the "uratul". One would say a little verse "the plugusorul" (about a little ploughman), another would be loudly ringing a handbell, and the third would be cracking a cattle whip. When the spokesman shouted "manati, mai" (a herdsmen's driving call) the others would follow up with "hai, hai". The older lads would form groups of 6-8-10, led by a spokesman. Another would be a bell ringer, another with a flute or "fluier", and the rest with cattle whips. When the spokesman would shout "manati, mai", the rest would all respond with "hai, hai" and crack their whips. The bells were loudly rung and the "fluier" played without end, reinforcing the spokesman, who recited the "plugusorul". The Haicatul (or "plugusorul") traditionally used in Voloca, was known as "Badica Traian". When the group had talented individuals, who wished to widen their repertoire with different orations, they would sometimes improvise depending on the household situation, but especially when they encountered a household with pretty and marriageable young ladies. They would receive payment in money and at many places they enjoyed in addition some good food and drink.

In all the houses, the "malanka" was celebrated at night. This was performed by a group of 25-30 youth, having among them sometimes a few wearing masks. The group singing the "malanca" was usually accompanied by a fiddler and, on rare occasions, by someone on the "tambali" (hammer dulcimer). The content of the performances and the melodies was generally much enjoyed. The leading role of the "malanca", portraying a young wife, was usually played by a young man, who could as easily have been mistaken for a woman. The second masked person (sometimes not masked, however) was the leading male of the "malanka" – usually a young handsome husband, properly married. When the "malanka" was sung, these two characters stood facing each other in front of the windows of the house. Acting as an old woman and an old man, they wore costumes that generated much laughter. In other comical roles were a Jew, a Jewess, a gypsy and others. During the time these young men sang the "malanca" at the windows, the masked ones danced around the yard. The old woman and old man would craftily steal into the house and would invade the sausage pantry or the cupboard where drink was kept. Money was given to the members of the "malanca" and, at some houses, they also received something to eat and drink. At houses where there existed young girls, the payment was generally better.

The custom of traveling around with "Izorii" (the Nativity Pageant), was introduced into the village after WW I. The first group to do so was one assembled by the teacher, Nazarie Paulencu. It pleased many residents of Voloca and has been remembered for a long time - it has been repeated often since. The principal characters are: Irod (King Herod), the three wise men, two soldiers, an angel, a shepherd, a prophet, and others. The pageant centers around the birth of Jesus, the Massacre of the Innocents, the Escape of Jesus etc.

Those who traveled with the "buhaiul" (the bull) formed groups of 8-12 young lads. The bull was made from a small barrel over which was thrown a hide. In the middle was made a hole, from which stuck out a tuft of horsehair. This hair, when drawn with wet fingers, produced a sound resembling the bellowing of a bull. One of the young men would tell the story, while another would ring the bells, and a third would pull along the hair to produce the bellowing of the bull. Others, at appropriate intervals, would shout "hai, hai" and would snap (crack) the cattle whips. At some houses, the residents did not want the bellowing to be produced because this might frighten their cattle.

Another group who traveled the village might do so with the "capra" (the goat). This group usually consisted of three – the goat, the person who controlled it, and the third person, who was the one trying to sell the goat. The goat was very highly 'decorated' and had a tendency to make many funny faces. People also liked this pageant when it was well done. For a period, this pageant was very successfully performed by Isidor Grecu, Vasilie, son of Hortugului, and Isidor, son of Irene. The villagers would be convulsed with laughter when they would see them playing 'the goat'.

There was sometimes also the custom to travel around playing "ursul" (the bear). This group consisted of three – the bear, someone with a "fluier" and someone with a "ciur". (**TN**: One dictionary entry translates this as a 'screen' – this may be the equivalent of a kazoo – a comb with tissue paper.)

Through the village traveled many groups, since the village was quite stretched out in size. The next morning at daybreak, the small children traveled with the 'seeding' custom. They would enter the homes and, from the entranceway, would scatter a handful of grains of wheat or corn and wish the householders "Happy New Year with Good Health". Sometimes, the "malanca" and the "irozii" would continue in the morning after sunrise, to visit the remaining houses, particularly those at the edges of the village.

On the morning of New Years Day, the elders went to church, but the younger generation, being tired from the nighttime activities, went to bed. After noon, however, they had to go to the dance. The younger generation very much wanted to partake in the activities and the dances because, during the Christmas Lenten period, no weddings were performed and no dances were held. During the Christmas holidays, celebrations lasted three days and sometimes even four. If Christmas Eve fell on a Sunday, then this day was celebrated after the three days of holidays.

Rare it was that a girl was not invited to dance. They would all dance, because after the "malanca" the boys would all want to win much favor. After the holidays, things returned to normal and the girls would dance with their boyfriends or with those they would like to - especially the more attractive ones. During the holidays both the younger and the older women would dance. The younger girls would give their hand more often to the young men that were the more skillful dancers. Nevertheless, the young men were usually able to find some of the older girls to dance and romance with. Mostly, the girls would dance regardless of how well they had learned, without being embarrassed. They would quickly learn, but among the boys, there would be some, who were very bashful and would have to be dragged into the dance and held tight by the hands, or they would run away. In the end, even the hesitant would learn. Thus is life - it all begins with difficulty – even in dancing.

After New Year, came the celebration of the Baptism in the Jordan, which was celebrated near a well in the village, or at the waters of the Derelui River. In recent years, this celebration, called "Iordan", was celebrated at the church. On the eve of "Iordan", the population would go to the church in the evening as part of the service, and would return with a flask or bottle of 'blessed or holy water'. No one was allowed to eat bread or drink the 'holy water'. A bit of the 'holy water' was poured into the wells. The rest of it was placed in a glass jar with a sprig of basil, to be available throughout the rest of the year. The evening church service finished quite quickly because the priest and the dascal (church reader) had to travel throughout the village with the "chirileisa" (a religious blessing) to bless all the houses. Since our village was large, there were three priests but even so, they could not cover all the houses. Thus, those houses on the very margins were visited and blessed by a dascal and a church usher. Each priest had with him two or three men, who would carry the wooden pail of 'holy water', a satchel with "varzare" (baked goods), a bag with "fuioare" (fibre ready for spinning), and a bag with "graunti" (grains). Also accompanying the party, were four or five young men, who went ahead of the group and shouted as loud as they could: "Chiraleisa- Sir and Madam, come out of your house with lighted candles to greet the priests", at which point they would begin to sing the church song "In the Jordan you were baptized O Lord,….". After this, the priest would bless the house by spattering the four walls with holy water. The residents would kiss the cross which had been carried to their home, as well as the priest's hand, and would then

give payment, which could be money, baked goods or grains. They would place a "fuior" on the cross. At times "Iordan" was celebrated with greater pomp. This point will be expanded on at a later time.

After the holidays, the winter "caslegile" would start (see 1.19), when many weddings were celebrated. There were dances on Sundays and holidays. At the end of the winter "caslegile" period, there was a week with meat allowed, followed by a week allowing only milk and cheese products and, finally, the start of Lent. This Lenten period was observed until Easter. During this time, no flesh was consumed by anyone except for the very small children or the sick. The Lenten period was observed with such a strictness that there was even no closeness allowed between husbands and wives. There were no weddings held during Lent, nor any similar events. The population during the past fully respected these customs.

At the beginning of Lent, the 'great cleansing' took place whereby one carefully washed, with boiling water, all the vessels that had been used during "caslegile" for the preparation of meat dishes.

In the first week of the Great Lent, the holiday of St. Toader occurred – a saint more important to women. It was also a time when they went to church to take part in a service commemorating the dead. For the holiday of St.Toader, the women would prepare a "covasa" (see 1.12 above), a type of food with a sour taste that was much enjoyed. Whenever I had the chance to eat "covasa", I always enjoyed it. The women would make a large amount of "covasa" and would give some to others who did not make it. It would be eaten with cornbread and cakes.

On March 25 would be celebrated the 'Great Visitation' (Annunciation), when the Archangel Mihail visited the Holy Virgin to announce the coming of the Holy Spirit. For this day, an exemption from Lent of fish as a food was allowed – an event much welcomed during a long and severe Lent.

Palm Sunday was observed on the last Sunday of the Great Lent to celebrate the entry of Jesus Christ into Jerusalem, when he was welcomed with song and olive branches.

Near the end of the Great Lent, began the week of the suffering, when there many events held at the churches. There were some very religious services, which were made in the evening. Morning prayers or "matanii" would also be said because the men and women, in general, and the young, in particular, would have to attend to confess their sins. They would be required to say a certain number of repetitions of the prayers – 20 or 40-50 or even more, depending on the number and severity of their transgressions but, depending also on the severity of the confessor. After the believers had said their appropriate repetitions of prayers, they were considered to be forgiven and had the right to continue as members of the church. The young people, boys and girls, came to these morning and evening services happily because they had an occasion to meet. The Thursday of the week of suffering was awaited with joy and impatience by the youngsters. The villagers named it the Great (or Holy) Thursday. On this date, the mothers would bake "colaci" (braided breads), some of which they would bring to church. They would receive into their homes a slightly older relative, who would bring in his satchel braided

breads and candles for the young family members. The mothers of the house would take care to dedicate each braided bread to the memory of someone from the family who had died. Much happiness was made for the children with these breads. With certainty, these “gifts of remembrance” (“pomana”) were truly appreciated.

Also on Holy Thursday, starting early in the morning, it was the habit to start a bonfire in the village at each house. This was a great event, even for the older children and, especially for the young men, who prepared the fires with dry deadfalls, board slabs and scrub, as well as straw or dried weeds raked up and collected from the gardens. The original, religious purpose behind these fires was to warm the spirits of the dead, but they served also the practical purpose of allowing a cleaning up of the gardens through their burning. Afterwards, the gardens were left much cleaner and could be worked up easier. The young men would play around the fires and some of the more courageous would try to leap high over the flames. The children would beg their parents to be awoken early so that they could rush out to see the fires.

Thursday evening, there was an important service at the church, which was attended by many people because, on that night, the Holy Scriptures were read in 12 languages.

The following day was Great (or Good) Friday, or the ‘Friday of Suffering’, when Christ was destined to die on the cross from which he was later buried. The service at the church was called “Prohodul”. This was held Friday evening and, at the church many people assembled. They would listen to the service and would sing, after which they would walk around the outside of the church carrying lit candles in their hands. From that day and, until the mass at Easter, it was not permitted to sound the church bells. Preparations and baking for Easter could be done on Holy Thursday and on Saturday, but not on Friday. Also at this time, colored eggs were prepared and some would be beautifully decorated.

To prepare for Easter, there would be a great cleanup both inside and outside the homes. These preparations needed to be completed before Holy Thursday. Also in preparation for Easter, all would prepare and make new “camasi” (fancy shirts), especially the young people, and particularly the young girls, who would embroider beautiful shirts with flower patterns. New shirts were sewn also for the adults, but these were simpler. Nevertheless, everyone had to have a new shirt for Easter.

Saturday night, just before the Arising, fires were again made near all the houses in the village. A large fire, which was keep going all night, was made on the grounds of the church and was attended by many young men and youngsters. At this fire, they would explode “sacaluse” (homemade fireworks), preceding the service of the ‘Arising of Christ’. The “sacaluse” consisted of tubes of steel (often surplus but useful), loaded with gunpowder. At one end, they had an opening through which flame could reach the gunpowder. This was achieved with the aid of a long pole in which a long iron nail was stuck and which was heated red hot in the fire. It was then positioned into the opening. The powder would catch on fire and, at that moment, a powerful explosion would result.

The smaller fires built near the houses would die out earlier and the children would go to sleep. Nevertheless, there would always still be some larger fires throughout the village, with at least one in each of the sectors of the village. One of these used to be made in a valley near our home and near the house of Macrina, daughter of Pricopi the Oncioaie. Here would assemble many youngsters and young men. In addition, many older men would attend. This place of gathering had a reputation and a customary happening that was greatly enjoyed. Some of the more rascally and adventurous characters would gather here and the largest fire would be built – one that lasted almost until daybreak. This was also where the biggest and greatest number of explosions occurred. Those who wanted to take part, would have to collect a large supply of wood to make the fire large and keep it going. To begin with, they started with dried wood, but soon they were carrying in knotted chunks, old logs, stumps, dried roots and anything else they could find. When these were quickly used up, they would set out to bring to the fire even odd bits of lumber, stored wood, dog houses, gates from yards or pieces of cut firewood. When these were thrown into the fire from a distance, thousands of sparks would fly.

There would be a great deal of fun, or so it seemed, at least, to those doing these things. The most interesting part came at the time of the explosions. They wished always to outdo those on the hill, those at the church, or those at the other locations. At this fire they had bigger, thicker tubes of steel left over from the war. These were loaded with gunpowder, some harsh-smelling powder and sometimes even with dynamite powder. After this they were packed with earth, clay, and sods and then were tamped down tightly with a maul. Those who did this loading were Nicolai, son of Matruca of the Tambalarului (the dulcimer player), his brother Toader, and Simion, son of Isan. After this tube was well loaded, it was thrown into the embers of the fire. The young men added, in great haste, some wood and branches and then all rushed off to hide behind a hill or in a ditch, to observe the fire. The roads and paths that led to the fire area were guarded by 1-2 young men, who would inform and stop anyone who was unknowingly approaching the fire or might pass through there. This was a good precaution. After several minutes, one would hear a powerful explosion, sounding like thunder, and the fire was blown about in all directions. The tree stumps and embers were thrown to a great height and flew through the air to who knows where. It was great fun, and the more clever youths would tell many kinds of anecdotes and produce much glee. The tube was filled again many times over the night, if it was not lost or did not burst – otherwise they would use a second tube kept as a spare. Year after year, the fire was made at Macrina since, at that house, there lived a rather mischievous lad, who was also at times a good “fluier” player. A place of great attraction near this house was the large “scrancioble” (steep slope), down which a pair of young men would race or, even on occasion, a boy and a girl. Some of the brave ones would roll down, head over heels, rather than using their feet – others would even try to slide down on a sled tied with a belt. There were some from this group, who would roll head over heels many times, sometimes up to 30-40 times. To this slope, great crowds, mainly composed of young people, would come – boys, girls and teens but also men and women. Thus it was in all the days of Easter.

But let us return to the continuation of the story from where we left, namely the fires of Saturday night. After midnight passed, the fires would begin to decrease and the explosions would become rarer. By ones, or in

groups, the young people would head for home to prepare for going to church, to celebrate the service of the Arising. There were very few, however, who went to bed that night.

At the church meanwhile, some people began to assemble even before midnight – some coming in the evening and staying near the fire until the church was opened. Since the village was very large and since, at Easter, many people wished to attend (at least one or two persons per household), the people would soon fill the church. As big as the church was, it could not contain everyone and many would be left outside. Some would exit the church to cool off and to keep from falling asleep. In these cases, others would enter and find their empty spaces. The Easter service was very beautiful. At the beginning, the Arising was celebrated, whereby a procession around the church was made to the sound of the bells, as well as to the songs of the priest and the choir. Then the priest and the crowd would enter the church and the service began. At the end of the service, the priest would give a sermon about the Arising of Christ and, after that, would be the blessing of the gifts. From every house, someone would come with a platter and breads to be blessed. In a basket, a loaf of bread, one or two large braided breads ("pasca"), several smaller "pasca" and some colored eggs were brought to church for blessing. Also included would be two candles, some bacon, sausage, pepper, "tamaie" (incense) etc. Everyone would also have something extra special. The blessing of the gifts was made around the time of sunrise. Those with the platters would line up in two rows along the entrance to the church and, if they did not fit, in two rows going out into the church grounds, inside the gates. The blessing ceremony consisted of a procession with the choir and the cross, followed the priest, who would sprinkle the baskets with gifts with Holy Water. Behind the priest came the ushers, who would gather from each basket a pasca, or a colored egg, and money. Of these offerings of the pasca and eggs, most were given to the poor. They were often also given a piece of the large pasca.

Small pascas and eggs were generally given to the children. After the blessing of the Easter baskets was completed, people would greet each other wishes for a healthy life and a sincere hope that no harm would come to them. Afterwards, they would all settle down at the table for a meal. Each would take a bit of the blessed bread and then they would, all together, begin to partake of the meal. Having started, they would then salute each other with the occasional shot of whiskey (moonshine), would take a bite of the bacon and sausage, which had been blessed, enjoy an egg or two, and then proceed with the rest of the meal. At the end, they would drink beer that had been bought, although many made a very good beer at home. After this feast, they settled back and enjoyed a deep sleep. After noon, some would go to the steep hill, others to the church.

The second day of Easter, there was a service at the church, which was attended mostly by the older people. After the meal, a festival (fete) was held in the church yard. Many dances were held here, attended by young men and young women. The young had the custom of competing in egg-cracking contests, using their colored eggs. Anyone whose egg was cracked, was considered to have been defeated, and they would have to forfeit their egg – that is to say, the broken egg was taken by the one who had broken it. This was a rule over which there was no discussion, except in the case where there was a fraud (if, for instance, a wooden or plaster egg was being held in the hand alongside that of the chicken). There were young boys who would come home sated

with eggs, or with their satchels full of them. Others would keep their eggs in a kerchief. It happened once in a while that an uncooked or soft-boiled egg would be broken in the competition and that it splattered on the children or their clothes. This was immediately thrown away. Throughout this period, one of the young men or male teens would be involved in ringing the church bells or 'beating the "toaca"'(**TN**: Playing a resonating tune with wooden sticks on a hollow tube – usually located in the bell tower). During these days, it was the wish of all to hear the bells peeling all day long.

Many people would come to the festival. They enjoyed extremely the custom of going to the church fete. Almost all wished to participate or to observe the events. There was also a service on the third day of Easter (Tuesday), but fewer people would attend. By comparison, in the afternoon, however, more people came to the fete than on the previous day. It appeared as if the entire village was gathered on the hill by the church. On this day also, the young men and women danced, while the other youngsters continued with the colored egg-cracking contests. Meanwhile, those more restrained in manner, stood on the margins and watched the dances. But they would have contests as well - when they could find suitable companions who would bring out their bottles of moonshine ("holerca") and they could salute each other with a glass or two. The villagers were merry, happy and living well. Most of the ones present at the fete considered themselves blessed. Even the people who died during the days of Easter were considered blessed, because, during that period, the skies were opened and the dead went directly to heaven without having to await the Judgment Day. But when the sun was finished and it began to set, all were overcome by a strong feeling of gloom, because Easter had passed so quickly. Group by group headed for home. First were usually the young girls, followed by the housewives, the children, the young men and finally the men. Soon one saw only the odd straggler on the grounds of the church. Whereas earlier the church yard was so full that you could not find a place to set yourself on the grass, now it was equally empty and lonely. When in the sky the first stars started to twinkle, the church grounds were devoid of people and the bell sat silent again.

Also during Easter, there was the custom that the godchildren would visit their godparents with braided breads ("colaci"). Some of the godparents had 10-15 godchildren or more. The godchildren brought their godparents "coloaci", "pasca", and eggs while the godparents would be prepared with a richly-laden table. On this occasion, all ate well, would have a drink or two, and would have a happy time with a dance, accompanied by a fiddler or someone playing the flute.

It is well known that our people almost always ate "mamaliga" (cooked cornmeal). However, at Easter the population ate blessed white bread, large "pasca" and little "pasca" (**TN:** often filled with a cottage cheese base**)** and therefore "mamaliga" had a rest. Even the poorest man would not have to eat "mamaliga" on Easter Day. The holidays passed very quickly and all the population had to return anew to work, be it in the garden or in the fields.

Another important holiday that was observed in the spring was that of St. George. This holiday sometimes occurs before Easter and sometimes after Easter. At St. George's, people dug up square green sods of grass in

which they poked a branch of willow that had leafed out. These sods, they would place by their gates, by the entrance to the house, at the door of the barn, at the well and at other places.

Another holiday related to Easter is the Ascension of the Lord or "Ispasul", when one goes to the cemetery and celebrates a 'meal for those in the grave'. Also at that time is celebrated the 'Day of the Heroes'. About this, more is written elsewhere. After "Ispas", the next holiday of importance to Christians that occurs, is 'Great Sunday' or Whitsunday, when the Holy Spirit appears, to speak to the Apostles. This event celebrates the event when the Apostles received the Holy Spirit, and their obligations, and responded with the Scriptures, based on those four visions.

The day after Whitsunday, Christians observed the Day of the Holy Trinity. Whitsunday is the last holiday connected to Easter and, until it, one can make the last "pasca" for the year. Around the house, branches of linden trees were put up and, in the windows, many different varieties of flowers were placed.

In popular folklore, it was said that, at this time, male and female ghosts or spirits would wander around and furthermore, that these spirits could bring bad luck to people. These spirits were in the female form and were tall, thin and rather 'dried up'. In the literature, many of them have feminine names.

At "Sianziene", which is observed June 24 and marks the birth of St. John the Baptist, people would collect good blossoms of curative plants, which they then set out to dry. These flowers, put into a bath, could cure different sicknesses. Also at this time, girls would collect and decorate themselves with flowers that would make them beautiful. After "Sianziene", came the holidays of the Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul, when at Chernauti was made the "hram" (church festival). These apostolic saints were the patron saints of the capital of Bucovina and Chernauti was filled with a great crowd to mark the occasion.

On 20 July, the feast of St. Elie, the Master of Thunder, who punishes the devils by throwing lightning at them, was celebrated. On this day, "pomana" (memory of the dead) gifts of pears and apples were given. In Voloca, there was a man named Ion Chetrarul, who would collect money from people so that he would turn away the hail storms. He claimed to have the power to protect the grain fields from hail.

On August 6, the "Change of the Face" was celebrated – it was believed that from that day forward nature changed its visage or face. Grass, the grain fields, leaves on fruit trees, the woods, and the pastures changed color and ended with a more open appearance which heralded harvest time and the start of autumn.

On 15 August, the holiday called the Greater Feast of St. Mary (the Assumption of the Mother of Christ) occurred. On this occasion, "hram" is celebrated in many villages. Close to our commune, was the "hram" at Curiurul-Mare-Saliste, which Volocans attend in large numbers. Many families in Voloca are related via marriage to families in Cuciurul- Mare. Also at this Feast of St. Mary, many feasts in memory of the dead are made. After this day, the "caslege" of the fall occur, when many weddings occur.

On September 8, the Lesser Feast of St. Mary (commemorating the birth of the Virgin Mary) occurs.

On September 14, the Day of the Cross – the Ascension of the Cross is observed. This was a day of Lenten observance. The eating of any fruit having the shape or outline of a cross was forbidden on this day.

On October 14, believers observed the holiday honoring St. Paraschiva.

On October 26, one of the more important holidays, that of St. Dumitru – The Martyr, occurred. On this date, the "hram" at Cuciurul-Mare-Tisauti was celebrated. This was the time of fall and people began to prepare themselves with what they would need for the winter. The cattle were left loose to graze in the gardens without restrictions.

On November 8, the day of the Archangels St. Mihail and St. Gavril was observed, when a "hram" was kept at Corovia. On November 30, the day of St. Andrei was observed - a day set aside for the young people, when maidens and young men would make different wishes they hoped would come to pass – mainly with whom they might end up married.

On December 6, the day of St. Ierarh Nicolae was celebrated. This was the ultimate holiday kept within the Lent before Christmas. Since it was during the Lenten period, the young had to obtain permission from the Metropolitan to hold an event at which they were able to dance the "hora". Since at that time, dances could not be held elsewhere, the "hram" at Voloca was visited by young men and women from many villages, enjoying a chance to dance. Meals were prepared as normal during Lent, with cabbage rolls, fish, peas, broad beans, lentels, dried fruit, beans and mushrooms. The people of Voloca would have many notable celebrations that were fondly remembered in other villages. Occasionally, there also occurred fights between groups of young men at a "hram". Often, it was the youths from Cuciurul who provoked these scandals which, however, occurred mostly in the more distant past. In recent times, even the youth of Cuciurul have become more peaceful.

After the holiday of St. Nicholas it was not long until Christmas, the upcoming great holidays of the winter. All the residents of Voloca, and the youth in particular, began to prepare for the coming of these holidays, forming groups or teams to travel caroling, with the 'star', "malanca", "Irozii", "Uratul", the 'goat', and others. These things were discussed in detail at the start of this section.

## 1.19
# Caslegile (Non-Lenten) and Lenten observances in the past

Volocans from the past had observances which they diligently followed with great concerns. Besides the four "caslegile" (non-Lenten) annual periods of the year, when one could eat "de frupt" (animal-derived products), such as eggs and meat, were the four fasting periods of the year. The four "caslegile" were in the winter, the spring, the summer and the fall. The four fasting periods were the Great Lent (just before Easter), the Lent of the Apostles St Paul and St Peter, the Lent of St. Mary and the Lent before Christmas.

The times of these events were:

1. The Winter Caslegile began on 25 December and continued until the start of the Great Lent (this date was not fixed).
2. The Great Lent followed after the Winter Caslegile and continued into, and included, the week of Easter – the week before the resurrection of the Lord (Easter Sunday).
3. The Spring Caslegile occurred from Easter to the start of the Lent of St. Peter.
4. The Lent of St. Peter stretched from the end of the Spring Caslegile to the celebration of the feast of St. Peter on 28 June. The feast of St Peter was always held on June 29.
5. The Summer Caslegile was over the period after the feast of St. Peter (June 29) to 31 July, inclusive.
6. The Lent of St. Mary stretched from 1-14 August, inclusive. August 15 is the observance of the feast of St. Mary, Mother of Christ and her Ascension.
7. The Fall Caslegile extended from the Feast of St. Mary to 14 November, inclusive.
8. The Lent of Christmas (Advent) began at 15 November and lasted to 24 December (Christmas Eve), inclusive.

Our ancestors strictly observed all four of these fasting periods and would not deviate from them for all the world. They were true believers who attended church regularly and who observed all the saintly calendar with devotion. During the periods of "caslegile", they were allowed to eat any type of food including flesh, eggs, milk and cheese. During Lenten periods the eating of meat was forbidden and they could eat only Lenten foods prepared with oils. Only on 25 March, the celebration Buna Vestire, was Lent broken. All people would have to observe Lent, except for infants or those gravely ill, who were allowed to have milk.

Meals for Lent were prepared using beans, potatoes, peas, lentils, broad beans, dried mushrooms, dried apples, cabbage, cucumbers, onions, garlic, parsnips, carrots, beets, horse radish, nettles, white squash cakes and sprouts. To these meals were added "mamaliga", cooked "malai" (a cornbread) cakes baked with corn flour and

potatoes and rye bread. From this assortment listed above, one could find tasty meals in various combinations that would satisfy the appetite of man.

It should be said, that observation (of Lent) had benefits, in addition to being required, in that it was good for the health of the body as well as the soul. It is good for people to have limitations and balances in everything. A life lived in indulgence and carelessness leads to sin to illnesses and to poor health. Those, who criticized the Lenten rules as being too severe, should reconsider and consider the advice of doctors.

Interspersing these four Lenten periods with the four "caslegli" was not an idea based on superstition or mysticism but was actually judged on health. Those who observed these alternating periods reaped a good benefit.

In addition to the periods of merriment and many distractions, sessions of structured and regulated life with meditation are necessary.

## 1.20
# Remembrance of the dead
# About memorial meals
# The Ascension of our Lord (Ispasul)
# Day of the Heroes

In ancient times, the population was very religious and their beliefs and customs were observed generation after generation – these beliefs were treated with the greatest respect and dedication. These beliefs and customs were very tightly connected to the lives of the people and were observed on specific dates and for specific occasions without any deviations being permitted. It was considered a great sin not to stick to the beliefs handed down. Thus, not only at birth and marriage, important events in the life of a person, but also at death, there were certain customs and practices that would be respected by all.

For example, it was necessary after the ceremonial act of interment to make a "masa" (memorial meal) and to give "pomana" (gifts- normally food) in the name of the soul of the deceased. This would be the first of the "masa" made on behalf of the deceased person and was attended by relatives, neighbors, and family friends. In addition to the above persons, also invited to the "masa" were those who attended to the coffin (pallbearers), the person who drove the carriage, those who were part of the funeral religious procession (they carried the large cross, the "propurile" (religious banners from inside the church) and the "sfesnic" (the large candelabrum)), and the man who carried the "pomul" ( a short, hand-crafted 'tree' from which were hung candies and similar treats). Also invited were the people who lowered the coffin into the grave. The gravediggers were given a "pomana" right at the gravesite. For the digging of the grave, they would be paid and they would also be given food.

A second "masa" was celebrated the third day after the burial, a third at six weeks after, then one at six months (half a year) and finally, on the one-year anniversary. These were the most important "masa" for the deceased. Other "masa", which would be made in memory of all the deceased members of the family, would be made in conjunction with specific church holidays. Many "masa" were celebrated on Saturday morning. To these, men and women would be invited, especially the elderly. When a young person had died, young people would also be invited to the event.

The "masa" would be Lenten or non-Lenten, depending on whether they were held during a period of Lent or "casligile" (see 1.19). Set on the table would be bread, corn bread, and "bors" or "zeama" (see 1.12). This would be followed by "galuste" (cabbage rolls), "racituri" (meat jelly or head cheese), "friptura" (meat roast) and a milk-with-barley dish "mlesnita". For drinking, they would be given "raciu" (whiskey) or "holerca" (white lightning). Towards the end of the meal, baked goods and pastries would be brought to the table. In addition to this meal, the invitees to the meal would be presented with a "pomana" consisting of a "colac" (small circular braided bread) with a candle, and sometimes a small glass with water. Attached to the glass

would be large sugar crystals, “covregi” (a fancy pretzel-like pastry), sweet cookies, long candies, and/or “coarne mare” (dried seed pods from the carob plant). Sometimes in place of a ‘glass’, a liter-sized jug would be presented or even a pottery jug.

In the beliefs and values of the ancients, it was an important duty to give a “masa” and to give “pomana”. When someone gave these in memory of a loved one, they would never think of receiving something in return for the offering. In addition, the gift must be offered in a whole-hearted manner, without any feeling of material loss or malice or otherwise the gifts would not be ‘acceptable’ (**TN**: add “in the eyes of God”). There was also a belief that those who made many “pomana”, especially if they were made to the poor, would have their sins forgiven. In a sense, he who made these gifts would await his reward, but it is well understood, not from the one who received them, but from the Lord God who could forgive his sins and prepare his way into heaven. Nevertheless, the gifts of “pomana” also had a practical aspect – they served to feed many of the poor and hungry.

It is true, we may say today, that those who are dead do not need to eat, but it is also true those who live, and especially those who have no place to live, do need to eat. For this reason, “pomana” and good deeds should be done and given to the needy, the poor and the helpless. A “masa” to which one invites only the rich and greedy is purely a feast and not a memorial meal of honor.

“Pomana” can consist of food, clothing, or other items. Wealthy and generous people might give poultry, pigs, cattle or sometimes, even a plot of land as “pomana”.

It was customary to make a “masa” on those dates honoring the saints after which the deceased had been named. These dates included St. George, Palm Sunday, the Apostle Saints Peter and Paul, St. Ilie, Whitsunday, The Greater and Lesser Feasts of St. Mary, St. Dumitru, St. Nicholai, etc. At the “masa”, an atmosphere of the holidays prevailed, but with much restraint and devotion. Overall, during the time of the “masa”, people recalled the good deeds of the deceased – these things the attendees would remind each other about. The treatment of the dead was done with respect and treated with saintliness. The elderly, the grandparents, and the parents worried about the continuation of these values in the hearts of their children and of the young generation in general - the continuation of ancient practices held important in their religion and in the customs of their ancestors. This is how the old ways and customs were passed on from father to sons, or from relative to relative, without allowing the new generation to alter them, nor misuse them. The holy beliefs of the people were not to be cast asunder.

At some of the large “masa”, children and the youth were invited and took their places at the meal remembering the departed, sitting in the same room with their elders. They were able, on this occasion, to see and hear the great respect with which the departed were spoken about by their parents and by the other, older invitees. This was a great privilege and a happy occasion, which gave the children a lovely chance for participation in faith and to learn a lesson in life. I participated in just such an event with my own family and it became the most

pious, most cleansing and most enjoyed event of my life. By remembering the dead, we bring them back from the other world, to walk again in our midst. In that moment, they live with us and through us. Recalling them becomes always a quiet, solemn and uplifting occasion - an opportunity for meditation and preparation for us to envision the days when, we too, will be called on to depart this life.

The largest and most beautiful "masa" celebrated in Voloca was made at "Ispas" (Ascension Day), at the cemetery. For Ascension Day, all the families in the village would prepare with baking, foods, and drink. These, they would bring to the cemetery on the hill, some using carriers and some their satchels. For the great feast, the women would prepare "pascute" (small cheese-centered braided breads) and colored eggs. Some with huge amounts, some with less, they would all journey to the new cemetery on the hill on this occasion. At a few houses, someone might remain to take care of the cattle or look after the household. All of the villagers were at the cemetery. It was a day on which all of those alive went to visit their ancestors. After what I have seen, and what I recall, the celebrations at Ascension were always met with very beautiful days, with clear skies and warm temperatures. There were also many, many flowers around. Almost all of the graves were covered with white tablecloths and were loaded with huge amounts of rich foods. Not missing either was drink - whiskey, wine, beer, rum, lemonade, "razol" (pear liquor) or water placed in glasses that would be given as "pomana" to the poor.

The cemetery was crammed with people. All were dressed in white "camasi" that contrasted with the green color of the grass. The "masa" were so numerous and so loaded with food that the donators could not find enough people to give gifts to even with the great number of poor and needy people who came, and this did not exclude the gypsies.

Since the gypsies knew of the customs of the people of Voloca, they gathered there on Ascension Day in great numbers to receive "pomana". Some had huge containers and even sacks that they would fill with the bread, "pascuti" and eggs. With great greed, some would even corner and badger people, fearing there would not be enough "pomana" left for them. But, it was always the case that there was some left over.

Among the Volocans, one could find some unsavory men who would be ready to pull a prank. They would call the gypsies over and ply them with an exorbitant amount of drink and get them drunk. These people would then fall asleep in the shade or in a ditch and were unable to go around the graves for "pomana", thereby ending up with empty containers. They would not awaken until the evening or even till night and by then all the people had departed from the cemetery. These pranks were carried out by only a few - one of them was Toader, son of Pavaloa. Nevertheless, even those who had been tricked were able to find some leftovers that they were able to put into their containers.

We must clarify that the "pomana" and "masa" at the graveyard was preceded by a divine, religious service at the church and was followed by an additional service at the cemetery, to which the congregation moved as part of a church procession. In the morning some of the people would go to church, but only a few – also, the service

was short. During the time of the service, the housewives, men, and even the young (mostly the girls) would be laying out the "masa" on the graves. By the time the priest, and those people forming the procession, reached the cemetery, all of the graves were covered and the baking was all laid out. A religious service was held to memorialize the heroes who fell at the battlefront during WW I, after which the priest walked around the graveyard and sprinkled blessed water on all the graves in the cemetery. (**TN**: "spattered" is perhaps the correct word - this was done with a tightly-tied bunch of dry basil which would be dipped in the water container and shaken towards the grave.) Only after the divine mass for the heroes and for the dead, and after the blessing of the graves and the laid-out meals, did people begin to offer the "pomana" and invite guests to the "masa" laid out on the grave. The invitees would include relatives and acquaintances, but all passers-by would be offered a "pomana" of a "pascuti" and an egg, as well as a drink or two. Afterwards, they were all invited to feast on the baked goods laid on the carefully-groomed and heavily-laden grave.

When, in some families, there were many dead relatives, be they parents, siblings or children, the family would move, in turn, to each of these graves and lay out a "masa" so that they could give "pomana" for each one. Throughout the entire graveyard, tablecloths were laid out over the graves and covered with "pomana" and only very occasionally here and there would one see the odd lonely grave unattended. These were noted with great sadness. They may have been the grave of an impoverished person, an unmarried person with no off-spring, or perhaps someone whose remaining family members had all left the village.

One would hear so many words and voices intermixed at the cemetery that, if one stood aside and listened, one might think he was hearing the strong buzzing of bees being bathed in the strong rays of the spring sunshine. On this day, all those alive were filled with thoughts of their parents, grandparents and ancestors who have slept the eternal sleep for hundreds and hundreds of years.

With the thought that life is not eternal and that, those alive would in turn end up here, the people with their beliefs in church and in God had the occasion to meditate on their actions and to seek ways to correct their errors. This belief served as a shield against evil and a good guide for a life without sin. It was also a good way to educate the Romanian people.

## Customs tied to the most important events in the life of a person: birth, marriage and death.

### I. Birth

The birth of a child into a family was a great happiness. Generally, the joy was greater if the child was of the masculine sex. A boy brought less worry to the parents and also, through him they could achieve an extension of the household and a perpetuation of the family name. Certainly, there were parents who, for various reasons, desired to have a daughter. Regardless, a birth was considered to be a blessed event that brought joy within the

house and was celebrated with pomp and with the observation of a number of customs that have been passed on and observed religiously over the ages. Those who had the means would make an elaborate celebration with a celebratory meal, musicians and many guests. The poorer would put on a more restrained celebration, more modest to fit their means and often did not engage musicians.

The child would be baptized in church and would receive a name. By custom, the name given would be that of the Saint's day on which he was born, or the next nearest one on the calendar. In ancient times, this naming system was respected to the highest degree of observance – the newborn received the name 'given to him by The Book'. In more recent times, it was allowed for the parents to give the child a name of their choice. There were also cases where the newborn received at church the name of the saint, whose celebratory day it was, but the parents would give him another name that they preferred and that he then used thereafter for all of his life. Shortly after the birth, neighbors, relatives and friends would come to bring wishes of good health and happiness, as much for the mother as for the newborn. Also at this time, they would bring gifts from their households – young animals, poultry, foods and/or money. These gifts were called "rodini". This was a good custom and the gifts were welcomed – especially so if the family of the newborn was in need. For some households, the value of the gifts exceeded the worth of the entire household.

Not long after the birth, the baptism of the newborn took place. The godmother would take the child to the church and the priest, who officiated over the mystery of baptism. The ceremony consisted of submerging the child in blessed water and the saying of a prayer that was heard throughout the church. At the end of the ceremony, the priest would ask of the child "Do you renounce the Devil?" "I do so renounce" would respond the godmother, on behalf of the newborn. This was repeated three times.

After the completion of the baptism ceremony, the godmother paid the priest the appropriate fee and then she brought the child home to the mother. The baptism celebration might be held the same day as the baptism, or on another. For this event, the household prepared a large meal with baking, drinks and music. Invited to this would be the godmother and godfather, the appropriate family seniors, friends, and neighbors. The celebration itself also followed certain rules. The guests who came to the baptism celebration brought gifts or money. Certainly, not all households made a celebration with musicians.

In the early days, a child would have a godmother and a godfather, both of whom had been the witnesses for the marriage of the parents. Later in time, the custom began whereby the child would have more grandparents. This was done for two reasons. The first was that sometimes there were more friends of the family who wished to participate and wanted to be godparents for the child while the second was that, sometimes the parents of the newborn, wishing to obtain more gifts, choose more godparents. On the other hand, perhaps they were considering a time further along the way, when the child was bigger, that they would have the need for assistance and protection (eventually, the alternative was help from many others in the village.) Certainly, the most significant gifts came from godparents and the more affluent people who gave "dare de mana" (hand-crafted gifts).

The occasion was marked with good wishes from all those present and was celebrated with many songs. After the child had grown somewhat, the parents would take braided bread to the godparents. And on this occasion too, there would be a celebration and the godparents would again give a good gift - new clothes perhaps, or money.

## II. Marriage

Marriage was the second important event in the life of a person. A young person of the male sex would come together with another of the female sex with the intent of founding a new family. For the act of marriage, two young people would decide to join to create a new home, a new household, and to live together for the rest of their lives. This event would be culminated with a distinctive degree of pomp that occurred over many days and in which many people participated. In the more distant past, marriage was considered to be a holy union, made for life, in the face of the church altar.

The groom had to have completed 24 years of life. Then he was considered to have reached the age of majority. The bride had to be 18 years of age, but in some cases, she was allowed to be younger, as young as 16 years old. By custom, the young people, who wished to get married and to establish a new family, needed to know each other and to like each other. Nevertheless, their parents had the final say. Without the agreement of the parents, there could be no marriage. When, caught in the middle, there was a great love and they were faced with disagreeing wishes, then the young couple needed to find a way around their parents' objections. In some cases, the bride was kidnapped by the groom and taken to his parents' home. This act of theft (kidnapping), of course, was committed with the pre-knowledge and consent of the bride. After this event, the young people hoped they could get married. It happened sometimes that the parents of the girl would abandon their position of opposing the marriage, and then the girl would be returned home and the wedding just needed a place. Happenings like this were rare and aroused much commotion and much talk in the village.

Sometimes the young people recanted and agreed to a marriage according to their parent wishes, but from these marriages, made with reluctance, it is hard to affirm that one can find much joy. It is summarized by the proverb "Love is not made with forced reluctance". It happened sometimes that such marriages had a tragic consequence (example of Vasilie, son of George).

As a general rule, a marriage was made when everyone was in agreement. The wedding was seen as a happy event where two young people were married. For this reason, parents had to be considerate and reach a good understanding with their children, so the wedding did not lead to unpleasant turmoil or that the children were not joined reluctantly and ended up with a painful experience. Marriage is a celebration in which joy must dominate. It must have a feeling of thankfulness on the part of the couple and have no place for sadness or misunderstandings.

The young people wishing to get married were generally from the same level of family wealth. A poorer young man did not customarily ask for a girl of greater family wealth in marriage, nor did a richer man take on a poorer girl. This was the rule, but occasionally there were exceptions.

To set the wedding plans in place, "petetorii" (matchmakers) were used. They would set into place the agreement between the parties, that is, between the two sets of in-laws. For this role, there were certain appointed women in the village who understood the marriage protocols and who had sufficient ability to complete the mission.

The wedding was done according to certain well-established customs that were observed religiously from generation to generation. Above all, there was the requirement that the girl must be a virgin (and a "fata mare" or past the age of menstruation). Secondly, there would need to be a discussion as to the dowry that the bride would receive, and equally important, was what the groom would receive from his parents.

To begin the process of the marriage contract, the matchmakers, who were the middlepersons, went to the parents of the girl and, after informing them of the purpose of their visit, they would propose the union, which they would describe with all its advantages. The matchmakers would praise the wealth of the family of the groom, on whose behalf they had come, and after that, described the groom's position - often with embellishments and clever expressions. This was often done in verse. They would then ask those in the household if they were disposed to give the daughter to the proposed young man. If the parents were disposed to do so, then the matchmakers asked the parents about the dowry offered with the girl. In turn, the parents of the girl would express an interest as to the property of the young man. After they had reached an agreement and both positions were exposed, the matchmakers returned to the parents of the young man to communicate the results they had obtained. If they, in turn, were happy and agreeable with the dowry offered by the girl's family, than a date was fixed on which the parents of the young man, together with him, would go to the girl's parents home 'to drink "holerca"' (white lightning).

This was now considered to be an engagement. The parents of the girl would prepare themselves with food and drink and likewise the parents of the young man would store the bottle of all-important "holerca" in their satchel. Then, they would discuss all the wedding details and a possible date; the parents of the bride and groom also revealed, in detail, the gifts they would give to the young couple.

(If the matchmakers acting on behalf of the groom could not reach an understanding with the parents of the bride, the process ended and the wedding could not proceed.) When the parents of the young man, accompanied by the matchmakers, entered the home of the girl's parents, he remained outside and hid somewhere. After the customary salutations, the guests were invited to take their places at the prepared table. The matchmakers began immediately a discussion with carefully-chosen and well-intended words, often spoken in verse, again explaining the purpose of their visit. The principal point of the discussion referred to the asking for marriage of the girl and the establishment of the dowry. Then the parents of the girl, in the presence of all

the witnesses, spoke as to how much land, and/or how many cattle, and what in the way of clothing and bedding they would gift with the girl.

If the parents of the young man were satisfied with the dowry offered, then they would respond with what they would offer with their son. The parents of the girl also had the right to express their reservations. If these were not met, then they might not agree to give the girl and the marriage would not proceed. But, as I said earlier, it should be presumed that the main understanding was already made during the first visit of the matchmakers, when it was first agreed to meet 'to drink "holerca"'. This engagement, when they together drank "holerca", was treated as a binding agreement, pledged in the presence of all those present and required only respect as an act sealed in the presence of witnesses.

When the agreement was completed, the young man was invited into the house. The young couple was asked if they loved each other and they responded to this question with a degree of shyness and hesitation. In earlier times, the young were more bashful and respectful in the presence of their parents and of the elderly and did not easily discuss these matters in front of them. When this protocol also was completed, the parents of the young couple shook hands and the matchmakers also shook hands to seal the arrangement. The young couple was also invited to shake hands, to embrace and to kiss.

After this was completed, the hosts brought to the table the baking and drink while the parents of the young man brought out from their satchel the bottle of "holerca" they had brought and added it to the table. All would partake and toast each other with good wishes. They also discussed different aspects of the arrangements agreed to for the wedding. All of them then discussed the date on which the wedding would be held.

After this agreement, it would be said in the village that 'such and such' young man had drunk "holerca" with 'such and such' family.

In this manner, the engagement was completed and then, on three consecutive Sundays, the banns were pronounced in church – that is to say, the priest would announce at the end of the holy service the names of the girl and young man who wished to marry. At the end of this announcement, he would ask if anyone present in the church knew, or was acquainted with, any obstacle in the road for this marriage. By custom, the wedding date was set for four or six weeks after the engagement. During this period of time, both families would prepare themselves with the things needed for the wedding - food, drink, musicians and other things. The bride would sew a linen "camasi" for the groom and would also weave a fancy waist sash, while the groom ordered fancy shoes for the bride, or yellow (or light-colored) boots and other fancy items. Apart from these things, the groom and bride prepared gifts for their future in-laws. Overall, the wedding required much preparation and the spending of much money.

Just before the wedding (on Friday or Saturday), there would be a great deal of boiling and cooking both at the house of the groom and that of the bride – an enormous amount of food was prepared for the wedding.

According to the customs, the wedding celebration took place at the house of the groom. Saturday night, both the groom and the bride would be preparing themselves for the exchange of gifts. For this occasion, the young men and women would gather in the two yards and dance. Also at that time, one could hear the most extraordinary verses spoken by those with diverse artistic talents. The girls would leave for home early, but the young men remained until later and many of them were invited into the house to eat and were chosen as "nuntasi" (members of the bridal party). First the groom selected two "vatajei" (attendants). With their help, he selected the "nuntasi". The role of the "numtasi" was to organize the wedding procession for the groom and to sing the wedding songs, both on the way to and back from the church, as well as, at the house later. On the road to the church, in front of the "nuntasi", were the musicians who accompanied them. The procession was very impressive and the songs were very beautiful.

In addition to the "vatajei" and the "nuntasi", the groom also had two "sfitiuci" and two "sfasii". The "sfatiuci" were girls while the "sfasii" were married women. In a similar manner, the bride also had two "vatajei", two "sfitiuci" and two "sfasii" as well as "nuntasi". These "vatejei" (also called "vornecii") had the duty of overseeing the smooth operation of the wedding and of watching over the dances and the celebration. They were also the persons who invited people to the wedding celebration. In addition, they had the duty to accompany the "sfasii" for the ceremony of the exchanging of gifts.

The role of the "sfasii" was to bring the gifts to be exchanged and to sing the wedding songs that predicted the future life of the bride that she would have as a wife, a mother, and a housewife, leaving behind her life as a maiden. The "sfitiuci" were close friends of the bride who would accompany her to church. They would also take part in the singing at the house. At church, after the wedding ceremony, they would toss candies, money and wheat at the couple being married.

For the gift exchange on Saturday night, the groom would send, by means of the "sfasii", the pale boots or fancy shoes, while the bride would send the groom's "camasi", the fancy sash and other gifts. For this exchange, the "sfasii" did not go alone but with all the party and they sang all the way there. The procession, led by the musicians, included the "vatajei" and the "nuntasi". The "sfasii" traveled in a wagon and since it was dark, they led the way of the procession with lit lanterns.

When the "vatajei" walked around the village inviting guests to the wedding, they carried a walking stick or a cane, which at the upper end was decorated with a fancy kerchief. They also had a wooden flask, filled with "holerca", which was tied to the back of their head with a leather band. From the flask the "vatajel" would pour a toast for the invitees, who were persons named by the groom and bride. The invitation usually followed this format; he spoke saying "You are invited by the groom and bride, by the in-laws and by the wedding hosts to attend the wedding feast". Those invited were then offered a shot glass or two of "holerca" from the flask. If they accepted the invitation they did so by having a drink – this indicated they would participate at the wedding. They would respond with a thank-you for the drink and would be careful to toast the future couple with wishes

of good health, good luck and many years of happy life. The invitations to the wedding were made Saturday before the wedding, or two or three days earlier.

On Saturday night, after the "nuntasi" had been given food and drink, they would leave singing, together with the "sfasii" and the musicians. Those from the groom's home proceeded towards the bride's and those from the bride's home toward the groom's. Where they met on the road, the two processions each formed a wall and sang a challenge to each other as to who could break through the wall. Whichever side succeeded in breaching the wall, was considered to have earned a great honor. It was a good omen if the successful group was the "nuntasi" of the groom. The ritual of exchanging the gifts was practiced equally by the procession of the bride as well as the procession of the groom, since both had "vatajei", "nuntasi", "sfitiuci" and "sfasci". After the presentation of the gifts, the ceremonies of Saturday evening were complete and all left for their homes.

Sunday morning, both the groom and the bride went to church from their homes. Each went separately and was unaccompanied. They met to pray together that their futures would be good and fruitful. Sometimes they might take confession and pay for a special service. After this, they would each retrace their steps quickly to the homes of their parents to return to the church later – but the next time with the appropriate processions for the wedding ceremony.

Both the groom and the bride would leave their family homes dressed for the wedding and riding in carriages accompanied by all the procession. The processions were led by the "nuntasi" and the musicians. At the very head of the group would be the "vatajei", with their canes decorated with the fancy kerchiefs and with flowers in their hats. They traveled the road singing. The groom traveled with his procession and the bride with her procession. When they reached the church, all entered it and assisted with the religious service. After the completion of the service, the priest would begin to officiate at the wedding ceremony.

If on the chosen Sunday, several weddings were to take place, the priest performed the union of each couple in turn, in the order in which they arrived at the church. In the more distant past, for us here in Bucovina, the union of marriage took place only at the church and this ceremony fulfilled the legal requirements. Later in time, the marriage was first performed before a civic official with this being the only ceremony necessary. Only after the official civil ceremony could one celebrate the religious ceremony, which was now considered optional. More recently, most couples are content with only the civil ceremony.

The main song that the "nuntasi", accompanied by the musicians, sang going to church was 'We are going to a monastery'. When the time arrived to start the ceremony, the groom and bride were invited to take their place at a designated location in the middle of the church, where the rituals of the marriage ceremony were performed. Behind the couple stood the "nasii" (**TN**: wedding witnesses or 'best man' and 'maid of honor' – in those days, usually a married couple), holding the large church candles that were alight and decorated with beautiful cloths and with flowers. Immediately behind the "nasii", were the parents of the intended couple and close relatives. Finally behind all this, arranged in a semi-circle were the "vatajei, nuntasi, sfitiuci and the sfasci". In front of

the couple and beside the priest was situated a table on which was placed the Bible, a cross, the wedding crowns, a jar containing honey and several varities of white bread or sweet biscuits.

The priest would initiate the marriage service and the "dascul" (church reader) would lead the appropriate responses required. For a wedding, there was a special service with particular prayers and particular songs or hymns. Towards the end of the service, the couple being wed and the "nasii" would follow the priest around the table several times. During this time, the song or hymn "Isaia dantuieste" (a special matrimonial song) was sung. The "sfitiuci" then threw candies, walnuts, hazelnuts, carob pods, money and grains towards the couple. These, they scooped out of their satchels that had been decorated with fancy bands. Meanwhile, the chidren scrambled to gather these goodies up. If they felt so inclined, even the marriage couple would bend down and collect walnuts, hazelnuts and candy. At the end of the marriage ceremony, the priest delivered a sermon, while standing in front of the couple and the "nasii". He then directed them towards the altar where they would kiss the holy icons.

After this, the best-man paid the priest and the "dascul" for officiating over the service. The union was now considered to be locked or sealed, and the "sfitiuci" tossed the remaining coins and candies from their satchels. The newly-weds and the "nasii" then exited the church. When they passed through the doors, they were met by the waiting musicians and singers, who sang a march (or anthem) from the door to the churchyard entrance. The anthem sung in those days was "Destepta-te Romane" or 'Arise Romanians'.

At the churchyard gate, the young men would start to dance. Meanwhile, the newlyweds would take their place together in the appropriate carriage. They were followed by the "nasii", the "sfitiuci", and "sfasci" and other close relatives, all in other carriages. When the carriages were ready to leave, the dancing would stop and the "nuntasi" of both the groom and the bride would organize and start the procession, traveling on foot, in front of the carriages. On the return from the church, the "nuntasi" sang wedding songs, accompanied by the musicians and they would "chiuiau" (shout). (**TN**: Although the dictionaries translate this simply as 'shout', recollections and demonstrations by several seniors, who had emigrated as youths, indicate this was more like a cross between a yodel and the calls of a pack of prairie coyotes.)

The procession would work its way towards the house that was highly prepared and the wedding celebration would begin to unfold – the meal, the dances and, at night, the "pripoi" (gift presentation ceremony). By custom, the wedding took place at the home of the groom, but sometimes it would take place at the bride's home. Arriving at the house, the parents would welcome the newlyweds with bread, salt and a toast, after which they and all the wedding party would enter the house and sit at the highly-prepared table. At the middle of the seating would be the groom and bride as well as the "nasii". The rest of the wedding party would sit in the other set places. As the couple was entering the house, the "nuntasi" would sing 'Mother-in-law hold the door closed tightly, because look, your daughter-in-law is trying to enter'. The wedding party was followed by the musicians who would enter the house to play if there was room for them near the door or beside the cupboard – if not, they would set themselves up in the "tinda" (entranceway, see 1.15). The meal continued until all the

wedding party had eaten well. The groom and the bride did not eat meat or foods containing meat, but only those with cheese or eggs. After eating, all would exit to the outdoors to dance, clapping their hands and singing – 'After three times at the table, we must get the wedding outdoors'.

Outside, the dancing started with the groom and bride followed by the "sfitiuci", the "vatajei", and the "nuntasi". During the dancing outside, the feasting inside continued for the relatives and the others who had been invited to the wedding. In addition to the groom, the bride would dance with the "vatajei" and with other young men. All the young uninvited people who came to the outside wedding could dance without having to pay. Inside the house, the older guests would be having a few drinks, telling a few jokes, and would be singing. For the dance that was made on the occasion of a wedding, even uninvited guests could come simply hoping to participate in the dancing. After the completion of the dancing, these people would return to their homes without having partaken of the feast. Meanwhile, the "nuntasi" and the invited guests re-entered the house and again sat down at the table. At the same time, the musicians entered to play for the guests the music of weddings and to prepare for the presentation ceremony, or "pahar dulce" (sweet toasts).

The cooks and bakers began to bring in the special "bors", cabbage rolls, roasts, headcheese, pastries and other goodies. Bottles of drink and glasses were also brought to the table. In the past, the villagers drank mostly "holerca" (a kind of whiskey they made from rye grain) but later they also introduced beer, wine, rum, cognac, and sometimes "razolul", a kind of pear liqueur. By custom, the table would be very laden with food and drink. With all this food and beverage, there was much merrymaking and good will. The musicians would play and sing and often, they would be joined by guests who also made a good contribution. The Romanian villager values hard work highly, but he also knows how to celebrate. Sometimes, it would happen that someone from the talented guests would take it on himself to entertain the wedding party and all those present with a series of the traditional songs from long ago.

And thus they celebrated until late in the evening but before the people arose from the table, they began to issue calls for the "pahar dulce" (a call to do the presentation of gifts). In this ritual, the guests waited until after the "nuntasi" went first. They gave money or different items as gifts to the newlyweds. The person who announced what the gift given was, would be the 'best-man' – and he started the ritual by giving the biggest gift. To all those who offered a gift, the groom, in turn, offered a glass of beverage as a 'thank-you'. During all this time, the musicians continued to play.

After midnight, the maid-of-honor and the "sfasci" of the bride prepared the bride for bed in a separate room. To this room, they would also shortly invite the groom. A cloth (to confirm the purity as claimed in the engagement) would be laid out for the bride. The groom and the bride would go to bed together, while the rest of the household would continue to celebrate or would also go to bed. At this time, the "nanasi" and the invited guest left for their own homes.

Monday morning, the maid-of-honor came back to visit the bride to examine her clothing. If it was spattered with blood, the stained cloth would be exhibited throughout the household and outside and overall the situation was regarded to be as it should. If the bride was not "chemnica" (a virgin), then in the old days, she would be sent home. By custom, this unpleasant situation could be corrected if the parents of the bride would agree to increase or 'beef-up' the dowry with an additional parcel of land or a brace of oxen, or at minimum, at least a cow or a calf. With this increase, they would pay and wash away their shame. In more recent times, this absence of virginity is not treated as severely and people pass over the problem more easily.

Close friends and relatives were invited to feast also on Monday since there was usually food and drink remaining from Sunday that needed to be consumed. Many years ago, particularly in wealthy families, the celebration would continue for at least three days. People were always happy to celebrate and quite willing to stay with good food, refreshing drinks, songs and dancing. This was, in the main, because, in the past, life was difficult due to wars, attacks, raids and killings that might occur at any time. These were times of such suffering that often people could not find the time for a celebration for years on end. For this reason, when they had a moment of respite, they unleashed their desires to celebrate and they celebrated with great joy.

Tuesday after the wedding was the occasion of "calea primara" (the first outing). It was the first travel of the newlyweds and was a trip to the parents of the bride – the first visit she would make as a married woman. For this visit, she was accompanied, of course, by her husband. For the meal that was prepared for this occasion, the "nasii" and close relatives were not forgotten. Musicians would also be hired to play during the meal and also at the dancing since, after the meal, the guests danced until late into the night. With this celebration on Tuesday, called "calea pimara", the wedding was considered to be completed.

## III. Death

Man was not made to live on this earth forever. Regardless of how beautiful and precious life may be to us, it has also an ending. When a newborn comes into the world, the household is full of joy and hope. A birth fulfilled the taunts and merrymaking calls made when the marriage was celebrated. But in this world not only dance and joys exist but also occasions of hurt and sadness. All who are born must also die – all have a beginning and an end. And so it is with life and all its joys. The time comes when a person must leave this world which is so beautiful and alas, this departure is unspeakably sorrowful. Often the departure leaves behind it such grief and emptiness that the event produces an ultimate grief which is difficult to endure. In place of the singing and calls of joy one finds a house resonating with wailing, lamenting and crying. Since death is a natural event, there is no one who can elude it. The turn comes around for everyone whether it be early or later and they must eventually drink from that vessel that produces the shudder of death.

I have written earlier about birth and baptism, about marriage and weddings, together with all of their traditional procedures and customs and now it is time to write also about the customs practiced on the occasions of deaths

and funerals. Most people die of old age or sometimes of some particular illness, while some die due to some accident or during a war. About all these, it is said that they died a proper death and may therefore be buried within the holy grounds of the church.

There are also occasions when the departed has precipitated his death himself, that is, he has committed suicide. Then the interment is not made according to the rituals of the church and the dead person is buried outside the boundaries of the cemetery (in a specific area reserved for these cases), without the pealing of the church bells, without a procession and without the body being brought into the church.

When a member of a family was approaching the end of his life after a long period of suffering, a priest would be summoned to offer him confession and the last rites. It was considered to be a great sin for a man to die without first receiving these last rites through which his sins were forgiven. After receiving the Eucharist, the suffering person was calmer and more comforted. Rare was the case when those, who received the Eucharist, recovered and lived very long. In the far past, villagers could not seek the help of a doctor – this was in part because there were very few of them and even those few could only be found in a town. In the villages, the older women with their experience played the role of the doctor. They knew how to extinguish embers and produce poultices, which on some occasions served a useful purpose. Beyond that, it was strictly the 'Will of God'. During these periods of history, this was the situation and nothing else could be done. When those in the household noted that the patient was nearing the end of his life, they would watch over him carefully so that he did not die without a candle burning. People were especially attentive at night and, one by one, they would take a turn to watch over him and if he needed it, they would occasionally administer a spoonful of water or would make him more comfortable in his bedding.

When it became evident that the sleep of death was imminent, whoever the attending person was would light a candle and place it in the moribund hand. At this time he would also summon the others within the household. This would be the final and most difficult hour. It is not possible for us to describe properly the period that is the border between life and death. To a certain extent, this moment of ultimate stress can be read in the face of the dying person. How this final moment passes can be known, however, only by the person experiencing it.

After the death has occurred, the deceased was washed, groomed and dressed and was then laid out, according to the traditions of the country, on a "laita" or bench in the big room of the house. The priest was informed and also the church attendant or "palimar", who needed to ring the church bell three times a day. A cross and a candelabrum were brought from the church and would be placed near the head of the deceased. In addition to the priest and the reader or "dascul", who would be paid for the funeral services, the "palimar" would also be paid for the ringing of the church bells. The information of a death was spread quickly throughout the village by the fact that the bells were ringing. The population would be asking "Who has died?" and thus, from mouth to mouth the story of the death was spread. Those who were part of the household would fetch all that was necessary for the burial from town and also some pine boards. A carpenter would be summoned to prepare a coffin for the deceased. When the coffin was ready, the deceased was placed in it and the assembly was again

placed on the bench in the big room. For his work in preparing the coffin, the carpenter would receive a "colac", a candle and a towel - later he would also attend the "masa" which followed the burial.

The deceased was lamented or "bocit" several times a day by various relatives and village mourners but most especially at dawn, at noon and at sunset. (**TN**: The procedure of "bocit" is a now (thankfully?) abandoned custom whereby people would gather to 'moan and wail' to graphically display their grief to all. The procedure was often led by 'professional or hired' mourners from the village. Versions of this custom are still practiced and seen on television following deaths in the middle-East and Arab countries). When news of the death of the person would reach more distant relatives they would come to do their duty of mourning. On these occasions, they would do their mourning cries outside the windows of the house.

The mourners would arrive at the house of the deceased with candles. These candles had the purpose of illuminating the path of the deceased through the unlit darkness leading to the world beyond to which he must now journey. The candles would be lit and placed in the candleholder set near the head of the deceased.

In the evening young and old would assemble at the house for a vigil and would stay until late into the night – some would remain until dawn. From the closer relatives, some would come to help with the preparations needed for the occasion of a funeral. At the vigil, people would talk about the life and accomplishments of the deceased and discuss his final days and the manner in which he died (easy or difficult), whether he suffered greatly, whether he was conscious until his final moment, etc. The young would make some lighter comments or would play games or have other discussions. They were left in peace as long as they did not go beyond the limits of respect that the occasion demanded. These activities tended to distract those grieving from their pain and lightened the heavy and oppressive atmosphere in the minds of the grieving family.

The body was kept in the house three days after which it was taken first to the church and then to the grave in the cemetery. In other words, the burial would be scheduled for three days after the day of death. Occasionally this schedule was delayed (in winter for instance). On the day of the interment the priest and the "dascul" would arrive at the house at the agreed-to time and the procession items consisting of the crosses and banners, etc would arrive from the church. In the same way, the bier or coffin transporter would also arrive. A service would begin in the house after which the coffin was moved. At the doorway of the house the coffin was lowered three times to touch the threshold of the entrance before it was mounted on the bier, which had been placed outside before the entrance. When the deceased was carried out, a mourning ceremony (with wailing and moaning) took place. A short funeral service then took place in the yard, called the first "prohod", after which the cortege would start moving. At the gateway of the yard a second "prohod" called the "popas" or halt, was performed - there also a reading was made from the Scriptures. The deceased would be brought to the church and the cemetery on a bier that was borne by eight men or youths, four on each side of the coffin. People with a higher social status would transport the coffin on a wagon drawn by oxen.

When a younger man or woman died, the coffin would be carried by young men; when a married man or woman died, they would be carried by married men. All the persons who carried the coffin would receive a "colac", a handkerchief or a small towel, and a candle.

Between the home and the church six or twelve "prohods" would be made. For those who were very poor, only three were made (at a lower cost). At each "prohod" a Scripture reading was made. Thus, the funeral could be made simple with six stops and would cost less or with twelve "prohods" and with a longer time period and a higher fee. It can be seen therefore that the burial service was not made the same for all people. For the richer, it was made with greater pomp, with more "prohods" and Scripture readings and with a longer procedure at the grave. For those persons with lower means, the ceremony was much reduced if they did not have the money to pay for a larger ceremony. For those with no means at all, only three "prohods" were performed. Which of these events were seen as more righteous or deserving in the eyes of God we cannot know.

At each "prohod" the procession would stop and the bier with the 'no-longer alive' person would be lowered to the ground. A short ceremony and several Scripture readings would take place with those present all kneeling. At the end of the reading all would arise and the cortege would continue along the road. Between the "prohods", the deceased would be mourned with the appropriate wails and moans. In more recent times, during the interval between "prohods", the funeral hymn "Sfinte Dumnezeule" (Holy Father) is sung by the "dasculs" or by the choir.

The deceased would first be brought to the church where a funeral service would begin and where the coffin lid would be opened so that the deceased could be seen by his neighbours one last time. After the service the now-closed coffin was taken from the church and the cortege continued on the road to the cemetery. At the cemetery there was a grave prepared by the gravediggers. There, the coffin was placed on the edge of the grave. Here also was performed a funeral service after which the priest would deliver a eulogy commemorating the life and accomplishments of the deceased. There would also be some Scripture readings on this occasion. After the completion of this service, the coffin was lowered into the grave with the use of two "franghii" (bands of rope) held by the gravediggers. The priest would take one of their spades and would make with it the sign of the cross on each of the four sides of the grave disturbing a small amount of dirt in each case and letting it fall on the coffin thereby blessing it.

The family would then pay the priest, the "dascul" and the gravediggers, if they had not already done so earlier. For completeness, we should note that those funerals with the greatest pomp would be officiated by several priests- two or three would be invited even from other villages, if required. In Voloca there were normally three priests.

All those who assisted in the procession had tied to the crosses or banners a handkerchief, a small towel or a kerchief which, at the end of the burial, they retained. In the same manner, those who carried the bier received a kerchief or a handkerchief. At each "prohod", each had received a "colac" as "pomana". The priests and

"dasculs" would receive a "colac" and a candle tied with a handkerchief. The gravediggers and guests at the grave would be offered a drink (alcoholic). In addition, the gravediggers would be given a chicken as "pomana". Also at the grave, a chicken was promised to each priest and a cloth was given on which they could kneel when they read the scripture at the graveside. These items were taken by the priests in addition to their customary fee. The "palimar" also received a fee for the ringing of the church bells.

After the burial, all those who had taken part were invited to the home for a funeral "masa" or "praznic". If it was not possible to accommodate everyone, then those invited would be close family, those who carried the bier and those who assisted in the procession. In addition, the priest and the "dascul" would be invited.

There would be a "masa" celebrated also three days after the funeral. As can be deduced, a funeral was a costly event. If the deceased was an unmarried person, very many young people would come to the funeral and the deceased young man or girl would be clothed as a groom or a bride. Those with a high social status would also employ musicians for the funeral.

For three days following the burial, a time during which the deceased was honoured, a candle would be burning continuously in the home – (this might even be the remains of the beeswax candle or candle coil that had lain on the chest of the deceased in the coffin.) This was done in the belief that the soul of the departed remained over this period in the house, especially during the night. During the period that the body had remained in the home laid out on the "laita" (three days), his soul wandered all the roads and places that he had seen and walked on during his earthly life.

At the "masa", "colaci", candles, vases, clothing and even animals – both smaller and larger - were given as "pomana" so that the person being commemorated could have them in the 'other world'. It was most strongly believed that the deceased would receive all these goods in the 'other world' and that he would be joyously able to receive and make use of them. These beliefs were good in that people would, in this way, help the poor. The "pomana" was more welcome and appreciated when it was blessed by being given to those in need. This was a beautiful and good custom observed with strong religious beliefs in our village.

"Masa" for the deceased was also made after six weeks, after six months and after one year. All that was given as "pomana" had to be given with a full heart, without any bad feelings and without even a hint of regret. Otherwise, the gift was not 'acceptable' and the deceased could not have the joy of it in the 'other world.'

## 1.21
# Construction of the Chernauti-Suceava-Itcani railway line

During the time of the Austrian occupation, life changed greatly both in our country and in our village. In Chernauti, the capital of the province, numerous things happened – sewers were built, electric lights installed, water was piped to homes, an electric tramline was installed  and other things.

One especially important improvement was the installation of a rail line which connected Lemberg in Galacia with Chernauti. The line was extended to the south to Suceava-Itcani, the northern border of Moldova. The Chernauti-Suceava-Itcani rail line was planned to pass through Voloca, near Borodaci, then through Moacera and on to Adancata.

The villagers of Voloca became very alarmed and worried when they became aware of the plan that called for the train (or the 'vehicle with fire', as they called it) to come through the village. They formed a delegation and sent a document to the authorities letting them know that they were opposed to the planned route. They did not want the train to pass through the village – it might set the houses on fire, run over the children, or kill their animals. It was with great difficulty that they became more relaxed and finally relented when they learned that the route would not take the train through the village center, among the houses, but instead, would be going to the edge of the village and, in fact, would be in the fields.

The reason the villagers feared the train so greatly and wanted it routed further from the village, was that they could not foresee, at that time, the role and use of this new mode of communication. Their descendants, Volocans of later times, look always for a mode of transport as convenient as possible. They certainly would not be opposed to a train passing through the village – in fact, they would be very happy to have a train station in the village. With the passage of time, the mentality of the population has changed greatly.

The Cozmin train station that was constructed at that time was out in the fields, far from the village. It was used by few villagers from Voloca but did see a lot of usage by others in the Cozmin Valley. This station no longer exists. It was bombed and dismantled during WW II.

The contracts covering the construction and commissioning of the rail line extension, between the concerned parties, were signed 05 June 1868. This was the great day of concern for the villagers – because now they would see the construction of the Lemberg-Chernauti-Suceava rail line. Construction on the Suceava-Itcani-Romania section was completed in December, 1869.

In time, Volocans began to accept that this 'vehicle with fire' and were no longer afraid of it. In fact, many began to use it for traveling to further-away places. The steel line which passed through the village had many

significant consequences; it connected south-east Europe with central Europe and the north. (It created a connection from Turkey, Bulgaria and even Greece with Romania and then Galacia, Austria and Germany.) Because of the line, Volovans could travel throughout Bucovina, and they could go to Galacia, or Austria or even America. Many traveled to Moldova, to work there.

During the construction, more needy Volocans had the possibility of earning wages preparing the roadbed for the rail line, especially on the portion in the region of Voloca. The land needed for the railroad was purchased from the landowners by the state, for good prices. No one remained uncompensated.

Later, this rail line proved its importance and showed its benefits not only for Voloca, but also for the entire region through which it traversed

## 1.22
# About "Bees" (construction get-togethers), "socials" and merrymaking

A good and useful custom that was practiced in the village was one where the people would help each other via a "claca" or 'bee'. If someone did not have a horse and a wagon and needed to bring in wood from the forest, or to take manure out to the fields, then they would invite to a "claca" several householders who did have horses and wagons and the job would quickly get done. For this work, those helping would not be paid money, but the person being helped would provide food and drink for them. "Clacas or claci" would also be formed for hoeing cornfields or cutting grass, and the women might arrange one for spinning hemp. In this way one family would help another and when asked to help in return, they would quickly respond.

The occasions on which the 'bees' were organized the most were those on the occasions when a new house was being constructed. After the walls had been constructed using logs, as was done with the types of houses in Bucovina – a strong base with solid, healthy wood and set on cornerstones of stone – then a 'bee' would be organized to chink and build smooth walls. The neighboring young men and teens would gather for work. Those who had wagons would come with them and would load them with two or three barrels for carrying water. The rest would come with spades, and hoes or iron forks. A few might come with adzes and axes – and all would set to work. The first task was to dig a trench into which they could mix the earth with straw – meanwhile those with wagons went to fetch water.

The young men would enter the trench and trample the earth and straw mixture with their bare feet in time with a dance played by a fiddler and a dulcimer player – they also played without payment. The mixture would be drawn out of the trench with the iron forks and placed on flat carriers or stretchers. Some men would then carry these to others whose job it was to fill and smooth the gaps. The people who did the wall-smoothing were some of the older ones with a bit of experience in the task. The work would go well and soon it looked as if it had been plastered. Often some carpenters would also come to shingle and within a few hours, the house would be chinked smooth and shingled.

When all the work was finished, everyone would wash up. After this the owner of the new house would host those who had come to help with food and drink. The workers would sit themselves on the grass and their host would prepare a long, short-legged table. They would cover this with a clean, white table cloth and all the participants in the 'bee' would set themselves around it. The meal for the 'bee' would be prepared by a number of women, often relatives or immediate neighbors. Some of the women would prepare the meal while others would bake bread. Sometimes, the hostess would prepare on the bake oven a corn-meal delicacy ("malai") on cabbage leaves. (**TN**: Served with farm cream in western Canada, this was called "alivenci"). The first serving at the meal would be "bors", or soup made with potatoes and thickened with cream. This would be followed by

"galuste" (cabbage rolls), roast meats and other good foods. If the period was during Lent, then they would have to use Lenten foods. Some might also put out cottage cheese made with cows or sheep milk and served with cream or "mamaliga" or with a form of yogurt. The meals would be cooked outside over a fire in big earthenware pots which had two handles and which would be tied to wooden supports with wire.

The participants were toasted with "holerca" (white lightning), and each one would have two shots in a row. They would then pass the bottle on to the next person. In this way the whiskey would be drunk by all, in turn, from this one glass. The rounds with the bottle might occur three or four times – hence, in the end, each helper was treated to 6-8 shots of whiskey.

The men would eat from a large common bowl. The women meanwhile had to worry to keep refilling the bowl so that all the workers were sated. The "bors" or "zeama" (see chapter 1.12) was eaten with wooden spoons, while meat and cabbage rolls would be eaten by hand – no one used forks. After they were finished with the eating and drinking, the younger ones would begin a dance because soon the young girls would also appear and quickly, the ground was resonating with their feet. The fiddlers bow would flick as if on fire and the young would make the earth pound. No one would feel or plead tiredness – even though they might have worked hard earlier at trampling the mud mixture that had been needed for the task.

Similarly, when the time came for hoeing in the fields many would help each other by assembling a 'bee'. Whoever needed hoeing done would invite as many people as they thought would be necessary to complete the hoeing in one day of a specific area of corn. Later, they would return one days' hoeing to the other person, whenever they needed it.

This was a good and a nice custom in that it allowed people to help each other and in particular, it helped them when in need. After the war, these customs began to disappear, things began to change.

In addition to the 'bee' discussed above for finishing a house or hoeing a field they might also be held to: cut hay, reap grain, husk corn, and to transport with wagons from the fields or from the woods. Women would convene them to card wool or to spin. In this way people would help out each other a great deal. For the hoeing of corn fields or potatoes, the main participants were young girls – mothers and fathers took less of a role. The 'bee' for hoeing, hay cutting or harvesting grain, did not usually require an entire day. It did not take place during the morning, but only in the afternoon. With the help of this system, work could be done in a short time and a person would escape their worries.

The 'bee' for hay cutting would be attended by men and older youths. From those attending, some were designated the 'lead cutters'. They would have the best scythes and would go in the lead – the others would follow. 'Bees' for hay cutting were rarely assembled, instead, cutters who would be paid were often engaged. The same is true also for the cutting of "painea alba" (wheat or barley) and corn. (**TN**: "painea alba" literally translates 'white bread' – we assume here they mean those crops giving white bread – perhaps as opposed to rye

– which gave dark bread or perhaps "painea neagra".) This was the case because cutting hay or crops was considered to be difficult work that required great care and hence should be well paid. The cutters would also require good meals and most would also accept a few drinks.

In the fall many 'bees' would be assembled for removing kernels from the corncobs. These were greatly enjoyed by the young people, both girls and boys. They would often work late into the night and sometimes until after midnight.

'Bees' using wagons were organized when "painea alba", hay or corn were to be transported from the fields. Each wagon would make one trip, or two at the most.

There was a tradition in Voloca, going back a long way in time, to have "sezatori" or 'socials' for carding wool or spinning. These 'socials' would be organized starting late in the fall and particularly during the winter, when nights were long and most of the outside work was finished. In general, they would be held indoors because it would often be cold and damp outside. The women would spin, clean the materials, sew, comb the wool and prepare feathers for stuffing – by tradition, the 'socials' usually involved women's work. Thus, those who gathered at these 'socials' were normally women and young girls from a particular corner of the village. They were rarely attended by older women. (**TN**: In Canada, these are sometimes known as 'stitch-and-bitch' gatherings).

In the evenings, a number of young girls and women would gather at someone's home. They would work together, but each one would be doing their own project. Each one would have brought their materials and implements from home: to sew, to spin, etc. One might need to sew a wedding shirt for a groom or something similar, another had to spin and would bring her drop spindle, another might have to wind some balls of yarn or wind together strands with a winder to form yarn. All would gather with great merriment at this 'social'. They worked together and with greater efficiency. If they were each working separately at home, sometimes none of them would feel quite the urge to work and they would probably get sleepy and go to bed early – with the 'social', things were different. Here, many women and girls would meet each other, they could tell each other good stories, could sing together, or they could tell each other jokes and riddles. In addition, they could learn the gossip within the village, perhaps pertaining to a wedding announcement, or a new love affair, or who knows what stories of magic or dealings by devils or witches.

Occasionally, young men would sometimes also attend the 'socials'. They quickly understood that the time spent at these events could be very entertaining. One of the more talented young men might sing or would draw out of his belt his little flute or even the larger version, the "fluir", and would play some "doiana" (sad laments) or other well-loved tunes. It was also the case that from these visits, some romances might ignite and these would start the path to a marriage.

At the 'socials' it was not the custom that the hostess of the event would be expected to prepare and serve any food or drink for the attendees, but that depended on the individual – each did according to their personalities. The gatherings were being made mostly for providing a place to work effectively, and to have an occasion at the same time where people could tell stories, joke, sing etc. This was really the only means of common entertainment in the village, especially if it occurred during Lent when dancing was not allowed. At that time, libraries, radio, television, and theatre or cinemas did not exist in the village and the youths did not have anywhere to pass their time. For this reason, the 'socials' were organized fairly regularly.

Some of the hostesses would serve some delicacies, especially if the women and girls attending had put aside their own projects for a while and had assisted the hostess with something like combing the wool or preparing the feather down. Things served might be simple pastry twists, cakes with poppyseed or cabbage, some new bread, or cornbread. They might help these go down with a bottle of home-made whiskey – and all of a sudden it looked like a big meal. Such a 'little something' would always be very welcome and would be enjoyed greatly.

When I was about 17-18 years old, I attended several of these 'socials'. I would be especially happy to attend those held at the home of my Aunt, Zamphire wife of Ioan. They would do a lot of weaving and spinning there. My Aunt would make beautiful "catrinca" (wrap-around, decorated skirts), waist bands and shoulder bands. Since she also had a very pretty daughter by the name of Saveta, in addition to the women and young girls, a number of young men would collect at her 'socials' – the 'socials' at her house were very much enjoyed and awaited. I would be invited to read tales, since it became known in the village that I had collected numerous books and was a good story teller. Indeed, many others had never had the pleasure of reading the stories of Ion Creanga, Slavici, or Isperescu. When I had time to return to my home, as for instance during the winter vacation, I would bring along with me my books of stories and would attend the 'socials'. It would be a time of joy and great welcome when I would put in an appearance with my books. The place would go quiet and I would begin my readings with something like the tales 'the mother-in-law and the three son-in-laws' or 'the experiences of Stan', or the stories of Danila Prepeleac or others. They would listen with attention and, at the end, some lady or young girl would ask "Did it really happen that way?" For many of those who listened to me, the stories felt like some things that had happened in the distant past. In their imaginations the stories were really records of real events. They accepted with all of their beings these tales. In the past, that is how it was. When I no longer had the opportunity to attend the 'socials', I gave away my books to others in the village, and they never were returned to me. This was not, however, a loss, but a net benefit for all.

These customs of having 'bees' and 'socials', whereby people would gather to work together were excellent. In this manner they were also able to interact socially. The work was also done more efficiently and more quickly. At the same time that they worked, they interacted and were able to pass on good stories of the past, predictions of fortune tellers, tall tales, and jokes. In the same manner they were able to learn and sing many of our traditional songs, and sometimes even our dances.

People both worked and enjoyed themselves both at the ‘bees’ and at the ‘socials’. In addition to work, people also have needs for some distraction – otherwise life becomes too monotonous. In the same way that work is an essential of life, so also is the need for interactions.

In the distant past, the people would work very hard and led a harsh and insecure life. Wars, invasions, raids and other misfortunes followed their every step. Nevertheless, when the need for constant work relaxed a bit, people looked for interaction with others and sought for ways to meet and visit. They would meet at specific times and at holidays, but they also began to use ‘bees’ and ‘socials’ for these gatherings. These gatherings were simple. The people would meet, work, drink, eat and then they would dance, sing, gossip and joke. Song was never absent at these gatherings. There might be a soloist or a group who would sing in unison. These songs were of inestimable value in the authenticity and originality. They were not songs that had been introduced from elsewhere but were songs that had issued from the feelings within their hearts. With these songs they survived the work and with them also they lessened the load on their daily lives that was so often filled with difficulties without measure.

## 1.23
# Places where dances were held in the village

At all times and at all places, young people have sought suitable locations to meet and to dance. This was true also in Voloca where the people continued to be lovers of social gatherings and dances. They would gather at various places on Sundays in their free time to dance. Some of these places came to be called the dance "vatra" or area. In Voloca there were four such locations:

1. The area on the edge of the village. This was a grassy area near the school where the Arcasi Society centre was later built.
2. The area on the Clipani. This was the grassy area where later the Reading House (library) was built.
3. The area near the Gordeni. A grassy area in front of the houses where now the teacher, Pojoga, and the bootmaker, Bobinschi, live.
4. The area near the Caliceana. Beside the homes of Ioan Dohie and Vasilie Ghihaulu.

There must also, I think, have been a fifth place in the Hrusauti sector.

At the first place, on the edge of the village, most of the young men and young girls attending came from the eastern part of the village – from Gropana and Turcile. This was also the place where the Arcasians often met because many of the members of that society lived in that part of the village.

At one time, before WW I, a sociable and intelligent man, who was a member of the Arcasi Society and who was known as Grigori, son of Dumitru, Cocea, moved the dances from the edge of the village near the Iosub Inn to an area near the Blanca Inn. He hoped that if the dances were held near the Blanca, just across the road from the school, he would take over the lucrative business enjoyed by the Iosub Inn. The new dance area was a good one and a success from the point of view of business for the Blanca.

I watched the dances there when I was a child. I was perhaps four or five years old when I went there to see the "hora". It was a beautiful thing to watch and even though I was quite small, I remember very well and with great fondness even now, some 78 years later, one of the pieces of music that was played and danced. WW I had not yet begun but it was 'beating at the door' and we did not know it. People were not as well informed then as they are now. There were no radios then, no televisions, and not even newspapers or magazines in the village for people to read. Only the priests or the teachers might occasionally read a newspaper. Life nevertheless carried on.

For the payment of a few axe handles or perhaps a bottle or two of whiskey, one night someone dug several wide, long and deep trenches in this dance area. This was done so that no one could dance near the Blanca Inn anymore. The youth would be forced to dance again in the area near the Iosub Inn. In spite of this mischief, the effort was in vain because the young men, and especially the members of the Arcasi Society, on hearing about the silly deed, quickly filled the ditches and leveled the ground over the entire dancing area. The dance took place, that very same day, on its normal area near the Blanca Inn.

The people of Voloca were amazed by the work of the young men and of the Arcasians. Grigori Cocea, who had chosen the new place, went to war in WW I and fell as a hero on the battlefront far from the village. May he have a comfortable grave and may his name never be forgotten.

After the end of WW I, the dances again took place near the Iosub Inn for awhile. Later the Arcasi Society decided to move from there to an area near the home of Grigori Vanzuneac. This is where the largest and most spectacular dances in the village took place – dances which I watched during my youth. I have also written about dances in other chapters.

Ion Salahor has written the following about dances held at the second area, the one near the Clipani –"Every Sunday young men from the valley would organize a dance on the grassy area near Moisi, who operated a shop and also sold whiskey. Here young men from the Clipani Valley would have dances which were the largest in the village and to which many young men and women would collect. In general, the most prosperous households around were those located along the Clipani Valley. The young householders would attend the dances with their wives. Some of the older people would also go to the dances to admire how the young people danced. This was especially true of the older women who wanted to see with whom their sons and daughters were dancing."

At the third area, near the Gordeni, those attending were mostly youth from that area. The boundary of the area they came from began on the hill near the church. From there it continued towards Ilarie Porfiran, then on towards Nicholai, son of Simion, and then to the home of Leonti, son of Vasilie. Finally, the boundary continued to the Gordeni and Gheorgiteni and extended out to the edge of the Olicica Valley. The dances held here were not as well attended as those described in the two areas above.

The fourth area, in the Caliceanca, collected youth from the Grapani Valley in the south, reaching to the Caliceanca, at the south of the village. These dances were also somewhat smaller in attendance and collected fewer viewers than the first two described. In this region one found few households with significant land holdings. The population was less affluent but nevertheless, the girls were beautiful and lively.

Attending the dances in the Hrusauti sector were mainly the youth from that canton. There were times when the young men and women from Hrusauti would join the "hora" in the village, mainly at the dance area on the edge of town.

Thinking back to the dances of those times, I should mention here the name of a simple man with a solid Romanian soul and a man who was an artist – Pricopi, son of Nitoaie. He was a man who played very beautiful music for new dances that were truly Romanian. The men and women of the Arcasi Society incorporated these dances in their repertoire very quickly. He played the "fluieras" (small flute) beautifully and his music was easy to dance to. This man contributed a great deal to the re-introduction of Romanian dances to the village. He had a house near the bridge across the Moscali River. He did not own much property but he had a talent that inspired others. Many musicians learned the music, songs and dances that were truly Romanian from him. These pieces were then widely used.

Around 1930, the custom evolved to hold dances and gatherings in 'gated' areas and to collect an entrance fee. These were held at Veroana Ungurean, Vanzureac, etc which had well-enclosed yards. Dances were rarely held on week days, except during the major holidays when people did not have to go to work.

The organizers of the 'closed' dances during the latter periods raised money with which they could do something for the Society, or some project for the village, as well as to cover the costs of the various expenses. A few times some abuses were made by the organizers (for example by Mayor Nicholai Paulencu).

By custom, the dances or "hora" were held on Sunday afternoons during the "caslegeli" periods (**TN:** – see 1.19). They were attended mainly by the young men and women. The young married couples or the older people did not interfere with the young people at the "hora". They had the privilege of dancing at weddings, family gatherings, work bees and, if invited, at social events. Similarly, church festivals ("hram") constituted happy occasions for gatherings and dances after a feast with tasty baked goods and visiting with others from nearby villages.

After extended periods of hard work and especially after Lenten periods, the young looked forward greatly to gatherings and to dance. This was especially true for us since our church festival, the feast of St. Nicholai, fell during the Christmas Lenten period. Organizers needed to find a violinist, a dulcimer player, a drummer, a clarinet player and, in later times, an accordion player. There were times when they might also find a player of the Jews' harp or the leaf (**TN**: – played like a blade of grass between pursed lips). From among the villagers of Voloca many musicians and singers of renown emerged. They were appreciated by the locals but also recognized as outstanding by visitors from other villages.

In the more distant past, to get permission to hold a dance Sunday afternoon, the young men and women had to go to church Sunday morning to listen to the gospel and the sermon that followed. They also had to attend religious lessons. These lessons were held after the service and during them the youth would learn special prayers, the catechism, about moral values, about sin, about the mystery of religion, the Ten Commandments and other things. The priest would also test some of them during these sessions to see what they had retained of the teachings. The young people did not particularly enjoy these requirements because their thoughts were

elsewhere, but there was little they could do. If they did not attend the religious training or if they fled (left too early) then the priest would not grant them permission to hold a dance on Sunday. This was regarded as a great loss and one that would be difficult to endure. It can be observed that the priest had great power at that time. After WW I, the situation changed.

On a Sunday when a wedding was being celebrated, the organized dances were not held. This was because the young men and young women could dance outdoors at the home of the wedding and would not need to pay for the musicians. At organized dances, money had to be collected to pay the musicians. From the surplus money collected the organizers would buy a bottle or two of whiskey which they enjoyed after the end of the dancing and after they had paid the musicians – normally a fiddler, a dulcimer player and a drummer.

In addition to the youth who came to the dances of Sunday afternoons, young married women as well as mothers and sisters of the dancing girls would attend to watch the "horas". Young children would also often gather so that the dancing area would often be filled with people.

By custom, the first dance was a large, group "hora" which was danced in a large circle. People would then dance in couples. Most of the dancing was done with couples or pairs but there were numerous dances done solely by young men or girls – mostly in large circles. Examples of these were the Arcanul, Sarba, Batuta, Rata, Rusceasca, etc.

I indicated elsewhere that the dances enjoyed on the dance areas were performed only by the young men and women – the married couples had their opportunities at weddings, social gatherings of the families and at building/work bees. Occasionally, married men would gather to dance at a drinking establishment if the place had the needed space and if there happened to be someone around with a "fluier".

## 1.24
# Talented musical artists from Voloca
# Solo vocalists and instrumentalists
# How we are losing our songs, horas, etc.

Song was appreciated and cultivated even in the very earliest history of Voloca. Mothers rocking their infants in the cradle, while spinning or combing their wool, would sing. Young men would sing when they traveled to see their girl friends. Young men and women sang while they worked in the fields or when they were working communally at a 'bee'. Men would sing while they were crafting something from a piece of wood. The elders would sing at weddings or on the occasions of family gatherings. They would sing solo or as a group, in harmony or in unison (in a single voice.) Some produced music with leaves or with Jew's harps. Others played country flutes ("fluier"), the "telinca" or the large flute ("caval"). For larger gatherings, musicians would be invited to attend. They would play the "cimpoi" (a Romanian bagpipe) the fiddle, the hammer-dulcimer ("cymbali" (**TN**: sometimes spelled "tambali"), and the "ciure" – an instrument that was like a tambourine. In more recent times, that is to say around the start of the 20th century, the large tuba was introduced. It was followed by the trumpet and later, the clarinet.

For a long time only the fiddle and the dulcimer were played at dances. This combination of instruments would also appear at family gatherings. They would play before the meal and generally the music was one of love. The players were often accompanied by singers. Some of the music sung was joyful while some was about sorrows, about the spirit and soul of man and about misfortunes. The singers sang with musicians or without accompaniment, depending on the occasion. Some people sang only on special occasions while others would sing almost all the time, be it in the house or outside – at work or in the fields, etc. Almost all of their lives, some people made their work sessions easier with song.

Over the years there have been many great singers and musicians in Voloca, both male and female. Many of them were enjoyed both for their beautiful voices as well as for the enjoyable songs they had learned. These popular artists had a large repertoire of songs including "doina" (melancholic songs), songs of love, songs about outlaws, songs about old people, songs about gallantry, ballads, etc. All of these creations, if they do not fall victim to the passage of time, will form the treasured "folclorul" of our national culture. (**TN**: The term "folclorul" which the dictionaries try to translate as 'folklore' is in fact a broad term encompassing stories, poems, songs and music of the country. Lacking an equivalent English word or simple expression equal to this meaning, we will continue to use the Romanian word to transmit the meaning – see also Chapter 1.25.)

Over the history of our village we had many people talented in creating musical pieces but unfortunately during certain periods of the past there was no one around to record their creations and hence many of them were lost. Because of this, these musical pieces cannot be collected and saved. This constitutes a grave loss for us since

these pieces can no longer be recovered. It is true that many popular songs are handed down from father to son and from generation to generation but this rule does not always work. Some periods were more productive and richer than others. During these, the number of popular artists was greater and they included people of exceptional talents. There were also periods that were less productive and poorer, when the number of artists was less and when their creative talents did not reach the appropriate levels of artistry. This is an indisputable fact – one that applies to all forms of art. Exceptional artists who exhibit a degree of genius do not occur all the time.

Because of all the misfortunes of WW II, we lost a great deal. The losses were immense and irreplaceable – especially in the area of Romanian "folclorul" from northern Bucovina, an area that included the village of Voloca. Just when;

a) the number of artists was increasing
b) people began to collect and expand the local "folclorul" and
c) the technical capability to record the folclorul appeared (tape recorders),
d) the scourge of war with all its vast store of misfortunes and totally disastrous consequences arrived.

During this terrible period nothing could be saved and all was lost. There was no time to be able to collect the "folclorul" – there was no time in fact to keep up with other, sometimes more urgent, needs. Misfortunes arrived without warning and without an invitation. It is easy to understand that under these circumstances it was possible to save nothing related to cultural activities – many were unable to save their very personal treasures – or even their lives.

The war brought a conflict and a time of such confusion that it cannot be fully described. The consequences were disastrous beyond measure. Who had the time to think that they should be concentrating on preserving the "folclorul"?

If it had been possible to predict in advance the approaching disaster and if someone had thought about this much earlier, we would be in a different situation. Another important point is that not everyone is suited to attempt such a task. There is always a need for people who are trained for such a task, blessed with certain talents and knowledge in this area of expertise. If some people with these capabilities had saved these artistic creations, these items would be treasures of extraordinary and incalculable value. At this time they would constitute an extremely precious contribution to our national "folclorul".

Among other things, this music would provide uncontestable evidence to the Romanians of today that we have maintained a unity within our country. It would provide a proof that this area, which is in the main body of Moldova, belongs to us. Despite the fact that nearly 150 years had passed since the dismembering of the country, when Bucovina was invaded by Austria, despite all that, old Romanian songs continued to exist in

these parts and one could hear them in Moldova in the regions under Austrian control. These songs had continued to be sung and played in the same manner on both sides of the border.

The music that I heard in my childhood, the music of my parents, while we were under Austrian rule, I was able to hear again as a youth in the Neamt district when I was in the military in 1932, some fourteen years after the union of Bucovina with the mother country. Almost a century and a half had passed during which the brothers of Romania were separated but neither time nor the physical separation had allowed them to forget their common clothing style, their language, their customs and even their music. For these reasons, it becomes evident why Bucovina with its people was a vital organ of the body of Moldova and that the popular Romanian music which circulated freely when the country had not yet suffered separation in the north, continued to be used after more than a century under foreign rule. The cruel authorities separated the country, but not the spirit of the people of Moldova.

It would have been of great value if we could record here some of the songs that were sung by our mothers and grandmothers of the past – or the songs that our parents, grandparents or great grandparents sang while they worked or crafted their goods. They knew how to sing or play on their flutes many “doina” and songs from the distant past. It is a great tragedy that we cannot leave to those who will follow us some of these songs so that they also will know the songs of those before them. From these songs they could have learned what their predecessors achieved, what they endured, and also what they had created that was good and wonderful. It is with great regret that we must confess that in this scope we can do very little. The people who knew these songs have unfortunately all died and together with them, so have the songs. We did not succeed in helping them survive through the turmoil through which we have had to travel. Not only did we experience these problems, but so also did our neighbors.

Preoccupied with countless problems and caught unprepared, we had neither the time to think nor to realize the problems we were going through. When the clouds of dark luck descended upon us, we fled whichever way we could with our lives in our hands, and often with only a small bag of possessions. We knew not where to flee, when to stop running, and what to attempt to do. We lost all of the things we held most dear and loved the most; our land, our beloved village, parents, siblings, children, our homes that we had built up and our places of rest where our ancestors lay. The places we left are where the songs, that we and they knew, died. We did not succeed in learning them nor did we have the time to record and save them. They too went as if to the grave. Our feelings of sadness are unbelievably great and our hearts are greatly hurt by this. These old songs, “doina” and ballads have died just like the artists who created them.

Many oral and instrumental pieces of music have existed in Voloca for a long time. The simplest instruments used were the leaf, the “telinca”, and the drum. It was not difficult to play these. It took a lot more patience and practice to play the common small, or even the large, “fluier”. The leaf and the drums were played mostly by girls while the flutes and “telinca” were played exclusively by men. The bagpipes, violins, dulcimers, and tambourine were played by men – musicians and artists. The same is true for the trumpet and clarinet. Later,

when the accordion was introduced to popular music, it was learned and played almost equally by males and females.

A leading singer, during his time, was Constantin Rahovei. He had a very smooth bass voice that was well loved. He began to sing and play while quite young – singing and playing the "fluier" in equal measures. While he was a youth he would shepherd the cattle in the hills near Buda or near Brezna and he played and sang so beautifully that he amazed those who heard him. He was a well-built man and had a handsome face. After he had matured into a young man the young ladies greatly admired his talents and begged him to perform. He would agree to do so – but for a price. He demanded that they give him a kiss or that they allow themselves to be tightly embraced. If they agreed, he would perform for a long time and very well almost any song they had requested. He sometimes became a bit spoiled with all the adoration while still quite young. He eventually could not escape the young ladies and was spending much time just listening to their requests.

Constantin continued to sing and play but as time went on, he recognized that he could increase the price for his music; he ended up spending a bit more time in the arms of the young ladies. With great fondness, Constantin recalled recently his memories of these great years. Many young ladies gathered him snugly to their bosoms and many also kissed him with great passion. One of them became enamored with him beyond measure. As he grew up in time, her great love captured him completely. After this time his music became more romantic, more filled with feelings, and more beautiful. Often, such a love cannot be fully fulfilled. So it was also to be for him. He was unable to marry the one whom he loved most of all but he continued to think about her for the rest of his life. She did likewise, never forgetting him. This unfulfilled love lead to a long, continued yearning and a fire in his heart. For this reason, all the rest of his life, he played and sang about his unfulfilled desires.

I heard Constantin sing and play his "fluier" many times at gatherings or performing with his chorus and on other occasions. Constantin would perform with the other godchildren of Vasilie M. Cocea during the Easter holidays when they all gathered to bring "colaci" (braided bread) to their common godparent. In addition, he sang often wherever he worked – when he was involved in building a house, when he was shingling, etc. His voice was so strong that it could be heard from a long distance especially when he was shingling the roof of a house or a barn.

His love, Saveta, heard him many times and remembers him well from their youth. She sighed many deep sighs over him – but she could not do anything about it. They both lived beyond their 85$^{th}$ birthdays but their paths continued to be what destiny decreed.

Out of all the music Constantin played, the one piece most deeply ingrained in my memory is "I remain on the hill while my beloved is in the valley". This song was also sung in latter years by Ilutia Guraliuc, a nephew of Constantin. In my estimation, Constantin Rahovei, was the most brilliant songster of Voloca.

An excellent player of the "telinca" and also the "fluier" was Gheorghe Ionica. **(TN:** For some reason, perhaps modesty, he does not say 'my father' as it is later revealed in this chapter.) He would craft himself a "fluier" from a special piece of wood that he had selected with great patience. If he was not satisfied with the sound from it he would discard it and would make another. He kept working at it until it produced exactly the note he wanted. After many adjustments he would have crafted an instrument that produced music that was beautiful and pleasant and resembled that which come from an expensive flute. With the aid of a heated wire, he would burn the "fluier" surface and decorate it with different geometric patterns. The "fluiers" he produced were thus rare pieces – they were beautiful and produced beautiful sounds. He crafted many "fluiers", some of which he gave to others. He kept a few of the very best ones for himself.

Gheorghe Ionica played the "fluier" skillfully and those who heard him were very pleased with what they heard. Often, he played the "fluier" in the evening after he came home from work, or during the holidays. He also played at family gatherings, especially at the home of my godfather, Grigori, who had the habit of gathering family at his home during the holidays. Gheorghe also played when he went to cut hay for someone else in their fields. He would take his "fluier" along with his sickle. When he took a break for his lunch or when he needed a rest, he would unpack his "fluier" and he would begin to play. He knew many different tunes both for dances and for family gatherings. In his youth he was often invited to join and play with groups who would go out at Christmas singing carols or with the "haicatul" ("uratul") (See chapter 1.20). When he was the leader of the musicians, he would bring together the young men and even some of the younger married ones and he would play some male tunes that would really get their heels flying.

It was a great tragedy that I was left by him while still a small child and that I did not have the privilege of hearing him for a longer period – he left to take part in the war in 1917 and was killed. From many other people I learned later in life about his talents. One of these people in particular was Toader, the son of Vasilie, who lived on the hill. Toader, when he saw that I was becoming very appreciative of music, said to me one day "Ionica, sir, your father played a very mean fluier!" He did, in fact, play beautifully, and even though I was quite young, I could still comprehend that that he played beautifully and had a huge repertoire.

From my recollections of my father I retain in my mind vividly, even today as I write this chapter, the sounds of the "Ciobanusul" (little shepherd) played in a manner that only he could do. Today the "Ciobanusul" is played in a different way – with a changed melody that is different from what he played. The sounds of his "fluier" produced a different resonance. It used to sound exceedingly beautiful – at the same time tender, yet sweet and melancholic. Sometimes it is played also on the "telinca" but the capabilities of the instrument are more modest because of its construction.

I recall a time around the beginning of WW I when my mother would go to one of her neighbors, Macrina Oncinoaie with her spinning fork. She would meet there together with her sister-in-law and several other women. As the gathering was usually in the evenings and my mother had no one to leave me at home with, she would take me also to Macrina's place. Macrina was a widow but she had an older son and a youth who was

about five years older than me. The older son was called Nicholai while the younger was named Teodor. Nicholai was about 19-20 years of age. He could play amazingly well on the large flute. He played many dance tunes and we all listened with great pleasure. Nevertheless, the music he enjoyed playing most consisted of mournful melodies and he played them with such feeling that his shirt would quiver. The ladies who were listening were greatly touched and sighed deep sighs. Many of them had good reason to be melancholic because most of their husbands had gone off to war.

Nicholai, son of Macrina as he was called, would be invited to go to the village meeting place where the young girls and women gathered. He would happily attend. He was not very tall in stature, dark in complexion, and very mild mannered. His mother loved him very much because he was also very obedient. He played his "fluier" so very beautifully that his entire being was consumed with his playing. It can truly be claimed that this young man was a pure artist of popular songs. He knew a great number of melodies, each of which he could interpret magnificently in his unique way. Each time he played, you could never get enough of his music.

Normally, he would play for a long time without becoming winded. He played for hours on end and well into the night – but we never once thought of departing for home before he was finished. His reputation grew throughout the village as people marveled at his ability. I enjoyed listening to him immensely and I would often go with my mother just to hear his playing. One day however, I believe about 1915, Nicholai, son of Macrina, was called up for service in the war with other young men. Many in the village felt very badly when he left because there was no one left to play at his high level.

Time passed and we waited the day when Nicholai might return home. Our long wait ended one day when a message arrived from Vienna that Nicholai had died in hospital following a wound in battle. Our wait was not rewarded - Nicholai did not return. Thus was extinguished the short life of an artist from Voloca.

Another talented young man who performed and who I met after the end of the war (we are talking here of WW I), was Pricopi, the son of Artimon Semeniciuc. He was tall, blond, handsome and intelligent. He sang very well and played the large flute as well as the clarinet. I saw him performing many times and I greatly enjoyed his style. At the "hora" held at Grigori Vanzureac's place, I observed how he danced and directed the "Rata" and the "Arcanul". By then I was somewhat older and was traveling to school in town. I was able to be a better judge of Pricopi's talents. One day he visited our place and I spoke with him for an extended period. He brought with him his clarinet and he played many pieces for me. He had an unruly nature, was often full of worries, and had a desire to travel so as to create a better fate for himself since he was not rich. After a while, he decided to flee to Argentina from where he never returned. We were never able to determine what happened to him but there was a rumor that he had died there in a skirmish or a revolution.

In our village there were also some good trumpet players – such as Mitruta, son of Galuti Busuioc and Ion Cocea. In the following paragraphs I will tell you a few things about Mitruta, son of Galuti, who was, during his era, an exceptional trumpet player. He played at dances and especially at the "malanca" (see 1.20) of St. Vasilie,

when he accompanied his sons. The "malanca" group with which he played his instrument was eagerly awaited. Many people considered the "malanca" group that was led by Mitruta and his trumpet was the very best one. They were probably right - he did play the trumpet very well. He had learned to play the trumpet while in the army, during the period we were under Austrian rule. He completed his service before the war started in 1914, hence when the war broke out, he was at home having been already discharged. Nevertheless, he received a summons to duty during the mobilization in the village while he was living in the Buda hills. Shortly after, he too had to serve anew in the military.

At the end of the war Mitruta had the good luck to return home uninjured. When I first saw him, he was still young, well built and of medium stature. He had a round, ruddy face and sported a nice mustache which curved upwards in the fashion worn by Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany.

Before the start of WW II, perhaps about 1938, I hoped to organize a mixed chorus in the village (in addition to the one composed of older people that was set up in 1934.) The chorus was to consist solely of young men and girls. To start the process I posted a notice and began to solicit the participation of singers. Quite a number of young men volunteered, but only a few females. The parents, especially the mothers, were uncomfortable with their daughters being out many consecutive evenings. During daytime on weekdays, little could be done because people had to work. Sunday, the young people would go to church in the morning and after the noonday meal they customarily wanted to dance. In the end we did not succeed and we were unable to establish a mixed choir of youths in our village at that time. Nevertheless, this attempt served a useful purpose. Via this process, I was able to discover how many singers there could be found in Voloca. At this time I made an interesting discovery. By asking various people what their singing capabilities were, I uncovered a young tenor. I was left amazed by the beautiful sound of his voice.

How very unfortunate it was that this talent was not discovered earlier and that the young man was not sent on to higher education and to the conservatory. The time was now too late and even if we had wanted to do something we could not because WW II was approaching on our doorsteps and the world was in a very cloudy and uncertain situation. I asked him to sing more pieces for us and learned very quickly that he had a voice of gold. He could have performed as the lead soloist in any opera theatre. This young, blond and pleasant man was called Gheorge Cocea. I thought a lot more about him, but events rolled on. The call-up came along, then the war and finally, the escape from the village as refugees. We never did meet again. Around 1941 or 1942 I heard that he had become a casualty on the eastern battle front.

I have written about Pricopi Anitoaie, who played the "fluier", elsewhere.

An excellent but very modest singer was Domnica Gheorge Ionica (**TN:** As was the case with his father above, Toader avoided the expression "my mother" – again we deduce this later.) She did not have a particularly distinguished voice, but she did know many "doina", old songs, and old mourning cries or chants. All of her life she sang but never in public at gatherings or bees or at the community meeting place. Whether she was

spinning, carding wool or sewing, she was always singing. Most of her songs were of the melancholic variety. Although her voice was not distinctive, she had a very musical ear and an exceptional memory. She knew an impressive number of melodies including all the words. These pieces she would be constantly singing, without error.

During my very young years I spent all of my time around her and hence I was able to listen to her every day. At that time I was unable to appreciate the great value of these songs but I did so later when I went off to school. Furthermore, at that time I did not have the foresight and ability to collect "folclorul". No one knew anything about the times that awaited us and we always felt we had plenty of time in the future. We never once considered that in a short time we would lose all this valued treasury and would not have recorded even those items given to us by our mothers. Circumstances overtook us and trampled all that we knew. As I have written above, we lost everything. This disaster came in June of 1940.

One profound question troubles me always and for it I have no acceptable answer. Where did my mother learn all this repertoire of songs and wailing chants – who was her teacher?

About the musicians Andreis, the father and his son Nistor Andreis, about Nistor and Ion Rahovei and about Petrea Tiganu, we have written elsewhere. All of these artists from Voloca performed in the village at one time or other.

I will finally add here the name of a renowned present-day singer from Voloca. He is Ion Paulencu, also known as Nicuta, son of Zenoviei. He is an excellent bass who had the great luck to be able to sing opera. I am very happy about his success since I encouraged him and aided him along his journey. I have written about him in other places in this Monograf as well.

## 1.25
# The Folclorul of Voloca

Over its long existence, Voloca has had many talented and creative residents within its population. From the many artistic people who were born over many generations in Voloca, we have been left with a true treasury of art. Many of their creations are still being used today and we will endeavor to illuminate them in succession below. Other works, to our great misfortune, have been lost because they were popular only for a short period and were not recorded by anyone.

Thus, there are numerous tales, songs and ballads which died together with the people who knew them and related or sang them. Priceless treasures were lost forever often because of the unfortunate circumstances that came along with WW II. We were injured suddenly by these great surprising events and, in our haste to survive, we were able to salvage little of our past. We did not have the foresight to see that one day we would lose completely the ancient areas of our ancestors together with all of the things that were dear to us. We could not foretell that we would flee for the larger world leaving behind what looked like an empty lake.

In this unfortunate and tragic way, we mirror the ways of our grandparents and parents who took with them to their graves their beautiful music. Those who survived them knew nothing or at least very little of the treasury that once existed. A great misfortune befell us in 1940 with the takeover by the Russians of Northern Bucovina and Basarabia.

The following poem is an example of the treasury that existed:

> Little wheat with beautiful leaf,
> Bucovina, a wondrous country,
> We see you with sorrow great,
> And with a tearful face.
>
> You have sons and daughters
> and on your flat plains wondrous flowers.
> You have forests large of oak,
> and sons handsome and strong.
>
> You are beautiful and rich
> and are acclaimed by great poets.
> You are lovely and renowned,
> and by people widely acclaimed.

Girls hard-working and beautiful,
dressed in skirts of silk.
With blouses all aflower
all embroidered on them.

In the fall to gather grain,
they tie their skirts up with a belt.
They work together with the men,
they return at night all singing.

Some sing of their loves,
for a young or older man.
Others they may sing of grief,
such that even the leaves heave sighs.

And the shepherd at the sheep pens,
plays a doina from old times.
A doina that goes on till midnight,
And imitates a forest's whisper.

Doina are played for all us here,
and for the shepherd with his sheep.
Until the winds are imitated,
The "doina" of our olden times.

*Heard recited by Iliuta G. from Borodaci-Voloca*

(**TN:** Other examples of this four-line form of poetry continue - for some 24 more pages. As you have quickly found out, it translates very poorly as poetry into English. No further attempt will be made here to translate. Those interested will simply have to learn, or brush-up on, the Romanian language.)

# PART II

## 2.1
# Volocans, good householders and knowledgeable craftspeople

The residents of Voloca have always been diligent and hard-working people. This included not only those with significant property but also the poorer people – all of them would strive to work hard to improve their situation and grow their holdings. Their diligence, their modesty and their iron will - all signs of their character - allowed them to work around their troubles even in bad circumstances. Rewarded by good profits, some of them attained enviable properties and, with hard work and careful planning, many from Voloca reached a state of good life. Intelligent and persevering people, they were able to resolve for their betterment, all the problems that stood in their paths. Very few of our villagers were 'slackers'. The overwhelming majority of them struggled mightily 'to squeeze milk even from dry rocks'.

If they were landowners, their thoughts were always on how to better manage their fields, how to make their properties more comprehensive and more attractive. If they were tradesmen, they endeavored to make good, durable and attractive products – products that one would just enjoy to view. If they were intellectuals, they dedicated their efforts to improve the village and spread culture throughout the population. If they were artists of one sort or other, they dedicated their lives to their co-villagers and to those of neighboring villages and if they were just laborers on the fields or workers in a factory, they worked in a conscientious manner, with pride and using all of their experience.

Wherever I have traveled, I have heard only good things about the villagers of Voloca. I have received letters of extreme praise in regard to the villagers of Voloca – letters which have filled my heart with joy. They are renowned everywhere for their hospitality and caring manner. Widely recognized as capable and proper people, their credibility as responsible citizens and hard workers have been cemented and they are saluted. In the same way, Volocans are recognized as being peaceful and respectful of others, as well as of state authorities and the laws.

The male in a household in Voloca rises early, tends to the tasks needing attention about the household and then proceeds to work in the fields where he works hard with dedication throughout the day. He is also the person who must go to the mill, or to town or to the forest while the housewife remains to look after the children, look after the livestock, and prepare food. After she has completed her chores outside, she attends to her spinning or goes over to the loom to weave. The Volocan housewives are hardworking and hardy and their handiwork is made with good taste, is clean, attractive and pleasant to customers. Their clothing is truly Romanian in its simplicity and modesty. The young women and housewives do wear embroidered shirts and special skirts, but only to church or to the "hora" (dances).

The works of the tradesmen of Voloca are also highly appreciated. Because of their talents, their work is highly regarded by all the residents of villages in the area. Many were asked to come to work further away when there was a need to build a house or barn or a well to be dug and lined. In Voloca a large number of skilled craftsmen were developed not only in the construction trades but also in other trades such as: wheelwrights, coopers, wood carvers, coat makers, great coat fabricators, moccasin makers, boot makers, ironmongers, cabinetmakers, and tinsmiths. Overall it is recognized that the village has a large number of good tradesmen as is evidenced by the high caliber of good houses, barns, sheds, wells and beautifully-worked gates. In all of these constructions one can recognize a love of beauty and the skill of knowledgeable craftsmen. The entire assemblage of the construction in Voloca exudes a prosperous setting.

Recalling the tradesmen of Voloca and their constructions, we must award to them the highest degrees of honor for the quality of their efforts as well as for the final products. They would ask a good wage for their hard work but they delivered on their promises without any deficiencies.

If Voloca has reached the point where it is a rich, attractive commune with many attractive households, a large portion of the credit is due to the efforts of the school teachers in the village. They put into place a fruitful system in the schedules of villagers that has allowed them to blossom and to raise their manner of living. Their efforts form the basis of this improvement and in the schools they have dedicated many long years to teach the children to become literate and to prepare them for a better future. A people can only advance through knowledge and this truism has been demonstrated in our village. This role fell to the teachers and they have fulfilled it. Through their efforts, the darkness has been overthrown and an ordered way of life has settled on our village. To their highest credit is the fact that they have prepared and sent to many schools in the towns waves of students, some of whom advanced to professional or specialized schools and some who have succeeded in moving on to universities in neighboring countries. Good seeds were planted in fertile ground and yielded good crops – to the credit of the teachers and the appreciation of the villagers. The number of young people who went on to higher education grew year by year. Some of these returned to their village of birth and elbow-to-elbow with their seniors they put in exhausting efforts to help and improve conditions in their commune. In this way Voloca was elevated in stature in a short time from all points of view.

Other intellectuals joined together with the teachers in the task of raising the culture and learning of the average villager. When an understanding and the collaboration that developed between all these intellectuals, the results were for the very best. Many of the teachers and intellectuals started fruitful activities in the roles of cultural societies in the village. They started these societies and led them for many following years. When the local population were themselves able to assume the operation of the societies, they did so and we can state that they proved themselves to be very capable.

Man cannot live in a state of constant stress. Work that is too difficult and too prolonged wears one down beyond measure. For this reason it is necessary to find times of relaxation to allow the body to recover and to be renewed. There are people who, even in their periods of rest, will dabble at some things – things that in some

way lead to useful and pleasing advances. They go so far with these hobbies of theirs, from which they gain pleasure, that they reach a point of such expertise with them that their hobbies become true art.

Some craftsmen acquire their skills in this manner and the development of popular artists occurs. In this way, Voloca developed a body of artistic talent. Some learned how to sing and play beautifully or to dance while others learned how to craft and decorate wooden products so skillfully that they seemed to acquire a life of their own. Still others sculpted crosses, candelabras, or icons from wood with the skills of true artists.

One person emerged from the youth of the village who at the same time became a sculptor of note as well as a writer – Ioan Salahor. What he has achieved in the artistic area is impressive – we have to a large extent described that elsewhere in this tome. Here we are attempting to describe, in general terms, the endeavors of the villagers of Voloca.

Three directors of choruses emerged from our village – two of these went on to fruitful activities further afield. We have already stated that some of the craftsmen from our village achieved true art in their products. In the past also, in Voloca we had people who were born here and lived on as famous musicians both as talented players and vocalists of fine voice. We must not forget that the ladies of Voloca were also artists as they produced their elegantly embroidered blouses, their weaving and their highly decorated Easter eggs. All of these creators of beauty were true artists who have left us creations of high quality. For as long and as often as we can, we must continue to put forth their names.

In Voloca we also had some more needy villagers who owned very small lots of land. These people had to seek work on the estates of the richer households or they worked in the forests. There were also some who went to work elsewhere in Moldova where they would work on larger estates, in the mills in the towns or at other difficult jobs. Still others left for America to seek jobs and wages. In the more distant past, the poor people led a very bitter life, working hard and earning very little. At that time no one from Voloca worked in factories in the towns because they did not exist and jobs as assistants for the tradesmen usually went to the locals in the town. After the war, many from Voloca worked on the building of the railroads.

## 2.2
# Dumitru Sfecla, a teacher in Voloca
# A great celebration in Voloca
# The celebration of Iordan (Baptism of John) on the Derelui

"Dumitru Sfecla came as a teacher to our village before I myself went to school. I believe he came about 1906, or earlier – when exactly I do not know". This is how Ioan Salahor starts off his recollections about the teacher Dumitru Sfecla.

"Dumitru Sfecla was the son of a villager from the village of Boian, near the border with Basarabia. Boian was a truly Romanian village located on the left bank of the Prut River. At that time, Bucovina was controlled by the Austro-Hungarians so that the official language throughout all of society was German. Sfecla was very different from the other teachers at our school, most of whom spoke German to each other. You would not see Sfecla socializing very much with the others nor speaking much German. He would more likely be associating with the Priest Gheorgi Velehorschi when the priest came to the school to teach religion and Sfecla would speak with him just as the rest of us did, in the language of Moldova (Romanian). Mr. Sfecla lived near the village bank. The Director of the bank was Niculuta, son of Gutoaie, and the book-keeper was Ion Ungurean, who later became the reader at the church. Together with the priest, Gheorgi Velehorschi, Ion Ungurean, and several of the young men who had escaped being drafted into the army, and with assistance of the Dacia Society in Chernauti, Sfecla succeeded in founding the Arcasul Society in Voloca. The Dacia Society was a student organization whose members were the sons of villagers from throughout Bucovina – all of the members were Romanians. As was the situation during the time of the Austrian rule, the authorities of the time looked for ways of preventing the continued use of the Romanian language and customs. For this reason, Mr. Sfecla sought to establish the society under the guise of a 'union of firemen' – however, their mission was entirely different. The Arcasians, on Sundays or holidays wore, on their chests, badges showing the Romanian tri-color (flag) which was worn at that time with the red stripe at the top. This is as opposed to the normal manner in which it should be worn – with the yellow stripe on the top.
(**TN:** This paragraph begins with quotation brackets- the closing set of brackets do not appear until almost the last sentence of the chapter –essentially the entire chapter is an extraction from the writings Ioan Salahor).
(**TN#2:** In what follows, Sfecla is often called Domnul Sfecla – a Romanian term of high respect. We use the poor translation of "Mr." instead.)

In the beginning, the Arcasul Society in Voloca had only about 25-30 members, all of them young men who had served in the army – it also had a few of the younger landowners. Dumitru Sfecla would lead this group each Sunday to church and they would sing during the service, slowly increasing their presence. He gradually taught them to sing better and better. Also during that time period, a co-operative was established in the village. The

persons in the lead for establishing this were Mr. Sfecla, Ion Ungurean, the priest Velehorschi, and Niculata, son of Gutoaie, who served as President of this co-operative for a period of time.

The first merchant of the co-operative was Sandru, son of Mitruta (husband of Vasiloaie). Later, about a year or so, the son of Mitruta, son of Cocii, finished his military service. He had been a civil servant and hence was able to read and write. He was named Grigori, was a tall, handsome man and was somewhat different from the other young men in the village. He was always on the lookout for good things to do to benefit the village.

Grigori was one of the first to join the Arcasul Society and became one of its leading members. Near the building that housed the bank and the co-operative there was a large garden about a falca in size. (**TN:** 1 falca~3.5 acres, see Chapter 1.8 for details). When Grigori became the merchant at the co-operative, he thought it would be a good idea to make a dance area in this garden and to move the dances there from the area near the inn of Iosub. In truth, this was not a move that anyone had been expecting. Nevertheless, the locale was changed and at this new place they learned many new dances from Dumitru Sfecla on scheduled evenings over many weeks. In this way, they were able to perform a new dance each week at the Sunday afternoon dances. Almost the entire village would gather there on Sunday to see the dances being performed. The young men and young girls would always assert: "I am going to the hora." Those young people of the village who were willing to listen to Dumitru Sfecla were able to learn many good and useful things.

I remember one summer that there was a large gathering of people for a celebration in the village. I cannot remember if I was old enough for school at that time or not, but I do remember that I walked and visited throughout the village where things were going on. This celebration took place mainly in the yard of Stefan, son of Maftei, which was near the council chambers. Near the entrance to a large storage shed they had made a bridge out of boards and they had covered the walls of the shed with the most beautiful woven, wall hangings. This was called the "scena" (stage).

I had no clue what the word "scena" meant since I had not heard the word before. On this particular Sunday a large number of high-society people came to the village from town and from outside villages. The Arcasi from Cuciurul Mare also came with a large beautiful tri-color flag – other Arcasi from other villages also came. Most of the young men were dressed in black clothes that were cinched at the waist with belts covered with golden buttons. They had wooden guns and on their heads they wore tall hats decorated with the odd turkey feather. These people were called the "dorobanti" and they were to do a theatrical dance. However, I was unable to see the performance since just as it was about to begin, all of the children were shooed out of the garden and only the visitors and the Arcasi members were left to see the performance.

The road that passes by the house of Stefan, son of Maftei, was full of young men, young women and many adults. Since people needed to pay an entrance fee to see the performance, not very many entered the yard and most resorted to trying to peek through the cracks between the boards. I wiggled my way through them to try to get to a suitable crack but it was not to be because the bigger boys just pushed me back. I did not leave easily

and succeeded in clambering up a support post in a far corner from where I was able to see the scene and I was delighted to see how the theatre was performed. My luck unfortunately did not hold for too long and soon the church reader, Pajoga, who had spotted me, came over and pulled me down from my perch – in fact, he sent me off with a cuff to the backside. Those who were able to see through the cracks between the boards said that the high-society people, who had come for the town, danced in the German fashion. These dances and theatre continued almost until dark.

I was unable to see what was happening inside but later the gates were opened and the musicians came out. They played so loudly that the sounds resonated throughout the village. Then, the rest of those inside came out dancing and all proceeded to the grassy area near the council chambers where they gathered everyone in a large circle and they danced the large "hora". They formed such a large circle that it enclosed the entire area, notwithstanding the huge size of it. Young men and women, married couples, the young and even the old – all began to dance. And so they danced together – the high-society group with the common villagers - together for better than an hour until the sun set. At the head of the "hora" was the forestry engineer from the Cosmin Forest. This man was called Holca and beside him was Mr. Sfecla and other leading rich householders. Holca, the engineer, 'called' the "hora". I remember the event very well and it is as if I can still hear his calls at this big "hora". I still use his calls when I was asked to 'call' later at weddings or similar events. Both Holca and Sfecla knew many calls or songs for the "hora" and they took turns in doing so. Everyone danced with cheerfulness and good will to the sounds of the music and to the calls of Dumitru Sfecla and the engineer, Holca, and perhaps even some others.

After it began to get dark, those involved danced back to the yard of Stefan together – both those who had paid the fee and those who had not – and squeezing among them, I succeeded in getting in. In spite of the fact that it was quite late, I did not want to go home because, of course, I had to inspect the stage and I needed to see more closely the wooden guns and all of the other things that were there. When I was at the peak of my enjoyment, my mother appeared. She had come to find me and take me home – she had in fact not forgotten to bring with her a handy little sapling which she used appropriately across my back a few times before I took to flight. Fortunately, I escaped with only a few strokes of the sapling. The celebration went on until late into the night but I sighed longingly and could not fall asleep because the music continued non-stop. And so ended that day – a day that was one of the most enjoyable ones and one that I remembered fondly for a long time.

From the above description one can easily surmise what sort of a person Dumitru Sfecla was: a good Romanian with a large heart and soul. Since his house was located near the school, he often provided a place to live for unmarried male or female teachers.

Dumitru Sfecla owned a gun and would go out hunting but we rarely saw him return with a dead rabbit or something else he might have shot. He went out mostly to enjoy the walk in the fields, over the hills and valleys, from where he often returned with a large bunch of flowers that he collected in the fields.

I never did have Sfecla as a teacher in any of my classes while I went to school in the village. I do know that when there had been a heavy snowfall with blizzard conditions and cold weather, Mr. Sfecla would come out of the school with all of the children and would put in the trees around the school garden pieces of cornbread so that the sparrows would have something to eat. He would teach the children to do the same at home and tell them to put crumbs or grains in the more sheltered places so that the birds could eat during the very cold periods when they could not locate food. The other teachers would often watch and laugh at Mr. Sfecla, saying that he had entered a second childhood and was fooling around as if he was a child. In fact, Mr. Sfecla was a very good and honest man, probably one of the best ever at our school.

I don't really know why it happened, but one day when I was returning to the classroom after the morning recreation session outdoors, just when I was passing Mr. Sfecla, he stopped me in the corridor. I do not know what his reason was, but he grabbed me so violently by the hair that he tore out a patch of hair that would have been large enough to make a barbers brush. The pain from the hair pulling was very great but I did not know how to hide this act of Sfecla's and I did not want to tell my parents even though I had not been guilty of misdoing. In addition, I was quite ashamed because I had been considered one of the best students. In the end, when I needed a haircut, I could no longer hide the damage and I told my father that Mr. Sfecla had yanked my hair. My father, after he had heard the story, told me to watch out for Sfecla and to keep out of his sight. He did not go to Sfecla to ask for an explanation because he knew something I did not about Mr. Sfecla and about some other occurrences, and was not letting on.

In our village there were a few families of Jews. Many of them owned shops of drinking establishments (inns) while others were livestock traders – they all knew how to turn a good profit and all of them lived well. One of them, Maier son of Alteroaiei, owned the largest inn in the village. When he brought in whiskey, he would bring it in a large 1000 liter barrel (**TN:** ~250 gallons for the non-metric readers). When the transport with the barrel reached the Schiopul Hill on the road, they would have to send down and hitch an additional pair or two of horses to haul the load up the hill. Maier was one of the richer Jews in the village – he was also a very attractive Jew with black hair and with eyes that glowed like two pieces of coal. He had a sister who was equally attractive. Their mother was a widow and even though she was getting on in age, one could tell that in her youth she had been a beautiful woman.

Maier got married at the age of about forty to a very rich Jewess – but one who was ugly and crooked like a hag. I do not know what the thinking of this Jew was, but he decided to have a wedding of the type that we would celebrate – a Romanian wedding. The Jew had a few young men from the village with whom he was good friends and these friends set in motion the procedure for the wedding. They appointed "vatajei" who invited guests to the wedding (**TN:** see Chapter 1.20).

A few days before the wedding of this Jewish couple, on a day when we were playing outdoors in the schoolyard, Mr. Sfecla came out on to the doorstep of the entrance to the school, closed the door behind himself and called us to come closer because he had something to tell us. We all gathered around near him and

immediately there was a silence so great that one would have heard a fly buzz by. Mr. Sfecla spoke to us thus: "After you have left school and have gone home, you must tell your parents they must not go the wedding that this Jew is arranging, because this will not be a true wedding, not one of the sort that is made properly by us Romanians. This is a disgrace and a joke by a Jew of no shame which, in this manner, makes a mockery of the customs of our ancestors. This is a business decision and a plan to gain more money from our people just as he is extracting money for a poison which he sells people in his inn, darkening their minds and destroying their souls. It would be for the very best if no one bought even a drop of whiskey from this Jewish drinking house."

If the bell had not rung summoning us back to class, Mr. Sfecla might have continued and said more because he was a good speaker and the children quite liked listening to him. However, what Mr. Sfecla told us on this day seemed mostly to have entered in one ear and exited out the other. I certainly did not say anything about it at home and I believe all of the others did the same as me. We were all eagerly awaiting the coming of that Sunday when we could all go to the wedding because the word was that for music a group would come from the nearby town and that they would join with all the fiddlers and dulcimer players in the village to play at the wedding and at the celebration meals afterwards.

The day finally arrived – towards the end of September. It was a beautiful sunny day with the feel of autumn. The music began even before noon just as people were coming out of the church. The musicians were playing so loudly that the sound resonated throughout the valley. A photographer also arrived to take photographs of the wedding. We children had gathered there very early in the day so that we could observe all, not wanting to miss a single thing. In spite of the large size of the yard, it was completely filled with men and women, all of whom had been invited to the wedding. Of course, none of came bare-handed they all brought a live chicken or two as a gift. Some brought a pair of large "colaci" as was our custom for our weddings. I suspect that in total they brought a few hundred chickens – as well as the huge collection of "colaci" which all the people ate. The chickens were later taken to town for market.

I do not know what those who had been invited to the meal ate since, for the most part, many did not enjoy even a single drink of whiskey. Some of the others, however, were so drunk that they did not know where they were. The musicians played in an area that had recently been a field of clover but had been mowed for hay. There everyone was dancing –young men, girls and even the older people – and they danced as if they had all gone mad. The photographer wandered around from place to place taking photos. Meanwhile, we children followed him around and would stand at the front of his scenes so that we would be seen in the photographs.

Mr. Sfecla could be seen looking out the window of his house at all of these blasphemous goings on. His house was located just across the road and he could easily see everything. I myself crossed the road but I did not notice him and, when I passed by him, I greeted him with the customary "I kiss your hand" – which is how we would greet teachers. He looked so saddened and deep in thought that he seemed not to see anyone and was instead engulfed in seeing the rabble who had been stupefied and made crazy by the drink provided by the Jew.

This is how the wedding went and news of it spread to many other villages. (**TN:** No attempt has been made to inject 'political correctness' into the translation.)

After this wedding, we began to see Mr. Sfecla less often and he was much more subdued. Nor would he go out hunting as he had done in the past and, if he occasionally did go, he would climb to the top of one of the hills and would sit there for hours on end staring in the direction of the village where he had been born. In the following winter, people would see him when he walked out with his sleigh after he had finished at school. Twice a week he would go a meeting of the choir and would conduct practices with the young people until late at night. Those who were in the choir began to say after a while that they did not know what was wrong with Mr. Dumitru Sfecla because he just did not seem to be the same.

Sfecla would go to church every Sunday with those who sang in the choir, but it appeared that he had somehow changed and was not the person he had been before. He continued to work at the school and he continued to invite those in the Arcasul Society to come to learn things from books which he had brought in from Moldova. Mr. Sfecla would not go to, nor would he buy anything from, the Jewish merchants, as was the habit of his fellow teachers. This was especially true of Petru Dolinschi who, after he was finished at the school, went regularly to the Alteroaia Inn. The village gossips said many things about him – that he was just an old bachelor and was off to see Mrs. Alteroaia who was a long-time widow. Mr. Dolinschi spent the major part of his free time at the inn, apart from the time he spent hunting. I never did see Mr. Sfecla and Dolinschi go out hunting together.

My father and Doloinschi were good friends since they met often at the Alteroaia Inn where they would enjoy the odd drink together with other householders. Mr. Sfecla was generally busy with the Arcasul Society and with the choir, which he conducted. Meanwhile, Dolinschi had as his main preoccupation, his time with friends at the inn. As a result, Mr. Dolinschi had more friends than did Mr. Sfecla.

I was in the third class and had recently begun to enjoy the vacation, in about 1910, when I heard that Mr. Sfecla's condition had deteriorated and that he had been placed in a psychiatric hospital where he stayed all summer. After he was released from the hospital he was given a pension and he moved to Chernauti where he served as an administrator at the Normal School for Teachers.

Mr. Sfecla did return to our village on occasion especially on Sundays when he would join the choir in the church. One winter he spent the Christmas holidays in our village. At that time he did something that no one had ever considered doing before. Three or four days before the Feast of John the Baptist, Mr. Sfecla, with about four other young men went to the Derelui River which flowed at the edge of the village and chose a spot where it was wide and appropriate. There they cut out pieces of ice with axes and made a large and beautiful cross out of blocks of ice – a cross that was so beautiful that people passing by were amazed by it. Mr. Sfecla announced that that winter the church service for the Feast of John the Baptist would be celebrated there on the river, instead of at a well in the village as had been the case in the past. Not only did Mr. Sfecla announce this,

but he also found an ally in the parish priest, Cassian Stratulat, who did not want to lose the opportunity to fill his satchel and his pockets with offerings.

Traditionally, the service on the Feast of St. John the Baptist was held at the well of one of the larger households. By custom the place chosen was in the yard of one of the leading landowners from the village for example that of Iluta Paulencu, Gheorg Ungurean, Toder Bojescul, Niculuta, son of Guroai, etc. The household selected had the task of preparing for the service and preparing a celebration while the priest enjoyed the fruits of the event. But now, if the service was going to be held on the river, there was no one who had the responsibility to do all of this preparation and things traditionally wanted by the priest. The river belonged to everyone and to no one in particular and the priest was about to lose a windfall from which he would normally benefit. In the end, after much opposition and many arguments between Mr. Sfecla and the parish, the priest, Gheorghe Velehorschi, arranged with one of the householders that, after the completion of the service at the river, the celebration would be held at his home as had been done before. In this way, after great pain and laments, they finally arrived at an arrangement whereby the service would be held on the river.

After he had been released from the hospital, Mr. Sfecla had allowed his beard to grow. He had grown a large, hazel-colored beard that covered all of his chest and made him look like one of the patriarchs - not so Cassian Stratulat, whose beard was white and consisted of only a few scrawny hairs.

On the river, beside the cross of ice, the young men had stuck a large number of evergreens from the forest which they had decorated and arranged so beautifully that everyone from the village came to admire them. For the service all of the “propuri”, banners, crosses and icons were brought from the church and were placed around the cross made of blocks of ice along with a table which served for the mass. This was a special holiday – the weather was fine, the fields were covered with snow and the bright sun made the vast ocean of snow shine like a million little stars.

Looking like a patriarch, Mr. Dumitru Sfecla lead the choir which never sang better than it did on that day. When the end of the service was approaching and just after the choir sang ‘Our Father’ (the Lords Prayer), Mr. Sfecla gazed over the great crowd who had gathered there and it looked like he wanted to say something …however, he said nothing. Immediately after this pause, he left his position, made his way through the crowd and started off straight across the fields toward Chernauti walking through snow that reached almost up to his knees. He left all those behind him incredulous and not one person from the crowd went after him to call him back. Everyone just gazed after him as he reached the top of the hill and disappeared over it. The church service continued on to its end but the responses from the choir were no where as beautifully sung as they had been earlier when Mr. Sfecla was still in their midst. The service ended but everyone continued to gaze towards the hill at the tracks left in the snow by Dumitru Sfecla as he left.

Sometime later I learned that Dumitru Sfecla was again committed to a hospital where a short time later he died. He left behind him and wife and three small children, a girl and two boys. They had been left orphaned by their father to a tenuous existence with not one of them having reached school age.

Thus was extinguished a great Romanian who achieved many things towards raising the lives of our villagers towards a higher level of culture" Ion Salahor" (**TN:** Closing quotation marks finally appear.)

The choir continued for many years and the celebration of the Feast of St. John the Baptist on the Derelui became a tradition.

## 2.3
# Forest Workers –Tree cutters and passionate hunters from Voloca

South of the village of Voloca there lies an extended forest of beeches and hornbeam trees. In a few places there are also clusters of elm and oak. The forest also contains some sycamores and spruce. It is a distance of about three kilometers from the edge of the village to the entrance into the forest. In the more distant past, however, the forest reached much closer to the village. Needing to create areas for grazing, the people cut down the forest nearer the village and made a good area for pasture – the grazing common.

The population of the village had grown too large, in comparison to the arable land, and for this reason there were many needy people in the village who had little land and some of that quite poor. The good land, for the most part, was held by the richer people or "fruntas" (top rankers) as they were often called. These people would own between 6 and 12 "falci" of good ground. (**TN:** one falca = 14 300 square meters or ~3.5 acres. Shortly we will also use prajina as a measure. 1 facla ~ 70 prajina. A prajina = 180-210 square meters or 1/20 of an acre.) The middle-ranked farmer might have 3 to 5 falci. The rest, who were poorer, would have anywhere from a few "prajini" to perhaps 1½ "falci", or even a bit more. The top and middle rank owners would lead a better life, but for the poorer, life was always very difficult. The poorer, of which we had many in our village, often had the most children, who they had to raise and feed. The poor mostly, therefore, spent their lives working for the rich people. Often this was just for baked goods and food for their children. Their work was mostly poorly paid and they were always short of money. For simple things like a pot of whole milk, or a container of sour milk, or for a ball of cottage cheese, one would need to spend a whole day at work hoeing, or cutting grain or hay.

Factories did not exist and no other places for work existed where the poorer members of the village could earn some money. Their sole possibility rested in the forests near the village. There the needy could earn a bit of money.

This situation described existed about the start of the 20$^{th}$ century – that is about 1900. At that time, the forest near Voloca existed in all its beauty and richness. In addition to being extensive, it was also quite dense. The trees were tall and thick, and they grew straight to the sunlight and were beautiful. The forest was controlled by the Church Foundation of Bucovina and was very well maintained and kept in order. Because of this fact, there was no other forest equal to this one in beauty and quality. The forest was administered by forestry engineers, forestry technicians and foresters, all of whom understood the needs of the forest and took good care of it. They were all tradesmen with higher training or professional schooling.
Wild animals also lived in this forest. They could only be hunted with permission and only by following certain rules. The forest was patrolled by foresters and rangers.

The extended forest was portioned into parcels and the cutting of trees was made in an orderly manner following certain rules and criteria. When harvesting was opened in a particular parcel of land, the foresters would mark, with a hatchet, those trees that could be cut and would assign cutting sections to the different cutters or harvesters. Generally, 2-3 men would be assigned a cutting section. This is how the system worked when harvesting was allowed. Two men would cut down the tree with saws and would knock it down while the third would clear the trunk of branches. After that, those with the saws would cut the trunk into pieces about 1 meter long, or longer, as the need might be. The third man, if it was so needed, would then split the pieces into two or four pieces depending on the thickness of the tree. The split pieces of wood were called "cutaci". The trunk pieces near the top of the tree were not split but were left round and were called "obleci". (**TN:** – no translation for these terms found) Both the "cutaci and obleci" (splits and rounds) were stacked in meter-cubed piles (1 m long, 1m wide, 1 m high). Four of these units would be called a ½ "stajen" while a group of eight (8 cubic meters) was called a "stajen". The thicker branches would be cut up and gathered into piles of ¼ or ½ "stajen" as the need might be. All that would be left were the bits from the branches and the thin ends of the trees.

Customarily, the harvesters were not paid in money for their work but instead with firewood. They could gather the bits left over and the chips, as well as being allowed to buy as much wood as they wanted at a good price. From what they cut, they were each allotted a certain portion. The harvesters did not have to be worried about firewood. With the quantity of wood, limbs and branches they could gather they could even sell some of it to earn some money. They had another advantage. Each evening when they returned home from the forest, they were allowed to take with them as much damaged wood as they could carry on their backs or on a hand-drawn sled: this might be broken pieces, ends of trees, chips, and branches. These they would burn at home, normally after drying. In this way people could obtain a sufficient supply of wood for the whole year – while the portion they would receive for the cutting work, they could sell.

Sometimes the cutters would find a piece of wood which they would recognize as especially suited for something such as the runners for a sleigh or sled, or for some supports, or a loom or a windlass or something similar. They would set this piece aside and take it home without much of a cost. Among the cutters there were also numerous carpenters who knew more about working with wood and could use it to make handles for axes, hoes, forks, scythes, rakes, flails, rasps, supports for cutting wood "cracani" (sawhorses) or even stools, looms, and other items. They paid little for the materials that they brought home to make these items. In this manner they could also earn some additional money.

The cutters were often the same people each winter. The ones remembered the most were: Ioan, son of Pricopi who was the son of Gavriil; his brother Gheorgi; Gheorgi son of Ionica; Ion son of Ilinchii; Truta, son of Ilinchi; Irmita, son of Nicului; Artimon Burgelea; Artimon, son of Vasilie who was the son of Culuta; Grigori Varzari; Pricopi, son of Matina; and even others. These people would spend the entire winter in the forest, harvesting trees.

Their food was simple: “mamaliga” with potatoes or beans, pickled cucumbers, cabbage, a piece of baked goods or cornbread, or toasted bread. Those who were able, would perhaps take a bit of cured pork belly, some eggs, some cheese and maybe onions. Some of them would take with them raw potatoes which they would cook in the coals of a fire in the forest where they were working. For protection at night and from the cold, they would make a shelter of standing poles with a bit of roof. They would leave a hole at the top to allow the smoke from the fire to escape. The shelter would have a conical shape.

I learned from people as well as from books that I have read that no other forests as beautiful and well-kept as those in Bucovina can be found in all of Romania.

Other people in need from our village worked in the forest making roads and bridges or making clearings for the deer. They would also cut hay in areas in the forest, would then gather it and stack it into piles. Still others would be employed constructing or repairing at the Forestry Center or in clearing up the barns, the sheds, the gardens and other outbuildings. Their days of work were recorded or entered in the ledgers and the workers were then properly paid either in money or with an allowance of wood. Customarily, for work of relatively minor importance which was not recorded in the ledgers, the workers would not be paid in money, but rather in portions of firewood or feed for their livestock.

At certain intervals of time young trees would be planted on those areas where all the trees had been cut. All cleared areas had to be reforested. This was also an opportunity for those in need to earn some money. The hard-working villagers came readily for all these jobs because they knew for certain that from their efforts good results would appear. Some of them worked all winter at cutting and then in the fall they worked at clearing away shrubs, etc. In this way many of the poorer people spent a most of their time in the forest – working at cutting, clearing, cutting hay and assisting the forestry engineers and foresters. Those who were blessed with some musical talent would make themselves “fluir”(flutes), “tilinci” (recorders) or “fluierase” (small flutes) and, when times were a bit more relaxed, they would play them.

Among these people of the forest, some became well-known hunters. Also allied with them were some of the wealthier householders from the village or some of the intellectuals, especially those from the teaching ranks. These people were able to buy hunting rifles, after which they would buy a permit which granted them permission to hunt. They would pay a fee and were obliged to respect certain hunting regulations. People respected these limitations imposed by the regulations, but sometimes the animals would leave the woods and would cause damage to householders - at times outside of the hunting season. Then people might still take out their rifles and shoot perhaps a wild boar, a fox or a rabbit. Sometimes it might even happen that a wolf would wander out of the forest.

When this happened and an animal was shot, the people would be breaking the law and if the killing became known to the authorities, they would have to pay a fine, or sometimes even serve some time in a lockup. The

regulations were very strict. The main problem was with wild boars which could make great damage to the corn or potato gardens. Over time, many people were punished for breaking the hunting regulations, but they did not give up their rifles or hunting ways since they were so passionate about hunting. The most well-known hunters during their time were: Gheorge Ionica; Ion Cocea; Procopie Cocea: Niculuta, son of Gutoaie; the teacher Petre Dolinschi and the inspector Corneliu Klain from Chernauti.

## 2.4
# Chichifoi came to the village to improve the icons on the altar of the church

The history that is contained in this chapter comes courtesy of the memory of Ion Salahor, from whom I have learned many interesting things about our village. With great kindness and patience he has given me explanations on topics about which I had questions. We come now to the summer of the year 1911, when "badita" (**TN: -** an endearing term for an older gentleman) Chichifoi, the icon restorer, came to Voloca.

"The altar of the church was very smoke-stained and showed many signs of its age. This was not really surprising since 80 years had passed since the construction of the church and a colossal numbers of candles had burned in the church over that period. In addition, the smoke from incense had also been present. Over the course of time, the smoke had settled on and stained the walls of the church as well as the painted icons. Something needed to be done and for this reason Vasilie Chichifoi was invited to the village. After he had assessed the situation, he negotiated with Niculuta, son of Gutoaie, claiming that he would produce a good renovation. In the end, they reached an agreement on the extent of the work and on the fee. Niculuta, son of Gutoaie, was one of the leading landowners in the village. He had been the mayor for a number of terms and was a very intelligent man. He did not know how to read or write but was able to retain everything in his memory – in fact he did so better than those who were literate. He was also a passionate hunter and we would often see him going off with his gun on his shoulder. For the renovation of the altar, he granted Vasile Chichifoi a sum of 600 Lei. With that amount of money one could buy a pair of oxen and a few additional things at that time."

When the people in the village learned what a large sum of money Niculuta, son of Gutoaie, had granted Chichifoi for this task, they were truly amazed. Niculuta decided to renovate the church altar with his own money – this was so that God would grant him forgiveness for his very serious transgressions. He had fathered a child with a god-daughter of his and this was considered to be a very grave sin. It appeared that God had forgiven his transgression, but not too much time passed before Niculuta fathered a second child with this god-daughter. Thus is man – always liable to sin!! God is good, he said, and he will forgive me. Perhaps he had some truth in this statement because this was not the first time that it had happened that a godfather took advantage of a godchild, or even the opposite, that a godchild had seduced her godfather. Many things happen in this world of ours!

Yielding to temptation and relying on the goodness and patience of the Good Lord, Niculuta fathered even a third child with his god-daughter. Calculating then that his sin total was very great, he could see that death was not something to look forward to. He had to do something to placate God and to atone for his madness. Such a great list of sin could not be corrected by some trivial act however, and Niculuta calculated he needed to donate,

to the altar dedicated to God, a sum equivalent to four oxen or even more. He had not had any children with his wife and for this fact he was quite sad. He had a nice house and a large estate, he had enough of everything, but he had no one to leave it to after his death. In this way he assured himself of some heirs.

"During that summer, during which I worked at the church, things went very well for us. In the morning we would go to the church and we would lock ourselves indoors and would let no one to enter – even the priest did not have the right to enter." So continued Ion Salahor, who at that time was a youngster who helped Vasile Chichifoi with the work. "Only the church caretaker, who brought us water, had the right to enter the anteroom of the church but not the church itself. A large barrel was placed there which he had to fill with water every day. We needed the water to wash the icons, which were badly coated with smoke residue from the candles. Using water mixed with some soap and a bit of soda, the washed icons came out looking newly made. After they had dried a bit, Vasilie would get me to coat them with a layer of the best shellac and then we would set them in place again. I worked there for the entire summer vacation, that is to say, a total of about six weeks.

We did not work throughout the entire day; sometimes we worked in the morning and sometimes in the afternoon, but even then for only 2-3 hours. I would bring my books along with me and would do some studying with Chichifoi so that it would be easier for me when I returned to school.

Ladies from the village would bring us meals on a rotation and they would often hurry to do so – they would bring us a great variety of some of the very best foods. As long as the renovation was being worked on, Vasilie let no one enter the church. Only the sponsor, Niculuta, son of Gutoaie, was allowed in two or three times. If someone died, they would have to get the crosses and banners which were stored in the anteroom ("tinda") but the coffin was not allowed into the church. The priest would hold the service outside at the front of the church. On Sundays and holidays, the service was held outside in the church yard. Very large crowds would come to the church, so large that they would fill the yard.

When we had finished the restoration and had put all the icons back in their places Vasilie Chichifoi told the priest that all was finished, but no one would be allowed to enter the church until Saturday afternoon. Even we, who had done the work were not allowed – this was so that we did not raise some dust that might then settle on the icons which had not yet fully dried. This was on a Wednesday – the village now had until Saturday to hear and discuss the fact that we had completed the work, that the church would now reopen and that on Sunday a new blessing of the altar would take place.

On that Saturday there was such a surge of people at the church that they could not all fit in. The priests, all the "epitropi" (church guardians), councilors and numerous householders all came and when they saw how beautiful and clean the icons were, especially compared to the dirtiness before, they were delighted. They could almost not recognize them as being the same icons. The women were the ones most impressed and stayed long to admire the work. It is true that from the labor of our hands a work of remarkable beauty and cleanliness

emerged. The next day, Sunday, the church groaned under the surge of the crowd and all the tables holding gifts of remembrance for the dead were overloaded with offerings of fruit and “colaci”.

On the way, as we were going to church Chichifoi reminded me that I should never in any way let slip how we had cleaned the icons or else he would cut off my tongue. He had told me this two or three times earlier during the job, but he reminded me again now. Salahor continued: “But since then such a long time has passed, and Vasile Chichifoi passed away a long time ago, so I will explain how the work was done. The icons were so smoke-coated and covered with dust which had fallen over them through the long years, that they were almost black. First of all, we would wipe off the grime using the feet of rabbits. These we obtained from Niculuta, son of Gutoaie, who had a large supply of them in the attic of his house since he was an avid hunter. These rabbit feet served as little brushes which worked very well for wiping the icons. After this was done, we would wash the icons with soapy water to which a bit of soda had been added. This was all that we needed to do. This work could have been completed in less than two weeks, but Chichifoi said that we need not rush at this job because it would not work out well – I believed him totally – whatever he said was how it must be done.”

Sometimes during the work when one of the ladies would bring us a little bottle of whiskey together with the food, Chichifoi would have a good swig (or two) after which he would lie down and have a good sleep – doing no more work that day. Since I did not want to waste my time and because I could not sleep during the day, I would get out my books and study. When nightfall approached, I would awaken him so that we could go home. Vasilie did not drink very heavily later, but he was able to hold his own, especially when he would meet with some of the richer landowners of the village. When he would come home from the inns late at night with my father, they would often begin to sing so loudly as they sat by the bake oven that they would blow out the oil lantern on the oven shelf and they would wake us all up.

As long as Chichifoi stayed in our village, he never went to one of the inns operated by Jews. If someone invited him out for a drink, he would only go to the inn of Spiridon Porfirean, who had a gramophone in his inn. Among the patrons of Spiridon Porfirean were largely teachers, sometimes the priest, the constabulary, and some of the more respectable people from the village. For these people he had a room set apart where he set up tables covered with clean, white tablecloths. For the rest of the people there was another room with a single long table and long benches at the sides.

On the Sunday when the church was to be re-blessed, when Chichifoi and I entered the church, all those there turned to took at us and parted to make place for us in a manner reserved normally for the priest with his incense burner (“cadelnita”). The men and the women who were nearest began to kiss the hands of Chichifoi - a thing from which I was unable to escape as well. Older women would grasp me and kiss me on the forehead as well as on the hands and said that these hands had accomplished holy works and were hands of gold. I was not quite willing to believe this, when I recalled how filthy and black my hands had been during the restoration.

The Sunday of the re-dedication was a magnificent day with a clear, cloudless sky. It was around the start of September in 1911. Huge bunches of flowers had been brought and placed before the icons at the altar. For this Sunday service, seven priests had come from different villages as well as a higher official from the Metropolit. People said that he was Vladica and that he had been sent especially for the blessing of the churches in Voloca. The church was filled to overflowing and many people were standing outside filling the entire church yard. There were also many visitors from adjacent villages.

For the day, Vasile Chichifoi was dressed in new clothes and wore his mustache with the ends waxed to point upwards – normally he wore them drooping down. With great difficulty we made our way through the men and women, in part because the women wanted to kiss Vasilie's and my hands. When we reached the front of the church, we stood together just before the altar. I did not enjoy standing there because I was embarrassed – this place was for church guardians and respected old men - but Vasilie would not let me leave his side. I was glancing back occasionally and concocting a plan to flee from there but I could not because everyone was gazing at us. I don't know how I ever survived that day. I worried that perhaps after the service was over and the re-blessing had taken place, and when we were leaving the church, a couple of the old decrepit women would gather round me and give me the evil eye.

After everyone had come out of the church, including Vladica and the other priests, Vasile and I exited. He continued to grasp my hand tightly and would not let me go. We then went to the house of Niculuta, son of Gutoaie. There, a huge crowd of villager landowners, who had brought all types of food and baked goods, awaited us. The ladies had laid out beautiful woven hangings on the grass in the orchard. They had also set out a long set of tables which they covered with table cloths and on which they placed all the food. All of the men and women seated themselves at the table. The church official, Vladica, along with the priest, the church guardians, and we were invited to eat in the house. They placed the two of us right at the middle of the table right beside Vladica. They then seated the rest of the priests and the church guardians. I did not feel very comfortable sitting next to the old priest because I could not forgive him because of his greed for money. I would much rather have enjoyed a dash to the river where I could enjoy a swim with the other boys because I found it to be very hot. In the house they drank toasts and praises to my parents but these were not as complementary as those to Chichifoi and me.

They had placed an entire roast turkey on the table for the two of us as well as many delicacies but I did not get too far in eating because at that point Vladica stood to praise Niculuta, son of Gutoaie, for the great deed he had commissioned for the church and the two of us who had carried out the wondrous task. Vladica was followed by the other priests who spoke, praising and thanking everyone who had been involved in this beautiful work. I was becoming so tired that I could just see darkness in front of my eyes.

After the clerics had finished speaking, most of the people began to return to their own homes. Vladica and the other visiting priests also left. Left behind were just our local priest, with the church guardians, a few householders and the immediate neighbors of Niculuta, son of Gutoaie. Finally, we had a chance to eat properly

and we did so and they all drank until almost nightfall. My dear friend Vasilie had been toasting so often that he could hardly stand. He was holding on to me on the way home and was dragging me from one side of the road to the other. I also had to bring home the two large "colaci" which we had been gifted at the meal. The "colaci" were large and beautifully made and in addition we had been given a large towel each. The towels were embroidered with silk thread and were incredibly beautiful. I had a hard time but eventually we did reach home without falling down. My mother did not know what to do in her great joy when I gave her the two towels which Chichifoi shouted that we should award her. My father, for reasons I cannot quite understand, was quite out of sorts that day and announced that they would never succeed in making any kind of a success out of me.

Chichifoi did not give me money for helping him with the work, but he would buy me whatever I needed. From time to time he would give me some change and would tell me to go into a bakery ("cofeteria") to buy something that I might enjoy. However, I could never build up the courage to enter ….I did no know what the delicacies were called nor did I know how one would eat them. (We are talking here about a shop in town, frequented in those days only by the richer people, officers, etc.)

When he finished his work in our village, Vasile Chichifoi, was asked to come to other places, to other villages. I was left behind at home and I felt very bad that he did not take me with him. On the other hand, the time was coming when I had to return to school in town – I was now going to be in the second class."

In this chapter we have related events that happened in the village at the start of the 20th century. I thought it would be a good idea to record a few notes about those discussed above from our commune for others who follow to read in the future.

Vasile Chichifoi was an artist who produced church art- icons, sculpted crosses, banners, etc. He was based in Chernauti but was originally from the Suceava area. Our co-villager Ion Salahor received his first lessons in art and church art from this man.

Niculuta, son of Gutoaie, was an important householder in our village. He served in many different and important positions within the village. He was mayor for a period as well as the director of the bank etc. He was a reasonable, respectable man but did in fact sin dreadfully with his god-daughter. He needed to ease the load on his soul. Otherwise there was no point in his dying because he would be facing the eternal flames of hell.

The Mitropolit during this period was Vladimir de Repta, while the village priest was Cassian Stratulat.

(**TN:** This chapter, in the original, suffers from an almost random sprinkling of quotation marks. It is not always clear, apart from the obvious first paragraph and the last four, what is said/written by Salahor and what by Ionica – the ease of translation indicates that >95% of the words are those of Salahor.)

## 2.5
# Two economic institutions that existed in Voloca during the Austrian period

Because we were under Austrian rule, we could not control in our lives things having to do with political freedoms. Nevertheless, there were some good people who stepped forward to help their fellow country folk, who were being exploited without mercy by the operators of drinking houses and by money lenders. This is the topic that will be expanded on in this chapter.

Around the end of the 19th century and the start of the 20th century very many outsiders, in particular, many Jews, infiltrated into the village from other countries. These people opened many places of distraction including many inns or drinking places. It is well known that this nationality is very clever in matters of finance and merchandising. Being intelligent and enterprising people, they were able to thrive and prosper very quickly in the villages they settled into. In the beginning, they started small, with small goods and household items but in a short time they gained good profits and became rich. To attract customers, they began to offer goods on credit and soon their stores, formerly quite small, became transformed into larger establishments that were well provisioned and had many types of goods.

When customers could buy things on credit, many of them began to take advantage of this situation, often taking things that they really did not need. They believed they would be able to pay for the items when they had the money. In their naivety, the simple country people saw this simply at face value: they could not do the calculation needed to tell them that goods taken on credit would, in the end, cost more than those for which they paid with money in hand. They did not realize the merchants had a tally or register on which they recorded all clients who bought goods on credit and that the prices of the items taken grew with the passage of time. The unpaid debts grew as a function of time from the date of the actual sale – growing until the date the debt was paid. The rural customer had no idea of the increase in the price: it grew with respect to the original price (a sum owing and dated to the time of payment). The merchants understood this well, but then this was their trade method.

If the goods had been sold for money in hand, the merchant could have used the money to buy other goods that he would have on hand. But since this money was tied up in goods given on credit, he could not use it and had no new goods. Fine, but why should the merchant lose his profits when he is doing his customers a favor? It would be just to say that he should gain some interest on the money that he could not use. The merchants fully used this argument but in the end they began to abuse it. They allowed the debts to be accumulated by the rural customers who were not literate, were devoid of the culture and, in matters of trust, naïve. At that time, a great deal of poverty and lack of enlightenment existed. Because of their debts, many villagers ended up back to using wooden tools – they were so impoverished by their debts.

But this was not all of the problems: there was about to descend on the heads of the villagers another misfortune that was to reduce some to total impoverishment. If until this point they spent some money, however small the amount, they knew they could bring something home – a spade, a scythe, a hammer, a sickle, a plow, or some other useful item – but they still brought back something. But now the situation was arriving when they would spend a large amount of money without getting anything useful and they would end of worse for it. They would arrive home with their bodies and souls poisoned with alcohol, and would bring misfortune into their homes and to their families. Over a short time, many drinking places were opened – their numbers exceeding all the other stores. These were the beginning of a great amount of misfortune and impoverishment.

Drunkenness is an ugly and dangerous habit. It brings with it many other bad habits and ends up reducing a man to worthlessness. Alcohol darkens the mind of a man, destroys his health and brings him to impoverishment – because with drinking one cannot hold on to his money. As soon as an alcoholic gains any money, he heads off to the drinking establishments. He never thinks that his household is falling into disrepair, or that his wife or children have nothing to wear or to eat. He does not care that he is embarrassing himself to the eyes of the world – he does not even recognize the fact. Once he has started drinking, the addiction becomes his master and he cannot leave it.

After some time, the alcoholic is in no condition to work and since he cannot earn money from working, he sells items from around the house to pay for his habit. If he has been appointed to a steady job, especially if he is working in a place that is involved with money or goods, he is often tempted to commit deeds that are unwelcome and against the law. With these happenings, it is usually not long before he is dismissed from his position. Some people start to become deceitful, to cheat or cause scandals – they provoke fights, or damage public facilities, etc. Instead of going home at night, they spent their nights all over the place. The life of an alcoholic is one of disarray. If he is married and has a family, he is often a liability for them. In fact, for all of society, rather than being of some value he instead becomes a drain on all and a bad example.

During that period, excessive drinking developed deep roots in Voloca. There are always weak people around – people who would begin with one glass or two - but soon they exceeded their proper controls and once today went that way, tomorrow repeated the sequence - until they became outright alcoholics. There were plenty of occasions on which one could drink as well: at weddings, at commemorative meals, at baptisms, at building bees, and at different gatherings and the bad habits infiltrated the people without even being noticed. Drinking houses began to appear in every hamlet and in every highly-populated corner of the villages but especially at the major crossroads where they would be easily seen. The proprietors knew very well that the best places to put their establishments were where the most people passed and most of them sought out the best corners. The people who sold “holerca” (whisky) began to do very well.

The villagers would use a lot of alcohol on almost all celebratory occasions – at the major holidays, at weddings, at baptisms, at the end of a construction, at building bees, at the blessing of a new house, at funerals,

at church fetes, at celebrations on certain dates, "Ispas" at the cemetery, for sealing agreements, etc. Barrels of whiskey were brought from the towns or from the distillery and all the contents would be consumed. The people would buy ~10 liter containers on which the Jewish merchants made huge profits. Many of the villagers got into the habit of going to drinking houses on a regular basis and there they would toast each other until they fell under the tables – others would fall asleep half way home. They got so addicted to their drinking that many ended up selling their livestock, their land and even their houses for money for more drink. The overall situation became very grave.

Another misfortune that began to affect many villagers badly was the habit of borrowing money from the money lenders. They did so when they wished to purchase some desirable land which bordered theirs, especially if it was good land - the opportunity was one they did not wish to pass. Other villagers wished to build a new house or even start a complete new household, with all that is involved, or others to buy cattle to start a herd, but did not have the money. They would then go to the money lenders who would allow them to load up with loans beyond their capabilities, at high interest rates. Unable to meet their payments, the debts grew with interest compounded on interest. This occurred especially during bad farming years, or when the villager had nothing on which to earn a profit, or due to the addiction with drink, or even sickness during which they were unable to work. The laws were unforgiving and if they could not pay their debts, everything they had would be sold, including their land and homes, and the money would be used to pay the debts. Many of the villagers were left out on the roads – impoverished and without land because of their borrowing from the uncaring and greedy money lenders.

This type of situation did not happen just in Voloca but throughout all the villages in Bucovina. These developments happened many times during the second half of the 19th century and the start of the 20th century. These occurrences, which served to exploit the rural population, were recognized by the authorities, who realized their citizenry was being exploited. They decided they had to do something to prevent the ruin of the villagers.

To decrease the exploitation, cooperatives were set up in the villages. They carried all the goods needed by the villagers, but at fixed prices – the operation of them was to be overseen by intellectuals and knowledgeable people from the villages themselves. In addition, for those who had a need to borrow money, a bank of the Reifeisen variety (credit union) where the rural population could obtain loans under more advantageous conditions. The villagers were informed of all the obligations towards the loan, they were told at what the rate the interest would grow and what they had to pay to decrease the loan. The borrowing rate was set quite low for these loans.

The intentions of those who set up this bank and cooperative were aimed at having the villagers escape the grasps of the immigrant money lenders who would not give loans at reasonable interest rates and would try to cheat people by always increasing the rates. The purpose behind the cooperative was to teach people the ways

of commerce without their having to depend on outsiders and so that the profits would remain in the hands of the community.

The credit union and cooperative played an important role during that time period, especially if one considers the fact that they were operated solely by people from the village. They were led in each case by an intellectual (a priest or school teacher), who was able to interpret properly the written regulations that had been introduced to govern these economic enterprises.

At the beginning, there were some difficulties because of the lack of expertise in these areas (banking and commerce) as well as the problems that the outsiders, who had held control in their businesses and money lending houses, tried whenever possible, to harm the newly-established enterprises. It was in their interests to extinguish the new businesses and to impede the good organization and operation of these institutions. They used all the means that they had available to interfere and spread misunderstanding. They used sly tricks to promote improper things that would harm the villagers, just to gain an advantage.

Regardless of how good the intentions and how good the plans of some people may be, there is always a way in which things can, with embarrassment, fail because of a 'stick stuck between the spokes'. Here or there, one can always find an axe handle placed in the path to help the foreigners to do their fiendish work. Not all men are strong – there are also those who are weaker and they can often easily yield to temptation. In spite all the difficulties inherent in the starting up of something, when the state of literacy in the village was far from what it could be, these enterprises had a good beginning and allowed those, who wanted to try and had some confidence, to see that the rural population was capable of operating a commercial business. Both the cooperative and the bank operated successfully until the start of the great war – by this we mean the world war of 1914-1918.

After the start of the war, the situation began to become more difficult and after some time the bank and the cooperative had to close and their assets were liquidated. Many husbands and young men had to leave to serve in the war and only the old people, the women, the young girls and the children were left behind. The school teachers were also called to serve and the schools were closed. There was no one left to oversee the operation of the enterprises. In addition, there was no one available to bring in the merchandise – as time went on, there was no where that merchandise could have been located. Those who had worked in the cooperative or in the bank and had gone into service could not be replaced. In addition, Voloca was quite close to the front and was occupied by the enemy on three occasions – being sometimes occupied by one side and then by the other (it was in the zone of battle operations for a while). Under these extremely difficult conditions, it was not possible to set up any system of obtaining goods, and the village reached a state of total impoverishment – devoid of the goods necessary for survival. One could not find salt or petrol or even matches.

The four years that the war lasted were very difficult. In Voloca there was a great shortage of food and a great impoverishment. The steamroller of war passed over the village many times and all was destroyed, was lost or

was requisitioned by the armies – sometimes by the Austrians, sometimes by the Russians. In the end the people remaining in the village were left with nothing at all.

Under these conditions the credit bank and the cooperative disappeared. After the end of the war, there was a major rebuild which would bring to the village of Voloca a totally new kind of life.

## 2.6
# Volocans who departed for Canada and the USA

At the start of the 20th century, right from the year 1900, agriculture and industry in Canada and the USA witnessed an event without precedent. Large farms were established. Large factories were being constructed and mines were being opened, rich in ores of iron, copper, coal, gold, etc. – railroads were being constructed and roads were being built to fit all types of needs.

For all this expansion, money was needed as well as much manpower. To meet this need, many banks were established. They made money available for the capital needs. Many interconnected alliances between companies were needed to execute the work needed. These projects created the need for engaging engineering and labor to do the tasks. In the face of the great number of workers needed, the local numbers of workers was totally insufficient. For these reasons, they began to employ workers from European countries. There were agencies created who recruited workers and transported them by train and then by ship to America.

Passports were generated quickly and, for those who wished to travel, they could do so even if they lacked the money for passage. Their transport and food for the journey were paid and charged to an account that they would repay with their work. The account was dated back to the sign-on date, from which they had first been given food and care. Their first work went to pay, in part, for the debt accrued for the transportation and all the other needs. After they had paid all of their debts, the workers received a stated wage, which depended on the quality and value of their labors. If the workers were housed and fed by the employer, the employer would retain a portion of their salary. Others lived on their own and then received their full wages.

The work was done in harsh conditions, but the pay was good. Certainly, those who became rich, were the investors and bankers, but capable and industrious workers realized good earnings at the end of their labors. After years of hard work, many of the workers, who left Bucovina returned to their families with many dollars, whether they had worked at a farm, or in a mine, or a factory, or a railroad project. With these earnings, they returned home and often would buy land and establish beautiful estates.

Attracted by good prospects, many of our villagers from Voloca also left for Canada and the USA. This emigration occurred between the years 1900 and 1914 - in effect, up to the start of WW I and while Bucovina was still part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Many poorer villagers from the densely populated areas also left for across the ocean. This was the situation for many in Bucovina. Many Romanians from Ardeal, whose aspirations were suppressed by the Hungarians, also left.

In Voloca, there were many people struggling with small plots of poor land and large families. From these families, many went to work across the ocean in the hope of earning much money there. After that, they could

return home rich. But there were also some well-to-do people, who left driven by a desire to earn dollars. I will try to recall here some from the families of Voloca who left for Canada and the USA. From our village many families departed – 60-80 families or perhaps even more. Their names are listed below:
(**TN**: There is a great shortage of commas in Ionica's writing and the start of new names is not always assured)

- Ion Paulencu (bachelor)
- Pricopi Popovici
- Petrea, son of Teodoric
- Simeon, son of Cristini
- Artimon, son of Tudosie
- Toader, son of Pavaloie
- Mitruta, daughter of Saveta
- Georghe Salahor
- Nicholai Ungurean
- Teodor Onofreiciuc
- N(icholai?) Mitrea
- Georghe Dubinschi
- Mitruti, of the Rich Ungurean

These twelve (**TN**: or thirteen?) villagers returned to the village after a significant number of years and, with money earned in America, they established large and beautiful households.

Others returning with more substantial sums of money were:

- Petrea, son of Toderica
- Teodor, son of Pavaloi and
- Mitruta, son of Saveta and Pricopi Popovici, who established a large estate with a large amount of land.

They settled themselves into the village and did not again return to America.

Others returned with smaller sums of money, but even they were able to set up significant households. One of them returned to Canada or the USA a second time.

Of those who emigrated and did not return to Voloca, but who established themselves there, we will name a few:

- Isidor Penteleiciuc
- Nistor, son of Nica

- Vasilie Penteleiciuc, son of Costan
- Toader Paulencu
- a son of Sandica Nicholai Paulencu
- a son of Pricopi Hlopina
- Dumitru Hancu
- Safronie, son of Todosie
- the father of Elie Guraliuc
- Vasilie, Nazarie, and Toader Onciulencu
- the sons of Naicu
- a son of Vasilie, the son of Gheorge, and
- a brother of Pricopi Onofreiciuc.

From these, many returned to the village to visit family (on one or two occasions) and then returned to America without coming back to the country.

Some remained in America and settled there and left behind their roots. Of those who returned in visits we recall the following:

- Toader and Nichoai Paulencu (brothers)
- Isidor Penteleiciuc and
- Nistor, son of Nica and Dumitru Hancu

Isidor Penteleiciuc, son of Matruca, the son of Malentei, visited Voloca in 1971 and was amazed at the changes that had taken place in the village since he had left for America. Since he left, 60 years had passed. In Voloca he found his brother Iluti (little Eli) and then, through him, many children, nephews and nieces. He also visited Romania, where he found another brother, who is the priest in Suceava. He also traveled to Fagaras where he found more nephews and nieces.

Brothers Toader and Nicholai Paulencu, descended from N.G. Ursul, visited the village and relatives shortly after WW I. They took holidays in the winter and traveled the village with “Irozii” (see 1.18) in 1922.

It remains for me to relate something about Nistor, son of Nica and Dumitru Hancu. He visited the village in 1924-1925. Nistor was a pale boy, clever, of middle height and somewhat thin in stature. He always had a leaning towards fantasy and adventure. He had an elementary school education. He left for America, while quite young to earn money, because in the family were many children – seven in total, four boys and three girls. Of the boys in the family, one became a doctor in the army, one a court clerk and the youngest became a blacksmith in the village. Nistor decided to go out into the world and try his luck. The three girls got married in the village. Nistor, when he arrived in America, ended up on a large farm with herds of cattle and sheep. He was

engaged as a shepherd. The farmer was very rich and had large areas of arable land and a large amount of pasture. The farmer gave Nistor a nice horse, which he would ride and used to tend the flock of grazing sheep.

Now after quite some time, Nistor bought himself a cowboy outfit, a nice saddle, and a large hat. Understandably, he soon also wanted to get a nice whip and then, a multi-shot pistol. Nistor was well suited to a cowboy costume and in his imagination could see himself in who knows what adventures. Furthermore, his labors were not strenuous, his wages were reasonable, and with good food he was living very well. Everything was going very smoothly until one day, when he met another group of youths at a horse race, and he forgot about his flock of sheep. The sheep ate as much as they wished, but then they got thirsty. As Nistor was occupied elsewhere with the horse races, the sheep set off by themselves to seek water. They did not, however, go where Nistor normally took them, but they started off instead in the direction of a cliff. Over the cliff, they could see water and since they were very thirsty, the sheep took off straight towards the water. They all fell down the cliff, from where they could not climb up. Some were injured and some drowned.

When Nistor returned on his horse and he saw the huge problem, he was frozen with anxiety. Because of fear, he did not know what to do. Without the sheep, he could not return to the farm. Suddenly however, a saving idea came to him – he would run away – he would disappear. This he did. He sold his horse and whatever else he had and, with money saved earlier, he went to the train station from where he took a train directly to a seaport. He boarded a ship and returned directly to Voloca. The entire journey back he lived in fear and apprehension that authorities would find him. Lucky it was for Nistor that at that time one traveled much easier from one country to another with minimal border-crossing formalities.

Having reached his home village, Nistor escaped his worries about the farmer who lived many thousands of kilometers away and had now lost Nistor's trail. The people in the village expected that he had returned from America with many dollars and that he could assist them. They did not realize that he had returned barely with his life, that he had been a fugitive and that he had difficulty in paying even for his return journey. When he would recall what an ideal life he had working for the farmer and what a beautiful horse he had owned, he felt like dying of despair – and how very handsome he had looked in his cowboy outfit! But it had all disappeared like a beautiful dream.

At home, times were quiet and since his parents were old, he could not decide what to start at or what direction to go. Nor did Nistor particularly enjoy hard work – he just did not know how to correct his plight. In the end he 'shacked up' with a widow, Angelusa, who lived near the young priest. He soon had a son with her. He would find work by the day where he could, sometimes he would spend time cutting wood – but always his mind would wander back to America and those areas far away from here where he had lost his sheep. He would have returned at any moment but he did not have the money for the journey.

After a long and restless time, Nistor's luck changed. He succeeded in finding a benefactor who sent him a passport and money for the journey to America. When he left, he remained gone and he never returned again.

While Nistor had still been in the village, he often enjoyed going to the dances and parties. He was a good dancer. During the winter holidays he sometimes participated in the "Irod" pageant (**TN:** see 1.20). I did not have any contact with his son until much later when he was a married man and worked as a clerk in the village cooperative during the time of the Russian occupation – perhaps about 1967.

Another clever Volocan who returned from America for a year with a passport and then settled permanently there was Dumitru Hancu, the brother-in-law of N. Maniola. He was a short, handsome, dark-haired man. He returned to the village about 1924. Dumitru enjoyed drinking and partaking of the offerings at the Gordeni Inn. Since he enjoyed some degree of wealth, he would invite others to join him there as well as the innkeeper's wife with whom he became quite friendly after a short while.

The inn was operated by the son of Aizic. This man had a very beautiful young wife. In their family they had a young daughter – a child perhaps fathered by a different man. The husband with whom the young wife was living was suffering from epilepsy and was in general quite sickly. He did not seem to be able to satisfy all of her needs.

Dumitru Hancu, who often frequented the inn, soon moved from friendship to a love affair which the young wife also embraced with an equal fervor. After a time, the husband began to suspect something, but there was little he could do. He kept quiet and pretended that nothing was going on - nor could he, in fact, do anything about it.

The situation continued for about a year, after which time Dumitru, at the end of his stay, returned to America. This was after Dumitru and the young lady had many meetings and secret telephone conversations. No one knows what they discussed nor what agreements they had come to before Dumitru departed. After a short time, Dumitru Hancu sent a passport for the lady and her daughter. It appears that the passport did not travel in the normal mail. To avoid it falling somehow into the hands of the innkeeper, it was brought by Nicholai Paulencu (the son of Gh. N., son of Ursul) and was handed over in secret to the innkeeper's wife.

Immediately after receiving the passport, the wife began to prepare for the journey with great haste. One night, when her husband was away from home, she took her daughter and went to sleep overnight at the home of Dumitru Hanca's sister. The next morning she left for Chernauti and was then off to the 'new world', where happiness and her future awaited.

When the son of Aizic returned home and found his home vacant, he was saddened beyond measure and wept with despair. From such a great tragedy and loss, he became ill and after a short period of suffering, he died. His wife and daughter never returned nor did they send even a single letter. In a similar vein, Dumitru Hancu rarely wrote to his sister or relatives and after a while he neither wrote nor responded to their letters.

Another intelligent and handsome young man was Pricopie, son of Artimon. He left for Argentina and never returned. Pricopie Semeniuc, son of Artimon, first traveled to Canada or the USA, where he stayed for a period of time. Later, he returned to Voloca and was married here. When he still was a very clever and presentable young man, I met him at a dance ("hora") held at Vanzureacs where he took part in several different male dances – the "arcanul", the "rata", the "serba", etc. On one occasion, he invited me to join as well and I learned that he was also a great lover of music. He played the clarinet very well. We had many conversations and I enjoyed greatly how he observed and participated in many events. I was greatly saddened to learn that not very long after his marriage, he left for Argentina. For a long time nothing was heard about him. Some time later a story reached us that that he had been killed in Argentina during a revolution in which he had participated.

We should also not forget other villagers from Voloca who went to America. In particular: Tanasi, son of Jacob Lupascu; Petrea Ceuca; and a son of Stefan, son of Maftei. About these three, I do not know if any of them ever returned to Voloca or, if once they left, they never returned.

In the following sections I will recall the stories of four villagers from Voloca who spent time in Canada or the USA. These four were; Vasile, son of Ghioghoaie; a Paulencu fellow; a person called Agafi; and finally Ioan L. (**TN:** Ioan is being very vague here on last names – probably intentionally). Initially, these fellows probably went to the 'new world' with the intention of earning money through honest labor. After a while, it seems, they tired of hard work and decided to live a better and easier life without having to slave. About these, I know that they returned to Voloca - or more correctly said - that they were deported back to Voloca – since they arrived having been handed over from jurisdiction to jurisdiction as undesirables. It appears that they committed a number of offences and were charged to stand before the courts. Sometimes they were imprisoned for certain offences. Sometimes they gambled at card games and gained money but they would then lose it in the same way. Once they tried the easier life, they soon forgot about hard work. But, for a person to survive, he must have money. What they did and what their deeds were, only they know, but it is apparent they did not follow the 'proper path' and having been caught several times with the 'cats in the bag', they were regarded as habitual offenders and, in the end, were deported. Eventually, they did not escape without paying a considerable price. The trio of Vasilie (son of Ghighoaie), Agafi, and Paulencu were drugged (poisoned) with some strange cigarettes and lost their minds. They were left for the rest of their lives with smoky and altered minds which were unstable. The smoke from the poison cigarettes went to their lungs and then to their brains and eventually proved fatal. They remained mentally unstable for the rest of their lives. Paulencu, I believe, died after about a year although Vasilie and Agafi survived for some time. Vasilie worked in the bush for a while while Agafi lived with his parents and did a few odd jobs around the household. After some time both these fellows died as well.

The destiny of Ioan L. was completely different. He suspected at the very beginning that these cigarettes might be noxious and that it would not be good to smoke them. For that reason he refused to smoke them when they were offered to him. He suspected that the people offering the cigarettes were not being very honest. But these people were not to be denied in some way and seeing that he refused to smoke their cigarettes, they held him

and cut off two fingers from his right hand, maiming him forever. A courageous and intelligent man, Ioan L. chose to let them cut his fingers off, preferring to be left with an unscrambled mind. Because he refused to smoke, Ioan L. returned to the village healthy and with a clear mind.

There was apparently a good reason why Ioan had his fingers cut off. At a card game that lasted three days and three nights, he had lost a large sum of money. When the game began, Ioan L. did not start off with a large sum. After playing for some time, his luck kicked in and he ended up with a tidy sum of money in front of him. At the end of these three days and nights, his luck left him and he awoke to find out all his winnings had disappeared. He lost not only his own initial stake but also everything he had won. From a huge pot of winnings, he had been left flat broke.

Ioan L. was not a man who accepted this fate easily. An idea for salvation came to him like a flash of lightning. His card-playing partner, who had won the total pot, had placed the money in a large briefcase and arose from the table intending to go home. After having played for an extended period, the winner had a great need to relieve himself. After he had entered the washroom, Ioan L. waited for several seconds and then followed him in. He then hit him on the back of his head with the butt of his revolver knocking him out and leaving him unconscious. Ioan L. then grabbed the briefcase with the money and fled. He kept at his flight for a long time so as to escape his pursuers. He began to head for the border hoping to flee to Mexico.

After a time, suspecting that he was still being followed, he decided he would be better off to hide the money somewhere and to continue his flight without it. In this way, it would make it easier to escape. He would then return to the hiding place later and recover the money. When he arrived at a railroad bridge, he removed several stones from the masonry of the bridge supports. He thrust the money into the cavity and replaced the stones.

The plans of Ioan L. were defeated, however, when his pursuers caught up with him and grabbed him just before he crossed the border. He was arrested and returned to the crime scene to face the charges of his accusers. Ioan L. denied at all times that he had taken the money and even his accusers could not squeeze an admission out of him. He continued to stand strong in the face of his accusers. Nevertheless, he was found guilty since he had fled and had tried to escape across the border. If he had been innocent he would have had no motive to flee and try to cross the border. Having a previous record, the authorities wished to be rid of him and after certain formalities, he was designated, it is said by higher political authorities, for expulsion. Ioan L. never had the opportunity to return to his hiding place to recover his hidden money. He was accompanied without delay and was transported under guard from one jurisdiction to another. His long road ended in his home village of Voloca.

Having arrived back in Voloca, Ioan L. had to begin to work. He asked his parents for that portion of land that he deserved as his inheritance. He sold this piece of land and with the money he bought another piece of land somewhat uphill from the bridge across the Olicichi River. On the streams above the river, he built two fish ponds. He brought in fingerlings and populated the ponds. After some of the fish had grown large, he moved

some to a small pond for breeding stock. The rest he left behind to grow larger. He would feed the growing and fattening fish with meat and worms and would then sell them in the towns to which he would transport them in barrels to keep them fresh. In this manner, Ioan L. soon earned some tidy profits.

Ioan also made a nursery for laying hens. He would feed them well and kept them warm in the winter. In this way, he had fresh eggs for sale throughout the year. He would sell them to the restaurants and from this business also he made good profits.

But Ioan did not stop there. He partnered with a neighbor and in their spare time they installed good stoves and bake ovens of a new design for people. With these jobs they again made good money. After some time, this man who had been so poor to start with, accumulated such a sum of money that he was able to lend money to people who had a need to borrow to build a house or buy some land. Certainly, he did not lend this money without a charge – he would charge each a good amount of interest.

Ioan L. married and had children. He died near the end of WW II under somewhat unclear circumstances. Although in his youth his life was marked with unethical acts, later in life he decided he could live a good life through honest work. He became a practical man who was capable of many initiatives – initiatives from which others learned many good lessons.

Many villagers from Voloca, who established themselves in Canada and the USA, married there and established families and lovely households. Many of these acquired riches because of their hard labors. Those following them arrived at improved conditions through education and practical common sense which allowed them to succeed. They also married in America or Canada with girls from those countries or with Italian or French girls who had moved there. Among the many Romanians in America who immigrated there from Ardeal or Bucovina, there are certainly many from Voloca. At present there exist there the children, grandchildren and great grandchildren of villagers of Voloca from earlier times.

The total number of Romanians in Canada and the USA is in the hundreds of thousands.

## 2.7
# Other Volocans who emigrated to foreign states for various reasons

In the previous chapter we concentrated on Volocans who emigrated to Canada and the USA during the first decades of the 20th century, that is to say, before WW I, in the search for work. In this chapter we will recall those who left to study, those who were refugees and those who left to escape the wars. All of this group of people left either just before WW II, during the war or shortly after the end of the war. Within this period we have people who emigrated to Italy, France, Germany and Argentina. There may also be Volocans in other countries as well.

Two villagers from Voloca, Teodor Onciulescu and Ioan Onofrei went to Italy to study. Both studied the Italian language at the Roman School in Rome where they passed their doctoral exams with excellent results. Teodor Onciulescu returned to Bucovina, married a teacher from here named Leontina Nichitovici, and returned to Italy with his wife. He settled in Naples and there he built a house. Teodor functioned for a long time as a professor before retiring with a pension. He enjoyed many travels throughout Europe with his wife. He maintained correspondence with relatives in Romania both on his side of the family and that of his wife. In Voloca, his only relatives were a sister Paulina and two brothers-in-law, Teodor and Petrea Nichitovici, brothers of his wife.

Teodor Onciulescu was in Voloca the last time at the start of the war (1942) and when he left he never returned to the country. His wife, Leontina, visited Romania about 1970 at which time she wanted to come to visit her brothers. At that time her two brothers Teodor and Petrea had the great good luck to obtain permission (from the USSR) that allowed them to travel from Voloca to Campulung where a third brother lived. There they were able to meet their sister, Leontina, many years after her departure. The reunion constituted a great joyous occasion for all.

In the summer of 1972, medical dentist, Dragos Penteleiciuc, the son of Ilie Penteleiciuc, together with his wife, made a very nice car journey through the countries of southern Europe. During this trip they also visited Italy. Before leaving, they had the good idea of taking with them the address of Onciulescu in Naples. When they stopped there, they went for a visit to his house. Great was the surprise of the hosts when they realized who their guests were. Teodor Onciulescu and his wife did not know Dragos Penteleiciuc nor his wife but they were very acquainted with Dr.Dragos' father, Ilie, going back to the days of their childhood in the village. It just so happened also that during the time of this surprise visit to the Onciulescu family in Naples, they were being visited by Nicholai Nichitovici (Leontina's brother) and his wife Neltea who had just arrived from Campulung in Romania. The degrees of surprise and joy were both great. My compatriot from Voloca, Ilie Penteleiciuc (father of Dragos), who now lives in Radauti, sent me a letter about this memorable reunion so that it could be recorded and gain greater exposure.

The other Volocan who completed his studies in Italy, Ioan Onofrei, returned to Voloca just before conscription for WW II and was mobilized. He was sent with his unit to the eastern front and was killed during an attack in the region of Odessa. Thus was extinguished the life of a brave Volocan intellectual during the prime of his life.

Around 1970 or 1971 Simion Penteleiciuc and his wife departed from Voloca for France. He had worked for many years as a technician at I.A.R. Brasov and later in Bucharest. From France, Simion continued to the USA, where I believe he finally settled in Chicago. He left behind in Voloca his three grown children, all of whom were employed. Not too many years later, these three married sons succeeded in joining them in the USA and were able to get good jobs there. They all live in California now and the sons now have children. Simion is now retired and enjoying a life of leisure with his family – he is very happy with his situation. He has a very good wife with whom he gets along very well and he lives a very pleasant life. The great joys of Simion and his wife are their grandchildren. They are overjoyed with them and love them very much.

In Federal Germany is a lady, formerly from Voloca, who left during WW II and who then married a German there. Her maiden name was Magdalena Paulencu. She married Aurel Rahovei, son of Leonti Rahovei. They live in Geissen South (Angle 23).

A son of Ioan Salahor, I have been told, went to Australia where he settled many years ago. I learned about him during a conversation I had with Dumitrie Salahor when he happened to be traveling through Craiova.

Another villager from Voloca, Dumitru Paulescu, moved years ago to Brasilia, the capital of Brazil. He had been mobilized here and was on the war front near Ardeal. He probably was captured and taken prisoner, but no one knew anything about him for about ten years. His family believed that he had been killed. In the end, a letter reached his wife with the news that he was living in Rio de Janeiro. After that first letter, he wrote his wife a number of times but never explained how he had reached there nor why he had not written before. His wife began to write to him requesting an explanation but he avoided the questions and indicated the existence of some problems – he did not even indicate in his letters what he was doing there. Finally, he implied somewhat vaguely that he was involved in the sale of works of art – but nothing was said about the nature of the problems.

It is known that when Brazil decided to construct a new capital city and let out tenders for those who wished to be involved in different work related to the construction of the new city, Dumitru made a bid to participate in the work. I know that before his mobilization he had no experience or training other than that of a lawyer. He studied law at Chernauti. Perhaps later he was able to acquire other skills.

In what capacity he was involved in the projects, I do not know, but I do know that he did take part. We know this because on the completion of the new capital city of Brasilia, he was granted a house lot in the new city and the right to settle there. After several years he built a comfortable home there. Following that, he made several quiet approaches to the Romanian authorities towards having his wife and children come to him in Brazil. The

first approaches were unsuccessful, but after more attempts and some interventions on his behalf, he succeeded in getting his wife and two daughters to come to him.

His oldest daughter, being married, was able to take her husband with her. Thus, in 1964, this family was able to be re-integrated. On 21 September 1964 Maria Paulescu and her two daughters, Lucia and Doina, together with Lucia's husband, Ovidiu Rosiu, left Voloca. I was there to see them off when they departed from the train station in Sibiu. Nine years passed from that date until in 1973 we were able to communicate again. Ten more years were to pass after that until we were able to meet in Brasilia in 1983. They are now in a good situation there.

Maria was able to bring to Dumitru his records and graduation certificates – items which allowed him to gain corresponding accreditation from the University of Brazil. This was possible because he was fluent in Portuguese, the language of his new country. His son-in-law, Ovidiu Rosiu, who had earned a degree in economics from Bucharest also had his qualifications recognized by the University of Brazil. Ovidiu originally came from Sebes-Alba. Lucia gained employment as a medical assistant in the field of radiology at a hospital in Brasilia. She had acquired a diploma for this specialty from Romania. Within a short time she gave up her job and attended the university there. After she completed her biology requirements, she entered the Faculty of Medicine.

Doina entered the Faculty of Philology (French and Portuguese Language Studies) at the university and later entered the Faculty of Economics. Doiana graduated as a Professor and Lucia became a medical doctor. Before they entered their studies the two girls had to learn Portuguese. They did this within the family with their father. Ovidiu also learned the language this way. They have all adapted to the language of Brazil except for Maria, Dumitru's wife. She was unable to master this new language.

The family has all it needs, their lives go well; they are making significant progress and feel blessed. They have bought a plot of land – perhaps about 30 hectares on the edge of Brasilia and have constructed a comfortable home there. They have planted areas with different plants, vegetables, fruit trees, flowers, etc. The climate is mild and most plants grow and produce almost year round. They have created for themselves a little heaven in this place. I visited them there in 1983. I will do a separate write up of this visit.

## 2.8
# How World War I started

"Whether we have peace or are at war, we are constantly in the whirlpool of the merciless battle for domination. Woe be it for the weak." This truism was spoken first by Georges Clemenceanu.

The appetite for domination and conquest rarely disappears and constitutes always the motive for war. As long as people and countries wander from the truth, the upright course and the correct ways, there will be no peace on earth. All people love and desire to live in the righteous way and to be independent and to be masters of their own house. In place of accepting the honorable role of protectors of the smaller and weaker states, the larger powers have sought to dominate them, to defeat them, and to ravish them. Under these norms of behavior, peace is always very fragile and when the opportunity arises, the oppressed and humiliated state has the right to seek its independence. There is always plenty of talk about peaceful negotiations, but the invaders rarely want to enter these with the intention of giving up their gains.

Let us now turn to the breakout of WW I – showing the reasons and causes. (**TN:** Ioan sets up a system of double dates from here on in the original text. He gives first the Julian calendar date, then the Gregorian. We will drop the Julian dates – 13 days behind.)

Austro-Hungary declared war on Serbia 28 July 1914 following the assassination in Sarajevo of Crown Prince Franz Ferdinand and his wife by a Serb nationalist. Relations between Austro-Hungary and Serbia were not friendly because of the annexation of Bosnia in 1909. Military maneuvers conducted by Austro-Hungary in Bosnia were not seen in a good light by the Serbs and the presence of the Crown Prince in Sarajevo was not a welcome tactic.

On 28 June 1914 Archduke Franz-Ferdinand and his wife Sofia of Holemberg were assassinated in Sarajevo by a young, 19-year old Serb, Gavrito Princip. This event, ending the life of the heir to the Austrian throne, was to lead the world, but most especially Europe, into a bloodbath of huge proportion. At the beginning, no one would have believed that the assassination of this young royal couple would have had such wide-reaching consequences. The event would probably have been less significant had not other serious and fairly large motives, some not immediately evident, existed. Nevertheless, this was the event that triggered WW I.

Following the event, Austro-Hungary issued an ultimatum to Serbia. This ultimatum set forth some very harsh conditions and demanded a response within 48 hours. Serbia was unable to completely accept the conditions, but was ready, for the most part, to compromise. The Serbian response was considered to be a rejection of the ultimatum by Austro-Hungary and so they, with the backing of Germany, declared war on Serbia on 28 July 1914. The very next day, they began military operations.

Russia began to prepare itself to attack Austria with a view to supporting Serbia and thus declared a general mobilization of 31 July 1914. On that date, Austro-Hungary also declared a general mobilization. On 01 August 1914, Germany announced a state of general mobilization and furthermore, it declared war on Russia. France did not wish to be left unprepared and also declared a general mobilization. On 03 August 1914, Germany declared war on France. On 04 August 1914, England declared war on Germany. Declarations of war then followed one after the other until the conflict involved essentially all the countries of Europe.

In May 1915, Italy declared war against the Central Powers (Austria and Germany) and on 27 August 1916 Romania joined the war against Austro-Hungary. On 30 August 1916, Germany declared war on Romania and on 01 September Bulgaria and Turkey also declared war on Romania.

The two allied sides engaged in a destructive war whose end no one could envisage. France and England declared war on Austria and Germany on the 11th and 12th of August and Japan declared war on Germany 23 August. On 02 September, Russia and then on 05 September France and England, entered the war against Turkey. The situation in Europe began to deteriorate more and more. On one side were the Central Powers consisting of Austro-Hungary, Germany, Turkey and Bulgaria while on the other side was the Alliance consisting of France, England, Russia and Serbia. They were joined later by Italy, Romania, Portugal, Japan, and near the end of the war, by the USA. During the war, Greece, Belgium and other European states were also involved. Canada, Australia and other English and French colonies and dominions also joined the cause on the side of the Alliance. Eventually, the conflagration involved the entire globe.

Could such a loss of life and such a destruction have really come about solely from the assassination of two people – certainly not! There were other grave motives, more ingrained and more hidden and which we will reveal in turn. Greed, perfidy, rivalry and the insatiable appetite for conquests and overpowering others played major roles in the conflict that became WW I.

In conjunction with the items mentioned above, one can put also the following question “If the events in Sarajevo had not taken place would the conflict of WW I have happened or not?” The answer is simple - the war would have happened sooner or later because the conflict was conceived, thought through, and fiendishly calculated much earlier. Whether in secret or quite openly, the major powers of the time were arming themselves. They were all seeking to become the strongest military forces and sought to perfect their armaments. In particular, they were spending enormous sums on artillery and also on warships. They began to battle ardently for supremacy and leading the movement was England. It wanted to retain its many and huge colonies and to hold on to them so that it could remain supreme over the seas and master of the navigation routes.

Russia, France, Germany and Austro-Hungary could not stand indifferent to England’s desires to rule the world and the rivalry would have lead to conflict one day for certain. Rivalry and the insatiable desire for colonies would certainly eventually have lead to a war.

## 2.9
# Our village during WW I

It was the summer of 1914. The men were living peacefully, occupied with the work in the fields while the housewives were busy with the children and needs of the households. The young men and women were enjoying themselves but were also helping their parents both around the house yard and in the fields. The older children would take the cattle to graze in the village common. This was the period of the long holidays for them and so they were free and able to help their parents with the less strenuous work. One could see in the faces of everyone joy, thankfulness and enjoyment of life. Admittedly, there were also some who were troubled or poor and who were laboring under difficult situations, but these went mostly unnoticed because beside joy, troubles and misfortunes have existed since the start of time. On Sundays they would all go to church, both young and old, men and women. They would fill the church even though it was quite large. After noon, the young would assemble for a "hora" (dancing) or at a wedding and they would dance and enjoy themselves. The younger husbands and their wives would do likewise. The rest would relax around the house and rest or would visit and converse.

Many people would gather for weddings, and especially so for the dances. All would arrive cleanly dressed in the national costume, which is what was generally worn in the village. The young men and young girls were beautiful, skilled dancers. They danced Romanian dances, the most enjoyed of which was the "Moldoveneasca". The girls were beautiful and very decoratively dressed – the young men were proud enough not to be outdone. Tall and sturdy as oak trees, dressed in white shirts, they danced the "Arcanul" or the "Sarba" in such an enthusiastic and brave manner that it was the greatest joy to see. It would be many years before one would again see dances of this type and young men like these would be hard to find. They were handsome, intelligent and proud, and danced like true artists.

The gatherings were so enjoyed and so happy that it seemed as if all of the joy of the world had come together and was being held in the hearts of those young people - collected by love and warmed by joy and the intoxication of the dances. This state of joy could not have been exceeded as long as the sun shines in the heavens.

Within the kingdoms and empires, it appeared that there was only peace and calm – at least so it seemed from the day-to-day events. In the village, there was never a thought that a war might break out. News, of any sort, penetrated the countryside with difficulty because the population had few means of receiving it. People did not read newspapers since many still could not read, and at that time there was no existence of radio and television. Even if there were some who could read, newspapers were not easily available. The priests or the school director or the teachers might sometimes have access to newspapers and thus might know a bit more in the way

of news. Since the population at that time was composed mostly of religious believers, who had no outside information whatsoever, they put their faith in the beliefs that God was good and would protect them from misfortunes and wars.

The rulers were themselves Christians, who believed in the ways of the saints whereby, if they gathered somewhere for a meeting, they would simply extend a hand to bring about peace, should a problem of misunderstanding occur. Blood need not be spilled - that was a sin. This was the understanding or view of the analysts, who analyzed the interactions between empires during that period of time. Unfortunately, in the decision chambers of the rulers, things were actually very different. One night, as if out of the cloudless skies, a huge storm arose. The news came with a short message "A war has broken out between the kingdoms".

According to the stories of our fellow Volocan, Ioan Salahor, all those relaxed patriarchs and beautiful citizens, who were sleeping peacefully in the village, were rudely awoken as if from a dream. In the middle of the night, the church bells began to toll and to resonate through the hills and valleys.

In Voloca, the mobilization in 1914 was announced at night by the pealing of the church bells. Later, at sunrise, a son of Galuta, son of Busuioc, sounded the mobilization by a trumpet call from the top of Buda Hill so that the whole village could hear it – both in the valley to the north and the one to the south. By then, as the sun rose over the cultivated fields or hayfields, the men were usually at work with their tools or cutting hay. When they heard the call of the trumpet, many men and youths were in the fields with their scythes in their hands. They stopped their hay cutting and tossed their scythes to the ground – some violently enough to break them.

Many of them had "holerca" (whiskey) with them, which they immediately drank. Then they returned singing, and in some cases crying, to their homes. In a short while, all of them gathered at the military barracks where the Sergeant issued them military uniforms, arms and ammunition. From this fact, one can conclude that the higher authorities had been expecting an outbreak of the war and had already made preparations under great secrecy. Galuta's son, who was the trumpeter, had completed his compulsory military service exactly one year before the outbreak of WW I. I knew this handsome and deserving young fellow during my childhood.

The village watchmen traveled the roads announcing that all men under forty years of age must appear at the military barracks to be conscripted. The entire village was in motion, young and old, husbands and wives and even older children - all very worried and afraid. They were all inquiring as to why the church bells were being rung so long. They could hear all over the plaintive cry – "Woe is us, what shall we do now that a war has started?" In all truth, the start of WW I was not a war between the rulers of empires but a war to be endured by the poor people. In all the villages one would hear the crying and wailing normally only heard after a death. Here, there, and all over the hills, one could hear only the cries of woe. People were running every which way - generally overcome with fear. From almost every household there would be one or two men who would be taken to serve in the army. As daylight dawned, the roads were filled with mothers tearfully carrying their children in their arms. Their older children were following them, holding on to the mothers' skirts – they too

were screaming as they could sense the fear and despair in their mothers' cries. Some of the young men, who had just finished their military duty, were now again forced to return anew to their regiments along with the other young men and husbands.

Many of the conscripted left the village dressed in clean white shirts and new clothes, as if dressed for a holiday, and traveled to different points or villages within the Austrian Empire. Many of these left, never to again return to their homes. This they realized even as they were leaving. About 50 men between the ages of 30 and 40 years were left in the village. These received their uniforms at the military barracks along with arms and ammunition. They were stationed in the village school and were required to serve as local sentries. All the benches and tables were removed from the school and the floor near the walls was covered with straw, on top of which the solders made their beds.

Food for those stationed in the school was brought from homes by their wives or someone in the family, since they were not permitted to go to their homes even to eat. Only when they were on patrol through the village, were they able to pay short visits to their homes. Their patrol routes covered the roads and the larger bridges as well as the rail line through the district. There were a number of fixed locations at which a sentry would also be posted. People claimed that there were Moscali spies who were keeping an eye on all these places with the purpose of destroying the bridges and other works or for the purpose of locating any concentrations of Austrian troops. For this reason, at night, when it was dark, no one was allowed to venture on the roads. Very many rumours circulated about the enemy spies, but no one knew how many were true.

(**TN:** The men of Voloca, as citizens of the Austrian Empire, were conscripted into the Austrian army. One immediate "enemy" to the east was Russia. The author has used throughout his writing two terms - Ruthenians and Moscali – to refer to people from parts of what we now call Russia. The Ruthenians came from what is now the Ukraine and Belarus. The Moscali – also sometimes called Moscovites – came from further north, from an area once known as Moscovy.)

There was great apprehension within the population and no one had the inclination to get back to work. Among those who became soldiers, two from the village were appointed Corporals. They were Toader (son of Tinuta), who could read and write, and Grigori (son of Tanasa), who was not at all literate but was a good leader. He was able to retain by memory everything he heard, and was more knowledgeable than those who were literate. When he assigned the duties to the various groups of troops, he would record some signs in a notebook that only he understood and, in this manner, he kept his records.

One night shouts were heard that the soldiers were leaving the village. All those who heard the shouts awoke from their beds and ran to the school to see what was happening. There they found the soldiers assembled on the road, dressed and loaded with all their military equipment. They were awaiting the arrival from the military barracks of Sergeant Huber, who would give the order to start the march. The women were again beginning to wail and the children to scream and to hold unto the hands of their parents. These woeful wails and cries were

enough to break one's heart. Not much time passed before the Sergeant arrived. He instructed the troops as to how they should fight and behave in the battles. He then gave the order to begin the march which left under the command of Grigori, son of Tanasa. Grigori led the troops to Cucuriul Mare, where they met up with troops from other villages. Then, from there, they all proceeded towards Chernauti. Toader, son of Tinuti, with another five soldiers (including Toader, son of Todiresci) remained at the military barracks in the village. After the troops had set off and could no longer be seen, one could hear only the crying and wailing of the women.

Sergeant Huber and the soldiers left behind watched the troop column depart. Each of them was bombarded by questions from the women. However, who could know what would happen, or how long the war would last, or how many of those, who had just set out, would ever return to see their wives and children, or parents and siblings. The soldiers wiped the tears from their faces and started back in silence towards their barracks on the hill.

The five soldiers who remained had to serve as sentries for the village and the bridges. In addition to them, some of the older men were ordered to serve, in turn, as sentries at places deemed militarily important. This situation carried on for about two weeks during which, fortunately, nothing untoward happened.

On a Sunday morning, the villagers could hear cannon fire towards Noua Sulita, on the border with the Moscali. (**TN:** Russian border). That day, no one ventured out to go to church – everyone climbed to the top of the hill to look in the direction of the sounds of the cannons. No one could see anything except for the occasional puff of smoke that would issue from the barrels of the cannons. Since the firing was a long ways off, even the sound could not be readily heard. The people were very frightened and seized with great fear.

A group of older men gathered on one of the higher hills in the Calinceanca. From there, the group which included Gheorge Ionica (**TN:** the author's father); Ion, son of Vasalchii; Io(an?), son of Ilinchii; Toader, son of Nicuti; and others, could see far past Corovia and Ceahor, and all the way to the Prut River, where the battle front was. They had a pair of binoculars with which they tried to see the troops and the cannons, but they were not well located to do so clearly. They could see the area from which the smoke would arise from the firing of the artillery and after that they could hear the rumble. I was also there with my father and asked Ion, son of Vasalchii, if I could look through the binoculars to see the scene. I did not see very much because I did not know how to hold the binoculars properly or to adjust them to suit my eyes. I could see better with my own free eyes than through the binoculars of Ion.

The most frightened among the people were the Jews. They had packed their bags and were ready to flee. They were very fearful of war and particularly feared the Moscali, who sought out the Jews for punishment.

For the next few days after that one, no more shooting was heard but some alarming news began to circulate. It was claimed that in our section of the battle front the Austrian forces were rather sparse and that the Moscali could probably easily defeat them and overrun us.

One night, when no one could see them, even those last five soldiers that had been left here departed and we were left with only the Sergeant. The second day, however, many soldiers, mostly older men arrived. There were so many that they could not fit into the school and had to be billeted in private homes. For all of them, the kitchen was in the school. The troops bought or requisitioned livestock from the villagers. These were butchered and cooked in some large cauldrons named “chislicuri”. They would also take from people, with or without payment, rye and corn flour, potatoes, beans, onions and other items. They would produce good meals.

It is easy to understand that most of the regular soldiers came from the ranks of farmers or farm workers. The more skilled positions of health workers, telephone operators, supplies controllers, purchasers, etc were all filled by Jews. They were able to place themselves in positions that were a bit easier. This was largely because they were able to speak German, but also because almost all were literate. They were a rung above everyone, including those in the army.

These older soldiers did not stay in our village very long – also from their ranks there was no one from our village.  The most gruesome rumors could be heard everywhere. Someone claimed that the Moscali had surged into the country and were already near Chernauti. Another talked about the cruelty and barbarity of the approaching Moscali. A third said that they cut the fingers off from young men and the breasts off women. Yet another said the Moscali had a great hatred of Jews and that when they caught them they would immediately tear out their long hair curls and cut off their beards. These stories created great fears but no one could confirm if they were true or not.

The people remaining in the village began to accept the situation with the war and the difficulties associated with it. If troops arrived from elsewhere, they had to be accepted into the homes and if there was a need for food then they had to contribute what was necessary. They were asked to give up their best horses and wagons, their cattle were taken to be butchered, as were their pigs and this they knew they must do so since it had been ordered by the authorities. More than once they hoped that they had again the things they did before the war began. However, orders were something that had to be obeyed and no one attempted to oppose them.

One day the old troops left the village and for a few days the villagers of Voloca had a short respite. However, from time to time a patrol or two would travel through the village before they would again retreat to the woods.

One cloudy day in September, people could see a group of about 30 cavalry moving across the cultivated land, through the rows of corn. They were traveling from the direction of Chernauti but did not come into the village. Instead, they continued on towards Cuciurul Mare where they stopped at the edge of the village. They were seen from closer up by Ioan Salahor, who was stationed in a hiding place. He was able to see that they had large hats (the size of a half-bushel), very long rifles, and curved swords. Their horses were not very large but were very high-spirited and fast, with tails that reached down to the earth. When the people heard this, they started to flee as fast as they could so that they might reach some hiding places. They took their most valuable things from the

house, their clothes and sacks of rye or corn. They dug holes in the cornfields to hide whatever they could in them. They also tried to hide their livestock in out-of-sight locations. The story of these cavalry troops spread like lightning throughout the village. These were the Cossacks, the elite cavalry of the Russian army. A great fear and uncertainty descended. But this cavalry group did not enter our village but instead turned back again towards Chernauti. For the next few days, no troops of any type were seen from any direction. There were some patrols during the nights, but not cavalry, only infantry. It was not known from which side these came – Austrian or Moscali. Austrian troops would be seen in Cuciurul Mare from time to time but no more were seen in our village for a while.

One Sunday, just before noon, the Moscali arrived at our village. Rather than standing to resist them, the Austrian army had withdrawn and not provided any opposition. Before the enemy had reached the village, in fact, while they were approaching the crosses in the Cozmin, they fired a few artillery rounds and then they were able to continue unopposed along the road leading to the village. The enemy were lead by the cavalry with their large hats (the Cossacks), who proceeded cautiously. They were then followed by the main body of the army.

On that day in September 1914 there arrived in our village, and shortly afterward in many others, so many Moscali cavalry and foot soldiers that they seemed to outnumber the leaves on the trees and the blades of grass. The numbers were so huge that it appeared that an earthquake was occurring. No one had ever seen as huge a military assembly as the one that entered our village that day.

As soon as they entered the village, members of the infantry spread out to search all of the houses to confirm that there were no hidden Austrian soldiers. The cavalry rode through the village and set fire to all the houses of the Jews. Whether they were following orders in doing this, or whether it was because of their personal terrible hatred, these acts of arson produced great damage and misfortune. Fire spread from the houses of the Jews that had been set on fire to other houses and soon many of the neighboring houses were on fire. Equally terrible was the fact that much livestock was burned. This included oxen, cows and sheep that were tied up in the barns and could not be released because there was no one around to untie and release them. The population had fled the village to hide because of fear of the Moscali.

The invaders, in general, did not bother the men or the villagers – they searched for Austrian soldiers and if they did not find any they moved on. After making their incursion in the village, the army continued on to the south-west, in the direction of the retreating Austrians. The village remained as if abandoned with just the dogs howling at night in a blood-curdling manner. There was no sign of movement around – no one appeared on the roads and it appeared as if the entire village was deserted. Terrible times!

All those people, who had been able to, had taken their livestock from near their homes and had hidden them in the hills or in the forests at sheltered and hidden locations where the Moscali did not enter or travel through.

For many entire days, the houses remained deserted while the villagers watched from their hidden places what was happening and what the Moscali were doing. After a while, when they could see that the Moscali were not bothering the villagers, the fugitives began one by one to venture back to their homes. It was the fall, a time for working at the harvest, but the villages could not get at the task - so unsettling and anxious was the time. Day-to-day existence was very uncertain and now the dangers of starvation and other shortages began to appear. Many households had lost a portion of their livestock, as well as their horses and wagons, to the war and now had no means to bring in the crops from the fields. The husbands and young men had been taken off to war and only the old men remained at home. The women no longer were worried about working. Instead, they would gather together to grieve over their departed husbands and sons. They would also "dadeau in bobi" (**TN:** 'read the beans' or 'beads' – assumed to be similar to reading tea leaves) to learn if their men were still alive and whether they would return home from the war.

Where ever one went or turned, all they would hear about was the war. One could not find goods in the shops, nor were whiskey or tobacco available for consumption while the Moscali occupied the village. Although there were a few people who returned to their homes and did some work around them, many remained hidden because of fears of the Moscali. Even the Mayor remained hidden in the woods with many civic workers and the tasks needed to be attended to in the village remained undone. The greatest fears of the people were about the cavalrymen with the big hats, who were very vicious. They were a strange sort of people with different characteristics from us. They were almost like wild men and were said to be Tartars. They had slanted eyes. They preceded the main army and set fire to the houses and instilled fear into the population.

The "true" Moscali soldiers were a people more like us. They were generally tall and blond. Many wore beards and almost all had mustaches. Some of the Moscali were kind men – some spoke Romanian and were able to converse with the villagers quite well. When they would go to eat, they would often take one of the larger bowls from the homes in which they were being billeted, to bring back food for those in the house. They generally had plenty of bread and sugar which they shared with the children.

In general, the Moscali, who came through, did not spend much time in the village but continued on further in pursuit of the Austrians, who had now retreated to the mountains. After a short respite for the village, the next wave of Moscali would appear, would rest several days in the village, and would then follow the previous wave. After the passage of one of these waves of troops, the village would again become more relaxed. People would appear from their hiding places, from the woods and from the cornfields. They would return to their homes to do some needed work. Since the villagers were short of money, many began to go to the larger towns to sell something: milk, cheese, eggs and other food products. The money was not always very useful for, while it was easy to sell their goods, there was little they could buy with the money. They would not find the items they needed. One could not find salt, or coal oil, or tobacco, or alcoholic drink, etc. This was because the shops had been owned by Jews, who had quickly closed them and, to avoid the Moscali, had fled at the same time the Austrian army retreated.

One could survive without coal oil and matches since one could burn, in place of coal oil, rendered suet from sheep. It would be burned by placing it in a vessel with a wick. For starting fire, one could use a flint and a piece of steel. The shortage of drink, tobacco and, salt especially, presented more difficult problems. In the end, substitutes were found for drink and tobacco. People began to cook wine vinegar, to which they would add some sugar; this would serve as a drink. In place of tobacco, they used tassels from corn to form cigarettes that were fortified by the small amounts of tobacco they could find in butts thrown to the ground by the military. For salt, however, no substitute could be found and this was a problem, since unsalted food had little taste. One could not even find any coarse rock salt and the people became quite embittered. Before the war, salt had been brought into the village from Cacica, but now this place was on the other side of the fighting front, in an area held by the Austrians. Since it was not possible to get salt from there and since it could not be found elsewhere, people had many problems with the situation.

In his memoirs, Ioan Salahor records that at that time he was a boy just over 14 years of age. He relates how he succeeded in reaching Cacica with a wagon and two horses and returned with 500 “husti”(?) of salt. He had great courage but also good luck to be able to cross the military front without being observed by either the Moscali or the Austrians both going there and on his return. It had been a difficult journey and he had traveled on roads over fields, through the hills and woods – all through areas rarely used. The fighting front was not fixed nor was it continuous – it had openings both in the fields and in the woods. He did not encounter any deep trenches or barbed fences nor any sentries. Although such a passage through the front was possible at that time, it was also very risky. The young man had good luck to make the successful journey and did all a great deed and service by bringing salt back from Cacica.

This clever and daring young man was not satisfied with this one accomplishment. Since he discovered that he could traverse and return across the fighting front even with a horse-drawn wagon, he decided to return again to see if he could locate and see his father. He set off and, after many adventures, succeeded in reaching the place where the Austrians were stationed. He was able to find his father in the area of Patrauti on the Siret River. There he found Sergeant Huber from our village and other soldiers from Voloca. All of them quickly gathered around him to enquire what had happened in the village and asked of any news about their individual families. The officers questioned him as to whether he had seen many Moscali troops and where they were located. The young man had in his satchel about 100 packs of tobacco which he sold to the soldiers. They asked him many questions, but the young man was very tired from the journey and also very hungry. He heard their questions half asleep because the house into which they had taken him was warm and he was very fatigued after his efforts. Soon a soldier appeared with a big bowl of a very good soup, a piece of meat and a piece of army bread. Hungry as a wolf, Ioan devoured the food with a great appetite and thanked him greatly. After he had eaten, he regained his strength and was able to respond to all their questions.

An officer who wished to obtain more information from the young man brought over a Romanian-German interpreter and began to ask him a number of questions. In a short while Ioan was able to speak directly with the officer in German and was able to discuss the situation with little need of the interpreter. He told them his route,

how he had traveled and what he had seen. After that, he was able to see his father and to see for himself that he was still in good health. He then told everyone that he wished to return home to his mother. His father agreed that that was the best place for him to be.

The officer agreed to the return home of the young man but warned him to very careful where he went. He told him that if he reached home to his mother he must tell no one where he had been, with whom he had spoken nor what he had seen. In particular, he must tell no one where the Austrian troops were located, because in two weeks at the most, they would be returning to attack and drive out the Moscali. This in fact was the case, and in less than two weeks the Moscali retreated back past the Prut River.

When the young man began his return journey, he was accompanied to the edge of the village by his father, Sergeant Huber and two other officers. There they separated and all shook hands with him again warning him not to tell anyone where he had been and what he had seen. At his departure, both the father and son were in tears. Immediately Ioan turned to the right across the fields and aimed for a path that led into the woods. It was very early in the morning and one could not see very far. There was also a layer of fog but the young man was in a hurry and followed the path straight ahead. Those who had accompanied him to the village edge could no longer see him nor could he see them. After a while, he reached the edge of the forest which he entered without stopping. Shortly, the fog intensity began to ease and he slowly began to see further. As he passed through the woods he saw many indications of temporary shelters and fires but there was no trace of the Moscali soldiers. They all appeared to have left the forest and to have traveled towards Chernauti.

The young man continued his journey home with caution, sometimes over the fields, sometimes through the woods until he reached the edge of Dumbrava Rosie. At this point, it was not a great distance to our village – perhaps only about three more hours of walking. Unfortunately, now he was cornered by a number of savage dogs that approached him intending to do harm. Fortunately he had with him an entire loaf of bread, intended as food for the journey. With this bread he was able to pacify the dogs. As soon as he gave them the food, the dogs satisfied themselves and began to show friendly signs. They walked along with the young man and wagged their tails. This was a good sign - the dogs became quite friendly and accompanied him for a good distance along the road, which then entered again into the woods that formed the boundary between Dumbrava Rosie and Voloca. When he exited the woods and got closer to our village, he spotted several wagons with Moscali soldiers near the big hay stack located near the oak trees. They were loading the hay into their wagons from this stack, which belonged to an uncle of his, Gheorge by name, who lived nearby in a house. The young boy hurried quickly towards the village and went directly to the house of his Uncle Gheorge to tell him that some Moscali were taking hay from the big stack near the oaks and were loading it into their wagons. His Uncle started off towards the meadow but a significant amount of time had passed before he arrived there and the Moscali had all gone. Only about half of the haystack remained. It is good that at least that much was left!

All the time that the young man had been away from home his mother had been greatly worried. She was concerned that something had happened to him - he was the eldest of all her children. When she saw him

returning home she could not believe her eyes. Ioan had been missing from home for more than a week and his mother had heard nothing about him. When he arrived asking for food, she regained her energy and began to chide him asking "where in the devil he had been" and "what mischief he had got into?". The young man had no time to listen to his mother's scolding, which he rarely regarded, but instead headed for the shelf where they kept the "mamaliga". He tore off a piece of it and together with a dilled cucumber attempted to sate his hunger. His intestines were rumbling from hunger since he had eaten nothing that day. He had not even had time to think about eating during the perilous journey he had to make to get home. Before his mother could make him something to eat, he fell asleep like a log, fully dressed as he was and covered with mud. He just stretched himself out on the bench and fell asleep as deeply as one of the dead. His mother could hardly awaken him when the food was ready. Anxiety and weariness defied description. When he awoke the next day, his mother began to question him again but he could not say or tell her anything.

The young man did not want to tell anyone where he had been or what he had done in the days he was gone or anything that the Sergeant had told him. He understood that he was not allowed to do so to anyone whatsoever. The curious villagers wanted to know where he had been and what he had done – his response was that he had tried once more to go for a load of salt but that this time he did not succeed. His mother only learned what had really happened after our troops (Austrian) returned to the village.

After the Moscali retreated to the other side of the Prut River, Ioan visited his father at the front several more times, having been given permission by the military commander (he was given a special pass). In this manner he was able to bring his father some food and other items from home. If he was stopped by a sentry or patrol he would show them his special pass from the commander and then they would allow him to pass through.

When the Moscali first entered Bucovina (September 1914), they remained there for six weeks before they retreated across the Prut, where they remained for the rest of the winter. This first incursion advanced only up to the waters of the Siret River. In 1915, just after Palm Sunday, the Moscali entered Bucovina again. This time more troops came than the first – both cavalry and foot soldiers. They also had a great deal of artillery. The cavalry was made up of Cossacks from the area of the Don. Having many soldiers, they were able to advance to the area of Campulung Moldovenesc. At Mestecanis (Carlibaba and Berhomet) there were a series of very intense battles between the Austrians and the Moscali. The Moscali could advance no further. Furthermore, they were repelled completely out of Bucovina within about two months. Many Moscali fell at Mestecanis and many were taken prisoners. After that date, the Moscali army was repulsed and driven back far beyond the Prut. The battle front remained there from the summer of 1915 to mid-1916 when Romania entered the war against Austria. The battle front stretched from the edge of the village of Ostrita, then via Cotul Ostritei, Rarencea and Slobozia, to Toporauti, which was near the original border.

At Easter in 1917, Ioan left home on Saturday evening to bring his father some "pasca", decorated eggs and other food that is normally prepared for Easter. He reached the edge of the village of Cotul Ostritei where many

soldiers and sentries were positioned. They had only some small holes through which they would push their guns when needed. This they would do only if the Moscali tried to approach the Austrian line of troops.

One could never cross the front because between the combatants there were 10-12 rows of barbed wire arranged in a zig-zag pattern. These formed a true barrier of barbed wire that could only be crossed if the wires were cut. These barriers separated the Austrians from the Moscali. The young Ioan Salahor slept the Saturday night before Easter at the front beside his father.

Towards morning on the Day of Christ's Arising (Easter Sunday), shouting was heard at many points along the front. Everyone awoke to see what was happening. When they looked towards the barbed wire barriers - what did they see? Standing beside the barbed wire fences they saw a multitude of Moscalis who had crept up during the night and who were now beginning to shout, as day was breaking, "Do not shoot brothers, for *Christ has Risen*". (**TN:** –*Christ is Risen* is a traditional Easter greeting for that region of the world). Some called out in Russian while others did so in the language of Moldova. Soon, large numbers of other Moscali appeared and came to the Austrian barbed wire fence. At that moment, the Austrians began to emerge from the trenches without their rifles and they too approached the fence. They came together at that one time, the two foes, not as feared enemies, but greeting each other as brothers and friends. They enjoyed the entire day of Easter in peace talking to each other as if they had been close friends since the beginning of time. In most ways, there was nothing to separate them and they had no good reason to want to fight each other. All of them had wives and children at home, or parents or siblings they longed to see and who awaited them. But since it was the will of the rulers that they could not share a peace between them, the poor people were forced to battle each other, to die blamelessly on the fields of battle – some to remain unburied and food for the vultures. All of them would have been much happier to return to their homes and to no longer need to fight – but the choice was not theirs, they followed the orders of the rulers.

Many of the Moscali spoke Romanian since they came from the Basarabia area. When evening began to approach, all were driven to sorrow that they would have to separate and then they would again have to shoot at each other. Not long before darkness, thunder rolled in, and they began to return each to his zone. Eventually all returned to their posts. From there they had to stand on guard and to try to kill each other. On the night after Easter, the guns did not stop even for a minute, not on one side nor on the other. However, on that night, they were shooting not at each other, but instead into the air.

After Ioan had returned to the village and told the people about the events that had occurred at the front on that Easter Sunday, the villagers were very pleased and began to speak with the hope that perhaps God would be able to produce a peace between the rulers and the men might be able to return home from the front. In fact, for a short period of time, not as much shooting was heard and not as many attacks were reported. This situation could not last very long, however, because in those places where soldiers from our area were stationed, they were replaced by others from other armies and from other nationalities. Troops from our region were moved to the front in Galacia, or into Italy or to other places further away. This was done to prevent opposing troops, who

could understand each other, from somehow becoming passive and fraternizing. It appeared that the same thing happened on the Moscali side as well and their forces were moved to other fronts.

In this manner, the front would change and move during the war from one area to another and our village would pass from Austrian to Russian control and back again. It was very difficult for the old men, for the women, and for the children to gain a time of respite. The troops moved back and forth always demanding and taking food from the people during their movements. In particular, they took grain and livestock but also forage for which they had a need. Restrictions were introduced in the movement and circulation of people because the village was in a war zone, the front often being very near. No one could go anywhere without the permission and approval of the authorities - passes would have to be carried that were issued by the village office and signed by the Mayor.

When the Moscali first entered Voloca and the Austrians retreated to the mountains, a Russian Governor was installed in Chernauti – by custom he was a military person – a General. On the day he was scheduled to enter the city, he was met at the bridge across the Prut by the Metropolitan carrying the cross from the church altar and Book of Scriptures, as well as by the Mayor and council members. The General arrived mounted on a horse and accompanied by many high-ranking officers. The first thing that happened was that the Metropolitan, Vladica, held up the cross and the Scriptures for the Governor to kiss. The accompanying officers then kissed the two items, in turn, according to rank. After that, the Mayor of the city presented the Governor with two "colaci" and some salt which he accepted and divided up among the other officers who were accompanying him. One "colac" he kept for himself. The Mayor then presented him with the key to the city, which the Governor then accepted. The entourage then proceeded to the Cathedral. Here they were met by all the clergy dressed in the clothes they normally reserved for a service. Meanwhile, all the church bells throughout the city were pealing. After they had been toasted and fed, towards evening, the Governor with his entourage was escorted, with great pomp, to the Palace which had been prepared for them. There, they set themselves up and stayed for the duration of the occupation. From the procedure and the magnitude and pomp of the civic ceremony for the installation of the Russian Governor, it appeared that the many of the occupiers believed that they were settling permanently in this new place. The war was not however, yet over and before too long, in the same way that they came, so also they departed.

At one time the battle front was about 7-8 km from our village. Many projectiles fell into the fields and along the edges of the village. All the places and houses were filled with soldiers of every kind. The school was turned into a hospital and many of those wounded at the front were brought there. The war became more intense and took on more dimensions when Romania entered the war against Austria. The artillery thunder could be heard day and night – equally from one side as from the other, so much so that the doors and windows all shook and rattled. The carts returned endlessly with the wounded from the front. There were so many wounded soldiers that they could not fit into the school and had to be taken to many houses where they were laid simply on layers of straw until there was a short stoppage and they could be taken to hospitals further away from the front. The lice scrambled over everything like ants and all the people were infected with lice. All the houses, barns and

sheds were filled with soldiers, horses, carts, and many other things in this time of war. It was terrible for the soldiers but was equally so for the villagers. Misery began to show its teeth in earnest. The villagers could not understand most of the soldiers because they came mostly from other nations and spoke different languages. During WW I many different nationalities of soldiers passed through our village. Some were Austrians, others Hungarians, Czech's, or Poles, or Germans, Serbs and, near the end, Italians. In addition to these allies, there passed Russians, Cossacks, Tartars and other Asiatic peoples (Mongols). Conscripts from Voloca and throughout Bucovina were also sent to various fronts including Galacia, Russian, Italy and other places.

Italians were brought to the village as prisoners from the front and were set to work at different jobs of military importance for the Austrian army. We could converse somewhat with them, but with the other soldiers there was no communication at all. Some of them were also very unpleasant, especially the Hungarians and the Czechs. The Poles were somewhat better but were very self-important and were more standoffish than all the others. When a big battle occurred, everyone would depart – however, when they returned only about half did so. The rest were left behind dead, or wounded or were taken to hospitals.

It was a very difficult time for the villagers during the war as every corner was filled with soldiers who would take all the food supplies from the people and anything else they could find. This was especially true when cavalry units stayed in the village. They would take all the fodder from the village and if someone had managed to keep a cow or a heifer alive they had no food left for feeding it. The soldiers would seize anything that they wanted: corn, potatoes, beans, eggs and anything else including even pigs. No one had any assurance that they could retain what little they might have. There was a great shortage of food. In addition, others even less fortunate than us, had been brought into the village from those villages on the very battle front. From those villages all the men, women and children had been removed with whatever they could carry on their backs. They were moved to our and to other neighboring villages further back from the front. Nothing remained in the homes or households they left behind since once they left, their homes were completed gutted by those who remained as well as by the soldiers.

According to the judgments of the villagers, of all the nationalities of troops that passed through the village, the cruelest ones were the Hungarians and Czechs. The Hungarians would take everything from the house of a person so that the poor children there were left without even a morsel of bread or a potato, while the Czechs took even the dogs and cats - which they would then eat. While it is true that the Italians ate even the frogs, at least these were not things taken away from the villagers. Many were horrified and sick to the stomach when they heard about or saw some of these happenings. The situation could be seen to be deteriorating constantly.

At the beginning of the war, the Austrian army was very well equipped and had lots of good food but by about the third year of the war they began to encounter a food shortage. Near the end of the war, neither the army nor the general population had sufficient food. There was a great shortage and everyone wandered around looking for something to eat. This became the number one concern and problem. In the fields where potatoes might have grown, the ground was scoured with desperation in the hope that one might still find a potato, regardless of

how small. It was reaching the point where there was not even anything one could steal, so great was the shortage.

During the war a regiment of Serbs from Bosnia passed through our village along with some Croats and Dalmatians. They were very kind people who interacted well with the villagers and took nothing from them. They behaved well and were very devout. They were tall and handsome men, who had the same religion as us and, while they stayed in the village, they attended church every Sunday. This regiment left the best impression on the villagers of all of those in the Austrian army.

The population awaited anxiously for an end to the war because they had become horrified at the enormous bloodshed, and could no longer endure the great tragedies and the severe shortages. However, the struggle continued sometimes with even greater intensity and looked like it would never end. During the period that the front was in the region of the village, life was very difficult. The fences had all disappeared from around the homes and those houses that had been abandoned were soon destroyed and burned. Gardens could not be dug or planted because the troops would walk directly across them as they went from house to house. Being near the front, the troops would make their forays through the fields and gardens and soon they were in a state of disarray as bad as the village. No one could plow the fields since there were no animals - all cattle had been taken by the armies – horses also - for the cavalry or for food. Sometimes also, exploding shells would hit the fields.

With the presence of the large army population in the village, a water shortage in the wells sometimes also occurred. It is difficult to express in words the hardships that the villagers, as well as the soldiers, had to endure during that time. Only after the front moved further from the village did the population escape some of the hardship. The first to leave after that were the refugees, who had been brought to our village from elsewhere. On their return, they found not their homes, but complete devastation right down to the bare ground. They were forced to make dirt shelters in which they lived until the worst had passed and they were again able to build some sort of homes.

Few and short were the periods of time during which there were no troops in our village. One regiment would leave and another would immediately arrive. Most of these units would stay in the village for just a few days and then they would proceed on to the front. They often arrived during the night, often very fatigued and too often very famished. They often begged for some food, but they rarely received any because the people did not have enough for themselves, or for the elderly and the children.

Many unpleasant messages would arrive at the village –heart-breaking ones. These were the notices to the families or parents announcing the deaths at the front. The lists grew on and on. The numbers of dead and wounded grew by the hundreds and thousands – but there was still no talk of an end to the war. The war continued and a need grew to find new soldiers to take the places of those who had died, had been wounded or had fallen prisoners. For this reason, they began to conscript all males they could find between the ages of 18

and 50. (**TN:** earlier the range was ~24-40). They did not worry if the men were big or small – or if they were healthy or not – as long as they could walk and were not blind, or missing an arm or leg. Near the end of the war there was a need to take even those who were 17 years old and those over 50 years of age. Through the village one could see only old men, young boys and children in one direction and women and young girls in the other. (**TN:** Since Ionica, the author of this Monograf, did not appear to have served in the army we can assume he was less than 17 years of age in 1918 – another clue as to when he was born.)

The women who had been left at home a long time without husbands sometimes had one or two babies, fathered by the soldiers posted in the village, either willingly or otherwise. When their husbands returned, they had to reconcile these facts as best they could – the fault had been the war. Certainly, not all participated in such activities, but then there was no one there to keep an eye on them.

The bigger boys spent a large portion of their spare time shooting. They quickly found rifles, pistols, bullets, shells and grenades left behind by the soldiers and to pass their time, they would fire these off. They were not thinking that they were gambling with death. They paid close attention to learn how the soldiers operated and loaded their weapons and soon, they too knew how to do so. Shooting in this way, without regard to safety, bullets would be flying in every direction and no one knew where they were coming from next. This play, or better said, distraction, sometimes occupied the boys all day. In this way, the young men and the children often forget that they had got almost nothing to eat that day. The mothers would warn the children against this behavior, but they took little notice and continued to shoot throughout the hills and valleys. It became very dangerous to travel through the village and you might easily have to pick yourself off the ground with a bullet wound. Not all would simply shoot into the air.

Many trees were also destroyed with grenades. The youths would tie a grenade to the root of a tree. They would then tie a long wire to the firing pin and stretch the wire out to a rise in the ground behind which they would hide. They would then tug the wire, pull out the firing pin and the grenade would explode, uprooting the tree. Many escaped these escapades uninjured only by the grace of good luck. There were some however who paid for this play with their lives. They were killed by grenades or unexploded shells while others were badly injured or wounded.

There was a great deal of munitions left over throughout the village by the soldiers. In many cases they were left just along the paths between houses. The soldiers often carried heavy loads of munitions and when they arrived overloaded, fatigued and famished, they simply unloaded parts of their burdens and then forgot them. This was the great joy of the young men. When they could find these abandoned arms and munitions their games began. All of these happenings repeated after each wave of soldiers had passed through to the front and before the next wave arrived. Almost all of the boys were involved in some way in these great displays of gunfire and explosions since there was no one to control them. Nor was there anyone available to hold them responsible or stop them. The younger children watched their older siblings with great admiration.

During the war very few soldiers received a leave from their duty that would allow them to visit their homes; they had great problems along the front. In many cases they could not be given leave because of the location of the front, or because the area that they were in was in transition occupied alternately by each side (Voloca, for example). For this reason, many of those who somehow did manage to get a leave from the front, refused to return and were pursued and arrested, if found. Since they were constantly afraid of detection, they did not remain at home but instead would be on the run in the woods or in nearby villages. Often remaining hidden, some of them did not have the luck to escape tentacles of the Austrian authorities even at the end of the war when Bucovina was joined to Romania.

The forests near Voloca were filled with fugitives who did not want to fight in the Austrian army. They worked at cutting trees and the bigger boys from the village would bring them food from home because they had no food in the forest. They never ventured into the village and did not sleep in shelters or places near their cuttings but each night retreated to hidden places further away and known only to them.

When we were occupied by the Moscali, many young men carried wood from the forests unhindered because the woodcutters left the woods unguarded and fled with Austrian troops, returning only when the Austrian troops did. During this period, the young men were able to gather sufficient wood to supply themselves for a long time – some even had extra which they sold.

When the Moscali came to Voloca for the third time, in the fall of 1916, there were very few men left in the village since most had been conscripted into the army. Those who were not sufficiently fit to be soldiers were taken to dig trenches or to build defenses, roads or bridges. Defendable positions were built throughout all the forests. Because of this, the household work fell to the women, the elderly and the older boys. When the Austrians retreated and the Moscali arrived, or when the Moscali fled and the Austrians returned, the area of passage of the armies was destroyed down to the bare earth. The desolation was even worse when the army consisted of cavalry units. Then there was the need not only for food for the soldiers but also for the horses. It was a bitter time for the poor villagers because they would be left not only with no food for themselves but even for the odd animal that they might have saved from the destruction. One year we had a great drought and nothing grew – in addition there was a shortage of water. One other summer, when there was a great concentration of soldiers in the village, we had a huge storm with hail that destroyed almost all of the crops. The hailstones were as large as cups and there was so much of it that some did not melt for three days. No one had ever heard of such a terrible storm before!

It was very difficult for those villages near the front or those on the routes through which the huge armies passed. They suffered many indignities both from the Austrians and from the Russians. The Moscali patrolled the villages both day and night and would capture whoever they found – women, young girls, and young boys and took them to dig trenches and defensive positions, or to build new roads to places far from the village. Some succeeded in escaping but the soldiers would simply find others to replace them and would haul them off to work.

During the time of the war, we would sometimes spend the Christmas or Easter period under Austrian occupation or sometimes under Moscali occupation- depending on the location of the front. Over the winter of 1916/1917 we spent the Christmas–New Year period under Moscali occupation – similarly for the Easter period in the spring of 1917. The village was full of Moscali soldiers - they were in our homes, our barns, in tents and in hay shelters - wherever they could shelter. At Easter all of them came to church. Those, who could not fit inside, stood outside in the churchyard. They all met and greeted each other with the greeting '*Christ is Risen'* – in Russian. When the priest came out of the church to bless the breads, they all removed their hats and the entire crowd stood with their heads uncovered. The Moscali were each given a piece of blessed bread. Before they ate the bread, they crossed themselves three times. That was how the Moscali were at that moment. Not much time would pass before there would be a tumultous moment in their lives - in that fall – in October of 1917 – would start the great revolution in their country.

(**TN:** The chapter ends at this point – fizzling out - with no real ending to the war story.)

## 2.10
# The Great Union of 1918 The moment of quiet victory in the history of the Romanian people

Every Romanian breathing in the subjugated provinces of Bucovina, Basarabia, and Ardeal desired and struggled for the realization of a union with Romania. For this grandiose ideal, many intellectuals and conscientious men from these Romanian provinces had labored for a long time. Basarabia had been subjugated under Russian rule since 1812, Bucovina had been a state occupied by Austria for almost a century and a half (since 1775) and Ardeal had suffered in the same way by occupation by Austro-Hungary. It was natural for these provinces to return to the motherland from whose breast they had been ripped during different epochs of history.

Basarabia was reunited with Romania on 09 April following the signing of the International Treaties at Chisinau. Besides the fact that this province had been ripped from the body of the motherland improperly by the Russians, the union became possible because the Soviet government had adopted on 15 September a 'Declaration of the Rights of People in Russia'. This declaration granted equality and independence for people in Russia and granted them the right of self-determination and freedom – even the possibility of separation and the possible formation of an independent state.

On 27 October 1918, the National Council of Romanians in Bucovina convened in Chernauti under the leadership of Iancu Flonder. This Council formulated the wishes of Bucovina to unite with Romania. Similarly, on 28 November 1918, the National Council of Romanians in Chernauti-Bucovina decided for the union of Bucovina with Romania. At Alba-Iulia on 01 December 1918, the Great National Assembly, representing 100,000 young Romanians from all the areas of Transylvania and Banat declared that there should be a union of these Romanians and the territory they occupied with Romania.

In the following discussion, we will concentrate mostly on Bucovina and more specifically the region around Chernauti where Voloca is located.

At the time WW I broke out in 1914, many of those living in Bucovina recognized that the momentum for union was on the rise. They crossed the front that existed between Bucovina and the 'old kingdom' to enroll in the Romanian army in order to fight against Austro-Hungary so as to expedite the liberation of Bucovina. The wished-for union became a fact in 1918 following the dismantling of the Austrian Empire. Through representations and various legal means, Bucovina decided to unite with the kingdom of Romania. This action was in accord with the wishes of the population of the province – an action whose results were appropriate since this was the will of the people and had been approved and prepared in an organized manner by Bucovinians. The population of Bucovina received this act with joy and enthusiasm.

Only someone who lived during this period and saw the union with their own eyes as well as the celebrations that the event triggered could understand the significance of the union and the gratefulness issuing from the souls of the people who were finally liberated from a foreign master. I have written these statements so that people will realize and recognize the sentiments of the oppressed people of Bucovina when the union happened.

Following the Great Union, there was a period of profound changes within Voloca. From being citizens of Austria, we became citizens of Romania. At the head of our nation we no longer had an Emperor but instead, a King. The official language was no longer German but our own language, Romanian. Our national capital was no longer in Vienna but was now in Bucharest. The nation's decisions were different and since Bucovina was now part of the Kingdom of Romania, the decisions were made by us together with the other provinces of Romania. The students in the school in Voloca no longer had to learn German – all activities were conducted in Romanian. The curriculum manuals for all the schools in Bucovina began to appear in Romanian. Similarly, old Austrian laws were slowly replaced by new Romanian ones. On holidays we did not say a prayer in church for the well-being of the Emperor in Vienna, but instead on behalf of the King in Bucharest. The colors of the emblems on the shoulders of the guards in Voloca were the colors of the flag of Romania. The flag was the Romanian Tri-Color which the Romanians in Bucovina had treated with great respect for many years even before the union. This flag had a deep significance because in their chests had always beaten the hearts of Romanians. Honor and pious homage should be paid to these modest and conscientious citizens of Voloca.

Having escaped the whirlpool of the war and now incorporated into the Romanian state along with the rest of Bucovina, the village of Voloca began to turn itself towards a new life – one that promised to be more beautiful and more flourishing. Some abuses, irregularities and unwanted interventions clouded parts of this magical union period and, after a period of time, they became part of the scene. It is certain the people had wished for and awaited patiently the union in the hope for improved public manners, decisions and openness. The song 'On our flag is written unity' written by Ciprian Porumbescu is known and sung with great enthusiasm and dedication in Voloca even now by the Arcasi choir, whose great patron was Domn Stefan Voda.

The union was sung about and celebrated in Voloca with much enthusiasm and joy. Some groups organized popular concerts ("serbari") with theatrical plays and songs that celebrated the importance of the union. Many "horas" written about the union, for example, "Hora Severinul", were sung so beautifully that one could but sit back and enjoy listening to them. Young intellectuals, students (both primary and senior), priests, and teachers from Bucovina - all of whom were involved in cultural societies in the village, reorganized the old groups to bring in the new culture. This served to cement the union that had so recently come about. The process occurred throughout Bucovina and in Voloca as well.

These were heady times because, finally, national sentiment and love for ones country could be practiced in everyday life. The most impressive performances and the best prepared ones were made at the schools. From these, one could see that the teaching of the ways of Bucovina, which had led to the fight for union and better

life, had not been forgotten and would soon be understood by all. These performances highlighted the fact that for over a century and a half Volocans had been separated from their brothers by foreign domination and had been unable to practice their customs. The unification of the territories and administrations, the unification of the governing systems, of the teaching systems, etc. were needed to rid everyone of the lasting hardships of the past. There was much that remained to be done - but all of it required time.

Also requiring repair were the effects of the recent war which left much sorrow and scarcities, much destruction, and many deaths. It is a fact that time heals wounds. Soon people began to rebuild the wreckage caused by the war and to look towards a new life with a better future. Through persevering work they began to remake their lives.

After all the commotion surrounding the end of the war and the Union had eased and people were a little more relaxed, the village of Voloca began to raise itself up and to progress from all points of view; it began a true re-flowering. The husbands and young men who had returned from the war began to rebuild the ruined houses – in some cases repairing the old structures, in others constructing new ones. They also had to rebuild fences around the households. Often they made these using barbed wire left by the Austrian army that could be found almost everywhere. Few remade their fences in the old customs using saplings simply because the saplings were needed for firewood. Some set to work repairing bridges and roads which were often in a bad state of repair. Materials and labor were easily found but the means for transport were scarce – few wagons or horses existed. This was because of the long-lasting nature of the war. Throughout the village one could find a few cattle but horses were entirely absent. There was no question of using automobiles or trucks. Even the army, except for rare cases, did not have these things. Cars were not to appear until much later but horses, or in some cases, oxen, began to appear before too long.

Within a few years people began to acquire cattle, sheep and horses with which they could work the land into better growing conditions and to again look to a life of plenty and prosperity. A number of years of good harvests followed and put an end to the shortages of food. People again began to celebrate weddings, dances and gatherings just as they had in the earlier, good days of peace.

The school was restored and then re-organized to follow a new program of learning. It functioned in the Romanian language and the books were Romanian. On the walls of the classroom one could see displayed the map of a united Romania where not so long ago had been displayed the map of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The teachers, in many cases men returned home from the front, were inspired with a love of the country and of the nation of people. They dedicated their beings and souls to the schools to increase knowledge and literacy. In particular, they wanted the students to learn the history of their motherland, a united Romania, instead of the history of the old empire.

During these incomparable years of nationalism and patriotism, I began my primary schooling in Voloca. I recall this period of school and the teachers. We spoke with such great enthusiasm about our new country, a

united and whole Romania, that at times one could see tears of joy on faces. Many things were missing for the new scholars and even the school was not refurbished very well because much had been greatly damaged or lost during the period of the war. During the conduct of the war, the school had served as the command center for large military operations. Nevertheless, at the time we went to school with joy and considered ourselves blessed that we could be taught in the Romanian language. After classes, almost every day we sang the song of union "Hora Severinul", 'Before our Flag', or the 'Tri-Color' flag anthem.

On some occasions we would produce school concerts to which our parents, siblings and relatives were invited. There existed a holiday-like atmosphere for these with an enthusiasm that is hard to describe and is hard to understand by those who did not live during that heady period immediately following the union.

Church representatives, parish priests and other clergy took part in these cultural events. Some priests from Voloca put a great deal of effort into the subject of culture and from these we need cite as the most active, Priest Gheorghe Velehorschi. He expanded a rich area of activity into the founding of the Arcasul Society. During that period, the schools and the church worked hand-in-hand to raise the level of culture and education in the youth. While the teachers worried about the scholastic part of life for the scholars and youth, the church occupied itself with the moral education. Hours of religious study were held in the school – in addition lessons were given at the church, in some cases lessons developed especially for the young.

On Sundays or major holidays, the children would take turns to go to church, led by their teachers. It was a custom in these days for the intellectuals in the village, and especially the teachers, to become involved in the spread of culture in its various national forms. Their ideals were to spread the light of knowledge into the population. It can readily be stated that the intellectuals brought true enlightenment to the villagers.

In many villages there were hard-working priests who would work with the teachers to help raise the status of the rural population from the backward state in which some found themselves. Note what a degree of success eventually followed for those who sought to explain the topics of culture and civilization even to the rural population of Bucovina. These elite countrymen of Bucovina were typified by an illustrious teacher of the past, Vasile Vasiliu. They were important for their hard work, their intelligence and their foresight.

In our parts of the country teachers worked with the children and the school, both of whom they served all of their lives with understanding and devotion. In a similar manner, the priests served in the churches, preaching to people Christian morality with great love and giving them examples from which they could learn.

Great was my feeling of bitterness and of having being deceived when I heard that a priest in the village of Oltenia moonlighted as a mill operator while the teacher also worked at raising pigs for the export market. Certainly there were very few who did such things but the cultural levels were being overlooked in Oltenia by these telling examples. Their intellectuals were not driven by a desire to raise the villagers from the darkness in which they were living. These examples did not say much about the cultural levels in that village.

The majority of the teaching profession in Bucovina were dedicated body and soul to the schools. They worked intently both for spreading knowledge to the villagers as well as for promoting Romanian culture and a sense of nationalism. In general, these teachers were modest men who had no thoughts of becoming rich. They were dedicated to their task of awakening a national conscience, highlighting by glowing examples all that was Romanian, particularly the Romanian language, dress and customs of our ancestors. These teachers were the people who founded the cultural clubs or societies in the villages as well as the choirs – activities that they felt were necessary and which resulted in brilliant successes.

The celebratory programs that had first been organized during the rule of the Habsburgs were well prepared. Care was taken earlier that these events did not ruffle the feathers of the Austrian authorities. The names of the cultural societies and their stated scopes of activities were so selected so as to appear inoffensive and so that they did not attract the attention of the Austrian rulers. The Arcasal Society was claimed to be an organization for extinguishing fires in the village.  In other words, this was a society formed by volunteer firefighters. In some ways, the society did prepare for this role and in addition could help out in the case of a flood or of a disorder threatened by troublemakers. On other occasions, they would assist in the construction of village projects of public interest. They never, however, lost sight of their real true purpose for which they were founded nor of the people that they had pledged to serve.

## Wrongdoings and abuses from which one can learn lessons for the future

It is a well established fact that Bucovina, this Romanian province, requested to join the Kingdom of Romania and did not become part because it had been defeated by an army. Thus, Bucovina should not be considered as a conquered territory which was occupied by force. Some politicians from the ‘old kingdom’, however, chose to treat Bucovina as a conquered area. The union had been nothing but a union of Romanians and was viewed as such but outsiders. However, some of those who came from the capital, sent by the government in Bucharest, conducted themselves in Bucovina as if the local population were part of a conquered territory – or even worse, as members of a colony, as one official claimed.

The government in Bucharest did not recognize the intelligence of the citizens of Bucovina and placed in all positions of power and responsibility people from the old kingdom who had no knowledge of the laws, habits and ways of life of the people of Bucovina. Furthermore, many of them came with mannerisms and habits that were foreign to the population of Bucovina. It was a serious error on the part of the authorities in Bucharest to send, as leaders in the province, unprepared and unneeded people who created many hostilities and complicated the civil order in the province. In addition, many of these officials began to take unlawful liberties with regulations and began unpleasant abuses, compromising themselves and those who had sent them to administer the provinces affairs.

If one of the locals dared to protest against the overstepping or abuse of these officials, they would be accused to their faces of being a communist, a Bolshevik, or rebels who were out to harm the country and to break the laws of society. Because of these methods, many innocent people were forced to suffer undeserved sanctions, imprisonment, fines and in some cases, beatings.

These abusive and improper functionaries had the ugly habits of cursing at people on numerous occasions and even more ugly, of branding the people with expressions more foul than they had ever heard in their lives. Truly, the situation was made much worse by the behavior of these officials with their oaths, curses without match, and by their disgust. Soon the population all began to ask themselves - "How long must this situation exist with such discomfort and unpleasantness?". After a time the abuses and irregularities became so widespread that they were obvious to all. The population began to look for corrective intervention by higher authorities. A long time was to pass, however, before the situation was rectified.

The abuses occurred in the towns as well, but were more common in the villages where the population did not as fully understand the new laws that had been introduced because many were illiterate. The rural population neither realized the rights they had nor the limits of the power of the functionaries. Because of this situation, the villagers were cheated, exploited and intimidated.

In the villages the local police or "jandarms" were the people responsible for many of the abuses. If someone sought to vindicate themselves and tried to prove their innocence, or if they sought for a reckoning for the wrongs of which they were being accused, they were immediately threatened with a whip and were, in addition, often hit with an additional rain of charges of wrongdoing. The police station "Chief", who had been sent from the 'old kingdom', treated the people poorly – sometimes walking among them and hitting them with his baton. The Chiefs considered themselves to be the absolute authorities within the villages. They believed that they should be the ones to issue orders to all the village functionaries, the Mayors, the priests, teachers, etc. These pretensions were not justified but, in the rural regions, the people of Bucovina did not understand the procedures of the Romanians of the south.

If someone was on the roads after nine at night, he would be escorted to the police post and would be forced to do all sorts of chores (cutting wood, washing floors, etc.). Often after this, he would also be arrested. If the person protested in any way, he was, more often than not, beaten. If the Chief heard a noisy gathering somewhere he would proceed there in person and march the riotous people back to the post under the pretext of calming the public situation – a practice not allowed in law. Similarly, if the Chief saw a free-running dog that somehow had escaped his chains, he quickly summoned the owner and threatened him, claiming that he had committed a crime.

To escape the consequences, people did what they had to and made payments, perhaps not directly to the Chief, but instead to his wife or other intermediaries. Thus, with these small forms of harassment and the payments made to avoid actions from them, many Chiefs ended up very well off financially. It is not hard to find reasons

why these people were avoided, nor why people would not look for help from the police very often. Often the police found people guilty simply because they refused to act like ‘logs in a pile’.

In our village, the police Chief was Gheorghe Barsan. He liked to be involved in every occurrence. Because of his involvement, after some time he became quite wealthy and built up a fairly substantial estate. He came to the village as a very poor man with only his pistol and a greatcoat but when the time came for him to leave for another part of the judicial district, his riches were so great that he required two large wagons to hold all of his goods.

As was common in Bucovina, the people in our village were generally honest, peaceful and calm. Being also good householders, they took good care of their own affairs and did not interfere in the affairs of others, as should be the case of good and settled neighbors. It was rare that there would arise a significant conflict between them – one possible exception being the rivalry between youths at a wedding or a dance. Thus, the Chief generally had few problems. Nevertheless, he would sometimes find someone who had committed some offense after having drunk too much or someone who had done some public nuisance. The Chief then took the opportunity to ‘fleece’ the offender very well.

Often the Chief would try to apprehend bush workers and would look for reasons to ‘squeeze’ them as well. These were workers in the forest who eked out an existence cutting trees and producing wood for the Chernauti-based, Administration of the Church Foundation of Bucovina. These workers knew how to craft different household tools out of wood such as hayforks, scythes, rakes and rake handles, flails, rope winders, chicken cages, sleds, etc. For the hard work that they put in during the day, they were allowed to take, in the evening when they went home. some pieces of wood with which they could warm their homes or, if the piece was good enough, from which they could craft one of the tools listed above. The taking of this wood was done with the permission and knowledge of the forestry officials.

When the Chief met one of these workers returning home at night, he would accuse him of theft. In order not to be marched off down the road and have to endure who-knows-what difficulties, the workers would go to see the wife of the Chief and they would make some arrangement with her so that the account might be settled. Otherwise, the Chief would not let the theft accusation drop and would proceed further with it. They needed to make some arrangement so that the ‘offence’ would be forgiven and the affair would end. Since in our village there were many of these woods workers who were also good carpenters, coopers and wheelwrights, the Chief was able to find many of them on whom he could put the ‘squeeze’.

When Gheorghe Barsan came to our village as Chief of the police post, there were already two officers there who were Sergeants. They were also Romanians but from Bucovina. Before Barsan arrived they had quietly maintained order and decorum in the village very successfully. When the new Chief arrived, he tried very hard and finally succeeded in getting them moved to new postings under various pretexts. He wanted to have the village to himself and to do whatever he desired. He made life so miserable for these two Sergeants that, in the

end, they gave notice to quit stating that they did not want to work with Gheorghe Barsan. One of the two was moved to work an as office secretary in the Police Division Office in Chernauti while the other was appointed as Police Chief in a village in northern Bucovina. Neither the remaining Corporal nor the rank-and-file ever dared to complain to the Chief. They obeyed his orders blindly. While the Sergeants were still around, there had been some hope. This faint hope faded, however, when they were relocated.

Immediately after the war, husbands and sons who had fought during the war on various fronts, began to return home. They returned dressed in army uniforms since they had long ago lost the clothes they had worn when they first entered the army and no one knew where they might be after that length of time. Many of those who returned had been taken as prisoners in Italy or other foreign countries both to the east and the west. Hence, they wore military uniforms of many different kinds. Those returning from Austria wore different clothes from those from Italy or England or the USA and these in turn were different from those from Russia or France or from countries even further away. For these reasons, one could see many uniforms of different types on the demobilized combatants returning to Voloca. Most of these military uniforms were not new but were instead well worn. Some in fact were in very poor condition while others were in better repair.

Those returnees who could find some useful clothes at home, used them and abandoned their uniforms. Others often could not often even find the houses, which they had left, anymore. They continued to wear their military clothing because they had nothing else. We need to remind people that the fighting front moved through Voloca three times during the course of the war and that many parts of the village were left wrecked and abandoned. On three separate occasions, the attacking troops of Czar Nicholas II poured through the village forcing the Austrian army to retreat. All these soldiers needed food for themselves and for their horses. They commandeered everything they could get their hands on. The rules of war are bitter and there is little room for mercy or charity.

There were cases where from some houses the father and sons, or just the sons, left home never to return. In some cases one of them might have returned only to find no one left and nothing but the damaged area where their house had existed. The mother had died or had been killed and the empty house would have been burned or destroyed. There was great poverty and shortage during that time. There were no battles directly in the village, but only nearby. Nevertheless, the village fully endured the misery and horror of the war. These things I myself observed and endured.

Some of the villagers from Voloca who had fought on the Austro-Italian front had fallen as prisoners in Italy. When they returned after the end of the war, they returned wearing good quality clothing. They had been awarded this clothing to use freely and to wear for as long as it lasted. Among those prisoners returning from Italy were Ioan and Toader, sons of Toderesei Salahor. The Police Chief from Voloca met these men when they returned and admired greatly the greatcoats they had been given and were wearing. Meeting again on a second occasion, Chief Barsan asked Ioan Salahor if he would sell him his greatcoat. Ioan smiled and replied that he had decided not to sell it. The Chief made no response but continued on his way. After some short time

however, the Chief summoned Ioan Salahor to the police post under the pretext that they had some question to resolve. Knowing he was not guilty of any offences, Ioan went to the station. There, the Chief, after a short conversation, told Ioan Salahor that he would have to give up his coat because he did not have the right to wear it. Ioan now understood why he had been summoned and that the Chief had his eyes on his coat and would not leave him in peace. Nevertheless, he said he was not going to give the greatcoat he had been given by the Italians to the Chief. Barsan then became infuriated and struck Ioan on the side of his head with his fist. Ioan, who then considered responding in kind for this unjustified attack, noticed that the Chief was reaching for a cattle whip which he had laid on the table for the purpose of beating Ioan. Ioan was young, strong and in good physical condition. There is no question but that he would have defeated the Chief in a fight, but he was afraid of the consequences. Instead, he shouted out with all his might- "Help me, dear people, because the Chief is trying to kill me!"

It just so happened that at precisely that moment two villagers who had also recently returned home from foreign prison camps, were passing by the police post. Hearing the loud cry for help, they entered the office in the station to see what was going on. At the same time, alarmed also by the shout from the office, the wife of the Chief burst in like a tornado. She was a husky, imposing woman with more common sense than her husband. She was able to settle the Chief down quickly with great ease. It was immediately evident that she had a great influence on the Chief and that he respected her power. The set-to ended without any consequences because of the intervention of Bursan's wife and also probably because of the presence of the other two villagers who just happened to be passing by. Ioan Salahor retained his coat and was able to wear it in good health elsewhere. He did, however, take care not to cross paths with the Chief again. This event quickly convinced Ioan to leave the village. He moved to Chernauti where he trained as a vehicle driver and later, after his training was complete, got a job there.

The Chief, Gheorghe Barsan, continued with his abuses and transgressions until, in the end, the people made a petition to the Commanding Officer of the district. Since the Chief had also harassed the Mayor, the latter reported the problems to the District Prefect. Following an investigation, it was decided that the Chief would be moved from Voloca to a new village near the banks of the Nistru River. He found it very difficult to leave Voloca because financially things had gone very well for him. He had acquired a horse, a wagon, a cow, pigs, many fowl, wood, fodder, much furniture and other property. He wanted to continue in his position in the village but the people would not allow it. All things have an end and when he left, he was well gone – he never did return. He had lived in the village for almost ten years.

Not long after the union, two regiments of infantry were stationed in Bucovina. One was based in Chernauti – Regiment 113, the Coman Swordsmen while the other was based in Suceava – Regiment 114, the Luca Arbore Regiment. Young men of Bucovina, 21 years of age or older, were conscripted into these two regiments. Many of these had already served for 2-3 years on the Austrian front. Nevertheless, they were forced into service again as part of the Romanian army. They took everyone except those who had lost an arm or a leg or those with obvious major injuries. There were numerous injustices made on this occasion because the military took all

the youths without exception for this military service. One case of abuse, for example, was that of Simion, son of Ioan Dohie, who had been blind all his life – a fact well known by all. He was nevertheless forced into service and was only released with difficulty after several months of misery and mistreatment. The military claimed that he was just pretending that he could not see.

When the young recruits arrived at their regiments they were given terrible uniforms – mostly they were old and torn and often very tattered. Many of these men, when they had served in the Austrian army, had been issued proper uniforms in good condition. The uniforms they were now forced to wear left them with a bad impression. It was difficult to wear such poor attire and yet participate in training – but that was not the worst problem. The scarcity of food was severe as well. The food, in addition to being scarce, was terrible. The fault was in the command structure of the military which paid little heed to the needs of the soldiers.

(**TN:** I could not determine the full ranking system within the Romanian army of ~1920. The recruits were supervised, and as we will read, severely abused by the sadistic "gradati", who appear to be the first-rank officers of the NCO's. For lack of a better equivalent rank designation we will use the word "gradati" in the translation.)

In addition to the shortages and difficulties, there was the general state of chaos and stupidity that existed in the Romanian army at that time. The non-commissioned officers, the "gradati", and many of the officers treated the recruits terribly. For that reason, the youth were filled with dread when the time came for them to go into service. They would have preferred to die rather than be forced to join the military. For those who had already served in the war and had suffered greatly at the front serving Austria, the Romanian military seemed like a burden that was just overwhelming. Some of the training corps from Regiment 113 would beat the recruits like a farmer would beat his sheaves of hay. For the very smallest of errors, the recruits would be beaten by the "gradati" and the sergeants. Often they would force them to strip and would beat them while naked – on these occasions they would administer 25-50 strokes. One "gradati" would stand on each side of the recruit. The recruit would be laid prone or placed with his head on a chair. He would then be beaten with a belt, a sapling, or pieces of rope – the latter often being soaked in water to make them heavier and to cause more damage. Those "gradati" who were assigned to count the number of strikes would purposely make errors in favor of the beaters and the beating would continue often with both men lashing out at the same time. Often the recruit being beaten would faint because of his pain or the wounds on his cracked, open back, or would not be able to drag himself up off the floor. Then the "gradati" would simply throw a bucket of cold water on him. Many recruits were beaten until they were bleeding by the "gradati" or the Sergeants. This is how the Romanian military was when the country was controlled by the landlords and the bankers.

The number of methods used to make life miserable for the recruits is beyond count. The "gradati" invented ever more mean tricks and unfair practices with which they sought to make the lives of the recruits a hell. They watched at every moment for reasons and motives for which they could beat the recruits – this would happen almost every night.

The recruits would enter the sleeping quarters after nine in the evening – after the alarm had been sounded. They were required to wash their feet outside first – be it winter or summer. Since their boots were generally badly torn, when they entered, their feet would still be rather grimy. This was an excuse for them to be beaten on the soles of their bare feet with belts. When one of the "gradati" felt that the boots had not been set out exactly in line or that they had not been polished to a degree sufficient for the Sergeant to use them as a mirror to see the state of his mustache, again the belt was administered. It never bothered the Sergeant that with all the patches on the boots one could not find an area large enough to allow a smooth surface.

Sometimes the "gradati" would do a clothing inspection and would check to see that the recruits had dusted off and cleaned their coats. One "gradati" would do the inspection as he followed a second who, with his cigarette, dropped ashes on the clothes. Clearly the inspecting one found 'dust' on the clothes – the belts again came down on the backs of the recruits.

Sometimes the "gradati" would cut the buttons off the coats and vests of the recruits while they were in their exhausted sleep. Then, in the morning, the "gradati" would return to do an inspection of equipment of the recruits to ensure their attire was in proper condition for inspection by the Sergeant. Not surprisingly, they were able to find some uniforms that were missing buttons, and the recruits, being therefore negligent, were again administered a beating. Since they could not go onto the training field with their clothing flapping open, the recruits were forced to buy buttons and sew them on immediately. And who would you believe had extra buttons for sale? Why, of course – the Sergeants and the Corporals! These techniques were used by the "gradati" as a means to earn some money which they could use to buy cigarettes and stamps or to fund a few drinks they wanted to enjoy.

On other occasions, in the middle of the night, the recruits were awoken and lined up along the edges of their beds. They were told that someone had stolen a cooking pot from the mess and that there was going to be a search for it to find the thief. Even if the 'stolen' pot was not found, the recruits had a price to pay. Obviously, the 'expensive' pot had to be replaced – they all had to make a contribution towards its replacement.

When the time came for the soldiers to be paid, little joy came down to the recruits. New brooms were needed for the dormitory and – oh yes – more coal oil and paper for the office – and the supply of whitewash was very low, etc. None of these 'essential' items were included in the budget that had been received and hence they needed 'donations' from the recruits. In addition, if a recruit were to receive some money from home, once again he benefited little because if he did not share this with the "gradati" he was obviously a self-centered and greedy person. Every one knew that you had to keep on the good side of the "gradati" – but also that their memories of past support were very short.

The recruits were maltreated not only in the barracks, but also on the training fields outdoors. If the recruit made a mistake or even if the "gradati" said he had made a mistake, then they would be pushed to exhaustion

with severe exercise. 'Up', 'Down', 'Quick Step', 'Prone Position', 'Attention' – the sequence continued at a great pace until exhaustion set in. If a recruit could no longer keep up with the pace then while he lay prone, he would be kicked and trampled on without mercy. This type of behavior was practiced sometimes by the ranks up to Major or other senior officers.

There were cases where civilians passing by the training fields would see these maltreatments. Seeing these things, they would strongly complain to those committing these condemnable acts. The protests did little to help – the military shouted back at them and accused them of being a bunch of communist and Bolshevik trespassers. This is how the new regime treated many people in Bucovina and Basarabia. They were always accused of subversive activities by the central authorities who placed no trust in them.

Some of you will feel that there is some stretching of the truth in these stories, but in that regard, I assure you that they are completely true. In fact, I have neglected to list all the abuses that were practiced and used to make the recruits miserable. It is absolutely amazing that the senior command in the army and in particular, the Commander of the Regiment, somehow permitted this to happen to the recruits. Did they indeed not know what was going on in the barracks? Did they think that the maltreatments were simply inoffensive rituals or military pranks? In any case, the officers were responsible for this miserable treatment which should never exist in the military. Fully understood, the military is the military, but trampling others underfoot and causing deep misery serves no purpose for anyone. These ways served to destroy many people and resulted in grave consequences, as we shall see later.

The population of Bucovina in the region between the Prut and the Nistru rivers was of mixed nationalities. Many people originally of Ukrainian (Ruthenian) ancestry lived there and among them one also found many Poles, Germans and Jews. In many of these villages the Ukrainian language was used. The number of those who understood Romanian was small. These areas were also included in the Union. The youth in these areas, since they did not generally understand Romanian, had a more difficult time understanding the ideas and regulations included in the school instruction. Because of this, they encountered some significant difficulties. Often they were insulted or beaten without being guilty of anything. This unacceptable treatment did not occur in our region because most of our population consisted of good people and were Romanians. Even in the villages in our area, the newly-installed authorities, and especially the heads of police, did not behave properly. Brutalities and abuses in plenty occurred here as well. All of these things which follow generally remained unknown to the larger population of Romania.

Among the citizens of the towns discussed above were many displaced Romanians who had lost their language, often because, in their particular village, they formed too small a minority and they had become assimilated into the Ukrainian majority. They still had Romanian names such as Frunza, Mihalcean or Capita, but they knew no Romanian at all, having lived for an extended period among the Ukrainians. Others lost not only their language but even their names, which over time had been changed. The new Romanian authorities had to untangle all of these changes to make sense of this complex situation.

During the period that the Upper Region of Moldova had been under the occupation of Austria, the population of the region was subjected in a systematic manner to become "denationalized". These steps taken by the Austrian government resulted in a weakening of the Romanian nationalistic feelings and made it less important in the new province. Therefore the citizens and, in particular the youth, who were now incorporated into the new province had little in the way of an urge to learn Romanian. When the young men from this region, who were conscripted to do their military duty, made a mistake or did not understand something, they were labeled as communists or Bolsheviks and they were beaten because they did not understand Romanian. They spoke the language they had learned in their youth at home and in many cases also knew German which they had learned during their military service for Austria or during the years of the war when they were on the front. And the persons who were administering these punishments were the "gradati", the Corporals, the Sergeants and the Majors from the 'old kingdom'. Through their heartless ways they tried to humiliate and victimize the soldiers by mocking their appearance, their vocabulary and their comportment.

Many of the "gradati" appeared to be gypsies. The fault was not only theirs but also all who lacked culture and education. The main fault lay with the officers and commanders who had the obligation to learn that they were performing these stupidities. Their attitudes of condemnable neglect and their incompetence harmed many in the military and damaged badly the spirit of the minority populations in Bucovina in the villages near where they were stationed.

How can it be that the officers did not show more concern for the lives of their soldiers, in the ways that they lived, how they were fed or how they were treated? It appears they just did not care. To them, the soldiers simple consisted of a crowd of people who in time of peace had to be set to labor and it a time of war had to fight and die on behalf of the rich. Who were these officers and where did they come from? Almost all of them were the sons of large landowners, estate holders or bankers. This was the reason.

The only concerns of the senior officers related to obtaining the most-elegant, most-decorated and most-expensive uniforms for themselves. Some of their uniforms were so showy and exaggerated that, when they were dressed in them, one might think they were officers in an opera. This was during a time when the uniforms of the soldiers as well as their footwear, were in a deplorable state. Insufficiently dressed, poorly fed and woefully treated, these soldiers suffered this regime very heavily and sacrificed their lives. Only the Jews fared better because they started off materially better and often ended up as instructors. They knew how to work their way around the Majors in order not to have to suffer the miseries endured by the others.

The following event occurred one night in December 1919. The soldiers of Regiment 113 from Chernauti revolted. The broke into the arms magazine and armed themselves with the arms and munitions they found there. They then locked the "gradati" present in the barracks in a cell and fled the barracks. Throughout the town, people began to hear shooting. Since it was night time, people did not know what was happening and many feared that the war had started up again. Not all the soldiers took part in the uprising. Some had remained

in the barracks while others ran to the homes of regimental officers to let them know what had occurred. Nevertheless, the number who escaped the barracks armed was greater than those who stayed. The numbers of Ukrainians and Romanians from Bucovina in the rebels were about equal. Most of the Romanians headed quickly for their homes, most likely to try to find some food. They then headed for the forest where they found various secret places and hid. Some were from villages in the immediate vicinity of Chernauti while others were from other parts, much further away from the town. The soldiers of Ukrainian origin fled across the Prut River and hid in the Vijnitei Forest or near the Ceremus River. Still others crossed the border and fled to Galacia. Among the Romanian soldiers from Bucovina who had rebelled, other than those from the Chernauti District, there were some from the Districts of Suceava, Campulung, Radauti, and Gura Humorul as well as other locations. The rest of these had the intention to flee towards their native areas, to their homes. However, when they reached the Siret River, they were met with gunfire and machineguns. What had happened?

The border guards from Suceava with the infantry from Regiment 14 had been placed in a state of alarm and these soldiers, armed as if for war, were sent towards the Siret. They were told that some invading Bolsheviks from Chernauti were on the loose and that if they approached the Siret and tried to cross the border, they should shoot them. A paradoxical situation then occurred – men from Bucovina shooting at each other, brother shooting brother. The armed soldiers from Chernauti, armed as if for war, retreated. There were fewer of them and they were in scattered groups. They began to consider returning to their home base. Those Romanian soldiers originally from southern Bucovina, realizing the situation, retreated and hid in the Cozmin Forest. Many could not, however, remain there because it was winter time and very cold weather and they had no food. In addition, they were being hunted by units of the police. Therefore, some returned voluntarily to the barracks while others were caught and were hauled back.

There were still some who were unwilling to return voluntarily and who had avoided capture. These retreated and hid in secret, rarely-traveled and inaccessible places. From there they came out at night to the main road that ties Siret to Chernauti and robbed the traffic consisting of cars and goods trucks that passed by. Attacks during the day were rare. There were other escapades made by these fugitive soldiers who hid throughout the Cozmin Forest. People began to refer to them as the ‘outlaws of the woods’. There were stories also of similar groups in the forests near Campulung, Vijnitei and Ciudeul. Nothing more was ever heard about those who succeeded in crossing the northern border. This hazardous and confused state of affairs could not last for too long. It was necessary to restore order and to correct the situation.

Rigorous methods were introduced to capture all the fugitive soldiers so as to hold trials to punish the guilty. The military began a careful search through the village and the woods aimed at capturing the fugitives. They began to put pressure also on the families whose sons had fled. The persecution of the parents was relentless instead of that of the fugitive sons. As if they had done anything! Not only had these poor people barely survived the world war under Austrian rule when they suffered many hardships with their sons, now, after the Union, another set of hardships were piled on their heads.

Why did this revolt occur – who instigated it and against whom? Who was the guilty party? We will respond to these questions later. First we will look at how the events unfolded, the trials and the results of them. Search patrols consisting of police and soldiers were formed and sent to search for the fugitives. This procedure taken lasted many months. The first searches were conducted at their parents' homes, and if they were not there, then the parents suffered in each case. They were accused of knowing where the fugitives were hiding and not admitting it. The searchers would overturn all of the households as well, often, as well as those of the neighbors. It was a terrible time for the poor parents who suffered greatly and needlessly because of their sons, about whose whereabouts they knew nothing. Most often they did not even know if they would ever see them again.

The military thoroughly searched the villages, the woods and the hiding places and, in the end, they captured almost all of the rebelling soldiers except for those who had succeeded in fleeing further away or those who had crossed the borders. Those captured were severely beaten, then were led back to the regiment with their hands tied behind their backs. **(TN:** The order in which sentences of these two paragraphs are given is different from the original – the original was very confusing.)

The captured soldiers were now in a very serious situation. Some claimed that originally they had wooden, and later iron, collars put around their necks. They were treated with great bitterness and suffered many indignations. Through the villages, a state of unrest set in. As soon as those who were captured had been returned to the barracks, they were beaten, and maltreated as if they were animals. They were put to hard labor and tortured from the beginning. This is how they were questioned. From these methods, one captive went out of his mind while another ending up dying.

Teodor Hrib from the village of Arbor, Sergeant of the unit at the time of the revolt reported "Some officers and "gradati" from the Romanian army dispensed extreme cruelties for the very least of offenses. When these offences were at their worst, I felt that it was my duty to report them to the Regiment Commander – but he took no steps to correct them". "Those who were caught and brought back suffered a treatment that was worse than these and it was horrifying. The things that I saw at that time horrified me. This lost revolt was repaid for by a hundred years of condemned life and another hundred years of imprisonment as well as thousands of beatings. No one however asked the question of why they had deserted – what had been the trigger? My feeling is that they should also have applied these measures first against those guilty parties who brought the situation to a need for desertion." (Toader Hrib –The Arbore Cronicle, Edition II, May/June 1972).

The poor soldiers had survived at the Austrian front, where they had fought for two or three years and then they had returned exhausted to their homes. They ended up being killed by their fellow Romanians whom they considered their liberators. They were better off under the German rule during the Austrian period. Even during that period the people of Bucovina did not have to endure such suffering and humiliation. It had been such a terrible disappointment!

The captured fugitives were kept imprisoned under severe guard to make certain none escaped and communicated with anyone. No one had the right to visit them nor to bring them some food. They were kept that way all winter with only one meal a day – and they continued to be beaten. Some ended up looking like skeletons.

What blame can be laid on these unfortunate victims? All these unfortunates asked for was nothing more than humane respect and treatment from the "gradati" and the officers. Each one would have fulfilled his duty of service to the Romanian military as they had already done under a foreign master, the Austrian army. It was only because their liberating brothers had lost all signs of humane treatment, friendship and brotherhood. This was the source of all the trouble and misfortunes.

During this period of history other nations had also been liberated from the rule of the Austrian Empire and had rejoined to form countries. Not one of them, however, went through the stupidity that occurred here.

None of the parents of these poor soldiers were able to assist their sons. They hoped that they might somehow assist to help them escape their misery and somehow ease their troubles. They came up with the idea of going, as a group, to the Minister of Bucovina, who was situated in Chernauti, and to petition him to intervene on their behalf in Bucharest over this issue. No sooner said than done. One appropriate day a group of parents gathered and left the village to petition the Minister. The Minister received them and listened to them with intense attention. Some of the group called out together as one voice that they would have been happier if their sons had been killed at the front than to be thus tormented and tortured.

The Minister immediately intervened on their behalf in Bucharest and the situation did improve somewhat with a decrease in the number of tortures. Nevertheless, beatings and misery did continue because that was the custom in the army. The questioning of the soldiers continued a long time. The methods used were inhuman and flagrantly against the law. Those who were considered to be organizers of the revolt faced a Court Martial that sentenced them to many years of imprisonment. Some others received shorter sentences. In the end, even those soldiers who did not run off did not enjoy a good record. When they were later transferred to other regiments, they were received poorly overall, set to work doing unpleasant tasks and considered to be communists or rebels.

During the questioning, the fugitives were asked why they had rebelled. Their united responses were – "because of the beatings and the misery placed on us by the "gradati" and Majors". These responses did not please the questioners – this suggested that they, themselves, were responsible for the situation. They felt it essential to put the blame solely on the fugitives and stated that the rebels had in fact instigated an uprising against the state and that some had rebelled for the purpose of separation from Romania. This is how the Court Martial was conducted – the soldiers who rebelled were found guilty and for this reason they had to be punished. A simple closed case!

The following spring, the 113th Infantry Regiment based in Chernauti was moved to Botosani into a barracks with thick bars on the windows, a parade ground surrounded by barbed wire fences and many guarded watch-posts. On the grounds of this barracks, the military training of the 113th regiment continued. In that following summer, it was announced that the King would be visiting Botosani and other nearby towns. Preparations were made for the occasion, included an inspection review of the troops. Soldiers from the 113th Regiment were also assembled for this review. They appeared normal except that they were missing their guns and belts. This came to the attention of the King and he asked one of the adjutants the reason. He was given the requested explanation, or at least the official version of the decisions of the Court Martial Proceedings of the event. Not long after that, an order was issued by the Ministry of the Military in Bucharest to disband the 113th Chernauti Regiment as well as the 114th Suceava regiment. Soldiers from these two regiments were reassigned to other regiments across the country.

From the time of the rebellion in December until the reassignment of the soldiers to other regiments, almost a year had passed. This time was not credited to their service period and, in addition, their training was regarded as having to start anew. Including the time put into service for Austria and that for Romania, some of these soldiers had to serve 5-6 years. This was very long and difficult – but those who were condemned to many years of imprisonment were much worse off.

If the soldiers of the 113th Regiment had been able to appear as a group in front of the Commander of the Regiment without their arms and voice their complaints, maybe the situation would not have developed as it had.

Around this same time, or maybe slightly before, some financial irregularities began to appear in Bucovina. Financial agents, appointed to collect the "birurile" (taxes) from people were discovered to be behaving improperly. Some of them were receiving the money but were not giving back receipts on the date they received the money because they claimed they did not have the receipt books with them. They would find naïve people who would agree to give them money without a receipt. After a while, the agents would pretend they had forgotten to collect the tax and came around again to the people's houses for money. Still others would give the payees a receipt consisting of a piece of valueless paper, which they would promise to replace with a proper receipt from the office later. The person would pay his bill but received no record of it in return. This money did not go to the states' coffers, but instead went into the pockets of the corrupt agents. Since the receipt had no value, the people had to pay the bills again. This practice was used in particular on women and on older people who did not know how to read.

It might happen that someone had forgotten that they had paid or how much they had paid, and accepted the problem as being their error, especially when they now received a reminder that they still owed money. After a time, the collectors would appear again and claim that they still had a portion to pay and that if they did not, they would have their properties impounded. If someone lost their receipt and could not show it to an inspector, once again they were forced to pay. There were very many different cunning and unsavory methods that were

used to cheat people and many were confused and frightened by the pestering techniques of the collectors. After a time these abuses became obvious to those they were taking advantage of – the public began to complain and protest. There was an inquiry and much fraud was exposed. In the end, the procedure found the guilty ones and they were sent to prison. Furthermore, their properties were confiscated since the state had lost many funds. The victims of the frauds, however, ended up the losers. The payments made without receipts and those receipts that were false or improper ones, were not recognized as legal and those cheated had to pay again.

The number of people cheated or hoodwinked by these crooked collectors was fairly large. This was so mainly because the public never suspected that such a group of improper officials could possibly exist. Something like this had never occurred in the past. For this reason, the overall losses were quite large.

Mosi was located several kilometers north-west of Chernauti. The School Director appointed for the elementary school there was a man named Emilian Vasilescu. He came to Mosi from somewhere in the 'old kingdom'. The village population was of mixed ethnic origins – with the largest group being Ruthenians (Ukrainians). They were followed in number by Romanians, Germans and Poles. Most of the villagers were workers at the sugar plant at Jucica or were engaged at other enterprises in the town. The children of these workers attended the school in Mosi - in general they were diligent in studies and well behaved.

The School Director, Emilian Vasilescu, was a rather conceited, arrogant, and brutal person (he had good living quarters in the school that were well furnished). He conducted himself in front of the teaching staff, that is to say his colleagues, as a 'dictator' and as a 'master of the inferiors' – as the students said. By his actions and behaviour it was clear that he was unsuited and unprepared for the job of teacher and even more so as the Director of a school.

Director Vasilescu often requisitioned students from different classes and would send them to the town to purchase for him bread, milk, vegetables and fruit, salt and other items. Even though the town was quite far away (part of the distance had to be traveled by foot and then part by tramway), the director did not hesitate to drag students out from lectures to send them to attend to his personal business. By the time the student got there and returned, he would have been gone for two or three hours during which time he had missed the lectures. The Director always chose only boys and, in particular, only the older and most intelligent ones. This procedure he would repeat often and because of this, the unfortunate students, who were required to serve him, were unable to learn since they were not attending the lectures. In frustration, some of the students were not even coming to school because they knew the Director would just come in and send them to do his purchases.

To avoid some complaints and to not hinder some students too much so that they fell too far behind in their studies, he decreased his habits of using the top class of students and began to use students from other classes. Vasilescu initially began to use the oldest students from Class VI and VII, but when he stopped using them to avoid difficulties, he started to use students from Class V. By custom, Vasiliecu's chores needed three students, sometimes only two. Being abusive, he would send a senior student to Class V to request that three students

would be released to be sent shopping. Having no choice, the headmaster of the class would release the students requested because, being subordinate to the instructions of the Director, he had to follow his needs. The Director continued with these abuses for a long time and, with the other teachers not being frank about the learning problems for the students, he did not appreciate the unhappiness of the teachers as well.

One day a student sent by the Director came to the headmaster of Class V midway during a lecture on mathematics and told him that the Director wanted to have three students he could send into town. The instructor told the student sent by the Director that the three students would be available at the end of the hour of mathematics. Trouble – not two minutes passed before Director Vasilescu invaded the classroom, blue in the face and with bulging eyes. He began to rant and addressed the instructor with a rain of insults for not sending the requested students immediately. He did not give the instructor even the least of chances to explain his reasons. In front of the entire class the Director berated the instructor as loud as he could "Communist! Bolshevik! I am the Director and you must obey my orders. While I am the Director I will do what I wish and no one can stop me."

The Director then took the three requested students and left with them. In the class, they were left with an unpleasant and uncomfortable atmosphere following this outburst from this abusive and coarse person. Following the event, the instructor of Class V asked for an investigation of this case so that his guilt could be cleared, according to the procedures for the teachers. After a few weeks, an inspector from Chernauti arrived on the scene. Following the inquiry into events, the Director was found to be completely blameless, while the instructor was warned by the Inspector that he must follow the orders of the Director. Furthermore, so that there would be no further problems, the Inspector told the instructor that whenever the Director requested a student, he must yield to his request. He stated that the Director knew what he was doing and he was responsible for his own actions!

These were the results of the investigation – this is how 'justice' was served for the teachers' problems, for the students and for the parents. The reader will probably find it hard to believe that the story described above in fact truly happened!

It was about 1965 that Ion Salahor of Voloca happened to meet by chance with a man from Iasi. They fell into conversation and the man starting telling Ion about his background and other things. He mentioned that in 1919-1920 he had been in the military in Chernauti and just happened to have been in the 113$^{th}$ Infantry Regiment. Continuing, he started to talk about the revolt that happened there. He said that he was one of the ones who had, at that time, beaten and harassed the Romanian soldiers from Bucovina, who were doing their service there. Forty-five years had passed since that tragic period and the man still spoke with some satisfaction and pride about how they had beat the soldiers from Bucovina until they were left half dead and needed buckets of water thrown on them to revive them!

This abusive man, named C. Stoian, was a pensioner and had been a Platoon Major. He considered that it was an honor to associate himself with this knavish event. One can see that this man, who was one of the senior officers, took a direct hand in the beatings. He had started out as a "gradati" and had advanced to the rank of Platoon Major. Wise he was not, but he did know how to acquire some wealth and had built a big roomy house with a place for his parents in the Copou sector of Iasi. If this boastful bully had more sense, he would not have allowed his hideous behavior to become common knowledge.

During the years 1919-1920, many very unpleasant events occurred and I have tried to relate some of them. The stories of the rebellion of the 13th Regiment have been included here because many of the young men from Voloca served in this regiment. The reports of the irregularities by the tax collectors also involved Volocans – many from this village suffered and were cheated. Finally, in the tale concerning the arrogant Director Vasilescu, the connection to Voloca was via the fact that the poor victimized instructor was married to a girl from Voloca.

With the passage of time, many of these unpleasant happenings have been forgotten – as the expression goes "Time heals all wounds". Nevertheless, from the stories related above, one can learn many lessons as to why they happened. They play the role of informing us so that we can recognize situations when we must not hold back and sanction abuses. We need to step forward to prevent the consequences such as those seen here and the unpleasant disasters that followed.

The people of Bucovina were always true patriots and desired the Union body and soul. Those, who had the opportunity, even fought for the Union by fighting earlier against the Austrian authorities. Many generations of people from Bucovina long dreamed for and awaited the coming of a reunion with the rest of their brothers. Almost a century and a half had passed since Bucovina had been overrun by the Austrian Empire. Over this long period of time the people had to endure completely different conditions.

As an Austrian province, Bucovina did benefit from an advanced culture that had been imposed on it and was able to learn much from the rigorous system of order and law used by the Austrians. Austria had an excellent civil-administrative system which is why, to some extent, they were able to maintain their empire. This system could not help but have some influence on the people in it. The people adapted their habits to fit this system and its strict laws. They became more organized, careful, and conscientious in their work.

Under this regime based on honesty, the system of right and justice developed greatly. Breaking of the law began to disappear. No one could escape their duty to serve. These responsibilities resulted, as a consequence, in a transformation of the entire society for the better and a true change in the ways of human life. The culture of the Romanian population of Bucovina, who long lived under these conditions and in this milieu, also evolved here.

The transformation of a society for the better is a very difficult, but possible, task. It requires time and can only be done with competent and knowledgeable leaders who have a love of honesty and who, when the needs arises, have respect for the laws. Over an extended period of time, the feeling of order and discipline, and respect both of the law and of the authority of the state, becomes ingrained in the blood of people. They themselves become ordered, responsible and respectful. The expression capturing this is: "Civilized people who respect one another at the same time become good citizens". A man with a good conscience, a high ethical level and a respect of the laws and the authority of the state has no fear or worries. Those with proper convictions, know that one cannot otherwise thrive and develop a normal and relaxed life.

Despite all of their respect of law and authority, the people of Bucovina were anything but servile. Aware of their rights, they guarded them with care. These hard-working country folk, dedicated to work, proud in their lives, while still very modest, would not allow themselves to be trampled underfoot. This was the reason for the rebellion of the 13th Infantry Regiment. They did not rebel again the order of the state but instead against the military brutality and the inhuman treatment or, in other words, they were manifestly against the actions of some abusive functionaries. No one can condemn the defense of their rights. They had deep conflicts of conscience because of their sense of right and justice, but the injustice, humiliation and insults made them lose their patience in many cases.

The people of Bucovina were intelligent, understanding and dignified citizens. An eminent scholar (from the 'old kingdom') and a good observer of Bucovina stated that they were the elite of Romanian citizenry. But who were these citizens of Bucovina? They were all of the people of Moldavia including those of Northern Moldavia, or, as it was sometimes called, the Upper Country. Nevertheless, there still are differences. Only through culture and education can progress occur and civilization improve. Another, better path does not exist.

## 2.11
# The mixing of the population of northern Bucovina

In the beginning, the Slavs penetrated the territory of our country. Starting at the beginning of the 6th century, they lived alongside the aboriginal Daci-Romans (that is, our early ancestors) until the 9th century. This produced the first mixing of our population with the Slavs. After that period, the main group of the Slavs moved further south, over the Danube. Many remained with us and were assimilated into the ranks of the local Romanians. In the northern part of our country, where our population borders the population of the Slavs, the assimilation ended up in the advantage of the Slavs, since they were more numerous and because they had moved unto our territory with a population that was more numerous than ours.

This first process of assimilation, which occurred in our early development, took place in the 'State of Upper Moldovia' (later called Bucovina). It happened also in the area of Voloca that was a part of the jurisdiction of Chernauti. The Volocans would not allow themselves to be assimilated, and as a result they instead absorbed those who moved into the village.

The second occasion on which a Slavic element came into our country was at the time of the forays made by Stefan Voda and his followers. These forays raised in support a large part of the country's population. They brought back as hostages many Slavs, settling them particularly in the 'Upper State', that is to say, northern Moldovia. This transplanting of people had an overall negative effect on our countryside.

On 22 June 1498, after the end of the battle at Cozmin, Stefan Voda demanded that King Albert redress the damage and losses he had caused by entering the country. At that time Voda was given as reparations, from the remaining men, women and children in the Slavic areas, a population of about 100 000. These people were brought into our country and settled in different villages. For this reason, today the Ukrainian language is heard in many locations. – Reference Grigore Ureche, page 56.

On 10 June 1509, Bogdan Voda, son of Stefan, laid waste the remaining countryside all the way to Lviv. He set fire to Robatin, a large city, from which he brought back much booty, including the large church bell that was brought to the cathedral in Suceava. Also at that time, many peasants and landowners were brought back as reparations. They were installed in the countryside, where they were assigned land (they colonized it). - Reference Grigore Urech, page 86.

Many battles occurred on the lands of Moldova, especially in the northern part. It suffered the devastation of the barbarian hordes, especially the Tartars. The Tartar-led forays and robber raids had an effect of depopulating Moldovia – one could say that they devastated the northern part. Large areas of the countryside lay almost in

ruin. To repopulate the areas, those in control brought in foreign peoples of Slavic origin from nearby regions, and especially from Galicia. The historic chronicler, Neculce, records on page 81, that the area from Iasi to Chernauti was reduced almost to wilderness after the Tartar raids. These raids continued up to the time of Voda Dimitrie Cantacuzino. This led to the third settlement of the Slavs in the northern part of our country.

Over the period 1790-1848 Bucovina was united with Galicia – a union decreed by the Austrian Emperor. As there existed no borders to separate these two lands (provinces), very many residents of Galicia entered Bucovina, settling in the countryside and towns and so, over this period, Bucovina was again infiltrated by many Ukrainians (Slavs). Not only Ukrainians but also Poles, Germans and many Jews entered into Bucovina over this period. The Germans came from Austria and from Galicia, in particular. Many of these arrived in Bucovina shortly after it was annexed by Austria in 1775.

Another period of immigration into Bucovina by people of Slavic origin came about by the desire of the large landowners to obtain land workers cheaply from Galicia. The landlords had no workers to till the land because the number of Romanian peasants was small and, in addition, many of these were free men (freeholders). These people were able to work their own holdings and could not be forced to labor for the large landlords. For these reasons, our rich landlords imported laborers from Galicia, where the population was denser and poorer. Because the land there was scarcer and less fertile, the Galicians came to our area in large numbers to work. To keep them permanently indebted, the landlords granted them small plots sufficient only for building a house or shelter of some type. Finding continuing work here, most stayed indefinitely on the estates of the landlords and did not return to Galicia. Also from these areas, the landlords imported different tradesmen for which they had a need, as well as overseers for the agricultural workers.

This complex process of transplanting the Slavic population of Galicia into Bucovina occurred in a number of stages, and over an extended period of time. The infiltration of foreign elements into the original population occurred also in Voloca, but to a lesser degree. Ukrainians were brought to our village and were settled at the edge of the village to the south-east - near the common grazing grounds in the area that was called ‘the Russian Sector’. These people spoke and sang Ukrainian at the beginning, but after a short time, they learned the language of the Volocans and, over time, became Romanians, being completely assimilated by the start of the 20$^{th}$ century. Since that time, one hears only Romanian, even in their songs or caroling (“malanca”).

The center of the area that was the ‘Russian Sector’ is now occupied by the families of Valescu, Gagiuc, Holovaci, Hrezliuc, Culiuc, and Guz. Others of Slavic or Polish roots who came and settled here are the following families: Milosinschi, Dubinschi, Lindvischi, Chimcinski, Bobinschi – all now ‘Romanianized’, and Paschevici –who became Romanians via marriages. The Poles were blacksmiths and shoemakers. There were also a few German craftsmen, who have since left (Oberhofer, etc).

We had even a case where a Jewish girl became infatuated with a handsome young man from the village who was known as Nicu – she ended up marrying him. Three sons who were known as, Toader, son of Nicu, Irimita,

son of Nicu, and Ilitu (little Eli), son of Nicu, resulted from this marriage. All the descendants from this marriage became Romanians. Toader and Irimita, sons of Nicu, remained gentlemen in the village and had children. Toader had three girls – Veroanta, Ileana and Zamphira – whereas Irimita had a daughter –Viroica and three sons – Gheorghe, Toader and Simion. All of these children married into the village and some of them were still living there in 1950.

Iluti, son of Nicu, left for school in a larger town and was later a police official in Suceava. Iluti's son, Aurelian, and I were colleagues in the State Law Faculty in Chernauti.

Whereas in some villages the Slavic elements predominated and succeeded in overtaking the Romanians, in part or in whole, as was the case in Cuciurul Mare and other older villages, in Voloca, the opposite happened. The Romanian population, which was stronger and more resistant, assimilated all who came here whatever the nationality - with the exception of the Jews.

Because of wars, difficult times, and raids, the population of our village was reduced. Some were taken as hostages by the Tartars and other invading nationalities, others perished in battles, while yet others scattered through escape routes through the mountains and left.

Somewhat later, the village was repopulated by Romanians from the Maramures region. The present residents come from a combination of the original natives and the influx of those from Maramures.

## 2.12
# School teachers who worked in Voloca immediately after the Great Unification of 1918

Immediately after the end of the war, Alexia Morariu came as the Director of Schooling in Voloca. He was a tall, ruddy-faced man with chestnut colored hair and a short mustache. He was a well-built man with a love for conversation. He was well suited both in the role as teacher and as Director – kind with the children and well-loved by the villagers. He is remembered by all as a first-class educator and as a highly-respected person. As soon as he arrived in the village, he set right down to work and he did not stop until he had set up the school completely in the manner it should be.

During WW I, the building suffered damage and needed significant repairs. Most of the furniture had been destroyed, many of the records had been lost and conditions were such that it fell to the task of Director Morariu to completely reorganize the school and re-supply it with all the necessary items. The greatest contribution he made for the village, however, was the fact that he was able to send many children to schools in the towns and especially to "liceu" or secondary school. He would go the homes of parents of good students to advise them to send their children to further schooling in the towns. Sometimes, he would invite parents to the school to discuss the situation and try to convince them, explaining that the students would be supported by the State. We can report to his credit, that in the end, he succeeded in sending many good students to the schools in Chernauti.

The villagers were not easily convinced by the need for higher education, knowing that they would have to spend a significant amount of money, but the Director would not relent until he had convinced them. He spent a fair amount of time on my behalf trying to convince my own mother, who did not have the necessary money, and who had never once had the thoughts in her mind of sending me off to higher learning. Due to the efforts of this hardworking educator, many children from the village of Voloca attended schools of higher education and succeeded in getting diplomas from various higher-level schools and faculties (universities). Following the completion of their studies, they were able to find positions in various state institutions.

The village of Voloca was indebted greatly to this inspiring educator, Alexie Morariu. After a few years of work in Voloca, he was moved to Boian (county of Chernauti). Alexia was married and had two sons. The older, named Horia, studied Law and was appointed to an important post within the Prefecture of the County of Chernauti. I know nothing about the younger son, Radiu, because the parents left the village of Voloca.

During the time that Alexia Morariu was the Director of Schooling in our village, a number of instructors worked in the primary school of our commune. These included; Petre Dolinschi, Victoria Repciuc, Natalia Pojoga, Fanica Hotinceanu, Nazarie Paulencu and Valeria  Porfirean. In the following sections, I will say something about each of the people named here.

Petre Dolinschi, originally from Broscauti (county of Storojnet) was another hard-working teacher, and a good Romanian. He was a tall man with dark hair, a black mustache, short-cropped beard and a thin face, but with an overall pleasant appearance. The children were somewhat afraid of him because he would sometimes physically discipline those who would not learn properly and especially those who were rowdy during class. He played the violin very well and he used it in school to lead the singing. From what I had heard, he learned to sing and play a number of patriotic Romanian songs even during the time of occupation by the Austro-Hungarians. Even though we were under the rule of the Austrians, he sang and played only Romanian songs. This he had to do with some caution. He was a rather stern teacher with the children but was well-loved because he was able to teach them these beautiful songs. As I recall, he was an instructor in Voloca even before WW I, that is to say, even before the Great Unification. I had him for a teacher for only a few months before our class was taken over by a young instructor by the name of Fanica Hotinceanu.

Victoria Repciuc was a teacher in the village both before and after the war. She was about 40 years old, or perhaps a bit younger, when I started school. She was a tall woman, brunette and quite attractive. As a teacher she was good with the students and quite agreeable, working mostly in the lower grades and obtaining good results. She had great patience with the small students and was always prepared and organized very well for her classes. Victoria would also teach the young to sing – she had a good voice and knew many easy songs suitable for the young pupils. She was loved both by her pupils and by their parents since she would teach them well and would never physically punish them. Victoria worked many years in our village and her husband was later transferred to the village to assume the role of Director. They continued to work here until retirement. Victoria Repciuc was a good teacher and was matched by her husband in the operation and upkeep of the school. The place was always neatly kept and the classrooms were always kept clean. They were always intently preoccupied with doing a good job.

Natalia Pojoga was a very likable and lively teacher who was also very beautiful. She worked in Voloca for only a few years. For a short time she was the master of our class and many of us cried greatly when she had to leave us to go to a different village. I must recall now that she was probably too gentle with the children. She also had a very good voice and knew how to sing beautifully. Natalia spoke very rapidly but nevertheless was very similar to Victoria Repciuc and was slightly younger than her. After several years she married another teacher, Olvian Pascanu, and the two of them moved to Comaresti (county of Storojinet). There they settled for a long time and worked, as far as I can remember, until the summer of 1940 when they became refugees. After that date, I have heard nothing about this family, who along with many others, were displaced throughout the entire country and found refuge wherever they could. Some returned in 1941 to the positions they had earlier held, since at that time Bucovina was re-occupied by the Romanian army, but many did not return and, in fact, were better off in not doing so. Some fled in 1944.

We can say about Fanica Hotinceanu, who was the youngest teacher in the school in Voloca during that period, that she was the most beautiful. This is certainly how it appeared to us as pupils and we hurried to learn our

lessons well just because of our admiration of her. We did not have the experience and knowledge necessary to be able to judge her professional abilities or teaching methods, but we would all strive to complete our work quickly. Her class was very relaxed and comfortable and even during the breaks we would play gently and would not roughhouse as would often happen with students from other classes. This teacher was always with us. She would play with us during physical education periods or during our breaks and afterwards would arrange us for singing. As long as I was in her class, the pupils were relaxed and goodwill dominated – the lessons all appeared to be quite easy. She had the gift of explaining things very well, was always good natured and, from all that I can recall, she felt very good towards us as well since I cannot ever recall her being out of sorts with anyone. She worked only a short time in the village. She married a military officer and moved to the town (Chernauti). I had her as a teacher in Class I.

Nazarie Paulencu was the son of a good household from the village. His parents were well established and highly respected in the village. The family consisted of two sons and a daughter. The eldest, Nazarie, completed a few grades (about two years) of higher schooling before the war, but then this was interrupted by the outbreak of war and he had to serve in the war. His sister was taken in marriage by an Ungureanu, the Church Cantor, but they lived together for only a short time and after she had given birth to two children, she died. The third child, Nicholai, took over as the main family householder and served a number of times as the Mayor of Voloca.

After the war, Nazarie returned and was named as a provisional teacher in the village. I had him as an instructor in Class II. At that time he was young, tall and hardy, with a heart that leaned towards teaching. He enjoyed all the good students, but those who were weak at their studies feared him because he would physically discipline them. After a period of time, his efforts in teaching were not as dedicated as he began to involve himself more with politics and in addition began to drink. While still in his youth, he abandoned a fruitful and pleasant activity, important in the society of the village of Voloca.

Also during this period, that is just after the Great Unification, Valeria Portiferan, the daughter of Spiridon Portiferan (**TN:** see more later in section 2.22) was appointed a teacher in the primary school in Voloca. She was a young girl who was well liked, tall, lithe and had a clear complexion. She had a flushed facial appearance and always was quite pleasant – she also sang beautifully. She had a female soprano voice. She worked in the village for a few years and then married a villager, Dulgheru, a postal official in Chernauti. They moved there because of his job.

Valeria was a capable teacher, well prepared for her lessons and fond of children. She was still alive about 1980, living as a pensioner near Bucharest. She was always overjoyed if she met a Volocan who could bring her up to date on news about the village. She remembered with fondness the village of Voloca and her younger years spent here.

Because of the invasion of the Russians in 1940 and 1944, we scattered throughout the country and even into strange lands. I do not know about others from that period except via those I happen to meet.

## 2.13
# Father Gheorghe Pojoga

Following the death of the priest, Cassian Stratulat, which occurred a short time before the start of WW I, the clergy left to take over from him was Gheorghe Velehorschi. He was appointed to administer and conduct the affairs of the parish throughout the war. He was an active, understanding and respected priest. After the war ended and following the peace agreements in Paris, Bucovina again became part of Romania. Immediately after the Union, Gheorghe Velehorschi was appointed to a post within the Metropolit in Chernauti and moved there with his family. With these occurrences, Voloca was left with a single priest, who was the Junior Assistant, Petre Deleanu. On occasion, another tall and hard-working priest would join him to conduct the church service on Sunday or holidays but neither of these two priests stayed a long time in our village.

About two years after the war, Gheorge Pojoga was appointed as Parish Priest for the village. Not long after that, a young man named Vasile Ursache was appointed as Assistant Priest. These two priests remained in our village many years. For the third position, Junior Assistant, those appointed did not stay very long and always looked for more senior positions elsewhere. The main reason was probably the fact that this position did not come with a parish house. (**TN:** The word used for the second and third posts is “cooperator” which all dictionaries translate simply as cooperator. Since there were sometimes two of these “cooperators” – I have chosen to designate the positions as Assistant and Junior Assistant. The Romanian translation for deacon is “diacon" so that does not appear to apply.)

The village of Voloca had only two parish houses – one for the old priest and one for the young one. The house designated for the Parish Priest was a large brick structure which was built on a strong foundation of rock. It had many rooms and tall windows. At the front, it had a balcony and veranda of the type one would see on the homes of the rich. Near the house there was a good barn, also built of brick, and nearby were all of the other structures needed for a well-run household. The house was located very close to the church. In addition to the buildings near the parish house, there was a large garden with good soil. The yard was all enclosed with a stylish fence.

The parish-owned house for the Assistant Priest was located much further away from the church. It was a newer building and almost as large as the Parish Priest’s house. It was covered with red tiles, also had a balcony/veranda and had many rooms. There was also a large barn nearby and a garden but the garden were not as large as that attached to the parish house on the hill near the church.

Both parish houses had large wells with good water. The church in the village of Voloca owned 24 falci of land in the fields. (**TN:** 1 falca ~3.5 acres, hence holdings were ~85 acres; see 1.8). This land was controlled by and for the use the priest. The taxes for this land were paid from money collected from the parishioners during

offerings at the services on Sundays and holidays. The church was very large and built of wood. As large as it was, it was always filled with people. Volocans regularly attended church and in large numbers. This habit has continued to this date.

Being a stoutly-religious people, the villagers observed with great dedication the customs and important events passed down to them from their forefathers. They would bring many gifts to the church consisting largely of "colaci" and money and would pay for many services dedicated to those from their families who had died so that their sins might be forgiven. They would also pay for services for those still alive so that God would grant them good health and long lives. On Sundays and on the important holidays such a copious pile of "colaci" and other gifts were brought to the church to commemorate the dead, that the special table set us to hold these gifts was often too small. The parishioners would also bring "colaci" to church on the anniversaries of some of the smaller holidays during the week, especially if they occurred during the Great Lent before Easter. Since Volocans are generous, the donations to the church were substantial and life was good for the priests, especially so for the Parish Priest. This senior priest took half of all the things that were brought to the church. The other half was divided between the other two priests, as well as the cantor and the caretaker. This second half was divided into three equal parts, two of these were taken by the two assistant priests and the third was subdivided between the cantor and the caretaker. In a similar manner, the money collected was also divided, but only among the priests. The reader ("dascal") would receive whatever the parish priest deemed was suitable. For this reason, when prayers were said for someone or on various other occasions, the parishioners would give the reader the odd Lei or two, separately and on the sly - money which he did not have to share with anyone else.

Father Gheorghe Pojoga arrived in our village during the Great Lent, towards the spring of 1920. At that time he was about 50 years old. He was a large man with a handsome appearance but most importantly, he was a good man, always very reasonable and fair. He was never too proud to speak to anyone and would stop to talk even with the young children. The villagers of Voloca were very pleased to have gained such a good man for their Parish Priest. They were also amazed to see how much property the priest brought with him when he moved to our village. He had served for about 20 years in the previous community, which was located about 25 km away. When he first came, he moved with about ten wagons, each pulled by two horses. They were all filled with his baggage and goods. But, that was not all. Following that, he returned to his old residence with his wagon as well as those of others from our village on numerous occasions to bring back much more material and many sacks of wheat, rye and corn.

When he finally settled into his household for good in our village, he owned a great deal. He filled his barns with livestock and, in particular, he had a pair of beautiful large horses. His sheds and pens were filled with chickens, geese, ducks and turkeys. In addition, he had brought two peacocks with all of their magnificence. The villagers were amazed by the size of his holdings and particularly they were amazed by the peacocks because few had ever seen such birds before. However, even at this point the transport of his goods from the place he had lived before was not finished.

When he had finished plowing and seeding all the fields he now controlled in Voloca, in the late summer, the priest asked the parishioners to form a bee and to come with their wagons. He needed about thirty wagons, each drawn by two horses, to transport the pieces of a large outbuilding, which he had dismantled, to Voloca. The building bee transported the materials and reassembled the structure. This building was needed to store the wheat, rye and corn as well as a supply of hay, clover and alfalfa which he needed to feed his livestock. Such a large number of animals needed a lot of forage for the winter.

Some of the land belonging to the church in Voloca was put into crops and some was reserved for hay, alfalfa and clover. As the village was soon to discover, Gheorghe Pojoga was a very knowledgeable and hardworking farmer. He was very good at running not only the church but also all of the operations needed to manage an estate properly. Even some of the most capable property holders in our village were able to learn from his examples. Father Pojoga was not shy in dispensing ideas and suggestions to those who would ask for advice and who would listen. Just because he was a good, capable landowner does not mean that he neglected his religious side or his duties at the church. Absolutely not!

Pojoga would conduct a very beautiful service in church. It was greatly appreciated by all those attending and his sermons were listened to with great attention. Similarly, he would conduct a beautiful funeral service with 6 or 12 “prohods” (**TN:** see 1.20) and at each “prohod” or stop he would read some passages from the Holy Scriptures which those in the procession would listen to carefully as they knelt. The Parish Priest had a very good voice and also had a gift with words. He would lead an impressive prayer and sermon in the church as well as at the grave. I do not think Voloca ever had a priest the equal of Pojoga.

When the time came to discuss the cost of the funeral, because that is how the priest was paid, Pojoga would respond “However you sing for me, so also shall I dance for you”. That is to say, depending on how much you pay me, so shall I conduct the funeral service – this concerns the degree of pomp, the length of the sermon, and the number of “prohods”. In all cases it was well done but some services were shorter and more modest. In general, the Parish Priest conducted the funeral service for the more important and richer people and he would leave the service of the lesser important, poorer villagers to the Assistant Priest. On the rare occasion, both priests would serve or even all three. At the service beside the grave, the more affluent people would lay a beautiful, woven rug (“scortar”) by the grave for the priest to kneel on while he read from the Holy Scriptures. This rug was left for the priest to take. If such a rug was not laid out, then the priest would read standing up.

If there was going to be a funeral, a wedding or a baptism, then the parishioner would go to the Old Priest (the Parish Priest), to determine a price. The same thing would happen when there was the need for clergy to bless a new home, or bless a new well, etc. The negotiations took place with the Parish Priest. The elaborateness and pomp of the religious ceremony that was provided for these baptisms, weddings or funerals depended on the price that was paid.

It should be mentioned here that at the time when Father Pojoga came to Voloca, weddings in Bucovina were performed by the priest in church but the registration of the births, marriages and deaths was performed in the parish council chambers. Later on, the Romanian civil code was extended to include Bucovina and all acts covered by civil laws had to be performed in the council office, by a civic official. Before this time, the old law had been used and the Parish Priest took care of these matters. The groom and bride would have to go to see the Parish Priest several days before the religious ceremony was to be held. The Priest would do the registration of the marriage, as was required. The young couple could not, of course, go empty handed to see the Priest. They would have bring a gift of some kind, for example, two large 'colaci', a container of salt, perhaps a chicken or just a bit of money. When the actual religious ceremony took place at the church, another fee was needed – and this one 'tweaked one by the nose' – (**TN:** meaning - this one was not cheap!)

Before the religious ceremony, it was the custom that the "banns" would be announced in church on three consecutive Sundays so that the public would know of the upcoming wedding and to enquire of those assembled if anyone knew of a reason why either of two young people should not be allowed to be married. This procedure was both necessary and welcomed, and for that reason was strictly observed.

Sometimes someone might want to dedicate a large celebratory meal ("masa") in memory of a deceased family member and would invite a priest to come and read a prayer or bless the meal. This type of a meal was called a "masa cu popa" – a meal with a priest present. From one of these events, the priest would eventually leave for home with several "colaci" and some money. All of these customs were leftovers from the older Romanian customs and were respected by people with happiness in their hearts, saying that this was the priest's due and this was the proper way to do things. Rarely, one might find a tightwad who would complain. But in those cases, people would ignore the comments. Traditions were left to us by our ancestors and can not be changed from one moment to the next. The same is true for customs. It may be true that not everyone was equally generous and some customs were skirted, but old traditions were respected by all. In all their dealings, the villagers of Voloca were generous and strong in their religious ways. They have continued to be so up to this very day.

As strong and healthy as Father Pojoga was, his wife was, by contrast, physically weak and sickly. Although she was now older, one could tell that in her youth she had been an attractive woman. She was hardworking and a neat housewife and fully understood all of the needs of running a house, but suffering often and being quite busy, she spent most of her time at home, rarely going out anywhere. For her condition, she had lots of work and things to take care of. She had a housekeeper in the house to help cook and clean and another woman to work outside and take care of the poultry and pigs.

The Priest had three hired helpers, two of whom worked with horses to transport goods, to plow, to harrow, to seed, to bring in the crops and hay, to haul wood from the forest, or to take grain to and from the mill. They had plenty of work. The third hired helper had the tasks of taking care of the livestock – he needed to feed and water

them and remove all the manure. One can see that the estate was well organized and that everyone had specific jobs to do. This being the case, the estate flourished before ones very eyes.

The Pogoja family had only one child, a well built and very beautiful daughter. She grew up as a flower in the family and never was short of anything she needed. She took mostly after the ways of her father, was kind, friendly and loved to chat. She graduated from normal school but did not take up a position teaching. She did not have a need to do so since, besides being beautiful and having the qualities anyone would be pleased to have, she had a good deal of wealth and a large prospective inheritance. She had everything she needed and unless her luck changed and some hazard got put into her path, her future was bright. When this daughter first arrived in our village, she was about 20 years old. When she attended church, all would observe and admire her.

The housekeeper that the Priest's wife employed in the house for cooking and cleaning was about 25 years of age. The Priest's daughter got along with her very well especially so because they were of a similar age. They became quite friendly and often discussed events as well as ideas that came to their minds. This woman was herself not ugly and had many tales to tell. The housekeeper had been married previously while she had lived in the village from where the priest came. No one knew why she and her husband had separated after just one year of marriage. The gossips of that village had generated a number of different stories. They generated a few about the Pogoja's daughter as well, but who can ever tell if these stories had any glimmer of truth in them. People talk a lot - about everything.

Let it be said that some of these stories reached our village. The stories claimed that the lady in question (the housekeeper) had been caught at home with another man and that her husband had chased her out of the house and that they had then separated. The story told about the Priest's daughter was that she had a young man in the previous village with whom she had fallen in love, beginning even during her childhood. They had become close friends when they went to school in the village. The story ended by saying that this was the reason the priest had moved from that village – he wanted to separate the two young lovers. The main reason behind this was that although the young man came from a good family who ran a good household, he had completed only six years of schooling. It was claimed that the priest could not accept a marriage that would bring him an 'uneducated' son-in-law.

If this had not really been the reason, the Priest would not have moved from the village although things had gone very well there for him all the years he had been in that village. His daughter had been born there and grew up there, she had gone to school there and also there had met her first love. Such a reason for moving could have been possible.

At the beginning, it appears that the relationship had been an innocent close friendship, as happens between children. With time, however, the relationship became more serious and stronger and with the passing years it became even stronger and all consuming. During the years that she attended the normal school in Chernauti, she had been housed in a place where the restrictions were more severe than those for monks in a monastery. The

poor girl's movements had been monitored all the time and she had not been able to enjoy even a short break of freedom. It is hard to even contemplate her degree of desire for freedom when finally, she was finished the schooling there. While the young people, as a group, were allowed to go out for some events such as church services, a walk in the town or a walk through the public gardens (always as a group), they rarely were able to visit the theatre or see a movie. The single time they could enjoy freedom was when the summer vacation arrived.

When the Pogoja's daughter first came to Voloca, she had already finished her schooling and was an attractive young lady. She was quite reserved in her manner and did not become friends with just anyone. One could tell, however, that she was somewhat unhappy and often deep in thought. Nevertheless, she became a well-recognized person in our village.

Around the time that Father Pojoga came to out village, he adopted a young girl, originally born to a relative of his. She was already beyond childhood, being about nine or ten years old, and attended school in our village. She was a very clever and pretty girl, but in the spring of 1921 or 1922 her life ended. All of us who were at that time school pupils went in turn to see her laid out for the funeral. Her life had ended very abruptly and left great pain behind. She passed through life, as if a dream, but we never did learn what had caused her death.

Many years later, almost when I was an old man, when I once traveled to Craiova, I happened unknowingly to meet a brother of this young girl. After a bit of conversation, I discovered that he was the brother and also learned the cause of the death of his sister so many years in the past. The girl had died of appendicitis and had not been operated on at the time. I found it very amazing that I should inadvertently stumble across the brother of this girl when both of us were old men.

Let us return now to the story of the housekeeper from the Priest's house who, while young had the experience of being married, and who had, in addition, a lover on the side. She apparently did not enjoy being single and after not too great a period of time, she found herself a lover in our village. He was one of the leading young men in the village and was the son of one of the largest landowners. This young man was about the same age as her and had traveled somewhat. He had been away to war for about three years and had been taken prisoner in France. He had then stayed there for about two years during which he was able to learn French. He was a clever, handsome and intelligent young man.

The home of his family was not far from the house of Father Pojoga. Thus he was able almost every day to see the housekeeper from the priest's house. She had laid eyes on the young man and was not easily dissuaded, and he, attracted by her womanly body, let himself get tangled in her web. This woman did not let go easily and a great love came upon them. At one end of the barn there was a room where the Priest's hired men had beds for sleeping. Those men, after completing their work around the farmyard, had the habit of going into town to visit the ladies there and their room remained empty for a part of the night. Here the clever young man and the

housekeeper from the Priest's house would meet together and would become entangled to ease the fire in their hearts (or perhaps their groins).

The Priest's daughter learned above the love affair between the housekeeper and the young man but was unable to determine the signal that they used so that the woman would go when the young man was waiting. She probably wanted to play a joke on them anyway. Finally, she was able to determine the signaling system. The method was by means of a note which was left in a certain place and which indicated the time and date for the meeting. As the hiding place for the note was in the yard of her father, the Priest's daughter had the idea to watch and perhaps to surprise then in the act. After what transpired, we have to think that the Priest's daughter changed her mind and changed her first plan – she may have felt too out-of-place.

With the knowledge of the housekeeper, one night Pojoga's daughter dressed herself up as an ordinary farm girl, added a kerchief on her head, and so dressed, she set out with the intent of meeting the young man, of playing a hoax on him and then having a good laugh at his expense. Outside it was very dark, so dark that you could barely see 2-3 paces away. The girl did not have to wait long before the young man, Gheorghe, appeared. As soon as he spotted her, he grabbed her tightly in his arms and began to kiss her with passion before she could play her trick. Gheorghe took her quickly by the hand to lead her away but she became greatly frightened and led out a scream without wanting and exposed her identity. It appears she was not used to this behavior. Realizing his situation, Gheorghe was left confused and embarrassed and could not understand what had happened. This commotion frightened the housekeeper as well and she began to fear the trouble that would result if the priest found out what was happening. Would he not have heard the scream?

The housekeeper stood back at a distance and watched the priest's daughter. Gheorghe was standing there stupefied, wondering what he should do and which way he should flee. The Priest's daughter did not have any reason to reproach him so she responded with the following: "In the end, this is a humorous situation. The young men who I meet are so polite and restrained in their ways that they bore me. They stop to speak much more easily with my parents than with me and are too timid. I would like it if they were a bit more bold and more manly and would not be such wimps". Hearing this, Gheorghe regained his composure somewhat. He began to beg her to forgive him and said that if he had known it was her he would not have done what he did …but the girl did not let him continue with these words for too long. She said immediately that she forgave him but told him that he should never tell anyone what had happened and must keep it as a very private secret. For the moment, the blame was laid at the feet of the two women who arranged this meeting but certainly the housekeeper did not foresee what might happen and how far the effects of this meeting might go. Having a very personal interest with the young man, she did not expect something like this.

In the end, this secret was revealed because not only the two involved knew about it, but also the housekeeper who had helped put the plan into action. The secret would not have been revealed except that the housekeeper felt a bit romantically hurt by it and was somewhat jealous. Furthermore, the friendship between the two women quickly cooled and was replaced instead by a heavy coolness.

Gheorghe's ardor for the housekeeper began to cool and this may have been part of the housekeeper's unhappiness, but an event, perhaps somewhat fortunate, began to unfold that resolved the problem somewhat.

The Priest's daughter had many admirers and most of them were not simply after the potential dowry, but instead because of the beauty of the girl. Among the admirers was one man who was a bit older and who was also quite rich. He was a lawyer with a large house in Chernauti. The house was located in the center of the town and had a second story and many rooms. On the ground floor, there was a printing shop which printed the Morgenblatt, the Allegemeine Zeitung and the Vorwetz (**TN:** – German language newspapers). The lawyer also owned an automobile – something quite rare at that time.

This lawyer quickly became the preferred suitor by the parents of the girl to become the son-in-law. I do not know if he was the preferred choice of the daughter as well but, since she was an obedient girl who did as her parents said, she accepted him to be her husband. During that era, it was rare for a child to choose to oppose the will of their parents on the subject of wedding partners. A great amount of money hung in the balance for the potential son-in-law, depending on the decision of the parents and their daughter.

The chosen groom was about 45 years old but still was in good physical shape and had a pleasing appearance. A talkative and intelligent man, he also had the gift of being able to compose verses and epigrams. If he had not started to go bald, he would be mistaken for someone much younger. This man, Eusebie Hoticeanu, had been married previously and had two sons with his wife from that marriage. One of them, Ramir, was about 8 years old while the younger son, Liviu, was about 6 years old.

The lawyer had separated from his first wife because of her infidelity. He had a car but he did not know how to drive. Therefore, he had engaged a chauffeur. All went well for a while, but the chauffeur was an intelligent and handsome young man. This fact began to complicate the domestic situation. From where the first spark sprang and who initiated the relationship is not clear, but the fact that the husband was very busy and often away had a great influence on the closeness that developed between the lady of the house and the chauffeur. In such situations, just a short step is needed to solidify a more intimate relationship. The young wife, since she was often left alone at home, had to do something do so that she did not get bored. Tasks within the house were taken care of by a number of housekeepers so that the young wife had little to do except to go out. Well understood, she would need the automobile so that she was not always watched by the entire town. Today they did this, tomorrow the same and so the two of them (the lady and the chauffeur) traveled to all of the places they most enjoyed. Sometimes they drove out of town and into the nearby woods. The forest was not too far away and they could stop and walk around and enjoy the fresh air around them in the forest of oaks and beech. These things continued for some time until the husband (found out and) sent his wife away for good together with the chauffeur. But you need not believe that his event was a great bit of bad luck for these two illicit friends (lovers). After the separation, the law decreed that the couple must divide the property they had acquired during the marriage. Even though the husband, in addition to being a lawyer, acquired the best legal help, he was

unable to escape this ruling easily and he had to accept and obey the legal ruling. So that he could retain the house, he kept the two boys but then had to pay out a large sum of money for her portion of the estate. Only in this way was he able to retain the house.

All of this had been the fault of the automobile, but even now, perhaps it was the automobile that caught the eye and approval of the new girl, the daughter of Father Pojoga. After the divorce was complete and the former wife received her portion of the estate, she married the chauffeur. They bought themselves a new vehicle and the chauffeur would park in the town square from where he generated a good business. The couple lived happily together and had a number of children for which they were very grateful. As the wife of the chauffeur, the woman now had a more serious occupation as well as a more complete, active life.

Separated from his wife and his former chauffeur, the lawyer now came to our village to see the priest's daughter with a new chauffeur. He would come 2-3 times per week, always in the evenings. Sometimes he would spend the night at the home of the priest. One evening when the prospective son-in-law of the Priest was coming to the village in his automobile, he was met with a rain of stones thrown towards the vehicle. The stones broke the front widow. Since the vehicle was a roofless model, he was also hurt by some of the stones. This action was performed by a number of young boys of about 12-14 years of age who had lain hidden behind a fence. The boys badly frightened those riding in the automobile and the vehicle then turned and sped back towards Chernauti. At the very beginning, those in the automobile thought that some unknown band of criminals had done this and did not even consider that this was the action of some boys.

The next day the automobile returned to the village and went straight to the police station where the occupants reported the incident and demanded that there be an inquiry and a search to uncover the culprits. This task was not too difficult for the police because the boys did not keep quiet but instead had boasted to others how they had frightened off those who had been coming by automobile to the Priest's house. (Ion Salahor believes that these boys were students at the school.) It was amazing that they should think of doing such an act so as to frighten those in the automobile and even to break the front windshield with stones. The boys, four in number, were taken to the police station for questioning, but despite the questioning and perhaps some beatings, to try to get them to reveal who had put them up to do this, they would not say. The questioners felt certain that the boys had not come up with the idea of doing this mischief themselves. In spite all of the threats and questioning, the police were of no assistance is gaining any information whatsoever from the boys. They insisted that no one had encouraged them whatsoever and that they had done the action purely out of their own accord, as a prank, to see if they could scare the automobile into flight. In the end, it was decided that the culprit was one of the four boys and he was required to pay for the damage caused. The particular youth found guilty had been fingered by one of his friends when questioned by the priest and, in the end, all four contributed to the cost and the incident did not become commonly known.

After she had married the rich lawyer, the Priest's daughter lived like a princess, surrounded by a crowd of admirers. This brought about another nuisance on his husband's head. He had lived a very eventful life with his

first wife from whom he had been left with two children and from whom he had separated. He then had to defeat other younger men who had been hovering around his wife who had married properly. He became concerned least he suffer the same fate with this wife that he had endured with the first. For this reason, he would not allow her to venture anywhere alone without him or at least one of the two boys - he did not trust the servants.

The Priest's daughter then lived many years in luxury among riches, enjoying the loving attention of her husband and the sympathy of her admirers. But, with the passage of time, almost unnoticed, the two boys grew up and lost the desire to keep an inquiring eye on their step-mother. They were starting to encounter their own personal lives and problems. On the other hand, there was no great reason to keep an eye on step-mother. Living a completely sedimentary life, she became so fat that she lost all of her appeal and charm. There was no longer any threat for her husband nor any appeal for her admirers. In fact, if you had seen her or knew her while she was a girl living with her parents and now saw her again, you would be absolutely amazed about the change. No one would have believed that the girl, who had once been do remarkably beautiful, could have lost all of her appeal and would have been reduced to such a situation of ugliness. Since people no longer looked at her as they had done when she was young, her husband no longer had a need for concern.

The oldest son of the lawyer was a student in high-school and, just as he began his studies, he unfortunately got sick and died. He had been a sympathetic and intelligent young man who did well in school. The second son finished his schooling, entered the Faculty of Law and became a magistrate. He lived until sometime in 1980.

After Father Pojoiga had married off his daughter, he was left with only his wife. He was still quite healthy and would travel to perform services at churches further away on occasion. The couple found it quite difficult without their daughter at home and would also recall the beautiful little girl they had adopted and who they had lost long ago. They grieved their two lost children greatly. Father Pojoga continued to serve well and beautifully, both in church on Sundays and holidays as well at funerals and other occasions, but on his face one could read the shadows of deep grief. Who knows, perhaps he was thinking often about the daughter he had married off, to the best of his efforts, to an older rich man – but perhaps he had been too old for her. If their little angel of a daughter had not left them also with such a feeling of emptiness, it might have been easier for them but as it was, the two of them had many sad thoughts and feelings. The difficulty of the situation could also be read into the sermons the priest gave in church. These he delivered with great feelings of hurt and conviction.

In all his sermons, Father Pojoga worked hard to teach the parishioners to follow the righteous path. Many of those who heard them would understand the meanings and mend their ways. Voloca had many people who behaved in a very Christian manner, people who were willing to lend a helping hand to those in need, ever ready to do good deeds. Father Pojoga tried hard to attract the youths, the young boys and young girls, to church so that they would learn Christian morals and also how they should treat and respect their parents and others in life. For his efforts, Father Pojoga was highly valued and loved by the villagers.

Regardless of how good a person may be, no one can be liked by everyone nor can they please all. Even Father Pojoga did not escape all worries and bitterness. Life on earth just is that way.

Gheorghe, the young man who had an affair with the Priest's housekeeper, as earlier described, got married to a daughter of a landowner of his social class, as was appropriate. All went fine for awhile until the housekeeper, having been forsaken, sought a way to get back at the young man and did so in a dramatic way. This was because she had believed that Gheorghe would have selected her as his wife. She began to gossip to other women about what had happened between Gheorghe and the Priest's daughter as well as other tales of this sort. As long as Gheorghe did not marry, she had maintained her hopes but now that he had married, she could no longer restrain herself and began to tell everyone what had occurred. Idle chatter can lead to much misinformation and tragedy. It can 'turn a mosquito into a stallion' especially for those who were willing to listen to all the stupid manufactured tales of scorn generated against the priest's daughter. (**TN:** a play on the Romanian words "tantar" (mosquito) and "armasar" (stallion))

In the end, these stories reached the ears of Father Pojoga. Great was the anger they generated when he heard them. In addition, he became very saddened by the shame that now descended on his family. If he had not paid such attention to the scandalous tales, they would have returned to the mud from where they arose. They probably would have been forgotten over time and people would have recognized them for what they were. Usually, this is what happens. The people gossip for awhile and then they keep quiet because other events occur to catch their attention, most of them much more important.

Father Pojoga however, was unwilling to wait and summoned Gheorghe to come to the parish offices where he rebuked him sharply and in the end threatened to sue him for the shame he had brought to his family. Gheorghe held his tongue for a bit but finally responded that these tales were the jealous rants of the Priest's housekeeper and should not be given any credence. In fact, most of the population placed little credence in the stories, knowing who the source of them was and knowing that she probably was jealous. They realized her desire for revenge because Gheorghe had not taken her as his wife.

To convince the Priest, Gheorghe took an oath in front of the Priest and told him about the relationship he had previously had with the housekeeper. Furthermore, Gheorghe maintained very resolutely that nothing of the stories that the housekeeper had spread through the village was true and that he had never even considered doing such a thing, or of even telling anyone anything like these scandalous tales. Furthermore, he said that if he was going to be sued he would appear and would demand to see witnesses who, under oath, could refute his claims of innocence. He claimed his innocence of these claims would be proven. Father Pojoga did not put too great a belief in Gheorghe's claims of innocence and hurled a few more bitter words toward him. He told Gheorghe never to again appear before him. Evidently, the Priest was still left very angered. Meanwhile, Gheorghe avoided the Priest as long as he could. He tried for as long as he could to avoid any contact, but since he was a neighbor of the Priest it was difficult to avoid all contact.

After some time, it happened that a close relative of Gheorghe's died. This relative had no children and it turned out the Gheorghe had to arrange for the funeral and all of the things involved with it. The deceased had been one of the leading citizens in the village and custom required a proper, officious funeral especially since during his life he had served several terms as one of the epitropes (advisors) at the church. In his capacity as a nephew, Gheorghe attempted to fulfill his obligations to his uncle and to see that he had the type of funeral he deserved. He did all that he could to begin with and the time now came when he had to go to see the Parish Priest to discuss the funeral service. Gheorghe recalled his past dealings with the Priest and, considering the needs of the situation, decided that the best solution might be to go to see the Assistant Priest with whom he could make arrangements. He went to the young priest and asked him to invite the older Parish Priest to officiate at the funeral. Gheorghe said that he was willing to pay whatever he requested. In any case, the Parish Priest was needed for the funeral because this had been the wish of the deceased – he had requested a funeral celebrated with two priests.

The Assistant Priest went, as requested, to see the Parish Priest and told him that Gheorghe had requested his services for the funeral but the Parish Priest, on hearing this, became very angry and responded to the Assistant thus: "You can tell that cheat to come to see me to negotiate, not to send someone else. Otherwise, I will not consider myself properly invited and will not serve for the funeral!"

The fact should be noted that, at that time, important civic events were recorded at the parish offices and not at the council offices. The Parish Priest was the one who filed the information needed for a burial. Realizing that the Parish Priest would not come to the funeral unless he was invited in person, there was nothing Gheorghe could do – whether he wanted to or not, he had to go see the Priest. When he entered the Priest's house, Pojoga neither looked at him nor allowed him to kiss his hand as was the custom. Gheorghe bade his time, not taking offence at this initial rejection. He told the Priest why he had come and asked him to come, with good will, to the funeral of his uncle, a man who had served on the parish council.

In place of responding to him, Father Pojoga hit him with a torrent of sharp remarks. Gheorghe waited for some time and then responded: "Father, I have not come here to hear these words of abuse, but to inform you that tomorrow we must have a funeral for my uncle, a good Christian man and one of the leading householders in this village. He was a man for whom we are indebted to give a funeral of the type he warrants. Let us leave aside all these other questions and now let us discuss the reason for which I have come to see your Holiness."

Having heard these words, the Priest calmed down somewhat and asked what form of a funeral he was expecting, to which Gheorghe responded: "Father, your Holiness knows much better than I what kind of a religious service we should be having. I came here just to find out how much I must pay you." The amount that Pojoga demanded from Gheorghe was such a gross exaggeration that he did not know how to respond. The Priest then said he was in a hurry and left Gheorghe no room to argue because he had many other things to do. They had some further arguments and more squabbling but in the end, they came to some sort of agreement that

the next day the old Parish Priest would attend and serve for the funeral. They did indeed put on a very beautiful funeral with 12 "prohods" and with a beautiful service in the church. This was followed by an excellent service at the graveside where the old Parish Priest gave an impressive eulogy mentioning in detail the good deeds and pure life of the true Christian they were burying. It must be said, however, that the greater part of the service was in fact led by the Assistant Priest and the reader. Father Pojoga sang far less and mostly did the closing sections of the service. At the grave, the Parish Priest knelt down on the carpet that had been laid there and led the attendees in the Lords Prayer. At the end of the service the carpet was presented to him.

From the graveyard, all those attending, with the two priests in the lead, walked to the house of the deceased where a large meal ("masa") had been laid out. There were another set of prayers said there on behalf of the departed. Those attending were then given "pomana" (gifts commemorating the departed) and were toasted and fed in memory of the deceased. Everyone appeared to be very pleased.

Gheorghe turned to the task of paying the young Assistant Priest his fee, and then also the fees due the reader and the gravediggers. He left the old Parish Priest to the end so that he would pay him after all of the others. When the time came to pay him, he only gave him a quarter of the fee he had demanded. The Priest took the money but was clearly unsatisfied and left the yard saddened and without wishing those left behind a good day. Gheorghe finally had some satisfaction for being able to get revenge for the insults he had suffered. Not long after that, Father Pojoga threw out the housekeeper from his house because she had been the cause of much trouble and shame. From what I later learned, she returned to the village from which she had first come and was able to make up with her husband there. They then continued to live there together.

All of these unpleasant things appear to have angered Father Pojoga and he no longer was as talkative and hospitable as he had formerly been. He did continue to serve well and conscientiously at the church. He seemed however to be more restrained and much saddened. He had experienced many beautiful, cloud-free days in his life, but life was now becoming more bitter for him.

Almost without notice, time passed and now, many years after marrying off their daughter, Father Pojoga and his wife became more alone and lonely. They had hoped to have a grandson or granddaughter from their daughter's marriage, but that did not happen. After the marriage of the daughter, the Priest did not maintain as large a farming operation. He gave his daughter many gifts and retained fewer things for himself. He still retained control of all the church holdings.

During that era, priests had a great advantage. In addition to their salary, they had the use of the church house in the village where they had been appointed, the use of the church lands to cultivate as they saw fit and they received a quota of wood from the forests which were controlled by the Church Foundation of Bucovina (**TN:** see 2.3). They were thus in a good position right from the beginning. But this was not all. They had further income from the church because parishioners would pay for a special service and would bring "colaci" in memory of family members. At Easter parishioners would give money, "colaci" or eggs; at Iordan (Feast of St

John the Baptist) when the priest would visit the homes with 'holy water', he would receive bags of "fuior" (fibre of flax or hemp ready for spinning), or bags of rye, corn or wheat. Some might also give him some baked goods (a poppy seed cake, for instance).

In addition to all the items mentioned above, the priest would also be paid a fee for serving at a baptism, a wedding or a funeral. Also, he would do so again at the blessing of a new house, the blessing of a well, the saying of prayers at a "masa cu popa" (memorial meal with the priest attending) and for other events of that nature. Totaling up all of these sources of support, we can firmly conclude that the priests did not do too badly. While it is true that by far the majority of the income went to the Parish Priest, the Assistant Priest did not suffer either. While not all of the villages had such large holdings for the church or offered such richness, the number of priests was also limited. While some villages might have three priests, others might have only two or even just a single priest. We can conclude that overall, the priests could live in a dignified life with ample means.

Many people may question why the Metropolitan of Bucovina created such a state of material prosperity for the priests. The answer goes like this: The intentions of Vadita, the church head, were to shield the priests from temptation and the sins of greed. He believed that if they had a better situation in life to start with, they would not need to develop a trade or search around for ways to make money. They could then devote their lives and all of their activities to the church to spread the gospel to the populace in order to protect people from sin. This in fact was what happened in Bucovina in the past. Later, however, the situation changed somewhat.

The household and holdings of the Father Pojoga continued to go smoothly even after his daughter was married. The son-in-law would come for visits every once in a while but, as time went one, the visits became more infrequent. The daughter would visit her parents fairly regularly but after a while no one else came along with the chauffeur and the automobile. She had grown so fat that her husband had lost all his concerns that someone might have an affair with her.

Life continued in this way for some time and then Father Pojoga began to appear somewhat weaker and would tire easily. They called in the doctors from the town but they were unable to find a cure and he became even sicker. Perhaps they misdiagnosed the problem. He stayed in hospital for a number of stints but instead of improving, he slowly got worse and began to be very thin. From a strong handsome man who had been like one of the strongest oaks, he became a mere shadow of himself. He was fading day by day before their very eyes and the doctors could not help him. In the end he returned home to the village and the doctors would visit him to give him further medication. All attempts were futile and one Sunday morning the village was awoken by the pealing of the bells – 'The old Priest has died'.

The villagers of Voloca grieved the loss of their good Parish Priest, a man loved for his engaging and friendly manner as well as for his many other characteristics. After the funeral, the Priest's wife sold all that she did not need and moved in with her daughter and son-in-law in Chernauti. From what she sold, she accumulated a large sum to see her through her old age.

## 2.14
# Activities of the cultural societies between 1920 and 1930

After the end of WWI, the husbands and young single men who had the good luck to survive returned to their homes. More and more of them returned from different battle fronts with happiness in their souls. The village began to be reborn from the darkness and scarcities that those left there had endured through the war that had seemed to have no end. The war had lasted four years with no end seen in sight. Among those returning from the front, many had serious injuries but they too felt a great joy when they saw anew their village and especially their families who had been awaiting them with great anticipation. It was more painful at those households where those who left never did return. Unfortunately, there were many cases where neither the father nor his sons nor brothers ever returned to their homes.

The village appeared in terrible condition – barren and almost abandoned. Great shortages existed everywhere but the people, as always, wanted to survive and so they set to work. They began to repair their houses, to work their gardens, and to improve their yards. In particular, they looked to somehow acquire a cow or even a pig but livestock was very scarce. On three separate occasions the battle front had passed through the village and on each occasion the troops had taken all – sometimes it was the Austrians and sometimes the Russians.

After a period of unceasing hard work, the state of the village began to improve slowly and people began to enjoy a bit of the rest periods necessary for a normal life. For a while they grieved those who had died on the battlefields and they remembered them to their followers but this atmosphere of grief and yearning cannot nor must not last forever. Life requires its sense of fairness and normalcy and a more settled permanent condition.

The years 1918, 1919 and 1920 proved to be quite difficult. The Great Union took place but there were still many shortages and problems that needed resolution. Time, however, cures even the deepest of wounds and the villagers of Voloca began life anew. They began to live normal lives and started to enjoy once again social gatherings and weddings. Everyone looked forward to dancing and enjoyment because they had suffered far too long during the war. This applied equally to those who had gone off to take part in the battles as well as those who had remained in the village.

The first society to resume activities after the war was the Arcasul Society, which was also the one that had been established the longest. Around 1921 the Reading Society was also established. It was founded and sustained by a number of primary teachers from the school in the village. Within a short while, another society, named Trezvia, was founded. (**TN:** Coming from “trezi” – ‘the sober ones’.) It played an extremely important role at that time in the task of combating alcoholism. The activities of this society were felt deeply in the lives

of many homes in the village because, through it, many men gave up heavy drinking. This resulted in a highly beneficial effect on the health and welfare of people.

These three societies had rich and important influences on the artistic and cultural activities in our village going on to about 1930/31. There was a true national rebirth for these industrious Romanians of Voloca who had lived for almost a century and a half under the Austro-Hungarian occupation. The three societies competed in outdoing each other in improving the the overall situation, in broadening activities and in organizing popular gatherings and concerts in ways the village had never seen before.

The population felt a long-unfulfilled need for social gatherings and would come out in large numbers to assist in the setting up of these popular concerts. Younger as well as older men, husbands and wives, the old and the children, but especially the young girls – they all came to help. By custom, the gatherings would be held in a large attractive yard of some household and would have an entrance fee. The fee for entrance was small – 1 or 3 or 8 Lei.

Each society might prepare a short theatrical piece, often a comedy. For others events, the artistic program would consist of musical pieces, or poems or would begin with a talk given on a subject of interest and importance to the villagers. The artistic program would last about two hours after which the popular gathering would take place with dancing by the young people. The event would culminate with the large, group “hora”. The stage would be improvised within a storage shed or would be made independently from lumber and would be covered with some woven coverings. There was no hall for audiences or dances in the village. In addition to the regular villagers, some of the intellectuals would attend and take part in these events. The organizers of the event would also look after organizing a buffet for the event.

The popular concerts were very enjoyable because all the young men and women would be wearing the national costumes of Voloca and would dance only Romanian dances – some of them newer as well as some handed down from the old generation. One could read joy, enjoyment and enthusiasm in all of their faces. You could never get enough of the wondrous dancing done by the tall young men – handsome and tall as great spruce trees. It goes without saying that the word spread around quickly about the beauty and hard-working nature of the girls of Voloca as well. We should also add a note of appreciation for the musicians of that period who knew how to play authentic Romanian dance pieces. They also came from Voloca.

These gatherings took place in the summer and lasted from two in the afternoon until about ten in the evening. From the dances enjoyed at that time we recall the following: “hora, coasa, ardelanca, sarba, arcanul, rata, and batuta”. Most of the events were organized by the Arcanul Society which had as members some of the leading young men of the village. Many of them had served in WW I. Some of their names were: Ion Salahor; Pricopie, son of Artimon Semeniuc; Pricopie Paulencu; Isidor Ceuca; Pricopie, son of Isan Semeniuc; Vasilie Dohie and; Nichifor and Ilie Rahovie. In the first years after the war, Nazarie Paulencu served as the head of the Arcanul

Society. One place used for the gatherings was the yard of Veroantei Gheorghe Ungurean since it was large, attractive, and well enclosed. It was part of a showy estate.

Sometimes, in the spring and summer, the concerts were held in the woods and had a distinctive, attractive charm. The place used was at the edge of the woods in magnificent surroundings and near the home of the forester, Protiuc. The gatherings in the woods also had an entrance fee. Even though the location was far from the village, the youth of the village would readily attend and would enjoy the event in its pleasant surroundings.

The Reading Society organized many pleasant gatherings. The school teachers led all the activities and the society benefited from the comfortable seating in the school building. Members were recruited from the younger villagers who had completed their schooling. The prime objectives were cultural and artistic activities. The meetings were mostly cultural events with the artistic program consisting of well-balanced theatrical acts which included songs, poetry and lectures by notable authors who were recognized and to the tastes of the youth of the village. I attended and helped at some of these meetings organized by the Reading Society and found them to be very good - some were in fact excellent. Among the teachers who participated a great deal in the activities of this society, the leaders were Silvia Pojoga-Paulencu and Olvian Pascanu. The Reading Society provided a valuable contribution to the rural culture but played a minor role in organizing dances.

The Trezvia Society provided an immensely important service to the village of Voloca, combating alcoholism with great success. On the heels of its activities, the number of serious drinkers declined considerably. One might even say that it was a miracle because in many cases relaxation, joy and material comforts returned to many. During the earlier period, the number of serious drinkers of whiskey was very large and the lives of many families had been destroyed by this poison sold to them by outsiders. The women and children especially, suffered hardship, beatings, humiliation and shortages of money because of drunkenness. The Trezvia Society radically changed the lives of many villagers. Members of this society would not consume alcohol. At their events, one could only buy lemonade or carbonated water. After some time, this mode of behavior was accepted by most households in the village.

At the start, the society had a difficult time because it had been a long-established procedure to use whiskey in greetings and in business agreements but in the end the Trezvia Society succeeded in its mission. There were many who participated and gained greatly from the ideas set in place by this society. One of the people who lead the effort to implement and sustain the programs of the Trezvia Society was a modest and relatively poor man by the name of Traian Spataru. He was often exposed to insults and unpleasantries because of his activities. In the beginning the innkeepers tried to bribe him, then they tried to lure him with various temptations and, in the end, they tried to threaten him in many ways. But Traian Spataru remained with his convictions and would not bow his head to ‘Judas and his conspirators’. He remained steadfast and firm to the end – poor, but with a clear conscience. He had lived that way and he died that way.

The foreign innkeepers brought nastiness and attacks against the Trezvia Society because the society took 'much water from their mills'. They collaborated and they fought against the society but were unsuccessful. The people were awakening to a new life.

The members of Trezvia, young men and women, householders and their wives, all took action willingly in a campaign against drinking. All their theatrical plays, poems and talks condemned drink and drinking. In all the gatherings they would endeavor to show the deleterious effects of excessive drinking – effects both directly from the drinking as well as effects on the families of those addicted. Alcoholism was treated and regarded as an enemy, a truly national peril.

Like the other cultural societies in the village, Trezvia would hold events charging an entrance fee. These events were held to raise funds for its activities. The society did not have a meeting place of its own but met instead at the homes of its members. Many members of Trezvia were also members of the Arcasul Society or the Reading Society and vice versa. A good understanding existed between the three societies as well as a strong collaboration. The closest collaboration was between the Arcasul and Trezvia Societies.

It is necessary to reiterate that these collaborations bore good results which were reflected in the lives of the villagers and raised them to a higher road and a higher level of civilization and national standing. Volocans again returned to become front-line citizens, aware of their values, disciplined and hospitable.

Based largely on the activities of these three societies, the village was seen by the civil authorities of the region as one that merited serious attention. In this way, Voloca became a nationally-recognized center and a model for all those Romanians who had escaped long ago from Austrian rule.

## 2.15
# Gatherings and dances that took place in the past at the home of Grigori Vanzureac

As I recall it, the most enjoyable dances and gatherings that were organized in our village after WW I were those held at the home of Grigori Vanzureac. This gentleman had a very well established estate which was well looked after and was surrounded by fences on all sides. Around the outside of the yard were fruit trees and tall shade trees. Near the entrance there was a well with good drinking water. The location was a relaxed one and was protected from dust and wind. During the heat of summer, the location was pleasant and the trees around the boundary provided shade and cool areas.

The well by the road had a large windlass and bucket with which to draw water. Its surrounding area was paved with slabs of stone and it had a handy dipper from which one could drink water. The paving stones had been laid with craftsmanship and the well was finished with a cover. In the immediate area there were long benches made of narrow boards and saplings. All of these accessories were needed because this was a place to which many people came.

This was a much-used place both because of the number of people who came to dance and equally for the number who came to watch. Almost all of the village youth would gather there. The mothers of the young girls would usually come along as would many of the recently-wed couples. When a large “hora” was planned, many of the intellectuals from the village would come to watch these national dances and the costumes fancily embroidered by the girls. Young people from other villages would come to see our “hora” and especially to learn the new dances from us. The dancers would perform all the older dances (Romanian dances of our village) but they also used to dance to music learned from other villages or even other provinces of the country, particularly from Moldova and Ardeal.

The village of Voloca had many musicians and some of these were of the highest caliber. All of them were Romanians from our village. Customarily, a fiddler, a dulcimer player and a drummer would be hired for a dance. For larger gatherings, more musicians would be hired – perhaps a trumpet player, a clarinet player or someone on the double bass. A fee was usually charged for entrance to these events and fewer common people would attend, especially fewer of the youth.

Close to the edge of the property, near the house of Grigori Vanzureac, there was a steep slope and many seats of the type used in Moldova were set into it. Grigori Vanzureac had seen this arrangement there and decided to use a similar set-up in his yard. People could also bring their own separate seats. These personal seats presented some dangers to coming through the entrance way because they had to be passed high over the heads of the people. Only those with both courage and agility attempted these maneuvers.

The new array of seating at Vanzureac's was made with a good construction technique and everyone would rush to get a good seat. The seating would hold a large crowd from the springtime to the fall but especially so during the main holidays at Easter. Some people would sit on them, others simply sat on the slope and some just watched from below. All were happy and satisfied. Laughter, joking and good will abounded!! They were very grateful that the owner, Grigori, had been able to install something that had not previously existed in Voloca.

Grigori was a small compact man with a dark complexion and a pleasant appearance. With all the things he attempted, he proved to be honest and enterprising. From the way he considered things and then set ideas into motion, one could see that he was an intelligent man and a good Romanian. He served for a number of terms as a deputy in the local council for the commune of Voloca.

Grigori would come up with idea after idea which he would try to put into practice. Once, he decided to open a two-room restaurant in his house so that those who came to the events might be able to sample some delicacies and sample the odd glass or two of drink. The young men and especially the young landowners would often visit the establishment, as occasionally would the intellectuals from the village. Grigori also opened an outlet for tobacco and cigarettes.

Grigori never did try to make a big profit from his enterprise in part because he himself enjoyed the odd drink, sitting together with his customers. In this way quite a few of his clients enjoyed a glass or two of whiskey or rum at little cost because Grigori was neither a mooch nor a penny-pincher and he enjoyed passing his time with his customers.

Grigori's restaurant had two rooms; the larger one was used to serve his regular customers while the smaller one was frequented mainly by his casual clients. If it had been possible for the young ladies to treat the gentlemen who had asked them for a dance to a drink, then his business and his returns might have been greater. Nevertheless, his business continued and he was able to gain some profits.

Vanzureac was the first person to come up with the idea that it would be good to have a public bath where people could wash and clean themselves especially those working hard in the summer putting up hay. No sooner thought of, then implemented! Vanzureac made up a plan which he set about to quickly execute. At the end of a ditch near the slope, he set people to digging a room into the hillside. He brought in bricks and mortar and acquired a long pipe (conduit) to transport water from the well. He then made use of some small pipes and screen to generate showers. Not long after that he brought in a stove from town and a boiler tank to allow him to heat the water. Voila – the baths were ready.

These baths did function for some time but they did need improvement. Nevertheless, for the moment they served the need. Water flowed out of the baths through an exit channel and flowed eventually to a nearby stream into which it flowed via the ditch. This rather modest installation was somewhat primitive and could not

offer great accommodations and comfort. However, at the beginning it was still useful and worthy of praise. Grigori attempted to do some good for people and to provide his co-villagers with a service, and perhaps at the same time earn a bit of money.

As with every venture, at the start it is difficult to make a profit and one must wait for quite a while. Grigori did not prosper from his ideas and ingenuity. Too few people came to use the baths – some said it was too expensive, while others said they could equally well bathe at home. It is well known that rural people have rather tight strings on their purses and do not yield profits for anyone easily. Not being much used, the baths fell into disrepair and their condition eroded until finally they were defunct. The river eventually damaged them to a point where they could not be repaired. They simply proved unprofitable. Grigori had some other ideas to implement but not having the money, these ideas had to await a better time.

I thought it would be a good idea to expand a bit more on this story of Grigori Vanzureac, a villager of Voloca who strove hard to come up with something new and who wanted to establish new things in our village. He donated a part of his yard to be made into an attractive setting for dancers from the village when they wanted to move from the grassy area opposite Iosub's Inn to Grigori's yard. When this move happened, it damaged the custom and profits of the villager Iosub Singer, who was both an outsider and a non-Romanian. Once the "hora" moved to Vanzureac's, he had the task of providing good music and of setting up good dances – ones that were interesting and yet truly Romanian. Among those who sympathized with his aims was the teacher, Nazarie Paulencu, a native of our village. He introduced many new dances which he taught with great pleasure to the eager young people.

All of this took place in the years after WW I and after Bucovina had reunited with the Kingdom of Romania. These were glorious years of great renewal - years of joy and great hopes. The dances and gatherings held at Vanzureac's over that period were never equaled in their beauty. Many people came simply to watch the new dances being introduced and it was a time of great enjoyment for the participants as well as the observers.

There were many young men of the age who had returned from the front but over the next few years, a new generation of young men grew up who had not participated in the war. Similarly, there were many girls, some somewhat older and who had not been able to marry at the normal age because the men had been taken off to war. One could distinguish these because they were a bit past their prime. All of them nevertheless were attractive and were dressed up with great care and meticulous in their preparations. The young men treated them properly and with respect, granting them the attention they deserved.

With time, a new crop of young women, who were somewhat younger and hence more attractive, began to come to the dances as well and sought to take their places at the "hora". There was a large competition between the two generations of women and they both began to dress in constantly more-decorated blouses and flowery skirts so as to be most attractive to the men. No one had ever seen such wonderful costumes at the "hora" until that period. As large as the area reserved for dancing was, it was filled to overflowing with pairs of young men

and girls. People could not get their fill of watching and admiring. The most numerous group of dancers were those from the Arcasul Society. They organized the dances and would lead them. The ones who were the most imposing, the most attractive and the more serious were those who had been to war and who had the good luck to have returned home uninjured. All the girls desired to dance with these men. The mothers of the young ladies stood on the sidelines and watched how beautifully their offspring danced. They experienced joys in their hearts and perhaps in those moments remembered their younger days. Others watched with interest which men danced with their daughters and perhaps were making up plans for weddings. I do not believe that even at Easter such great crowds assembled as did for the "hora" at Grigori Vanzureac's.

Young married couples would also come to see the events. Around the edges younger boys watched the dancers intently, wanting to learn the steps. Even we, young school children, would go to the dances. We would go to the far ends or the edges and would grab a dance with the young men and women. We enjoyed greatly these national dances and all wanted to learn them. As young boys we would form couples and would join the older youths enjoying the sounds of the music. We greatly appreciated that the older ones never did shoo us away from their dances and allowed us to dance together with them so that we too could learn these beautiful dances. We were careful in our behavior and danced somewhat to the side so as not to rile anyone. Thus, we have ended up with unforgettable memories of that time even now, much later. All of this multitude of couples danced well, precisely and with great feeling and would have danced on and on had not the musicians felt a need every once in a while for a rest.

All of the population had a hunger for dances and gatherings, an understandable situation following the long absence of these events. This period of renewal and flowering of the Romanian songs and dances in the territory of Voloca lasted many years. Around this time, a number of men returned to Voloca from Canada and the USA, young men who had emigrated there many years before the war. They were overjoyed to see the state of the village and all of the changes that had occurred but especially to see the new dances which they had never seen before. They started to join in at the "hora" and in time they learned to dance the steps. Some of these men remained in the village, married and set up substantial households. Others, on the other hand, returned after a few months or a year to those far-away countries where they earned good positions in their lives.

Those who returned from Canada and the USA were accompanied by a reputation of having many dollars. Many of the mothers began to seek them out as possible son-in-laws. While it is true that most were handsome and very well dressed, not all of them were all that rich. They all watched with joy the dancing performed by couples but their greatest attention was attracted to those more manly dances which were accompanied by complicated steps and loud calls. Of these dances we recall in particular: "arcasul, rata and sarba".

On a number of occasions I observed these dances led by a handsome and intelligent man by the name of Pricopie, son of Artimon. He would stand at the head of the group and direct the dance, calling out all of the moves. He was an impressive person and the dances usually went very well with his lead. He had returned from

South America (Argentina), and after about two years he once more left for that region, from which he did not again return to the village. After a period of time, news came that he had been killed in a revolution.

There were many returnees from Canada and the USA, some who came purely for a visit, while others came with the intent of staying. Among the first were two sons of Gheorge, the son of Nicholai, who in turn was the son of Ursu. Another was Nistor, the son of Nica. From those who remained I recall the names of Petrea, son of Toderica; Toader, son of Pavaloaie; and Mitruta, son of Saveta , who came somewhat later.

I will note here also the names of some of the young men of the village at that time: Procopie Paulencu; Ionica Salahor; Nichifor Rahovei; Gheorghe Tocar; Toader Tocar; Nicholai Salahor; Gheorghe and Simion, the sons of Sandica; Procopie Semeniuc; Nicholai Tirlion; Vasile Dohie; Nicuta, son of Grigori who was the son of Haluca; and Nicuta's brother Gheorghe. Some others who were slightly older than these men were: Ilie D. Penteliciuc and Mitruta V. Penteliciuc.

Sometimes the Arcasal group of young men, numbering 60-80, would go to different villages to celebrate their large church festivals, "hram". They would be led by the teacher, Nazarie, son of Iluta. Their performances were always received with great admiration and respect. I will never forget "horas" and gatherings nor the highly-skilled men. These performances were the high point periods of the dances and also of the merriments and enjoyments of the past.

Although it had existed for a long time and had conducted many activities, the Arcasul Society did not have a proper home until the year 1930. It was founded in about 1906 and was very active from the very beginning, starting with the leadership of the priest Gheroghe Velehorschi and the teacher Dumitru Sfecla. The Society was never able, however, to obtain a proper home. During the early period, Bucovina was under Austrian rule and so this problem could not be put before the local authorities for consideration. For choir practices, the members of the Arcasul Society would gather at the home of the teacher, Sfecla, or in a classroom and, when they had a general meeting, they would hold it in the home of someone with a larger house. The lack of a place to practise was felt greatly and hindered the activities of the society but over that period and immediately following WW I, the society had no success in acquiring a building of their own. Many years were to pass before their desires could be fulfilled.

The activities of the Arcasul Society were abruptly interrupted in the summer of 1914 when war broke out. All the young husbands and single men had to go to the battle fronts. After the end of the war and the reunion of Bucovina with the Kingdom of Romania, the society could resume activities. Their first task was to reorganize and to elect an operating executive. To start with, meetings were held in the homes of some of the society members, but the activities they undertook were nevertheless most praiseworthy. Everyone was joyous that the war had ended and that they had been able to return to their homes. They all wanted to meet and to participate in activities in every possible way. They started off by organizing dances and singing events, and for the latter were aided by the teachers, Damian, from Cuciur village and Nazarie Paulencu, from our village. This

assistance extended also to a group of interested men, who wanted to perform national dances. The two teachers were good instructors and capable organizers.

The teacher, Damian, organized and instructed the choral group. The practices were held on the edge of the village on one of the slopes of the Cuciurul Hill, under the clear sky and usually between nine in the evening and midnight. There the Arcasul members from Voloca would assemble and await the arrival of Damian, the choral director. He would cross the Derelui River and would come down the large hill facing Voloca until he would reach the place of meeting – practice with the Arcasi would begin immediately. This is how activities began at first. They struggled with difficulty but with a desire in their hearts. No one complained that it was too far to go, that the conditions needed did not exist or that it was too difficult. They did not worry about paying or collecting money and the membership slowly increased to over 100.

The contributions of the teacher, Damian, to the preparation and organization of the choir require the greatest of praise. These activities took place in the years 1920-1921-1922. These were very productive years, filled with many activities. The period was shortly after the war and many things had to be started anew, in the main, with new participants because many of the young men of that period who had shown talent in singing never did return after the war. These losses were felt heavily by their families, by the village and by the Arcasul Society. Persons that I remember in particular who did not return were the two sons of Dumitrie Cocea, a son Toader Bojescu and Nicholai, son of Pricopie Salahor. This latter person was one of the most talented interpreters and player of “doinas” (melancholic songs) on the large flute (“caval”) that ever existed in our village.

With time, the losses were replaced and the society activities began to return to normal. The number of members in the Arcasul Society quickly recovered and at the same time the cultural activities began to be supplemented with theatrical pieces and the recitation of poetry. Slowly the need for a permanent home began to surface more and more. It was very necessary to find a location first, because the Arcasi did not have a parcel of land on which to start to lay the foundations. The committee had no place where they could plan such a building nor anywhere to be able to meet. It was becoming very difficult to hold practices or general get-togethers since now they were in need of more space. In particular, the choir could not meet on a regular basis to practice. The choir suffered as a result and its activities were rather restricted. Meetings had to continue to be held at the home of one of the members. This was also the case when they had to hold a choir practice, a rehearsal for a theatrical presentation or a rehearsal for “Irozi”, which they would perform during the winter holidays.

While the society did not have to pay rent in most cases, the activities could not continue for very long depending solely on the members to provide accommodation. These ‘home’ meetings would cause significant disturbances in the operation of the homes - they were noisy, caused minor damage, and brought in dirt. The housewife of the home would have good reasons to protest. The meetings and rehearsals would often last late into the night and those living in the house, especially the children, could not go to sleep and would miss their

needed rest. For these reasons, one can see that it was difficult to put on events without great inconvenience. Nevertheless, the society continued to operate even under these difficult conditions.

A presentation was made to the local authorities of the commune with the hope of finding a suitable location but those on the council responded that they had no available land to offer to the society. It must be said that if there had been a more friendly attitude taken and more understanding employed, the question of a location could have been resolved favorably. It appeared that the time was not yet appropriate.

However, around 1928, a good start began when a group of Arcasi led by Toader Mihaita, and including a number of committee members, began a concentrated negotiation on the subject. Their great good luck at that time was that the Mayor was Nicolae Gorda. He was a good man with excellent judgment, who approved their request and granted them a parcel of council-owned land right in the middle of the village.

Mayor Gorda was an honest man, modest and respected, who lived all his life as a bachelor. Because of his activities and his qualities, people had considered, nominated and then elected him to the post of Mayor. In the end, he set a good example for those who followed. Many of the intellectuals in the village had put a good word in for the Arcasul Society, and intervened both with moral and material assistance. The place allotted was on a grassy area near the dance ground and just across the road from the inn of Josef Singer. It was a place very well suited for the home of the society.

This decision of the location did not meet with the approval of the wife of the innkeeper, Iosub, and she set about trying to overthrow the plans of the Arcasi. She did not find it appropriate that a House of Culture would be built next to her inn. She claimed that in order for this to happen there should be some type of a consensus but it was just her attempt to ‘put a stick into the rotating wheels’. In the end, what she had feared nevertheless come about.

The Arcasi did not spend much time sitting about but set to work immediately. They dug the trenches, poured the foundations, brought in materials and began the construction of the building. All the sympathetic supporters lent a helping hand. Some donated money, others came with wagons to help with the transport of materials and still others donated lumber for the construction. Each of the Arcasi members committed to completing something, to contribute something, to raise some money or to find some necessary materials. Some of the Arcasul members were carpenters and donated their time to the construction without any pay. Many people and especially Arcasul members worked so hard at the construction that one was left to watch with great appreciation. There was a feeling of happiness and good will visible on their faces greater than anything seen in a long time. The building was rising like a miracle before ones eyes.

Many of the ladies and young girls from the village contributed to the effort either with work, cleaning up and whitewashing, or by preparing and bringing food for the carpenters. No one had expected that this home for the Arcasi could possibly have been constructed in such a short time.

The construction was neither very large nor very showy but it met the needs of the Arcasul Society very well. Not everyone, however, was convinced of that. The building had two rooms and an entranceway. A smaller room served as the office and library while the second, larger room, was used for meetings, choir practices and eventually for dances. There was great joy in the village when the home of the Arcasi was finally finished and blessed. Other cultural societies from the village, carrying the Romanian tri-color flags, took part in the inauguration ceremonies of the building. They were joined by most of the villagers from Voloca. It was a celebration for the entire village. Those who were the happiest and most grateful were the Arcasi, who now had their own home where they could meet anytime and in large numbers without disturbing anyone. From that time forward the activities of the Arcasul Society were able to evolve and increase in number. A period of expansion in activities occurred as had never been seen in the past.

Writing now about this important accomplishment for the Arcasi, I want to cite here the names of a few members who worked on the construction as well as some of the others who wholeheartedly contributed, in one way or another, so that this construction could come about quicker and who helped to speed the use of this location for the betterment of the youth of our village.

The President of the Arcasul Society was Teodor Mihaita, a young active and passionate man. In his efforts he was aided by: Mitruta, son of Pricopi, son of Dumitras; Pricopie Paulencu; Toader, son of Pavaloaie; Simion Semeniuc; Gheorghe Tocar; Simion, son of Dumitras and others. All of those who contributed 200 Lei or more were cited as Founding Members while those who contributed less were listed as Honorary Members.

The cost of the construction was paid for by dues collected from the members and money donated at gatherings as well a grant from the office of the Prefect for the District of Chernauti. At that time the prefect was Ion Iocoban. The lumber was obtained through the permission of the Forestry Authority of the Cosmin Forest.

## 2.16
# Activities overseen by societies, the formation of a choir and the results obtained

A number of cultural societies existed in the village of Voloca that fulfilled their mission well. Of these societies, the earliest established was the Arcasul Society which was formed before WW I, in the year 1906. The activities of this society were very fruitful.

The society had been led for a long time by school teachers and for a while the leader was the priest, Gheorghe Velehorschi. Turning to the teachers, the first one we should name was Dumitru Sfecla who organized a male choir within the society. As modest as this man was, he was equally hard-working, good of heart, and active over his time here. He had high values, a big heart and was the greatest of patriots. From all the things that he started for the village of Voloca, one could say that he was a good Romanian, a highly-respected man and that he had a clear vision. His heart grew as he watched how Voloca improved and he rejoiced time and time again when a saw a good deed or a beautiful creation. On the other hand, he was saddened beyond measure when he saw some of the people straying in some way or especially those who were falling into drunkenness. In the village there were many drinking houses, all owned by outsiders – people who were neither Romanians nor of our religion. These aliens were attracting people to heavy drinking, poverty and great losses. In many cases, our people ended up losing all their properties and ended up impoverished with their unlucky families while the outsiders lived very well, enriching themselves and were able to send their children on to higher education. Meanwhile, our villagers struggled, and they continued to struggle for many more years in darkness, humiliation and poverty.

These problems of their lives were recognized by our enormously great poet, Mihail Eminescu, who much earlier had raised to the heavens the spirits of the Romanians when he had written his celebrated “Doina”. He understood very well the conditions of the rural Romanians, and this becomes very clear even in the first verses of his poems. Eminescu described to perfection the grave dangers for the Romanians in this part of the country. Some people have sought to minimize the importance of these poems claiming that they should not be interpreted as such in the opera of Eminescu. It is certain beyond a doubt that he knew the conditions about which he wrote in his “Doina” and we cannot question his evidence.

Certainly, there were other intellectuals who also observed these dangers and warned that something needed to be done to raise the rural population from the dreadful state in which it struggled. Their beliefs were that the salvation for the population lay in literacy and culture and in particular, for the rural population, that they required education and improvement.

These missions began to be taken on by the intellectuals of the villages and the cultural societies which they needed to organize and to lead. Before too long, these societies began to form throughout the region of Bucovina. Leading these movement almost everywhere were the teachers. Other important contributors were some priests, other young intellectuals, and students of all ages. There was a lot to do and in the beginning it was quite difficult. The Austrian authorities did not see the formation of Romanian cultural societies in villages throughout Bucovina in a good light.

It was a difficult task to convince and to enroll the rural villagers into these societies. There were always those who would tell the people that these societies served no purpose, that one would just waste their time there, and that people would be much better off spending their time tending to their own chores. For some period of time, it was also said by these type of people that schooling was really of little value as well – the children could be better used to guard the livestock at pasture and other chores for which they could be useful. The rural population heard many arguments of this type but there were few (if any) who said that it would be an even greater loss and danger if they were to go to the drinking houses. There were some of the villagers who would say "Why should I send my child to school – I don't want him to become a priest." And here we are not talking about a secondary, but just a primary school. We see that there was a time when even primary school was seen as too much enlightenment for some of the rural population.

Those who were interested in the status quo knew that only in a backward state is it easy to twist things, to cheat and to gain advantage. Lack of knowledge and naivety allowed the artful, greedy exploiters to take advantage of the rural population. It was a difficult task ahead for the intellectuals in the villages. Even if they were not the most educated or trained of people at that time, many of them dedicated their hearts and souls to improve culture in the villages.

In Voloca, the person who set a foundation for this improvement in culture was the teacher, Dumitru Sfecla. His activities, carried out through the Arcasul Society, started near the start of the 20$^{th}$ century. The members of this society were the young men and the young landowners from the village. Their dress uniform was the national dress and on their chests they bore a crest with the Romanian tri-color flag. Some would have a belt, made from material of the three colors which they would tie around their waists. In the winter they wore greatcoats and heavy hats.

After a short period of preparation, the Arcasi began to organize popular celebrations and gatherings with programs that consisted of Romanian songs and dances. They would recite Romanian poetry and sometimes would prepare a short theatrical piece. Almost all of the village would attend these events. The celebrations would be opened with a few words or perhaps a speech on some topic. The introductory words were normally made by the president of the society who normally was a teacher or a priest. The national costume, which served as their uniform, was what they usually wore in the village. On major holidays or for performances, they usually wore costumes that were newer, somewhat more decorated and perhaps better made. The programs

produced by the society, in addition to using the Romanian language, the Romanian dress, and often including a "hora", also introduced many Romanian songs.

Endowed with good understanding and being musical, the teacher Dumitru Sfecla organized an Arcasi choir from young villagers. He taught the choir to sing a church service that had been written by Isidor Vorobchievici. Having learned this, the choir provided the responses to the services in the church in the village on Sundays and important holidays. But this choir was not restricted to singing church music; Dumitru Sfecla taught the Arcasi to sing popular and patriotic songs as well. Almost all the songs that they learned had a component of nationalism. Beginning as early as 1906-1907, the Arcasi from Voloca began to sing songs written by Ciprian Porumbescu, Isisor Vorobchievici, Eusbiu Mandicevschi and others. The hard work and organization of the teacher Sfecla in just 2-3 years led to an excellent choir that was a wonder for the village of Voloca.

This choir was, and remained for many years, the main activity of the Arcasul Society. I have written elsewhere that this society claimed to be, and was founded initially as, a society of volunteer firefighters. Dumitru Sfecla developed a rich body of work in our village. He was a good teacher in school, much loved by his students, but also a hard-working culture activist. He concentrated also on the mission of setting people to search for, and to recognize from where evil might arise. He became very saddened when he saw that even among those who understood the consequences, there were some who did not act properly.

When Sfecla observed on one occasion that many of the villagers were on their way with gifts in their hands to the wedding of couple not of our nationality and religion, he became furious. From a window in the house where he lived he stood deep in thought and sank in deep depression beyond measure at the sad spectacle he was seeing. This event and a number of other disappointments damaged his mental state. Very few people understood the deep hurt in his soul; he could not stand the humiliation and darkness in which many people were still willing to live. From these events he became ill and later died. The world war finished (1914-1918), the union of all Romanians came about, and decades passed, but the memory of Sfecla remained alive in the hearts of the Arcasi from Voloca.

Another cultural society in the village that was founded about 1920 was the Reading Society, which had as its home a room in the village primary school. It was led by teachers and had a rich program of activities. This society concentrated on spreading culture among the younger people, especially those who had completed their primary schooling. This society set about to maintain a contact with those who had completed their schooling so as to reinforce and extend the knowledge they had gained in their long years of attendance. Most importantly, it was recognized for enriching the knowledge in areas of agriculture and household economics. Two important persons who spend much effort in the activities of this society were Silvia Pojoga-Paulencu and Olvian Pascanu.

In the activities of the society, they would present theatrical plays when there were concerts organized. They would recite poetry, tell stories, read advice columns from magazines, present riddles, and also hold discussions on topics to which the young could listen.

Another cultural society that played an extremely important role in Voloca was Trezvia. It was formed just after WW I. Trezvia took on the difficult task of combating alcoholism. Anyone who recognizes the power of drink and drunkenness will realize how great the battle was to salvage people from this habit or better said, from this calamity. There were in Voloca during this period many drunkards because there were many drinking houses. There was a period of hard work needed to explain to the population, the young and more particularly the old, the effects of this terrible habit. This work was very hard and discouraging. The proprietors, who sold this poison, would not admit the effects of their profits. With interference or with axe handles (ie. beatings), they attempted to defend their positions. They had no hesitation in hurting society or its members, either openly, or as was mostly the case, covertly. Sometimes they did this with money, sometimes they offered free drink and they had continued to have success with the weaker people. The Trezvia Society had a difficult road and suffered a number of causalities. Nevertheless, in the end, it succeeded in its mission, ending almost completely drunkenness in the village of Voloca. Truly, this was a great accomplishment which the Trezvia Society did to the amazement of many. One of their greatest battlers was Traian Spataru. At buffets held at gatherings in the village no alcohol was served in any form, only lemonade, juices, soft drinks and other refreshing drinks.

The village of Voloca was great without alcoholism, without fights, without arguments and without scandals. The Trezvia Society achieved a miracle. This happened largely over the period 1925-1926. They were the best and most distinguished years for the Trezvia Society. Many women, wives and children, were extremely pleased over these results. They had formerly suffered greatly from the habits of their husbands and fathers, who coming home drunk, would start beatings and arguments.

(**TN:** There is some confusion in the text here. The typist who entered the Monograf into the Blog has probably mis-entered several sentences. The two sentences below, in brackets, belong much later in the text. We skip from Trezvia to a choir activity now. Another important note is that over the next few pages we hear in detail about this choir led by a Teodor Ionica – this Teodor is in fact our author, but he does not want to specifically say so.)

{The last president of the society was Teodor Ionica. He lasted through to the occupation of northern Bucovina by the Russians and then fled. The activities stopped.}

On 07 January 1934 a choir of ‘ploughmen’ (a rural chorus) was formed by young men from the households in Voloca. The initiative for the formation of this choir came from a group of young men who requested that Gheorghe, son of Ioan, son of Lupul, contact the student, Teodor Ionica, and propose that he organize and lead such a choir. The response from Teodor Ionica was positive and he asked Gheorghe, son of Ioan, son of Lupul, to generate a list of the people who were interested in such a choir and to bring it to him so that they could see if

there was a sufficient level of interest. Within two hours, a list was available, containing the names of about 40 young men. The list was able to be prepared in such a short time because the day was a holiday, the afternoon of the feast of St. John the Baptist, and many people had gathered for a "hora" at the clubhouse of the Arcasul Society. In addition, there had been some discussions among the men somewhat earlier with the aim of founding a male church choir in the village.

Impressed by the enthusiasm of the people to have such a choir, Teodor Ionica suggested to their delegate, Gheorghe, of Ioan, son of Lupul, that they should meet three days later at 8 o'clock in the evening at the home of the Arcasul Society to evaluate and class the available voices. On the designated day, almost all of those on the list appeared, bringing with them others who wished to take part in the choir. The evaluation and assignment of chorus voice parts lasted until almost midnight. A few people were not accepted because they lacked musical voices or had 'tin ears', but most by far were accepted as having voices well suited for a choir. A very large fraction of those chosen were already part of the choir in the Arcasul Society that was formed after the Great Reunion, while a few had been part of the original Arcasul choir formed by Dumitru Sfecla. One person in this latter category who we must make special note of was Constantin Rahovei, a bass of great talent. He was also a very good large flute ("caval") player.

On that evening we also established the schedule for choir practices. We decided on three practices per week lasting from eight to ten o'clock in the evening. The practices were attended regularly – they were missed neither by the director, Teodor Ionica, nor by the choir members. Very rare it was that someone would miss a practice, unless it was for some important reason, so great was the love of singing for these men. Regardless of how tired they were following their hard work during the day, they attended very regularly and were always eager to learn new songs, even though no one was being paid in any way for this work. All of this was being done from joy and enjoyment and truly, the enjoyment for these men knew no limits.

The results of their hard work were evident in a short time. By Easter, they were ready with a new church liturgical program for males, in four voice parts. For any choir director, this would have to be considered a great achievement when one takes into account the number of men who had to learn the music and the fact that none of them were able to read music and were simple farmers. Furthermore, their voices had no training and they were, in addition, heavily occupied with work around their households and in the fields.

We need add that, in addition, over this period of time, they had to work in the church to increase the capacity of the balcony and side balconies ("cafasul") for the choir. The church which was now 100 years old (in 1934) did not have side-balconies. Being a historic monument, they sought the permission of the Metropolitan in Chernauti for this change and, seeing the plans prepared by the carpenters, he approved them. Since the church had been built out of wood, the side-balconies were also built out of wood. The choir members contributed the necessary funds, procured the materials, made transport (horses and wagons) available to bring the materials to the church and were the skillful carpenters who completed the work needed. In the choir there were a number of carpenters who had built houses and other buildings. Among these we will cite for contributions were:

Constantin Rahovei; Simion, son of Dumitras; Nicholai, son of Maftei Gheorgescu; Toader, son of Mitruta, son of Timbalarului; Pricopie Penteleiciuc-Cochina; Ilie Guraliuc, and indeed, even the choir director, Toader Ionica.

Everything was ready in time for Easter. The church service in its entirety had been learned, the side-balconies had been completed and were newly whitewashed. The inauguration occurred on Sunday, the day of the 'Arising Of Our Lord', in the year 1934. There was a feeling of great joy and fulfillment in the hearts of the choir members as well as that of their director, Teodor Ionica. This accomplishment was also a great surprise for the believers throughout the village. The side-balconies had been added fairly easily with the help of good materials and the able carpenters. Any money that was necessary had been donated by the choir members.

The mastering of the church liturgical service had been a difficult task. The short time window had required a large effort and the long pieces were difficult to learn. Many of the choir members had never before performed in a local chorus nor had many of them had any voice training - in addition, none of them were able to read music. They had to learn the pieces by repetition and the time available had only been approximately 3 ½ months. The director found it necessary to increase the hours of practice. Instead of working for two hours, from eight o'clock to ten, the rehearsals took from eight to eleven and often up to midnight. Not a single choir member protested that the time was too long and that he was too tired. In the evenings, before everyone arrived, Teodor Ionica would tell them the news of the day both from within the country and in the world at large. He would also read to them interesting articles from the magazine, "Albina", from the newspaper, "Universal", and other publications that might interest them. Within the choir and at practices no political discussions were permitted – any publications that were read dealt with culture, art appreciation, or non-political topics. These lessons would last about a half hour or slightly more, until all of the choir members had arrived. Men did not own pocket watches at that time, except for the very few. Because of this, some members would arrive for practice a half hour early, while others did not arrive until eight o'clock or slightly later. During this interval of time we discussed things and read interesting articles, particularly those dealing with agriculture, health etc.

Practice would begin by 8:15. The music was learned in sections and was introduced by the first tenors. The first section of the piece was sung initially by the choir director using both his voice and a violin, so as to familiarize the members with the tune. If the passage was very difficult, the director would sing the piece solo two or three times, and then would ask the first tenors to do likewise. They would sing as close to his ears as they could both with their voices and with the violin and he listened to see if they had caught the correct interpretation of the piece. Any error was then quickly corrected and if the piece was difficult it would be sung by the director and the tenors ten times or more. If the singing did not go well, the director would choose one of the members and would sing the entire segment all the way through with that person 2-3 times and then would take another of the first tenors and do the same. In time, they sang as one voice. The rest listened attentively so that they could catch the nuances of the piece.

Following this, they would then proceed to the part for the second tenors, then the baritones and finally the bass. It was hard work for the choir members, but the work of the director was even harder. The choir members might take a break, but not the director. He had to work through the different parts and sing all of them. Breaks were rarely taken and often we forgot about them. We only stopped when someone committed an error outside the common ones or when someone made a joke that made the place roar with laughter.

Using the procedure described above, progress would occur, but the director needed to sing all the voices in turn. After that section was mastered by all of the voices, the entire ensemble would sing it. Then, the director would not sing but he would be listening to how the group sang and would see if each voice did its task properly. The singing of each segment by the full choir was repeated as often as was necessary. Once they had mastered one segment, they would move on to the next until the entire musical piece was mastered. In the end, the entire ensemble would sing the piece numerous times until the director considered that they had it correct.

In this manner, they proceeded with the entire liturgical service, from the very start to the end. They worked very hard and seriously until in a short time they were able to achieve success. For Easter Sunday the choir performed with the choir responses in the new side-balcony which they had built. Their aim was achieved and the hearts of both the choir members and of the church attendees were filled with joy and fulfillment.

After Easter in 1934, we continued to practice the liturgical service, to consolidate it in the memories of the choir members, after which we moved on to other church music for other occasions, pieces for concerts, hymns, etc. Each Sunday and important holiday, the choir would attend church to sing the prayer responses to the liturgical service. Neither the choir members nor the director were paid or benefited in any way for these efforts. Nevertheless, the choir had a need for a fund for a few particular expenses. To raise some of these funds, they began to practice the songs that were used on the occasions of weddings or funerals so that all Volocans would know of the existence of the choir and its capabilities. In fact, before long, the choir's presence was solicited equally for weddings as for funerals. Those who invited them would pay 100-200 Lei and feted the choir. Only the members themselves would avoid the payment if singing was requested within their own families for a wedding or a funeral.

It needs stating that the members of the choir did not pay any kind of a fee. The choir elected Simion, son of Dumitras, as treasurer because he was a conscientious, honest and respected man. He was the person who often boosted the spirits of the members and for his ways he was elected to hold and spend the money received from weddings and funerals.

In the summer of 1934 we began to prepare a secular program of music consisting of popular songs and choruses by different writers. We hoped to present these to lovers of music in the village at a large meeting or a concert. From the many pieces that formed our repertoire at that time I will list below some:

1. "On our flag" by C.Porumbesc

2. "Three colors recognized all over the world" by C.Porumbesc
3. "In the forest (you wish to hear)" by C.Porumbesc
4. "He told the gentleman he would come" by Gavril Muzicescu
5. "The ploughman and the soldier" by D.G. Kiriac
6. "Come, my brothers" (a canon) by Al. Podeleanu
7. "Our country calls us" by Al. Podeleanu
8. "Like a spring day" by Constantin Sandru
9. "Iancu's March" by Timotei Popovici
10. "Glory to God" by Beethoven
11. "O world, how beautiful you are" by Beethoven
12. "In the grove" by C.M. Weber
13. "The Night Hymn" by Silcher
14. "I leave, the forest remains" –popular song
15. "What lived in the past" –popular song
16. "Crossing the valley, dying of thirst" – popular song.

In addition to those indicated earlier, the choir also learned other liturgical songs.

In the late fall, and especially in 1934, the choir set to practicing Christmas carols and a 'little ploughman' ("plugusor") ceremony for the winter holidays, which were approaching. They also prepared the well-known, 'God grant you many years' ("Multi ani traiasca"), and other musical pieces used for celebrations. This required an intense effort with good results. The men would come to the practices regularly, with great enjoyment even though many of them were almost exhausted with their work in the fields. It was difficult for the director to understand from where these people obtained such strength, such joy and the patience that would allow them to continue to do this program, without any pay. Their young, amateur director, T. Ionica, was absolutely and completely dedicated to the singers. He never was tired out and dedicated his body and soul to the choir and the songs. The practices were held Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday evenings at the home of the Arcasul Society. The practice schedule was chosen to fit the convenience of the choir members as well as the director, who had to travel from Chernauti.

The songs listed above were learned during the period of 1934-1935. In summer, during the time of the long school vacation or holidays, more work could be done and it was easier – hence the progress was more substantial. Over time, the members of the choir improved their knowledge as well as the quality of their voices. The musical pieces became well known and in a short time the choir was able to produce an excellent harmony. This having being achieved, we began to put on concerts in the village, an activity that was completely new for Voloca. Before the concerts, we would hold a discussion period dealing with the needs and interests of the local householders.

Some Sundays during 1935 and 1936, the choir led by their director, Teodor Ionica, began to travel to nearby villages, on foot, to give the responses to prayers in their services. In particular, they sang in the Tisauti church in Cuciurul Mare as well as the Saliste church there, in the church in Corovia and in the church in Cehor. One Sunday, the choir gave the liturgical responses at a service held in the Chapel of the Metropolitan in Chernauti.

Also during these years, the Ploughman's Choir performed a program of Christmas carols and traditional songs at a gala organized by the National Theater in Chernauti, both times winning first place. There was also a competition organized between church choirs held at the St. Paraschiva church in Chernauti. The Voloca choir took second place; the choir from Cozmin took first place. Choirs from many villages took part in this competition and the battle for the top places was very close. We were very pleased with the result we achieved. With the experiences enjoyed over these two years, we decided to take part in a competition held at the Romanian Arena in Bucharest, which was organized by the Royal Fund for Literature and Art. We participated in this event in 1937 and 1938, on both occasions taking second place. The years mentioned above were the most active and successful ones for the Ploughman's Choir of Voloca.

Beginning in 1939, the situation in Europe worsened greatly. Huge concentration camps were established, people left for army units, for training, and in September 1939, the WW II started. The activities of the choir decreased greatly. We reached the point where almost no one was available to sing in church. Those left to sing in the choir were very few in number. Shortly after, in 1940, with the loss of Northern Bucovina and Basarabia, the choir suffered greatly also from the loss of its director, T. Ionica, who became a refugee.

In the summer of 1941, after the recouping the northern part of Bucovina, the director, T. Ionica returned to work in Chernauti and once he was settled in the town, he resumed his cultural activities in Voloca. He began to hold practices again, approximately twice a week, in the village, in the evenings. The choir was re-organized and activities began to return to normal. A number of choir members were no longer alive, but those remaining all showed up to do their duty. We re-established the old songs and began to practice a number of new musical pieces. This was the situation around 1941-1942 when a new cultural institute was established in our village, the Caminul Cultural Society. It was decided that the home for the Caminul Society would be the building of the Reading Society, which at that time had been reduced to organizing very few activities. Most of the remaining members of the Reading Society joined the Caminul Society. The Ploughman's Choir also became affiliated with this society. T. Ionica, the choir director, was chosen as President of the Society.

A number of new members from the group of intellectuals joined this new cultural society as well. This included a medical doctor, an agronomist (**TN:** "one dealing with agriculture and rural affairs"), the school director, Ioan Arghirescu, and the two priests, D. Ciobanu and V. Vasilescu. A schedule of activities was planned based on advice given by the council of the Caminul Cultural Society of Chernauti. The president, T. Ionica set about to set up the building allotted by the village council and obtained the necessary furniture. A library was also established for the Caminul Society and in a short while a radio was also acquired.

A plan was put in place for the activities of the choir. This plan set out the hours for practice on two days of the week in the evening when T. Ionica would come from Chernauti. After the practices, he would return to Chernauti that same night. Sometimes he would remain in the village overnight and would return to the town the next day, leaving early to arrive at work on time. From its very beginnings, the Caminul Society had a lot of attention paid to it by various civic authorities in Chernauti. They assisted in putting in place good conditions for its operation and placed at its disposition all of the materials that it needed. Because of this, the Caminul Society operated with good results. It had at its head a committee of intellectuals who could plan a serious program of activities.

The committee set about to organize concerts and cultural meetings, which had a rich program that was wide-ranging and interesting. It included the choir, a group of dancers and a theatrical group. Each concert would begin with a discussion on current events of interest to the villagers. The president of the Caminul Society and the committee had the task of preparing and running this program. Many other intellectuals and villagers were attracted to contribute in some way to the activities of the Caminul Society. We had a very good start. The choir activities went well and within a short while the dance group was organized under the leadership of Viorica Vasilescu and Alex Ionica. Somewhat later, the formation of the theatrical group took place, instructed and led by knowledgeable intellectuals from the village. The Caminul Society of Voloca participated in a competition of song and dance held in Bucharest, earning second place.

At the end of the summer of 1943 (**TN:** The original says 1934 – it probably should read 1943) a large competition of Caminul choirs from all over Bucovina, as well as two other judicial divisions from the north, was organized at Radauti. These other two divisions were part of the District of Suceava. The best choirs from the regions of Chernauti, Radauti, Suceava, Campulung, Storojinet, Hotin and Dorohoi competed with each other in an attempt to lead the class. Both mixed and male-only choirs, all dressed in national costume, all varieties of beautiful examples, took part,  They all presented well-chosen programs that were well prepared and which were pleasing to the audiences, and hopefully especially to the judges who they hoped to impress and gain their votes. Both the choir members and the director must prepare seriously for such a competition and work hard to obtain a good result. The overall competition was a spectacular event. In addition to the judges, there were important people from Bucharest and from the District of Suceava. It was viewed by many lovers of music from throughout Bucovina. All the events went smoothly, to the joy and appreciation of the audiences. First prize was awarded to the mixed choir from Rosa-Stanca-Chernauti while second prize was awarded to our male chorus of farmers from Voloca. We had a great joy and feeling of satisfaction for the results we achieved.

These prominent achievements would have led to even greater success, but there was great disappointment on the horizon with the state of the war in which we were involved. We were, in fact, in the middle of a war and after a while the situation at the front began to become very worrisome. The balance of power was tipping against us. We began to have more and more deaths and wounded. This required sacrifices from us and, in particular, new recruits were needed for the battlefront. The number of concentration camps continued to grow and soon there was no one around to work the fields.

Under these conditions, the activities of the Caminul members became reduced to a minimum. There was no one to work with nor were there those burning desires to undertake the activities. These losses began to be felt more and more and, in the end, paralyzed all activities.

A very difficult period emerged for everyone. We would awaken to find one or two refugees, whose stories were worse than those from the refugees in 1940. The front was retreating and was approaching the borders of our country. The population was in turmoil and began to prepare itself for a new escape from the region. No one ever came to the building housing the Caminul Society. Everyone had packed their bags and questioned when they should leave and which way they should flee. Under these conditions, the activities of the Caminul Cultural Society of Voloca, under the presidency of T. Ionica, ended. Ionica was a man with a great desire and appetite for the improvement of the village of Voloca.

The last president of the society was Teodor Ionica. He lasted through to the occupation of northern Bucovina by the Russians and then fled. With his departure, the activities stopped.

(**TN:** This last sentence has been repeated here from its earlier, confusing position)

## 2.17
# Education efforts of Ilie Repciuc, the Director of the primary school in Voloca

When Alexie Morariu left our village, the person who replaced him as school Director was Ilie Repciuc. This change-over occurred, as I remember, at the start of the 1922-1923 school year. Repciuc was a well- prepared teacher, had a good training, and had a sober and severe manner. He was correct in his ways and treated his work seriously. He was devoted, body and soul, to the school which he directed with great understanding and in the manner of a good caretaker. He did not permit misbehavior in the discipline of the school. Repciuc was accurate in his work and was always punctual. He embraced with rigor all his professional responsibilities. Firmness and correctness were two characteristics recognized by all in this Director, and they were appreciated by the higher education authorities. He maintained the school and the classrooms in excellent condition. The school library was replenished often and was improved greatly. He took great care so that not even the least significant book suffered any damage. Overall, everything was kept clean and in proper order.

Repciuc was often direct to the point and detested small talk. When he would open a school concert, his introduction would be short and concise – it was easily understood by all. When Pepciuc took over the primary school, there was still a lot to do. There were still some repairs needed and the school needed a number of improvements. The war had left a large amount of major damage. All repairs were completed with the help of the Mayor and the Commune Council and the furnishings were all obtained. Finally, the school could function in a normal mode – all the necessary changes were complete.

After he had put everything in order, Repciuc was able, in his free time, to turn to playing the violin. When he could find a partner he enjoyed dancing as well. This would take place mostly during the summer vacation when he was not so busy. He owned some property in Voloca as well as in Ceahor which he cultivated with expertise and which yielded good crops for him. He was helped in all his work around the household by his wife, Victoria. She was a teacher who taught older children than he did. Together, they were able to perform good work in the community and in the education of students.

The couple, Ilie and Victoria Repciuc, had four children, two boys and two girls. Another daughter, born in later years, and named Gratiela, died at the young age of about six years. The other four children grew up, attended school, and eventually established families of their own.

The oldest of the children, Traian, was a heavy-set, well-built, light-haired, handsome, clever and joyous young man. He finished his higher-education (“liceu”) at the Aron Pumnul School and went to Chernauti for further study. He played a prominent role among the students and, for a period, served as President of the Dacia Society. He was enthusiastic and well-organized.  He had also been a great help to his family as he was a hard-

working and reliable young man. He understood very well all of the needs of the estate. He was good at making and bringing in the hay, also at bringing in wood from the forest, and even at taking his turn with the other young men at mowing down the grain crop. Traian did not put on airs and was very popular and friendly with all of the other boys in the village who attended different schools in town. He was a very respected young man who was always ready to assist and who was careful and disciplined in what he asked others to do. He inspired credibility in his peers and was respected by all. Traian later established himself as a very capable employee and a good family man.

Stella, the second child, was an attractive girl who was well-built and intelligent. She was very sympathetic in nature and loved horseback riding. She finished four grades of "liceau" and then attended a commercial school. Following that, she met a priest and got married.

The third child, Virginia, attended the Polish Normal School (S.M.P.), graduating as a teacher. She then got a job somewhere and shortly after married a medical doctor.

The fourth child was a son named Leandru. This young man completed a few years of high school, and probably a professional course on postal and telegraph technology and later was appointed a functionary in the post office.

Ilie Repciuc remained Director of the school until he retired. For the entire period that he led the school, things went well – the learning took place under good conditions, good relations existed between members of the teaching staff, and the results of the education received were substantial. The villagers were very pleased both with the way the school was operated as well as with the results obtained by their children. It can easily be stated that the period during which the school in Voloca was led by Ilie Repciuc was a very productive period and experienced progress from all points of view. The standards within the village were raised substantially over these years. A continuing series of children from Voloca graduated to go on to further education in the town. Some were able to take the exams for entering high-school, others entered normal school and yet others entered trade schools, etc.

Cultural events, concerts and cultural meetings, all of them having programs that were well-prepared by the teachers, would be held at the school. A good basis was laid for scholarship and, for a period, a program of handiwork and the weaving of hangings was organized by Olinici Aspasia. Village students were able to learn to produce many attractive handiworks there. A second program of handiwork for boys was established by Ilie Penteiliciuc. In this program, the boys would learn to craft many tools normally used around a household.

Two teachers, Olvian Pascanu and Silvai Paulencu organized a school choir. They also established a small experimental garden plot on the grounds of the school where one could find some apple trees, grapes and vegetables that were raised by the students. Here they could learn some agricultural practices and get their first exposure to fruit and vegetable production.

From what we have written above, one can easily see that where there is a collection of good instructors, good leadership and collaboration, one can obtain good results. The village of Voloca had the great good luck to have industrious teachers who contributed to raising the level of life in the village. During this period when Ilie Repciuc was the Director, there were a number of other permanent teachers. Out of these we cite: his wife, Victoria Repciuc; Silvia Paulence; Modesta Cozac; Leontina Nichitovici; Niculai Nichitovici; and Nicholai Paulencu. Temporary teachers during that period were: Olvian Pascanu; Levitchi; Olinici Aspasia; Viorica Vasilescu; Ilie Penteleiciuc; Vasilas; and Varvara Salahor.

At the same time, there was a small two-room school run in the Hrusauti section of the village. It was led by Director Nazarie Paulencu who came from the main school. The second class was under the control of Minodora Vagencnecht, a young girl who had graduated from the normal school in Chernauti.

During those pleasant years of peace and happiness when Ilie Repciuc led the scholars in Voloca, many children continued on to other schools in towns throughout Bucovina. Some continued on to the Aron Pumnul high-school in Cernauti, others attended the orthodox religion schools, both the one for young men and the one for girls. Some continued on to the normal schools for teachers (a separate male and female one), some proceeded to technical and professional schools and some to the Choral school. Some students traveled as far as the Stefan the Great high-school in Suceava, the Dumitru Cantemir high-school in Cotmani, the high-school at Vatra Dornei, the normal school in Vascauti, the "gynasium" in Vijnita or the school of art and trades in Cumpulung. Some of these students successfully completed their high-school studies and continued on to different university faculties. The village was full of male and female students and scholars. The parents were proud of their children but they were also overjoyed with the efforts of the teachers in raising the quality of education in the village. Equally, the young people, returning home from vacation from the different schools provided the village with an amazing array of talent. Some of them donated time to assist the teachers in organizing pleasant concerts with theatrical plays, recitations and songs. The village and its inhabitants were bursting with pride and enjoyment under these circumstances.

Almost all of the young people would go back to the school during their long summer break where they were quickly welcomed by their former teachers and in particular by the entire family of Ilie Repciuc. With this family, many of them got their first lessons in etiquette and life in the civilized world because as villagers, we had not learned how to sit properly at the table, how certain foods needed to be served, or how to use our cutlery.

With these lessons we were able to learn a more cultured manner of speaking, some rules of etiquette, and also how to act in public. The family of Ilie Repciuc at some time served a meal or entertained with coffee or delicacies almost every student who went to school. They would always invite someone for every possible occasion.

The Repciuc family also owned a gramophone and many records. With the music from this gramophone, I learned my first dances while I was still a student. This situation continued unchanged for many years until most of us graduated. The home served as a modest, first school of dance which proved very valuable later in life. In addition to the girls of the house, other older students would attend so that we would have many people to dance with on holidays or Sunday afternoons. Some days, so many young people would assemble that the rooms of the Repciuc home could have been mistaken for the rooms in the Camin Cultural Center, but nevertheless, we were all always welcomed. On many Sundays during the summer holidays, or even during the holidays around the Christmas period, the school served as the place for a reunion of all the young people from the village. We used these occasions to gather, and they served as a time for singing and especially for dancing.

The school Director, Ilie Repciuc, joined in on some of the dances, since he greatly enjoyed them. Almost regularly, these memorable gatherings of young people would end with tasty goodies or something more substantial. The family of Ilie Repciuc was relatively wealthy, was very hospitable and generous. All of these gatherings of the young people would end with song, dance and good will.

This was the golden age for the village of Voloca and those of us who were young people during that time had the privilege to be able to enjoy and live those days of dreams and stateliness.

## 2.18
# Intellectuals rising from the ranks of villagers from Voloca

The area fondly referred to as Voloca has produced many worthy people. A very large majority of Volocans are good, hardworking, diligent and understanding persons. They are modest in nature, are reliable and are good householders and neighbors.

If we go by the proverb that states: “man blesses the area he occupies,” then these people have transformed the land on which they settled into a heavenly garden. Little arable land initially existed but, on the other hand, much land was available. This situation determined the role for the settlers and long occupied those who worked the land using their attributes. They became involved in agriculture, animal husbandry, raising bees and honey and growing silkworms. Those who owned less land, took up other trades to earn their livelihood. Someone once said that Voloca was heaven on earth, where milk and honey flowed. These words were true because that is in fact how it seemed to be and how he, therefore, characterized it. In fact, everything the villagers achieved was via intense labor, and through their diligence and hard work. These characteristics were essential to start with and, in the poorer years, were critical just to survive.

Those who remained here over the years, as well as those who were torn away by terrible disasters and were driven to other regions, showed evidence of strength, strong will, and an ability to work that could not be imagined. They survived those greater obstacles and faced the cruelest adversities but never left their goals disappear. In the end, they were victorious and were reborn. They knew how to maintain good households, they built good barns and houses, they built good wells, they acquired all the tools needed for a complete household and they worked their fields with sufficient knowledge to be able to grow their needed foods. Even in the earliest of times, they learned to plant and graft fruit trees and around most houses one could see well-pruned trees loaded with fruit. You would see all kinds of fruit. Near the houses they made gardening rows for vegetables and near by were flower gardens. At the same time, some succeeded to acquire knowledge in the raising of cattle and sheep while others raised bees or butterflies for silkworms.

As the population increased and the size of the village grew, roads were straightened, enlarged and paved. The yards of the households became encircled first with fences made of saplings and later with pillars and boards. The gates leading to the properties were built with, and carved out of wood.

The villagers of Voloca built a school, the Camin Cultural Center, the Arcasul Society home, a drug dispensary and a maternity station, but before all of these, they built a large church and two parish houses for the priests. They founded a cultural society and, with the improvements in their economic status, many of the villagers from Voloca sent their children away to different schools in the towns. Summing it all up in an expression, “the

villagers of Voloca tried to turn their village into a model village". They struggled hard and adjusted to life so that, to a large measure, they achieved this target. There is still much to write about their accomplishments and about their hard work and proper ways of conduct, but we will review that in other sections. Now we have the task of describing the accomplishments of the intellectuals and educated people who originated in Voloca. That is to say, we will discuss what schools they went on to from the village and what they achieved.

Starting around the start of the 20th century the church reader, Pojoga, sent two daughters to a pedagogical school in Chernauti. They graduated from there as teachers. Their names were Victoria and Natalia. After these two girls were finished, he sent a third girl, Silvia, to this same school and about two years later a fourth daughter, Felicia. All four of the girls graduated as teachers and three of them served long terms as teachers, for some periods in Voloca. The fourth daughter, Felicia, married a teacher from the village of Bobesti, where she got a teaching job.

Around the same period, a farmer from our village, Grigori Onufreieiuc, sent one of his sons, Ion, to "liceu" (high-school) in Chernauti. It was a very bold move at that time for a farmer to send a child to a school of higher learning. Grigori, who was sometimes known as Nica, was a clever man but did not own much property. He served on the commune council a number of terms. The son continued on with his schooling and graduated as a military doctor with the rank of Colonel. He later completed his required years of service. Another son of Nica became a court clerk. There were some stories about the existence of a third son as well.

About ten years before the start of WW I, two sons of a farmer, Nicului Bodnari had been sent to professional schools. These two sons, Iluta and Dumitru, eventually worked as officials on the railroad from Suceava. At first, life at the school was difficult because they were of their peasant background and they often ran away from school but, in the end, they succeeded and were able to enter the civil service.

About two or three years before the start of WW I four more sons of peasants from the village left for school in town (Chernauti). Two of them returned almost immediately, but the other two, Nazarie Paulencu and Ion Salahor, remained at the school until the outbreak of war, when their classes stopped. After peace returned, they resumed their studies. Nazarie Paulencu served in the school as a substitute teacher while Ion Salahor continued on to an automobile driving school and became a chauffeur. This was the state of affairs at the time of the Great Union (1918).

Another young man, Traian, the son of the teacher, Ilie Repciuc, had also been sent to "liceu" before WW I but his studies were interrupted by the war. He also continued his studies after peace was signed and after graduating, he entered the Faculty of Law. After receiving his license he was installed as an administrative functionary and a notary.

After the end of WW I and the Great Union, a flood of children left to study in the towns. They went to "liceu", normal school, "gymnasium", professional school, trade schools, etc. Among those who completed "liceu" and university are the following:

- Teodor Cocea - completed "liceu", Faculty of Law and became a lawyer
- Nicolae Pentelescu - completed "liceu", Faculty of Theology and became a priest
- Teodor Onciulescu - completed "liceu", Faculty of Literature and became a professor. He continued his studies in Rome where he obtained a Doctoral degree
- Vasilie Paulencu - completed "liceu", Faculty of Theology and became a priest
- Teodor Ionica - completed classic "liceu", Faculty of Law and State Affairs and became a functionary and a professor (**TN:** This is our author.)
- Dumitru Nichitovici - completed "liceu", Faculty of Theology and became a priest
- Silvestru Pascanu - completed "liceu", Faculty of Law and became a functionary
- Teodor , son of Mihalutosie Pentelciciuc – completed "liceu", entered the Faculty of Mathematics but died while still a student in 1931
- Teodor Luca - completed "liceu", Faculty of Law and became a lawyer
- Gheorghe Todiras - completed "liceu", Faculty of Literature, became a professor and later an administrative functionary
- Ion Onofrei - completed "liceu", Faculty of Literature and became a professor. He continued his studies in Rome where he obtained a Doctoral degree
- Traian Grigoras (who moved to our village) - completed "liceu", Faculty of Law and became a lawyer

In addition to the four daughters of the reader, Pojoga, we must add Valeria, the daughter of Spiridon Porfirean, who worked in the village after the Union and who later got married and became a post mistress in the Dulgheru section of Chernauti where she had moved. A brother of hers, Modest, completed "liceu" and then became a book-keeper at the Electric factory in Chernauti.

We continue with our list of young men and women who went to normal school after the Union. We list:

- Leontina Nichitovic - graduated as a teacher
- Nicholai Nichitovici - graduated as a teacher
- Varvara Salahor - graduated as a teacher
- Agripina Ungurean - graduated as a teacher
- Pricopie Chiascu - graduated as a teacher
- Viorica Salahor - graduated as a teacher
- Zenovia Hlopina - graduated as a teacher
- Nicolai Paulenco - graduated as a teacher
- Alecu Paulencu - of Volocan origion, graduated as a teacher
- Ilie Ungurean - graduated technical school and became an architect

- Gheorghe Hancu - completed "liceu", became a civic functionary
- Teodor Paulencu (from Hrusauti sector) - became a functionary
- Gheorghe Penteleiciuc - trade school and became a health agent
- Dionizie Nichitovici - became a agronomic functionary
- Nicholai Lupascu - weather statistics functionary and inspector
- Gheorghe Luca - cantor
- Nicholai Luca - cantor
- Gheorghe Halunga - bookbinding foreman
- Vasilie S. Guraliuc - foreman
- Teodor Hrezliuc - foundary foreman
- Vasile A. Guraliuc - cantor
- Gheorghe D. Penteleiciuc - functionary
- Marin Popovici - functionary
- T. Paulencu - functionary at CFR
- Dumitru Milosinschi - functionary
- Padurar I. Georghita - medical orderly
- Vera Rahovei - medical orderly
- Domnica Rahovei - medical orderly
- Zamphira Hlopina -medical functionary
- Maxia Hlopina - functionary
- Valeria Oberhofer - medical health corps
- Nazarie Ursuleac - non-commissioned officer, then a functionary
- Virginia Repciuc - teacher, later a functionary
- Leandru Repciuc - postal functionary
- Gheorghe Simionescu - commander of the military firefighters
- Teodor Simionescu - engineer

The last three persons were promoted and appointed after 1944. Others who continued with their schooling in the country after 1944 and who were appointed to positions were:

- Aurelian Penteleiciuc - pediatrician
- Felicia Ungurean - teacher
- Maria Rahovei - medical nurse and later a functionary
- Nicolai Rahovei - non-commissioned officer, later a functionary
- Stela Repciuc - school of commerce

- Elisabeta Lupuleac
- Dumitru, son of Ilinchii Penteleiciuc
- Orest Pascanu
- Cornel Pascanu

From those named above: professors, priests, lawyers, non-commissioned officers, teachers, functionaries, engineers, tradesmen, health corps, cantors, etc., almost all of them returned to and lived in Romania. Very few left for foreign countries. I can name but a few;

- Teodor At. Penteleiciuc - student in mathametics
- Ilie Ungurean - architect
- Gheorghe Todiras - professor but later returned to Voloca to die and is buried there
- Dumitru, son of Ilinchii Penteleiciuc - died trying to cross the border
- Nicholai Paulencu - teacher, died during a journey and
- Ion Onofrei - professor, died at the front.

Of the people who did go to foreign countries, T. Onciulescu and Leontina Nichitovici, who were married, moved to Napoli in Italy. Dumitru Paulescu lives in Brasilia and Simion Bodnar is a master pilot in the USA.

The majority of students from Voloca completed their studies in Bucovina, mostly in Chernauti (this was while the entire province of Bucovina was under the control of Romania – until 1940.) The youngest of the above group were often refugees and had to do their schooling elsewhere. Because some of them became refugees, they had to interrupt their studies and never were able to return to them. It is true that even before the occupation of northern Bucovina by foreigners (**TN:** Ionica does not say Russians), many children did not attend school because of their financial situation, as well as other reasons. Many missed the last three or four years of "liceu". Most of these people entered different industries or work that was suitable to their capabilities. Some gained qualifications in different lines of work, or trades as opportunities, persistence or luck allowed.

A son of Ion Salahor emigrated to Australia where he married a lady from Greece.

After 1944 many young and even older refugees from Voloca took courses to become certified in different professions. They were often able to get good jobs. Simple farmers, people who would hire themselves out, and garden workers were able to succeed and to rise to honorable positions because of their knowledge, hard work, and proper manner – all of which were respected. Examples were: N. Maniala; Ilie Misaita; Radu Onufreiciuc; Mihai Rahovei; etc., etc.

Among the older students, I missed Teodor Strutz who completed four years of "liceu" and a professional school for postal and telegraph workers. He worked in Bazargic and later in Bucharest. I recall also Militan Porfirean and Gheorghe Olintiriuc from the textile trades. Perhaps I have not mentioned all of those from

Voloca but nevertheless, the number of intellectuals, professionals or tradesman is quite large. This is testimony to the fact that Voloca produced many quality people. Kudos is also due to the teachers from the village. They were the inspiration for this great flood of learning.

## 2.19
# Consumers cooperative in Voloca
# The Association for Insuring Animals

After the Great Union in 1918, Bucovina, including Voloca, experienced a great transformation, as we have discussed in previous chapters. All commercial activities and the sale of alcohol had previously remained in the hands of strangers. For this reason, measures were put into place quickly to correct this. The Romanian authorities attempted to assist the villagers in establishing a village cooperative. The needed capital had to be raised from within the ranks of the cooperative members and the members were the ones who also had to conduct the affairs and acquire the inventory needed. Each member of the cooperative signed on with a membership of 1000 Lei and became a founding member. The goods were sold to the villagers at fixed prices and the profit made on products was kept modest. From the profits, the merchant was paid as were the freight costs for the goods, the rent, maintenance costs, lighting costs and the heating costs in cold weather. Finally, some dividends were paid to the members in proportion to their capital outlay.

In theory, it would seem that the setting up of the cooperative would be simple and easy but reality proved totally otherwise. Many difficulties and problems appeared before the villagers learned how to negotiate and to get the system operating. It was manifestly obvious that the desire existed for emancipation and for the work towards a better and more dignified life but the people lacked the necessary experience. As a result, there were many costly errors made which damaged the good work done by the cooperative. The people did not know how to organize the work efficiently nor to operate the enterprises properly.

Another problem was the fact that some of the villagers would not support the cooperative in any way. They would not even come to purchase goods from the cooperative but instead continued to go to the shops of the foreigners, who would fleece them to no end. It was a difficult battle with many losses during which the cooperative learned many valuable lessons for the future. In this battle the cooperative was assisted and encouraged by some intellectuals from the village and by the authorities. With their assistance they were able to organize a school to learn the mercantile business. What in the first years had seemed very difficult to achieve, in later years they succeeded as long as people were united and worked with competence and good intentions. In this manner, a successful cooperative was born in Voloca. But how very many holidays and how very many nights were needed to enlighten the people about the purpose of the cooperative, how it needed to be conducted, its mission and what good it would bring!!

Certainly, it took a long time until the cooperative reached its desired form. It needed many big efforts, much patience, much understanding and much perseverance but most precious of all, an unbounded love for the villagers. Many teachers and intellectuals blessed with these qualities worked on behalf of the villagers in the villages where they lived.

The cooperative in Voloca had a good start. Some of the leading, hard-working members at the beginning were: Ion Bojascu, Constantin Rahovei, Toader Onofreiciuc and others. The merchants appointed were not always up to the task because they had not been properly trained. When one is dealing with money, valuable goods or materials, one needs to appoint people who are careful to be accurate as well as reliable persons. One does not always succeed in this. Nevertheless, the cooperative had the opportunity to progress and to educate but the times were cloudy. Just when the work had achieved some success and a healthier business emerged, a very serious impediment appeared – the year 1940 – when everything was turned upside down. The cooperative in Voloca too was gravely affected and was then disbanded in the wake of these tragic events.

The 'Association for Insuring Animals' was an organization formed among the villagers of Voloca, with the scope of insuring against major losses, those among them who had suffered the loss of livestock because of an accident or disease. This organization enrolled those villagers with large-horned livestock – cows, bulls, oxen, heifers and calves. The decision to form this organization was well received and it was supported mostly by the owners with larger holdings of cattle. Because of the existence of this organization, many villagers benefited. They used the organization to supply them with money to buy a replacement animal when they had lost one, without having to go to too great an effort. This was especially true for the poorer people who might just have a single heifer or cow. They were greatly relieved with the existence of this organization, without which they could not have bought a replacement animal.

The method of operation for the organization was ingenious and yet quite simple. In the very beginning, it was decided that the method of operation should be simple, not have very many formalities and should have little paperwork so as not to use up precious time. It envisaged a simple fee. It was decided that all those households that owned cattle and who wished to take part in the organization would sign the register. This measure was put in place by a provisional committee composed by a number of respected farmers who had large herds. This committee convened a large meeting of the villagers for the purpose of explaining the mode of operation and the function of the organization. At this meeting it was decided that the committee should have two delegates from each sector of the village. The delegates should be well-known to the people from that sector. The new committee formed from these delegates agreed to work without fee for a specific period of time after which they would be replaced by new delegates chosen from the households to replace them. In terms of the operation of the association and the payment for losses, they decided that if the animal died because of an accident, the animal would be butchered and the carcass and hide would be sold. This would only be the procedure used if the animal had otherwise been healthy. If the animal had been sick or diseased and had eventually died, then it must be buried. This decision would be made by the committee and a veterinarian.

The householder caught in a situation, where his animal was killed in an accident or if it had died, would contact one of the delegates from his sector of the village. The delegate would then contact the full committee. They would then assemble at the farmer's yard where, after reviewing the actual situation, they would determine the value of the loss, or put another way, the committee established the price for the accidentally-

killed or diseased carcass. This evaluation was based on the age and quality of the animal as well as the price of hides. Once this price scale had been established, it remained fixed for all people.

If the animal was accidentally-killed and had been healthy, it would be butchered. The hide would then be sold to the tannery and the meat would be sold to villagers, to butchers or to a restaurant. The committee collected the total money from the meat and hide sales. The money realized from the sale was supplemented by money raised from those who joined the organization to add up to the total price established for the loss of the animal. For example: In the case of a cow that had been evaluated as worth 3000 Lei (if it had been sold alive), assume they obtained 1800 Lei for the meat and 600 Lei for the hide. These two amounts lead to a sum of 2400 Lei. There remains a total of 600 Lei to gather from the members of the organization. If now we suppose the association had 60 members from the village signed on, then the money to be collected would be divided to the sixty members  600/60 = 10 Lei. Thus, each member paid the delegate 10 Lei. The delegates then forwarded the money to the committee who made up the sum 1800+600=2400+600= 3000 Lei.

If the cow had been sick and hence could not have been sold, then it needed to be buried. It would have been evaluated in the same manner as above. In this case, however, the entire sum had to be raised from the contributions from the members of the association. The portion due from each was therefore substantially higher (in each case the “dues” were based on the actual cost.)

Somewhat later, a modification was made in the question of the dues from each member so as to arrive at a more equitable situation. The portion due was now to be based on the number of animals rather than the number of members. If a person had one cow they paid one portion, but if a person had two or three cattle then they would have to pay two or three portions.

As soon as the committee collected the money from its members, they would approach the member having lost the animal with the entire sum. This operation normally took place quite quickly, typically in a week or just a bit more. It depended heavily on the credibility of the committee members who were householders with good reputations in the village. They had been elected by those who were satisfied with their reputations and they continued to show good judgment. The good spirits of honest householders played an important role in the activities of this Association for Insuring Animals. The activities continued over a period of quite a number of years without any irregularities or unhappiness. Without laws, without paperwork, and without complicated formalities, people were able to cooperate well and were satisfied that the Association functioned as it should and would come to help in their time of need. It can truly be said that the Association brought an important service to the villagers the entire time that it existed.

Both the Association and the village cooperative, about which we have written above, played important roles in the improvement of life for the villagers. They helped the villagers learn to be considerate, to be good householders and to do things by themselves and for themselves without being exploited by strangers.

These good beginnings were terminated in the summer of 1940 when, with an ultimatum issued by the Soviet government, the northern part of Bucovina was taken away from us.

**2.20**

# General census of the Romanian people in the commune of Voloca on the Derelui, within the district of Chernauti, taken on 29 December 1930

On 29 December 1930 the population living in Voloca stood at 3589. Broken down into ethnic background there were:

| | |
|---|---|
| • Romanians | 3505 |
| • Germans | 32 |
| • Ruthenians (Ukrainians) | 2 |
| • Poles | 19 |
| • Jews | 31 |
| **Total** | **3589** |

In Voloca, Romanian was spoken except by those of ethnic origin, who nevertheless used Romanian to speak to Romanians in the village. Within their own homes they spoke their mother tongues, that is to say German, Ukrainian, Polish or Yiddish. Sometimes they used Romanian at home as well.

The religion of the people of Voloca was Orthodox, except for a few Roman-Catholics and a mosaic of others.

By age, out of the total population of 3589

- 3015 were seven years of age or older
- 574 were under seven years of age

Broken down by sex and age:

- for those seven years or older; male 1398, female 1617

Turning now to the question of literacy:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Literate** | **1428** |
| • male | 789 |
| • female | 639 |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Illiterate** | **1587** |
| • male | 609 |
| • female | 978 |

The results above show that those not knowing how to read and write exceeded those who did by 159. Furthermore, the breakdown shows that among those who could read and write, the males exceeded the females by 150. For the case of the illiterate, females outnumbered males by 369.

Turning now to level of education for the 1428 literate people the breakdown was as follows:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| • primary school only | male 746 | female 611 | total 1357 |
| • secondary and university | 34 | 15 | 49 |
| • professional | 5 | 8 | 13 |
| • out-of-school (self-taught) | 4 | 5 | 9 |

During the year 1930 there were eleven students studying at university:

- Nicholai Pentelescu - theology, son of a rural villager
- Teodor Onciulescu - philology, literature, son of a rural villager
- Dumitru Paulescu - law, son of a rural villager
- Teodor Penteleiciuc - mathematics, son of a rural villager
- Teodor Cocea - law, son of a rural villager
- Vasile Paulencu - theology, son of a rural villager
- Dumitru Nichitovici - theology, son of a rural villager
- Traian Repciuc - law, son of a school teacher
- Traian Grigoras - law, son of a priest
- Silvestru Pascanu - law, son of a cantor

All of the students named above successfully completed their university studies except for Teodor, the son of Tanasi Penteleiciuc, who died in 1931.

The number of students from the village at secondary schools was large in comparison to the population enumerated in 1930. Some attended the “A. Pumnul” “liceu” in Chernauti, others the Orthodox “liceu” for boys, or the one for girls. Yet another group attended the two (male and female) normal schools for teachers in Chernauti. A smaller number of students continued to the “liceu” located in Cozmin and to the “gymnasium” in Vijnita. Several attended the “liceu” in Vatra Dornei. One lone student attended in Suceava and another graduated from the normal school for teachers in Vascauti.

Few students attended the professional schools, especially the one in Chernauti and only one was at the trades’ school in Campulung.

Four students attended the school for cantors (church music) in Chernauti. Two or three young men did their apprenticeship at the CFR workshop in Chernauti and about the same number were following an apprenticeship program as boot makers and iron mongers.

The number of young men sent off to higher education far exceeded the number of girls. This was the result of the long-held mentality of rural villagers that girls really did not need a higher education. For them, the main task was to know the needs of a household and to be good housewives. For this reason the parents worked hard at keeping the girls away from higher education. The impediments placed by those who would not allow their children to attend school did not always succeed. Many of the young men would strive to attend school because they wanted to be able to read and write when they entered the army where these were essential skills. Many more of the poorer young men had ambitions to someday become more substantial landowners and heads of families and once again there was a need for literacy.

Nevertheless, the number of young men who never attended school was substantial. Around the beginning of the 20th century the situation was even worse. The number of children who were attending school was very small and the number who never had any schooling at all was great. The new school building in the village was started around the 1901-1902 school year but in the following years few of the poorer people sent their children to school. Their claims were that they did not have the means to clothe the children properly or to buy them shoes. The more affluent, on the other hand, often did not send their children to school either. Their reasons were that they had so much work to do that they could not do without the help of the children around the household (or farm). In addition, they needed the children to shepherd the cattle, lambs, and geese, to keep an eye on the younger siblings and to perform some of the easier tasks around the home.

This is how one can explain why the number of non-literate persons exceeds the number of literate ones in the census of 1930 which we are discussing here. The largest portion of the people in 1930 consisted of the elderly and the parents of the children who were of school age. We are therefore led to conclude that the largest portion of those found non-literate in 1930 were the elderly and the grown-ups rather than the school-age children. By 1930 we see that most villagers were beginning to recognize the value of education - the numbers of children in school increases year after year. Furthermore, if now we think about the large number of students sent to trades schools, “gymnasia”, “liceu” and normal school we would say that the attitude of Volocans has changed for the better because, in the end, they began to appreciate the value of education. If, in addition, we consider the eleven university students we must conclude that Voloca is a commune ahead of its time in the area of literacy.

These comments are being written in 1980, that is to say, fifty years after the census. I have written about this to address those who cannot understand why in 1930 there existed such a large number of illiterate people while at the same time the number of intellectuals and young students was quite large. The explanation given above, I believe, clarifies this point. Comparing the situation as it existed in 1930 to that existing at the start of the century, it is easy to see what a large forward leap was made in a short interval of time. It was a short time, but nevertheless it still took three decades.

This rapid transformation in the mentality of villagers towards schools and learning was due also, in large part, to the historic happening in 1918 when Bucovina, until then an Austrian province, was reunited with the

Kingdom of Romania. During the period of Austrian rule there existed no stimulus for rural Romanians to send their children to different schools. This changed suddenly after the Union; it then became a necessity of prime importance.

All of the administrative work within Bucovina had been in the hands of strangers, both of nationality and of language. Even in church at time, only German was allowed. This situation could not have continued forever. At all the schools, the majority of the professors were foreigners who did not understand Romanian. This situation was repeated everywhere – in commerce, in industry, in different economic enterprises, in cultural institutions, in justice, in professional societies, etc. Everywhere you found only Jews, Germans, Poles and Ukrainians in power. The aboriginal (i.e. Romanian) population was very poorly represented, in fact often it was non-existent. A new corps of people was needed.

The Government from Bucharest sent a set of administrators to conduct the affairs of the newly-acquired province. These people, together with Romanian intellectuals in Bucovina, began to organize a new administration. This process did not succeed by any measure to fill all the needs and gaps. The administration requested that all functionaries learn Romanian in order to keep their positions in the civil service. Some people were willing to meet this requirement and were appointed to positions in this new administration. Others preferred to move to other regions still under Austrian control or asked to be retired and given a pension.

From the very beginning, both the people from Bucharest and the intellectuals in Bucovina recognized that a new corps of people would be needed to replace the old ones who had left or retired. These new people would need to be recruited from among the aboriginal Romanians, as was right and fair. They needed to find a healthy and durable solution to the problem. This solution was found by encouraging and stimulating the more-talented Romanian children to become better prepared by attending secondary schools, normal schools, professional schools and all other such learning places. There was an appeal sent out to teachers and parents to send all possible, capable students to these institutions. Very many teachers responded with relish to this request and set about to prepare students for writing entrance examinations for the schools. As a result of this, many young sons of rural farmers, who proved themselves capable of learning, went on to secondary schools. These results destroyed the myth believed by many that rural people could not become educated. As a result, many teachers and educated scholars were able to rise from the rural ranks.

To meet the needs of the new province, the teachers in Voloca, as well as some teachers in other villages set about to convince the rural families to send their children to the best schools and to allow them to proceed as far as they could. As a result, the village of Voloca sent many children to different schools. It emerged as one of the leading communes in the entire Chernauti district, and possibly in the entire province of Bucovina. We must for this reason pay tribute to the following deserving teachers: Alexie Morariu, Ilie Repciuc, O. Pascanu, and Silvia Pojoga!

Because of these wise and democratic measures, within a decade and a half, the posts of administration in Bucovina were largely filled with Romanian officials. Towards the end of the fourth decade of the 20th century, this recruitment was completed and a normal state of equilibrium was reached in regards to the change of the administrative functions. This was still not the case for commerce, industry and finance, however. In these areas of the economy, foreigners, and Jews in particular, continued to predominate. Changes in these areas could not come about quite as quickly. This was a carry over from the past that existed for a long time after the dismantling of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Industry, commercial activities and banking depended heavily on capital, on experience with large sums of money, and experience with many legal procedures. The positions of those entrenched were very solid and the aboriginal element could only penetrate the economic sector very slowly and with great difficulty.

In the villages, the stores, inns and drinking houses all continued to be in the hands of strangers who continued to cheat and exploit the villagers without mercy. Because of their lack of education and naivety, many of the villagers got into debt over their heads and ended up reduced to using wooden tools. While it is true that in many villages Romanians did establish businesses and some larger communes did have cooperatives, in general these did not do well. They often ran large deficits and lost significant money. The level of support they had was embarrassing, but once again we must state that too often it was as a result of a lack of understanding and experience. A significant part of the fault lay also at the feet of the rural villagers who would not support the cooperatives or aboriginal-owned businesses. They continued to buy the goods they needed from the foreign shopkeepers and failed to unite and show solidarity. On the other hand, good merchants must worry about maintaining quality and this concern was often missing in the Romanian shops.

The students, after the completion of “liceu”, or whatever other secondary school, were often temporarily appointed to an administrative position. They would rapidly adapt to the position and soon would seek a permanent post. If they had completed a higher level of education this problem was resolved easier. For industry, commerce and finance, the requirements for entry were more difficult and more stringent. There were a number of schools of commerce of various quality established. These allowed some degree of practical experience in commerce but they did not prove to be the answer needed for the native Romanians. To enter these fields simply having a ‘degree in the pocket’ was not sufficient. To start commercial activity, one must have a physical location as well as capital and some good experience - as well as other things. None of these were something a young graduate would have. We are talking here about the years between the two world wars, when properties belonged to specific owners (private property as opposed to the socialist era).

## 2.21
# How the pupils and students from Voloca would enjoy their summer holidays

Holidays are always welcome occurrences for pupils and students. The vacations are also needed for rest and for renewing the physical condition of the young, who often returned home rather pallid and sickly. While away at school, they did not always enjoy very good living conditions or reasonable food. Many parents did not have sufficient means or money for good rental accommodations near school for the children. Some students stayed with landlords under very poor conditions, without heat or sufficient lighting, without proper bedding and often without reasonable food – sometimes even without hot food.

Life was not easy in this era even in the boarding schools. Even there, the students were often cold and the food was poor quality – the main advantage was that they had supervision. In the early days, the number of positions in the boarding schools was limited and bursaries were likewise few in number. As a result, students had to study under rather difficult conditions. This is how conditions were for quite a number of years after the war, at a time when I too was a student.

These precarious living conditions and the need to refresh our bodies and our stressed minds explain the impatient wait for the holiday periods. Even though conditions of life at home were not always the very best, we could at least eat our fill, would have free time to rest and dance, could enjoy the sunshine and fresh air, be free of worries about difficult lessons and catch up on our sleep. For children and youths, these things are essential. It is well known, however, that even students who live in good conditions and do not suffer privation of anything still await the holidays with the same impatience and anticipation as those of us who endured difficult conditions. For these reasons, when the bell sounded ending the final hour of courses, we would all breathe out easily and rush back to our rental accommodations or boarding rooms, as might be the case. There we would grab our bundle containing our work and books and then we would rush with joy towards our homes by train, wagon or on foot.

Another important desire we often had was to return and meet with all the young people from the village so that we could all interact together happily. Everyone had something to tell, some story, some news, or perhaps a story of a success achieved at school. We sought the opportunity to meet and to sing and dance together. When the brothers, Nicholai and Dumitru Nichitovici, who had been at school in Cotmani, returned with a football, they started a sensation in our ranks. Until that time, no one in Voloca had seen a football. A great joy ensued for all of us boys with the introduction of this ball.

Each of the different vacations had it own charm. The Christmas vacation with its many holidays came after the first several months of study. The holidays presented many opportunities for all to meet. While I was a youngster, I would always go around caroling (“colinda”) during the holidays, either by myself or with two or

three friends. As I grew older, we began to carol as an organized group and would go mostly to the homes of the intellectuals. At New Years, I would go out with "plugusor" – as the little ploughboy.

When we first arrived home, we would often gather at the Pascanu household which had a number of sons. The oldest of these, Olvian, was a teacher. He would lead us in choral practice and would take us to visit the homes of the intellectuals in the village – the school director, the teachers, the priest, the cantor, the mayor, etc. At all of these homes we would be welcomed with baked goods and other delicacies. The entire group enjoyed friendship and good will. When I grew older, we would dress up with masks and sing parts learned and used especially for the winter holiday period.

We awaited with glee the Sunday and holiday evenings when we would all get together with our sleds. We would choose good locations with long slopes and the time was chosen so that we could continue for long undisturbed periods. Often the older ones of us would gather with the sleighs and would invite the girls who would quickly accept with glee. Some of the ones who did so were: Stela, the daughter of the school director; Varvara Salahor; Agrapina Ungurean; and sometimes Leontina Nichitovice - also other girls as well as the occasional teacher. There would be a great deal of rejoicing especially when a sled would tip over into the snow near the edge of the run. These minor accidents were not particularly dangerous.

Unfortunately, these vacations would speed by quite quickly and we would have to separate and return – but not without deep sighs and regrets. We remembered with some concerns that we had come home with our books and had intended to prepare for future lectures. While at home for the vacation, we had failed to open even a single book!

After a few more months of school, the Easter holiday period approached, as did the arrival of spring - events that we all awaited with joy. Once again we rushed home and tried to see how to best use our freedom. Our first concern was to attend church and the evening services because this was the Holy Week. During that era, the young frequently attended church, which was not a bad thing because they listened to and learned many good and valuable lessons. We would also join in for the celebration of the Reincarnation and then would meet on the grassy open area near the church where we would try to crack each others painted eggs (**TN:** see 1.18). In the evenings we would meet for walks which we would do as groups – just enjoying the wonders of nature. We all felt a strong calling to meet and associate. It was the call of spring and the call of youth.

Unfortunately, these holidays too seemed very short and as we all parted our ways we had a feeling of torment. We all knew we were about to face the difficult upcoming days of final examinations and there was too much to learn with the warm sunshine around, the unceasing singing of the birds and the beauty of the surrounding flowers. However, the conscientious students had to face their difficulties to be promoted from their classes with good marks before they could be released for the long summer holiday which they could then enjoy without worry, with freedom and in their own homes.

Everyone strove to achieve the best results so as to enter the holidays without headaches but not everyone achieved their goals. Some of them ended up with severe corrections if not something worse. No one could afford to lose their courage! The young succeed as long as they have the will.

The summer holiday was awaited with great impatience. Over such an extended holiday one could do many things. The first thing we did was to rest. We then looked to lending a hand around the house and helping with some of the lighter chores out in the fields. This still gave us sufficient time to catch up on our sleep as well as for other distractions. On Sundays or holidays we would meet at church or at the school. Those of us with good voices would meet to sing. When I was in Class IV, I began to gather younger students to form a small choir to sing pieces written for two or three voices. Practices would take place at our house in the orchard. We had a very good beginning. The following year, I got up the courage to increase the size of the choir and was able to lead them in instruction to a level that allowed us to sing a number of liturgical pieces in the church service. When I first proposed this possibility to the priest, he did not refuse it but instead gave me some encouraging words. I was very emotional, but the singing went very well. It was my first public exposure as a choir director. Encouraged by this result, I continued further on this path.

Also during my year in Class IV, I began to prepare a group of pupils from the village who wanted to write the admittance examinations for "liceu" and other schools. We were able to achieve good results in this endeavor as well. Almost all of the students I had been preparing succeeded in achieving high averages. With this work, I was also able to earn a bit of money during the vacation.

Regardless of how busy or distracted I might sometimes have been, I would never leave my music. I attempted to gain a greater knowledge in musical theory, paying particular attention to this in lectures given by a professor of music. Furthermore, being a member of the choir in "liceu", I was able to become acquainted with some easier pieces that I could use for my own applications. When I arrived at Class IV in "liceu", I possessed all the requirements for a director. I began to lead a choir of older youths, many of them of my age or older. We began to learn to sing serenades and romance pieces written for many voices. We would work mostly by ear, but the results were good. We would get by minor errors quite easily. We still had a lot to learn, but this never discouraged me and there was never a time when I thought that we should abandon this project. The practices would take place in the evenings in our house or outdoors in the open. Those who formed the backbone of the choir were: Nicholai Pentelescu, Dumitru Paulescu, Silvestru Pascanu, Ilie Penteleiciuc, Teodor Ionica (**TN:** – the author) – as well as other of the older students from the village.

We then decided to improve the choir and to increase the repertoire sufficiently to be able to hold concerts or to sing at public gatherings. The first public offering was made on the Feast of St. Ilie outside the home of the director of the village school. We were well received and were then invited into the house where we were made very welcome. After that initial presentation, the performance on St. Ilie became an annual tradition at which we were often accompanied by the soloist, Father Vasile Ursache. Following this performance we began to do performances for other intellectuals as well as at larger church gatherings. In parallel with these performances,

we also did excursions to sing at the Gates to the Forest, on Buda and at Horodiste. By now we were beginning to instill more ideas into the young. We began to perform at popular concerts in the village where we wanted to leave a lasting impression.

When the student, Toader the son of Tanasi, son of Mihalutoaie, died, we put together all the music needed to be sung at the funeral. All of the young people from the village participated since the funeral took place during the summer vacation.

Having achieved good results, we decided to participate more fully in the cultural life of the village be it with songs, theatrical pieces or recitations. A very large number of us became involved in this task and we worked at it with pleasure. Now having almost reached adulthood, those in the highest classes and those who had graduated began to attend gatherings in other villages or evening soirees. The young must get their just rewards.

Young boys and girls, students and scholars, we all were united and collaborated for the village concerts and some even organized these cultural activities. We were guided by a noble ideal - that we might contribute to the improvement of the village where we had been born – a task we did with love to the best of our capabilities and knowledge.

## 2.22
# Spiridon Porfirean

During the period that he was alive, Spiridon would dress in the Germanic style and people referred to him as Domnul Scriidon (**TN:** a unique, teasing, Volocan expression, not found in dictionaries, roughly equivalent to "Mr. High and Mighty".) According to the stories of Ion Salahor, he began with a tiny shop in the entranceway ("tinda") of a small rural house that he had rented from a landowner in the village. With time he built up a bit of a holding and he bought that little house and eventually became a significant property owner in the village.

"Costache, Scriidon's father, had also dressed in the German style. He was a furrier by trade and knew how to tan the hides of sheep and cattle. From the sheep hides he would make vests and jackets, while the cattle hides he would sell to Matruca, son of the dulcimer player, to make moccasins. Costache was a man of medium height and solidly built. He had a large bushy mustache, and large hairy eyebrows. He had a second son who was called Ilarie, but who was commonly known as "Ilartu". This son was built similar to his father but he did not have as large or as bushy a mustache or as large eyebrows. Ilartu, son of Costache, was also a furrier by trade and was one of the best. Nevertheless, people in large numbers would take their business to some Jewish tradesmen entrenched in the village, so that Ilartu, although being a compatriot of theirs, did not have enough custom to become rich from his trade." (**TN:** Source of quotation not recorded – presumably Ion Salahor)

To speak the truth, Ilartu had a lot of work to do just curing the hides, a task not enjoyed by all. The Jews would not take on this job, either because they did not like it or because they did not know how to do it. The family of Costache Porfirean had come from the village of Ilisesti in the judicial district of Suceava. They were ordinary rural villagers at home, but they would dress in the Germanic style because of their trade or perhaps for other reasons.

Spiridon was the eldest son of Costache and was taller than his father and his brother. He also had a large, fancy mustache but his would point upwards and not downwards as his father's did. He was a very handsome man and so was his wife. She was tall, well-built and beautiful. This is how Ion Salahor described them when they were of an age when Spiridon was quite young. Two young children grew up in the Porfirean family – a daughter Valeria and a son, Modest. Valeria was about four years older than Modest having been born in 1898 while Modest was born in 1902. These dates are however approximate.

In our village both Spiridon Porfirean and his wife were viewed as respectable, honest people as had been the father, Costache, and the younger brother, Ilartu. They treated everyone well and were good homeowners and neighbors. They were well appreciated for the many good deeds they did in the village.

About five years before the outbreak of WW I (i.e. ~1909) Spiridon Porfirean sold the old house that he had owned and bought a new place closer to the center of the village. It was located across from the large inn of Maier, son of Alteroaie, and not far from the Gate of the Czars. He made some modifications and improvements

to this house. He made a new doorway facing the road and installed a large window on that side, similar to what shopkeepers in town had. In this window he displayed all the products he had for sale in his shop. This was a 'display-window' – something new for our village.

The new house was located quite close to the school and Porfirean had calculated that it would be good to fill his display window with lots of school necessities, which he did in a short time. Children could buy notebooks, crayons, ink, blotting paper, pens, nibs, erasures and other items from him. To each of his small clients, he would give two candies when they made a purchase. This bonus brought great joy to the scholars and also brought Porfirean many customers. All the children would come to him so that before too long, the Jews began to give out candies as did all the other businesses in the village.

After another period of time during which Porfirean's earnings increased, he constructed a new house near the old one. Once again he had a door built towards the road and he installed a large window like one would find in the towns. In the beginning people did not know what Porfirean was planning but one day they discovered a large sign on the wall above the door that faced the road. On this sign was written 'National Restaurant'. Also on the sign was depicted a male dressed in the beautiful national costume and holding in his hand the Tri-color, the Romanian flag. It is a very certain fact that this was a very courageous act by Porfirean to try in 1910 when Bucovina was still part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Few in the village recognized the significance of this action and the courage of this brave man whom we cite here. Perhaps many did not even notice what had been painted on the sign or did not understand its significance, but in the heart of this good Romanian, Spiridon Porfirean, beat a sense of pride for what he had done. During that era we were citizens of Austria and had a different flag, the flag of the Imperial Hapsburgs. Porfirean fully knew this, but he wanted to show that the true flag for Romanians was the Tri-color. We see here a simple and modest man but one who was courageous and merits being remembered and recognized by those who followed!

Despite all his efforts to do well and to serve with his restaurant, business went poorly. This was because few customers came to his restaurant and more continued to go to the drinking places owned by the Jews. Porfirean felt this problem heavily especially since he had spent a lot of money with his 'National Restaurant'. His largest competitor was Maier, son of Alteroaie, from across the road, who also had a large establishment and was turning a good profit. People were used to going to Maier's inn and were avoiding Porfirean's place although it was more attractive and kept cleaner. The beginning was difficult but before too long, customers began to frequent his place as well.

Maier, a wise man and a good marketer, had a large room into the middle of which he had placed a long table with benches on each side on which people would sit to drink whiskey. Along the walls in the vicinity of more benches he had set up a number of big spirit barrels which also formed an attraction. In another somewhat smaller room (called the "sinca") Maier or his mother, Alteroaie, sold whiskey to customers through a small window. Not everyone got to go into the "sinca", only the favored customers. These favored customers were

treated with attention and with better-quality beverages. Anyone who had been invited into the "sinca" and had been treated to a drink there would consider himself to have been honored.

The main room in Porfirean's 'National Restaurant' was larger than the room in Maier's inn. It had numerous tables with individual chairs and to one side had a long table with long benches. Towards the walls at the end of the room there was a large cupboard with a glass front behind which there were placed some shelves. On them were placed many bottles with different varieties of beverages. In front of this cupboard with the drinks there was a long table from wall to wall, a sort of a counter, behind which Porfirean stood and sold drink to his customers.

On a small table near him he had a gramophone – he would call it his 'little wooden house'. Over it stood another long bench. The villagers of Voloca had never seen or heard anything like it before. They could not even remember its name. Great was their amazement that this wooden box could sing, that is to say that one could hear the voice of a man from it. Some said that it was an unholy thing and the women said the devil lived in the little house and sang for them. We must not be too surprised by this; at that time the population in the village was still very superstitious and backward. (Similar things happened with eclipses or with movies.)

Because of some of these things, many would not come into Porfirean's new restaurant because they were worried. They would come as far as the door and then they would stop outside and listen from there. When they saw that the teachers were willing to sit inside, they began to gather their courage and started to have one or maybe two, or even more, drinks in Porfirean's establishment. Sometimes the Regional Governor would come as well as the commune councilors. One of the village priests was a customer, as were some of the police. The place was kept in better condition than Maier's and the customers were served properly. All in all, the largest portion of the population continued to patronize Maier's inn and the drinking establishments of other Jews because they could get alcohol on credit. Some claimed that Maier sold his whiskey for a cheaper price and this may have been the case, although it was probably diluted.

The situation continued in this manner until one day in August 1914 when the 'War between the Kingdoms' began. It was the first war that affected the whole world and it brought much death, grief and destruction.

One by one the men of Voloca were called to the regiments and from there were sent to different fighting fronts. Bucovina and our village were part of an area that saw the advances and retreats of many troops as well as the temporary occupation by many foreign armies. The Russians occupied Bucovina three times and each time they retreated. It is difficult to believe, but the sign put out by Porfirean with the man in national dress and holding the tri-color flag survived all this. Even the Military Commander, Huber, a man of German origin, never considered damaging the sign and removing it from its place. The sign with the Romanian Tri-Color remained unharmed in its location the entire period of the war even though just beside it many units of the Austrian army had billeted as well as Hungarians, Czechs, Slovaks, Croats, Serbs, Poles, Ukrainians, and Romanians from Bucovina and Ardeal. During their temporary occupation even the Moscali (Russians) would have seen the Tri-

color but no one thought of taking it away from there. No one had any great worry about it. That sign remained in place until the joining of Bucovina with the 'old kingdom' without anyone paying attention to it. And so, un-noticed, it remained in place although no one knew why. But by then, the world had other worries.

The war was very difficult and very long. It lasted four years and many thought the end would never come. The entire world suffered greatly and experienced countless losses and disasters. Voloca too experienced great grief, hardship and losses. Many of those who left for war never returned and many of those who did return were badly crippled. The village looked very desolate at that time and great impoverishment was experienced by all with the greatest problem being the lack of food.

Slowly, the situation began to return to normal and people began to adapt to the new Romanian administration. Time heals and cures wounds. The work of reorganization and reconstruction began. A period of renewal and progress was started. Porfirean threw himself into work again with enthusiasm. The two children were sent off to school. He set about his efforts without ever receiving even the least acknowledgement of appreciation or praise for the efforts he had made towards Romanian nationalism.

The reconstruction proceeded at a great pace. Compensation either arrived too late or did not come at all. Maier decided to move to Radauti where his wife, who was very rich, owned a big house. Ermina, his sister, married a Hungarian Jew who made a great profit during the war and who then settled in Chernauti, where he bought a house. He was a non-commissioned officer for a regiment, charged with obtaining supplies.

Spiridon sold the house that he owned and bought the house of Maier, son of Alteroaie. Now Spiridon Porfirean had even more work to do. To assist him he took his son Modest out of school after the completion of Class IV of "liceu". The house that he had bought from Maier was the largest one in the village, with many rooms. It also had a large cellar called a "rathus" under the house, very useful for an inn. Nearby there was a large barn for cattle and horses and very good sheds to house chickens, geese, ducks and pigs. Maier had been not only an excellent innkeeper, but also a good farmer. The garden near the house was more than a falca in size (**TN:** 1 falca ~3.5 acres) and had good soil.

People now began to refer to Spiridon as "Domnul Spiridon" (**TN:** halfway between Mr. and Sir). An increasing volume of people began to come to Porfirean's cellar and his business began to thrive. Porfirean's daughter, a very beautiful girl and an excellent singer, completed her normal school in Chernauti and was appointed a teacher in Voloca. She did not however serve very long because she soon married a handsome, strong, brown-haired man named Dulgheru, who was a Post Office official in Chernauti. I recall often how beautifully Valeria used to sing the "Hora Severinul".

Seeking more success and progress, Porfirean decided to build a mill in the village for producing cornmeal, as well as wheat and rye flour. In the village there already existed a mill for cornmeal. It was owned by a Jew and was located near the edge of town, down by the Derelui River.

No sooner said than done! This new mill was constructed near the bridge across the Olicica stream, near where the main road passed and where there was an open field. Spiridon found that he could not operate both the "rathus" and the mill and so he took Modest out of school before he had completed "liceu".

Modest, his son, was not too pleased with this situation – he had wanted to complete "liceu". For this reason he remained at home only for about two years and, as soon as he became of age, he left for Chernauti to continue his education. In the town he found accommodation at the home of a young and attractive widow who had a house with many rooms which she rented to tenants. In one of these rooms lived a presentable young man. Shortly after Modest arrived as a renter, the proprietress had a heated argument with this man and he left. Things then went very well for Modest at this guesthouse because the proprietress took care of his needs and provided everything he needed. When the time came for him to do his army duty they came up with an arrangement and were able to get approval for the young man not to have to be sent off far away. Instead, he was allowed to do his service in Chernauti with the Hunter's Regiment Number 8 based in Chernauti. Modest would spend his days at the barracks and his nights at home. After the completion of his service, he was appointed as book-keeper for the Transport Company in Chernauti and shortly after married the proprietress. His parents were left in Voloca, unhappy.

When his daughter had married, Porfirean gave her the house and garden as a dowry. He had intended to give the mill to Modest, but the boy had refused the mill since he did not want to give up his future wife at the guesthouse with whom he got along so very well. The ways things stood, it looked like Porfirean would have to leave the mill to his daughter. However after some time, no one is quite sure how, one night Porfirean's mill burned down to the ground and nothing remained for her.

About one or two years later, the news flashed through the village that Mr. Porfirean had simply gone outdoors one evening and had fallen down and died without any signs of illness or suffering. The story was that he was 60 years old. As I recall, this happened in 1931 or 1932 and if he was 60 years old when he died, he must have been born in 1872. After the death of Spiridon Porfirean, his son-in-law, Dulgheru, sold the house and garden to a man who had recently come back from America with money. This man was Mitruta, son of Saveta and he later married Viorica, the daughter of Pricopi Hlopina. The children took Porfirean's widow to Chernauti to live with them there.

With the passing of Spiridon Porfirean to that eternal place, Voloca lost one of its leading householders. He was a celebrated man, a man of honor, and especially a great Romanian and a great patriot. This family brought much joy and was highly respected in Voloca.

Spiridon's younger brother Ilarie or Ilartu, as he was known, lived for many years in Voloca after the death of Spiridon. He was also a good and proper man and a knowledgeable furrier. He lived many years as a widower. He was respected and proper as behooves a good Christian. He was a very understanding man – a trait for

which people showed him esteem and love. He died at a great age, having lived well past 80 years. With his death, the Porfirean family became extinguished in our village.

Modest Porfirean lived with his love until 1940, the time when we lost Chernauti with the rest of northern Bucovina and Basarabia. At that time Modest was put into a concentration camp and, with the start of the war, he was mobilized and spent the rest of the war in the army. After the end of the war, he returned healthy but not to Chernauti which was occupied by the Russians. Instead he went to Campulung Moldovenesc where he entered into service as a controller in the Campulung mining complex. He was no longer with his love from Chernauti there but found a new wife.

The lady Modest had married and with whom he had lived in Chernauti left for Germany at the time of the Russian occupation in 1940, as did many others who were of German background. She returned again after the end of the war, but not to Chernauti. Instead she came back to Vatra Dornei where she lived with a man from that village who had worked in Chernauti. She had left from Chernauti with him and then returned with him to Romania.

Modest died in 1970 at the age of 68 years and was buried in Campulung Moldovenesc.

Valeria Dulgheri was still living as a pensioner in the municipality of Bucharest when she was in her 80s. If I obtain any further biographical information I will let you know in some future story.

Ion Salahor believes that Valeria was taken into the Porfirean household when she was quite small and that she was the daughter of the sister of Spiridon's wife (left orphan by her mother). He also believes that the boy, Modest, was taken in to the family when he was just one year old and had been the son of a sister of Spiridon's. (This needs to be confirmed).

(**TN:** Teodor Ionica suggests a birth year for Spiridon of ~1871-1872. A quick check in the Voloca church birth records tells that Spiridon was born 15 December 1870 at House 123 in Voloca to Constantin Porfirean and Maria Lemntiu. He was followed in the family by a sister, Minidora born 6 October 1873, a brother Pricopi born 26 May 1876 and a second sister Fevronia born 11 August 1879. All were born at House 123 and all dates are on the Julian Calendar. We have not yet found the birth record for Ilarie.)

## 2.23
# In the east, in the sky, a colossal fiery cross

It was some time before the start of WW II and all over the world there were signs of unrest and grave concerns. Some people were discussing the possibilities of a new war. Stories in the newspaper stated that the leaders were going to meet and would work out a peaceful arrangement. There was much press and talk about peace, but the populations of various countries were uneasy and gripped with unsettling fears. There was a feeling of impending doom in the air. Was a new war just about to begin? This was difficult to believe! Only 20 years had passed since the last war and the peoples wanted peace not war!!

It was a beautiful summer night with a clear sky. I was going to bed quite late in spite of the fact I had to rise early to go to town the next day. About an hour after midnight, when I opened the door to go outside, the night sky was enveloped in a powerful light that seemed to come from the east. I raised my head to view the sky and, turning my head towards the east, I saw a fantastic scene - one more beautiful than anyone could ever have imagined. High in the sky in the north-east, a colossal cross could be seen as if burning with flame and taking up a huge portion of the heavens. I had never before even heard of such a thing! This colossal fiery cross was blood-red colored in the middle while towards the outer edges it had huge tongues of fire, like the tongues of dragons, with more transparent colors, like those one sees in a fire. The flames from this cross illuminated both the heavens and the ground beneath in that part of the sky.

I shivered in the face of this sight, stood rooted to the spot and was overtaken by a great fear. I felt like I needed to flee or hide but I could not – meanwhile the cross continued to burn, throwing out tongues of flame in all directions. When the fire finally went out, the sky was gripped by the deepest of darkness. I re-entered the house but I could not fall asleep. I lay there thinking about the phenomenon, trying to regain my senses and to convince myself of what I had witnessed. Had it been a comet? Was it a heavenly signal? What else might it have been? Some suggested it must have been a ‘star with a tail’ (shooting star). My mind jumped at various possibilities for the occurrence but as I continued to seek an explanation, I remained confused and could not find one. I needed therefore to talk to other people who might be able to interpret the meaning of this phenomenon.

I got many different responses. Some said that it was a good sign and that the large country in the direction of the cross would return again to Christian ways while others interpreted it as an indicator of a new war with a great spillage of blood. Still others predicted that many great disasters were about to rain down on us and that much bad luck and suffering would befall us. We would have to ‘bear the cross’ just as Christ had to bear it to Golota before he was able to again arise. These were the interpretations I received. Which of these would be the correct one? The one big question, to which no one had the answer. It was an unsolvable mystery. I remained

filled with worry and uncertainty and continued to ask myself what was about to happen. What would happen to us, what was going to happen in the world? What was awaiting all of us? No one knew anything.

In time I tried to put these questions to others and they too began to become very concerned. There were other factors in the world situation that were leaving people uncertain and restless. Not everyone was seeing the future this way. Some were still very optimistic and believed that the future would be dominated by peace. There just cannot be another war, they said. Rationality must come to the fore, rationality will win in the end. They spoke further about disarmament and peace accords, and even declared loudly and strongly that right would prevail. They concluded there would not be a war. Those who spoke otherwise were labeled as alarmists. Nevertheless, numerous contradictory stories circulated and visionary and concerned people remained skeptical. They generally kept silent however, considering this position to be the more prudent and healthy one. The truth would eventually be seen, but a bit later.

## 2.24
# Voloca,
# a rich and beautiful commune

Because of their great love for the village, some Volocans have compared their village to the Garden of Eden which overflowed with milk and honey. This comparison is not a complete exaggeration because, for the villagers, the area's varied topography, mild climate which they enjoyed, clean streams of cold water, and silvery meadows and hills merit the love and praise of its inhabitants.

Voloca is a village of much greenery with many flowers cultivated in the gardens, joining those planted by the hand of God through the hills and hay meadows. The sweet scent of these flowers fills the sweet air with an intoxicating perfume and a pleasing fragrance. Thousands and thousands of bees fly from blossom to blossom to collect the miraculous nectar from which they produce a strongly-flavored honey that is both very sweet and very useful for man.

Near almost every house one can see large and well-pruned fruit trees loaded with fruit of different species. There are apples, pears, sweet plums, prune plums, sour cherries, Merino cherries, apricots, and peaches, to name the more common. Almost all houses also have some nut-producing trees. Even grapevines can find sufficient sunlight to grow in this climate. In the springtime, if you were to look down at the village from one of the hills, you would see all the trees in bloom and then you could truly see heaven on earth. Dear God, how very many joys and gifts you have granted us that perhaps we have not appreciated nor valued as highly as we should!

Everywhere one looks in the spring, one sees trees in blossom. The privilege of just seeing this scene is sheer delight and fills our hearts with unbounded joy. The soul in unclouded, the heart is thrilled and our bodies are filled with relaxation.

Dear village that I love, how beautiful you appear in spring dressed in your wondrous costume! Your houses, newly-whitewashed for Easter, could I but once more see again among the blossoms. We see you at this time of most importance and during the most significant of holidays with all of your glory. So that their joy too can be fulfilled, many visitors have come - many songbirds serenade you with their enchanting sounds and dazzle you with their array of multi-colored plumage. It is a period of enchantment and blessing to see our village in the spring.

The summers are generally beautiful and enjoyable in Voloca except for some of the cooler and rainier ones. By far, the majority of years are pleasant, comfortable and have good temperatures with sufficient rain during the summer. Although in the summer the trees have lost their blossoms and are producing fruit, the village is not devoid of blossom. The gardens and hillside meadows are filled with them.

The fields are well tilled and repay the farmers' hard work. The gardens and sheep paddocks produce rich rewards. The hard-working nature of the people is renowned and because of their hard work and perseverance they are able to earn their living from their land holdings. They raise healthy livestock and their cows produce good milk which they use wisely, since they are gentle in nature and lovers of animals. It is these qualities in the people who look after the welfare of their livestock and are gentle with them that set them apart for others.

If one walks through the village among the houses in the summer, one can easily see the abundance around the households leading to the good conditions of life they have created. People all work from the break of dawn to nightfall whether it be in the house, in the gardens or out in the fields. Many of the younger ones now travel to the towns where they work in factories. In their own ways, each strives to bring to his home the earnings from their labors. In addition to being very hard-working and knowledgeable, they are always prepared to endure all hardships and to overcome obstacles placed in their paths. With their unending work, they have succeeded in building larger and more attractive houses than were ever seen in the past. One is amazed when one sees the number of new, well-built and well-furnished homes. Near the houses one finds only flowers and row upon row of vegetables and greens. Every little corner, every little patch of ground is planted in crop or cultivated in order to produce some output. Our villagers of Voloca strive to work hard and to live in a rational manner. They understand how to plant and harvest their crops and gardens, how to care for their orchards and all of the needs of a good household. They have become specialists in the grafting of fruit trees.

The number of tradesmen of various skills has grown. Volocans have come to understand any type of work and whatever they undertake, they do to the best of their capabilities. They are good householders and the ladies are good housekeepers. There is an understanding and interaction between all that is rare to see.

Volocans work throughout the year but the most intense work period comes at the end of summer and in the fall when the time arrives to collect the crops from the fields. Everyone hurries so that they can collect as much as possible. Only they know what needs doing and how they need to proceed to supply their household with its requirements. The fruits of their work are seen in every area of life. The villagers are well dressed in attractive clothing, their food is nourishing and their children are well looked after. The homes are furnished in good taste, their beds are richly laid out, and their rooms are filled with products. At church or at dances, their girls are dressed in a luxurious style rarely encountered.

The weddings celebrated today exceed in every way those celebrated in the past in terms of food. Now there are many more varieties, more richness and also much better ways of presentation. People no longer eat as a group from one big bowl but each person now has a plate of their own. This is certainly a great improvement in terms of hygiene. In way of food, a rural wedding does not compete with the wedding of an intellectual. Gifts of money are normally given at a wedding and those coming forward for presentation of gifts (**TN:** "strigat de pahar dulce"- literally those "called tby the taste the sweet drink") offer sums entirely in keeping with the times.

People can now be seen traveling by automobiles, buses, trains, motorcycles and, on occasion, bicycles. Almost no one walks anymore except for visits to close neighbors. Even the poorest people have forgotten about walking to town. One no longer ever sees on the roadways or fields someone walking to town carrying large jugs of milk, or little barrels of beans or packs with apples or chickens on their backs. These scenes from the past have disappeared. Even without produce, people do not walk to town. Those who have a need to go or some produce to sell, use the bus and within a few minutes they are there. After they have finished their business, they go back to the bus route and in a few minutes they are home again, rested and ready to work for the rest of the day.

In the old days anyone needing to go to town would use up an entire day just getting there, doing their business and returning. By the time a man had returned home he was all tired out from the trip and from the materials he had carried on his back. He neither had the time nor the energy to do anything more that day. Even those who would have used their wagons to go to town did not fare much better. They would have to sit on the 'devils basket' on top of some wood or sacks or other crooked and hard objects. They would be bounced and shaken so much that their teeth clattered in their mouths. Rare was the case that they could find a comfortable seat and even then they would need to walk when going up hills. Only the priest or the school director would have springs on their wagon. Looking at the present situation, life is much improved.

Volocans now make much larger and more light-filled houses. The houses have more rooms and are well made. The insides are painted, and the houses are furnished with electric lighting, good cook stoves and appliances. Overall, the homes are well furnished. Supplied with good and comfortable accommodations, well covered and comfortable beds, good clothing, tasty and healthy food which is prepared in a knowledgeable manner, it is evident that life today is much better and is more enjoyable. In addition to the conditions described above for the home life, we should add that the conditions under which work is carried out have also improved.

Wood is now cut with motorized saws, the same improvements are also true for cultivation where one rarely does things by hand. Most work is now much easier mostly because people have learned how to use machinery.

In the areas of technical progress, people do less and less physical work and more and more with their brains. In terms of preparing or preserving food, the ladies of Voloca now produce miracles. Still, nothing remains more precious to them than their husbands. The woman of the house takes care of her house and children, washes the dishes, feeds the cattle in the sheds, weeds her garden, goes into town with produce and helps her husband in the fields or anywhere else where he may need assistance.

I have stated elsewhere that life for Volocans today is more comfortable and affluent. This is an uncontestable fact but it continues to be due to the unending work done – one might say an artifact of their past. People of today work to be able to eat better but they work with more efficiency than in the past. This is true here in our village.

Our village not only has many big and beautiful trees which are loaded with fruit in the fall, it also has many hives with bees. All of these things require a lot of hard work – work that must be done conscientiously and at the proper time. Overall, Volocans have succeeded with understanding and a sense of doing things properly. This also explains why their cows give plenty of good and rich milk. We need to mention that it is difficult to raise and keep cattle when the soil is not very rich. The farmers have to introduce a rationale and a method to improve the nutrient value from poor-quality forage. At the good households of this day, even the cattle feed on better forage than they did in the past. This is a sign that progress has occurred.

From what I have described it is not difficult to see why milk and honey flow in Voloca. This miracle is due to the hard work of Volocans – hard work that has overcome obstacles and for which we should honor the villagers.

Up to this point we have described all of the beautiful and good things. It would seem that Voloca is almost a Garden of Eden where milk and honey overflow but besides the milk and honey, another nuisance flows in too large a quantity and this one destroys very many. This material, “samahoanca” (whiskey), presents a very serious threat to lives and the futures of those who drink it. I have spent some time confronting my co-villagers and have tried to show them the perils of drink. I have tried to convince them to leave it alone.

In the end, the village remains what it was and still is: a model village with good, hard-working and understanding people. A village of true Romanians who have not forgotten their Dacii-Romanian origins which make them what they are.

**(TN: – we are left with a final short history)**

In 1790 Bucovina was joined to Galacia and it remained that way until 1849. At that time, it was separated from Galacia and was made a part of the Hapsburg Empire as a country directly controlled by Austria. So it remained until 1918. During WW I it was occupied three times by the Russian troops of Tsar Nicholas II.

Following the dismembering of the Austrian Empire and the Peace Accord of Paris, immediately following the end of WW I, Bucovina was re-united with Romania.

On 14 October 1918 a National Council of Romanians was convened in Chernauti under the leadership of Iancu Flonder. The council formulated a desire for the union of Bucovina and Romania.

On 28 November (15 November Julian Calendar) 1918 The National Council of Romanians held a meeting in Chernauti to discuss and vote on the union of Bucovina with Romania. Bucovina became an integral part of the state of Romania and remained so until June 1940 when the northern part of it was occupied by the Soviet Union. In 1941 it was liberated but in 1944 it was again occupied by Russian troops.

*Author's Notes: In addition to various regional expressions I have used some old grammatical forms including: "service, intreolalta, spuie, unchies, catana, inlauntru, majurii, liturgie, deasmeni, datoreste", etc.*