

Viktor W.



This is a picture of my stepfather Viktor W., but I don't know when or where it was taken.

Viktor was an interesting person. I held Viktor in high esteem. Though he could read Hebrew, he didn't understand what he was reading. But what made him special? Not only was he an excellent farmer, he very much lived for it and knew all about it. And what was the most important, and what I very much regret, that I never had a tape recorder and that I didn't record it. Because when the villagers used to gather in that large room of ours where the bar was and where people would drink, people would tell stories. Who had experienced what at the front. My stepfather was a naturally talented humorist. I remember that the Pusovce locals laughed till their bellies hurt when he told stories. He knew how to turn everything into a joke. He had a special talent for telling funny stories. He didn't read the jokes somewhere, he made them up. But they were excellent.

Viktor was a very good farmer. He was a cattle merchant, but when he made enough money he left the business, because he liked farming. So he bought a neglected piece of land, where nothing would grow. He meliorated it [melioration: a combination of measures that permanently improve soil for various uses - Editor's note] by draining it. To this day it's the most fertile land in Pusovce! It's land left by Viktor. So that was the first field that he bought and made fertile. Then he bought more and more, until he finally had 14 hectares. For those times that was really a lot. Because most farmers had five, six hectares. He grew everything, potatoes, wheat, barley and oats. He also raised horses. As a good farmer, the residents of Pusovce trusted him to the degree that he even had a breeding bull. The villagers used to come to our place to fertilize their cows. He was such an expert that he bred cattle.

Then he sold that house where I was born. He bought a brick house with a beautiful garden. We of course had a helper for the household, when my mother couldn't manage it all herself, and we also had a coachman. Back then they called him a coachman, but he was a servant. And the furniture in that house was better too. I was nice and modern. However, from the age of 3 or 4 I was with my grandpa in Chmelov, because I was attending religion school there. I had to live with him there, because it would have been impossible for me to commute between Chmelov and Pusovce. Back then there weren't buses yet.