



Two Crosses in Selz In Remembrance of the Year 1919

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So much blood was shed as the bands of Bolsheviks descended on the village of Selz on August 3, 1919. Because the young men took a stand against the invaders to protect their families, they were arrested and accused of being opposed to the Revolution and Bolshevism. Eighty-seven men received the sentence of the Tribunal – “Death by Shooting.”

On the morning of August 4, 1919, they took the men from the village and shot them with machine guns – just like that. Then the drunken thugs descended on the corpses with bayonets and muskets, cutting off hands and legs. They brutally violated the dead. After that they moved on. It was a horrific scene.

The family members dug a mass grave in which most of the dead were buried. Only a few of the executed were taken to the village cemetery and buried there.

Three of my uncles lost their lives in this massacre – Stanislaus and Themoteus Jundt were buried in the mass grave. Alexander was not there. It was a week later when he was found 13 kilometers away in a corn field near Strassburg, where he had succumbed to his injuries. It was never discovered how he managed to get so far away. My grandfather and his two daughters left in the night to retrieve his body. My father nailed together a coffin. They took him to the cemetery in a hand cart, opened the grave of Alexander’s great-grandfather Josef Jundt and lowered the coffin. It all had to happen quickly – one could already see the morning light in the east. They said the “Our Father,” closed up the grave and left. Back at the house, my grandmother asked if her son Alexander had been found and she was told about the burial in the great-grandfather’s grave.

It remained a family secret.

In memory of the dead, the Selzers placed two wooden crosses at the site where the terrible massacre had occurred. In 1937 they, too, became victims of Stalin’s Terror.

Two Crosses in Selz

Two crosses stand in gruesome outline
Behind the cemetery close to the forest.
They remind us of the nineteenth year,
When so much innocent blood was shed.

They are witness to the demonic atrocity
Committed in the name of Bolshevism
Against decent men and young blood,
Resting here now in the cold earth.

They moved through the land with fire and sword,
With no respect for the father of the house.
They robbed and burned with animal lust
And plunged the lead into many an honorable breast.

Fr. Klemens Weissenburger, a true example of genuine goodness,
Yet another who had to bleed to death in his youth.
With death staring him in the face,
He raised his hands and blessed the men before his death.

Johann Fahn also met his fate,
After doing so much good for the poor.
Violence over-rode justice, he had to submit.
The scoundrels, the cowards, they shot him down.

Anton Welk fell too before the murderer's hand,
Even though he was known to be respectful and honorable.
Perhaps if he had caroused and fooled about like others,
He would not have found his death so early.

Michael Bartle, what did he do?
And why did Wendelin Usselmann have to die?
Oh, but there are still many others who were mercilessly gathered
To meet their fate on the same path.

Two crosses stand in gruesome outline
Behind the cemetery close to the forest.
Forget not, brothers, it is inevitable
That Bolshevism disintegrates on its own.