

Mr. Stolpyansky On Guard



This photo is from the Turiec region, near the village of Motycky, where we were in hiding. It was taken in November or December 1944, and shows Stolpyansky, one of the members of our group.

Our group wasn't composed only of Jews. One of the non-Jews was a former employee of the Ministry of Defense of the Slovak State, then a Czech engineer, Domin Ruzicka. There was one Russian, too – Stolpyansky, whose parents left Russia in 1917. The rest of us were Jews. During our stay in the mountains, two German women were sending us messages. We had a connection down in the village. We would also get packages of red paprika, because we'd heard that if we sprinkled it on the ground, dogs wouldn't be able to follow our scent. That's what we also did, but luckily no dogs arrived.

One day I saw ski tracks on the slope opposite us. After that we didn't cook or heat. We would walk down to the village to find out what was going on. We found out that Dano Chladny, an officer of the Czechoslovak army, had begun to organize a partisan group, which later we also joined. I don't know why, but my cousin Vojtech Kürti signed up only the men as members. Maybe he didn't like women. When he was three years old, he was burned. His entire body was covered in scars. On one side he had someone else's ear sewn on in a plastic surgery operation, and he had only three fingers on his hand. He survived thanks to his father being a doctor, and that he was suspended in an oil bath.

One day a Soviet patrol from Jelenska Skala came to see us. They wanted to take our weapons, but our guys managed to keep them. They registered our group. Our code names were Orech 1 and Orech 2. After that we functioned on a professional level. We also began keeping proper guard.

Once we received a report that above Jelenska Skala was a cave in which a woman was going to give birth in a few days. The Kürti brothers were excellent skiers, so they sent them there. We packed them some cotton parachutes, so the baby would have diapers. They were very well supplied. The baby really was born there. Mr. Gross went with the Körtis as well, because he was a children's doctor. Mr. Gross was part of our group. He was also Jewish. The poor guy, he was more afraid than that woman. The baby was born healthy.