

Chapter 9

1954-1957

1954

In the days leading up to the New Year, there had been a reorganization of the “Local People’s Committee”, and from the New Year Karel Ardély of No. 263 took office as chairman in place of Rudolf Liška of No. 41. Many members were also new. Like all other elections since 1948, the election was carried out by the committee of the communist party without participation by the people.

This year, people had even more trouble over home pig slaughtering than last year. To their request, they had to attach documents and receipts relating to the fulfilment of the delivery quotas of all agricultural products, and also receipts for the delivery of lard (7½kg) and pigskin in 1953. If they had not fulfilled their 1953 meat delivery quota, the district office gave them a permit only if they pledged themselves to hand over half the pig for public consumption, plus 4kg of lard from the other half.

Immediately after the New Year it started to freeze. The thermometer fell to 5–8–12 degrees below zero, and snow fell on January 7 and 8. There was a thaw from January 15 to 20, and then the temperature fell to minus 12–16–20 (minus 26 was measured at one point in the fields) until the end of the month.

There was frost throughout February. It was dry and without snow, but the temperature fell to 2–20 degrees below freezing point. A consequence of these severe frosts was the bursting of water pipes in the buildings of the new school and in many houses which were on the mains. Likewise, potatoes stored in cellars and storage pits were in many cases frozen through.

March 7. Brother Tobiáš was the first in the Rychlík family to become a grandfather. His son Alois and his wife had a son, who was given the name Jaroslav.

March 16. Sowing started.

March had been wholly dry and without rain. The fields were black. All the winter wheat had been eaten by mice and rooks, and anything left had been destroyed by the frosts. Hence there was a great demand for spring wheat, and although some came to the co-operative it was not enough to cover the full requirement. It was rationed out at 20kg per measure of land.

From April 1, there was a reduction in the price of retail goods, apart from meat, lard, and butter, of from 5–10% up to 40%.

April 8. We pruned the vineyard. The vines had been badly affected by frost, and eaten by hares.

April 15. The council offices moved from the manor house, No. 28, to newly renovated rooms in the old school at No. 141.

April 24. There is a country saying about the weather, “On St George’s Day the rook has to hide itself in the oats,” but this year not even a sparrow was hiding.

April 29. People were still sowing barley and wheat. Even the winter wheat which remained in places was doing badly, and it was necessary to plough it back and sow again.

Those who exchanged ordinary potatoes for seed potatoes at the co-operative paid 36 crowns for 100kg of seed potatoes, and those who bought seed potatoes from the co-operative paid 100–110–120 crowns for 100kg depending on the variety.

April 29. The apricot trees started to flower.

April had been very cold. Night temperatures fell to 1–2–3 degrees below zero. There was plenty of rain, but as a result of the cold weather everything was behind and even the trees were still bare. This year, April did not give May half a leaf [a graphic expression which we shall meet several times]. The first thunderstorm arrived on April 15.

May. Nowadays, if somebody wanted to build himself a house and did not have a building plot of his own, he could take over a suitable plot even if the owner did not agree. The first expropriation in Těšany was by Štěpán Sýkora of No. 156 at the expense of Jan Horák of No. 19.

May 16. There were elections for the “Local People’s Committee”, “District People’s Committee”, and “Regional People’s Committee”. The village was divided into twelve wards, and each ward had one candidate. On entry to the voting room, each voter received three voting slips (without cover), one to the village council with a candidate from his ward, one to the district council also with one

candidate, and one to the regional council with a third candidate. The candidates for our ward were Miroslav Dostal of No. 22 to the village council, Jenofefa Skříčková of No. 244 to the district council, and Palán from Měnín to the regional council.

According to electoral law, a voter was allowed to go behind a curtain and cross out the name of a candidate who did not appeal to him, but very few did so, because what each voter did was carefully observed by the members of the electoral commission. Therefore voters took the papers they received and tossed them into the urns. Outside, they said to each other that these were not elections, they were “play-acting”. [The word is “komedie” in the Czech and “a farce” might seem the natural translation, but “play-acting” is given as an alternative by my dictionary and it seems to me that this is at least as likely to be what the writer had in mind.]

May 23. Brother Pavel became a grandfather. His daughter Marta, now Svobodá, gave birth to a healthy son who was christened Karel.

In various fields around Těšany, test bore holes were being drilled.

The first half of May had been very cold, with night temperatures 2 degrees below zero and frequent showers. The second half of the month had however been dry.

June. Hoeing and thinning out of beet was going very well, because this year the crop had not been attacked by any pest.

June 9. Hay was cut for drying. The crop this year was very poor, and many people would not be cutting for drying because the crop was being fed to the animals while still green.

The whole of June had been dry and without rain. Barley was doing badly, especially that sown after beet, which was dried out, and there was hardly any second cut of hay.

July 1. In the evening, there was a thunderstorm with hail, which battered crops in several fields and in the vineyards. Barley was 20–30% beaten down, and the vines were damaged. During the storm, on July 1 and 2, so much water fell that people living in parts of the village had their gardens flooded, and water even penetrated into the yards.

July 7. It thundered in the evening and throughout the night. There was a great deal of rain, which continued into July 8 and 9.

July 15. Here and there, people started cutting barley.

There was a great shortage of meat. It was on sale only on Saturday, and the queue outside one shop started at 3.30 in the morning. There was quarrelling in the queue, and purchases were restricted to 10dkg per person so that everybody would get some.

The whole of July had been wet and cold. The harvest had started on July 15, but only of barley. Wheat, the great majority being spring wheat, did not start being cut until July 30. The corn crop was sparse and low, and the barley in some fields had been beaten down by hail. So people looked towards the winter with concern. There was no dried hay, and there would be no straw for the animals. And they were even more worried about the corn quotas, which perhaps nobody would be able to fulfil.

We had the following quotas for 1954, based on a total of 2.28ha including land not bearing crops (balks, grazing land, garden, vineyard).

Corn	729kg
Maize	9kg
Potatoes	205kg
Sugar beet	53 cents
Grapes	336kg
Meat, pork	80kg
Meat, beef	117kg
Meat, poultry	4kg
Eggs	457
Milk	620 litres
Dried hay	28kg

Těšany as a whole had to deliver 36 waggonloads of corn to the state. Threshing cost 9 crowns per kilowatt-hour.

The first half of August was wet, and both harvest and threshing were prolonged. The second half of the month was dry.

September 1. Brother Tobiáš celebrated his 50th birthday. All six of us came, with our families, to wish him good health into his second fifty years.

From Monday August 30 until September 8, workers from Brno were here. They divided into three groups and visited everybody, trying to convince them of the necessity of fulfilling all corn delivery quotas.

The end of threshing and delivery was fixed at September 5. After September 5 the price of corn was 15% lower. Because the crop this year was very poor, people were fulfilling their quotas to at most 60%, and even that figure was not reached by everybody.

For a whole week after September 5, people were called to the council office in respect of the unfulfilled quotas, and officials from the district went on inspections. Thus delivery period continued until September 18, after which there was an announcement over the loudspeakers that Těšany as a whole had fulfilled 42% of its quota.

September had been almost dry apart from some dew, and in the last third of the month distinctly cold.

October 17. We gathered the grapes. Because of the cold and wet weather, they had a poor sugar content, 14–15–16 and occasionally 18 degrees. The price for Portugal grapes delivered as part of the compulsory quota was 3 crowns per kilogramme, for Frankovka, Riesling, Valtellina, and Sylvaner grapes 4.80 crowns. For Portugal grapes delivered over and above quota, the price was 7.20 crowns per kilogramme, and for the better varieties 10.20 crowns. After fulfilling their quotas, growers could make as much wine for themselves as they wanted without tax. The crop this year was not great. We harvested around 600kg.

The trees were full to breaking with fruit of all kinds. Our summer “strudel” or “Alexander” apples remained healthy on the tree until November. Plums sold at 50 halěr per kilogramme, summer apples at 1–1.50 crowns, winter apples at 2 crowns.

The whole of October had been very cold and wet.

November 2. For the first time after the harvest, around twenty people received permission to grind 100kg of corn.

November 28. Today there were elections to the national assembly, the regional people’s committee, and the district people’s committee. The elections were conducted in the same way as in 1948. The voter received papers without envelopes, one for each election, containing the name of one candidate, and having no choice tossed them into the urn in front of the eyes of the electoral commission. The elections turned out as had been expected, at 99.7%. It had admittedly been announced that anybody who did not like a candidate could go behind a curtain and cross his name out, but anyone who dared to do so was watched by eyes appointed for the purpose.

November had seen plenty of rain. It started to freeze on November 18, and until November 25 temperatures dropped to 7–10 degrees below zero. After November 26, there was a break in the frost, and people could resume ploughing.

At the beginning of December, people started to use the new shelter which the village had built at the bus stop.

Because of the great quantities of fruit, Těšany took its turn at the slivovice distillery after December 20. Distilling normally took place either in Rajhrad or in Bošovice. Distilling of slivovice cost 48 crowns per litre inclusive of tax.

This year, permits for home pig slaughter would be harder than at any other time. The chairman announced over the loudspeakers that those who did not have their cowsheds stocked in accordance with the plan, and had not fulfilled their 1954 quotas of beef, pork, and poultry meat, need not bother to apply. People delivered surplus cows not in milk before the end of the year, and received 3.50–3–1.50 crowns per kilogramme live weight as assessed by eye. Cows in milk sold at 2000–3000–4000 crowns according to quality.

Corn prices were unchanged.

1955

Another year had passed beyond recall, and a new year took over.

In the first week of the new year, work started on the digging of a water main which would supply the street near the mill and part of our own street.

January 19. My husband underwent a hernia operation in the hospital on the Golden Hill in Brno.

January had been cold with snow. The temperature fell to minus 15 degrees at most. On some days there was a partial thaw with showers of rain, and everything became covered with a glassy coating of ice. On January 17, at 6 o'clock in the morning, there was a sharp but short-lasting thunderstorm, with thunder, lightning, and heavy rain.

February 1. The mill of brother Antonín at Žatčany was closed. He was not allowed to grind flour, and was allowed to crush for animal feed only one day per week. Těšany was reassigned to the mill at Šitbořice.

February 19. There was a festival in the large family of the Rychlíks. Brother Frant at No. 119 married his daughter Libuše to agricultural engineer Eduard Stoniš from Kyjovice near Moravská Ostrava [the principal city of Northern Moravia, about 140 kilometres north-east of Brno]. The whole of our family, all the Rychlíks, were there.

The weather in February had been mild and wet up to February 20. After that it started to freeze, and snow fell on February 24. Temperatures fell to 10–12 degrees below zero.

March 14. My husband Frant Rychlík, who had reached his 65th birthday on December 2, received his first pension payment with backdating to the new year. The monthly payment was 260 crowns. This pension was received by all workers on the land who had reached 65 years and had been paying national insurance since its inception in 1948.

March 19. 34-year-old carpenter Bohuslav Buček, living at No. 290, was killed falling from the scaffolding on a construction site in Brno.

Winter was still ruling. On St Josifka's day, March 19, the temperature fell to 6 degrees below zero, and snow was lying everywhere on the fields. On March 31, there were 7 degrees of frost, and field work had still not started.

On April 1, there was a reduction in retail prices. All foodstuffs apart from meat, butter, lard, and artificial fats were reduced by 5–10–15–20%. Bread was reduced from 2.80 crowns to 2.60 crowns for a one-kilogramme loaf, a roll from 40 haléř to 30 haléř, and a kilogramme of flour from 5 crowns to 4.50 crowns.

Textile goods were also reduced in price, but not by much. The largest reductions were in goods which ordinary people did not buy, such as cars, motorcycles, vacuum cleaners, pianos, television sets, radio receivers, and so on.

April 2. People started sowing here and there.

We were given delivery quotas for 1955, based on our holding of 1.74ha of arable land.

Rye	44kg
Wheat	193kg
Barley	259kg
Maize	10kg
Potatoes	186kg
Sugar beet	57 cents
Pork	98kg
Beef	130kg
Milk	764 litres
Eggs	409
Dried hay	34kg
Grapes	22kg per are, and since we had a vineyard measuring 24 ares this was 518kg in total

April 29. The apricot trees came into bloom.

The first two thirds of April had been very cold, with morning temperatures 2–6 degrees below zero and with showers of snow and rain. The final third of the month was dry and warm.

May 23. There was a frost, which severely burned the vineyards in the lower locations and in the dells.

May had been very cold, with night frosts. It rained twice, once in the middle of the month and once at its end.

June 6. Work started on digging the water main to our street. The inhabitants were doing the work themselves, without payment. So far, it had got as far as No. 90.

After June 8, the first cut of hay was taken for drying. The crop this year was very good.

June had been very cold and wet. From June 1 to June 3 there were thunderstorms and showers, then it stayed dry until June 20, when there were heavy thunderstorms and spells of rain. Much water fell in the part of the village known as Dvorky [which had been built in a slight hollow north-east of the village's centre], such as had never been seen before.

The corn was doing very well, and there was hope for a very good crop. Potatoes and beet were also doing well, but there was little maize. It was yellow, and was suffering from the cold.

July 14. Around noon, a thunderstorm came from the direction of Šaratský Dvůr, with torrential rain.

The water level in Dvorky rose sharply after today's downpour and penetrated into people's cowsheds, storage sheds, and yards, and the village called for help from neighbouring villages and from Brno. Firemen came from Moutnice and from Nesvačilka to help our own fire brigade, and then men arrived from Brno with motorized fire engines. They pulled hoses through houses Nos. 116 and 115 by the gates and across the yards and gardens to the "ditch", and thus pumped out the water. The Moutnice and Nesvačilka brigades went away in the evening, but the Brno brigade and our own worked through the night and until 7.30 the next morning. The six hoses of the Brno brigade were discharging 3500 litres per minute, and the two hoses of our own brigade 1000 litres a minute.

July 25. The harvest started.

July 26. Work started on the next part of the water main in our street, from No. 90 to the middle of No. 109. We were doing it at our own expense, and each house paid 285 crowns. The trench was dug in one day, everybody digging the section in front of his own house. Jaroslav Ledba at No. 124 laid the pipe the same day, and the next day, July 27, we had water flowing in our own house.

Sunday July 31. The new bell was consecrated. It had been procured by a collection among the inhabitants, and the metals needed for its casting were likewise collected among the inhabitants. The bell was called "The Holy Family", cost 8000 crowns, and weighed 240kg.

July had brought us much rain and in places the root crops were damaged by water, but otherwise both corn and root crops were doing fine. Overall, however, July had been quite cold.

August. The new month started with yet more rain. On August 2 there was a thunderstorm, and wet and showery weather continued for a whole week.

August 8. It started to rain in the morning, and continued all day and all through the night.

August 9. Again all day until 10 o'clock in the evening.

August 10 and 11. Thunderstorms. The corn that had been cut longer was sprouting, and in the hollows unbound corn was lying in water. Dvorky was flooded once more, and the Brno fire brigade had to come again.

August 12. The new bell rang for the first time to mark the last journey of Vincenc Dosoudil of No. 242.

Thunderstorms continued until August 16, and then the weather improved.

August 24. At 11 o'clock in the morning there was a sharp thunderstorm over Těšany, which came from Šaratský Dvůr. The water fell in such quantities that it carried away stooks and flooded hay and root crops. It rolled off the hills to the east and across the fields, and came into our back yard where it got to within twenty paces of the gates of our barn. Some land further along was also flooded.

The local fire brigade had to rescue people's animals, and again the Brno brigade came with two appliances and helped to pump out the water from Dvorky. This lasted from 4 o'clock in the afternoon of August 24 until the same time next day. This time the water penetrated not only across yards and into cowsheds and storage sheds, but into living rooms and kitchens.

Four threshing machines were working night and day to thresh the corn from the fields and from barns into which the water had flowed. This year's crop, in spite of all vicissitudes, fishing out of the water, scattering of stooks, and unbinding of sheaves, yielded six cents per measure.

At the end of August, there were still stooks in the fields, and the stubble had not been turned over.

September 6. People brought in the last stooks from the fields.

September 21. Threshing finished, and according to an announcement by village chairman Karel Ardély everyone had fulfilled his corn delivery quota in full (some even more) apart from Frant. Štefanová of No. 201, who was 900kg short, and Julie Horáková of No. 68, who was 700kg short.

Milling this year was unrestricted. Everyone could grind and crush as much corn as he liked, and there was no need for any permit. But because the corn had started sprouting, the flour was bad for cooking and baking.

September too had been very wet and cold. Many stubble fields had still not been turned over. Potato lifting started towards the end of the month. The potatoes were hard to dig, were muddy, and in the hollows were rotten.

On Saturday October 8, 19 recruits from Těšany attended a call-up in Židlochovice. Thirteen of them were enrolled in the army, and would start their military service at the end of the month.

October 29 and 30. We gathered the grapes. The crop was poor, and the sugar content was only 14–16 degrees.

The first half of October had been wet. The weather improved in the second half of the month, but field work was very badly delayed. All the maize was still to be harvested, and much of the potato and beet crops.

November 7. I saw maize still awaiting harvest.

November 19. There was another happy event in our large family. Brother Antonín at Žatčany married his daughter Vlastička to Rudolf Pálek from Žebětín [a village some ten kilometres west of Brno], at the time a clerk in Brno.

November 25. The state farms took over and ploughed some of the sectors around the village. The fields in these sectors had belonged to private smallholders, but many of the fields around Těšany were lying fallow, and some land-holders with large amounts, being unable to till their fields, voluntarily offered them to the state farms without compensation. So the state farms took over the sectors containing these fields, and if the owners of other fields within the same sector did not want to surrender them they were exchanged for vacant fields elsewhere. Many fields were for sale but there were few takers, and when somebody occasionally bought one the price was 1000–1500–2000 crowns per measure.

The weather in November had been quite favourable. There had been occasional showers and rain, but everything that was still outside was gathered in without great difficulty.

After the day of St Mikuláš, night frosts started, and on December 13 and 14 temperatures dropped to 10 degrees below zero. On December 16 there was a thaw, and mild weather without frost continued until the end of the month.

The year 1955 had passed into history, and with it much worry, pain, and hard work, and little joy and content. For agricultural products delivered as part of the quota, we received 97.80 crowns for 100kg of wheat, 89.70 crowns for barley, 16 crowns for 100kg of potatoes, 13.32 crowns for 36kg of dried hay, and 0.90–1.30 crowns per litre of milk according to fat content. For pork, delivered as part of the quota, the price was 6 crowns per kilogramme, and for calves for slaughter 3.50–4–4.50 crowns per kilogramme according to quality class.

Prices for agricultural products sold to the free market were markedly higher. Thus for 100kg of fine cleaned barley for malting, the price was 90kg of barley for animal feed plus a supplement of 200 crowns, and if there was no feed barley then 75kg of maize. The price for pork sold on the free market was 16 crowns per kilogramme, and if a producer had a contract to raise a pig for the free market he could buy 200kg of feed barley or maize (barley at 70 crowns for 100kg, maize at 90 crowns), and he received 14.50 crowns per kilogramme for the pork.

1956

On January 4, my 48-year-old brother František became a grandfather. His daughter Libuše, married to Ing. Eduard Stoniš, had a daughter, who was christened "Jitřenka".

During the whole of January, the weather was wet, showery, and mild. On January 25, the temperature fell to minus 3 degrees. On January 27, it became more severe with a snowfall, and on January 31 the temperature fell to 19 degrees below freezing.

On February 11, Květoslav Rychlík from Žatčany, the son of my brother Antonín, married Miluše Růžičková, also from Žatčany.

The weather in February showed us what it could do. The temperature on several days fell to 25 degrees below zero. From February 11 to February 25 there were blizzards, with great drifts on the roads, and all bus transport was stopped. Water mains were frozen and burst. On February 27 the temperature was minus 17, on February 28 minus 7, and on February 29 a thaw set in.

March 9. My mother's brother and our uncle, 80-year-old Fabian Sýkora, died in Žatčany.

The sudden thaw at the start of the month, with temperatures 6 degrees above zero, melted great quantities of snow. The water from the ditch behind our back garden overflowed, and flooded our garden and the adjoining fields.

Even by the end of March, spring sowing had not yet started. The fields were wet, and water was standing in the hollows.

From April 1, the prices of foodstuffs and other consumables was reduced by 5–30 per cent.

Also from April 1, the servicing of cows by bulls was discontinued, and artificial insemination was again introduced. The A.I centre was at Rajhrad.

April 4. Sowing started.

As a result of the wet harvest the previous year, the corn was germinating badly. Only 50% of the barley was coming up. Maize had been harvested unripened and had become very mouldy over the winter, and was germinating only to 40–50%. Winter wheat was 80% frostbitten, and some people were ploughing it back in and sowing spring wheat or barley. Seed corn for both wheat and barley was in short supply, and barley seed from the free market store cost 430 crowns for 100kg. Seed potatoes from the free store cost 100–105 crowns for 100kg. Even hay seed was in very short supply, and was selling between people for 70–75 crowns per kilogramme.

April 21. We pruned our vineyard. The wood had been badly affected by frost.

The beginning of April had seen night frosts to 3–5 degrees below zero. Towards the end of the month it was wet and very cold, and the trees were still bare. This year, April did not give May even half a leaf, and many fruit trees, walnut, cherry, and apricot trees, had been killed by the frost and had to be dug up.

The first two-thirds of May were cold and wet. The corn was doing well and had not been attacked by any pests, and this year the beet shoots were also free. The weather in the last third of the month was warm and dry.

May 30. Hay started to be cut for drying, but it was very badly affected by frost.

June 25. Work started on a drain to relieve Dvorky [the part of the village that had been so badly flooded the previous year].

As a whole, June had been cold and damp, but there had not been many periods of rain, only showers and drizzle. Corn and root crops were doing well, but hay badly.

July. The second cut of hay was very poor, and in places non-existent.

Many people had their potato plants attacked by Colorado beetles, and sugar beet and turnips were badly attacked by poppy aphids. People dusted their crops against both pests.

July 23. The harvest started.

The weather in the first half of the month had been dry. There were then thunderstorms and rain until July 25, after which it was fine to the end of the month.

August 9. Today we threshed. The corn was of good quality and yielded 500kg per measure, but there was less straw than last year.

The harvest proceeded smoothly and quite quickly. There were no major storms, only showers and light rain. By August 12, almost everything had been harvested apart from some backward spring wheat.

August had been almost wholly dry, with just a few showers. All the corn had been threshed apart from that from three fields. Threshing cost 7 crowns per kilowatt-hour.

September. At the beginning of the month, work started on the construction of a new cemetery.

September 26. Nine recruits from Těšany were called up, of whom eight were passed as fit for

military service.

The whole of September had been dry, and the sowing of winter wheat was waiting on some rain. Potatoes were collected and yielded an average crop, and maize was also harvested. There was almost no third cut of hay, and already a shortage of animal feed was becoming apparent.

October 7. Today we gathered the grapes. As a consequence of the harsh winter, in which the wood of the vines had been frozen and many heads killed, the crop was very poor. We harvested 180kg from 24 ares, with a sugar content of 18 degrees.

There had been some very welcome rain on October 6, and on October 10 we sowed winter wheat.

On Sunday October 14, Marta, now Svobodá, of Moutnice, the daughter of my brother Pavel, gave birth to healthy twin girls.

October 15. The beet harvest started. As a result of the dry months August and September, the yield was very poor, 25–30 cents per measure.

October had been very warm. At the start of the month there was some rain, after which the winter wheat was sown, then fine weather lasted up to the end of the month, when it rained and became perceptibly colder.

The weather in November was very capricious. On November 9, the temperature dropped to 6 degrees below zero, and the next day there was snow. From November 12 to November 18 the weather improved and we could continue harvesting the beet, of which there was still a lot to be lifted. However, from November 19 to November 25 the temperature again dropped to 6–9 degrees below zero. Snow fell on November 26, but then there was a thaw, with rain and showers until the end of the month.

December 3. A reduction in the price of various kinds of goods and provisions was announced. It applied to such things as meat, lard, smoked meats, pulses, rice, and raisins, and also photographic apparatus, radio receivers, and watches.

The weather in the first two-thirds of the month was mild and wet. In the third part it froze, and perhaps four centimetres of snow fell. The heaviest frost was 9 degrees below zero.

Our delivery quotas for 1956 were based on the 1.73ha of arable land which we were tilling.

Pork	88kg
Beef	110kg
Milk	683 litres
Eggs	409
Barley	285kg
Wheat	214kg
Maize	10kg
Potatoes	205kg
Dried hay	31kg

We received the following prices for farm produce.

Item		Price (crowns)
Pork, delivered as part of the quota	1kg	6
Veal, ditto	"	3–5
Milk, ditto	1 litre	0.90–1.30
		(according to fat content)
Eggs, ditto	1kg	8.40
Wheat, ditto	100kg	97.80
Barley, ditto	"	91.10
Potatoes, ditto	"	32
Potatoes for industry, ditto	"	18
Dried hay, ditto	"	37
Fattened geese and ducks	1kg	26–30

We had to pay the following prices in the shops.

Item		Price (crowns)
Sugar, granulated	1kg	10.50
Sugar, lump	"	11
Butter, according to quality	"	38-42-48
Pig lard, rendered	"	36
Pork cutlets	"	31
Pork for roasting	"	28
Pig's head	"	8
Belly pork	"	20
Beef, according to class	"	17-18-22-26
Salami	"	28-36
Ordinary sausages	"	16-18-25-28
Frankfurters, klobásy [traditional Moravian sausages]	"	25-28-32
Salami, horsemeat	"	22
Sausages, horsemeat	"	10
Bread	"	2.60
Rolls	each	0.35
Flour, coarse ground	1kg	4.40
Flour, fine ground	"	3.50
Rice, first quality	"	12
Rice, inferior	"	6

Rolls had been at 30 haléř following the earlier price reduction, but after a short time the price increased again to 35 haléř. They said the quality had improved (which we hadn't noticed).

Textiles and ready-made clothes were still dear. After the price reductions, two prices appeared in the shop windows, the old price and the new reduced price. Thus men's shirts had been 60-80 crowns or more, according to quality. After the reduction, prices started at 45 crowns, but after a short time shirts were again on display at prices from 60 crowns upwards. They said the quality was higher. And those who wanted to buy fine cloth for men's suits had to pay 350-400 crowns per metre.

A lady's coat from good material cost 1000-1200 crowns.

Footwear was also dear. A pair of working shoes [possibly boots, there is no way of telling] cost over 50 crowns according to size, walking-out shoes 100-260 crowns, hand-made shoes 350-400 crowns.

1957

The new year took over, with damp and wet weather which lasted until the middle of the month. In the second half of the month there were snowstorms, and the temperature dropped to 2-4-...-16 degrees below zero. A thaw set in on January 28, with night temperatures 2-5 degrees below zero and day temperatures 4-5 degrees above.

In January, there was a very widespread flu epidemic. The hospitals were overflowing, and could not take all the sufferers for treatment.

On January 29, my husband went down with the flu.

On Saturday February 2, it seemed to my husband that he was feeling better, and that the flu had already abated. He got up out of bed, dressed, and greeted Dr Toman with the words "Doctor, I am already well".

The next day he was very much worse, and I sent for the priest to minister to him. On Monday February 4, Dr Toman sent him to St Anna's hospital in Brno, where the next day, February 5, he died.

February 8. Today was the funeral of my husband František Rychlík (67 years old). At 9 o'clock, the hearse brought him from Brno, and at 10 o'clock there was a funeral attended by a large number of people from Těšany and the surrounding region. The priest, the Rev. Antonín Florian, gave a very beautiful speech over the grave. He recalled that he used to walk behind him in the vineyards, that he used to like to sit and chat with him in the shed. He had been very well read, with a wide experience of life.

Sleep peacefully after a lifetime of hard labour, and farewell.

I remained alone, with the worry of how to cope with all the expenses and the work.

Transport, funeral directors	765.74 crowns
Church charges, namely priest, sexton, organist, singers, servers	230 crowns
Gravedigging	80 crowns
Musicians	470 crowns
Hearse	160 crowns
Wreath	90 crowns

Throughout February, the weather was almost springlike until February 20, when temperatures fell to 4–5 degrees below zero and there was snow.

March. Up to the middle of the month, night temperatures were 4–5 degrees below zero, and there was snow. After March 15 there were showers and rain, but after March 20 the weather improved and sowing started.

Those who needed barley for sowing could obtain it freely, that is without incurring a delivery quota in return, at 425 crowns for 100kg. Hay seed could be obtained direct from those with it at 50–60 crowns per kilogramme.

April 4. The apricot trees came into bloom.

There was a very great shortage of turnip seed, so the village council shared out a ration according to the amount of land to be planted. I received 1.20kg at a cost of 11 crowns (it was selling under the counter at 20–30 crowns per kilogramme).

April 5. We pruned the vineyard. My brother Jaromír helped me.

April 15. We sowed beet. Night temperatures were 3–5 degrees below zero.

April 25. I signed to deliver a quota of 528kg of grapes this year.

Towards the end of the month, night temperatures were 10 degrees above zero, and day temperatures up to 25 degrees. Potatoes were planted. Those who did not have enough seed potatoes could buy them at the free store for 95–105 crowns per 100kg.

The first half of May was dry and very cold, with night frosts. The beet in some sectors was ravaged by black caterpillars, and had to be planted anew.

May 19. There were elections to the village council. Eighteen members were elected.. The previous council had had twelve members.

Marie Rychlíková	No. 247	Karel Ardély	No. 263
Anna Svobodová	No. 231	Miroslav Dostal	No. 22
Jenofefa Skříčková	No. 244	Fr Křepela	No. 32
Ant. Svoboda	No. 80	Rud. Juříček	No. 55
Vratislav Mandelik	No. 40	Jan Novotný	No. 25
Oldřich Kusý	No. 139	Jos. Komínek	No. 315
Rudolf Liška	No. 41	Fil. Vahala	No. 274
Frant Janoušek	No. 158	Al. Příbyl	No. 116
Frant Dudek	No. 213	Fr. Šibiček	No. 28

Karel Ardély of No. 263 was elected chairman.

In the middle of May, I was called to the lawyer's in Židlochovice to wind up the estate of my late

husband. He read me my husband's will, in which he had appointed me heiress of all he possessed.

The whole of May was very cold and dry, with night frosts.

From the beginning of June, there was not a single shower of rain. The first cut of hay was very small, root crops were doing badly, and everything was suffering from the dry weather.

June 20. In the evening, there was a short thunderstorm. The next day it thundered all day, with a lot of rain. Temperatures rose to 24–29–31–32 degrees.

July started very hot, with temperatures of 32–34–35–37 degrees.

July 6. The harvest started.

July 14. It started to rain, and rained almost every other day. The frequent showers and rain persisted almost throughout the month, and corn lying in swathes or bound in stooks sprouted. From July 28, the weather improved, and the rain stopped.

August. The corn was taken to barns and to the threshing machines. This year the grain harvest was good, but there was little straw.

August 19. A recruiting campaign for a "Standard Agricultural Co-operative" started. Every day, in front of the council office, there were cars and motorcycles which had brought district officials from Židlochovice and officials and workmen from Brno, to the number of more than fifty on some days. They spread out through the village, and undertook an intensive campaign on behalf of the SAC. When people saw them coming, they escaped to the fields or locked their doors and refused to open them, but in many cases they went round the house and came in through the yard.

They always went to a house in pairs, and said that they had come for a friendly chat. They had precise information about each of the people they visited, and about all the members of their families. They knew if someone had not fulfilled some part of his delivery quota, or if he or his children went out to work, or if he had children studying, or if some member of his family had a retirement pension.

If somebody refused to believe the "convincing" of the agitators of the advantages and benefits which awaited them in the co-operative, and didn't want to sign an application, they threatened that they would throw him or his children out of work or off their course of study, or that they would take away his parents' pension, or that they would evict him.

August 29. Six-year-old Marie Čermáková from No. 281 was run over by a lorry on the main road, and died on the way to hospital.

The first half of August had been dry, the second half wet. The recruiting campaign continued until the end of the month, but people held together and nobody wanted to join the co-operative.

September. The recruiting campaign continued. Some people were summoned to the council office, where officials argued with them until late in the night. Others were summoned to Židlochovice with the same purpose.

On September 4, it was announced over the loudspeakers that the agitators would not leave Těšany until the co-operative had been established, even if it took until Christmas.

September 7. The campaign was still continuing, and already many people, worn out by the constant daily arguing and arguing (they had been to brother Jaromír's five days running), had signed applications to join the co-operative "voluntarily".

On Saturday September 7, twelve people who so far had stubbornly refused to join up were called to the council office, where they were talked to until past midnight and eventually persuaded, but none of them wanted to be the first to sign, so they were all given pencils and all signed at the same time.

On Sunday September 8, council chairman Karel Ardely announced that the agitators would not be coming again, that whoever still wanted to join should come and sign an application, and that the co-operative was established.

September 11. The new SAC instituted communal ploughing of various fields.

September 12. The inaugural meeting of the newly established "Standard Agricultural Co-operative" was held. Almost all those who worked on the land had joined the SAC, perhaps only ten staying outside. As chairman of the SAC, Barnabáš Petlák of No. 252 was elected, deputy chairman Jan Horák of No. 150, book-keeper Miroslav Dostál of No. 22, vegetable crop experts Ant. Svoboda of No. 80 and Josef Juříček of No. 126, animal husbandry adviser Barnabáš Chalupa [no house number given], stores manager Frant Sedláček of No. 38, and treasurer Josef Dostál of No. 86.

September 18. The SAC started sowing rye.

September 23. Twelve boys from Těšany were called up for military service.

September 25. We gave the SAC seed for sowing. I was assessed for 190kg of corn and 360kg of potatoes.

September 28. We gathered the grapes. It was necessary to gather them early, because they had been badly rotted by the constant rain and cold. The sugar content this year was therefore quite low, 14–15–17 and occasionally 18 degrees. My delivery quota this year was 528kg of grapes.

The whole of September had been very wet and cold, and not good for work on the land.

During the first half of October, we lifted the potatoes. The crop this year was very good.

After October 15, we lifted the sugar beet. From half a measure, we harvested 42 cents. The maize was harvested immediately after the beet, and it too had yielded a good crop.

The weather was favourable throughout the whole month, with almost no rain.

November 1. I did my first half-day's work in the co-operative. The whole of one sector would carry winter wheat, and we were scattering powder on it. I and all my brothers had become members of the co-operative.

November 15. Private plots of 50 ares were apportioned to members of the co-operative. Our gardens, right up to the buildings, were counted as part of our portion. Many members were not satisfied with the apportionment, which led to quarrels and cursing.

In all the sectors taken over by the co-operative, people were digging out fruit trees, whether young or old, wherever they happened to be, in the fields, by the brooks, or in the balks in the vineyards. In future years, fruit would be scarce.

November had been wholly dry.

December 10. There was a meeting of all members of the SAC. The management of the SAC announced that each member had a duty to supply animal feed to the co-operative and to fulfil his half-year meat delivery quota. If he fulfilled his half-year meat delivery quota, he had further to supply 80kg of grain, 250kg of potatoes, and 500kg of turnips from each hectare. If he fulfilled his meat delivery quota for a whole year, he had further to supply 40kg of grain, 125kg of potatoes, and 250kg of turnips from each hectare. (The pork delivery quota was 57kg per hectare.)

The weather throughout December had been almost dry. The temperature at the start of the month dropped to 9–12 degrees below zero for several days, then there were several days of thaw, then the temperature fell again to minus 3–5 degrees, but there was no snow.

The following inhabitants of Těšany died during 1957.

Františka Menšíková	No. 233
Antonie Zvolská	No. 206
Josef Drtil	No. 120
František Rychlík	No. 105
Josef Sýkora	No. 37
Alžběta Dosoudilová	No. 102
Marie Komíníková	[no number given]
... Lejsková [no first name given]	No. 122
František Horák	No. 68
Marie Svobodová	No. 81
Josef Ryšánek	No. 22
Jan Strouhal	(brought from Pavlovice)
Zdenek Sedláček	[see note below]
Cyril Novotný	No. 62
Maruška Čermáková	No. 281
Marie Ardelyová	No. 260
Josef Milota	No. 82

[Zdenek Sedláček is described as “(dítě převoz)” with a gap before the closing bracket. The meaning of this is not clear to me. It might mean that he was a child who came with Jan Strouhal, who is described as “(převezen z Pavlovic)”, but the surnames are not the same. My dictionary's translation of “převoz” is “ferry”, but there are no ferries near Těšany.]