

Chapter 13

1969-1974

1969

The New Year started with twelve degrees of frost, and the next day there was snow.

From the New Year, the weekly magazines "Reporter" and "Literary Papers", which had been suppressed in August, started to appear again.

People were bearing the loss of freedom very badly. In a protest in Wenceslas Square in Prague on January 17, 21-year-old philosophy student Jan Palach poured petrol over himself and set himself alight. He died three days later, and on January 25 had a state funeral.

From the New Year, all old age pensions were increased. Those up 799 crowns received an increase of 45 crowns, from 800 crowns to 899 an increase of 50, from 900 crowns to 1099 an increase of 59, and then the increases got larger up to 100 crowns on a pension of 2200.

January 25. Gardeners, bee-keepers, and those rearing animals arranged a dance at which there was a competition, with prizes, under the title "Ten Questions". The questions were about noteworthy events in the village, but alas people turned out to know very little. [The questions and answers are in the diary, but most of them relate either to the play "Maryša" (see December 1943) or to other matters that are covered elsewhere in the diary, and I see no point in repeating them in full. However, in addition to matters that appear elsewhere we learn that the church had been built in the years 1896-98 (when writing her retrospective survey in 1942, the writer had put "during 1895 and 1896") and consecrated in 1906, and that Těšany had had a mayor, Cyril Viktorin, who could neither read nor write. According to Vermouzek, Viktorin held office in 1905 and 1906.]

During the first half of January, temperatures were 4–10–15 degrees below zero, and there was snow which started to lie. After January 15, a thaw set in. It rained but then froze at night, so the roads iced over, and on one day all transport was stopped.

February 28. I was at the state lawyer's in Brno handing over the house and everything attached to it (the field) to brother Jaromír and his wife, with certain rights reserved to myself.

During the first half of the month, temperatures were between 10–14 degrees below zero. On February 15 and 16 there was a blizzard, temperatures were 10–13 below until February 20, then there was a thaw until the end of the month.

March 4. Jara's daughter Anna, now Vymazalová, gave birth to a son who was christened Karel. Now Jara had four grandsons.

March 16. Winter returned, with freezing rain and a blizzard. The fierce wind blew down the posts carrying the telephone and electricity cables, and telephone communication with the outside world was cut off for a time.

Night temperatures were six degrees below. Towards the end of the month the frosts retreated.

During the night of March 28 and 29, while people in the towns were celebrating the victory of the Czechoslovak ice hockey team over the Russians, there were demonstrations in which a great deal of damage was done, and the political situation became much, much worse.

April 2. Sowing started.

April 26. The apricot trees came into bloom.

The political situation was very much worse. According to announcements on the radio, everyone who cursed and condemned the Soviet Union and the other Warsaw Pact countries for their invasion of our republic would be pursued and punished.

The whole of April had been very cold and dry, and in truth it gave May only half a leaf.

May. This year, the local loudspeakers did not urge people to decorate their windows for May 1, and the May Day procession did not take place. Nor were there any processions in the towns.

May 26. Brother Jaromír suffered a heart attack at work and was taken to hospital.

May was dry and cold up to May 18, when there was a thunderstorm with drenching rain.

June also was predominantly dry until towards the end of the month, when there were thunderstorms and showers.

July 12. Jara left No. 100 and moved in with me at No. 105, and gave his own house at No. 100 to his son. Now it was Josef Rychlík who was living at No. 100.

July 19. The harvest started.

July 20. At 17 minutes past 9 o'clock in the evening, three American cosmonauts landed on the moon. They stayed there for 24 hours, and on Thursday July 24 they returned to earth and landed safely.

The whole of July was dry, with shade temperatures up to 34 degrees. The harvest progressed very quickly and everything was cut by combine. The corn was standing upright and had not lodged.

August 11. During the afternoon, 54-year-old Marie Langášková jumped from a first-floor window of a block of flats built by the SAC for its members, and was killed on the spot.

August 21. The anniversary of the entry of the troops of the five states into our country. There was unrest and demonstrations in the towns, with deaths and injuries, and in consequence arrests and imprisonment.

August 23 and 24. There was a get-together of natives of 50–55–60 years.

A new building was being put up by the council office which would be a "Self-Service" provision store.

October 9. The main road from Klobouky through Těšany to Brno, which had been very badly damaged by tanks and heavy vehicles during the invasion of our country by foreign troops, was being repaired and widened.

October 12. Václav Chaloupka of No. 153, a native of Těšany now in the army, won the Velká Pardubičká on his horse "Korok", trained at Šinkvice Dvůr. [The "Velká Pardubičká" is a famous Bohemian horse race over fences, roughly equivalent in standing and national affection to the Grand National in England.]

October 14. Towards evening, the winning rider of the "Velká Pardubičká" returned. Almost the whole village turned out to greet him. In his racing costume, he went through the village in a procession of inhabitants led by a band, and in front of the council building he was welcomed by council chairman Mil. Dostál.

October 30. The SAC finished gathering the grapes. This year's crop was very prolific. The SAC harvested 675 cents, and received half a million crowns for them.

The sugar content of the grapes was high. For example, grapes of the Neuburk variety reached 26 degrees of sugar content, and other varieties 19–20 degrees. The final collection, of the grapes known as Martinmas grapes, was interesting. In a normal year, these are still green and hard. This year, they reached 19 degrees of sugar content, and 40 cents were gathered.

October had been wholly dry and without rain. The winter wheat had not yet germinated.

November. All the sugar beet was lifted by combine. The yield was poor.

In the middle of November, it started to rain.

December 6. Snowstorm and freezing.

Josef at Dubňany celebrated his 60th birthday, but his health was very poor.

December 8 and 9. The temperature fell to 20–21 degrees below zero, and then to 8–6 degrees below until Christmas [the figures "8–6" are this way round in the original].

Before and during Christmas, we were surprised to hear Christmas carols on the radio and television which we had not heard there for many years. There were few people at the morning Mass on Christmas Day. There is an obvious drop in the number of people going to church, but the tavern is full.

The following inhabitants died during 1969.

January 7	Josef Král	No. 52	69 years old
January 18	Antonie Bartušková	No. 220	89 years old
April 6	Matěj Chalupa	No. 44	81 years old
April 8	Frant. Saitl	No. 116	[no age given]
April 26	Jarolím Kolářik	No. 260	77 years old
August 11	Marie Langášková	No. 33	54 years old
December 28	Jana Sýkorová	No. 202	27 years old

Josef Král was the son of father's sister Karolina, and our cousin. He died suddenly of a stroke.

1970

In the New Year, there was a flu epidemic, and to stop it spreading the primary and secondary schools were closed for a week. Three members of our own family were hit by the disease.

January 8. As a result of the continuation of the flu, the school holidays were extended for another week. School would now start on January 19.

January 17. The gardeners' association organized a "Communal dance". The guests at each table were asked to put forward a suggestion for the improvement of Těšany, its business, and the service of its people. The best suggestions would be forwarded to the village council.

A thaw had set in on January 12, with temperatures of up to 4 degrees above zero, and the snow rapidly vanished. Towards the end of the month the frosts again became more severe, down to 18 degrees below zero.

February 2, 3, 4. A blizzard. Transport made difficult.

February 8. Shrovetide. There was dancing only on the Sunday, from 5 p.m. until midnight. On Monday and Tuesday, nothing. Where were the times when music had played for three days and young and old alike had been merry? It was a pity that the village council didn't know how to arrange it.

Winter was coming and going. February 10 and the next day, a thaw. February 15, a great blizzard, with frosts deepening to 17 degrees below zero.

March 3. A great blizzard, roads impassable.

March 13. Roads still impassable, 3-4 degrees of frost.

March 31. The weather had been frosty during the whole month, and the roads in the majority impassable.

April. Wet and unpleasant weather until April 10, then it improved, and sowing started on April 15.

April 23. The apricot trees came into bloom, and the temperature rose to 14 degrees above zero.

April 27. Good weather. The potatoes were planted.

May 4. Jara had a heart attack at work and was taken to the military hospital in Brno.

May 7. Brother Josef from Dubňany was taken to St Anna's hospital in Brno.

May 29. Jara came home from hospital.

June. In the majority, cold.

July 8. 32-year-old Antonín Naležinský was stung to death by a migrating swarm of bees near Šaratský Dvůr.

During the night of July 10 and 11, there was a thunderstorm. Corn and root crops were doing well despite the relatively dry weather. There was also a good crop of cherries and strawberries.

July 20. The harvest started.

July 21. Wet weather started.

July 31. The weather eased, and the harvest proceeded very quickly.

August 17. The harvest finished. Wheat gave 28q per hectare, and barley 40q.

August was on the whole wet and warm.

August 29. It rained, and hailstones fell which partially beat down the vines.

The whole of September was without rain. The potato harvest was finished. There were plenty of them and they were fine, but there were always many Colorado beetles on them.

Towards the end of the month, night temperatures fell to 1–2½ degrees below zero.

October 21. At the expense of the Office of Ancient Monuments, the repair of the cross at the junction by the manor house was started. This cross commemorated the battle of the Three Emperors at Slavkov in 1805. [This battle is known to us in England as “Austerlitz”, and took place some ten kilometres to the north. Těšany was therefore a little away from the actual battlefield, but the first Těšany record book has a note that the village was comprehensively pillaged.]

November 20. Voluntary workers from the gardeners’ association were helping with the repair of the roof of the smithy, No. 33. This smithy had been bought by the Office of Ancient Monuments from its owner, Eduard Langášek, for 35,000 crowns. At the expense of the Office of Ancient Monuments, it would be restored to its original state. [It was opened to the public as a small museum in 1975, and is well worth a visit. There is guide material in English.]

It was wet from November 15 to November 25.

December 1. There was a census, which counted 1174 inhabitants. The 1960 census had counted 1267 inhabitants. Now, in 1970, there were 93 fewer.

Snow started to fall before Christmas, and there were 10–12 degrees of frost.

The following inhabitants died during 1970.

January 21	Cyril Daněk	No. 57	80 years old
April 27	Pavel Ryšánek	No. 74	69 years old
May 5	Cyril Ryšánek	No. 133	69 years old
May 19	Martin Dosoudil	No. 102	82 years old
June 1	Jan Příbyl	No. 94	85 years old
June 2	Anna Vahalová	No. 278	65 years old
July 8	Antonín Náležinský	No. 222	32 years old
August 8	Antonín Harašta	No. 73	85 years old
September 21	Jan Hajek	No. 241	67 years old
October 15	Rozárie Nehybová	No. 95	69 years old
November 4	Frant Tomanová	No. 265	93 years old
November 24	Jarosl. Vahala	No. 223	81 years old

1971

The New Year brought us snow and frosts. Up to January 10 there were frosts of 12–15 degrees and perhaps 15cm of snow. After January 10 it warmed up, and the night frosts were 3–4 degrees until the end of the month.

February was not too cold, with night temperatures 3–4–5 degrees below zero and day temperatures above freezing.

March 25. The sowing of corn started.

April 4. The apricot trees came into bloom.

Throughout April, there were still night frosts of 1–3 degrees.

May 7. The repair of the cross at the junction by the manor house was completed.

May 19. The first thunderstorm of spring arrived, and with it hail.

June 1. Repair work started on the statue of St Dominic by the smithy, and on that of St Gothard by the old school, No. 139.

July 13. During the afternoon, a thunderstorm with hail beat down crops around the isolated “Saratský Dvůr” and in strips across various fields.

July 21. The harvest started. The temperature on some days reached 32 degrees above zero.

July 22. Electric heating was installed in the church.

July 29. A film crew came to Těšany and filmed the setting of the Mrštík brothers' work "Maryša", namely Maryša's birthplace, No. 19, and the old smithy, No. 33.

August 1. The harvest finished. It had only taken twelve days. The corn yield was very good, 40q per hectare.

In the middle of September, the lifting of sugar beet started.

October 4. There was a one-degree frost.

October 10. For the second time, the Velká Pardubičká was won by "Korok", trained at Šinkvice Dvůr and ridden by Těšany native Václav Chaloupka.

October 26. The lifting of sugar beet was completed. The yield this year was 450q per hectare.

November 11. Twenty centimetres of snow fell, temperature 4 degrees below zero.

November 25. There were elections at all levels, to the national assembly and to the regional, district, and local councils. In Těšany, 21 delegates were elected. The chairman was again Miroslav Dostál of No. 22.

November 26. The upper vineyard fields had been taken over by the SAC, and all the trees and vines were pulled out. We had 13 trees pulled out, and they were brought to us to a place between the front of our house and the road.

The weather during the whole of December was very mild.

The following inhabitants died during 1971.

January 14	Jan Novotný	No. 199	91 years old
January 25	Frant Příbyl	No. 4	76 years old
February 9	Pavel Hnilica	No. 64	90 years old
February 9	Marie Suchá	No. 257	76 years old
February 24	Frant. Ryšánková	No. 224	64 years old
March 2	Anna Ryšánková	No. 74	69 years old
March 20	Frant. Čermáková	No. 35	84 years old
April 11	Frant. Viktorin	No. 179	79 years old
April 17	Frant. Skříčková	No. 78	79 years old
April 24	Frant. Straková	No. 188	84 years old
April 30	Zdenka Derková	No. 236	46 years old
May 26	Frant Král	No. 200	42 years old
June 11	Frant Štefanová	No. 201	80 years old
June 17	Antonín Náležinský	No. 70	84 years old
August 14	Rudolf Žák	[no number]	42 years old
September 9	Petronila Haniášová	No. 71	[no age given]
September 15	Jan Štěpánek	No. 138	75 years old
September 17	Frant Čermák	No. 35	61 years old
November 4	Josefka Čermáková	No. 51	88 years old
December 27	Josef Mandelik	No. 284	56 years old

1972

From January 1 to January 10 there was no frost. After January 10 it started to freeze, and the temperature dropped to 5–10–15 degrees below zero. Towards the end of the month mild weather set in again, and this continued throughout February.

At the beginning of March it got colder, and on March 11 the temperature dropped to 10 degrees below zero. After March 11 it became very much warmer, and on March 16 sowing started.

April. The weather was warm, and on April 8 the apricot trees started to blossom. In the middle of the

month there was substantial rain.

In the second half of the month the remaining fruit trees blossomed, but the weather was cold and wet, and the flowers pollinated badly.

The road was repaired and asphalted from the junction by the manor house to the junction by the "Silver Ball". [According to Vermouzek, this was a tavern which stood at a crossroads on the road past Šaratský Dvůr.]

Labour Day, May 1, was celebrated with a very well attended procession not only through the village but along some of the side streets, and an official from the district spoke to people by the school.

During May, they dug a sewer in the street leading upwards opposite our house.

On May 27 and 28, there was a festival for those born in Těšany in 1912. 26 people came, including those now living elsewhere. The festival was held in the meeting room of Jednota [a grocery co-operative founded in Těšany in 1955], where people looked at one another and hardly recognised each other after the intervening fifty years. On the Sunday they went together to church, and in the afternoon they said their goodbyes.

The whole of June was dry.

July 11. The SAC pigsty burnt down, and 128 sows with piglets were killed.

After July 20, harvesting started, but the weather was very wet, and the work continued in very difficult conditions and lasted right through August and into September.

Despite the unfavourable weather, the corn yielded very well. Barley gave 46–50q per hectare.

September 19. The Rev. Antonín Florian, who had been in Těšany since 1 August 1936, went into retirement at Holubice. We said farewell to a good priest, who had experienced good and bad times with us for 36 years.

In his place came the Rev. Frant Tesař, 52 years old, who would now be our spiritual leader.

The whole of September was dry.

October 8. The "Velká Pardubičká" was held, and Těšany inhabitant Václav Chaloupka took part on his horse "Korok" and won for the third time. [To win the Velká Pardubičká three years out of four was a feat roughly comparable to that of Red Rum in winning the Grand National three years out of five, or to Arkle's three successive victories in the Cheltenham Gold Cup. Vermouzek says that it was a unique occurrence in the history of the race, and Těšany's pride in the matter is wholly understandable. There is a painting or coloured photograph of Korok on display in the old smithy.]

In the SAC and on the state farm, the sugar beet was almost wholly lifted by combine. The yield this year was very fine, 500q per hectare.

During the whole of October and November, there was no rain apart from a little light dew. The SAC gathered 926q of grapes from 15ha. The sugar content was 13–16 degrees.

Apart from some night frosts, December was warm and dry. There was no snow.

During the entire pre-Christmas period, no carols were to be heard on radio or television. Religion was again suppressed, especially in schools. Children who went to religious services, or even only to church, could not proceed to higher education.

Those applying for certain posts were vetted as to "how they behaved in 1968". Those who did not praise the Soviet Union risked being subjected to criminal proceedings.

The living standards of the people were high. They were well shod and clothed, and appeared physically in good shape.

The days were long gone when the chief desire of young people was to have a bicycle. Now they were not even interested in motorcycles. Today all the young wanted to have their own cars. At the present time there were over fifty private cars in Těšany. Their prices were 50,000–60,000–70,000 crowns or more according to mark.

How did our family find itself at the end of 1972?

I myself, apart from trouble with high blood pressure, was still pretty active. From 24 September 1969 until 30 June 1972 I had stayed with my brother Jaromír's daughter, who was a teacher in Velké Pavlovice, to look after her son Karel. Now, after the holidays, the lad went to nursery school, and

since July 1 I had been back home. After the last rise in pensions in 1971, my pension went up from 500 crowns to 572.

Brother Antonín and his wife in Žatčany were both receiving old-age pensions. In May 1971, Antonín had to go to hospital because of pain in his eye, and after unsuccessful treatment the doctors decided that the eye would have to be removed and he had to undergo an operation. Now he was well again, though he has one glass eye. In spite of this, he still did some work in the SAC, and his wife also worked there.

Their daughter Vlasta, now Urbánková, lived with her husband in their own house in Žatčany, and both went to work in Brno. They had a car to improve their standard of living.

Antonín's son Květoslav was working as an excavator driver. He lived with his wife Miluška in a bungalow near the mill. They had a daughter Dana and a son Milan. Dana went to secondary school in Újezd, and Milan to the primary school in Žatčany. They also had a car.

Their youngest son Antonín was a gardener, and worked on the gardening side of SAC Brno-Komárov [a suburb towards the SE of the city]. After completing his two years of military service, he married Ludmila Stehliková from Dyjákovice near Znojmo. She also worked as a gardener in SAC Komárov, which was where they met. These young people also had a car. In November they had a daughter, whom they christened Jana.

My second brother Tobiáš and his wife were receiving pensions, but both still worked in the local SAC, and in the sugar-beet season in the autumn they went to the sugar factory in Sokolnice.

Their son Alois was working as a locksmith for a construction firm in Brno, and his wife for a preserves and pickles firm in Modřice [a village some seven or so kilometres to the south of Brno]. Alois had two sons. The elder, Jaromír, was an apprentice locksmith, and the younger, Květoslav, was learning bricklaying. Alois too drove his own car.

My third brother was also receiving a pension, as was his wife Marie. Pavel worked in the local "Woodwork" undertaking, which was a subsidiary activity of the state farm. The whole winter he went round people's houses slaughtering their pigs for them. His wife worked in the SAC.

Their daughter Marta, now Svobodová, in Moutnice, went to work in Brno, as did her husband. They had four children. The eldest, 19-year-old Karel, was studying at technical college, and 17-year-old twins Marie and Marta already went to work in Brno. The youngest, Pavlinka, was in her second year at school.

Pavel's second, his son Jaromír, was married, and like everyone else went to work in Brno. His wife Jiřina worked in the SAC. They had three children, Jiřina, Pavel, and Jaromíra.

My fourth brother František and his wife were drawing pensions, and František too went to work in the local "Woodwork" undertaking. This autumn, he fell ill and had to go to hospital, where he underwent a gall-bladder operation.

Their daughter Libuše, married to agricultural engineer Eduard Stoniš, was living in Olomouc where they were both employed. They had two daughters, Jitřenka and Milena.

František's son, also František, was a trained carpenter, and like everybody else went to work in Brno. His wife Marie worked in the local "Woodwork" undertaking. They had three children, Antonín, Petr, and Marcela. All were already at school. They too had a car.

Fifth brother Josef at Dubňany was likewise on pension, but was in very poor health. His wife Marie had never been in employment, and had no pension.

Their son Květoslav was working as a foreman in the local lignite mines. His wife Jitka sewed linen at home for a textile manufacturer. They had two daughters, Květoslava and Naděžda.

My sixth brother Jaromír, with whom I was now living, had retired a year ago on account of his heart attacks. His monthly pension was 1271 crowns. His wife had a monthly pension of 375 crowns. Both worked as chicken rearers on the state farm. In the winter, they received a batch of 5,000–6,500 chicks from one to three days old, and they handed them over after 53–60 days with weights of 1.60–1.70kg. However, in the summer they received a batch of 10,000–11,000 chicks. Jaromír was allowed to work up to 180 days in a year, but if he did more his pension would be reduced.

Jaromír had four children. His eldest, his son Josef, was a structural engineer and was working in Znojmo. His wife Libuše was a confectioner by trade, and worked at a confectioner's in Brno. They

had two boys, ten-year-old Jaromír and six-year-old Lubomír.

His daughter Anna, now Vymazalová, and her husband were teaching in the school at Velké Pavlovice. They had two boys, nine-year-old Miroslav and four-year-old Karel. When coming to Těšany to see grandpa and grandma, they drove in their own car.

The last of his children were the 19-year-old twins Jaromíra and Eva. They were strong healthy girls. Jaromíra went to higher school in Brno, and would graduate in 1973. Eva had trained as a shop assistant, but was also following a part-time college course from which she would graduate in 1974.

Prices of goods at the end of 1972.

Item		Price (crowns)
Flour, selected	1kg	4.90
Flour, second quality	"	4.20
Flour, coarse	"	3.80
Flour, semi-coarse	"	3.50
Flour, smooth	"	3.20
Semolina	"	4.20
Pearl barley	"	4.70
Rice, first quality	"	6
Rice, second quality	"	4
Rice, pre-cooked	"	6
Lentils, large	"	16
Poppy seed	"	30
Garlic	"	30
Onions	"	3.50–4.50
Lemons	"	10
Oranges	"	15
Apples	"	8
(this year there was a bad crop of all fruit)		
Butter, selected	"	48
Butter, first quality	"	40
Butter, second quality	"	32
Lard, rendered	"	22
Artificial fat, Hera [a brand name]	¼kg	6
Smetol [a brand name]	"	4.70
Margarine	"	4
Bread, ordinary	1kg	2.80
Buttermilk bread, white	"	4.10
Rolls	each	0.30
Loupáčky [a cross between rolls and croissants]	"	0.35
Sugar, lump	1kg	8
Sugar, granulated	"	7.30
Sugar, icing	"	7.30
Salt	"	1.30
Coffee, roasted	50g	8–10
Milk, full fat	1 litre	3.10
Milk, semi-skimmed	"	1.80
Cream	¼ litre	6.40
Eggs	each	1.00–1.40
Beef, braising steak	1kg	17
Beef, rump steak	"	29
Beef, fillet	"	40
Pork, loin	"	36
Pork, chops	"	33

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Prices of goods at the end of 1972 (continued)

Item		Price (crowns)
Pork, collar	1kg	30
Pork, shoulder	"	28
Pork, belly	"	20
Ditto, smoked	"	26
Pork, from the leg, smoked	"	60
Ham	"	70
Salami, Brněnský [a standard style]	1kg	28
Salami, Myslivecký [ditto]	"	28
Salami, Pařížský [ditto]	"	30
Salami, Turistický [ditto]	"	50
Salami, Uherský [ditto]	"	90
Salami based on ham	"	[no price given]
Rolled salami with garlic	"	18
Rolled salami, Kabanos [a brand name]	"	25
Rolled salami, Bratislavský [a standard style]	"	25
Rolled salami, Polský [ditto]	"	30
Frankfurter, veal	"	25
Dietní [a brand name]	"	30
Sausages	"	25
Sausages, home-made	"	38
Wheat, state purchase price	100kg	130
Barley, ditto	"	85
Wheat, sales between people	100kg	250–300
Barley, ditto	"	150–200
Maize, ditto	"	300–400
Potatoes, ditto	"	100
Eating potatoes for home consumption, from the shop	"	80
Wine from the growers	1 litre	10–12–15
Ladies' dresses		100–150–200–500
Ladies' coats		550–800–1200–1500
Men's suits		600–1500
Men's coats		600–1000
Ladies' and men's sweaters		150–250–400
Men's shirts, working		50–60
Men's shirts, festival		120–180–200–300
Boiler suit		80
Men's slippers for use at home		32
Men's walking-out shoes		115–300
Ladies' shoes		60–100–150–250–350
Ladies' high boots		600
Bedlinen	for one bed	166–285
Bedsheets	each	52–61
Towels, everyday	"	10.50–16
Towels, from terry towelling	"	22–35
Teacloths	"	7–10
Dusters	"	8
Coarse cotton	1 metre	18–24

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Prices of goods at the end of 1972 (continued)

Item		Price (crowns)
Ticking	1 metre	20–50
Flannel for underwear	"	12–16
Printed cotton for aprons		16–18
Summer headscarves		11–12
Cashmere scarves		58
Everyday aprons		20
Handkerchiefs	one dozen	60
Kitchen suite (dresser, table, four chairs)		2500–3000
Bedroom suite		8000–10000–12000
Living-room suite		10000–20000
Radio receiver		900–1200–1900
Television set		3800–4800–5000 and more
Building material, bricks	1000	1000
Cement	100kg	60

The following inhabitants died during 1972.

February 2	Františka Novotná	No. 221	70 years old
March 1	Barnabáš Ledba	No. 91	69 years old
March 16	Jiří Petlák	No. 182	19 years old
March 18	Antonín Stojan	No. 28	68 years old
April 12	Josef Duda	No. 294	59 years old
May 25	Štěpán Chaloupka	No. 109	60 years old
July 13	Františka Dosoudilová	No. 296	75 years old
September 26	Štěpán Král	No. 176	84 years old
November 1	Jan Horák	No. 19	73 years old

1973

The New Year started with mild cold weather, night temperatures 1–3 degrees below zero and day temperatures 0–2 degrees above. In the first week there was a fall of perhaps 2cm of snow, which disappeared within three days.

January 12. Because of the spreading of an outbreak of foot and mouth disease which had occurred at Boleradice [a village eight kilometres to the south-south-east], all schools and taverns were closed within a radius of 20km, and a dance which should have taken place on Saturday January 13 was cancelled. The church was also closed, and people were not allowed to assemble anywhere. This prohibition did not apply to meetings of the village council, nor to those of the Communist party, nor to the management committee of the SAC.

The weather remained mild until the end of the month, with night temperatures 2–4 degrees below zero and day temperatures from 1 degree below to zero. At the end of the month there was a fall of snow, which melted within three days. From January 29 the children were again going to school.

February started with mild and wet weather.

At the beginning of February, all dog owners received paying-in slips for the dog tax. This was at the rate of 30 crowns per dog.

February 9. The ban on public assembly was lifted. People could again visit the tavern and the cinema, and they were allowed to go to church.

February 12. Jara's son Josef bought himself a new car, a "Trabant".

Work started on the refurbishment of the old smithy at No. 33 by the Office of Ancient Monuments, which had set aside 500,000 crowns for the purpose.

February 26. There was a celebration to mark the 25th anniversary of the triumph of the working class over capitalism. In the evening, there was a lantern procession through the village, but apart from

schoolchildren and teachers only around thirty inhabitants took part. This did not show any great satisfaction with the government of the working class.

The weather was mild and wet to the end of the month. There was snow, but with day temperatures up to five degrees above freezing it soon melted. In the Brno market, they were already selling snowdrops picked in the woods.

The weather at the beginning of March was mild and fine.

March 4. Shrovetide. There were dances on the Saturday and Sunday, but they were poorly attended and on the other days there was nothing. In other times there had been Shrovetide entertainments for three days in two different halls, and both halls had been full.

March 6. The SAC did the harrowing and preparation for sowing, and on March 10 the sowing was done.

March 22. The SAC was already sowing the beet. The weather was very fine.

March 24. Jara bought four colonies of bees from the Rev Antonín Florian, who had not taken his bees with him when he moved to Holubice.

The weather towards the end of the month was fine and warm, with day temperatures 12–15–18 degrees above zero. It had however been dry all winter, with little snow and little rain.

April had true April weather, cold and with showers of snow and rain.

It rained during the first third of May, and was then dry until the end of the month.

June. From Saturday to Sunday June 2 was the first thunderstorm, with brief rain.

June 4. Jara built an apiary in the garden.

June 7. Jarka took her graduation examinations. [This is a reference to Jara's daughter Jaromíra.]

June 9 and 10. The "Barnabas festival" was held. None among the unmarried young men wanted to be the "stárci" [the "stárci" (men) and "stárky" (girls) played leading roles in the festival] and so young married men played the parts, with their wives behind them in traditional Kijov costume borrowed from a lending deposit in Brno. The young these days are not interested either in the festival or in being one of the "stárci". These are always elected on the Monday, and four of them hold office for the whole year. To be one of them used to be an honour for a lad. The old customs had been abandoned and also the old Těšany costume, which today you wouldn't find in the whole village. When there was an occasion on which the girls wanted to dress in traditional costume, they went to Brno and borrowed Kyjov costume from a lending deposit.

[There is no English equivalent of the traditional festival costume or "kroj", a richly embroidered blouse and skirt in a pattern peculiar to its owner's village (there is a man's costume as well). When we were in Dubňany in 1993, we were shown the family example of the Dubňany kraj with some pride, so there at least the tradition was being kept up. We were told that the example we were being shown had originally been made in 1928, and since the writer's brother Josef did not move to Dubňany until some years later it had presumably come down through Luboš's mother's branch of the family.]

During the final third of the month, it rained. The corn and root crops were doing very well.

July. Jara's daughter Eva passed the fourth year of her five-year business studies course with distinction.

July 5. Jara's second daughter Jaromíra, who after graduation had applied for a place at the education faculty, was not accepted because of a bad reference from the village saying *that she went to church* [underlined in the original]. At the present time, religion was suppressed, and children whose parents were not in the communist party, and went to church, could not get into schools. Even in Těšany, many people who were in the party, or who worked in well paid posts, had stopped going to church, and neither had their children christened nor had church weddings.

July 6. Roofers were painting the church tower red.

The first half of the month had been dry apart from a mild shower.

July 16. There was a meeting of the SAC at which members were told that the Těšany, Moutnice, and Nesvačilka co-operatives were being combined into a single SAC based in Moutnice, and that from 1 January 1974 they would start to operate together.

July 19. The harvest started. There were showers from July 20 to July 26, and on July 27 it rained all day.

July 30. Brother Antonín departed on a 14-day excursion to Romania. The trip, including travel and

other expenses, would cost 4000 crowns.

From the start of August, the weather was fine. The harvest proceeded quickly, and all the corn was cut by combine.

August 4. The SAC harvest was completed. The corn had yielded 46q per hectare.
The whole of August was dry apart from one little shower.

September 23. The gardeners' association organized a fruit exhibition (fruits like plums, apples, and pears had done very badly), and at the same time an exhibition of old photographs and mementos of Těšany. Photographs over fifty years old were on display, taken on various occasions, for example a festival in front of the old Rotnágl tavern where young and old were standing under a high maypole, all dressed in the traditional costume which today's young people no longer know.

September had been wholly dry until the last week of the month, when it rained.

October 8. The SAC started gathering the grapes, which continued until October 20. It collected 650 quintals of grapes, for which it was paid at the rate of 8 crowns per kilogramme. In all, it received over half a million crowns.

During the last week of the month, the state farms and the SAC started lifting the beet. Nothing was done by hand, everything was lifted by combine.

In the last week of October there were frosts, 3–4–5 degrees.

October 28. The festival to celebrate the independence of the *CSR* [Czecho-Slovak Republic, underlined in the original] was not commemorated either on the radio, or on the television, or in the village here. Nor was there a word in memory of President Masaryk, who had deserved the greatest credit for our liberation.

October 31. The SAC finished lifting the beet.

In the first week of November, night temperatures fell to 5–6–8 degrees below zero.

November 6 and 7. Everywhere there were great celebrations of the October Revolution which had taken place in Russia in 1917. This was on the radio, on the television, and in schools.

November 15. I received a notification from the Pensions Office in Prague that in the course of a re-examination of various pensions it had been discovered that my pension increase in 1971 had been wrongly calculated, and that I was entitled to a backdated increase of 48 crowns monthly. From December 22, I would be receiving 620 crowns monthly, and as a supplement since October 1971 I received 1248 crowns.

November 17. They started laying a sewer in our street. A giant excavator with a bucket dug a trench, into which workmen laid pipes.

November 19. A fire broke out in the laundry of Václav Ryšavý at No. ... [left blank in text]. It was soon spotted, and was prevented from spreading.

Dr Rostislav Vermouzek, who had taught in the Těšany nine-year school for several years from 1955, was writing a history of Těšany from its earliest days. He was searching through the archives, and was also asking elderly people what they could remember. He came to us and took notes, and wanted me to fill him in on what I knew of the strike of workmen on the manor estate in 1905.

The reason for the strike was the low rate of pay, 25–30 krejcar per day. Josef Sedlák of No. 147, who worked in a factory in Brno, encouraged the workmen not to give in to such oppression, and to demand a wage increase. Our father, Tobiáš Rychlík of No. 100, wrote a petition for them, and they went to the estate office and presented it to the manager, Josef Grizl (a German who spoke Czech badly). The estate manager refused to increase the wages, and so Josef Sedlák recommended the workmen to stop work.

Manager Grizl called for 40 policemen to protect the manor family. Spokesmen came from Brno, one named Sehnal and the other Bartoš, to negotiate with the workmen. The spokesmen talked to the assembled workmen in front of Rotnágl's tavern, the manor house was surrounded by police with fixed bayonets, and the Weiss family looked on from the balcony. And the Polish-born wife of August Weiss was very angry, and wanted to know why the police were not firing on these people.

Of course the strike turned out badly. Several people were imprisoned, and wages were not increased. And our father, when he turned up for his usual autumn employment on the weighing machine at the sugar factory in Sokolnice, was told to go away because he had written the petition for the workmen.

Dr Vermouzek also wanted to know the previous name of the hill on which the political prisoners had built the chapel in 1946–47, which had come into the ownership of Jos. Vahala of No. 166 after the land redistribution of 1924. It had been universally called the hill above Hastrmánek. The road from Brno through Těšany and Borkovany to Klobouky used to pass between this hill and the mill called Hastrmánek, which had No. 136. The modern road through Těšany and around Borkovany to Klobouky was built in 1839. The mill Hastrmánek, which had a drinks licence, was ruined during the battle of 1945, and the estate didn't repair it but had it completely demolished.

Towards the end of the month it got colder, and a little snow fell. Night temperatures were 0–1–2 degrees below zero, day temperatures 3–5–10 degrees above.

Opposite the secondary school, beside the block of flats, the SAC was building nine family bungalows. Each had a frontage of nine metres, and they were all built in the same style with a flat roof. Thus a new street was being created.

Everyone who was building or repairing a house was looking for bricklayers, and so nearly everyone was doing the building himself or with the help of retired bricklayers. People paid bricklayers 15 crowns per hour and general workmen 12 crowns, but the matter had to be kept from the local council or they would have been assessed for tax. So it was said that they were working as volunteers without pay.

December. The last month of the year started with falling temperatures. December 1, 9 degrees below, December 2, 11 below, December 3, 16 below, December 4, 5 below. On the following days there were snow showers, with temperatures from zero to 3 degrees above.

December 11. On Tuesday, Dr Vermouzek gave a talk about Těšany in the cinema, but alas few people turned up.

During the month, the refurbishment of the smithy at No. 33 by the Office of Ancient Monuments was completed. Under the smithy was some theatrical scenery which had been made at some time by Těšany amateur dramatics enthusiasts, and which now lay discarded under the smithy for children to play on. A pity. The young of Těšany are not now interested either in amateur dramatics or in dances.

December 21. The water main was extended from No. 109 to the end of the street, and then upwards along the former post office street to the Gothard [presumably the statue of St Gothard outside the old school, see June 1971].

There was no frost during the second half of the month. The first day of winter, December 21, was warm, with a temperature of 9 degrees above zero, and then to the end of the month night temperatures were 0–1 degrees below zero and day temperatures 5–10 degrees above, with occasional drizzle.

Towards the end of the month, the theatre scenery was cleaned.

In Žatčany, the young couple had a son on December 5 whom they christened Pavel. Now brother Antonín had two grandsons and two granddaughters. [These last two sentences, which are out of sequence, are an interpolation in the writer's hand as when rather older.]

The following inhabitants died during 1973.

January 3	Veronika Vrbová	No. 114	76 years old
February 2	Alžběta Novotná	No. 182	75 years old
March 19	Filip Vahala	No. 274	69 years old
May 13	Marie Turková	No. 39	84 years old
May 20	Kateřina Novotná	No. 236	82 years old
June 28	Štěpán Horák	[no number given]	62 years old
July 13	Věra Zahradničková	No. 248	47 years old
August 2	Božislav Petlák	No. 90	66 years old
August 9	Frant Příbyl	No. 267	80 years old
August 19	Frant Vahala	No. 136	41 years old
November 10	Aloisie Píchová	No. 76	70 years old
December 23	Anna Přerovská	No. 232	80 years old
December 27	Frant Horák	No. 277	58 years old

1974

The New Year started with mild weather. Night temperatures were 0–2 degrees above zero and day temperatures 3–7 above, with constant cloud and drizzle.

January 4. There was a talk in the cinema by Dr Rostislav Vermousek about Těšany, and about its history from its earliest times. But alas few people turned up.

Up to January 15, the weather was still mild, with night temperatures 1–0 degrees below zero and day temperatures 4–5 degrees above. On January 15 there was freezing rain, which resulted in large amounts of ice on the roads and elsewhere. From January 21 to January 22 the temperature fell to 5 degrees below, but from then until the end of the month there were no night frosts and day temperatures climbed to 5–8 degrees above zero.

February 1. Brother Jaromír's son Josef had a collision in his new car on the road behind our gardens. The car was smashed, and Jožka was taken to the casualty hospital.

February 2. In the SAC centre, Frant. Sedláček fell from a height of 6½ metres, and was badly injured.

February 10. The weather was springlike, with day temperatures 8–12 degrees above zero. Snowdrops were blooming in the woods, and catkins were budding on the willows.

February 15. Jožka came home from the hospital, where they had been treating him for a head injury after his car crash.

February 18. The combined Těšany-Moutnice-Nesvačilka SAC sowed spring wheat.

February 21. Jara made a shaft in front of the house, in which a meter would be fitted on the water main.

February 24. It was Sunday and Shrovetide, but the traditional carnival which used to last for three days was not held.

February 26. A lovely sunny day. The bees were gathering water.

February 27 and 28. Night frosts, 4 degrees below zero.

March. The SAC no longer operated from Buček's at No. 42, everything was transferred to Moutnice, and payments for work units performed were made to Těšany people at the weighing machine in the centre.

March 3. On this first Sunday in Lent, the Federation of Socialist Youth announced that it was organizing a Shrovetide dance. We could not recall an occasion in which a dance had been held here between Ash Wednesday and Easter.

The SAC bought a vineyard with cellar (on the former Rotnágl hill) from Frant. Chaloupka, now living in Brno, for 75,000 crowns.

March 22. The apricot trees came into bloom.

Lovely sunny days until the end of the month, with day temperatures 18–22 degrees.

April 1. The trees in the gardens started to become green and to blossom. The weather was warm and dry until the middle of the month. From April 15 to April 19 there were night frosts, 4–5–4–2 degrees below zero, and day temperatures 10–12–14 degrees above. On April 22 it turned colder, and light showers with cold days continued until the end of the month.

May started with cold weather and occasional showers.

May 14. In the evening, the first thunderstorm of the year.

They were knocking down some barns in our street and building blocks of flats there, and were also building four blocks of flats opposite the playground. All were in flat-roof style.

Cold and dry to the end of the month.

June 5. Eva completed her five-year part-time business studies course, a week at college and a week in the shop, and today graduated with distinction.

From June 10 to June 15 rainy showers, after June 17 a whole week of showers and thunderstorms.

July. A branch water main was dug from No. 109 under the road and across the triangle to the road leading upwards, where an outlet was made so that people in the opposite street could have water closer by. The workmen had laid the pipes, and their foreman said to the children who were watching the work, "Children, come and fill it in, and we'll give you some money for chocolate." The children brought hoes and started work, and then council chairman Mir. Dostál came to look. He praised the children, and said that when they had neatly covered the whole trench they should come to the council office for their reward. The children did indeed finish the work neatly, and then seven of them went to the council office and received 10 crowns each. Among them was 5½-year-old Kája, Anička's son

from Pavlovice, who was staying with us on holiday.

July 23. The harvest started. Since the spring, it had been dry apart from a few showers, and the corn crop was poor.

August 6. The harvest and threshing finished.

August 8 and 9. Thunderstorms with rain, then hot until August 18 with temperatures 30–34 degrees, then dry and cold to the end of the month.

September. This year the SAC gave members little corn from the private plots. Those who cultivated half a measure for themselves and had two measures in the communally cultivated plots received nothing.

In the last week of the month, rainy showers and cold.

October 14. I was taken by ambulance to the military hospital in Brno, where after examinations and blood tests I was diagnosed with a shortage of red blood corpuscles (I had been having heart attacks for some time). On October 17, 18, and then 21 they gave me blood transfusions, with Banatosid and Feronat plus acid to promote appetite.

October 31. An ambulance brought me home. I was better, and the attacks had stopped.

November. The SAC had gathered the grapes immediately after the middle of October, but the crop was poor, 310q, and the sugar content low, 14–16 degrees.

The SAC and the state farm were lifting the beet under very difficult conditions. There was incessant rain, and soldiers helped with the harvest.

November 15. The lifting of the beet was completed with difficulty. It had still to be carted away.

November 27. The first snow fell, but melted during the day.

December. In the first ... of the month [the text reads most naturally if it is assumed that a word is missing, but there is no way of telling whether it was “week” or “third”] there were light showers and flurries of snow, and from December 11 to 12 thunder and lightning. On December 13 there was a fall of snow, which lay for several days. Over Christmas, rain, and on the evening of December 26 more thunder and lightning.

On New Year's Eve, at 7 o'clock in the evening, chairman Miroslav Dostál broadcast over the loudspeakers. He said farewell to the old year, and enumerated the works that had gone well and those that were still unfinished. On the whole, his speech was cold, as were his wishes for the year 1975.

The following inhabitants of our village died during 1974.

January 10	Ladislav Milota	No. 82	[no age given]
February 1	Josefa Končená	No. 205	78 years old
March 26	Josef Dosoudil	No. 116	28 years old
May 18	Anna Novotná	No. 307	74 years old
May 20	Martin Příbyl	No. 61	74 years old
July 10	Jan Zejda	No. 289	65 years old
August 2	Marie Štěpánková	No. 179	78 years old
August 17	Barnabáš Horák	No. 292	65 years old
September 22	Františka Hnilicová	No. 125	86 years old
[no date]	Marie Petláková	No. 181	92 years old
[no date]	Štěpán Oprchal, longtime gravedigger	No. 264	79 years old
[no date]	Vladimír Polešovský	No. 96	82 years old
December 6	František Cech, retired teacher	No. 269	72 years old
December 25	Alois Žáček	No. 14	81 years old

For 36 years, Žáček had been organist at the local House of God.

[The text finishes at this point, the book being full. I haven't seen the continuation volumes, though I am told that they exist, for a few more years in her own hand and then in that of others.]