

Translator's postscript

The manuscript from which this translation has been made is a Rychlík family possession and in due course will find its way back to Moravia, but I made a working photocopy for my own use (partly as an insurance, partly so that I had something I could make notes on), and it is possible that at some future time the family will agree to the deposition of this photocopy in a suitable library so that those interested can see the original text. It is untitled and I do not know how a library would catalogue it, but the author is Aloisie Rychlíková, and the text starts "Já Aloisie Rychlíková naroz. 31/XII.1896 píši tuto knihu aby naše příští pokolení vědělo, jak jsme žili, co dobrého neb zlého se v naší obci stalo". The pages of the original book are of A4 size, but I had it copied on to A4 sheets with A3:A4 reduction and each leaf of the photocopy therefore contains two pages side by side. The first leaf contains a right-hand page only, but I may put a note on the blank left-hand page to link it to this translation.

A copy of Vermouzek's book is in the British Library (the copy which Josef has lent me will be returned in due course, and I know of no other copy in Britain), and it is interesting and instructive to compare it with the diary. Although the writer helped Vermouzek with material, there is no evidence that she let him see the diary, and the political realities of the time suggest that she almost certainly didn't. Vermouzek was writing during the period of post-1968 repression, and was or at least was prudently pretending to be an establishment figure (his book was published "to the 30th anniversary of the liberation of Czechoslovakia by the Soviet Army"); I would not have expected the writer to have put the safety of herself and her family at risk by allowing such a person to see some of the things she had written. But where the diary and Vermouzek overlap, the diary tends to be far more detailed, and it was written down at the time and not some years later. Common sense suggests that its version of events normally has the greater authority.