

No 134

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For the memorial book "Famine: 1933"

I have already written to the literary collective working on a memorial book in the name of its head, Maniak V.A.

I want to add about those dead and perished because of the famine, about whom I only became aware of recently.

The place of death—the village Bulatselovo of Arbuzyinka district of Mykolaiv oblast. (Prior to the war— Blahodatne district of Odesa oblast).

1932. My grandfather Donichenko, Semen Vasylovych (71 years old) died. In the last year of his life he was persecuted.

In 1933, Anton Tsehelnik, Vasyl Tsehelnik, Hanna Dubyna, an elderly woman with the last name Barysh, her son Tymosha and his two young sons died.

In the spring of 1933 in Bulatselovo, Ivan Sydorovych Hopanenko, born in 1907, was murdered because of the famine. The murderer—Ivan Hladun—hacked the chest of the 26-year-old Hopanenko with a hoe. Hladun was given about five years. He returned to the village Novoblahodatne which was 7-8 km from Bulatselovo.

The village Ostapivka of Arbuzyinka district. In 1933, almost the entire Shevchenko family died, namely: Marko Hnatovych Shevchenko—father, Dunia Yakivna Shevchenko—mother, Kolia Shevchenko—son; and three daughters: Nina Shevchenko, Vira Shevchenko, Halia Shevchenko.

Only the underage Darka survived, who is still alive today.

In Ostapivka many other villagers died. Much more than in Bulatselovo. Even those who went to houses in brigades to take grain, look into pots, rummage around ashes in case a single grain was hidden there, died.

This tragic incident occurred in the neighbouring village of Semenivka: three villagers from Ostapivka stole a cow from a villager of Semenivka, took it away in the night, cut it up, and began cooking meat. A whole group of Semenivka villagers followed their tracks and came to Ostapivka and found the thieves. They took Kostia Nishpurenko, Klym Zarytsky, and one other villager whose name I've forgotten, and brought them to Semenivka for punishment.

These three villagers from Ostapivka, who could not resist stealing something which did not belong to them, were served street justice in Semenivka—they were beaten to death with sticks.

D.M. Hopanenko (Shevchenko): "We lived in Akhtovka (a neighbourhood in Ostapivka). Father died while returning from Pervomaisk. He was carrying something in his bag for his family. We found his body but the straps of his bag were already cut off.

After father, mother died, and then my brother, sisters ... many villagers. I remained alive, went to the commune which functioned in the neighbouring village Bulatselovo. But even in the commune there was famine. For dinner they cooked *tsybukh* with milk. [*Tsybukh*—the flower of onions when they blossom]. But I survived everything and have two of my own children, grandchildren ..."

The grave of Okulyna Stepanivna Kupko (1902–1933) can be found at the Stepanivka graveyard (this is in the village Blahodatne, on the right bank of the Korabelna river). There is a whole row of graves, unkempt and abandoned. Perhaps they also died from the famine.

I suggest addressing the village councils to help identify the number of villagers who died, otherwise the book collective may never find out about many other victims.

April 18, 1989. \Yevhen Hryhorovych Donichenko, born 1939.
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