

# BECHEROV - HISTORY

by  
Demeter Kokosh



Becherov: An Earthly Paradise, "Zemsky ray, to napohled"; it is a land of "milk an honey". It's nestled in a beautiful valley, surrounded by forested mountains, meadows, farm fields, streams and many cold mountain brooks. It has a temperate climate, mild summers without mosquitoes and mild winters. Rain comes "when needed". During spring and summer, the clouds, thunder and lightning appear over the Western mountains; then comes short bursts of rain, the storm moving on as quickly it came. Skies clear and the sun comes out. The country side-is refreshed. The kids are delighted to go barefoot into the orchards to pick ripe, fallen, delicious apples and pears.

Becherov's landscape also possesses a majestic landmark; the ruined ZBOROV CASTLE, that seemingly has stood there since the beginning of time. Through the valley runs "CESARKA", Caesars road, state highway which runs from Rome and other Western European Capitals and North into Galicia, Poland, part of the Austro-Hungarian empire prior to WW-I.

### Short history of Becherov:

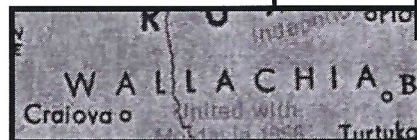
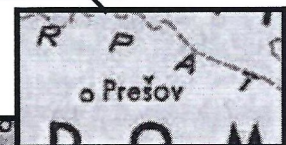
The first known record of Becherov is from 1414, found in the land record used for tax assessment. The name of the village was recorded as KWBEHER, a German name with eighteen German households. This came about because in early 1200's, about 70% of the population in Upper Hungary was exterminated by the MONGOL invasion; at the invitation of King Bella, the depopulated Upper Hungary was settled by Germans. This region retains it's Germanic influence and cultural memory to this day.

At the end of Hungarian-POLISH war of 1492, the

land register of Becherov lists only seven of eighteen settlements as occupied. The history of MAKOVICA account of the 1492 war records the destruction of the ZBOROV castle, and a broad destruction of Makovica region; it specifically mentions the devastation of Andrejova located a few miles from BARDEJOV.

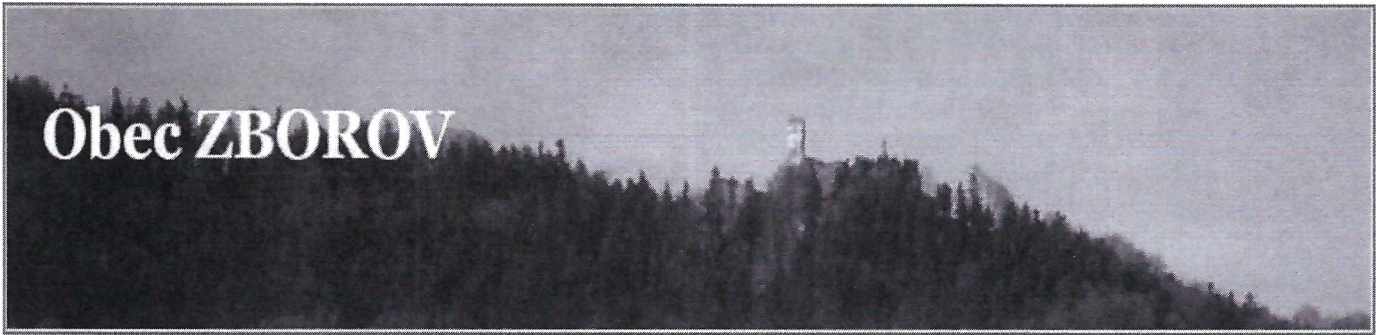
After the 1492 war, BECHEROV had a small WALLAKIAN/RUSYN population. The land record of the year 1618 records 35 serf and 4 non serf families. The village also had an Orthodox priest and a wooden church.

NOTE: church Slavonic was spoken throughout all Slavic inhabited areas: Thessalonica, Wallachia, Bulgaria, Upper Hungary(now Slovakia), Moravia, Silesia, Poland, Kievan Rus. To be continued...



## BECHEROV - HISTORY..... Part 2

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**Zborov Castle** was the strong hold, power and administrative center of the Makovica Fiefdom. It stood then as it does now as the most prominent land mark in the area. Located on the highest point of the region, it is visible from Becherov, Komlosa, Ondavka, Regetovka, Stebnik and near environs.

**Who were the Castle builders?** The new Zborov castle, rebuilt after the 1492 destruction during the Polish/Hungarian war, was design by the foremost Italian castle designers and incorporated the latest defensive techniques. Construction was performed by the Italian masters, professional castle builders and some local draftees. The castle construction imposed an enormous burden on the Makovica population. From my childhood, I recall a poem describing hardship, misery and sorrow imposed by the forced labor in building the castle.

**Castle ownership and history from 1600:** The Makovica castle was later purchased in 1600 by the RAKOCZI family for 90,000 "Ducats".

In 1684, the castle was again destroyed - this time by the Hapsburg Imperial Army. This came about

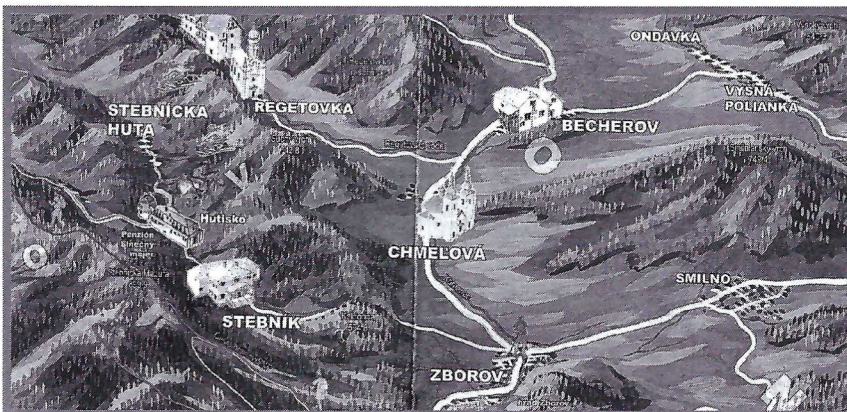
because the castle was a central nest of rebels against the Hapsburgs. The castle was besieged for three years; being breached only with a castle insider, a Benedict Arnold, a Judas. I suspect that he was well rewarded by the Hapsburgs for his deed. It was also a testimony to the Italian Castle designers and builders. I suspect such a long siege caused an inordinate amount of misery and destruction on the Makovica region; the troops were not supplied by Vienna, but lived off Zborov and the Makovica region.

The betrayed Lady of the Castle was sent to a nunnery in Vienna for the rest of her life. Again, circa 1705, Rakoczi , the prince of Transylvania and all of Northern Hungary, began another insurrection, a war of independence from the Hapsburgs. (See; Wikipedia, Francis II Rakoczi; Rakoczi Uprising). Through political intrigue involving France, England, Spain, Poland, Russia,



**Ference Rakoczi II**

Turkey (Ottoman empire) and other misfortunes of war , including a betrayal by his field General, RAKOCZI lost the war. All of Rakoczi holdings and dominion were seized, which included most of Hungary. Rakoczi was given asylum in England, France, and finally in Constantinople.



# BECHEROV HISTORY, "1828 LAND CENSUS"

## Part 3

by  
Demeter Kokosh

### LISTING OF LANDOWNERS

FROM: World Vital Records.com  
German and Hungarian Land Census, Saros County



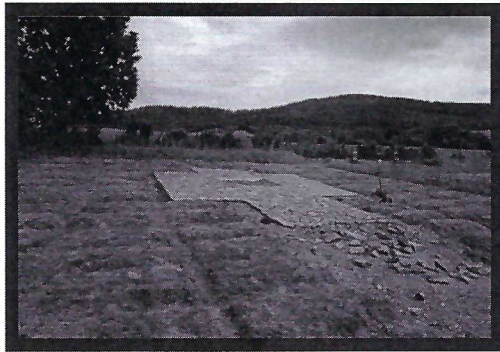
#### No. 30 - Behero

- |                      |                         |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Ket, Petro        | 34. Safran, Gmitro      |
| 2. Vadocz, Panyko    | 35. Bortnyanszky, Steph |
| 3. Kos, Ilyko        | 36. Szakanics, Joan     |
| 4. Bury, Seman       | 37. Mlinarsik, Joan     |
| 5. Lisesissin, Tem   | 38. Guzy, Georg         |
| 6. Tančsin, Mich     | 39. Roman, Danyko       |
| 7. Rosurn, Gmitro    | 40. Kurucz, Joan        |
| 8. Brindik, Joan     | 41. Liszecko, Joan      |
| 9. Sztok, Mich       | 42. Mihalko, Petrus     |
| 10. Szokira, Georg   | 43. Czaper, Panyko      |
| 11. Szokira, Joan    | 44. Szemancsak, Joan    |
| 12. Brinda, Theod    | 45. Cseginy, Bas        |
| 13. Schneider, Joan  | 46. Kobzsak, Steph      |
| 14. Plevka, Joan     | 47. Kot, Joan           |
| 15. Taragös, Steph   | 48. Szejka, Joan        |
| 16. Zsurbely, Gmitro | 49. Nazar, Joan         |
| 17. Fedorko, Petrus  | 50. Vadocz, Jaczko      |
| 18. Borisz, Vaszily  | 51. Lisesissin, Janko   |
| 19. Grivna, Jatzko   | 52. Nazarik, Petrus     |
| 20. Grivna, Mike     | 53. Gmiterko, Gmitro    |
| 21. Pauhis, Steph    | 54. Zsurbely, Bas       |
| 22. Kurucz, Georg    | 55. Safran, Joan        |
| 23. Tutko, Lesko     | 56. Michalko, Mich      |
| 24. Kokos, Jaczko    | 57. Ovad, Joan          |
| 25. Kochan, Vaszily  | 58. Kurilla, And        |
| 26. Hricsko, Mich    | 59. Brinda, Perko       |
| 27. Hafis, Joan      | 60. Kulypa, Seman       |
| 28. Kinta, Hricz     | 61. Banyiczky, Joan     |
| 29. Hafis, Georg     | 62. Plevka, Jos         |
| 30. Gavel, Mich      | 63. Szukanics, Joan     |
| 31. Fezenko, Danyko  | 64. Guzy, Jaczko        |
| 32. Tanycsin, Jaczko | 65. Guzy, Georg         |
| 33. Kosztik, Jaczko  | 66. Csvany, Jaczko      |
|                      | 67. Fedorko, And        |
|                      | 68. Borisz, Mich        |
|                      | 69. Szelek, And         |
|                      | 70. Kot, Joan           |

#### Commentary:

1. Only 70 of 130 households possessed taxable land holding.
2. But, all households had their own homes with an attached garage, a barn, a root cellar, and a granary. They also had about 5 to 10 acres of land, access to common pasture; they all had orchards, many kept bees. They all raised farm animals: chickens, geese, goats, sheep, cows, pigs and other animals. Population census of 1869 includes accounting of all farm animals possessed by each household.

These non-taxable residents were called "chalupniks", cottagers. They supplemented their income, primarily by working on large estates "PANSTVO". They also worked on larger farms during planting and harvesting season.



## BECHEROV HISTORY, "FAST FORWARD"

### Part 4

by  
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Becherov History, fast forward: Current event dealing with "the" most horrendous historic event, World War One!!!

From October 1914 to May 1915, Becherov was the battleground ZERO. The village was first occupied by the Hungarians and bombarded by the Russians. The Hungarians were forced to retreat to Zborov and in turn, bombarded the Russians now occupying Becherov.

The framed article below is from the website: Club Vojenskej Historie, Beskidy.

After remaining two days, the volunteers focused their attention on the war cemetery in the Becher. The project of reconstruction of the war cemetery was born last year. Architectural design of the reconstruction produced Ing. Arch. Lubomir grams. With support from the Ministry of Interior and the Austrian Black Cross work begin in June 2011, on the war cemetery. Over two days, volunteers began unloading the central path of a war cemetery. They are using natural stone, red-brown color. The shape of the path chosen in accordance with drawings and preserved historic stone is interpreted as the shape of the cross. Even in this war cemetery further work still needs to be carried out.



The central monument will be 2.5 meters and will be wooden crosses embedded in a stone mound in the shape of the parallelogram. This is a unique copy which will be a rarity in war cemeteries in Slovakia. It will be followed by further work, a change of grave fields, marking crosses on the graves, and more. Even in this war cemetery, an information board will be added.

In the war cemetery are buried in Becher's 111 soldiers in 72 individual and communal graves. These are members of Austria-Hungary and the Russian armies. Most of the soldiers buried in this cemetery are unknown soldiers. We know the names of several soldiers from the Austro-Hungary 47th Infantry Regiment (Infanterieregiment Nr. 47), which had its payroll in the Maribor region in Slovenia today. Part of the soldiers buried in this cemetery and war came from the territory of present Slovenia.

This battle, historically designated as the Battle of Gorlice, located about 30 miles north of Becherov in Poland and extending about 100 miles along the mountains from west of Bardejov and east of Dukla was characterized as the STALINGRAD of WW-1. The battle in Gorlice actually began in August 1914, and culminated in May 1915, with over a million dead soldiers on each side and a devastation of the area towns and villages resulting in about 600,000 of the civilian population killed. Presov Region has 236 WW-I cemeteries. Bardejov has 5-6 and Becherov has two, one on the Polish border and the other one at the Uniat Church.

## BECHEROV HISTORY, "WORLD WAR ONE"

### Part 5

by  
Demeter Kokosh

From: BECHEROV CHRONICLE: sent by IVAN RUSINKO, July 28, 2011

With deep and sorrowful cries, wives and mothers escorted their husbands and sons to war; they knew that many of them would not return home.

**AUGUST 2ND, 1914;** \*\*\* 35 men from Becherov departed for military service. Later, an additional 39 were sent into the military and combat. Initially, all served on the Russian front, soon thereafter; all were transferred to the Italian front.

List of men recruited into military and served in combat:

Andrij Zbihlej, Lesko Boris, Osif Boris, Andrej Miko (Cigan), Fedor Lazorik, Seman Super, Mikolaj Varchol, Stefan Rusiiak, Hric Krajevskyj, Vasil' Grivna, Vasil' Banickyj, Seman Lescisyn, Fedor Cuper, Osif Cuper, Petro Varchol, Mitro Varchol, Ivan Banickyj, Stefan Boris, Ivan Fedorko, Ivan Rusinko, Osif Brynda, Lesko Semancak, Mutro Marcinak, Georgij Petricko, Fedor Zbihlej, Seman Kotik, Fedor Vadoc, Vasilij Jurcisyn, Ivan Smajda, Vasilij Juras, Fedor Lescisyn, Ivan Guzij, Georgij Grivna, Mikolaj Grivna, Ivan Lescisyn, Georgij Grivna, Georgij Lazorik, Mitro Snajder, Ilijas Cuper, Seman Brynda, Ilijas Varchol, Andrij Hafmak, Stefan Mihalik, Petro Mihalko (Mihalik?), Mitro Plevka, Michal Tancin (Vovcko), Andrij Fedorko, Panko Rozum, Vasilij Guzij, Hric Roman, Il'ko Brynda, Fedor Surkala, Seman Guzij, Osif Jaroscak, Mikolaj Verchol, Osif Varchol, Georgij Varchol, Vasilij Tutko, Andrij Tutko, Michal Brynda, Hric Guzij, Osif Mikul'ak, Ivan Hafic, Fedor Hafic, Michail Markovic, Osif Hafic, Teodor Miko (Cigan), Ivan Kochanik, Petro Kochanik, Michal Liichtenberg Gevrej, Hersko VolSteter Gevrej, Mikolaj Vacur.

#### **MILITARY CASUALTIES:**

Killed in Combat: Seman Lescisyn, Petro Varchol, Mitro Varchol, Stefan Boris, Mitro Plevka, Mitro Mrcinak, Fedor Lazorik, Osif Brynda, Petro Miko, Andrij Miko, Andrij Zbihlej, Lesko Boris, Ivan Lescisyn, Seman Super, Osif Boris.

Returned Wounded, died from wounds: Guzij Nikl'ovl'an Hric, Fedor Lescosyn, Vasil' Grivna, Ivan Lescisyn.

#### **CIVILIAN CASUALTIES:**

Killed: Michal Vadoc, Tanka Grivnova, Paraska Varcholova, Tancinova Mitrova.

Wounded: Paraska Kostokova, Anastazija Cuperova, Lina Lichtemberg (Zydivka,). NOTE: Becherov was ground zero from October, 1914 to May, 1915.

**AUGUST 16, 1914:** \*\*\* Becherov received order to provide 17 teamsters to transport military supplies into the combat zone.

#### **TEAMSTERS:**

Hric Roman, Michal Grivna, Seman Lescisyn, Fedor Markovic Tkac (d'ido mojoho otca Ivana Rusinka a mij pradido), Ivan Banickyj, Lukac Varchol, Danko Kokos, Pavel Boris, Michal Brynda, Il'ko Varchol, Hric Zurbej, Vasil' Kalina, Vsir Jaroscak, Vasil' Tutko, Ivan Taragos. \*\*\* All healthy, fit horses were drafted for military combat service. The remaining lame, sick, and blind horses were used for this transport service. All teamsters, men and horses, survived.

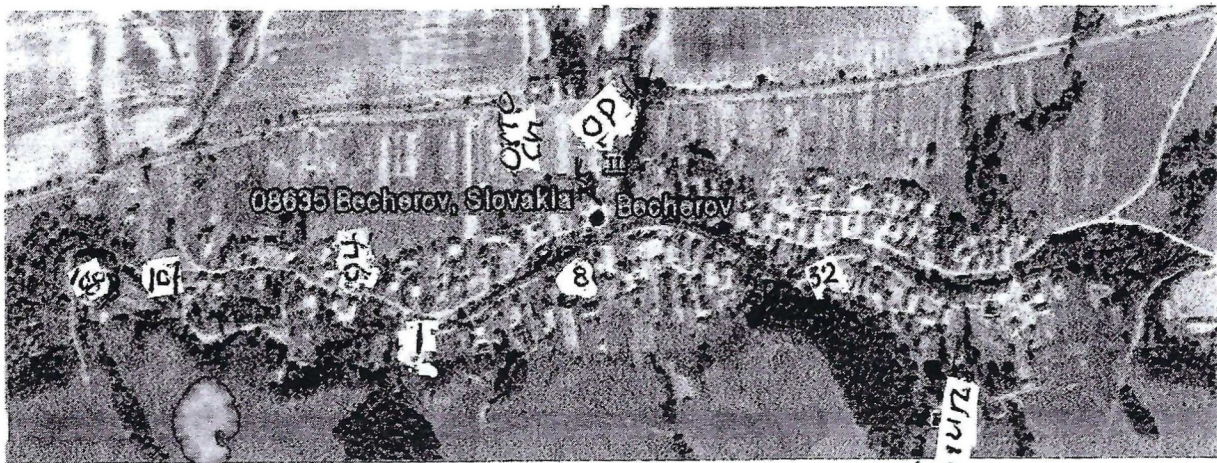
Additional notes: (1) All horses drafted into military combat, perished; those that were killed, were consumed as food, other, were slaughtered for food. (2) Eighty (80) homes were destroyed; KOKOSH family house burned down in March, 1915. (3) My mother's house. Catherina Jurchisin, born 1911, was also destroyed. (4) Uniat Church and School House might have been damaged but not destroyed.

"VECNAJA PAMJAT"

# BECHEROV HISTORY, "RESIDENCE DIRECTORY: PERIOD, FROM 1926 TO 1940"

## Part 6

by  
Demeter Kokosh



- |                             |                        |                         |                               |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Lazorik (Gavel)#1        | 32. Kochanik           | 60. Tutko               | 84. Varchol                   |
| 2. Roman #2                 | 33. Petricko           | 61. Warchol             | 85. Tutko                     |
| 3. Rusinak                  | 34. Zbihley/Le(xx)ccko | 62. Lescisin            | 86. Huterko/Siroku            |
| 4. Masley                   | 35. Kotik              | 63. Plevka              | 87. Gmitterko                 |
| 5. Brinda                   | 36. Lescisin/Hanuscik  | 64. Plevkana            | 88. xxxx                      |
| 6. Jurcisin                 | xx. Kasarna; barracks  | 65. Suchanic            | 89. Banicky                   |
| 7. Grivna                   | 37. Warhol             | 66. Miihalik            | 90. Fedorko/Havrik            |
| 8. Banitsky#10              | 38. Jurchisin/Kulpa/po | 67. xxxxx               | 91. Guzij/Niklovlan           |
| 9. Grivna                   | rianda                 | 68. Vovcko              | 92. Mikulak                   |
| 11. Kotik                   | 39. Moroz/ zurbey      | 69. Fedorko             | 93. Kohan/ Petaik             |
| 12. Lescisin (Nazarik       | 40. Kalina             | 70. Rozum               | 94. KOKOS#114                 |
| 13. Kot/Cuper               | 41. Rusinko            | 71. Kalina              | 95. Taragos                   |
| 14. Tkac/Markovic           | 42. Dupej (Vadoc ?)    | 72. Cuper               | 95 B: Semancak/<br>Brindatina |
| 15. Popovic                 | 43. Miterko-           | 73. xxxxx               | 96. Katrenicka                |
| 16. Petricko/Bavolak        | Gmitterko?             | 74. xxxx                | 97. Kochanik                  |
| 17. Plevka                  | 44. ????               | 75. Lichtemberg         | 98. Suchanic                  |
| 18. Zbihley/Cimrak          | 45. Semancak           | zid/Jew/ Hebrew         | 99. Bacik/Hafic#119           |
| 19. Fedorko.                | 46. Brinda             |                         | 100. Hafic                    |
| 20. Kohanik#24              | 47. Stop               | ⊙ Orthodox Parish       | 101. Purdeska/Kochan<br>ik    |
| 21. Rusinko (Okatij ?)      | 48. Popovic            | , KORCMA zid/jew        | 102. xxxxx                    |
| 22. Zidivka-Nalka (?)       | 49. Boris/Suchanic     |                         | 103. Zbihley/Skinta           |
| 23. Lezusko                 | 50. Gluz ?             |                         | 104. Kris                     |
| 24. Schneider               | 51. Lazorik            | 75. Juricko/Lescisin    | 105. Markovic                 |
| 25. Ulci                    | 52. Cuper              | 76. Jaroscak            | 106. Mitrik.                  |
| 26. SKOLA<br>(SCHOOL HOUSE) | 53. Juricko            | 77. Cuprik              | 107. Cigan colony             |
| 27. Kokos/cuper             | 54. Schneider          | 78. Brinda#95           | 108. Hafic/Mlinar             |
| 28. Vlakucova ?             | 55. KORCMA/Jusko       | 79. Zid; grocer/sklep , |                               |
| 29. cegin/Marcinak          | 56. Brinda             | 80. Zbihlej/Osko        |                               |
| 30. Semancak                | 57. Hafinak            | 81. Surkala             |                               |
| 31. Uniat Fara Gr. Cat      | 58. Brinda             | 82. kochanik, mitro     |                               |
|                             | 59. Jurcisin           | 83. Grivna/Chutko       |                               |

## BECHEROV HISTORY, "BECHEROV ORTHODOX CHURCH HISTORY"

### Part 7

by  
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Becherov Parish: First to be established in the 20th century, in the newly created Republic of Czechoslovakia. How did this come about?

Historical events that culminated in establishing an Orthodox Church in Becherov:

- 863 – Mission of Cyril and Methodius to the Moravian Kingdom to establish Byzantine Orthodox Slavonic Church "Pravoslavne Christianstvo"
- 1054 – SCHISM. Cardinal Humbert, Pope's Envoy, placed a Bull of Excommunication upon the altar of the Church of Holy Wisdom at Constantinople
- 1596 – Council of Brest/Litovsk:
- Union with Rome. Recognized primacy of Rome, but retained Byzantine practices. Some of the Orthodox Bishops rejected union with Rome.
- 1773 – Empress Maria Teresa issues edict #3412/1773; outlawing Orthodox Church in the Austro/Hungarian Empire.
- 1891 – Reunion with Orthodoxy in America:

**Minneapolis/St. Paul:** Encounter of Fr. Toth (Uniat Byzantine Rite Priest) with John Ireland (Catholic, Latin Rite Archbishop) Archbishop John Ireland did not recognize Father Toth as a Catholic priest. Fr. Toth and the congregation petitioned and were accepted into the Russian Orthodox Church.

- The Minneapolis Church/Parish was accepted and embraced into the Russian Orthodox Church and materially supported by the Tsar of Russia.
- Rusyn peasants from the lowest social strata, only one rung above that of the Gypsies, were elevated to the status and dignity of the mighty RUSSIAN. \*\* They were acculturated as Russian; and identified themselves as Russians\*\*
- Circa 1902 – First attempt to establish Orthodox Church in Becherov by Zbihlej Brothers. Fr. Artim, (Uniat Priest), charged them as being Muscovite revolutionaries. They were arrested, their materials confiscated; they were tried in Presov and exonerated. \*\*Their mission to establish an Orthodox Church in Austro/Hungary was impossible because of the edict issued by Empress Maria Teresa in 1773.

1914-1919 – World War One: Saw the destruction of the Austro/Hungarian Empire and with it the nullification of the Imperial Edict that previously prohibited existence of the ORTHODOX CHURCH.

1920's – Becherov Orthodox Church was established by returning villagers from America (in part, due to recession in U.S.) who were re-united with the Orthodox Church in America.

