

My Great Grandmother's Sacrifice



Picture this; it is 1943. You are forcibly taken from your home to go to another country, and you never return. Well, this is the true inspiring story of my great grandmother, Ulijana. At the young age of 19, Ulijana was taken from her home in Ukraine by the Nazis to go to Kivarscha camp in Germany. After arriving at the camp Ulijana later found out that her close friend Evka was there. When they saw each other they both attempted to escape but failed miserably and they were caught by the Nazis soldiers. The soldiers hit them on the back with their massive guns.

As a punishment, they were both sent into a dark confined room with no natural lights not even a little candle. It was cold and there was no food not even a crumb to eat. After three weeks in Germany, Ulijana finally arrived at her destination, the Kivascha camp. All of the captives were forced to shower in cold water. Girls and women had their heads shaved. But this wasn't required for Ulijana, as she was sick.

During May, Ulijana was supposed to travel more, but got sick to the point where she couldn't stand on her own. But the soldiers didn't buy it, they yelled and screamed for her to get up. Another soldier gave her a pill and told her to board the train. On the train Ulijana met her cousin Andrej. He grabbed Ulijana's hand and told her to jump off the train. Ulijana refused and stayed behind.

My Great Grandmother's Sacrifice



Finally, the train arrived at Stuttgart. Everybody was given a name tag and divided into different groups with different assigned jobs. Ulijana did farm work on Aichelbach farm. She was later told that there was a Ukrainian man on a neighbouring farm. Ulijana admired him from afar cutting wood. She had a gut feeling that the man she was admiring would be her husband. She was right. She married him and that fine man is Wasyl Zubreckyj, my great grandfather.

Ulijana and Wasyl cared for 3 children Liza, Helgat, Keirhert Roulph. Ulijana had to look after her children, milk the cows, mow the fields, sow the seeds and operate machinery. On one occasion, when operating a machine, she injured her hand. Doctors had to amputate a middle and index finger. Soon afterwards Ulijana received the devastating news that her father had been shot by Russians. Ulijana's father was a deacon at church. He had been on the ice cutting out a hole for the annual church 'Blessing of the Waters'. However, he was caught and that cost him his life.

Time flew by. Ulijana and Wasyl decided to move to another country in hope for a better life. So, they came to Australia and their legacy is always remembered.