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Summary

Maria Weber Loos, nee Weber, was born on January 28, 1937, in Rechnitz. She had one sister who was 17 years older than she and one brother who went to fight in the war; he came back after war's end. Her Father and Mother stayed home, tending their farm. In April 1945, the Russians forced the family out of their house. They then fled to the grandparents' house in Hodis. Maria started school after the war ended.

Her parents and the other adults didn't talk much about the massacre that happened in Rechnitz. They also didn't like to talk much about the Nazis in general, or Hitler. Maria asserts people knew that Jews were living in the castle, and also about the massacre of the Jews in March 1945. Her maternal aunt, Aloisa Baus [sp], told her a. Maria can't remember the details of the conversations. If anyone talked about it, it was in secrecy or a whispery tone because they were scared about the Russians, or else. Maria points out that some of the people in Rechnitz witnessed the killings, but no one ever found the bodies of the victims. She's never seen the countess, but she knew that there was one living in there. The children were not allowed to enter the castle's property. She remembers that, after the castle burned down, the countess came back to visit the town on several different occasions. The residents of Rechnitz believed that the Jewish victims were buried at the site where the Kreuzstadl memorial is today. Those who might have known about the location of the burial site have already died. Maria thinks that the reason these people didn't talk was that they were afraid of any repercussions.

Maria knew about Bartschi [sp]; that he lived in the Hauptplatz in Rechnitz, and that he was a "big" and essential Nazi. After the war's end, and after he came back from serving time in jail, he became a functionary of the Österreichische Kameradschaftsbund [Association of Austrian War Veterans.] Everyone was intimidated by him. He was known as the "Herr Dr." The people in town talked badly about him and criticized him by saying that he hates the Jews and the Romani. Throughout his lifetime, everyone was intimidated by him.

She's also seen Boldizin [sp], whom she described as a very tall man, always wearing a uniform. People also didn't talk very nicely about him. People didn't dare to say anything that would anger him out of fear that they would be incarcerated or deported. There were few Romani living in Rechnitz. One day, they were gone. Maria never learned about what happened to them.

The Jewish people in town owned many stores; Maria recalls frequenting a grocery store and a textile store near to the Hauptplatz. She claims to have been too young to remember the reason why the Jews disappeared from one day to the other. When Maria was older, she was told that the Jews were sent to Hungary and shot. After the war's end, some Jews came back to live in Rechnitz. The town's people had emptied the Jewish homes and stores. She never understood why the people didn't like the Jews.