

CHRONOLOGY

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1703 – A first researching mission under the command of Mathias Brunner, a mine foreman from Tirol, prospects for minerals in the South Banat and checks the mine installations situation;

1717, October – Prince Eugene of Savoy conquers the fortress of Timișoara, which was for 164 years occupied by Ottomans;

1718, the 21st of July – Peace of Passarowitz (Pojarevac) concluding; the Banat becomes a component of the Hapsburg Empire for two centuries;

1718 – The first 13 colonists (miners) arrive at Oravița;

1718 – The first industrial mine and metallurgic installations building begins at Oravița and Bocșa, and after at Dognecea, Sasca Montană, and Luncani;

1729, the 29th of January – The first “montanistic sciences school” [mountain mining] in south-eastern Europe is set in Oravița;

1736, the 16th of July – Court counselor Benedikt von Neffzern elaborates “Banatische Bergsystema”, a set of rules to juridical, economical and social regulating the mining problems in the Banat;

1736 – 1739 – Battles with the Ottomans on the Banat territory that conclude with Belgrade Peace (1739);

1771, the 3rd of July – A metallurgic plant is inaugurated at Reșița (still functioning nowadays) that has to come the most important one in Romania;

1773, 24th of June – Peter Kastel, a state office holder, together with 94 specialized in wood exploiting and charcoal processing colonists set up a new settlement eastwards of Oravița, and call it Steierdorfanina;

1790 – One of the colonists named Mathias Hammer discovers the coal deposits that have to settle the oldest coal mine in Romania, functioning till 2006;

1796 – It is registered the first export order for Reșița Plants (shells for Naples kingdom artillery)

1806 – Robert Fulton builds the first steamboat and opens so a new horizon for naval transports and coal utilization;

1825, the 17th of September – The first public commercial railroad, 40km lengthwise (Stockton – Darlington, U.K.) is inaugurated; George and Robert Stephenson are the builders of it and of the steam engine “Rocket” that circulated on that railway;

1829 – Treaty of Adrianople puts an end to the Ottoman monopoly on the Low Danube navigation and the foreign trade of the Romanian Principalities;

1829 – 1835 – Franz Xavier Riepl, an Austrian professor (1790 - 1857) elaborates the first project of a railroad system for the Austrian Empire, which comprises also the idea of a railway to connect the mine basin of Anina to the Danubian port Baziaș;

1830 – It is founded the Danubian Steam Navigation Society (D. D. S. G.) that has to function till 1995;

1845 – The first rolling mills and puddling installations are built in Reșița;

1846 – Reșița Plants build for its inner necessities the first steam engine on the Romanian territory;

1846, the 13 of October – An important discussion is held at the Montanistic Direction head office Oravița; the building of a railway between Oravița and Anina is decided; the discussion was lead by the State Secretary Michael Leyer; participants in: baron Ransonet, mine assessor Giller, railway engineer Bach, mine foreman Abt, “Markscheicler” Oberth, building site foreman Koloszvary, probationist Schroll, and the producers of the project: Anton Raposs and Anton Scherawitza;

1848 – The works for the railway Baziaș – Oravița that have begun in the summer of 1847 are interrupted due to a yellow fever epidemic and to the civil war after;

1848 – The initial project of the railway that had a steam drive between Baziaș and Lișava, and a horse drive combined with inclined planes on cable ways between Lișava and Anina would be not carried out by reason of the technical difficulties and the financial crisis. The original project is preserved at The Mountainous Banat Museum Reșița. The three inclined planes vestiges are still visible; they were lengthwise of 284m, 101m, and respectively 126m;

1852 – Court counselor Anton Wissner inspects within May – June the Mountainous Banat in order to recommend the pressing works and the measure to make the exploitations more efficient. On the 27th of July 1852 his report is published. He recommends all exploitations, mines and domains selling, and focusing on the section Baziaș - Oravița in what concerns the railway;

1854, 20th of August – The railway Baziaș – Oravița is open for wares traffic, and beginning with the 1st of November, for passengers too;

1855, the 1st of January – The imperial authorities, in financial crisis as always, give full swing to Wissner’s report proposals and sell all mines, metallurgic and forest estates from the Banat and Bohemia together with a 90 years concession of a railroad system (including Baziaș – Oravița) building and exploiting. Total transaction value: 275 millions golden francs, so to say the approximate value of the Suez Canal construction;

1857 – StEG company, the transaction beneficiary, prospected and found an important deposit of sphaerosiderite in the area of Anina; that deposit superior utilization certainly might be made within a metallurgic complex that was encouraged by the coal deposits existence. Thus, the idea of the railway completing till Anina was reconsidered, but on another route nearer the coal deposits between Gârliște and Jitin;

1861 – The metallurgic plants of Anina building begins practically in the same time with the new railway route that has to front a level difference from 218m (Oravița) up to 557m (Anina);

1863 – Oravița – Anina still rests the first (and the main) mountain railway from Romania. On 33,4km lengthwise, the propping walls and the diggings in stone are of 21.3km. There are 14 tunnels of 2,084m total length, the longest being Gârliște tunnel (661m). Also there are 10 viaducts of 843m total length. The main of them

are Racovița (11 arches, 26.5m high and 115m lengthwise) and Valea Jitinului (7 arches, 37.2m high and 130.8m lengthwise). We may notice that the tunnels were manually dug (the dynamite wasn't invented yet...), and the metallic decks were launched with windlasses;

1863 – Such a difficult railway as that one between Oravița and Anina needed special locomotives that must fulfill some conditions contradictory in semblance, as the wheelbase, curvature radius, weightiness on axles, and the declivity degree. It is about four locomotives which were projected by Pius Fink, an Austrian engineer (1831 – 1874); they were produced at StEG engines plant Vienna, according to Professor Wilhelm von Engerth' principles. Called “Steyerdorf”, “Lissawa”, “Gerliște”, and „Krassowa”, the four locomotives were awarded at the international exhibitions from London (1862) and Paris (1867) and worked for a long time (the last one, till 1905);

1869, 20th of October – It is the date of the railway opening for passengers;

1881 – Locomotives from the series MAV 450 were also put in circulation for longer than half a century;

1929 – Iron Plants and Domains Reșița Company (U. D. R.) projected and built five locomotives series 400 000 exclusively for Anina- Oravița railway;

The eighties of the 20th century – After a long time of working, the steam engines series 50 000 were gradually retired and replaced by hydraulic Diesel locomotives. A special regulation for this line is still operative today; given its content, it is a unique one.