

1979

# Early Pioneer Families In Decatur County, Kansas

Lillian Shimmick  
*Fort Hays State University*

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1979



*Fort Hays State University*

# **Ethnic Heritage Studies**

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*Early Pioneer Families  
In Decatur County, Kansas*

*by*

*Lillian Shimmick*

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*Early Pioneer Families  
In Decatur County, Kansas*

**Forsyth Library**

Edited by Ms. Rose Petracek Arnhold and Dr. Helmut J. Schmeller with an essay on census data by Dr. James Forsythe

Fort Hays State University  
Hays, Kansas

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Without the excellent cooperation of the members of the many families interviewed, this work would not have been possible. For their assistance and cooperation I am deeply grateful.

To Garrah Gaumer, Harwood Kolsky and Anna Petracek I owe a special debt of gratitude for it was by their insistence and encouragement that these histories previously published in the local Jennings newspaper, the Journal-Advocate, are compiled in book form.

The information for this work has been gathered from interviews, newspaper accounts, epitaphs and published obituaries. I apologize for any inaccuracies or omissions that may become apparent. I believe the risk is overshadowed by the reward of having this early Decatur County history preserved.

The Ethnic Heritage Studies Project at Fort Hays State University made possible the publication of this work. I will be forever appreciative of the assistance, encouragement and direction of Ms. Rose Petracek Arnhold and Dr. Helmut Schmeller and the support given to this project by Fort Hays State University.

Jennings, Kansas - May, 1979  
Lillian Shimmick

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Miss Lillian G. Shimmick was born July 9, 1899 in Jennings, Kansas to Frank and Anna (Havlina) Shimmick. Her father, a first generation Czech, born in Chicago, Illinois, and her mother, born in Kanin, near Prague, Czechoslovakia, encouraged in Lillian a love for and an interest in Czech history. Miss Shimmick spent most of her life in the field of education.

She received her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in education in 1925 from the University of Nebraska, her Master of Arts degree from the University of Iowa in 1929, and completed additional graduate work at the University of Iowa, the University of Kansas, and Fort Hays State University.

Miss Shimmick's teaching career, which began in 1918 in a rural school in Jennings, included teaching assignments in Wyoming; Mason City, Iowa; Geneva, New York; and Beloit, Kansas; and officially ended in 1961 as she completed the school year in Jennings High School. She taught at the elementary, secondary, and university level in addition to serving as principal, consultant, and Superintendent of Schools in Decatur County from 1941 to 1949. Miss Shimmick was a member of the summer teaching faculty at Fort Hays State University from 1946 through 1949.

She is a life member of the National Education Association and a charter member of the American Association of University Women and Delta Kappa Gamma. She remains very active in community activities and in the Jennings Methodist Church. In 1972 Miss Shimmick was privileged to visit the homeland of her mother. She co-authored A History of Big Timber Cemetery with Mr. Harwood Kolsky in 1976. She has encouraged, by her own example, a lively interest in the history of the Czechs in Decatur County.



**"Pioneer Family."** A limestone sculpture by Pete Felten that commemorates the early pioneer families in Decatur County, Oberlin, Kansas.

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## PREFACE

This account of some of the early pioneer families in Decatur County, Kansas and of their material and cultural contributions toward the development of a vigorous and distinctive community is derived from a series of newspaper articles written between 1966 and 1975 by Lillian Shimmick. The original articles which appeared in the now-defunct Jennings Journal-Advocate unfortunately are no longer available to the general public. In an effort to preserve these materials the Ethnic Heritage Studies Project at Fort Hays State University edited the original articles and, with the cooperation of the author, included additional items to provide a source of information for those wishing to engage in research on the early years of the community. An essay by Dr. James Forsythe on the use of census data complements Lillian Shimmick's narrative and should be of special interest to persons seeking to trace their family origins.

Lillian Shimmick's account in no way claims to be a comprehensive treatment of all early settlers in the Jennings area. Rather, her intent is to convey the unique flavor of the community in the late 1800's and to focus on the distinctive contributions made by the early pioneer families. Although a number of ethnic groups played a role in the early settlement of the area, the author, who is still fluent in Czech, understandably focuses to a greater degree on settlers from Central Europe, in particular on immigrants from the provinces of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire.

Whatever the specific circumstances which had prompted these immigrants to abandon the relative security of familiar surroundings for the promises of unfamiliar lands across the Atlantic, it seems certain that all shared to a greater or lesser degree in the belief that America was indeed, as

a popular saying had it, "the land of unlimited opportunities." The decision to settle in Kansas appears to have been prompted in many instances by the promise of free government land. The 1862 Homestead Act provided that, for a \$10.00 filing fee, any American who was the head of a household or who was 21 years or older, or any immigrant who was 18 years or older, or the head of a household who took out citizenship papers, could receive 160 acres of free land by living on it for five years. In 1873 the Timber Culture Act, which allowed a settler to receive 160 acres by planting forty acres of trees and cultivating them for ten years, supplemented the Homestead Act and thus further encouraged settlement.<sup>1</sup>

A variety of official data offers specific information on the movement of immigrants to Decatur County. According to 1880 census statistics there were 330 foreign born in Decatur County; by 1885 this figure had increased to 415. (Table 1)

	1880 <sup>2</sup>	1885 <sup>3</sup>
Foreign Born	330	415
British America	71	46
England and Wales	47	45
German Empire	80	
Germany		92
Sweden and Norway	32	
Sweden, Norway, and Denmark		83
Austro-Hungary, and other south of Europe		107

<sup>1</sup>Paul Gates, History of Public Land Law Development (Washington: Public Land Law Review Commission, 1968), and Benjamin Horace Hibbard, A History of the Public Land Policies (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1924), are good sources of information on the land system of the United States.

<sup>2</sup>U. S. Bureau of the Census, "Compendium of the Tenth Census" (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1883), p. 505.

<sup>3</sup>Kansas State Board of Agriculture, "Fifth Biennial Report to the Legislature of the State for the Years 1885-1886" (Topeka, Kansas: Kansas Publishing House, 1887), p. 20.

While these and other official statistical data are of considerable help in gaining a more precise picture of the manner of migration and settlement, they contain occasional errors or contradictions. In one instance, for example, a settler was listed in the Kansas State Census of 1905 as a native of Austria while his Naturalization Certificate of 1889 shows him as a native of Germany renouncing all allegiance to one "Wilhelm (sic), Emperor of Germany."

It is apparent to an observer of the Jennings community that the Czech heritage has not been preserved to the extent that it has in other settings. As was the case with other immigrant groups, the Czechs had two sets of orientations, one consistent with the broad features of American society and one reflective of their unique ethnic culture. Upon arrival the immigrants were set apart by language, dress, customs, and religion. The dilemma of attempting to preserve their culture and traditions and simultaneously attempting to enter into the life of the new land appeared to be resolved in favor of the latter.

The majority of the early pioneers had no experience as farmers. They were, for the most part, skilled tradesmen very willing to share work and resources to make the agricultural way of life a success. In the sparsely settled community there was no ethnic group so large as to make possible the perpetuation of unique cultural traditions. There was no sharp contrast in the lifestyles pursued by the various groups. As pioneers, all faced the common threats posed by Indians, by grasshoppers, and by unpredictable climatic conditions. As pioneers, all were exposed to poverty, all were equally subject to the difficult work necessary for survival and all faced the isolation from family, friends and familiar social networks. Where a strong religious orientation contributed to the solidarity of many urban ethnic groups and set them apart from the larger community, religion does not appear to have been a divisive factor among the early pioneer families in Decatur County. The frequency of intermarriage among these various

groups, the blending of customs and the decline in ethnic rituals and traditions suggest that the shared experience of pioneer life forged the diverse groups into a community in which the need to cooperate for survival overshadowed their differences. It is against this backdrop of pioneer conditions that the development and growth of the community can be best understood.

Early Pioneer Families in Decatur County is the result of a collective effort. To the families who willingly shared material and to Lillian Shimmick who gave so much time, effort, and energy toward the completion of this publication, we are especially grateful. We would also like to express our appreciation to Dr. Gerald W. Tomanek, President of Fort Hays State University, for his support of the Ethnic Heritage Studies Project and his commitment to the preservation of the cultural heritage of western Kansas. A special thanks goes to Dr. James Forsythe, Chairman of the Department of History, and to Dr. W. Nevell Razak, Chairman of the Department of Sociology. Their advice and counsel and their willingness to share departmental resources were indispensable. Ms. Norlene Razak was responsible for typing the manuscript and for completing the photographic layout. Her skills and those of Mr. Lorraine Jackson, who provided the photographic reproductions, were crucial to the completion of this work. We also wish to express our appreciation to Patty Heinrich and to Bianca Gager Johnson who did much of the preliminary work, and to Mr. Mac Reed of Forsyth Library for his assistance.

Ms. Rose Petracek Arnhold  
Dr. Helmut J. Schmeller

FAMILY HISTORIES  
THE SOLOMON REES FAMILY

The failure to mention the Solomon Rees family in the history of Decatur County would render it incomplete. Solomon Rees was born in Delaware County, Indiana on October 21, 1847. Solomon, later known as "Sol," a Civil War veteran in Company E. 147th Indiana Regiment, came to northwest Kansas in 1872 and took up a claim on the Prairie Dog Creek in Decatur County, Kansas. In the winter he trapped and hunted; in the summer he improved his homestead. A picture of his "soddie" is in the Decatur County Historical Museum at Oberlin, Kansas.

After Kansas passed the drastic "hunting laws," concerning the buffalo hide hunders, Sol drifted to the Panhandle of Texas in 1876 where he became a government scout and guide in what is known as the "Dull Knife War" of 1878. For his service he received \$5.00 per day. Upon discharging his duty as a scout and protector of the settlers, Sol returned to his "soddie" on the Prairie Dog and made repairs and improvements.<sup>1</sup>

Isolated from the life he had known, Sol became restless and again his love of adventure led him to rent his farm and to head for New Mexico where he established a business in Raton. After a three year stay, he returned to his home on the Jackson Prairie which was located just west of present day Jennings. To further improve his claim he built a frame house east of the Jackson Trading Post on the south side of the road. It was to this place that he brought his bride, Miss Lettie Lyons, whom he had met at Shibboleth, a trading post southwest of Jackson, and married in Oberlin, Kansas on November 11, 1883. In a short time Carrie, Sol's twelve year old son by a former marriage, joined the family. On February 20, 1885 Sol's second son, John, was born and his first daughter, Gertie, was born on May 17, 1888. Gertie Rees Green once remarked, "It was at Jackson that I first entered school, and it was in that

same frame schoolhouse that I taught my first term (1908-1909) of school."<sup>2</sup>



Solomon Rees family picture. Seated in the 1909 Reo were Sol, his wife, Lettie. L to R: John, Georgia, Carrie, Gertie, Wayne, and Roy.

With a wife and three growing youngsters, Sol settled down. He became owner and operator of a store which remained in operation until 1889. When the residents of Jackson began leaving one by one to establish residence in towns along the railroad, Sol moved his store to Jennings. Mr. Alonzo Beers, a friend of Sol's, followed suit the next year and moved his wife, Susan, and family to Jennings.<sup>3</sup> Mr. Beers, an admirer of Andrew Jackson, was credited with naming the trading post Jackson. As soon as Sol had re-established his store business in Jennings, he had a frame house built on a small acreage across the railroad tracks just north of the town.<sup>4</sup>

A second daughter, Georgia, and two more sons, Roy and Wayne, completed the Rees family. Time passed and members

of the Rees family married. Carrie and Ora Jones were married on September 9, 1912 at Monte Vista, Colorado where he had set up a photography studio.<sup>5</sup>

John Rees married Nellie Roberts, a rural school teacher, on December 29, 1906.<sup>6</sup> Nellie, a victim of the influenza epidemic, died in February of 1920 and was buried in the Jennings cemetery. John, who died on August 20, 1957, is also buried there.

Gertie Rees and Thomas R. Green were married on August 4, 1910 at Jennings.<sup>7</sup> Gertie died December 6, 1977 and is buried at Mountain View Cemetery in Longmont, Colorado; her husband, Thomas, died in 1973.

Georgia Rees and Charles D. Boulls were married in November, 1915 at Jennings. Georgia died February 16, 1973 in Riverside, California and her husband died in Jennings on May 5, 1953.<sup>8</sup> Both are buried in the cemetery at Jennings.

Roy Rees, a World War I veteran, married Neta Miller in Denver, Colorado on October 5, 1919. Roy's untimely death occurred about a year after their marriage when he attempted to save the life of a friend who was trapped in an abandoned mine. Roy is buried at Longmont, Colorado.

Wayne Rees, the only surviving member of the family, married Viola Huff on May 28, 1927 at Longmont, Colorado.<sup>9</sup> Later the family moved to Moab, Utah. Viola Huff died on November 20, 1971.

The Jackson trading post became a ghost town. Martin Chapman was the owner of the flour mill and after his death the flour mill was closed and later burned. The stores were moved to Jennings with only the Rees frame house and the schoolhouse remaining in Jackson.<sup>10</sup> The schoolhouse was sold and moved. After the exodus, Sol Rees became sole owner of the trading post site. The former Rees house was torn down. Sol sold his farm land to his son, John, who later sold the quarter section to J. C. Petrasek for \$100.00 per acre.

Sol died at his home in Jennings on April 14, 1913, at the age of 67. Several years before his death he suffered

from a stroke from which he never recovered. During his long illness he was cared for by his wife and daughter, Georgia. John R. Cook, author of The Border and the Buffalo writes after a visit to Sol's home, "He is today less than sixty years of age, a broken-down man in body; but he has been a man of iron. He has dared and done what the average man of today would shrink from."<sup>11</sup> Lettie Rees lived to the age of 78. Both she and Sol are buried in the cemetery at Jennings.

All that remains today is an open field where a few foundation stones reveal the site of the former trading post. Across the road to the north is the well-kept Jackson Cemetery where a few of the early settlers are buried. The fence enclosure was the gift of Frank Mazanek, Sr., installed by his sons, Frank, Jr., and John. Relatives of many of the pioneers moved the bodies of their loved ones from Jackson to other cemeteries. Foreign-born Frank Mazanek, Sr., and his wife lie at rest in the Jackson Cemetery.

The pioneer village with its mixture of English and non-English speaking settlers is no more. Where the thrill of hobnobbing and the business of buying and selling were once the order of the day, now only a lonesome emptiness prevails in Jackson. The pioneers have come and gone, leaving to those who remain a legacy of high purpose, great courage, and a deep and abiding faith.

<sup>1</sup>For an account of Solomon Rees' activities in the Dull Knife War see, John R. Cook, The Border and the Buffalo (Topeka, Kansas: Crane & Company, 1907).

<sup>2</sup>Records on the Jackson school district reveal that Loreta Rees, granddaughter of Sol Rees, taught school there during the years 1933-1936.

<sup>3</sup>Children of Alonzo and Susan Beers were Alonzo, Jr., Ida, Mary Louise, Charles, Franklin, Sarah, Emma, Edwin, Winfield, George, Pauline, and Carl.

<sup>4</sup>This house is still standing and is owned by Mrs. Emma Shimek.

<sup>5</sup>Carrie Rees and Ora Jones had one son, Merald.



<sup>6</sup>The children of John Rees and Nellie Roberts were Loreta, Gleneta, Veda June, and Jay Voyl. Loreta married Ready A. Farley on February 27, 1944 and had one son, Gerald. Loreta died in an automobile accident on February 15, 1967 and was buried in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Her twin sister, Gleneta, married Varrian Tritt on November 29, 1929. Their children were Cecilia, Varrian II, and Vaneta. Veda married Max Groves on February 12, 1936. Jay Voyl married Virginia Hartzell in Philadelphia. Their children were Jay Wayne, Stephen, and Carol.

<sup>7</sup>The children of Gertie Rees and Thomas Green were Georgia Green Lee and Raymond Rees Green.

<sup>8</sup>Georgia Rees and Charles D. Boulls had one daughter, Betha, who married Kenneth Norton at Riverside, California. They had two children, Robert and Linda.

<sup>9</sup>The children of Wayne Rees and Viola Huff were Charles, Ruth, Lucille, and Richard.

<sup>10</sup>It was during the period of school district reorganization (1945-1947) in Kansas that the Jackson District School #33 was abolished and the land annexed to the Dresden School District #101.

<sup>11</sup>John R. Cook, The Border and the Buffalo (Topeka, Kansas: Crane and Company, 1907), p. 313.

## THE JOSEPH CILEK FAMILY

Joseph Cilek was born on March 11, 1832 in Sobeslov, Bohemia in Eastern Europe. Joseph was sixteen when Francis Joseph II was made Emperor of Austria Hungary in 1848.

Joseph served in the Austrian army from 1854 to 1862. Having discharged his obligation to his country, Joseph planned his departure to America. Joseph and his fiance, Barbara Rohan, who was also born in Sobeslov on November 28, 1840, were married on December 20, 1865. Together they worked and planned for the future. During this time a daughter, Anna<sup>1</sup> was born on July 26, 1866 and a son, Charles<sup>2</sup> (Karel) in 1868. In the same year the Cileks left their native land to make a home in Richardson County, Nebraska near the present town of Humboldt. They are listed as passengers taken on board the S.S. Berlin embarking from Bremen and arriving in the United States on July 2, 1869.

The United States of America in its first 92 years of independence had weathered many changes. Steadily, the frontier pushed westward. The tragic Civil War was over, and the period of reconstruction had begun. Joseph and Barbara found themselves in the midst of the Civil War veterans who had returned to their families. Nothing seemed to be stable. Footloose individuals, striving to better their lot, moved into the unknown. Meanwhile, the Cileks remained and worked among friends and relatives in Nebraska. Added to their family were John<sup>3</sup> who was born June 3, 1870 and Mary Francis, born November 3, 1871.<sup>4</sup>

With the enactment of the Homestead Act, western territory was opened for settlement. The promise of owning land was attractive to many of the immigrant families. Joseph, with his family, left Nebraska for Decatur County, Kansas accompanied by several other Bohemian families, the Skalas, the Rohans and the Blechas.

On March 17, 1873 Joseph filed a claim for a homestead on the north side of the Big Timber Creek. That location was chosen because wood, spring water, fish and wild game

were plentiful there. A dugout was made in the bank of the creek and on June 13, 1873 Josie,<sup>5</sup> the first white child in Decatur County, was born.

Norton was the nearest settlement with one sod store. Joseph found it necessary to walk to Norton, a distance of 30 miles one way for provisions. During the rainy season it took three days to make the journey. All he could bring back was a fifty pound bag of cornmeal which he divided with the other families. Settlers also walked to Kirwin, Kansas for needed supplies.

Farming, a new occupation for Joseph who was a shoemaker by trade, was a difficult undertaking at that time in Decatur County. Farming began with sod breaking and corn planting. All farming was done with horses or oxen. Repeated crop failure forced the men to leave their families and search elsewhere for work. In their absence the families would frequently live together and pool their resources for survival. In the case of Joseph Cilek, his wife and children lived with the wife and children of Wenzel Rohan. The Rohans spoke German while the Cileks spoke Czech. Thus, the children of these first immigrant families were comfortable with both languages. On many occasions, families survived on rabbits and birds for food. Corn and sometimes rye were dried, ground, and used as coffee. The devastating 1874 grasshopper invasion shattered all hope for a corn crop and discouraged and disillusioned many of the pioneers. The Skalas, Blechas and others returned to Nebraska. Joseph and Barbara Cilek remained on their homestead to rear their children and to see conditions improve.

Medical services were non-existent. Both mother and infant mortality was high. Charles (Karel) Cilek became ill and died at age six. He was buried on the farmstead. Later the Cilek family and other Czech families established the Bohemian Cemetery. Lizzie was born September 3, 1876;<sup>6</sup> Rosa on March 26, 1878;<sup>7</sup> and Lewis on June 22, 1882.<sup>8</sup>

Joseph Cilek assisted in the organization of the Big Timber School, the church services held in the homes, the

Bohemian Cemetery, the Big Timber Band, and the dance orchestras which played at different homes every Saturday night. Churches were too far away to attend regularly and Joseph Cilek, a Roman Catholic by birth, insisted that catechism be taught in the family. Joseph was ever grateful that life and home were spared from the ravages of prairie fires and that his family survived the massacre in the Last Indian Raid in Kansas in 1878.<sup>9</sup> During that raid the Cileks, Steffens and Rohans hid in a ravine just north of the Big Timber Cemetery for several days until the raiding Cheyennes had passed.

Thirty-four years of loving companionship ended for Joseph when Barbara died of cancer at the age of 59 on April 3, 1899. Joseph died on January 3, 1922 at the home of his daughter, Anna, and her husband, Joseph Petracek. The last sixteen years of his life were spent with his daughter's family. Joseph did not speak English and insisted that the family speak Czech. The only tie he maintained with his native land were the Czech newspapers. His grandchildren recall memories of him sitting in his rocking chair, smoking his large pipe, and insisting that the children sit quietly and listen to him read and reread the newspapers in his native tongue.

At the time of his death the funeral was held in the home with friends and relatives coming to offer consolation, gifts of food, and offers of service to the family. Both he and his wife are buried in the Big Timber Bohemian Cemetery that they worked so hard to establish.

<sup>1</sup>The children of Anna Cilek Petracek and Joseph Petracek were Edward, Lizzie, Charles, Adolph, Clara, Joseph, Jr., Emil, Anna, and John.

<sup>2</sup>Charles Cilek died at the age of six.

<sup>3</sup>The children of John Cilek and Marie Hess Cilek were Ida, Alfrieda, Vivian, and Loretta.

<sup>4</sup>The children of Mary Francis Cilek and Hans Arnt Hanson were Bertha, Clara, Ellen, Esther, Arthur, Howard, and Mable. Hans Arnt Hanson was previously married to Maren Odelia Olson. Their children were Gertie, Herman, Otto, and Thelma.

<sup>5</sup>The children of Josie Cilek and William Stramp, Sr., were George, Anna, Charles, Henry, Willie, Mary, Jessie, Hazel, Vera, and Mabel.

<sup>6</sup>The children of Elizabeth Cilek Carstens and James Henry Carstens were George, Henry, John, James, Mae, and Bertha.

<sup>7</sup>The children of Rosa Cilek Petracek and Frank Petracek were Julius, Ruth, Harry, Frank, Rudolph, Alfred, Sylvia, Mildred, and Blanche. Frank Petracek was previously married to Julia Tacha and their children were Nettie and Herbert.

<sup>8</sup>The children of Lewis Cilek and Fannie Hess Cilek were Edith, Eileen, Raymond, Edward, Charlotte, and Frances.

<sup>9</sup>For details on the Cilek family's experiences in the last Indian Raid in Decatur County see George Nellans, Authentic Accounts of Massacre of Indians, Rawlins County, Kansas 1875 and Cheyenne Indian Raid in Western Kansas, September 30, 1878. N.P. 1958.



Joseph Cilek Family. First row: L to R: Mary, Anna, Barbara, Joseph. Back Row: Rosa, Josie, Lizzie, John, Lewis.

## THE FRANK TACHA FAMILY

Among the immigrants to the United States in 1863 were Frank Tacha and his wife, Katherine Pfeiffer Tacha. They came with their sons, Frank, Jr., and Godfrey from Throve Sveny, Austria-Hungary to Rushford, Minnesota. In Minnesota six children were born to the Tacha family: Anthony, Theodore, Ernest, John, Julia, and Frances. It was with their eight children that Frank and Katherine moved to Decatur County, Kansas in 1873.



The Frank Tacha Family. Front Row: L to R: Ernest and John. Second Row: L to R: Frank, Sr., and his wife, Katherine, Frank, Jr. Top Row: L to R: Anthony, Godfrey, and Theodore.

Early homesteaders were privileged to choose the quarter section on which to build their dugouts. The Tacha family located in the Big Timber area, seven miles northwest of the present town of Jennings, Kansas. Four of the sons, Frank, Jr., Godfrey, Anthony, and Theodore, filed claims for homesteads at the same time as their father.

These newcomers encouraged friends to move westward and as the Macharts, Krizeks, Kolskys, and Kumps came from Minnesota they found a warm welcome awaiting them in the Tacha household. Many of the newly arrived stayed with the Tachas until dugouts were constructed on the land they were to homestead.

Their children chose their marriage partners from neighborhood families. Frank, Jr., married Della Henry.<sup>1</sup> Godfrey married Kate Heilman,<sup>2</sup> Anthony married Barbara Kadletz,<sup>3</sup> Theodore married Mary Prachejl,<sup>4</sup> John married Antonia Fiala,<sup>5</sup> and Ernest married Hettie Higbee.<sup>6</sup> Julia married Frank Petracek. She died in childbirth leaving two children, Nettie and Herbert. Frances married Marion Melvin. Both daughters preceded their parents in death.

After the family was grown Frank, Sr., and Katherine decided to move from the Big Timber area to a farm on the Prairie Dog Creek approximately two miles southwest of Jennings. John, their son, and his wife, Antonia, stayed to farm the original homestead.<sup>7</sup> Frank, Sr., and Katherine spent the remainder of their lives in the new location. Frank died in 1908 at the age of 76 and Katherine died in 1919 at the age of 87. All members of the Tacha family are buried in the Jennings cemetery.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The children of Frank, Jr., and Della Henry Tacha were Julia, Winona, and Alma.

<sup>2</sup>The children of Godfrey and Kate Heilman Tacha were Edward, Frank, George, and Earl.

<sup>3</sup>The children of Anthony and Barbara Kadletz Tacha were Ernest, Harry, Carl, and Jesse.

<sup>4</sup>The children of Theodore and Mary Prachejl Tacha were

Mabel, Bertha, Walter, Mae, and Edna.

<sup>5</sup>The children of John and Antonia Fiala Tacha were Clara, Julius, Nora, Elmer, and Ruth.

<sup>6</sup>Ernest and Hettie Higbee Tacha had one son, Claude.

<sup>7</sup>Antonia Fiala Tacha emigrated from Moravia in 1871 with her family. She lived to celebrate her 100th birthday in Oberlin, Kansas.

<sup>8</sup>The dates of birth, death, and marriage of the Tacha family are given in The History of Big Timber Cemetery by Harwood Kolsky and Lillian Shimmick.



## THE GEORGE KUMP FAMILY

Like many of his countrymen before him, George Kump, Sr., left his native Germany in search of better opportunities in the New World. Born in 1830 in Gradetz, Germany, George Kump served for eight years in the army of his native land and subsequently worked as a textile salesman. Together with his brother he decided to move to Arcadia, Wisconsin where he joined other German immigrants. There he met Frances Kryser, born in 1845, the daughter of a tailor from Sweintz, Germany, whom he soon married. The couple became proprietors of a hotel in Winona, Minnesota where their children, John and Anne, were born. A few years later the family moved to Arcadia, Wisconsin to operate a new hotel they had built there. Here four more children -- George, Jr., Mary, Charlie, and Frank -- were born.

In the hope to improve the economic position of his family, George Kump and his brother-in-law, Frank Kryser, decided to move westward. They arrived in Decatur County, Kansas in the late summer of 1878. After selecting homesteads in the Big Timber vicinity, they returned to their homes in Wisconsin just two weeks before the Indian Raid occurred near Oberlin.

John Kump (born October 24, 1870) was a lad of ten when his family decided to pull up stakes and move westward. Traveling by chair car on the Union Pacific the Kumps arrived at Buffalo Park, Kansas in March of 1879. Fortunately the weather was pleasant; the Kumps purchased a team of oxen and a covered wagon and proceeded to the home of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Tacha, Sr., near the Big Timber Creek.

After filing a claim to a quarter section one and one-half miles south of the Big Timber Creek, George Kump's immediate concern was to provide shelter for his family. Aided by Frank Tacha and by Frank Kryser, George Kump built a two-room sod house. Here another child, Fannie, was born. After years of sacrifice and toil the Kumps proved up on the homestead which is located six miles northwest of Jennings.

The Kumps were known throughout the community as a friendly and outgoing family. Their linguistic ability -- they were conversant in English, Czech, and German -- soon made their home a social center. In addition the Kumps were instrumental in organizing Sunday School and church services in private homes. Their eldest son, John, usually led the family in prayer and worship.



The George Kump Family. Front Row: L to R: John, Grandma, George, and Anna. Second Row: L to R: Charles, Fannie, Frank, and Mary.

As the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railway was being built westward through Decatur County, additional employment became available to settlers and their sons. John assisted foreman-carpenter Charley Danley in building railway depots at Clayton, Dresden, Colby, Brewster, and Levant.

After completing the railroad job, John went back to the farm to build a home for himself. With the help of his brothers, George and Charlie, and that of a neighbor, Jim Carstens, a two-room soddie was built in a week's time. In

1891 John married Barbara Nerminger who had made her home with the Robert Farris family. The couple began their life in a small frame house on the land known as the John Cilek place just a short distance east of the parental Kump homestead. Here George, Jr., was born. Later the family moved again to another home less than a mile south. Here, in a soddie, the second and the third child -- Mae and Lee -- were born. As the family grew and prospered a new two-story frame house was built, complete with basement.

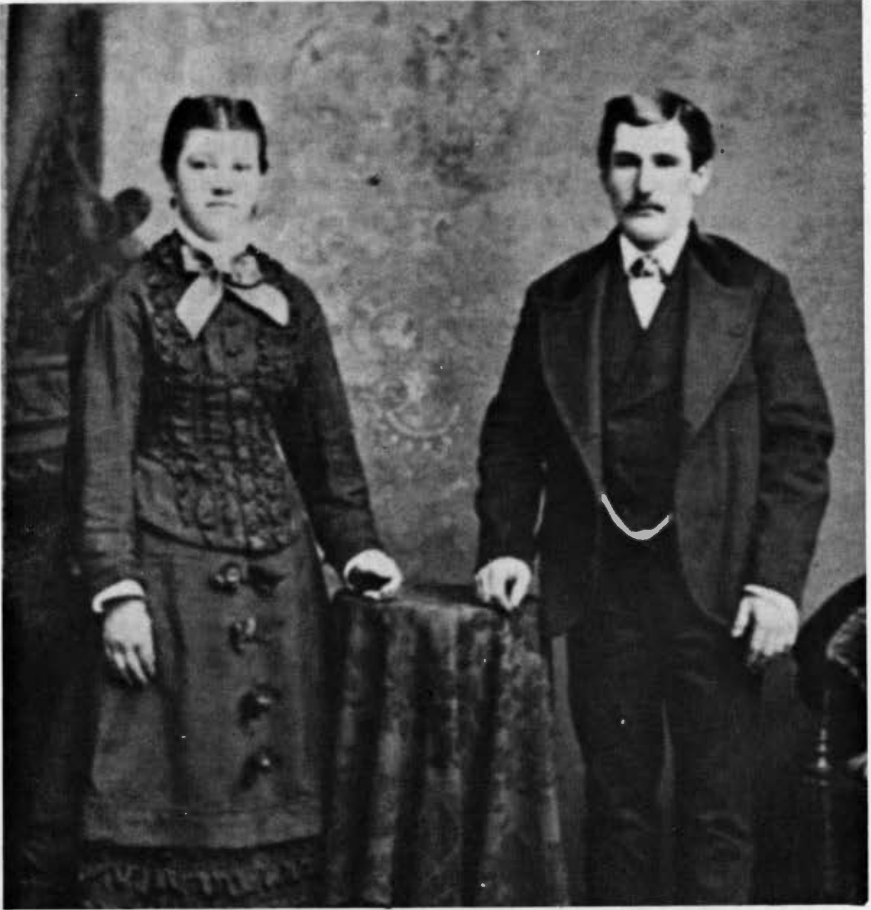
On June 18, 1930 Mrs. John Kump passed away after a long illness. John retired from farming and in 1931 married a long-time friend of the family, Miss Claudine Weitzel. After her death in 1956 John and his son, George, Jr., made their home together. Until his death in 1972 at the age of 102 John led an active social life, enjoying the company of his many Czech and German friends in Oberlin.

## THE FRANK MACHART FAMILY

Frank Machart was born on August 6, 1853 and reared in a small village near what is now Prague, Czechoslovakia. He prepared for service in the Roman Catholic Church by studying for the priesthood but was never ordained. Seeking adventure in a new country he emigrated from his homeland to join relatives who had settled in a farming area near Winona, Minnesota. There he worked as a wheelwright among his relatives and other Czech farmers. He married Mary Mraz in 1879 and in that same year they joined a westward moving caravan to northwest Kansas. Czech families from Minnesota, the Frank Krizeks and the Frank Tachas, joined Czech families from Nebraska, the Joseph Cileks, the Wenzel Rohans, and the Gustav Steffens, to become an integral part of the Czech settlement in Decatur County, Kansas.



Frank Machart's Sod House.



Pictured above are Frank, Sr., and Mary Mraz Machart.

Like their neighbors the Macharts faced constant danger and hardship. Sadness came to mar their lives when Joe, the eldest son, died of pneumonia at age 6. Henry, an infant son, also died and both children were buried in the north-east part of what is now the Big Timber Bohemian Cemetery. At the time of their deaths the cemetery was not formally organized. Other children of Frank and Mary Machart were Frank, Jr., Blanche, Bill, Rose, Joseph, and Leonard. All of the Machart children received their elementary education at the one-room Big Timber School.

Frank, Jr., and his brother, Joseph, were the only members of the family to remain in Decatur County. Frank married Anna Ledvinka on October 18, 1908.<sup>1</sup> Anna was born in Bohemia and emigrated with her mother to America after the death of her father, a coal miner in Bohemia. Anna died in 1958 at the age of 55; Frank, Jr., died in 1971 at the age of 89. Both are buried in the cemetery at Jennings, Kansas.

Blanche Machart was born in Jennings on November 29, 1880 and married Anthony Petrasek. She died on September 5, 1941 and was buried in Malin, Oregon.<sup>2</sup>

William Machart was born in Jennings on October 14, 1891. He married Miss Anna Bartos. He was a World War I veteran. He died on May 31, 1926 and was buried in Pine City, Minnesota.<sup>3</sup>

Rose Machart was born in Jennings on March 14, 1890. She married W. A. Guptil. She died April 17, 1928 at the age of 38. She was buried in Pine City, Minnesota.<sup>4</sup>

Joseph Machart was born on November 20, 1894 in Jennings. He married Viola Hess. He died September 29, 1967 at Oberlin, Kansas and is buried there.<sup>5</sup>

Leonard Machart was born in Jennings on September 3, 1898. He served in the Armed Forces in World War I. He later became President of the First State Bank at Beroun, Minnesota and then President of the First National Bank in Pine City, Minnesota. He and his wife, Grace, reside in Pine City.<sup>6</sup>

For many years Frank, Sr., served his community as clergyman, officiating at burial services at the Big Timber Bohemian Cemetery until he left Jennings in October, 1911, to make his home in Minnesota. Frank, Sr., died in December 1927 at the age of 74; Mary died in January 1939 at the age of 79. Both are buried at Pine City, Minnesota.

<sup>1</sup>The children of Frank, Jr., and Anna Ledvinka Machart were Dale and Gerald.

<sup>2</sup>The children of Blanche Machart and Anthony Petrasek were Irene, Ivan, Edwin, Enoch, Paul, Lou, and Lee.

<sup>3</sup>The children of William Machart and Anna Bartos were Richard and Elinor.

<sup>4</sup>Rose Machart Guptil and W. A. Guptil had no children.

<sup>5</sup>The children of Joseph Machart and Viola Hess Machart were Harold, Twila, Joan, Billy, and Mike.

<sup>6</sup>Leonard and Grace Machart have no children.

## THE ELIASHA W. FORD FAMILY

Homesteaders moved in great numbers into Western Kansas in 1872. Some came on foot and on horseback; others with families made the journey in covered wagons. Upon arrival adults 21 years and older quickly filed a claim for a quarter section of public land. If the homesteader lived on his claim for five years and improved it, he would receive full title to it virtually free of charge. The dugout in the side of a bank became the settler's home with its dirt walls, dirt floor, and dirt roof. Merchandise became available at trading posts established along the Prairie Dog Creek at Slab City, at Jackson, and at Shibboleth. Later to this nucleus of communal development a school and church were added.

E. W. Ford, with his wife, Margaret Ann, and family, left their home in Cromwell, Iowa in March 1879 and came to Decatur County, Kansas to homestead. E. W. Ford filed his claim for a quarter section of land in the Jackson settlement which boasted of having a well-patronized grocery store with post office and a flour mill.<sup>1</sup>

In April 1879 the E. W. Ford family moved into their dugout. By October the family had built an addition to it and two years later a sod house was built. The Ford family lived in the sod house until 1900. A frame house was constructed near the sod house at that time.

E. W. Ford supplemented the family income by teaching school. He served as teacher at Jackson in 1882 and 1883. He taught school at Jennings in 1884.

The children of E. W. and Margaret Ford were Ada, Grace, Frank, Maggie, and Hamlin. E. W. Ford, farmer and educator, died at his home on June 6, 1910 at the age of 74; his wife, Margaret Ann, died on August 27, 1911 at the age of 76. Both are buried in the Jennings cemetery.

The Fords are remembered as community-minded people ever supportive of civic projects. During his life E. W. Ford kept a diary. After his death his daughters, Ada and Grace,



followed the same method of recording daily events. These diaries are still available and are used as a source of reference by local townspeople. For years Grace and Mark Munson kept a record of the persons who were buried in the Jennings cemetery. The record which contained the names, the birth and death dates, and the lot numbers has proved to be an invaluable guide.

Grace Munson died on April 9, 1949 at the age of 79; Mark died August 29, 1963 at the age of 90. Before his death Mark purchased a granite marker bearing the names of those persons who contributed to the purchase of the cemetery fence. This beautiful marker is between the two entrances at the north end of the cemetery.



The E. W. Ford Family. L to R: Ada, Mrs. Ford, E. W. Ford, and Maggie.

<sup>1</sup>The postmaster was Samuel Alonzo Beers; the miller was Martin Chapman.

## THE OSCAR MUNSON FAMILY

Among the Civil War veterans moving westward to secure a homestead was Oscar Erwin Munson. Oscar had served for three years in the south with Company A, First Wisconsin Cavalry. When his enlistment expired, he re-enlisted with the Navy where he served until the close of the war. After hostilities had ceased, Oscar returned to his boyhood home at Salem, Wisconsin.

On May 1, 1866, he and Mary Eliza Rector of Salem, Wisconsin were married. They left their hometown and established a home at Crescent City, Iroquois County, Illinois where they lived for thirteen years. During this period five of their children were born: Johnnie, Benjamin, Harry, Mark, and Edith. Johnnie, the eldest son, died in infancy.

In May 1879 Oscar Munson and Edwin O. Rector, his brother-in-law, arrived in Decatur County, Kansas with their families. Oscar patented the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , NW $\frac{1}{4}$  and SE $\frac{1}{4}$  NW $\frac{1}{4}$  in Section 25-4-27 west of the sixth principal meridian in Kansas. Most of the present city of Jennings is located on the original Munson homestead. It was suggested that the town be named Munson, but Oscar Munson declined. Adjoining the homestead to the north, Oscar Munson received a patent from the United States Government on a timber claim in the SW $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 24-4-27 west of the sixth principal meridian. The large grove of trees the Munsons planted at that time still remains and can be seen when looking north from the Jennings cemetery road. Edwin O. Rector received a patent from the government on the SW $\frac{1}{4}$  in Section 3-4-27 west of the sixth principal meridian.

During the prolonged period of drought and repeated crop failures the settlers became disillusioned. Many considered returning to their former homes. The Munsons, too, were plagued by moments of indecision. After much reflection they decided not to return to their former Illinois home but to remain in Jennings. Three more children were born to the Munsons: Herbert in May 1881, Addie Nell in October 1883 and

a baby boy in 1886 who lived but a few days.

For more than 53 years the Munson family lived on their Kansas homestead, first in a dugout, then in a soddie, and finally in the frame house built by their son, Harry. Moments of joy and sorrow were theirs as the years passed. Benjamin, the eldest son, was the first to establish a home of his own after he and Laura Eleanor Pine were married.<sup>1</sup> Benjamin and his brother, Herbert, met death by drowning in the Prairie Dog River near their home in February, 1897. On April 1, 1898 Mark T. Munson was married to Grace Eleanor Ford, a school teacher who came to Decatur County with her parents in 1879.<sup>2</sup> Addie Nell Munson was married to Walter John Pattee of Smith Center, Kansas.<sup>3</sup> Harry Lee and his wife, Mabel Munson, had no children. The eldest daughter, Edith, was married to August Gottfried Nelson on October 2, 1904.<sup>4</sup> All of the members of the Munson family, with the exception of Addie Nell, are buried in the Jennings cemetery. She is buried at the side of her husband at Smith Center, Kansas.

The Munsons were held in high esteem by their many friends. The Munson family played an active role in the neighborhood home religious services. After the construction of the Methodist Church in 1893 the Munsons continued their active religious role. On December 21, 1930 Oscar was made an honorary member of the Jennings American Legion.

On February 13, 1932, the Jennings community was saddened by the death of Oscar E. Munson at the age of 89. Five years later, on July 20, 1937, Mary passed away at the age of 93. For nearly 66 years they had enjoyed married life together. In the Jennings cemetery, once a part of the original Munson land grant, Oscar and Mary are buried.

The Munson two-story house still stands at the side of the road west of Jennings. In the yard stands a lone stately pine that was planted by the Munsons when their daughter, Edith, was two years of age. The grandson, Arthur, was the last member of the family to live in the Munson house; his wife, Edith, resides there now.

<sup>1</sup>The only child of Benjamin and Laura Pine Munson was Mrs. Hallie Benham Goodspeed.

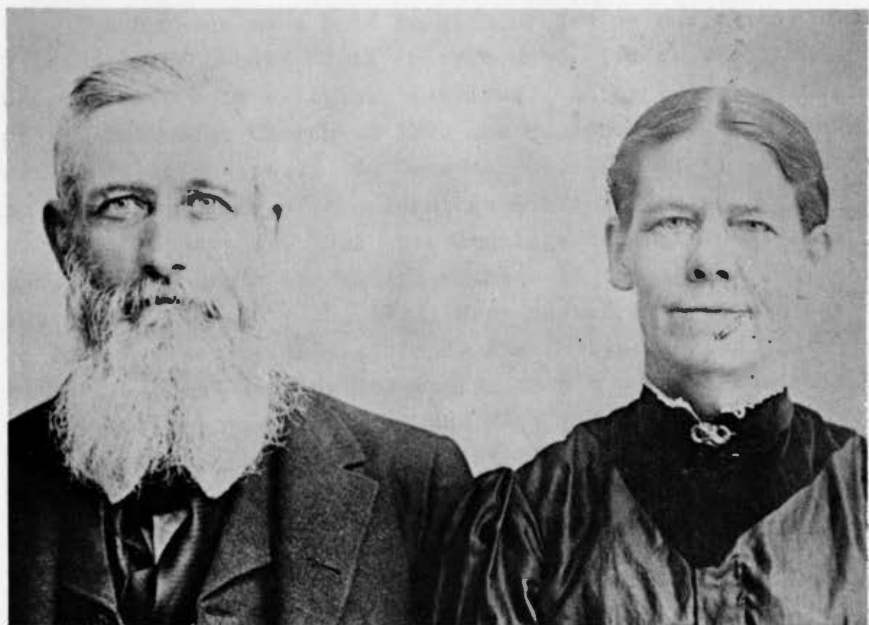
<sup>2</sup>The only child of Mark and Grace Ford Munson was Arthur R. Munson.

<sup>3</sup>The children of Addie Nell and Walter John Pattee were Gerald M. and Frank.

<sup>4</sup>The children of Edith and August Nelson were Carl Oscar, Laurence M., and Norman August.



The Oscar Munson Family. L to R: Addie, Harry, Mary Eliza, Mark, his wife, Grace, Edith, and Oscar. Arthur is seated on the hobby horse. Hallie is holding a doll.



Oscar Munson and Mary Eliza Rector Munson.

## THE CHARLES VOTAPKA FAMILY

Among the early Czech settlers in Decatur County were Charles (Karel) Votapka and his wife, Marie Ludra. It was through the efforts and assistance of this couple that so many Czech families made their home in Decatur County.

Charles was born in Kutne Hory, Czechoslovakia on March 11, 1850. Charles attended school until he was 14 years old. At that time he entered a trade school and was trained as a mechanic. In the late 1800's military service in Austria-Hungary was compulsory for Czech males at the age of 18. Whenever possible, parents would help their sons evade this duty. When Charles approached the age of enlistment, his father, who was a civil servant, urged him to emigrate to North America where opportunities were greater for advancement. In 1866, at the age of 16, Charles emigrated to America.<sup>1</sup>

In New York City, Charles found a home among other Czech immigrants who had once lived in his native country. There he met a Czech girl, Marie Ludra, who was born on September 6, 1852 in Traha, Czechoslovakia and had emigrated to America in 1868 with her mother and sister, Jennie.<sup>2</sup>

On April 3, 1869 Marie Ludra and Charles Votapka were married. After their marriage, they both continued to work in a cigar factory where they made cigars by hand and helped in the making of chewing tobacco. Charles found this work distressing; the smell of tobacco was distasteful and standing for long hours while making cigars was most uncomfortable so he sought and found a job with the Bliss Sewing Machine Company.

While in New York both Charles and his wife became naturalized citizens. The original spelling of the Votapka family name was Wotapka. The naturalization authorities, however, made an error by writing the surname with the letter "V" instead of "W." When Charles went to the authorities to have the error corrected, he was told that it would take a court action and considerable money to correct the mis-

take. Since Charles had very little money at that time, the spelling of the family name remains Votapka to this day.

Charles and Marie had six children: Maggie was born in New York City and died in infancy. A second daughter, Jennie, also born in New York City, died at the age of two of diphtheria. Fearing that their six month old son, Jerry,<sup>3</sup> might get diphtheria, the family left New York City for St. Ansgar, Iowa in 1874. There a second son, Charles, Jr.,<sup>4</sup> was born on December 2, 1877. After moving to western Kansas a daughter, Jane,<sup>5</sup> was born on February 14, 1880, and a son, Frank,<sup>6</sup> on May 2, 1882, both of whom were reared on a farm north of Jennings, Kansas.

While living in St. Ansgar, Iowa the Votapkas decided to join other Czechs who were planning to homestead in western Kansas in order to better their lot. Charles left his family in Iowa in February, 1879, and traveled to Decatur County, Kansas to file a homestead claim and to prepare a dwelling place for his family. On arrival he was taken to the home of Mr. and Mrs. Wenzel Rohan. During his stay with them he cut wood and made his sod house. He moved his family to Decatur County in the fall of 1879.

On December 20, 1884 Charles Votapka received title for the NW  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 25-3-27 west of the sixth principal meridian in Decatur County, Kansas. The crops were poor the first year and Charles, along with many other of the Czech farmers, found it necessary to seek work elsewhere in order to support their families. Charles went to Nebraska to help harvest and to do whatever work he could find from May until December. Crop failure the second year forced Charles to return again to Nebraska to find employment. The third year Charles was fortunate in obtaining work on the Union Pacific Railroad at Lenora, Kansas. He walked to and from his farm to his work. On September 17, 1890, Charles patented the NE  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 26-3-27 west of the sixth principal meridian. He later sold both quarters to his son, Jerry, on January 21, 1901.

Charles and Marie looked for land on which to build a

home. On July 7, 1900, they purchased the SW  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 31-3-26 west of the sixth principal meridian in Decatur County for \$1,200. This land was home to them for the remainder of their lives. The house they built there still stands a short distance north of the residence of George Votapka, a grandson.

Charles Votapka was an energetic and industrious farmer who played an active role in the building of the community. He was a member of the Západní Česko Bratrská Jednota (Western Bohemian Fraternal Association). Fearful that children would not be taught Czech reading and writing, he used his influence to secure the services of Mr. James Ruzicka, a native of Bohemia. On his arrival in 1916, arrangements were made for this young man to work as a farm hand during the week and to teach Czech reading and writing on Sunday from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

The children in attendance brought their lunches and reported that at the close of each Sunday session Mr. Ruzicka played the piano so that the children might have an hour of social dancing. While Mr. Ruzicka was in Jennings he worked on the farms of Mr. and Mrs. James Skubal, Sr., and Mr. and Mrs. Charles Votapka. After Mr. Ruzicka left, Charles himself was hired by the local chapter of the Bohemian Lodge to teach advanced courses in Czech conversation and writing at the Lodge Hall. He was hired to teach on Sunday for sixteen weeks for the sum of \$3.00 per Sunday.

Charles Votapka will be remembered as a stocky, slightly bent, hard working man with bushy eyebrows and a thick mustache. His manner was always friendly as he smiled, gestured and conversed in broken English. He was a kind, trustworthy citizen, an asset to the community. He was ever thoughtful of the comfort of his frail wife. On Memorial Day they attended the services at the Big Timber Cemetery.

On April 3, 1919 Charles and Marie celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary, a privilege accorded to few pioneers. Marie died of a heart attack on April 9, 1922 at the age of 69. Charles died on December 24, 1929. Both are



buried in Big Timber Cemetery. Several years before his death Charles Votapka wrote the following letter in which he attempted to chronicle the important events in his life.

CHARLES VOTAPKA, SR.

Was born March 11, 1850 at Kutne Hory, Czechoslovakia. When I was 1½ yrs. old we moved in the city where my father was an officer. We moved a dwelling near the court house. Later we moved to Tahadla near a sugar refinery, where I started to go to school. Later we moved to Oumomina and I went to school to Kresetic. When I was 10 years old we moved again to Kutne Hory (Kuten Burg) and I went to school till I was 14 yrs. old & then I started to learn the trade of mechanic.

After the war in 1866 the first ship I came to America -- New York City, & in 1869 April 3 I got married. First child, a daughter, died 9 days after birth. Later another daughter, she was ailing more than a year & when she was 2 years old she died of diphtheria. Her name was Jennie. At that time our son Jaroslav (Jerry) was born. After the burial, we left N.Y. for Iowa fearing diphtheria would take the boy too.

We started farming 3 miles from St. Ansgar. In that time we lost \$1000 so the 4th year we moved to Kansas. First 3 years we had no crops, it was too dry. First year I went to Nebr. to help harvest & any other work, was there from May till fore part of December. 2nd year the same. The 3rd year they were starting to build the railroad at Lenora so I went to work on the railroad. After that we began to raise crops & from then on the things were better & I got the most needed machinery for field work & a threshing machine. Later sold my farm & bought another on the Big Timber. So now have 560 acres.

With my wife we were together 51 years. On the 50th year we celebrated our golden wedding. After that she passed away. Heart attack. After that my son and family moved in with me. I am boarding with them. He is renting my farm.

March 11th 75 years old. If I have time then later I will write more.

Karel Votapka, Sr.

The above is the translation of the letter written in Bohemian by Charles Votapka, Sr., presumably in 1925.

Můj životopis

Byl jsem narozen 11 března 1850 v Hajku u  
Kutné Hory a když mi bylo asi 15 roků odětkovali  
jme se do Kutné Hory. První čas jsme bydleli v  
Kreoni budově na úřadě a pak jsme se stěhovali  
do kláštera a konečně na Sahadla u cukrovary.  
Do jsem začal navštěvovat školu. Pak jsme se odět  
kovali do Lumovína a ja chodil do školy do Křesetic.  
Když mi bylo 10 roků stěhovali jsme se zase do Kutné  
Hory a tam jsem chodil do 14 let do školy a pak jsem  
se začal učit zeměměřičem. Po válce v 1866 jsem  
jdi jsem se vypravil do Ameriky a 1879 - 1884 3 dubna  
sem se oženil. První dečko dívka zemřela 9<sup>th</sup> den  
v narození, nato se nám narodila zase holčička a  
byla sic nec rok nemocna a konečně když byla 2 roky  
tata zemřela na záškat, vtom zase se nám narodil  
chlapec Jaroslav a po pohřbu jsme se pustili hned do  
Iowa neb jsem se stavěl že by chlapec v N. J. zase  
zemřel. V St. Ansgar Iowa jsme začali farma-  
it ale vedlo se nám tu špatně tak že jsme asi  
1000 přišli a po 4 letech jsme se stěhovali do  
Kansas. První 3 roky se nám neurodilo

This was written by Charles Votapka Sr. presumably in 1925

nic pro velké sucho. První rok jsem šel do Nebraska  
na své na práci ke konce května a pobyl jsem u  
začátku prosince. Druhý rok tak a třetí rok  
nám zde začali sít set brachu u Lenory tak jsem  
šel zase dělat na draku ale potom už se nám zača-  
lo rodit a od té doby bylo vše lépe a ja si zařídil  
většinu nutných polních stroju u mlaticku a svoji  
farmu prodal a koupil jinou na creeku tak že nyní  
mám 500 akru. Se svoji manželkou jsme žili 51 let  
(50ti výročí slatou svatbu jsme oslavili a ona druhý  
rok nashle zemřela srdcevní vadou. Po její smrti  
přistěhoval se můj syn Frank se svoji rodinou  
ke mě a ja s nima se stravuji. Ona totiž farmu  
odemne rentuje. Jn. jsem Angl. 11. března 195 let.  
star. Budete mít kdy tak pordeji připsati víc.  
Karel Votavka Sr.

Čestněy můj si topis  
Karel Votavka Sr.



Wedding picture of Charles and Mary Ludra Votapka on April 3, 1869.

<sup>1</sup>Charles Votapka had four sisters: Bessie, who came to America and lived a short time in New York City before returning to Vienna; Vincie, who came to America, married Joseph Jedlicka and made her home near Clarissa, Minnesota; Frances and Mary.

<sup>2</sup>Marie Ludra had three sisters and one brother. Anna was the first of the five children to come to America. She married Mr. Kraus. Their children were Annie, Louise, and Carolyn. After his death Anna married Frank Varous. Marie

and Jennie emigrated to America with their mother. Jennie Ludra married Frank Storch. Both moved to Jennings and lived the remainder of their lives in the community. Since there is no information on the son, Anthony Ludra, it is assumed that he did not come to America.

<sup>3</sup>Jerry married Hettie Norman. Their children were Ray, Blanche, Thomas, and Claude.

<sup>4</sup>Charles, Jr., married Clara Heitman. Their children were Guy, Hazel, Grace, Mabel, and Glenn.

<sup>5</sup>Jane married Frank Pracheil. Their children were Carrie and Blanche. She later married Jesse Haley. Their children were Elsie and Jessie.

<sup>6</sup>Frank married Leoba Heitman. Their children were Frances, George, Carl, and Billy.

## THE ALBERT JANOUSEK FAMILY

The name Janousek is listed among the early settlers who homesteaded near the Big Timber Creek in Decatur County, Kansas. Albert Janousek, born on August 20, 1824, lived with his wife and their small son, Vaclav (Jim), in the hamlet of Hvizdalkia in Bohemia. Together with other peasants and farm laborers he left his home each morning to work on plots of land owned by wealthy landowners. Long hours and low wages, however, provided for little more than a bare existence. Albert, like many of his kinsmen, looked forward to the day when he could make his home on another continent which promised free land to settlers and religious freedom for all.

In 1871, Albert, a widower of several years, married a girl from his native village, Anna Specka, who, like Albert, was a Roman Catholic. Realizing that the opportunities for the working class in their native land were extremely limited, the Janouseks continued to make plans for emigrating to America. Vaclav Janousek, who had learned the trade of a baker, was serving in the Austro-Hungarian army. Upon issuance of a passport to the Albert Janousek family, the government released Vaclav from military service so he could join his parents and his small half-brother, Pete, on the journey to America.

The Janouseks headed for Bremen, Germany, the nearest point of embarkation. There they joined other emigrants awaiting the arrival of a large sailing vessel. While at sea for several weeks another member, a baby girl christened Albina, was added to the family. As the journey ended in New York Harbor the immigrants faced a week of quarantine at the Ellis Island detention center. Once the family had passed the rigid inspection requirements they were taken to New York City where they boarded a train for Nebraska.

Following their arrival in Nebraska the Janouseks stayed for a short while with relatives until they settled near Exeter in Fillmore County on railroad land which became

theirs after meeting residence requirements. Vaclav Janousek, who had received his musical training at school in Bohemia, soon acquired a reputation among fellow Czechs of being among the best accordion players. To the Czechs, music, song, and dance were vital to their very existence and Vaclav, who had received instruction on various instruments, was happy to fill the many requests for native Czech tunes.



The Vaclav Janousek Family. Pictured by their sod house are: L to R: Vaclav (Jim), Maggie, Mary, and Agnes holding Jim, Jr.

It was at Milligan, Nebraska that Vaclav met Agnes Becvar who had come from Bohemia with her parents at age three. Vaclav and Agnes were married on February 17, 1883 at Milligan. The young couple soon decided to throw in their lot with those moving west in search of new land. Albert and the rest of his family also decided to pull up stakes and join a westward moving wagon train. In late February, 1883, the Janouseks in their covered wagons reached

the farm home of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Tacha on the Big Timber Creek.

At this time the United States government permitted prospective settlers to select the land on which they wished to establish a claim. Albert chose to live among his Czech brethren along the Big Timber Creek. With the help of neighbors he completed a dugout on his homestead in Altory Township. Vaclav, to be close to his parents, chose to homestead the adjacent quarter-section of land to the north.

Albert Janousek reached the advanced age of 77 years. On November 28, 1900 he was laid to rest among his kinsmen in the National Bohemian Cemetery (now known as the Big Timber Cemetery). His wife, Anna, died on July 12, 1930 at the age of 89 years and was also laid to rest in the National Bohemian Cemetery.<sup>1</sup>

On February 10, 1920 Vaclav Janousek passed away at the age of 66. His wife, Agnes, died at the age of 85 on February 8, 1950. Both were laid to rest in the Big Timber Cemetery.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Albert and Anna Janousek's son, Pete, moved to Idaho with his family. His children are Clifford and Mae. Albina Janousek married Frank Ruzicka. Their children are Joe, Rosie (Hrabe), Louis, Mary (Salvage), Emil, and Anna (Hrabe). Albina passed away shortly after Anna was born.

<sup>2</sup>Vaclav and Agnes Janousek had thirteen children, four of whom died in infancy. They are: Mary (Mazanek), Frank, Maggie (Fiala), Jim, Jr., Anthony, Clara, Fred, Anna (Fetner), and Rose (Powell).



## THE FRANK MAZANEK FAMILY

Frank Mazanek was born in Straznek Nove Mesto, Moravia, on September 26, 1848. He married Frances Anna Navratil and to this couple were born five children: Frank, Jr., Eva, John, Ambrose, and Minnie. Minnie died at the age of 13 and is buried in the Jackson Cemetery.



Stone and log house built by Frank Mazanek after he moved from his sod house.

In the early 1870's the Frank Mazanek family emigrated to the United States to establish a home among the Czechs in Wilbur, Nebraska. As the restless pioneers moved further westward in 1884 the Mazanek family joined the movement and located in a dugout three and one-half miles west of Jennings, Kansas.

It was on October 21, 1889 at Oberlin, Kansas that Frank Mazanek received his certificate of naturalization. Now he was an American citizen and very proud of it. Frank

Mazanek appreciated the educational opportunities available and all of his children attended the Jackson School.

During his working years as a farmer and a stonemason it was the privilege of Frank Mazanek to help his children build houses for their families. In 1900 a stone house was constructed for his son, Frank, Jr., and his bride, Mary Janousek Mazanek;<sup>1</sup> in 1904 a stone house was built for John and his wife, Mary Horky Mazanek.<sup>2</sup> Later a home was built for Eva and her husband, Frank Loub, while Ambrose and his wife, Kate Horky Mazanek, remained on the original homestead.<sup>3</sup>



L to R: Joseph Vacura, Frank Mazanek at age 80, and granddaughter, Clara Mazanek Vacura.

With their children married and living close, Frank and Frances Anna remained in Decatur County until their death. Frances Anna died January 3, 1920 at the age of 70. Frank died December 22, 1928 at the age of 90. The fence at the Jackson Cemetery was purchased by Frank Mazanek and installed by his sons, Frank, Jr., and John. It is in Jackson Cemetery that both Frank and Frances Anna are buried.

<sup>1</sup>The children of Frank, Jr., and Mary Janousek Mazanek were Stanley, Frank III, Emil and Sophia. Sophia later married Leo Hrabe.

<sup>2</sup>The children of John and Mary Horky Mazanek were John, Jr., Eddie and Clara, who later married Joseph Vacura.

<sup>3</sup>Mary Horky Mazanek and Kate Horky Mazanek were two of the eleven children of Fred Horky, also an immigrant from Moravia, and Anna Rada Horky.

## THE VACLAV FLASKA FAMILY

Among the early Czech pioneers to settle in the Jennings vicinity was Vaclav (Wenzel) Flaska, the father of Joe and Fred Flaska of Jennings, Kansas. Vaclav Flaska was born in the village of Klatovech near Plzen, Czechoslovakia. He learned his trade as a blacksmith at Viden. Learning of the opportunities in the New World, Vaclav and his two brothers, Bartha (Bartholomew) and Joseph, came to the United States of America where they settled in Wilbur, Nebraska with relatives of the Rezny family. At first they worked among friends and relatives doing odd jobs. Attracted by the free land in western Kansas Vaclav soon moved west. Working among the Czechs in Jennings, Kansas, Vaclav boarded with the John Shimmick, Sr., and the Joseph Vacura, Sr., families.

On January 16, 1887 Vaclav returned to Wilbur, Nebraska where he married Mary Hlavac who was born in 1866 in Silesia. Proudly he conducted his bride to his dugout home on the land he had homesteaded since 1885. The couple's first children, Joe and Mary, were born in the dugout. Later, as the family prospered, a sod house was built. It was there that Frank, Matilda and Charley were born. As times became more difficult for the Flaskas, they moved for some five months to Wilbur, Nebraska where Vaclav found work husking corn. Here their sixth child, Anna, was born. By 1896, however, the family was back in Kansas and moved into a frame house which was to become their home for many years.<sup>1</sup>

In order to supplement his meager farm income Vaclav dug wells and helped to build dugouts. Unlike many of his neighbors, he had received a thorough training in the elementary school in his native country enabling him to read and write fluently in both Czech and German. Willingly he gave of his time to translate and to serve as a scribe for those who had been deprived of an education.

The Flaska children were a robust and fun loving dozen. Joe, the eldest son, recalls how he walked to the Kaspar

sod schoolhouse when he was eight years old. The school term at that time was only four months. Later he and his other brothers and sisters attended the Bethal School soddie northwest of his home.

The Flaskas derived great satisfaction from group singing, from dancing, and from participating in public events. Vaclav sang with his children at home and at many public gatherings. Today, tourists and local citizens alike express appreciation for the lively strains of Czech music that flow from Fred's (Flaska) Jennings Recreation Center as they enter and leave town.



The Vaclav Flaska Family. Top Row: L to R: Mary, Matilda, Joe, Emily, and Anna. Middle Row: L to R: Adolph, Father Vaclav, Mother Mary, and Agnes. Bottom Row: L to R: Fred, Charley, Frank, Leon, and Wesley.

In the fall of 1902 Vaclav visited his mother and sister in Czechoslovakia. During his five months absence, Mrs. Flaska remained at home and operated the farm with the help of her children. In 1909 the Flaska family moved to Greenleaf, Kansas where they farmed for a few years but by 1915

the Flaskas returned to Jennings to live among their many friends. After a lingering illness, Vaclav died of Bright's disease on May 25, 1917 at the age of fifty-eight. He is buried at the Big Timber Cemetery.

Mrs. Flaska outlived her husband by twenty-five years. She remained on the family farm with her son, Fred. A staunch and cheerful pioneer mother, she continued to serve her community to the best of her ability. During her last illness she was taken care of by her children. On May 28, 1942 she died at the home of Mrs. Emily Tacha.<sup>2</sup>

The Flaska family took great pride in its Czech heritage. Several members of the family joined the Western Bohemian Fraternal Organization. Joe served as state president of that order and later as treasurer of the local ZCJB lodge. He and his wife attended many of the state and national conventions.

<sup>1</sup>The names of the Flaska children were: Joe, Mary, Frank, Matilda, Charley, Wesley, Anna, Leon, Emily, Fred, and the twins, Agnes and Adolph.

<sup>2</sup>Mrs. Flaska was preceded in death by her children Leon, Agnes, Frank, Matilda, Adolph, and Charley. Her daughter, Mary (Svanda), died in 1976.

## THE DANIEL SIMPSON FAMILY

Among the many pioneers moving westward in the 1880's was the family of Daniel Simpson. A Civil War veteran of Company E, 38th Iowa Regiment, Simpson decided to leave his farm near Oelwein, Iowa to join his friend, Quil Knolten, in western Kansas. In Daniel's family were his wife, Matilda Story Simpson, a former Vermont school teacher of English descent, his sons, Frank, Joseph, Orve, and Mark, and his daughter, Emma. Another member of the Simpson household since her infancy was Ida Platt.<sup>1</sup> Ida's mother died in childbirth and to be near his daughter, Milton Platt followed the Simpson family westward.<sup>2</sup>



L to R: Frank Simpson, Sr., Matilda Simpson, her grandson, Frank, Ida Platt, Edna Simpson, Sarah Jane Rundle Simpson, Smantia Criss Simpson. In front of the livery barn are Orve Simpson, Bert Simpson, Mark Simpson, and Daniel Simpson.

The long journey ended for the Simpson family and Ida as they stepped off the Burlington train at Kanona, Kansas in 1885. They had brought with them some household goods

and cattle and quickly filed a claim to a quarter section of land southeast of Kanona. This land, which is approximately three and one-half miles northwest of Jennings, was in the Simpson estate for many years.

Daniel and Matilda Simpson's daughter, Emma Simpson Roberts, settled in Denison, Kansas with her husband and family after making the trek westward, while Orve Simpson remained in Iowa to make property settlements before joining the family in Kansas. Orve married Smanthia Criss. Their only child was their son, George. Mark, the youngest son, with his wife, Sarah Jane Rundle Simpson, made the trek by covered wagon. During the journey their first child, Frank, was born on September 27, 1885 at Smith Center, Kansas. After their arrival at Kanona, Mark made arrangements to operate a livery stable business. Their second child, Albert, born on April 29, 1887, was the first child to be born in Kanona<sup>3</sup> and on October 28, 1978 was honored for his sixty year membership in the Masonic Lodge of Jennings. Sarah Jane, in addition to taking care of her own family's needs, washed, sewed and papered for others. She also served as midwife in the community.

Eventually Mark Simpson and his family decided to move from Kanona to a more advantageous location along the cross-country railroad. In 1888, as Jennings became a village, Mark Simpson bought a half interest in the livery business owned by Mr. Atkins. After Mark's untimely death, Daniel Simpson bought Mr. Atkins' remaining one-half interest and moved his family to Jennings. In 1888 Daniel Simpson began construction of the Revere Hotel after having transferred the livery stable business to his son, Frank.<sup>4</sup> Daniel and Matilda Simpson continued to operate the Revere Hotel until their retirement. Upon retirement they moved to a two-story frame house a short distance from the hotel. There they busied themselves with a garden, a few chickens, and a cow. They made their own hominy, soap, and, in the fall, they filled newly laundered bed ticks with either clean, fresh straw or corn husks.



Daniel became ill and after suffering a lengthy illness died at the age of 72. He is buried in the Jennings Cemetery. Matilda, affectionately known as Grandma Simpson, chose to remain in her home after his death. Following the death of his wife, Smanthia, Orve and his young son, George, made their home with Matilda. Matilda was a favorite not only of her grandson but of the neighborhood children as well who frequently came to help her and to listen to her recite her early experiences as a Vermont school teacher. Matilda centered many of her activities around her Baptist faith. When she was no longer able to care for herself she made her home with her daughter, Emma, and family. She died in 1912 at the age of 87 and is buried in the Jennings Cemetery.

<sup>1</sup>Ida Platt later married John C. Barnett.

<sup>2</sup>After his arrival in Kansas, Milton Platt married Mrs. Catherine Marek Melvin, a widow, on May 1, 1890. They had one daughter, Olga, who died at the age of 3. Catherine died in 1902.

<sup>3</sup>The third child of the Mark and Sarah Simpson family was Edna Simpson, born in 1889 at Kanona, Kansas. She died in 1927 at the age of thirty-eight. Edna's married name was Edna Simpson Landau.

<sup>4</sup>Frank Simpson was married to Sarah Simpson, his brother, Mark's, widow. Their children were Harry, Leroy and Guy. Harry was born on August 21, 1894 and died on August 2, 1978. He is buried in Oberlin, Kansas. Leroy was born on May 11, 1897 and died on June 9, 1955 at the Yakima Valley Memorial Hospital at Yakima, Washington. He was 58 years old. In addition to working for the Central Grocery Company and serving as a distributor for the American Home Foods Company, Leroy also owned and operated a grocery business from 1938 to 1945. Guy Simpson was born November 19, 1899 and on December 10, 1978 at the age of 78 he died at Boswell Memorial Hospital in Phoenix, Arizona. He is buried in Phoenix, Arizona.

## THE HERMAN DOCHOW FAMILY

Political upheavals and the frequent threats of revolution in their native land were the principal reasons which persuaded the Dochows to seek a better life in the United States. Having originally fled France during the period of the persecution of the Huguenots, the Dochows settled in Gemplen, Germany where Frederick Dochow II was born on December 2, 1818. A miller by profession, he married a German girl, Fredericka Engel, in Boytzenburg, Germany. But as the political situation once again became a threat to the welfare of the family the Frederick Dochows decided to sever the ties with their homeland and emigrated to the United States.<sup>1</sup>

After a two week ocean voyage from Germany to New York City the Dochows faced a slow and wearisome train journey to Wisconsin where they were met by relatives who helped them to establish a new home. As the children grew into adulthood the family circle was broken: some children married and settled in the Dakotas and in Minnesota while two of the brothers went west to Colorado and then on to Oregon. Frederick Dochow found the winters in Wisconsin too unpleasant for his rheumatic condition. Searching for a more favorable climate he persuaded his son, Herman, to accompany him to Atchison, Kansas to pick corn for Sam Arthur. It was there that Herman met Addie Minerva Arthur, whom he later married. After settling on a farm near Farmington, Kansas three daughters -- Minnie, Grace, and Pearl -- were born to the Herman Dochows. Their son, Loren, was born after the family had moved to Osborne, Kansas.

The urge to move westward was ever present among the young married folk who were eager to improve their lot. Thus the Herman Dochows too joined a wagon train and traveled as far west as Decatur County where in 1887 they settled on a farm southeast of Jennings. Living at first in a one room dugout, they soon built a three room sod house to accommodate a larger family. Here a daughter, Bessie, and later a son,

Joe, were born. During these early years times were hard and money was scarce. To make matters worse, Herman was troubled with rheumatism and home remedies were the only means available to ease the pain. His wife often placed hot packs made of ears of unhusked corn taken steaming hot from a wash boiler around him.



The Herman Dochow Family. Back Row: L to R: Grace, Minnie, Pearl.  
Front Row: L to R: Herman, Joe, Bessie, Addie, Loren (Pete).

Through hard work and thrift the Dochows eventually established themselves in a new two-story frame house which was built just west of their sod house. The bricks for the chimney had to be hauled from Norcatur and the lumber from Jennings. Unfortunately the youngest child, Joe, was found breaking the bricks with his hammer and more bricks had to be hauled from Norcatur. John and Pete Pauls and Harry Munson assisted Herman in building his house while Nick Hahn bore a well near the house in 1891. On September 27, 1892 Herman Dochow obtained a patent from the United States gov-

ernment bearing the signature of President Benjamin Harrison for land on which he had built his house. Later, in June of 1900, Herman Dochow received a patent for school land for an adjacent quarter section of land.<sup>2</sup>

The Dochows were sociable, outgoing folk, never too busy to help others or to contribute their share to the community. It was a common occurrence for the passerby to stop at the Dochow house where an invitation to stay for lunch was cheerfully extended even though the meager fare consisted many times of no more than homemade bread and gravy. Herman conversed as best he could in broken English. He made no effort to teach his children to speak German nor would he converse with others in his native tongue. The abuses and inequities experienced in the fatherland had left him embittered.

Herman was reared in the Lutheran faith, his wife in Methodism. The family attended the Methodist Church in Jennings often walking to day and evening services and to Sunday School. Herman also was a member of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, Jennings Lodge #449, while Addie and Pearl became members of the International Association of Rebekah Assemblies, Jennings Lila Rebekah Lodge #430. On April 6, 1903 Herman Dochow passed away at his home at the age of forty-seven. His death was attributed to a leakage of the heart by the family physician, Dr. Dewight Funk.

The Dochow children received their formal education in several school districts like the Elkhorn School or the two room frame schoolhouse located on a hill in the eastern part of Jennings. When the children were old enough, they found employment in the neighborhood. As a teenager, Pearl worked for several families before moving to Kansas City, Missouri in June of 1909 where she worked for the Loose and Wyld Candy Company and the Walkers Laundry. Later she kept house for Miller Hageman, her grandmother's uncle who ran an apartment house. In 1916 she and her husband, Owen Boyles, returned from Kansas City to Jennings to be with Mrs. Dochow and to keep the family farm in operation.<sup>3</sup>

Mrs. Addie Dochow's retirement years were spent on the farm with Pearl and Owen enjoying an active life in the companionship of friends and relatives. In 1939 she suffered a cerebral hemorrhage and on October 30, 1940 she passed away at the age of 80.<sup>4</sup> She and her husband are both buried at the Jennings Cemetery.

<sup>1</sup>The Frederick Dochows had nine children: Charlie, Albert, Matilda, Adolph, Edna, Martha, William, Gustav, and Herman.

<sup>2</sup>The 1892 document lists the NE  $\frac{1}{4}$  of section 6, township 5 S, Range 26 W of the 6 PM. The document of June, 1900, refers to the SE  $\frac{1}{4}$  6-5-26.

<sup>3</sup>Pearl was married to Owen Boyles on March 6, 1912 at Olathe, Kansas. Boyles was a furniture finisher who worked for the Robert Keith Carpet and Furniture Company. After Joe, Pearl's youngest unmarried brother, was drafted into the U.S. Army in 1916, the Boyles' returned to Jennings. On July 10, 1926 a son, Joe, was born to Pearl and Owen. He attended elementary and high school in Jennings and in Oberlin. Joe served in WW II; he is married to Katherine Kirk and lives in Kansas City, Missouri.

<sup>4</sup>Pearl's oldest sister, Minnie, was married to D. S. Logan and lived on a farm just southwest of Allison on the Solomon River. Their children were Ross, Glenn, and Mamie. Minnie Logan died in 1954. Pearl's sister, Grace, was married to Thomas Davitt, a painter. They made their home on a farm southeast of Jennings. The couple had two children, Loren and Raymond. Grace died in 1909 at the age of 29. Pearl's brother, Loren (Pete), married a hometown schoolmate, Nellie Smith. The couple lived in Kansas City for several years before eventually returning to Jennings. There were six children: Ernest Edward, Bernard, Boyd, Vivian, Nettie Pearl, and Addie Katheryn. Loren died in 1961. Pearl's youngest sister, Bessie, was married to Nick Gibson. They made their home in Kansas City. Their children were Charles and Evelyn. Bessie Gibson died in 1936.

## THE WILLIAM BARTLEY FAMILY

William Randall Bartley, Jr., was born in Lee County, Virginia on May 8, 1863, the second of eight children born to William R. Bartley and Columbia Elizabeth Thomas Bartley. The Bartley family moved from Virginia to Doniphan County, Kansas in June, 1868 where they lived for two years. In the spring of 1871 they moved to Brown County, Kansas and it was on this farm near Powhattan that William was reared. In 1885 William and his cousin, Francis, homesteaded in Sheridan County near Selden, Kansas. After proving up on his homestead he returned to Powhattan and on March 24, 1887 he and Sarah Ann Ranshaw were married. Three children were born to this couple, Elmer, Earl, and Minta Mae.

William, better known as "Ran," made his living by working as a grocery clerk and then a helper in a grain elevator. In harvest season, he was one of two men who "fed" by hand the ripened grain into the separator. He received \$1.00 per day for this work and was paid an additional 25¢ per day for oiling the machine. Later he operated a livery stable. Ran was especially fond of horses and regardless of how hard he worked during the day he curried his horses night and morning. On the door of his livery stable in Powhattan was a sign that read, "Whip light, Drive slow, Pay Cash or No go." Several teams and buggies were in readiness to transport travelers. One morning a gentleman came to town to make a speech at one of the churches. After the service was over, the speaker went to the livery stable to secure a team and buggy to take him to the home of a family living in the country. Believing that the man was honest, Ran let him have his very best team. He later regretted the act of kindness for the speaker never returned. In checking with the family on whom the speaker was to call, Ran found much to his dismay that no such person had ever stopped there. No trace of the stolen property was ever found.

One of William's closest friends was an Irishman named

John Nellans who was a jovial, friendly individual. John, his wife, Alice, his five sons and two daughters, built and operated a grocery store which proved to be the beginning of the town of Powhattan. As the railroad extended westward the Nellans decided to move to Decatur County to a farm just a mile west of the present community of Jennings. They felt that in Decatur County farming opportunities would be greater for their growing sons.

After the Nellans were established in Decatur County, Ran and his family decided to join them. The ten day journey, covering a distance of about 300 miles, was made in a covered wagon and a single horse buggy in which Elmer and Earl rode with their shepherd dog.

Minta Mae often spoke of the family's arrival in Jennings on June 24, 1901. As they drove into town their friend, John Nellans, and Frank Shimmick, a local hardware dealer, were standing outside the Shimmick store. The day was far from pleasant, the wind blew dirt and gravel down the street. As John saw the Bartley caravan he said, "Well, Frank, here's some more Brown County folk."

The Bartley family camped for the night in the Nellans' yard. With the assistance of the Nellans family the Bartley's moved to a farm a short distance north of the Nellans home. The sod house they moved into had been originally built for Joe Kaspar, Sr., and his bride, Mary Maschek, of St. Louis, Missouri.

Several families from Brown County made their home in Decatur County. Among these families were Ran's sister, Jennie E. Bartley, who married Alonzo (Lon) Baxter in 1899 and lived in Powhattan until 1897 when they moved to a farm approximately four miles southeast of Jennings. The Baxter's had ten children.<sup>1</sup> After fifteen years of dry land farming the discouraged Baxters moved in 1912 to Waverly, Kansas. Alonzo died in 1935 and Jennie in 1959.

The Bartley family lived in their two room sod house for four years before building a frame house on a quarter section joining the Nellans land. Once again the Bartleys

and the Nellans were next door neighbors.

Both Ran Bartley and John Nellans were members of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows<sup>2</sup> and their wives were members of the Rebekah Lodge. Both men were sportsminded. Both encouraged their sons to play on the town baseball team.



Bartley Sod House.

In addition to farming, Ran served as road director for many years and was considered to be outstanding in the performance of his job. He kept one of the finest teams in the county and for years he drove the funeral hearse for Mr. Frank Shimmick. The coal black, expertly groomed horses were harnessed for duty in summer and winter.

In addition to his farm work, Ran and his son, Elmer, repaired telephone lines for the Farmer's Rural Telephone Exchange between Lund, Jennings, and Kanona. Ran served as both president and secretary for the Exchange. To show



their appreciation and to reward his fine performance, the company granted William and his wife life service.

Elmer Bartley became a farmer and lived on the quarter section adjoining his father's land on the south. He married Dora Elgin on July 28, 1912.<sup>3</sup> They had two children.<sup>4</sup> Elmer died in the Oberlin Hospital on October 30, 1978; Dora resides in the Good Samaritan Home in Oberlin.

Earl Bartley chose to leave the farm. His talent as a vocalist led him to prepare himself for a career in music. He was graduated from the Conservatory of Music at Nebraska Wesleyan where he sang tenor in the Nebraska Wesleyan Male Quartet. This quartet appeared in various concerts and for one service on the Billy Sunday Evangelist Program in Omaha, Nebraska. To the delight of Jennings music lovers, the quartet gave an evening performance in the Jennings Opera House. For many it was their first introduction to songs from Gilbert and Sullivan's opera, "The Mikado." Earl received a bachelor's degree and a master's degree from the University of Nebraska in 1930. He married Neva Leona McNeil in 1916.<sup>5</sup>

Minta Mae was stricken with spinal meningitis as a small child. By wearing a brace on her foot she was able to walk without a crutch. She, like her brother, Earl, sang well and played the organ and the piano for church services and funerals. Minta remained at home and cared for her father during his last sickness and then her mother until her death. Unable to care for herself, Minta retired to the Good Samaritan Home at Oberlin, Kansas. She died on October 10, 1976 at the age of 84 and is buried in the Jennings Cemetery.

The Bartley and Nellans families maintained a life-long friendship. Home, lodge, and religion provided a basis for shared activities. Funeral services were held for both Ran and John at the Methodist Church in Jennings. At life's end the two neighbors and their wives were again together. All are buried in the Powhattan cemetery.

<sup>1</sup>The children of Alonzo and Jennie Bartley Baxter were

Carl, Loyd, Grace, Ray, Earl, Lester, Esther, Ida, Glen, and Edith.

<sup>2</sup>William Bartley was a charter member of the IOOF for approximately 47 years.

<sup>3</sup>Dora Elgin Bartley was the daughter of Thomas Carver Elgin and Celestia Elgin, a pioneer couple who homesteaded a year before the Bartleys arrived in Jennings.

<sup>4</sup>The children of Elmer and Dora Elgin Bartley were Edwin and Leila. Leila married Kenneth Erickson.

<sup>5</sup>The children of Earl and Neva McNiell Bartley were Ernest Randall and Richard Lee.

## THE JOSEPH RUZICKA FAMILY

Joseph Ruzicka and Emilie Hruska were married in March, 1920. It is by looking at Emilie Hruska Ruzicka's life that one can better understand the experience of immigration.

Emilie was born on February 5, 1891 in a small village near Beroun, Czechoslovakia to Joseph and Anna (Jelinek) Hruska. The Hruska household consisted of five children -- four girls and one boy who was killed on the Russian Front in World War I. Before her marriage Anna immigrated to the United States and spent four years on a farm near Plainville, Kansas visiting and working in the household of relatives. On her return to her native land she was united in marriage with Joseph Hruska.

Stimulated by their mother's often related experiences of America and the frequent invitations extended by relatives, Emilie and her sister, Frances (Frantiska), would later experience the excitement of emigration for themselves.

The Hruskas were far sighted parents who sought the best in life for their children. Emilie, upon completion of education in elementary and secondary schools, was enrolled in a business college in preparation for a secretarial position. Daily en route to the college she walked across Charles Bridge, an ancient historical stone structure spanning the Vitava River in Prague, Czechoslovakia. Above and beyond the river perched on a hillside stood Hradcany Castle, the seat of the Czechoslovakian government since 1918. Amidst the castle grounds loomed the tower of the Gothic Cathedral of St. Vitus where the Czech crown and jewels are kept. These are the great monuments of Prague's glory that are tourist attractions today.

Emilie and Frances accepted the invitation of an aunt and uncle, Frank and Antonia Ruzicka, to visit them at their farm home near Oberlin, Kansas. Little did either party realize the difficulties involved in obtaining visas for overseas travel. Repeatedly the uncle made application for

his nieces but without success. Finally, in a last desperate attempt, an appeal was made for assistance to the late Senator Arthur Capper of Kansas. Shortly thereafter the passports were obtained. The parents arranged for transportation to Le Havre, France, the port of embarkation. Emilie and Frances boarded the train to France leaving behind the familiar for the strange and unknown.



Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Ruzicka.

Travel bureaus had been provided in many large cities to aid and protect the traveling public. Unfortunately, this service was unknown to the Hruska sisters who were filled with apprehension as the train pulled into the city of Le Havre, France. Those fears were allayed when they were given assistance by two representatives of the travel bureau. Language proved no barrier. Friendly smiles and gestures sufficed to locate lunch counters and later the Bureau of Customs where passports were inspected. There

the customs officer at the open window carefully scrutinized both passengers and visas. Thinking the sisters were brides-elect of some Canadian or American frontiersmen, the inspector countered with a grin, winking knowingly all the while as he affixed the official stamp of approval of transit.

Safely on board the British liner, the RNS Grampian, the sisters once again were on their own. Time passed slowly for the immigrants; they grew tired of the isolation and sameness which the ocean afforded. Days passed without a close-up view of another vessel. After a week and a half of travel, news spread that the liner was to make its first scheduled stop. As the ship dropped anchor at St. John, New Foundland the passengers realized Canada was not too far. Orders were given for all passengers to check and pack all personal effects and have all luggage assembled for unloading. On the thirteenth day the sea voyage ended and the great ocean vessel proudly docked.

The last leg of the journey was over land by train from St. John, New Foundland through Montreal and Toronto to Chicago for passengers with destinations in Nebraska and Kansas.

Unforgettable experiences often occur in unexpected places. So it was with Emilie as she sat in the waiting room of the Chicago railway station with fellow passengers. Sitting across the room in a row of seats facing her, Emilie saw a lady unlike anyone she had ever seen before. Her well-groomed hair, the dark eyes, and smooth skin, were jet black. Emilie was fascinated by her. When the black stranger became aware of Emilie's rapt attention, she flashed a smile of sincere friendliness and understanding. Spontaneously, the newly arrived Czech immigrant countered with a gesture of gladness. Then, both became amused. Strangers no more, they nodded and smiled at each other again and again. Much later, Emilie could recall the warmth of the smile given in welcome.

It was early evening when the Hruska sisters reached

Republican City, Nebraska -- just a month to the day they had left their homeland. Joe Ruzicka met them at the railway station and took them by train to McCook where he rented a car and driver and took the sisters to the home of their aunt and uncle.

The topography of northwest Kansas differed markedly from that of Czechoslovakia. In Kansas the vast open plains were unbroken by mountain barriers or forests. In Kansas the majority of farmers owned their own farms unlike the Czech peasants who farmed for landlords.

Time passed quickly for the sisters. Emilie married Joseph Ruzicka in March, 1920. Joseph and Emilie had three children: a daughter, Violet, and two sons, George and Bud. After Emilie's marriage, Frances left Kansas and worked as a dressmaker for four years in Omaha, Nebraska. She then returned to Czechoslovakia. She expressed many times in her correspondence with her sister how she regretted not returning to the United States after the death of her parents.

Joseph and Emilie reared their three children on a farm in Center Township northwest of Jennings. They farmed for thirty years and enjoyed the association of their neighbors and the fellowship of members of the CZBJ (Western Czech Fraternal Association) Lodge #244.<sup>1</sup>

Upon retirement in 1955, the Ruzickas moved to McCook, Nebraska to be near their daughter, Violet, and her husband, Lloyd Myers.

Emilie preceded Joseph in death on October 4, 1974 at the age of 83. Emilie and Joseph had spent 54 happy, productive years together, giving their best to each other, to their children, and to others. Three years after his wife's death, Joseph died at the McCook Community Hospital at the age of 83. Both are buried in the Oberlin cemetery.

<sup>1</sup>Joseph Ruzicka was a 50-year member of the ZCJB Lodge. He received his pin in March, 1972.

## LIFE IN THE EARLY JENNINGS COMMUNITY

### I. Development of the Community

Upon completion of the midwestern land survey in 1872, the government of the United States opened vast stretches of prairie land for settlement. The promise of free land lured many to venture into the unknown in search of homesteads. Once open for settlement the frontier teemed with strangers: old and young, native and foreign-born, some righteous, some unscrupulous. Life on the Kansas prairies, however, was not for the pampered or the fainthearted, and hardship was the common lot of all prairie dwellers as they struggled to exist throughout the long, cold winters and the hot, dry summers. Money was scarce and in many a household there was no money to buy even a postage stamp. Men were forced to leave their families for periods of time to seek employment elsewhere. Discouraged and disillusioned, some of the homesteaders even relinquished their claim to the land and returned to their former homes.

In April, 1873, a number of Bohemian families settled on Big Timber Creek in the southeastern part of the county. Luckily most of the immigrant settlers were skilled tradesmen and all gladly cooperated in meeting the challenges of life on the prairies. Matej Kaspar, John Shimmick, Sr., and William Heilman were blacksmiths; Frank Machart, Sr., was a wheelwright and George Kolsky was a stonemason while Wenzel Rohan, Joseph Cilek, Gustav Steffen, and Henry Delmarko were farmers. However, the latter had worked as a textile designer for some twenty-five years in his native Vienna, Austria.

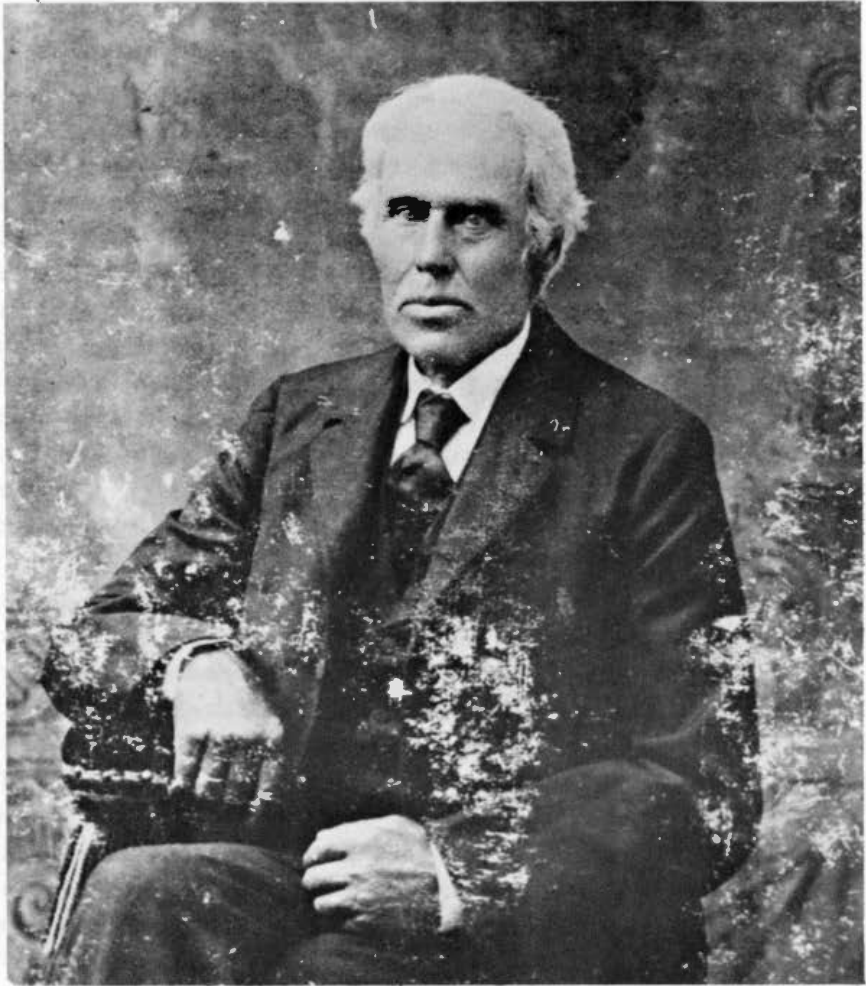
The lack of money and the difficulties of travel during these early years made the procurement of necessities a difficult task. On Saturdays one or more members of a family would walk for miles to such trading posts as Slab City, Jackson, or Shibboleth. At Slab City, Warren Jennings and John Green were the proprietors of a building housing their grocery business and the United States Post Office.

Here settlers and cowboys exchanged the news of the day and bargained for such staples as coffee, flour, salt pork, and tobacco. Liquor was shipped in sixteen gallon barrels, and although neither beer nor whiskey were sold at Slab City, they could be purchased at other trading posts. As the business at Slab City declined customers were obliged to take their produce to Jackson where Sol Rees, a former Indian Scout, operated a general store while Samuel Alonzo Beers served as postmaster. The Jackson community also provided a school, a feed and flour mill and offered church services. However, after the creek dam at Jackson went out the flour mill was forced to close. Today, the cemetery at Jackson is the sole remaining evidence of this erstwhile frontier community.

With the news that the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railway would extend its lines through northwest Kansas to a terminal in Denver, Colorado, settlers and prospectors alike drove wildly hither and thither attempting to secure the best land located near the railway. After the roadbed had been completed in 1888, the CRI & P Railway set about establishing townsites along its routes. Since the present city of Jennings was to be located on the Oscar Munson property, the intent was to name the town Munson. That idea, however, failed to materialize since Oscar Munson, a modest unassuming individual, did not approve. Finally the town was named Jennings in honor of another settler, Warren Jennings. The first agent of the CRI & P Railroad was Mr. Wallace, who planted the trees south of the present railway station.

Soon new businesses began to appear. In 1888 as Jennings became a village, Daniel Simpson bought a half interest in the livery business of Mr. Atkins. That business was located on the north side of Main Street, a thoroughfare ten feet wide and running east-west through town. Across from Main Street and south of the Simpson livery stable stood the town's first lumberyard which was owned by the Chicago Lumber and Coal Company. With a family now on

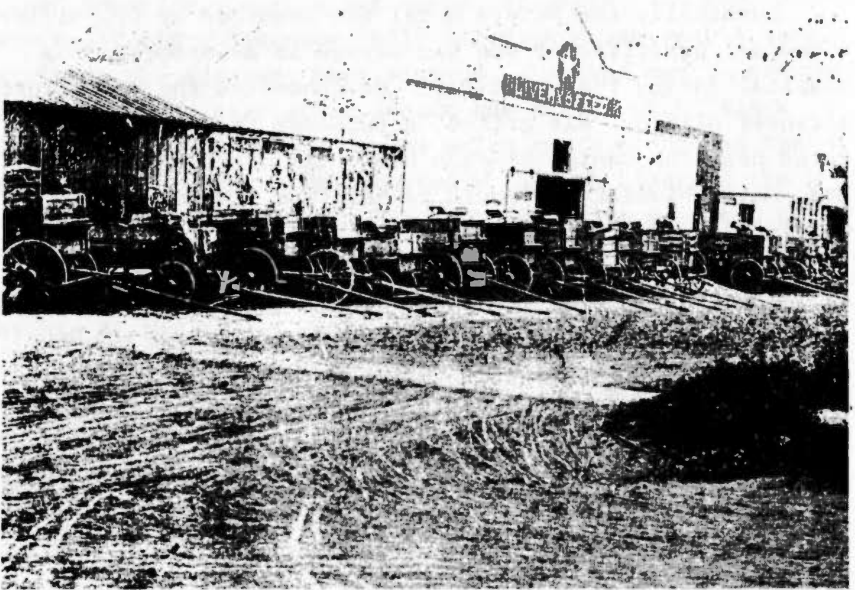




Warren Jennings.

every quarter section of land a creamery was built and milk routes were established. After the milk was separated, the farmers would drive their wagons under an outside projecting spout and receive their portion of the skimmed milk which they took home to feed the calves. The creamery, owned by Mr. Goodrich and operated by A. J. Brock, however, went out of business as soon as Duval hand cream separators were made available to farmers.

On Kansas Avenue, the street bisecting Main Street north and south, stood a feed barn operated by John Squires, Sr., a veteran of the Mexican War and the American Civil War. Here horses were left to be fed and cared for by the day, by the week, or even for longer periods of time. Later Mr. Squires added another service by providing transportation for the traveling public. As travel increased the building boom continued. Grocery and dry goods stores, eating houses, implement sheds, hardware stores, a meat market, print shop, schoolhouse, saloon, blacksmith shop, commercial bank, and church were added to the ever expanding community.



John Squires' Livery Barn.

With temporary housing becoming a pressing problem, liveryman Daniel Simpson decided to alleviate the trying situation. He turned his thoughts toward the construction of a hotel and transferred the responsibility for the livery

business to his son, Frank. The construction of the hotel was begun in 1888 under the supervision of Tom Kelly, a carpenter. Upon completion, the two-story structure, located diagonally across the street southeast of the Simpson livery barn, became known as the Revere Hotel.

The first floor of the hotel consisted of a kitchen with pantry, a dining room, waiting room, and an office. Eight bedrooms, four on either side of a long hallway, were on the second floor. The first proprietors of the hotel were Daniel and Matilda Simpson. However, after a few years as the task of serving meals and of housing travelers became more demanding, the Simpsons retired to a nearby house and rented the hotel to Mr. F. D. Barnett.

Eventually the Revere Hotel was acquired by Dr. Miller, a medical practitioner who had served as an orderly in a hospital during the Civil War. He converted the hotel into a cancer clinic. His office, a two-room frame building located near the Daniel Simpson home, was later purchased by Mrs. Mary Shimmick and moved to her farm five miles northwest of Jennings.

Mindful of his patients' welfare, who came from far and near to seek treatment, Dr. Miller had a porch built on the north and on the west side of the hotel. The porch roof, complete with ornate banisters, served as a balcony for convalescent patients rooming on the second floor. Dr. Miller was married four times -- three of his wives had died -- and he was the parent of twenty children. Soon after his last marriage he moved to Morland, Kansas and from there continued his medical practice at Dresden, Kansas. By that time Drs. C. C. Funk and H. O. Hardesty were the two resident doctors at Jennings. The only member of the Miller family who spent the remainder of his life in Jennings was Preston ("Press") Miller. For many years he worked for the Grain Elevator Company and the Farmers' Elevator until he became director of the Star Rural Mail Route. Preston Miller is buried in the cemetery at Jennings.

The rapid development of the community was also reflected in the establishment of two eating houses operated by Ham and Eliza Brock. The first of these was located on Main Street, just east of the building that once housed the J. W. Allen creamery; the second was located on the east side of Kansas Avenue. Here was one of the several places where people congregated to exchange the news of the day and to swap stories. At times during discussions, controversies arose over trivial matters, which were carried to the point of anger and often led to street fights. It was not unusual to see the bearded veterans of the Blue and the Gray take sides and battle it out with bare fists and walking canes. At other times bets were placed to ascertain the "top" man with the greatest speed, strength, and endurance who could win a footrace while carrying a man on his back. At least one witness, Bert Simpson, observed men in groups of two lashing each other around the ankles with "Black Snakes" (rawhide whips) to see which could withstand the greater punishment. Others vied with each other in the sport of rifle shooting: one participant is reported to have demonstrated his considerable marksmanship by shooting through the hole of a spool of thread held at arm's length by his sister.

As the demand for public transportation increased, another livery stable came into existence. Two brothers, Charles and Matt Thiesen, of Allison, Kansas built the Blue Ribbon Livery Barn in 1907. The business flourished and, rain or shine, day or night, seven days a week, buggies, surreys, and horses were for hire -- with or without drivers. During periods of widespread illness in the community such transportation was especially crucial for the work of the two resident doctors, who snatched what sleep they could as they were transported from the home of one patient to that of another.

With the increasing need for public housing Bob Squires, son of John Squires, Sr., purchased the rooming house of Mr. and Mrs. John Green and enlarged the building. It was an

attractive structure in which many local and itinerant customers received food and lodging. The last proprietors of the hotel on Kansas Avenue were Mr. and Mrs. Frank Chandler. However, as the cost of modernizing became prohibitive, the hotel business was discontinued. Later, Mr. Ed Gillespie bought the building, tore it down, and removed the lumber.



Bob's Hotel, owned by Bob Squires, son of John Squires, Sr.

After a few years in the livery business, the Thiesen brothers sold the Blue Ribbon Barn to Mr. and Mrs. Claar. Eventually the property was acquired by Mr. and Mrs. W. P. Noone. After the death of her husband, Mrs. Blanche Noone deeded the property to the Heritage Associates of Jennings, Inc. The Simpson livery business, which had been in operation from 1888 to 1915 with eight teams held in travel readiness, also ceased to exist when the horse drawn buggy gave way to the automobile. The structure was dismantled and later the lots were sold to Thomas Sejkora.

## II. Musical Entertainment

The hardships of pioneering on the prairies would have been far more difficult to bear had it not been for the strong sense of community and cooperation which characterized the joint endeavors of the settlers. Numerous social gatherings, picnics, and festivals helped to break the monotony of the day-to-day drudgery. Here the rich Czech musical heritage provided a communal bond which transcended nationality. While Czech, German, Swedish, and some English could be heard in the settlement, all -- no matter what their national origin -- could sing, dance, and laugh together.

The Czech folk dances in particular provided a most popular form of entertainment. Each week, usually on Saturday nights, the whole Czech neighborhood would gather at the home of a neighbor where local Czech musicians were engaged for a small fee to furnish the music. Guided by the rhythmic melodies of the fiddle and the accordion, the dancers did the polka and the waltz, the two-step and the Schottische. Others, huddled in a corner, visited while a few of the less active men sat and smoked as they enjoyed a game of cards. Children, dressed in their Sunday best, not to be left out, darted in and out among the dancers in an attempt to emulate their elders. At intermission it was the senior bushy-bearded men, not the youth, who waited with uplifted steins as the beer was dipped from a water bucket.

The setting, more European than American, was a riot of color and design. Men wore colorful shirts, vests, and hats of their native land; the women also wore Czech dresses, highlighted by floral designed shawls, scarves and blouses. The gaiety continued long into the night with the dances ending at the break of day.

Pioneer Czech music was not confined to dance music alone but also offered some stirring marching rhythms as well. The beginnings of an interest in forming a band

appeared within the homes of Czech families living west of Jennings. The idea grew out of a need for music as the long processions moved each year from the Machart picnic grove to the cemetery on Memorial Day. Under the leadership of Anthony Petrasek a band was organized and band rehearsals were scheduled at the home of Cyrill (Cidele) Vacura. In due time the musicians were transported by wagon to appear in civic programs in nearby communities. Anthony, Joe C., Wenzel, William (Bill), Fred, and Frank Petrasek were all members of this band. Other members were Charles, Frank, and Cyril Vacura; Joe and Frank Urban; and John, Joe, and Henry Vavroch.

One of the families that played a prominent role in providing musical entertainment was the Vaclav Janousek family. At one Fourth of July event hosted by Matt Kaspar, Sr., and his wife everyone in the community had been invited. Matt was so pleased with the success of the dance that he gave Vaclav \$5.00 for providing the musical entertainment. This remuneration seemed like a small fortune to Vaclav. It was the most he had ever received. At other times when the dancers had little or no money to offer him, they would simply slip a small jug of beer in his wagon.

Music in the Janousek household, in fact, seemed to be as important to their well-being as bread and water, and sacrifices were willingly made in order to purchase musical instruments. When Vaclav expressed the desire to buy a Czechoslovak-made accordion, the family gladly sold a cow for \$45.00 to pay for the instrument. On the day of its arrival, happiness reigned supreme as neighbors gathered quickly to admire the beauty of its case and to listen to its rich vibrant tones. All seemed to sense the joy its melody would bring to them as they would dance az bude den bilej (until the day was white with light). Indeed the sun was high in the sky on many occasions as Vaclav and other folks returned to their homes from an evening of musical entertainment.

In addition to providing entertainment at social

gatherings, Vaclav Janousek also took the time to give lessons to any of the children who expressed a desire to play an instrument. His son, Fred, learned to play the clarinet, the violin and the accordion; Frank, the trumpet, drums, and accordion; Jim, Jr., the base horn; and Anthony the baritone horn. As Vaclav played at various dances, one by one his sons would accompany him until finally he had an orchestra of his own to travel with him. When the first Big Timber Band was organized by Gilbert Gilbertson, Vaclav joined and played the clarinet. He was also a member of a later Big Timber Band organized by Joe Henry, Bill Heilman, and Charles Rohan.\*



Big Timber Band.

\*Others who served in this and in later Big Timber bands were: Frank, Willie, and Leonard Machart; Henry Steffen; John and Theodore Tacha; Lew Cilek; Lew Wentz; Joe and George Kolsky; Edward Petrusek; Charles Kaspar; Joe Krizek; Roy Keenan; Park Coverdale; Edward and Harry Tacha; Henry Heilman; Harvey Rohan; Frank, Fred, Jim, Jr., and Anthony Janousek; and Clyde Votapka.



The bulk of the Czechs in Decatur County lived in and around the original Czech settlement on the Big Timber. Joseph Shimek, however, was an exception. He and his family arrived later and purchased farm land in a German settlement southeast of Jennings. The Germans, like the Czechs, were music lovers. Under the direction of band director, Moritz Nauer, a local farmer, the Nauer Band was organized in the early 1900's. The band was composed of men of the rural neighborhood, representative of German, Czech, and other ethnic groups. The band never failed to draw a crowd as it played for jubilees and on Memorial Day in the City Square at Jennings in view of the G. W. Shook Variety Store.



Members of the Nauer Band shown from L to R: George Hickert, Arthur Sheetz, Terence Nauer Curtin, Billy Brooks, Wilbur Hahn, War Brooks, Moritz Nauer, Willie Shimek, French Wolf, Matt Schmidt, Mike Zimmerman, Rudolph Leiber, Joe Shimek, Albert Hickert, Ernest Wolf, and Florent Bader.

In 1907 the citizens of Jennings built an Opera House on the south side of Main Street, just east of the Revere Hotel. To bring this recreational center to the people of

Jennings, local businessmen organized a company and sold a sufficient number of \$100.00 shares to defray building expenses. For a number of years such public school events as basketball games, high school plays, operettas, pageants, class day, and graduation exercises were held there. Each year at Memorial Day programs, the Opera House was filled to capacity with rural and town people. Travelling shows playing at the Opera House never lacked for an appreciative audience. "Blind Boone," a Negro musician, entertained on numerous occasions. For several years the North Brothers Stock Company played to large matinee and evening audiences for a week at a time. Choral groups from state and church colleges gave one-night evening performances. But the hey-day for travelling shows began to wane as the silent movies came into prominence. Farm families began to spend Saturday nights in town. Often the town band gave a concert at the bandstand located across the street from the present Shaw Grocery Store. On those evenings the Hardesty Drug Store was a popular place for ice cream sodas, and it was not unusual for the young men to sing quartets in front of the restaurant. The Saturday night movie was often followed by a dance which lasted until well after midnight.

About 1920 the Opera House was purchased from Barney Schieferecke and became the property of the Jennings Lodge No. 360 AF & AM. After some remodelling the stage was converted into a dining room and the dressing rooms into a kitchen and restroom. In the auditorium, which became the chapter room, the ceiling was lowered, new folding chairs were purchased, and new electric light fixtures as well as wall-to-wall carpeting were installed. The box office and staircase leading to the balcony were removed. A part of that space is now used as a cloak room, the remaining portion as a place for the preparation of candidates for the initiation ceremony. The application of brand new gray siding greatly improved the outside appearance of the building which is readily identifiable by two emblems at the front: a five-pointed star and the square and compass

insignia of the Order of the Eastern Star No. 320 and the fraternal order of the Masons.

For several years local businessmen also sponsored a week of Chautauqua. People attended these events in great numbers, fascinated by the quality performances of professional musicians, lecturers, magicians, and even Punch and Judy shows.

### III. Sports Activities

Any account of the varied social activities in Jennings would be incomplete without mentioning the town's favorite sport: baseball. Whether played in backyards, on sand lots, or on school grounds, baseball was as exciting to pioneer children as it is to today's children. Baseball contributed greatly to the integration of the various ethnic groups as a sense of pride in the school and the town baseball team became ever more pronounced. In the early 1900's a town baseball team was organized in Jennings with the wholehearted support of the local businessmen and the top men were chosen for the teams. The players appeared in attractively designed uniforms bearing the name "Jennings" on the shirt. The city baseball diamond complete with wooden bleachers was located across the railroad tracks just north of the present Garvey elevator on the Elton Gillespie land.

During one of the seasons Indian students from the Haskell Institute played town teams up and down the line. At that time Arthur (Art) Smith, originally from Colby and Jennings' first banker, was a recognized athlete. When the Haskell Indians were asked who in their opinion was the outstanding baseball pitcher among all the teams they had played, they unanimously named "Speed-ball pitcher Art Smith from Jennings."

Summer baseball entertainment continued year after year under local management until World War II when games were scheduled in a rather sporadic manner. Under the direction of Loren Beers, who was manager of the Jennings Baseball

Club at this time, receipts from the games and other monetary contributions made possible the purchase of a 10-acre tract of land from Cora Winget Comfort to be used as a ball diamond. By this time grade and high school ball teams had also been organized. Shortly thereafter the newly acquired property was deeded to the city of Jennings. Eventually flood lights were purchased and installed and before too long the land was deeded by the city of Jennings to USD #295 for an athletic field.



The Jennings Baseball Team.

#### IV. Fraternal Associations

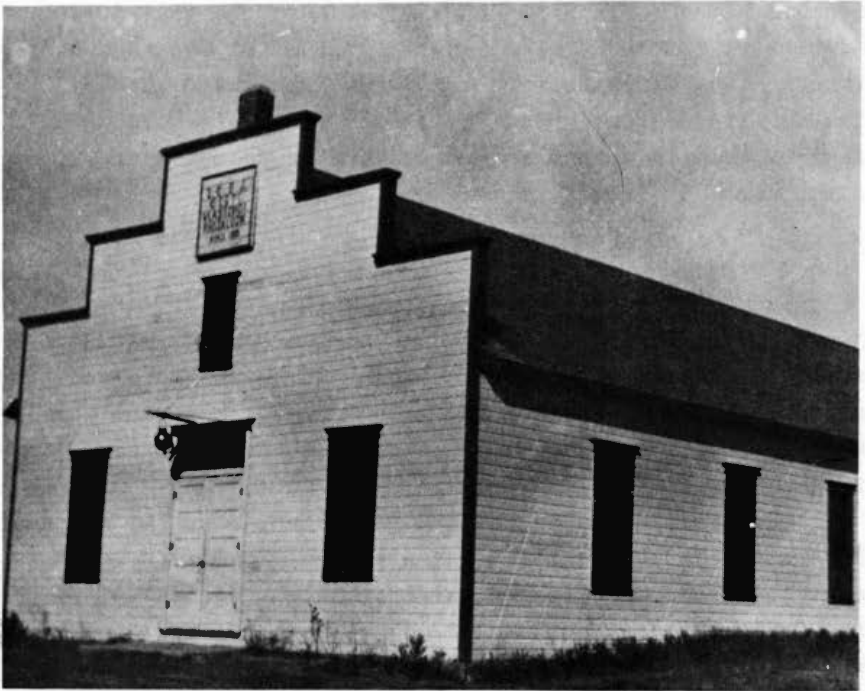
The strength and stability of any community depends to no small degree on the dedication of its members to provide for those in need and to support the intellectual and spiritual growth of all. Although there was relatively little money in the community, none of the members of the

community had the feeling of being underprivileged. Clothing, tools, and food were shared freely. Still, prolonged illness could strain the meager resources of any family. Here Czech fraternal organizations were of considerable help. The Jennings pioneer Czechs soon became members of the C.S.P.S. (Česko-Slovenský Podporující Spolek or Czecho-Slovak Protective Society) which was headquartered in St. Louis, Missouri. This association not only provided insurance benefits but also served as a focal point of social and community life. Ferdinand Pavlicek, a local resident, served for many years as treasurer of the association while Joe Tucek served as president.\* In order to provide a suitable locale for lodge meetings and dances a frame lodge hall was built by volunteer labor on the Joseph Pavlicek land.

However, at the close of the century some fifty lodges broke away from the C.S.P.S. due to dissatisfaction with the premium arrangements. In 1897 a new Czech insurance fraternal, the Z.C.B.J. (Západní Česko-Bratrská Jednota or Western Czech Fraternal Association), was founded and the Jennings Czechs soon became active in the new organization. On July 29, 1905 the Jennings Z.C.B.J. Lodge #153 was chartered and a year later Henry and Bud Harris had completed construction of a new and larger lodge hall on the Joseph Petracek, Sr., land. The earlier lodge hall was sold to Joseph Pavlicek who used the structure as a granary and later tore it down.

Membership in the lodges was for many years restricted to Czech adults. However, in 1920 children were admitted and in 1924 individuals married to Czechs could also become members. As the majority of the Czech people in Decatur County were very eager to have their children learn to read, write, and speak in both Czech and English, the Z.C.B.J. decided to offer Czech classes on Sundays as well as for several weeks each summer.

\*Among the early members of the C.S.P.S. were the Pachners, Vacuras, Urbans, Fialas, Petraseks, Cileks, Pavliceks, and the Petraceks.



Z.C.B.J. Lodge Hall.

Further improvements in the nature of the insurance coverage added to the attractiveness of the lodge. By adding a few cents to the monthly dues, the local lodge could make available a daily "sick-aid" payment of fifty cents to those individuals who had been ill for more than a week. This was a considerable help to many at a time when men in the cities earned no more than seven dollars in a six-day work week.

Up to 1931 all meetings in the lodges were conducted in Czech. But increasingly English became the dominant language and in about 1968 the name and the initials of the organization were changed to "Western Fraternal Life Association" or W.F.L.A. A monthly magazine, Fraternal Herald, or Bratrsky Vestnik provides members with news of other lodges and their members. Local Lodge #153 still conducts its meetings at the Lodge Hall on the fourth Sunday of each

month. Members often point with pride to the four 50-year members of Z.C.B.J., namely Cyrill (Cedelie) Vacura, Charles Vacura, Rosa Cilek Petracek and James Ruzicka. The hall, however, is seldom rented any longer for public dances. Members seem reluctant to promote public dances since order is at times difficult to maintain.

#### V. Education

In addition to providing for their material needs, the pioneers considered religious and common school instruction of crucial significance. No sooner had church services been organized than a one-room sod school house, known as the Kaspar school, provided a place for elementary instruction in the "Three R's."

The school term in the 1880's lasted about two months. Unfortunately, absenteeism was a common problem in these early ungraded schools and parents thought nothing of keeping their children at home or on the farm whenever there was extra work to be done. Consequently, few received more than the equivalent of a fourth grade education in reading, writing and arithmetic. On the whole, girls and boys stayed in school until they obtained a job or until they got married.

One of the early teachers in the sod school east of the Herman Dochow soddie was a hometown girl, Miss Letha Pine. She was hired to teach for a term of two months at a salary of about \$18.00 per month. Many of the teachers boarded around in Ichabod Crane fashion among the school patrons. The school room itself had a dirt floor and was equipped with benches, a blackboard, a teacher's desk and a stove. Children walked to school, carrying their dinner pails. Drinking water at school had to be carried in -- it was poured into a bucket and all drank from the same dipper. Each child had a slate and slate pencil. Toilet facilities were sought in convenient "out-of-the-wind" places. Discipline appears to have not been much of a problem. One of the students, Mrs. Pearl Dochow Boyles, neither remembers a hickory stick or ever seeing any children being



Big Timber School in 1888.



Big Timber School in 1906 and 1907. Nellie Roberts is the teacher.



punished.

In later years the school term was extended from two to seven months in the rural schools and to nine months in the town schools. As time passed, the level of teacher preparation was increasing. After the seven month term in the rural schools had ended, many parents enrolled their children in town schools for additional training. In that manner the process of town and country integration was hastened.

In the early 1900's the elementary school in Jennings offered advanced instruction in grades nine and ten. Upon graduation students could seek additional training by enrolling in the county high school or in another high school in a neighboring county seat. By 1924, however, a new brick school building was completed in Jennings housing all twelve grades.

Throughout the years from 1879 to 1963 the school districts in Decatur County were repeatedly reorganized and consolidated. By June, 1964, only two of the original 110 school districts remained: Oberlin-Norcatour United School District #294, and Jennings-Clayton United School District #295. The latter now operates under the title Prairie Heights Schools USD #295 Clayton-Jennings-Dresden.

## VI. Libraries and "Literaries"

Many of the early homes and schools in northwest Kansas suffered from a scarcity of reading materials. The few books to be found in the home were the Bible, a Prayer Book, and the Catechism. Many of the Czechs looked forward to the arrival of The American, a weekly Czech newspaper published in Chicago, Illinois. Its news section and its serialized stories provided for some exciting reading. The Hospodář ("The Farmer"), the only agricultural journal in Czech, found its way into only a few of the homes while the Bratrský Vestník ("Fraternal Herald") was available to the members of the C.Z.B.J. fraternal organization. Some copies of the Pecárkuv Národní Kalendář, a national calendar or

yearbook published by Dr. Jaromir Pečárku<sup>v..</sup> in Prague, Bohemia, are still to be found today in some of the homes in Jennings. A kind of almanac, this work also featured short stories and a variety of advertisements. The first weekly newspaper of the community was edited and published by G. W. Shook beginning on August 2, 1888.

The beginnings of a hometown library coincided with the arrival of Mrs. Margaret Underwood, a widow from Galesburg, Illinois. She brought with her a large circulating library which she made available to the public. Many of her books which were read throughout the community were of the E. P. Roe, Margaret Sangster, and Joseph Conrad period. By 1928 the Jennings community sensed the need for a public library. Sponsored and promoted by the Jennings Community Club under the leadership of Mrs. T. L. (Nettie) Hill, a public library was established although tax support was not forthcoming until 1931. The Jennings City Library, modernized and stocked with outstanding books, encyclopedias, and magazines, is now housed in the Jennings City Hall. Through its services the community has access to nearly all materials owned by other Kansas libraries.

Another institution which greatly contributed to the cultural enrichment of the settlers was the Literary Societies or Literaries. By the time Decatur County had a family living on every quarter section such Literaries were organized and served as neighborhood mixers and as centers of entertainment.

The Literaries were held in the one-room, one-teacher country schools. Each of these "Little Theatres" was illuminated by oil lamps with reflectors affixed to the walls. Bed sheets, hung from wires across the front of the room, substituted as stage curtains. To add to the seating capacity, benches were placed along the sides and at the back of the room.

The teacher, in cooperation with others in the district, arranged for varied programs of group singing, recitations, vocal and instrumental numbers, minstrel shows,

essays, and debates. This proved to be community involvement at its best. By invitational arrangement the patrons of the local school would attend the meetings in adjoining districts thus enlarging the circle of acquaintances. Kanona, Norway, Center, and Big Timber schools took part in this means of entertaining and a similar exchange was worked out with the Elkhorn, Lieber, and Stevens school districts. Mrs. Anthony (Emily Shimek) Krizek of rural Jennings vividly recalls the good times everyone had while attending the Friday evening Literary at Elkhorn school not far from her home.

The late W. P. (Bill) Noone of Jennings often spoke of his experiences in a rural school northwest of Alma. He was fascinated by the local talent revealed at the school literary programs where he received his start in debate and public speaking. The training he received there served him well as businessman, school board member, and in his work as a Kansas legislator from District 40.

## VII. Religious Life

The Czechs in Decatur County, although deeply religious, were never credited with the building of a church. Early efforts by an itinerant Roman Catholic priest to organize a congregation apparently came to nothing. The principal reason for this failure appears to have been an economic one: most Czechs felt that they could not afford the financial burdens which the establishment of a parish would undoubtedly entail. Later, as travel became less difficult, some of the Czech Catholics joined congregations in nearby communities of Leoville and Oberlin. Many families, however, chose to remain at home and decided not to become affiliated with any church.

The earliest record found of the Jennings church dates back to 1878. W. A. Saville, who was pastor of the Norton circuit in that year, lists Jennings as one of the seventeen preaching places added to his charge. The diary of Mrs. Mark (Grace) Ford, the daughter of the pioneer Eliasha W.

Ford, has this to say about the early history of the Jennings Methodist Church:

"On April 13, 1879, a few homesteaders met in the home of Warren Jennings where Elmer Tacha now lives and organized a Sunday School class choosing the name Slab City Union Sunday School. The origin of the name is from the fact that Mr. Jennings was postmaster of a post office officially called Slab City. The officers of the Sunday School were: E. W. Ford, Superintendent; Miss Anna Jennings, Secretary-Treasurer; Neil Stutesman, William Johnson, Chorister. The school continued to meet in the Warren Jennings home for about three months and then was transferred to a recently finished sod school nearby. Reverend Zimmerman preached occasionally in connection with the school and was instrumental in getting the name of the post office changed to Jennings and in a little more than a year the Sunday School changed its name accordingly and continued as the Jennings U.S.S. for about fifteen years when it was made a Methodist school. At last there were six or seven denominations represented. When Sunday School was organized there were three classes: the old people's class, the young people's class, and the children's class."

Eventually, under the supervision of Reverend J. L. Clark, a new church was built. Directed by carpenter Charles Danley, the father of the late Mrs. Clarence (Ura) Freely, the work on the building was performed by volunteers and on October 15, 1893 the building was dedicated. It was reputed to be the finest frame church in the district at that time.\*

\*The roster of the Methodist Church lists the names and dates of service of its pastors from 1879 to 1978: Zimmerman (1879); Stafford (1880); "Uncle Jack" Dangelly (1882); Moreley (1886); A. M. Scott (1887); Jimmy Daniels (1888); Thomas Muxlow (1889); Damon (1890); Allen (1891); Windsor (1892); Clark (1893); Wheelan (1893); Winterburn (1894); J. T. Bates (1897); C. H. Cowman (1903); W. E. Caldwell (1905); James Greene (1907); S. C. Hicks (1908); Frank Funk (1909); Erwin Sitterly (1911); H. H. Wolfe (1913); Charles Herbert Marston (1917); W. C. Anderson (1920); W. L. Franklin (1922); Grant Mann (1923); Ira Bieber (1925); Ira

According to the diary of the late Mrs. Mark (Grace) Munson of Jennings, the second church to be built in Jennings was the Baptist church which was dedicated on December 24, 1899.\*\* Prior to that time the Baptists had held their services at the Jennings frame schoolhouse then located on the hill east of First Street. The new frame church with its bell tower was an attractively designed structure. The floor of the church was built on an incline, sloping from the back of the church to floor level in front of the sanctuary. Each Sunday the bell was rung before Sunday School and the worship services. Before funerals the bell would also toll -- each stroke of the bell sounding at intervals indicated a year in the life span of the deceased.

Baptism by immersion is one of the Holy Sacraments of the Baptist church. One of the individuals who was baptized in the spring of 1907 was Rollie Harris of Clayton. Accompanied by his older brothers, Raymond and Roy, he met the minister and Goldie and Myrtle Morton on the Prairie Dog Creek north of Jennings. After the minister, suitably equipped with hip length rubber boots, had immersed each individual in the cold waters of the creek the converts quickly wrapped themselves in blankets and hurried away in waiting buggies, the Morton girls to their own home and the

Torrence (1928); Everett Vaughn (1932); Homer Massie (1934); Hugh Morris (1939); Arthur L. Carlton (1938); Lawrence Carlton (1940); H. C. Hall (1942); Virgil Hayes (1944); Herbert Thomas (1947); Otis Bussart (1948); C. R. Pate (1951); Wilbur M. Hooper (1952); Victor Peterson (1956); Roger Shanks (Summer 1957); Wesley H. Davis (1957); Bob H. Adams (1964); Jack Kersenbrock (1967); Alvin Smith (1971); Alvin Rose (1978).

\*\*According to the records of the late Mrs. Mark Munson, the first minister was A. B. Roberts, remembered by many for his pipe smoking habit. Among those attending services in the newly built church were members of the families of Daniel Simpson, Willaby Harris, Henry Rodevald, Jesse Locy, E. G. Taylor, Isaac Jordan, the Littells, Henry Roundtree, Albert Morton, Eb Colman, and Charles Dickens Roberts. Others who served the Baptist church were Allen Van Cleave, Bullers Stranghre, Carl Overman, Robert Wynn, Rev. Straughn, and Rev. Allen.

Harrises to the home of their grandparents where they could change into warm, dry clothes.

The Baptist church in Jennings, however, was relatively short-lived. After services were discontinued in 1917 many of the members attended the local Methodist church. The church building remained vacant for a number of years until it was later used and finally purchased by the American Legion Post #351. It was then torn down and on the same site the present American Legion building was built.

#### VIII. The Bohemian Cemetery

One of the early concerns of the Czechs was to make provisions for a common burial ground. To meet this need a cemetery board was organized in the late 1800's. Mates Kaspar served as director of the board while František (Frank) Machart, Sr., served as clerk and Josef (Joseph) Cilek held the position of treasurer. On February 25, 1888, the National Bohemian Cemetery (Česko Národní Hřbitov) was plotted. This two-acre area was purchased from Mr. and Mrs. Frank Krizek, Sr., and is located about eight miles northwest of Jennings. Although most of those interred in the cemetery are Czech there are also some Germans and Italians. No one has ever been denied the privilege of purchasing a lot.

From the beginning the Czech cemetery served as a gathering place for the colony. In times of sorrow whole families were present at burial services; on our nation's Memorial Day they gathered to honor the memory of war veterans. This was a time of solemnity and a time to pay homage to those who had served their country on foreign or on home soil. Each year children and adults participated in the morning Memorial Service where a Czech band played both the Czech and the American national anthems. The speech eulogizing the dead was delivered in Czech. While the band played martial music children gathered wild flowers from the farm pastures and decorated the graves of the war veterans. Following the morning service the group dis-

banded only to reassemble later at a nearby grove for a picnic and a program in which the Czechs and a few English speaking individuals participated.

With the passing of the years many changes have come. Seldom does one see the Czechs in holiday dress or hear them conversing in their native languages. The cemetery is no longer known as The National Bohemian Cemetery but as the Big Timber Cemetery which is now tax supported. Due to this financial assistance the cemetery has been enlarged from two to four and one-half acres. It is enclosed by a wire fence and an imposing brick entrance to the north, designed and constructed by Joseph Flaska and his son, Milo. The interior has been made beautiful by buffalo grass ground cover, smartly trimmed trees, shrubs, and flowering plants. An electric automatic water system complete with hose and hydrants has been installed. Erected near the flag pole is a recent light tan, brick memorial bearing the names of Czech war veterans who served in the Civil War, the Spanish American War, World War I, World War II, and in Vietnam.

Each year on the Sunday nearest the date set for the national Memorial Day the people still gather at 9:00 a.m. at the final resting place of the pioneers and their children. Today the American Legion Post #351 is in charge of the service. The high school band plays as the children decorate the graves.

A 1:00 carry-in picnic dinner to which the public is invited is held in the city of Jennings on the lawn just north of the Jennings City Hall. During the day the Czech Memorial (Church) Museum is open to the public to enjoy the heirloom exhibits that have been brought in by families of this and neighboring communities. The Czech Memorial Museum is the property of the Heritage Associates of Jennings, Inc., a non-profit organization. Its annual meeting is held in January in observance of Kansas Day. Membership is open to all interested persons.

This is the legacy from our people. In spite of the unknown they came and stayed living out their lives in stead-

fast faith and together among friends and relatives have  
found rest in the bosom of Mother Earth.



## EARLY CZECH SETTLERS OF DECATUR COUNTY, KANSAS

The area that is known as Decatur County, Kansas was traversed by trappers in the late 1860's, and as the line of settlement moved westward from north central Kansas in the early 1870's, men came seeking buffalo for meat for their families. Soon stories filtered into central and eastern Kansas and into Nebraska of the verdant rolling prairie between the beautiful valleys of Beaver, Sappa, and Prairie Dog Creeks. Game was abundant, the land was fertile, and water could be obtained easily along the streams.

The federal survey of the county was completed in 1872, and the first homestead applications were entered at the Land Office in Cawker City in mid-December of that year. The following spring a small group of emigrants from Bohemia, who had been living near Omaha, Nebraska, arrived in the unorganized county, and on April 17, 1873, they settled on Tom Cat Creek, later called Big Timber Creek, the major tributary of Prairie Dog Creek. These settlers were from the area of the old Kingdom of Bohemia, which at that time was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and which now is a part of Czechoslovakia.

The first Bohemian, or Czech, settlers in Decatur County, one early county historian recalled, were the families of Joseph Cilek, Wenzel Rohan, William Heilman, Wenzel Skalok, Joseph Wenzel, Jacob Joseph Wenzel, and Anton, Frank, Louis, and Joe Blecha.<sup>1</sup> Seven years later when the 1880 federal census was taken, only the Cileks, Heilmans, and Rohans of this initial group remained. The Czechs residing in Jennings Township in 1880 were the members of the families of Frank Kryzer, Matt Kasper, John Petracek, George Kolsky, Frank Tacha, Joseph Machart, Gus Staffen, Frank Marek, Joseph Celek, Wenzel Rohan, Charles Watapka, and Albert Janousek. The wives of two men, George Kump of Austria and Bartholomew Henry of Prussia, were born in Bohemia. Wenzel Rohan had his stepchildren, William and Katie Heilman, living with him.<sup>2</sup>

The federal and state censuses provide useful information for understanding settlement patterns, family mobility, and family and local history. The federal census of 1880 gave the place of birth of each person enumerated, the birth-place of both parents, and the relationship of each person in a house to the head of the house. Each Kansas census gave the place of birth and the previous place of residence before moving to Kansas. Both censuses gave color, sex, age, and occupation. The age recorded was as of June 1, 1880 for the federal census and as of March 1 of the census year for the Kansas enumeration.<sup>3</sup>

The vital information on the 1880 federal census can be used in many ways. The family of Frank Tacha, Sr., offers a good example of how this census can be used to determine migration. The younger children of Frank Tacha, Sr., were born in Minnesota. Anthony Tacha, 15 years old in 1880, was born in the ascertained year of 1864-1865, i.e., after June 1, 1864 and before June 1, 1865. This date is referred to as the ascertained year of birth.<sup>4</sup> Frank Tacha, Sr., moved from Bohemia to Minnesota before the 1864-1865 year when his son was born. The youngest child in 1880 was six year old Earnest, who was born in 1873-1874 in Minnesota. Frank Tacha, Sr., moved to Kansas after the birth of Earnest in 1873-1874, so his arrival was after the first Bohemian settlers arrived in April, 1873. If the reported age of Earnest was correct, Frank had to arrive after June 1, 1873.

The ages of members of several families on the 1880 federal census provide more accurate determination of the year of arrival in Decatur County. Mary Cilek, the eight year old daughter of Joseph Cilek, was born in 1871-1872. Six year old Josephine Cilek was born in 1873-1874 in Kansas. As noted above, Joseph Cilek arrived in April, 1873. Josephine, the first white child born in Decatur County, was born in June, 1873, after the family arrived in Kansas.<sup>5</sup>

Similarly, the ages of the children of Frank Marek, Sr., can be used to determine arrival both in the United States and in Kansas as well as where the family first

settled in the United States. James Marek, age 13, was born in Bohemia (1866-1867) and Kate, age 10, was born in Iowa (1869-1870). Frank Marek, Sr., probably left Bohemia for Iowa between June of 1867 and June of 1869. But Frank Marek moved again. Since his son, John, who was born in Iowa, was one year old in 1880, Frank's ascertained arrival in Kansas was 1879-1880. A person wishing to search ship manifests for the exact arrival date for Frank Marek's family could then narrow the search to these years. Of course, naturalization applications could also be used to determine the arrival date.

There were clues on the 1880 federal census about the Albert Janousek family that could be pursued. Albert was 23 years older than his wife, an indication that a wife had been lost and that there had been a remarriage. The oldest son, James, was only 13 years younger than the wife, another sign of remarriage. The other children of Albert were young and reflected the natural two year spacing of children that is frequently reflected in the census. These clues could be useful in the reconstruction of the family history of the Janouseks.

The 1880 census that follows reveals other things about the early Czech settlers in Decatur County. Albena Janousek was born while her parents were crossing the Atlantic Ocean. The Kryzer, Kump, Tacha, and Machart families were recorded as coming from Minnesota to Kansas. The Kasper, Steffen, Cilek, Kolsky, Rohan, and Janousek families came from Nebraska. The Marek, Watapka, and Henry families came from Iowa. The Benedict family had moved from Wisconsin but did not appear in later censuses. The Petracek family came direct from Bohemia in the 1870's. Family tradition and/or records may show routes of migration to Kansas other than the routes that can be ascertained from the census.<sup>6</sup>

Family relationships can sometimes be determined from the census. William Heilman and his sister, Katie, were shown living with Wenzel Rohan in 1880. The parents of the Heilman children were born in Prussia. William was born in

Prussia, but his sister was born in Nebraska. One could assume, as a point of reference for tracing Heilman family history, that Catherine Rohan, who was born in Prussia, was the mother of the Heilman children. If so, Catherine Heilman could have lost her husband after 1864-1865 and married Wenzel Rohan about 1867-1868. This information and these assumptions could be checked with local records, and in this case, those records would probably be in Omaha, Douglas County, Nebraska, as Rohan moved from this county to Decatur County. The Heilman family would have arrived in the United States in 1863-1864, based on the ages of the two children. It could also be assumed that both German and Czech were spoken in the Rohan home.

The censuses for Decatur County, both federal and state, show a high rate of consistencies in the spelling of names and the ages given. The major inconsistencies appear in connection with the place of birth. The changes in place of birth occurred sometimes because the census enumerator asked specific questions, or perhaps the individual failed to follow instruction. Sometimes a family member or a neighbor was the source of information. For instance, Catherine, or Katy, Rohan was shown as born in Prussia on the 1880 census; her birthplace was recorded as Germany on the Garfield Township enumeration of the 1885 Kansas census. The Rohan family was enumerated in two townships in 1885, and the Center Township census shows her birthplace as Baden. Her husband was shown on the Garfield Township census as being born in Bohemia, but his place of birth was recorded as Austria in the Center Township report. Similarly, Frank Mazanek was recorded as born in Bohemia in 1885 but in Moravia on the 1905 and 1915 census schedules.

The reasons are many for the apparent discrepancy in birthplace. The individuals frequently described themselves as loyal to a region rather than to a nation. Changing loyalties or a spirit of nationalism sometimes caused an individual to give a different place of birth. The knowledge of the census enumerator was important. In 1915, all

the individuals from Bohemia who lived in Center Township were recorded as born in Bohemia, Austria.

The following abbreviations were used for the census enumerations which follow:

PLACE OF BIRTH

A	Austria	M	Moravia	IL	Illinois
B	Bohemia	N	Nebraska	IN	Indiana
C	Colorado	O	Oklahoma	MI	Minnesota
F	Foreign	P	Prussia	MO	Missouri
G	Germany	W	Wisconsin	NY	New York
I	Iowa	AO	Atlantic Ocean	WA	Washington
K	Kansas	BA	Baden		

OCCUPATION

A-H	At Home	H-W	Housework
A-S	At School	H. Deal	Hardware Dealer
Ag. Labor	Agricultural Labor	H. Hold	Householder
Bl. Sm.	Blacksmith	K-H	Keeping House
F-H	Farmhand	Merch.	Merchant
F. Labor	Farm Laborer	Re. Farm	Retired Farmer
Farmer	Farmer; Farming	St. Mas	Stone Mason
H-K	Housekeeper		

RELATION TO HEAD OF HOUSE

H	Husband	D	Daughter
W	Wife	SS	Stepson
S	Son	SD	Stepdaughter

The following material has been transcribed from the Tenth Census of the United States of 1880.<sup>7</sup>

	Tacha, Theodore	M	11	S	S	A-H	MI	B	B
	Tacha, John	M	9	S	S	A-H	MI	B	B
	Tacha, Earnest	M	6	S	S	A-S	MI	B	B
094	Tacha, Frank	M	25		S	Laborer	B	B	B
095	Tacha, Fanny	F	23		S	K-H	B	B	B
096	Machart, Joseph	M	22		S	Bl. Sm.	B	B	B
097	Machart, Frank	M	27	H	M	Farming	B	B	B
	Machart, Mary	F	19	W	M	K-H	MI	B	B
	Machart, Joseph	M	3/12	S	S		K	B	MI
	Staffen, Gust	M	40	H	M	Farming	P	P	P
	Staffen, Elizbeth	F	30	W	M	K-H	B	B	B
	Staffen, Emma	F	6	D	S		N	P	B
	Staffen, Henry	M	4	S	S		N	P	B
	Staffen, Lidy	F	1	D	S		K	P	B
099	Marek, Frank	M	41	H	M	Farming	B	B	B
	Marek, Sofie	F	37	W	M	K-H	B	B	B
	Marek, Frank	M	17	S	S	Laborer	B	B	B
	Marek, James	M	13	S	S	A-S	B	B	B
	Marek, Kate	F	10	D	S	A-S	I	B	B
	Marek, Joseph	M	7	S	S	A-S	I	B	B
	Marek, Henry	M	5	S	S	A-S	I	B	B
	Marek, John	M	1	S	S		I	B	B
100	Celek, Joseph	M	46	H	M	Farming	B	B	B
	Celek, Barbara	F	39	W	M	K-H	B	B	B
	Celek, Anna	F	13	D	S	A-S	B	B	B
	Celek, John	M	10	S	S	A-S	N	B	B
	Celek, Mary	F	8	D	S	A-S	N	B	B
	Celek, Josephine	F	6	D	S	A-S	K	B	B
	Celek, Lizzie	F	3	D	S		K	B	B
	Celek, Rosa	F	2	D	S		K	B	B
101	Rohan, Wenzel	M	42	H	M	Farming	B	B	B
	Rohan, Catharine	F	39	W	M	K-H	P	P	P
	Rohan, Caroline	F	10	D	S	A-S	N	B	P
	Rohan, Mary	F	7	D	S	A-S	N	B	P
	Rohan, Charles	M	4	S	S		K	B	P
	Rohan, Lizzie	F	2	D	S		K	B	P
	Hilman, Wm. M.	M	16	SS	S	A-S	P	P	P

	Hilman, Katie	F	15	SD	S	A-S	N	P	P
104	Watapka, Charles	M	30	H	M	Farming	B	B	B
	Watapka, Mary	F	30	W	M	K-H	B	B	B
	Watapka, Joseph	M	6	S	S		NY	B	B
	Watapka, Charles	M	2	S	S		I	B	B
	Watapka, Jennie	F	4/12	D	S		K	B	B
109	Henry, Bartholomew	M	50	H	M	Farming	P	P	P
	Henry, Fanny	F	46	W	M	K-H	B	B	B
	Henry, Fanny	F	22	D	S	A-H	I	P	B
	Henry, Emma	F	15	D	S	A-H	I	P	B
	Henry, E. Dilla	F	14	D	S	A-S	I	P	B
	Henry, Joseph H.	M	8	S	S	A-S	I	P	B
	Henry, Mary	F	6	D	S	A-S	I	P	B
117	Janausek, Albert	M	55	H	M	Farming	B	B	B
	Janausek, Anna	F	38	W	M	K-H	B	B	B
	Janausek, Peter	M	7	S	S		B	B	B
	Janausek, Albena	F	5	D	S		AO	B	B
	Janausek, Mary	F	3	D	S		N	B	B
	Janausek, Albert	M	2	S	S		N	B	B
118	Janausek, James	M	25		S	Laborer	B	B	B

#### OBERLIN TOWNSHIP

112	Benedict, Jacob	M	31	H	M	Painter	B	B	B
	Benedict, Clara	F	22	W	M		W	G	G
	Benedict, Elizabeth	F	4	D	S		W	B	W
	Benedict, Peter	M	1	S	S		W	B	W

Names on the federal census preceding as well as the Kansas censuses which follow occasionally were spelled differently. On the later censuses, Celek was spelled Cilek, Watapka was spelled Votapka, Janausek was spelled Janousek, Staffen was spelled Steffen and Stephen, Kolsky was spelled Kalsky and Kalska, and Hilman was spelled Heilman. Other slight differences will be noted on the later censuses. The spelling was frequently dictated by the way the name sounded to the census enumerator if the name was not spelled by the person interviewed.

The Kansas census is very useful for tracing family

movement. The state censuses which follow will help the direct descendants of the early Czechs in Decatur County to understand their family composition.<sup>8</sup>

KANSAS STATE CENSUS  
OF 1885

Dwelling Number	House Number	Name	Sex	Age	Marital Condition	Occupation	Place of Birth	Where from to Kansas
BASSETVILLE TOWNSHIP								
---	---	Kuiting, Joseph	M	22		Farmer	A	B
CENTER TOWNSHIP								
---	---	Rohan, Wenzel	M	46		St. Mas	A	N
		Rohan, Katy	F	43	M		BA	N
		Rohan, Caroline	F	14	S		N	N
		Rohan, Charlie	M	9	S		K	K
		Rohan, Elizabeth	F	7	S		K	K
		Rohan, Frank	M	4	S		K	K
GARFIELD TOWNSHIP								
005	---	Janosek, James	M	30	M	Farmer	B	N
		Janosek, Agnes	F	19	M		B	N
		Janosek, Mary	F	1			K	K
005	---	Machart, Frank	M	30	M	Farmer	B	MI
		Machart, Mary	F	24	M		MI	MI
		Machart, Joe	M	5			K	K
		Machart, Frank	M	2			K	K
006	---	Krigeck, Frank	M	25	S	Farmer	B	B
001	---	Tacha, Frank	M	52	M	Farmer	B	MI
		Tacha, Katie	F	52	M		B	MI



		Tacha, Antony	M	21	S		MI	MI
		Tacha, Julia	F	19	S		MI	MI
		Tacha, Theodore	M	17	S		MI	MI
		Tacha, John	M	15	S		MI	MI
		Tacha, Earnest	M	12	S		MI	MI
002	---	Steffin, August	M	45	M	Laborer	P	N
		Steffin, Eliza	F	34	M		B	N
		Steffin, Ermmmer	F	12			N	N
		Steffin, Henry	M	11			N	N
		Steffin, Ludy	F	7			K	K
003	---	Cilek, Joseph	M	57	M	Farmer	B	N
		Cilek, Barbary	F	44	M		B	N
		Cilek, John	M	15	S		N	N
		Cilek, Mary	F	13	S		N	N
		Cilek, Joseph	M	11	S		K	K
		Cilek, Elizabeth	F	8	S		K	K
		Cilek, Rosa	F	6	S		K	K
		Cilek, Louis	M	4	S		K	K
004	---	Henry, B. W.	M	55	M	Farmer	G	I
		Henry, Fannie	F	51	M		B	I
		Henry, Joseph	M	14	S		I	I
		Henry, Mary	F	11	S		I	I
005	---	Watapka, Charles	M	36	M	Farmer	B	I
		Watapka, Mary	F	36	M		B	I
		Watapka, Jeary	M	11	S		NY	I
		Watapka, Charles	M	7	S		I	I
		Watapka, Frank	M	3	S		K	K
		Watapka, Janey	F	5	S		K	K
003	---	Kalska, George	M	41	M	Farmer	B	N
		Kalska, Becky	F	35	M		B	N
		Kalska, Frank	M	14	S		B	N
		Kalska, Mary	F	9	S		B	N
		Kalska, Charles	M	7	S		K	K
		Kalska, Antony	M	5	S		K	K
		Kalska, Earnest	M	3	S		K	K
		Kalska, R.	F	1	S		K	K
008	---	Bartos, P. V.	M	28	M	Farmer	B	N

		Bartos, J. C.	F	23	M		N	N
		Bartos, E. H.	F	3	S		N	N
		Bartos, J. E.	M	1	S		K	K
004	---	Rohan, Wenzel	M	46	M	Farmer	B	N
		Rohan, Katy	F	44	M		G	N
		Rohan, Caroline	F	14	S		N	N
		Rohan, Charly	M	9	S		K	K
		Rohan, Elizabeth	F	7	S		K	K
		Rohan, Frank	M	4	S		K	K
		Heilman, Wm.	M	22	S		G	N

JENNINGS TOWNSHIP

---	---	Schimek, John	M	45	M	Farmer	B	I
		Schimek, Mary	F	42	M		B	I
		Schimek, Frank	M	17	S		IL	I
		Schimek, Charles	M	15	S		N	I
		Schimek, John	M	13	S		N	I
		Schimek, Joseph	M	11	S		N	I
		Schimek, Lucy	F	9	S		N	I
		Schimek, Julia	F	7	S		N	I
		Schimek, Albert	M	5	S		N	I
		Schimek, Missey	F	3	S		N	I
---	---	Mazanek, Frank	M	37	M	Farmer	B	N
		Mazanek, Fanny	F	34	M		B	N
		Mazanek, Frank	M	12	S		N	N
		Mazanek, E.	F	8	S		N	N
		Mazanek, John	M	7	S		N	N
		Mazanek, H.	M	3	S		K	K
---	---	Etuk, F. M.	M	25	S	Farmer	A	MI
---	---	Kasper, Matt	M	46	M	Bl. Sm.	A	MI
		Kasper, Mary	F	37	M		A	MI
		Kasper, Joseph	M	8	S		W	MI
		Kasper, Andrew	M	4	S		K	K
---	---	Kump, George	M	55	M	Farmer	B	I
		Kump, Frances	F	38	S		B	I
		Kump, John	M	14	S		I	I
		Kump, Ann	F	12	S		I	I

		Kump, George	M	9	S		I	I
		Kump, Charles	M	7	S		I	I
		Kump, Frank	M	5	S		I	I
		Kump, May	F	2	S		K	K
---	---	Marek, Frank	M	46	M	Farmer	B	I
		Marek, Sopha	F	45	M		B	I
		Marek, Frank	M	20	S		B	I
		Marek, Jamy	M	19	S		B	I
		Marek, Joseph	M	10	S		I	I
		Marek, Andrew	M	8	S		I	I
		Marek, John	M	6	S		I	I
		Marek, Walter	M	3	S		K	K
---	---	Petracek, Joseph	M	26	M	Farmer	B	N
		Petracek, Anna	F	18	M		B	N
---	---	Petracek, John	M	55	M	Farmer	B	N
		Petracek, L.	F	50	M		B	N
		Petracek, James	M	22	S	Farmer	B	N
		Petracek, B.	F	18	S		B	N
---	---	Yanack, Andrew	M	60		Farmer	B	N
		Yanack, Anna	F	40	M		B	N
		Yanack, Peter	M	15	S		N	N
		Yanack, A.	F	12	S		N	N
		Yanack, Mary	F	10	S		N	N
		Yanack, Albert	M	8	S		N	N
		Yanack, Mary	F	6	S		K	K
		Yanack, Eliza	F	3	S		K	K
		Yanack, Joseph	M	1	S		K	K
---	---	Tacha, Frank	M	28	M	Farmer	B	MI
		Tacha, D.	F	18	M		I	I
		Tacha, J. M.	F	1	S		K	K

OBERLIN TOWNSHIP

---	---	Tacha, G. J.	M	23			G	MI
		Tacha, K.	F	19			N	N

KANSAS STATE  
CENSUS OF 1895

ALTORY TOWNSHIP

017	017	Janousek, James	M	39	Farmer	B	N
		Janousek, Agnes	F	31		B	N
		Janousek, Mary	F	11		K	K
		Janousek, Maggie	F	9		K	K
		Janousek, James	M	6		K	K
		Janousek, Fred	M	4		K	K
018	018	Janousek, Albert	M	75	Farmer	B	B
		Janousek, Annie	F	55		B	B
		Janousek, Mary	F	18		N	N
		Janousek, Albert	M	16		N	N
		Janousek, Julia	F	14		K	K
		Janousek, Rosa	F	12		K	K
		Janousek, Joseph	M	10		K	K
020	020	Tacha, Theodore	M	25	Farmer	MI	MI
		Tacha, Mary	F	25		N	MI
024	024	Tacha, Frank	M	62	Farmer	B	MI
		Tacha, Kate	F	62		B	MI
		Tacha, John	M	23		MI	MI
025	025	Machart, Frank	M	41	Farmer	B	MI
		Machart, Mary	F	35		MI	MI
		Machart, Frank	M	13		K	K
		Machart, Blanch	F	8		K	K
		Machart, Rose	F	5		K	K
		Machart, Willie	M	3		K	K
		Machart, Joseph	M	4/12		K	K
026	026	Ruzicka, Joseph	M	28	Farmer	B	N
		Ruzicka, Anna	F	21		B	N
		Ruzicka, Zilpha	M	2		K	K
		Ruzicka, Ralph	M	1		K	K
028	028	Krizek, Frank	M	34		B	N
		Krizek, Josephine	F	28		B	N
		Krizek, Joseph	M	6		K	K
		Krizek, Frank	M	3		K	K

		Krizek, William	M	8/12			K	K
029	029	Steffen, Gust	M	54	Farmer		P	N
		Steffen, Lizzie	F	45			B	N
		Steffen, Henry	M	19			N	N
		Steffen, Ludy	F	15			K	K
		Steffen, Anna	F	9			K	K
030	030	Cilek, Joseph	M	61	Farmer		B	N
		Cilek, Barbara	F	54			B	N
		Cilek, John	M	24			N	N
		Cilek, Rosa	F	17			K	K
		Cilek, Louis	M	13			K	K
031	031	Ledovika, Fany	F	43	Farmer		B	B
		Ledovika, Joseph	M	15			B	B
		Ledovika, Anna	F	9			B	B
		Ledovika, Albena	F	7			B	B
032	032	Bartholomew, Henry	M	65	Farmer		G	I
		Bartholomew, Fanny	F	60			B	I
034	034	Kolsky, George	M	50	Farmer		B	B
		Kolsky, Barbara	F	45			B	B
		Kolsky, Frank	M	24	F. Labor		B	B
		Kolsky, Charles	M	17			B	B
		Kolsky, Anthony	M	15			B	B
		Kolsky, Ernest	M	13			K	K
		Kolsky, Rosa	F	11			K	K
		Kolsky, George	M	10			K	K
		Kolsky, John	M	8			K	K
		Kolsky, Anna	F	6			K	K
		Kolsky, Joseph	M	5			K	K
		Kolsky, Fany	F	2			K	K
035	035	Votopka, Charles	M	45	Farmer		B	I
		Votopka, Mary	F	45			B	I
		Votopka, Jerry	M	20			NY	I
		Votopka, Charles	M	17			I	I
		Votopka, Jane	F	15			K	K
		Votopka, Frank	M	12			K	K
036	036	Urban, Joseph	M	46	Farmer		B	IL
		Urban, Mary	F	40			B	IL

		Urban, Frank	M	24	F. Labor	B	IL
		Urban, Joseph F.	M	22		B	IL
		Urban, Mary	F	19		B	IL
		Urban, Isac	M	10		IL	IL
		Urban, Anna	F	4		K	K
037	037	Rohan, Kate	F	53	Farmer	G	N
		Rohan, Charles	M	18		K	K
		Rohan, Lizzie	F	16		K	K
		Rohan, Frank	M	14		K	K
038	038	Heilman, William	M	30	Farmer	G	N
		Heilman, Elnora	F	28		B	N
		Heilman, Minnie	F	6		K	K
		Heilman, Ella	F	2		K	K

CENTER TOWNSHIP

001	001	Ruzicka, Frank	M	27	Farmer	A	N
		Ruzicka, Anna	F	20		NY	N
		Ruzicka, Joseph	M	1		K	K

COOK TOWNSHIP

---	---	Kuitig, Joseph	M	32	Farming	A	A
		Kuitig, Joseph	M	2		K	K
		Kuitig, William	M	4/12		K	K
		Kuitig, Jenne	F	25		G	G

JENNINGS TOWNSHIP

001	001	Cilek, Martin	M	70	Farming	F	N
		Cilek, Mary	F	49	H-K	F	N
		Cilek, Moke	M	15	H-K	F	N
002	002	Flaska, Wenzel	M	36	Farming	A	N
		Flaska, Mary	F	28	H-K	A	N
		Flaska, Joseph	M	7		K	K
		Flaska, Mary	F	6		K	K
		Flaska, Frank	M	5		K	K
		Flaska, Matilda	F	3		K	K
		Flaska, Anna	F	1		K	K
003	003	Vacura, Joseph	M	49	Farming	F	I

		Vacura, Bneick	F	48	H-K	F	I
		Vacura, Charley	M	19	Farming	F	I
		Vacura, Cerilea	F	17	H-W	F	I
		Vacura, Frank	M	15	Farming	I	I
004	004	Petrasek, Joseph	M	26	Farming	F	N
		Petrasek, Lizzie	F	24	H-K	N	N
		Petrasek, William	M	1		K	K
005	005	Petrachek, Michel	M	50	Farming	B	N
		Petrachek, Mary	F	43	K-H	B	N
		Petrachek, Frank	M	22	F. Labor	B	N
		Petrachek, Mary	F	18	H-W	N	N
		Petrachek, Antony	M	15	Farming	N	N
		Petrachek, Emma	F	12		N	N
		Petrachek, Frederick	M	4		K	K
		Petrachek, Wenzel	M	24	F. Labor	B	N
006	006	Petrachek, James	M	27	Farming	A	N
		Petrachek, Mary	F	28	K-H	A	N
007	007	Petrachek, John	M	64	Farming	A	N
		Petrachek, Peronila	F	59	K-H	A	N
001	001	Petrasek, Joseph	M	36	Farming	B	N
		Petrasek, Anna	F	28	H-K	B	N
		Petrasek, Edward	M	9		K	K
		Petrasek, Lizzie	F	7		K	K
		Petrasek, Charley	M	5		K	K
		Petrasek, Otto	M	4		K	K
		Petrasek, Clara	F	2		K	K
005	005	Kump, John	M	24	Farming	MI	W
		Kump, Barbara	F	24	H-K	N	N
002	002	Mazanek, Frank	M	47	Farming	M	N
		Mazanek, Francis	F	45	K-H	M	N
		Mazanek, Frank	M	21	F. Labor	M	N
		Mazanek, Erici	F	19	H-W	M	N
		Mazanek, John	M	16	Farming	M	N
		Mazanek, Ambreius	M	13	Farming	M	N
		Mazanek, Minnie	F	3		K	K
001	001	Shimmick, Mary	F	53	H-W	B	N
		Shimmick, John	M	23	Farming	N	N

		Shimmick, Joe	M	21	F. Labor	N	N
		Shimmick, Lucy	F	20	H-W	N	N
		Shimmick, Julia	F	17	H-W	N	N
		Shimmick, Albert	M	15	Farming	N	N
		Shimmick, Minnie	F	13	H-W	N	N
006	006	Tacha, G. J.	M	32	Merchant	B	WA
		Tacha, Kante	F	29	H-K	N	N
		Tacha, Edwin	M	9		K	K
		Tacha, Frank	M	7		K	K
		Tacha, George	M	4		WA	WA
		Tacha, Earnest	M	21	Merchant	MI	MI
005	005	Prachejl, Wenzel	M	27	Farming	N	N
		Prachejl, Barbara	F	19	H-W	N	N
006	006	Kump, Francis	F	49	H-K	B	MI
		Kump, George	M	19	Farmer	W	MI
		Kump, Charley	M	17	Farmer	W	MI
		Kump, Frank	M	14	Farming	K	K
		Kump, Mary	F	12		K	K
		Kump, Fanny	F	8		K	K
001	001	Kasper, Matt	M	56	Bl. Sm.	B	N
		Kasper, Mary	F	47	H-K	B	N
		Kasper, Joseph	M	18	Farmer	N	N
		Kasper, Andrew	M	13	Farming	K	K
		Kasper, Matt, Jr.	M	9		K	K
		Kasper, Charley	M	4		K	K
		Kasper, Antony	M	2		K	K
002	002	Tacha, Anthony	M	30	Farming	MI	MI
		Tacha, Barbara	F	26	H-W	MO	N
		Tacha, Earnest	M	7		K	K
		Tacha, Harry	M	2		K	K
003	003	Tacha, Frank	M	37	Farming	B	MI
		Tacha, Dillie	F	28	H-K	I	I
		Tacha, Julia	F	11		K	K
		Tacha, Yononia	F	8		K	K
		Tacha, Alma	F	4		K	K
004	004	Petrasek, Frank	M	34	Farming	B	N
		Petrasek, Nettie	F	8		K	K



		Petrasek, Herbert	M	4		K	K
005	005	Pevleshek, Joseph	M	55	Farming	B	B
		Pevleshek, Emma	F	45	H-K	B	B
		Pevleshek, Joe	M	12	Farming	K	K
		Pevleshek, Ada	F	7		K	K
		Pevleshek, Fred	M	4		K	K
		Pevleshek, Louisiana	F	10		K	K
006	006	Prochejl, Wenzel <sup>9</sup>	M	50	Farming	N	N
		Prochejl, Roselie	F	48	H-K	B	N
		Prochejl, Frank	M	21	F. Labor	N	N
		Prochejl, Bessie	F	20	H-W	N	N
		Prochejl, Fannie	F	18		N	N
		Prochejl, Henry	M	16	Farmer	N	N

KANSAS STATE CENSUS  
OF 1905

ALLISON TOWNSHIP

001	001	Shimek, George F.	M	36	Farming	B	I
		Shimek, Mary	F	28		B	I
		Shimek, Albert	M	9		I	I
		Shimek, Willie	M	7		I	I
		Shimek, Ernest	M	5		K	K
		Shimek, Emily	F	2		K	K

ALTORY TOWNSHIP

---	003	Kraska, James	M	30	Farming	B	N
		Kraska, Mary	F	25		B	N
		Kraska, Emma	F	5		N	N
		Kraska, Eddie	M	4		N	N
		Kraska, Hellen	F	3		N	N
---	004	Cilek, Joseph	M	70		B	N
		Cilek, L. W.	M	23	Farming	K	K
		Cilek, Lannie	F	21		N	N
		Cilek, Edith	F	2		K	K
		Cilek, Ellen	F	4		K	K
---	005	Steffen, Gust	M	65	Farming	G	N

		Steffen, Lizzie	F	55		B	N
		Steffen, Henry	M	29		K	K
		Steffen, Ludy	F	23		K	K
		Steffen, Anna	F	19		K	K
---	006	Krizek, Frank	M	47	Farming	B	IL
		Krizek, Josie	F	36		N	IL
		Krizek, Joe	M	16		K	K
		Krizek, Frank	M	13		K	K
		Krizek, William	M	10		K	K
		Krizek, Victor	M	8		K	K
		Krizek, Antone	M	5		K	K
		Krizek, Tinna	F	2		K	K
001	001	Machart, Frank	M	51	Farming	B	MI
		Machart, Mary	F	44		MI	MI
		Machart, Frank	M	22		K	K
		Machart, Blanch	F	18		K	K
		Machart, Rosa	F	14		K	K
		Machart, William	M	12		K	K
		Machart, Joseph	M	9		K	K
		Machart, Leonard	M	6		K	K
005	004	Kolsky, Geo	M	60	Farming	B	N
		Kolsky, Barbary	F	54		B	B
		Kolsky, Geo.	M	19		K	K
		Kolsky, John	M	18		K	K
		Kolsky, Anna	F	16		K	K
		Kolsky, Joseph	M	15		K	K
		Kolsky, Fanne	F	12		K	K
---	002	Hendrick, Barboloma <sup>10</sup>	M	75	Farming	B	B
		Hendrick, Fannie	F	68		B	B
---	003	Votapka, Jerry	M	30		NY	I
		Votapka, Hatty	F	25		IN	I
		Votapka, Claud	M	6		K	K
		Votapka, Blanch	F	3		K	K
---	004	Ladvinka, Fanny	F	53		B	B
		Ladvinka, Joseph	M	25		K	K
		Ladvinka, Anna	F	19		K	K
		Ladvinka, Albina	F	17		K	K

---	005	Rohan, Frank	M	24	Farming	K	K
		Rohan, Laura	F	19		K	K
		Rohan, Hazlie	F	1		K	K
		Rohan, Katarina	F	62		G	G
---	006	Votapka, Chas. Jr.	M	26	Farming	I	I
		Votapka, Clara	F	23		I	I
		Votapka, Guy	M	3		K	K
		Votapka, Mabel	F	2		K	K
		Votapka, Hazel	F	1		K	K
---	007	Heilman, William	M	40	Farming	G	N
		Heilman, Elenora	F	37		B	B
		Heilman, Wilma	F	16		K	K
		Heilman, Alma	F	12		K	K
		Heilman, Henry	M	9		K	K
		Heilman, Olga	F	7		K	K
---	002	Tucek, Joe	M	39	Farming	B	B
		Tucek, Mary	F	28		B	IL
		Tucek, Mary	F	6		K	K
		Tucek, George	M	36	Farming	B	B
---	003	Urban, Joseph	M	56	Farming	B	IL
		Urban, Isaak	M	19		IL	IL
		Urban, Anna	F	15		K	K
---	---	Fiala, John	M	66	Farming	B	N
		Fiala, Frank	M	23	Farming	K	K
		Fiala, Joseph	M	21	Farming	K	K
		Fiala, Anna	F	18		K	K
		Fiala, George	M	19	Farming	K	K
		Fiala, Lillie	F	14		K	K

CENTER TOWNSHIP

001	003	Pachner, Frank	M	30	Farming	B	A
		Pachner, Barbara	F	21		B	A
		Pachner, Katie	F	1		K	K
040	005	Fiala, J. <sup>11</sup>	M	30	Farming	NEW	NEW
		Fiala, Mary	F	29		NEW	NEW
		Fiala, Anna	F	5		K	K
		Fiala, Emma	F	3		K	K

		Fiala, Jerry	M 5/12		K	K
038	007	Votapka, Ed	M 39	Farming	B	NY
		Votapka, Emma	F 39		B	NY
		Votapka, Bazena	F 18		NY	NY
		Votapka, Kamila	F 15		NY	NY
		Votapka, Joseph	M 13		NY	NY
		Votapka, Vladimir	M 9		NY	NY
		Votapka, Edmond	M 6		K	K
030	004	Beneda, J.	M 34	Tailor	B	C
		Beneda, J.	F 24		K	K
		Beneda, Bessa	F 5		K	K
		Beneda, Julia	F 3		K	K
005	007	Ruzicka, J.	M 36	Farming	B	N
		Ruzicka, J.	M 11		K	K
		Ruzicka, Louis	M 8		K	K
		Ruzicka, Rosa	F 6		K	K
		Ruzicka, Emile	M 5		K	K
		Ruzicka, Mary	F 3		K	K
		Ruzicka, Anna	F 1		K	K
052	003	Ruzicka, Joe <sup>12</sup>	M 60	Farming	B	NEW
		Ruzicka, Katie	F 62		B	NEW
		Ruzicka, Jim	M 20		NEW	NEW
053	009	Janousek, James	M 50	Farming	B	B
		Janousek, Aggie	F 39		B	B
		Janousek, Maggie	F 18		K	K
		Janousek, James	M 16	Farming	K	K
		Janousek, Frederick	M 14		K	K
		Janousek, Anthony	M 11		K	K
		Janousek, Frank	M 9		K	K
		Janousek, Clara	F 5		K	K
		Janousek, Anna	F 3		K	K

COOK TOWNSHIP

011	011	Kuitig, Joseph	M 43	Farmer	A	A
		Kuitig, Jennie	F 35		G	G
		Kuitig, Joe	M 12		K	K
		Kuitig, Willie	M 10		K	K

		Kuitig, Anna	F	8		K	K
		Kuitig, Lena	F	6		K	K
		Kuitig, Emit	M	3		K	K
		Kuitig, Albt.	M	3/12		K	K
012	012	Kuitig, Joseph A.	M	77	Farmer	A	A
		Kuitig, Anna	F	64		A	A
038	038	Kuitig, Ferd.	M	33	Farmer	A	A

CUSTER TOWNSHIP

001	001	Petrasek, Mat	M	59	Farmer	B	N
		Petrasek, Mary	F	53		B	N
		Petrasek, Anton	M	25	Farmer	N	N
		Petrasek, Emma	F	21		N	N
		Petrasek, Frederic	M	14		K	N
007	007	Urban, Joe	M	28	Farmer	B	IL
		Urban, Rosa	F	22		K	K
010	010	Urban, Frank	M	34	Farmer	B	IL
		Urban, Louise	F	28		NY	NY
		Urban, Emil	M	6		K	K
		Urban, Rudolph	M	4		K	K
		Urban, Helen	F	2		K	K
		Urban, Frank	M	1		K	K
011	011	Pavlicek, Joe	M	38	Farmer	B	C
		Pavlicek, Julia	F	28		N	N
		Pavlicek, William	M	5		K	K
		Pavlicek, Bessie	F	4		K	K
		Pavlicek, Frank	M	2		K	K
		Pavlicek, Joe	M	1		K	K
012	012	Matousek, Joseph	M	26	Farmer	B	B
		Matousek, Minnie	F	23		N	N
019	019	Petrasek, Frank	M	34	Farmer	B	N
		Petrasek, Bessie	F	30		N	N
		Petrasek, George	M	9		K	K
024	024	Prachejl, Henry	M	26	Farmer	N	N
		Prachejl, Fannie	F	28		N	N
052	052	Petrasek, James	M	39	Farmer	B	N
		Petrasek, Mary	F	29		B	N

		Petrasek, Barbry	F	10		K	K
		Petrasek, July	F	8		K	K
		Petrasek, Ernest	M	5		K	K
		Petrasek, William	M	3		K	K
		Petrasek, Lydia	F	6/12		K	K
		Kolsky, Ernest	M	24		K	K

GARFIELD TOWNSHIP

012	012	Vatapka, Char	M	55	Farmer	B	I
		Vatapka, Mary	F	55		B	I
		Vatapka, Frank	M	22		K	K
028	028	Rohan, Chas	M	27	Farmer	K	K
		Rohan, Minie O.	F	26		IL	IL
		Rohan, Harvie	M	4		K	K
		Rohan, Emma	F	2		K	K
		Rohan, Mabel	M	1		K	K

HARLAN TOWNSHIP

012	004	McChesney, J.	F	65	Farmer	B	I
		McChesney, E.	M	22		K	K
		McChesney, L. V.	F	17		K	K
		McChesney, P. V.	M	5/12		K	K

JENNINGS TOWNSHIP

---	014	Petrasek, Joseph	M	37	Farmer	A	N
		Petrasek, Lizzie	F	34	H-K	N	N
		Petrasek, Willie	M	11		K	K
		Petrasek, Henry	M	9		K	K
		Petrasek, Alma	F	5		K	K
---	024	Prachejl, W.	M	60	Farmer	B	IL
		Prachejl, Rosalie	F	58	H-W	B	IL
---	030	Tacha, G. J.	M	42	Farmer	MI	MI
		Tacha, Kate	F	39	H-W	N	N
		Tacha, Edward	M	19		WA	WA
		Tacha, Frank	M	17		K	K
		Tacha, George	M	13		K	K
		Tacha, Earl	M	9		K	K

---	032	Flaska, W. F.	M	47	Farmer	A	N
		Flaska, Mary	F	38	H-K	A	N
		Flaska, Joe	M	17		K	K
		Flaska, Mary	F	16		K	K
		Flaska, Frank	M	15		K	K
		Flaska, Matilda	F	13		K	K
		Flaska, Anna	F	11		N	N
		Flaska, Charlie	M	9		K	K
		Flaska, Leon	F	7		K	K
		Flaska, Wenzel	F	5		K	K
		Flaska, Emily	M	2		K	K
---	034	Pavliceck, Joseph	M	67	Farmer	A	IL
		Pavliceck, Ed	M	17		K	K
		Pavliceck, Rosa	F	20	H-K	IL	IL
		Pavliceck, Fred	M	13		K	K
---	035	Mazanek, John	M	26	Farmer	A	N
		Mazanek, Mary	F	19	H-K	N	N
	037	Tacha, Frank, Jr.	M	48	Farmer	A	MI
		Tacha, Della	F	37	H-K	I	I
		Tacha, Elma	F	14		K	K
---	039	Kasper, Matt, Sr.	M	66	Farmer	B	MO
		Kasper, Mary	F	57	H-K	B	MO
		Kasper, Matt, Jr.	M	19		K	K
		Kasper, Charlie	M	13		K	K
		Kasper, Anthony	M	11		K	K
		Kasper, Andrew	M	22	F-H	K	K
---	040	Kasper, Joseph	M	29	Farmer	N	N
		Kasper, Mary	F	30	H-W	N	MO
		Kasper, Cilie	F	3		K	K
		Kasper, Helen	F	10/12		K	K
---	041	Tacha, A.	M	40	Farmer	MI	MI
		Tacha, Barbara	F	35	H-W	MO	N
		Tacha, Ernest	M	17		K	K
		Tacha, Henry	M	12		K	K
		Tacha, Carl	M	8		K	K
		Tacha, Jessie	M	4		K	K
---	042	Tacha, Theo	M	35	Farmer	MI	MI

	Tacha, Marry	F	35	H-W	N	N
	Tacha, Mable	F	9		K	K
	Tacha, Birtha	F	6		K	K
	Tacha, Walter	M	3		K	K
	Tacha, May	F	3/12		K	K
---	048 Prachejl, Frank	M	30	Farmer	N	N
	Prachejl, Jane	F	25	H-W	K	K
	Prachejl, Carrie	F	4		K	K
---	049 Petrasek, Wenzel	M	34	Farmer	A	N
	Petrasek, Lucy	F	29	H-W	N	N
	Petrasek, Mary	F	7		K	K
	Petrasek, Helena	F	6		K	K
	Petrasek, Sophia	F	5		K	K
	Petrasek, Jesse	M	2		K	K
---	050 Hess, Joseph	M	29	Farming	A	N
	Hess, Rosa	F	21	H-W	K	K
	Hess, Arthur	M	3		K	K
	Hess, Viola	F	1		K	K
---	051 Vacura, Joseph	M	59	Farmer	A	A
	Vacura, Benika	F	59	H-W	A	A
---	053 Vacura, Cedelia	M	28	Farmer	A	N
	Vacura, Mary	F	28	H-K	N	N
	Vacura, Jerry	M	5		K	K
	Vacura, Olive	F	4		K	K
	Vacura, Emma	F	1		K	K
---	054 Petracek, Frank	M	44	Farmer	A	A
	Petracek, Rosa	F	27	H-K	K	K
	Petracek, Nettie	F	17		K	K
	Petracek, Herbert	M	14		K	K
	Petracek, Julius	M	8		K	K
	Petracek, Otha	F	6		K	K
	Petracek, Harry	M	4		K	K
	Petracek, Frank	M	1		K	K
---	057 Kump, Chas	M	27	Farmer	W	W
	Kump, Celia	F	24	H-K	K	K
	Kump, Harry	M	1		K	K
---	061 Cilek, Matt	M	25	Farmer	A	N



		Cilek, Mary	F	21	H-K	N	N
---	062	Shimmick, John	M	34	Farmer	N	N
		Shimmick, Kate	F	35	H-K	A	N
---	065	Petracek, Jos	M	46	Farmer	A	N
		Petracek, Anna	F	38	H-K	A	N
		Petracek, Edward	M	19		K	K
		Petracek, Lizzie	F	17		K	K
		Petracek, Chas	M	15		K	K
		Petracek, Adolph	M	13		K	K
		Petracek, Clara	F	11		K	K
		Petracek, Jos	M	9		K	K
		Petracek, Emil	M	7		K	K
		Petracek, Anna	F	5		K	K
		Petracek, John	M	3		K	K
---	067	Cilek, Martin	M	81	H. Hold	A	MI
		Cilek, Mary	F	59	H-K	A	N
---	068	Vacura, Chas.	M	30	Farmer	A	I
---	069	Mazanek, Frank, Jr.	M	31	Farmer	A	N
		Mazanek, Mary	F	21	H-K	K	K
---	---	Kump, John	M	34	Farmer	MI	MI
		Kump, Barbara	F	34	H-K	G	MI
		Kump, Geo	M	9		K	K
		Kump, Mary	F	5		K	K
		Kump, Lee	M	1		K	K
---	---	Cilek, John	M	34	Farmer	N	N
		Cilek, Mary	F	26	H-K	A	N
		Cilek, Ida	F	2		K	K
		Cilek, Freda	F	5/12		K	K
---	---	Kump, Frank	M	24		K	K
		Kump, Fanny	F	59	H-K	A	MI
		Kump, Fanny	F	18	H-K	K	K
---	---	Shimmick, Mary	F	63	H-K	A	N
		Shimmick, Albert	M	25	Laborer	N	N
		Shimmick, Jos.	M	32	Farmer	N	N
---	003	Mazanek, Ambrose	M	22	Farmer	A	N
		Mazanek, Frank	M	56	Farmer	A	N
		Mazanek, Frankie	F	54	H-K	A	N

---	006	Shimmick, Frank	M	38	H. Deal	IL	N
		Shimmick, Annie	F	29	H-W	A	N
		Shimmick, Lilian	F	5		K	K
		Shimmick, Arthur	M	3		K	K

OBERLIN TOWNSHIP

---	002	Janoushek, Albert	M	27	Farmer	N	N
		Janoushek, Katie	F	20		A	N
		Janoushek, Adolph	M	2		K	K
		Janoushek, Rudoph	M	8/12		K	K
---	005	Krub, Louis	M	49	Farmer	B	MO
		Krub, A.	F	45		W	MO
		Krub, Josie	F	16		I	MO
		Krub, Charles	M	14		I	MO
		Krub, George	M	12		I	MO
		Krub, Louis	M	10		I	MO
		Krub, Anna	F	8		I	MO
		Krub, Florence	F	4		I	MO

OLIVE TOWNSHIP

078	078	Beneda, James	M	31	Farmer	B	B
		Beneda, Mary	F	28		B	B
		Beneda, Pauline	F	3		K	K
		Beneda, James, Jr.	M	6		K	K

PLEASANT VALLEY TOWNSHIP

---	004	Tacha, John	M	33	Farmer	MI	MI
		Tacha, Louise	F	33		K	K
		Tacha, Clara	F	6		K	K
		Tacha, Julius	M	3		K	K
		Tacha, Nora	F	1		K	K
---	004	Prochejl, W., Jr.	M	37	Farmer	K	K
		Prochejl, B.	F	29		K	K
		Prochejl, A.	F	9		K	K
		Prochejl, W.	M	8		K	K

KANSAS STATE  
CENSUS OF 1915

CITY OF JENNINGS

016	018	Casper, Ruby	F	16	Labor	K	K
034	036	Varoush, Anne	F	73	H-W	B	I
040	042	Kump, Mrs. Francis	F	69	H-W	B	M
057	059	Shimmick, Frank	M	48	Merchant	IL	IL
		Shimmick, Anna	F	39	H-W	B	B
		Shimmick, Lillian	F	15		K	K
		Shimmick, Arthur	M	13		K	K
		Shimmick, Maurinne	F	4		K	K

CITY OF KANONA

001	001	Fiala, G. A.	M	28	L. Dealer	N	N
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CITY OF OBERLIN

065	069	Vatopka, Frank	M	31	Reg. Deeds	K	K
084	088	Beneda, Louis	M	35	Tailor	B	B
		Beneda, Anna	F	35		N	N
		Beneda, Otto	M	13		C	C
		Beneda, Edward	M	12		C	C
160	172	Tacha, F.	F	58	Farmer	A	A
		Tacha, Della	F	49		I	I
		Tacha, Winona	F	28		K	K
		Tacha, Alma	F	23	Teacher	K	K
		Tacha, Geneva	F	10		K	K

ALLISON TOWNSHIP

---	---	Shimmek, Joe	M	46	Farmer	B	I
		Shimmek, Willie	M	17		I	I
		Shimmek, Stanley	M	14		K	K
		Shimmek, Mary	F	37		B	I
		Shimmek, Emaly	F	11		K	K
		Shimmek, Jena	F	8		K	K

ALTORY TOWNSHIP

---	---	Janousek, Joe	M	29	Farmer	K	K
		Janousek, Anne	F	24	H-K	K	K
		Janousek, Stanley	M	5		K	K
		Janousek, George	M	3		K	K
		Janousek, Mildred	F	1		K	K
		Janousek, Anne <sup>13</sup>	F	71		NOSF	NOSF
---	---	Krizek, Frank, Sr.	M	56	Farmer	B	IL
		Krizek, Jossie	F	46	H-K	N	N
		Krizek, Joseph	M	26		K	K
		Krizek, Frank	M	23		K	K
		Krizek, Willie	M	20		K	K
		Krizek, Vitor	M	18		K	K
		Krizek, Antony	M	16		K	K
		Krizek, Tina	F	12		K	K
		Krizek, Jossie	F	8		K	K
---	---	Machart, Frank	M	32	Farmer	K	K
		Machart, Anna	F	29	H-K	B	B
		Ledvinka, Fannie	F	65		B	B
---	---	Steffen, Henry	M	39	Farmer	N	N
		Steffen, Ludy	F	35		K	K
		Steffen, Lizzie	F	67		B	N
---	---	Kolsky, George, Sr.	M	70	Farmer	B	N
		Kolsky, Barbary	F	65		B	N
		Kolsky, George, Jr.	M	29		K	K
		Kolsky, John	M	28		K	K
		Kolsky, Anna	F	26		K	K
		Kolsky, Joe	M	25		K	K
		Kolsky, Fannie	F	22		K	K
---	---	Fiala, John	M	76		B	N
		Fiala, Joe	M	32	Farmer	N	N
		Fiala, Edward	M	7		K	K
		Fiala, Eller	F	4		K	K
---	---	Cilek, L. W.	M	33	Farmer	K	K
		Cilek, Fannie	F	31	H-K	N	N
		Cilek, Edith	F	12		K	K
		Cilek, Ellen	F	10		K	K

		Cilek, Raymond	M	8		K	K
		Cilek, Edward	M	5		K	K
---	---	Rohan, Chas.	M	38	Farmer	K	K
		Rohan, Minnie	F	36	H-K	IL	IL
		Rohan, Harwa	M	14		K	K
		Rohan, Emma	F	12		K	K
		Rohan, Mabel	F	11		K	K
---	---	Rohan, Frank	M	34	Farmer	K	K
		Rohan, Laura	F	29		K	K
		Rohan, Katharina	F	71		G	G
		Rohan, Hazel	F	11		K	K
		Rohan, Ernest	M	8		K	K
		Rohan, Albert	M	6		K	K
		Rohan, Roy	M	4		K	K
		Rohan, Walter	M	2		K	K
---	---	Votapka, Chas., Jr.	M	37	Farmer	I	I
		Votapka, Clara	F	32	H-K	I	I
		Votapka, Guy	M	13		K	K
		Votapka, Mabel	F	12		K	K
		Votapka, Hazel	F	11		K	K
		Votapka, Glenn	M	9		K	K
		Votapka, Grace	F	7		K	K
---	---	Urban, Isaac	M	29	Farmer	IL	IL
		Urban, Libbie	F	24		NY	NY
		Urban, Harry	M	7		K	K
		Urban, Lawrence	M	6		K	K
		Urban, Geneva	F	5		K	K
		Urban, Agnes	F	1		K	K
---	---	Heilman, William	M	51	Farmer	G	N
		Heilman, Elenora	F	48	H-K	B	B
		Heilman, Ella	F	22		K	K
		Heilman, Henry	M	19		K	K
		Heilman, Olga	F	17		K	K
---	---	Tucek, Joseph	M	49	Farmer	B	B
		Tucek, Mary	F	35	H-K	B	B
		Tucek, Mary	F	16		K	K
		Tucek, Mabel	F	9		K	K

---	---	Urban, Joseph	M	67	R. Farmer	B	B
---	---	Tucek, George	M	44	Farmer	B	B
---	---	Pavlicek, Edward	M	26	Farmer	K	K
		Pavlicek, Grace	F	19		K	K

CENTER TOWNSHIP

001	001	Fiala, John	M	38	Farming	N	N
		Fiala, Mary	F	37		N	N
		Fiala, Anna	F	15		K	K
		Fiala, Emma	F	13		K	K
		Fiala, Jerry	M	10		K	K
		Fiala, Clara	F	8		K	K
		Fiala, Mammie	M	5		K	K
005	005	Ruzicka, James	M	24	Farming	N	N
		Ruzicka, Mary	F	24		K	K
		Ruzicka, John	M	6		K	K
		Ruzicka, Margaret	F	4		K	K
006	066	Ruzicka, Joseph	M	71	Farming	B	N
		Ruzicka, Katie	F	73		B	N
019	019	Janousek, James, Sr.	M	60	Farming	B	N
		Janousek, Agnes	F	49		B	N
		Janousek, James, Jr.	M	26		K	K
		Janousek, Fred	M	24		K	K
		Janousek, Anthony	M	19		K	K
		Janousek, Frank	M	17		K	K
		Janousek, Clara	F	14		K	K
		Janousek, Anna	F	11		K	K
		Janousek, Rosie	F	7		K	K
021	021	Bezenek, Joseph	M	34	Farming	B	M
		Bezenek, Fanny	F	28		B	IL
		Beznoska, Anthony	M	41	Farming	B	N
044	044	Janousek, Albert	M	37	Farming	N	N
		Janousek, Katie	F	31		B	B
		Janousek, Adolf	M	12		K	K
		Janousek, Rudolf	M	10		K	K
		Janousek, Emil	M	8		K	K
		Janousek, Allen	M	4		K	K

		Janousek, Edward	M	3		K	K
		Janousek, Willie	M	6		K	K
		Janousek, Mabel	F	1		K	K
		Beneda, Julia	F	12		K	K
045	045	Pachner, Frank	M	39	Farming	B	B
		Pachner, Barbara	F	31		B	N
		Pachner, Katie	F	11		K	K
		Pachner, John	M	9		K	K
		Pachner, Rudolf	M	6		K	K
		Pachner, Joe	M	3		K	K
		Pachner, Frank	M	1		K	K
046	046	Ruzicka, F. J.	M	47	Farming	B	N
		Ruzicka, Antonie	F	38		B	C
		Ruzicka, Joseph	M	20		K	K
		Ruzicka, Lewis	M	18		K	K
		Ruzicka, Rosie	F	16		K	K
		Ruzicka, Emil	M	14		K	K
		Ruzicka, Mary	F	12		K	K
		Ruzicka, Anna	F	10		K	K
		Ruzicka, James	M	8		K	K
		Ruzicka, Clara	F	6		K	K
047	047	Vavroch, James	M	55	Farming	B	MO
		Vavroch, Barbara	F	50		B	MO
		Vavroch, Joseph	M	30		I	MO
		Vavroch, Henry C.	M	25		I	MO
		Vavroch, Lewis G.	M	22		O	MO
		Vavroch, Mary A.	F	18		MO	MO

COOK TOWNSHIP

009		Kuitig, Joseph <sup>14</sup>	M	52	Farmer	NOEM	NOEM
		Kuitig, Jennie	F	45		NOEM	NOEM
		Kuitig, Joseph, Jr.	M	22	Ag. Labor	K	K
		Kuitig, William	M	20	Ag. Labor	K	K
		Kuitig, Anna	F	18		K	K
		Kuitig, Rena	F	17		K	K
		Kuitig, Ammond	M	13		K	K
		Kuitig, Albert	M	10		K	K

	Kuitig, Emma	F	7			K	K
001	Kuitig, Ferd	M	45	Farmer		A	A

CUSTER TOWNSHIP

---	---	Urban, Frank	M	44	Farmer		B	IL
		Urban, Louise	F	38			NY	NY
		Urban, Emil	M	16	Farmer		K	K
		Urban, Randolph	M	14	Farmer		K	K
		Urban, Helen	F	12			K	K
		Urban, Frank	M	10			K	K
		Urban, Anna	F	8			K	K
		Urban, Emma	F	6			K	K
		Urban, Antone	M	4			K	K
		Urban, Mary	F	1			K	K
---	---	Vavroch, John	M	29	Farmer		I	MO
		Vavroch, Lizzie	F	27	H-W		K	K
---	---	Pavalicek, Joseph	M	49	Farmer		B	IL
		Pavalicek, Julia	F	39	H-W		N	N
		Pavalicek, William	M	15			K	K
		Pavalicek, Bessie	F	14			K	K
		Pavalicek, Frank	M	12			K	K
		Pavalicek, Joe	M	11			K	K
		Pavalicek, Theodore	M	7			K	K
		Pavalicek, Annie	F	6			K	K
		Pavalicek, Lizzie	F	4			K	K
---	---	Kolsky, Ernest	M	32	Farmer		K	K
		Kolsky, Bessie	F	27	H-W		A	A
		Kolsky, Jerry	M	8			K	K
		Kolsky, Raymond	M	7			K	K
		Kolsky, Irene	F	5			K	K
		Kolsky, Evelene	F	4			K	K
		Kolsky, Libby	F	2			K	K
---	---	Petracek, Jas.	M	48	Farmer		B	N
		Petracek, Mary	F	38	H-W		B	N
		Petracek, Barbara	F	19			K	K
		Petracek, Julia	F	17			K	K
		Petracek, Ernest	M	14			K	K



		Petracek, Willie	M	12		K	K
		Petracek, Lillie	F	10		K	K
		Petracek, Jerry	M	7		K	K

GARFIELD TOWNSHIP

001	001	Vatopka, Charles	M	65	Farmer	B	I
		Vatopka, Mary	F	65		B	I

JENNINGS TOWNSHIP

001	001	Storch, Frank	F	75	Jeweler	B	NY
		Storch, Jane	F	65		B	NY
002	002	Kaspar, Chas.	M	24	Farmer	K	K
		Kaspar, Lily	F	24	H-W	K	K
		Kaspar, Mildred	F	2		K	K
003	003	Tacha, Mrs. Kate, Sr.	F	82	H-W	B	MI
004	044	Tacha, Kate	F	49	Farmer	N	N
		Tacha, Ed. E.	M	29	Ag. Labor	K	K
		Tacha, Frank W.	M	27	Ag. Labor	K	K
		Tacha, Earl S.	M	18	Ag. Labor	K	K
005	005	Tacha, Anthony	M	50	Farming	MI	MI
		Tacha, Barbara	F	46	H-W	MI	MO
		Tacha, Carl	M	18	Ag. Labor	K	K
		Tacha, Jenne	M	14		K	K
006	006	Tacha, George J.	M	23	Farmer	WA	WA
		Tacha, Essie	F	21	H-W	N	N
		Tacha, Richard G.	M	2		K	K
		Tacha, Darrel J.	M	1		K	K
013	013	Petracek, Frank	M	54	Farmer	A	N
		Petracek, Rosa	F	36	H-W	K	K
		Petracek, Herbert	M	24	Ag. Labor	K	K
		Petracek, Julius	M	18	Ag. Labor	K	K
		Petracek, Ruth	F	16		K	K
		Petracek, Harry	M	13		K	K
		Petracek, Frank	M	10		K	K
		Petracek, Rudolph	M	7		K	K
		Petracek, Alfred	M	4		K	K
		Petracek, Sylvia	F	2		K	K

015	015	Tacha, Theo	M	45	Farmer	MI	MI
		Tacha, Mary	F	45	H-W	N	N
		Tacha, Mabel	F	19		K	K
		Tacha, Bertha	F	16		K	K
		Tacha, Walter	M	13		K	K
		Tacha, May	F	10		K	K
		Tacha, Edna	F	6		K	K
		Griffin, T. J.	M	29	Ag. Labor	N	N
017	018	Petrasek, Frank	M	44	Farmer	B	N
		Petrasek, Bessie	F	40	H-W	N	N
		Petrasek, George	M	19	Ag. Labor	K	K
		Petrasek, Otto	M	11/12		K	K
018	019	Tacha, Ernest	M	27	Farmer	K	K
		Tacha, Bertha	F	22	H-W	K	K
019	020	Tacha, Harry	M	22	Farmer	K	K
		Tacha, Ellen	F	19	H-W	K	K
		Mumson, H. L.	M	44	Carpenter	K	K
021	022	Hess, Joe F.	M	38	Farmer	B	N
		Hess, Rosa	F	30	H-W	K	K
		Hess, Arthur	M	12		K	K
		Hess, Viola	F	11		K	K
		Hess, Helen	F	9		K	K
		Hess, Rudolph	M	7		K	K
		Hess, Emilie	F	5		K	K
		Hess, Valerie	F	4/12		K	K
022	023	Shimmick, John	M	43	Farmer	N	N
		Shimmick, Katie	F	44	H-W	B	N
		Shimmick, Rosa	F	12		K	K
		Shimmick, William	M	9		K	K
		Shimmick, Mary	F	6		K	K
022	024	Shimmick, Joseph	M	41	Farming	N	N
023	024	Shimmick, Jos	M	41	Farming	N	N
024	026	Mazanek, Frank	M	66	Re. Farm	M	N
		Mazanek, Fanny	F	64	H-W	M	N
025	027	Mazanek, Frank	M	41	Farming	M	N
		Mazanek, Mary	F	31	H-W	K	K
		Mazanek, Emil	M	9		K	K

		Mazanek, Sofia	F	11		K	K
		Mazanek, Stanley	M	6		K	K
		Mazanek, Frank	M	3		K	K
031	033	Kump, Chas	M	37	Farmer	W	W
		Kump, Celia	F	34	H-W	K	K
		Kump, Harry	M	11		K	K
		Kump, Ruth	F	9		K	K
		Kump, Della	F	7		K	K
		Kump, Walter	M	1		K	K
		Baxter, Frank	M	18	Ag. Labor	K	K
033	035	Kump, John	M	44	Farmer	MI	MI
		Kump, Barbara	F	44	H-W	G	N
		Kump, George	M	18	Ag. Labor	K	K
		Kump, May	F	14		K	K
		Kump, Lee	M	11		K	K
038	040	Vacura, Charles	M	40	Farmer	B	I
		Vacura, Mary	F	33	H-W	B	B
		Vacura, Joseph	M	8		K	K
		Vacura, Wenzel	M	7		K	K
		Vacura, Frank	M	5		K	K
		Vacura, Helena	F	2		K	K
039	041	Vacura, Cedelie	M	38	Farmer	B	I
		Vacura, Mary	F	38	H-W	N	N
		Vacura, Jerry	M	15	F-H	K	K
		Vacura, Oliva	F	14		K	K
		Vacura, Emma	F	12		K	K
		Vacura, Libby	F	5		K	K
		Vacura, Mary	F	3		K	K
		Vacura, Anton	M	1		K	K
		Vacura, Joseph	M	71	Farmer	B	I
		Vacura, Benika	F	70	H-W	B	I
040	042	Skubal, Joseph	M	56	Farmer	B	N
		Skubal, M. M.	F	53	H-W	B	N
		Skubal, Wenzel	M	22	Ag. Labor	N	N
043	045	Cilek, John	M	44	Farmer	N	N
		Cilek, Mary	F	36	H-W	B	N
		Cilek, Ida	F	12		K	K

		Cilek, Elfrida	F	10		K	K
		Cilek, Vivian	F	5		K	K
		Hess, Mary	F	73		B	N
044	046	Kaspar, Matt	F	77	Farmer	B	N
		Kaspar, Mary	F	68	H-W	B	N
		Kaspar, Andrew	M	32	Ag. Labor	K	K
		Kaspar, Anthony	M	22	Ag. Labor	K	K
045	047	Pavlicek, Emma	F	67	Farmer	B	IL
		Pavlicek, Fred	M	24	Farmer	K	K
046	048	Petrasek, Wenzel	M	44	Farmer	B	N
		Petrasek, Lucy	F	39	H-W	N	N
		Petrasek, Mary	F	16		K	K
		Petrasek, Helen	F	15		K	K
		Petrasek, Sofia	F	14		K	K
		Petrasek, Jesse	M	12		K	K
047	049	Petrasek, Joseph C.	M	46	Farmer	B	N
		Petrasek, Lizzie	F	44	H-W	N	N
		Petrasek, William	M	21	Ag. Labor	K	K
		Petrasek, Henry	M	18		K	K
		Petrasek, Alma	F	15		K	K
		Petrasek, Lilly	F	10		K	K
048	050	Shimmick, Albert	M	37	Farmer	N	N
049	051	Petracek, Joseph	M	55	Farmer	B	N
		Petracek, Anna	F	48	H-W	B	N
		Petracek, Edward	M	29	Ag. Labor	K	K
		Petracek, Charles	M	25	Ag. Labor	K	K
		Petracek, Adolph	M	23	Ag. Labor	K	K
		Petracek, Clara	F	21		K	K
		Petracek, Joseph	M	19	Ag. Labor	K	K
		Petracek, Emil	M	17		K	K
		Petracek, Anna	F	15		K	K
		Petracek, John	M	12		K	K
		Cilek, Joseph	M	81	Re. Farm	B	N
051	053	Flaska, Wenzel	M	56	Farmer	B	N
		Flaska, Mary	F	48	H-W	B	N
		Flaska, Charles	M	19	Ag. Labor	K	K
		Flaska, Leon	M	16	Ag. Labor	K	K

		Flaska, Wenzel	M	14	Ag. Labor	K	K
		Flaska, Emily	F	12		K	K
		Flaska, Fred	M	9		K	K
		Flaska, Adolf	M	6		K	K
		Flaska, Agnes	F	6		K	K
		Flaska, Anne	F	21		K	K
---	---	Kaspar, Jos.	M	38	Farmer	N	N
		Kaspar, Celia	F	13		K	K
		Kaspar, Helen	F	10		K	K
		Kaspar, Jos.	M	8		K	K
		Kaspar, Julius	F	6		K	K

LYON TOWNSHIP

043	043	Skuball, R. L.	M	29	Farming	N	N
		Skuball, Nettie	F	27		K	K
		Skuball, Gadienir	M	6		K	K
		Skuball, Myron	M	3		K	K
		Skuball, Rudolph	M	1		K	K
047	047	Prachehel, Henry	M	36	Farmer	N	N
		Prachehel, Hellen	F	27		N	N
		Prachehel, Louis	M	11/12		K	K

OBERLIN TOWNSHIP

004	004	Votapka, Jerry <sup>15</sup>	M	40	Farmer	NY	-
		Votapka, Helen	F	35		IN	-
		Votapka, Claud	M	16		K	-
		Votapka, Blanche	F	13		K	-

OLIVE TOWNSHIP

044	045	Beneda, James	M	42	Farmer	B	B
		Beneda, Mary	F	38		B	B
		Beneda, James	M	16		K	K
		Beneda, Pauline	F	13		K	K
		Beneda, Kattena	F	9		K	K
		Beneda, Lloyd	M	7		K	K
		Beneda, Johnny	M	5		K	K

PLEASANT VALLEY TOWNSHIP

022	022	Tacha, John	M	44	Farmer	MI	MI
		Tacha, Janie	F	43		N	N
		Tacha, Clara	F	15		K	K
		Tacha, Julus	M	13		K	K
		Tacha, Nora	F	11		K	K
		Tacha, Elmer	M	8		K	K
		Tacha, Ruth	F	4		K	K
		Tacha, Carl	M	2		K	K

ROOSEVELT TOWNSHIP

034	035	Beneda, Jerry	M	23	Farmer	B	B
		Beneda, Ketrina	F	65		B	B
		Beneda, Besie	F	15		C	C

The federal and state censuses contain information other than the lists of people that are found on the preceding population schedules. The various census schedules contain information on agriculture, schools, newspapers, and social statistics. The 1885 census shows that male school teachers in Jennings Township received \$18 per month and women \$16. In nearby Garfield Township, men and women school teachers received \$20. The going rate for farm labor was \$16 per month in both townships, and a washerwoman's wages in Garfield was \$1.00 per day. Farm prices differed between the two townships. Milk cows sold for an average of \$35 per head in Jennings and \$30 in Garfield. Fat cattle sold for four cents per pound in Jennings and for three cents in Garfield. The 1915 census shows that F. J. Ruzicka, a farmer, was a miller by trade.

The agricultural census schedules can be useful when reconstructing the history of a family. For example, George J. Tacha, a young farmer in Jennings Township, was renting a farm with a farmhouse at the time of the 1915 census. In March, 1915, he planned to plant 20 acres of corn, 10 acres of sorghum, 10 acres of Kafir, 5 acres of milo, and one acre of potatoes. He owned three horses.

A more complete farming history can be written for Anthony Tacha in 1915. He owned a 640-acre farm that was mortgaged. He had planted 180 acres of winter wheat in the fall of 1914. In the spring of 1915, he planned to plant 50 acres of corn, 10 acres of oats, 7 acres of rye, 20 acres of barley, 10 acres of sorghum, 10 acres of milo for grain and forage, 10 acres of Kafir for forage and hay, and one acre of potatoes.

The Anthony Tacha farm operation was diversified as there were grain and cattle for cash flow, and Anthony apparently had a good year in 1914. He had either fattened and slaughtered or sold for slaughter \$200 worth of livestock and had \$60 worth of poultry and egg sales during the year. He had cut 40 tons of tame hay in 1914 and still had on hand on March 1, 1915, two hundred bushels of corn and 4 bushels of wheat from the previous year's crop.

Tacha's farm operation seemed from the evidence to be modern and efficient. He had a cream separator for separating the cream from the milk that was produced by his 5 milk cows. He had a herd of 13 head of cattle for slaughter and for sale. The animal power for his farm operation came from his herd of 16 horses and 7 mules. He even had a dog on the farm. His farm, including 180 acres of uncultivated pasture land, was fenced, with the 1,200 rods of fence costing \$20 per rod to install. A stream ran through the farm, and this could be used for watering the cattle. A windmill pumped water from a 36 foot deep well.

Anthony Tacha was representative of the established Czech farmers in Decatur County in the spring of 1915. He did not have the largest wheat acreage planted in the fall of 1914, nor the largest farm. John Cilek, Matt Kaspar, and Joseph Skubal had 300 acres of wheat, and Charles Kaspar had 225 acres. Joseph Petracek had 1,200 acres in his farm, and John Cilek had 800. Matt Kaspar's well was 160 feet deep.

The histories of other Czech families can be pieced together. The names which appear in this essay can be used to construct the basic family and the families of the sons

and daughters. The marriage license records in Decatur County or the appropriate counties in Nebraska, Iowa, and Minnesota should be used for dates and places of marriages and the full names of the spouses. Deeds and wills are useful as family members, sometimes in other counties and states, are given. Family Bibles are useful, as are church, lodge, and military records. Older citizens in a community can help with events as well as names, dates, and places. The agricultural schedules of the federal and state censuses can help fill gaps, and mortgage records in courthouses are useful.

For those who wish to write their own family histories, the basic material is in this essay. Miss Lillian Shimmick has provided much useful social, cultural, and economic history, and she is to be commended for her work. The Czechs and their children made important contributions to the development of their adopted county and state as farmers, politicians, county officials, school teachers, and musicians. The Czechs of Decatur County have a proud heritage, and this essay helps preserve some of that heritage that is now over one hundred years old.

<sup>1</sup>Mrs. S. J. Harvie, "The Early History of Decatur County as Mrs. S. J. Harvie Remembers It," Oberlin Times, October 14, 1909.

<sup>2</sup>Schedule I, Population, Decatur County, Kansas, Tenth Decennial Census of the United States, 1880, National Archives (Microfilmed). Janousek was spelled Janausek on the 1880 census, and Heilman was spelled Hilman.

<sup>3</sup>A child listed on the transcribed censuses who was less than a year old was listed according to number of months old at the time of the census. A child whose age was 4/12 on the federal census was born in February, 1880. A child whose age was 4/12 on the Kansas state census was born in November of the preceding year.

<sup>4</sup>A good description of the child-ladder method of ascertained arrival and birth can be found in Barnes Lathrop, Migration into East Texas, 1835-1860 (Austin: The Texas State Historical Association, 1949), 23-33.

<sup>5</sup>Harvie, "The Early History of Decatur County." The newspaper articles which Miss Lillian Shimmick wrote and which



have been edited for this publication should also be consulted.

<sup>6</sup>The migration routes were determined by the child-ladder method.

<sup>7</sup>The original census manuscripts of the 1880 Federal census are in the National Archives, Washington, D. C. Microfilm copies of the 1880 census are available for purchase, or they may be borrowed from or used at the Federal Records Center, 2306 East Bannister Road, Kansas City, Missouri 64131. Microfilm copies of the 1880 census in the Forsyth Library, Fort Hays State University, Hays, Kansas 67601 were used for this transcription.

<sup>8</sup>The state of Kansas took censuses each ten years from 1865 through 1925. The original manuscript copies are in the archives of the Kansas State Historical Society, 120 West Tenth, Topeka, Kansas 66612, and may be researched by anyone. Microfilmed copies of the state censuses in the Forsyth Library, Fort Hays State University, were used for this transcription.

<sup>9</sup>Wenzel Prochejl was listed on the 1905 census as born in Bohemia.

<sup>10</sup>This was the Bartholomew Henry family. It is unknown why this particular spelling was used.

<sup>11</sup>This was apparently an error in recording and was meant to be NEB. John and Mary Fiala were listed on the 1915 census as born in Nebraska and moving from Nebraska.

<sup>12</sup>This was apparently an error in recording and was meant to be NEB. Joseph, Katie, and Jim Ruzicka were listed on the 1915 census as moving from Nebraska to Kansas. Jim was listed as born in Nebraska.

<sup>13</sup>The NOSF abbreviation was not identified. Anne Janousek was listed on the 1895 census as born in Bohemia.

<sup>14</sup>The NOEM abbreviation was not identified. Joseph Kuitig was listed on the 1905 census as born in Austria; Jennie Kuitig was listed as born in Germany.

<sup>15</sup>There was no place given as place moved from to Kansas.

--By James L. Forsythe









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