

## BOHEMIANS PROMINENT IN MANITOWOC COUNTY HISTORY

Accounts of some of the early settlers,  
the history of Tisch Mills, etc.

by Camille Dushek, Mrs. George Pribyl,  
Clarence Spevacheck, Dan Juchniewich  
and others.

### Early Bohemian Immigration

by Dan Juchniewich

Early Bohemian immigration to America, like many other ethnic groups, is closely tied to political and religious confrontations. During the 16th and 17th centuries, Protestantism and Catholicism struggled for supremacy in Europe. Bohemia was a focal point of this controversy. There were many Protestant converts and the government was actively seeking to maintain its political sovereignty. Bohemia elected Frederick of the Palatinate, son-in-law of James I of England, as King. Soon war broke out, later to be called the Thirty Years War. In 1620, the Bohemian army was defeated in a battle near Prague. The Battle of White Mountain, as it was called, led to the loss of independence for the nation and forced many Protestants to flee or die.<sup>1</sup>

People were persecuted for their religious beliefs and many escaped to other European nations. Later, they would be among those people traveling to America. The first known Bohemian to come to America was Augustine Herrman. In 1633, employed by the West India Company, he arrived in New York. Herrman moved to Maryland in 1660. He had been granted 20,000 acres in Cecil and New Castle counties by Lord Baltimore for drawing a map of Virginia and Maryland. This tract of land he named "Bohemia Manor" and subsequent grants of land were called "Three Bohemia Sisters" and "Little Bohemia".<sup>2</sup>

There were many and varied reasons for Europeans, Bohe-

mians included, to come to America. But once they arrived, why would these immigrants travel to Wisconsin? There were only a few miles of railroad in the Midwest during the late 1840's. Most travel was by ship or on foot.

Wisconsin had the advantage of many fine ports on Lake Michigan. It was not far from Chicago where many ships landed after coming up the Mississippi River. The Erie Canal opened easy travel from the East Coast to the Great Lakes and then to Wisconsin. Many early settlers were farmers and the land of Wisconsin appealed to them. The winters were colder than central Europe, but many crops familiar to them could be grown. There was no competition from slave labor to contend with and the taxes were low. Citizenship could be obtained in only one year.

One major factor in the movement of immigrants to Wisconsin was the Official the state maintained in New York City. The job of the "Immigration Commissioner" was to persuade people to settle in Wisconsin. Advertisements for Wisconsin were extensively circulated in Europe.

"Come! In Wisconsin all men are free and equal before the law. . . . Religious freedom is absolute and there is not the slightest connection between church and state. . . . In Wisconsin no religious qualification is necessary for office or to constitute a voter; all that is required is for the man to be 21

years old and to have lived in the state one year."<sup>3</sup>

Bohemian movement into Manitowoc County began in the late 1840's as evidenced by the 1850 Census report which reported that there were only five families residing around Manitowoc Rapids. It was not long after 1850 that many more Bohemian immigrants began to arrive in the county. By the 1860 Census, over 1,700 Bohemians were living in Manitowoc County. According to the information of Mrs. George Pribyl, around Manitowoc, Kewaunee, Stangelville, Mishicot and Tisch Mills, most of the immigrants came from the northern provinces of Domazlice, Mrakov, Pilsen, Straz, Tabor and Prague, Czechoslovakia.

The largest influx of native born Bohemians came during the period between 1850 and 1900, with the latter times showing a slow decrease in numbers. By 1900, there were only 1,666 people in Manitowoc County that gave their birthplace as Bohemia.

Although most of the early immigrants to this area were farmers, as seen in the census lists they also included quite a number of skilled tradesmen and merchants. They were among the early pioneers of this county that farmed the land, built the businesses, started churches, and were responsible, even, for the formation of some of the villages in the area.

#### 1850 Census

The total population of

Manitowoc County was 3,702. Only five families list their native country as Bohemia for a total of nineteen people. Anthony Fiddler, John Arvis, Peter Straker and Linsill Wozarss list their occupations as farmers; Joseph Chloupek as miller

The following chart lists the towns covered in the 1860, 1870 and 1880 U.S. Census reports for the County of Manitowoc, Wisconsin. The numbers reflect only those persons that specifically stated their place of birth as Bohemia. They do not include any person or children with Bohemian ancestry who were born in the United States or anywhere else.

Although many of the Bohemian immigrants came to Manitowoc County because of the excellent farm land, they were not remiss in other fields of endeavor. From the early census reports, here are some of the other occupations and the people involved.

#### 1860 Census report

Cabinet Maker - John Simberski; Shingle Maker - John Feight, Joseph Halker, Frank Schenak; Music Teacher -

Wenzel Shimonick; Teacher - Stephen Herzman; Tailor - Joseph Yenshik, Peter Gilich, Jacob Nepiva; Blacksmith - Francis Budhollow, Wenzel Stroof, Joseph Bonotsni; Miller - Anton Chloupek, John Herzman; Clergy - Father Joseph Malley; Doctor - Anton Chladek; Butcher - Fr. Novak; Tavern Keeper - John Todd, A. Fisher; Printer - Joseph Laup; Gentleman - Anton Ansoerge; Brewer - Anton Kinnel.

#### 1870 Census report

Storekeeper - Ludwig Lewels, John Hrinick; Teacher - Thomas Juranik; Blacksmith - John Blinick, Geo. Scarrda, Jos. Kaper, Wenzel Smozel; Miller - Joseph Jakesch, Frank Fabor-sky, the Chloupek family; Shoemaker - Joseph Kalevader, Jacob Johanik, Wenzel Tucks, Frank Kautsky; Butcher - Frank Yevina, Fred Shreder; Tailor - F. Havlachick, Wencel Musil; Hotelkeeper - Joseph Capitan; Brick Manufacturer - Ferdinand Merek; Cooper - Frank Foster, Jos. Stockinger; Milk Peddler - Paul Reicker; Glue Manufacturer - Hubert Falge; Carver and Sculpture - Frank Hess; Grave Stones and Monuments - John

Mendlick; Fruit Store - Francis Mika; Lunch Hall - John Toddl; Liquor Dealer - Frank Sixta; Clothing Merchant - Julius Brandies.

#### 1880 Census report

Carpenter - Jos. Stephan, Frank Fidler; Justice of Peace and Grocer - Joseph Zelinka; Town of Cooperstown Clerk - Jos. Hejda; Fireman - John Skarda; Storekeeper - Emeal Pech; Harnessmaker - Anton Witt; Druggist - Emil Fischel, John Krejci; Midwife - Rosalie Schroter; Cigarmaker - G. Kuhlanke, John Burik; Candy Store - Anton Tucks; Minister - W. Walenter; Jeweler - John Braun; Peddler - Simon Pick; Manufacturer - Leopold Mann.

These are not all the names or occupations listed in the Census Reports, only those in which the spelling was relatively clear. Some of these may be spelled wrong, but that was how they were written in the report.

1. Thomas Capek, *The Cechs In America*, p.1
2. *Capek*
3. *Capek*, p. 36

Township	1860	Township	1870	1880
Buchanan	4	Cato	44	0
Cato	47	Centerville	0	22
Cooperstown	329	Cooperstown	342	343
Centerville	5	Eaton	0	0
Eaton	1	Franklin	398	404
Franklin	124	Gibson	265	224
Gibson	222	Kossuth	538	505
Kossuth	508	Liberty	0	6
Manitowoc City		Town of Manitowoc	14	19
Ward 1	27	Manitowoc City		
Ward 2	35	Ward 1	17	Ward 1&3 - 78
		Ward 2	16	12
Ward 3	34	Ward 3	92	
Manitowoc Rapids	22	Ward 4	114	140
Town of Manitowoc	4	Manitowoc Rapids	48	103
Maple Grove	35	Maple Grove	48	103
Meeme	0	Meeme	0	5
Mishicot	174	Mishicot	219	186
Newton	30	Newton	0	4
Rockland	73	Rockland	0	89
Rowley	17	Schleswig	0	5
Schleswig	2	Two Creeks	100	60
Two Rivers City		Town of Two Rivers	61	41
Ward 1	2	Two Rivers City		34
Ward 2	16	Ward 1	1	0
Town of Two Rivers	16	Ward 2	4	0
Total Bohemian population	1,727		2,321	2,377
Total County Population	22,416		33,364	37,506

## The Bohemians and Czechs in Manitowoc County

by Camille Dushek, Whitelaw

The Chloupek family came from a place called Kutna Hora, Bohemia during the revolution against Austria. Anton and Wencel Chloupek were the first members of the family to settle in Manitowoc County. They stopped at Manitowoc Rapids for awhile, but soon moved north to start their own business. At this time, the main trail between Milwaukee, Manitowoc and Green Bay ran past the tavern and lodgings of Joseph Poquin in the area called French Creek. The stream that flowed nearby carried the same name. The stream provided the ideal power to drive a mill.

Anton and Wencel began work on a reservoir system and dams to power two mills. They built a dam about one mile upstream and several small dams downstream from that point. The water was collected in a reservoir of about 60 acres with a depth of 16 feet. The first mill, a gristmill, was operated by Wencel. The second mill, a sawmill, was operated by Anton. Anton also ran a brewery. Soon after the mills were in operation their parents, Joseph and Marie and brothers John, Joseph, Jr. and Emil joined them.

The Chloupek family became prominent members of the community. They were always ready to help fellow immigrants until the time these people could buy their own land. But tragedy struck on Sunday in the spring of 1880. Heavy rains combined with snow began to swell the stream. Ice cracked and began to pile up around the reservoir dam. A man was sent to open the dam to relieve some pressure, but by the time he got close he was met by rushing waters as the dam broke. The Chloupeks also farmed besides operating the mills and brewery. Adolph, son of Anton, tried to free the livestock in the barn but they would not leave. The animals perished but Adolph and a hired hand sought safety on the barn roof before the timbers collapsed. They were swept down stream where they saved themselves only by clinging to a stout tree limb.

With the flood, the Chloupek

fortune was wiped out. After losing almost everything, Anton died shortly after. Joseph, Jr. rebuilt a saloon and hotel about one half mile south of its old location. The dam was never rebuilt. Some of the bricks from the foundation of the brewery still remain.

In the northwest part of the county Michael Kellner found an area he liked to settle in. Kellner walked to Green Bay to work until he earned enough money to establish himself in what was to become Kellnersville. He built a sawmill, flourmill, tannery and a store during the course of his life. Some of the other families in the area were: Wilda, Straka, Cigel, Volzal, Kosliv, Fiedler, Reim and Wiesner. Most of these came from the province of Domazlice.

Families around Kellnersville would bring their crops and lumber to Michael Kellner's store to trade for food and household goods. People had confidence in the Kellners. They began to deposit money at the store just like at a bank. However, many of these depositors lost their savings when the store failed.

Some of the citizens in and around Kellnersville were: F. Bezucha, blacksmith; M. Ledvina, shoemaker; Dr. Tompach; John Polivka, store owner; Jan Hynek, farmer who owned a steam operated threshing machine.

Vaclav Mencil settled in what was to become Menchalville. He came from Melnik Cechy in 1854. Others in the area were Cizek, Sikora, Kliment who owned the first ten horsepower threshing machine and Vojtech Harous who taught the Czech School in Menchalville.

Settlers around Greenstreet used cedar logs to make shingles. These were traded at \$1.50 per thousand for food and household goods. The store in Greenstreet was run by a man named Doubeck; a dance hall run by Mr. Shubers and a tavern run by Zlinka.

Rosecrans had a tavern and dance hall run by A. Rott, a blacksmith shop owned by W. Petska, Dance Hall and store

owned by a man named Kralovec. North of this area the Yakishs had a mill and dam. A Mr. Kozlovsky owned a tavern called Kozlovsky Corners.

Early immigrants to the Melnik area were: W. Shimonek, F. Podhala, J. Krejci, G. Just, J. Porqdek, W. Maloy, M. Schan. J. Smrcek was an instructor in the local Sokol. Shimonek owned the store, dance hall and hotel. There was a tavern owned by M. Suchan. The Post Office had mail delivered twice a week from Two Creeks. A man by the name of Sestak built outside bake ovens. North of Melnik is a stream that runs into Devil's River. This stream was named Kriwanek's Creek after Mr. Kriwanek who settled there in 1850.

South of Melnik on the Green Bay Road lived the Witts, who owned a store and tavern. This business was later owned by J. Zeman. Further along was a dance hall owned by Schlies.

Some of the early Bohemians in the city of Manitowoc were: John Chloupek and Adolph Schenian - attorneys, Joseph Wattawa - funeral director, Kovars and A. Fanta - tailors, Mr. Benes and Anton Topic - shoemakers, Fred Simonek - ran a Boarding House and stable, Anton Koslovsky - Pharmacist, Charles Zeman - owned a large grain elevator.

### HISTORY OF TISCH MILLS 1854-1972

Up to the year 1850 this vicinity was then entirely a wilderness of only Indian paths along the East Twin River, which at that time was called the "Mishicot." The Indian village "Black Earth" was about one and half miles following north on this river from what is now Tisch Mills.

There were some French Canadians and Norwegian families inhabiting the lake shore area and up the river as far as Mishicot, also at Shoto and Francis Creek.

A Bohemian family group, John, Anton, Joseph and Emmanuel Chlopek immigrated to this country in early forties and settled in Kossuth, which now is Francis Creek, where they built a sawmill and a brewery. Many of their European friends when they came to this country,

would stay and work for them until they found some land on which to settle. The Cholopek's were hospitable to all immigrants from Bohemia.

The Stangel family came to this country in 1853 sailing across the ocean to Baltimore. From there by rail to Milwaukee, then with thirteen other families, Dworaks, Konops, Sklenars and others sailed on a two-masted boat on Lake Michigan from Milwaukee to Manitowoc. They stayed with the Chlopek's until they obtained the tract of land.

In 1854 Joseph Stangel, the youngest son, then nineteen years old, walked from Francis Creek to Mishicot, and upon the advice of others, followed the river to this locality. That night he slept under a tree near where a barn now stands on a farm, whose present owner is Joe Rehak (same tract of land which was obtained from the government by Wenzel Stangel, a brother of Joseph. Next day he was awakened by an Indian who came by. With his sign language Joseph followed the Indian to a log cabin, where a white man, another settler by the name of Wencil Sinkula lived. This cabin was across from Mike Pivonka's Hall, which later was used by the early settlers as their first church.

After looking over this land, Joseph Stangel returned to Kossuth. and advised his father

and brothers Wencil and John to settle in this territory. A year later 1855 he traveled by foot to the government land office at Menasha, where he obtained the tract of land, in the town of Mishicot, Manitowoc County, estimated at about one half section for three dollars an acre. This land was divided by the three sons, Wencil, John and Joseph. The southeast corner of Tisch Mills is now on some of this land. They immediately began cutting over the wilderness and erecting small dwellings.

About the year 1867 the Charles Tisch family came to settle in this community. They built a sawmill, and later a gristmill. As clearing land and logging was the chief industry then, a pier was built at Two Creeks in 1861 by Pfister and Vogel Leather Company, and also a tannery. This was the most important lake port on Lake Michigan where boats made regular visits to take tanned leather, bark, shingles, hay and lumber to Milwaukee and return with cargos of freight and mail. One of the sources of revenue for the settlers, in the early days, was hemlock bark which was hauled on wagons and sleds to the tannery. The milling business was also of great assistance to the pioneer in exchanging his produce for flour. The mills went by the name

of "Carlton Mills" but in 1879 Charles Tisch, rechristened his new mills, "Tisch Mills" by which this community received its name.

In 1895 the river overflowed its banks and destroyed the sawmill which never was rebuilt, as most of the logging was out of this territory by now. Charles Tisch continued in the flour and feed mill activities for some time, but logging was the main industry in which he was interested, so he sold his gristmill to Charles Novotny and W. Seyk and moved to Wausau. Later when logging started in western U.S.A., the Tisch family moved to Tacoma, Washington.

Charles Novotny disposed of his properties to W. Seyk company and in 1903 the partnership of Ed Schleis and Joseph Konop was formed, under the name of Schleis and Konop Milling Company. The building was completely destroyed by fire in 1907 but it was later rebuilt as it now stands. The business was sold to Josef Kohnle in 1945 and at present is under the name of Kohnle Milling Co.

In the early eighty's a brewery was erected east of the mills, known as the "Langenkamp Brothers Brewing Co." but in 1900 the village experienced the second conflagration. The brewery was destroyed by fire and never was rebuilt.

First retail mercantile establishment in the village was owned by Mr. Sternard who sold his interests to Adolph Polachek. In 1884 the property was sold to F.W. Stangel and Charles Marchaled. The latter disposed of his interests to R.W. Stangel, who then built a larger store and conducted a mercantile and farm machinery store for forty-five years up to the time of his death in 1924. His two sons Edward and Joseph had joined him in the business and they continued with the business until 1954 when they sold the store to George Krupka, who in 1960 sold his interests to Harold Janda. The store was remodeled by Mr. Janda and he continued in the business until 1966 when Joseph Kolarik and sons took over and are conducting the business at the present time.

The County Line House, one of



Charles Tisch Home — 1867 (Picture taken 1910)

the first structures erected by Joseph Stangel was east of the store. It was a dance hall and refreshment parlor and also provided room for the first Post Office. Later Mr. Stangel sold all his holdings in the village proper to Charles Marchaled, who in turn sold out to Henry Pentzcim. The last owner was Joseph Lodel. In 1920 he disposed of the site to the Tisch Mills State Bank.

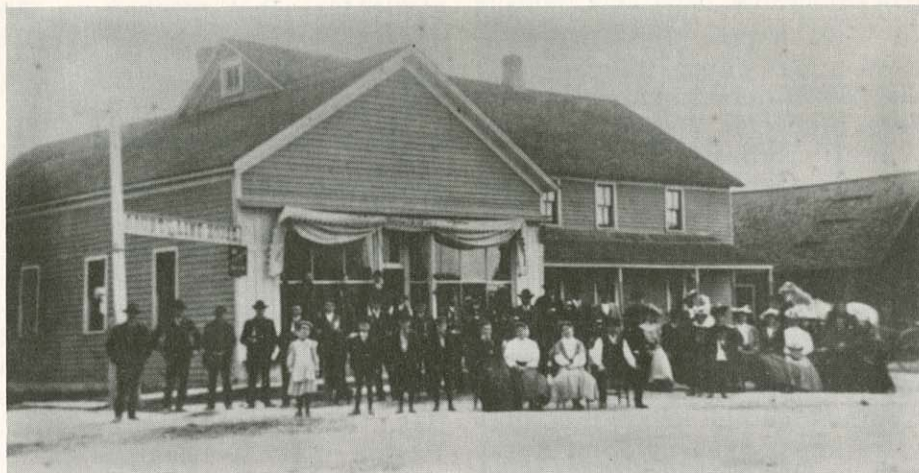
This community was without banking facilities until the organization of the Tisch Mills State Bank in 1917 which opened its business in the corner of Forst's Hotel. The bank utilized these quarters until 1921 when a modern structure was erected on the site where the County Line House stood.

In the pioneer days the only post office in this section was at Two Creeks, called "Nero Post Office". The mail was brought in by boat, then it was conveyed weekly to the County Line House by Mr. Parma on horseback. The farmers and villagers would come and get their mail there.

The Post Office was transferred to the Stangel store in 1884. F.W. Stangel was named postmaster and held this position for forty years, up to the time of his death in 1924, when Anton Olson succeeded him. The Post Office is in the bank building at the present time.

The first means of telephone communication was a telephone installed at the Stangel and Marshaled store in 1887, by the Wisconsin Telephone Co. The local people realized that lines could be built to communicate from their homes so with the assistance of Wisconsin Telephone Co. and Dr. DeNeVeau, Anton Olson and Anton Holly the County Line Telephone Co. was organized and incorporated for \$10,000 on February 27, 1910 with a switchboard at the store. In 1921 the switchboard office was moved to Anton Olsons, later the Orin Olson home. The County Line Telephone Company sold to Stockbridge-Sherwood Company in 1967 and since has been operated by them.

The Tisch Mills Fire Department was organized in 1906. Hydrants were put in at various



*County Line House, Tisch Mills. Built by Joseph Stangel 1st Post Office was in this building. Now Tisch Mills State Bank is on this site.*

points throughout the village. The fire house was a shed erected east of Forst's Hall. The water tower was across the street. In 1920 a Fire House was built near the mill. In 1950 the present Fire Station was built north of Forst's Hall.

Other business places of interest from the early years were a busy tinsmith by the name of Joe Horkey. The first cobbler was Albert Sweykar who also made boots and shoes. Wencil Sykora established a harness shop in 1880 and made a success of the enterprise. After his death his son Edwin took over. The first blacksmith shop was built by George Sladky who operated it for many years. In 1917 Wencil Ciha Sr. began operating a blacksmith shop here. Wencil Beranek was the wagonmaker. Two meat markets were operated here in the 1900's by Charles Lodel and Anton Holly.

The garage by Fank Riha and Fabian Auto Co.

First cheese factory in operation was located on the Wensel Dolezal farm. Several years later F.W. Stangel built a cheese factory west of the store, which operated for thirty years and around 1930 was purchased by Pauly and Pauly Cheese Company of Manitowoc. A Dairy Farmers Cheese Factory was organized in 1913 and a new building was built in 1917.

The first church, Nativity of Blessed Virgin Mary, was built in 1858, it was enlarged and remodeled in 1927 and renovated in 1969. The parish house was built in 1918 and the parish hall in 1964.

Among the first physicians to practice in Tisch Mills were Dr. Flushers, Hoyer, Chloupek, Weber and DeNeVeau. Those were the days the doctors made house calls and traveled with horse and buggy or by cutters.

Frank Shimel was the undertaker and director of funerals until 1918 when Joe T. Konop succeeded him in the business. He was the undertaker until 1931 when he died. His son, Victor then continued in the business.

Lastly we must not forget the famous "Schauer's Brass Band" organized in 1856 which had ten members. It was the first Bohemian band in this territory, furnishing music for all occasions, church festivals, weddings and dances. After some of the members passed away, new ones replaced them, later under the name of "Tisch Mills Brass Band"

Tisch Mills was always a thriving and flourishing village, the settlement provided plenty of opportunity for those with a thirst to hoist a few. In the early years. W.R. Forst operated a hotel and saloon, Joseph Lodel was proprietor of another, Frank Urbanek ran a third and Tom Pivonka the fourth.

#### **Nativity of Blessed Virgin Mary Church**

**By Mrs. George Pribyl**

The first pioneers of our parish, who came from Bohemia, now Czechoslovakia, to settle here were Wencil Sinkula, Joseph, John and Wencil Stangel, Joe Sklenars, Thomas Vocadlo, Thomas Kozelka, Wencil Riha

and Langer. The latter two settled in the Town of Carlton, Kewaunee County. Between 1857 and 1862 others that arrived were John Mudroch, Wencil Svoboda, Wencil Schaur, Joe Kaiser, Albert Lodel, John Zahorik, Matt Slonp, John Dworak and Anton Hallada.

Wencil Sinkula had a log cabin which was across the road from Mike Pivonka's Hall and tavern. The early settlers would gather here on Sundays to pray and sing hymns together. These meetings were supervised by John Rezac and Anton Schleis up to 1856, when word was received that a Bohemian Missionary, Father Joseph Maly, was visiting several settlements in this territory. A request by the people was sent to the Bishop in Milwaukee for Father Maly to come here. September 28, 1856, St. Wenceslaus Feast Day, Father Maly came. This same log cabin was converted into the first temporary church; a family table served as an altar on which Father Maly read the Mass. Thereafter he returned here twice a year. In the winter Mass was celebrated in the cabin, in the summer outside under the trees.

By 1861, the congregation increased to fifty-two families. The members considered building a new church. Wencil Sinkula donated two and one half acres of land for a cemetery. He also sold one and one half acres of cleared land for building a new church. The cost was \$20 for the land. The frame church was 50 x 30 feet and 17,500 shingles were used in its construction. There were only two pairs of oxen available, owned by Joe Sklenar and Tom Voadlo, so most of the provisions were carried on foot from Manitowoc. The church was dedicated on September 8, 1863; this being the feast day of the Nativity of Blessed Virgin Mary.

By 1888, the congregation grew to 148 families. Again, it was decided to build a larger church of brick. All the bricks came from a brick yard owned by a man named Schaff. This brick yard was located between Ben Stangel's farm and Mike Pivonka's Hall. The church, complete with a tin roof and 8 1/2 foot high tower, cost \$4500. T v o

carpenters that worked on the church were Lawrence Ebel and Frank Shimel.

**St. Wenceslaus, Greenstreet  
From: St. Joseph Parish,  
1870-1970**

Beginnings are always difficult. But beginnings in a strange land create even greater difficulties. The first settlers in the tiny community of Greenstreet found a variety of difficulties and problems which soon seemed to be the order of the day. Father Adalbert Cipin, Pastor of St. Wenceslaus at the turn of the century gives us much of the early history. He mentions that it was a "period filled with sorrow, distress and suffering with only a few periods of happiness."

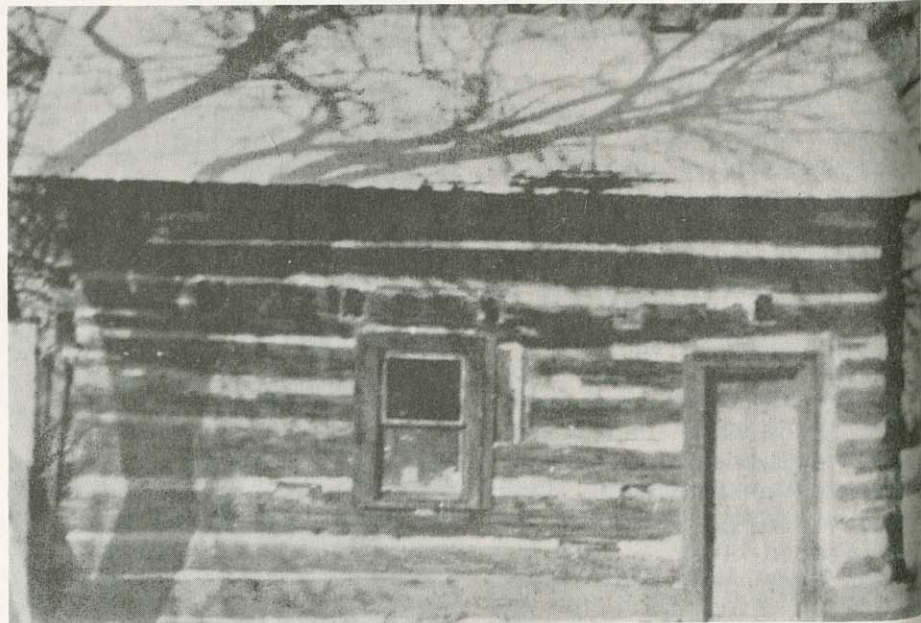
The first settlers arrived in 1853 and 1854. They were Wenzel Zeman, Simon Zaruba, Kasper Birger and a gentleman whose surname was Trestnik. All came from the community of Kremezske in Bohemia. The desperate misery and hunger of the country were the main reasons why these people migrated to America. Many who came to the state of Wisconsin stopped in Chicago but quickly moved north because of a severe cholera epidemic.

Having arrived, the immigrants lived in huts with some of the pioneers who had preceded them. Some worked on farms, in grist and sawmills to obtain sufficient funds to purchase land

and build homes for themselves. At first, they constructed log shanties for protection against the inclement weather and wolves. Soon they began clearing the forest and with the timber built more suitable homes and barns. Slowly, fine farms dotted the landscape.

As early as 1854, the settlers began gathering materials to build a church. One of the first missionaries to visit the area was Father Maly. He offered Mass in the home of Frank Simbersky. Here he also baptized the children, performed marriages and preached the Word of God. Simon Zaruba and Frank Simbersky donated land for a church and cemetery. The progress of building was slow. John Tiecher, a carpenter, directed the building of the church. The project took two years to complete, including the tower. A bell was purchased and an altar constructed by a Mr. Valek, also a carpenter. John Braun, a clockmaker, later paid for improvements to the altar. A charcoaled picture of Saint Wenceslaus was enclosed in a gold frame; this work done by seminarian, Joseph Koudelky, later to become the first Bohemian Bishop of Cleveland, Ohio.

Among the earliest members listed, we find the following: Frank Vanis, Wenzel Doubek, Frank Skvor, Kapinas. Albrecht, John Fajt, Joseph Hynek and a



Cabin owned by Wencil Sinkula. First temporary church of "Nativity of Blessed Virgin Mary Church"

Mr. Hruska, Sustr, Kriz and Ziegler. The first parish councilors were Wenzel Zeman and Karl Pinger.

### St. Mary Catholic Church, Reedsville

#### From History of Reedsville

The Church of The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary was built by a settlement of Catholic Bohemians. These people, twenty-five families, bought the property on Menasha St. in 1863 and in 1865 built a small log church (24 x 36), where the present cemetery is located. The first baptism recorded is that of John Tikalsky, son of Elizabeth and John Tikalsky, January 1, 1872 by the Rev. Gideon Mazanek. The first Mass was when Frank Kocourek and Barbara Foreyt were married January 4, 1871 by Rev. Joseph Maly. The first officers of the congregation were John Tikalsky, Matt Voboril and Joseph Tikalsky.

#### Stastny Hotel, Francis Creek

From Mr. and Mrs. Fred Kliment  
Emma Kliment is the daughter  
of Frank Stastny

The Stastny Hotel was owned and run by John Stastny. Besides the hotel, there was a tavern, dance hall, post office and for a short time a grocery. In 1895, John sold the business to his son, Frank, who continued to operate it until 1924.

After Frank took over, the tavern became known as "Uncle Frank's". He continued as postmaster until Rural Free Delivery came to the area. The mail would be delivered to the hotel once a week. People then came to pick up their own mail.

Dances were not held every week, but only several times a year. In the winter, three wood stoves had to be stoked to warm the hall. On cold days, the music and dancing did more to keep people warm than the stoves. A picnic was usually held along with any dances held in the summer.

Brick ovens were used to bake rye bread. Wood fires would be started in the ovens and allowed to heat the bricks to the right temperature. Then the wood fire would be removed and the bread placed in the oven to bake.

Frank Stastny also owned a 120 acre farm near the hotel. On this,



Father Maly, first pastor of St. Wenceslaus.

he raised cows, horses and various crops. About once a month, there would be a cattle and pig fair in the area. Farmers brought the animals they had for sale to the fair. There other farmers or dealers from the cities would buy them. Once larger meat packing centers became organized, this practice of fairs quickly died out.

The Stastny Hotel is now the site of the Hilltop Haven, Francis Creek.

#### Excerpts from the MANITOWOC DAILY HERALD

July 16, 1901 — Francis Mika was born at Prague, Bohemia August 1, 1832, where he received a liberal education and for some time was engaged in the manufacturing business. In 1854 he came to this country and settled in the northern part of Manitowoc County, trading with

a few scattered pioneers and Indians. Three years later he removed to this city and was at first employed as a salesman in the mercantile business, and later established himself as a dealer in farm produce. After the Civil War broke out he received from Governor Harvey a lieutenant's commission but when about to start for Madison, was taken seriously ill and was thus prevented from serving in the field. After his recovery he was appointed clerk of the board of enrollment for the Sixth Congressional District which met at Green Bay, where he remained one year, devoting his leisure time to the study of law with the intention of taking a course in the University after the war was over. A sudden and severe inflammation of the eyes, however, resulted in total blindness and put a stop to his ambition. With the help of his industrious wife he conducted a confectionery business at Manitowoc and acted frequently as interpreter to the circuit courts and lower courts. In several counties of the state he became known as a political speaker.

During his blindness he wrote a number of dramatic plays, some of which were produced at Chicago and Prague. He also wrote novelettes and fourteen articles on physical phenomena for a newspaper in Cleveland, Ohio. His poems in the Bohemian



Frank Stastny — Stastny Hotel Bar (picture taken June 1920). Now the Hilltop in Francis Creek.

and German language were published in newspapers and a few in the English language in the Manitowoc Pilot. In 1891 his wife died and after that time he made his home with his daughter, Mrs. Ernst Wagner. There are two other children, Mrs. Charles Fischer, and Mrs. M. Ries, both of Chicago.

**August 21, 1901** — To adequately give the life story of Leopold Mann would be to enter into the history of the village and later city of Two Rivers, so intimately was he connected with every phase of its growth and life. Mr. Mann was born in the year 1834 in Prague, Bohemia, and came to this country with his parents in 1846. The family was very poor at first and settled on a farm in New York state, where the boys of the household were taught to bear their share of the burdens of a pioneer life and were given the independent character that assured to them future success. After several years young Leopold started west in order to try his fortune in the new country, then opening in Wisconsin. At first he turned to mercantile pursuits, engaging in business at West Bend in a small way. By this time his brothers, Henry, Hermann and Joseph had joined him and the three then moved to Two Rivers, in 1862. The young men then purchased an interest in the Two Rivers Manufacturing Company, which was owned by H.H. Smith the father of Two Rivers, and William Aldrich, afterwards a congressman from an Illinois district. After some years of partnership with these men the Manns secured the entire control of the plant and have operated and steadily enlarged it to this day. The plant now consists of a new sawmill and pail factory, the chair factory being discontinued some three years ago at the time of a strike. Leopold Mann was vice president of the concern and resident manager, his brothers Hermann and Joseph having been dead for some time and Henry residing in Milwaukee.

Mr. Mann was married to Miss Anna Neistadt, of New York in 1865 and his wedded life was most pleasant and harmonious. His wife predeceased him in July



*Dance Hall of Stastny Hotel (Taken June 1920)*

1894 and two sons, Walter and Albert and one daughter, Mrs. Joseph Cooper, of New Haven, Conn. survive both their parents. In private life the decedent was a great lover of the home and while a life long Republican always refused to be burdened by the cares of public office, although often solicited to do so.

**Feb. 13, 1899** — Frank Willinger was born in Bohemia, Feb. 24, 1848. He emigrated to America in 1867 and located in Manitowoc County. He opened a tailoring establishment at Clarks Mills and after conducting the same for some time removed to Cato and engaged in the retail liquor business. Not being satisfied with this he removed to Newell Minn., and engaged in the brewing business. He remained there for six years and again returned to the scenes of his first ventures. He entered into partnership with John Schreihart and together they established the Schreihart Brewery. After a few years he disposed of his interest in the plant and opened a retail liquor store at the corner of Washington and Eighth Streets. This he conducted up to the time of his death. He was married in 1868 to Miss Margaret Jrippner. His wife and four children, Joseph, William, Anna, and Margaret survive him.

**Feb. 15, 1899** — Joseph Krainik was born in Bohemia, January 25, 1845, his parents being natives of the same country. In company with his parents he emigrated to America in January 1857 and they settled on a farm in the Town of Kossuth, this county. His early advantages were limited and life was a struggle for an existence. At the age of 13 he was obliged to assist in the

support of the family and worked for fifteen cents a day to keep the wolf from the door. In February 1868 he was united in marriage to Miss Lizzie Hlava, of Kossuth, and they settled on a farm of their own.

In 1881 they moved to this city and shortly after locating here the family was afflicted with small pox. Three children died from the disease and Mr. and Mrs. Krainik and one child were the only ones of the large family, who escaped the plague.

The children who survive him are Joseph, of Milwaukee, Mary, Anna, Emma, Rosa, Vlasta, Libbie and Julia of this city. Three brothers and two sisters also survive him. They are Anton Krainik, of Lodi, Wenzel and Stephen, of this city, and Mrs. Barta and Mrs. Spevacek, of this city.

**June 5, 1899** — Wenzel Krainik was born in Bohemia, Sept. 28, 1846, and came with his parents to this country in 1856. The family located in the Town of Kossuth. Mr. Krainik assisted his father in running the farm. He was married Sept. 21, 1867 to Miss Anna Svoboda, the wife who survives him, and the family continued to reside at Kossuth until 1873, when they moved to this city. Upon moving to this city, Mr. Krainik engaged in business for himself and about 12 years ago he established the general store, now conducted by his children, at the corner of Tenth and Buffafo Streets. Mr. Krainik served as a member of the county board for several terms and was elected a member of the city council six times. He was one of the board of directors of the North Side Opera House and was president of the



local lodge C.S.P.S.

### Frank Benisek

Frank Benisek, one of the successful agriculturists of the Town of Manitowoc Rapids, who is engaged in operations of the old Benisek homestead, was born October 22, 1860, in Bohemia, and is a son of Mathias and Paulina Benisek. In 1871 Mathias Benisek brought his family to the United States, there being eleven children in the family: Ignatz, Josephine, Anthony, Vencel, Mary, John, Hennie, Annie, Paulina, Frank, and Barbara. They came directly to Manitowoc County, and made their home in a log cabin on the present farm of Frank Benisek, in which they lived until the father could build a more modern home. His remaining years were spent on this property, and he died in 1900, when eighty-eight years of age, his widow surviving him nine years and being about the same age at the time of her death.

In 1891 Mr. Benisek was married to Miss Emma Strouf, daughter of John and Anna Strouf, who came from the country and settled first in the Town of Kossuth, later moving to the Town of Gibson, where Mrs. Benisek was born. Seven children have been born to Mrs. and Mrs. Benisek, namely: Anthony, Edward, Frank, Charles, Adolph, Eleanor and Emil.

### Vencel Benisek

Vencel Benisek, who is successfully engaged in agricultural pursuits in the Town of Manitowoc Rapids, is a native of Bohemia and a son of Mathias and Paulina Benisek, . . .

Until he was twenty-seven years of age, Vencel Benisek worked on his father's farm, and he then went to northern Michigan, where for ten years he was employed in the iron foundaries. Returning to Manitowoc County he bought the land on which he is now conducting operations, and he has greatly improved the farm in many ways, remodeling the house and erecting new barns. His land is very productive, and he has made a success of his agricultural ventures. Mr. Benisek was married in 1879 to Miss Barbara Halama, daughter of Joseph Halama. Mrs. Benisek



W. Sykora Harness Shop

was born in Bohemia, in which country her parents spent all their lives. Seven children have been born to Mr. and Mrs. Benisek, namely: Jennie, Otelia, Sophia, Julia, Lydia, Agnes and Vencel, Jr.

### Wenzel Blaha

Wenzel Blaha, a substantial citizen and practical business man of Two Rivers, Wisconsin, who is junior partner of the firm of Knipfer & Blaha, fish dealers, was born in Two Creeks, Manitowoc County, September 1, 1863, and is a son of Frank and Anna (Chavhaur) Blaha. Frank Blaha was born in Bohemia, and came to the United States during the late '50's, traveling on foot from Manitowoc to the mills in Two Creeks. Securing forty acres of wild land in that section, he proceeded to clear and cultivate it, gradually adding to his holdings until he had one hundred and twenty acres of finely cultivated land, on which he spent the remainder of his life. He was a progressive worker in church circles, assisting in building two churches in Two Creeks. His death occurred in 1904 when he was eighty-three years of age, his wife still surviving on the old homestead, being sixty-eight or seventy years old.

Wenzel Blaha received his education in the district schools of Two Creeks, after leaving which he started out for himself and secured employment in the lumber woods. He was married

in 1889 to Miss Mary Short, a school teacher, born at Two Rivers, a daughter of John Short, a native of Ireland, who enlisted for service in the Civil War from Two Rivers and spent his active years in farming in Manitowoc County. After his marriage Mr. Blaha located at Two Creeks, where for three years he was the proprietor of a saloon and hotel, and during the next four or five years he was engaged in handling grain for Schroeder Brothers. At this time he formed a partnership with George Knipfer, under the firm name of Knipfer & Blaha, in the fish business, . . .

### John Braun

John Braun, proprietor of one of the foremost business establishments of Two Rivers, has been a well known member of the jewelry trade in Manitowoc County for thirty-five years, having founded his present business in 1876, on Washington Street, Two Rivers. He was born December 5, 1854, in Bohemia, and is a son of Joseph and Anna (Petrok) Braun, whose other children, all born in Bohemia, were as follows: Mary, who married Joseph Yakish of Manitowoc County; John Frank who is deceased; and Caroline, who married Charles Etzler, of Reedsville, this county. Joseph Braun was a watchmaker and jeweler by occupation, and in 1866 brought his family to America, locating first in

Manitowoc and then going to Cooperstown, where he died in 1908, at the age of eighty-two, while his wife passed away in 1905, when seventy-six years old.

John Braun was twelve years old when he accompanied his parents to America, and by the time he was fourteen he was a skilled jeweler. He continued to work with his father after coming to this country until 1876, when he established himself in business on Washington Street, Two Rivers, and from a small beginning built up one of the finest businesses in eastern Wisconsin. For thirty years he was also interested in the photograph gallery which is now owned and managed by his son, Paul, on Washington Street, but who has now retired.

In 1881 Mr. Braun was married to Miss Laura Chopek who was born in Manitowoc in 1863, and they had two children: Edward and Paul. Mr. Braun has held office on the city board of alderman, but has never sought other public offices, his business duties claiming all of his time and attention. Fraternaly he is connected with the Knights of Columbus and the Elks, and he and Mrs. Braun are consistent members of the Catholic church.

#### **Hon. John Chloupek**

Hon. John Chloupek, judge of the county court of Manitowoc County, was born in Kossuth township, July 20, 1861, and belongs to one of this section's

pioneer families. Joseph Chloupek, the grandfather of Judge Chloupek, had five sons: John, Anton, Wenzel, Joseph, and Emil, of whom Anton and Wenzel came to Wisconsin in 1847 from New York, and the others of the family followed during the next year. They were typical pioneers of Manitowoc County, there being only one pair of boots among the five sons, and the journey being made with their provisions strapped to their backs. Locating the Kossuth township, on Francis Creek, the boys secured work at sixteen cents per day, in order to secure the means of purchasing implements to work their wild land, none of which had been cleared, and to furnish provisions for the family until the farm could be made to pay for itself. Later they built the first gristmill in Kossuth township, and some time after that Wenzel built a gristmill and sawmill, the latter being the first sawmill in that township.

John received his early education in the country schools and then entered the Two Rivers high school. After this, he engaged in teaching, and so continued from 1879 until 1885. In 1886 he was elected clerk of the circuit court, serving in that capacity for six years, and in 1891 entered the law department of the University of Wis., at Madison, being admitted to the bar in 1892. On his return to

Manitowoc County he was elected district attorney and served for four years, but met with defeat in 1896. He then engaged in practice with Judge Baensch, and in 1901 was elected to the office of Judge of the county court, being re-elected to that position until 1913.

Judge Chloupek was married May 16, 1888, to Julia Bressler, daughter of Charles and Gabriele (Fischer) Bressler, who came to Manitowoc County in 1848, and to this union there have been born four sons and one daughter, all of whom survive.

#### **Hubert Falge**

Hubert Falge, who has continuously resided in Manitowoc for the past forty-four years, is one of the best known and most highly respected citizens here and has long been an active factor in public affairs. He was born in Trautenau, Bohemia, on the 29th of February, 1836, and received an academic education. For ten years he was an instructor of Latin, German, and History in the Real Schule at Nachod, Bohemia. In 1860 he wedded Miss Mary Ludvik. In 1868 he crossed the Atlantic to the new world, settling in Manitowoc, Wisconsin, where he began the manufacture of glue. This industry has since been much enlarged and is now known as the Armour Glue Works. In 1869, having established himself in business and also prepared a home for his family, Mr. Falge sent for his wife and children, who joined him here. During the school year of 1873 and 1874 he acted as an instructor of German in the first ward school. In 1878 he was elected clerk of the court on the Democratic ticket and, being re-elected three times, served continuously until 1887 or for a period of nine years. From that time to the present he has served, without interruption, as justice of the peace in the first ward, notary public, insurance solicitor and collector for the Manitowoc Electric Light Company. he has also filled many other positions of honor and trust which have been entrusted to him.

Mr. Falge lost his first wife on the 7th of July, 1880, she passing away after a brief illness. On the



*Charles Lodel Meat Market, Tisch Mills.*

31st of December, 1883, he was again married, his second union being with Augusta Leverenz. His children are seven in number: Dr. Louis Falge, of Manitowoc; Mrs. Mary Burmeister, Onekama, Mich.; Mrs. Hermine Morris, San Diego, CA.; Mrs. Anne Copps, Los Angeles, CA.; Mrs. Bertha Barnard, Manistee, Michigan; Ottmar, a senior law student at the University of Wis.; and Mrs. Ludmilla Rahr, of Manitowoc.

#### Frank Sixta

He came to the new world from Prague in 1867, and shortly after his arrival he established a wholesale liquor business, in connection with which he also dealt in bar supplies. The undertaking prospered from the beginning, and after a few years he admitted a Mr. Arns, of Sheboygan, to a partnership. Later he was again alone in the business and subsequently organized the firm of F. Sixta & Sons, his associates being E.C. and Edward W. Sixta. The former withdrew from the firm, Dr. L.H. Sixta taking his place as a stockholder in 1909. He and his brother Edward still carry on the business, the latter having entire charge although both are financially interested. The trade of the house has continually grown until the business now extends all over the state.

#### F. Stupecky

Mr. Stupecky, who has been engaged in the manufacture of glue in Manitowoc for forty years, was born in Bohemia, on June 20, 1845. He is a son of Wenzel and Mary (Musil) Stupecky. In 1855 they emigrated to America, settling in Manitowoc.

Leaving school at the age of thirteen, Mr. Stupecky found work in a local mercantile shop. During the eight years he was employed there, he also acted as an interpreter of German and Bohemian in the city courts. After two years in Chicago, Mr. Stupecky returned in 1868 to run a mercantile business of his own. Two years later he sold the business and joined with Hubert Falge in the establishment of a glue factory. After the retirement of Mr. Falge from the business, he continued to operate it alone.

#### Joseph Mrskosh

Joseph Mrskosh, the proprie-



This picture was taken in 1909 on the Wencel M. Stangel farm, now Benjamin Stangel Farm.

Left to right: Wencil Stangel, Sr., Ben Stangel, Edw. Jansky, Emil Stangel, Martin Sklenars, Louis Lambert, Joseph Rous, Wencil I. Stangel, Frank Roidt, Wencil M. Stangel, Wencil Fronk, Joe W. Stangel. Top row: (on water wagon) William and Louis Stangel. On the engine, Joe A. Stangel, Joe Yersch, W. Schusta. Standing in front of engine, George Stangel.

tor of the Range Line House, was born in Bohemia, February 22, 1854, son of Frank and Antonia Mrskosh. In 1866 the family came to the United States on a sailing vessel that took twenty-four days. Frank had only thirty dollars when they arrived in Milwaukee, where he worked as a bridge-tender to earn the money to proceed to Manitowoc County. Locating at Cooperstown, Frank followed his trade as a cooper and purchased twenty acres of land.

After his father's death in 1870, Joseph stayed on at Cooperstown until his marriage to Mary Vodvaska. They purchased a farm and ran it for twelve years, after which Mr. Mrskosh obtained the Range Line House and five acres of land. He made many improvements to the brick



Back row: (1 to r) George Stangel, Wenzel Stangel, Reverend John Pelnar, West, Texas. Wenzil Riha, Norman, Reverend Herback, Norman, Wisconsin, Joseph Stangel (tavern) Stangel's corner.

Front row: (1 to r) Charles Stangel (Ben's brother) Harvey Stangel, Manitowoc, Betty Pribek, Pelnar, cousins West, Texas, Mary Riha, (wife of Wzl) Viola (Stangel) Manitowoc, Mrs. George Fannie Stangel, Clara (Riha) Pekarek, Ben Stangel, Sr.

hotel and tavern, also adding thirty acres to his property.

The information about Benisek, Blaha, Braun, Chloupek, Falge, Sixta, Stupecky and Mrskosh is taken from the second volume of Falge's *History of Manitowoc County*.

#### The Schauer Brass Band

The Schauer's Brass Band of Tisch Mills was organized in 1856. The Schauers had recently come from Europe and had undoubtedly received their musical training in the "old country". The first band they brought together here consisted of 10 members; Wencil Schauer, Sr., Wencil Schauer, Jr., Albert Lodel, Frank Smidel, Matt Koutnik, Wencil Sazama, Frank Schleis Sr., and Joseph Staral, Joseph Jachimstall, and Joseph Blahnik. It was the first Bohemian band organized in this part of the country, furnishing music on most occasions, whether they were church festivals, weddings, or dances. They were often called as far as Sheboygan, Green Bay, and Escanaba, Michigan. All were highly accomplished musicians. When some of the members of the famous band were summoned to the Great Beyond, they were replaced by others such as Joe T. Konop, Joe Stangel, Sr., Joe J. Schauer, Emil Schleis, Ben Urbanek and others.

The Schauers actually organized three bands. In 1890 the band organized included Wencil Schauer, Jr., (Wencil Schauer, Sr., was no longer with



The Schauer Brass Band

Front Row: (l to r) Wencil Schauer, Jr., Wenzel Sinkula, Joe Stangel. Back Row: (l to r) Joe Schauer, Joe Karman, Sr., Joe T. Konop.

them.) Frank Schauer, Joe Schauer, Fanek Johanek, Sr., Frank Schleis, Sr., of Norman, Jos. A. Stangel, and Tom Johanek. This seems to have sometimes have been known as the Sandy Bay Band.

In 1896 the band pictured above was organized. It consisted of the following members;

- Wencil Schauer, Jr. .... bariton and tenor
- Wenzel Sinkula ..... Bass
- Joe Stangel ..... E-flat alto
- Joe Schauer ..... B-flat clarinet

- Joe Karman, Sr. .... B-flat clarinet
- Joe T. Konop ..... Cornet

The Schauer Band was as popular in its day as was Romy Gosz in the mid 1900's. As mentioned above they often played up north. In winter they took a sleigh to Denmark. Leaving the horses in charge of their teamster, they boarded the north bound train, staying for four or five days to fulfill previously arranged engagements.

## The Ancestry of Clarence J. Spevacek

### Paternal

Much of the early paternal history of Clarence J. Spevacek ancestry can be attributed to the diligent research and efforts of Rev. Kirby Spevacek; son of Stanley Spevacek and Hazel Willmite; who at present is a missionary pastor of a Lutheran church in Lusaka, Zambia, Africa. The correct address is Post Office Box 218, Chelston, Lusaka, Zambia, Africa. A copy was obtained from Glen Spevacek; also a son of Stanley Spevacek and Hazel Willmite, and a brother of Pastor Kirby Spevacek; who lives at 6208 Hammersley Road, Madison, Wisconsin 53711, for the purpose of compiling a more precise ancestry of Clarence J. Spevacek. As the author of this

ancestry, my many thanks go to both Pastor Kirby and Glen Spevacek for their contribution and generosity in forwarding the material for my use. Although some of my research may vary, and subtractions and additions have been made to some paragraphs, Pastor Kirby has done an excellent job in this research.

A note on the name, "Spevacek", itself. In modern Czech the name would be spelled, Zpevacek. The name means, "Little Singer" (Zpevak means singer, the verb Zpivati means to sing, and the work Zpevnik means hymnal). But the original old spelling of the name that one will find in all the records is Spevacek.

The earliest member of the family of whom we presently have record is Anton Spevacek who was born July 23, 1822. According to the records of Melnik cemetery where he is buried, Anton was born in the village, Burg, or Hamlet of Vodochotech. Concerning this village, Dr. Strupl; former minister at Melnik; says that it is probably Vodochody. Now the problem is that there are two localities with this name in Bohemia, one is near Rostocky and Kralupy, and the other is Staskov-Vodochody on the Elbe River in the County of Roudnice, in North Central Bohemia. Anton's grandson; Anton Spevacek Jr.; directs the search in a somewhat different direction. He says that Anton was born in Ochress Smehova. However, in speaking with Anton on Dec. 14, 1973, he told me that his grandfather came from Mesolva, a small village near Praha (Prague).

The state archives at Prague (Archivni Sprava Praha) have no Spevacek listed for the village of Vodochody near Rostocky. However, in the records from Litomerice near Roudnice covering the years 1785-1839, were found the birth notifications of Anny Spevacek, born 12-5-1825, Father John Spevacek bartender from Vodochody, mother Katherina, daughter of Wencil Cynbulka; and Elizabeth (Alzbety) Spevacek, born 4-22-1827, Father John Spevacek, legal son of John S. from Dobrovize, mother Kratherina (Nee Cermak) from Dobrovize. It is interesting to note that Dobrovize is near the vicinity of Kladno and Belokah. Otherwise to date of this writing, no more information has been found regarding the true village from which Anton came. In fact, the place of origin becomes even more obscure, when we find that the death records at the Manitowoc County Court House, list Anton's place of birth as Ochita, Bohemia. This we do know, that he came from Bohemia.

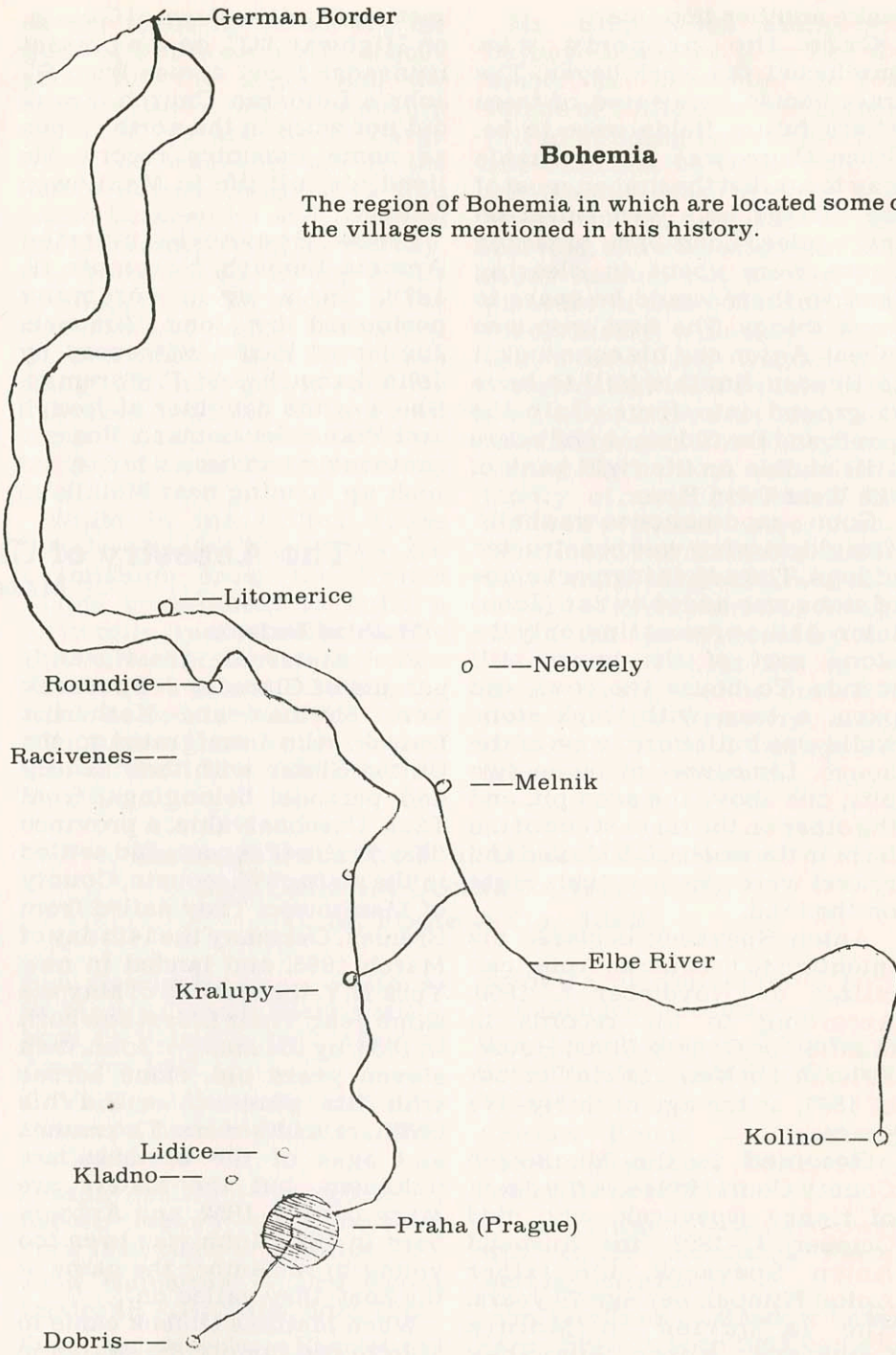
Anton Spevacek was a Protestant. With exactly what denomination he was affiliated in Bohemia is not known. Bohemia had a sizeable minority

of Protestants among its people for a long time. After the Martyrdom of Jon Hus in 1415 two thirds of its people either became members of the Unitas Bratrum (Bratraska Jednota) or the Lutheran Church. However, after the Battle of White Mountain in 1621, Protestants were swiftly suppressed in the land by counter-reformation. Only after the toleration patent (1781) did the Protestants gain some freedom.

It appears that Anton moved from Vodochody to the vicinity of Kladno to seek employment. He got a job at Kladno hauling coal from village to village with a team of oxen. (Klado is 29 kilometers west of Prague). In the last one hundred years it has grown into an industrial center. Thanks to the rich coal deposits, ironworks were opened in the year of 1850. Apparently during this time Anton married Hanna (Anna) Kimpl, born in the year of 1819, who according to the records, was the daughter of Anton Kimpl, of caucasian race, who lived in the vicinity of Kladno. The exact date of the marriage is not known, but to all appearances Anton must have been about thirty, and Hanna about thirty-three.

Anton and his wife Hanna had two sons; Frank, born on November 19, 1853; Jan (John) born December 23, 1854; and Rosiland (Rose) born in 1856, the month and day not known. According to some records, Anton and his wife "Hanna" came to America in December of 1856, and brought their children with them. According to the records at the Manitowoc County Court House, John was baptized in the city of Prague, Czechoslovakia, all the children were born in Belokah Village, sometimes spelled Beloky, which is east of Lidice.

When the Anton Spevacek's family landed in New York N.Y., they made their way to Wisconsin, and settled in northern Manitowoc County on a twenty acre plot of land, in section 30, of the Town of Gibson, overlooking the Neshoto, now called the West Twin River, which empties into Lake Michigan at Two Rivers, Wisconsin. There they built a



**Bohemia**

The region of Bohemia in which are located some of the villages mentioned in this history.

small log shack, with one room and a ground floor, along a gully which is on property today owned by Louis Mleziva. Anton cleared this plot of timber, and also walked over to the eighty which makes up the present homestead, to tap maple syrup. This syrup was then sold to the Brusses, who lived at Rosencrans.

The tract of land which makes up the present farm is located in section 29 of the Town of Gibson, and was purchased from Hezekiah Smith on December 19, 1866, for the sum of seven hundred sixty dollars. Evidently

Mr. Smith was connected with the Mann Bros. Company of Two Rivers, Wisconsin, who owned sizable tracts of land along the Neshoto River, and used the timber, floating it down the river, for their pail factory. Property records also show that the land was owned by the Baird family of Green Bay, Wisconsin, as far back as the year 1837. Anton had to walk to Two Rivers, a distance of approximately fifteen miles cross country, to purchase the farm. Unfortunately, when he got there he discovered he did not have enough money to take the deed home with him, so he had to

make another trip later.

Once the property was purchased, the work began. The tract had to be cleared of trees where future fields were to be. Since there was no profitable way to market the timber, most of the cleared logs were burnt on huge piles. Long back breaking hours were spent in clearing land so there would be space to grow things. The first crop was wheat. Anton and his sons took it to Deacon Smith's Mill to have it ground into flour. Only the pond, and the old stone walls, are still visible on the right bank of the West Twin River.

Soon a modest house was built. The oldest wing was constructed of logs. The adjoining part made of stone was added by Jan (John) later. At the present time only the stone part of the house still stands. To house the cows and oxen, a barn with thick stone walls was built north west of the house. Lime was made in two pits; one above the sand pit, and the other on the far east end of the farm in the woods. Good sand and gravel were also available right on the land.

Anton Spevacek declared his intention to become an American citizen on November 7, 1859. According to the records in Manitowoc County Court House, he landed in New York in October of 1857, at the age of thirty-five years.

Recorded in the Manitowoc County Court House, is the death of Hanna Spevacek, who died October 4, 1898, the husband Anton Spevacek, the father Anton Kimpel, her age 79 years. She is buried in Melnik Cemetery. Anton Spevacek passed away October 16, 1899, at the age of 77 years. He died at his son Frank's home, because he had no other place to go, living but a year and twelve days after his wife's death. He is buried along side of his wife on Melnik Cemetery, Melnik, Wis., Manitowoc County.

Frank Spevacek, the eldest son of Anton and Hanna Spevacek, was born November 19, 1852, in Bohemia. He grew up on his father's farm, but at an early age, he bought and cleared a farm near Zanders, Wisconsin, Manitowoc County, but near the Kewanee County line. This is in

section 10, of the Town of Gibson, on Highway "Q", on the present Hunsader farm, across from St. John's Lutheran Church. Frank did not work in the north woods as some memoirs record. He lived his full life in Manitowoc County.

Frank Spevacek, married Antonia Lamach, November 19, 1876, in a civic ceremony performed by John Simonek, Justice of Peace, witnessed by John Lamach and F. Foreman. She was the daughter of Joseph and Franciska Lamach. Joseph, previously had been a tailor, but took up farming near Melnik on

what is the Charles Klement farm. According to some reports, he was given to drink.

Frank Spevacek and his wife Antonia had four sons: Anton, Charles, Emil, and George. After farming in Zanders for a number of years, he took over the post office, store, and saloon combination, in Bolt, Wisconsin on Highway "Q", but in the County of Kewanee. While working as an appointed postmaster, he apparently kept up a pretty good business, at least for five years. He took butter and eggs in trade for groceries.

## The Ancestry of Clarence J. Spevacek Maternal

### Mathias Dufeck

The maternal great-grandparents of Clarence J. Spevacek were Mathias and Katherina Dufeck, who immigrated to the United States with their family and personal belongings, from Taus, Czechoslovakia, a province near Praha (Prague), and settled in the state of Wisconsin, County of Manitowoc. They sailed from Bremen, Germany the 14th day of March 1866, and landed in New York N.Y. the last day of May the same year. Their Eldest son born in 1854, by the name of John, then eleven years old, came across with his parents, as did his brothers and sisters. The names and ages of the brothers are unknown, but the sisters are Mary born in 1852, and Antonia born in 1846. John was even too young to remember the name of the boat they sailed on.

When Mathias Dufeck came to Manitowoc County, he settled in the Town of Mishicot, purchasing an 80 acre tract of land, mostly heavily wooded with light sandy soil, in partnership with August Hawel, on equal shares, and he settled with his family on this farm. The farm was located about four and one half miles north of the Village of Mishicot, off the Saxonburg Road, and about a mile west of Skubal's Corners. He purchased this property from Wenzel Havlichek, and his wife Josephine, for the sum of \$800.00. This transaction is recorded in warranty deeds Volume 13, page 16, Manitowoc County Court

House, Manitowoc, Wisconsin, and dated July 20, 1867, and recorded November 30, 1868, at 11 A.M. The description of the property is as follows: E $\frac{1}{2}$  of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$  of S19 T21 R24E. On the 26th day of November, Mathias Dufeck, and his wife Katherina (now spelled Catherine), gave a mortgage to Frederick Halberg, Town of Mishicot, Manitowoc County, for the sum of \$225.00 for the above described property. The mortgage was satisfied and paid for February 21, 1889, as recorded in mortgage Volume S page 79.

That same year on October 23, 1867, August Hawel, born November 9, 1819 and dying January 5, 1879, at the age of 60 years, sold his half share of property to John Dufeck, son of Mathias Dufeck, and his wife Catherine, for a consideration of one dollar. John, then age thirteen, took over the management of the farm because of his father's ill health. The description of that part of the property is as follows:  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the E $\frac{1}{2}$  of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$  S19 T21 R24E. The transaction was recorded March 13, 1880. In the meantime, Mathias Dufeck died, the exact date of his death is not known, but his wife Catherine sold the balance of the farm to her son John Dufeck, for a consideration of one dollar. The transaction can be found in warranty deeds Volume 32 page 572, dated January 7, 1879, and recorded March 3, 1880. The description of this property is as follows: E $\frac{1}{2}$  of

the E½ of the NE¼ of S19 T21 R24E.

John seldom spoke of his brothers, their first names unknown to us, but one settled in Marshfield, Wisconsin, and the other ones location was not known. Because means of transportation were primitive and scarce in those days, visits between John and his brothers were few and far between. Since John was educated in German Schools, read, spoke and wrote, German fluently, and his brothers were unable to understand German, there was no correspondence between them. John had little love for those Germans that spoke low German, commonly known as Plattdeutsch. he used to say, "them dam Plattdeutsch, they can't even speak good German, and then they want to argue." The entire Dufeck family, however, spoke Bohemian fluently.

#### **Mary Dufeck**

The Mathias Dufeck family now pretty well grown up, Mary the second eldest of the children; left home and became employed as a housekeeper for the United States Senator, Isaac Stephenson, of the Stephenson Lumber Company of Menominee, Michigan. While in his employ she met Barney Brumsted, who was the head cruiser for the Lumber Company.

Barney's life was rather unique. Information released by his son Otto, reveals that at one time he carried a lunch bucket with the noted industrialist and philanthropists, John D. Rockefeller and Andrew Carnegie when he worked for Standard Oil. During the Civil War the opened a general Merchandise store in the city of New York, and specialized in selling kerosene lamps. He three times, which was legally feasible those days; for fear of being drafted again, which would have been the fourth time, and he would have to go to war, he sold his business in New York. Forming a wagon train, he loaded it with flour and sugar and a new gun that could be fired seven times without reloading, and with plenty of ammunition for this gun, he set out for the gold rush in the West. When he got out west he sold the flour for

twenty times its value, and the guns at \$75.00 each plus a good price for the sugar and the ammunition. While hauling \$60,000.00 to the Wells Fargo Bank, he was held up by the Jessie James Gang. In a gun battle between he and his men, and the James Gang, he Barney, was wounded on the top of his head, right in the middle of his forehead, but he had the money so well hidden that the James Gang did not get it, and he delivered it to the Wells Fargo Bank. Barney carried a scar on the top of his head the rest of his life.

While in the United States Senate, Senator Stephenson got permission from the United States government to build a forty mile track of railroad into Upper Michigan. As compensation for the job of building the track he received all the White Pine timber for one mile on each side of the track, for its entire length.

### **Excerpt from the Plat Book of Manitowoc and Calumet Counties, Wisconsin C. M. Foote & Co., 1893**

Rev. George Brunne — Pastor of St. Mary's Church, Clark's Mills, born in Bohemia 1847, came to America 1867.

J. Vandrachik — Farmer near Grimm's, born in Bohemia 1839, settled here 1867.

Joseph Frolick — Proprietor of cheese factory in Rosecrans, born 1840, came to America 1871.

John Hamernik — Dry Goods Dealer in Rosecrans, born 1845.

Carl Kuchenbecke — Farmer and stock breeder, Melnik, born 1860, came to America 1863.

Joe Shinek — Manufacturer and Dealer in Boots and Shoes, Cooperstown, born 1860, came to America 1863.

Frank Warnish — Dry Goods Dealer, Cooperstown, born 1835.

Wenzel Frolik — Farmer and stock breeder, Kellnersville, born 1867.

Joseph Hurka — Farmer and stock breeder, Kellnersville, born 1863.

Jacob Neidl — Pleasant Grove Farm, Taus, born 1857.

John Simon — Pleasant Spring

Mr. Stephenson authorized Barney Brumsted to cruise the timber, and determine the best stands of White Pine, the highest priced building lumber. Barney, knowing that he would be gone for months, and in love with Mary Dufeck, decided to get married, and with this venture in mind, started out as the first pioneers in this beautiful White Pine country, with only a horse and a cow, and wagon, they traveled, and built a cabin in the area now known as Hermansville, Michigan. There they lived among the Indians, and raised a family of seven children. The children's names were: Anna, Caroline, Otto, Elizabeth, Helen, Clara and George. Clara died at the age of twenty one and George died at the age of two. Mary died October 1, 1942, at the age of ninety years, and is buried in Hermansville Cemetery, along side of her husband Barney, who preceded her in death.

Brook Farm, Kellnersville, born 1848 also local doctor.

Rev. Joseph Balcar — Pastor of Bohemian Presbyterian Church, Melnik.

Andrew Bouda — Woodland Farm, Mishicot, born 1855, settled farm 1877.

Anton Kriwanek — Water-Power Mill, Grain and Stock Farm, Melnik, born 1845.

John Havlinek — Meadow Lawn Farm, Branch, born 1863, came to America 1866, settled farm 1882.

Albert Kazda — Rose Bud Farm, King's Bridge, born 1850, settled farm 1889.

Joseph Kronforst — Riverside Farm, King's Bridge, born 1846, settled farm 1871.

John Leiterman — Dealer in wagons, blacksmith, Manitowoc, born 1851.

Frank Lestina — Twin Brook Farm, Francis Creek, born 1834, settled farm 1877.

Frank Pech — Maple Grove Farm, Francis Creek, born 1846, settled farm 1876.

Wenzel Peroutka — Burr Oak

Farm, Mishicot, born 1837, settled farm 1877.

John Rezak — Highland Farm, Francis Creek, born 1844, settled farm 1872.

Karl Schwedewe — Elms Farm, King's Bridge, born 1843.

John Wanek — Lyndale Farm, Francis Creek, born 1851, settled 1873.

Anton Youra — Homewood Farm, Francis Creek, born 1840, settled 1863.

John Zeman — Zeman's Homestead Farm, Melnik, born 1837, settled 1866.

F. J. Shaffer — Dry Goods Dealer, Branch, born 1854.

S. Shinek — Fairview Farm, Branch, born 1854.

Charles Etzler — Justice of the Peace; Dealer in Wines, Liquors and Cigars, Reedsville, born 1853.

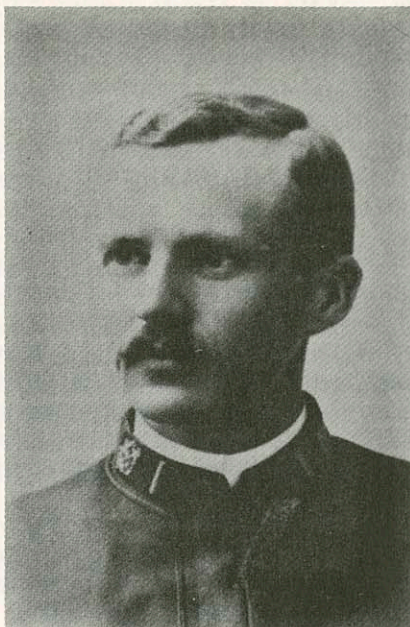
Charles Rezba — Highland Farm, King's Bridge, born 1851.

John Kraus — Farmer and stock breeder, Two Creeks, born 1831.

### Some Manitowoc and Nebraska Prochazkas

According to the Kutna Hora Prochazka genealogy, in so far as I have been able to trace dates of birth, the sixth child and second son of my great grandparents was named Anton. He was born in Kutna Hora in 1836 and apparently left the farm a few years after his parents settled in Watertown, Wisconsin. The Milwaukee Directory of 1854-55 lists him as a locksmith and a boarder with Katharine Best, widow of Lorenz Best, who later married my grandfather, John N. Prochazka.

From Anton's daughter, Clara Prochazka, I learned that her father had been in Milwaukee for a while and then had gone on to Reedsville, where he worked in a sawmill. He then moved on to Manitowoc, Wisconsin, where he and another Bohemian, Emanuel Chloupek had a machine shop. Both men were about the same age and married sisters, Anna and Eliza Stupecky. Anton married the younger sister, Eliza who was born in 1844 and Emanuel, the older Anna, born in 1840. The marriage of Anton and



*Dr. Emil Prochazka*

Eliza yielded three children, Emil born in 1864, Addie in 1866 and Julius in 1868. Their mother died in 1876 at the age of 32 and her three children were raised by their maternal grandmother who lived on another street, close by.

When Addie was 16 years old, that is in 1882, her father Anton, married Margaret Ewen, and this second marriage yielded three children, a baby that died at birth, a daughter Clara born in 1886, and a son Henry born in 1890. Their father, Anton Prochazka died in 1908 at the age of 72, and his second wife, Margaret Ewen,

who was born in 1852, died in 1923 at the age of 71. The family burial plot is in the Evergreen Cemetery, Manitowoc, Wisconsin.

Emil Prochazka became an Assistant Surgeon in the Marine Hospital Service, which years later was expanded into the Public Health Service as a unit of the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare. His commission as an assistant surgeon carried a military rank equivalent to a lieutenant, junior grade and he wore a uniform with a similar insignia. The photograph of Emil, shown here was taken in New York City in 1893, during his assignment to Ellis Island. While serving in the New York area, he often visited our branch of the Prochazka family; but I was too young to remember much about it. They regarded him highly as did also the medical officers of the Marine Hospital Service.

From the office of the Surgeon General, I obtained a fine biography of Emil Prochazka. This was issued to the medical officers of the Marine Hospital Service about a week after his death on April 1, 1898. Apparently, the Service did not know that at the time of his death there were other close relatives, his father's second wife, Margaret, a half-sister, Clara, and a half-brother Henry.

## MANITOWOC COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Address all Communications To:

NEWSLETTER  
1115 North 18th Street  
Manitowoc, Wisconsin 54220

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
Manitowoc, Wisconsin  
PERMIT No. 388

George & Ethel Frieder  
821 Jackson St.  
Manitowoc, WI 54220