



The Bohemians settling...in Caledonia....Their epic remains to be written.
Joseph Schafer, Wisconsin Domesday Book (1927)

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Coming in 2001
TABOR NEWS: Bohemian Pioneers in the American Forest
Ione Kramer

Tabor, just north of Racine in Wisconsin, as the first Czech farming community in the U.S, drew land-hungry Czechs like a magnet. From it, ox-drawn wagons left for points and north and west, as Tabor became the mother of all Czech farm communities. This new book pursues the riddle of Tabor's origins: Was it an accident or a planned "colony"?

The book shows the settlers' heroic efforts to wrest farmland from the forest, area history and natural conditions that determined existence, the vibrant social life the Czechs built which drew dancers from as far as Chicago, how Tabor was named for the fifteenth-century Hussite citadel which became symbol of Bohemian nationalism, how the community became storm center for a religion-Freethought controversy unique among American Czechs --and much else little known or not talked about. Ione Kramer, writer and editor, is from an old Tabor family.

Foreword

OFF THE BOAT they would ask, "How can I get to Tabor?" Or so the story goes. Tabor, just north of Racine in Wisconsin, had a reputation far beyond its size in the Czech lands of nineteenth-century Europe. The first Czech farming community in the U.S, it was a magnet for land-hungry Europeans. From it, ox-drawn wagons left for points north and west, as Tabor, though that area was then still known as Caledonia, became the mother of all Czech farming communities.

This chapter "The Czechs Arrive," from the book TABOR NEWS: Bohemian Pioneers in the American Forest to be published in 2001, pursues the riddle that puzzled the author as a child in Tabor. Why did this Czech settlement grow up just there, just then? Was it an accident or a planned "colony"? The book also tells how the new settlers, from 1850, join, earlier corners of several nations to build a community in this partly-populated, heavily forested area.

Other chapters show the settlers' heroic efforts to wrest farmland from the forest, local natural conditions that determined their existence, the vibrant social life the Czechs built which weekly drew dancers from as far as Chicago, how labor was named for the early Bohemian Tabor -- Hussite citadel which became the symbol of Bohemian nationalism, how it became storm center for a religion-Freethought controversy unique among American Czechs, and much else little known or not talked about today.

It is hoped that this special draft edition of Chapter 3 on how the Czechs arrived will stimulate more Tabor memories that readers will want to share with the author and the community. Does your family have a Tabor tale? Or period photos? * PLEASE CONTACT THE AUTHOR

CHAPTER 3: THE CZECHS ARRIVE

The big question about Tabor is: How did it come to be? Almost everybody's folks had come from "the old country" at some time or other, so to me as a child it seemed that emigration to the United States was an undertaking foreordained, in the nature of things. Of course this was not so: For Europeans of whatever land, to tear themselves away from their deep roots was a momentous decision.

Why did the early Czech immigrants decide to leave the land they loved so dearly? Were they a Czech version of the Pilgrims, leaving their country to seek a place to practice their religion, or perhaps their Freethought? This belief, though widely held, is inaccurate. True, religious oppression and denial of Czech national aspirations by Austria's Germanic and Catholic Hapsburg regime was certainly a factor, but others were more important.

Thomas Capek, foremost authority on Czechs in the United States, in 1920 described the land the immigrants left,

"The peasantry had just emerged from a condition resembling semi-slavery, the law that abolished forced labor having been passed in 1949. The elementary school taught little more than reading, spelling, and arithmetic. The sovereign desired not educated citizens, but loyal and obedient subjects. For centuries the ruling class drummed into the head of the peasant its specious theories: obey the Church, obey the Government, obey the lords. The archbishop claimed a prior lien on the peasant's soul; the emperor held a chattel

mortgage on his body; the lord usurped the fruits of his labor. To the peasant little was left that was free and unencumbered."

Writing in 1944, Capek states unequivocally:

"Religious persecution and political oppression had brought occasional early immigrants, but the economic urge for greater security; real or imagined was by far the strongest factor motivating departures, Conditions in Austria in the nineteenth century arose from current political and social inequalities; the Czechs were looked upon by the "master race" governing from Vienna as a decidedly lower social stratum. Absentee land lords contributed to the sad lot of the peasant with feudalism not wiped out until 11148. Between the demands of the large landowners, the tax collector, and the church, little was left to the average family."

For the German states, much has been written about economic crises resulting from overpopulation and dislocations of the industrial revolution. The first great wave of the outflow to the United States had been rolling since 1845. This was one of those times in history of mass hysteria based on illusion, a search for a quick fix to escape a new social situation rather than holding on, seizing on its features, and making them work to your advantage. But in the early and mid-nineteenth century German states, fear of the problems arising from the industrial revolution was very real. Such a thing had never happened before and ordinary Germans or citizens of any country could not see beyond their own miseries to the enormous advantages it would bring. They could not be expected to in their time. Not enough of such economic analysis has been done for the Czech lands.

Reasons for Emigrating

Serfdom existed on the big Czech estates, and the tiny individual landholdings did not provide much of a living. Yet, before 1840 nobody thought of emigrating, Capek states. A decline in the relative prosperity of the Napoleonic wars and especially drought and blight of the potato crop in 1840 turned Czechs toward emigration.

Books and articles about the United States had circulated widely in the German states, and in German-language magazines in Austria, which were not so heavily censored. Czechs read these, for under Hapsburg rule German was taught in the schools. In 1847 thirty-nine soldiers in the Pilsen 35th regiment in the Austrian garrison at Mainz mutinied and fled to the United States. After the Revolution of 1848 liberals wrote of the freedoms there (excepting of course black slavery which the Czechs saw in terms of their own serfdom). These paeans to freedoms, often serving as a veiled reminder of the lack of them in the Austrian Empire, were an inspiration to some who wished to leave for political reasons.

One was Anton Klobasa of Choceň, sixty miles east of Prague, a well-off tanner and later councilman, tax collector, and lawyer, Impressed with American democracy, he read the American Constitution and Declaration of Independence in German. In 1848 he had been commander of the local citizens' National Guard company organized to keep order and uphold the new Austrian Constitution. Afterward, disheartened by the performance of the government, friends met secretly in his home to talk about emigrating, and Klobasa took the initiative.

His son Anthony writes in his memoirs:

“Of course it was impossible to obtain passports for emigration to America. However he did succeed in securing passports to Hamburg, Germany, and in the meantime made arrangements with ship agents, under cover, to put them through. Father succeeded in getting four or five families through.”

Most likely in 1852 they included Klobasa's brother-in-law Joseph Buresh, whose family lived long in Tabor. Others may have been Jan Houdek, Antonin and Jan Stransky, and the family of Jan Kaspar, all of Chocen. After four years in Racine the latter moved to McLeod County, Minnesota. Because Klobasa's wife did not want to leave Europe, his own family did not reach Tabor until late 1855.

In some localities, passports were issued grudgingly. "They put all kinds of hurdles in my way, and I was forced to undertake six trips to the county seat six miles away," Jan Novak would recall. When he threatened to go to the regional government at Budejovice, the officials called in his wife to get her to oppose his plan.

Novak finally got permission, and his village gave his wife and child and the family of his brother Anton a great send-off.

“So many neighbors gathered that the highway leading around our house was full of people, who came for the last time to shake my hand. With tears in my eyes I said forever goodbye to them. I was accompanied three hours of the way to the river Kamnejka by at least forty faithful neighbors.”

The Economic Factor

The emigrants' greater motivation was economic, a way to better themselves. In the rural areas they were small landowners and cottagers, representing the rural lower middle class, or agricultural and domestic laborers, all of whom had little other opportunity to improve. But some did own land, for the majority of emigrants not over twenty-five acres, which they could sell to buy passage and possibly a small farm in the United States. Shoemakers, wheelwrights, blacksmiths, and other artisans emigrated from both city and country.

Some say the discovery of gold in the California made a bigger impression in the Czech lands than in most places. True, though some Czechs were attracted to California, it was not gold but land that interested the early Tabor families. Land held almost a mystique for them.

Jan Mikulecky, renting a farm in Sloupnice, learned in a letter from America of land so cheap that he could afford it. His wife, Anna Padour Mikulecky helped pay for passage by selling for fifty pieces of gold her beautiful embroidered silk and velvet vests worn in local style over white blouses. For a year Terezie Makovsky worked making such garments to sell for funds to take her husband Jan and herself with three other Makovsky families to Caledonia in early 1856, The other three soon left Tabor for Minnesota.

A Jandl family story widely told in Tabor illustrates the importance of the economic factor. After its earliest immigrant had been in Tabor for some years, a wealthy man offered to pay his passage back, No way, he said. "There I went to school barefoot."

Arduous Passage

Travel routes through Europe and the United States changed with each improvement in transportation. Already in 1852 it was possible to go from Prague to Hamburg by train. One way in 1854 was by river from Prague to Leipzig, then by train to Hamburg or Bremen. Emigrants might embark at one of these two German cities in ships to North America. Or they might take a coastal vessel to Liverpool, England where they would board a sailing vessel. From Hamburg the Novak party took a ship to Hull and then one to New York.

In ports at both ends, immigrants were prey for scalpers, lodging-house runners, and other cheats, Cyril Klimesh tells the heartbreaking story of a Spilville, Iowa family: The ship's crew led them to believe their luggage had been forwarded, when in fact the men themselves had appropriated it. The worst loss was the precious comforters filled painstakingly over the years with feathers dropped by the landlord's geese, the only feathers tenants were allowed to keep. From many sources, Klimesh summarizes the precarious voyage.

“The ships were not on regularly scheduled runs; sometimes it would take weeks before passage could be arranged. After waiting for several discouragingly long weeks, migrants were apt to take the first vessel available, regardless of what port in America it was bound for. Their destination could be New York, Boston, Baltimore, New Orleans, Quebec or any number of smaller ports.

Once the vessel was under way, there was no guarantee that it would dock at the scheduled port. Adverse winds sometimes blew the ship so far off course that the captain put into the nearest convenient harbor. On the average, emigrants aboard sailing vessels during the 1850s spent from five to eight weeks at sea. Depending on the wind and, to a lesser degree, the design of the ship, the time would vary considerably. In winter the voyage generally took longer, sometimes three months or more, although a good tail wind all the way could cut sailing time to a month or less, a record crossing. Steamships had already made their debut and could cross in about two weeks, but their cost was beyond the emigrants' reach.”

These factors may have figured in the voyage of the Jan Mikulecky group. At Bremen they found that the ship they had booked was under repair. Finally they got places on a sailing ship, which took three months, "longer than Columbus," Anna observed.

Passengers embarking from some ports had to bring their own food for the voyage. Those from Bremen cooked rations provided by the ship on stoves on deck. Anna recalled bread so moldy it "smoked" when they ate it. One day a whale from a passing school got under the ship and tilted it dangerously. A member of the party died and was buried at sea. Perhaps it was the husband of Anna Klofanda, for she was a widow on arrival.

Other sea deaths in later Tabor immigrant families would include Helena Stritesky, wife of Joseph, in 1854, and in 1856 Anna Gregor Smerchek, wife of Paul, leaving six children aged two to sixteen. In 1854 one out of six ship passengers died or came close to death with illness. The previous year the New York Journal of Commerce had referred to immigrant ships (which generally could be identified in the harbor by their stench) as "damned plague ships and swimming coffins." Bremen and Hamburg had the best health record and ships taking Irish emigrants the worst. One reason was that on the

vessels from the two German ports meals were cooked by the staff, Those who went first class had excellent accommodations, with champagne every other day on one American vessel,

New York was the port of arrival for many. Early European immigrants did not go through the famed Ellis Island, which began operating as a processing center only in 1892, In the beginning doctors had come aboard to examine passengers as the ships sat waiting to be towed into the harbor. After 1855 processing was done at Castle Garden, a former fort at the bottom of Manhattan Island.

From Now York the usual way to Wisconsin in the 1850s was by riverboat up the Hudson to Albany, then by rail to Buffalo, and from there through the Great Lakes by steamer to Milwaukee or Chicago. The lake steamer voyage was supposed to take five or six days, but one vessel in 1850, so overbooked that the immigrants slept on deck, took ten days and nights.

When the cross-country rail line reached Cleveland, there was no need to go to Buffalo for a lake boat. After 1852 passengers could go all the way to Chicago by rail, and by 1855 to Racine. In 1852 Jan Novak spent twenty-six days aboard ship, six days on the train from New York to Chicago, and two and a half days walking to Racine.

Many continued to board take boats at Cleveland, where they may have known someone. Milwaukee, on the Great Lakes route, was a natural stopping place. Capek says the Czech community in Milwaukee predates those in Cleveland and Chicago, thus as a "first" is topped only by that of the Pilsen mutineers in New York City.

In Chicago, Jan Novak found six Czech families in 1852, and that autumn met a group preparing to leave for Racine. He found no Czechs in Racine when he arrived there in the spring, as these families had moved to Tabor.

The first Czechs to reach Racine County had come in May 1848, Charles (Adolf Karel, also A C) Kunz, forty-three, born in Prague, with his wife, Catherine Bayer, and four children. A baron in his native land, Kunz brought considerable money. He was a city dweller and soon after his arrival proceeded to buy a house and eight lots in Racine. He also purchased various pieces of land in Tabor along the river between the Four and Five-Mile roads, and an eighty-acre farm far west of the river near the county line. He described himself as a farmer to the 1850 census taker, with real estate valued at \$2,000.

Managing the Kunz holdings was Anton Kroupa (Kraupa in early references). An 1879 biography says he arrived in New York in November 1848 on the Lilentz. Though penniless, he found his way to Cleveland where he worked for the winter, and then moved to Racine in spring 1849. However, later accounts and his obituary say that he came with Kunz.

To pay back his passage, Kroupa, a weaver by trade, managed Kunz's farm for eighteen months he soon married Anna Cepelek. One account says seven people came with Kunz, so perhaps she and Kroupa are the addition to his family. At any rate, Kroupa was Kunz's trusted lieutenant, his name often appearing as witness on records of Kunz's legal transactions. Kunz left Wisconsin in 1852 to become one of the first settlers in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, so that may explain why Kroupa is accorded the honor of being Racine's first Czech settler, Kunz died in Iowa sometime before May 1855,

First Czechs in Tabor

The basic document for the history of the Czechs in Tabor is a six-page typewritten manuscript by J. Mikulesky, a carpenter who lived on the Five Mile Road. I knew Mr. Mikulesky. He built a house across from the Burbank School, and beside it, for his daughter Doris, older than I was, a charming playhouse that was every little girl's dream. I spent many happy hours in it after he rented the big house to a Czech family with girls my age.

One summer I shared with Mikulesky the task of painting our family farmhouse. The Czech original of his manuscript, written in 1922, resides in the central monument of Tabor's Bohemian National Cemetery. Without it, study of the history of the community would be more difficult.

Mikulesky cites as Caledonia's first Czech settlers (1850) John Posler, twenty-seven, and Vaclav (Frantisek Josef Andrlé, thirty, both from Luže in the Chrudim district east of Prague. Posler, in trouble for activity in the 1848 uprising, was smuggled out of Austria first in a barrel and then in a load of hay. His abettor was John Sobotka, who had a haulage route from Austria to Germany and later wound up in Missouri. Son of a soap manufacturer, Posler was well read, having besides the usual Czech and German, knowledge of French and Latin. His chosen trade was carpenter, but he worked as a clerk in the city court for six years.

He and Anderle, of whom little is known, must have come to Wisconsin after the June, 1850 census. In August and September they bought several pieces of land north of the Five Mile Road. One they purchased jointly. Posler bought ten acres on Highway 31 from Johann Bauer, second among the early arrivals in my own family.

Posler may have built one the two log cabins which stood behind the later site of our farmhouse. Perhaps he was aided by Bauer and his father-in-law, my great-great grandfather, Johann Lang, whose log house, though probably obscured by thick forest, lay just to the north. The cabin that survived, which served as the farm's pigpen in my day, had a room on either side of a central north-south hallway. Small windows high up could be covered with heavy board shutters. Anderle lived around the corner on the Five Mile Road on the site of Mikulesky's home.

If they spent the 1850-51 winter in such homes, it is no surprise to find Andrlé selling out to Posler in June 1851 and returning to Bohemia, where he lived until his death (Mikulesky). By 1852 the migration to Iowa had begun. Kunz was already gone. In August Posler too, now in Cedar Rapids, was selling his Tabor land through an intermediary. A 1911 history of Iowa's Linn County surrounding Cedar Rapids cites him as one of its early Czech settlers. Then he decided to head for California gold, but lightning killed one of his party's oxen (accounts vary as to whether at Lincoln, Nebraska or in northern Missouri) so they decided not to go on. He settled in to farm in Cainsville, in Missouri's far northwestern Harrison County, just over the Iowa state line.

In 1861 Posler went back to Austria to bring out his mother and sister, both widows, and the latter's two daughters. He delighted in flaunting his American citizenship, which entitled him to privileges even the Czech nobility did not have. On learning of the outbreak of the Civil War, he hurried back alone to enlist. He served in the Twenty-seventh Missouri Volunteer Infantry at Vicksburg and the Battle of Jackson, and did not get his family to the United States until after the war.

Why This Place?

It is not clear why these and other early arrivals should have come to this particular forested area with its foggy Wind Point poking out into Lake Michigan like a nose above the mouth of the Root River. Digging turns up marvelous old tales. One offers an explanation for why so many Czechs live along the lake in eastern Caledonia. At some unstated, time a lake boat carrying a load of Czech immigrants shipwrecked on Wind Point, and the passengers, thrown up on the shore, settled down there. But when one sees the early maps of this same land under Yankee owners' names and understands the mechanisms of acquiring land, this tale holds no more water than that wrecked boat.

A companion to this tale is associated with the brick works founded around 1870 at Wind Point by Francis Burdick and George Erskine. The owners are said to have persuaded lake captains to draw in at the point to let the immigrant men off—and into the hands of the two, operators. To keep their labor force, they went to great ends to keep them in the dark about the fact that Racine actually lay several miles to the south, so the story goes.

Beyond word of mouth, the Czechs learned about Wisconsin in the same way as Germans of their time. The first Czechs may have seen leaflets or read ads in German-language newspapers. After 1852 newcomers at the New York docks were guided to Wisconsin by its immigration commissioner Gysbert van Steenwyk, stationed there to promote the state.

The first Czechs, like many German immigrants, probably got off the boat in Milwaukee, rented a room in a home or hotel for their families, rented or purchased a horse and perhaps a wagon, and rode out looking for land. Finding farms closer to Milwaukee already bought up or too expensive, they chose Caledonia,

More likely about Kunz, however, is that he knew someone in Wisconsin, for he does not seem to have come to be a rural settler. There are several possibilities: He or his wife knew someone in Racine; or they originally headed for Milwaukee and there learned of the developing town, Racine. These suppositions could also apply to Anderle Posler. Other possibilities are: The two knew Kunz Kroupa; or were directed to Milwaukee or Racine by the Czech Society which had formed in New York in early 1850 to aid immigrants. They may even have come with its secretary, Vojta Naprstek, an 1848 refugee, who arrived in Milwaukee in the summer of 1850 to open a Czech bookstore and lending library. Since he was also a Forty-Eighter, Posler may have known Naprstek, though no trace of any of these individuals was found in the Naprstek papers in Prague.

Word of Caledonia was passed back, "A few came to relatives, others to friends," writes Mikulesky. A Stritesky family memoir quotes such a letter: "There is nobody to stop you, and you can buy all the land you want."

From "a friend who had gone before," now in Wisconsin, in 1852 Jan Mikulecky in Sloupnice learned of freedom and acres of cheap land. It could have been Daniel Stritesky or John Mazanek, listed by Mikulesky as 1851 arrivals. Despite hard conditions, Terezie Makovsky, who with husband Jan and two other Makovsky families arrived in the autumn of 1856 (recommended Tabor to her sister Mary (Mrs. Joseph) Lorence.

The Mikulecky group seems to have headed directly for Caledonia, by way of Bremen and Quebec. A

local file of immigration information cites September 1852 as the date Mikulecky entered the United States at Buffalo, That city was not a common port of entry and has no records. With him were Anna and their infant son, Joseph, and Mrs. Anna Klofanda and her children, for that September date is recorded for her son. If you ask the old families, very few know. I don't know these details about my ancestors either.

J. W. Mikulesky's document lists mainly men, though some brought families. Thirteen came in 1853, thirty-one in 1854. They were not the graybeards one sees in latter-day volumes picturing those who became locally famous. They were young, they were dashing, fiery, among Europe's best and brightest, the least willing to put up with Hapsburg absolutism and its economic deprivation. While many of the families named in Joseph Mikulesky's document still live in Tabor, others long ago moved elsewhere.

Some immigrants brought money to buy land. Jan and Anna Padour Mikulecky purchased ten acres with a small cabin at the Five-Mile Road and Highway 32. But many of the single youths arrived almost penniless. They might find their way to Cleveland where they could take a cargo boat bringing goods to the new lake cities. And, when the boats anchored out beyond the Racine reef, jump ship and swim ashore. In fact, jumping ship in New York harbor and swimming ashore was a not uncommon way of avoiding immigration formalities among German men, and possibly Czechs too.

They hoped to find work building what became the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad. Many lived in its 285-acre camp and materials yard which occupied the entire area along the lake from the Five to Six Mile roads

A factor that should not be discounted is the desire to avoid service in the Austrian army. Perhaps this is easier to talk about now that our own time has experienced an unpopular war. One who fled the impending service was Joseph Svanda, says Bess Svanda Janacek of her great-grandfather. The Kovar family cites their earliest immigrant John Frank Kovar (known in Tabor as Frank). Many left Europe before age eighteen for this reason,

Another early arrival was Mathias Secor (Zika, Sika), a former Austrian grenadier from Strakonitz, who in 1851 or 1852 came with his family to a farm on the Four Mile just at the end of the East River Road. The family moved to Racine in 1880 Perhaps that is why it does not appear in Mikulesky's Tabor document. Their son, M. M. Secor, who reached Tabor at age ten, became a most colorful figure, served twice as Racine's mayor, aryl built up one of the country's largest trunk factories. "Where is Secor? I want a job," Czechs just off the boat would ask, according to the story. This tale may be the origin of the apocryphal "Tell me how to get to Tabor" legend.

When immigrants came, Tabor people took them in, whether or not they knew them. Many, like the Makovskys, when after several years they built a larger cabin, kept their small cabin for newcomers, Bess Janacek recalls that her grandmother was one of many who came as a stranger to Makovskys, a young girl in her teens hoping to find a husband. She married Mikulas Danek, a man much older than she was, but "good to her," Bess says.

In her book *Immigrant Milwaukee*, Kathleen Neils Conzen speaks of the "early, almost accidental German attraction to the city" and this could apply as well to Tabor and the Czechs. Wisconsin was ready for settlement. The historical forces were such that Wisconsin would have had a Czech

settlement anyway — if not Tabor, then someplace else. But Tabor was right there south of Milwaukee, easily accessible through Naprstek's Czech Society. Though the Czechs were not the first settlers in Tabor, without them the community would not bear that name, and it would have been a different place.

Sources:

1. Thomas Capek, *The Czechs (Bohemians) in America*, New York. 1920, 53-54 and "Sociological Factors in Czech Immigration," *The Slavonic and Eastern European Review*, 22 (October 1944), 93-98.

2. Capek, *The Czechs in America*, 25.

3. Anthony Klobasa, *Memories of my Boyhood*, St. Louis, 1937, 6. Jan Novak, "From the life of Jan Novak in Tabor, Wisconsin" (in Czech), *Amerikan*, 9:170 (I 8861). A section appears in English in Vera Laska, *The Czechs in America, 1633-1977: A Chronology and Fact Book*, Dobbs Ferry, N.Y.. 1978, 69-70.

4. Joseph G. Svoboda, "Czechs: The Love of Liberty," in *Broken Hoops and Plains People*, Nebraska Curriculum Development Center, Lincoln, 1970. 157-58.

This story of Anna Padour and Jet Mikulecky and subsequent mentions draw on a memoir "Our Grandmother" by Mary Vlasta Peterka (Mrs. John Kovar), Anna Padour's granddaughter, in possession of the Kovar family, and a writeup on them in Racine County Historical Museum. The *Grassroots History of Racine County*, Racine, 1978, 503-504.

Makovsky information is from the family, *Grassroots History* p. 491, and an editor's note in *Habenicht*, 270.

5. Cyril M. Klimesh, *They came to This Place, A History of Spillville, Iowa and its Czech Settlers*, Sebastopol, Calif., 1964, 38-41.

6. Mary Cable, "Damned Plague Ships and Swimming Collins." *American Heritage*, 11, 5 (August 1960), 78-80. Capek, 38.

7. Francis Dvornic, *Czech Contributions to the Growth of the United States*, Chicago, 1962, 54, is the source on Kunz's wealth. Information on Kroupa is from *The History of Racine and Kenosha Counties Wisconsin*, Chicago, 1879, and a newspaper article, October 1. 1900.

Kunz has remained something of a mystery. There is a story in Jan Habenicht, *History of the Czechs in America* (Dejiny Cechuv Amerických) that Kunz brought with him a lot of cloth, and traveled about (presumably the Midwest) with Kroupa and several assistants selling it. He got in trouble for not paying customs duty, but it seems unlikely that he could have got far. The business did not do well, as he was a "kind-hearted and sincere man."

Habenicht's book, published in Czech by the Hlas publishing house, St. Louis in 1910 is a basic reference for history of American Czechs. It became available in English in 1996 from the Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International, P.O. Box 16225, St. Paul, Minnesota, 55116-0225 (www.cgsi.org), translation by Miroslav Koudelka, English by Paul M. Makousky. Habenicht, a doctor

well known for his medical column in Slavic, made an extensive survey of Czech communities in the United States. He devotes several pages to Racine and five to Caledonia, with the Kunz reference on p. 217.

Kunz's will in the Racine County Court House (Land Deeds, Book 33, p. 16) dated May 15, 1850, lists his birth in 1807 in Prague. In an appendix to the will dated May 14, 1855, Kroupa states that he witnessed it and that Kunz has died. The Genealogical Society of Linn County found no trace of him or his descendants in any of the usual records. Habenicht says that he bought a farm near West Amana, Iowa County in 1852.

Mikulesky's "Notes on Early Days in the Bohemian Settlement, Caledonia Township, Racine County, Wisconsin" is in the archives of the Racine County Historical Society. From a 1922 Ms. translated and somewhat updated by a lawyer friend in 1940. Much of Mikulesky's content is a condensation of Habenicht. However, not every local detail, or some added by Mikulesky from collective memory, tallies with documentary evidence. Mikulesky himself emigrated from Sloupnice in 1869. The spelling of his name with an "s" is that used by the Wisconsin Historical Society, and helps distinguish him from several Mikulecky families in Tabor.

8. Information on Anderle/Posler is from Mikulesky and miscellaneous sources. Some information on Posler is from material in the Harrison County (Missouri) Genealogical Society archives. Mikulesky gives Anderle's name as Vaclav, but Habenicht says Frantisek Josef. On p. 308, he has a furrier named Josef Frantisek Anderle, who after arriving in Milwaukee in 1853 operated a bar and tailor shop. Date and place of birth are the same, but Habenicht does not relate them. His information is not always 100 per cent correct, for he has them arriving after the date when Posler bought land from my relative. The Milwaukee Anderle, old and ailing, committed suicide on June 8, 1900.

9. Story from Bob Johnson, a volunteer at the Racine County Historical Society.

10. *Grassroots History*, 575.

11. F. J. S., "Bohemians Brought Color and Fun to City," manuscript, Racine County Historical Society archives; Narration to the exhibition "Fame, Fort= and Sweet Liberty, European Emigration from Bremen/Bremerhaven to the U.S.A.," Bremen, 1992.

12. Kathleen Neils Conzen, *Immigrant Milwaukee*, Cambridge, Mass., 1976, 35.