

Chapter 8. The First Generation Born in America

Generation 8: Albin Theodore Kadlec

(B. 2 Apr 1881, M. 1 May 1907, D. 28 Oct 1949)



Figure 8-1. Albin Theodore Kadlec, as Young Man.

Albin Theodore Kadlec was the third-born son and the eighth-born child of the eleven children of Josef and Francis Kadlec. He was married to Josephine Helen Micka and had three children:

1. Amos Kadlec (B. 9 Jan 1910, M. 5 June 1934, D. 6 Aug 1976)
2. Joseph John Kadlec (B. 17 May 1911, M. 25 Jun 1936, D. 1 Jun 1967)
3. Alice Kadlec Wozniak (B. 16 Apr 1913, M. 2 Oct 1934, D. 17 Mar 2004)



Figure 8-2. Josephine Micka Kadlec, Age Fifteen.



Figure 8-3. Josephine Micka Kadlec as Young Woman.



Figure 8-4. Josephine Micka Kadlec.



Figure 8-5. The Micka family, Back Row: Anna, Josephine, John, Mary, Albina, Tony, Frank.
Front Row: (Father) John, Clement, Rose, (Mother) Anna, William.

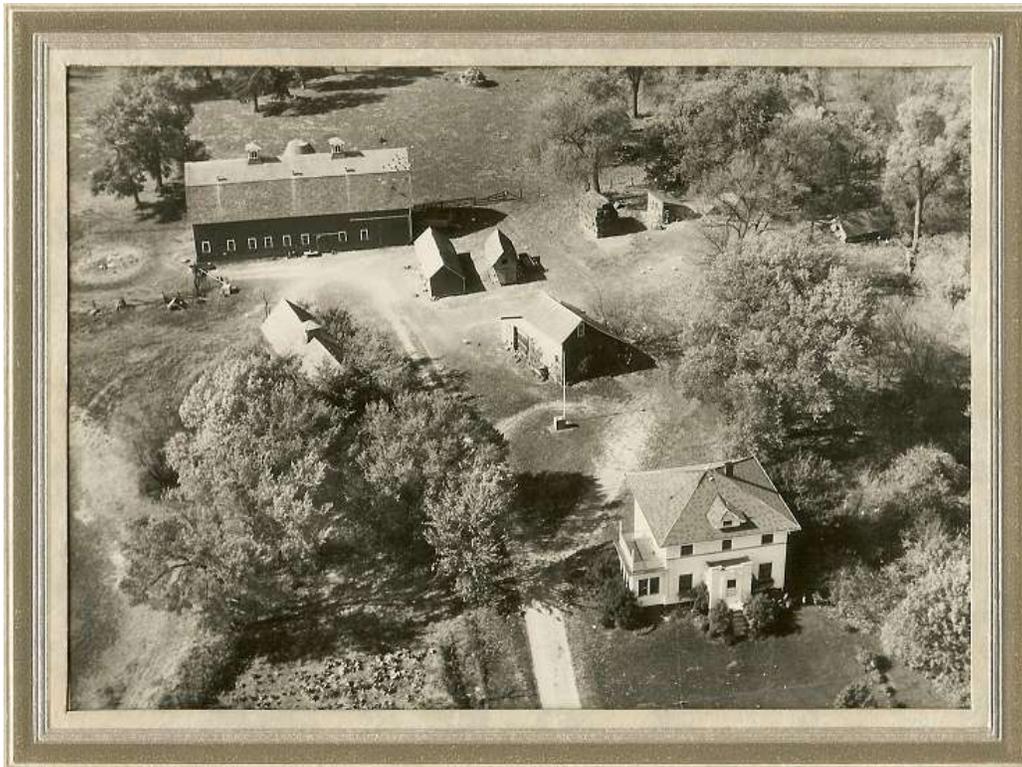


Figure 8-6. Micka Family Farm, located just North of the Kadlec farm.

As a young woman, Josie lived at 175 Granite Street in St. Paul, Minnesota, not far from the Minnesota State Capitol grounds with her sister Anna's family. During this time, Josie worked as a housekeeper.

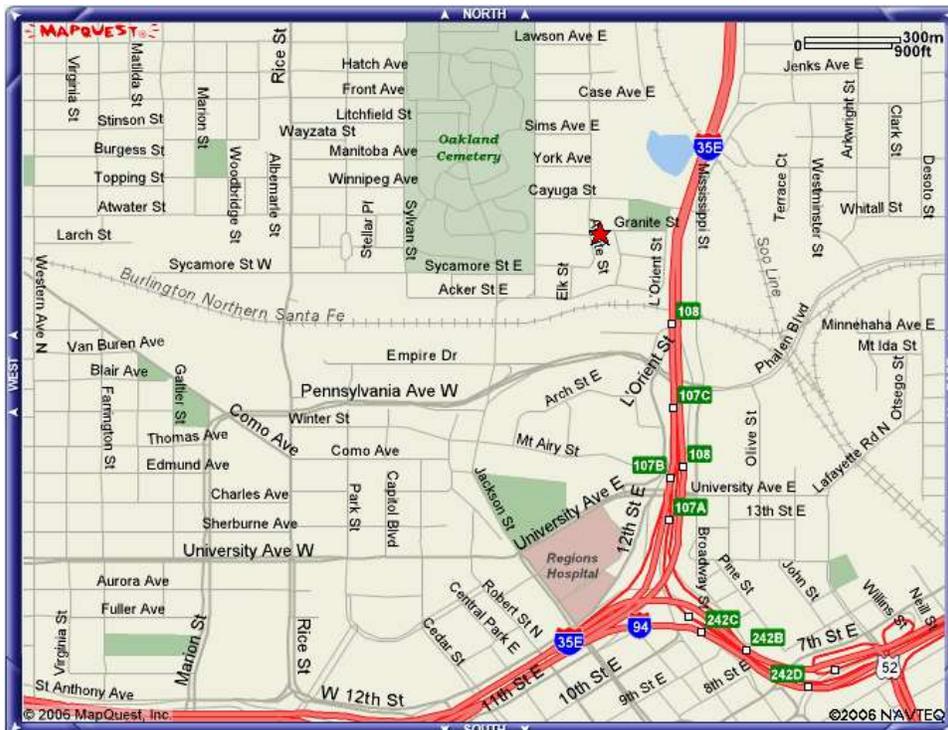


Figure 8-7. Map of 175 Granite Street, St. Paul, Minnesota where Josie Micka lived as a single woman, working as a housekeeper at the Merchants Hotel.



Figure 8-8. Photo of 175 Granite Street, former residence of Josie Micka, taken August 2006. She lived here with her sister Anna (Micka) Carlson and Anna's husband Oscar and their children Roy, Agnes, and Frank Carlson.



Figure 8-9 Merchants Hotel, Third and Jackson, St. Paul.
Photograph Collection 1867, Location no. MR2.9 SP3.1M p80, Negative no. 31



Figure 8-10. Teddy Roosevelt's Room, Merchants Hotel, St. Paul.
Photograph Collection ca. 1900, Location no. HF5.4 p20, Negative no. 4627

The Letters

On April 2, 1907 Albin would turn twenty-six years of age and be within one month of marrying his twenty-eight year old sweetheart, Josephine (Josie) Micka, who lived just north of the Kadlec farm on McLeod County road 71 or Lace Avenue.

Letters of correspondence between Albin and Josie, which were written in the months before their wedding on May 1, 1907, have survived intact for nearly one-hundred years in the attic of the Kadlec farm. In total, five of these letters survived; two were written by Josie and three letters were written by Albin.

The letters reflect two pragmatic young people, who are discussing the arrangements leading up to their wedding; Albin requesting Josie not to spend too much on her wedding dress; Josie instructing Albin to fill out the wedding paperwork with correct information; Albin suggesting that they fit the wedding in on May 1st to better coordinate with the work schedule on the farm; and both of them discussing when to break the news to their respective family members.

The letters are presented in their entirety on the following pages.

Silver Lake
Maine
Oct 7 - 1906

Albin Kadlec

Dear friend with pleasure
I will ans. your welcome
letter which I received
Saturday Morning and
you asked me to go out for
ride with you Sunday
I waited for you till
8 o'clock Degree of honor
lady was waiting for me
at the G. G. W. N. hall
to practice in the team
I told them that I would be
there about 8 o'clock some of
them wanted to know the
Reason why I couldnt be there

Albin you wrote that maybe
I will burn the letter before
I will read it that's something
I never did yet
I dont see why I should burn
your letter I always like to
receive letters but dont like
to write
Albin I was going to telephone
Sunday that I would go
for ride with you
But you know how it is
on farmers line if we
Telephones then there is
car at every receiver.

Figures 8-11 and 8-12. Letter from Josie Micka to Albin Kadlec.

on the line some places maybe
two or three
Albin & you tell to mama that
Larina still has some
pictures of the baby that
was taken in coffin
Larina was asking why
to mama dont come over
she hasent been here for long
time
This is about all I can write
to night I am just about
frozen up here such change
in weather last few days

I feel sorry for the farmers
that has to hoosh corn.
I will close for this time with
Best regards to all
yours
your ~~best~~ friend
J. H. Micka
Silver Lake
Main.

Figures 8-13 and 8-14 Letter from Josie Micka to Albin Kadlec.

St. Paul
Minn.
April 11-1907

Dear friend This is thursday
evening and have little time
to spare so I'll write you few
lines let you know that
I arrived safe Sister Anna
and children just got away
from breakfast table they ways
surprised to see me
Albina sleeps here at annas but
I didnt talk with her yet

last night I was in bed ^{when} she
came home this morning she
was gone when I get up.
she goes to work at six ^{ty}
Have you seen Rory since
I left I spose she is lone
some I told her that I would
write to her and she said
what good will the letter do me
and tears was rolling down
her cheeks
Albin I cant tell you when I'll be
ready I struck an I risk
dress maker she thinks that
every thing has to go just the
way she says

but she promised that she
want disappointed me
she is going to start on my
dresses Monday

Albina just got home and
talks & bathes me so
I'll close for this time
hope you'll get this on saturday
A.M. Sunday as you said
I'll try and write next week.

I remain your true friend
Josie H. Micka
175 Granite St.
St Paul
Minn.

Figure 8-15 and 8-16 Letter from Josie Micka to Albin Kadlec

St. Paul
April 24 - 1907

My Dear friend

I must ans. your welcome letter which I received Monday four o'clock after noon mail man comes this way twice a day ten U. M. and four P. M.

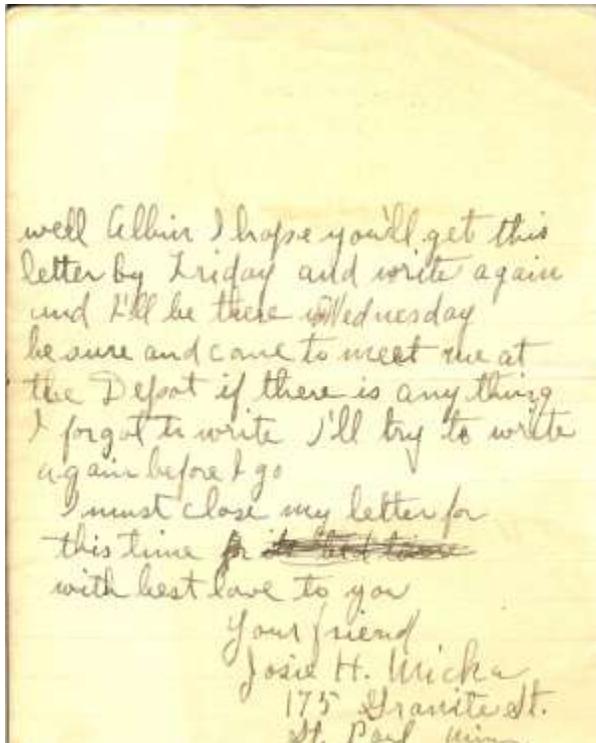
About my dresses I am having two dresses made at Dress makers I was there this morning for first fitting and have to go there tomorrow again she said she wouldnt disapoint me that she'll work hard to get them done

Albin you spoke about my age when you get marriage licenses Sister Emma said you do have to give my age and where I was born and where mother and father was born father was born in Moravia and mother in Bohemia I hope you'll laugh when you reads this but I think its best for you to know so if they do ask you'll know where they was born yes Albin you better tell your sister Rosy not wait till the last minute maybe she wouldnt like it I hope there is lots people knows we are going to get married but thats alright just so they dont know what day

Sophy Kelopy came over last Sunday and asked if Albin is home Sister said know she asked is Josie here she said yes Sophy said Oh she is the one I want to see she stayed only little while and asked me to be sure and come over before I leave and she asked me ~~if~~ some questions I told her that I taking vacation and going back to Kchalupskys and she said now dont go to telling me no fibs

Next Sunday we are going to Sisters Marys have dinner with her if its nice they I hope I dont have to wear fur coat next week

Figures 8-17 and 8-18. Letter from Josie Micka to Albin Kadlec.



well Albin I hope you'll get this
letter by Friday and write again
and I'll be there Wednesday
be sure and come to meet me at
the Depot if there is anything
I forgot to write I'll try to write
again before I go
I must close my letter for
this time ~~for this time~~
with best love to you
Your friend
Josie H. Micka
175 Granite St.
St. Paul Minn

Figure 8-19. Letter from Josie Micka to Albin Kadlec.



SILVER LAKE
APR
22
7AM
1907
MINN.

Miss Josie Micka,
175 Granite St.
St. Paul,
Minn.

Figure 8-20 Envelope of Letter from Albin Kadlec to Josie Micka.

Hutchinson Minn.
 April 21- 1907
 Miez Josie Micka
 Dear friend
 I received
 your letter yesterday and
 was very glad to hear from
 you,
 Say Josie be sure and don't
 have any more dresses made
 then you have to have and
 try to have them done before
 May first as that is the only
 time in this part of the year
 I can spare, after May first

we will have a lot of work
 with corn field and plant-
 ing garden stuff,
 Say I did not see your sister
 Rosie yet,
 I hope you will get this letter
 on Tuesday morning,
 I was to Glencoe today it
 was seven o'clock when
 I got home,
 well I think I will have
 to close for this time be
 sure and write soon and
 tell me how much you have
 done about your dress

Figures 8-21 and 8-22. Letter from Albin Kadlec to Josie Micka.

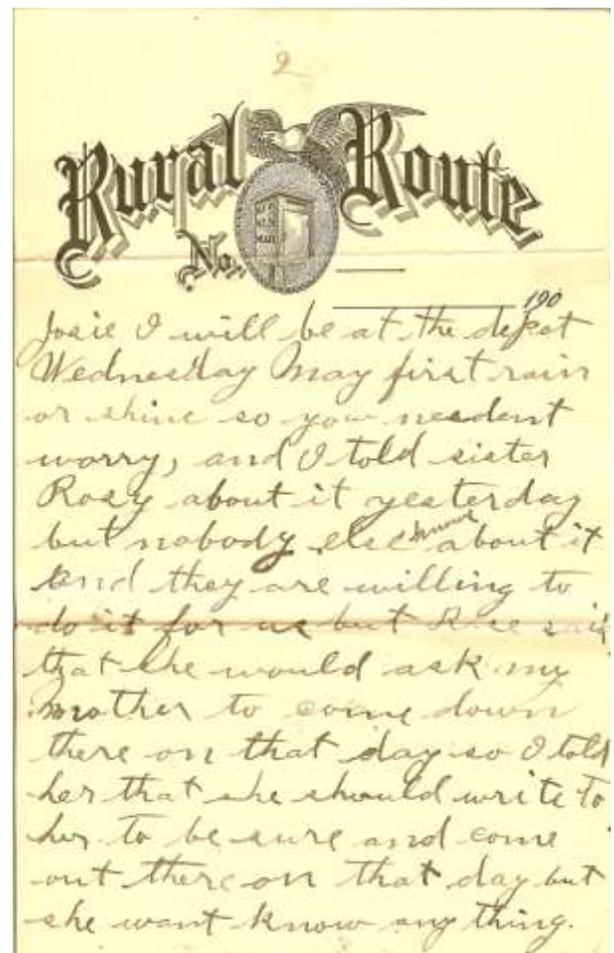
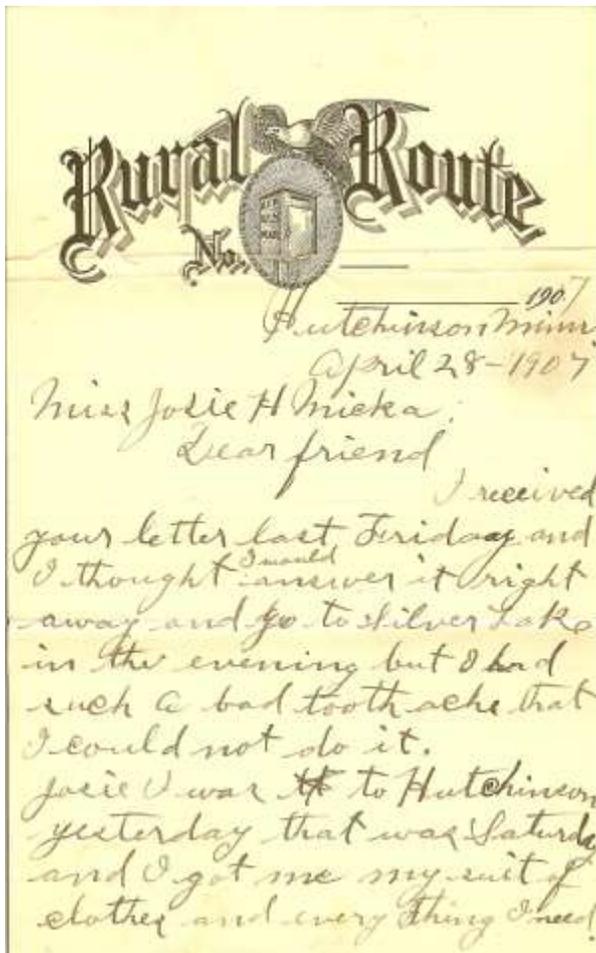
and write soon and tell
me if you will be able to
come on that day write
so I would get your letter
Thursday or Friday if you
can, I did not tell any
body any thing yet but I
think I will tell sister
Rose soon about it. I
must close so good with
best love your friend,
write soon.

Albin Kadlec,
Hutchinson,
R.R. No. 2. Minn.

Figure 8-23. Letter from Albin Kadlec to Josie Micka.



Figure 8-24 Envelope of Letter from Albin Kadlec to Josie Micka.



Figures 8-25 and 8-26. Letter from Albin Kadlec to Josie Micka.

there is some on the first page
or the other side

Rural Route
No. 100

until she will come out there
Say Josie you want to be care-
ful when you exchange trains
at Bellevue or you don't
forget something in the
other train or you do not
want to forget anything
out there either, and be
sure and ask your sisters
to come and see us out
here as soon as they can.
Josie I told Emma and John
last Saturday that I went to
Hutchinson to get my teeth
fixed and when I came home
then I told them that I will

have to go there Wednesday
again so I think we can
fool them alright.
This is Sunday afternoon
or in the evening at half
past six I have my milk-
ing to do yet I think Charles
is coming over to night so
I will send this letter by him
and I think you will get
it tomorrow afternoon
again.
so be sure and come Wednesday
don't miss the train or if some
thing should happen to you before
Tuesday night then send a message
to Silver Lake that you can not come
so good night Dear friend your
in love Albin Kadlec Hutchinson

Figures 8-27 and 8-28. Letter from Albin Kadlec to Josie Micka.



Figure 8-29. Wedding Photo of Albin and Josephine Micka Kadlec.

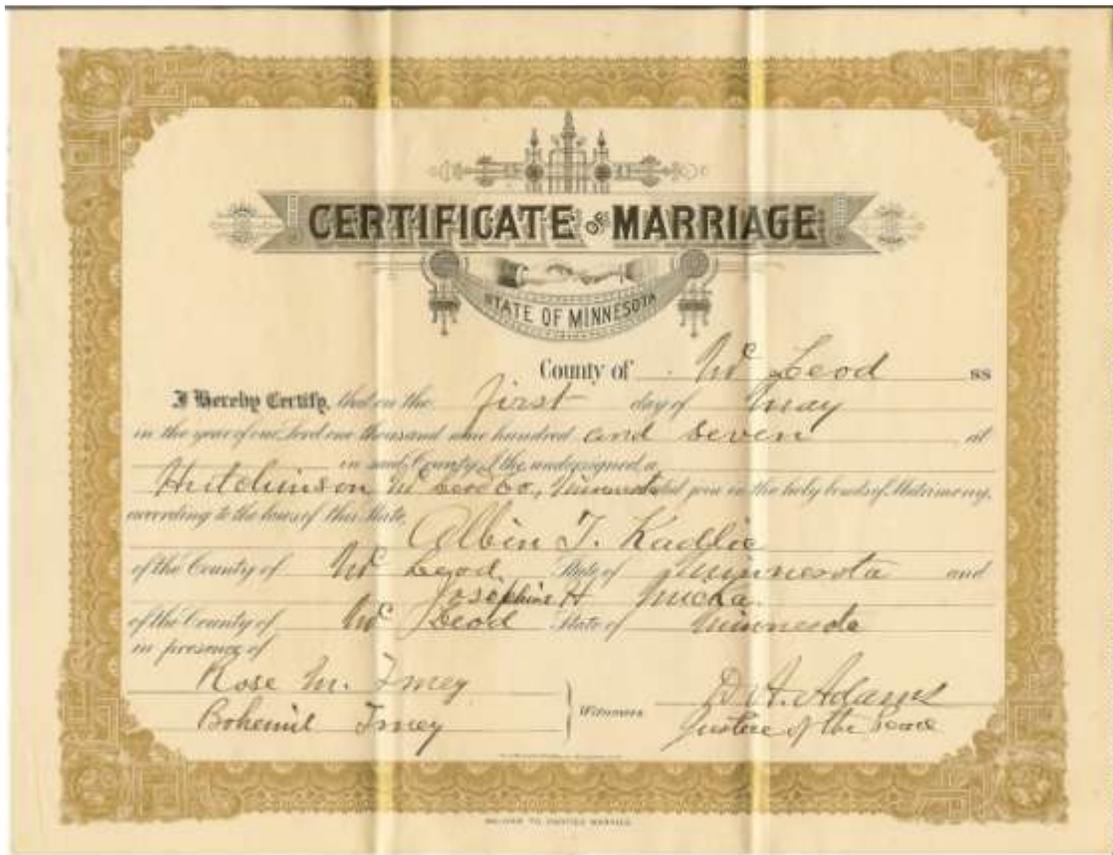


Figure 8-30. Marriage Certificate of Albin and Josephine Kadlec.

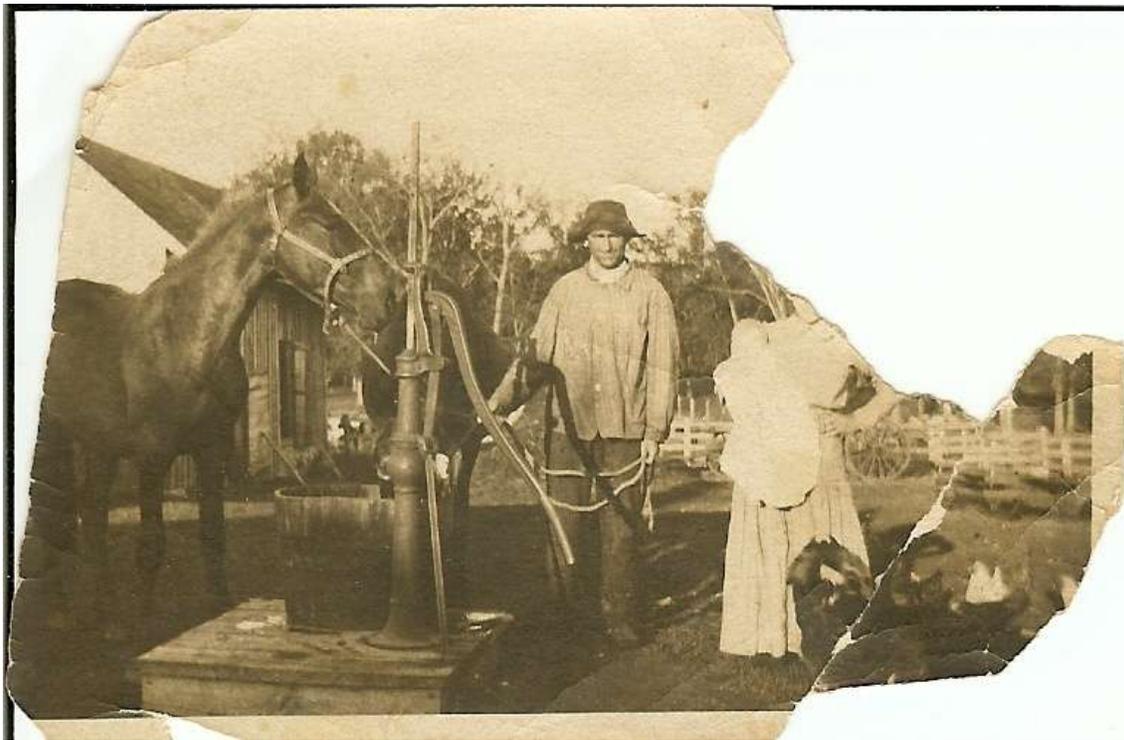


Figure 8-31. Albin and Josephine Micka Kadlec with Amos Kadlec as infant, circa 1910



Figure 8-32 From Left: Mrs. Albin (Josephine) Kadlec with son Amos; Mrs. Henry (Mary) Kadlec with daughter Marion; Mrs. Charles (Emma) Hawlish with daughter Helen; and Mrs. Frank (Anna McLaughlin) Kadlec and daughter Francis.

The Josef and Albin Kadlec families, like many Czech immigrant families at that time, were not religious, perhaps attributable to the strife that religious intolerance had caused in the Czech lands before they had immigrated. At the writing of this book, a number of Albin's grandchildren are still alive and were old enough to have vivid memories of their grandfather before he passed away. Their stories and recollections of Albin recall a very kind man, perhaps somewhat of a "ladies man" with a flirtatious wit and a fine sense of humor. His nephew Richard Kadlec, once wrote, "Uncle Albin had patience of love".

Jerome Kadlec recalls a childhood memory of his grandfather Albin and his sense of humor back in the 1940's when young Jerome was just a boy. On occasion, Bill Telecky, the neighbor who lived on the farm just to the West of the Kadlec farm would walk his female cows over to the Kadlec farm, one at a time, to be bred by the Kadlec bull, which got the notice of young Jerome. When the Kadlec bull was finished with his business, Jerome would note Mr. Telecky walking his cow back to her home farm, which was about a quarter of a mile away. Curious young Jerome would ask his grandfather Albin, "How come he keeps walking these cows back and forth?" and instead of providing his grandson with a detailed birds and the bees type of explanation, Albin told Jerome, "We are looking to buy a cow, but don't like the cows he's bringing over". Subsequently with each cow that was brought over and then summarily returned back to her home farm, young Jerome would ask, "What's wrong with this cow?" To which Albin would reply, "That one was too tall" (or something to that effect). "What's wrong with that cow?"—and Albin would reply, "That one was too short", or too black or too brown, too slow, etc., presumably with a smile on his face and a twinkle in his eye in putting young Jerome on.

Jerome also recalls the story when he was around ten years old and his grandfather Albin allowed him to drive the truck home on a winter day on the way back from running an errand into the Town of Silver Lake. On this errand, they had also picked up a jug of Mogen David wine and as young Jerome negotiated the uphill road rounding the final bend to the Kadlec farm, the truck slid off the gravel road and proceeded downhill towards the frozen Swan Lake. Jerome managed to avoid running into the trees on the way down the hill with some help from Albin who was riding shotgun alongside him, juggling the bottle of wine to keep it from breaking. When all was said and done, neither the truck nor the bottle of wine was damaged and they walked back to the farm to get the tractor to retrieve the truck off the ice. The entire family would recall that story with glee in the years that followed.

Another recollection of Albin came from his nephew, Richard H. (Dick) Kadlec, who was the son of Albin's brother Henry. As a young boy, Richard would spend time out at the Kadlec farm with his cousin Joseph. On one occasion, Richard wrote to Jerome: 'Your dad had a green work wagon—one day we were behind a grey horse that suddenly developed a diarrhea and we came home with a new coat, so Uncle Albin said'

In researching Albin for this book, a considerable amount of his farm records were found, including his harvest yields, milk tickets, bank accounts, labor arrangements with friends and family, and tax records. Without exaggeration, one could devote an entire research project to analyzing these farm records to get a good glimpse of the economic existence of a farmer at the turn of the twentieth century (e.g. see the "Grubbing Account" below)

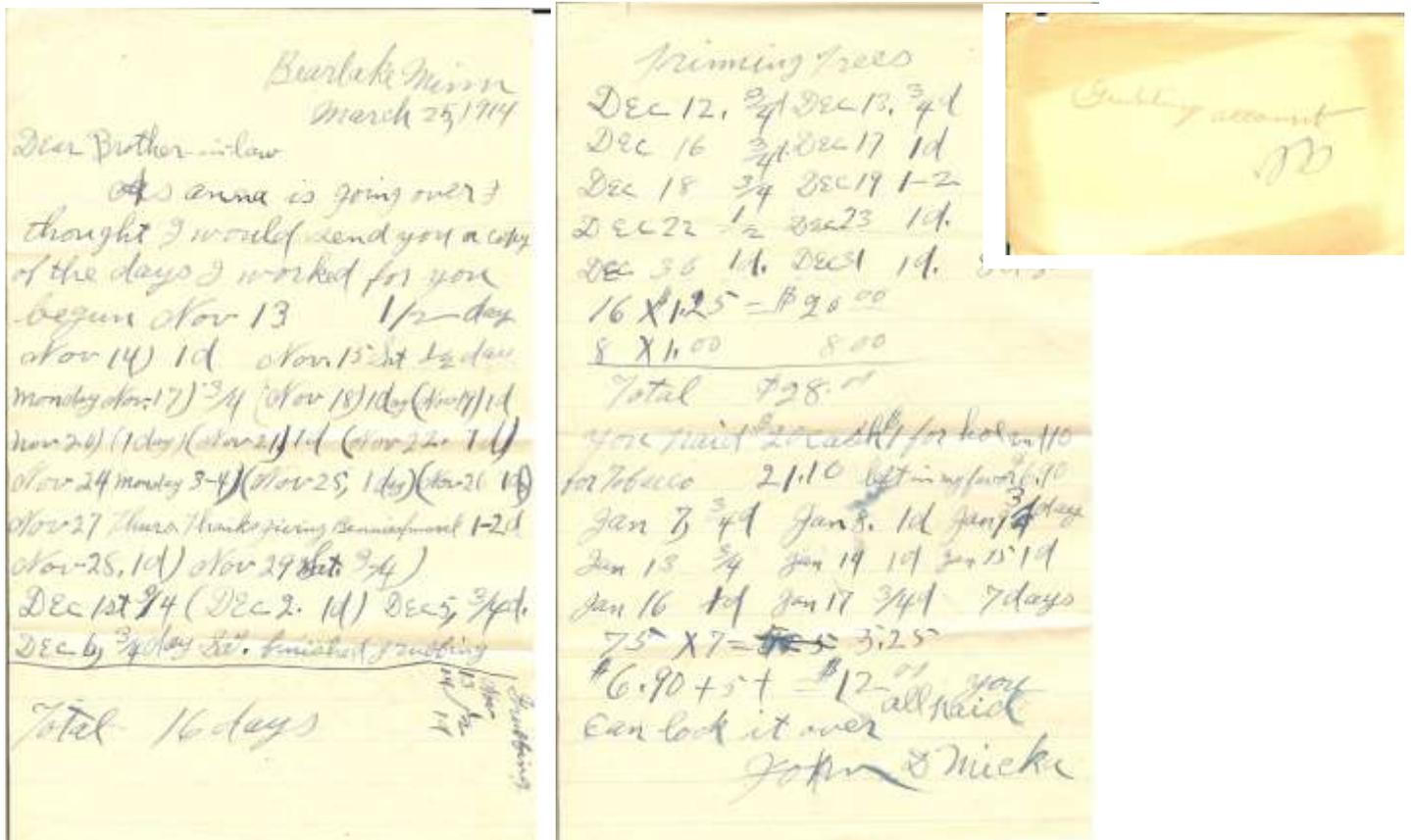


Figure 7-94. "Grubbing Account", which tracked the labor of Albin Kadlec's brother in Figure 8-33. Albin Kadlec's record of his 'grubbing account', brother in law John D. Micka's effort summary for clearing trees for farmland in the East half of the Kadlec farm.

The legend of Albin's life was overshadowed by its tragic ending, which occurred in the fall of 1949, after the crops had been harvested and the new barn had just been re-shingled with cedar shakes due to one-hundred mile per hour straight line winds that ravaged the farm earlier that summer. On Thursday evening 27 October 1949, Albin sat down at the kitchen table in the Kadlec farmhouse to have what would be his last meal; his favorite bedtime snack of bread soaked in warm milk with cinnamon and sugar sprinkled on top.

Jerome Kadlec later recalled the events of Friday morning, 28 October 1949:

“Josie awakened Rose and said “Where is Albin?” as there was no sign of him in the house and no lights on that she could see in the buildings so Rose went outside looking for him. He had closed the door in the hog barn so that was unusual and Rose went and found that he had hanged himself at about 3:15am. I will never forget her scream as she came in the entry door as she blurted the words in Czech that he had hanged himself. It was a traumatic time around here.”

There was a note that Albin had left in the early morning that started, “About 3:15...Dear Wife...” And according to the note, Albin was not able to come to terms with leaving the farm and moving to the new house that he and his wife were having built in the town of Silver Lake.

In retrospect, Albin's sense of worth and purpose seem to have been inextricably tied to his life and existence on the Kadlec farm that he had worked so hard to sustain over the years. Although his suicide came as a surprise to his family, he is believed to have been planning it for a while. In the preceding week, while saying goodbye to his daughter Alice Kadlec Wozniak after a weekend visit before she headed back to Minneapolis, Albin was unexplainably emotional and in tears.



Figure 8-34. Kadlec Farm, Old Log Barn Where Albin Kadlec Died, October 28, 1949

Albin's grandson Jerome (father of the author), age 12 at the time remembers the great commotion, and sense of loss experienced by the family with Albin's passing, especially because his own father (Albin's son Joseph) was already disabled and Albin had been a strong father figure and role model to him. Albin had promised young Jerome that if he

could graduate from high school without smoking a cigarette, Albin would buy him a gold watch. Unfortunately, Albin would never live long enough to fulfill this promise. Jerome remembered the family keeping vigil with Albin's body through the night before the funeral, which occurred on the following Sunday 30 October 1949.

On the day of Albin's funeral, a 'cold Northwest wind blew', according to Rose Kadlec's journal. During the funeral service, which was held at the Kadlec farmhouse, the somber mood was occasionally interrupted with the cheerful whistling of little Bonnie Mae Woznak, who was just nine months old at the time. Bonnie's mother Alice (Kadlec) Woznak would later tell Bonnie that her innocent whistling had taken some people aback, as they didn't know it was a child whistling and assumed it was some adult making the noise.

At the writing of this book in 2010, the old log barn still stands, in part as a monument to bear witness to Albin's life; Jerome had the other old farm buildings razed, but could not allow the same fate for this one. Those connected with the family cannot look at it without feeling a sense of loss and sadness. Some forty years later, growing up on the Kadlec farm, I would try to ask my grandmother Rose about her memories of that day, but she could not bring herself to talk about the events of that October morning. Shortly thereafter, Rose's life would become increasingly difficult, as she took over the responsibility of running the farm and caring for mother in law, three children, and her disabled husband.



Figure 8-35. Kadlec Farm, Old Log Barn Where Albin Kadlec Died, October 28, 1949

But in telling the story of Albin's life, it should not be remembered for its sad ending, but rather for his remarkable achievements and lifelong commitment to serving his family. The author's research and reflection on Albin's life revealed that he was a central and pivotal member of the Josef Kadlec family; the dutiful third of five sons, who shared his father's passion and talents for farming the land and providing for the family. For example, in the hazy, humid, windless summer days working in the fields, his grandson Jerome remembers how mosquitoes would not seem to bother or bite Albin, even as

they swarmed on his back. Albin's farm records and documents indicate that he was indeed a well-organized businessman, who made provisions to loan money to his siblings in their time of need in the Great Depression.

What was never documented about Albin's life can only be speculated and imagined now, many years later: a son of an immigrant born into a large pioneer family in a small log farmhouse in the last decade of the 19th century. In such a big family there must have been a considerable amount of sharing required; not only of work in and around the house and in the fields and barns, but also of family moments: the holidays, harvests, weddings, funerals, folk songs, bedtime stories, family laughter and conversations in Czech around the dinner table: over servings of mashed potatoes, meats, pies and kolachy—these are the family treasures that Albin helped pass to the next generation.

Funeral Services for Albin Kadlec Held Sunday

Funeral services for Albin Kadlec who died on Friday morning October 28, were conducted Sunday afternoon, October 30, 1949 at 2 o'clock from the family home. Dr. Jaroslav Mrazek officiated. Prelude by Mrs. Jos. Lowy, and hymns "Rock of Ages" and "There is No Night There" were sung by a trio consisting of Mrs. Jos. Lowy, Mrs. Ed Kasper and Carl Lindstrom. Interment was in the family lot at the Bohemian National Cemetery with the Z.C.B.J. Lodge of which he was a long time member, attending in a body. Pallbearers, members of the lodge, were John Marvan, Fred Drahos, Frank Reml, George Micka, James Pessek, and William Telecky. Flower bearers were grandchildren Marilyn, Jerome, Joanne, Duane, and Kenneth Kadlec and Milan Wozniak.

Albin Kadlec was born the son of Joseph and Frances (Kutina) Kadlec in Hale township, April 2, 1881, and attained the age of 68 years 6 months and 26 days. After going to school at District 12, he worked at the farm home of his parents which is now owned by Amos Kadlec.

On May 1, 1907, he married Josephine Micka, daughter of John and Anna (Drahos) Micka. The Kadlecs bought the John Doubek farm now known as the late Wencel Pessek farm. Together they started their life long career "farming" on that place. One year later they sold out and bought the John Lorence farm on the Swan Lake road. As years passed by, they built their home on the present site, which is now occupied by Mrs. Kadlec and Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Kadlec and family. His departure is mourned by his grief stricken wife and his three children, Amos and Joseph of Hale township and Alice Wozniak of Minneapolis.; also 8 grandchildren and three living sisters, Mrs. Rose Tmey of Minneapolis, Mrs. Phil Pendergast (Julia) of Perry, Michigan and Mrs. Emma Hawlish of Silver Lake survive, as do two brothers, John of Silver Lake and Henry of Minneapolis. Albin Kadlec enjoyed a wide circle of friends. He worked extremely hard throughout his life time and his willingness to aid and enjoyment of friends and family made him respected by all who came to know him. The Leader wishes to join in extending sincerest condolences to the bereaved.

Relatives and friends from a distance attending the sad rites were: Mr. And Mrs. Arthur Woznak and son Milan and daughter Bonita Mae, Mrs. Rose Tmey and son Amos, Mr. And Mrs. Henry Kadlec, Mr. And Mrs. Ernest Schimming, Mrs. Blanch Small, Mr. And Mrs. Norman Born and family, Mr. And Mrs. Art Morton, Mr. And Mrs. Floyd Perlick, Mr. And Mrs. Leo Woznak, Mr. And Mrs. George Woznak, Mrs. Charles Melsha of Minneapolis; Anthony Micka and daughter Genevieve and Mrs. Robert Micka of Crookston; Mr. And Mrs. Wm. F. Micka and daughter Betty and Theresa, Clifford Born, Mrs. Nettie Koci of St. Paul; Mr. And Mrs. Ed Dusoski of Wayzata; Chester Woznak of St. Louis Park; Mrs. Gladys Nuwash Watkins of Chicago and a host of relatives and friends from the surrounding community (Silver Lake Leader)



Figures 8-36 and 8-37. Gravestones of Albin Theodore Kadlec and Josephine Helen Kadlec, Bohemian National Cemetery.