

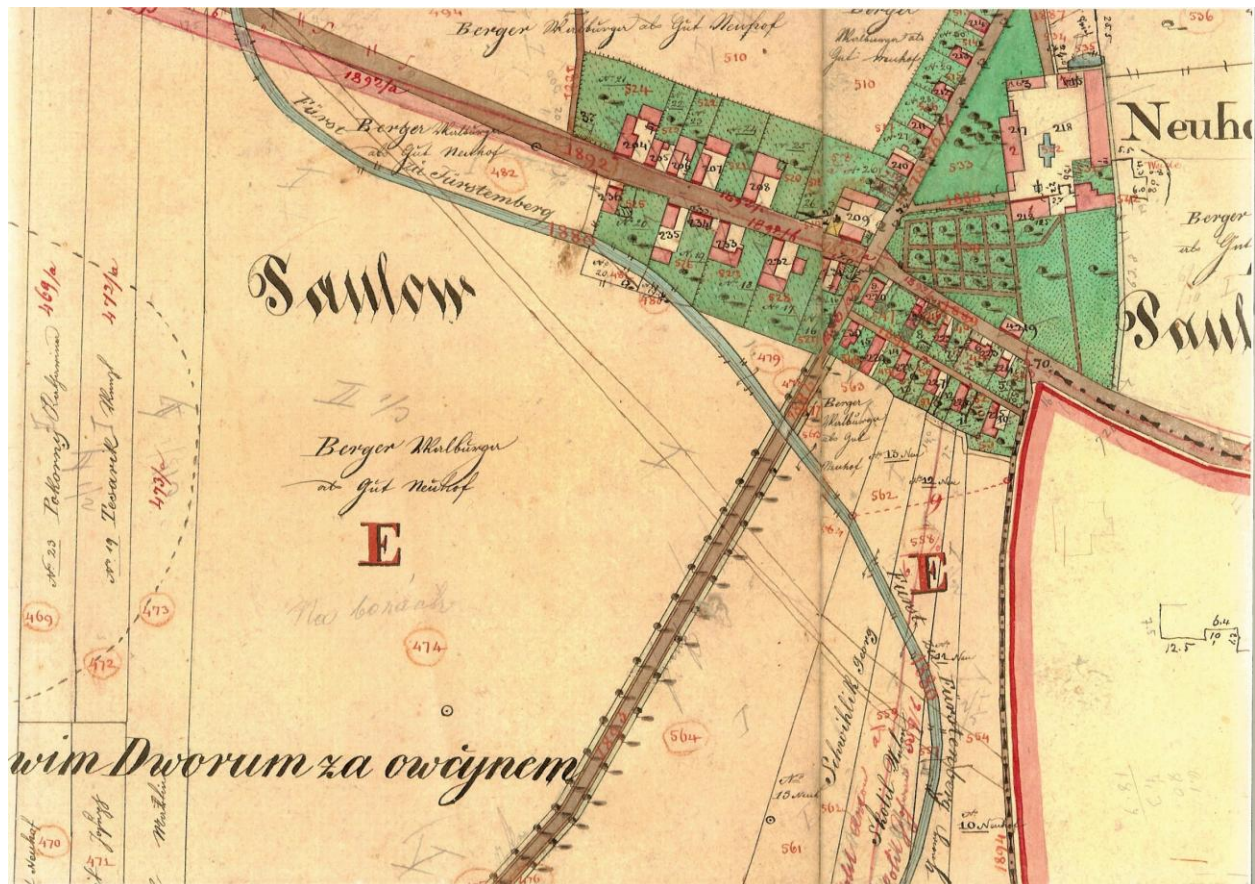
Pavučina Corner – By Tony Kadlec

For this column, I am pleased to be able to reprint the next in a series of articles that were written by Mr. Gene Aksamit, a member of the Board of Directors of the Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International (CGSI) and resident of the Twin Cities.

Czech Archive Records – Part IV: Land Registers

By Gene Aksamit

That old saying – “Death and taxes are the only thing certain in life” – was also true for our Czech ancestors. Over the centuries the emperors and kings who ruled the Czech lands taxed their subjects, usually heavily. From the mid-1600s through the mid-1800s, three major tax cadasters, or land registers, were prepared. These registers listed subjects and their property and became the basis for levying taxes. They do provide information on the property held by our ancestors. And the original records for all three of the major tax cadasters are deposited in the Czech archives. Two of the cadasters are discussed here, starting with the final one prepared.



Cadastral map for Pavlov, a small village a few miles west of Prague, Czech Republic

In 1817, the Austrian Emperor ordered the *Stabile cadaster* as part of land tax reform. This was the first systematic survey and mapping of towns and villages in the regions of the present-day Czech Republic.

Accurate surveys of 9,053 cadastral communities were completed between 1826 and 1843 throughout the Austro-Hungarian Empire – including Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia. The information was recorded on cadastral maps, *indikační skizy*, that provided a basis for legal descriptions and valuing yields of properties.

The maps are very detailed with a scale of 1:1440. These hand-painted maps show individual houses, farmyards, farm buildings, gardens, pastures, fields, streams and woods. Color coding was used to differentiate each of the above features. House numbers were noted and, in some cases, the owner's name was shown. The original cadastral maps for Bohemia are housed in the Czech National Archive in Prague, for south Moravia in the Brno Regional Archive, and for north Moravia and Czech Silesia in the Opava Regional Archive. Copies of these maps can be obtained from the appropriate archives. The Czechs have been digitizing the maps with the intent that all will eventually be available from the archives on CD's. These maps make very interesting additions to one's family history.

The second great Bohemian tax cadaster is called the *Tereziánský katastr* after Empress Maria Theresia (Queen of Bohemia in 1740 – 1780). It was initially prepared from 1710 – 1713 during the rule of her father. The initial phase included *Fasse*, or tax returns. The information on these returns led to many complaints and the final registry was not completed until 1748 when it was finally agreed how to tax the yield of serfs. The final registry of 1748 included first and last names of heads of households and yields from various fields and meadows. The *Tereziánský katastr* is housed in the Czech National Archive in Prague. © Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International 2009-2011, All Rights Reserved

Cemeteries and Genealogy in the Czech Republics

By Mark Bigaouette, CGSI Regional Representative

Grave sites and customs are very important in Czech cemeteries (hřbitov). They are covered by flowers and are well cared for, though ownership differs than in North America. Plots can be owned, or even rented for two to ten year periods. All of the information about the individual is kept by the village/town or church authorities. There is almost no information on the gravestones themselves.

Authorities greatly disapprove of unkempt plots, and people are asked to give up the space if not maintained. New owners can choose to dispose of the old gravestone and replace it, or leave it and reuse it. When searching a cemetery in the republics, don't overlook gravestones laying in a pile or for ones thrown over a wall!

Lessons to be learned include:

1. Researching records, not cemeteries, is important
2. Never place an emphasis on cemetery on your trips to the republics
3. Rarely will you find a gravestone dated prior to 1900, and many are simply inscribed rodina or family with the surname and no given names or dates.

When I was in Letohrad, Bohemia in the cemetery there was a sign placed by the authorities on spaces 136-7 that said "volný hrob" (available grave/urn). To the left of the Rodina Kubelkova gravestone is the site of my great grandmother's grave. Her name is the only one on the stone, though my cousin's parents' urns are now part of that space. When they came into control of that space, they could have had the body removed and cremated (they didn't).

Should you see a cemetery on your visit to the Czech Republic, you will be astonished as to its beauty, but not to its genealogical value. The only way to be astonished about that (and you will!) is with using the records.

Remember that the churches and village only have those records going back to about 1900. All matriky (vital records) books filled prior to 1900 were sent to the osudný archiv (regional archives). You too can be very successful and walk the land of your ancestors just don't take a wrong turn and only visit the cemetery!

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Zpíváte česky (Do you Sing Czech?)

By Georgiana Dolejsi

Let Me Call You Sweetheart

Nech mé volat miláček, já tě miluji
Šeptej mé má milá, ze mé rada mas

Nech tu lásku svitit, ve tvé verne oči
Nech mé volat miláček, já tě miluji

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If you have any contributions or suggestions for topics for future columns, please contact me by email: tkadlec@gmail.com or call me: (651) 271-0422 or send your letters to my attention: 1408 Fairmount Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55105. See this article online at: www.kadlecovi.com Dekuji! Tony Kadlec