



the Heimatbrief

A Newsletter Magazine of the German-Bohemian Heritage Society

Celebrating the GBHS' 18th Year

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Members enjoy a warm sunny day at the GBHS picnic August 16.

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Coming Events

September 13, 2003
Board of Directors Meeting
GBHS Research Library

September 20, 2003
Field Trip
New Ulm Area Attractions

October 18, 2003
Annual Fall Meeting
N.U. Public Library Lower Level

German-Bohemian Immigration to St. Paul, Minnesota

by **Linda Therkelsen and Robert Paulson**

An "Austrian" found in records in St. Paul, Minnesota, is frequently ... a German

Further, that German-Bohemian was probably from South Bohemia, and likely to have come from County Krummau (Cesky Krumlov) or sometimes from Prachatitz (Prachatice), just north of Krummau, in the District of Budweis (Ceske Budejovice).

Because of their German ethnicity and language group, it

from this area in Bohemia. They do not appear as Czech, of course, and because Bohemia was part of the Austrian Empire when they were born, or the AustroHungarian Empire at the time of immigration, death certificates, census records, and many church records show "Austria," or sometimes "Germany," reflecting their ethnicity and their language, a dialect of German (Böhmisch).

The German -Bohemians from South Bohemia immigrated from villages in the Bohemian Forest where their ancestors had lived as farmers and cottagers for centuries. While some had first come to this southwestern borderland when invited in the 1200s by the Bohemian dukes, there are some even older villages that lie along trade routes both from Bavaria and from the cities of Vienna, Salzburg, and in particular from Linz. The County Krummau area where they lived surrounds the southernmost "hook" of the Moldau or Vltava River, the river important for the trade routes, and in the development of the southern Bohemian Forest. The Linz route led from Linz to Hohenfurth (Vyssi Brod) to Krurnmau, eventually to Pisek and then to Prague. Both the local lord and the community collected tolls for the use of these routes. This particular route was for the import of salt and export of cattle, among other goods and produce.

Germanic tribes had lived in the area, but the first rulers in recorded history were the local Bohemian noblemen, the Vitek family (Vitkovci). The Vitek family was a very old Bohemian family tracing back to Vitek Senior of Prcice, first mentioned in 1194, and a part of the larger Witigonen family. According to legend, a huge property was acquired, which was later divided between the five sons. Each son had a different colored five-leafed rose in his coat-of-arms. The one who received the Cesky Krumlov Estates was the Lord of Krumlov, and had a green rose. The name Krumlov is derived from German "Kmmme Aue," meaning "crooked meadow," related to the crooked winding of the Vltava River.

Because the area was sparsely populated at the time, Vitek invited people from neighboring countries to settle, as did the king of Bohemia, who had his own possessions in the area. People's allegiance was to their immediate land and its owner, there was not a concept of "nation." So more came from the bordering area of Upper Austria, especially the Mühlviertel region, and from Bavaria.

There was always a fair amount of exchange in these border areas. Villages along the trade routes from which German-Bohemian immigrants to St. Paul would come include Salnau (Zelnavá), Oberplan (Horní Pláná), Höritz: (Horice na Sumáve), Schwarzbach (Cerna v Posumávi), Friedberg (Frymburk), and others, all appearing in recorded history from the 1300s or before. There were also graphite and silver mines in the area, use of forest products including berries and fruits,

woodworking, and of course all the trades and crafts required for village life.

Some villages of the Krummau area west of the Moldau outer "hook," those closest to the border, grew more as a result of recolonization after the Thirty Years War (1618-1648). These include Glöckelberg (Zadni Zvonkova) and Neuofen (Nova Pec). All had always been involved in using forest products, especially lumber. In 1786-1793, the Schwarzenberg rulers built the Schwarzenberg Canal in order to more fully use the lumber of this part of the forest. The canal allowed lumber to be floated from the isolated border area to larger population centers, even all the way to Vienna. This encouraged further population growth, for lumbering, and as mills were built to process the wood before sending on to the river. These people, however, usually came from the older German-Bohemian villages east of or on the Moldau.

German-Bohemian surnames appear in the records as soon as the court and land records start in any of these villages, 1400s and 1500s for the older villages. Because of the longtime occupation of these borderlands by German-Bohemians and relative isolation of the Bohemian Forest, there are some very uniquely identifiable surnames found in South Bohemia, that since the 1870s have appeared in St. Paul (like Faschingbauer, Holzinger). There are also some general German names (Müller, Bauer) as well. Of course, they did also intermarry with their Czech neighbors, so some names can be Czech, or even "exchange" (Köhler, Kollar). And there are some that are also common German-Bohemian names over the west borderlands, like Petschl.

German-Bohemians from South Bohemia immigrated for all the usual economic reasons outlined in the larger discussion on German-Bohemian immigration. In addition, in this area, in 1870, a gale destroyed hundreds of square miles of woods, affecting the lumber industry. A disease spread by beetles killed more trees beginning in 1874. Unemployment grew after an initial time of increased work cutting down and processing the dead trees.

Somehow, they began to find St. Paul as an area for immigration, and soon a German-Bohemian population "chain" immigrated to help the city boom in the 1870s and 1880s. Perhaps the first from South Bohemia had been following the path to New Ulm, to discover there were jobs to be had right there in St. Paul before they ever left from that major transportation center. It would take more research to discover exactly when the first South Bohemians arrived, but it would appear to be the late 1860s to 1870. The Mississippi River was a major transportation route for immigrants earlier, but in 1867 the railroad extended from Chicago to St. Paul, making it even more accessible.

Within my (Linda's) own relatives, one brother and his

family first immigrated in 1870, followed by another brother and family the next year, and two more siblings and their families in 1873. But many, many other relatives were immigrating at the same time, and continued to chain immigrate through the 1880s, with a few coming as late as the 1890s. Everybody was related to everybody, and wrote back and helped other relatives and neighbors immigrate.

The earliest of these immigrants settled in the same neighborhood as their neighbors back home, the Czechs, in the area near West 7th Street. However, as the city grew outward from the river, the German-Bohemians especially lived and worked in the Frogtown - in those days, Fröschenburg, because of all the German immigrants - neighborhood of St. Paul, named for the numerous croaking frogs of the swampy area.

Fröschenburg or Frogtown was one of the different "settlements" within St. Paul, as was the "settlement" on Fort Road (West 7th). At the time the German-Bohemians pioneered there, St. Paul was a number of separate settlements where people lived, Uppertown, Lowertown, Dayton's Bluff, St. Anthony Hill, Baptist Hill, Reserve Town, and so on. Frogtown, as described in two memoirs written by Rev. Father Alexius Hoffman, who grew up in the neighborhood 1867-1875 (handwritten memoir 1925, "Frogtown," and memoir written in 1935, typed 1978, Frogtown 1867-1875"), was almost rather a "suburb" to the settlements of, e.g., Uppertown, and Lowertown closer to the river. Hoffman had been born in 1863 on St. Peter Street, son of immigrants from Bavaria and Rhineland, and in 1867 his family moved to a location first near Rice Street and Rondo, to start the first grocery store in Frogtown. Hoffman trained as a priest at St. John's in Collegeville, after attending Assumption Parish School as a child.

He described how part of Uppertown west of the old Capitol reaching to Seven Corners became to the German settlers "Böhnenviertel" or Beanville. The German women raised plenty of beans in their little gardens, for every little house had a garden. This was where Hoffman had been born, before his family moved to early Frogtown, to what would later be only southeast corner of a much larger neighborhood. (St. Paul generally grew north and west from the river.)

Joseph Rondo, a French-Canadian teamster, really Rondeau, had come down from the Red River country near the Canadian border, and settled near Fort Snelling before 1838. He and some of the other French-Canadians made some of their living by selling "wet goods," i.e. alcohol to the soldiers. Rondo and the rest were told to move on out of the area of the military reservation. Rondo then located in St. Paul under the bluff, purchased from Phelan, in 1840. He made a claim somewhere on the Lake Como road, and then laid out an addition that became a part of St.

Paul. Rondo's Addition began at Rice Street and went as far north as Martin Street (now Central Avenue) and as far west as Louis Street.

Rondo, then, was the first settler of Frogtown, definitely living there by the early 1860s. Frogtown was then a swampy area, full of tamaracks and larches, with a few bushes - and plenty of frogs croaking. There were also marshes and "lakes" - really ponds -- including "Lake Lafond," where St. Agnes Church now stands.

Rondo and the earlier settlers probably built log cabins, but Frogtown became an area of settlement for the poorest pioneers, who built shanties, and later as their living improved, frame houses of one and a half or two stories. (Rondo later built a brick house.) The early houses, as described by Hoffman, were one story, generally facing with the gable to the street, and only a few feet from the street, so that people could step right into the street. The shanties were plain board structures, with the boards set vertically, of one room, with a shed or "lean-to" serving as kitchen and woodshed. Some roofs were shingled, others covered with boards.

Rice Street and Rondo Street were first cow paths, for the people in Uppertown would drive their cows out to graze in this "suburban" area - a "prairie" back of Western and Mackubin. Even as Frogtown developed, the streets were of dirt - mud with any rain or snow. Wagons drove up and down, cows, pigs, geese, and sheep would be driven through the streets, raising plenty of dust when the weather was dry, contributing to the mud, ruts, and general lack of sanitation of the street when not. Of course, heavy loads of lumber on wagon were being driven through, as people built their houses, stables, and barns. The houses were not "laid out" squarely on blocks yet, for they did keep animals, small farms, and gardens in the Frogtown settlement. Some of the barns can still be recognized as houses now in the Frogtown neighborhood, along with many of the other old structures, some renovated later. Houses were in straggling rows along the larger muddy streets - neither

straight nor level; other streets not really there yet. The street signs were nailed to the fence comers, no sewerage, water works, no street lights except a kerosene lamp on a pole at the corner of Rice and Rondo.

In Frogtown itself, as it developed, many had a pig, as a practical source of meat in the city", and many a cow for the milk only - it was not practical to keep cattle for meat in the "city." In the mornings, the cow herders would round up the cows from the neighborhood and drive them up Rice to Rondo and out to the "prairie."

This was the Frogtown to which the German-Bohemians immigrated in the 1870s-1890s and later.

Staunch Catholics all, they first attended the first church for German-speakers, downtown at Church of the Assumption (founded 1856). In 1884 those living in the West 7th neighborhood would help found the Church of St. Francis de Sales. German-Bohemians from South

Bohemia comprise a major part of the group of immigrants who organized the Church of St. Agnes in the Frogtown neighborhood in 1887, and the church records are laced with their names. They were also found in St. Bernard, divided out of the parish of St. Agnes in 1890, and in Sacred Heart.

The German -Bohemians found both skilled and unskilled work in the rapidly growing city. They put much of their woodworking and masonry skills to work to truly "build" St. Paul - they were particularly involved in construction, building, carpentry, and masonry. They also worked as drivers, butchers, in dairies, lumberyards, and as saloonkeepers, cigar makers, shoemakers

(shoemaking done in the Bohemian Forest had included making wooden shoes), tailors and in factories. A major use of their skills was on the railroad, and James J. Hill made certain to locate his maintenance and repair shops in their neighborhood in order to use those skills. Some "let their services as needed," sawing wood, working on streets, helping on the farms in the city, making ice,



Church of St. Agnes

slaughtering pigs, smoking hams, shoveling snow. The women worked all day and even longer, cooking, caring for children, geese, chickens, cows, the garden and flowerbed, doing laundry, fetching water, until pumps came into use later in the 1870s.

Some German-Bohemians from West Bohemia, Egerland, areas also immigrated to St. Paul, some perhaps coming to the city from New Ulm. There were some from other parts of South Bohemia a little farther north of Krels Krummau itself, including Prachatitz and a cluster of villages around Neugebäu (Novy Svet) and Fürstenhut (Kni zeci Plane) west-northwest of Wallern (Volary).

As it grew in population and expanded its area, and grew older, the Frogtown immigrant neighborhood was later dominated by the beautiful ornate Baroque-style St. Agnes Church where German language sermons, hymn and confessions lingered well into the 1950s. The church of today was built starting in 1909 on the basement church begun in 1897 on that site. It is similar to a church in Algen-Schidgel, in the Mühlviertel in Upper Austria across the border from the Krummau area. This church replaced the first wooden Church of St. Agnes on a different site, built for the rapidly expanding congregation organized in 1887.

The church was a strong presence in the neighborhood, giving order and direction to the German-Bohemian immigrants. Not only did the church spire visually dominate, the clock chimed out the time each hour and half hour, and also the Angelus, a time for prayer, at six, noon, and six. It was part of the immigrants' everyday life, as well as their spiritual life, just as the church had been back in their homes in the "old country" in Europe.

Social events often centered around the church: card clubs, sauerkraut suppers, men's club, women's club, and benevolent insurance societies, such as the Deutsch-Böhmisch Bruderbund and Schwesterbund. Old-time dancing was the rule at wedding receptions that were held at the many neighborhood saloons and taverns that graced almost every street corner of the neighborhood.

The German language was universal. It could be heard over the back fences that separated the small immigrant houses. The small yards contained vegetable gardens, a chicken coop with a few chickens and sometimes even a goat. It was not uncommon to find a smoke house and sometimes a tiny "grandparent house" tucked away in the rear of small thirty foot lots. German was also the language of commerce in the many local business establishments that dotted the neighborhood -- taverns, grocery stores, bakery, butcher shops, hardware store, tailor shop, barber shops, pharmacy, mortuaries. They displayed the German names of their proprietors on their marquees: Hafner, Hennes, Lauss, Dietcher, Stleger, Probst, Herbst, Hecht, Seeger.

The sights and sounds of the "old country" - the church, the chiming of the church clock, the German language, the music, and even the small animals - mingled with the familiar smells of home. At suppertime the air was filled with the fragrance of cooking: pot roast, sauerkraut or cabbage, vegetable soup, dumplings, and apple strudel.

For the first generation or so, the German-Bohemians tended to many within their own group and within their neighborhood, further increasing relationships with others from South Bohemia. However, living in the city accelerated assimilation, even if it be within the German speaking community.

Despite a heritage of strong German Catholic ties, many of us could be left without the knowledge of our German-Bohemian ancestry - and of our ancient ancestral ties to South Bohemia - because of that misleading "Austria" identifier in so many records.

See page 15 to order a 48 page book about the parish of St. Agnes which contains transcriptions of more than 250 marriages.

Andreas Schmidtpeter

From Hirschau Heimatbuch "Pfarrei Hirschau im Böhmerwald", by Karl Bretl. Translated by Karen Hobbs.

There is a large flagstone in the floor in front of the communion railing in the parish church of the Good Shepherd in Hirschau (built in 1832). It bears the inscriptions "Here lies Andreas Schmidtpeter, R. I. P." The flagstone marks the grave of the generous man who made it possible to build the church.

(Picture by RJ Pritzl)

Andreas Schmidtpeter was born in farmhouse number 3 in Hirschau - now known as the home of the Linsmeier Family. He spent his youth there. At that time the local resident farm boys often sought extra employment during the winter as broom binders and the housewives worked at sorting and splitting feathers for the rich feather merchants who purchased feathers in Bohemia and then exported them to the larger German cities. Andreas and others acted as middle men by buying up the feathers, having them split and reselling them. The poet of the Bohemian Forest, Josef Rank, writes about this in his memories of his youth -- he mentions that his Father had a "Federniederlage" (feather warehouse) at the "Paulihof" in Friedrichsthal.

Andreas Schmidtpeter, too, was able to turn that particular type of business into a most rewarding enterprise through which he acquired great wealth. He made many business trips to the large cities of Westfalia. He always traveled on foot and, out of fear for the safety of the large sums of money he always carried with him, he would wear very simple clothing. He also went to Tirol and Hungary. Whenever he returned home the entire village would be gathered to welcome Andreas and to hear him tell about what happened during his travels.

One of his stories follows. "Ten years ago I was traveling on foot from Pest to Debrecin in Hungary and was wearing poor clothing to disguise the fact that I had a lot of money with me. As I approached Debrecin, my "Pinsch" (Pinscher) who was always with me when I traveled began to bark and would not come out of the grain field where he was nosing about. I followed his barking and took a few steps into the field when a voice called out: "Halt. Are you friend or foe?" I was very frightened and quickly answered, "Friend!"

A young man in his prime with a very good physique rose up out of the grain brandished a knife and stepped toward me asking what I wanted. I said I was a workman and was there only because the dog was barking and wouldn't come out when I called him.

"Well then, give me something to eat -- I haven't had a bite in three days. I am a deserter from the Galician frontier. I can't go about in daylight and at night there is nothing to be had." I gave him a roll which was all I had. Then I went to the next village and bought something a little more substantial, gave it to him and went on my way.

Eventually I was traveling in Hungary again. It was in the Autumn as usual. The roads were terrible because of persistent rain and I was forced to stop for a while in a miserable little village. There is nothing worse in the world than a Hungarian village tavern -- there is never any bread available and they serve only sour wine. The main room was full of revelers and a cloud of tobacco

smoke hung in the air. You know how tobacco smoke smells. Apparently I was acting in a manner that insulted the drunken Magyars. They kept showing their daggers in a way that made me quit anxious for my safety. All at once the door opened and a very well-dressed man came inside. The noisy Magyars fell silent at once and hunched together. The man looked around the room and when he saw me he hurried over to me, embraced me and said, "Don't you recognize me?" "No," I answered.

"I saw you pass by my house and I followed you my friend, this is no place for you to stay. You must stay at my house overnight." The man took my arm and moved me towards the door. I went along gladly -- it was a relief just to get out of that place.

The man led me to a beautiful house. He took me into the main room which was already occupied by a white-haired elderly couple, a young woman and three angelic little children. They all greeted me warmly which made me wonder why. The young nobleman said, "Father, mother, this is the man who saved me from starvation and about whom I have so often spoken." Then he turned to me: "Don't you remember the man in the grain field? I am that man. I knew you the moment I saw you."

"The entire family thanked me with tears in their eyes which made me cry, too." said Andreas Schmidtpeter. "The deserter was the only son of the wealthy owner of the manor and his safe return was most fortunate for all his family. I had to stay with them for a day and then good weather returned. "The mountains must remain apart but men will always meet again."

But Schmidtpeter wasn't the only one who told of his adventures. The village elders also had tales to tell about things that happened because he had so much money. During one of his journeys Schmidtpeter was overtaken by darkness and he had to take an overnight room in a lonely Gasthaus that had a very bad reputation. After he spent a little time in the tavern and had finished his supper he went to his room and was completely undressed when there was a soft knock at the door. He opened it to find the hostess outside. She looked frightened as she whispered to him that the host and his servant had somehow learned that he had a large sum of money and they planned to murder and rob him. She told him he must get out of the room quickly and hide. He genuflected for a quick prayer, crept out quietly and crawled into a shed and hid deep inside a pile of straw shocks. After he was there for awhile and quietly praying for his life, he heard the two men come near, saying: "He must be in here. It is so dark he could not have found his way elsewhere." Then he heard them clearing away one shock of straw after another. When there were only two or three shocks left in front of the corner where Schmidtpeter was hiding the host finally said: "He must not be here," and both of them left. During

that night Schmidtpeter made a vow that if he should escape those murderers he would build a church” Whether or not the story is true, Andreas Schmidtpeter remained a bachelor and lived a pious and god-fearing lifestyle. He donated the money to build the church in the village of his birth and established a fund whose interest was sufficient to maintain two ministries there. It also funded the parish house with its garden and outbuilding, the cemetery and its mortuary, he gave a field and a meadow in Friedrichsthal for support of the parish as well as some land in Springenberg. He also provided for mass and rosary stipends. His gifts had great spiritual value because the little parish community of Hirschau, Friedrichsthal and Schwarzau gave many more priests and nuns than many a larger parish in our homeland. The first Bohemian convent of the School Sisters of Notre Dame was also built in Hirschau.

At age 60 Andreas Schmidtpeter quietly departed his birthplace, full of confidence in his Lord and Savior and in life in another world. The house where he was born and died was destroyed in a disastrous fire in Hirschau on August 10, 1921. Many valuable remembrances from his life were also lost in the fire.

The big, heavy strongbox with its complex lock system that Andreas Schmidtpeter carried with him on his travels is preserved in the parish house. May the memory of this noble benefactor of our parish community live on!

Franz Bretl

Editors note. Andreas Schmidtpeter article submitted by Robert J. Pritzl. Visit his web site at www.pritzl.net. Email rpritzl@strato.net

Greetings from Nuremberg

A Letter to Robert Paulson

Hello Mr. Paulson,
First, excuse please my "English" - I believe your German is much better than my English but I will try to write this mail in your language.

Last year you help me with the search for Peter Pregler, he was the brother of my great grandmother, he emigrate in the year 1891 from Bohemia to U.S.A. You send me much helpful information!

Before this I know your name from the Bohemian Heritage Society home page also I read your name in other internet homepages, I read the "Mailing List" almost every day. I don't know why, but I don't have read the "Our Founders Story" in the GBHS - Page before.

But these days I was reading this Story. It is not so easy

for me to read in English but your story I understand very good. I read it several times.

With great movement I read from your visits at your grandmother Matilda, from your unhappy attempt to visit Neubäu in 1978, from the story of the St. George Chapel, from the successful end of your search for your roots in the "Heimatland" until to the lightning from your great grandfather...till we meet again - "bis wir uns wiedersehen"

I am only 41 years old and I lived from the "Heimatland" only two car-hours away. But I can, a little bit, imagine how you feel as a great grandson of a emigrant at the time you can see the home of your great grandfather with your own eyes.

As a child I too have listening by the old stories of my greatparents and her relatives and friends and so I knew much things and places in the old country.

And I have often visit my Uncle and my Aunt, they live in Bavaria only 2km away from the border to Czech. In the little Bavarian village Schwarzach I looked several times over the border and to the places there was in old time Unterhütten and Dianahof.

But for the first time I visit this country after the fall of the iron curtain. Now I could see this mysterious places with my own eyes. But from the old villages nearby to the borderline was nothing to see anymore.

My Greatparents Andreas (died 1986) and Anna (died 1974) Mages, they came from Unterhütten -Hs.Nr.33 -, cannot go back in the old Heimatland again. But I think, maybe it is better - they have saved the old home in their memories.

Another Uncle of me tried, like you Mr. Paulson, in the 1970's to visit the grave of his grandfather in the cemetery of Waier/Rybnik but it was ending like your attempt to visit Neubäu...in view of a automatic gun, aiming to him, hold by a Czech soldier.

Since September 2001 I am online and as I have learned to work with the WWW. I thought maybe the web will help me to find interesting things about the home of my ancestors in old Bohemia. At one late evening I start my search - I did not really believe to find much.

And then... I was fascinated to find much information over the villages of my ancestors, maps from this villages and a list with house names and numbers - also about my grandfathers house. I showed this documents my father an his sisters and first they cannot, like me before, believe that anyone had saved this old scripts. And this so fare away, in the U.S.A.

But then we all means it is really very, very great that anyone write all these things and we can read this documents today .

And also it is very nice that the GBHS homepage is in the WWW - with the "Mailing List" and much other interesting things!

Mr. Paulson you do a wonderful work for all the German-Bohemian's, in the whole world!!!

And I have read in much letters, that much other peoples mean's the same!

In the last year you gave me the information, that the son of Mr. John Pregler (the ancestor I have been searching for) died in 1999 and that he was 96 years old when he died.

It is very sad that I was a few years too late to contact him, but before I get some old documents and letters from my aunt I did not know from his existence.

He also did not know anything about me or other living relationship in Germany but I am sure he was glad to read a letter from Germany!

I would be glad to have contact with my emigrated relationship in U.S.A but there is only the adopted daughter of John Pregler. (*Another related emigrant has no descendants*).

Now I hope I have taking not to much of your time but after I read these days your story it was a need for me to write you this lines!

And for all the people in the whole world (especially in this times) a peaceful future! - **I hope this wish is not too late!**

Much greetings from Germany to you, Mr.Paulson

Helmut Mages
H.Mages@T-Online.de

PS: If I find the time to make a next trip in our old Heimat, I will visit the place where in old time the village Neubäu was standing and especially I will visit the monument for the St.George's Chapel. And there, in substitute for you, I will burn a candle for all the people they have must leave their wonderful home.

Social Attitudes in New Ulm

by Robert Paulson, GBHS Founder

The article that appeared in the June 2003 edition of "The Heimatbrief" entitled "Lacemaking" appeared in the New Ulm Daily News on 22 May 1897. It was authored by, Julia Darrow Cowles a member of a well-known Minneapolis literary family. The article had first appeared in a Minneapolis newspaper.

The article should be of particular interest to New Ulm German-Bohemians because it articulates a long fell attitude about the social structure of the New Ulm community. It had been felt by the German-Bohemians that the descendant of the "founders of New Ulm" had looked down upon them as lower class; as less cultured, and less educated than the people who "lived up the hill". This is the first time that this attitude of social class distinction has been found in print.

Mrs. Seiter, the wife of Adolph Seiter, the owner of the Dakota Hotel in New Ulm, for a time lived in a mansion on German Street overlooking Goosetown, the home of the German Bohemian community. In this article the author refers to the German Bohemians as "peasants" and states that Mrs. Seiter felt that she must improve the hygiene of these "peasants" so that they can better market their lace. It is to her credit, that Mrs. Seiter tries to help the German Bohemians improve their lot in life, nevertheless she clearly articulates her condescending attitude toward the German Bohemians as a social group.

I hope you enjoyed reading this enlightening article. Special thanks to Dan Hoisington for bringing this article to my attention.

Bob Paulson
GBHS Founder

May Field Trip

By Molly Schweinfurter

Our May 14th Field Trip was a success! Twenty-seven members joined us for a day of adventure and learning. Our first stop was the Fort Ridgely Historic Site where we learned about the Fort's role in the U.S. - Dakota War of 1862. We then traveled to Ramsey Park in Redwood Falls where we enjoyed a bag lunch at the Zeb Gray Shelter overlooking Ramsey Creek. Our next stop was the Lower Sioux Agency Site where we toured the exhibits and grounds, including the old stone warehouse which is the oldest surviving building in Redwood County and was a part of the original Agency Site. We then got a quick tour of the Birch Coulie Battlefield while the thunder gently threatened! Our last stop before heading for home was the Renville County Museum in Morton. They have many interesting exhibits highlighting the history of Renville County spread throughout the many buildings on their site. Many thanks to those who helped make this trip a success that was enjoyed by all!

September Field Trip Planned

The outreach committee has been busy planning our second field trip. We will again stay in close proximity to New Ulm but future trips could take us further distances and to other states.

Saturday, September 20th, 2003 will find us leaving New Ulm by motor coach heading for the Jeffers Petroglyphs, the Geis Buffalo Farm, Stan's Sod Houses, and the Sleepy Eye Depot Museum. A picnic lunch will be enjoyed at Hageman Park.

The bus will leave New Ulm at 8:15 a.m. and return at approximately 4:45 p.m. The cost of the trip will be \$20.00 per person which includes the bus ride, admission at all attractions, and picnic lunch. A very reasonable price for an all day event.

If you are interested in signing up please contact Angie Portner at 507-359-2121 or angiep@newulmtel.net.

Search for GBHS Newsletter Publisher and Editor

By Jerry Gulden

We all recognize the time and effort LuAnn and Louie Lindmeyer have given to the German-Bohemian Heritage Society's Newsletter. LuAnn was the first editor in 1990 and Louie, with LuAnn's help, have been doing the Newsletter ever since. A hearty thank you to the both of you for this contribution.

Now is the time for someone to step forward that has always wanted to or has an inclination to publish a newsletter. We will be in need of a replacement starting January of 2004. I suspect there may be more than one volunteer, in that case we will break the newsletter into smaller pieces of responsibility and maybe have a rotating editorship. We are also open to suggestions as to how the newsletter is organized and distributed from the new editor.

Those that are interested can contact me at red73vet@hotmail.com, or write me at GHBS, PO Box 822, New Ulm MN 56073-0822. Include your name and telephone number so that we can contact you.

Deutsch-Böhmisches Kochbuch

Now available in English

The Bukovina Society has published an English translation of the Valentin Reitmajer cookbook *Deutsche-Böhmisches Kochbuch*, translated by Dr. Sophie A. Welisch. Entitled *German Bohemian Cookery in 19th Century Bukovina* the English edition contains sixty-three recipes in numerous categories. It may be ordered from the Bukovina Society at P O Box 81, Ellis, KS 67637 for \$6.60 US, which includes postage.

Our Readers Write

Just got my Heimatbrief! On the top left of page 12 number 3, Catherine, who married Joseph Wild and lived at Lamberton. Dad and I worked for Joseph Wild at Sikeston, ND, about 10 miles West of Carrington.

Joseph and his wife Kate still lived on the farm, but his sons Raymond and Clarence ran the farm. Clarence was not married but Raymond married that Fall. This was the

The Wild farm was about 1.5 miles east of Sikeston. I believe Joseph and Kate moved to Carrington after I left. Probably after Raymond got married. I left there the first part of October.

LaRay Ries
705 Forest St.
Lisbon, ND, 58054

Photo Identified

On page 15 of the June issue of the *Heimatbrief* were two photographs that Duane Piere submitted for identification. The photo on the right was identified by Alice Manderfeld of New Ulm.

The subjects in the photo are the children of Anton & Anna (Holm) Manderfeld. They were identified as: back row left to right; Hubert, Henry, and Carl Manderfeld. Front row left to right; Anna Manderfeld Hofmeister, Clara Manderfeld Rohner, Caroline Manderfeld.

Thank you to Alice for your her help.

Freyung Cultural Prize for the Life's Work of Leopold Hafner

Monatschrift für die Böhmerwäldler. Mitteilungsblatt des Deutschen Böhmerwaldbundes. Lenzmond—März, 2003. 56 Jahrgang, 3. Folge.

"Freyunger Kulturepreis für Leopold Hafner's Lebenswerk" by Armin Fechter

Translated by: LaVern J. Rippley, St. Olaf College

Once again, the sculptor who derives from Wallern in the Böhmerwald has been awarded a high distinction. At the county seat in Freyung, officials have honored an artist whose work speaks in its own language. It breathes a distinctive spirit which exudes a mature form—one that is free and unimpeded by all the short-term trends of the contemporary fashionable scene. Works from Hafner's Atelier are on display in prominent structures in various parts of Europe and South Africa, in the United States and Brasil, as well as in the cities of Passau and Speyer.

Born on the 23rd of October 1930, Hafner's artistic talent



was, so to speak, bedded with him in the cradle. His grandfather was a painter and thus the fact that the young boy had talent was recognized instantaneously. At least to the degree that the family recognized early on that the as yet malleable young Hafner should be steered in the right direction.

After the Hafner family was expelled from the Czechoslovakian Böhmerwald in 1946, the promising young successor of his grandfather was sent to Perlesreut to study with another sculptor from Wallern, Ludwig Pinsker, the goal being to learn the elementary techniques of sculpting. Shortly thereafter, Hafner completed his journeyman's qualification test at the state technical college in Zwiesel. His powerful ambitions soon carried him forward and onward. In 1951 he joined the academic class at the Art Academy in Munich where he earned his diploma in art. During that period he won the assignment to assist in shaping the high altar for the cathedral church in Passau.

Since 1959 Hafner has been working as a free lance sculptor. Initially, his atelier was situated in the Castle of Vornbach. During this time, he completed the traditional journeyman's face to face encounters with a variety of artists. Furthermore, by means of visits to

Italy, Greece, Romania and Hungary coupled with tours into the world metropolises of Moscow, London, Nairobi and Capetown--followed by a stay in the sculptor-rich city of San Salvador in South America, Hafner brought his years of learning to culmination. Soon thereafter in 1969 he took up residence and structured his atelier at the site of the former quarters of the episcopal prelate of Aicha vorm Wald where he still lives currently and works in these accommodations.

One of the foremost characteristics of Hafner's output is the shaping of church spaces, a goal which he has determined will be his own personal legacy. Throughout all of Germany from Westphalia to the Tirol region of Europe and in the far reaches of South Africa and Brasil, Hafner has left his own special mark on houses of worship. As pointed out recently by Passau's Neue Presse, Hafner always takes into consideration the totality of space within the church ["die Harmonie des Raumes läßt er gelten"] (he causes the available space of the church itself to determine the artistic results for the artist). Be the Presse statement what it may, the artist himself voices the same message more succinctly: [Ich mache keinen Hafner, sondern das, was der Raum fordert] (I'm not on the scene to replicate another Hafner, but to supply what the space requires).

Of special significance are Hafner's portraits. For example, he created the epitaph for Bishop Simon Konrad in the Cathedral at Passau. For the Walhalla museum of heroes near Regensburg he created the marble bust of Gregor Mendel, the monk, who is credited with discovering the laws of genetics. Along the Grosser Osser Mountain, hikers find his Hans Watzlik. In addition, Hafner has created an image of Professor Werner Heisenberg, the atomic physicist and Noble Prize winner, who for years was a spokesman for the Sudeten Germans. Moreover, he crafted the Passau artist, Dieter Stauber, who, like Hafner, derives from the Böhmerwald.

Hafner has also produced numerous fountains and memorials. Excellent examples of these are the centennial fountain of the four Bavarian dioceses at Altötting as well as the Creator's fountain in Passau-Kohlbruck. In addition there is the mighty fountain which he produced for the Gymnasium [high school] in Untergriesbach, which represents the perfection of a freshly opened blossom. Also in the category of his fine monuments is the Adalbert Stifter cenotaph on the Böhmerwald Square in Munich, and last but not least the famous Monument about German-Bohemian Immigrants which stands in New Ulm, Minnesota, USA.

Besides those already mentioned, many other contracts have fallen to this sculptor. Among them is the Patron Saint's fountain in the Passau Cathedral yard as well as one in the St. Catherine Chapel of the Kaiser Cathedral

in Speyer. One of his spatial triumphs lies in his ability to make his product fit naturally into its appropriate setting. As the man reading his citation, Robert Muthmann discovered, there are no less than 14 churches that display somewhere in their interiors, the imprint of his handicraft. [Wer die zeitgenössische Kunst OstBayerns kennt, kennt auch Leopold Hafner] (the person who knows anything about contemporary art in Eastern Bavaria, also knows Leopold Hafner): these words were spoken by Winfried Russ, Chairman of the Cultural Agency of Freyung-Gravenau, on the occasion of awarding Hafner the prize in the presence of the County supervisor, Alexander Muthmann. In order to pinpoint the nature of Hafner's output more exactly, Muthmann quoted the founder of the Museum of Modern Art in Passau, Hanns-Egon Wörten, with the words: [Leopold Hafner hat keine Konzessionen an die Zeit gemacht, alle Moden angeschlagen und einen sehr persönlichen Weg von hoher Qualität eingeschlagen—und er ist ihn konsequent gegangen] (Leopold Hafner has never made concessions to any specific time period. He has rejected all popular, fleeting fashions and instead has pursued his objectives on his own pathway to top quality, and he has done so with very strict discipline.)

Hafner's work has received multiple expressions of recognition: in 1975 he accepted from the City of Passau the Cultural Prize issued by the former citizens of the Böhmerwald. In 1976 he got the Cultural Prize of the Sudetenden German Landsmannschaft. In 1982 Hafner was inducted into the Academy of Sciences and Art, and in 1999 the County of Passau gave him its Cultural Award.

At the same time as Hafner accepted his award, the 16-year-old violin player, Steffi Falk, was awarded the Progress Citation. Hafner incorporated her in his thanks to the guests for coming out to see and hear such a gifted musical young girl and such a tempered "old man." He then added [und wenn ma was gschent kriagt, sagt ma halt bei uns: Vergelt's Gott!] (and as we used to say in the hometown where I grew up--if you get something for nothing, you say 'May God reward you for it'). Our publishing house and its editorial staff congratulate Hafner on the occasion of this honor.

Peasants in Bohemia

by Karen Hobbs

A Peasant is one who lives in a rural community as opposed to an urban worker, craftsman or merchant in a town or city.

In the tax rolls of 1654 the population of rural communities were classified in tax categories according to the type of house they lived in and the nature of their landholdings.

A farmer (Bauer) usually lived in a Bauernhof - a cluster of residence and farm buildings around a central courtyard entered by a large gate. He had enough land for his own subsistence and to pay his tithes and robot (dues similar to rent paid to the noble landlord) in produce. That was usually 30-40 acres, seldom more.

The farmer's courtyard usually had a pile of manure in it. The farmer's had a saying: "Show me your manure pile and I will tell you what kind of farmer you are."

The size of a farmer's landholding was sometimes designated as a 1/4 manor, 1/2 manor or a full manor. A half-manor was considered a large holding although it was barely 40 acres. That 40 acres might not be in one place -- instead the farmer might have one long narrow field right behind his Hof, another one some distance away with neighbor's fields in between, and others even farther away well outside the village. Farmers would trade fields if possible in order to consolidate their holdings but that did not change the basic shape of the fields. They always remained long and narrow -- a form that developed because plows were so hard to turn and because everyone wanted some land next to the village.

The farm Hof residence entry almost always had a raised stone platform in front of it with a nice bench and perhaps a bucket of water nearby. The platform helped keep the entry hall clean and the men of the family liked to spend idle time sitting outside on the bench when the weather permitted.

They could get away from the hustle and bustle the women created, smoke a pipe, watch who passed by, and engage in handcrafts like whittling or carving new figures for their family Christmas creche as they sat there.

Many Bauern (farmers) were also craftsmen who practiced their trades to supplement their income, in particular during the winter months. Tool-making (everything from plows to nails and hinges), wagon-making, wheel making, basket making, broom making, making wooden shoes and masonry were common peasant trades.

A small farmer (Chalupner) was not as well off as a Bauer and might not have a nice farmstead with a courtyard

surrounded by house, henhouse, grainary, stables, toolshed, wagon shed, etc. He had much less than 30 acres and if he had a large family it was not enough for subsistence. He may have had to supplement his income but he usually did it with day labor for the Bauern and craftsmen in his village or he practiced one of the "lesser" crafts like broom-making or making wooden shoes.

A Chalupe is defined as a dilapidated building in an old 19th Century German-English dictionary. The small farmer may have gotten that word as his designation because he never had the means to maintain his residence and any shed or outbuilding he owned like a Bauer could.

The next category of taxpayer in the Tax Rolls of 1654 is the Gärtner -- Gardener. This is a person who has a small house - possibly only one or two rooms and perhaps a small shed attached and has no fields -- only a garden.

These families were often weavers, tailors, shoemakers -- craftsmen whose main income came from their craft but who grew some of their own food in a garden. The garden was not necessarily next to their house - it might be some distance away in an area where many villagers maintained gardens and fruit trees or kept bees. The house was usually owned by the noble lord and they had to pay him rent for it and the garden land or to provide him with some of their hand work and do some work in his own fields.

A cottager had no land at all. The more fortunate cottager had a shed or leanto with a goat and a few chickens but most of them were at the bottom of the economic ladder -- day-laborers and weavers or cloth finishers and dyers.

Some retired farmers moved into cottages when family members took over the farmstead but they still got their food and support from the farm so they could be quite well off. In some cases the cottage for the retired elders of a farm family was built into the Hof. A true cottage was a freestanding small residence, often only one room but possibly with a loft of some kind.

Farmhands and farm Hof house servants sometimes had sleeping accommodations inside the family residence. If they did not they lived with their own families or perhaps in a nearby cottage. Farmhands and stable workers sometimes made quarters for themselves in the barn.

There is a wonderful living museum of German farmhouses at Bad Windsheim just 32 km east of Dinkelsbuhel in Germany. You can see real examples of a weaver's cottage, a miller's residence in a mill, a brewery, and various types of farm Hof dating from the thirteenth century to 1935. The German farm houses are pretty

typical of the types of houses the German-Bohemians built. Some parts of Bohemia had distinctive exterior architecture but the way their buildings functioned inside was much the same as those at Bad Windsheim.

There were some places in the Bohemian forest that had large farm Hof that were two story buildings with the residence on the upper floor and the stables, shops and sheds on the ground floor. I did not see any of that type of farm Hof at the Bad Windsheim museum but when I was there in 1997 not all of the buildings were open as yet.

Karen Hobbs

Rootsweb Electronic Mailing List

Concerning the topic of illegitimate children, I found an interesting reference. Or have any additional information about this "fine" for the births of illegitimate children ?

Thanks,
Benji

Felix Gundacker (a professional researcher) wrote on a website: (freely translated)

It's interesting to note, that illegitimate children were baptized (sometimes often) not only in another parish, but also in another "Herrschaftsbereich" (area of another feudal ruler).

The reason for this was the "Geldstrafe" = fine, which had to be paid in the 17th and 18th century to the feudal ruler, for the 'first time offense' (means first birth of an illegitimate child).

The fine was 10 "Gulden". This was a larger sum, considering that you could buy a small farmhouse for app. 100 "Gulden"

ORIGINAL GERMAN TEXT:

Interessant ist hier anzumerken, daß uneheliche Kinder nicht selten nicht nur in einer anderen Pfarre, sondern auch in einem anderen Herrschaftsbereich getauft wurden.

Der Grund lag in der Strafe der Grundherrschaft, die für erstmaliges Vergehen im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert eine Strafe von 10 Gulden einhob. Ein sehr hoher Betrag; war doch ein einfaches Bauernhäuschen um ca. 100 Gulden zu haben.

History For Sale

German-Bohemians - The Quiet

Immigrants by La Vern Rippley & Robert Paulson

A "must have" book for researchers. Over ten years in the making. Fully researched. Nine chapters describing our German-Bohemian ancestors life in the homeland, the journey to America and life in their new-found homes. Customs, traditions, music, heritage and more. Over 150 photographs. Hard cover, 279 pages \$25.90

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German-Bohemian Immigrant Monument Book

A souvenir booklet of the monument dedication by the GBHS with early history of the organization. . . \$5.00

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All prices (U.S. Funds Only Please) include sales tax and postage . If you wish to order any of these items, send a check payable to GBHS and mail it with your request to: GBHS, P.O. Box 822, New Ulm, MN, 56073-0822

Announcing:

Church of St. Agnes, St. Paul, Minnesota: Ethnic Origins in Marriage Records, 1887-1897

transcription and introduction by Linda Therkelsen

The influx of immigrants to St. Paul resulted in a burgeoning of ethnic Catholic parishes within the city. The Church of St. Agnes, in St. Paul's Frogtown neighborhood, was the church home for ethnic Germans from Bohemia (now in the Czech Republic) and from Burgenland (now part of Austria). The Rev. James Trobec noted the name of the parish in the old country, as well as the name of the small villages where the people were born, in the parish marriage records.

This volume includes full transcriptions of the 250+ marriages Trobec performed at the Church, including names of witnesses and translations for dispensations. Almost half are marriages with at least one of the parties born in Bohemia. Burgenland is the birthplace for another fifth.

The book also includes maps showing the locations from the records, which clearly illustrate the likelihood that the families could have known each other before emigrating. In addition to an index to brides and grooms, there is a locality index which can be used to find others from the same communities.

The methodology used in compiling this data can be used as a model to find ethnic origins through the use of Catholic church records.

ISBN 0-915709-97-X, 2002, 48 pp., paper, 3 maps, photos, Order #M-484, \$13.00, plus shipping and MN sales tax (where required).



German-Bohemian wedding, 1886, St. Paul

Compiler Linda Therkelsen has been tracing her German-Bohemian ancestors for 4+ years, and helps connect others to St. Paul. Her great-grandparents are shown above.

Available only from:



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