

Please note that this document was written in 1911.

[Transcriber's note: In order to render surnames "searchable" on the Internet, I have occasionally placed variant pronunciation and spellings in brackets with a "p." meaning "pronounced as", rather than add an (h) as indicated by the author.

We who are descendants of the early Czechs from Johnson and Linn Counties in Iowa should be extremely grateful for Professor Simek's tenacity in rooting out the Bohemian names from various records, some of which would be virtually lost due to misspellings, alterations and the passage of time. My husband's Horak family came to northern Johnson County in 1854, and we live north of the Johnson County line in Linn County at present, a few miles from where Professor Simek grew up. Many of the surnames in this document still exist in our neighborhood.]
- Barb Horak, June 2010

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LEADING EVENTS IN JOHNSON COUNTY IOWA HISTORY
Pioneer Publishing Co., Chicago, 1911, pages 897-906

THE BOHEMIANS IN JOHNSON COUNTY
By B. Simek (pronounced Shimek)

*(Note: *In Bohemian the letter "c" with a v-shaped mark over it is pronounced as "ch" in chat, and similarly "s" with a v-shaped mark over it is pronounced like "sh" in shall. In this account the letter (h) in parenthesis signifies that the letter "c" or "s" preceding it should be written and pronounced as here indicated. Where "ch" appears without the parenthesis it is sounded as in German.)*

The Bohemians, or as they should properly be called, the C(h)echs,* [Czechs] constitute approximately one-fifth of the population of Johnson county. They occupy the greater part of the northern tier of townships, and their colony extends into Oxford, Madison, and Penn townships and across Newport township into the northern and eastern part of Iowa City. Smaller colonies are also found in Union, Lincoln, and Fremont townships, and individual families are scattered throughout the county.

It is now practically impossible to determine the name of the first Bohemian who came to this county. The first owner of real estate seems to have been Anton Rigl (or Rigel) [sometimes Ridl, or Reger] who purchased a part of section 4 in Big Grove township on the 9th day of January, 1852. Others, like Joseph Renein [p. Renehin], came early but returned to Bohemia for their families or friends.

THE NORTHERN COLONY

The first permanent settlement was made in the northern part of the county and centered in Jefferson township in this county and College township in Linn county. The majority of the older settlers in this section came in the years 1854 and 1856, but stragglers followed for many years after. These people left their native land during the period of political disturbances which followed the revolutionary outbreaks of 1848 and 1849, the period of great awakening among European nations. The oppressed of all nations were demanding their rights and the Bohemians, who had borne the oppression of the Austrian government for several generations, joined in the general uprising. The partial collapse of this effort made exiles of many of those who had taken part in it, and the industrial depression which followed caused many more to leave their native land.

The spirit with which these people entered upon their duties in the land of their adoption may perhaps be best understood by a brief reference to the history of the "Slavonic Political Society" which was organized at the home of Mr. John Witousek [p. Witoushek]

near Shueyville, March 5, 1863, and the records of which are still preserved. By this time the older settlers had become citizens of this country, the first application for naturalization papers, so far as the records of Johnson county show, having been made by John Witousek, August 17, 1854, others following rapidly. The privilege of free citizenship, which had been denied to them in their native country, was so highly prized that few permitted delay in securing it. But they felt the need of a more thorough understanding of their new duties, which had been assumed most seriously, and for this purpose the society was organized. Its object as set forth in the records was twofold: 1. The maintenance of our Slavonic honor among Americans. 2. Honorable participation in the political affairs of this country. Its motto was well worthy of a body of strong men: "Unity in fundamentals, freedom in disputed questions, charity in all things." The object of the society was to discuss political questions and thus gain the necessary information for an intelligent exercise of franchise.. To reach a fair conclusion, as the records show, the society subscribed for the New York *Staatszeitung* (German) "because it is democratic," the New York *Tribune* (English) "because it is republican," and the Dubuque *Herald* (German) to give information concerning questions of direct interest to the people of this state. In addition to this the society and its members subscribed for the *Slavic*, the only Bohemian paper published in this country at the time. The numerous addresses and discussions, of which a partial record is preserved, breathe a spirit of appreciation of liberty and the responsibilities of free citizenship which is not often found in political discussions. No body of foreigners ever received the rights of American citizenship with a deeper appreciation of their duties, and the writer knows from personal experience that it was an inspiration in later years to listen to the fervid utterances of some of these men who had suffered so much in their efforts to secure the right which they finally enjoyed. These were strong men and good citizens, and no taint of anarchy marred their concept of a government for the people.

The society undertook to celebrate the Fourth of July in 1864, and Francis Joseph Simek [p. Shimek] of Jefferson township, and John B. Seykora [also Sykora] of Iowa City were selected as the orators of the day, though the records do not show that the latter officiated. The celebration was held in Shueyville, and here in a strange tongue these people gave expression to their profound appreciation of American patriotism. Similar activities were continued until 1870, when the society was transformed into the Reading Society, which is still in existence in Monroe and Jefferson townships.

The first officers of the Political Society were the following: President, Rev. Francis Kun; vice presidents, Joseph Hrdlicka [p. Hrdlichka] and Anthony Sulek; secretary, Francis Joseph Simek [p. Shimek]; treasurer, George Bures [p. Buresh]; librarian, Frank Sulek. This was not the first Bohemian society in the county, for other organizations had preceded it both in Jefferson township and in Iowa city, but it is especially note-worthy because it was the first to make preparation for the duties of American citizenship its chief aim, and the spirit of its membership was but typical of the spirit of those earlier pioneers who brought so much of understanding to their new duties out of the abundance of their own sufferings and experiences.

As noted, the original settlement in the northern part of the county centered in Jefferson township, but extended far beyond its limits. The first settlers came either by way of Iowa City, or directly across the prairies from Racine, Wisconsin, which was the starting point for the ox-team caravans which crossed the prairies to the Iowa Eldorado before the railroad crossed the Mississippi river. These people were in part political refugees, like Anthony Sulek, Joseph Sosel, Francis J. Simek [p. Shimek], and others, or they were seeking relief from the industrial oppression and depression from which they had suffered in their own country. They came with limited means, and partly for this reason, and partly because in their native land they had been accustomed to comparatively small tracts of ground, they purchased small tracts of cheap land which had been practically exhausted by earlier settlers, or acquired prairie which was then still considered of little value. But it is noticeable that they soon acquired land and built their own homes, and this home-making quality has characterized the Bohemian people of every class and kind who have come to this country.

As also noted, the first purchase of land in the northern part of the county by a Bohemian was probably that of Anthony Rigl [Rigel, Ridl] in Big Grove township in 1852, but larger numbers did not come until 1854, and the majority of these settled in Jefferson township and the adjoining part of Linn county. Purchases of land were made during that year [1854] by the following persons in about the order named, as shown by the county deed records. (The correct form of the name is given first, and if another form appears in the records, or is in common use, this appears in parenthesis. Since so many of the names are misspelled in the records it is believed that this will form a useful reference.)

Anthony Sulek, Francis Rigl (or Rigel) [also Ridl, Riggel], John Witousek [p. Witoushek], Joseph Renein [p. Renehin], Anthony Kopecky, Joseph Coufal (Coufall, also appearing as Sofal; the station on the Cedar Rapids and Iowa City Interurban now written Cou Falls, was named for this man), Joseph Dostal, Victor Barta (later written Barta-Letovsky), John Horak, Ignatius (Ignaz) Stepanek [Stepanek, p. Shtepanek], and Anthony Pecka (Pitzka). Other settlers who came to Jefferson township but did not purchase land until later were: John Barta-Letovsky, George Sirovy [also Sirowy], Frank Hajek, Bontta, and others.

During the same year (1854) purchases were made in Big Grove township by the following: Anthony Plesl (Antoine Plassel), Ignatius (Ignaz) Zabokrtsky (Zawakusky; the name also appears in other records as Zabriskie, and in other forms), Joseph Stransky, Vit Votroubek (Watrobek), Ignatius (Ignaz) Stepanek [p. Shtepanek]. Frank Zika and John Fiala also came to Big Grove or Cedar townships in 1854, but did not at once buy land. In Cedar township the purchases during that year were made by Joseph Zenisek (Zenischek or Zenisheck) [p. Zenishek], Jacob Zenisek and Joseph Kucera [p. Kuchera]. It is also probable that John Dusil settled in Monroe township during the same year.

In 1855 a larger number settled in the county, and purchases were made as follows:

In Jefferson township – Joseph Filipi (Phillippi, also Filipy), Vaclav (Wenzel) Sulek, Francis Kubias, Joseph Stepanek [p. Shtepanek], George Sirovy (also Syrovy) [Sirowy], Joseph PirkI (Perkle), John Slezak, Matthias Skerik (Matthew, p. Shkerik), Francis Kaliban, John Janko (also Johnke) [also Yanko], Daniel Kucera [p. Kuchera], Vaclav Sich [p. Shich] (Wenzel Seck), Joseph Horsky (also Horskie), Francis Volesky (or Wolesky). John Holec [also Holets], Frank Myska [p. Mishka, Miska], John Feyerabend, John Spacek [p. Shpachek] and Joseph Stransky also came in during this year but made no purchase.

In Big Grove township – Daniel Kramar, John Novak (Nowak), John Trkal (Takal), Ignatius (Ignatz) Serbousek and Francis Zika (Frantz Syka).

In Cedar township – Joseph Ptak, Matthias Hynek (Hinek), Dolezel and Holubar, James Brodsky (Brodsky), John Broz (Brush), and Frances Sv(w)idensky [Svidensky, Swidensky].

In the year 1855 several new-comers arrived in Big Grove or Cedar Township, among them Vaclav Ulc [Ulch], Albert Maly, Jacob Zinkula, Thomas Kucera, Jacob Kucera, [p. Kuchera], John Jilek [Yilek] and Jacob Smith.

In Newport township Anthony Sulek and John Novak (Nowak) purchased land in the northern part in the year 1855, and were the first Bohemian land owners in that township.

In the year 1856 additional purchases were made in Jefferson township, but mostly by those who had come in the preceding year, or in 1854. The following are shown by the records: John Barta-Letovsky (Bartiletowsky), Joseph Simbersky [p. Shimbersky] (Shinborsky), Joseph Jakubec (Takubetz, also written Jokobez), and Vaclav Fibikar (Winzel Fibiker). Others who came

during this year were: Frank Pirkl and Francis J. Simek [p. Shimek]. There was also quite an addition to the colony in the latter part of 1855 and the early part of 1856 consisting of the following, the exact date of whose arrival was not ascertained: Joseph Hrdlicka [p. Hrdlichka], John Feyerabend, Frank Myska [p. Myshka], John Dlouhy, Frank Pospisil [p. Pospishil], Frank Bys, Frank Rousal [p. Roushal], Hynek Serbousek, John Spacek [p. Shpachek], Zahradnik, and John Kroul. Later some of these purchased land and others located elsewhere in this or Linn county.

In Cedar township, in 1856, John Vrba (Verbough), John Fiala and Joseph Lasek [p. Lashek] purchased land, and other new-comers in this and Big Grove township, were the following: Vaclav Krofta, Frank Stochl, Anton Dvorak, and John Ruzek.

In the '60's further additions were made to the Bohemian colony in Jefferson and Monroe townships, among them Joseph Konasek (1860), Vaclav Pudil and John Splichal [p. Shplichal] (1861), Joseph Castek [p. Chastek] (1862), John Krejsa (1864), Anthony Cihak [p. Chihak], Joseph Netolicky, and others.

It should also be noted that several families which at first located in Linn county at an early day later moved to Jefferson or Monroe townships in Johnson county. Among these were: Paul Korab and the Novak family who came in 1854, Thomas Korab in 1855 and George Chadima in 1856. [note; the pronunciation of Chadima in Czech sounds rather like Hud-gee-mah and is very misspelled in old records.]

This northern settlement has changed very much since the days of these pioneers. The log house has been crowded out by the modern residence; the automobile and the carriage have taken the place of the ox-team; the small holdings of the first settlers have expanded; out of the waste or wild lands of early years splendid farms have been developed; and the people are no longer strangers in this land. The children of these pioneers know nothing personally of the hardships which the fathers suffered, but they cherish the memories of those who dared to endure, and they are proud of the stock from which they came.

The northern colony has furnished Johnson county and the state, more or less directly, with a long list of useful servants. In this list are three professors of the State University (Professors H. Claude Horack and B. Shimek, and Assistant Professor Frank E. Horack), a member of the legislature and mayor of Iowa City (John M. Barta-Letovsky), a clerk of the District court (Paul A. Korab), two county recorders (J.J. Novak and James Havlik, Jr.), four members of the board of supervisors (Anthony Sulek, George Ulch, Frank Sulek and Joseph Konasek), and various minor county, city and township officers. It has also given to Iowa City and Cedar Rapids a number of successful business and professional men.

IOWA CITY

While the largest permanent early settlement was formed in the northern part of the county, several Bohemian families settled in Iowa City at a very early date. The first one to own real estate in Iowa City, so far as the county records show, was Mr. Zenisek (Zenishek) who became part owner of lot 1, block 20, January 23, 1855. In 1856 John Hamrlik (Hamerlick), Vaclav Mikulecky (Wencel Michaletsky), and Anton Javorsky also purchased lots, and in the following years many who had come earlier also acquired property. John Hamrlik came with his family in 1852, but he found several families located in Iowa City, among them the Kadera and Stejskal families, and John Kile.

Early in 1854 John Cerney (Cherney), with his sons-in-law, Joseph Charvet (now usually written Harvat) and Joseph Konvalinka, and their families, located for a short time on the north side of Renolds street east of Linn, where they built their own house, Mr. Cerny being a carpenter

and Mr. Konvalinks a millwright. During the same year, or in some cases probably earlier, the following arrived; Vaclav Duchacek (Duchachek) (probably much earlier), Jacob Zinkula, Eggermeyer, Jerabek, Vaclav Mikulecky, Emanuel Rohlena, and perhaps others.

Among the arrivals in 1855 were George Dostal and Anton Javorsky (now usually written Yavorsky). Subsequently larger numbers came, especially just before and after the Austro-Prussian war in 1866, and the Bohemian population of Iowa City increased until it has formed approximately twenty per cent of the total. Unfortunately no accurate record of these arrivals is at hand, but the following are recalled: The families of Frank Mezik (1856), Frank Sala (Shala, Shalla)(1857), M. Kroe (Krotz), Severin Buric [p. Burich], Anton Bittner, Joseph Maly, Vaclav Silbernagel, Joseph Pisa (Pisha) (1864), Vaclav W. Mares [p. Maresh] (1866), George Nedobity, Joseph Kriz, Frank Dvorak, Frank Vorel, Vincent Kreesl (Grissel), Joseph Kozderka, John Lehky, Frank Zetek, M. Plevka, Vaclav Kriz, Ivan Vejvode, Vaclav Calta, Peter Kodl (Cole), Joseph Lasek (Lashek), Vaclav Lasek (Lashek), Thomas Neuzil (1867), Joseph Kaspar (1867), Pribyl, Frauenholz, Vavrina, Joseph Slavata (1874), etc. Other names of early settlers will be found in the list of soldiers of the Civil War.

These people came for the most part with limited means, but they were thrifty, and by nature home-builders, and they soon acquired homes of their own. They have become a fixed part of the population of Iowa City, and by their industry and perseverance they have added materially to its development. The younger generation is taking an active part in the business and professional activities of the city, and in its public affairs, and their representatives have occupied practically every official position within the gift of the community.

NEWPORT TOWNSHIP

A few Bohemians had settled in the northern part of this township in the middle fifties, at the edge of the northern colony, but the present settlement was established somewhat later. In the early sixties Joseph Lhotka, Martin Vanek, Plasil (Plashil) and M. Parizek formed the nucleus of the present colony. John Dvorsky came in 1866, and his brother, Frank Dvorsky, and Dominic Jirava, the Lacinas, Hradeks, Krals, and others, followed. By their industry these people greatly improved an unpromising region, and in later years several families assisted in establishing settlements in other parts of the county.

OTHER SETTLEMENTS

Smaller settlements were formed later in Lincoln and Fremont townships, and in Union township. In the former one of the earlier settlers was John Pechman, and later the Petrus, Petsels, Dvorskys, and others came in chiefly from Newport township.

The nucleus of the Union township colony was formed by Peter Kodl (Cole) and Frank Vrchoticky (usually known as Bily or White), and soon after Thomas Neuzil, Hibl, Hrade, and others from Iowa City and Newport township followed.

In addition to this there are settlements in Oxford, Madison and Penn townships which are practically extensions of the northern colony, and many families are scattered about in other parts of the county.

SOLDIERS OF THE CIVIL WAR

Reference has been made to the intense patriotism of the early Bohemian settlers. Many of them had left their own country because they did not wish to serve in the army of a foreign tyrant, but were for human rights presented an entirely different aspect to them. Although the

Johnson-Linn county settlement was relatively not large it furnished nearly one hundred soldiers who fought in the armies of the North, the greater part coming from Johnson county.

As many of the names of the Bohemian soldiers are misspelled in the reports of the Adjutant General of Iowa for the years 1863-65, and as it is desirable that a correct record of these names be preserved, a complete list of all the Bohemians who enlisted from Johnson county, so far as could be ascertained, is here presented.

In every case the correct name is given first, and the name as given in the adjutant-general's reports, or the Roster of Iowa Soldiers, vols. I-IV, 1908-1910, if different, follows in parenthesis. In a number of cases the men enlisted outside of Johnson county, chiefly at Cedar Rapids, but were residents of this county. On the other hand perhaps some who enlisted in this county belonged elsewhere. This was the case with Charles Bednar and John Pospisil [p. Pospishil], who probably came from Linn county. The nativity of several is erroneously given in the reports as German or Austrian. The list follows:

6TH IOWA INFANTRY

Company G

Velka, Charles (Bilka, Charles), 3rd sergeant, wounded at Resaca, Ga.; veteran; in adjutant general's report, 1865, called a German.

It is also said that Joseph Svidensky enlisted in this company under a name which had been given to him by his employer who found Svidensky too hard, but no definite information was secured.

12TH IOWA INFANTRY

Company D

Rencin (p. Renchin), Frank. (Enlisted first in Company K, 1st Iowa Infantry, but was discharged to reduce number, wounded at Shiloh.

Votroubek, Ignatius (or Vit), (name appears as Watrobek, Enos).

Votroubek, John (Watrobek, John).

These men enlisted at Cedar Rapids and are called Germans in the reports. They were Bohemians from Johnson County.

14TH IOWA INFANTRY

Company F

Votroubek, Vaclav (Watrabek, Wenzel). Another soldier of the same name was a member of Company B, 9th Iowa Cavalry.

15TH IOWA INFANTRY

Company A

Broz, Joseph (Brush, Joseph), enlisted in Cedar Rapids; called a German

Company I

Maly, Albert (Mali, Albert);

Novotny, Joseph (Nowitney, Joseph).

22ND IOWA INFANTRY

Company A.

Beranek, Francis A. (Beranck, Francis A).
Honza, John W. (Houza, John W.).

Company B

Novak, Frank (Nowak, Frank), 7th corporal, native of New Jersey.

Company E

Sala, John (S[h]ala) (Shalla, John), musician

Company H

Horak, Vaclav (Harrick, Wesley, in Iowa Roster as Horrich, Wesley).

Company K

John Mudroch (Monro), 2nd sergeant;
Martin Svidensky (Surdansky), 4th corporal, killed at Vicksburg;
Joseph O. Dostal (O'Dorstal), 7th corporal;
Paul Miller, musician;
Bednar, Charles (Bedner, Karl, Beaner in Iowa Roster);
Benes (Benesh), Vaclav (Bemesh, Weizel), died in service;
Bittner, Jacob, wounded at Fisher's Hill, Virginia;
Dvorak, Joseph (Dworak, Joseph);
Horak, Joseph (Horack, Joseph);
Holpuch, John (Holbreck, John);
Holubar, Joseph, 1st corporal;
Klima, John;
Konecny (Konechny), Frank, "Austrian");
Mezik, Frank (Mezik, Franc);
Pospisil (Pospis(h)il), John;
Skrabal, Albert (Shkrabal) (Skrabaal, Albert);
Skriwan, Thomas (Skriban, Thomas, Skribar in Iowa Roster);
Javorsky, Alois (Yaworsky, Alois);
Javorsky, Joseph (Yaworsky, Joseph);
Zika, Vaclav (Zika, Wenzel), prisoner at Winchester;
Uveri, John (Heck, John, known generally by the latter name), reported under the name "Corporal John Hack" as slightly wounded at Fisher's Hill.
Melsa [Melsha], John (Milssa, John, residence given as Grinnell, but enlisted from the northern part of Johnson county),
Placek[Plachek], Frank (Placek), and
Leipert, Joseph (Lappert, Joseph) were later recruits.
A Frank Placek also appears in Company G, 47th Iowa Infantry

46TH IOWA INFANTRY

Company E

Horak, Frank J. (Horak, Frantisek), enlisted in Cedar Rapids;
Sulek, Anthony, "German," enlisted in Cedar Rapids

47TH IOWA INFANTRY

Company G

Benesh, John (Beneish, John);

Hynek, Frank (Henik, Frank).

Placek [Plachek], Frank (Placek, Frank), "Austria," see also Company K, 22nd Iowa Infantry;
Chudacek [Chudachek], Matthias (Poor, Michael), "Austria," the name Poor was adopted as the
result of an attempted translation, the name is now often written Hudachek, Matthias is often
erroneously rendered "Mike," hence Michael;
Zika, George (Zeka, George), "Austria."

1ST IOWA CAVALRY

Company K

Petsel, John, enlisted in Cedar Rapids

2ND IOWA CAVALRY

Company B

Zahradnik, John J. (Zacharenck; in Roster of Iowa Soldiers as Zahardneck, nativity Austria)

Company H

Kodl, Joseph (Cole, Joseph), 3rd corporal, wounded at West Point, Miss., veteran;
Chudacek [Chudachek], Anthony (Pwor, Thomas). This was intended for Poor, this soldier being
a brother of M. Poor or Chudacek. Anthony is often called "Tom" and hence Thomas instead of
Anthony. Listed as German on re-enlistment. Re-enlisted in the same company in 1864.

6TH IOWA CAVALRY

Company I

Draek, Joseph. In the Iowa Roster the residence is given as Salem, and in the adjutant general's
report, 1863, vol. II, as Salem, Johnson county. This should evidently be Solon.

8TH IOWA CAVALRY

Company K

Kapsa, Frank (Capsen, Frank).

9TH IOWA CAVALRY

Company B

Votroubek, Vaclav (Watrobek, Winzel). Residence given as Cedar Rapids

13TH REGULARS, U.S.A.

(Not appearing in the adjutant-general's reports)

Company A.

Javorsky, Frank (Yaworsky);
Zinkula, Joseph, corporal;
Kapsa, John (Capsen);
Sulek, Vaclav

Company B – Kreh, Frank A.

Company C – Blaha, J. corporal

4th MISSOURI INFANTRY

Kubik, John, enlisted in St. Louis

51st Missouri Infantry

Pechman, John, enlisted in St. Louis

The regiment and company of other men who enlisted in this county could not be ascertained. Such were the cases of Charles Moll, and Jacob Kucera (p. Kuchera) from the vicinity of Solon, and John Rohlena from Jefferson township. Rohlena was probably a member of the 13th Regulars. He fell at Chattanooga.

In 1898 a number of Bohemians also enlisted in the Spanish-American War. James (or Vaclav) Havlik, Jr., served as gunner's mate on the battleship Oregon throughout the war, and the following were members of Company I, Iowa National Guard: Joseph F. Bartovsky (Bartosky), Edward Kos, James (or Vaclav) Krofta, Joseph W. Jonas [p. Jonash] (Unash), James (or Vaclav) Vanek and Charles Javorsky (Yavorsky). Later enlistments for service in the Philippines were: Frank Dvorak, John Jeslinek, James (or Vaclav) Kriz, Joseph Benda, and Joseph and Vincent Selbicky [p. Shelbicky].

The errors in names may be assigned to various causes. In some cases the surnames were difficult and were translated or adapted. In some cases, as that of Joseph Svidensky, the modified or substituted name is said to have been applied arbitrarily by an employer who found the correct name too difficult. The former use of the letter w in place of v also caused some changes, as in Dvorak, Svidensky, etc. Still other changes in names are due to the custom which prevails in Bohemia of applying a name to an estate and then transferring it to any new family which may take possession of it. It has occurred that persons having more than one name of this kind have been charged with ulterior motives by those who were ignorant of the circumstances. Changes in the given names have also been made in many cases. Sometimes similarly sounding English names have been employed, as where Vaclav was changed to Wesley, or Ignatz to Enos. In other instances foreign corruptions of Bohemian names were used, as where Wenzel, the German corruption of Wenceslaus, or Vaclav, was chosen. In still other cases erroneous translations were made, as where James has done service for Vaclav. Finally the names were sometimes simply misspelled. In all these cases it seems only due the men who fought for our country that their names be correctly recorded.

EDUCATIONAL INTERESTS

In the years 1880-81 a movement was set on foot to establish a Bohemian college in Iowa. The prime movers in this project were Frank Sulek, Paul A. Korab, and others in Jefferson township and John M. Barta-Letovsky, Joseph Pisa (p. Pisha) and others in Iowa City. The decline of Western College suggested this as a suitable location, but a convention held at Western College, to which delegates came from various parts of the country, decided that Iowa City would be a more satisfactory location. The project was ultimately given up and the Bohemians decided to make use of the educational facilities offered by established American institutions. The outgrowth of this spirit was the organization in later years (1903) of the Council of Higher Education, chiefly through the efforts of certain Bohemian citizens of Cedar Rapids and Iowa City. This organization encourages young Bohemians to seek the advantages offered by the best educational institutions of the country, and if necessary offers aid in the form of honor loans. It has become national in scope. The president (B. Shimek) and secretary (Paul A. Korab) are located at Iowa City, and

four members and officers of the board (W.F. Severa, Joseph Mekota, M. Houser and Edward Soukup) are in Cedar Rapids, Messrs. Mekota and Hoser being former Johnson county boys.

White locally the Bohemians maintain vacation schools in which their own language is taught, they are staunch supporters of the public school system and freely make use of its facilities.

CHURCHES

Along spiritual lines the Bohemians of Johnson county divide into three more or less distinct groups – Catholics, Protestant and those who do not affiliate with any church – the latter chiefly of Protestant or Hussite antecedents.

Perhaps the first Bohemian minister to come to Johnson county was Father Spacek (p. Shpachek) who came to Iowa City in the fifties. He was later succeeded by Father Urban. The first Bohemian Catholic church established in Johnson county was the Church of Sts. Peter and Paul in Cedar township in 1863. The second was St. Mary's church in Newport township, and the third St. Vaclav's (St. Wenceslaus) church in Iowa City, which was built in 1893.

So far as known the first Protestant Bohemian minister in the county was Rev. Francis Kun who came to Jefferson township in 1860, and served the old Protestant colony in northern Johnson and southern Linn counties. The old church west of Ely in Linn county, built in 1868, is still in use and is one of the oldest Bohemian Protestant churches in the county. The Bethlehem Chapel, or as it is usually called, the Chadima Church, is an off-shoot from the Ely church. It is located in sections 2 in Monroe township.

SOCIETIES

The oldest Bohemian societies now in existence in Johnson county are the Reading Society of Jefferson and Monroe townships, which is simply a continuation of the old Political Society, and the Slovanska Lipa of Iowa City, the latter a social and aid society. Both were established in 1863, and both followed still earlier organizations.

In addition to the society's names, the following may be mentioned, with the year of birth:

In Iowa City –

Zastit, 1870, social and aid
Lodge P.J. Safarik, No. 75, C.S.P.S., 1882, fraternal
Catholic Workman, No. 31, 1897, fraternal and religious
Ceska Beseda, 1903, literary
Sokol Iowa City, 1907, gymnastic
Lodge Iowa City, Z. C. B. J., 1908, fraternal

In Solon –

Lodge Laska, No. 164, C.S. P. S., 1890, fraternal
In addition to this many Bohemians are members of various American societies.

OTHER INTERESTS

In 1869 John Barta-Letavsky and Joseph Pisa (Pisha) established a Bohemian paper "Slovan Amerikansky," in Iowa City. Its first editor was Professor Ladimir Klacel, but he did not continue long. He was a man of deep learning, but was scarcely a suitable advisor for people who were

confronted with hard material problems. The paper is still published in Cedar Rapids by John M. Barta-Letovsky and Son, under the name "Slovan Americky."

Probably the first Bohemian physician in the county was Dr. John Habenicht, who came to Iowa City in the seventies. He was an eccentric man who imagined that he had great histrionic talent and devoted rather more energy to ranting on the amateur stage than to the practice of his profession. Dr. Folprecht also came early but did not remain very long, and Dr. Smrz, an electric physician, spent a part of the year 1888 in Iowa City. The younger physicians, like Dr. Joseph Valenta and Dr. Netolicky, are graduates of the College of Medicine of the State University.

The first Bohemian to practice law in the county was Frank J. Horak, a graduate of the College of Law of the State University. Other more recent graduates of this college who remained in the county are Paul A. Korab, Prof. H. Claude Horack and Edward Sulek.

Other Johnson county Bohemian graduates of the Colleges of Law, Medicine, Pharmacy, Dentistry and Applied Science have located elsewhere.

Only a few words can be said here concerning the remaining varied interests of these people. A discussion of their success in farming would be a history of the development of agriculture in several townships in the county; an account of their success as business and professional men, as skilled mechanics and artisans, and as industrious laborers would require a discussion of the progress of these interests in Iowa City, Solon, Swisher, Oxford, and Lone Tree. They have borne their share of the work in developing the county and its various interests, and in common with their fellow citizens they are enjoying the hard-earned fruits of their efforts.