

Scio Is Center of Largest Czech Colony on Pacific Coast

First Settlers Came in 1896 Won by Valley's Fertility; 170 Families in Group now

Life, Customs, Languages, Foods and Above all Thrift of People, Miscalled Bohemians, Described by Woman Who Lives Among Them

By VIRGINIA L. DOLEZAL (Resident of Scio)

SCIO—A young man's dissatisfaction with a farm in the mid-west, in the late nineties, led to the beginning of Scio's Czech colony, now the largest of that nationality on the Pacific coast. A colony so strong that the local newspaper maintains a series of type with Czech accent marks, in order to print invitations and hand-bills in the native tongue of the Czechs.

Joe Young, Jr., left his Kansas home in 1896, to roam for two years throughout the western United States, in search of a new location for his family and friends. At last he found the Willamette valley, and knew its fertile acres to be exactly suited to the needs of his essentially agrarian countrymen.

He persuaded his father, his brothers, Louis and Albert, and his nephew, Joe Wesely, to come with him to the new land. All these first arrivals except Wesely were foreign-born.

The party came by train to Salem, arriving June 4, 1898. They waited a short time for their implements and a few head of stock which they shipped from their former home. Proceeding to the vicinity of Scio, they bought, for \$2200, a tract of 200 acres a short distance southwest of the town. Most of this land is still in possession of the Young family.

Tales of Land's Fertility Bring Others

Lured by tales of the fertility of the land, other Czechs soon came to make their home near the first group.

From Chadron, Neb., came Albert Chladek, who bought at \$4 an acre a 2000-acre piece of timberland nine miles southeast of Scio. This land he resold, in 1899, to several of his countrymen, among whom were Joe Lamplot, Anton Stepanek and Frank Bartn.

Parts of the Chladek place now comprise seven prosperous farms, all but one of which is still owned by the original Czech purchaser or their descendants. Cleared and improved by the diligence of their sturdy farmers, this land is now worth, conservatively \$75 an acre. Colony Now Numbers At Least 150 Families

Gradually the Czech colony at Scio grew until it now numbers more than 170 families, one of the largest in the United States. There are two other Czech settlements in Oregon, one numbering about 40 families, at Malin; and the other, some 30 families, at Scappoose. Many Czechs also congregate in Chicago, in Minnesota, Kansas, Nebraska and the Dakotas.

"Bohemian" Declared Misnomer Really

The term "Bohemian" as applied to these colonists is essentially a misnomer, as Bohemia, before the World war, was only a

Typical Czech



John Jiroch, who came to this country when 18 years old and to Scio in 1921, who the writer of this article points to as a typical Czech. He and Mrs. Jiroch, wedded 51 years, live on a small tract near Scio.

small province of what is now Czechoslovakia, and many members of the Czech race came from other provinces. Czechs coming to the United States before the war were often misunderstood and ridiculed as men without a country. Since the formation of this valiant little republic, uniting all the Czech and Slav-speaking peoples under one flag, and independent of stronger oppressors, American Czechs are proud to call Czechoslovakia the land of their fathers.

Though Czechs may differ from blackest-haired to fairest blonde, the majority of them are brown-haired, grey or blue eyed, and light-skinned.

Older Czech Men Stick to Mustache

Their cheek bones are high, their noses prominent, often ac-

quiline, their mouth generous, their teeth strong and even. Virtually all the older men wear mustaches.

Most Czechs are shorter than the average American, but whatever their build, their bones are large and strong, their back long, their legs short. This build prevails in both men and women, who for countless generations have done heavy work in the fields.

Of foreign-born citizens, Czechs must be classed as among the most desirable. They secure their citizenship as soon as time permits, pay their bills, obey the laws and try mightily to adopt the customs of their new country.

Many of the older Czechs, coming to America to escape oppression in the "old country" before the war, were appalled that America was not the free country they had dreamed about, but that freedom must be paid for by hard work. Accepting the situation, and grateful for the religious and social non-interference, their innate thrift and perseverance saw them through to positions of security and respect in their new allegiance.

Czechs are inclined to be excitable, voluble, and prone to emphasize with gestures. They are quick to anger, and long to hold a grudge. Despite this, their dispositions usually are cheerful and full of a lively, though sometimes heavy, sense of humor.

Thrift Is Keynote so No Czechs on Relief

The thrift of the Czechs is perhaps their chief characteristic. It is significant that of the several dozen Scio families on relief during the depression, not a single one was of Czech origin.

Yet this fact is understandable when one knows that a Czech works hard to get the ultimate production from his farm, wastes nothing, and above all, lives within his means. The charge, not uncommon among those longer in America, that "Czechs eat what the hogs refuse" is untrue. Although they do utilize products some would consider waste, they eat well.

Condiments Play Part in Cooking

A favorite Czech food is jaternice, a kind of sausage made from the liver (jatra) and head of hogs. Ground fine, it is highly seasoned, and canned, or stuffed in jackets like wieners.

Condiments play a large part in Czech cooking, nearly all their dishes being highly spiced and flavored. Of these, caraway seed and poppy seed are the most common. The former is used not only in bread and cake, but as flavoring in meats, particularly pork and chicken, and vegetables.

A stranger to a Czech community might well wonder at the taste in decoration on viewing the long rows of huge, ugly, grey-white poppies. They are not grown for beauty, but for their tiny black seeds, called mak. The seed is taken from the pods after the stocks are thoroughly dry, and does not, as some people believe, contain opium.

Small as are poppy seeds, they are ground even smaller, in a specially made grinder, to prepare kolace, which might be termed the national bread. The ground seeds are cooked to a thick paste with sugar and milk. Then they are inserted in a hollow on the top of a roll of slightly sweetened bread dough, and baked open face. Poppy seed is also used ex-

tenensively in other breads and cakes. Gourmands Everywhere Relish Curious Pie

A curious pie, called a cake, which has found favor with gourmands of many nations, is an original Czech recipe. It is the cheese cake made from sweetened cottage cheese and baked in a pie shell. It closely resembles custard, but has a peculiar tang. Another example of Czech thrift is observed: in that this cake is sometimes made from the milk of a newly fresh cow. I have eaten this, knowing wherefrom it came, and found it good.

Another Czech pastry, unpalatable to many American tastes, is a small unleavened dumpling, called knedliky. The dough is dropped from a teaspoon into boiling broth, or fried in a pan.

Though the Czech love of wine and beer (pivo) is general, there are fewer habitual "sots" among Czechs than are common to other races.

Love of Music Is Universal With Czechs

Love of music among Czech people is universal. Nearly every-

Wesely, Surviving Founder and Home



Above is Wesely's home on edge of Scio, showing a well kept farm scene. This house was built in 1918, 15 years after he with his two uncles founded the Scio Czech colony. Below, Wesely himself, pictured outside his grocery store at Scio. Note that he does not wear mustache typical of older Czech men.

one is in her right side, is slowly improving.

Looking for Sheep

A few miles southeast of here the fall sown grain is so rank that farmers are looking for sheep to pasture their wheat, while here many farmers have not plowed nor sowed any and if the present rate of moisture keeps up much longer there will be no sowing done for some time to come.

Fred de Vries showed his moving pictures, taken in Europe, Friday night at the 28th and Madison Methodist church in Portland.

Most farmers were fortunate in having their potatoes and corn harvested before the last heavy rains, but much garden truck, pumpkins, and gladioli bulbs are still out in the wet.

Pratum Farmers Seek Sheep to Pasture Fields; Potatoes in

PRATUM—Mr. and Mrs. George Kleen left Thursday for a two-month visit with their daughters in California.

Miss Olivia de Vries was home from Portland over Armistice day. She left for Forest Grove Friday, where she will attend the Oregon youth council.

Mrs. Henry Schroeder, who recently suffered a stroke of paraly-

Native Costume

After the birth of their first child, named for his father, they moved to the vicinity of Scio, putting their slender savings into a payment on a farm. The young wife helped in the fields until the farm was paid for, and the children, now four, (larger families are uncommon among Czechs) were able to help their father. The land was cleared, crops planted, stock multiplied and bigger barns erected.

Two of the children finished high school, all of them were given American advantages, though the parents may have been a little bewildered by the ideas and expenses.

Apt to Vote "No" On Tax Measures

Kernak is clean, diligent and honest, will arise at midnight to help a neighbor he considers deserving, but won't lift a finger for one he dislikes. He drives a hard bargain, but keeps his word, once given. He looks for cheap values, but will pay a good price for an article he knows is superior. He votes against any measure he believes will raise his taxes. He loves music, bright colors, his animals and good food. He dresses well, though not in the height of fashion, and provides adequately for his family.

He Has never been back to the land of his birth, and has no particular desire to go.

At nearly 60, John Kernak still operates his farm, with the help of his two married sons, (the daughters have married and gone to live on other farms).

Perhaps soon he will go to town to live, or give up the hardest work of his diversified farm to the capable hands of his sons.

When he does, the bromide of three generations from shirt-sleeves to shirt-sleeves will not hold true. His Czech children and grandchildren may never be wealthy, but they are too thrifty ever to know real want.

But he was too hard-working not to prosper, and at 29, we find him a United States citizen, and married to an American-born girl of his own race, 12 years his junior.

Proper names often end in ska or sky, never in ski, and Czechs are sensitive to this latter misspelling, feeling no kin to the Russian or Polish orthography. Even remembering that every letter is sounded, it is difficult to pronounce Czech names because of their letters' peculiar slurs and twists.

A newcomer to Scio once remarked on his difficulty in pronouncing these names. The then postmaster, a Czech speaking both languages fluently, replied, "You can't pronounce them; you just have to sneeze 'em, and burp 'em!"

Given Names Carried In Most Families

Given names are preserved in families more consistently than is common to other nationalities, the oldest child almost invariably being named for the father or mother. John, Josef, Edward, Henry, Charley, Rudolph, Frank and Adolph are perhaps the most common names for men, many of these being translated from a slightly different Czech original. Yaromir and Vladimir are usually Anglicized to the nicknames Jerry and Laddie.

There is a Mary or an Anna in nearly every Czech family. Rose and Libby retain favor, and Viasta is not uncommon.

Typical Case of Czech Man Recited

Typical of the Czech-American is John Kernak. He left his home in Moravia (another province, now a part of Czechoslovakia) in 19 because he was tired of working for 35 cents a day in a coal mine, and being whipped if he didn't attend church. He landed at Galveston, Texas, at the turn of the century, after a six weeks' steage passage.

He worked his way to Washington, but having no relatives or friends, and knowing little English, he was obliged to work for his board and room, with no monetary recompense, that first bleak winter when he admits he longed to be back in the Moravian coal mine.

Hosteler Home Scene Of Stork Shower Held For Mrs. Willys Berkey

HUBBARD—Mrs. Lee Hosteler entertained Wednesday afternoon honoring Mrs. Willys Berkey with a stork shower. Light refreshments were served.

The Pyke residence in Hubbard was recently purchased by Mr. and Mrs. Henry E. Adams.

Dorcas Club Sews For Needy Person

Mrs. A. C. Spranger Opens Her Home to Group at Bethel

BETHEL—Mrs. A. C. Spranger was hostess to the all-day meeting of the Bethel Dorcas club Wednesday. No host luncheon was served. The day was spent with sewing on Red Cross materials for a needy sick case.

At the business session in the afternoon Mrs. E. E. Matten was re-elected president and Mrs. M. H. Utter, vice-president; Mrs. J. M. Nichols is new secretary-treasurer.

It was voted that funds in the club treasury be expended on improvements for the school kitchen. Plans were made for the annual Christmas dinner and party, with exchange of gifts, for the families of the members, to be held at the school the evening of December 10, with Mrs. Cass A. Nichols and Mrs. A. C. Spranger in charge of the dinner.

To Send Gift to Home

Mrs. J. M. Nichols and Mrs. E. E. Matten presented reports of the federation meeting at Mill City. Mrs. Nichols, member of the board of the Children's Farm Home at Corvallis, gave a talk

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When picketing of two out of thirty restaurants of the Salem Restaurant Association failed to coerce the owners into signing a union contract, the boycott was resorted to.

Persons entering the restaurants picketed were "spotted" and threatened with loss of patronage from unions if they continued to patronize such restaurants. However, no objection was raised to patronage of other restaurants operating without a union contract.

Attempts were made to boycott the picketed restaurants by having teamsters refuse to deliver supplies and provisions to them, causing them at times considerable inconvenience, although no objection was made to deliveries to other restaurants operating without a union contract.

What is this but intimidation and coercion which is made unlawful for employers under the Wagner act.

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