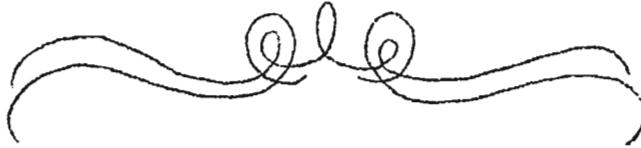


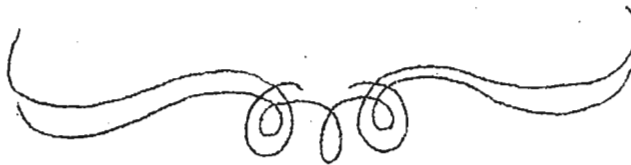
Dedicated . . .

To the brave forebearers who  
came to America, contestants  
in the arena of hope, to make  
their new homes - and to the  
descendants who continue to keep  
the family ties firmly knotted.

THE CZECH ACCOUNT of KOTTSICK & STASTNY  
is being presented at this time in  
observance of the golden wedding  
anniversary of John and Julia Kottsick.



This history has been compiled as accurately and carefully  
as possible with appreciation to all who have contributed  
material and time in preparation of this publication.  
It is not perfection, but aimed at preserving the  
heritage so rightfully ours.



If there are those who can supply additional  
information, omissions or corrections concerning  
anyone named in this compilation, it will grate-  
fully be received by:

Bette D. Wright  
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Oregon City, Or. 97045

## HISTORY

Roman Emperor Marc Aurel died in the stronghold of Vienna in the year 180 A.D. --- thus begins the entanglement of Austria's early history. This landlocked portion of central Europe has been a crossroad of nations since that time, as well as the scene of undeserved hardships and invasions. Charlemagne's reign incorporated the country into the Frankish empire which began the series of borderline transformations with each incoming emperor, like the changing hemlines of fashion as each new season approaches. In 1246 Ottokar II, the king of Bohemia, linked the lands of the northern and southern Slavs, but the duration was short-term when Rudolph, the head of the Swabian family of the Hapsburgs, enforced the restitution of the feudal estates and bestowed them upon his own sons in 1282. This initiated a continuous rule of his family for more than six centuries.

The Hapsburgs acquired more land in the 14th century and established a regime of their own. Albert II united for the first time, the Austrian possessions with Bohemia and Hungary which began the long uninterrupted line of the Hapsburg dynasty. (1438 - 1806)

Maximilian I founded the Hapsburg world power by marrying the heiress of Burgundy, cloaked with marriage settlements that later included Spain with all its dependencies in Europe and America, as well as Bohemia and Hungary.

Maximilian's grandson, Emperor Charles V gave his Austrian lands to his brother Ferdinand (King of Bohemia and Hungary) as heir to King Louis II who was killed by the Turks. These new enemies established their rule firmly in the Hungarian Plains and harrassed the Austrian mainlands for more than 150 years. By now the Hapsburg possessions were deeply involved in religious struggles of Martin Luther, the great leader of the German Protestantism and the Reformation. Bohemian Jan Hus had already been burned at the stake 200 years earlier for his views on making religion appeal to the free intelligence and free conscience of mankind, rather than authoritative.

In 1619 Ferdinand II assumed leadership of the Catholic party and played a chief role during Germany's great civil war, more commonly known as The Thirty Years War. (1618 - 1648) The Hapsburgs, supported by German and Polish troops, pushed the boundaries of the Turkish rule back to the Balkans.

This began the gradual decline of the Hapsburg dynasty, although their heads were declared to be hereditary kings of Hungary. Maria Theresa, daughter of Charles VI married the duke of Lorraine, thereby creating the Hapsburg - Lorraine monarchy. Her father's death in 1740 sparked an attack on her possessions and for the first time Prussia appeared openly as a rival and acquired the greater half of Silesia. Prussia's Frederick II halted two attempts by the Austrians at annexing Bavaria. Bloody borderline battles ensued. Maria Theresa being strictly Catholic and conservative, introduced a series of constitutional, military, and educational reforms, although later revoked. Her eldest son and heir, Joseph II, surpassed his contemporaries with radical changes. He introduced codification of civil and criminal law, eliminated torture from legal procedure, reduced powers of the estates, set up administrative units and law courts, devised a new taxation system, emancipated the farmers, established religious toleration, and created an educated bureaucracy. Although his reign was short (1780 - 90), his and his mother's rule deeply affected future developments in the entire Danube Basin.

From 1792 - 1815 Austria waged a nearly continuous war against France, temporarily losing a considerable part of her possessions. French armies occupied Vienna twice.

Emperor of Austria, Francis II, laid down the crown of the German empire in 1806, but his new minister Metternich, succeeded in gradually improving Austria's position. Napoleon married Francis' daughter in 1810.

Austria's decision to join the great coalition resulted in the collapse of Napoleon's empire and Francis played host to the Congress of Vienna which ended the stormy period. In 1835 Francis' son Ferdinand I succeeded to the throne.

Revolutionary outbursts, a democratic regime set up and later annulled, comprised his reign. Ferdinand relinquished his power to his nephew Francis

Joseph I who abolished feudal services of the farmers.

Disenchanted Hungarians refused to accept Francis Joseph's constitution *giving more sway to the Germans*. In 1866 Prussia allied with Italy to wage a seven weeks' war against Austria and its allies which enforced Hapsburg's withdrawal from the re-organization of Germany and necessitated the experimental "Dual Monarchy". By now Austria and Hungary remained perfectly independent of each other, each retaining its own constitution with legislative and executive bodies, although sharing the same sovereign, common foreign and military affairs, customs duties, and a joint state bank.

The assassination of the heir-apparent, Francis Ferdinand, on June 28, 1914, led to Austria-Hungary's declaration of war against Serbia. Soon the flames of this conflict launched World War I. Despite heavy losses and serious military setbacks, the Austro-Hungarian armies maintained the struggle for over four years. On November 21, 1916, Francis Joseph died after a reign of 68 years and his grand-nephew Charles became the last emperor and king. Two years later his efforts of statehood independence and freedom from Germany's domain fell apart, as did his empire when the American peace conditions were accepted in 1918.

The German members of the Austrian parliament set up a democratic republic in November 1918. Gradually robbed of self-rule by nearly four centuries of Hapsburg domination, Bohemia joined with Moravia and Silesia, and Slovakia to form the Republic of Czechoslovakia.

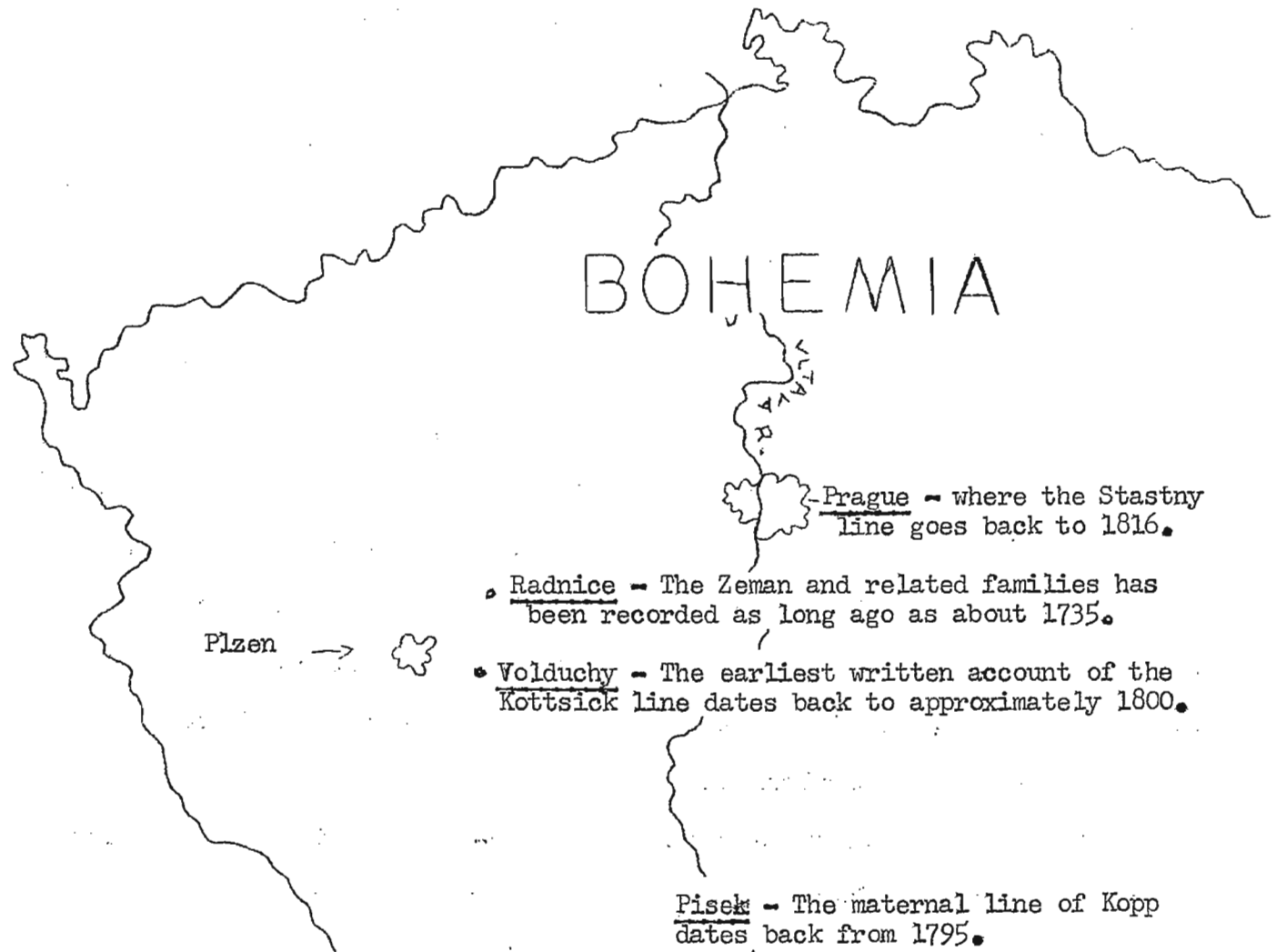
Twenty years of peace and emerging from a war-torn land into an agricultural and industrial country, Czechoslovakia faced more outside encroachment when she was allotted to Germany by the Munich agreement in 1938, resulting in German army occupation without notice. After the liberation of 1945 Bohemia recovered her territory and the status of province.

all the years of invasion and division of what was once known as

the people have maintained a spirit of pride and patriotism with hard work in struggle for national independence with freedom of speech and a free

## THE AMERICAN DREAM AND REALITY

With this background then, it is not difficult for one to visualize the distressed lives these people have tolerated, generation after generation, yet succeeding in preserving a highly developed class of intellectuals, artists, and leaders despite suffering cultural and political oppression throughout times of foreign rule, wars, and occupation by invaders.



The common observations about the above mentioned lineages is that they were generally from the same area - that of western Bohemia, and their eventual voyages to America.

One can value the realistic reasons for our ancestors leaving their beloved homeland for America - which was more than a promise. Pulled by the gravity of optimism, they prepared for their exodus.

THE JOURNEY  
(fiction)

Whatever the mode of travel, their journey probably took them in a northerly direction to Prague. No doubt their heartbeats quickened as they viewed for the last time the broad green gentle water of the Vltava River, separating this beautiful age-old capital. A sudden feeling of warmth radiated from each earthy-colored building of the Old Town, and sweeping pride while passing the New Town. Perhaps tear-filled eyes gazed upon domes, cathedrals, and spires piercing skyward. It is likely that the otherwise slow-moving people noticed a rapidity of time racing by, the fleeting moments not allowing quite enough time for one leisurely farewell, but stuffing anxieties between final glances, as the winding street took them away.

Mixed emotions probably clouded rational decisions...too late now to change. WERE THEY DOING THE RIGHT THING? Would they find truth in all those American promotions? Was the railroad really offering FREE land? - Indeed! But what of the dear ones they were leaving behind? Perhaps they too would follow, someday - with financial aid from them, when they would flourish.

The natural path to the Atlantic flowed within the banks of the Elbe River. Bremen already! Will the ship carry us safely? What will we do when we get there? How will we know where to go? What of our language barrier? Hustle and clattering of assembling lines left no time for worrumsome thinking. There would be plenty of time for that while enroute. My passport - my trunk - my ----- bringing with them the things they needed most; faith, hope, and courage, they made their way in line to the waiting steamship.

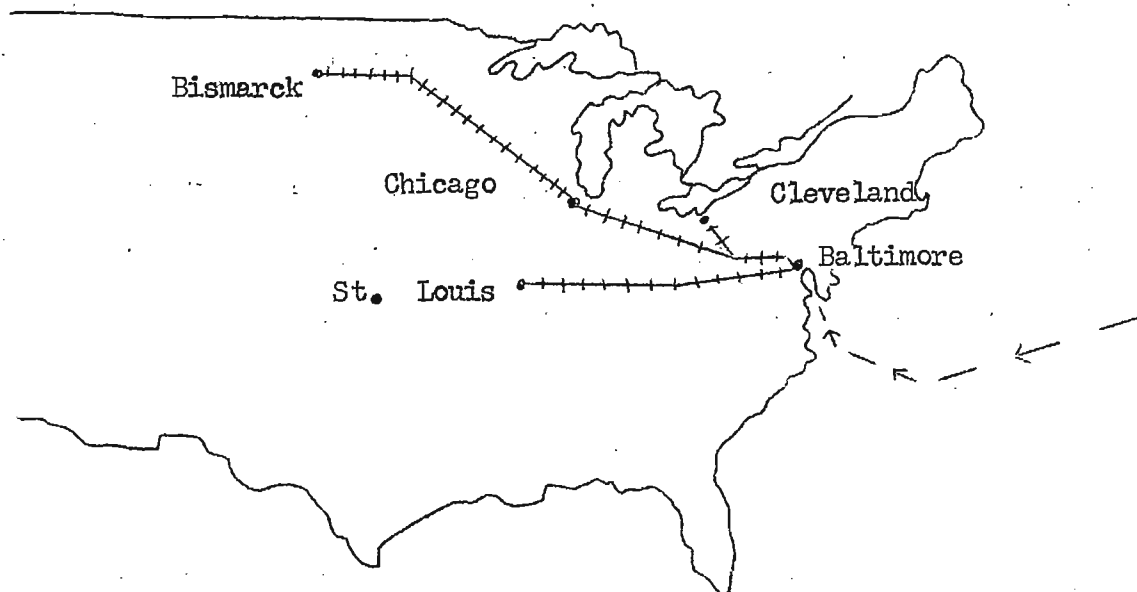
Busyness of getting situated and observing their temporary aquatic home occupied daytime hours. Amidst sudden free time there was moments - hours, even, to stack up the weight of facts on the scale. On one side was Bohemia's past - scenes of skirmishes, wars, invasions, political oppression, harsh and cruel rulers, hunger, possible future wars, suffering...all outweighing the good kings, Wenceslaus and Charles IV. On the other side of the scale, America's

Revolutionary and Civil Wars far behind, were promising equal opportunities and freedom for ALL the people.

The haunting cost of this pilgrimage...hard work, frugal savings, sacrificing, disposition of personal items at a loss...anything that would add up to adequate passage and American train fare. There was no turning back now. They were PROBABLY doing the right thing.

About three weeks following European departure, at the port of arrival, customs quarantine ethnic hostels provided quarters for required days. Then by train they traveled on to Missouri, Ohio, North Dakota, or whatever destination was theirs. Some had friends or relatives to greet them others had no one. Their time was just beginning.

These hard-working folks who knew long hours, eating to live, living to work, working to sleep, and sleeping to work, were not strangers to this life now descended upon them. They would earn their way - and earn it they did. Despite handicaps and hardships unknown to us, they prospered. Some even flourished. By looking at Europe through eyes as a new American, and at America through eyes as a former European, their doubt was quelled. YES. THEY DID THE RIGHT THING!





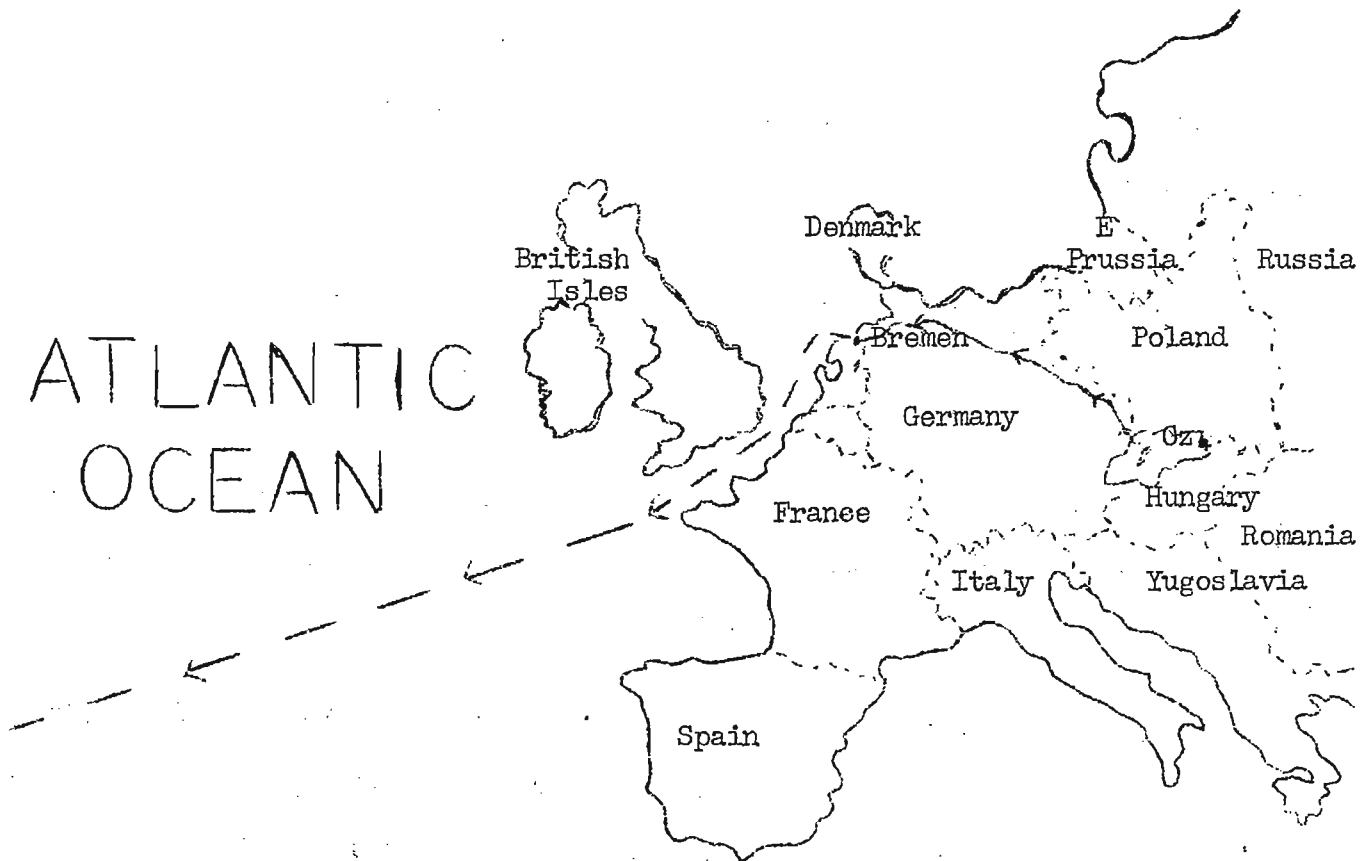
MAP OF JOURNEY

KOPETA, Kathryn & Elizabeth - left for America and Cleveland, Ohio about 1868.

Port of arrival, exact date, and vessel unknown.

KOTTSICK, Frank & Marie plus six children - arrived Port of Baltimore 18 June,

1880 on the vessel, Kaiser Wilhelm.



Encouraged by promotions and facilities, many immigrants entered the world port of Baltimore. Direct lines from Bremen, railroad cargo and passenger terminals right down to the waterfront, and the closest channel to midwest cities-- were all sound reasons for selecting this natural deep water harbor.

## EARLY DAYS IN AMERICA

A personal account of Kathryn Kopeta Kahovec

"Arrived in Cleveland about 1868. Was married there to John Kahovec in 1870 and made home in Cleveland for 15 years - then decided in March 1885 to explore farming in Dakota Territory and file on land. John went with a neighbor to the village of Mandan, chose a place south of town then went back to Cleveland to get his family. They landed in Mandan April 15, 1885. The family consisted of father John, mother Kathryn, daughter Mary and son John Jr. (another son died in infancy) and James Stastny, wife Elizabeth, sons Martin, John, Tom, and daughter Amelia. Ten altogether."

The move to Mandan was spurred on by two reasons. John Kahovec suffering poor health, was given a recommendation by his doctor to live where the air was fresh. Also farmland with homestead claims attached was being offered in Dakota Territory.

Kathryn once stated to her granddaughter Gay, that 'youngsters in Cleveland threw stones at Grandpa because he was wearing an overcoat that evidently looked odd in the city'.

Even though John heeded the advise of his physician, he died a young man. Kathryn remained in Mandan until her death in 1921. From their family three out of four survived, but son Frank died in infancy.

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A very sweet Elizabeth Kopeta married James Stastny in 1873, making their first home in Cleveland. Not many early records are available, but their daughter's birth was recorded and filed in Cleveland. It states that "Mollie" was born July 9, 1880 at #86 Brooker Street. That would place her age at nearly five when the family moved to Mandan. Her father James built a one-room house on the chosen site where the two families lived together for some time before Kahovec's moved to their own place.

The North Dakota climate agreed exceedingly well with James who lived one month past his 86th birthday. His beloved Elizabeth preceeded his death by ten years. Together they reared six children to carry on the family line, and one child Mary died as a youngster.