

The Filipek Story

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Introduction

As follows is *The Filipek Story*, a compilation of what I have learned over three decades about the history of my Filipek family line. It is a long and complicated story but one I am sure you will enjoy.

This *Introduction* provides some background and housekeeping for this and related documents along with the relationship with the associated web pages.

For ease of use, the above [Table of Contents](#) includes active links along with a simplified genealogy chart to assist in selecting items of interest. Merely touch the line or page number to move to a section of interest.

In order to help preserve our family history and to make that history more widely available, [Our Filipek Family Web Pages](#) was created in the early years of the 21st century.

While quite successful in its goals, it became clear with the passage of time, that a web site with many hundreds of pages was not easy to print or to electronically download. Thus in the later part of the first decade of the 21st century, I began to compile various categories of information such as Filipek Family Addresses, Filipek Family Census Records, Filipek Genealogy Source Records, and the Filipek Stories into pdf documents.

Such pdf files will make it easier to download files for preservation on our many computers and they will also allow much easier printing of pages and for studied analysis as desired. As part of this effort, a [Filipek and Nemec PDF Downloads](#) web page was created. From this page, all currently available pdf's from [Our Filipek Family Web Pages](#) and [Our Nemec Family Web Pages](#) can be accessed.

You are encouraged to download the various Filipek and Nemec pdf files, not only for your own study but to also help preserve for future generations hard to obtain data and information about our common Filipek, Nemec and Jordan origins and history. Files are updated every once in a while, and checking about once a year is a reasonable frequency. Version dates are shown at the beginning of the [Table of Contents](#).

File Information

Master File Name: Stories_Filipek

Author: Dave Jordan

Creation Date: Fall 2000

Modified: 10/10/2007, 12/6/2012, 10/11/17

Contact

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What's New

Going forward it is intended to briefly describe what major items were added since the last version of this document.

1. 10/11/17: Various format updates.
2. 12/6/2012: Primarily formatting changes and fixes of a few typo's along with some reorganization.

File Connections

As follows are other files that connect with *The Filipek Story*. All are available at [Filipek and Nemec PDF Downloads](#) as individual pdf documents with titles and file names as listed below.

1. *The Filipek Story*
File: Stories_Filipek.pdf
Summary: *The Filipek Story* provides a written history of the origins of our Filipek and our Nemec family. As part of this story there are many appendices and sections.
2. *Recollections of the Filipeks*
File: Recollections_Filipek.pdf
Summary: *Recollections of the Filipeks* provides a collection of short anecdotes and memories of our Filipek family.
3. *Historical Filipek Family Addresses*
File: Addresses_Filipek_Historical.pdf
Summary: Contains chronological address listings for various families in the Filipek/Nemec line.
Linkages: Vaclav Filipek married Katerina Nemec; their son James Albert Filipek married Grace Vanderkloot; one of their daughters married a Jordan. Also contains addresses for Martin and Katerina Nemec and various descendants.
4. *Filipek Family Census Records*
File: Census_Filipek_Historical.pdf
Summary: Contains census transcriptions for various families in the Filipek/Nemec line.
Linkages: Vaclav Filipek married Katerina Nemec; their son James Albert Filipek married Grace Vanderkloot; one of their daughters married a Jordan.
5. *The Jordan Story*
File: Stories_Jordan.pdf
Summary: *The Jordan Story* provides a written history of the origins of our Jordan family. As part of this story there are many appendices and sections.

Prelude

In December 1977, I wrote *The Story of James and Katherine Filipek*. Since that time, much new information has been found. In addition other stories about other branches of the Filipek Family have become available. With the creation of [Our Filipek Family Web Pages](#), I have decided to update and expand the various stories into a larger framework. The resulting, *The Filipek Story*, is a collection of short stories by various authors about different chapters and branches in the lives of and descendants of Anton and Katerina Filipek. With time, others may contribute their own stories leading to a growing work on the origins and history of the Filipek Family.

The Filipek Story is divided into six major parts.

1. The first *Origins* focuses on early roots in Bohemia.
2. The second part *Anton and Katerina Filipek Descendants* provides chapters for each of their descendant branches including the Filipeks, Janas and Sokoliks.
3. The third part *Martin and Katerina Nemeč* provides chapters for each of their descendant branches, but primarily one, Frank and Mary Nemeč.
4. The fourth part *Closing* wraps up with some overall thoughts, a bibliography of suggested reading, and acknowledgements.
5. The fifth part is an *Appendix* which contains transcriptions of letters to various relatives seeking information about the Jordans.
6. The sixth part is a listing of *Associated Documents* that are related to *The Filipek Story* which exist as separate documents. These include detailed address data, census data, and genealogy records, voyage records, historical family letters, and other stories or articles.

Our Origins in Bohemia focuses on our early roots from the 18th and 19th centuries in southern Bohemia. In *Our Origins in Bohemia*, there are currently three contributions. These include *Origins of the Filipek Family*, which discusses the early history of the Filipeks in Kolence and the surrounding area. Next is Vladimir Kandl's *Four Hundred Years of Filipek Farm Ownership*, an interesting list of all owners of the Filipek Family Farm. And next there is *Origins of the Nemeč Family*, which will be of interest to descendants of Vaclav Filipek and Katerina Nemeč.

In the *Anton and Katerina Filipek Descendants* sections are provided for each of their children. Within these sections, there are chapters for the various descendant families and in some cases, their descendant families. As further chapters are written, they will be added.

Of the seven surviving *Anton and Katerina Filipek* descendant families, three, the Frantisek and Mary Paleček Family, the Frantisek and Marie Filipek Family and the Jakob and Rosalie Kandl Family stayed in

Bohemia. Later, five of seven of the Palecek children and one child of Frantisek Filipek came to America.

Four of the seven *Anton and Katerina Filipek* descendant children came to America. Jan Filipek came first in about 1869 to Minnesota and his story is described in *The Jan and Francesca Filipek Chapters*. Frank and Anna Sokolik (nee Filipek) arrived in Minnesota a decade later in 1879. Their story is related in *The Frank and Anna Sokolik Chapters*. Their son, Theodore Sokolik's *My Life as I Lived It* relates their early life in America. What little we know about the Frank and Katherine Jana (nee Filipek) is related in *The Frank and Katerina Jana Chapters*. Vaclav and Katerina Nemecek arrived in Chicago in the 1880s. Theirs is a complicated story of back and forth to Bohemia including a 5-year stay in Colorado in the 1890s before finally settling down in Chicago in 1900. Their story is told in *The James and Katherine Filipek Chapters*.

While readers may wish to initially focus on stories in their branch, for those interested in every nugget of information on the life and times, you may wish to read the other stories to gain additional insights and find connections between them.

Reader Tips

The Filipek Story has been placed on *Our Filipek Family Web Pages* and *The Nemeč Story* has been placed on *Our Nemeč Family Web Pages* for easy distribution and updates.

The home address for *Our Filipek Family Web Pages* is:

<http://www.jordanstuff.net/ourhistory/Filipek/index.html>

The home address for *Our Nemeč Family Web Pages* is:

<http://www.jordanstuff.net/ourhistory/Nemecl/index.html>

Frequency of Updates

Current stories may occasionally be updated with new information and a date tag will show the latest date of the various stories. As new stories become available they will be added. Readers may wish to check the *What's New* page to easily identify when material has been added.

Printing

After being available for many years on-line, it was recognized that it was difficult to print the html version of our various family history web pages. To improve this situation, various sections of the html web version our family history are being made available as pdf files. These downloadable pdf files will allow preservation of our family history on our personal computers and will also allow better printing of various stories and genealogy data.

Related Information

While it's possible to just read *The Filipek Story*, there is much companion information contained in the Topics Section on *Our Filipek Family Web Pages*. Topics include: *Address Data, Census Data, Family Overview Pages, Family Charts, Genealogy Source Records and Photos*.

Connections

Many readers will most likely be offspring of one of the Filipek, Sokolik or Nemeč families. It may be helpful to consult *Our Filipek Family Overview* page or *Our Nemeč Family Overview* page to figure out which family you are from and to learn some of the names and relationships. My purpose was not to create a detailed genealogy of all the offspring, so you may need to do a little research to first work your way back to a couple of original families. If you can't figure it out, drop me a line and I may be able to get you onto the right family.

The key families included in *The Filipek Story* are:

1. **The Anton and Katerina Filipek Family:** Anton and Katerina's children are Mary (1850), Anna (1853), Frantisek (1854), Jan (1856), Katerina (1858), Rosalie (1860), Terezie (1862) and Vaclav (1863). Their current offspring number in the hundreds.
2. **The Frantisek and Mary Paleček Family:** Frantisek and Mary had at 11 children and five immigrated to the United

States. Their children are Frantisek (1868), Jan (1869), Vojtech (1871), Vaclav (1873), Josef (1875), Marie (1877), Tomas (1878), Maria (1880), Anna (1880), Rudolf (1881), and Rosalie (1883). Jan, Vojtech, Josef, Tomas, and Rudolf came to the United States.

3. **The Frantisek and Anna Sokolik Family:** Frantisek and Anna's children are Frantisek (1873), Jan (1876), and Theodore (1879). Their current offspring are less than thirty. Frantisek and Anna Sokolik are Ted Curtis and Mary Fritz's great-grandparents.
4. **The Frantisek and Marie Filipek Family:** Frantisek and Marie's children are Antonín, Roman, Parla, Bozura, and James F. (1892). It is believed that all but James F. stayed in Bohemia. James F. Filipek accompanied his Uncle Vaclav Filipek on his return to Chicago. We knew James F. Filipek as Jim the Gardener.
5. **The Jan and Francesca Filipek Family:** Jan and Francesca's 12 children are Frantisek (about 1875), Jan (1877), Mary R. (1879), Josef (1881), Vojtech M. (1882), Anna (1884), Alzabeta (1886, Tomas (1888), Micel A. (1890), Ludwig (1891), Franceska (1893), and Roselee (1901). Their offspring number in the hundreds. Jan and Francesca are Cindy Filipek Johnson's gg-grandparents.
6. **The Frantisek and Katerina Jana Family:** Frantisek and Katerina's children are Katherine (1879), Frank (1881), Anna (1883), Mary (1885), and possibly Elizabeth (circa 1889).
7. **The Jakob and Rosalie Kandler Family:** Jakob and Rosalie's children are Josef, Tomas, Rosalie, Jan, Mary, and Katerina.
8. **The Vaclav and Katerina Filipek Family:** Vaclav and Katerina's children are John James (1882), Mary (1889), Milada Katerina (1891), James Albert (1892), and Rosalie Katerina (1894). Their current offspring number is less than thirty. Vaclav (James) and Katerina Filipek are Dave Jordan's great-grandparents.

The key families included in The Nemec Story are:

1. **The Martin and Katerina Nemec Family:** Martin and Katerina's children are Tomas (1850), Josef (1852), Maria (1854), Vaclav (1857), Anna (1859), Frantisek (1861), Katerina (1862), and Frantisek (1867). Katerina Nemec married Vaclav (James) Filipek. They are my great-grandparents.

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Contact: [Dave Jordan](#)

Origins

The Filipek Branch

Origins of Our Filipek Family

The Earliest Filipeks

The earliest known Filipek ancestor of my gg-grandfather Antonín Filipek was Regina Filipekova born sometime in the 1500s. In 1577, she was a widow when she became the owner of what is now known as the Filipek Farm. The Filipek Farm is located in Kolence, a very small town in what was then southern Bohemia. Regina kept the farm for 13 years and then passed it to her daughter Barbora (Barbara) and her husband Matej Prokes who became Matej Prokes-Filipek upon his marriage and becoming the farmer of the Filipek Farm. This change of surname of the male to assume the name of the farm was very common in Bohemia and offspring of Matej and Barbora would be Filipeks and not Prokes. The farm was passed down 11 times through the generations from Regina, the original owner, to Antonín Filipek who became the twelfth owner in 1849. The passage of the farm was sometimes to sons and sometimes to daughters and sometimes to previous owner's sons or daughters. Besides Matej Prokes, there were four other cases where men married Filipek woman and then assumed the Filipek name. Although there were all these name changes, Antonín Filipek and all his offspring can trace their genealogy back to Regina Filipekova. However, even though they have the same surname, this is not a linkage back of 10 generations of fathers.

A complete listing of the owners and farmers of the Filipek Farm from Regina Filipekova to the present is listed in *Four Hundred Years of Filipek Farm Ownership*. Miroslav Kandl, a great-grandson of Antonín Filipek, now owns the farm.

Bohemia and Kolence

Kolence is a small town consisting of a number of farms in what is now Czech Republic. The Czech Republic consists of two old provinces Bohemia and Moravia. Prague was in Bohemia and Bohemia is to the west of Moravia.

The name Bohemia goes back to Roman and Celtic times. The Latin Boihaemum means "home of the Boii", and "boii" is Celtic for "fighter" for the people that originally inhabited the region. I'm not sure how far back the Kingdom of Bohemia existed, but the King of Bohemia was explicitly mentioned in the Papal Bull of 1356 as one of the original princes named to elect the Holy Roman Emperor. Back in 1560 and for several centuries the Austrian Hapsburgs generally controlled the Kingdom of Bohemia. There was one very rough period around 1630 during the 30 Year War in Europe when the Catholic and Protestant wars were going in Bohemia, that Bohemia lost about 75% of its population. Generally throughout this period the places we know as countries were Kingdoms, Duchies, Electorates, and Counties. Based on who was winning at the time, they would be over-laid by various Empires such as

the Holy Roman Empire, the Ottoman Empire, the Russian Empire, the Austrian Empire, the Napoleon Empire, or the German Empire. The empires would provide centralized governmental control while still letting the various leaders continue to function in their Kingdoms, Duchy's and so on. For the most part, the Holy Roman Empire and the Austrian Empire controlled Bohemia throughout the period up to World War I. At the end of World War I the country of Czechoslovakia was created from Bohemia, Moravia, and Slovakia. After the Russians moved out of Czechoslovakia in the late 1980s, the people of Czechoslovakia chose to split into two countries, one being the Czech Republic.

So from the beginnings of the Filipek Farm in the 1577, there have been many national influences and empire swings back and forth over the land including the Austrians, the Germans, and the Russians. Since most of the time our Filipeks were in Kolence, it was called Bohemia and our story will thus refer to our ancestors as being from Bohemia rather than Czechoslovakia or the Czech Republic. However, it is useful to note that the language they spoke was Czech, which predates the establishment of the name of the country by over a millennium.

Kolence is about 70 miles southeast of Prague and about 20 miles northwest of the border crossing to Austrian at Ceske Velenice. *Ceske* translates to *Czech* thus *Ceske Velenice* means the *Czech Velenice*. This was done to differentiate from similarly named towns in other areas such as Moravia. Kolence is located on Route 148 and the various farms have numbers. The Filipek Farm is No. 16. Down the road is the former Sokolik Farm, which is Farm No. 9. Nearby towns to Kolence are Lomnice nad Luznici which is about three miles to the west and Novosedly which is about 1.5 miles to the east. Note the "ice" sound is pronounced phonetically as "itz".

Because there are really no large towns around and the marriage choices limited there are a number of close cousin marriages in our history. These are pretty typical of small farming communities whether there or anywhere. In fact given the Filipeks were there for hundreds of years there are many marital connections between the same families.

I am uncertain of the translation of the name *Filipek* but in Czech it is written as *Filípek*. Daughters until they were married added the suffix "ova" as in *Filípekova*, which means "daughter of *Filípek*". Generally one finds that Bohemian names end in "ak", "ek", or "ik", thus the "root" word is most likely "Filip", which may well be the equivalent of the English "Phillip" and the ending "ek" could be "son of". However, at this point, I am only guessing.

Antonín and Katerina Filípek Family

The focal point of our story is Antonín Filípek and his wife Katerina Ceckova. Antonín and Katerina are my gg-grandparents. They are also Ted Curtis and Terry Nelson's gg-grandparents, Cindy Filipek Johnson's ggg-grandparents, and Vladimir Kandl's great-grandparents.

Antonín Filípek

Antonín Filípek was born on March 25, 1815 at the Filípek Family Farm at No. 16, Kolence, Bohemia. His parents were Vojtech (Albert) Filípek and Anna Kotek, and Vojtech's father was Tomas Filípek. It is believed Antonín had three brothers and five sisters and it is presumed he was baptized at St. James' Church in Novosedly.

Katerina Ceckova

Katerina Ceckova was born April 5, 1833 at No. 13 Zablati in the Parish of Lomnice. Her father was Tomas Cecka who was the farmer at No. 13. Tomas' father was Pavel Cecka and his mother was Katerina Blazek from Dynin Number 6. I have not yet found Zablati on a map but if the Parish of Lomnice includes Lomnice nad Luznici, then Katerina Ceckova lived about 3 miles west of Kolence on Route 148, certainly fairly close to her future husband. I have not found Dynin on a map. For those interested in locating Czech places on a map, see the Town Locator link in our Links section.

Katerina's mother was Anna Ciganek who was the daughter of Matej Ciganek alias Marek, the farmer at Number 8 Lhota, and Katerina nee Martinek from Becice. Both Matej and Katerina Ciganek had passed on by the time of Katerina's birth in 1833. The term "alias Marek" most likely occurred because of the purchase of a farm with Matej taking on a new surname. What is unclear is whether his original surname was Ciganek or Marek. My guess is that it was Marek and he took on the Ciganek name since the daughters surname was Ciganek. I have not found Lhota or Becice on a map.

Their Marriage and Children

Antonín and Katerina were married on October 9, 1849. Their children are Mary born August 30th, 1850; Anna born January 17th, 1853; Frantisek born August 5, 1854; Jan born July 15, 1856; Katerina born July 15, 1858; Rosalie born September 13, 1860; Terezie born September 24, 1862; and Vaclav born September 10, 1863. It is thought that all were born on Farm No. 16, Kolence and all baptized at St. James in Novosedly. Daughter, Terezie, died in infancy.

At the time of her marriage, Katerina was 16 while Antonín would have been 34, 18 years her senior. A relatively large age difference shows up a number of times in our research suggesting that it may have been a custom or an expectation that the male established his livelihood first. Another example is Frank Sokolik's marriage to Anna Filípek; Frank was 20 years older.

Antonín and the Filípek Farm

Antonín became the owner of the farm in 1849, which he obtained from his father Vojtech who had owned the farm since 1804. Vladimir Kandl's research discovered the following:

At the balance of the farms and after withdrawal of drudgery and pay- ins was the purchase price of the farm and the document established for 15 golden crowns and 15 farthings.

I believe this was the transfer of the farm from Vojtech to Antonín, a combination of working the farm and payment of money to his father.

Antonín had a great love of the farm and had hoped that it would be passed on to his Filipek sons and remain in the Filipek name. This was not to be. His son Frantisek became an architect and moved away, Jan left for Minnesota in 1869, and Vaclav the youngest, who would study agronomics, decided to leave and start a new life in Chicago. The farm formally passed to his daughter Rozalie and her husband Jakob Kandl in 1883 when Antonín was 69 years old. However, Antonín continued to live there until his death in 1900.

Vladimir states that:

Antonín died aged 85 years in the church at Novosedly at the mass saying, 1900. With Antonín Filípek died out the family Filipek in the farm No. 16 in Kolence. However, the descendants continue through the daughter - Kandl family. Antonín Filipek's greatest longing was to preserve the farm for the family. He was unhappy about bringing it to another family.

In some sense, the passage to the Kandl's was no different than what happened five times before in the ownership of the farm, but perhaps Antonín was unaware of this since the last time it had happened was in 1760. The Kandls did not change their name to Filipek as was the earlier tradition, but all the offspring of the Kandls are related to Antonín Filipek, and I believe the farm is still referred to as the Filipek Farm.

Cindy Filipek Johnson became the first of the current generation to find the Filipek Farm and she visited the Kandls in 1992. She states that:

Miroslav Kandl still lives there and has maintained a section of the original Anton Filipek living quarters with original furniture and belongings along with Anton's artwork on the walls. Below this section is an old fashion potato cellar. There are barns and sheds along the courtyard, opposite of the house so in fact the inside courtyard is closed in by building on three sides.

In the summer of 2000, Ted Curtis, on a bicycle trip with his wife Celia, visited Kolence and met Vladimir Kandl.

Closing

Anton died on June 27, 1900 in church at Novosedly of heart paralysis. He was 85 years old. A picture of the Novosedly Church can be found in the *Anton Filipek Photo Collection*.

Katerina died two years later on November 12, 1902 at the Filipek Family Farm, also of heart paralysis. She was 69 years old. They are both buried in the Novosedly Cemetery near the church.

Anton and Katerina lived long lives, outlived four of their children, and saw several of four of their children leave for America years earlier. They both had to be sad knowing that they would never see Jan, Anna, Katerina, and Vaclav after they left for America. They had to be further saddened to know that Anna, Katerina, and Mary died before they did.

However, each of their children had several children, so there were many grandchildren. There were those that were nearby, such as Rosalie's children who lived with them on the farm, and Mary's children who lived a few farms down the road, and Frantisek's children who lived in northern Bohemia. And in Minnesota they knew Jan had many children, and in Chicago, Vaclav had his three children and the two Sokolik boys, and somewhere there were Katerina's children and the other Sokolik boy. It was the end of a long life at a peaceful farm, with memories of children, grandchildren, family, paintings, and the passing of the home and farm to the next generation.

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Author: Dave Jordan

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Contact: [Dave Jordan](#)

Four Hundred Years of Filipek Farm Ownership

By Vladimir Kandl

The following chart lists the farmers and farmer's wives of the farm at No. 16 in Kolence, known as *The Filipek Farm*. It was as researched and made available by Vladimir Kandl.

<i>Four Hundred Years of Filipek Farm Ownership</i>							
<i>No</i>	<i>Farmer</i>	<i>Born on</i>	<i>Name of the Farmer's Wife</i>	<i>Time of Keeping the Farm</i>	<i>Farmer and Spouse</i>	<i>Children</i>	<i>Children Names</i>
1	Regina Filipekova	?	Widow	1577 to 1590	Regina Filipekova	1	Barbora
2	Matej Prokes-Filipek	?	Barbora daughter of Regina	1590 to 1620 and 1620 to 1630	Matej and Barbora Filipek	2	Mariana, Lukas
3	Lukas Filipek	?	Barbora daughter from Matej Filipek	1631 to 1642	Lukas and Barbora Filipek	3	Katerina, Dorola, Anezka Filipek
4	Josef Noosedel-Filipek	1612	Barbora of Lukas Filipek second Marian z Lizmice	1643 to 1669	Josef and Barbora Filipek	-	-
5	Ondrej Zahradnik-Filipek	?	Dorola, widow after Vaclav Zahradnik	1669 to 1687	Ondrej and Dorola Filipek	3	Simon, Tomas, Lukas
6	Tomas Filipek	1659	Monika born Bailova from Luznice	1687 to 1719	Tomas and Monika Filipek	8	Matous, Era Jiri, Vit, Anezka, Anna, Rozina, Alzbeta
7	Jacob Kolicko-Filipek	July 25, 1697	Anna born Filipekova daughter of previous farmer	1719 to 1750	Jakub and Anna Filipek	4	Jan, Rozalie, Mariana, Anna
8	Jan Filipek	August 24, 1725	Dorola born Kundratora of Kolence	1750 to 1759	Jan and Dorola Filipek	4	Jan, Tomas, Ondrej, Vaclav
9	Vit Safranek-Filipek	1740	Dorola widow after Jan Filipek	1760 to 1776	Vit and Dorola Filipek	3	Frantisek, Kaspar, Katerina

<i>Four Hundred Years of Filipek Farm Ownership</i>							
<i>No</i>	<i>Farmer</i>	<i>Born on</i>	<i>Name of the Farmer's Wife</i>	<i>Time of Keeping the Farm</i>	<i>Farmer and Spouse</i>	<i>Children</i>	<i>Children Names</i>
10	Tomas Filipek	December 8, 1752	Marie Ann born Jirakova of Koleneec	1776 to 1804	Tomas and Marie Anna Filipek	5	Anna, Vojtech, Matej, Mariana, Josefa
11	Vojtech Filipek	April 16, 1780	Anna born Kolkova of Koleneec	1804 to 1849	Vojtech and Anna Filipek	10	Vojtech, Jan, Frantisek, Antonin, Rozalie, Marie, Marie, Anna, Katerina, Frantiska, Magdalies
12	Antonin Filipek	May 22, 1815	Katerina born Ceckova from Zablati	1849 to 1883	Antonin and Katerina Filipek	7	Jan, Frantisek, Vaclav, Marie, Anna, Katerina, Terezie
13	Jakub Kandl	July 7, 1860	Rozalie daughter Antonin Filipek	1883 to 1926	Jakub and Rozalie Kandl	7	Josef, Frantisek, Jan, Tomas, Rosalie, Katerina, Marie
14	Tomas Kandl	November 30, 1887	Ruzema born Lkolova of Lipnice	1926 to 1962	Tomas and Ruzena Kandl	3	Vladimir, Miroslav, Jaroslav
15	Miroslav Kandl	-	Marie	1962 to present	Miroslav and Marie Kandl	2	Miroslav and Jiri

Notes

1. The first known Filipek ownership of the farm was Regina Filípková who operated the farm from 1577. Scot of Kolence provided the following excerpt from the Kolence town chronicle in regard to Regina Filipekova's taxes.

"Původní osedlí: Podle taxy panství strážského z roku 1577 měli tito poddaní z Koleneec následující povinnosti:

...Regina Filípková: platila při sv. Jiří 14 a 1/2 groše, při Havle tolikté?, roboty denně 2 dny, ovsu 2 dšbery, slepice 2, vajec 5 a 1 šr.

Roughly translated:

Original homeowner: According to the tax of the possessions of the Count of Straz in the year 1577 the servants from Kolence have provided the following obligations:

...Regina Filipekova paid on St. George's day 14-1/2 grosen, on St

Havel's day paid the same amount, and served to cut wheat for two days, two buckets of oats, two chickens, 5 eggs and one cheese.

2. While the farm owners maintained the Filipek name through 12 ownerships, the males were not always Filipeks. The tradition was that the surname of a non-Filipek male farmer changed his surname to Filipek upon marrying and operating the farm. There are four cases like this and the children were then Filipeks.
3. The farm is now owned by the Kandls who are offspring of Anton Filipek.
4. Order of children is not necessarily order of birth.
5. Spelling is as best as I can read it, but there are undoubtedly errors.
6. The information in this chart was obtained from the research of Vladimir Kandler at the Trebon Archives.
7. The above chart is not a genealogy chart, although there is a birth sequence back to Regina Filipekova.

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Author Notes: Dave Jordan

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Three Brittle Stalks of Wheat

By Cindy Filipek Johnson

Three brittle stalks of wheat in a vase. Light as breeze, the spikes scratchy to my touch. There is a sound, though slight, a hollow rattling that can almost bring me back. This needs to be here, I know, to keep and pass on- however fragile now, the strength is there.

Ninety years ago they stood at the edge of the field, it was September, the work was done for today, and though there would be more tomorrow- always more- it was time to go. There were three brothers, all born here, as was their father and fathers and sons for three hundred years. This was the place that the Filipek's lived and died, until today. There were always problems, things were never easy, but there were no other choices to be made- this farm was here and so were they. The decision to leave was as much to end, as to begin. They could not think today, of what was ahead of them; only the loss of what today was- and yesterday.

The crops were doing well this year, there was a healthy flock of geese and a new calf. Things would not be hard for them, the parents and the youngest-a sister. Each of the sons had worked hard to leave something behind. Vaclav planted a small grove of fruit trees for his mother: cherries, apples pears and plums. He built a small bench for the grove, so she could rest. They had laughed at the smallness of the trees, mere twigs now. His mother did not laugh. She reminded them that in time, these trees would grow like her sons. These trees would always be here and that the fruit would bring her joy.

Jan carved out a rybný-lake, studied the aeration and drainage, then stocked it with small fish for his father. Every evening he and his father had fished and talked of plans. In his mind he could see his father sitting along the bank of the rybný as he rested after a long day. He knew that his father would boast to the other men that his sons had made this- his son, who now lived in America.

Frantisek would not leave with them, would not go as far. He would be an architect or teacher in Tabor- not a farmer in Kolence. This was perhaps harder for his parents to understand. He would return, but would never be a part of this place again. His children would never wake from sleep here, to run through these fields in the sun. Novesedly needed a church, he would build it. His parents would have their own seat in the front, they could look out the windows and see the graves of their past- this he knew would give them peace.

The brothers worked throughout the summer to complete their tasks. None would leave without the other. They worked together one last time. So, that evening, after their mother's meal, after the talk and stories of their past, they stood at the edge of the field and listened to the dry hiss of the wheat as the wind brushed through. No one said anything. No one looked any further than this field. In the morning, they would leave.

Vaclav would live in Chicago, own a store and would return to visit. Frantisek would become a teacher and his children would live in the city.

Jan would never return, he would be a farmer and have six strong and handsome sons.

Jan came to Minnesota, where he built a farm of his own. His sons built a church, near a small cemetery, and though his sons would carry on his name, Jan never again would have a home. He sold his farm, then a house in town. House after house they would rent. His children wanted to be back in the country, his children wanted a home, his wife knew, but she could not understand why he would not stay, why he would not farm this rich land with his sons and pass this place to them. These sons grew wild, scattered to the city, came back to the wheat fields to be buried at the small country cemetery. They died old men.

The oldest son was Frantisek, they called him Frank. He stayed and built homes for the people of the town. His four sons did the same, though they too, never lived in any of these houses, never, in fact, owned homes to raise their families. In summer, there was always work on the farms around town, and the brothers were always available for hire. They still spoke Bohemian and married Czech descendants, like themselves. They had grown wild, drank and did not care for their wives and children. They remembered their grandfather, Jan, only as being unhappy, that he played the fiddle for drink and lived to be a very old man. He had once been a farmer in the old country, they had heard. My grandfather was one of those sons.

I stood there now, at the edge of the wheat field. Old and bent over his cane, he told my mother the story, stopped to wipe away his tears and waited for her to translate the story to me in English. I had to know, he said. It was his grandmother, that youngest sister, who stayed behind at the farm. He and his brothers grew up here. The oldest, he stayed to raise his own sons. He cried as he told of his incarceration as a political prisoner for eight years; of how he could not help his wife; and how his children grew up without him. His wife worked so hard to keep the farm until he would return. The communist police had threatened to kill his sons, they took control of the farm, and they let them stay and live. There is the rybny, still, and the grove of fruit trees gnarled with age. The church, gray and damp, chained shut by communist rule-the bench where the father sat until he died there one Easter Sunday. No one can come here, no one can maintain the structure "by law"- he says. Yet he arranges for us to sit on that bench as a neighbor man plays a perfectly tuned organ for us, the music floods the stained walls, I look out the window at the cemetery. The statues are gone and the altar bare.

At the edge of the field, he tells us that for forty years, they have not planted these fields, as his family struggled, went hungry and poor. These fields were not theirs to farm. He was so sorry, he had tried to fight them, but for his family's sake, he had to give up. "This wheat you see comes wild, the rest is weeds, but the wheat is part of the old farm," he says. It makes him happy that it is stubborn, that it grows despite them, wild and strong like his grandsons. "This is Filipek land, this was their home and you are the the first American to return," he says crying, blue eyes, the color of my grandfather's. He smiles suddenly and says, "I always knew they had gone to America!!! Others doubted, but I knew that they were

there. We have sacrificed much for your country. You are a great nation today because you have gotten the strongest and smartest of all of us!" After our meal, he toasts to family, says that our futures now are with the children. Before I leave, I return to the field. I take with me all that I can, for I too have children-three- strong, beautiful and like the breeze. I take three stalks of wheat, golden and supple. The weight of this in my hand surprises me. It is a part of me, and now them. It is important that they know the strength is there.

Interpretive Note

The above story was originally written shortly after Cindy's visit to the Filipek Farm in the Czech Republic in the summer of 1991. It was updated for these web pages in February 2001. Some of the recollections of the three boys leaving do not match estimated dates and that part should be considered both a blurring of memories and artistic license. To the best of our knowledge Jan left about 1869 and Vaclav it is believed possibly left in 1883 and returned and finally in 1889. In general memories tend to be more favorable toward life's descriptions than dates.

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The Nemec Branch

Origins of Our Nemec Family

Martin Nemec

The focal point of our story is Martin Nemec who was born November 1, 1831 at No. 17 in Mazelov. Martin's parents were Vojtech Nemec, the farmer at No. 17 and Maria Bocek. Maria's parents were Jakob Bocek a farmer at No. 13, Ripek and Mariana Witek from the Estate Sobeslav at Ceraz, Bohemia.

Vojtech's parents and Martin's grandparents were Tomas Nemec the farmer at No. 17 and Katerina Zasadil. Tomas and Katerina Nemec had at least one daughter whose name is unknown. The daughter had three daughters between 1814 and 1817, all out of wed lock. It is presumed they all lived on the No. 17 Farm. Tomas and Katerina Nemec's son Vojtech and his wife Marie Bocek had 9 children between 1818 and 1837 all born at No. 17 Mazelov. Our Martin Nemec was the seventh boy.

Katerina Zelezny

Katerina Zelezny was born December 30, 1827 at Klec No. 4. Katerina's father was Matej Zelezny (alias Malinek) and he was a farmer. He was born about 1791 in Bohemia and died on January 28, 1869 at Klec No. 4 at age 77. It is believed Matej was born a Zelezny but took on the name Malinek with the purchase of property. Matej's father was also named Matej Zelezny and Matej's mother's name was Marie Binova from Val.

Katerina's mother's name was Maria Brabec and Maria's father's name was Simon Brabec of Klec No. 12 and Maria's mother's name was Alzbeta Nemec. Maria Brabec was born about 1797 in Bohemia and died on April 2, 1883 at Klec No. 5 at age 86. It is unclear if Alzbeta Nemec is another link to the Nemecs. Thus it appears that Katerina Zelezny's mother and maternal grandparents lived nearby in Klec.

Katerina Zelezny had a younger brother Matej (1830) and a younger sister Rosalie (1839). Around 1925, the grandson of Katerina Zelezny, John Filipek, would marry the granddaughter of Rosalie Zelezny, Rose Skoblik. Because Matej Zelezny and Maria Brabec were common great-grandparents of John and Rose, they were second cousins.

Martin and Katerina Nemec

Martin Nemec and Katerina Zelezny were married on January 15, 1850, probably at the parish in Lomnice. She was 22 and he was 18. They had eight children. Their first child, Tomas, was born April 13, 1850 in Frahelz. The next two children Josef born 1852 and Maria born 1854 were not born at Frahelz but at as yet an undiscovered location. Their next four children, Vaclav, born July 24, 1857; Anna born May 1, 1859 and died on May 4, 1860; Frantisek born July 6, 1861 and died July 29, 1861; Katerina born October 20, 1862 (my great-grandmother); were born at Mazelov No. 44. The eighth child, also Frantisek was born October 16, 1867 at Ceske Budejovice No. 342.

Throughout his life Martin held a number of occupations. In the beginning he was a farmer, but by 1870 he was a tailor in Ceske Budejovice and later a cottager and tapster of spirits in Lomnice. Martin died at Lomnice No. 45 on April 8, 1901 at age 69 of carcinomum ventriculi, which I believe is stomach cancer. His wife, Katerina, died less than a year later at Lomnice No. 45 on February 13, 1902 at age 74 also of carcinomum ventriculi.

Martin and Katerina Nemeč's Children

Tomas Nemeč

Tomas was born April 13, 1850 at Frahelz No. 5. It was just a few months after their marriage on January 15. He would have moved with his parents to Mazelov about 1858 and to Ceske Budejovice in the 1860s. On May 22, 1867, when he was 17, he obtained a copy of his birth certificate for his emigration to America. However, it appears that he did not go. A few short years later on March 13, 1870 at almost age 20 he died of edema in Frahelz. His occupation was tailor's apprentice.

Josef Nemeč

Tomas was born in 1852 at an unknown location. He would have moved with his parents to Mazelov about 1858 to Ceske Budejovice in the 1860s and Lomnice about 1870. On November 19, 1876, Josef, at the age of 24 died in Lomnice of paralysis of the lungs. His occupation was tailor's apprentice.

Maria Nemeč

Maria was born in 1854 at an unknown location. She would have moved with her parents to Mazelov about 1858 to Ceske Budejovice in the 1860s and Lomnice about 1870. Nothing else is know about Maria.

Vaclav Nemeč

Vaclav was born July 24, 1857 in Mazelov at Farm No. 44. At this time nothing is known about Vaclav. It is believed that he stayed in Bohemia, if so he is the only male Nemeč of this family that might have stayed in Bohemia. He would have moved with his parents to Ceske Budejovice in the 1860s and Lomnice about 1870. Possibly he has Nemeč descendants today in the Czech Republic.

Anna Nemeč

Katerina was born May 1, 1859 in Mazelov at Farm No. 44. She died a year later on May 4, 1860.

Frantisek Nemeč

Frantisek was born July 6, 1861 in Mazelov at Farm No. 44. He died 23 days later on July 29, 1861.

Katerina Nemeč

Katerina was born October 20, 1862 in Mazelov at Farm No. 44. She would have moved with her parents to Ceske Budejovice a few years later and Lomnice about 1870. My mother, Jeanne, recalls Katerina

telling her she was from a place about 20 miles from the Austrian border and that is about how far away Lomnice is from the border. Jeanne also recalls that Katerina went to cooking school in Vienna and we do know that she was considered a great cook. Katerina went to Chicago in 1882 to have her child and we think she returned to Bohemia and then went back to Chicago in 1889 with her husband Vaclav. More can be found about Katerina in *The James and Katherine Filipek Family Story*.

Frantisek Nemeč

Frantisek Nemeč was born October 16, 1867 in Ceske Budejovice at No. 342. He would have moved with his parents to Lomnice about 1870. According to the 1900 Census he came in 1884 at age 17 to the USA, probably to Chicago. A little more about Frantisek can be found in *The James and Katherine Filipek Family Story*.

The Towns

Mazelov is about 6 miles west of Lomnice, via 148 and another road. It is also about 2.5 miles northeast on Route 3 from Ceske Budejovice and then east about .6 miles. This is the birthplace of Katerina Nemeč in 1862. It is also the birthplace of her father Martin.

Frahelz is located about 1 mile north of Lomnice nad Luznici off of Route 150. Martin and Katerina Nemeč lived here just after they were married. They had their first son, Tomas, here in 1850 but moved away within a few years.

Ceske Budejovice is a large town of about 100,000 just south of Mazelov. It is an important road center, railway hub, and river port and the origin of Budvar (Budweiser) beer. There must have been a significant German presence in this whole area at one time. The town has an inner historic town and a nearby castle. Note the "ice" sound is pronounced "tse". Budejovice is a major rail stop where trains can be obtained southeast to the Austrian border at Ceske Velenice with exchanges to Vienna providing a way that Katerina could have traveled to Vienna to study cooking. Similarly trains can be taken north from Budejovice to Prague and then on to the major ports of Hamburg and Bremen where it is likely Katerina, Vaclav and other Filipeks and Sokoliks sailed to reach America. Katerina's brother Frantisek Nemeč was born here. Their parents Martin and Katerina Nemeč lived in the city for a few short years in the late 1860s before moving to Lomnice.

Lomnice nad Luznici is a town of about 2000 is on the Luznice River and is about 13 miles northeast of Ceske Budejovice and about 6 miles northwest of Trebon via Route 150. Lomnice is at the intersection of Routes 150 and 148. Lomnice is also less than 2 miles west of Kolence on Route 148 and less than a mile from Klec.

The Martin and Katerina Nemeč family moved here about 1870 and remained the rest of their lives. Our Katerina Filipek (nee Nemeč) was about 8 when she moved here with her parents. Thus she lived relatively near her future husband Vaclav Filipek of Kolence. Of note is that Lomnice is about 20 miles northwest of the Austrian border at Gmund/Ceske Velenice via road, similar to the 20 miles that Jeanne Jordan

remembered her Grandmother Katherine Filipek telling her. Rose Filipek (nee Skoblik) was also born here in 1900. Lomnice is probably where Katherine Filipek and Rose Filipek both went back to over the years to visit relatives.

Close

Through the research of Terry Nelson we have been able to compile a very good genealogy of the Nemecs of Bohemia. A recent surprise was a much larger Martin and Katerina Nemecek family and by tracking their children's birth it was seen that they moved from Mazelov to Frazzle to Mazelov to Ceske Budejovice to Lomnice. Martin and Katerina then settle in Lomnice for about 30 years until the end of their lives. Martin and Katerina had 8 children. Two died in infancy, two sons died in their early 20s and were thought to be bachelors, one son, Frantisek, and one daughter, Katerina, left for Chicago. Thus as best we know, only two children Maria born 1854 and Vaclav born 1857 appear to have grown to adulthood and likely stayed in Bohemia. It is not known if either had offspring.

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Antonín and Katerina Filipek Descendants

Introduction

Antonín and Katerina Filipek had 8 children. In order of birth they were Mary, Anna, Frantisek, Jan, Katerina, Rosalie, Terezie, and Vaclav. Three children stayed in Bohemia. These were Mary, Frantisek, and Rosalie. Four came to America. These were Jan, Anna, Katerina, and Vaclav. Their eighth child, Terezie, died in infancy. As follows are stories of the various descendant branches.

Frantisek and Mary Palecek Chapters

The Frantisek and Mary Palecek Family

Mary Filipek was born August 30th, 1850 at the Filipek Family Farm. She was the daughter of Antonín and Katerina Filipek. On June 6, 1871 at age 20 she married Frantisek Palecek. Frantisek was born August 22, 1848 and was 22 years old at the time of their marriage.

Frantisek and Mary had at 11 children and five immigrated to the United States. Their children were Frantisek (1868), Jan (1869), Vojtech (1871), Vaclav (1873), Josef (1875), Marie (1877), Tomas (1878), Maria (1880), Anna (1880), Rudolf (1881), and Rosalie (1883). Jan, Vojtech, Josef, Tomas, and Rudolf came to the United States.

The first three children (Frantisek, Jan, and Vojtech) were born before their marriage in 1871, but were then legitimized. After the marriage the Palecek Family appears to have moved to Ponedrazka No. 2 in the Parish of Bosilec where Vaclav, Joseph, and Maria were born. Then on March 26, 1879, Frantisek and Mary Palecek purchased the Frantisek and Anna Sokolik Farm No. 9 in Kolence. Mary and Anna were sisters and the Sokoliks were leaving for Minnesota and the Farm was just down the road from No. 16 where Mary was born and her parents still lived.

Mary's husband Frantisek died at age 35 on April 10, 1884 just a year after their 11th child was born. Mary must have stayed on the farm and later her son named Frantisek took over the Farm. Mary died on either September 16 or 26, 1899 at age 49 of typhus, which is an infectious disease, generally caused by fleas or mites.

Other Palecek Connections

Besides the marriage of Frantisek Palecek to Mary Filipek, there are a number of other Palecek connections of interest that should be mentioned.

For example, Frantisek Sokolik's mother was Anna Palecek. It is unknown how she relates if at all to Frantisek Palecek. However a useful lead may be to examine the passage of Farm No. 9. This farm passed from Frantisek Sokolik's parents of whom his mother was Anna Palecek to son Frantisek Sokolik and then to brother-in-law Frantisek Palecek. Could the old Sokolik Farm have originally been the Palecek Farm before the Sokoliks before it reverted to them in 1879?

Other connections with the Palecek families are that Frantisek and Mary Palecek's son John married Mary R. Filipek, a daughter of Jan and Franceska Filipek in Minnesota. In addition, in the 1885 Minnesota Census a Frantisek Palecek age 42 and an Anna Palecek age 13 were living with the Janas in Rush City, Minnesota.

Thus there appear to be a number of close cousin marriages and friendships among the Filipeks, Paleceks, Sokoliks over the years. Perhaps someday, others will unravel the ownership lineage of the Sokolik farm and the relation among all these people to each other and to Farm No. 9.

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Frantisek and Anna Sokolik Chapters

The Frantisek and Anna Sokolik Family

Anna Filipek

Anna Filipek was born January 17th, 1853 at the Filipek Family Farm at No. 16, Kolence in Bohemia. She was the daughter of Antonín and Katerina Filipek. On February 18, 1873 at age 20, she married Frantisek Sokolik age 40, a farmer who lived a few farms down the road at Farm No. 9.

Frantisek Sokolik

Frantisek Sokolik was born on November 29, 1832 at Farm No. 9. His father was Jan Kadlec, alias Sokolik, and his mother was Anna Palecek. It is believed Jan Kadlec assumed the Sokolik surname upon taking over the Sokolik farm. The background of how this happened can only be guessed at this point. One needs to assume that Farm No. 9 had been a Sokolik farm for many years and that Jan Kadlec bought it from previous Sokolik owners. However, this hypothesis is challenged by the possible passage of that farm from Palecek to Sokolik to Palecek as noted in *The Frantisek and Mary Palecek Family Story*.

Frantisek and Anna Sokolik

The Sokolik and Filipek Farms were very near each other and Frantisek and Anna must have known each other for years. After their marriage, Frantisek and Anna had three children. The first, Frantisek, was born December 30, 1873. A few years later Jan, known as John, and later JK, was born on February 4, 1876. Both of these births were confirmed via birth records to have been in Kolence and probably at Farm No. 9.

There was a third child, Theodore who is thought to have been born either on either January 10, 1879 in Bohemia or 1880 in Minnesota. Most evidence points toward a birth in Bohemia, probably in Kolence, but when Terry Nelson searched for the Kolence records along with those for Frantisek and Jan, Theodore's could not be found.

Leaving for Minnesota

In 1879, for unknown reasons, the Sokoliks decided to sell the farm and settle in Minnesota. Frantisek was 46 and Anna 26. They did know that Anna's brother Jan was living in Minnesota so there would be relatives to help them along. The area they would settle, Montgomery and New Prague Minnesota had a strong Bohemian presence so it is likely they had heard good news from others and perhaps already had friends there.

So on the 26 Mar 1879, they sold their farm to Anna's older sister Mary and her husband, Frantisek Palecek, packed their possessions and took a train to Hamburg where they boarded the German *Lessing* for the voyage to the United States. On 7 May 1879, the Sokoliks arrived in New York. They were listed on the *Lessing* manifest as Franz, Anna, Franz, and Johann, and a 3 month old whose name is hard to read, but it appears to be Theodore.

Minnesota

The first evidence of the Sokoliks in Minnesota was found in the 1880 Census. On June 10, 1880, Frank, Anna, Frank, John and Theodore are shown living in Montgomery, Minnesota. In the same household are Frank and Kate Jana along with their 6 month-old daughter, Kate. Anna and her sister Kate are housekeepers, Frank Sokolik is a farmer and Frank Jana a laborer. Theodore Sokolik is shown as one year old.

The Sokoliks were next found in the 1885 Minnesota State Census. On May 1, 1885 Frank, Anna, Frank, John, and Theodore are living in Rush City. Theodore is listed as age 6 and born in Bohemia. The Janas were also found living nearby.

When the Sokoliks and Janas arrived in Minnesota, one of the towns they settled was Montgomery, Minnesota. Montgomery is in LeSuer County. Montgomery is the same Bohemian farming community that Katerina's brother Jan had settled in ten years earlier. The small farming village of Montgomery is about 10 miles south of New Prague and is about 60 miles south of St. Paul. By 1885, the Sokoliks and Janas (spelled Gunia in the 1885 Census) had moved to Rush City, while their brother, Jan Filipek, continued to stay in Montgomery area.

Rush City is in Chisago County and is about 50 miles north of St. Paul. What prompted the Sokolik and Jana moves north and one that was over 100 miles away is unclear. Perhaps there was a good deal on a farm, or perhaps they had other friends that were moving there. Unfortunately the decision to move had disastrous consequences for both families.

The Sokoliks early history in Minnesota is described in Theodore Sokolik's *My Life as I Lived It*. In his story, Theodore describes their rural life, his father's wanderings and family moves, and ultimately the loss of his mother during the summer he was seven years old. He describes being taken to St. Paul with his brother from New Prague to see his mother, but arrives too late. After his mother's death, Theodore says he went to stay with his mother's sister. Shortly thereafter, his mother's sister, Katerina Jana died and Theodore and John moved to Chicago to be with their Uncle Vaclav. Theodore states that after his mother's death, he never saw his father or brother again. What a loss for a small boy. Not only does he lose his mother but also contact with his father and older brother, and then he loses his aunt who had known him since birth.

If Theodore was seven when his mother died, then his mother, Anna must have died around the summer of 1886 or 1887. She would have been about 33 or 34, far too young to die, especially with young children. It is strange how the father disappeared completely. It is logical that Theodore and John being young needed a home and a mother, and it is likely that Frank Sokolik made arrangements with his wife's sister, Katerina, who also had young children to care for his younger boys. The Sokoliks and Janas appear to have come to America together and followed each other around Minnesota so having Katerina care for the young boys makes a lot of sense.

Theodore states in his story that the family moved around a lot as his father worked building the railroads. So it's possible his father continued to travel to where the work was and took the older son, about age 13 at the time with him. Perhaps with the early death of Katerina Jana, it is possible that Frank Sokolik could not later find the link back to where his children were after the boys went to live in Chicago with their Uncle Vaclav.

Theodore and John looked for their father and older brother for many years but were never able to find them. John was said to have paid a genealogist to search for his brother but to no avail. This all remains a mystery and there is always hope that offspring of John and Theodore's older brother are somewhere and a link will be found someday so that the other half of the story can be filled in.

Author's Note

Some additional information about the Sokoliks can also be found in *My Life as I Lived It*, *The Frantisek and Katerina Jana Family Story*, and *The James and Katerina Filipek Story*.

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My Life as I Lived It

By Theodore Sokolik
November 23, 1955

I was born in New Prague Minnesota [on January 10, 1879] and the family lived at my father's [Frank Sokolik's] farm just outside the city limits, where his hobby was raising fine stock cattle and horses. As time went on he made up his mind to help build railroads. That was when the country was young and advancing. And from time to time we the family followed him in his work, which was from town to town and state to state. At times we lived in log cabins, which at that time were surrounded by Indians, with whom I often played with. This was at the time when the country was wild with deer, bear, and other wild animals.

As time went on Mother [Anna] was taken sick. So the family returned to New Prague and then to St. Paul where she was hospitalized. In the mean time I was taken to a farm, mother's friend, till she returned from the hospital. Here my sleeping quarters were in the hay loft, this was in the summer time. The farmer was unkind to me, so one day I made up my mind to run away which I did with my little pal, my dog, to our home five miles away. Upon my arrival, I learned that Mother was very sick and wanted my brother John and myself rushed to her bedside, which was complied with. I was seven years of age. We arrived in St. Paul too late, for Mother had passed on a few hours earlier. Of the sad news, I cried and would not eat. As young as I was I understood the great loss we sustained. We were taken to the hospital where I viewed Mother as she laid in the casket. I was so small that I was raised up to her resting place. I then put my arms around her neck and kissed her farewell forever, parting with one that can never be replaced.

After the funeral, we were taken to Rush City to live with Mother's sister [Katerina Jana]. She too soon past away. From there, we shifted to Chicago where we lived with Mother's brother [James] who had a family of his own to support with small means, living in a small four room basement flat. A friend and a physician to the family saw the condition in such small quarters, seemed to like me, and found out that I was made an orphan and insisted on adopting me, but without success, depriving me of a brighter future in life. I had no choice; there I remained in poverty.

The only time I knew of Christmas was through charity. I started to work at the age of eleven years [about 1890], helping to support myself, with all odds against me. Walking five miles to work winter and summer for many years. At times I did not have clothing warm enough to keep my slender body warm. One winter I had worn a straw hat, it was the best I had.

On one cold windy day as I was going to work I was so cold from the wind that I stopped at the side of a building to get warm crying. A kind lady stopped and asked me why I was crying, I think she knew. She asked my name and address, then I had told her of the loss I had sustained through the loss of Mother and a home. She dried my tears and kissed me just like mother did when she lived. A few days later, I

received a new suit, overcoat, cap, and a pair of warm gloves that kept me warm all winter. Who the good lady was I never learned, but many times I prayed for her. To me, she was the gift of God whom I then so badly needed. After working hours, I peddled newspapers on the corner of Adams and Clark Streets earning from fifteen to twenty cents a night. A hard way to earn a living. I tried hard to keep the light of life bright and cheerful. As the years passed and a brighter future seemed to shine upon me, I tried hard to live a modest life.

After the death of Mother, I never again saw my father or my brother, the sad memory of sixty-five years [since 1890]. In life, I traveled a great deal. I am happy to state that I enjoyed life such as it was. Never accumulated great wealth, but lived happily in a humble home with my dear wife and daughters, Eleanor and Virginia. Now as my life's journey fast passing, the family name will soon fade away.

Theodore Sokolik
November 23, 1955

Interpretive Comments

Theodore Sokolik wrote the above story on November 23, 1955. It is a great story and contains many interesting insights into the history of our collective family. It also has presented an interesting challenge to figure out who was who and how they connected to us. Brackets [] within the story have been added to insert current interpretations of names and dates Theodore was referring to. Within the story, various grammar and spelling corrections have been made to improve readability.

Year and Place of Birth

It is still unclear exactly where and when Theodore was born. His story says it was New Prague Minnesota, but there is significant conflicting data. His family believes his birthday was January 10 and the year was originally thought to be 1880. The 1880 Census taken in Montgomery on June 10, 1880 shows Theodore to be one year old, suggesting he was born in 1878 or 1879. The 1885 Census taken in Rush City on May 1, 1885 indicates Theodore was 6 years old and born in Bohemia. This again suggests an 1878 or 1879 year of birth and places that birth in Bohemia. Given that his parents provided the data for these two early censuses, one would assume that an 1878 or 1879 year of birth in Bohemia is probably accurate.

The 1900 Census taken on June 7, 1900 indicates Theodore was born in June 1878 in Bohemia and that he was 21 years old at the time. If the June information is correct, then as long as Theodore was born in late June 1878 then this data is consistent with the ages provided in the previous censuses. It is unknown if Theodore or the Filipeks provided the data for the 1900 Census.

The 1910 Census taken on April 23, 1910 indicates Theodore was 31 years old which is consistent with the 1900 Census but for the first time the place is changed to Minnesota. The 1920 Census taken on January 17, 1910 indicates Theodore was 38 years old and born in Minnesota. On

this census, I believe that the age was to be listed as of January 1, 1920, so an age of 38 suggests a year of birth of 1881.

Another early piece of data is the Ship Index Record for the Lessing for May 7, 1879 which names all the Sokolik family members, Franz and Anna, and sons Franz, Johann, and an unnamed party indicated by a question mark. The unnamed party was 1/4 years old. It is possible this was Theodore. At some point the full record will be obtained. Probably the unnamed party was named; it's just that the person doing the indexing couldn't read the handwriting.

In a search of birth records for Kolence, the birth records for Theodore's brothers Frantisek and Jan were found, but Theodore's could not be located. Possibly they are there and were just missed, or it is possible he was born elsewhere.

As a working hypothesis, it is suggested that Theodore was born January 10, 1879 in Bohemia, possibly Kolence and not in New Prague, Minnesota as indicated in his story. This is based on the early census data, which was filled out by his parents, and also on the ship index record. Further information from a baptismal record or the actual ship arrival record may clarify the exact date of birth and location.

Theodore's Mother

Theodore was the son of Frank and Anna Sokolik and Anna's maiden name was Filipek. Based on records from Bohemia, Anna was born January 17, 1853 in Kolence. Assuming she died when he was seven, the year would have been about 1886 and she would have been about 33 years old when she died. Theodore's father, Frantisek was born November 29, 1832 and was 20 years older than Anna.

Mother's Sister

After his mother's death, Theodore stayed with his mother's sister. This would be Katerina Jana. Katerina was another daughter of Anton Filipek. It is believed both the Sokolik and Jana families immigrated to Minnesota during the late 1870s, possibly at the same time. Katerina Jana (nee Filipek) was born July 15, 1858 and was five years younger than her sister, Anna Sokolik (nee Filipek).

Theodore states that his mother's sister died in Rush City, Minnesota, which is where the Sokoliks and Janas were for the 1885 Census. Theodore doesn't say exactly when this was but says it was too soon. It is guessed that her death date was between 1887 and 1890. Terry Nelson has searched for both death certificates but has not yet found either yet.

Mothers' Brother

After the death of Katerina, John and Theodore moved to Chicago to be cared for by James and Katherine Filipek. James was Anna and Katerina's brother. It is believed James and Katherine arrived from Bohemia in May 1889. Thus it is likely that the Sokolik boys joined them in Chicago shortly thereafter, either in 1889, 1890 or 1891. In 1889, John would have been 13 and Theodore 10. Clarifying the date of death for

Katerina Jana and the arrival date for the Filipeks may help clarify this hypothesis.

Theodore's Old Brother

Theodore's older brothers were John and Frantisek (Frank). Frank is the brother Theodore never saw again. Frank was born on December 30, 1873 in Kolence. Brother John, known as JK, joined Theodore in Chicago with the James Filipek family about 1889 or 1890. It is understood that years later JK Sokolik hired others to try to find his father and brother, but never found them.

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Jan and Francesca Filipek Chapters

The Jan and Francesca Filipek Family

By Cindy Filipek Johnson

Fall 2000

Jan said he was born in 1848, however records in Kolence (researched by Vladimir Kandl) state that he was born August 8, 1856. Why he would change this information is a mystery. He is found in the 1870 census and listed as 22 years old (when in fact he would've been 14) which is a puzzle--why would a 14 year old boy be on his own and traveling to America? His wife's obituary stated that they were married in 1867 in Bohemia yet he would have only been 11 at that time (or 19 by his 1848 date). He was not listed as her husband in the 1870 census and records in Minnesota indicate that there was a marriage by the Justice of the Peace on January 27, 1877, which was in fact after the birth of their oldest child.

Below I illustrate the huge discrepancies these dates present:

Jan Filipek's Age Discrepancies for Key Life Events

	Jan's Claim	Vladimir's Records
	age if 1848	age if 1856
Coming to America (1866)	18	10
Marriage in Bohemia (1867?)	19	11
First census and (1870)	22	14
First child (1875?)	27	19

Census record birth dates vary also as shown in the table.

Jan's Age Discrepancies for Key Life Events

Census	Stated Age	Implied Year of Birth
1870	22	1848
1885	30	1855
1895	45	1850
1900	51	1849

I question Vladimir's date but he would have had to have been the oldest child if he was indeed born in 1848 and Vladimir has done extensive

research prior to and after connecting with me (and has the genealogical resources and know how).

Jan spoke very little of the "old country" except to say that he left in 1866 to avoid the draft and that the family had a farm in Kolence, Bohemia. He also spoke of a brother named Vaclav living in Chicago. There was never mention of the other sisters who we now know settled in Minnesota.

Relatives in Bohemia say that he helped build the church in Novesedly before he left for America. Because of this his father was honored by being given a pew in the front of the church where he did indeed die during Easter mass in 1900 at the age of 85.

The first land purchase was found in 1890 (160 acres for \$370). They farmed with horses and cleared the land to plant wheat, corn and hay. They raised chickens, ducks, geese and pigs and butchered all the meat for meals. They resided here for 9 years then purchasing a 120-acre farm near by which they farmed until 1914/1915. These farms were located in Southern Minnesota near the present day towns of Montgomery, New Prague and Lonsdale. This information was from daughter Francis Kopet.

After his wife's death he moved to town and lived off of Main Street (and occasionally with his children) where he had a series of common law wives. He drank heavily and had an unpleasant disposition.

Jan played the violin at dances. The relatives in Bohemia stated that this was something he started as a boy and he was remembered for that. He was said to be very good.

My grandfather, Ted Filipek and his brother Emil remember him as being mean and that they thought he was a gypsy. He died when they were in their early teens. "He always had women living with him and then he'd kick them out because he didn't like what they cooked him to eat."

Franceska died in 1916 at the age of 65 of gangrene of the leg and septic thrombosis (Varicose veins?). Jan died in 1928 at age 80 (or 72) of chronic intestinal nephritis - 8 months (as per the death record); however, the church records state stomach cancer as the cause of death.

He was a practicing Catholic all of his life and was one of the founding members of the church and township at Trebon, which is outside of Montgomery and never more than a church and cemetery with adjoining farms.

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Frantisek and Marie Filipek Chapters

The Frantisek and Marie Filipek Family

Frantisek Filipek was born August 5, 1853 at the Filipek Family Farm. He was Anton and Katerina's third child. Frantisek later married Marie (Mary) Schubert. He became a teacher and architect in Louny, Bohemia. It is said that he designed part of the church in Novosedly and for this his father Antonín was given his own pew.

Frantisek and Marie had five children. Their children are Antonín, Roman, Parla, Bozura, and James F. (1892). It is believed that all but James F. stayed in Bohemia. James F. Filipek accompanied his Uncle Vaclav Filipek on his return to Chicago. We knew James F. Filipek as Jim the Gardener.

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Frantisek and Katerina Jana Chapters

The Frantisek and Katerina Jana Family

Katerina Filipek

Katerina Filipek was born July 15, 1858 at the Filipek Family Farm. She was Anton and Katerina's fifth child. She married Frantisek Janu most likely in or around Kolence, Bohemia. Frantisek Janu was born about 1855 but it is not known where he was from.

It is unclear whether the original name was Jana or Janu. There is some information suggesting the original family name was Janu, but to date no genealogy record has been obtained to verify this. Most references to the family in the United States use Jana. For example, the 1880 Census, Elizabeth Jana's birth record, and Frantisek Jana's obituary. Since the record of use of Jana is so consistent within the USA, the name Jana will be used throughout these pages. References to Frantisek Janu, however, in Bohemia will continue to use Janu since that may be the name he used there and the original family name. It is very possible that the name changed due to phonetic spelling when in the United States. In other records Gunia and Yana have appeared. Clarification should be possible by obtaining Frantisek's birth or marriage record.

Minnesota

From the 1880 Census, it was found that on June 10, 1880, the Frantisek and Katerina Jana family were living in the same home as the Frank and Anna Sokolik family in Montgomery, Minnesota. The Sokoliks arrived in the USA in May 1879 on the Lessing and it is possible that the Janas and Sokoliks traveled together. At the time of the 1880 Census, Frantisek was shown as age 24 and Katerina as age 22. They had one child, Kate shown as 6 months old, presumably born in December 1879. The later 1885 Census confirms that Kate was born in Minnesota.

The Sokolik and the Jana families must have been not only close relatives but also close friends. Not only were they both listed in the same household in 1880, but also in May 1, 1885 they were listed next to each other in the census, probably adjacent farms or dwellings on the same farm. By 1885, Frantisek and Katerina had three additional children beyond Kate. These were Frank circa 1881, Anna circa 1883, and Mary circa 1885. Also living in the same household with the Janas were Frank Palecek age 42 and Anna Palecek age 13, probably Frank Palecek's daughter. It had been thought that this was the Frantisek Palecek that had married Mary Filipek and had purchased the Sokolik Family Farm, but it turns out that that Frantisek Palecek died on April 19, 1884, a year before the 1885 census. So there is now another mystery Palecek.

When the Sokoliks and Janas arrived in Minnesota, one of the towns they settled was Montgomery, Minnesota. Montgomery is in LeSuer County. Montgomery is the same Bohemian farming community that Katerina's brother Jan had settled in ten years earlier. The small farming village of Montgomery is about 10 miles south of New Prague and is about 60 miles south of St. Paul. By 1885, the Sokoliks and Janas (spelled Gunia

in the 1885 Census) had moved to Rush City, while their brother, Jan Filipek, continued to stay in Montgomery area.

Rush City is in Chisago County and is about 50 miles north of St. Paul. What prompted the Sokolik and Jana moves north and one that was over 100 miles away is unclear. Perhaps there was a good deal on a farm, or perhaps they had other friends that were moving there. Unfortunately the decision to move had disastrous consequences for both families.

According to Theodore Sokolik's *My Life as I Lived It*, Theodore states that he went to live with his mother's sister after his mother died in the late 1880s. This sister would have been Katerina Jana. Theodore then goes on to say that "She too soon past away." Terry Nelson has tried to find the death records of both Katerina Jana and Anne Sokolik but was unable to find either. She did find though that there were a number of deaths from typhoid in the late 1880s in the area.

While we have been stuck on what happened to the Janas for some time, recently there has been a breakthrough. Through a message board, Terry found Barbara, a descendant of the Frantisek and Katerina Jana (nee Filipek) and they are in communication.

They have established that Frank and Katerina Jana had a fifth child, Elizabeth Jana on July 6, 1889. In addition, there is a Jana family recollection that Elizabeth grew up in a convent, which might be the consequence of Katerina's death. In support of this data, Terry verified the birth record in Chisago County and the parents are listed as Frank and Katerina Jana. Barbara also stated that on a birth record of one of Elizabeth's daughters the parent's of Elizabeth were shown as Frank Jana (Bohemia) and Katherine Filipek (Bohemia).

One of the conclusions we can draw from Elizabeth's birth in that Katerina Jana died after July 1889. This puts the move of the Sokolik boys to Chicago as after the arrival of the Filipeks. It also narrows the number of years to search for Katerina's death.

Further data is now being pursued on Frank Jana's death, which was about April 25th, 1929 and to review old pictures. What we are beginning to find is that the Janas and the Filipeks in Chicago continued to be connected even after Katerina died. For example, one exciting development is a picture of five children in New Prague in the Vaclav Filipek Picture Collection appears to be the Jana and Filipek children. We also hope to find other picture matches in the Mystery Photo Collection.

Author's Note

Additional information about the Janas can be found in *The Frantisek and Anna Sokolik Family Story* and in Theodore Sokolik's *My Life as I Lived It*.

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Jakob and Rozalie Kandl Chapters

The Jakob and Rozalie Kandl Family

Rosalie Filipek was born September 13, 1860 at the Filipek Family Farm. She was Anton and Katerina's sixth child. Rosalie married Jakob Kandl and they had six children. Jakob Kandl was born July 7, 1860.

Their children are Josef, Tomas, Rosalie, Jan, Mary, and Katerina.

Rosalie and her husband took ownership of the Filipek family farm in 1883 and operated it until 1926 at which time it passed to their son Tomas. Vladimir and Miroslav are her grandsons. Miroslav lives on the farm and Vladimir is interested in family genealogy and provided many of the genealogy details about the Filipek families in Bohemia.

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Vaclav and Katerina Filipek Chapters

The James and Katherine Filipek Family

Early Years in Bohemia

Vaclav Filipek

Vaclav Filipek (pronounced phonetically as Vaslov) was born September 10, 1863 at the Filipek Family Farm. He was Anton and Katerina's eighth and last child. When he was born his mother was 30 and his father 48. As the youngest child, Vaclav was the expected heir to the Filipek Family farm. And also as the youngest child, he would have watched the others make their life choices. By the time he was six, his brother Jan left for Minnesota and by the time he was 16, his sisters Anna and Katerina left with their husbands for Minnesota. His father deeply desired to keep the farm in the Filipek name and Vaclav was the logical choice.

By the fall of 1881 when Vaclav was eighteen, his older brother Jan had been gone for 12 years and his brother Frantisek, 9 years older, had developed more of an interest in architecture and teaching than farming. Two of his sisters had moved to Minnesota and the other, Mary, had married and owned the farm down the road with her husband Frantisek Palecek. So by the fall of 1881, it was only 18 year old Vaclav and 21 year old Rosalie at home with their parents on the Filipek Farm.

Sometime in early 1882 life got complicated for Vaclav. But first, let's jump forward a bit and then we'll go back to early 1882. From his Agronomics Journal, it is known that in the fall of 1884 Vaclav was attending the Hracholuskach School. The reason we know this is that the initial entry in that journal is for September 26, 1884. Hracholuskach is about 20 miles west of Ceske Budejovice and about 40 miles west of Kolence. The Hracholuskach School is a school of farm management and economy.

Terry Nelson has Vaclav's journal and has had it cleaned and rebound. The journal is cloth with a hand-stitched binding and the name Vaclav Filipek is embossed on the front. It is filled with pages and pages of beautiful script, probably of Vaclav's farm experiments. The journal's front cover along with sample pages can be seen in the Vaclav Filipek Picture Collection. Unfortunately for us, it is all in Czech, but perhaps someday some of the pages will be translated. It is unknown if the 1884 journal is his only journal or one in a series, but it does place Vaclav in Hracholuskach in the fall of 1884 at the age of twenty-one.

While attendance at the Agronomics School suggests that Vaclav was on a path for a formalized agronomics education, other things were whirling around him. At some point in the early 1880s, he met young Katerina Nemecek. They had a child and she went to Chicago to have the baby. The baby was born December 13, 1882 and baptized on December 17, 1882 at St. John Nepomucene on the near south side of Chicago. The baby was named John Vaclav Filipek and the Baptismal Record states that the

father was Vaclav Filipek and the mother was Katerina Nemeč. The baptismal sponsors were Thomas and Theresa Novak.

Katerina Nemeč

Katerina Nemeč was born October 20, 1862 in Mazelov at Farm No. 44. She was the daughter of Martin Nemeč and Katerina Zelezny. Sometime between 1862 and 1867 the family moved to Ceske Budejovice and then about 1870 to Lomnice. Almost nothing is known of her life in Bohemia, except that it is thought that she attended cooking school in Vienna.

Vaclav and Katerina in the Early 1880s

So how did Vaclav and Katerina meet? It is possible that they knew each other for years. Kolence a very small town was less than two miles from Lomnice. Given the size of Lomnice it's possible that this is where they both went to the Bohemian equivalent of grade school and high school. Katerina was about a year older than Vaclav, but the town was small and most likely all the families and kids knew one another for years.

Vaclav and Katerina must have become serious about each other by the fall of 1881 or spring of 1882. By the spring of 1882 Katerina at age 19 had become pregnant and either she or her family arranged for employment in Chicago with friends or relatives. It seems a little extreme to travel 5000 miles because of an unexpected pregnancy, and the research shows that her father's aunt had three successive children without a marriage and they all lived on the Nemeč farm in Mazelov in the early 1800s. In addition her mother, Katerina, was 6 months pregnant with her first child when Martin finally married her. So it's a little unclear what the issues were. In fact it appears that unwed pregnancies followed by marriage were pretty common in farming communities of the time.

So near the end of June 1882, Katerina said goodbye to her parents and boyfriend Vaclav Filipek and began the journey from her parent's home in Lomnice, Bohemia to Chicago, Illinois. She would have taken a small trunk of possessions and traveled via horse and cart to a nearby rail center, probably Ceske Budejovice. Vaclav may have been the one to take her. There she caught the train for Bremen, Germany, where she probably stayed a few days getting acclimated and finding a ship to America. On 5 July 1882, she boarded the *Strassburg*, which was headed for New York on one of its regular runs. The *Strassburg* was a decade old steamer about 350 foot long and 40 feet wide. The voyage took 17 days and she arrived in New York on 21 Jul 1882.

Katerina listed herself on the manifest as a servant, which is a way of saying that a family sponsored her to provide help in their home. It appears that she made the voyage without friends or relatives. After arriving in New York Castle Garden, she disembarked and passed through local customs. Getting into the USA in those days was pretty easy. She then needed to exchange her money and take the ferry from lower Manhattan to New Jersey where she boarded a train for Chicago. The trip to Chicago is about 900 miles and took several days. Once in Chicago she needed to make her way with her belongings to an area around 185 W. 24th Place, a Bohemian neighborhood on Chicago's south

side. It was about 3-4 miles from the railroad station. The entire journey was about 5000 miles and took a over three weeks. She was 19 years old, 4 months pregnant, and it appears she went by herself. And as long as it was, it was a journey she was to make several times in her life.

Some research has been done on who these friends or relatives or sponsors were in Chicago might have been. One possibility is that they are John Filipek's 1882 baptismal sponsors. These sponsors were John and Theresa Novak. Later, Katerina's brother would marry a Mary Novak. In addition, a family that lived next door to the Novaks, the Dedinas also seem connected somehow. However at this time no relationship links between the Nemecs and either family have been established and thus it is possible the Novaks were just friends of the Nemecs who had left for Chicago years earlier.

The only information we have on what happened to Vaclav during this period is a quote from Rose Filipek, John Filipek's wife. In a discussion with her in 1977, she said "James ran away Bohemia (Koleneec) so he wouldn't be inducted into the army-about a year after Grandma Katherine". If so, then Katerina sailed to America in the summer of 1882 and Vaclav followed in the summer of 1883. I don't know if there was a war going on, but Bohemia was part of the Austrian Empire and most likely the Austrians tapped all of their provinces for young able-bodied men. In the summer of 1883, Vaclav was 19 going on 20, a prime age for recruitment.

The next event we know is that Vaclav and Katerina were married on January 29, 1884. This information which I searched for years was finally found on Katerina's 1914 Passport Application. Unfortunately the location is not stated. Previously I had a requested a decade long search for their marriage record at St. John Nepomucene in Chicago and I also searched the *On-line Illinois Marriage Index* for all Filipek and Nemeec marriages before 1900. Since no marriage was found at St. John Nepomucene or in the *On-line Illinois Marriage Index*, it would appear that Vaclav and Katerina returned to Bohemia in late 1883 or early 1884 and were married there. Searches are taking place for the marriage record in Mazelov, Kolence, Ceske Budejovice, and Hracholuskach.

To add more intrigue to our story, it was recently discovered that in 1883 Anton Filipek transferred the working of the Filipek Family Farm to his daughter Rosalie who had married Jakob Kandl. Rosalie and Jakob were married the same year and perhaps the two events coincided.

It is possible that all these events are interrelated. Anton saw his son leave because of the draft. He may or may not have known about the new grandchild, but he already knew that others in the family had left for America like people and perhaps he thought that Vaclav would stay also. So it appears that with the marriage of his last daughter and now almost 70 years old and no one to work the farm, ownership was transferred to Rosalie and her husband Jakob Kandl, who had been married in the same year.

Determining whether Vaclav and Katerina were married on January 29, 1884 in Bohemia or the United States would help sort out who was

where and whether they both came over or whether they both went back or just one. Based on the Agronomics Journal, we know Vaclav was certainly at the Agronomics School in Hracholuskach in the fall of 1884 completing his studies. But we do not know if Katerina was with him. There are no recollections of his marriage from the Kandl family, all they knew was that Vaclav had decided to leave, that he had planted a grove of cherry trees for his mother, and left for Chicago. Their recollections were also that he had four daughters, but this is not correct.

Could Vaclav and Katerina have returned to Bohemia and not told anyone about their child? Or did she return to her parents home in Lomnice and live there with her son John while Vaclav pursued his education at the Agronomics School. Is it possible they were married in the USA and I just haven't found the record yet? The implications are interesting. If they both returned, it suggests their son John returned also and was raised as a boy in Bohemia. It also means that Vaclav intended to be a farmer and was continuing his studies, but the Filipek farm was already transferred to his sister in 1883. Our mystery continues and with time it will sort out, we just need a little luck in finding the marriage certificate and lots more luck in finding the shipping records.

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Early Years in America

The Early 1890s

In 1889, Vaclav finally decided it was time to settle in the United States. And although other data implies that he came in May and that perhaps Katerina was with him, the only ship arrival record found to date implies he came alone. In June 1889, he traveled from his parent's home in Kolence, probably to the nearby rail center at Ceske Budejovice. There he traveled to Bremen, Germany where he booked passage on the newly built *Munchen*, a steamship about 400 feet long and about 45 feet wide. After a several week voyage, Vaclav arrived in Baltimore on 18 June 1889. It was the *Munchen's* fourth voyage to the United States. After arriving in Baltimore, he traveled by rail to Chicago.

While it is finally known that Vaclav arrived in June 1889, there is still much uncertainty as to where Katerina and their son John was during the interim and whether they went back or stayed in Chicago. One possibility is that she also arrived in 1889 but on a different ship. The manifest for the EMS arriving from Bremen in New York on 18 June 1889 shows a Kathe Filipek of the correct age. She is with Anastasie Filipek, age 11. No John Filipek is listed. Kathe Filipek and age match well. But where is John Filipek, and who is Anastasie Filipek?

Some of the confusion comes from later records that implied that both of them arrived in May 1889. This arrival date is stated clearly on Vaclav's 1911 Passport Application and is confirmed by Katerina's 1914 and 1929 Passport Applications. Various census records also support the 1889 date, although some quote an 1883 and an 1882 date. I think part of the problem with the multiplicity of arrival dates in the different censuses is the Filipek's interpretation of the immigration question on the census. The problem was that since one or both of them came twice they could have been unsure of what was meant by immigration. This confusion actually helps us by providing some support for the multiplicity of trips it is believed they took. What is clear is that there is strong support from citizenship papers and three Passport Applications that they came to stay in May 1889. Thus the question though is whether Katerina was in Chicago already.

Why Vaclav finally decided to come remains a mystery. Perhaps he finally decided he didn't like farming. Perhaps Katerina spoke of the friends she had made in Chicago in 1882 and 1883 and the better life there. Or perhaps she was still in Chicago and went back to get him. Or perhaps there were continued problems with the military draft Vaclav wished to avoid.

On 10 Dec 1889, six months after Vaclav's arrival, the Filipeks had their 2nd child. She was named Maria Filipek. Like her brother John, she was baptized at St. John Nepomucene. Her baptismal sponsors were Katerina's brother, Frank Nemecek, who had arrived about 1884 and Marie Dedina, daughter of Vojtech and Rosalie Dedina. The short time after Vaclav's arrival and the birth, suggests that Katerina either arrived with him, or went back a few months earlier to finally convince him to come, or she had an unusually brief and successful pregnancy for the times.

More research is needed on this very confusing period from 1882-1889 to sort out who was where and when.

Sometime between their arrival in 1889 and early 1891 the Sokolik boys, John and Theodore were brought or sent to the Filipeks in Chicago. Their mother died about 1887 in St. Paul and they went to stay with their aunt, Katerina Jana also in Minnesota. Sometime after July 1889, their Aunt Katerina Jana died, possibly shortly after childbirth. It is then thought that Katerina's husband Frank Jana brought the family to Chicago where he put his newborn daughter, Elizabeth in a Catholic orphanage and left the two Sokolik boys with the Filipeks. He then brought his four other children to Colorado, possibly Pueblo to work on the railroad. By 1891, the oldest Sokolik boy, John, is listed in the Chicago Directory as a clerk at 34, 144 Van Buren. His address was 218, 25th Place, the same as the Filipeks.

On April 18, 1891, Milada Katerina Filipek, the Filipek's third child was born. Milada was baptized at St. John Nepomucene on April 26 and the sponsor was Marie Dedina.

Later that summer of 1891, Frank Nemecek married Mary Novak on August 24, 1891 at St. John Nepomucene. Frank had arrived about 1884 and Mary about 1887. The marriage record indicated that Frank was born in Budejovice and that Mary's parents were Joanni (John) Novak and Anna Koranda. It is unknown how the John Novak who was the baptismal sponsor for John Filipek in 1882 connects with Mary Novak.

On August 15, 1892, James Albert Filipek, the Filipek's fourth child was born. James was baptized at St. John Nepomucene on August 21 and the sponsors were Vojtech and Rosalie Dedina. It is believed that Vojtech and Rosalie Dedina were long time friends of the Filipeks, perhaps going back to when John was born in 1882. Katerina now would have been 29, James 28, John 9, and little Marie 2. John Sokolik would have been 16 and Theodore 13.

On January 1, 1893, little Milada Filipek died at age 1 year and 8 months; the cause is unknown. Her little brother Jim was only 5 months old. The Filipeks then had another child, their fifth and last, on August 1, 1894, Rosalie Katerina Filipek. Rosalie was baptized at St. John Nepomucene on August 21 and the sponsors were Vojtech and Rosalie Dedina, the same as for James Albert Filipek. Unfortunately, Rosalie did not live long as she died on October 13, 1894 at only 2 months and a few weeks. This was their last child. Katherine was 32 and James 31.

There seems to be a pattern in the naming of the Filipek children. Each appears to be named after one of the baptismal sponsors in some way. John Filipek after John Novak, Marie Filipek after Marie Dedina, James Albert after his father and his middle name after Vojtech Dedina (Vojtech translates to Albert), and Rosalie Katerina Filipek after Rosalie Dedina and Katerina her mother. For only Milada is there no connection.

During this period Vaclav and Katerina were learning the new language and customs of the area. In the records, a transition of their names begins to take place and Vaclav consistently uses James and Katerina varies

among a number of different Anglicized spellings. For consistency I will use James and Katherine when referring to them in America and Vaclav and Katerina when referring to them in Bohemia.

Early Chicago Locations

The first address in the Chicago Directory for James Filipek was for the year 1890 at 218 25th Place. The Directory lists his occupation as a butcher, which in a way makes sense given his farm background. There are no James or Vaclav Filipek addresses in the Chicago Directory for the years 1882 to 1889, and if they arrived in May 1889, they would have missed the 1889 Directory printing. They continued at the 218 25th Place address until 1891 and then moved to 187 24th Place for Directory years 1892 and 1893 and then to the rear of 187 24th Place for 1894. From 1891 through 1894, James is listed as a laborer, which does seem to be a step back from being a butcher. Unfortunately, the 24th Place no longer exist, as it appears that part of the Stevenson Expressway goes through the area where they lived and that the area was used for a new north south road. The 218 W. 25th Place no longer exists but the street does and there are a sprinkling of old and new houses. Some of the narrow brick multistory buildings on the streets with small concrete front porches look as if they are original buildings.

Connections with the Novaks, Dedinas, and NemeCs

What's interesting about the Filipek early addresses is the similarity of the addresses to others connected with the Filipeks.

218 25th Place

The first address Vaclav and Katerina lived at in Chicago was 218 25th Place; this was from around 1889 to 1891. What's interesting about this address is that Frantisek NemeC, Katherine's brother, was living at 218 25th Place in the early 1900s. It is possible that Frantisek, who arrived in 1884, lived there for many years and when the Filipeks arrived they moved in with him. What could be more logical but for Katherine to move in with her brother. However, in August 1891 Frantisek NemeC married Mary Novak and perhaps the quarters became too tight with Frank's marriage, or perhaps this is when the Sokolik boys arrived and the Filipeks moved to 187 24th Place.

187 24th Place

The Filipeks lived at 187 24th Place from about 1892-94. There are three areas of interest about this address. First, it is next door to the 1883 185 24th Place address of John and Theresa Novak. Earlier it was noted that John and Theresa Novak were the December 1882 baptismal sponsors for James and Katherine Filipek's son John and were thus probably long time friends or relatives.

The second area of interest about this address was the Dedinas were long time occupants of 187 24th Place. In fact, they can be placed at this address from as early as 1883 through the early 1900s. The Dedinas tie in because Marie Dedina was the baptismal sponsor for Marie Filipek in December 1889 and Vojtech (Albert) Filipek was the baptismal sponsor

for James Filipek in August 1892. Thus it appears that Katerina knew the Dedinas from her early days in Chicago, chose them for baptismal sponsors for their children Mary and James, and in 1892 chose to live in the same flat when they needed to move.

The third area of interest is that Frank Nemeč, Katherine Filipek's brother lived there in 1886.

Thinking Again about 1882

The fact that the Dedinas and Novaks lived next door to each other in 1883 and that the Novaks became John Filipek's baptismal sponsors suggest that Katerina stayed with the Novaks in 1882 and 1883 but also became friendly with the Dedinas who lived next door. Vojtech and Rose Dedinas both born around 1850 came over in 1873. They had a number of children. One, Edward, was born in October 1881 about a year before Katerina Nemeč arrived pregnant with John. Thus Rose Dedina, about 12 years older than Katerina, an experienced mother, living next door, and with a small child at the same time, might have become a good companion to a young girl experiencing her first.

Given all these connections, it is likely that James and Katherine first lived in the same building or same apartment with her brother upon their arrival in 1889 at 218 25th Place. However, Frank's Nemeč's marriage in August 1891 may have then prompted the Filipek's move to 187 24th Place, a location which was nearby and in the same building as the Dedinas, friends that Katherine was familiar with from as early as 1882.

Even with a lot of research by Terry Nelson, no relationship with the Novaks or Dedinas has yet been found. The only connection was Frank Nemeč marrying Mary Novak, a presumed relation to John and Theresa Novak. It is possible the Novaks or Dedinas had been neighbors of Martin and Katerina Nemeč in Mazelov or Budejovice and had kept in touch with them after they left for the USA in 1873. And because of that relationship, that is why they sent Katerina to Chicago in the fall of 1882. At this time, very little has been found in Chicago for John and Theresa Novak. They are John Filipek's baptismal sponsors in 1882 and they show in the 1883 Directory, but in a search of the St. John Nepomucene Baptismal Records for 1880-1900 there are no children listed and they are not sponsors for other Filipek or Nemeč children. Perhaps they moved away.

St. John Nepomucene

An important part of any immigrant neighborhood was the church. St. John Nepomucene was originally located at the northwest corner of 25th and Princeton in December 1871. The original church was a frame built just before the zoning change to brick because of the Chicago fire in 1871. Princeton Avenue is the same as block number 300 West and would have been only a few short blocks from the early Filipek, Nemeč, Novak, and Dedina addresses. James and Katherine were lifelong Catholics and the church was part of their heritage and activities. Their children were baptized at St. John Nepomucene and Mary and James made their first communion and confirmations there also. This is where

their daughter Mary was married and where the funeral mass for James also occurred. James was also a member of St. John Nepomucene Court, perhaps an organization similar to the Knights of Columbus. In May 1914, the church relocated to 2953 South Lowe. The Filipek events that took place at the new location were Mary's funeral mass in 1916 and her daughter Mary Barrett's baptism, a few days later.

Summary 1889-1894

In 1889, it appears the Filipeks made a major and final decision, and that was to seek their future together in the New World. They had gone back and forth and James had tried to complete his education to study farm management, but finally they decided that was not to be his destiny. They arrived as poor immigrants and then began a struggle with the language and new customs. In the beginning James could only obtain work as a laborer, seemingly going backwards from his initial job as butcher. Those early years were difficult as two more children arrived and James was struggled to support his own family of three children and the two young Sokolik children.

These early years from May 1889 to 1894 would have been the years that Theodore referred to in his *My Life as I Lived It* as being so difficult. These were the years Theodore speaks of no Christmas, thin clothing, only a straw hat against the harsh Chicago winters and peddling newspapers on Clark and Adams in the Chicago Loop to earn money. It is also the years, Theodore recalled: "a friend and a physician to the family saw the condition in such small quarters, seemed to like me, and found out that I was made an orphan and insisted on adopting me, but without success, depriving me of a brighter future in life. I had no choice; there I remained in poverty."

Some of the homes were probably 3 flats where one of level is below ground. The lower level most likely being cold and damp and least expensive since it was below ground. Many times the flats were carved in half with front entrances and corresponding rear entrances. Many families would live at the same address and there might be 6 apartments in a 3-flat, and sometimes more than one family in each unit. The 187 24th Place location could be the basement apartment Theodore referred to as: "living in a small four room basement flat."

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Off to Colorado

It does sound like times were tough in the beginning, but something happened around 1894. Perhaps it was the early death of their two daughters. Or perhaps the Filipeks took stock of their situation and decided a change was in order if they were to succeed. Also helping was that their nephews were older, John Sokolik was 20 and Theodore 15. Their own children were also older, John 12, Mary, 5 and James 2. So perhaps there was a little less stress as less day-to-day care was needed for the younger children and John and Theodore were old enough to begin better paying jobs.

The exact timing is not known, but sometime in late 1894 to early 1896, James, Katherine, John, Mary, and little James Filipek, along with Theodore Sokolik left for Pueblo, Colorado. John Sokolik appears to have stayed in Chicago, although he might have accompanied the group in the beginning and returned shortly thereafter. The reason for the move was that James and Katherine had taken jobs with the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad, he as a foreman and she as a cook for a large work crew. Theodore also worked for the railroad during this period, in particular as a fireman for a switch engine. What drew them to Pueblo is uncertain, but it was a time of continued expansion of the railroads and most likely there were ads in the papers for workers and managers.

From this period there are a number of pictures and letters. The pictures are located in the *James and Katherine Filipek Photo Collection*, including an interesting postcard collection of places in Colorado. From the dates on the letters it is known that in 1896 the Filipeks were in Pueblo, in 1897 in Pinon and Dawkins, and in 1898 in Dawkins. Theodore was listed in the Pueblo City Directory for 1897 as a laborer for the Denver and Rio Grande and as a resident of the Old Union Depot. In 1898, a letter indicated he was a fireman on a switch engine, and the 1899 Directory indicated he was a fireman for the Denver and Rio Grande. So most likely Theodore stayed at different places and likely boarded with other work crews.

Pinon and Dawkins were both small towns located about 10 miles north of Pueblo. They were both started about 1885, but Dawkins merged into Pinon about 1905. Today Interstate 25, which connects Pueblo to Denver, passes near Pinon. I believe the interstate parallels the original rail line, which followed the old Cherokee Trail from the Denver area to Pueblo.

By 1895 there was likely a rail line in place and the Filipeks were part of a project to either maintain or widen the line. It might be possible to sort out the story someday from old maps and railroad records.

The sense of the Pueblo letters is that the Filipeks were working very hard. They were boarding work crews, providing meals, and putting in track. It's likely they were paid per worker to provide meals and manage the bunkhouses. One letter refers to boarding 25 workers and possibly increasing to 55 or 60. In another letter, Katherine asks John Sokolik in Chicago to obtain a cookbook for her that she saw in a Chicago newspaper ad.

The letters also suggest they had a lot of friends still in Chicago that they wished to maintain contact with. James regularly asks John Sokolik to "Greet his friends". In fact, it appears that periodically the family may have gone back and forth for visits. In one letter it talks about someone leaving on a train on Sunday and arriving in Chicago on Tuesday. My impression is that the Filipeks saw Pueblo as a means to an end, but that their future life was in Chicago. In fact, it appears that they left a number of their possessions with John Sokolik while they were there.

After their return from Colorado in 1900, the Filipek and Sokolik fortunes seem to have improved considerably. James Filipek and John Sokolik start a grocery store, Theodore is settled into the railroad business, and things just seem much better than the picture Theodore painted of the early 1890s. It's almost as if they found "gold" along the way. But more likely it was a lot of hard work in a job that had some interesting economic advantages. First, both James and Katherine were working, not just one of them, and possibly they were managing their own account. They likely had "free" room and board and meals for their family, certainly a big part of a budget. And if they were paid per boarder, then working hard and striving for bigger work crews would result in efficiency in meals and in maintaining the shelter. I am sure Katherine provided them great meals and all wanted to be part of her work crew.

I think they had a lot of fun in Colorado and saw a many things. My Grandfather Jim remembers seeing Pike's Peak from his backyard and John Filipek wrote of a visit there. The postcards show a landscape unlike anything they would have seen in Bohemia or Chicago. Jim Filipek was pretty young but probably attended some school there and John Filipek was of high school age and may have graduated high school there. It is hoped someday through the history books to learn more about what the Denver and Rio Grande were doing at the time.

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Back to Chicago

The Filipeks returned to Chicago in late 1899 or early 1900. The last letter we have from Colorado is dated December 23, 1898 and they were back soon enough to appear in the 1900 Chicago Directory. Upon their return, the Filipeks and Sokolik nephews again lived together, this time at 2956 Emerald in Chicago, about a mile away from their neighborhood of the early 1890s.

Citizenship

Upon his return to Chicago, James completed the process of becoming a citizen. This was a multi-step process of which the first step was to declare intent to become a citizen. James' *Declaration of Intent* was made on February 10, 1900, almost a decade after his arrival. In the intent, the duties of a citizen are reviewed with the applicant and he is given time to ponder the action about to be taken; he also needs to find a sponsor who will vouch for his character. Citizenship in those days also meant that a man's wife and children would automatically become citizens. James took his *Oath for Citizenship* on April 2, 1900 at the age of 36. As a result of James' citizenship, Katherine and the younger children also became citizens. Since he was born in Chicago in 1882, John Filipek was already a citizen.

James could have started the citizenship process around 1894, but perhaps he wasn't sure yet or he decided to wait until the Pueblo job was over. James chose Axel T. Johnson of 3032 Emerald to be his sponsor. Axel stated that he had known James Filipek for five years and that he had known of his intent to become a citizen for at least three years. Since James just spent the previous 5 years in Pueblo, it's hard to understand how Axel knew him that long. However, some possibilities are that Axel was in Pueblo with James or Axel was the boss James referred to one of the Pueblo letters.

The Grocery Store

Upon their return, the Filipeks went into the grocery business. Both the 1900 Chicago Directory and the 1900 Census show James as a grocer at 2956 Emerald. The same Census Theodore Sokolik was a grocery salesman, suggesting he helped in the store. In the Census, John Sokolik was shown as a Gents (Gentleman's) Furnishings salesman and John Filipek was shown as a salesman, although it's unknown whether it was for groceries or men's clothing.

By 1901, James had formed a partnership for the grocery business with John Sokolik. It was called *Filipek and Company* (James Filipek and John K. Sokolik). It is clear though from the company name that John was the junior partner. This partnership lasted through 1902. By 1903, James had moved the grocery store to 3001 S. Emerald and was the sole owner. During this period, John Sokolik maintained his job as a salesman in men's furnishings. For example, in the 1902 Directory John was employed as a salesman at 192 Jackson Boulevard. Perhaps both James Filipek and John Sokolik were just feeling their way and had started together in the grocery business but found after a few years that either

they couldn't work together with their respective strong personalities or that John just found that men's clothing was more interesting to him.

Three photographs of the Filipek Grocery Store show a wide variety of goods, including dried cereal boxes, bananas, stove polish, gum, soap and sausages and loaves of bread. My Grandmother Grace Vanderkloot who lived in the area said she frequented the store and that James was the butcher. Meat can't be seen in the photographs but I really don't know where they kept it in the days before refrigeration.

Theirs was the classic corner grocery store, complete with a coal and wood burning stove. It had a little bit of everything and in the days before refrigeration, no transportation, and small houses with little room, people used to shop daily for what they needed at the corner store. High population densities in the neighborhoods and small budgets for patrons made it possible for corner grocers to have a regular and frequent clientele. Part of what grocers did was to buy commodities in bulk and reduce them to requested smaller sizes for patrons, such as a few ounces of butter, a couple of cups of flour, and so on. The Filipeks lived upstairs and after a few years added a high wall along 30th Street to provide privacy in their backyard for gardens and relaxation.

The Filipek grocery business continued for many years and the Filipeks prospered. They were able to send their daughter to a boarding school; they had frequent family photos, and were a part of their community. Sometime before 1910 they owned their home and store via a mortgage. When James died in 1914, the store continued, possibly through a manager and was sold around 1921. Profits from the store and their Colorado years helped maintain Katherine for another 30 years.

The Children

Upon their return to Chicago, John Filipek had just turned 17 and began to establish his career. John Sokolik introduced John to the Men's Furnishings business shortly thereafter. They worked together for many years selling men's clothing at various places in the Chicago Loop including Wilson Brothers' Clothing, most likely on commission. They were lifelong friends and both did very well, John Filipek retiring in his 40s.

The younger Filipek children attended grade school in the early 1900s. Grandma Grace Vanderkloot attended Brenan Thomas Grammar School at Lime and Archer. Lime is now Green Street and the location is about Green and 25th Place. So the Filipek children probably also attended Brenan Thomas given their new home at 3001 S. Emerald. Their older brother, John attended Harrison Grade School, named after Benjamin Harrison at 23rd Place and Wentworth before the Filipeks went to Colorado as the Filipeks lived in a different neighborhood in the early 1890s.

It is not known where Mary attended high school, but the 1910 Census indicates that she was at boarding school. This might have been a college or a professional school as she would have been 20 years old at the time. Sacred Heart Academy in Lisle was a Boarding School for girls. My

mom, Jeanne, believed this is where Katherine Filipek tried to enroll Mary Barrett in the early 1930s but she refused. Possibly this is the boarding school Mary Filipek attended in 1910. Eventually Mary married Lawrence Barrett on September 10, 1912 at St. John Nepomucene on her father's 49th birthday. Lawrence was 39 and Mary was 22.

After their return from Colorado, Mary and James continued their religious education. Mary had her first communion in the spring of 1902 at age 12 and Jim had his in 1904 at age 11. Nowadays children have their communions about age 7 in the 2nd grade, but then it was later. Mary was confirmed in 1904 at the age of 13 and took the name of St. Cecilia. No sponsor was listed on the records. James was confirmed in 1908 at the age of 15 or 16 and took the name of St. Thomas. His sponsor was Vojtech Dedina, the same as his baptismal sponsor. It is likely that John also had a first communion and confirmation, but it appears to be in the days before St. John Nepomucene was required to keep records.

Later Jim attended Wendell Phillips High School at 39th and Prairie. Wendell Phillips was about 2.4 miles from Jim's home at 30th and Emerald and he likely took a streetcar there, perhaps south on Halsted first and then transferred east on 39th. He took chemistry and was on the high school baseball team. There is a good collection of pictures of him in his Wendell Phillips sweater, baseball jersey, cap and gown and the Wendell Phillips School itself in the *James A. Filipek Photo Collection*.

Jim Filipek probably graduated between 1909 and 1912 at which time he would have been between 17-20 years old. He is not listed as a graduate in the 1910 Wendell Phillips Yearbook. It is possible he graduated a year earlier in 1909 or was delayed a year or two because of the Filipek move to Pueblo.

The Sokoliks

Around 1904, at age 30, John Sokolik married Kate and John moved about 5 miles south to 68th and Emerald. John was the first of the group to move away from the old neighborhood and may have been prompted by Kate already living in that neighborhood. This new location was south of the stockyards and would have had more open space and less crowding. John would take the elevated train to work in the Chicago Loop. John and Kate had two children. They were Florence in 1905 and Frank in 1910. By 1911 they would move to their long time home at 6827 South Union. A picture of the home can be seen in the Sokolik Picture Collection.

After working for a time in the Filipek Grocery Store, Theodore returned to the railroad business in 1902 and this time as a conductor. Around 1909 at about age 30, he married Lillian Spaninger and moved in with her parents at 705 65th Street. This location was just a few blocks from his brother. After only a few years of marriage Lillian died on May 19, 1915 at about age 34. Within a couple of years, Theodore married Louise on August 18, 1917. James A. Filipek and his then girlfriend Grace Vanderkloot were the witnesses. Theodore and Louise had two children, Eleanor and Virginia.

Return to Bohemia

In 1911, James took a trip back to Bohemia. He applied for his passport in April of that year. On the application he stated that he arrived in the USA in May 1889 from Hamburg and that he had lived uninterruptedly in the USA for 22 years, residing in Chicago and Pueblo. He is described as 47 years old, light hair, light blue eyes, and 5 feet tall. The height has to be wrong, and I believe they forgot to fill in the inches on his height and that he is really somewhere between 5 foot 6 inches and 5 foot 9 inches. It is unknown what prompted the trip back. It could have been a nostalgic trip to see his brother Frantisek, the architect and teacher, and his sister Rozalie Kandl, owner of the Filipek Farm. At first I thought that the trip might have been prompted by a relative's death. But it was found that his mother died in 1902, his father in 1900 and his sister Mary Palecek in 1899. There is no mention of Katherine accompanying him. It is thought that he went in early summer and stayed a few months. There are pictures in the *James and Katherine Filipek Photo Collection* of his brother, Frantisek, from this trip. Upon his return, it is believed that he brought back the three watercolors we have. He also brought back Frantisek's son James F. Filipek, age. 19.

James F. Filipek

James F. Filipek eventually became a landscaper for the Chicago Park District and was known as "Jim the Gardener". It is believed he used to supply John, Theodore, and Jim with extra plants at the end of the day from his work and that is how everyone had such great gardens.

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Changing Times

As he aged, James gained a lot of weight as evidenced by viewing the pictures from the 1905 through 1914. No longer was he doing heavy physical work outdoor work as in Pueblo. There are suggestions of many nights at the tavern and that along with an abundance of food in the grocery store and Katherine's great cooking may have lead to his increasing size.

The family pictures in our Picture Collections tell a story of a close and successful family. There are many group pictures and many pictures of the children at communions, confirmations, graduations, and marriages. Daughter Mary must have been a favorite as there were many engagement and wedding photos and her marriage to Lawrence Barrett in 1912 must have been a happy event.

James Filipeks' Death

On January 10, 1914, James Filipek died of a heart condition, angina pectoris. A contributing cause to his death was chronic intestinal nephritis, a kidney condition. James was under a doctor's care for 6 months. He was just 50 years old and with his death it was the beginning of changing times.

When he died, James was a member of the Modern Woodsmen of America, the Catholic Order of Foresters, Sokol Vlast, and Saint John Nepomucene's Court. The Woodsmen and the Forester organization were fraternal insurance organizations whereby members paid fees and the group would invest and pay out upon the death of one of its members. In a way, it is similar to group term life insurance that many of us can obtain from our place of employment. For people that don't have access to group insurance from work or were self employed, fraternal organizations are a way for friends and neighbors with similar backgrounds to come together to obtain insurance. In fact, several of James' organizations exist today, including the Woodsmen.

Beside the regular obituary put in for James by his family, there is a separate obituary from the president of the *Modern Woodsmen* in the Czech newspaper *Denni Hlastal*. This obituary may well be a way of both acknowledging a member's death and also providing the legal proof necessary for payment of the claim. His membership was not a last minute item. For example, in one of the letters from Pueblo, James is trying to get his ever changing address sorted out with the Woodsmen and in another letter he asks John Sokolik to pay his dues to the *Stepanski Society*.

Sokol Vlast is a gymnastics and fraternal insurance organization, which promotes Bohemian culture. There are still Sokols all over the USA, which include parades in native costumes and athletic competitions. *Saint John Nepomucene's Court*, may have been an organization much like today's *Knights of Columbus*. Thus when he died, Katherine collected at least three insurance policies. Given the grocery store, it was thought there should have been a will, but none was found. This should probably be searched again someday.

When James died, Katherine Filipek purchased a large 16-foot by 16-foot Filipek Family Plot in Resurrection Cemetery for \$200. Typical rates at the time were around \$1 per square foot. It is in a beautiful setting and there is large granite stone about 5 feet high. Similar to her husband planning ahead with all his insurance policies, Katherine had to be planning that her whole family's offspring would be together someday in the large family plot.

After James died, Katherine went back to her native Bohemia for a visit, her first since 1889. On her May 1914 Passport Application she is described as age 49, dark brown hair, blue eyes and 5 foot and 1/2 inches tall, although a later passport has her at 5 foot 3. It appears that no one accompanied her and her trip was both a nostalgia and grieving trip back to her home country and to be with his and her remaining relatives. Not much is known about this trip, but she was lucky to have returned before the start of World War I in August 1914.

More Moves

After James' death, there appears to be some quick changes in living locations. After living at 3001 Emerald for over a decade, Katherine was living at 5241 Quincy Street just four months after James died. This location was about 6 miles west and 3 miles south of the grocery store and almost as far west as Riverside. Sons James and John lived there with her. Within a year Katherine, James and John moved 6 miles east and 3 more miles south to 7328 S. Union which is believed to be the same address that Larry and Mary Barrett lived.

Then in 1916, just two years after James' death, disaster struck again. Mary Barrett, Katherine's daughter died as a result of childbirth complications on January 19. Mary was just 26 and had only been married for two years to Lawrence Barrett. The child was named Mary after her mother, and at the age of 53, Katherine began raising her granddaughter.

The Filipek clan including Larry Barrett remained at 7328 S. Union for several years. In 1918 Jim Filipek volunteered for the army and went to France as part of the Army of Occupation returning in the summer of 1919. Then some time around 1920, Katherine, John and James all moved back to 3001 S. Emerald having traveled counterclockwise in a big circle since 1914.

What prompted these moves so quickly after James' death is unclear. The two boys had their own jobs by then and did not work at the store so it must have been necessary to bring someone else in to manage the store and perhaps that manager needed the upstairs to live. Eventually, the store was sold about 1921. It was a good run and provided a good employ to the Filipek family for many years.

1920s

In April 1920, son James Filipek married Grace Vanderkloot and he then moved to her parents flat at 7047 S. Ada and to continue to pursue his career as a lawyer.

Sometime around 1921, Katherine and son John moved to Riverside at 253 Olmsted, next door to Theodore Sokolik. Theodore's first wife, Lillian had died and he had married Louise and they had settled in Riverside. Katherine and John Filipek must have seen how nice it was in Riverside (peaceful and bucolic compared to the hustle of the city) and decided to sell the grocery store and move there also.

By 1925, John married Rose Skoblik and wanted his own place so he bought the Olmsted property from his mother and then bought her the 72 Burlington Road home where Katherine remained until her death.

Back to Bohemia

In 1929, Katherine, John and Rose Filipek and their two children Johnny and Rosemary, along with 13 year old Mary Barrett went on a trip to Europe. They visited Rome, the Vatican, Kolence and probably Mazelov. They sailed from Hoboken, New Jersey on June 8, 1929. It appears they were part of a church group, most likely from the Catholic parish in Riverside. It was on this trip, that Jeanne recalls that Katherine fell and hurt her hip. Afterward Katherine always needed a cane to walk. On her previous trip, Katherine left just before the war started, on this one she got back just before the stock market crash. My mom also thinks she may have taken other trips back.

Katherine Filipek's Death

Katherine died at the age of 84 on January 9, 1948 at the MacNeil Memorial Hospital in Berwyn, Illinois. At the end, she moved in with her son and daughter-in-law, John and Rose to be cared for. Katherine is buried in the Filipek Family Plot beside her husband, James and with her daughter Mary Barrett and her grandson John J. Filipek. There is presently room available in the Filipek family plot for least three more graves. Katherine's death was due to stomach cancer and at the end she suffered from myocardial degeneration and senility. There is no engraving on the marker for Katherine, and someday I hope to add it, but I want to verify the year first through original birth and baptismal certificates.

How Katherine survived all these years without a job is unknown. It is known that she did take in borders, such as Larry Barrett and I'm sure her sons helped out, but it does seem that she was both frugal and had a good sum of money from James' insurance and the eventual sale of the store.

Appearance and Personality

James Filipek is thought to have been about 5 foot 6 to 5 foot 9. He was at least 6 inches taller than Katherine was. They both had blue eyes.

Katherine was short and was slender throughout her life. She appears to have been a kind and loving soul who would help anyone. She was always taking people in whether it was her son-in-law, Larry, her new grandchild Mary, or the young Sokolik boys. She had a fondness for nice jewelry and samples can be seen in her pictures in the *James and Katherine Filipek Photo Collection*.

As he aged, James gained considerable weight. By the tone of the Pueblo letters, James appears to be fairly demanding, controlling, and a take charge kind of person. He knew what he wanted and said it directly. Certainly these are attributes were desirable as foreman of a rail crew and for dealing with the daily issues of immigrant life. John Sokolik appears similar and maybe that's why they got along.

While most of us now live a somewhat refined life, it good to remember that the life of the immigrant was a challenging one. There were language problems, there was confusion about the customs and the laws, there were no parents to fall back on, there were no guaranteed jobs, and most of the money went for food and shelter in very small homes. The immigrant stock tended to be strong, take charge, self confident, shrewd, and risk taking individuals. Without these attributes they would not have come.

Closing

James and Katherine lived a complicated life. Theirs was a journey filled with many paths. They tried many in their journey and a few times circled around more before making their final decisions. Both grew up on farms and lived in families, which for many generations knew no other life than taking care of the land and the regular cycle of work. Through chance, Katerina saw a taste of the "big" city in 1882 and that event changed both of their lives. Afterwards, they went back and forth seemingly tugging between the traditions of family, farm, and history in Bohemia and a totally new kind of life in America. After seven uncertain years they eventually made that decision.

After 5 years of struggle in the new country, they made another key decision and that was to temporarily leave close friends and relatives in Chicago to try to improve their fortunes by working for the railroads in Colorado. This particular decision appears to have worked very well and upon their return in 1900, they were able to begin a grocery store and move from the harder labor of their youth to become successful merchants in a vibrant and cosmopolitan neighborhood in the South Town section of Chicago. The increasing prosperity of the grocery store allowed their their daughter to attend boarding school.

James and Katherine's photos tell a story of a strong family bonds that spent much time together. Their faith center around St. John Nepomucene and Vaclav was part of many social and religious organizations. His early death must have been a surprise and there is a certain sadness that after finally getting it all together that he passed away too soon. Katherine was a strong woman who went on with her life. On her own she went back to Bohemia to grieve, and then after her daughter died she raised her newborn grandchild. While she didn't run the grocery store personally after Vaclav died, she continued to own it and sold it in 1921 before moving to Riverside. Here she peacefully spent the next 27 years watching over her sons, their families, and making wonderful strudel and dumplings for all.

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James A. and Grace Filipek Chapters

The James A. and Grace Filipek Family

James A. Filipek

James Albert Filipek was born August 15, 1892 in Chicago, Illinois. His parents were James and Katherine Filipek and they were recent immigrants from southern Bohemia. James was baptized within a week of his birth on August 21st at St. John Nepomucene, the Filipek's parish church. His baptismal sponsors were Vojtech Dedina and Rosalie Mauz.

At the time of his birth, his mother Katerina was 29, his father James was 28, his big brother John was nine, and his little sister Mary was two. The Sokolik boys, cousins of the Filipek children lived in the same home as the Filipeks and John was 16 and Theodore 13. James was named after his father and it appears his middle name came from his baptismal sponsor Vojtech Dedina as *Vojtech* translates to Albert. James was normally referred to as Jim and his father spelled it Jimi in one of his letters. The Filipeks had finally decided to immigrate in May 1889 although they were here and back before they finally decided. Neither of Jim's grandparents ever immigrated although a number of their children did. In Chicago, though, there was only Uncle Frank (Katherine's brother) who had just married in August 1891 and cousins Theodore and John Sokolik. The rest of little Jim's cousins were in faraway Minnesota, Pueblo, and Bohemia.

At the time Jim was born, the Filipeks had recently moved to 187 24th Place. In the few years before, they lived at 218 25th Place where it is thought they shared an apartment with Katherine's brother Frank. After Frank married in August 1891, he may have wanted his own place. At 187 24th Place, the Filipeks shared an address with the Dedinas, friends of the Filipeks from the early 1880s and occupants of this address for many years. Most likely the 187 location was a multi-story flat and the Filipeks and Dedinas lived on separate floors. Little Jim's father was a butcher and a laborer back then and times were tough for the Filipeks with seven of them in the new small rented quarters. This location is likely the small four-room basement flat that Theodore described in his *My Life as I Lived It*.

When Jim was about two, the family decided to temporarily seek work in Colorado. This was probably around late 1894 or early 1895. In Colorado Jim's mom and dad worked for the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad. His father was a foreman for various work crews putting in track. The Filipeks were also responsible for boarding the workers and Katherine cooked the meals for the crew. She was a great cook. While in Colorado, the family lived in both Pueblo and two towns about 10 miles to the north, Pinon and Dawkins. They lived in Pueblo in the earlier years and Pinon and Dawkins later. There is a faded but great picture of Jim and his sister Mary on mules in this time period. Towards the end, Jim must have started school since there is an early script letter (circa 1899) in English from him to his Uncle John Sokolik who stayed in Chicago. One of Jim's boyhood memories was that he could see Pike's Peak from his backyard.

Around late 1899 or early 1900, the family returned to Chicago to stay but they chose a new location at 2956 S. Emerald, about a half mile west and a half mile south of the previous neighborhood. Young Jim would have been about 7 1/2 and had probably completed through the first half of 2nd grade in Colorado.

When the family returned, Jim's father went into the grocery business. First at 2956 Emerald and then about 1903 at 3001 S. Emerald. The family lived upstairs in a nice home above the grocery. It is thought that Jim attended the attended the Brenan Thomas Grammar School at Lime and Archer. Lime is now Green Street and the location is about Green and 25th Place. Jim was certainly assimilated into American culture through the old neighborhood, which was very diverse. While he learned and spoke Czech at home, his early letters were in English and there never was a trace of an accent.

After their return from Colorado, James continued their religious education. Jim had his first communion in 1904 at age 11. Nowadays children have their communions about age 7 in the 2nd grade, but then it was later. James was confirmed in 1908 at the age of 15 or 16 and took the name of St. Thomas. His sponsor was Vojtech Dedina, the same as his baptismal sponsor.

If he was on schedule, Jim would have graduated grade school around 1906; however, it is possible he may have been delayed a year or two because of the move to Pueblo.

Later Jim attended Wendell Phillips High School at 39th and Prairie. Wendell Phillips was about 2.4 miles from Jim's home at 30th and Emerald and he likely took a streetcar there, perhaps south on Halsted first and then transferred east on 39th. He took chemistry and was on the high school baseball team. There is a good collection of pictures of him in his Wendell Phillips sweater, baseball jersey, cap and gown and the Wendell Phillips School itself in the *James A. Filipek Photo Collection*.

Jim Filipek probably graduated between 1909 and 1912 at which time he would have been between 17-20 years old. He is not listed as a graduate in the 1910 Wendell Phillips Yearbook. It is possible he graduated a year earlier in 1909 or was delayed a year or two because of the Filipek move to Pueblo.

Although he likely worked at his parent's grocery store from a young age, the earliest job there are records for show Jim as a clerk in 1914, he would have been 22. By 1916 he was an insurance agent and in 1917 he became a clerk at the *Morris and Company* in the Chicago Stockyards. Around this time he attended night school at the *John Marshall Law School* in Chicago and by May 1918, his occupation was attorney. He was about 25 when he finally became an attorney.

World War I had raged since August 1914 and the USA entered the war in 1917. While relatively old, James at age 25 enlisted on May 25, 1918. He did his training at Fort Benning, Georgia and made lifelong friends from the experience. On August 6, 1918, he made corporal and prepared to sail overseas. Mom recalls he was in the 3rd Division but his records

show he was a Corporal in Company C, 4th Infantry, but it's possible Company C or 4th Infantry was a unit of the 3rd Division.

Jim sailed for France on October 7, 1918 and fortunately nearly at the war's end. It is not known if he saw any combat and it is believed he was a cook for his unit. With the war ending on November 11, 1918, he became part of the *Army of Occupation* in France and Germany. In the *James A. Filipek Photo Collection*, there are a number of pictures of him in heavy wool army outfits. The winter was cold and many of the occupation troops endured in outside barracks and tents. Jim and his unit returned to USA on August 28, 1919 and he was discharged August 30, 1919. Upon returning, he reportedly drank an entire bottle of ketchup as he missed it so much. Upon honorable discharge, he was paid \$82.02 including a \$60 Illinois bonus. Jim's Army papers state he was 5 foot 2 inches tall, gray eyes, ruddy complexion and light hair. His character was rated as excellent and his health as good when he was discharged. In a way he was very lucky. It was a difficult war and he arrived almost at its' completion. He made it without wounds or being gassed but made lifelong friends and had many experiences. I still have his old doughboy iron helmet.

Grace Vanderkloot

Trijntje Vanderkloot was born on August 7, 1894 in Chicago, Illinois. Her parents were Adrianus and Martha Vanderkloot, recent immigrants from Texel in Noord Holland. It is uncertain if she was baptized but if so, it would have been at the Dutch Reformed Church. Our Trijntje was also called Grace at an early age perhaps as a way of better assimilating her into their cosmopolitan immigrant neighborhood since Trijntje is a difficult name to say and spell in an English. Trijntje is the Dutch name for Catherine, so it's pretty unclear why the name Grace was chosen. The earliest documents using Grace are: 1) her entry in the 1900 Census, and 2) a 1959 letter from the Self Help Insurance Company which indicated there was a December 1, 1894 policy issued in the name of Grace L. Vander Kloot who was born August 7, 1894. Perhaps she was given the name Trijntje for use within the Dutch household but when relating to the English speaking world she used the name Grace.

At the time of her birth, Grace's mother Martha was 37, her father Adrianus was 42, big brother Matthew was 10, middle brother Art was 8, little brother Adrian was 5, and little sister Aletta was almost three. Her father, Adrianus had come over from Holland in 1881 and her mother in 1882.

The Vanderkloots lived in a variety of rented homes in the 1880s and 1890s but all were between 26th to 29th and Emerald or Lowe. These homes were all very close to Vanderkloot Iron Works at 26th and Halsted where Adrianus worked as a blacksmith. In August 1894, Grace's family had just moved to 2834 S. Emerald, possibly slightly larger quarters for a growing family. Grace's grandparents, Matthijs and Trijntje Vanderkloot lived just two blocks south at 2612 S. Emerald. Matthijs was a machinist at the Iron Works and it was Matthijs' brother that had come over in 1868 and had started the ironworks business. Grace's father, Adrianus had

many brothers and sisters in Chicago, so there were also lots of cousins for little Grace play with.

Not much is known of her early life, but Grace provided us a few recollections. She remembered that all the roads in her neighborhood were dirt except Halsted Street. She also told us that before going to bed, they would heat up bricks and put them under the covers to keep warm. Most likely there weren't any heater vents and the heat came from natural convection from a coal or wood burning potbelly stove.

Grace remembered that she attended the Brenan Thomas Grade School. Brenan was located at Limes and Archer; Lime is now Green Street and the location is about Green and 25th Place. She would have graduated Grade School about 1908. Instead of high school, she and her sister Aletta went to secretarial school. She recalled going to two schools about three blocks apart, the Healey School at 35th and Wallace and another called the Capes School also on Wallace. Wallace is 1/4 mile east of Halsted, so she probably used the streetcar to travel south on Halsted from 26th Street. At secretarial school she studied Eclectic Shorthand for 6 months. She told my mom that she was first in her class as a secretary.

Grace also told us she started working first at the Vanderkloot Iron Works. At age 18, she is shown in the 1913 Chicago Directory as a stenographer and in the 1917 Directory she is still a stenographer but then working at 2902 Carrol Avenue. Her sister Aletta is also shown in the Chicago Directory as a stenographer but at locations in the Chicago Loop. Grace also told us she worked in the Chicago Loop and had been an Executive Secretary for the Link Belt Company. She left her job April 1, 1920 when she married Jim later that month. I have copies of her old recipes on Link Belt stationary.

James and Grace Filipek

It is not known when Jim and Grace met but they may have known each other as little kids in Brennan School or in the neighborhood. Grace remembered Jim's father as the butcher at the grocery store at 3001 S. Emerald, so this had to be before 1914. In addition, Jim and his family moved away from the old neighborhood around 1914 and settled in with his family at 73rd and Union. So it's likely they met and started dating before 1914. In 1913 Jim was 21 and Grace was 19.

My mom recalled that Jim met Grace at the tennis courts. Assuming it was the old neighborhood, McGuane Park at 30th at Halsted is a good possibility. The earliest though it can be verified they were together was August 18, 1917. On this date, James Filipek and Grace Vanderkloot were the witnesses to the marriage of Jim's cousin Theodore Sokolik to Louise at the Pilgrim Congregational Church in Chicago. This was about three years before their own marriage and one would suspect they knew each other pretty well for Jim to ask her to his cousin's wedding and to be a witness. At the time Jim was 23 and Grace 21.

Jim had an intense interest in photography throughout his life and it is believed that he took many of the early pictures in the *Grace Filipek Photo Collection*. Through these pictures, it appears they enjoyed being

outdoors especially going swimming. Most likely Jim took her to JK Sokolik's Twin Lakes Wisconsin Lake Cottage. Most likely they also attended Chicago White Sox games in Chicago as Comiskey Park was very close to the old neighborhood and Jim was an avid fan all his life.

Grace loved to read and while they dated, Jim bought her most of the Dickens and Shakespeare novels. She kept these books for years and as children we would be in awe at the many volumes of thick leather bound books without pictures on their shelves.

Jim and Grace were married on April 15, 1920 at the Emmanuel Baptist Church at 2320 S. Michigan Avenue in Chicago. Jim was 27 and Grace 25. While they might have wanted to be married earlier, Jim needed to volunteer for the Army because of the war. Jim enlisted in May 1918 and did not return until August 1919, so it is likely they both started the wedding planning upon his return.

Mom said that the only people to come were JK Sokolik and his wife Kate. This seems a bit unusual and we can only speculate now on what the family stresses were.

One possible issue could have been religion. Jim's mother was a strong Catholic and certainly would have objected to a marriage outside the Catholic Church. However, it appears that Jim stopped practicing well before this. It also appears that John Sokolik and Theodore also chose other religions as well. JK became a Baptist and perhaps had guided Jim to that Baptist Church for the marriage. Mom said that John Sokolik was trying to convert her dad, but when Jim found out that he would have to be immersed to become a Baptist he lost all interest. Grace's family wasn't very religious at all and certainly couldn't have been married in the Catholic Church without converting, so given a desire for a church wedding, Jim chose the Baptist Church.

Another possible stress was their respective nationalities. Both their parents were immigrants and most likely both expected or desired their children to choose Czech or Dutch spouses.

Either way it'd hard to believe that only JK Sokolik and his wife came to the wedding. Jim and Grace were witnesses for Theodore and both Jim and Grace certainly had many friends. In addition, the wedding certainly was planned, since from her Social Security Application it is known that Grace's listed her last day of work as April 1, 1920, 14 days before the wedding. On the other hand, the wedding date itself, April 15 was a Thursday, certainly not a day of the week one would expect for a large wedding. The other unusual aspect of the wedding was there are no known wedding pictures. This seems especially unusual since both appear to have had money, and Jim was an avid photographer and there certainly was a tradition of wedding photographs including numerous ones for Mary Filipek, JK Sokolik and Theodore Sokolik.

The Early 1920s

After their marriage, all appears to be well with the families. Grace's mother's September 20, 1920 letter mentions that Jim and Grace came for

dinner the night before to the Vanderkloot home at 811 W. 27th. And my mom also recalled Grace speaking fondly of Katherine's great cooking.

Grace's mother died unexpectedly in October of 1920 of uremia. Shortly thereafter Grace's father, Adrianus Vanderkloot purchased a three-flat at 7047 S. Ada, about 5 miles south of the old neighborhood. While it is unknown where Jim and Grace lived initially, they did live at 7047 S. Ada from about 1921 to 1925.

In April 1921, Jim and Grace had their first child, Marjorie Grace, and three years later Jeanne was born in December 1924. Both were born at the German Evangelical Deacon Hospital and as far as is known, neither was formally baptized, although Mom always believed Katherine baptized them secretly. Jeanne was initially named Katheryn after her grandmother, but later her parents renamed her Jeanne Catherine. Mom tells the story that Grace was in great pain on the way to the hospital with her. There was a blinding snowstorm and Grace kept pulling and hanging on Jim, screaming in pain while he was trying to drive her to the hospital.

Riverside

Some time around 1925 Jim and Grace moved to 389 Addison Street in Riverside. Previously, Theodore had moved to Riverside and then Katherine Filipek and her son John followed him around 1921. Riverside was an early suburb of Chicago and represented all the attributes of suburbia including windy and leafy streets, controlled residential zoning, less noise and congestion. Grace was hesitant to move because all her friends and cousins were in Chicago. Ultimately, they bought a home that cost \$10,000 a huge sum for the times. The previous owners were the Jordans, no relation to Jeanne's future husband, but an interesting omen.

In the beginning, Jim commuted to his office in the Chicago Loop at 117 N. Dearborn. But later he worked as the attorney for a large automobile repair concern in Riverside. The late 1920s were good times in America and life was going well. The young girls had many friends and cousins and enjoyed attending Riverside Grammar School. Sometimes Grandma Katherine would bring a chicken from her yard for Sunday dinner and other times Grandpa Vanderkloot would stay with them for a few months as he made his rounds among his daughters.

Unfortunately, the good times ended for the Filipeks as it did for many with the 1929 Stock Market Crash. Within a few years later, Jim lost his job with the auto firm when the company went bankrupt. He picked up part time work with various trust companies acting as their attorney for the refinancing of mortgages of mortgages for people who couldn't pay them. He also sold Maytag washing machines to help make ends meet. Unfortunately, by early 1939, Jim and Grace lost the house because they were unable to make the mortgage payments for two years.

Back to Chicago

Around January 1939, James and Grace moved to 7304 S. Emerald, which was a 6-flat owned by Vanderkloot relatives. This was pretty close to the neighborhood they lived before the move to Riverside fourteen years before. The losing of the house had to be traumatic. Jim and Grace

lost their equity and they never again purchased a home. For Marge, it had to be especially difficult because she was partway through her senior year at Riverside High School. To complete the year with her class, she took long streetcar rides from the 73rd and Emerald home and occasionally stayed during the school week with relatives in Riverside. For Jeanne it was less difficult, as she had only completed the first semester of her freshman year in Riverside. As a young teenager, she found the excitement of Chicago and new relatives more interesting than the pastoral ways of Riverside. For her, it would lead to lifelong friends at the new Parker High School and to finding her partner for life.

The loss of their home because of the ups and downs of the economy has been a life's event that stuck in my mind throughout the years. Their loss was a reminder that good times don't last forever. And while it may be impossible to plan for a 15-year depression, it's useful to occasionally think about how to prepare for the inevitable not so good times.

Around 1938, Jim re-established an office in the Loop, but this time at 120 S. LaSalle. It is believed he stayed at that office until his death in 1961. Occasionally Grace would take the "Elevated" in and help out with the secretarial work.

By 1943, the Filipeks had moved to 8243 S. May. It is here that mom stayed while dad was away at war and where I lived before mom and dad bought their home in 1947 on 83rd Street. Then around 1950, Jim and Grace moved back to the 7047 S. Ada Street flat, where Grace's sister Aletta lived upstairs. In a way it was full circle for them, back to the same home they had lived when they were first married in 1921, except I think it was on a different floor.

Throughout the years, Jim continued his passion for experiencing the everyday joys of life. In Riverside, he constructed his own 9-hole miniature golf course in their yard. During WWII he made balsa wood airplanes. Later he made regular summer trips to Minnesota and Canada to go fishing with his friends. He and Grace enjoyed playing cards, including pinochle and gin rummy. And of course there was his backyard garden, the tomatoes, the fish aquariums, the photo developing, the White Sox on TV and of course, his black Cadillac.

Throughout the 1950s, Jim and Grace enjoyed regular Sunday visits with Jeanne's three children. The grandkids would play with the soup cans, explore Jim's stuff in the basement, walk in his garden, and play with the building blocks. A few times a year, the Odette's would come in from Minnesota and occasionally Grace would take the Zephyr to Minnesota via passes from Theodore Sokolik. It was a good decade of relaxation, grandchildren, going fishing, watching the Sox games on TV, finally beating the Yankees for the pennant in 1969 and settling into life's passage.

Jim died of a coronary occlusion at home on December 3, 1961 at age 69. He had been up and around that day but took a morning nap and passed away in his sleep. His daughter Marge was visiting from Minnesota so he got to see her one last time. Jim was buried at Chapel Hill Gardens South.

After Jim died, Grace stayed for about a year before the changing neighborhood and the upkeep of the home and yard became too much. She moved about 5 miles south to an apartment at 107th and Hale, near the Rock Island train to the Chicago Loop. There she would commute to the Loop to work temporary office jobs with her friends. She joked about how she often got jobs then an "envelope stuffer". With mom's move to Wheaton in 1969, Grandma Grace who had a small stroke a few years earlier moved with in with them. In one of life's bit of luck, I had just graduated and needed apartment furniture and thus saved Grandma Grace's furniture from being lost forever. Her old oak kitchen table and chairs and maple dressers have been stripped and refinished and are a pleasant reminder of days gone past.

Grace died on March 7, 1979 at the Abbey-Winfield German and Convalescent Home in Winfield. She was suffering from cardiac failure along with some senility. She spent the last ten years of her life living her daughter Jeanne and helping out around the kitchen, doing ironing, and making delicious speculaasjes and cinnamon rolls for all.

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Martin and Katerina Nemeč Descendants

Martin and Katerina Nemeč had 8 children. In order of birth they were Tomas, Josef, Maria, Vaclav, Anna, Frantisek, Katerina, and Frantisek. Anna and the first Frantisek died as young children. Tomas and Josef died in their young twenties. Katerina and the second Frantisek came to America and it is believed Vaclav and Maria stayed in Bohemia. As follows are stories of two of the various descendant branches.

Frantisek and Mary Nemec Chapters

The Frank and Mary Nemec Family

Frantisek Nemec

Frantisek Nemec was born October 16, 1867 in Ceske Budejovice No. 342. This date of October 16 is close to but different than the October 4th shown on his death record. In 1870 he moved to Lomnice with his parents Martin and Katerina Nemec. According to the 1900 Census he came in 1884 at age 17 to the USA, probably to Chicago. His sister Katerina was in Chicago in late 1882 and early 1883 and possibly she was still there when he came. It would be useful to someday to find the ship arrival record for Frantisek to clarify when he came and who with.

Frank lived at 218 25th Place in the early 1900s. However, it was found that James Filipek lived at this address in 1890 and 1891, shortly after they arrived. Thus it is assumed that Frank might have lived at that address then also and that James and Katherine Filipek moved in with him when they arrived in May 1889.

On August 24, 1891, Frank married Mary Novak who had arrived in the USA in 1887. It is thought that there might be a connection between Mary Novak and John and Theresa Novak, baptismal sponsors for John Filipek; however, Mary is not their daughter.

Children

It is believed that Frank and Mary had four children. These are Anna (July 25, 1892), Frank (April 19, 1895), Edward (May 21, 1897), and James (January 31, 1900).

Occupations

The 1900 Census shows Frank as a baker. Later the 1901 and 1902 Chicago Directories show Frank in the tobacco field. His son James stated that "prior to 1905 Frank Nemec was employed by Leggett and Myers Tobacco and after 1905 Frank Nemec established a Shoe Repair Shop on 25th Place." One of the letters from Pueblo appears to be addressed to Frank and implies that he is looking for work in Pueblo with the Filipeks. The 1923 Chicago lists Frank as a Jeweler. His 1945 Death Record indicated that he was a freight handler in the railroad business.

Frank Nemec

Frank died on October 15, 1945 at age 78. He had been in the hospital for a number of years. His home address at the time of his death was 2918 S. Parnell, the same address as in 1923. His obituary, shown below, establishes a key connection to his sister Katherine Filipek. He never left the old neighborhood and was still part of the St. John Nepomucene Community after more than 60 years.

NEMEC-Frank Nemec, late of 3003 S. Parnell avenue, beloved husband of Mary, nee Novak; fond father of Anna Dytrych, Edward, James, and the late Frank, brother of Catherine Filipek. Funeral Thursday at 8:30 a. m. from chapel, 3007 S. Union

avenue, to St. John Nepomucene. Internment Resurrection.
Calumet 2020.

Mary Novak

Mary Novak was born about March 1866 in Bohemia. She lived another 12 years after her husband and died on January 9, 1958 at age 91. Both Frank and Mary are buried in Resurrection Cemetery. It would be useful to determine if there are others in their family plot to help determine relationships.

Children

Their daughter Ann married a Dytrych, Frank died in 1928 at age 32 and is at Resurrection, Edward died on February 20, 1959 and is buried at St. Adalbert in Niles, Illinois. In 1978, I communicated with their son James who lived at 2549 W. 116th Place about our Nemeč genealogies. James provided many of the detailed dates of birth and death for the family. It is unknown whether there are any grandchildren or great-grandchildren of Frank and Mary Nemeč.

A little more about Frantisek Nemeč can be found in *Origins of the Nemečs* and *The James and Katherine Filipek Family* chapter.

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Closing

Why They Came

Americans are a nation of immigrants and occasionally we wonder who were my immigrant ancestors, where did they come from and why did they come. If you are in the Filipek, Nemec, Jana, or Sokolik lines, a review of the *Our Filipek Family Web Pages* can narrow down who your immigrant ancestors were and where they were from. The question *Why Did They Come?* is a little harder since generally the answers aren't written down. Helping our plight, though, is that people generally don't move from place to place without a lot of thought and the reasons they move tend to be just a few. Below is the information that has been collected for our Filipek, Nemec, Jana and Sokolik families.

1. **Jan Filipek:** Jan Filipek started it all for the Filipeks. Based on census and other sources, Cindy believes he came around 1869. He was born in 1856 so he would have only been about age 13. In the 1870 Census he is shown with his future wife's family, the Shimas in Montgomery, Minnesota. Discovery of the ship manifest would help clarify the date and whom he came with and could explain a little more on why he came at such an early age.
2. **Sokolik Family:** The Frank and Anna Sokolik and their three children Frank, John, and Theodore arrived in New York 7 May 1879 on the *Lessing*. They then proceeded to Minnesota. By June 1880, Jan and Francesca Filipek, the Sokoliks and the Janas were all living in Montgomery and the Sokoliks and Janas were living in the same household. It is unknown what prompted the Sokolik move to Minnesota, but contributing factors could have been that Montgomery was a strong Bohemian community, that favorable letters arrived in Kolence from Jan, and that they had a desire for something different. Certainly though Jan Filipek must have had something to do with it, given they settled in the same town. The move for the Sokoliks though is a bit unusual given that they had already secured their own farm in Kolence, they both had relatives nearby, they already had young children, and Frantisek Sokolik was almost 50 years old at the time.
3. **Katherine Nemec:** Katherine Nemec arrived first on 21 July 1882 at New York on the *Strassburg*. She then proceeded to Chicago. The reason for her travel was prompted by an unexpected pregnancy and a decision by either her or her parents that it would be best if she went away for a while. Katerina listed herself on the manifest as a servant, which is a way of saying that a family sponsored her to provide help in their home. One possibility is that Katherine's parents knew John and Theresa Novak in Chicago and contacted them to inquire about families needing domestic help. It is possible that they suggested the Dedinas, a family next door with a growing family. Thus it appears that a key reason James and Katherine Filipek, the two Sokolik boys, Katherine's brother Frank Nemec, the Janas and many others in our clan wound up in Chicago for generations had to

do with a long ago need for household help in Chicago and the need for a young girl to get away from her small town for a while.

4. **James (Vaclav) Filipek:** Rose Filipek recalled that James Filipek came about a year after Katherine, which would have been about the summer of 1883. The reason Rose indicated was to avoid the draft. And if he needed to get away from being inducted, Chicago was the logical destination since Katherine and his infant son were there. However, if he did come, it is known that he returned by the fall of 1884 as he attended an agronomics school in Bohemia and we have dated letters from there.
5. **Frank Nemeč:** Next, Frank Nemeč, Katherine Nemeč's brother came sometime around 1884. In 1884 Frank was just 17. This date was from the 1900 Census, but the dates are not always accurate and could be off a year or two. It could be that his parents sent him to help take care of his sister, or he could have traveled with James Filipek, both leaving together to avoid the draft.
6. **James (Vaclav) Filipek:** James Filipek arrived in the USA at Baltimore on 18 Jun 1889 on the Munchen. His decision to emigrate to the United States took over 6 years, and began in the summer of 1882 when Katerina Nemeč left for Chicago. During this period it is known that their son John was born in Chicago on 12 Dec 1882, that James and Katherine were married 29 Jan 1884, location unknown, and that he attended the Farm Management and Economy School in Hracholuskach, Bohemia in the fall of 1884. There is also a family recollection that he visited Chicago in 1883 for a short while. It is not clear where Katerina was during these years, although it is likely that she stayed in Chicago. It's difficult to speculate on the reasons for his decision to come since it's not known where Katherine was during this period, but certainly he decided farming wasn't for him as he never took up that profession in the United States. Perhaps the decision was as simple as that. That is he had returned to Bohemia to attend the Farm Management and Economy School followed by a life there. But perhaps Katherine continued to tell him of the opportunities in Chicago and somewhere along the line, losing interest in farming, he decided to join Katherine in Chicago and make his way there.
7. **Frank Jana:** Around 1890 after the death of his wife Katerina Filipek Jana, Frank Jana brought his five children to Chicago. They were: Katherine, about age 12, Frank, about age 10, Anna about seven, Mary about five and Elizabeth about age 1. He he remarried Annie Jars on 2 November 1890. John Sokolik about age 14 and Theodore about age 10 may have come also, or had arrived somewhat before. Most likely there was a family discussion on what to do with the Sokolik children and it was decided that the two Sokolik boys would stay with James and Katerina Filipek in Chicago. It is postulated that the youngest Elizabeth Jana was put into an orphanage in Chicago, possibly Holy Family Orphanage, a (nearby) parish orphanage for Czech and German children. Shortly

afterwards it appears that Frank took the four older children to Pueblo, where it is thought that he worked on the railroads.

8. **To Colorado:** Around 1895 James Filipek and his family traveled west to Pueblo where James boarded work crews and was a foreman for the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad and Katherine provided the meals for the crew. They returned to Chicago by late 1899 or early 1900. We have often wondered Why They Came to Pueblo and slowly the story is coming together. Through the Pueblo letters it was learned that the Filipeks never really intended to stay. For example, John Sokolik stayed in Chicago with a number of their possessions. In addition, James kept up his memberships in various Chicago fraternal organizations. Thus it is likely they used the opportunity to earn a better living and have a little adventure. But how did they choose Pueblo and how did they James manage the language barrier as foreman? At first, I thought the Filipeks saw an advertisement in a Chicago newspaper, it now appears that James and his brother-in-law Frank Jana kept in touch, and Frank probably let him know of the work and opportunity there. The language barrier may have been solved with Czech work crews as one of James' letters mentions Moravian and Slovak families. It is now suspected that the link to Pueblo could have been even earlier, perhaps with Frank Sokolik as Theodore suggests in the first paragraph of his My Life as I Lived It that his father traveled around a lot building the railroads. While not definitive, it's possible that Frank Sokolik worked for the railroads in Pueblo in the 1880s and introduced Frank Jana to it. Then in the mid-1890s, Frank Jana may have introduced James Filipek to railroading, and later James may have introduced his brother-in-law Frank Nemecek to it.
9. **1911 Return to Bohemia:** James (Vaclav) Filipek returned for a visit to his boyhood home of Kolence in the summer of 1911. It is thought that this was a nostalgia visit. James was 47 and perhaps at a reflective time of life. Katherine stayed in Chicago, probably to run the grocery store with her sons. There is some possibility that he knew he was not well and wanted to go back one more time, but except for being quite a bit overweight, he seems to look pretty good in the photos of that period. While there, he visited the Filipek Farm, saw his sister Rosalie and his brother Frantisek. On the return trip it is believed he brought the watercolors and a number of photographs.
10. **James F. Filipek:** James F. Filipek, son of Frantisek Filipek came in the summer of 1911 at age 27 with James on his return trip. It is not known why James F. Filipek came. Perhaps his father wanted to give him an opportunity in America and asked his brother to give him a start. As can be seen by many family photos, James became close to the new family. Later he worked for the Chicago Park District and received the moniker, James the Gardener, so we would all know which James we were talking about.
11. **1914 Return to Bohemia:** Katherine Filipek returned in the summer of 1914 shortly after James died. This appears to be a grieving trip back to be with relatives, cousins and old friends.

12. **Rose Skoblik:** Rose Skoblik came over in 1920 to help Katherine care for Mary Barrett. In 1916, Katherine's daughter, Mary died in childbirth after a caesarian. The child lived and Katherine at age 53 took on the responsibility to raise the new child, for her God's gift and a new sense of purpose after losing her husband and daughter in a two-year period. Given her age, she needed help and contacted her cousin Katerina Skoblik and they arranged for daughter Rose to come to Chicago to help. It is likely Katherine Filipek met the then 14 year old Rose on her trip back in 1914. Unfortunately, in 1916 war raged through Europe and Rose could not come until 1920.
13. **1929 Return to Bohemia:** Katherine Filipek, along with her son John Filipek and his wife Rose, their two children, and thirteen year old Mary Barrett returned in 1929. It appears they were part of a church group that visited Rome and then they went on to visit the Kandls in Kolence, and most likely Rose's family in Lomnice, and Katherine's cousins and family in Budejovice, Mazelov and surrounding areas.
14. **1930 Return to Bohemia:** John and Katherine Sokolik returned for a visit to Kolence in 1930. John was 56 and after hearing about the visit the previous year probably got nostalgic about visiting his boyhood home.

In summary, Jan was the first to start it all for the Filipeks in Minnesota, and the Sokoliks and Janas followed. However, it was the Nemecs that got the other branch of the Filipeks to Chicago. Through an old friendship with the Novaks and a chance event, many of us owe our Chicago roots, and really our existence, to two families we know little about. The result of these early decisions by Jan Filipek and the Nemecs started a gradual migration of other relatives and friends from the old country leading to a new way of life for them and us.

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Changing the Course of History

Perhaps the title is a little melodramatic, but there are a few events in our family history that if the event hadn't happened, many of us wouldn't be here. Sometimes it was an unexpected death, sometimes an unexpected child, sometimes the old country needed to recruit an army, sometimes an economic depression, and sometimes there was just the desire for a new kind of life.

Here are a few to ponder.

1. The key event that changed much for Vaclav and Katerina Filipek was the unexpected pregnancy of Katerina Nemeč in 1882. This occurrence started a chain of events that changed the lives of Vaclav, Katerina and their descendants. While an early child might not generally change a lot of things, it was her parent's decision to send her to Chicago as a result that changed everything. While Katerina appears to have returned to Bohemia, the experience opened up a new life in the "big" city to her. In a way she saw a wider world through her voyage and her stay in a vibrant area of a bustling and growing city. Through the experience she made many friends and developed a sense of life in a very different place than the small towns and farm where she grew up. After years of thought, Katerina and Vaclav finally decided to seek their destiny in the USA and they began it in the same neighborhood Katerina stayed in 1882 and with her old friends. Without the unexpected pregnancy and the somewhat severe decision by her parents to send her far away for a while, she and Vaclav would have had a very different life and so would we.
2. It appears that James followed Katerina to Chicago in 1883 to avoid the draft. It was in this period that Antonín transferred the farm to his sister, possibly on the presumption that his son would not be returning. While Vaclav did return to Bohemia, he did get a taste of Chicago. Perhaps the transfer of the farm to his sister and the memories of Chicago helped him to know that there were many different ways to earn a living and many different kinds of lives to live. Thus the threat of the draft appears to have had a considerable influence on Vaclav's destiny.
3. The unexpected deaths of Anna Sokolík (nee Filipek) and Katerina Jana also lead to a chain reaction of events. Without their deaths, the Sokolík boys would not have come to Chicago and most likely never met their future spouses. After Katerina Jana's death, it appears that Frank Jana put his youngest child in a convent in Chicago, arranged for the Sokolík boys to be raised by his wife's brother in Chicago and remarried. It then appears he took the remainder of his family to Pueblo, thus opening up a new path for James and Katherine Filipek a few years down the road.
4. The unexpected death of Mary Filipek in 1916, led to a request by Katherine Filipek to her cousin in Bohemia to see if her daughter Rose Skoblík would come to Chicago to help raise Mary Barrett. Because of the war, Rose was delayed until 1920. With time, Rose got

to know John Filipek, Katherine's son and Rose's second cousin and they were married about 1925. Without Mary's unexpected death, Rose would not have come and the destiny of John's family would have been very different.

5. The loss of Jim and Grace Filipek's home in Riverside in 1939 led to a series of events that changed many lives. Certainly it was traumatic for Jim and Grace and for Marge and Jeanne. However, in Jeanne's case it changed her entire life. Without the loss of the house, she never would have met Dorothy and Erma at Parker High School. The three were a clique in high school and later became lifelong friends. But more importantly Dorothy Koob who was dating Herb Jordan in the early 1940s, fixed Jeanne up with Herb's brother, Ed. As the story goes, Herb and Dorothy had it all figured out and Dorothy asked Jeanne and Herb asked Ed to come to an outing at Starved Rock State Park where a bunch of friends and cousins were going for the day. Dad drove his own car and brought cousins and friends and his guitar. Later that day Herb and Dorothy introduced them and the rest is history. And thus the loss of the Riverside home changed Jeanne and Ed's lives forever.

Thus young love, unexpected births, and unexpected deaths, and major move relocation decisions are part of what have led to us. We are not only the result of day-to-day family love and caring by each generation but also the results of a number of events that took place long ago, any one of which would have led to a very different family history.

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The End of an Era

Certainly the move to Chicago for Vaclav and Katerina Filipek and the Sokolik boys had to be an exciting and interesting change in their lives. For generations they their families had lived in small rural farming villages. Suddenly they were living in a rapidly expanding, vibrant, cosmopolitan melting pot. The neighborhood they lived in Chicago was only three miles south of the city center and in a heavily populated area. Chicago was in the midst of a great building and population boom and their neighborhood was very cosmopolitan. Next door neighbors were immigrants from England, Ireland, Bohemia, Germany, Sweden, and nationalities almost too numerous to count. Most were struggling with the language, new customs and a new way of life. But it was a vibrant society where jobs were plentiful, although not always high paying, and people from all walks of life intermingled at work and in the neighborhood.

Early on Katerina Nemeč and the Novaks would have witnessed the completion of the first cable cars down State Street to 29th Street in 1882. This would have provided easy access for excursions to the city center. In 1887 the city adopted a plan to install electric lighting on streets, and in 1890 the city began the planning for the World Exposition. One would guess that the Filipeks and Sokolik boys must have visited the famous Colombian Exposition in 1893, which was only a few miles from where they lived including the still standing Soldier's Field, the Field Museum, and the Art Institute. Later, they would have witnessed the building of the Elevated Train or the "L" as it worked its way south about a mile east of their neighborhood in the late 1890s. And if they were interested in politics, Chicago in those days was the place for Presidential Conventions. This was where Harrison was nominated in 1888, the first Democratic Convention was held in 1892, Roosevelt was nominated in 1904 and Taft in 1908. And of course there was baseball, an emerging sport at the turn of the century. In 1910 Comiskey Park, home of the White Sox opened at 35th Street just a half mile south of the old Filipek Grocery Store and about three-quarters to the east. It would have been a half-hour walk to the ballpark to enjoy an afternoon game in the sun.

The homes in the neighborhood were small cottages, bungalows, and flats. Many flats of the time held numerous and large families and often had only a few rooms per family. The homes were not well insulated and did not have central heat and generally had only one bathroom. My Grandmother Grace recalled that they would heat bricks to put under their blankets to keep warm at night. She also recalled that around 1900 all the streets were dirt except Halsted Street, which was paved and that in places the sidewalks were made of wood. Without refrigeration, people shopped everyday, but because of the housing density, corner groceries were plentiful and easy to walk to so the Filipeks prospered with their corner grocery at 30th and Emerald. Fresh meat was in good supply since the Chicago Stockyards were only a little over a mile to the south at 40th street, and with southwest breezes a certain odor in the wind. In fact, the whole area must have had a cacophony of sounds and

smells from the nearby Vanderkloot Iron Works, small factories, the Filipek Grocery, horses, street cars, coal and wood burning stoves, street vendors, fruit and vegetable carts, and the like.

The early 1890s were difficult for James and Katherine as they struggled with the new city, the new language, low paying jobs, three young children, two nephews and small apartments. But there were compensations, the excitement of the city and the neighborhood and many friends. Certainly it was very different than the small and peaceful farming communities they had come from where everyone knew everyone and everyone's business.

While the Filipeks and Theodore left Chicago and John Sokolik temporarily during their Colorado years, they were all back together in the same home upon their return to Chicago in 1900. Then around 1905, there was a small beginning in the breakup of the bonds and the neighborhood that would start a break with the past and eventually send them onto new journeys.

It all began after JK Sokolik married and decided to move about 5 miles south. He chose to live around 68th and Emerald, placing him a few miles south of the stockyards and into the fresh breezes from the southwest. While the area is heavily populated now, it likely represented more open land and homogeneous neighborhoods then. This area of Chicago was generally filled with only houses and stores, with industry, noise and smells only at the major mile and half mile intersections. In a way, it was an early preview of suburbia. And with the "L" nearby there was convenient access to the city for work and entertainment.

Theodore Sokolik married Lillian in 1904 and then moved in with her parents near 65th and Halsted, a few blocks from his brother John. Then Mary Filipek married and moved to 73rd and Union in 1912. Slowly the group was moving south and when James Filipek died in 1914, the boys and Katherine first moved west and then to Larry and Mary Barrett's home. So by 1916 all had moved from the original neighborhood and lived within a few blocks of each other in the new neighborhood. Here they would stay for a few years before Theodore made the decision after his second marriage in 1917 to move seven miles west to Riverside, a quiet and even more peaceful place. So while JK got the group moving south in 1905, Theodore got the group moving west a decade later. By 1921 Katherine had sold the grocery store and moved with her son John to Riverside, buying the house next to Theodore. By 1925 James and Grace Filipek moved to Riverside too so all except JK Sokolik eventually lived in Riverside in the 1920s and 30s.

The moves from the old neighborhood signaled the end of an era. It had begun with difficult decisions to leave Bohemia. There were constant livelihood struggles, risks, and hard work, but there were also close friends forged by the immigrant neighborhoods and the need to help each other succeed. Eventually an entrepreneurial life emerged for the Filipeks, first in the provision of room, board and meals for the railroad crews in Colorado and then the opening of their own grocery store in Chicago. Success brought them prosperity, a new life, better

neighborhoods, and a rich and interesting history for their offspring to discover.

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Bibliography

As follows is a bibliography identifying a few books that provide background about the life and times of our Jordan ancestors.

1. *American Pharaoh, Mayor Richard Daley: His Battle for Chicago and the Nation* by Adam Cohen and Elizabeth Taylor. The former Mayor Daley was born on May 15, 1902 at 3502 South Lowe which is just two blocks east and 5 blocks south of the old Filipek Grocery Store at 3001 S. Emerald. Chapter One describes Daley's neighborhood. While the Filipek neighborhood was further from the stockyards and had more of a mix of European nationalities within blocks, Chapter One provides some very good insights into the life and times of the near South Side of Chicago at the turn of the century.
2. *PUEBLO: A Pictorial History*, author information not available at this time. I have only a single page but it contains photographs and associated explanations.
3. *Montgomery: From the Big Woods to the Kolacky Capital*, 2nd Edition published 2000, a project of the Montgomery Arts and Heritage Center--1st Edition was a project of the Montgomery Bi-Centennial Committee. Contains pictures, maps, drawings and information about Montgomery in the late 1880s along with information about some early citizens.
4. *Jizni Cechy* by Josef and Marie Erhart 1970 has a view called "Dominican Monastery in Ceske Budejovice" which is identical to Antonín Filipek watercolor of the same subject.
5. *Ceske Budejovice* by Josef and Marie Erhart and Jiri and Vera Kuthan 1980. This book includes a view from across the river of the historic town center.

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1. I wish to thank Miroslav Kandl for his preservation of the original Filipek home in Kolence where he still keeps some of Antonín and Katerina Filipek's furnishings and paintings.
2. I wish to thank Vladimir Kandl for his extensive genealogy work. His work provided key information in identifying our distant Bohemian relations, including names, dates and who immigrated and who stayed. I also wish to thank Vladimir for his extensive research of the ownership of the Filipek Farm and genealogy going back to the late 1500s.
3. I wish to thank Cindy Filipek Johnson for her research and connections with the Filipek family in Kolence. She had an interest from a very young age and was thus able to preserve many stories and pictures that would have been lost if she had waited. Through her visit to Kolence in 1991 we know so much about the origins of the Filipeks and what the farm looks like. I also wish to thank her for sharing her *Jan Filipek Photo Collection*, writing stories, searching Czech history books, and her enthusiasm for all things Filipek.
4. I wish to thank Janice Filipek, Cindy's mother for her patient help in translating recent letters and old Filipek letters from the 1890s. Through her work we can see their words and get a feel for what they were like.
5. I wish to thank Tom Johnson, Cindy's husband for letting Cindy share with me numerous items in his grandmother's Wendell Phillips Scrapbook. Without these pictures, I would have had no idea of the immense size and everyday goings on of the school around 1910.
6. I wish to thank Terry Nelson for her intense interest in the Filipek and Nemecek families. She has done extensive document research both in Czechoslovakia and the USA and has brought out the detailed data we so badly needed to put together our Filipek story together. In this effort she looked beyond her own line to search for the roots and connections to the Sokolik, Jana, and Palecek families. I would also like to thank Terry for sharing her Grandfather Filipek's extensive picture collection and insightful old Filipek letters. Without these pictures and letters we would not know their faces or their thoughts. I also wish to thank Terry for her decision to invest in a careful restoration of Vaclav's Agronomic Journal.
7. I wish to thank Rose Skoblik for sharing stories with me in 1977, and allowing me to photograph her two Filipek Farm watercolors. She graciously offered to take them outside where I could see them better and to take better pictures. One of the watercolors is of the inner

courtyard of the Filipek Family Farm and a copy is now used for the *Our Filipek Family Introduction* web page. It is a beautiful watercolor, full of detail and a fitting image to begin the story of our Filipek history.

8. I wish to thank Rosemary Larson for sharing her Filipek stories and remembrances and for her continued preservation of the famous Filipek watercolors.
9. I wish to thank Jeanne Jordan for sharing with us stories about the Filipek past and for her preservation of the 3rd Filipek watercolor and Katherine's salt and pepper shaker.
10. I wish to thank Virginia Leonard for her stories and hints over the years. Long ago she shared the fascinating, *My Life as I Lived It*, a personal story by her father Theodore Sokolik which has done so much to sort out the early years in America of the Sokolik, Jana and Filipek families. Without this story we would be at a loss to know that the Janas and Sokoliks went to Minnesota and that the two Filipek sisters had untimely early deaths that changed their family history forever.
11. I also wish to thank John Leonard, Virginia's husband for his genealogy interest in the Sokoliks and being the e-mail link with Virginia.
12. I wish to thank Ted Curtis and his wife Celia Bouchard for sharing their Kolence pictures and stories with us. Without their photo of the church at Novosedly, I might never have realized the true location of the scene in the third watercolor.
13. I wish to thank Mary Fritz for sharing with us that she has a fourth watercolor and that she is the repository for numerous old letters and photos from JK Sokolik.
14. I wish to thank Marge O'Dette for her January 1977 letter explaining early Filipek and Nemecek history in Chicago and also hinting at the reasons that they came. Without her letter and setting up a visit with Rose Filipek in 1977 I would know far less about our Filipek heritage.
15. I wish to thank Barbara Halleybone for her extensive research on the Janas.
16. I wish to thank Tamara Cox for sharing color pencil sketches of the Filipek Farm drawn by Ing. Frantisek Kándl.
17. I wish to thank Scot for his photos and correspondence concerning the history of Kolence.

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Appendices

Filipek Water Colors

One of Antonín Filipek's passions was painting and we are fortunate that many of his painting still survive. There are about ten at the Filipek/Kándl Farm in the Czech Republic and at least three others in Lomnice and one in the USA. In addition, his grandson, Frantisek Kándl was also a painter and there are a number of his paintings in the USA with various Filipek descendants. Frantisek was the son of Jacob Kándl and Rosalie Filipek. He is formally referred to as Ing. Frantisek Kándl, the Ing., indicating a Professional Engineer.

Watercolors in Czech Republic

On a bicycle trip through the Czech Republic in August 2000, Ted Curtis met Vladimir Kandl. Vladimir is a great-grandson of Antonín Filipek. While visiting, Ted was able to take a quick photograph of a wall hanging of three more Antonín Filipek watercolors. These watercolors include a scene by a road and pond, a barn, and the entryway to the Filipek farm.

Cindy Filipek Johnson also recalls seeing about ten watercolors at the Filipek/Kandl farm when she visited in 1991. With time, perhaps copies of these will also become available for viewing.

Watercolors in USA

There are two watercolors in the Sarasota home of Rosemary Larkin. Rosemary is a great-granddaughter of Antonín Filipek. In early 2001, Vladimir Kandl indicated that both were done by Ing. Frantisek Kándl. One of the watercolors is of the inner courtyard of the Filipek Family Farm and a copy is now used for the *Our Filipek Family Introduction* web page.

Another watercolor is with Jeanne Jordan in Wheaton. Jeanne is also a great-granddaughter of Antonín Filipek. Her painting is of the old historic area in Ceske Budejovice. In the painting can be seen the old monastery by the river. Ceske Budejovice is the largest town in southern Bohemia and is about 20 miles west of Kolence. It took many years to identify the location depicted in this painting, but in 2001, Cindy Filipek Johnson matched it with a photograph in a picture book with scenes of Czechoslovakia. It is unknown if this town had any special meaning for Vaclav and Katerina Filipek. It was a major rail center and is just a few miles from the town of Mazelov where Katerina was born. This watercolor is signed *A. Filipek* in the lower left corner. Thus it is assumed that Antonín Filipek was the painter. It is also assumed that Vaclav Filipek brought this painting back after his visit to Kolence in 1911. It then passed to his son James A. Filipek and then to James' wife Grace and then to Jeanne Jordan. Eventually it will pass to me.

Mary Fritz of Iowa also has a watercolor. Mary is a gg-grandchild of Antonín Filipek. Her picture was originally in the possession of Theodore Sokolik. Writing on the back by Mary's mother, Eleanor states:

"Grandpa Sokolik's ancestral home town in Czechoslovakia-painted by a relative. "Grandpa Sokolik is probably Frantisek Sokolik, father of John and Theodore Sokolik. Since the painting is not signed "A. Filipek", the relative referred to is probably Frantisek Kándl, a cousin of John and Theodore Sokolik. John Sokolik had this painting in his home in Chicago, although it is not known when he obtained it. Perhaps it was during his 1930 trip to Kolence. Later the painting was inherited by Mary, his great niece who has it hanging in her home.

The four watercolors can be viewed in the *Kolence Scenes and Paintings Picture Collection*. The collection also contains additional watercolors by Antonín Filipek and Ing. Frantisek Kándl in addition to color sketches by Ing. Frantisek Kándl.

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Keeping in Touch

Descendants of Antonín Filipek began coming to the USA in 1869. Because of the distance and the times it was pretty hard for the families that came to keep in touch with those that stayed. Families did use the mails, but it was unusual for visits given the time needed for travel, generally months, and the expense. As our research progressed, however, we began uncovering evidence that there were a number of trips back to Bohemia along with visits to brothers and sisters in America. This chapter will review these old connections along with contemporary ones.

The Trips

In a conversation with Rose Filipek in 1977, she mentioned to me that Vaclav (James) Filipek returned for a visit about 1912. It took me many years to find a record of this but eventually I found his 1911 Passport Application for his 1911 trip. While we don't know for certain, this trip appears to be a nostalgia trip back to visit his sister Rosalie at the farm and his brother Frantisek the architect. In early 2000, Terry Nelson found a number of photos of this trip. On the return trip to the USA, James brought back James F. Filipek, Frantisek's son, whom we know as Jim the Gardener.

Through a bit of luck, we discovered that Jan Filipek of Montgomery, Minnesota visited his brother, James Filipek in Chicago sometime around 1907. This was found by identifying an unidentified man in a picture of James in his Chicago backyard. As the pictures for Jan and his family became available for our web page, it was noted that the unidentified person in the backyard picture was Jan Filipek. Thus there is evidence that Jan came to Chicago to visit his brother and most likely James, given his familiarity with traveling the rails, visited his brother occasionally in Minnesota.

Terry learned from her mother that the Filipeks took a trip back to Kolence in 1929. Katherine Filipek, her son John and his wife Rose and their two children, and Katherine's granddaughter Mary Barrett traveled that summer to Rome and to Czechoslovakia. In Kolence, they visited the Kandls at the old Filipek Farm and probably the Nemecs at their farm in Mazelov and also Rose's home in Lomnice. This trip was confirmed with a number of photos and also by Katherine's May 3, 1929 Passport Application. On her 1929 Passport Application, Katherine indicated that she had also traveled back in 1914 and later I found the May 18, 1914 Passport Application. The 1914 trip was the summer after her husband had died and Katherine stated on the application that the purpose was to visit relatives and travel in Czechoslovakia. Most likely she was heart broken over her husband's early death and wanted to visit and grieve with old friends and relatives.

Recent evidence suggests that James and Katherine Filipek and the Frank Jana family were in Pueblo at the same time. It is believed Frank Jana went there after his wife died, possibly as early as 1890. Perhaps after his wife died, Frank came to Chicago from Minnesota, dropped the Sokolik boys off and then went on to Pueblo. In 1894 or 1895, it appears that

James and Katherine Filipek and their children joined Frank and his family in Pueblo. There is also additional evidence that Frank Jana returned many years later to live in Chicago. So James Filipek and Frank Jana, two brother-in-laws appear to have kept in touch over many years.

In 1930, JK Sokolik and his wife visited the old Sokolik and Filipek Farms in Kolence. It appears that John and Katherine told him how great the 1929 trip was. John Sokolik's maternal grandfather was Antonín Filipek and his father was Frantisek Sokolik. There are other recollections of trips back by Katerina Filipek and John Filipek's wife Rose, although these have not been verified.

Rediscovery

Gradually as the first generation aged they began to lose touch. With World War II, it would have been impossible to visit and then the Russians came after the war. As I began my Filipek research in 1976, no one could tell me the name of the towns where the Filipeks, Sokoliks or Nemecs were from. I then began a long series of research trying to find it on a document, eventually finding it in the late 1980s on James Filipek's Passport Application.

Independently, Vladimir Kandl in Czechoslovakia and Cindy Filipek Johnson of Minnesota were also doing Filipek genealogy research in the 70s and 80s. In the early 1990s, Cindy connected with Vladimir and went for a visit to Czechoslovakia in 1991. In 1996, I found Cindy because of a FILIPEK surname interest she had posted in the Czechoslovakian Genealogy Society's surname database. Cindy and I discovered we were third cousins once removed and we began a series of information exchanges via letters.

In 1999, Terry Nelson found Dave via a FILIPEK surname match in *rootsweb* and we discovered we were 2nd cousins and our mother's grew up together. We both had high-speed e-mail and thus began an extensive exchange of information including Terry's discovery of about a hundred old photos, Vaclav's Agronomics Journal, and a number of old letters, many of which are in Czech.

To organize all the information, the Filipek Web Page was begun in April 2000. Then during the spring of 2000, Terry made contact with the son of James F. Filipek and also the offspring of Mary Barrett. Later Dave made contact with the Sokolik branch via Virginia Leonard, Ted Curtis and Mary Fritz. In August 2000, Ted Curtis used our research to know where the old Filipek and Sokolik farms were. With that knowledge, Ted and his wife Celia discovered not only the old farms but also Vladimir Kandl while on their bicycle trip from Prague to Austria. Later, after viewing the web page and seeing Antonín's watercolor, Mary Fritz told us that that she had a watercolor similar in style to the three other Filipek water colors. She also mentioned that she had numerous old photos and letters passed down from JK Sokolik. Hopefully someday we will be able to add some of this information to the web collection.

In January 2001, Terry found Barbara through an on-line bulletin board listing for JANA, which is a variant of Janu. After a month of exchanges

and verification, there is now a link to the original Frantisek and Katerina Jana (nee Filipek) family of Minnesota.

So it has been a circle of discovery. Our forebears came as immigrants over a hundred years ago. They strove to stay in touch but with the passage of time, the links began to fade. But through our wish to understand who we were and where we came from, a period of rediscovery and learning about the past has taken place. Through our joint endeavors we have discovered so much about our origins and our immigrant families, and by sharing we have all shared the joys of seeing their watercolors, their pictures, their faces, their homes, their letters and their stories.

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Letters

Marge O'Dette's Letter to Dave Jordan - January 25, 1977

As follows are excerpts from a letter from Marge O'Dette to Dave Jordan. Marge O'Dette's grandparents were James and Katherine Filipek. Her parents were James and Grace Filipek.

January 25, 1977

Dear David,

I had Ohn Xerox all of the papers you sent me, including your personal letter to me. My cousin, Susie Filipek Larson, was here on Sunday. The two of us went over all these papers and questions--her Dad, Uncle John Filipek was about 10 years older than my Dad--(Grandpa Jim). Susie knew some things I didn't, for instance, our Grandmother, Kathryn Nemetz, came to America first--in about 1883. She was unmarried, and pregnant, and Uncle John was born in Chicago. She had Nemetz relatives in Chicago. After going over some of the birth dates in the various papers, Susie guessed that James Filipek didn't come to America for several years- -(1889?)...

Susie says she's sure her Mother knows about the years in Pueblo, Colorado--They weren't miners--perhaps in the grocery business there, too.

Theodore and John Sokolik were nephews of Katheryn and James Filipek

Their mother was a sister to James Filipek and when she died, our Grandmother raised them.

James Filipek, the Landscape Gardener, we always called Jim, the Gardener. He and Uncle John Filipek and Grandpa Jim were first cousins-- their fathers were brothers.

Don't know where in Bohemia Katheryn Nemetz lived, or where the two of them were born.... Our great grandparents (Filipeks) never came to America. David, this is a tremendous undertaking

Sounds just fascinating. Actually, it's like Detective Work, isn't it?!? Afraid my contributions are mighty meager, but will try to collect more from Aunt Rose, this coming summer. Carry on, and good hunting!!!!

Aunt Marge

Notes

1. The letter was transcribed with some minor spelling and grammar changes to improve readability.
2. Susie is the daughter of John Filipek.
3. The surname Nemeč is sometimes spelled Nemetz in the USA.

4. It is presumed John Filipek's baptismal sponsors, John and Theresa Novak, were the relatives Katherine stayed with in Chicago in 1882 and 1883. It is unknown how the Novaks are related to the Nemecs, if at all.
5. Rose Filipek told me in late 1977 that the Filipeks were in the railroad building business in Pueblo. See notes from that visit.

Associated Documents

There are a number of additional documents on [Our Filipek Family Web Pages](#) and [Filipek and Nemec PDF Downloads](#). These are listed as follows to provide an inventory.

Additional Stories

To date there is only one companion story to *The Filipek Story* that is published separately on [Our Filipek Family Web Pages](#), but collected together at [Filipek and Nemec PDF Downloads](#). Various other companion stories by other authors are integrated into *The Filipek Story*.

The following stories and articles are available at [Filipek and Nemec PDF Downloads](#) as individual pdf documents with titles and file names as listed below.

1. *The Filipek Story*
File: Stories_Filipek.pdf
Summary: *The Filipek Story* provides a written history of the origins of our Filipek and our Nemec family. As part of this story there are many appendices and sections.
2. *Recollections of the Filipeks*
File: Recollections_Filipek.pdf
Summary: *Recollections of the Filipeks* provides a collection of short anecdotes and memories of our Filipek family.

Filipek Records Collections

To discover our Filipek and Nemeč family history, much research took place and many documents were obtained. The following documents include transcriptions, organized listings, and occasionally scans of original documents that helped to define our history and develop the various stories.

Each document in its own way provides a next level of detail about what they were doing and when and where. As an example, the *Historical Filipek Family Addresses* might at first glance appear to be an uninteresting document, but perusal of the chronological addresses for each individual provides a fascinating look at where they were, what jobs they held, and how their lives changed and improved as time went along.

These documents are available at [Filipek and Nemeč PDF Downloads](#) as individual pdf documents with titles and file names as listed below.

1. *Historical Filipek Family Addresses*
File: Addresses_Filipek_Historical.pdf
Summary: Contains chronological address listings for various families in the Filipek/Nemeč line.
Linkages: Vaclav Filipek married Katerina Nemeč; their son James Albert Filipek married Grace Vanderkloot; one of their daughters married a Jordan. Also contains addresses for Martin and Katerina Nemeč and various descendants.
2. *Filipek Family Census Records*
File: Census_Filipek_Historical.pdf
Summary: Contains census transcriptions for various families in the Filipek/Nemeč line.
Linkages: Vaclav Filipek married Katerina Nemeč; their son James Albert Filipek married Grace Vanderkloot; one of their daughters married a Jordan.

Additional Letters

Within the Appendix section of *The Filipek Story* there is one transcribed letter. This section contains a listing of additional letters which are either available on *The Filipek Story* web page for viewing or as downloadable pdf files at *Filipek and Nemeč PDF Downloads*.

On-Line Letters

The following letters are available on the [The Filipek Story](#) web page for viewing. When there, scroll to the bottom. With time these items will be converted to pdf documents.

Filipek Letters from Colorado

1. *James (Vaclav) Filipek's Pueblo Letter to Frank Nemeč -Jan 28, 1896*
2. *James (Vaclav) Filipek's Pueblo Letter to John Sokolik - (Oct 27, 1896 - Page 1*
3. *James (Vaclav) Filipek's Pueblo Letter to John Sokolik - (Oct 27, 1896 - Page 2*
4. *Katherine Filipek's Pinon Letter to John Sokolik -Feb 27, 1897*
5. *James (Vaclav) Filipek's Dawkins Letter to John Sokolik - Mar 18, 1897*
6. *John Filipek's Dawkins Letter to John Sokolik - Dec 23, 1898*
7. *James A. Filipek's Letter and Sketch to John Sokolik - circa 1899*

Jana Post Cards

1. *Katie Jana's Massachusetts Postcard to Mary Filipek - November 11, 1908*
2. *Mary and Lizzie Jana's Chicago Postcard to Mary Filipek - March 25, 1909*

John, Mary and James's 1909 Post Cards to their Parents

1. *Mary and John Filipek's Niagara Falls Post Card to their Father - about July 15, 1909*
2. *John Filipek's Thousand Island Post Card to his Mother - about July 15, 1909*
3. *Mary Filipek's Massachusetts Post Card to her Parents - July 28, 1909*
4. *James A. Filipek's Montgomery Post Card to his Father - July 27, 1909*

Theodore Sokolik Letters

1. *Theodore Sokolik's Letter to Theodore Roosevelt - circa 1910*

John Sokolik Post Cards

1. *J.K. Sokolik at French Lick Springs - c1905-1915*

Filipek Letters from Kolence, Czechoslovakia

1. *James (Vaclav) Filipek's Seventin Postcard to Katherine -Summer 1911*

James A. Filipek's WWI Post Cards

1. *James A. Filipek Post Card to John Sokolik - 12/3/1918*
2. *James A. Filipek Post Card to John Sokolik - December 26, 1918*

F. Kandl's Post Cards

1. *F. Kandl's Lomnice Castle Postcard to John Filipek - 1937*

PDF Downloads

These letters are available at [Filipek and Nemeč PDF Downloads](#) as individual pdf documents with titles and file names as listed below.

1. None at this time. Check back in future years.

Memorabilia

This section contains a listing of various memorabilia which are either available on *The Filipek Story* page for viewing or as downloadable pdf files at *Filipek and Nemec PDF Downloads*.

On-Line Memorabilia

The following memorabilia items are available on the [The Filipek Story](#) web page for viewing. When there, scroll to the bottom. With time these items will be converted to pdf documents.

1. *Vaclav Filipek's Journal - circa 1884*
2. *Vaclav Filipek's Railroad Ticket Collection from Bohemia - 1884-1886*
3. *Business Card Transaction - circa 1885*
4. *Vaclav Filipek's Traveler Card - 1896*
5. *Katherine's Salt and Pepper Shaker*
6. *Kate Sokolik's Ring*
7. *James and Katherine Filipek's Colorado Postcard Collection*

PDF Downloads

The following memorabilia items are available at [Filipek and Nemec PDF Downloads](#) as individual pdf documents with titles and file names as listed below.

1. None at this time. Check back in future years.