

STEINBACH, KATE. INTERVIEW

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Foreigners--Bohemians

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INTERVIEW with Mrs. Kate Steinbach.  
By Gertie GoodFoz, Field Worker.

I was born in Austria, now known as Czecho-Slovakia, in 1852. In 1877 we left Austria, my husband, Joe, and three boys. The oldest boy was 6 years old, the next one was 3 years old and the baby boy was 2 weeks old. We were seventeen days crossing on the ocean. There were a lot of us foreigners on the ship. I could not speak English, and the food we ate were not so appetizing. In the old country we did not use any salt in our butter, and the butter we got was plenty salty. We threw our butter away, but we noticed the Polish put their butter in a bucket. My sister-in-law was more inquisitive than I was and asked them why they were saving their butter. They told her, after they got in America they would work the butter over and then use it in their cooking and for seasoning their cooking.

We landed in Baltimore and stayed there just long enough to change our money into the American money. For every American dollar we got we paid \$2.42 of our old country money. We left Baltimore and got on a freight train and rode to Pittsburg and then got on a fine train when we got in St. Louis.

We left St. Louis after staying there three days and came to Aurora, Missouri. We lived in Aurora, Missouri, for seven years and then moved to Culver, Kansas, and from Kansas we moved here to Oklahoma, in 1899. We traveled in a covered wagon and it took us four days to make the trip from Kansas to Oklahoma.

In 1900 the Catholic church was built. My husband Joe helped build the church, he also helped build the jail, and the grade school.

Father Herring was our first Priest of our Catholic Church; he is now living in Tulsa.

Mrs. Steinbach is a Bohemian, and has lived here in Pawnee since 1889. She has many friends among the Indians, whites and colored people. She could not speak a word of English when she first came to America, but has mastered the English language, and speaks it with her quaint accent. She is an active church member of the Catholic Church. She is a widow, living with her daughter.