

REMINISCENCES OF JOHN SEFCIK, PRAGUE, OKLAHOMA.

I came to Nebraska in 1879. In Omaha I heard that land in the west can be had for nothing, which surprised me very much, for I had never heard of such a thing. In company with another Bohemian I went to Grand Island, where we met John Rybin, who assured us that there was plenty of land in Valley County and that he will take us there for five dollars. We accepted his offer and I feel thankful to him to this day. Then we returned to Omaha, where Mr. John Rosicky helped to find work for me. We stayed in Omaha six months and then had to go on the homestead. In that time I earned some money, bought a team and wagon ^{at} an auction, and when I had bought a stove and 100 pounds of flour, my money was gone. I prepared a dug out, but it was poor shelter from the rain. Later I built a sod house. The first year I planted corn into the virgin soil, but it did not ripen it was soft and when we shelled it, we had to leave it in heaps. My wife dried it in the oven, then ground it in the coffee mill and made porridge of it. That was our whole fare for two months. I prepared a load of wood, thinking to sell it in town and buy flour, but could not get to town on account of the snow. After we had more land under cultivation, times grew better. I bought another quarter section and am sorry I did not sell it when I could have got a hundred dollars more for an eighty than I gave for the whole quarter, for hard times followed. We had hail, wheat brought only 35 cents per bushel, hogs two and a half cents a pound, corn was cheap, and I could not get out of debt. In 1892 I moved to Oklahoma, where we had hard sledding for a few years, but now we are satisfied.