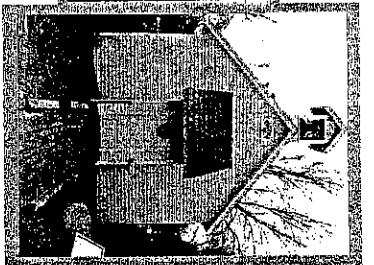
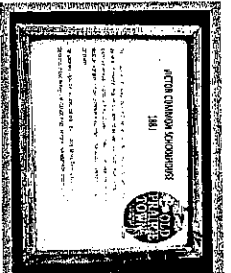


It is generally believed that John Stach and family were the first Czechs to settle in Shawnee County. In 1871 he homesteaded 160 acres in Northwest Shawnee County near Soldier Creek. As new Czech families moved to the area they were employed by Mr. Stach until they were able to acquire their own homesteads.

The community expanded rapidly in the 1880's. The residents convinced family members in Bohemia, Moravia and Slovakia to come to Shawnee County, often sending money to pay for the trip. Many were skilled craftsmen such as Blacksmiths, Shoemakers, Barrelmakers or Watchmakers with names such as Cerny, Olejnik, Rezac, Kratina, Kovar, Hejtmánek, Doležilek, Macha, Zlatník, Hladký, Immeschuh, Hromada, Horak and others. Still, most were farmers.

A cemetery was plotted in 1893. A Minister came from Blue Rapids for Church services. The Moravan Church bought the Olive Branch United Brethren Church from the Presbyterians in 1923.



Victor #101 School at Ward-Mead

There were 2 one-room schools in the heart of the Czech settlements.

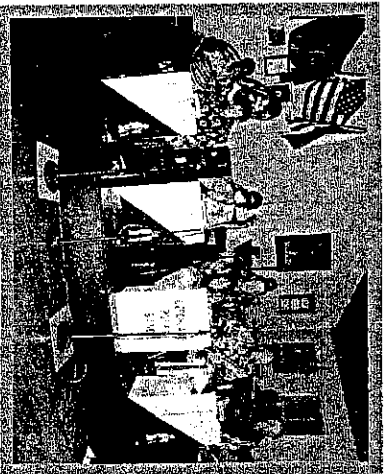
Stach School currently located at the Kansas State Historical Museum just west of Topeka. Victor #101 School is located at Ward-Meade Park in Topeka.

The Moravan Lodge was chartered in 1903 and had meetings at the Victor #101 School. In 1909, the Moravan Lodge built a hall/community center across the road from Victor #101 school at 86th and Crawford Road. The lodge was expanded in 1966.

The Hall has served the community for over 100 years by holding Polka Dances, Family Reunions, Birthday Parties, School Reunions, Business Seminars, Weddings/Wedding Receptions, Funerals and Customer Appreciation Parties.



Kolache sales at Tall Corn Festival



J.D. Parr Czechland Polka Band performing at Moravan Lodge

The Lion is the Czech Emblem which signifies: "Strength and Courage"

