

## TAPE LOG

October 7, 1980

Collector: Jim Leary  
 Informant: Jerry and Irene Novak  
 Moquah, Wisconsin

Note: The numbers in this log indicate serially the 40 or so songs recorded by Jerry Novak. Accompanying an occasional song ~~xxxxxxxx~~ will a parenthetical reference like the following: (CAZ, #26). This reference indicates that the song appears, designated by the number given, in the songbook Česko-Americký! Zpěvník (see my description of this volume in my fieldnotes).

1. Slovan Jsem (I am a Slav) (CAZ #19?) Plays the tune.
2. Ku Praze (The Road to Prague) Plays the tune.

JN reckons the two previous songs probably dance songs.

JN talks about coming to U.S. at age seven, in 1902.

Singing in the home and among Bohemians in Cedar Rapids, Iowa and among the Slovaks in Moquah

JN reckons these songs "mostly a hundred years old."

3. Andulko Safaro<sup>va</sup> (Annie the Farmer's Daughter) Plays the tune.  
 Here and in other cases, JN's hand is hard to read and I may have misspelled the title.

Annie, the farmer's daughter, you haven't got your geese at home ...  
 JN\* gives a translation.

JN discusses a song to be sung later about a soldier wearing a white coat.

4. Safaro<sup>va</sup> Koni<sup>v</sup> (Kone<sup>v</sup> (2sp?)) (The Farmer's Horses) Plays the tune.

The farmer's horses, they drink pure water,  
 Be careful my boyfriend, so they don't kill you.

"You can say that almost all these songs are country songs, the peasants are singing them." The previous song seems to be about a poor young farmer in love with a rich farmer's daughter.

5. Nèstast<sup>ny</sup> Safaruu Domeceau (The Farmer's Unhappy Home) Plays tune.

A farm boy passes his girlfriend's gate. She doesn't recognize him and doesn't open the gate. Later she asks forgiveness.

6. Loucení, Loucení (CAZ, # 219) (Parting) Plays tune.

On a young man's difficulty in parting from his sweetheart.

7. ~~Vy hvězdičky~~ (You Little Stars) Plays tune.

You are so little when I gaze at you/  
 You shine on me when I go home at night from  
 my sweetheart.

Talks about playing harmonica with his father, how he can't read notes.  
 On his brief education.



## 8. Koline (Kolin/a city)

Plays tune.

Kolin, you are on a beautiful level plane . . .  
It's a song from a war.

JN heard most of these at first on the accordion. He heard many of these around here (Moquah).  
Talks about house parties with dancing in his living room.  
Dances: mostly polkas and waltzes.

## 9. Už Jedou Vojáci (Returning Soldier)

Plays tune.

On the song's lyric structure, lack of plot,  
many floating verses.

Here comes the soldiers back to Bohemia,  
For each one a father or mother is waiting . . .  
But I am already dead, the flowers are growing  
over my grave.

## 10. The song goes on to describe how the soldiers were buried in a big pit and had lime poured on them, and this is what the emperor gives as a reward.

Jestě jsem Nevyrostl (I am not yet Grown Up)

Plays tune.

A child is being rocked in the cradle and already  
is being told how he will be a soldier, wearing a  
white coat in the emperor's army.

Sings in Bohemian.

11. Kdáž Jsem Sel V Praze (The Market Place at Prague)  
Given as Kdyz jsem sel po Praze in CAZ, p.244.

Plays tune.

At the market place in Prague I met a black gypsy woman,  
And I asked her, "Tell me, black gypsy woman, which girl  
is true."

They used to dance to that quite a bit.

## 12. Sil Jsem Proso (I Planted Millet) (CAZ, #115).

Plays tune.

I planted millet on my land, but I'm not going to harvest it.  
I love a beautiful girl, but I'm not going to have her.  
To sow and not to reap, to love and not to take. . .  
Then he said he took a walk in the park on a beautiful day,  
And then he saw her in the arms of another man.

Jerry sings the first  
verse in Bohemian, but  
in a version differing  
from the one in the book.

13. Trenčin Trnava (She Baked Bread)  
"A humorous one."

Plays tune.

A housewife takes all week to bake bread, but  
when it's finished: On the bottom of the loaf  
the water ran out, on the top of the loaf a mouse  
ran out.

It goes on "through seven verses." "Trenčin" is  
a city in Slovakia.

Sings in Bohemian.

Note: Jerry's Bohemian titles don't always match up



with his English ones. The title here actually means Trencin river in Bohemian, but Jerry gives an English title referring to the song's plot.

14. <sup>✓</sup>Jetelicku <sup>✓</sup>Jeteli (Clover Blossom) (CAZ, # 201). Sung in Bohemian after number 15.  
JN skipped this on his list.

15. Ja Jsem Malý Mysliveček (I'm a Little Gamekeeper<sup>e</sup>) Plays tune.

They took care of the woods and the game and whatnot:

I'm a little gamekeeper, I can barely carry my gun.  
I put it over my shoulder and I go to the woods.  
I came there one morning, the dew was still on,  
And I sat under the tree and I listened to the blackbirds . . .  
(And then it turns to love, says Jerry).

We used to dance to that too.  
On the peasant and anti-military themes of many of the songs. JN talks about his father and grandfather and their lives as peasants.

Returns to number 14. It's a wedding song . . .  
My little clover, clover, I will take a walk with you  
to the courthouse.

#### THE FIRST TAPE OF THE SESSION RUNS OUT

14. <sup>✓</sup>Jetelicku <sup>✓</sup>Jeteli Plays tune.

(number 16 has no song with it on JN's list)

17. <sup>✓</sup>Pod tim Nasim Okenečkem<sup>✓</sup> (Beneath our Window) Plays tune.  
This may be #.123 in CAZ.

Apparently JN learned this from his father; it involves a ~~xxx~~ peasant who was tricked into enlisting into the Army for 12 years by soldiers at a tavern. He laments that he will be parting from his sweetheart. JN tells a story of first hearing this song.

Can't recall words.

18. Karolina (a woman's name)

JN skipped this one.

19. Boleraz (A Green Juniper Tree) Plays tune.  
"A Slovak Song."

Come my boyfriend and stay at our place . . .  
"a love song."



20. Vy Ůci Černé (Your Black Eyes) Plays tune.

"Your black eyes, how false they are."

JN digs out his songbook. "There are very few of the songs there that are in that that I know . . ."

21. JN skips Adamku Nas (Our Adam) (CAZ, # 170).

22. Vy Rezmici (You Butchers) Plays tune.

You butchers, what is your custom?  
When you buy something, you call out  
"How much for that ox?"

The words are immaterial because it's a dance; they waltz around and then they clap their hands.

23. ~~Kanonyry~~ (The Cannoneers/The Guard) Plays tune.  
(Here I focus both microphones on JN)  
This is an army song about the emperor's guard,  
a picked group of men.

They complain the first day I'm on guard,  
the next day I picket, the third day I'm laboring.  
And when I come home and the corporal brings the news,  
I got to exercise.  
Sometimes I don't even have a straw to lie on,  
And when I go to bed I put my pack under my head.

24. Dudaček (The Bagpiper) (CAZ # 255??) Plays tune.

Is it true or not that a bagpiper is floating  
down the stream, dead?  
A blue eyed girl said, who will play for us now?  
There's another who will take his place.

JN discusses bagpipers in the old country.  
Reveals his youth in a town, his father's comments  
on old village dances and the "aping" of Viennese  
dances in the town.

25. ZaKukala (The Cuckoo Called) Plays tune.

This is about a woman who was betrayed:  
A cuckoo called in the woods,  
And my girlfriend cried in her room.

We discuss Harriet Pawlowska's Merrily We Sing.  
JN talks about the Polish people.  
On the difficulty of making English translations.

26. Padá Rosieka (The Dew Falls) Sings in Bohemian.  
"A children's song," a lullaby. Plays tune.

Talks about his sisters' singing.



## 27. Straka Skáče (The Magpie)

Plays tune.

Magpie, skipping around the garden,  
Looking for a grain.  
Maiden, do not do that to my heart.

Sings in Bohemian.

JN was intrigued by the metaphoric shift:  
"See how they cross over, right that quick."

28. Milovalá Jsem (I Loved only Once in my Life)  
A woman complains that her boyfriend broke her heart.

Plays tune.

Sings in Bohemian.

## 29. Přiletěla Vrana (A Crow lit on a Bush)

Plays tune.

Three crows land, one by one, on a bush and  
sing a song for a lad.

Sings in Bohemian.

30. Ach Není (There is Nothing Here)  
(CAZ, # 169?)

Plays tune.

There is nothing here that gives me any joy.  
What gave me joy is down with the water by  
the stream . . .

Always trying to give me what I do not want,  
They're trying to give me an old woman (i.e., "rich")  
(next, apparently, a woman would sing)  
They're trying to give me to a widower with half a heart,  
One half is with his wife in the ground, the other  
half he can give to me.

Apparently this is a humorous song of complaint  
in which young people complain about fixed marriages.  
I'm not positive, but I think this wedding  
related song differs from number 30; Jerry entered into  
it without warning and it doesn't appear to be on his  
list.

## END OF TAPE TWO, BEGIN TAPE THREE

## 31. Listěčku Dubový (Little Oak Leaf)

Plays Tune.

Verse not translated

Sings in Bohemian.

32. ~~Hodinky~~ Hodinky (The Clock in Hodinky)

Plays tune.

The chimes say that we should say goodbye,  
But I'm not afraid, when the hour comes,  
We can get married.

Sings in Bohemian.

(And the girl says)  
Get married with God's blessing,  
Get a girl who's equal to you.  
You will take the one who's equal to you,  
But a poor girl like me you will forget.

JN talks about house parties, with Phil Johanik playing, at his house  
from the 20's til the early 40's. Plenty singing and dancing.  
On Tom Johanik's band. On Matt Radosevich's Croatian connections.  
On possible Polish contacts in Ashland; JN mentions Joe Lupa who  
was raised on the east side of Ashland.



- Under our linden tree, on a little bench,  
My sweetheart and I used to sit.  
The birds were singing and the leaves were shivering  
When I kissed her on her cheeks.



41. Neni Lepsi Jakó Zjara

Plays tune

Nothing nicer than in the spring.  
The grass is always green,  
the grove is also in bloom,  
the lad is leading around his girlfriend.  
The girl is crying because she has to go to the convent.  
I don't like the convent because there are no boyfriends  
there.

Sings in Bohemian.

And I like to dance and I like the boys.

Mentions that his mother sang too.

42. Červená Ružička (My Red Rosebud) (CAZ, # 104).

Plays tune.

Little rosebud, why don't you blossom out.  
Because you, my boyfriend, do not come to our place.  
If I would come to your place, you would cry more,  
And you would be rubbing your eyes with that little  
red handkerchief.

Sings in Bohemian.

43. Leti, Leti Ptak

(A Bird Flies Over the Grove)

Plays tune.

A bird flies over the grove, calling to my sweetheart.  
Johnny's calling his sweetheart to come out.  
She didn't come out she sent a messenger to tell him  
that she is too busy.

This is in CAZ, #217.

THE END OF JN'S SINGING

We talk about how he remembers songs.

On the Moquah Dancers (Here I will beginning numbering topics anew).

1. How the group got started, their relationship with the Dept. of Rural Sociology in Madison, their early dances, their first program, Jerry's role as the Director or organizer. Appearances in Ashland.
2. Costumes mostly Slovak. (Here Irene Novak joins the conversation.) Some of the costumes (Maliska and Joe Johanik) were original, some were made here based on earlier patterns, beautiful embroidery. Irene talks about making costumes. We look at the pictures of dancers in the history of Moquah.
3. Irene (nee Lunda) was born in Moravia. Here family came to Oklahoma to coal mine. Discussion of her family. They come to Moquah after reading an ad in a Bohemian paper.
4. On the source of the group's dances. "The old people taught the young ones." Discussion of the csardoz and how it is danced.
5. Jerry and Irene mention those who remain of the original dance group and how they ought to revive their performances. Tom and Elmer Johanik are mentioned prominently.
6. On the old people's dances: the waltz, the polka, and special dances. Discussion of the Butcher's dance and Annie in the Cabbage patch.



7. On Phil Johank's accordion playing, his smooth style.
8. Irene says European music is either religious, military, or naughty.
9. On weddings. Different customs because people came from different villages. Irene recalls some specific events. On stripping parties, and the songs and stories told then.
10. Jerry talks about his job at 14 in the packing house in Cedar Rapids.

END OF TAPE FOUR

11. The dance group didn't emerge from a Sokol. Each ~~xxx~~ person contributed what they knew.
12. Irene tells a story about her mother and another woman arguing about whose costumes were prettiest. Every fox praises its own tail.
13. On the cessation of the original Moquah dances. On the Dramatic Club and Tom Johank's involvement. On the 4-H club's dances.
14. Discussion of handkerchief dance, Annie in the Cabbage Patch, and the Shepherd's dance.
15. Discussion of food at holiday times. Moquah Pioneer Days.
16. Discussion of local haystacks.

THE INTERVIEW ENDS