

## **Arrival of First Czechs in America - by State**

### **A Tentative Listing**

**Compiled by Mila Rechcigl**

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As a part of my historical research on Czech and Slovak Americans, I had begun gathering information on the first Czechs and Slovaks, who entered and resided in a particular State of the Union. An example of this is Augustine Herman (1621-1685), a native of Prague, Bohemia, who came to New Amsterdam (the present New York City) in 1640.

In the States to which Czechs and Slovaks immigrated in large numbers, such as New York, Illinois, Ohio, Texas or Nebraska, this has not been too much of a problem. The difficulty comes with other States in which relatively a few Czechs or Slovaks live, because very little, if anything, has been written about them. I am referring, in particular, to the following States: Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Hawaii, Idaho, Indiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Montana, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Oregon, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Washington and Wyoming.

A tentative listing, which I have assembled, is given below. It is limited to Czechs because, so far, I did not find any Slovaks who came to any US States prior to the arrival of Czech immigrants. To be specific, the listing refers to visitors and immigrants from the historic Czech Lands, irrespective of their ethnicity. Since Lusatia was an integral part of the Kingdom of Bohemia through the 17<sup>th</sup> century, and Silesia, through the 18<sup>th</sup> century, I have also included in my listing the Lusatians and the Silesians who came to America at that time. The present listing is now being extended to various Provinces of Canada and to individual countries in Latin America.

To my knowledge, a listing like this has not been attempted, which further underscores its tenuousness. Nevertheless, it should be pointed out that the material has been carefully researched and, for most of the States, the information is probably correct. It is to be expected, however, that new information may be uncovered with reference to those US areas that don't abound with Czech or Slovak population. Should you come across such information, please, send it to the following address: [svul@comcast.net](mailto:svul@comcast.net).

Beside the persons' names, also include the year of their birth and death, place where they were born and the year when they arrived in America and when they entered the particular State. If you would also send a short bio of these individuals, that would also be welcome. Besides the Czech or Slovak natives, you can also include persons with Czech or Slovak roots who removed to the above States from other US regions or States.

**Table 1: A Tentative Listing of the Arrival of First Czechs in America by State**

State	Arrival	Settler/Visitor	Birth - Death	Location
Alabama	1760	Matthieus Treisnek	ca 1735-?	Prague, Bohemia
Alaska	1791	Thad. Haenke	1761-1817	Chřibská, Bohemia
Arizona	1694	Jiří Hostinský	?-?	Moravia
Arkansas	1823	Abraham Block	1780-1857	Svihov, Bohemia
California	1766	Wenceslaus Linck	1736-1790	Nejdek, Bohemia
Colorado	1860	Libor Šlesinger	1806-1893	Ústí nad Orlicí, Bohemia
Connecticut	1650s	Augustine Herman	1621-1685	Prague, Bohemia
Delaware	1659	Augustine Herman	1621-1686	Prague, Bohemia
District of Columbia	1660s	Augustine Herman	1621-1686	Prague, Bohemia
Florida	1822-33	Julia Kopman	ca 1816-	Bohemia
Georgia	1734	George Boehnisch	1695-1722	Kunín, Moravia
Hawaii	1857-58	Jindřich Blažej Vávra	1831-1881	Brno, Moravia
Idaho	1859	Lewis Fleischner	1829-1890	Lhotka, Bohemia
Illinois	ca 1820	Joel H. Bolerjack (orig. Bullitsckek)	1800-1849	Stokes Co., NC, of Bohemian ancestry
Indiana	1792	John G. Heckewelder	1743-1823	Bedford, Engl., of Moravian ancestry
Iowa	ca 1848	Ignaz Vogel	ca 1814-1886)	Bohemia

Kansas	aft 1848	Philip Wohl	1823-1895	Karlovy Vary, Bohemia
Kentucky	by 1817	Anthony Philip Heinrich	1781-1861	Luby, Bohemia
Louisiana	1721-22	Balthazar Menthe	1682-1727	Opava, Moravia
Maine	1887 <sup>1</sup>	Carl August Schenk	1856-1924	Moravia
Maryland	1659	Augustine Herman	1621-1686	Prague, Bohemia
Massachusetts	bf 1692	John Henry Burchsted	1657-1721	Silesia
Michigan	1781	David Zeisberger	1721-1808	Suchdol, Moravia
Minnesota	1854	Jacob Wiener	1824-1910	Spálenec, Bohemia
Mississippi	aft 1832	Anthony M. Dignowitý	1810-1875	Kutná Hora, Bohemia
Missouri	1816	Wolf Block	1765-1835	Švihov, Bohemia
Montana	1860	Louis Gans	1840-1904	Neustadt, Bohemia
Nebraska	1854	Joseph Francel	1824-1911	Svojšice, Bohemia
Nevada	1858	Abraham Klauber	1831-1911	Zdeslav, Bohemia
New Hampshire	1900-10 <sup>2</sup>	Ferdinad Zecha	1860-1930	Bohemia
New Jersey	1659	Augustine Herman	1621-1686	Prague, Bohemia
New Mexico	bf 1885 <sup>3</sup>	Herman John Goth	1854-1886	Bohemia

<sup>1</sup> There were probably other Czechs who came to this State earlier.

<sup>2</sup> See footnote 1.

<sup>3</sup> See footnote 1.

New York	1640	Augustine Herman	1621-1686	Prague, Bohemia
North Carolina	1585	Joachim Gans	ca 1560-?	Prague, Bohemia
North Dakota	1871	Matěj Lorenz	1844-?	Znosim, Bohemia
Ohio	1771	David Zeisberger	1721-1798	Suchdol, Moravia
Oklahoma	1889 <sup>4</sup>	Anton Caha	ca 1852-1927	Klučov, Moravia
Oregon	1852	Louis Fleischner	1827-1896	Lhotka, Bohemia
Pennsylvania	1660s-70s	Augustine Herman	1621-1686	Prague, Bohemia
Rhode Island	1640s	Augustine Herman	1621-1686	Prague, Bohemia
South Carolina	1735	Johann Peter Varn	1719-1774	Varnsdorf, Bohemia
South Dakota	1862	Vaclav Ployhart	1844-af 1920	Bohemia
Tennessee	ca 1810	John Moser	1787-1860	Moravia
Texas	1833	Anthony M. Dignowitý	1810-1875	Kutná Hora, Bohemia
Utah	1854	Josef Francel	1824-1911	Svojšice , Bohemia
Vermont	1875	Albert J. Novak	1848-?	Austria <sup>5</sup>
Virginia	1660s	Augustine Herman	1621-1686	Prague, Bohemia
Lewis Co., Washington	1875	Anton Hylák	1837-1907	Bohemia
West Virginia	1734	George Michael Wildfang	1723-1803	Bohemia
Wisconsin	1842	Cyrenus M. Postle	1805-1868)	Friendship, NY, of Bohemian ancestry

<sup>4</sup> See footnote 1.

<sup>5</sup> Needs to be checked.

Wyoming	1854	Joseph Francel	1824-1911	Svojšice, Bohemia
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