

Who are the German Bohemians?

*From the German-Bohemian Heritage Society Webpage.
Used with the permission of Robert J. Paulson, Founder and Research Chair*

German-Bohemians are people who have either lived in or have ancestry in the outer rim of the Czech Republic. Once this region was part of the Holy Roman Empire of the German nation, when people moved and settled freely in Central Europe. When the nation of Czechoslovakia was created in 1919 out of the former Austrian crown colonies of Bohemia, Moravia and Slovakia, the German-speaking outer rim came to be known as the Sudetenland, named for the terrain that separates Germany from Bohemia.

After World War II, three and one half million of these Germans from Sudetenland were forcibly expelled from their homeland and "re-settled" throughout Germany. These too, are German-Bohemians, however, they prefer to be known as Sudeten-Germans.

Beginning in the early 1850's, and increasingly throughout the balance of the 19th century, there was a large chain migration to Minnesota and Wisconsin. Motivated by a string of immigrant letters, hundreds of immigrants joined their families and brought with them elements of the culture, crafts, traditions, music and values that characterize the descendents of these German-Bohemian immigrants to this day.



*The map above is included with permission from Border People: The Böhmis (German-Bohemians) in America
written by Ken Meter and Robert Paulson.*