

happened. James won the suit.

James and two of the older boys, Daniel and Atwell, began to build on the land James had claimed. James created the studding boards he used in the walls. The roof was clapboard shingles, hand-made. Most of the frame work was up when two men came to the house. They told James they had staked the land first and he would have to get off. James had propped his gun nearby. He raised the barrel, pulled back the hammer, and gave orders for the men to get off his land. They left immediately.

The house was completed enough to let the family move into it in the summer of 1895. The roof was not complete over the kitchen area but James laid some boards upon the rafters to keep out part of the rain and Dora held an umbrella over her head while she cooked on rainy days. Just before Christmas, the last of the shingles were delivered and the roof was finished. The floor was made from Oak boards with big cracks between each board. Three years later, James laid a pine floor hauling lumber from Sparks in a wagon about 19 miles. (That house is still standing.) He hauled his staple goods from Payson once a year about 10 miles. On October 17, 1896, another son was born (Roy Jennings.)

The first school was held in 1897 in the Brewer home. It was a three month term. The teacher boarded with the Brewers; they and the families of each of the students paid her salary.

The family was saddened by the death of little Eva. Her death was caused by pneumonia. On October 8, 1899, the family welcomed another son (Floyd Otis.)

Before any church buildings were built, the Brewers had church in their home, inviting their neighbors. Daughter Mae played the pump organ. Reverend Charlie Cansler and John Boles would come by and preach once in a while.

The Brewer family continued to grow with the birth of Grace Jane on July 9, 1902. Some of the older children were leaving the nest: Daniel, Atwell and May all had married, and in 1905, Leona married.

In 1907 when Oklahoma became a state, the Brewer family went to Rossville to celebrate with friends and neighbors.

Dora wanted to move to town so James took sons, Roy and Otis with him to Chandler to look for a place. He chose a place at the north end of main street right where the highway split. This later became Atwell's home. Here Leatha Margaret was born. She became ill with pneumonia and died April 11, 1908.

City life was not too good for this large family. In December of 1908, they moved back to the farm.

Another child left the nest when Ray married April 4, 1909. Everett Franklin was born July 26, 1910.

In 1915, James became ill. He had to have surgery. He only lived a year after that.

Their son Roy Jennings married Johnnie McCowan and lived in the community around the homestead the rest of his life.

## The Brezny Family

By Jerry and Ann Suva

(From information compiled by Cecelia (Pospisil) Hull.)

Frantisek and Johanna Brezny were probably married in 1878 or 1879 in the village of Zabreh, the district of Mistek, archdiocese of Olomouc, in the country of Moravia, which is located in present-day Czechoslovakia, but at that time was ruled by the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

Their children were: Hermina (Minnie), born April 1880; Arnost (Ernest), born August 1881; Karel (Charley), born March 1883; Frantiska (Francis), born December 1884; Marie (Mary), born 1886; and Alois (Louis), born June 1888. Frantisek worked as a smelter in a steel factory (foundry) in Zabreh. He died when Alois was eighteen months old.

Johanna worked as a maid in a boarding house and saved for the day she could join her sister in America. We have a document which has been translated from Czech dated May 6, 1894, called a "Certificate of Domicile," stating that "Johanna Brezny, a maid or day laborer, date of birth - 1852, status widow, established domicile or residence in Zabreh." We assume this was necessary before she could get a

passport and secure passage to come to the United States.

In 1895 Johanna took her six children and began her journey to America. She could not speak English but was able to make arrangements to work as a cook in the galley of the ship to pay for her and her children's passage. A copy of a part of Ernest Brezny's immigration papers on file with the Immigration and Naturalization Service in El Paso, Texas, shows that they emigrated from the port at Bremen, Germany, on the ship "Lampas."

Zabreh is located in the mountainous area of northern Czechoslovakia not far from the Polish border. This was quite a distance for Johanna and the children to travel getting to Bremen, Germany. They sailed from Bremen to New York and then went by boat to Galveston, Texas, their port of entry into the United States. They arrived in Galveston on May 23, 1895. From there they journeyed to Hallettsville, Lavaca County, Texas, where Johanna's sister Louise and her brother-in-law, Albert Sykora, were farmers.

About 1897 Johanna married Frank Harabis, a farmer living in the Hallettsville area, who also emigrated from Bohemia. Sometime after June 1900, Frank Harabis died of a respiratory disorder and soon after his death 1901-1903, the family moved to Dent township, near Prague, Oklahoma Territory. Johanna lived until December 1930, when she died in Prague, Oklahoma, at the age of seventy-eight. She is buried in the Catholic Cemetery, Prague, Oklahoma.

Hermine married Gus Suva. Their children were Frank, Emil, Josephine (Suva) Pospisil, Charlie, and Wesley. Arnost married Ann Ruzicka. Their children were Emil, Christine (Brezny)



Ernest Brezny; Francis (Brezny) Ruzicka; Anna (Ruzicka) Brezny; Rosie (Ruzicka) Brezny; Mamie (Ruzicka) Brezny; Louis Brezny; Herminia (Brezny) Suva; Mary Brezny Engle; Mike Engle.

Pospisil, Mamie (Brezny) Ogburn.

Karel married Rose Ruzicka. Their children were Frank, Josephine (Brezny) Sestak, Charley, Jr., Henry, and Helen (Brezny) Gregory. They live at Prague.

Frantiska married Lawrence Ruzicka. Their children were: Lawrence, Ernie, Anna, Georgia and Joe.

Marie married Mike Engles. Their children were Mike, Jr., Martha, and Mary.

Alois married Mamie Ruzicka. Their children were Joe and Ed.

### Henry Alonzo Bridge Family

*By Mary Bridge McMichael*

Henry Alonzo Bridge, born December 16, 1875 in Mt. Moriah, Missouri, and Grace Ellen (Stoner) Bridge, born August 10, 1880 in Mt. Moriah, Missouri, were married in Mt. Moriah, Missouri. Their dream was to come to Oklahoma. Henry's Uncle Eli had come to Chandler, Oklahoma, three years earlier. They started out with all their belongings in two covered wagons, a baby daughter three months old, Vera, and their dog, along with a hired driver for the second wagon. Forging the Verdigris River was quite an experience. The water was very swift and about three feet deep and rocky. Out in the middle of the river, the hame strap broke on the collar, letting the tongue fall loose in the water. Henry had to climb out on the tongue

to calm the horses and was able to bring the hame strap out of the water and fasten it back around the collar, getting his family out to safety.

Coming through the main street of Tulsa, they found several hogs following the farmers' wagons loaded with corn, and the hogs were rooting up Main Street. After leaving Tulsa, the first night out, in the middle of the night, they heard Indians on their horses going around and around their campground. Mother Bridge said, "They were whooping and hollering and we were really scared," but they did not bother them. They had been warned by other campers along the way about the Indians.

Henry and Grace purchased their first 160 acres from a homesteader that had made the run in 1891. It was located three and one-half miles southeast of Chandler. The first thing was to cut wood for their one-room log house. Then Henry chopped wood and hauled it to Chandler to make a trade with a merchant for a kerosene lamp. He told the merchant it was a deal if he would fill it with kerosene. The trade was made. Wood at that time was selling for one dollar and twenty-five cents a rick. Later, they purchased two other 160-acre farms close by. At their death, they still owned the three farms, also land in Missouri.

They were the first family to purchase a surrey in Chandler. This surrey was used many times for funerals.

Having peach orchards on his farms,

Henry formed a small cannery using his own labels in Chandler and shipped to Kansas City. He also bought up the local peaches and shipped them out by carloads to market in Kansas City. He remarked many times that he had to go to Prague and Stroud to get enough ice for the peaches he was shipping to market.

In the 1920s, they owned and operated a feed store at Tenth and Manvel. Henry was elected County Commissioner for Lincoln County in 1922, serving one term. His health caused him to move his family to Colorado where he purchased a 1,700-acre ranch, known as the Kendrick Ranch in the small town of Kendrick, Colorado. Their youngest son, Henry Alonzo, Jr., was killed while he lived on the ranch. In 1932, Henry moved his family back to Chandler and remained in Chandler for the remainder of their lives. Henry died September 17, 1957 and Grace Ellen died January 29, 1970.

Their family consisted of Vera Marie, born August 29, 1897, married Harry Slusher, Chandler and had one son, Henry David, died October 26, 1955, and later she married Harry Ricketts, died 1962; Ward Jennings, born March 23, 1899, died 1969, married Margaret (Meredith), Davenport; Vola Mae, born May 30, 1901, married Albert Allen, Chandler, and later married Carl Simonton, Davenport; Veda Victoria, born November 13, 1903, died 1968, married Glen Key, Chandler, died 1985, and had one daughter, Helen Grace, born April 13, 1927; Russell Marion, born November 22, 1909, died date unknown, married Vida (Standfill) and had two children, Janet Sue and Russell Marion, Jr.; Marth Lois, born August 19, 1915, married Gordon Conley Isenberg, Kansas, and had one adopted son, Larry, and twins, Richard and Robert; Mary Elizabeth, born March 2, 1918, married Ual J. McMichael, Chandler, and had one daughter, Rosemary.

All members of the family belong to the First Christian Church in Chandler.

### The Family of Leonard Bridge

Leonard Bridge was born February 27, 1870, in Harrison County, Missouri, died in Chandler, Oklahoma, on December 12, 1933. On December 3, 1891, he married Martha Ellen (Downey), daughter of John and Irene (McGown) Downey, born in Harrison County, Missouri. Martha Ellen died September 14, 1957, in Chandler, Oklahoma.

Mr. Bridge was of the type and character of the men who have made the State of Oklahoma one of the outstanding states. Only a few months after his



*Henry Alonzo Bridge and Grace Ellen (Stoner) Bridge. Picture taken at Seven Falls, Colorado Springs, Colorado.*