

ZOUZALIK, FRANK SR. FAMILY

Frank Zouzalik Sr. was born in Vienna, Austria, on July 29, 1877. He was a brick-layer by trade and as a young man he became a master in

his chosen profession — especially in all forms of masonry work involving brick, rock and plaster.

His most famous work was completed in 1927, at the Hostyn Catholic Church. During the 1920's, Frank Zouzalik Sr. traveled to Hostyn by horse and buggy and lived with the parish priest for periods of approximately six weeks at a time. The grottos that grace the grounds of Hostyn Catholic Church vividly portray his European experience in brick and rock work and has attracted many tourists to the village of Hostyn.

Frank Zouzalik Sr. is responsible for much of the brick work on homes and businesses in the Flatonia, Schulenburg, Moulton, Shiner, Cistern, and Praha area. He was especially gifted in the construction of fireplaces and during the period 1902 to about 1955, he continued his masonry work throughout the area. His fireplace at the old "McKay Home" in Flatonia, is made from rocks that were collected from all 48 states that represented the Nation at that time.

The Zouzalik family began its history in America quite by accident. Frank Zouzalik was serving in the Austrian-Hungarian armed forces in alternate years and practicing his brick-laying profession at other times. These were difficult days in Vienna during that time and he learned to speak German in the Army. His sister, Antonio had already immigrated to the United States and married a Petru. They lived in Praha.

Antonio (Zouzalik) Petru had a very close friend in Cecelia (Kocian) Bacak — a family living in Praha at the time, but who had purchased a farm approximately four miles northwest of Flatonia and was planning a move. Cecelia's husband, Rudolph, had traveled by horseback from Praha to the farm (a distance of about 7 miles) and was caught in a rainstorm on his return. He was thrown from his horse and later developed pneumonia. He died in 1898. They had one son, Julius, and Cecelia was carrying another child at the time. Cecelia (Kocian) Bacak was introduced to Frank Zouzalik Sr. by his sister, Antonio, and the relationship began by mail. There were many relationships that had similar origins during these very difficult days of the early immigrants to America.

There were accidents and disease that resulted in many deaths. These early Czechs were seeking farm land similar to their European ancestors, and this land had to be cleared using very primitive tools. This is what Cecelia and Rudolph Bacak had intended to do with their new property. The story is told that Cecelia offered to pay for Frank Zouzalik's ocean voyage to America if he would come and marry her. Through correspondence, she even obtained his measurements and had a suit ready for him upon his arrival.

Cecelia (Kocian) Bacak's history began with her birth in Lipnik, Moravia, on July 2, 1874. She immigrated to this country at age 18 with her parents, Joseph and Barbara Kocian. Barbara Kocian was born on January 1, 1842, in Lipnik, Moravia, and died May 2, 1920. Joseph Kocian was born on May 15, 1842, in Lipnik, Moravia, and died on May 28, 1920. Both are buried in the Sacred Heart Catholic Cemetery in Flatonia. Cecelia (Kocian) Zouzalik died unexpectedly on August 1, 1942.



Cecelia (Kocian) Zouzalik emigrated to the United States in 1892, at age 18, accompanying her parents, Joseph and Barbara Kocian from Lipnik, Moravia. They settled in Praha, Texas.



Frank Zouzalik Sr. is pictured above in 1927, after the completion on the beautiful grottos at the Hostyn Catholic Church. He was a master brick and rock layer from Vienna, Austria, and emigrated to the United States in 1898. His masonry work is well known throughout South Central Texas.

Cecelia's first child, Julius Bacak, was born on December 6, 1896. The child that she was carrying at the time of Rudolph Bacak's death, was her daughter, Lillie (Bacak) Syrinek, who was born on June 20, 1898. Frank Zouzalik Sr. married Cecelia (Kocian) Bacak in 1902. The family then moved to their new farm northwest of Flatonia and began clearing the land. Seven additional children were born to this union. One son, Emil, died at a very young age and is buried in the Praha Catholic Cemetery.

The eight remaining children in the Zouzalik family attended Albrecht School northwest of Flatonia. Frank Zouzalik Sr. was a trustee of the school. The children, along with Cecelia, farmed the land and Frank Zouzalik Sr. continued his love of masonry work. He was an expert with his mules and not only used them on the farm but also to lift mortar and brick to second story buildings via a pulley system.

Julius Bacak married Vlasta Baca and they were blessed with one child, Nieta, prior to her untimely death on December 10, 1932. On June 22, 1936, Julius Bacak married Lena Metocha of Cistern, Texas. They had seven additional children: James, Raymond, Cathleen, Alice, Glenn, Lee Jay, and Doris. Julius worked in various grocery stores and later owned and operated the "Red & White Grocery Store" in Flatonia for many years. He died on February 21, 1978, and is buried in the Flatonia Sacred Heart Catholic Cemetery. Lena (Metocha) Bacak still resides in Flatonia.

Lillie Bacak was born on June 20, 1898, and married Albin Syrinek. To this union were born three sons: Alfred, Raymond, and Adolph. The family farmed approximately three miles northwest of Flatonia. Albin Syrinek died on March 20, 1958, and Lillie (Bacak) Syrinek died on January 18, 1980. Both are buried in the Sacred Heart Cemetery in Flatonia.

The first son of Cecelia and Frank Zouzalik was Edward (Eddie) Zouzalik, who was born on December 15, 1903. He married Julia Zurovec of Cistern on November 8, 1927, and they had two children, Victor and Ervan. Over a 60-year period, Eddie Zouzalik worked at Lee's Garage, Flatonia Post Office, Flatonia State Bank, and the last 16 years as Fayette County Commissioner. He also served as a City Councilman and as Mayor of the City of Flatonia for 8 years. Julia (Zurovec) Zouzalik died on February 13, 1971, and is buried in the Sacred Heart Cemetery in Flatonia. Eddie Zouzalik married Laura Johnson on December 27, 1971. He died on October 21, 1990, and is buried in the Sacred Heart Catholic Cemetery in Flatonia.

Frank J. Zouzalik Jr. was born on July 1, 1901. He married Agnes Florus of Cistern on October 8, 1929. They had three children: Daniel, Larry, and Eugene. Frank Zouzalik Jr. spent his entire life as a motor grader operator for Fayette County and several large highway construction firms. In addition, he raised cattle as a hobby on a small ranch located across the road from the Zouzalik homestead northwest of Flatonia. Frank Zouzalik Jr. died on April 10, 1991, and is also buried at Sacred Heart Cemetery.

Albert W. Zouzalik (nickname "Sleepy") was born on June 5, 1908. He married Emma Hrcncir of Moulton, Texas, on November 29, 1942. He first worked at the Arnim and Lane Mercantile store and later owned and operated a pressing shop until he was drafted into the Sea Bees in World War II. He fought on many of the Pacific Islands. They later made their home in San Antonio, where he worked in construction and spent most of his life working for the Federal Government on military bases. Albert Zouzalik died on May 29, 1978, and is buried in the Sacred Heart Cemetery in Flatonia. Emma (Hrcncir) Zouzalik lives in La Grange, Texas.

Annie Zouzalik was born on April 28, 1905, and married Rudy Albrecht in 1922. They had no children. They lived in San Antonio, where Rudy worked at a sash and door manufacturing plant. Upon retirement, they moved to Shiner, Texas. Annie died on December 13, 1968, and Rudy died on July 30, 1983. Both are buried on the Flatonia City Cemetery.

Agnes Zouzalik was born on February 2, 1915, and married Roy Bunton of Gonzales on November 29, 1942. They also lived in San Antonio, where Roy Bunton was employed as a salesman for several different firms. They had two children: Barbara and Kenneth. They still reside in San Antonio.

Millie Zouzalik was born on March 7, 1912. She married her first husband, Lonnie Ling, and they lived in Edna, Texas, where he was employed by the County. He died and was buried in Edna. Millie (Zouzalik) Ling married Byron Elder on September 11, 1951, and they live in Portland, Texas. They have four children: Douglas, Wayne, Terry, and Kenneth.

Frank Zouzalik Sr. moved his family from the farm into the city of Flatonia in 1925. He continued his brick-laying profession for many years — living to a ripe old age of 95. He died on December 29, 1972, and is buried next to his wife, Cecelia (Kocian) Zouzalik, in the Sacred Heart Cemetery in Flatonia.

The Zouzalik family has been very active in the Flatonia community over the years. They have been especially involved in activities at Sacred Heart Catholic Church, City Government, Chamber of Commerce, Rotary, and a host of other volunteer projects. The grandchildren and great-grandchildren of Frank Zouzalik Sr. are scattered from Maryland to Texas.

Like so many other immigrants from the "old country" before them, this family history was the result of an unexpected death and correspondence back to Europe by relatives and friends of the family. Like the Zouzalik's, most of these immigrants came to this country with one trunk and very little money. The author of this story is in possession of the trunk that accompanied Frank Zouzalik, Sr. from Vienna, Austria, to Praha,

Texas, before the turn of the century. It will always be filled with family treasures and handed down from generation to generation.

by Ervan E. Zouzalik