

# Stanislaus B. Mateske

## Entrepreneur Extraordinaire

On the popular television series *Shark Tank*, entrepreneurs pitch their products or services to multi-millionaires hoping for an investment and a partnership that will launch their businesses to dizzying heights. Some of the guests on the show are bouncing back from hardship or earlier failures, and some come from an immigrant heritage that was propelled by the American Dream.

The October 21, 1945, edition of the *La Crosse Tribune* marked the passing of a La Crosse man and entrepreneur who had overcome both his immigrant roots and great personal hardship on his way to becoming a successful businessman.

Stanislaus Bernard Mateske was born in [West Prussia](#) on September 10, 1873.<sup>1</sup> Although a section of the Prussian (German) empire at the time, the region of his birth was historically part of Poland. After World War II, all of what was West Prussia was incorporated into Poland. The majority of people living there in the 1800s spoke German.<sup>2</sup> But the mother tongue for the Mateske household was Polish. Stanislaus Mateske's formal education ended at the sixth grade.<sup>3</sup>

From 1881 to 1890, there was a great wave of emigration from West Prussia, mostly to the United States.<sup>4</sup> The Mateske family was one of those making the voyage to the United States in 1885, when Stanislaus was about 12 years old.<sup>5</sup> By 1891, the family was living at 700 Kane Street in La Crosse.<sup>6</sup>

Like so many immigrants with limited education and English as a second language, manual labor on farms and in factories was the only way for them to make a living in the United States. In 1891, Stanislaus Mateske and his father, Joseph, were both laborers.<sup>7</sup> Stanislaus worked at the [La Crosse Plow Works](#), 519 North 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, owned by Albert Hirshheimer, for several years. Then he worked as a mattress maker for [Tillman Brothers](#).<sup>8</sup> Fred and William Tillman had a wholesale and retail furniture business, as well as a funeral parlor, at 116-118 South 4<sup>th</sup> Street.<sup>9</sup>



700 Kane Street as it appears today

(Jeff Rand, 2020 February 9)

Joseph Mateske, father of Stanislaus, died on September 15, 1903.<sup>10</sup> His widow continued to live at 700 Kane Street, as did his daughter, Frances, who worked at the [La Crosse Rubber Mills](#).<sup>11</sup>

Meanwhile, their son Stanislaus, had married a woman named Eva around 1900. Their first child, a daughter, was born in 1901. Stanislaus and Eva Mateske made their home at 839 Gould Street (now 829 Gould Street, an empty lot) in La Crosse.<sup>12</sup> Their second daughter, Stella M., was born on July 6, 1905.<sup>13</sup>

Over a five-year period when he was in his 30s and 40s, Stanislaus Mateske's life seemed to fall apart.

On March 15, 1913, his 12-year-old daughter, who had been an invalid since she was one year old, died in their home on Gould Street.<sup>14</sup>

Stanislaus Mateske had left the Tillman Brothers business and had become a mattress maker for [Advance Bedding](#) company in La Crosse. Advance Bedding was located at 327 Front Street.<sup>15</sup> It was while working for Advance Bedding that Mateske was injured on the job and left unable to work.<sup>16</sup>

Had this happened after September 1960, Stanislaus Mateske would have easily qualified for Social Security Disability because of his inability to work. But this happened to him in 1916-1917, and the socioeconomic safety net was much smaller half a century earlier.<sup>17</sup> His recourse at the time was to go before the [Wisconsin Industrial Board](#) to ask for compensation.<sup>18</sup> He had a hearing to present his case on February 15, 1917, at the La Crosse County courthouse.<sup>19</sup> At the same time, Mateske also petitioned the

La Crosse County Board of Supervisors for aid. His request was referred to the “committee on Poor and Insane and County Physician.”<sup>20</sup> That committee decided that La Crosse County would grant Mateske, along with eleven others who had also petitioned, \$100 per year for their disabilities.<sup>21</sup> That was not enough to even begin to support himself, his wife, and daughter.

Unable to work at a regular job and needing to generate income, Mateske started selling popcorn to employees at the La Crosse Rubber Mills. His business grew to the point that Mateske opened a small confectionary and grocery store at 1101 St. Andrew Street in 1918.<sup>22</sup> The 45-year-old Mateske had moved back into his mother’s house at 700 Kane Street by this time.<sup>23</sup>

Then there was another personal tragedy. On July 22, 1918, his 47-year-old wife, Eva Mateske, died of “complication of diseases.” Their daughter, Stella, was just 12 years old.<sup>24</sup>

In 1919, it appears that Stanislaus Mateske had moved out of his mother’s house on Kane Street and was living above his store on St. Andrew Street, one block away.<sup>25</sup>

The Mateske store was usually referred to as a confectionery, meaning it sold candy or pastries. His store was one of 22 establishments on the north side of La Crosse where one could buy locally-made [Funke’s candies](#).<sup>26</sup> But Mateske also carried other items for sale. He had a Class B liquor license to sell intoxicating beverages.<sup>27</sup> He was a dealer for Thomas J. Webb coffee.<sup>28</sup> There were 25 places just on the north side in in 1922 that sold [Tri-State Ice Cream](#), and Mateske’s store was one of them.<sup>29</sup> When the Independent Ice Cream Co., Inc. started production of its “smoother and richer” product, Mateske’s store became an outlet for the frozen treat.<sup>30</sup> In the 1930s, the store was a dealer for Pure Food Ice Cream made in La Crosse.<sup>31</sup> Adults and children alike could buy Wrigley’s Gum at Mateske’s store.<sup>32</sup>

# Funke's

**CANDIES ARE RENOWNED FOR THEIR GOOD EATING.**

**ASK FOR THEM AT YOUR NEAREST DEALER.**

## SOUTH SIDE

Abatto, R. V., 8th and Adams.  
 Andre, M., 1129 West Ave. So.  
 Besch, W. A., 1107 La Crosse St.  
 Boerner Drug Store, 301 Main.  
 Bodega Club, The, 120 So. 4th.  
 Bogert, J. H., 1531 Johnson.  
 Boma, M., 1015 Pine St.  
 Borman News Co., 510 Main.  
 Bruha, A. J., 913 Adams.  
 Beutler Grocery Co., 1403 So. 7th St.  
 Dittman, W. L., 335 West Ave. No.  
 Elks' Club, 5th and State.  
 Fuler, Chas., 12th and State.  
 Fritz, H. J., 828 So. 3rd.  
 Gees, A. M., 948 Mississippi.  
 Ginsky Bros., 1524 So. 10th.  
 Goodenough, W. H., 1911 M. C. Road.  
 Gorder Drug Store, 309 Pearl.  
 Grams, W., Groc., 628 So. 3rd.  
 Grant, Sam., 109 So. 5th.  
 Haddad & Shaheen, 227 Main.  
 Hammes, J. J., 901 Adams.  
 Havelick, Jos., 1422 So. 7th.  
 Hebbard & Co., 4th and Main.  
 Noeschler Bros., 5th and Main.  
 Hoff, M., 119 So. 3rd.  
 Hosely Cigar Co., 313 Main.  
 Ikert & Son, 2506 So. 3rd.  
 Jaekel, J. G., 1100 So. 6th.  
 Keizer, L. A., 935 West Ave. So.  
 Kerr, Mrs. J., 604 So. 6th.  
 Kindley, John, Drugs, 810 Market.  
 La Crosse Club, 121 No. 5th.  
 La Crosse Confect. Co., 229 Main.

La Crosse High School, 15th and Cass  
 La Crosse Normal, 17th and State.  
 Lapitz, Wenzel, 1035 Tyler.  
 Lavaque, L. E., 608 Main.  
 Lee Confectionery, 1001 So. 5th.  
 Levy News Stand, 605 Main.  
 Levinstein, N., 1534 Badger.  
 Linker Hotel, 318 Main.  
 Longueville, Paul, 514 So. 9th.  
 Mattie, L., 207 No. 3rd.  
 Miller & Son, H., 706 Jackson.  
 Monsoer, Mike, 223 No. 3rd.  
 Mueller & Zielke, 1307 Market.  
 Muehr, Peter, 1316 Farnam.  
 Murray, J. B., 1001 La Crosse.  
 Muth & Son, M., 2017 West Ave. So.  
 Newburg, Jake, 314 So. 3rd.  
 Norby, A., 1804 Jackson.  
 Olson, Arthur, 1903 La Crosse.  
 Peikert & Ferris, 1935 M. C. Road.  
 Rennebohm, A. C., 1103 La Crosse.  
 Rexall Drug Store, 518 Main.  
 Roehrer, A. & L., 1520 Jackson.  
 Roth, Geo., 535 Main.  
 Schlicht, H. E., 1608 So. 7th.  
 Schmauch, Henry, 1101 Market.  
 Shaheen, Geo., 128 No. 3rd.  
 Sheldon, A., 204 So. 4th.  
 Sill, O. H., 1514 Vine.  
 Skaff, S. A., 116 No. 3rd.  
 Spettle, Chas., 329 No. 4th.  
 Stannard & Gautsch, 114 So. 4th.  
 Steinmetz & Hart, 325 Main.  
 Stoddard Hotel, 4th and State.  
 Streitz, W. C., 906 So. 15th.  
 Thoeny, Mrs. J., 1517 Badger.

Trane Bakery Shop, 610 Main.  
 Vasilin, Gust, 1109 So. 8th.  
 Vollmar & Jost, 1400 Pine.  
 Wein, S., 432 La Crosse.  
 Wenzel Bros., 1315 Redfield St.  
 Wiggert, John, 1114 So. 3rd.  
 Worman, B. C., 801 La Crosse.  
 Y. M. C. A., 7th and Main.  
 Young, Theo., 1101 So. 3rd.

## NORTH SIDE

Brahmstad, Chris., 422 Mill St.  
 Coolidge, H., 1820 George.  
 Gibson Confectionery, 803 Rose.  
 Gondrezick, G. C., 1232 Caledonia.  
 Grand Crossing Eating House, Grand Crossing.  
 Knebes, Geo., 715 Rose.  
 Larson, Albert, 1452 Caledonia.  
 La Tulip, Wm., 1931 Loomis.  
 Lien, C. L. & Co., 1228 Caledonia.  
 Lokken, Melvin, 1300 Caledonia.  
 S. B. Mateske, 1101 St. Andrews.  
 McInnes, C. H., 303 Mill.  
 Misna, Mrs. M., 1453 Caledonia.  
 Mueller, Mrs. L., 817 Logan.  
 Nimetz, Al., 1120 Logan.  
 Partridge & Co., H. L., 128 Gillette.  
 Riek, Fred, 1601 Loomis.  
 Ruesgen, Jos., 507 Liberty.  
 Seroogy & Salmone, 1553 Liberty.  
 Soderberg, P. E., 1125 Gillette.  
 Wittenberg, H., 1230 Caledonia.  
 Witzke, Paul, Bijuou Conf. Co., 400 Mill St.

**MADE IN LA CROSSE**

**AND SOLD WHEREVER GOOD CANDY IS EATEN.**

Mateske's store on the North Side was just one of many places in La Crosse that sold Funke's candies

(*La Crosse Tribune*, 1922 May 17, page 11)

Besides coping with his disability and taking care of a pre-teen daughter, Mateske had extra difficulties in addition to those faced by any new business venture.

In late May 1919, a bullet pierced the window of his store. Police theorized that it came from a rifle fired by some careless boys shooting in the marshes near the La Crosse Rubber Mills. Boys shooting rifles inside the city limits on the north side of La Crosse was a frequent problem at the time.<sup>33</sup>

Robbers apparently viewed Mateske's store as an easy target.

On December 19, 1922, Mateske, accompanied by "his girl helper" and a customer, left the store at 6:00 p.m. so he could eat supper at his mother's house at 700 Kane Street. During the hour before his return at 7:00 p.m., some person or persons had pried open a locked back door and taken \$70 from an unlocked safe.<sup>34</sup>

A year later, Mateske's store was robbed twice in just three days. On Monday night, December 17, 1923, a robber took between \$12 and \$15 after prying open a back door. Then on December 19, smashing the glass in a front door for entry enabled a robber to make off with all the cigars and most of the cigarettes in Mateske's store. Mateske was so distraught on Thursday morning that he could not even speak to police investigating the crime.<sup>35</sup>

While Mateske was away for lunch on the afternoon of September 13, 1926, a robber squeezed through an opening in the foundation of the building and crawled under the floor until he came to a trap door providing access to the store. Between \$35 and \$40 was missing from the cash register and safe when Mateske returned from lunch.<sup>36</sup> This robber, however, was caught about a month later. R T. McNeil was nabbed after passing some worthless checks and given a chance to pay up; he sold his wife's diamond ring to raise part of the money and used money stolen from Mateske for the rest. McNeil's story of getting money from his mother to pay off the bad checks did not check out. Then two employees of the La Crosse Rubber Mills identified McNeil as the man they had seen around the store about the time of the Mateske robbery. McNeil had become acquainted with the store and the owner's routine when he had installed an electric refrigerator there for a local company. A judge sentenced McNeil to 12-18 months hard labor at the Waupun state prison.<sup>37</sup>

An even bolder robbery occurred on November 8, 1928, at 7:30 a.m. Two men ordered a package of Bull Durham tobacco before one of them shoved a pistol into Mateske's side while his partner took between \$40 and \$45 from the cash register.<sup>38</sup> An alert La Crosse policeman arrested Jerry Williams, who had served time in the Idaho state penitentiary for manslaughter, just four days later. Williams confessed and pleaded guilty in La Crosse County court the next day.<sup>39</sup> On November 17, Judge R. S. Cowie sentenced Williams to seven to fifteen years at the Waupun state prison.<sup>40</sup>

Police caught one suspect after he burglarized four business establishments, including Mateske's store, on the night of June 5, 1930. Mateske did not suffer any loss this time.<sup>41</sup>

In these various robberies, the criminals usually did not bother with any cash less than a quarter. Pennies in the Mateske cash register survived a couple of robberies, and Stanislaus Mateske put his pennies to good use in January 1941. Mateske called the W. A. Roosevelt company office to say that he had the money to pay a bill that he owed. When a man from W. A. Roosevelt went to the Mateske store, he was presented with a ten-inch by two-foot box, weighing about 90 pounds, containing 12,500 pennies as his payment. The Roosevelt representative summoned a truck.<sup>42</sup> The newspaper article reporting this transaction does not give a clue as to whether this was an example of penury or spite.

Fourteen years after his first wife died, Stanislaus Mateske married for a second time. His second wife was Florence Snedden of Rocky Mount, North Carolina.<sup>43</sup> Mateske and Snedden, who as Florence King had been a music teacher in La Crosse before moving to North Carolina, were married on February 6, 1932.<sup>44</sup> They made their home at 1103 ½ St. Andrew Street, right next to Mateske's store.<sup>45</sup>

# FREE ICE CREAM!!

SATURDAY and SUNDAY

To introduce INDEPENDENT ICE CREAM — the cream that's different. You will find Independent Ice Cream smoother and richer than the ordinary ice cream; you can't help but note the difference.

If you will go to one of the following stores and purchase one quart of bulk Independent Ice Cream, they will give you free on presentation of coupon below, one pint of this new and delicious ice cream. The stores listed are authorized Independent Ice Cream dealers and you are sure of getting Independent Ice Cream when you ask for it.

### SOUTH SIDE

Abbato Confectionery, 8th and Adams Sts.  
 Akins Confectionery, South Ave.  
 A. & R. Grocery, 1534 Badger St.  
 Borst, W. H., 1002 Jackson St.  
 Bennett's Confectionery, 1425 Market St.  
 Erlewein Grocery, 818 S. 3rd St.  
 Euler's Drug Store, 12th and State St.  
 Fritz, H. J., 828 S. 3rd St.  
 Justinger's Confectionery, 700 West Ave. So.  
 Kerr's Handy Store, 604 S. 5th St.  
 Levy, M., 605 Main St.  
 Koller's Store No. 3, 2630 South Ave.  
 Mercier, H., 9th and Market Sts.  
 Majestic Pharmacy, 518 Main St.  
 Monsoor, M., 223 N. 3rd St.  
 Norby, A., 1804 Jackson St.  
 Peck, W., 1721 West Ave. S.

Rennebohm, Henry, 706 S. 16th St.  
 Schmauch's Drug Store, 11th and Market Sts.  
 Sciborski, Frank, 1601 West Ave. S.  
 Stevelingson's Groc., 6th and Farnam Sts.  
 Smithlier, F. J., Confectionery, 1107 La Crosse St.  
 Stuber's Grocery, 1812 State St.  
 Thoney, Wm., 315 S. 23rd St.  
 Three States Fruit Store, S. 3rd St.  
 Wm. Trapp, 512 Pine St.

### NORTH SIDE

Bruemmer, Geo., 1453 Caledonia St.  
 Mateske, M., 1101 St. Andrews St.  
 Monsoor, Jno., 2233 George St.  
 Richard's Grocery, 1120 Logan St.  
 Schlicht, G. A., 803 Rose St.  
 Wittenberg, Henry, Pool Room, 1230 Caledonia St.  
 Will, Geo., Grocery, 2127 George St.

### COUPON

This coupon will be redeemed for one pint of Independent Ice Cream with the purchase of one quart at any authorized Independent dealer. Coupon redeemable only Saturday and Sunday, June 23rd and 24th.

INDEPENDENT ICE CREAM CO.

H. W. Pettengill, Mgr.

To comply with Wisconsin state law this coupon has a cash value of one-third of one cent.

OUR SPECIAL BRICK FOR THIS WEEK IS A SOLID BRICK OF ORANGE FRUIT ICE CREAM AND MARSHMALLOW PIECES.

Phone  
10-33

*Independent*  
ICE CREAM CO. INC.

Phone  
10-33

Mateske's store sold ice cream

(La Crosse Tribune, 1928 June 22, page 7)

Stanislaus Mateske was also known as one of the pioneers in amateur radio in La Crosse. In about 1922, he had a ham radio installed in his store; Mateske was said to devote "every minute of his spare time" to radio work. Mateske learned Morse code at the La Crosse vocational school from Mrs. William R. Miller. He touted the commercial possibilities of radio and thought radio operators would be in great demand in the future. He even traveled to Janesville to give a presentation at the [state school for the blind](#) in

early 1923.<sup>46</sup> His shortwave radio station was known as 9PJ [later W9pJ], and Mateske could exchange voice messages as far away as Kansas. Using the Morse code key, he could reach New Hampshire, Vermont, and the states on the Mexican Gulf.<sup>47</sup> By 1925, there was a La Crosse Radio Association that held regular meetings.<sup>48</sup> The club sent, received, and delivered non-commercial messages between people for no charge.<sup>49</sup> When a blizzard during the winter of 1925-1926 knocked out most telegraph wires in the tri-state area, Stanislaus Mateske stayed up all night with the shortwave radio in his store receiving telegraph messages and relaying them by telephone.<sup>50</sup> The La Crosse Radio Club held its annual outing on top of Grandad Bluff; besides enjoying food and fireworks, members erected temporary antennas for sending and receiving shortwave radio traffic.<sup>51</sup> Mateske, ever the promoter and teacher of amateur radio, gave presentations and instruction on telegraphy to Boy Scouts, including Troop 7 at St. John's Church.<sup>52</sup>

Mateske operated his store at 1101 St. Andrew Street until 1941. He was 68 years old, and he may have wanted to cut back on his work hours. For the next four years, he ran a canteen selling food, snacks, and drinks at the Rubber Mills and Trane company factories.<sup>53</sup>

Stanislaus B. Mateske died on October 20, 1945, at the age of 72. Funeral services were held at the St. John's Catholic Church, and he was buried in the Catholic Cemetery. Mateske was survived by his second wife, Florence; daughter Mrs. Stella Leisgang of La Crosse; two grandchildren; a sister in Chicago, another sister in Akron, Ohio, and a brother in Minneapolis.<sup>54</sup>

His widow, Florence, retained ownership of the store on St. Andrew Street until early 1954 when she sold it to Mathew F. and Dorothy Koelbl.<sup>55</sup>

The Koelbl family converted the store into a tavern and operated Matt's Tavern or Koelbl's Bar there for the next 42 years.<sup>56</sup> Mathew and Dorothy Koelbl owned it together until March 1978 when Matt Koelbl died.<sup>57</sup> Dorothy Koelbl owned it until early 1990 when she sold the property to Thomas M. Koelbl.<sup>58</sup>

After seven years of ownership, Thomas Koelbl sold the tavern to John R. and Jean M. Woods on December 18, 1997,<sup>59</sup> with Jean Woods becoming the sole owner in 2003.<sup>60</sup> Under Woods' ownership, the tavern was known as Teddy Bear's.<sup>61</sup>

The Governmental Employees Credit Union of La Crosse ended up with the property in August 2014.<sup>62</sup> They sold it to TND Enterprises LLC on January 2, 2015.<sup>63</sup> Later that month, on January 22, Duane and Tonia Genz opened Genzie's Gameday Pub at 1101 St. Andrew Street.<sup>64</sup> It is still in business at that location today.

The home that Stanislaus and Florence Mateske lived in, at 1103 1/2 St. Andrew Street, no longer exists. It stood until 1963, and then it appears to have been demolished before 1964.<sup>65</sup> A fence extending from the southeast corner of Genzie's Gameday Pub surrounds the vacant area where this building would have stood.



Genzie's Gameday Pub at 1101 St. Andrew Street, the former location of Mateske's store

(Jeff Rand, 2022 February 9)

Florence Mateske married Hugh Teawater in 1953. She was 68 years old when she died on July 8, 1956, in Jackson, Tennessee. She was buried in a cemetery in Camden, Tennessee.<sup>66</sup>

The sub-headline of the *La Crosse Tribune* article about Stanislaus Mateske's death was "'Blind Mike' Known To Many Residents."<sup>67</sup> That is because Stanislaus Mateske had been blind for almost the last 30 years of his life. He had raised a daughter, opened and operated a store to support himself, and become an expert in shortwave radio all without the benefit of eyesight.

He had lost his eyesight while working in mattress manufacturing at the Advance Bedding company when he was about 43 years old. Mateske testified before the Wisconsin Industrial Commission that his eye began to itch when it was exposed to dust while he was working at a mattress stuffing machine. Mateske admitted that "he had been at a blind school for some time but that he could read at a distance of from 14 to 16 inches before he lost his sight."<sup>68</sup> No matter what the exact cause, losing his eyesight was a disability that he had to deal with the rest of his life.





Stanislaus B. Mateske

*(La Crosse Tribune, 1945 October 21, page 1)*

How common was blindness in the United States in that era? The 1920 federal census noted 57,444 blind people in the country. A special study by the Census Bureau in the same year, however, came up with 20,000 additional blind people in the United States. People working with the blind estimated the total should be around 100,000 people. After the 1930 federal census also failed to provide a reliable statistic, the Census Bureau dropped that question for good.<sup>69</sup>

People like Mateske who became disabled due to job-related causes had to rely on whatever benefits their state or local governments offered and their own resources. Prevention of such work-related injuries was also the province of state and local governments until 1971. The Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 led to the creation of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), within the Labor Department, that year. It was the first nationwide regulation of working conditions to protect the health and safety of workers on the job.<sup>70</sup> Although frequently criticized for its myriad of rules and regulations, OSHA seldom gets credit for preventing job-related deaths, illnesses, and injuries that would be an additional burden on taxpayers when those affected need economic assistance.

Even though Stanislaus Mateske was not part of a larger historical event, nor did he brush shoulders with any famous person, he was a notable person in La Crosse's history who should not be forgotten. Mateske was an immigrant who had to learn English, and then overcome a limited education and blindness in middle age to achieve his version of the American Dream.

Jeff Rand  
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### Sources & notes:

- <sup>1</sup> "S. B. Mateske, Merchant, Dies," *La Crosse Tribune*, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1945 October 21, page 1.
- <sup>2</sup> "West Prussia," *The Germanic Genealogy Society*, accessed 2022 February 11, <https://ggsmn.org/cpage.php?pt=39#:~:text=After%20World%20War%20I%20West,north%20central%20and%20northeast%20Poland.>
- <sup>3</sup> 1930 U.S. census, La Crosse County, Wisconsin, population schedule, La Crosse, p. 13B, dwelling 277, family 320, Stanislaus B. Mateske; image, *HeritageQuest.com* (<http://www.ancestryheritagequest.com> : accessed 2022 February 11).
- <sup>4</sup> "West Prussia."
- <sup>5</sup> *La Crosse Tribune*, 1945 October 21.
- <sup>6</sup> *Jones & Kroeger's La Crosse (Wisconsin) City Directory 1891* (Winona, Minnesota: Jones & Kroeger, 1891), 255.
- <sup>7</sup> *La Crosse (Wisconsin) City Directory 1891*. By 1895, Joseph Mateske was working as a watchman for a railroad: *Philippi's La Crosse (Wisconsin) City and County Directory 1895* (La Crosse, Wisconsin: L. P. Philippi Co., 1895), 248.
- <sup>8</sup> *La Crosse Tribune*, 1945 October 21. La Crosse Plow Works name, location, and owner: *Spicer & Buschman's La Crosse (Wisconsin) Directory 1890* (La Crosse, Wisconsin: Spicer & Buschman, 1890), 122.
- <sup>9</sup> *Jones & Kroeger's La Crosse (Wisconsin) City Directory 1891* (Winona, Minnesota: Jones & Kroeger, 1891), 382.
- <sup>10</sup> *Wisconsin Pre-1907 Vital Records Collection*, Microfilm Reel 045, Volume Number 03, Page Number 0161, Sequence Number 245045, Joseph Mateske; Wisconsin Historical Society; transcription, [wisconsinhistory.org](https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Death/DR115698) (<https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Death/DR115698> : accessed 2022 February 11).
- <sup>11</sup> *Philippi's La Crosse (Wisconsin) City Directory 1905-1906* (La Crosse, Wisconsin: L. P. Philippi Co., 1905), 309.
- <sup>12</sup> "Mateske Daughter Dies of Long Illness," *La Crosse Tribune*, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1913 March 15, page 1. This house, 839 Gould Street, was renumbered by the city and became 829 Gould Street sometime between 1930 and 1932. *Wright's La Crosse (Wisconsin) City Directory 1930* (Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Wright Directory Co., 1930), 22; and *Wright's La Crosse (Wisconsin) City Directory 1932* (Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Wright Directory Co., 1932), 576. Mrs. Stella Rendler was the occupant both in 1930 and 1932. The house still existed in 1993, but it was torn down by 1994. *Polk La Crosse (Wisconsin) City Directory 1993* (Kansas City, Missouri: R. L. Polk & Co., 1993), 111; and *Polk La Crosse (Wisconsin) City Directory 1994* (Kansas City, Missouri: R. L. Polk & Co., 1994), 105. The property was subject to a sheriff's auction in late summer 1993 and transferred to a bank. La Crosse County, Wisconsin Register of Deeds, "La Crosse County Land Records Information," [lacrossecounty.org](https://apps.lacrossecounty.org/LandRecordsPortal/search.aspx?type=Parcel&type=Parcel) (<https://apps.lacrossecounty.org/LandRecordsPortal/search.aspx?type=Parcel&type=Parcel> : accessed 2022 March 1), entry for 829 Gould St La Crosse, Parcel 17-10048-100, South Eastern Addition E 81FT Lots 8 Block 11 Lot SZ: 81 x 50; 1993 August 24; citing Document Number: 1101953. It appears to have been a vacant lot since then. La Crosse County, Wisconsin Register of Deeds, "La Crosse County Land Records Information," [lacrossecounty.org](https://apps.lacrossecounty.org/LandRecordsPortal/search.aspx?type=Parcel&type=Parcel) (<https://apps.lacrossecounty.org/LandRecordsPortal/search.aspx?type=Parcel&type=Parcel> : accessed 2022 March 1), entry for 829 Gould St La Crosse, Parcel 17-10048-100, South Eastern Addition E 81FT Lots 8 Block 11 Lot SZ: 81 x 50; 2018 September 20; citing Document Number: 1716592. It is flanked by house on the west and an apartment building on the east.
- <sup>13</sup> *Wisconsin Pre-1907 Vital Records Collection*, Microfilm Reel 219, Record Number 521, Stella M. Mateske; Wisconsin Historical Society; transcription, [wisconsinhistory.org](https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Birth/BR2902791) (<https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Birth/BR2902791> : accessed 2022 February 11). Her birth occurred in Monroe County. According to her obituary in the *La Crosse Tribune*, 1918 July 23, page 6, Eva Mateske had two brothers who lived in Norwalk, Wisconsin, which is in Monroe County.
- <sup>14</sup> *La Crosse Tribune*. 1913 March 15.
- <sup>15</sup> *Wright's La Crosse (Wisconsin) City Directory 1922* (Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Wright Directory Company, 1922), 649.
- <sup>16</sup> *La Crosse Tribune*, 1945 October 21.

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- <sup>17</sup> "Historical Background And Development Of Social Security," *Social Security Administration*, accessed 2022 February 11, <https://www.ssa.gov/history/briefhistory3.html>.
- <sup>18</sup> "Commissioner Here Taking Evidence In Prostration Case," *La Crosse Tribune*, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1917 February 15, page 2.
- <sup>19</sup> "Dust From Mattress Robbed Him Of Sight," *La Crosse Tribune*, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1917 February 16, page 11.
- <sup>20</sup> "Proceedings of the County Board of Supervisors," *La Crosse Tribune*, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1917 February 21, page 10.
- <sup>21</sup> "Proceedings of the County Board of Supervisors," *La Crosse Tribune*, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1917 December 28, page 14. According to the CPI Inflation Calculator (<https://www.in2013dollars.com/us/inflation/1917?amount=100>), \$100 in 1917 would have the purchasing power of \$2,078 today.
- <sup>22</sup> *La Crosse Tribune*, 1945 October 21. This article states that he opened the confectionary in 1919. On his draft card, filled out with assistance of John Bangsberg, on September 12, 1918, shows that he was already a storekeeper at 1101 St. Andrew Street.
- <sup>23</sup> The National Archives and Records Administration in Washington, D.C.; *World War I Selective Service System Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918*; image, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com>: accessed 2022 February 11).
- <sup>24</sup> "Mrs. Eva Mateske," *La Crosse Tribune*, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1918 July 23, page 6.
- <sup>25</sup> *Wright's La Crosse (Wisconsin) City Directory 1919* (Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Wright Directory Company, 1919), 430. There are also later references to him living at 700 Kane Street, one block away.
- <sup>26</sup> "Funke's Candies Are Renowned For Their Good Eating," *La Crosse Tribune*, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1922 May 17, page 11.
- <sup>27</sup> "License Permits Granted By City Council Thursday," *La Crosse Tribune*, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1921 July 4, page 7.
- <sup>28</sup> "Thomas J. Webb Coffee," *La Crosse Tribune*, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1922 July 7, page 12.
- <sup>29</sup> "Look Kiddies!," *La Crosse Tribune*, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1922 July 27, page 2. Tri-State Ice Cream Corporation was a forerunner of Dolly Madison Dairy (<http://archives.lacrosselibrary.org/collections/businesses/mss-170/>).
- <sup>30</sup> "Free Ice Cream Saturday and Sunday!," *La Crosse Tribune*, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1928 June 22, page 7.
- <sup>31</sup> "We Thank You," *La Crosse Tribune*, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1930 January 5, page 2.
- <sup>32</sup> "Enjoy Wrigley's Gum Healthful, Refreshing, Delicious," *La Crosse Tribune*, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1939 February 21, page 5.
- <sup>33</sup> "Bullet Smashes Store Window On The North Side," *La Crosse Tribune*, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1919 May 31, page 1.
- <sup>34</sup> "Confectionery Store of 'Blind Mike' Mateske Is Robbed Of \$70 Last Night," *La Crosse Tribune*, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1922 December 20, page 1. This article noted, "Theft of property or money from human beings possessed of all their faculties may be bad enough but to steal from a blind man is regarded as a serious breach of order even among the greatest of crooks."
- <sup>35</sup> "Three Places Are Entered During Night," *La Crosse Tribune*, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1923 December 20, page 1.
- <sup>36</sup> "Robber Gets \$40 At Blind Mike's Store," *La Crosse Tribune*, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1926 September 14, page 1.
- <sup>37</sup> "Man Who Confesses Robbery At Mateske Store Is Sentenced," *La Crosse Tribune*, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1926 October 1, page 1.
- <sup>38</sup> "Two Unidentified Men Hold Up Mike Mateske; Get Between \$40 and \$45," *La Crosse Tribune*, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1928 November 9, page 1.
- <sup>39</sup> "Jerry Williams, With Pen Record, Confesses Holdup," *La Crosse Tribune*, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1928 November 14, page 1.
- <sup>40</sup> "Man Who Held Up Blind Merchant Gets Stiff Jolt," *La Crosse Tribune*, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1928 November 17, page 1.
- <sup>41</sup> "Suspect Detained By Local Police In Two Robberies," *La Crosse Tribune*, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1930 June 6, page 1.
- <sup>42</sup> "Store Proprietor Pays Bill With 90 Pounds Of Pennies," *La Crosse Tribune*, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1941 January 6, page 8.
- <sup>43</sup> "Marriage License," *La Crosse Tribune*, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1932 January 28, page 5.
- <sup>44</sup> "Entertains For February Bride," *La Crosse Tribune*, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1932 January 31, page 5.
- <sup>45</sup> La Crosse Telephone Corporation, *Telephone Directory for La Crosse and Onalaska, Wisconsin* (La Crosse, Wisconsin: La Crosse Telephone Corporation, December 1935), 46; also subsequent years by the same title: (1936

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June) 46, (1937 June) 50, (1938 June) 51, (1939 June) 54, (1940 June) 58, (1941 June) 58, (1942 June) 57, (1943 June) 56, (1944 June) 58, (1945 June) 60.

<sup>46</sup> "Radio For Blind Is Ambition Of North Side Man," *La Crosse Tribune*, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1923 February 11, page 9.

<sup>47</sup> "La Crosse Amateur Radio Sets Make Records For Consistent Work And Are Equipped For Emergency Work," *La Crosse Tribune*, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1924 December 14, page 7.

<sup>48</sup> "La Crosse Radio Association Meets," *La Crosse Tribune*, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1925 February 17, page 15.

<sup>49</sup> "Radio Traffic Is Consistent In Local Stations," *La Crosse Tribune*, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1925 February 28, page 7.

<sup>50</sup> "Mirrors of Main Street," *La Crosse Tribune*, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1926 September 26, page 3.

<sup>51</sup> "Radio Club To Hold Its Annual Outing Tonight," *La Crosse Tribune*, La Crosse, Wisconsin, page 6.

<sup>52</sup> "Gateway-Area Boy Scout News," *La Crosse Tribune*, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1939 April 7, page 13.

<sup>53</sup> *La Crosse Tribune*, 1945 October 21.

<sup>54</sup> *La Crosse Tribune*, 1945 October 21.

<sup>55</sup> "Real Estate Transfers," *La Crosse Tribune*, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1954 April 11, page 23.

<sup>56</sup> *Wright's La Crosse (Wisconsin) City Directory 1955* (Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Wright Directory Co., 1955), 172; also subsequent years of the same title (later published by R. L. Polk): 1956-1997.

<sup>57</sup> "Matt F. Koelbl," *La Crosse Tribune*, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1978 March 6, page 2.

<sup>58</sup> La Crosse County, Wisconsin Register of Deeds, "La Crosse County Land Records Information,"

*Lacrossecounty.org* (<https://apps.lacrossecounty.org/LandRecordsPortal/search.aspx?type=Parcel&type=Parcel> : accessed 2022 February 18), entry for 1101 St Andrew St La Crosse, Parcel 17-10071-80, McConnell & Whittlesey's Addition W 107FT Lots 1 & 2 Block 16 Lot SZ: 107 x 99; 1990 March 27; citing Deed Book Volume 864: 892.

<sup>59</sup> La Crosse County, Wisconsin Register of Deeds, "La Crosse County Land Records Information,"

*Lacrossecounty.org* (<https://apps.lacrossecounty.org/LandRecordsPortal/search.aspx?type=Parcel&type=Parcel> : accessed 2022 February 18), entry for 1101 St Andrew St La Crosse, Parcel 17-10071-80, McConnell & Whittlesey's Addition W 107FT Lots 1 & 2 Block 16 Lot SZ: 107 x 99; 1997 December 18; citing Deed Book Volume 1212: 729.

<sup>60</sup> La Crosse County, Wisconsin Register of Deeds, "La Crosse County Land Records Information,"

*Lacrossecounty.org* (<https://apps.lacrossecounty.org/LandRecordsPortal/search.aspx?type=Parcel&type=Parcel> : accessed 2022 February 18), entry for 1101 St Andrew St La Crosse, Parcel 17-10071-80, McConnell & Whittlesey's Addition W 107FT Lots 1 & 2 Block 16 Lot SZ: 107 x 99; 2003 July 23; citing document number 1364674.

<sup>61</sup> *Polk La Crosse (Wisconsin) City Directory 1999* (Kansas City, Missouri: R. L. Polk & Co., 1999); also subsequent years of the same title: 2000-2014.

<sup>62</sup> La Crosse County, Wisconsin Register of Deeds, "La Crosse County Land Records Information,"

*Lacrossecounty.org* (<https://apps.lacrossecounty.org/LandRecordsPortal/search.aspx?type=Parcel&type=Parcel> : accessed 2022 February 18), entry for 1101 St Andrew St La Crosse, Parcel 17-10071-80, McConnell & Whittlesey's Addition W 107FT Lots 1 & 2 Block 16 Lot SZ: 107 x 99; 2014 August 28; citing document number 164445.

<sup>63</sup> La Crosse County, Wisconsin Register of Deeds, "La Crosse County Land Records Information,"

*Lacrossecounty.org* (<https://apps.lacrossecounty.org/LandRecordsPortal/search.aspx?type=Parcel&type=Parcel> : accessed 2022 February 18), entry for 1101 St Andrew St La Crosse, Parcel 17-10071-80, McConnell & Whittlesey's Addition W 107FT Lots 1 & 2 Block 16 Lot SZ: 107 x 99; 2015 January 7; citing document number 1650338.

<sup>64</sup> "Duane and Tonia Genz," *La Crosse Tribune*, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 2015 February 15, page H2.

<sup>65</sup> *Wright's La Crosse (Wisconsin) City Directory 1963* (Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Wright Directory Co., 1963), 151.

*Wright's La Crosse (Wisconsin) City Directory 1964* (Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Wright Directory Co., 1964), 150.

<sup>66</sup> "Death Notices," *La Crosse Tribune*, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1956 July 18, page 15. Although her obituary states that Florence was buried in Tennessee, her name appears on a joint headstone with Stanislaus Mateske in the Catholic Cemetery in La Crosse. ("Stanislaus B Mateske," *Find a Grave*, accessed 2022 February 18, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/71031562/stanislaus-b-mateske>.)

<sup>67</sup> *La Crosse Tribune*, 1945 October 21.

<sup>68</sup> *La Crosse Tribune*, 1917 February 16.

<sup>69</sup> Frances Koestler, "The Unseen Minority, Chapter 5: The Facts of Blindness," *American Foundation for the Blind*, accessed 2022 February 10, <https://www.afb.org/online-library/unseen-minority-0/chapter-5#:~:text=For%20example%2C%20the%20census%20of,figure%20of%2057%2C444%20blind%20persons>.

<sup>70</sup> Judson MacLaury, "The Occupational Safety and Health Administration A History of its First Thirteen Years, 1971-1984," *U.S. Department of Labor*, accessed 2022 March 3, <https://www.dol.gov/general/aboutdol/history/mono->

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