



SEARCHERS



DEDICATED TO POLISH AMERICAN FAMILY RESEARCH

"Preserving Our Past Since 1988"

No. 15, Summer 1996

The Village of Borek Maly

By Mike Drabik

One of the largest groups of immigrants arriving in the United States at the turn of the century, and up to the outbreak of World War I, was from the Austro-Hungarian Empire. In particular, the province of Galicia. Poor soil, overpopulation, and lack of industry were contributing factors for emigration from this region.

The birthplace of my paternal grandmother, *Busia*, was Zdzary, located in the Galicia area, in the county of Ropczyce. Seventy-five years after her arrival to the U.S., her grandson married a girl born only a few kilometers away from the ancestral village. My wife, Bogusia, was born and raised in the village of Borek Maly, where her paternal family had lived for many generations.

According to Sulimierski, *Słownik Geograficzny Krolestwa Polskiego*, Borek Maly is a village located in the county of Ropczyce and is affiliated with the Roman Catholic Parish at Sedziszow Malopolski. The village is five kilometers from the city of Ropczyce, the village is the property of W. Michalowski.

An 1869 Austrian census, *Ort Repertorium*, published in Vienna in 1874 by the Central Statistical Commission, states on page 176 for the County of Ropczyce, that Borek Maly had a population of 158 inhabitants—81 males and 77 females—and a total of 33 houses.

(Continued on page 3)

My Genealogical Research

Buffalo, New York

By Edward R Prabucki

I invite all who share my love for genealogy to peruse this story of my research of my forefathers in Poland. The tales of their struggles, trials, and unfortunate tragedies have left a profound imprint on my life. My search for tranquillity is the same as that of my forefathers and millions of our Polish ancestors. My eyes have seen and my ears have heard of much violence during my life. The eyes of my forefathers witnessed even more violence. This has inspired me to seek and research the records of my ancestors in Poland up to the time my father and his cousin left to seek a better life in America.

Though I feel fortunate in the success I have achieved in my research, which was more than I had hoped for (I traced my ancestry as far back as the sixteenth century), I felt I must seek more. My curiosity made me desire more even though I was perplexed, at first, as to how to approach this project.

At first, listening to father relate stories of my ancestors over a period of many years, I was initially indifferent to his narratives about my great-grandfather and my grandparents, Piotr and Rozalia. Eventually, I became more interested. Father told me about my grandmother, Rozalia, who pined for her son, fearing that he was a victim of World War I in France. She died of grief on March 12, 1918. My grandfather passed away on January 19, 1931.

The loss of my father on June 7, 1977, started me in doing basic research of my ancestors in Poland. After perusing tens of thousands of these records,

(Continued on Page 6)

Due to the large amount of mail received, please take note when writing us for assistance:

The PGSWNY will answer ONLY correspondence that includes a self-addressed, stamped reply envelope. All correspondence should be directed to:

The Polish Genealogical Society of Western New York, 299 Barnard Street, Buffalo, New York 14206.

If you wish to contact one of our committees, please write the committee name on the front of the envelope. *Thank you*

For submission to the Searchers, deadlines are as follows:

Summer Edition—April 15 for June mailing; Winter Edition—October 15 for December mailing.

For submission to the Bulletin: Deadlines are February 15 for March mailing and August 15 for September mailing.

Membership Dues. . . A reminder from the Treasurer:

Dues are \$15 a year. This entitles you to two editions of the Searchers and two Bulletin updates. New members receive an information package to help them get started. Annual membership dues are to be received in January

Officers:	<i>President</i>	Mike Drabik	<i>Secretary</i>	Laurie Bialoglowicz
	<i>Vice President</i>	Laurel Keough	<i>Founder</i>	Mike Drabik
	<i>Treasurer</i>	Jenny Wolski		

Trustees:	Dorothy Krantz	Lynn Mycek-Rzepecki	Edward Prabucki
------------------	----------------	---------------------	-----------------

Committees:

Correspondence/Advertising

Mike Drabik Replies for member and nonmember inquiries/
advertising to media for special events

Bookstore

Helen Skarbek All purchases must be made at meetings
Accepting ideas for items to be sold

Photocopy

Brian Stanish Intercommittee use only

Surname Index

Leo Majchrzak Master lists/labels, address changes
Jim Glowney

Membership

Brian Stanish Applications/new membership packets to help in
getting started

Attendance/Roster

Leo Majchrzak Master lists/labels, address changes
Jim Glowney

Library

Dorothy Cook Donations to library and general information
Richard Zielinski on contents and use
Lynn Rzepecki
Helen Skarbek

Travel/Tours

Dorothy Krantz Trip information, reservations, and deposits
Lynn Rzepecki Welcome ideas for travel and local tours

Special Meetings (Picnic & Christmas Party)

Rita Prabucki Sign-up list and organization of our annual
Helen Skarbek picnic and annual Christmas party

Searchers/Bulletin Update

Laurie Bialoglowicz Accepting articles, member and nonmember
Mike Drabik surnames, and letters to the editor for
William Radlinski publication

Archives

Richard Zielinski PGSWNY photos, letters, etc., to be docu-
Daniel Kij mented for history of the Society

Villa Maria Lawn Fete

Florence Witul Sign-up list and organization of our participation
in this annual event

NYSCOGO (New York State Council of Genealogical Organizations)

Jim Lyons PGSWNY delegate

Awards

Edward Prabucki Submit names for annual awards to members for
Ted Smardz outstanding participation. Deadline for submis-
sion is September 1

Register Tapes

Laurel Keough Accepting Tops register tapes for the Society

October Workshop

Mike Drabik Sign-up list and organization of committees for
this annual event

MEETING REMINDER:

The PGSWNY meets the second Thursday of each month in the Villa Maria College cafeteria, 240 Pine Ridge Rd., Cheektowaga, at 7 p.m.

The Village of Borek Maly

(Continued from page 1)

As for the Ropczyce county, Sulimierski describes it as having the configuration of an irregular pentagon with its peak facing west. It is bordered by Pilzno County on the west, by Mielec and Kolubuszowa counties on the north, by Rzeszow county on the east, and by Jaslo county on the south. The city of Ropczyce lies almost in the center. A railroad line cuts the county into two unequal parts—the small northern part has sandy soil and pine forests, the large southern portion is composed of fertile soil, is partly hilly, and has deciduous forests. The River Wisloka flows through the western sector.

In 1880, the population of this county was 71,237. It was made up of 63,677 Roman Catholics, 408 Greek Rite Catholics (Russians), 46 Protestants (Germans), and 7,106 Jews. There are three cities located in the county—Ropczyce, Sedziszow Malopolski, and Debica. The only sugar refinery in Galicja is located in Szedziszow, resulting in large sugar beet production in this area. The county has two courts—one at Ropczyce and the other at Debica. There are one-, two-, three-, and four-class schools, but no middle schools in the county.

Surnames From the Parish Register for Borek Maly 1820-1850

Babiarz	Krypel	Rosz/Rokos
Barnak	Kocon	Rolek
Bartosz	Kapuscinski	Sabon
Bask	Kracz	Sado
Charhut/Harhut	Krubolka	Skaba
Ciepela/Czepiela	Labadz	Soltys
Czepiela/Ciepela	Lozek	Sroka
Czochara	Oboz	Sum
Depa	Ocytki	Surowiec
Dupa	Pasciak	Swider
Draus	Pasek	Swiderski
Fital	Paszko	Szczek
Feret	Pekala	Szypula
Filipek	Perc/Pyrc	Tyrpien/Terpien
Gdownik	Pichala	Terpien/Tyrpien
Guberniak	Pieta	Ulias
Hosa	Piowar	Wiktor
Jabcuga/	Polek	Wnuk
Jabczuga	Potwora	Zabawski
Jabczuga/	Przydzial	Zajac
Jabcuga	Przypek	Siomek
Kania	Pondo	Supart
Klis	Psiuba	
Klug	Pryc/Perc	
Kot	Rokos/Rokosz	

Additions to the Library

Portraits of Poland

History of the Polish Settlers of New Zealand

St. Stanislaus Church Golden Jubilee Book (1873-1923)

Microfilm of Church Records (Buffalo and Erie County Public Library)

Eminent Social Workers of Agricultural Organizations in Kujavian (1864-1939)

Electronic Mail

Do you have an electronic mail address? If you do, please send your e-mail address for inclusion in the membership roster to:

EQNJ55A@prodigy.com
(Lynn Mycek-Rzepecki)

Or

Frombufalo@aol.com
(Kathi White)

The Essence of America: *A father told his son that all Americans belong to a privileged class. The son said, "I disagree". The father replied, "That's the privilege".*

Robert Orben



NAME SEARCH

Member and nonmember researchers wishing to submit surnames for this page are asked to send submissions to the Searchers Committee.

To submit listings for publication, please send your name and address, the surnames you're researching and location, if known.

Majchrzak, Leo, Sr.

447 Mapleton Road, Lockport, N.Y. 14094

Surnames	Location
Majchrzak	Zduny
Olczak	Krotoszyn
Radzinski	Kalisz
Kostancki	
Kazmierczak	Krosniewice
Niabala	Lodz
Gurska	Graudenz
	Koscielna Wies
Czapla	Tuczempy
Polka	Grzemawa, Ruska Polska
Opolka	Kielce
Cukierski	Gora Ropczyca
(aka Culvernicky)	Gnonice
(aka Zugehoer)	Niwiska
Kolis	Kielce
Kujawska	
Bryk	

The Family History Library Update

The Family History Library of the Church of Latter Day Saints will be renovating and enlarging its present quarters. Earlier this year, a tentative date for closing the library was expected to be some time in June. Our latest information is that this will not occur until September.

MEETING REMINDER:

The PGSWNY meets on the second Thursday of each month in the Villa Maria College cafeteria, 240 Pine Ridge Rd., Cheektowaga, at 7 p.m.

POTPOURRI

City Directories

At the February meeting of the Society, a short presentation was given on the Buffalo City Directories. This reference source first appeared circa 1830 and became popular after the Civil War. Used as we now use the phone book, the City Directory was a way of finding people in various communities across the country. Available for large cities, and some towns, it was and is a useful reference for finding addresses of individuals. It also listed the city's administrators, locations of firehouses, police stations, libraries, schools, charitable organizations, societies, churches, professional people, and advertisements for businesses and craftsmen. Some early directories also listed deaths in the community for the previous year.

For the genealogist, this reference is of great importance. The time of the arrival of a relative in that city can be ascertained. His moves within that town or city can also be followed. Directories are not 100% accurate, since the majority of the people working on these projects did not speak the language of the immigrants they were interviewing. Thus, the spellings of surnames were often distorted.

Knowing the address of your relative enables you to use other genealogical tools—the censuses. Every ten years beginning in 1790, a federal census was taken. These records are made public 75 years after the year in which they were compiled to insure individual privacy. A state census was compiled in the odd years; i.e., 1885, 1895, etc., and is equally informative. To use the federal census effectively, knowing the address is not enough. You must also find out in which enumeration district your address is located. There are special maps available to determine this.

City directories for Buffalo are available in several local libraries: The Main library in Lafayette Square has them on microfilm; and a set of the original books, owned by the Western New York Genealogical Society, is housed in the special collections section of the library. The Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society has a set of original copies, as does the Rheinstein Memorial Library on Harlem Road in Cheektowaga.

Grand Polonaise Ball

The Polish Arts Club of Buffalo will be concluding its 50th Anniversary year with a **Grand Polonaise Ball** on October 19, 1996, in the Golden ballroom of the Statler Tower located in downtown Buffalo. The black-tie dinner and dance will officially open with the playing of the Polonaise. For information and reservations, please call Krystyna Pienkowska at 839-4480.

Buffalo and Erie County Library Special Collections Department

At the March meeting, Pat Blackett of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library Special Collection Department, gave a presentation on the

(Continued on next page)

contents and use of her department. One of the reference items she mentioned was the Sanborn Insurance Maps. These large map plates display houses, businesses, etc. They were updated on a regular basis over a period of years. Copies of these map plates can be ordered from:

The Sanborn Information Service
629 Fifth Avenue
Pelham, New York 10803

Pat also mentioned a new series of books that will be available in the special collections department soon. The Western New York Genealogical Society will be purchasing these for their collection. The first two volumes of *Emmigration From the Russian Empire: Lists of Passengers Arriving at the Port of New York* will cover the period 1875-1910. Volume 1 includes 1875-1881, and Volume 2 covers 1882-1886. Future volumes will run to 1910. The collection will list Poles from Russia, according to the compiler, between 1899-1910. Twenty percent of the names are Polish; 43% are Jewish. This series will be of help to many of our members. Check with Pat in a year or so to see when they are available.

Donation to Library

The Society has been fortunate to receive a donation from member and former president, Mr. Walter Kloc. Walter, more commonly known to everyone as the Society Map Man, donated a reference book entitled, *A Gazetteer of Galicia*, by Brian Lenus. For those doing research in this particular area of Poland, it is a reference that may be of help. Besides listing village names in Polish, it also provides the names for communities with large Russian (Ukrainian) and Jewish populations. The book also lists Roman Catholic, Eastern Rite Catholic, Orthodox Catholic, and Protestant parish churches.

Conference in Rochester

The Federation of Genealogical Societies will be sponsoring its 16th annual conference entitled, "In Your Ancestor's Image", August 14-17, 1996, in Rochester, New York. Over 90 lectures are scheduled dealing with a variety of topics, including basic genealogy, immigrants and their origins, computer technology, photography, genetics, and preservation, to mention a few. One of the presenters will be Greg Kinal of Elma, a former speaker at one of our meetings. His topic will be "Coming to America", which he will present on Thursday, August 15.

FEEFHS

The Federation of East European Family History Societies (FEEFHS) held its annual conference in Minneapolis, Minnesota, this year. More than 100 presenters and exhibitors participated. There were lectures on various ethnic and religious groups of Eastern Europe. The Polish presenters

included Jan Zaleski and Stanley Brescoll, both of Michigan. Last year's conference was held in Cleveland, Ohio.

Word Translator for Windows

Translate Polish to English and English to Polish with *Word Translator for Windows*. This is a Windows dictionary and word/phrase translation program for Polish that works in conjunction with your favorite Windows word processor! It's available for either Windows 3.1x or Windows '95! At present, there are three versions: Polish-English I and English-Polish I (4,000 entries) \$69.95, Polish-English II and English-Polish II (80,000 entries) \$124.95, Polish-English III and English-Polish III (120,000 entries) \$174.95. Add \$5.00 S&H. Prices listed are for U.S. and Canada. Polish-English IV and English-Polish IV (155,000 entries) \$224.95 +\$5.00 S&H will be available soon! The above can be ordered from:

Translation Experts USA
P.O. Box 18035
Denver, Colorado 80218-0035

June Meeting

During a break in the June meeting, those who were present had the opportunity to tour the Villa Maria College Library. It contains material which would be useful to us in our genealogical research.

Future Meetings

Judy Krauz, a local folklorist, will be our speaker at the September meeting. She will give a slide presentation and talk on "Architecture, Artists, and Legends of Krakow Christmas Cribbs".

In the near future, we hope to obtain a staff member from Villa Maria College and one from the Family History Library to give us information on the use of the computer in genealogical research and the World Wide Web.

Chicago, here we come!

The Polish Genealogical Society of America, located in Chicago, Illinois, is having a Fall Conference on October 25, 26, and 27, 1996. its theme is "Three Faces of Poland". Our Society is considering a trip to Chicago during this time. Dorothy Krantz and Lynn Mycek-Rzepecki will keep us posted on this.

Cheektowaga Polish Festival

Because the format of the Town of Cheektowaga Polish Festival has changed, our participation is on hold until we can contact Pat Wujcik.

My Genealogical Research

(Continued from page 1)

I discovered that my ancestors were a pillar of inspiration. The human loss they suffered over many centuries was lamentable, but I never felt retribution for their tragic losses through the invasions that occurred in their beloved Poland. I only felt veneration of them.

Father was a persuasive, rational philosopher. Periodically, I observed him kneeling and praying before a cross at his bedside. As a naive youth, I questioned the reason for prayer. Father reacted with parental moderation, saying, "I don't pray for my needs. I leave this to my Lord. I pray not for my nation's needs but pray for our world's needs, as it is obvious that if one area of our earth is lacking the needs to sustain its population, the rest of our earth, sooner or later, will experience the lack of these same needs". He believed that, if one part of a body is in pain and ignored, the pain, sooner or later, will cover the rest of that body.

My retirement enabled me to analyze my father's philosophy. Time has tested the faith and fortitude of my forefathers. I have inherited this same faith and fortitude to live as they had lived and to face tragedy as they faced tragedy. As my forefathers were creatures of God, so am I. Though, at times, I felt that I have endured so much, my forefathers endured much more. Their lives were shrouded in much mystery. Information about their existence has often eluded me. It is for this reason that I must dedicate my life to this research—to give their lives a rebirth and accord it to family history.

As my research continued, I observed the suffering of humanity in the Balkan War on television one evening. The facial and physical features of the tragic victims of that Civil War were similar, if not identical to, those of the people of Poland. As I continued this study, I realized that the facial features of the Lithuanians, Ukrainians, Scandinavians, East Prussians, Hungarians and all Eastern European people were also identical to those of the Poles. There is an obvious connection between the Poles and the Croats, Serbians, Caucasians—yes even the Persians—and that is the facial expressions.

There is little doubt in my mind that my ancestors migrated to Poland a millennium or two ago. Whether this was due to overpopulation, economic difficulties, or barbaric violence matters little. My lack of knowledge of the written word also matters little. The fact is they migrated to Poland.

My ancestors, like millions of others, sought tranquillity on earth, but there was none. So they migrated until they reached Poland. History has recorded the violence of the ages. Terror was an essential weapon of those in power who wanted to remain powerful. The toilers of the land could not endure the continued deprivation of their needs. Where they sought tranquillity, they experienced trepidation. Finally they said, "Not one step further". What was once unthinkable became conceivable and they protected and fought for the land upon which they toiled—Poland. Unfortunately many families were exterminated during this period of Polish history.

What did Poland's neighbors accomplish by their ill-fated invasions of that land? Certainly, the results will be the same in the war in Bosnia.

LIBRARY

Mike Drabik would like to thank the following for their contribution toward cataloging and organizing our library.

Ted Smardz - Stamped all the books with the Society name

Ed Potera - Spent several weekends preparing books for cataloging (writing down information to be typed on cards)

Ed Bialoglowicz - Spent several weekends preparing books for cataloging. Procured, delivered, and modified portable bookcase.

Dorothy Cook - Sorted and organized all the pamphlets, newsletters, magazines, and other miscellaneous items. Also, obtained a drawer to be used for our catalog, typed some of the cards, and organized the shelves.

Laurie Bialoglowicz - Typed title, author, and subject cards and prepared a list of all the books, maps, and microfiche material.

Lynn Mycek-Rzepecki - Collected all the donated books and kept a record of those donations.

Helen Skarbek - Helped in organizing the shelves and keeping books in order during meetings.

Polish Genealogy and the Internet

By Kathi White

Computer technology provides us with several data bases of information which are not available through other means. All that is needed to access this information is a computer equipped with a modem. Access can be provided through any independent internet access provider or one of the commercial online service providers; such as, Prodigy, Compuserve, or America Online (AOL).

The following data bases are now available through World Wide Web (WWW) access:

Federation of Eastern European Family Historical Societies (FEEFHS)

World Wide Web address: <http://feefhs.org>

This site provides links to many areas of interest. Some items of interest are:

- Polish Genealogical societies throughout the world
- Searchable surname databases
- Maps and geographical information*
- Ethnic, Religious & National Index
- Association of Polish Nobility

*Maps accessible through this site include the following:

- The Austro-Hungarian Empire—(Scale: 1 inch = 42 miles)
- East & West German Empire—16 maps (Scale: 1 inch = 28 miles)
- Russian Empire—(Scale: 1:6,100,000 or 1 inch = 96 miles)

Rafal T. Prinke--Genealogy Homepage

World Wide Web address: <http://hum.amu.edu.pl/~rafalp>

It is possible to access this site in both English and Polish languages.

Information contained here is as follows:

- Bibliography of Polish genealogy and heraldry
- Some Polish descendants of Charlemagne
- Searching and adding to researched surnames list*
- Links to other WWW genealogy servers (text in Polish only)
- Genealogical data in GEDCOM format

*The searchable surname list is a valuable reference tool. It currently has approximately 1500+ surnames and new names are being added daily. Anyone with an internet address can add his or her surnames to this list. This allows researchers to identify others searching the same surnames and to make contact with one another.

Genealogy of Poland (GENPOL)

This is referred to as a mailing list. You subscribe to it as you would subscribe to a magazine, but it costs

(Continued on page 8)

Polish Genealogy and the Internet

(Continued from page 7)

you nothing to join. It is a discussion group which covers various aspects of Polish Genealogy. You may read or send letters to the discussion list in either English or Polish, although most are written in English. Members who subscribe to this list live in countries around the world, including the United States, Canada, Poland, Germany, Australia, France, and Italy. This list is recommended for seasoned researchers with questions regarding onomastics, etymology, place names, and the availability of records. It was founded by the moderator, Mr. Andrzej Sikorski, and co-owners, Mr. Rafal Prinke and Mr. Kaj Malachowski.

When you subscribe to this list, you will receive confirmation that your request has been processed. This will enable you to send queries and read mail sent by others. The list generates up to a dozen pieces of mail a day. Subscription address (send mail to):

listproc@chem.uw.edu.pl

Under *subject/heading*, write **sub**

Under *body/message*, write **Subscribe GENPOL** and your first and last names.

Meanings and Translations of Surnames

By Janice Bartoszek

These Polish surnames and their translations, or meanings, were taken from *American Surnames*, by Elsdon C. Smith. (Chilton Book Co. 1969). The translations/meanings were derived from father's name, description, or characteristic of a person or the place he was from.

Resnick (Slavic) slaughtered animals for meat in compliance with Jewish law

Spiewak - singer, strolling minstrel

Graczyk - entertainer with some type of musical instrument

Piekarz - Polish baker

Koza/Kozak/Kozel - goats were handled by these people

Skora - prepared animal skins, tanner

Rybak - fishing people; Rybarczyk - fisherman

Krowa - tended the cows

Ziolko/Zuelke - grew and sold herbs

Grzyb - picked mushrooms, sold them, or lived where mushrooms grew

Rzepka/Pasternak - raised and sold turnips and parsnips

Rychez - took care of young bulls

Weglarz - coal miner

Kowalik/Kowalczyk/Kowalski - worked with metals, chiefly iron

Rudnick - worked in mines

Skiba - designated a plowman

Cieslak - carpenter

Chmiel - hop grower

Zurek - made sour meal pap

Tokarz - turner of wood or clay

Kucharski - one who cooked or prepared food

Micek - Maker of caps, hats, hoods

Szewc - Polish shoemaker

Szewczyk/Kabat/Krawczyk - made overcoats

Socha (Slavic) - man who used the old wooden plow

Bednarz/Bednarczyk/Bednarek/Kadow - cooper

Kagan/Kaganovich - rabbi

Worny - Polish official, the summoner who warned the peasants to appear in court

Nowacki/Przybylski/Bloch - foreigner in Poland (signifying stupidity because of foreigner's difficulty with language or lack of familiarity with locality)

Dziedzic - rented land to another, a rich landowner

Zidek - Polish term of contempt for a little Jew

Cichon - a quiet man

Glowacki - ancestor/forebear with a large, peculiar head (Kennedy in Gaelic - someone with misshapen head)

Kucera/Kenzick/Kendzierski - (Slavic) with a curly head

Bialek/Bialas/Blaly/Labno - light-skinned person

Szczesny - designates the man who became recipient of some good fortune

Haber - grew oats in Germany

Mazur - name given to someone who arrived from Mazury, a former Prussian Province

Kopec - Ukranian derivative; Kopecky - Czech derivative

Cygan - name given a gypsy who was of the Caucasian race in Poland

Sobczak - son of the egotist

Klimek/Klemens - merciful

Marszalek - officer in charge of military affairs in household of medieval king, prince, or noble

Stanko/Stachnik/StaneK/Stankus - pet form of word Stanislaw

Stankiewicz - son of Stanko

(Continued on page 9)

A Surprising Revelation

By Martin S. Nowak

As genealogists, our main task is to trace our lineage. Besides discovering names, dates, and places, the stories that we unearth, along with the facts, make our personal histories much richer and more rewarding. These stories can be found almost anywhere and when you least expect to discover them.

On a recent visit to Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, my friends and I visited Georgetown, which is a historic city located about 30 miles south of Myrtle Beach. Georgetown is a quaint city with colonial era churches, well-preserved old homes, and beautiful quiet streets shaded by stately oak, magnolia, and myrtle trees. In the eighteenth century, it was one of the richest cities in the South, due to a lucrative rice export trade. In Georgetown, rice—not cotton—was king. My attention was drawn, in particular, to one old home that was open to visitors. It was the Kaminski House Museum. We decided to take the \$4 tour.

The last owner of the house was Harold Kaminski, a prominent citizen, businessman, and mayor of Georgetown. He served this country with honor in both world wars and will forever be remembered as the *Officer of the Day*, who was in charge at the Pearl Harbor Naval Base on December 7, 1941—the day the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor.

A brief biographical sketch about Commander Kaminski revealed that he was the son of Heiman Kaminski, a Polish Jew who emigrated to America in 1855 from Schwersenz, Posen, Prussia. I immediately recognized this as the town of Swarzedz in Poland, 10 km. east of Poznan, which is the place of the birth of my great-grandfather, Michal Myszkowiak, who came to the United States in 1890.

I also learned that Heiman's cousin was Szymon Baruch, father of the great American Wall

Street wizard and advisor to presidents, Barnard Baruch. As teenagers, Heiman and Szymon fled Swarzedz and came to America together to avoid service in the Prussian Army.

From Bernard Baruch's autobiography, I learned that, as a young man, he paid a visit to his grandparents in Swarzedz. His grandfather—a congenial, educated man who enjoyed spending his afternoons in a beer garden—could trace his lineage back to Spain and Portugal. He also claimed to be a descendent of a scribe to the prophet Jeremiah. Bernard's grandmother had blue eyes and was probably of partial ethnic Polish descent.

Upon consulting the *Slownik Geograficzny*, I found that Swarzedz had a substantial Jewish population in the nineteenth century. At one time its Jewish population was greater than 50 percent. Swarzedz was home to many cloth manufacturers, dressmakers, and shoemakers.

I have no evidence of any intermarriage, or other relationship, between the Roman Catholic Myszkowiaks and the Jewish Baruchs. Yet, they were fellow townspeople in an area with a population of only 3,000. I'd like to imagine that the families had some kind of relationship—perhaps as shopkeeper and customer, acquaintances who might exchange greetings when their paths crossed, or as fellow travelers in Swarzedz, Poland, although I'll never really know.

It is in establishing peripheral connections such as these that our family histories become more interesting. All it takes is a little curiosity and a lot of investigation. Oh—and a little luck!

Meanings and Translations of Surnames

(Continued from previous page)

Kosciuszko - descendent of Koscia

(Slavic termination with connotation son of: *ov, ek, czyk, wicz, ovich, ak, enko*)

A Tourist: *Someone who spends a lot of money to live out of a suitcase.*

Nostalgia: *Living life in the past lane.*

Mistakes: *Yesterday's mistake is tomorrow's wisdom.*

A Strange Coincidence

By Janice Bartoszek

Have you ever noticed that strange coincidences seem to occur when one is doing genealogical research? At least, with me, some unusual happenings have occurred!

For example, one evening while I was at work at my part-time job, I received a phone call from an account customer. The gentleman's accent interested me and I asked him where he was originally from. Coincidentally, this man was from the same area of Poland from which some of my relatives came. When he mentioned he was from the southern part of Poland, I told him that my family came from the Zakopane region and Nowy Targ. He said, "I came from Zakopane!" I informed him that my relatives were the Stramka family, and he exclaimed, "I knew a Roman Stramka. At one time we were good friends. He died in 1986 under very suspicious circumstances. As he was riding his bicycle home one evening, he was run over by a hit-and-run driver and was killed. We think that he was killed by the Communist Party, because Roman Stramka was an activist in the Solidarity movement. He was also a World War II hero in the Zakopane area! In fact, his sister might still be alive!" This gentleman offered to take down my address and to see if he could somehow make contact with my family in Zakopane; however, I am still waiting.

Many weeks later, when I related this conversation to my parents, my mother pulled out a photograph of a beautiful old wooden home, a photo she was given by second cousin Jozef Stramka when she visited with him two years ago. On the back of the photo was handwritten, *domu* (house of) *cousin Roman Stramka*. Can you imagine—it was not from a relative that I heard this information but from a stranger whom I had a strong feeling to question about his past. My feeling was correct and this man, who was from the same area as my ancestors, provided me with some interesting genealogical information.

Veterans' Records

By Martin Nowak

The Polish Genealogical Society of America recently carried a report from the Jewish Genealogical Society of Long Island concerning World War I veterans' records at the New York State Archives. The archives has a card file containing discharge information on the State's WWI veterans.

Each 4 x 6 card contains the veteran's name, address, date and place of birth, dates of service, rank, unit, dates of overseas service, and percentage of disability, if any.

The cards are arranged alphabetically, so you don't have to know the veteran's home address, as you must for draft records.

Write to the following address stating that you're interested in a search of the state's card file on WWI veterans:

**New York State Archives
Cultural Education Center
Room 11D40
Albany, New York 1230**

Include a self-addressed stamped envelope. You will be sent a form entitled, *War Service Records Search Request and Reply*. Fill out the form with as much information on the veteran as you can. If a card on your relative is found, you will be billed \$2 per each copy of a card. The search is free, so if no record is found, you won't be billed.

The information on each card is limited, but it may contain another piece of the puzzle that you've been looking for, especially if your relative's military records were lost in the 1973 fire at the National Archives repository.

MICROFICHE COPIES
MICROFICHE COPIES OF THE *SWOWNIK GEOGRAFI CZNY* ARE BEING MADE FOR INCLUSION
IN OUR LIBRARY

Adam Mickiewicz and the History of Poland

By Laurie Bialoglowicz

It would be as difficult to speak of Adam Mickiewicz without delving into the history of Poland as it would be to speak of *Pan Tadeusz* without mentioning Adam Mickiewicz. They are intertwined—each one a product, or byproduct, of the other.

Events leading to the division of Poland, and the period of its nonexistence as a formal nation, played an important role in the development of some of Poland's greatest writers, artists, musicians, and patriots. Adam Mickiewicz, a writer who lived during the era when Poland was no longer formally recognized as a country, emerged as one of the greatest poets of the country, although he spent a little less than half of his life there. Perhaps it was because of this and his yearning to return to his country that his works have been immortalized. I feel that *Pan Tadeusz* was a culmination of that yearning.

Poland, formerly the Polish state of Polonia (880 to 960), became a country around the tenth century. Its people were members of western Slavic tribes who inhabited the areas of the Vistula, the Odra, the valley of Bohemia, and the shores of the Baltic. Gniezno was the first capital of the country, but Krakow later became its capital and is the site of the cathedral in which the kings and queens of Poland were crowned. Today, Warsaw is the country's capital.

When threatened by the danger of the Teutonic Knights, Poland and Lithuania formed a close alliance with each other and won a victory over them in 1410. The order of Teutonic Knights was formed by German towns along the Baltic coast during the crusades. It was an order founded for the purpose of caring for sick and wounded knights in the Holy Land. They subsequently migrated from the Holy Land and their political ambitions grew. No longer were they healers of the sick but one of the most hated and feared organizations in Europe. In his

History of Polish Literature, Czeslaw Milosz likens their methods of conquest to those of the Nazis during World War II.

After the end of the Jagiellonian dynasty in 1572, kings of Poland were elected. They did not possess supreme power; their power was limited by the Sejm, the nation's highest legislative body. The Sejm was made up of land-owning gentry and all of its decisions had to be unanimous. A single negative vote could break up an entire session. This practice was known as *liberum veto*, and it gave great nobles and foreign powers the opportunity to exert pressure on the Sejm.

Fearing a diminishing of its power and privileges, the nobility refused to allow the formation of a regular army sizable enough to guarantee the security of the country's frontiers. Serfdom resulted in agricultural stagnation and retarded the development of towns.

The sixteenth century was a period of religious upheaval and saw the growth of Protestantism, particularly the religions of Luther and Calvin, during the first half. In 1564, the Jesuits were brought to Poland, and Protestants began to return to Catholicism. Many institutions of learning were founded by the Jesuits—one of them being the Academy of Wilno—which flourished during the early seventeenth century.

During the first half of the eighteenth century, the universities began to decline, and the lowest point in the economy was reached in 1750. Increasing internal chaos and disruption prevented Poland from organizing an effective defense against growing pressures from external enemies.

The Confederacy of the Bar, which was formed during the war between Russia and Turkey, was an organized movement of the gentry directed against central authority. Kazmierz Pulaski, one of the leaders of the Confederacy, took part in the dramatic fighting that lasted four years and ended in the first partition of Poland (1772). He later emigrated to the United States and became a hero of the American Revolutionary War. It is ironic that, just as America was emerging as an independent nation, Poland was losing its political identity.

The End of the War

By Dorothy Cook

My friend Ann and I first saw the news of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima early one evening while we were walking down lower Main Street on our way to the Crystal Beach Boat. The front page of the newspaper, announcing the bombing, was posted on the outside wall of a news vendor's kiosk.

We stopped and read the headlines, but the part about the bomb had little impact on us. We had no idea how terrible it was in terms of destructive power. The fact that it had practically obliterated a whole city didn't seem to register. After all, we'd been reading about air strikes on major Allied and Axis cities for six years, including the fire bombing of Dresden. What really interested us most was the news that the end of the war was expected any day. Everything else was secondary and it was quite a while before I became aware of the full horrors of an atomic bombing.

World War II ended on Wednesday, August 15, 1945. On Tuesday evening, August 14, at 7:12 p.m. Buffalo time, the Japanese surrendered. As they had done when the Axis had surrendered in May (ending the war in Europe) all radio stations prefaced their programs and announcements with the first four notes of Beethoven's Fifth symphony, ...—, the Morse Code V (for victory).

I rushed to the intersection of Delaware and Hertel Avenues with several girlfriends. We were planning to join the crowds of people that, according to radio reports, were congregating downtown on Main Street.

While we waited at the bus stop, three or four boys from Kenmore, who were also driving down for the impromptu celebration, offered us a lift. None of us were al-

lowed to hitchhike and ordinarily wouldn't have accepted a ride from strangers. However, because of the festivities, buses were off schedule or filled to capacity before they reached our bus stop, so we felt it was the only way we'd get downtown that evening.

By the time we reached Main Street, we were in bumper-to-bumper traffic that was moving so slowly some of us were able to sit on the roof of the auto, while it was in motion, for a better view of the celebration. The noise was deafening. Church bells were ringing, auto horns were blaring, and people were waving American flags, cheering, and crying. Downtown was a sea of cars and pedestrians. Streamers, confetti, and sheets of newspaper blew about in the wind and, in some places, nearly covered the streets.

At about 8:30 p.m., the drizzle that had begun about ten minutes earlier turned into a steady rain, so we all crowded back into the car and slowly made our way home. Some people sought protection from the downpour in restaurants and bars, but we lacked funds for the former and were too young for the latter.

The next day, the newspaper reported that the festivities had started up again at 9:30 p.m., when the rain let up; but by then we were home for the night, glad that we'd been able to take part, even in a small way, in this exciting and historical event. It was estimated that nearly 200,000 people were on the downtown streets that evening and there wasn't a single report of a broken store window and practically no damage to streetcars or buses.

It's hard to express the feelings of joy and optimism most of us experienced with the end of hostilities and the unconditional surrender of Japan.

POLISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF WESTERN NEW YORK

299 Barnard Street
Buffalo, New York 14206

