



SEARCHERS



Number 26

POLISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF NEW YORK STATE

Fall 2000

Preserving Our Past Since 1988

POLISH PIONEER IN POLITICS

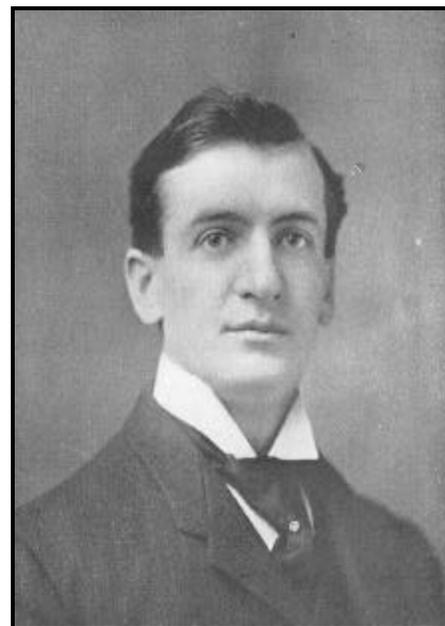
by Keith Kaszubik & Philip Best

Over the course of time we sometimes forget, or are never made aware of, the contributions of certain individuals to Polonia in years past. Our memories fade and become clouded over time, with time itself taking its toll by removing people from our lives forever. We need to take an active role in preserving our history in Polonia. To single out men of late and bring them to the forefront once again to acknowledge them for their contributions to our culture and to help us better understand the Polish American experi-

ence and the potential to make the American dream a reality.



In 1900, a full century ago, he was admitted to the bar to become the first Polish attorney in New York State!



Francis S. Burzynski

Francis S. Burzynski was born December 8, 1876 in Buffalo, N.Y. one

of nine children to Anthony Burzynski and Frances nee Strozykowska, early pioneer Poles and St. Stanislaus parishioners who arrived in Buffalo in the year 1872. The Burzynski family roots are deep in the parish of Kcynia, Poland. Although born here he was as true a Pole as a native and proud to be as such.

He received his elementary education at St. Stanislaus Parochial School. He attended Canisius High School and Canisius College in Buffalo of which he graduated from in 1895. In 1897 he graduated from Bryant and Stratton's Business College in Buffalo. In 1899 he graduated from the University of Buffalo Law School. In 1900, a full century ago, he was admitted to the bar to become the first Polish attorney in New York State!

As a member of the Democratic

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FOR YOUR INFORMATION

The PGSNYS meets the second Thursday of each month in the Villa Maria College cafeteria,
240 Pine Ridge Road, Cheektowaga, New York,
at 7:00 p.m.

Membership Dues... A reminder from the Treasurer:

Dues are \$15.00 for the year. This entitles you to 3 editions of the Searchers. New members receive an information package to help them get started. Annual membership dues are to be received by your expiration date which will be listed in the upper right hand corner of the mailing label. Please refer to this date when paying dues the following year.

Please notify us of any change of address.

For submission to the Searchers Newsletter, deadlines are as follows:

Spring Edition - April 15th for June mailing
Summer Edition - June 15th for August mailing
Winter Edition - October 15th for December mailing

Mail

Due to the large amount of mail received, please take note when writing us for assistance: The PGSNYS will answer ONLY correspondence that includes a self-addressed, stamped reply envelope. All correspondence should be directed to:

The Polish Genealogical Society of New York State
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.

PGSNYS Officers For Year 2000:

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All meeting cancellations due to bad weather will be announced on News Radio 930, AM WBEN

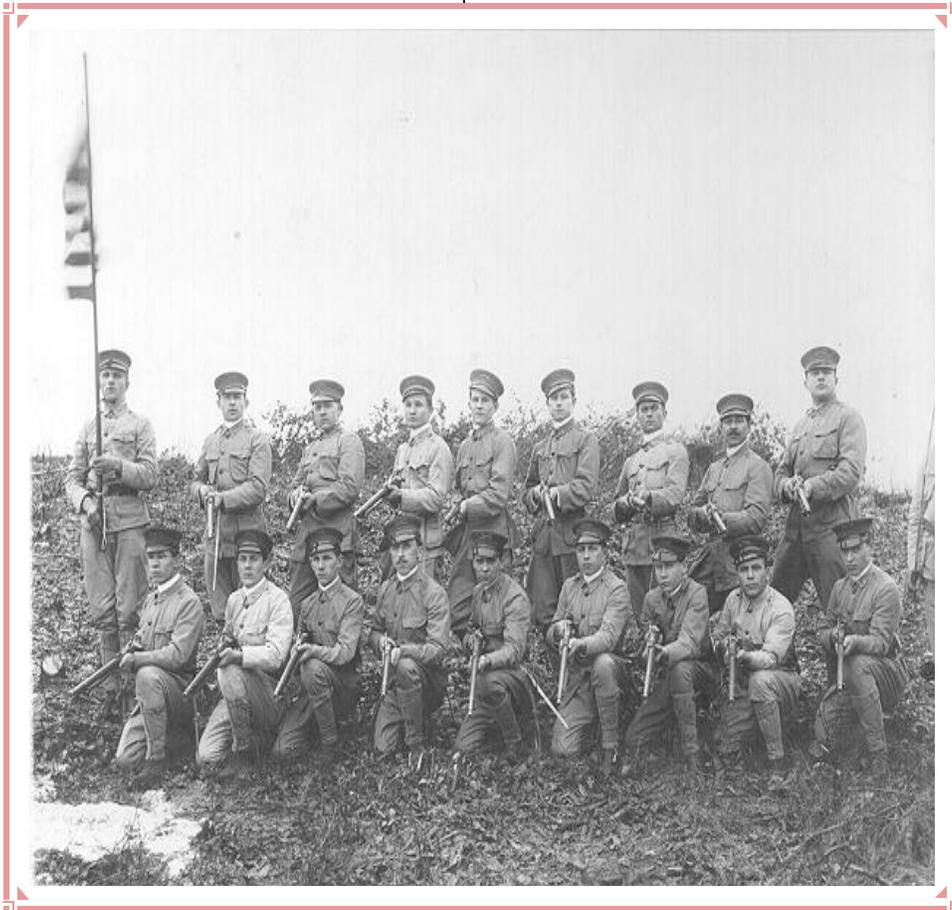
Please Visit The Polish Genealogical Society Of New York State's Web Site:

www.pgsnys.org

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In response to Daniel Kij's article in the last edition of the Searchers and a previous article on the Polish Settlement in Perry NY. in the fall of 1998, we would like to share the following photo that was submitted to us. If anyone can identify those below, please contact the society or email us. From the best of our guesses, this uniform was the khaki while the dress uniform was more elaborate with swords, braids and plumage in the headgear. Also, in the Letters To The Editor section on page 15, please see the letter from member Chester Daniels regarding the Ulan and his father Stanley Daniels. (Sure would be nice if someone would write an article on these little known groups!)



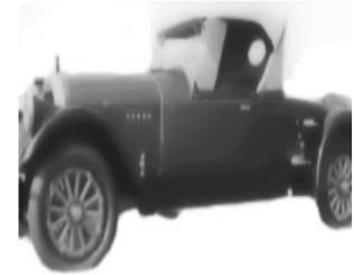
**Ulan Society of the Alliance of Polish Forces "Zwiazek Wojsk
Polskich", circa 1915**

Front row left to right

unknown - Tony Talewicz, Casimer Kochan, John Jablonski
Walenty Szymanski, unknown - unknown, Antoni Cyran, unknown

Back row left to right

unknown - unknown - unknown - Franciszek Stygris, Bronislaw
Tompolski, Leon Gorecki - unknown - unknown - unknown



**BUFFALO TRANSPORTATION/PIERCE
ARROW MUSEUM**

*SEEKING PIERCE ARROW
CONNECTIONS*

THE BUFFALO TRANSPORTATION /PIERCE ARROW MUSEUM is collecting names and family connections of Pierce Arrow employees. If your father/mother, grandfather/grandmother, uncle/aunt, etc. worked at the factory, we want to hear from you and about your relative and their work at Pierce Arrow.

JULY 8-15, 2001 will be PIERCE ARROW WEEK in Buffalo to commemorate 100 years since the production of the first Pierce Motor Car. We would like to invite descendants of Pierce employees to participate.

Please contact: Mary Ann Sandoro, 716-853-0084 or 716-855-1931, 24 Myrtle Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14204. Or E-MAIL:

msandoro@aol.com.

Polish Pioneer In Politics

(Continued from page 1)

party he was elected to the New York State Assembly in 1904 from the old Fifth District. As the first time in the political arena he defeated his opponent, Frederick Baker, with 6,180 votes versus 5,407 votes. He served an additional four consecutive one-year terms as the first Polish Assemblyman in New York State! He served on numerous commissions such as the general law commission, public-works commission, and military law commission. He earned distinction by introducing into the legislature his bill known as the "Burzynski Bill" providing for the deepening of the Buffalo River for a distance of 7 miles at the city line and extending all the way to Lake Erie. The Burzynski Bill was essential in development of commerce in the south and east sections of the city.

At the state capital he became close friends with Alfred E. Smith (later elected governor of New York and first Roman Catholic presidential candidate). The papers recorded Burzynski as one for "smashing precedents" in the Polish community.

During the Louis P. Fuhrmann administration he served on the City Civil Service Commission and in 1909 represented New York State at the Alaska-Yukon Pacific Exposition in Seattle, Washington.

In 1926, Mayor Schwab of Buffalo named seven people to a board to write a new charter for the city. Burzynski was chosen as one of those seven as the representative and voice of the Buffalo Polonia. He contributed to every chapter in the new charter which was adopted the following year and is still in use

today. The amazing thing is that the members of the board received absolutely no compensation for their time or even consideration of the education alone required to tackle such a project. It is paradoxical when compared to our day where people rarely do the job they are being paid to do and our elected officials do almost nothing except for themselves. In addition Burzynski was on a board of five members in 1927 to revise and write new city ordinances. This was 3 more months work with no compensation. Burzynski knew the true meaning of civic pride! After all, true dignity is not acquired with accumulation of wealth.



***It was also felt that
Burzynski's
appointment would
greatly increase FDR's
prestige among the
Poles.***

An inside view into Burzynski's personal life was provided in an article from the Buffalo Times newspaper dated September 25, 1927. It states, "His home town is in Fillmore Avenue and his summer residence at Wanakah-on-the-Lake. Here he enjoys many hours as his chief hobby is gardening. He loves trees, shrubs, evergreens, and flowers. He likes the law and politics and aspires to be the voice of the new charter in the new city council."

In the primaries of 1927 Burzynski was selected by the Democrats as one of their five candidates for councilman at large. Just on the

magic of his good name he received 10,000 votes without as much as lifting a finger! Unfortunately he was defeated in that election.

In 1930 it was almost written in stone that Franklin D. Roosevelt (then governor of New York State) would appoint Burzynski to the position of Public Service Commissioner to succeed Col. William R. Pooley, Republican of Buffalo. The senate had failed late in the previous year to confirm the nomination at the last minute of David C. Adie, which FDR had sent in, and Burzynski was highly recommended. He even had bipartisan support in that the Republicans in Erie County unanimously backed him too! It was announced that, "the Republican party in Erie County, as represented in its legislative delegation, would leave no stone unturned to promote Mr. Burzynski's appointment." It was also felt that Burzynski's appointment would greatly increase FDR's prestige among the Poles. The assumption that FDR would appoint Burzynski brought on a little static from the governor but later reports said he liked the idea. FDR made a tentative agreement to appoint Burzynski. Senate members were assuring confirmation.

The Democratic National Committeeman met with FDR on January 20, 1930 to discuss the Burzynski appointment. Questionable news started to filter-back from Albany through the media in regard to the nomination. Then FDR sent for Burzynski to meet with him. After the meeting Burzynski expressed no particular satisfaction over the call, and he dismissed the situation with the statement that the governor had advised him it would be a few weeks before he acted. On April 8, 1930 it was announced that Maurice

(Continued on page 5)

C. Burritt of Hilton, Monroe Co., Republican, was nominated for Public Service Commissioner. Burritt was confirmed and on May 8, 1930 started at his new position. This would not be FDR's last let down for the Polish people (who could ever forget how he sold Poland down the river at Yalta?). Burzynski would continue with his practice and other obligations.

He died at the age of 88 years old on January 23, 1965 at his home on 747 Best Street in Buffalo. The old gentleman had worked up until the last 14 months of his life until health problems forced him to finally retire. He was buried at St. Stanislaus Cemetery in Cheektowaga, N.Y. During his lifetime he also served as past council for the Polish Union of America.

He was a member of numerous other organizations including: the Erie County Bar Association, Advocates Legal Society (members of which served as his pallbearers), The Moniuszko Singing Society (past president and director), and director of the Polonia Land Association.

He was first married in 1898 to Victoria Burzynska, daughter of Vincent Burzynski and Magdalena nee Grabowska, who died in 1902. His second wife was Magdalena Tondrowska (1889-1975), daughter of Melchior Tondrowski and Valentina nee Gabrzelewicz, whom he married in 1911. He had a son, Edward J., from his first marriage who died as an infant. From his second marriage he had three children, Francis Burzynski Jr., Mrs. Virginia Berkhausen, and Mrs. Cornelia Devine. He was survived by 6 grandchildren at the time of his death. Author Philip Best's great-great-grandmother was Domicela Leppert nee Burzynska (aunt of Francis),

and he welcomes any additional information in regard to this family (please call 716 648-0167).

No matter the significance of our accomplishments we should always strive to do our best. The great statesman and pianist, Ignacy Jan Paderewski, once said, "I owe my success in one percent to my talent, in ten percent to luck, and in ninety percent to hard work. Work, work, and more work is the secret of success."



FRIENDS

There are many people who can be friendly,
but it takes someone like you to be a friend.

Other's may say they sympathize when I have a problem, but you put those feelings into action by being there and helping out.

Many others will listen when I talk,
but you do more than that--
you hear the thoughts behind the words.

I know I can trust you to be honest and understanding, to go beyond what's on the surface.

Your thoughtfulness is more than just being polite, it's a commitment to caring.

I know I couldn't find that kind of concern in just anyone... only in a true friend like you.

I know that if I need a mood lightened,
a secret kept, a story shared, advice given,
help offered, a memory relived, a success celebrated--anything

--I can always count on you. And you on me.

I'm always happy when new friends come into my life.

But old friends are always best friends.

I know that's true because of you.

In Memory Of

The PGSNYS is an all volunteer organization. This means that without the support of many friends, our function as a genealogical society is non-existent. Sadly we have lost two more important members of our team, long-term members, and



officers, that have worked hard to help preserve our society for the long haul. But they were much more, they were friends and they will be sadly missed by all.

Florence (nee *Wylupska*) **Witul** left us suddenly on June 5th, 2000. She served as Secretary of the PGSNYS from 1992 – 1994 and from 1998-2001. She also was committee chairman for the annual Villa Maria Lawn Fete. Her time and dedication to the society was beyond exemplary and is recognized by the members of the PGSNYS and it's President.



Edward Potera passed away on August 23, 2000. He held the position of Sergeant-at-Arms of the PGSNYS in 1992 and a past Director of the society. In January 1994 Mr. Ed Potera volunteered to take over cataloging and arrangement of the PGSNYS library a long tedious job, which at his direction was done quickly and competently. A volunteer in the truest sense of the word.



Skeletons Emerging From Jefferson's Closet

by Mitchell Grochowski
Straz 2000

William Jefferson Clinton isn't the only U. S. President to have suffered a sex scandal. The reputation of this nation's second president, from whom Clinton takes his middle name, is also on the firing line now that DNA testing has apparently established that Thomas Jefferson fathered not one but six children with his slave, Sally Hemings.

There will always be those who will rush to the defense of this famous American and signer of the Declaration of Independence. As a matter of fact, one of Jefferson's biographers, Herbert Barger, blames the president's brother for having liaisons with slaves at Monticello which he says fully explains the similarity in DNA. According to Barger, Randolph Jefferson liked to "play and fiddle and dance" with his brother's slaves, making him "the probable candidate for fatherhood."

But even if the reputation of Thomas Jefferson survives the paternity scandal, there's another incident in his lifetime which cannot be blamed or attributed to anyone else: The fact is the nation's second president and signer of the Declaration of Independence was an embezzler. And what makes the offense even more egregious is that he took the money from the estate of his close friend, Thaddeus Kosciuszko.

It is during the month of February, marking the anniversary of his birth,

that Polish-Americans commemorate Kosciuszko for his contributions to Polish and American freedom. Many Polish-Americans point with pride to the historically documented close bond of friendship between Kosciuszko and Thomas Jefferson. But this friendship would later prove to serve as an opportunity for Jefferson to steal from Kosciuszko when he found himself entrusted with the American Revolutionary War hero's estate.



A grateful Continental Congress elevated Kosciuszko to the rank of general after several other generals in the revolutionary army made it clear that their military campaigns would have floundered were it not for the French military trained Pole's expertise in engineering and construction of fortifications, including the one he built at West Point. Congress also awarded Kosciuszko land and backpay for his military service which would constitute the bulk of his American estate.

Although Thomas Jefferson was not

a warrior, he grew to admire Kosciuszko in a different way. In a letter to General Gates, Jefferson said of the Pole: "He is the purest son of liberty among you all that I have ever known." This flattering statement stemmed from the fact Kosciuszko and Jefferson shared almost identical philosophical views regarding equality and democracy.

But there was one perspective they did not have in common regarding the human condition, Kosciuszko's abhorrence of slavery.

When the Pole made a decision to return to Europe, he made Jefferson the executor of his American estate. Kosciuszko also wrote in his will that in the event of his death, Jefferson should apply the proceeds of his estate to purchase the freedom of slaves and give them instruction in a trade so they may become productive citizens.

Kosciuszko's efforts to liberate Poland were initially successful, largely because of his belief in the equality of man. He made a decision to enlist peasants in his liberation army. Previous to this Polish serfs were not allowed to bear arms. But at Kosciuszko's invitation they forged their scythes in hard acres and pikes. Thousands marched on Russian fortifications and overwhelmed them. Although military strategists credit the maneuver as a brilliant military coupe, it also served to give Polish peasants the

(Continued on next page)

kind of equality Kosciuszko desired for every man. Russian defeat only brought a larger army to put down the Poles. Kosciuszko was felled by a Cossack lance and taken as a prisoner to Russia by Czarist orders. Eventually released from prison, he returned to America but again felt a calling to return to Europe. It was at this time that he decided to make his will and entrust Thomas Jefferson as executor.

Some years later Jefferson left the office of the Presidency. He had little to look forward to in retirement from public life. He was near financial ruin because of ill-advised investments. When his accountant learned that he was entrusted with Kosciuszko's assets, he urged the president to "borrow" some of the monies to get out of debt. Seeing no other remedy for his financial plight, Jefferson converted Kosciuszko's funds to his own use while his friend and American Revolutionary War hero was in Europe.

To Jefferson's credit, he vowed that if he could ever pay off his own debt, he also would endeavor to reimburse the Kosciuszko estate. Another round of investments finally paid off for the ex-President, and he returned Kosciuszko's monies with interest.

Years later, Kosciuszko would be asked what he thought about Jefferson taking his money without permission. Ever the diplomat, Kosciuszko simply replied that he was pleased to learn the funds were able to help his friend.

Years later Jefferson walked into a Virginia courtroom without notice and asked a surprised judge if he could be released as he executor of

others were assigned as overseers by various courts. Although many of them plundered the estate with outrageous administration fees, Kosciuszko's American holdings had grown to a sizeable sum, what would be worth millions today.

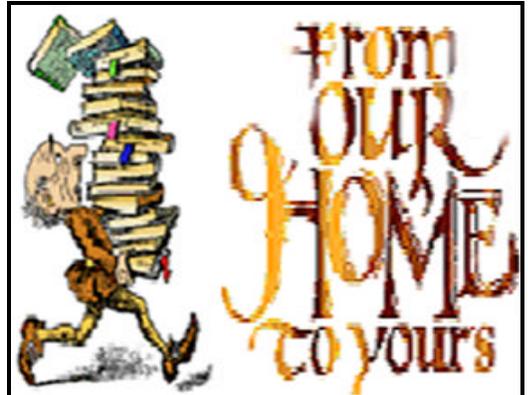
As for the individuals the estate was intended to benefit, Negro slaves, that was never to come to fruition.

After learning of Kosciuszko's death in Switzerland, Jefferson did not exercise his duties as executor and free slaves as Kosciuszko directed.

Jefferson, after all, lived in Virginia, a slave holding state. And now some historians claim he had a love affair with one of the very slaves Kosciuszko's money could have brought freedom for. Rather than deal with a hot potato, Jefferson gave up his executorship of the will.

Also, relatives of Kosciuszko went before a Virginia court to file claim to a portion of the estate. Told that Negroes were first in line for the money, the petitioners asked the court for a ruling on that issue and received a decision favorable to the petitioners.

Eventually the Kosciuszko fortune, what was left of it, became divided by relatives and friends in Europe. The courts ruled that Kosciuszko actually had three estates: one in America, one in Switzerland and one in Poland.



A warm welcome to the following new members who have joined the PGSNYS in the last few months

HRYHORCOFF, DANIEL
OLYPHANT PA

HILL, CLAUDIA B.
LIBERTYVILLE IL

GEBURA, PAULINE
CLARENCE CENTER NY

GRATTO, MARILYN
GRAND ISLAND NY

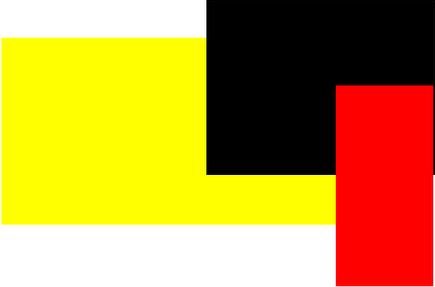
DULSKI, JOSEPH & THERESA
HAMBURG NY

MARTIN, GERI
EAST AMHERST NY

GABRYSZAK, HENRY R.
SLOAN NY

KASZUBIK, KEITH
HAMBURG NY

SZARPA, GREGORY
SLOAN NY



Reflections

by Mike Drabik

It was the Memorial Day week end and the weather finally gave way to some clear skies and warmer temps. Besides doing some needed yard work, which could not be done earlier because of the rain we had for three weeks straight, I went about cleaning out some file drawers and took time to reflect on the changes I have seen in my old Polish neighborhood.

Among the many files that I glanced at was the material I had gathered to write articles for our community newspaper, the East Clinton Shopper. Here I found the names of those businesses familiar to me as a young boy growing up in the Kaisertown/Kazimierzowo section of Buffalo. Who even remembers these businesses that once covered the strip from Bailey to the city line, so many, now nothing but memories.

The neighborhood was fortunate to have several good old time bakeries; Mazurek's Gold Ray; when you left St. Casimir's church after early morning Mass, the air was filled with the smell of fresh baked goods. Johnny's Bakery sold great cinnamon buns; Goinski's had delicious swinka (rye) bread; Blazejewski's wonderful cakes; Maslanka's fruit filled cheese cakes, Hyzy sold tasty sweet dinner rolls and later Burczynski, all had such luscious things. The butchers:

Manuszewski's: Ptak's (Mrs Ptak even cut her own meats!). Szelagowski and Bogdanowicz both had saw-dust on their floors. Ted's; Serafin's and later Indian Head, A&P and also Nu Way at the city line. All catered to the housewife's tastes for fresh meats.

We also had a fish market run by Mrs Gawronska, next to Molly's Hair Salon. Specialty stores were plentiful; Wozniak's Firestone where you could get a small appliance fixed or purchase various supplies and the kids loved the build it yourself model department; Nowicki's Ben Franklin mini department store, I remember Mr. Nowicki in his white shirt patrolling the aisles. There was Plezer's Shoes, Mrs. Okoniewski's ladies apparel and Brownie's Men's Wear, all did a thriving business. We also had Josephine's Bridal, Kwapisz's, where you could purchase religious items and a variety of Polish greeting cards.

Popular with the younger set was John the Greek's Honeybee, the local soda and ice cream parlor, that's when ice cream tasted like it should! On Weiss and Clinton Streets was the hamburger shop, Rams, named after the Ryan High School mascot, a great hang out for the teens of that time. Who can forget the Babe's on Spann and Casimir streets, just across the Houghton Park, serving delicious french fries to which you added a load of vinegar. Their thick ice cream shakes were great. Pizza

was just becoming popular and we had two shops in the neighborhood; Ronconi's and Sal's or drive down Clinton to the Bocce Club, whom some say was the best in Buffalo.

There were a few medical professionals on the strip also, Dr. Pantera, Greenky, Canney, Bembenista, and Krzyzanowski had dental services here. Medical doctors included; Swiatek, Banas; Sikorska and Okoniewski. Dr. Swiatek retired back in the 1980s was one of only a few who still made house calls to his older patients. Many a person in pain sought out the services of Mr. Zamorek on Casimir and Willet Streets, who put bones back in place and relieved sore backs. Prescriptions could be filled at the drug stores of Mr. Jan Frost, who ran an old time apothecary. Mr. Frost used to wear a big green visor and sleeve covers on his arms. Mr. Napierala sold his business to Alfred Szklarz, his shelving was a rich wood type, now enhancing the School of Pharmacy at the University of Buffalo. Further down Clinton was Kent's, which was the last local drug store to close. Insurance was sold by the Bakos Agency along with offices run by Al Dwyer and Mr. Biniszkiwicz. The local bank was Marine Trust, at Weimar and Clinton, until Erie Federal Savings and Loan opened a new facility at Willet Street.

Taverns and mom and pop deli's combed the neighborhood, almost every side street had either a tavern

or grocery on it. These little stores carried such a wide variety of penny candies and in the summer had great ice cream treats.

You could walk to get your hair cut or ladies get a fancy perm at the many shops that once existed. Just this past May, Frank Modzelewski passed away, he ran a barber shop started by his dad, located across from the old Ryan High. His shop was the last of its kind in Kaisertown. Frank was active up to his last day, an avid stamp collector, swimmer and ham radio operator, on his day off he made house calls to his older and ill clients. There was also Gorko's, Romey's, Binkowski's and Max's who did barbering, while the ladies had many shops to choose from such as Molly's, Agnes', Norma's, Frances' those are the ones I recall.

Recreation was no problem either, we had the well cared for Houghton Park to enjoy swimming, baseball, basketball, tennis and track. In the mid 1950s, the Polish Falcons held their National Convention and Zlot in Buffalo. The Zlot, a track and field competition, was held in Houghton Park, where I had the opportunity to see two time Olympic medallist, Stella Walsh, sprint. Maslowski's owned and operated the local bowling alley and further down at the city line was Skrzypczak's Bowl Inn. The Neighborhood House on Gorski and Clinton was a haven for a variety of activities for all age groups. Besides team basketball, the scouts met here and was the location of the public library branch for this section of the city. At this library various civic and social organizations held meetings as did the Ladies Home Bureau. Next door was located Lorenc's Photo Studio where you

had your communion picture taken and then was on display in his window for years to come. Across the street was Ace Tennis shop ran by the team of Durlak and Brodnicki, it was next door to the Strand theater, our movie house, where we often went to a Friday Fright Night or early Saturday for 30 cartoons showing.

The Fredro Hall, once the headquarters for a Polish Singing Society and theater group, housed the PAW novelty store, supplier of parish lawn fete supplies. From here the Gaj Sisters ran their dancing studio for many years. The Hall was rented out also for parties and other occasions. Recently the building along with the Neighborhood House were razed to make room for a new community center. The Peter Machnica Community Center is scheduled to open in 2001.

Kaisertown is the home of the oldest Polish family run funeral parlor in Buffalo. The Sittniewski family has operated their business from Weimar and Casimir Street since 1903. I had heard many times about Mr Teofil Sittniewski leading the funeral procession down the street to church, he would be dressed in his black suit, top hat and marched with a tall staff to officiate. The Buszka Funeral Home on Clinton was founded by the late Jan Buszka about 1920, and is now managed by his daughter Mary Buszka Semska. Others in the area included, Franciszek Pacer, Leonard Slawatycki, Kazimierz Golombek and Richard Czubaj Funeral Homes. Floral basket could be arranged at the Fronc flower shop which also had their own greenhouse at the end of Weimar Street.

Houses of worship in the neighbor-

hood include, the Byzantine style church of St. Casimir, (Polish), the little prince, Father Antoni Majewski served as pastor for 40 years followed by 13 years of the iron man, Fr Bronislaus Majerowski. This magnificent church brings to mind pictures of traditional 40 Hour, May and October Devotions as well as the funeral of a friend who was killed in Vietnam. I still can envision Fr Majerowski chanting the Office of the Dead in Latin as he processed, and the organist, Mr. Ted Polowy, singing the responses as the Marines escorted the coffin down the long aisle of the church. St Bernard's was founded for the German population in the area, long time pastor Louis Kieffer was a gentle and kind man, he looked after the children in the school yard with fatherly eye. The Fitch Baptist Church on Fenton, was a little white structure surrounded by hedges, across the street was the Magyar Reform Church, the only church in the neighborhood still with a REAL bell that is rung Sunday at 9AM. At one time there must have been a sizeable Hungarian settlement around here. On Willet Street where once was an Episcopal church which for a short period also provided a place for Polish National Catholics to attend, this is now the American Legion Clinton Post. Both St Casimir and St. Bernard operated parochial schools run by religious orders of nuns, the Felicians and the Franciscans respectively.

The City Public School was PS #69 adjacent to Houghton Park now renamed Houghton Academy, the principal for decades was Mr. Thomas Cleary. Those who tested him found out what a good swing he had with the paddle. Bishop Ryan High School operated by the Polish Franciscan Friars closed in the 1970s after

(Continued on page 17)

What Is Family History?

What To Keep

How To Organize Family Papers

Compiled by Nancy Piatkowski

www.buffalostate.edu/~piatkonm/
Nancy.htm

Introduction

America's Bicentennial Celebration in 1976 coincided with the publication and subsequent television dramatization of Alex Haley's *Roots*. This book and program inspired the general public to search for family records. In the course of this research, materials which have continuing historical value in their own right were collected.

Whether your ancestors landed at Plymouth Rock or Ellis Island, whether they were brought against their will or were native to this country, there are certain things you may wish to preserve in order to pass on to the succeeding generations the unique story of your family's part in American and local history.

What Is Family History?

Family history is more than birth, marriage and death dates. It is the story of personal interaction with a community and the impact of national, state and local events on generations of people. Sources for family histories can be written docu-

ments, photos, scrapbooks, diaries and other types of personal papers. Sources for family histories can be found in records of churches, schools, businesses, social clubs and other organizations whose archives document various activities engaged in by your ancestors. All of the day to day materials document who we are, what we did and what was important to us.

Your family's history reaches back to your siblings and parents, aunts and uncles, grandparents, great-grandparents; as far back as you or

A school essay written in the 1930s may reflect a time of great upheaval and change better than a textbook ever could.

anyone in your family can remember. It also reaches forward to your siblings' and your own children and so on. This article offers an introduction to organizing the history of your own family.

Your family history is of great interest not only to your own family, but to the larger community of historians, scholars and students from grade school to graduate school. For example, a school essay written in the 1930s may reflect a time of great upheaval and change better than a textbook ever could. A photograph of your great-grandmother

in her 1890s bicycling outfit may interest a costume designer as well as your daughter. Letters exchanged between husband and wife or parents and children may express what life was like in a particular place or time more clearly than any history book. For instance, letters written during military conflicts or letters home from college or while on a trip can provide personal insights and opinions which are extremely helpful in understanding the humanity in historical events. The story of our ancestors and ourselves is the story of our community, our country, our world. However, it only becomes history when it is organized and preserved for future generations.

What To Keep?

What to keep depends on the size of the collection and the age of materials. As a rule of thumb, the older the material and the smaller the amount, the larger percentage you would keep. For example, if you had a small number of bills and receipts documenting the purchase of livestock from the early 1900s plus a few letters and a Bible listing births, deaths and marriages, you would keep them all. But, remember, old does not always mean historical.

However, if you found massive

(Continued on Page 18)

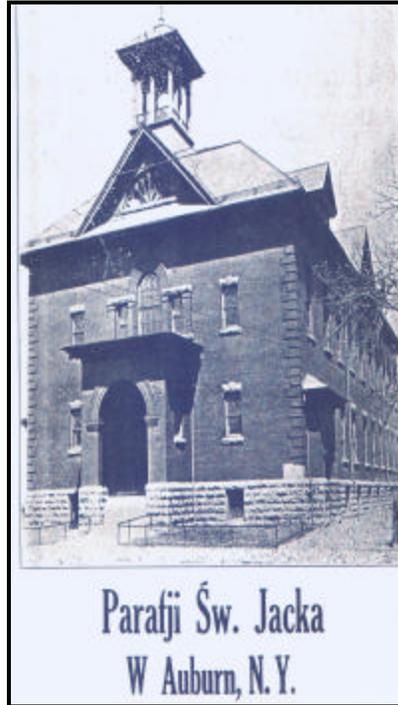
Auburn, New York St. Hyacinth Parish 1906

by Michael Drabik

New York State, Pennsylvania and Illinois are the leading states with large populations of Polish/Polish Americans. Buffalo, New York appears as one of the cities with a large Polish population, other cities in this state include, New York City, Syracuse and Rochester. Besides these communities others do exist, such as Auburn. This city located 30 miles west of Syracuse is located in Cayuga County and on the fringes of the State's magnificent Finger Lakes Region. The Poles were drawn to this area by the opportunities for employment in the several factories located in the town. Auburn is of particular interest to Buffalonian since we have a few common threads.

The Auburn Correctional Center, built in 1817, was the place of execution of the Presidential assassin, Leon Czolgosz, a Pole who shot William McKinley at the 1901 Pan American Exposition in Buffalo, New York. One of the last people to speak and see Czolgosz was the Rev. Jacek Fudzinski, a Franciscan friar from Corpus Christi Parish of Buffalo who went there to hear his last confession. Also one of the leaders of the Underground Railroad, Harriet Tubman, made her home in Auburn after the Civil War, Buffalo played a significant role in this system of smuggling slaves out of the country.

By the last decade of the 19th century, over a hundred Polish families and hundreds of single individuals



were already residing in northern sector of the city. The earlier Polish immigrants were mostly from the Prussian partition of Poland so living among the German population was not a great cultural or ethnic shock. They attended the German Catholic parish of St. Alfons, where the pastor was Rev. Regenbogen, a gracious and helpful soul. By 1905, the Poles formed a committee and met with the pastor to discuss their future. Fr. Regenbogen arranged for Polish speaking priests to attend to their spiritual needs during the course of the liturgical year. The committee decided to approach the Bishop of Rochester, Bernard Mc Quaid, for permission to organize a Polish parish in Auburn. Mc Quaid looked favorably on the proposal and designated the young cleric, Stanislaw

Szupa, to become the spiritual leader of the Auburn Polish settlement. Szupa was raised in the Buffalo area, studied at St. Bernard Seminary in Rochester as well as at The Polish Seminary at Orchard Lake, Mi.

In June of 1905, Szupa was ordained to the priesthood and two weeks later sent to Auburn to assist in the organization of a parish for the Poles. Arriving with no money or place to stay, Rev Szupa was welcomed at St Alfons parish and given permission to use the facilities for church and social functions. This lasted two years for which the pastor demanded no reimbursements, he always remained a true friend of the Poles. Ambitious to have their own house of worship, the Poles engaged in a sincere fund raising campaign. Once land was purchased, the money began to flow more steadily. The parish committee choose St. Hyacinth, Sw. Jacek, as the patron saint of the new church.

Late in 1906 building began on the first church structure, which was completed in time to celebrate the resurrection of the Lord in April 1907. The building measured 110 feet in length and 55 feet in width, accommodating six classrooms and living quarters for the teaching nuns on the lower level. In just five short years the parish census showed over 1100 parishioners.

Their pastor, Rev Stanislaw Szupa continued to serve his people until 1926, when he was resigned to St.

(Continued on page 12)

(Continued from Page 11)

Stanislaus Parish in Rochester, NY. He was temporarily replaced by a priest from the Buffalo Diocese, Rev. Wladyslaw Massalski, who came to administer until a permanent pastor was assigned.

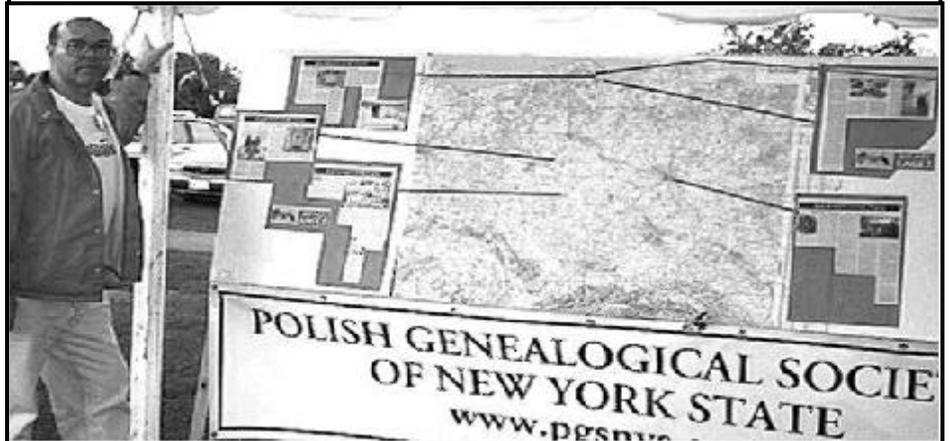
In July of 1926, the Franciscan Friars from Buffalo were appointed in charge of the parish and continue to this day. The first Franciscan pastor was Rev. Heronim Holubowicz, Rev. Blazej Szymaszek was his assistant. The major problem that Fr. Holubowicz found when he arrived was the over-crowding in the parish school, thus he embarked on a building campaign to relieve the school problem.

This was followed by the need for more adequate housing for the teaching sisters. A new convent was built and dedicated in 1937. Two years later, the parish would be debt free and a mortgage burning ceremony was held to celebrate this milestone in history. On this joyous occasion the three oldest living members of the parish were allowed to burn the mortgage papers, they were: Karol Lobermayer, Antoni Bialoszewski and Ignacy Kilian.

The parish decided to build a new rectory for the good Fathers in 1948, making their long walk to the church much shorter and convenient.

Also located a short distance from the parish complex is the *Sokolnia* or Polish Falcon Nest and the *Dom Polski* in Auburn. Nest 74 of the Polish Falcons was founded in 1906 with an organization meeting held in the home of Piotr Momot. By 1912 membership had grown and its members purchased land for the purpose of building their own *Sokolnia* of Nest building. In May 1914,

the Falcon Hall was completed and housed a library, gymnastic hall and meeting room. When the Haller Army was formed in Canada, several of the local boys left to fight for Polish Independence. Over the years several expansions and improvements were made to the building and also a ball field developed. The present facility was built in 1950 following the destruction of the old building by fire in 1947. The Falcons and St. Hyacinth Parish, remain a viable asset in the Polish community of Auburn, NY.



P.G.S.N.Y.S



**Working at the
Polish Festival**

August 2000



W E B R E V I E W

by

Dave Newman

This editions review:

MyFamily.com

Share Your Genealogy On-Line

While combing the Internet during a genealogical search, I stumbled across an excellent website called MyFamily.com. This website allows you to share information with family members through a personalized website. The personalized website is free and best of all you have the freedom to give whomever you want to gain access. I use this website to share genealogical, photo and sound files, recipes and family news. But there is allot more you can do. It's great to have one place for the whole family to go to for information.

The following is a walk through of all the features to date:

E-Mail

In an attempt to make your web experience easier and more enjoyable, you can send e-mail messages straight from your personal website. To make it so you do not have to check several e-mail boxes, when people reply back to you, messages will go to your regular e-mail box not your website. They have provided this e-mail area simply for your convenience while using the web.

Calendar

Enter important family dates in your Calendar - birthdays, anniversaries, vacations, etc. - so your family can keep track of these special events in one central place. You can also receive reminders before the events happen.

Photos

Share photos with the rest of your family! You can easily upload, view, edit, and organize photos just by clicking on the links above. You have 100 Meg of disk space to play with.

News

Take a moment each time you logon and post some news! Post anything of interest to you and your family, from "The kids have leading roles in the school play" to "We got a new puppy." Soon your site will be THE place to stay in the loop on family news.

Chat

Talk with one or all of your family members in a real-time chat. Chat is a wonderful, easy-to-use communication tool that allows multiple family members to converse at the same time - without having to pay long distance telephone charges. Also, the Chat Room is private and only members of your website can participate.

Online Family Trees

Collaborate with your family to create your online family tree. Upload

your gedcom file. This feature is like having your family tree program on-line to display the tree.

History

Post your fondest memories. Every family has some special memories of events, stories, and experiences that are part of the family's folklore. The Family History area is a great place to record your own family's stories and enable them to be shared and remembered - for now and for generations ahead.

File Cabinet

Store and access family files in an online, secure place. Upload any type of computer file into your File Cabinet to share with your family - video and sound clips, family newsletters, spreadsheets, documents, etc. From family reunions (itineraries, directions, hotel information) to holiday get-togethers (who's bringing what food, who's arriving when, who's getting gifts for whom), you can share it all here.

Reviews

Make your opinion known -- post reviews on the latest movie or book. How was that movie you went to last weekend? Create your own family review guide for movies, restaurants, music, etc.

Recipes

Compile Babcia's pierogi recipes. What was that great cake recipe your Mom makes?

Polls

Curious about the family's opinion? Just ask.

There are more features in the works. To begin your personal family website, check out

<http://www.myfamily.com>



Something All Genealogists Should Know And Help Happen

by David W. Dole

dwdole@fishnet.com

History researchers and genealogists either Californians, Americans, Canadians or elsewhere, should have both passive and active interest in the struggles of one octogenarian trying to help all genealogists, researchers and librarians everywhere SOLVE AN AGE-OLD PROBLEM: The “clipped” obituary!

You know that little bit of newsprint from somewhere in Wisconsin, sent to your mother by a cousin perhaps 20 years ago, which reads: “Susie Smith died at her lake home on Friday. Burial from Christ Church on Wednesday”. And here you are today trying to use the information in your genealogical efforts.

But you have no idea WHAT lake or WHERE in Wisconsin! Nor for that matter, how many “Christ” churches there are in that area or state. If you only had a clue . . . what’s this? Down in the corner appears—in 4-point type so you almost missed it—some sort of a code—15 characters long.

Off you go to a reference librarian or a genealogist asking, “What is it?”. And the first one says, “Oh, that’s the PGCS—Publishers Genealogical Coding Service. Here, look on their website at www.obituarycoding.com. Check the first seven characters of that code, the

Database on the Website tells you the name and location of the newspaper from which the obit was clipped! The last eight characters ARE the publication date!

Thus, with the addition of the PGCS code, “clipped” obituaries which are often almost worthless, now have real value and will live forever. Those who have them, will be able to learn their source location and publication date, easily and without charge.

Now, isn’t that worth knowing about and worth doing something about yourself, to help hurry it up? Even though PGCS has 6 local papers and 1 national paper, so far, using the coding, YOUR HELP IS NEEDED. Go to www.obituarycoding.com and register, identifying yourself and the newspaper to which you subscribe and it’s editor. PGCS will send you a cover letter about PGCS and a letter from YOU to the paper’s Editor (ready to sign and send) plus an explanatory page about the coding and an Application form for the paper to use in starting the coding.

And there’s no cost to you, except perhaps for a few stamps, envelopes and copies. The newspaper has but one, small, one-time charge for the license to their unique identity 7-character code. Lets give this all the help we can. If enough of us do it, surely your paper will start using PGCS.

Name Search



Member and non member 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 your researching and location if known. Please keep limit to- six surnames of research. Non members please include \$3.00

We know the limit on surnames for this section is six names, but Keith is such an avid researcher, just six names, is not in his vocabulary!!

Keith Kaszubik, 5550 Maple Grove Dr., Hamburg, NY 14075-7114, e-mail:pomorze@juno.com Researching the following ancestral surnames in Pomorze and Wielkopolska: BASKA, BACHORZ, BIADALA, CHAMIERGLISZCZYNSKI, CHWAL, CYSEWSKI (two distinct lines), CZAPIEWSKI, DABROWSKI, DORAWA, DZWONKOWSKI, FILIP, GLOWCZEWSKI, GRZE-SAK?, JABCZYNSKI, JANIEC, JANTA-POLCZYNSKI, KIEDROWSKI, KNOPIK, KOSTUJ, LEMANCZYK, LORBIECKI (aka ROLBIECKI), MICHALOWSKI, ORLIKOWSKI, PABICH, PAR YSEK, PARZYSZ, PRADZYNSKI, RICHFELD, SUCHY-LIPINSKI, TURZYNSKI, WALIGORA (WALIGORSKI), WALESKA, WANTOCH-REKOWSKI, WICHTOWSKI, WISNIEWSKI, WORIZALA, WYSOCKI, ZUROCH-CZAPIEWSKI. Germans in Witkowo near Poznan: ARNDT and ALBRECHT.

Letters To The Editor



Stanley Daniels

Dear PGSNYS,

The piece by Mr. Kij in the Spring 2000 Searchers presents a humorous rendition by a New York Mills immigrant from Poland. It is accepted as an exaggeration in an effort to win a writing contest. I have another view. Let me tell about my observations of a similar group in Utica. The group was, and I suppose continues to be, the St. Michael's Society. They did have two groups of uniformed "guards."

These were used only during Easter week beginning with Good Friday. After 3:00 P.M. the Holy Trinity Church main altar was transformed to a simulation of the tomb of Christ. If one was observant, a veiled Monstrance containing a Consecrated Host could be found almost hidden above the "tomb." The purpose of the uniformed guards of course is to guard the "tomb," and to provide human persons constantly present for the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. They did so in 20 minute shifts (two by two) each man standing motionless at attention, swords drawn, facing each other, on each side of the open communion rail that

allowed access to the "tomb." This repeated through the night into Holy Saturday, until resurrection mass Easter Sunday morning. At this time the tomb was opened, the main altar was revealed, and the Monstrance in the hands of the priest, was processed through the church, under guard, after which a solemn high mass was celebrated. The entire process was relatively serious.

The changing of the guard was quite impressive. Believe me, no one got in their way as three men marched from the school to the church on their way to the changing of the guard.

I enclose a rather poor reproduction of a computer scanned photo of my dad (Stanley Daniels circa 1940) in the uniform of what was known as an Ulan. (I think a lancer, a cavalry position) Not a clown at all in my eyes. The uniform is one of the Napoleonic era. I don't know of its origin or authenticity. It probably would be considered an antique today. Note the Polish Eagle on the helmet and buckle. The sword was far from tin or rust. I am not sure if

the above "pageant" is a reproduction of a tradition of European origin or something put together by the Utica locals. (I never heard of Dindus day until we moved near by Buffalo) I think they still continue this, although I am not certain as I have not been to Utica at Easter time for many years.

With kindest regards,

Chester J. Daniels

Dear PGSNYS,

I would like to thank you for all the information I have found on your website. The article about St. Stanislaus, with picture, was great, as this was the church my great-grandparents were married in in 1875, and my grandmother was baptized in in 1876. I started reading the census and was hoping to find cousins that my grandmother visited either in the late 1920's or early 30's. If you have a newsletter, could you please put in a note from me regarding a Michal (Michael) Domagalski. He and his wife, Maria Olszewska, were parishioners of St. Stanislaus and had seven children baptized there. Five of these children died as infants, according to the FHL microfilm. Two who might have survived to adulthood were Catherine and Frances. I did not find marriages for them in the St. Stanislaus records. In 1881 Michael lived at 149 Townsend, then at 1613 Drake and in 1914 at 2829 Drake. Perhaps someone would know what happened to this branch of the family. Domagalski was my great-grandmother's maiden name. She married Piotr Paluszek. Would living on Drake have had them change parishes? What wards were Townsend and Drake in? Thanks again for a great place to visit. Keep up the good work.

Armela Hammes

armelahammes@hotmail.com



Potpourri



Poznan Project Seeks

Volunteers

Genealogists whose area of research takes them to Poznan may be interested in this correspondence from Lukasz Bielecki:

For some time, we have been discussing the possibility of undertaking a joint project on indexing the marriages which had taken place in the former Prussian province of Posen (now region of Poznan, Poland) within the time frame of 1836-85. It is commonly known that a vast number of immigrants declared 'Posen' as their place of origin. This is presently often misunderstood as the city of Posen/Poznan being only the capital of a large area. Thus, numerous families had lost the information of the actual place of origin of their ancestors, and the mere surname is rarely an efficient hint.

Many of us have already been trying various strategies to pinpoint the actual town or parish of origin. Doing so, however, is the equivalent of seeking the proverbial "needle in a haystack," i.e. checking a number of parishes from some part of the province. A better way for this would be to index marriages from the entire Posen territory. The resultant database would definitely help anyone find the right couple within Posen, or at least identify parishes in which the surname occurs.

Given that there were 530 Catholic parishes and about 150 Lutheran communities in the area in question (this sort of indexing would not be very helpful for Jewish research, due to the destruction of records), it should be feasible to index the marriages, if only the necessary number of volunteers could be found. Over the 50 year period there would be up to 2000 marriages in a typical parish to write down, and the information to extract would be essentially only the names and age of the spouses. And because the major part of the records necessary for this have already been microfilmed by the LDS Church, it would be possible for anyone in the world to participate.

If you would like to join the project, please e-mail me and I will send further information on how to combine our efforts.

It will be appreciated if you declare to "host" an individual parish with which you might already have worked.

Contact: Lukasz Bielecki, Institute of Bio-organic Chemistry, Polish Academy of Sciences, Noskowskiego 12/14, PL-61-704 Poznan, phone +48618528503 ext. 193

Email: bielecki@ibch.poznan.pl

http://www.polishroots.com/posen_indexing.htm

Interesting Web Sites:

Charts for the genealogist

<http://www.pbs.org/kbyu/ancestors/charts/>

Record Collections Of Imperial Russian Consulates In The USA And Canada

<http://pixel.cs.vt.edu/library/refs/link/usa.txt>

An Aid to Russian Script

<http://www.kutschurgan.com/russaid1.htm>

Translations

<http://babelfish.altavista.com/translate.dyn>

Polish First Names and Feast Days

<http://www.rootsweb.com/~polwgv/namelist.html#polish>

Archival Information

The New York based Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences has recently set up an archival information center at its website (www.piasa.org) to help Polish Americans collect and preserve family data as well as records of Polonian organizations.

Her Borders

Today Poland shares land borders with Germany, Kaliningrad, Lithuania, Belarus, Ukraine, Slovakia and the Czech Republic

REFLECTIONS*(Continued from page 9)*

over 25 years of educating young men. The Friars enjoyed walking the streets of the peaceful neighborhood in the evening, they would often sponsor Friday nite hops, at which they kept a watchful eye out. During the summer months the Felician sisters from St Casimir's made their rounds to subscribe families to their publication, Ave Maria.

Other businesses that can be recalled are, Maliszewski's Coal Company, Palczynski's Hardware Store, Herko and Mach Paints, Koscianski's and Nykiel's Furniture, Kuras, Cross and Stachowski Liquor Stores, shoe repair shops operated by Mr. Perdziak, Konefal and Ejbisz, a fruit store operated by Jack Schruttt and Spisiak's Jewelry next to Motyka's dry cleaning, Mr. Motyka had a black man pressing clothes, one of the few black people we got to see. Szubalga, Sunny Side and Cadet's also provided dry cleaning and minor clothing repairs.

Plumbing problems could be addressed by the Nowak Brothers or Rudy Slazyk, auto repair was done at Don Durlak's or Clarence Kick's garages. Rozborski's was the filling station nearest our home, it sold Texaco gas, but there also was a Sunoco and a Sinclair station in the neighborhood. Flooring was installed by the Mack family who operated Cross Park Linoleum.

There were also the seasonal merchants that visited the neighborhood. I still can see the little old Italian man who pushed the yellow and red cart around the city selling hot popcorn and peanuts. He had a hand printed sign to price his goods, I don't ever remember him talking. The other merchant I recall was Jack, the produce man, who drove about the streets during the sum-

mer selling fresh fruits and vegetables from his truck. Milk was still delivered in glass bottles to the homes as was fresh baked goods, Stanley and Jewel Tea Products. This was the age when the insurance man made calls to pick up premium payments. You could leave home never thinking of locking your door. The neighborhood was tight knit, you knew all your neighbors and even their families. You ran to help your elderly neighbor carry her groceries, but you better not let your parents see you taking a nickel tip, or you really got it. This was looked on as a community responsibility not a job for hire.

Almost all of this picture has faded away. As I sat and looked over various straps of paper with notes and some ads from the newspapers I thought to myself, my children have no idea what this neighborhood was once like. The people who lived here and how enjoyable and self sufficient it was. I thought many of our members who never lived in Buffalo themselves, but had family here, might like to hear about growing up in one of the Polish neighborhoods during the 1950-60s. I truly hope you enjoyed reading this as much as I enjoyed writing it, memories are forever and can't be easily erased



**Stanislaus Among World's
1st Printers**

by Ed Wilczynski
Straz

Man is indebted to Johannes Gutenberg for the invention of print. The first book to be published in typeprint in Europe was the Gutenberg Bible, printed in Mainz in 1455.

We Polonians may be justly proud of the fact that one of the world's first printers was a countryman of ours, though his name, place and date of birth remain unknown. That he was Polish is proved by the signature on the books he printed, which he signed with his Christian name and the name of his native country: *Stanislaus de Polonia or Stanislaus Polonus*.

Information about where he learned the art of printing is also lacking, but numerous documents prove without the slightest doubt that in 1489 he was working for the printing works of a monk named Mathias Morawus in Naples.

Fortune willed that about that time, emissaries sent by Isabella of Castille and her royal spouse Ferdinand arrived in Italy to engage specialists in the art of printing in the service of the Court of Spain. Their choice fell on our countryman Stanislaus de Polonia and the German printer Meinhard Ungut. The two packed their printing press and instruments necessary for casting type and set off for Spain in 1490.

Upon arrival in that country, they settled in Seville and enjoyed many special privileges. The war against the Moors in Spain was still continuing and the fortified city of Granada remained unconquered. The fall of Granada in 1492 marked the beginning of Spain's ascent as a world power, the process to which the discovery of America imparted an added momentum.

The printing works opened by the two printers on their arrival from Italy set to work without delay. In 1492 they printed 12 theological and liturgical volumes prayer books and breviaries.

(Continued on Page 24)

(Continued from Page 10)

folders of bills and receipts from the 1990s, folders and folders of letters, diaries, journals and income tax materials going back for years, you could be more selective in the material you retained. A trained archivist could help you select documents that most clearly reflect significant thoughts and activities of family members involved, and could direct you to potential repositories which might be interested in some materials you do not wish to retain.

Don't try to censor documents by throwing away anything that would show the family in a less than perfect light. Families are not perfect and often it is the imperfections that add color to family histories. Rather than destroying the historical record, consider placing a time restriction on those items you feel could embarrass individuals while they are still living. Seal those documents in some way and indicate they may not be opened until a certain date (usually 25-50 years is long enough).

If you place your family papers in an institution such as a historical society, library or university, they are obligated to uphold any restrictions you place on the collection and has been established by you in writing through a donor agreement form.

What documentation of today should be kept for posterity? A receipt for the purchase of an everyday appliance in 1993 would probably not be of great interest to a researcher in 2093, since the purchase would be documented in other financial records. In general, think about whether a record is absolutely unique or whether it documents common activities. The following

list is a guide to the sorts of records that usually have historical value. It is not inclusive and no one collection will contain all of the material listed.

- ⇒ **Audio and video materials such as tapes, slides, VCR film and motion pictures which are labeled**
- ⇒ **Birth and /or Baptismal records, death and marriage certificates and other vital records**
- ⇒ **Certificates of Confirmation, Bar/Bat Mitzvah and other religious rites of initiation, marriage and records of religious ceremonies**
- ⇒ **Clippings—make sure they are dated and the publication is noted**
- ⇒ **Correspondence, keep with the envelopes which may have dated and other information helpful to the researcher**
- ⇒ **Creative work, paintings, drawings, prints, musical scores, etc.**
- ⇒ **Diaries and journals; annotated calendars, date books, office organizers**
- ⇒ **Newsletters, family and community**
- ⇒ **Memorabilia, Ephemera; postcards, posters, pro-**

grams from special events

- ⇒ **Military records**
- ⇒ **Photographs and negatives, try to date them and identify people and place**
- ⇒ **Records of homes and real estate transactions**
- ⇒ **Records of membership such as unions, professional organizations community and fraternal organizations**
- ⇒ **School records such as report cards, diplomas and written materials and art work**
- ⇒ **Scrapbooks**
- ⇒ **Wills and estate paper; legal documents**
- ⇒ **Written materials (published and unpublished) such as articles, books, essays, poems, stories and plays**

How To Organize Family Papers

Most family papers are scattered in many different locations.

1. **Begin by contacting as many family members as you can and ask them to send materials (originals or copies) to one location. This allows the papers to be organized according to an over all plan which will produce a family collection used by members and perhaps some day by a larger**

community of researchers.

2. When you have collected all you can, go through the materials to determine an overall picture of what the collection contains and into what categories materials may fall.
3. Sort them first according to the individual who compiled them or to whom they pertain. Remember, we are documenting the history of a family and its members, not compiling a list of types of records in your family.
4. Do not organize all death, marriage, military and service records together. Instead, if Uncle Joe Smith has given you his and records of his parents, organize them as the "Smith Family Records" and under that, "Joe Smith Family" with folders for Joe Smith, folders for his parents and so on.
5. Then arrange items chronologically within file folders under the overall categories you have chosen. By the time you have finished going through the collection it is likely you will know enough to revisit items you were unsure of, and be able to determine where they belong.
6. Finally, place all materials in acid-free folders and place folders into acid-free storage containers.



THE GENEALOGIST

by *Keith A. Kaszubik*

Ever since I was little I've had
an interest in the family tree
Every little bit of the family his-
tory fascinated me
Maturity and wisdom made me
aware of my mortality
Off I started on the road to do
my genealogy

At the Family History Center
the volunteer replied:
"Names, dates, and places, ei-
ther real or implied."

That was genealogy in a nut-
shell I soon learned
The fruits of my research which
had to be earned

There was no hurry, and time to
spare
After all, dead people aren't go-
ing anywhere

The study of our ancestors from
the womb to the tomb
Hatched, matched, and de-
tached, vital records cluttered
my room

Genealogy is more than a hobby
and a lot of fun
It's several different fields of in-
terests wrapped into one
Part linguist, part detective, and
translator to name but a few
And we all know where the
bodies are buried too

Great-grandpa please help me,
give me a clue
I've ordered the 1900 soundex
to hopefully find you

You're not really lost, just real
hard to find
Patience is a virtue and a re-
searcher's state of mind

From the old country to the new
world you came
Under numerous variant spell-
ings of your surname
From this world to the world be-
yond you have already gone
Hopefully we will all be re-
united before very long

Lord, I don't think I will ever
see

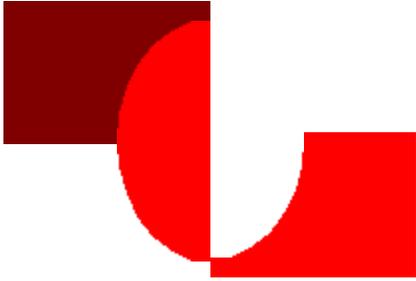
A completed genealogy
Respect for the living and re-
spect for the dead
This is what the genealogist said



Your Invited

Your invited to a reception to cele-
brate the publication of, *My Za
Oceanem: Smak Ameryki*, by
Krystyna Nasiukiewicz. At 3:00
p.m. on Sunday, November 19,
2000, Grupp Fireside Lounge, Stu-
dent Center, 2nd floor at Canisius
College in Buffalo.

This book in Polish, narrates the
experience of Polish immigrants to
the U.S. A significant portion of
the book is devoted to Polania in
Buffalo & WNY. Copies may be
ordered from the Polish Cultural
Foundation, 337 McKinley Ave.,
Kenmore, NY 14217.



Przewodnik Handlowy

by David Newman and Mike Drabik
August 20, 2000

Buffalo Polonia is very fortunate to have at least two fine books documenting the early settlement of our people in Western New York. The best known book was published as a double anniversary album, celebrating the 50th anniversaries of the founding of St. Stanislaus B.M. Church and also the Polish community in Buffalo. The renowned Polish American historian, Mieczyslaw Haiman, who was working and residing in Buffalo at the time, edited the parish album. The second book "The Przewodnik Handlowy presents a contemporary picture of Buffalo's Polonia was written and published by Wincenty Smolczynski and his partner Henryk Lokanski in 1906. An additional Album was printed 3 years later completing the series. Between these years, Smolczynski also published a smaller version of these business directories for the Polish community in Detroit, Michigan. The Polish Genealogical Society (PGS) of Michigan has been including translations of certain personalities from this album in their newsletters.

In November 1999, Mike Drabik indexed the two directories for the Buffalo Polonia. Over 432 surnames comprise the body of the work. Since these were paid adds, the information provided was supplied by the advertiser and in most cases include the place and date of birth, name of spouse and year of marriage, names of children and organizations and parish the family belonged. This is a treasure trough of

genealogical information for anyone doing research in Western New York. Information provided in this database will include the surname and given name of the individual, date and place of birth if provided and page number.

Please see Przewodnik Handlowy example with translation

How can I search the Przewodnik Handlowy?

You can search the Przewodnik Handlowy at the following PGSNYS web page. If you provide your e-mail address on the search form your request will be e-mailed to you:

<http://www.pgsnys.org/cgi-bin/przewodnik.cgi>

You can also send a SASE request to:

Attn: Przewodnik Search
Request

Polish Genealogical Society of
NYS
Buffalo, New York 14206

Note: Please include a self addressed stamped envelope. Without this fee requests will not be answered.

How can I obtain a copy of an article?

If you desire a copy of an article

found in the index, we will have a volunteer make a copy at the facility where the film or book is available. A translation of key genealogical information will be provided. This requires a \$5.00 fee (\$3.00 for PGSNYS members) for each request, send check or money order made out to: Attn: Przewodnik Request

Polish Genealogical Society of
NYS

299 Barnard Street

Buffalo, New York 14206

Note: Please include a self addressed stamped envelope. Without this fee requests will not be answered.

Where is the Przewodnik Handlowy located?

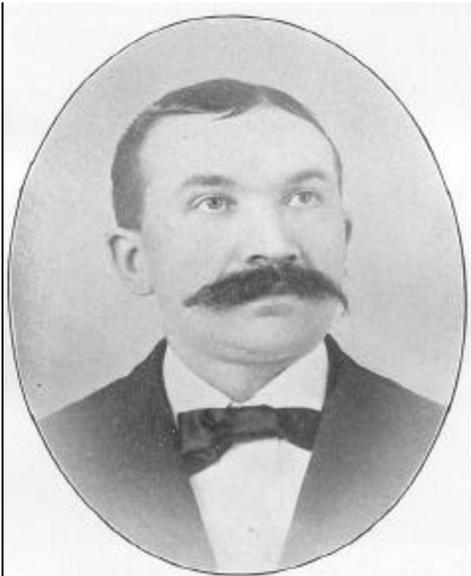
The Smolczynski albums are available for viewing at the following locations:

- Buffalo & Erie County Library Special Collections, on microfiche.
- Archives of the Felician Sisters on Doat Street in Cheektowaga, New York by special request.
- Polish Seminary, Indian Trail Road, Orchard Lake, MI, 48324

From the Album Pamiłkowy I
Przewodnik Handlowy Osady
Polskiej w Buffalo, 1908
[Commemorative Album and
Business Directory for the Polish
Settlement in Buffalo]

*Translated by PGSA Editor:
Fred Hoffman*

Jakób Kuczowski



Ob. Jakób Kuczowski.

Numbering among the ranks of the outstanding citizens of Buffalo's Polish settlement is citizen Jakób Kuczowski, born in the locality of Piechowice, Western Prussia, in 1860 – he completed compulsory schooling there and later devoted himself to various occupations. Within four years he was the overseer at beet plantations. Drafted into the military, he performed his military service in the 61st Infantry Regiment. From the army Mr. Kuczowski made his way to America in 1884, where he expected with his abilities to be able to earn importance and property, for he did not doubt that his strength and willingness to work would help him overcome the obstacles a young

immigrant usually faces in a foreign country. His hopes did not mislead him, for in a year's time he had reached the point of being able to marry Katarzyna nee Kreft. In a couple of years Mr. Kuczowski established a saloon, for from his labors he had saved a little capital, which his thrifty wife increased with his efforts.

Having many friends and acquaintances, Mr. Kuczowski was able to improve his saloon and put it on a first-class footing, and soon he moved into his own house at No. 1148 Broadway, where he continues to run his business successfully to this day.

Almost from the beginning of his stay in Buffalo Mr. Kuczowski took part in the life of Buffalo's organizations, for he was one of the first members of the St. Stanislaus Society, the oldest in Buffalo, and a member of the St. John Cantius Society. Other organizations of which Mr. Kuczowski is a member include the St. Jacob Society, No. 28, Polish Union in America, for which he has been the treasurer the last ten years. Mr. Kuczowski was also supervisor of funds for other societies, but his business did not allow him to occupy positions as an officer.

Today Mr. Kuczowski is respected and his business has grown splendidly, including in recent years a wholesale warehouse of domestic and foreign liquors. His son Jan currently runs the ever-growing business in partnership with his father. It is always busy and noisy in his saloon because he is an affable and hospitable host and carries only the best products. In addition to his son Mr. Kuczowski

has raised a daughter, Zofia.

Mr. Jan J. Kuczowski, who currently runs his business jointly with his father Jakób, was born in Buffalo on 6 May 1888. After finishing parochial school he went to Canisius College, and after graduation went to Chicago to St. Stanisław Kostka College, and from there to the Polish Seminary in Detroit [note: Polish seminary does not have to be a seminary as we use the work, i.e., a school for training priests; it can also be an institution of higher learning for lay people]. On his arrival in Buffalo he enrolled at the business academy. On going into business he first educated himself, knowing that study is even more necessary in business than in other callings. After taking over his father's business young Mr. Jan Kuczowski has developed it and undoubtedly will lead it to great heights, for he has knowledge and training, which, when joined with experience of life, enable one to do much. This is a splendid example for our young people, and one could only wish it would turn out that as many as possible of our enlightened Polish young people will devote themselves to business, in which case we could then carry much weight on the scale of local relations.



Interes ob. J. Kuczowskiego.

“Mr. J. Kuczowski's business”

Our East Side Yesterday—Today—and Tomorrow

In the sunset of our lives, a number of ex-residents of Buffalo's East Side experienced a normal, invited guest,-- nostalgia—so common at our Senior Citizen's meetings, a common form of addiction which a cure has not been found.

So great was the prestige of our Polish ethnic neighborhood. So strong, at times was the reluctance and see the unwanted change that still in our collective wisdom, - we were resolved to revisit that neighborhood, even though we questioned the sanity of what is in store for us. We were well aware that decades were expanded before that undesirable change became undeniably evident.



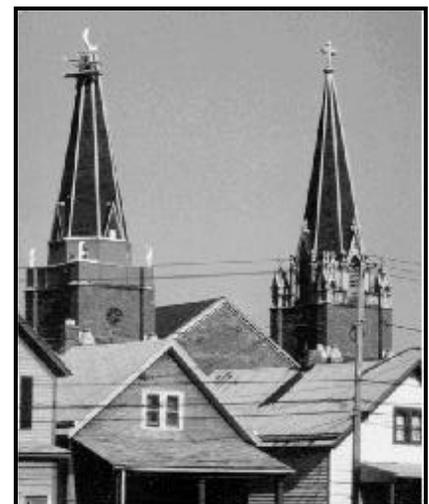
We took pride of that neighborhood in its hey-day---as residents our father's lives were dedicated to diligently working for the good of our ethnic neighborhood---much of it we credit to our devoted parents but also to the faith and the teachings of the all-knowing and devout Nuns.

We enjoyed our lives in the stable crime-free areas of the 1940-50's and adjacent to Humboldt Park were youth of different ethnicity and also being crime-free, we assimilated without problems to exchange our cultures but more so to be involved in sports.

We applied periodically a little gaiety and hilarity as we initiated our trip down Genesee St., recalling Roman's Shoe Repair at 1198 Genesee St. and Walter's Jewelers at 1210 Genesee St. where my mother and her sisters bartered over

expensive watches and reluctantly accepted his final price. Then we moved down Loepere St. it resembled the bombed out cities of WW-2, a revolting site,-a human disaster,-a man made failure. We hurriedly moved on,- now we were certain that in our desires to renew these memories of yesterday—we will face more inescapable disappointments—it will elicit un-

wanted sadness and numbing uncertainties—but we moved on, emerging in the once active, vibrant Stanislaus St.—that personified so many happy moments of our youth---often we purchased fresh baked goods from the ovens of Burcznski's Bakery at 179 Stanislaus,- now a ghostly, forlorn building,-- slowly we moved to the corner of Lathrop and Stanislaus,-- once the site of Liberty Milk Dairy at 228 Stanislaus where some of our fathers were employed and needless to say obtained many of its customers from that area---now a vacant field—consumed by unwanted events. Across the street was Frank's Restaurant that catered to the many employees of Liberty Milk, Ernst Steel,- Mroz Lumber Co. and Sander Roofers,--we found it incredible that Sander Roofers are still in business.



Polish Nat. Cathedral, Bflo NY in background - Sycamore & Sobieski Sts, Sold 1995, from Cross to Crescent Moon

After that we drove towards Mills Street,-turned towards Sycamore St. and observed and lamented over the vacant Transfiguration Church---once the center of the neighborhood for the faithful residents---now devoid of its treasures and abandoned. As we directed our eyes on it---we had to accept the unacceptable over the many unconvincing reasons for its demise. Moving on,-we stopped at Sycamore and Mills St. and turn the clock back to the 1940's---we see Joe Kaczorowski's Conf. At 946 Sycamore St.---our family Dentist-Dr. Szymoniak at 947 Sycamore St. ---across the street Frank's Grille at 948 Sycamore dedicated to those in need of liquid refreshments---now all that is left is one huge weeded area---void of life leaving us disaffected over the humanity that brought this about.

We crossed Mills St.---though the building is still standing---we remember during our ever-growing youth---spending periodically at Kowalewski's Tailors standing but vacant was Mike's Tavern at 984 Sycamore---there we dined on Fish Fries and liquid refreshments on most Fridays as we quenched our never-ending curiosity over many sport events. Across the street was Karas Meats at 993 Sycamore where I was sent on errands and lost in a world of housewives who---incidentally were always in a hurry to be waited on. Needless to say, without a system service,-all the Panienki were waited on first.

Directing our eyes across the street,- we visualized,-Usiak's Drug store at 998 Sycamore St.-

to recall as my sister and I often purchased medication for our mother's irregular heart beat. As we lacked a phone at our home,- either my sister or I utilized Usiak's phone to call Dr. Kummer a heart specialist---so again we moved on leaving this empty lot to its undetermined fate. Continuing on to Sweet Ave.---we turned the back pages of our mind to bring back the days where we purchased often a three pound loaf of rye bread at Walter Przybyl Bakery at 1021 Sycamore St. for our expanding families. Across the bakery was Zielinski Hardware Store at 1028 Sycamore where my father purchased plumbing supplies for the needed repairs of our home---this business and store also completely vanished from East Side history and also unconvinced over the reasons of the sad end of this area.

Finally we stopped in front of the still upright Queen Mary Holy Rosary Church of magnificent,- enduring splendor---we were subdued and mesmerized to this edifice---(though it is used now by a different faith)---. To me this was the icon of my enlightenment---my dedication to my faith---my involvement as an officer of its many Societies as President,-Secretary,- Treasurer,- Pre-Cana, and Ushers but most of all my devotion to my children. It was here that I sadly said my last prayers for my son, Mark,- lost in a tragic accident that never should have happened. Needless to say, I didn't care to go any further,- my friends agreed and we called it a day. This ended our sojourn and our neighborhood memories--- some happy-some sad.

Though we started with pessimism---we were not prepared for the extensive, incredible sight,-the inescapable loss



of this once vibrant East Side. Many see it as normal,-others with indifference. I see it now as a fallow, barren area---soaked in many unpardonable crimes,-its spirit lost in the souls of those that are left behind, that this new chemistry of change compounded by violent crimes was tantamount to the East Side liquidation.

We had left the present East Side without any wisdom to improve it and without the normal expectations for its future. However in my inquisitive talks with relatives and travelers,- I am at times fortunate to meet,- I became aware this is also the undesired end of once vibrant neighborhoods in Cleveland, Detroit, Chicago and Milwaukee.

In my final comment---father in the 1940's made me aware of the many tragedies our family ancestors had to endure during the barbaric invasions of its land by predatory nations--- partitioning and pilfering its valuable assets--- and so we feel it has come to pass when we drove through the East Side to the ex residents of that area.

Edward Prabucki

(Continued from Page 17)

Somewhat later they also began printing works on law, history, medicine as well as belletristics.

On his printing press, Stanislaus de Polonia printed a work by Bernard de Cranolach, a well-known physician from Barcelona, which showed all the astronomical tables for the period from 1485 to 1550. An order placed with him by the city of Toledo for 1,154 beviaries has been preserved to this day.

Soon, the printing press of Stanislaus de Polonia could no longer cope with all the orders placed with him. To deal with the situation, in 1502 Stanislaus opened another print shop in Madrid. It was there that the Spanish translation of Vita Christi, the great work by Polonus, was printed.

A document from that time testified that "Stanislaus Polonus is a master printer deserving of every praise." He gained a great reputation as the best printer in the whole Kingdom of Spain. Print typecast by Polonus was taken to the Spanish colonies in America which gave a beginning to the art of printing on that continent.

Unfortunately, nothing is known as to the time or place of death of our countryman. Unquestionably, Stanislaus de Polonia was one of the greatest printers of his time. In the course of his lifetime he printed some 90 works, beautifully ornamented with magnificent title pages, ornamental design and majuscules, embellished with many fine engravings. Today, only a few museums and library collections in Europe and America can boast of being in possession of some of the works which came from his printing press.

