

PRESERVING
OUR PAST
SINCE 1988

SEARCHERS

NO. 60

SUMMER

2012, ISSUE 2

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Karol Zawadzki.

PGSNYS - FOR YOUR INFORMATION

**PRESERVING
OUR PAST
SINCE 1988**

**FOUNDED BY
MICHAEL
DRABIK
(1950-2001)**

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.

Annual dues are \$20 (\$25 Canada, \$30 other countries), and membership entitles you to three issues of the *Searchers* and participation in the PGSNYS Yahoo Group. As a new member you will receive an information packet to help you get started. The expiration date of your membership is on the mailing label of the *Searchers*.

Please remit your membership dues by check or money order to:

PGSNYS
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12 Grant Road
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Please send any changes to your postal or E-mail address to PGSNYS at the above address or E-mail: cpyrak@roadrunner.com

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*Exceptions: July - picnic and December - Christmas party

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THE SEARCHERS NEWSLETTER

For submissions to the *Searchers* newsletter, deadlines are as follows:

- 1st issue (Spring) - due February 15th for April mailing
- 2nd issue (Summer) - due June 15th for August mailing
- 3rd issue (Winter) - due October 15th for December mailing

Submissions to the *Searchers* can be sent by postal mail (c/o *Searchers* Editor:
12645 Route 78, East Aurora, NY 14052) or via e-mail to:
editor@pgsnys.org or denise.oliansky@gmail.com

PGSNYS PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

This edition marks the 60th issue of our PGSNYS newsletter, *Searchers*. Every issue of the *Searchers* takes a team of people to make it successful. This team consists of article writers, the editor, article/edition reviewers, newsletter preparer/mailer, and the PGSNYS Treasurer. In this President's message, I'd like to thank this team for their time and efforts.

It's the editor who sets the tone for the publication, obtains and/or writes articles, creates the format of each issue, and prepares it for printing. I'd like to thank all the past and present editors of the *Searchers* for their dedicated time in producing a fine newsletter: the late Mike Drabik, Ted Smardz, Laurie Białogłowicz, Lynn Mycek, Jim Harlos, Grace Smokowski, and our current editor, Denise Oliansky. Their efforts are greatly appreciated.

I would also like to thank Laurel Keough for her many hours of reviewing and editing each *Searchers* issue before it goes to print. Additional thanks goes to Frank Martin, who prepares each edition for mailing by placing stamps and address labels on each copy and then delivers them to the post office. And, of course, our Treasurer, Chuck Pyrak, who sends each issue to the printer and pays for the printing out of the PGSNYS budget. Without this team, there would be no newsletter.

When reading this 60th issue, please remember it took a team to get this published. The next time you see any of the above mentioned members, please tell them, "Thanks for your time." If you live out of the area, you can always send your feedback by e-mail.

~Sincerely, Dave Newman, PGSNYS President



David Newman

POTPOURRI

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DOLORES WALTER, LANCASTER, NY
CAROL MCALLISTER, HAMBURG, NY

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ⇒ This is the 60th issue of the *Searchers* newsletter!
- ⇒ The dates for upcoming 2012 PGSNYS monthly meetings in the Villa Maria College cafeteria are Thursday, August 9, September 13, October 11, November 8, & December 13 (Christmas party).
- ⇒ Please note the recent increase in the PGSNYS annual membership dues to \$20, effective July 1, 2012.

To Know a Grandfather

by Kathy Cortes

“The family may have had some hard times after that, and perhaps Władisław supported the family as he began his architectural career, working at the American Bridge Company.”

Note from the editor: In the Spring, 2012, issue of the Searchers, the life of Władisław Zawadzki was celebrated in three translated documents. In this issue, we are fortunate to have the personal perspective of the granddaughter of Charles Zawadzki, brother of Władisław, as she writes about the lives of her grandfather and great-uncle.

I wish I'd known my grandfather, Charles E. Zawadzki, when I was growing up, but he died many years before I was born.

Oh, the stories he could have told me: crossing the ocean as a child, growing up in a big family on Buffalo's east side, practicing pharmacy, having a brush with history, going to Arkansas and Texas – his whole event-filled life.

Since family could not provide many details about his life – other than that he was a strict father and had been commemorated after his death by the Buffalo City Council – I turned to genealogy many years later to learn more. As we have all experienced, the need to know about our family's past can sometimes turn into an obsession!

I searched passenger mani-

ests, census data, Buffalo city directories and obituaries. I also gathered information about his brother, Władisław, who was an architect, and their parents and other siblings.

This then is a story about my grandfather and how he and his brother, Władisław, immigrated, grew up together, and contributed to their city.

Immigration and Family

Both brothers were born in Poland, in the province of Poznan. Władisław was Charles' older brother and the family's first born (1872). Charles was a middle child. He was born in 1878, after two sisters, Kazimiera and Zofia and before two more brothers, Louis and Vincent. One more sister, Jadwiga, was born in the United States.

The family emigrated from Poland in 1884, but not all together. First came Kazimierz, my great grandfather, arriving in New York City on the *SS. Rugia* on the fifteenth of May. Next came Władisław, then twelve years of age. He arrived on July 3, 1884, one day before our national holiday.

Charles arrived on October 31st, a few days after his sixth birthday with Theodora his mother and his other siblings. Did they celebrate his birthday as they crossed the

Atlantic on the *SS. Rhein and Maasdam*? Like Władisław, they landed in New York City on a holiday, but this time it was Halloween.

The family settled on the East Side of Buffalo, probably because many of their countrymen were already there. Perhaps they may have heard from other Poznaners what great opportunities Buffalo (then a rapidly growing city of over 150,000) offered to immigrants.

Kazimierz took out citizenship in just a few years and was naturalized in 1889. So Władisław, Charles, and the rest of their family became citizens automatically. Two years later, Kazimierz passed away when Władisław was 19 and Charles almost 13.

The family may have had some hard times after that, and perhaps Władisław supported the family as he began his architectural career, working at the American Bridge Company. While attending the old Central High School, Charles worked as a laborer for two years and then entered the University of Buffalo School of Pharmacy. He graduated in 1897, and immediately went to work at Spryszyński and Zawadzki, located at 1028 Broadway.

A Money Order Destroyed

It was at that pharmacy where Charles played a small part in the drama surrounding the assassination of President McKinley on September 6, 1901, by Leon Czołgosz, an avowed anarchist. Almost at the peak of technology for that time, the pharmacy had a long-distance telephone connection and a branch of American Express. About three weeks before the assassination, Dr. Isaac Saylin, a Buffalo physician, tried to send Emma Goldman a money order from my grandfather's pharmacy. (Both Dr. Saylin and Emma Goldman were friends of Czołgosz. The authorities at first suspected them of an anarchist conspiracy with Czołgosz, but upon investigation, ruled that out.)

Dr. Saylin presented Charles with a check for the \$45 money order, which he refused to ac-

cept. The reasons for not taking Dr. Saylin's check are lost to us. Was it a store policy? Or did my grandfather recognize Emma Goldman's name and did not want anything to do with anarchists? Another story I never heard growing up.

The next year, in 1902, Charles married Stanisława Patrzykowski. She was born in New York State; her parents had emigrated from Poland in 1870. It was also around this time that Władisław began to be known for his architectural designs on Buffalo's East Side: the A. Schreiber Brewing Company at 662 Fillmore Avenue, the Hodkiewicz-Cohen Bakery at 1132 Broadway, and the Dom Polski, done in a Renaissance style, at 1081 Broadway.

A Trek West

For reasons unknown, Charles left Buffalo to attend the University of Arkansas School of Medicine. He graduated from there in 1907, and was licensed as a physician and surgeon that same year. However, after briefly practicing medicine and pharmacy in Bremond Texas, Charles returned to Buffalo and settled in Niagara Falls with his family, which had grown to include three children: Eugene, Julia and Peter. He was the proprietor of the International Pharmacy at the International Hotel on East Falls Avenue.

A Second Marriage and Family

Charles' first wife died in 1910, and he relocated a few years later to Rochester, where he married a young widow, Helen Wiczorek Sullivan, in 1915. Helen was the daughter of Anthony and Anne (Brzyski) Wiczorek, who were born in Poland and came to the United States when Helen was three years old. She had also grown up on the East Side, and family lore has it that she had attended Charles' wedding to his first wife!

Despite the happiness at their wedding ceremony, there followed a few tragic years for Charles. Władisław's and Charles' mother died

“I gained the impression of two men who had fulfilling lives, with rewarding professional work, children and extended families, all living close to each other.”

in 1916, after a long illness. The following year, Charles' first born son, Eugene, drowned in an tragic accident at age 14.

Then happiness returned as Helen and Charles added to their family in the next few years: Robert, Eugene, Frances, and Theodore.

Professional and Civic Lives

During the war years and early 1920s, both Władisław and Charles consolidated their careers. Władisław designed more businesses, residences, schools, and churches, and Charles established a pharmacy at 1170 Broadway, another building Władisław designed, and which was also the home of the Polish Singing Circle.

Charles and Władisław were deeply engaged in the Buffalo community. Charles served for several years as president of the Erie County Pharmaceutical Association, first president and director of the Polish Druggists' Association, president of the Polish Singing Circle for several terms, and a member of the Polish National Alliance. Charles founded and led the Polish Singing Circle for many years and arranged many concerts in the Elmwood Music Hall and in other cities, which led to its renown.

Despite his busy architectural practice, Władisław also volunteered extensively for the Polish Reading Society, the Polish National Alliance, Polish Singing Circle, Polish Falcons, Polish Union of America, and the Polish Legion No. 256. He was often a featured speaker at many events in Buffalo.

Reading Charles' and Władisław 's obituaries and other sources, I gained the impression of two men who had fulfilling lives, with rewarding professional work, children and extended families, all living close to each other. They could easily share in family life, with many relatives' anniversaries, nieces and nephews' birthdays, graduations and weddings, plus numerous events in Buffalo.

With such full lives, it is sad indeed that both died so young. Władisław was stricken by a fatal heart attack, at the age of 54, as he began to speak at St. Valentine's Church to the Polish Council of Welfare. Charles suffered a heart attack four years later, in the evening at his home. He was only 51.

Memorials

Both Władisław and Charles gave generously of their time and professional expertise to the city of Buffalo, and both left memorials - Władisław in his many buildings in and around Buffalo, and Charles in a resolution passed by the Buffalo Common Council on October 20, 1930, which read:

“The Almighty has seen fit to remove from amongst us Dr. Charles E. Zawadzki, a leading citizen and a prominent pharmacist.

“His entire life was given up to public service. He was deeply interested in the needs of his compatriots. He championed their cause at all times. He had given his time and energy unsparingly to many charitable undertakings and he had played an important part in the musical activities of the city.

“For years he had been president of the Erie County Pharmaceutical Association, where he had rendered very meritorious service.

“BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that when this council adjourns it do so out of respect to his memory and the city clerk is hereby ordered to transmit an engrossed copy of this resolution to the members of his immediate family.”

In my opinion, their longest-lasting contribution was the stitching together of so many people’s lives in Buffalo through their work and volunteerism, bringing people of like minds together to meet and learn from one another and build a stronger community.

And Buffalo benefited from that.

Sources and Citations

Thanks to the following individuals for materials used in this article:

Mrs. Mary Ann Winger for a copy of our grandfather's obituary and the Buffalo City Council Memorial in: The Niagara Frontier: A Narrative and Documentary History. (Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1931, vol. III), pp. 98-99.

Greg Witul for the obituary “Charles E. Zawadzki. Funeral Rites Held,” Buffalo Evening News, 16 October 1930.

Ed Kornowski for the microfilm copy of my Great-Grandfather’s naturalization papers.

Amber Cortes, for finding the article: “Traced in Buffalo by a Money Order,” New York Herald, September 13, 1901, p. 4. <http://www.fultonhistory.com/fulton.html>

Additional materials used:

Wincenty Smolczyński and Henrik Lokanski, *Przedwodnik Handlowy*, 1906, pp. 126-7. Photo. Biographical entry translated by Agnieszka and David Newman.

Władisław 's work is mentioned throughout the *Intensive Level Historic Resources Survey, City of Buffalo, Broadway-Fillmore Neighborhood*. “Architectural Summary.” See especially pp. 4-13 to 4-14. <http://broadwayfillmorealive.org/2.0/intensive-level-historic-resources-survey-of-broadway-fillmore-neighborhood/>

Additional details on Władisław 's life appear in: “Władisław H. Zawadzki: Three Perspectives,” *Searchers*, No. 59, Spring 2012, Issue 1, pp. 4-7.

“...their longest-lasting contribution was the stitching together of so many people’s lives in Buffalo through their work and volunteerism...”



MEMBER MOMENTS

Dad's Notes:

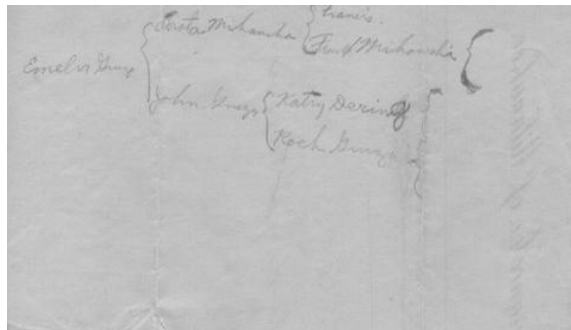
JANUARY 1916 -- NOTES BY FRANCIS A. DYSARZ SR.

by M. Dolores Dysarz Hausch

“He jotted down what he found out, on three pieces of paper and a small envelope.”

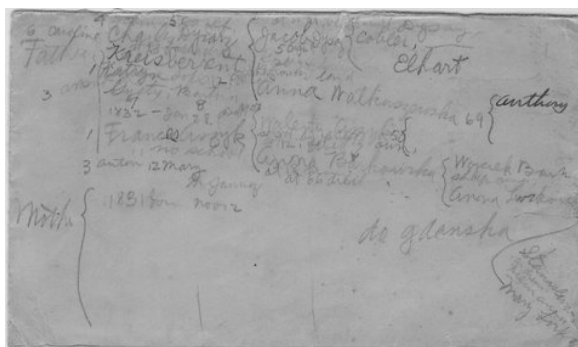
There is a story about these notes:

Inasmuch as they were written in January of 1916, I assume they were gleaned at the funeral of my father's sister Emily, who died on the sixteenth day. Naturally, there would have been many family members attending the funeral. He jotted down what he found out, on three pieces of paper and a small envelope.



These notes were in his possession through his first marriage in 1918, a sojourn to Oklahoma in 1920, where he had purchased land, his divorce in 1924, and second marriage (to my mother) in 1925. Naturally, he had several residences throughout those years.

My parents moved to Dearborn, Michigan in 1928, growing their family to six children. My older brother, Francis, left home when he enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1943, and thereafter never returned to live in



Michigan again. I don't know when my father gave him those notes, but it had to have been on one of his visits home, and prior to Dad's death in 1965. Thankfully, through his three marriages and numerous moves in the ensuing years, Francis also had held on to them. Some-

time in early 1991, when I began my interest in our family tree, he passed

those brittle notes on to me, as the 'family historian.' What a bonanza that was...about 75 years after the fact!

My first cousin, Norbert F. Winter, with whom I made contact about that time, was glad to have name verification, on the DYSARZ side, of some of his findings through the Latter Day Saints Libraries. He was especially pleased to learn the name of our GRUCZA family Patriarch, on which he swiftly followed up in the old West Prussian (village of Gentomie) microfilms. Norbert and I collaborated on our family research until his untimely death in 1999.

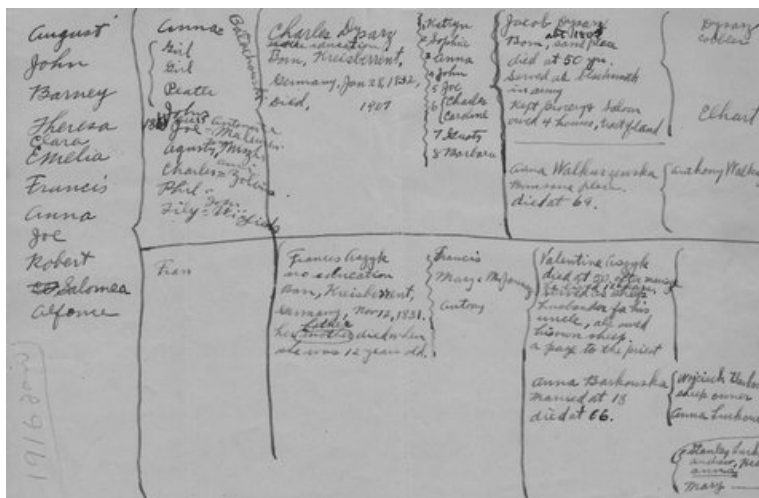
So now my questions:

Why did my father hang on to these notes for so many years?

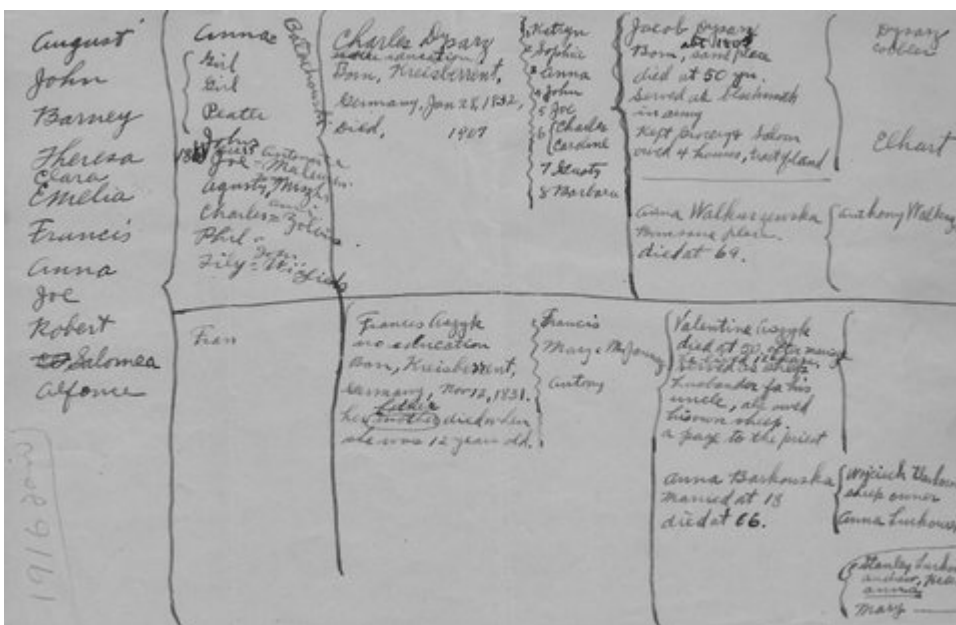
Why did my brother choose to not dispose of them?

Why did I become interested in our Family Tree?

I would like to think of it as PRECOGNITION....!



“...when I began my interest in our family tree, he passed those brittle notes on to me, as the family historian.”



Kate King Quantrill:

Black Sheep

by Douglas King Sr.



Kate King Quantrill was the daughter of my G-G-grandfather, Robert King. She was sister to my great-grandfather, William Jasper King. Kate was born in 1848, and was a young girl of 13 living with her parents on a horse farm in Blue Springs, Missouri just outside Kansas City at the start of the Civil War. There was no way to live in that area without taking sides. In Kansas, most people were unionists, also called freestaters or Jayhawkers. In Missouri, most were southern sympathizers. Kansas City sat right on the state border. Her father, Robert King was a horse breeder, who brought his horses with him from Kentucky after living in Illinois for a while. His horses were fast, with lots of stamina, and so they were highly prized animals. One of the people who wanted his horses was William Quantrill.

For those of you who don't know who he was, a quick bio is in order. William Quantrill was a Confederate guerrilla leader during the Civil War. He led a band of 450 bushwhackers on the Kansas-Missouri border. He planned and led the raid on Lawrence, Kansas, where 183 men as old as 90 and boys as young as 14 (who were old enough to carry a rifle) were killed. Most of the town was burned to the ground. He became an infamous figure, and was feared



and hated by some and loved and revered by others. Many of the men under Quantrill's command later went on to notoriety in their own right. Among them were "Bloody Bill" Anderson, Frank and Jesse James, and Cole and Jim Younger.



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Emory Cantey

Kate first met Quantrill on one of his visits to see her father's horses. She was said to be quite pretty and very mature looking for her age. He was first drawn to her beauty, but found her to be a skilled horsewoman and trainer. An accomplishment for anyone, let alone a woman, and a very young woman at that. She

was also said to have an adventurous streak and a love of life. All things that a man of his vocation would respect. Family oral history says that she kept her positive outlook on life even though her father was a very hard man to live with. As their friendship grew her father tried to restrict her seeing him. He was protective of his young daughter, knowing the kind of man Quantrill was. She would go off for long rides with him alone. Her father forbade her to continue that, and they met in secret. When he suspected that, he got more restrictive, and she eventually eloped with Quantrill, and they got married.

They lived in tents near his camp, and they moved as he moved his men. There were a few women who were wives and girlfriends of men in his command. They would usually have a separate camp of their own for their own safety. The woman's camp was discovered during one of the raids and the women taken and held prisoner. The house they were held prisoner in collapsed and the women were all killed. The men believed it was an intentional collapse. Kate was not there, and it is believed that is because she didn't stay with the women, but accompanied Quantrill on the Raids. Perhaps waiting just out of sight in some safe place, but she did not stay behind with the women. There are records that say after one of his raids, she was given four diamond rings and other valuables. She would follow him to Texas during the winter and camp with him there until they would return when the weather got warm.

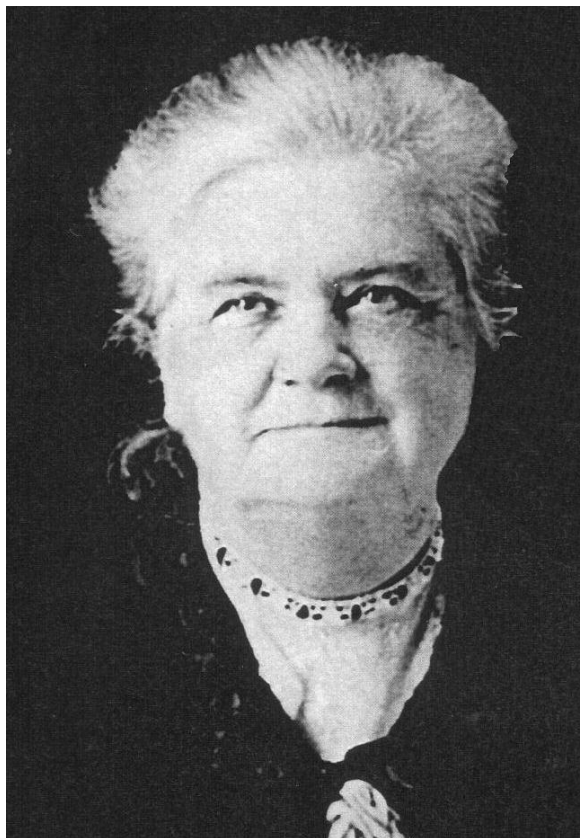
She was at his bedside when he died of a gunshot wound. He gave her money and jewels he had stolen on his raids to support herself. Because of the emotions of the time, she had to keep her relationship with him secret. She lived under an alias all her life. She took the name Sara Clarke while she was with him. Not using his last name for obvious reasons, rather using his middle name as her last name. It gave her a needed emotional link to him without giving herself away. She moved to St. Louis and got a job as a prostitute. In three years she ended up owning the house. Prostitution was legal at the time. The city would impose a fee of \$.25 cents for each "visit," which she protested. She ended up suing the city and winning in court getting all those fees back. She eventually moved back to Blue Springs. She found that her family was ostracized because of her alleged relationship with Quantrill. There was no proof, but just as today rumors were believed. However, in this case it was true. Normally the community would band together and try to help those who suffered particularly bad events. When her father's house had been burned by the freestaters, her family was left to fend for themselves, and they fell on hard times. In an effort to mend the hard feelings held by her father, she had a new house built for them on the farm. With her managerial experience, she got work running a legitimate rooming house for a while. At one point, she ended up keeping house in the house that was once the home of Cole Younger.

Ever the survivor she married again. Three more times in fact. Outliving all her husbands, she found herself destitute in her old age. She had children, but led a very secretive life. It is not known how much she told her children about her life with Quantrill. I very much hope she confided everything to them. And I hope that they will pass on the information to their children. To this day, however, even those children will not talk about her life. They are keeping any secrets that she



might have shared as surely as she did herself. They will not even share them with other family members. I have tried. There are claims that she had a son with Quantrill, but there are no records to support this. Even though she lived in secrecy, it is unlikely that a son could have existed without being known. Claims of being descended from Quantrill come from a family now living in Australia. I have not heard of any DNA testing that might prove or disprove the claims though. I would like to think that, but seriously doubt it.

Kate was a woman of exceptional strength, great courage, and with a keen mind. She held a secret her entire life to keep her new family safe from her past. She had self-confidence and the willingness to do what was needed. Definitely a woman well ahead of her time.



(Untitled—Part II)

by Mary Stahura Hawryłczak

Editor's Note: Mary Stahura Hawryłczak wrote her family history on December 14, 1984, and gave it to a family friend, Frank Martin, a long-time PGSNYS member, who is sharing it with PGSNYS members. Mary was born in 1909 and passed away in 2008. Because of its length, I divided the story into two parts. The first part, about her life in Poland and emigration to and early days in the U.S., was printed in the Spring 2012 issue. This is the second part, about her life in Western NY. This article was written in the first person by Mary, and is faithfully reproduced here, with minor edits to spelling, grammar, and paragraph order (so as to divide the story).

Eventually, my part of history began in Blasdell, NY. I recall very slightly, as if in a dream, being in a strange upstairs apartment and being held in someone's arms. I was looking at beautiful deep red wallpaper with huge flowers and a wide border. I also recall being fascinated by a brightly lit chandelier with sparkling long crystal drops and beading. I don't remember talking, just looking. How old was I then? Perhaps a year and a half. I surmise that must have been the time that my sister, Gladys, was born. In those days, women did not go to a hospital for delivery, but were attended at home by a doctor, mid-wife, relative, or neighbor. I must have been in someone's care. I think it may have been my cousin, Rose, who I later learned lived upstairs.

The only other recollection I have of Blasdell was later, and not so pleasant. I must have been about two and a half when I ventured outside of my house and walked carefully on the boardwalk towards the neighbor's house. Boardwalks were common along the lanes and were the only convenience that people had in order to walk over the swampy lands to go to Church, store, or tavern. A flock of geese was my undoing. As I

balanced myself on the narrow boardwalk, about half way to my neighbor's house, the geese spotted me as they cropped grass in the field. The whole flock made for me, necks stretched out, making terrifying hissing sounds. I stood petrified, screaming and screaming. All of the neighbor women, including my mother, rushed out and beat the geese away with their long white aprons. Needless to say, I got a good scolding for going out on my own.

The Sermak Tavern, which my Father used to frequent, is still located on the corner of Lake Avenue and Electric. The house we lived in was somewhere in the same vicinity near the present fire hall, but the house is no longer there. Sparsely populated, there were plenty of chickens, geese, ducks, and the occasional cow. All of this, I learned later.

It must have been shortly after this time that the furniture factory where my father worked burned to the ground and was never rebuilt. Most of the men went to work at the steel plant, but not all. The foreman, Adolf Rosiński, a friend of my parents and whose wife was my godmother, set up a hardware store on the corner of Wood and Kirby. Later he built a furniture store and warehouse on Ridge Road, which was called Rosiński's Furniture. Now it is the Victoria Center for Senior Citizens. My father got a job at Kling Furniture Factory in Brocton, NY, doing the fine finishing touches on furniture. He was very good at his job.

Brocton is a small village. At the time, my father could not find a place to rent for his wife and three children, so we settled in Dunkirk, NY, about seven miles away on a one-sided street. Down the other side of the street ran railroad tracks. The tracks led to a huge dark building with a big glowing fire. Later, I learned

“Uneducated, living in a foreign country, unable to speak the language, the immigrants clustered together for comfort, friendship, and to help each other in times of need.”

it was a shovel factory.

Our home was an old, two-family clapboard house with a front side porch that was niched into an ell. I remember the porch well because my father had strung a green woven hammock on it with a build-in cushion at the head. One day he swung me so hard that it broke, and I got a terrible whack as I landed on the deck. He got a good scolding from my mother.

Our house had no boardwalk leading to the backyard where there was a wood pile stacked by the fence. Everyone had a wood pile of odds and ends in those days, and children liked to play on it. One day I was sitting on top of the wood pile with the other children, eating a penny ice cream cone from the grocery that was next door. It was a warm sunny day, and I was nibbling on the cone to make it last longer. I decided to imitate the others and bit the bottom tip on the cone and began to sip the ice cream from the bottom end. To my utter disbelief, the whole thing slid through the cone and plopped between the pieces of wood. Did I ever make a fuss! In those days, though, you weren't pacified with another one. Instead, it was more like, “Why were you so stupid?” or “Let that be a lesson to you.”

One summer evening, when daylight was long, there was a small group of people standing in the backyard pointing up to the sky and telling me to look up. I saw nothing to get excited about, because all I saw was a large star, the size of a lamp bulb. It was Halley's Comet, that comes into view once in 80 years or so. I was about three at the time. I'll be 75 next week, so I might just get to see it once again.

My mother's life could not have been an easy one, no more than those of other immigrants. Uneducated, living in a foreign country, unable to speak the language, the immigrants clustered together for comfort, friendship, and to help each other in times of need. I must have been about three years old when my mother became pregnant again. People had large families in those days. It was also common at that time for peddlers to come down the street with loaded horse-drawn carts, shouting apples (*japłka*), pears (*gruszka*), cabbages (*kapusta*). Housewives would come outside for a social hour of tasting and good-natured bargaining for a better price. It was on such an occasion that my mother bought a bushel of potatoes and tried to carry them to the back door herself. She had a miscarriage, losing two lovely twin boys. Afterwards, I saw my brothers, who were laid out in a box on our old dining room table, which we still have today. There were side-by-side, eyes closed, and still. And so ended another phase of my life. Right after this, my father found us a place to live in Brockton, so we moved there from Dunkirk.

In Brocton, we lived in an old house that was next door to the Masonic Lodge, which also owned it. The house was in the center of town. It was an old boarding house that was converted into a two-family home. The rooms were partitioned between the front and the back. My cousins, Rose and Alex Molczan, with their children—Mary, Joe, Lottie, and Edwin—lived in the front section, and we lived in the back. Alex also worked at the furniture factory. They lived there only a few years, then moved back to Buffalo, where Rose ran a grocery store on Louisiana Street, and then later on Van Rensselaer. I still remember the pinafores with ruffled sleeves that she sewed for me.

My father cleared the backyard of weeds and tall grass, got rid of accumulated junk, and made a boardwalk to the back privy. He also barricaded the side driveway that had been the farmers shortcut to the blacksmith shop that backed up to our property. My parents planted a large vegetable and flower garden. They also planted flowers along the side driveway. It looked a hundred percent better. I loved the plums from the tree near the smithy and the tall apple tree by the back door. The greening apples were used by my mother to make delicious coffee cakes and turnovers. When I was older, I used to put up the ladder and daringly climb the apple tree branches.

I made my first English-speaking friend, Sara Kurtz, whose father owned the butcher shop. We could not understand each other, but we got along just fine. She loved my mother's homemade bread with farmer's butter from a crock. I made my first attempt to speak English when Sara started Kindergarten that Fall. I put on my best pinafore over my plain dress and just tagged along with her to school. My parents knew nothing about it. I just went to school. I couldn't speak English or spell my name. I didn't know what the teacher was saying. I just sat there with the other children and used my eyes and ears to learn. Whatever they said, I copied. The teacher gave up sending notes home with me that probably asked for my birth certificate, age, name, etc. My father could read printed letters, but not written ones. I found out later that I was much younger than the other children.

Two other Polish families moved to Brocton, but just as quickly moved out. We were the only Polish people in the area until my cousin, Frank Sanak, married Caroline and moved to Brocton. Frank and Caroline adopted a daughter, Madeline, who married Eugene Sroka and had a son, Leon, and twin boys. It was Frank and Madeline who were in Poland when I was there in 1976.

We moved many times from house to house, until we finally settled into a very old clap-board house once used by an overseer in charge of the vast vineyards, the owner of which lived nearby in a beautiful red mansion on Highland Avenue. Our house was surrounded by Concord grape vineyards and conveniently next door to the furniture factory where my father worked. There were lovely hills in the background. We rented the old house, with its thick walls, peeling paint, and broken wood shingles, from Mrs. Furman, who lived in the big red mansion. Her father had been a captain on the lake steamers, as well as owner of the vineyard. Since we were quite grown up by this time, between 7th grade and high school age, we were capable of putting it into shape by cutting down the long grass to make a lawn, chopping and stacking wood in the barn, and cultivating a good-sized garden. The old iron outdoor pump in the front of the house treated us all to sweet tasting cold water in the summer. Everyone in the whole furniture factory used it, along with strangers who had heard of it. My father cleared off the rust, painted it green, made a trough for a spillway, and hung up a tin cup—which people would just rinse off after using.

A thick Virginia creeper vine shaded the right side of the front porch, and a large apple tree shaded the left side. In the night, when the wind blew and rain spattered the upstairs bedroom win-

“There was no indoor bathroom, only an outhouse in back of the barn. Every Halloween, the teenage pranksters would tip the outhouse over...”

dow, I could hear the apples thud down the roof overhead. Four tall evergreens stood like sentinels, two on each side of a graveled path, guarding the front of the house. I could hear an owl hooting in the moonlight before I fell asleep. Since no place would be complete without flowers, there were the old-fashioned hollyhocks along the sunny side of the house, with asters, marigolds, and nasturtiums.

The house was very old and never painted while we lived there. The landlady did not have much money, because her husband had taken off after spending her fortune. My father did his own repairs on the house. There was no indoor bathroom, only an outhouse in back of the barn. Every Halloween, the teenage pranksters would tip the outhouse over, and it became a standing practice that the first workers to arrive at the furniture factory the next day would good naturedly help my father set it up again.

Our street was lovely, lined with sugar maple trees that were beautiful any time of the year. The sidewalks were old and sometimes lifted by tree roots. In the Fall, the grapes hung dark and sugar sweet on the vines and surrounded us with their beautiful fruity aroma. The sunny blue sky drifted with white clouds overhead. The maples blazed in their autumn colors, and the blue hills were only a short distance away. It was a beautiful place to grow up.

Many years ago, I made a painting of my home in Brocton, New York. The painting hangs on the wall of my current home. The house in Brocton is now gone, having been bought later by cousin Frank and Caroline and moved to a new location, but the trees that lined the path still stand, and my memories of that home are still with me.



Editor’s addendum: A bit of research on the ‘beautiful red mansion’ — it is located at 59 Highland Avenue in the village of Portland, Brocton, NY. It was originally owned by Captain J. Butler, and then by his daughter, Anna, who married Archie Furman (thus becoming the Mrs. Furman of Mary’s account). According to the 1925 NYS census, Anna and Archie had two sons, Charles and Butler. By the 1930 Federal census, Anna was divorced. Here is a picture of the mansion.



Reunited

by Barbara Golibersuch

Approximately five years ago, at a yard sale, I purchased two scrapbooks and a military yearbook from the World War II era full of genealogical treasures. One of the scrapbooks, with a beautiful red cover, immediately caught my eye. After further digging, I came across a hand-carved wooden stationary carrying case.

The red scrapbook contained letters, greeting cards, notes, personal photographs and Western Union telegrams that were sent to Joan Holender in Buffalo, New York from her husband, Lawrence Gunzberg. He was stationed in Switzerland in WWII and worked as a photographer.

I thought, "I can't leave these treasures behind." I brought them home and started my research. Well, as you can see it is now 2012, and I finally found a daughter of Joan and Lawrence. I went to Ancestry's Public Member Trees and found Sally Bruckheimer, who had a Gunzberg in her family tree. She was so very kind to me. We wrote many times, and when I mentioned that I was a member of the PGSNYS, she wrote back and asked if Ted Smardz was still a member. It is a small world. It turns out that Sally lived in Buffalo a while ago and helped Ted when she worked at the Mormon Library on Maple Rd. Sally put me in touch with Nancy Gunzberg, Joan and Lawrence's daughter, in California.

I called Nancy and we had an exciting conversation. She was very surprised to hear from someone in Buffalo who bought items in Orchard Park from someone who bought them at an auction in New York City. I mailed the package to her the next day.

Nancy was very pleased with the contents of the package. She said that some of the items she had seen before, but she was very interested in the items that pertained to her fathers' military service.

All in all, everything turned out fine. The memorabilia is back with the family to whom it belongs, and I met two very nice people.



We value and enjoy articles from our members. Please consider writing about your family history research experiences, helpful websites or other resources you have found, and interesting stories about your ancestors for inclusion in future issues of the

Searchers.

Please email your contributions to
denise.oliensky@gmail.com.

Thank you!

Polish Genealogical Society of NYS Mentioned in National Publication!

The Polish Genealogical Society of New York State receives national attention in the current July/August 2012 issue of *Family Tree Magazine* (page 3). Thomas Macentee created a "Buffalo City Guide," which delivers a cornucopia of information and facts about Buffalo's history, historical sites, and most importantly, the genealogical records and resources available and how to access them. Below is the section on Organizations and Archives, in which the PGSNYS is listed. The entire "Buffalo City Guide" can be found on the PGSNYS Website.

ORGANIZATIONS AND ARCHIVES

■ **Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society Research Library**

25 Nottingham Court, Buffalo, NY 14216, (716) 873-9644,
<www.bechs.org>

■ **Buffalo and Erie County Public Library**

Grosvenor Room, Central Library, 1 Lafayette Square,
Buffalo, NY 14203, (716) 858-8900,
<www1.buffalolib.org/libraries/collections/grosvenor.asp>

■ **Buffalo Irish Genealogical Society**

Buffalo Irish Center, 245 Abbott Road, Buffalo, NY 14220,
<bigs.limewebs.com>

■ **City of Buffalo, Vital Records**

1308 City Hall, 65 Niagara Square, Buffalo,
NY 14202, (716) 851-5431, <www.ci.buffalo.ny.us/Home/City_Departments/City_Clerk>

■ **Erie County Clerk's Office**

92 Franklin St., Buffalo, NY 14202, (716) 858-8785,
<www2.erie.gov/clerk>

■ **New York State Department of Health**

Vital Records Section, Genealogy Unit, Box 2602, Albany, NY
12220, <www.health.ny.gov/vital_records/genealogy.htm>

■ **Polish Genealogical Society of New York State**

12645 Route 78, East Aurora, NY 14052,
<www.pgsnys.org>

REMINDERS

Polish Archivist Speaking at PGSNYS Genealogy Fair at St. Gabriel Church

At the September 8th annual PGSNYS Genealogy Fair at St. Gabriel Church in Elma, NY, Daniel Bucko, an archivist at the Krakow Archives, will be presenting live from Krakow, Poland via Skype. The title of his presentation is, "Searching Polish Roots Onsite in Archives of Belarus and Lithuania." This is a rare opportunity to hear directly from someone with firsthand knowledge of genealogical resources in a Polish Archive. The presentation will begin at 1 PM.

Surname Directory of PGSNYS Members

If you haven't already, please remember to turn in the list of surnames you are researching and a 4-generation pedigree chart to Denise Oliansky at a meeting or by email (denise.oliansky@gmail.com) or snail mail to 35 Gervan Drive, West Seneca, NY 14224. There is no time limit on this project. New surnames can be added at any time to the developing surname database, which will soon be accessible on the PGSNYS website. To protect the information of living persons, the 4-generation pedigree charts will not be publically available online, but will be available to members at regular monthly meetings (once they are all compiled). Both of these resources will provide a wealth of information to those who are researching the same surnames.

Adopt-A-Roll

As mentioned in the Spring 2012 issue of the *Searchers*, PGSNYS is planning to have digitized by Biel's all the issues of the *Dziennik dla Wszystkich* newspapers, resulting in a searchable database that will be a tremendous resource to our members and others searching for ancestors who lived in Buffalo's Polonia. To help finance this project, we are offering the opportunity to "Adopt-A-Roll" (or partial roll), either in memory of a loved one or simply to help make this endeavor a reality. You can adopt a full roll at \$82.50, or a partial roll at \$41.25. However, any contribution amount is appreciated and will get us closer to our goal. A designated account has been set up specifically for these funds. Contact the PGSNYS treasurer, Chuck Pyrak, at chuck@pyrak.com to contribute or for more information.

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❧ **YE OLDE PHOTO ALBUM** ❧



Long-time PGSNYS members Edward Prabucki and his beautiful bride, Rita Podlas, married on August 5, 1947, at St. Valentine Church in Buffalo, NY.

Happy 65th Anniversary!



SEARCHERS NEWSLETTER
POLISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF NEW YORK STATE
12645 ROUTE 78
EAST AURORA, NY 14052

PLEASE CHECK YOUR MEMBERSHIP EXPIRATION DATE

PLEASE NOTIFY US OF ANY CHANGE OF ADDRESS