

Christmas with the Kowalskis of Warsaw

BY ROBERT STRYBEL, OUR WARSAW CORRESPONDENT

"I see it! I see the star!" little five-year-old Ania Kowalska squealed with delight and a sense of self-importance. Babcia looked out of the window of the family's fifth-floor Warsaw apartment, doubting whether her granddaughter could have really spotted a star though the smog hanging over the city. "Maybe it was the blinkers of a passing plane, or some reflection or the little girl's vivid imagination," she thought to herself, but not wanting to spoil Ania's fun, she said: "Yes, it's time to begin."

On Christmas Eve, the first star of the evening symbolizing the Star of Bethlehem is the sign for the traditional Wigilia supper to begin. But Babcia couldn't help thinking what a marvelous way this is to keep little children from under foot and away from hot things cooking on the stove during final preparations for the festive meal.

The magic moment has finally arrived and suddenly all the hassle of the time-consuming preparations, the house-cleaning, shopping, and cooking not to mention the expense, have suddenly evaporated as loved ones gather for what to Poles is the single most important occasion of the year. The table has been set with the family's best china and glassware, beneath them a pure-white tablecloth with tufts of hay protruding. There is an extra place-setting in memory of a departed family member, in this case Dziadek (grandpa), who went on to his reward three Christmases ago. But it has been offered to an elderly neighbor lady who lost all her loved ones in the war and would have had to spend the occasion alone in her small apartment if the Kowalskis had not invited her over.

On a small silver tray at center are several rectangular white wafers – opłatek. Babcia takes one, gives a piece to her elder son Edek

(Edward), and they each break off a small fragment of the other's opłatek, consume it, and kiss and hug in a heartfelt embrace, wishing each other the best of everything in the year ahead. The ritual is repeated right down the line until everyone present has exchanged bits of wafer and best wishes with everyone else.

The food is also special and different from the ham, sausage, bigos and other pork dishes Poles love, since the meal is entirely meatless and centers on herring, fish, mushrooms, sauerkraut, pierogi and other vegetarian fare. Following the meal, the family sings kolędy (carols) and then exchanges gifts before finally heading out to Midnight Mass which in Poland really does start at midnight.

So far everything has been the way Poles have celebrated Wigilia as long as anyone can remember, so the question arises: has anything changed? Although the basic outline of the occasion has remained more or less fixed and, with only minor variations, is practiced by millions of families like the Kowalskis across Poland, the advent of a free-market economy and the inroads of that loud, brash, commercialized pop culture have made their imprint.

In an article for the *Detroit Free Press* about the martial-law Christmas of 1982 I wrote: "Polish-style Christmas certainly lacks the American razzle-dazzle of new-fangled ornaments, ever-

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WE WISH ALL
OF OUR
PHS MEMBERS
AND THEIR
FAMILIES
AND FRIENDS
A VERY BLESSED
CHRISTMAS
AND
A VERY HAPPY
NEW YEAR.
WESOŁYCH
ŚWIĄT
ORAZ
SZCZEŚLIWEGO
NOWEGO
ROKU!



Upcoming Events

Christmas Party

This year PHS Christmas Party will be held January 20th, 2018 at the Aging Resource Center at 300 S. Adams Street in Green Bay. Like every year, we are starting at 11:30am with lunch being served at noon. We will be serving the meal potluck style. If your last name begins with A-J please bring appetizers, salads, vegetable, or fruit. If your last name begins with K-R, please bring a main dish. If your last name begins with S-Z, please bring a dessert. Polish sausage and opłatki will be provided.

The event is free to the members of our society and there is a charge of \$10/person for all the guests.

Please make your reservations by January 7th to Mike Wichowski at 920 217 7701. Please leave a message with your name and the number of people who will be attending. Wesołych Świąt!

November 19 & December 3, 1PM and 3PM – Polish Film Festival at UW-Madison Union South Marquee Theater. Free to the public. Films are screened in the original language with English subtitles. <http://www.polishfilmfest.com/index.html>

November 19, 2:00-4:00 PM – "Rising from Ashes Warsaw, Poland." Polish Genealogical Society of America, Copernicus Center, 5216 W Lawrence Ave, Chicago, IL. Margaret Guzek discusses the events leading up to the destruction of Warsaw during World War II, then the heroic effort of post-war Poland to reconstruct the beauty of its historic Old Town. Information and registration at: <https://pgsa.org/news>

December 2 – PHC Madison Wigilia Celebration. Goodman Community Center, 149 Waubesa St, Madison, WI. By reservation only: phcwisconsin@gmail.com

December 7, 6:00 PM – PHS Board Meeting
Perkins, 2800 S Oneida, Green Bay, WI. Meetings are open to public.

December 11, 6:30-8:00 PM – Holiday Cooking Class, Kołaczki. Polish Center of Wisconsin, 6941 South 68th St, Franklin, WI.

January 11, 6:00 PM – PHS Board Meeting. Perkins, 2800 S Oneida, Green Bay, WI. Meetings are open to public.

January 12 – Newspaper article deadline.
Submit articles to Malgosia at malgosiadaugherty@yahoo.com

January 20 – Polish Heritage Society Christmas Party. See left for information.

January 22, 6:30 PM – Newspaper distribution meeting.
255 Terraview Dr, Green Bay, WI.

January 28 – "Zookeeper's Wife." Polish Center of Wisconsin, 6941 South 68th St, Franklin, WI. <http://www.polishcenterofwisconsin.org/events/>

BOOK REVIEW

Pilsudski's most complete biography in English

Peter Hetherington: *Unvanquished: Joseph Pilsudski, Resurrected Poland and the Struggle for Eastern Europe*, second edition (Houston, Texas: Pingora Press, 2012), pp. 723, bibliography, index, photographs. ISBN 978-0-9836563-1-9. \$24.95.

REVIEWED BY: Donald E. Pienkos, Professor Emeritus, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee

This is a "can't put it down book" if there ever was one. This long, first-ever comprehensive, English-language biography of Joseph Pilsudski is truly engrossing and reads like a political history of Poland from its origins to Pilsudski's death in 1935 at the age of 67.

The author describes himself as a petroleum geologist with no formal training in history but with intellectual interests including the First and Second World Wars. Neither Polish nor familiar with the Polish language, he "stumbled upon a fantastic figure named Joseph Pilsudski." He soon realized that Pilsudski

was not "a petty dictator of a third rate power" as he has so often been portrayed. Instead he calls Pilsudski a "dynamic, eminently interesting, and important historical figure" whose life might even be characterized as "an unlikely combination of Robin Hood and George Washington."

Peter Hetherington sees Pilsudski as one of the most important political leaders in the thousand-year history of Poland. He is also presented as the single most significant person to lead the effort to restore Poland to independence in 1918, after 123 years of foreign partition and oppression.

But he also notes that nearly eighty years after his death, Pilsudski, remains a controversial figure.

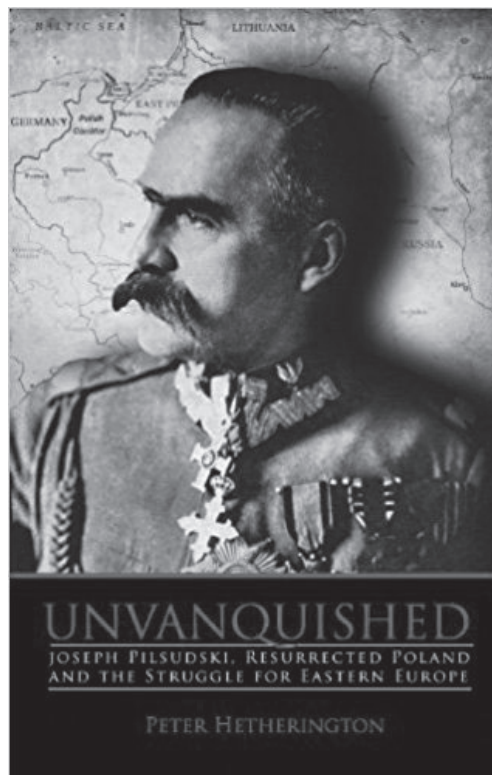
Born into an impoverished szlachta family in what was then tsarist-ruled Lithuania, he idolized his mother who imprinted in him a deeply patriotic commitment to a reborn Poland. It would include the multi-ethnic territories of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, carved up between 1772 and 1795 by Russia, Prussia, and Austria. His early political activities got him exiled far into Siberia and deepened in him an all-pervasive hatred of Russian imperialism.

In the early 1880s Pilsudski gravitated politically to the socialist cause and soon became one of its foremost leaders, strategists, and publicists. But early on he became convinced that national independence came first. As he later put it, "I boarded a red tram but got off at Independence Street." By the outbreak of World War I in 1914 Pilsudski was no longer closely associated with any single political party. Instead, he had organized his Legions and Polish Military Organization to fight for Poland's freedom. He was their unchallenged leader by virtue of his personal charisma and visionary belief that Poland's independence required one to sacrifice everything for the cause.

Central to Pilsudski's leadership was his involvement in actual military engagements. That was quite amazing, since he was essentially self-taught in that field. In adopting a military persona for himself, he operated like an amalgam of Kościuszko and Napoleon and invariably appeared in public in a soldier's uniform showing how much the "romantic revolutionary" he was.

His romanticism was also

evident in the notion he could readily win over the neighboring Lithuanian, Ukrainian, and Belorussian peoples to some sort of federation with Poland to liberate them from Russia.



of World War I and his decisive victory over the invading Bolsheviks in the 1920 Polish-Soviet War. The author acknowledges the ineffective and corrupt nature of the Poland's post-war parliamentary system, but is also critical of the results of Pilsudski's 1926 military coup d'état. Although intended to restore Poland's "moral health", it led to his authoritarian rule.

The author praises Pilsudski's realistic foreign policy focus in defending Poland's security vis-à-vis its two powerful "neighbors", post-war Germany and Soviet Russia. Here, Hetherington offers a picture of a Poland under Pilsudski that one never sees in print in the West: a Poland that was an important player in European affairs and a Pilsudski whose forceful approach to Germany and Russia made Poland a serious factor in great-power politics.

In conclusion, this reader might have liked to have seen a more nuanced discussion of the author's characterization of Dmowski or why Pilsudski treated his political opponents as harshly as he did. But notwithstanding such comments, this is a most impressive piece of work.

"The Pulaski Story"



Steve Peplinski

Steve Peplinski has produced a DVD, "The Pulaski Story," which tells about the

history of Pulaski, Wisconsin. The audio portion is transcribed from a 1950 radio broadcast which aired on WJPG, a Green Bay AM radio station. With the help of the Pulaski Area Historical Society and many other individuals Mr. Peplinski was able to coordinate photos and clippings with the original broadcast. He has donated his time and production costs so that 100% of the proceeds benefits the Pulaski Area Historical Society. The DVD is available for \$30 at the Pulaski Museum (pulaskimuseum@gmail.com).

Mary J. Drella

Thank You New members, RENEWING MEMBERS, and Donors!

The Polish Heritage Society of Northeast Wisconsin is pleased to welcome new members **Mary Ann Lukesic** of Oregon, Wisconsin, **Virginia Arendt** of Green Bay, and **Michelle Pienkos** Mora of Redondo Beach, California whose membership is a gift from member **Ann Pienkos**. Witamy!

We are also pleased to recognize member **Mitchell Sas** of Glenview, Illinois renewing as a Lifetime Member. Renewing since our previous issue's deadline are **Mary Ann Sankey** of Plover, **Cyril Cieslewicz** of Green Bay, **Donna Vercauteren** of DePere, the **Eugene Nelson Family** of San Diego, the **Mark & Sue Warpinski Family** of Green Bay, **Victoria Frederiksen** of Stephenson, Michigan, **Gerald Smurawa** of Pulaski, the **John Nuskiewicz Family** of Seymour, the **Michael & Harriet Wichowski Family** of Green Bay, the **Christopher & Elaine Wagner Family** of Green Bay, **Lorraine Zurawski** of Stevens Point, and the **Kasia & Tomasz Miaskowski Family** of Wauwatosa. Dobrze jest mieć Was z nami!

Bardzo dziękuję to Kasia & Tomasz Miaskowski who included a thoughtful donation with their membership renewal!

Thank you for your support and interest in our Polish heritage. If you have any status inquiries about your membership, please feel free to contact me. Also, your board officers' contact information is listed in this newspaper and on the phsnew.org website.

Paul M. Zwicker, Treasurer (zwickerp@aol.com)



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POLISH HERITAGE SOCIETY

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MEMBERSHIP: Individual per year \$20 Couple/Family per year \$25 Lifetime Member \$200

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Your date of birth Where in Poland are you from: City _____ Area _____ I don't know _____

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- Arti Gras (Feb) Art Street (Aug)
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 Polish Music event
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* for PHS use only to send event reminders

The ultimate guide to top 10 Christmas gifts from Poland

BY EWELINA NURCZYK

Many foreigners work in Poland but spend Christmas with their family back home. A last-minute flight may result in a frantic search for Polish-themed gifts at the airport. Are you sick of this scenario? Check out the list of the top ten gifts from Poland!

Piernik (gingerbread)

We start off with a truly universal gift idea. The delicious Polish gingerbread, known here as piernik, has been the symbol of the city of Toruń since the medieval times. If you happen to stay there, you are bound to buy loads of different kinds of pierniki (plural of piernik). Cakes or cookies, plain or decorative, hard as a nut or soft as a sponge – the selection is simply vast. Luckily for all of you, they are available in shops throughout Poland and easy to get at every Christmas market you can stumble upon. If you are looking for a safe and traditional gift – you have just found it.

Bursztyn (amber)

Your mum, girlfriend, or mother-in-law will be in heaven when she receives a piece of jewelry with amber in it. This warm-colored stone has been known for ages as the Polish gold and is still admired by tourists, especially in the city of Gdańsk. If you happen to be based there, you are all set. There is a variety of rings, bracelets, and earrings to choose from everywhere you go. But generally, you will find amber jewelry at every jeweler's in Poland, so get going!

Bombki (baubles)

Poland has been leading in the production of Christmas tree decorations for many years. Glass baubles are one of the most characteristic things to find around here in December. You can buy them in sets or as a single piece, premade or customized on the spot.

Many of them are small masterpieces, which can decorate a tree or stand on their own on the mantelpiece. There is only one small issue – be careful while transporting them.

Fryderyk Chopin CD

The most famous Polish composer of all times is here to make your Christmas classier. This is a gift for music lovers who appreciate the classical piano sounds. Polish shops offer a variety of CDs with Chopin's music, so no need to worry about accessing them. Alternatively, you can look for a recording of traditional Polish Christmas carols.

Read more about Christmas in Poland.

Sękacz (tree cake)

This can be an impressive gift that can easily compete with a Christmas tree thanks to its shape. Sękacz, which is often described as a tree cake, is a delicious treat for anyone craving sweetness during Christmas. When wrapped in festive packaging, it looks majestic and makes an elegant present. A traditional sękacz is easy to get in the east of Poland, but everyone who has tasted it will confirm that it is worth looking for it in other parts of the country as well.

Miód (honey)

Another golden oldie (literally!). This beautifully yellow product is very popular in Poland, where it is often used as a sweetener, medicine, and delicacy at the same time. Polish countryside is full of beehives and our honey is produced in a very eco-friendly way. Christmas packaging will make it look like a luxurious golden gift, a delightful sight underneath the Christmas tree.

Polish poetry

Poetry collections make a perfect gift for the soul. Every lover of literature

will enjoy good Polish poems translated into English or your native language. For starters, try Wisława Szymborska or Czesław Miłosz – Polish Noble Prize winners. Their poetry is modern and universal at the same time. Most importantly – it has been translated into many languages.

Bolesławiec pottery

The south of Poland boasts a centuries-long tradition of producing the most unique stoneware in the country, in the town of Bolesławiec. These characteristic blue and creamy-white pieces are easy to identify and, what is most impressive, hand-made. You can choose from plates and dishes, cups and mugs, sugar bowls, tea pots and many, many more. Easily one of the most popular souvenirs.

DVDs with Polish cartoons

This one is for the kids! During the grey times of the communist era, Polish kids were cheered up by some lively local cartoon characters, such as Reksio the dog or brothers Bolek and Lolek. These classic films are now available on DVD and they are a joy to watch. They usually do not contain spoken dialogue tracks, which makes them perfect for kids all around the world, as no translation is needed. Introduce your children, nieces, or nephews to these beautifully animated heroes – they will love them.

Żubrówka (Bison Grass Vodka)

This gift, on the other hand, is certainly not for the kids. Foreigners are usually happy with any alcoholic beverage from Poland, but Bison Grass Vodka is the go-to gift when you find yourself in the trouble of last-minute shopping. Used for making drinks with apple juice, this vodka will be a hit at any New Year's party. One drawback – it is not a perfect souvenir as it disappears too quickly!



2017 recipient of the Congressman Clement Zablocki award, Malgosia Daugherty with her father Mieczysław Misztal (on the right) and Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Chicago, Piotr Janicki (on the left)

The Polish American Congress – Wisconsin Division (PAC-WI) is an active unit within the national Polish American Congress which was founded in Buffalo, New York in 1944. On November 5th, 2017 the PAC-WI held its annual Polish Independence Day and Veterans Day luncheon at the Polish Center of Wisconsin located in Franklin. Central to the luncheon was the presentation of the Clement J. Zablocki Civic Achievement Award. The award recognizes people who have made significant contributions with respect to furthering Polish culture in Wisconsin. Our society is fortunate to have Malgosia Daugherty as an active member who has dedicated her time and talent to help further Polish culture and awareness in our community.

Malgosia, our current Vice President and a member of the Polish Heritage Society of Northeastern Wisconsin for many years, was honored as a recipient of this award. She has played a leadership role in our volunteer organization since 2002, including Treasurer for ten of those years. To paraphrase her induction by Ann Pienkos; Malgosia was one of the proponents of the PHS of NEW's current newspaper and plays a critical role in its bi-monthly production. She has been a leader in the presentation of international movies on Polish themes shown at no cost to residents in northeastern Wisconsin. She teaches the Polish language at St. Norbert College and at the Lifelong Learning Institute of the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay. She also holds presentations regarding Poland at various events across the state. In short, Malgosia Daugherty, a daughter of Poland, together with the Polish Heritage Society of Northeastern Wisconsin has enriched the community's knowledge and appreciation of Poland's heritage in many ways.

Malgosia received her award alongside three other recipients: Alex Durtka, Jr., President and CEO of the International Institute of Wisconsin, Neil Dziadulewicz a dancer and five-term President of the Syrena Polish Folk Dance Ensemble, and Beverly Krass, an active member of the Polish Heritage Alliance of Wisconsin, Polish Center of Wisconsin, Milwaukee Polish Fest, and Milwaukee Society of the Polish National Alliance.

Susan Zwicker, Past President, Polish Heritage Society of Northeastern Wisconsin



Polish Independence Day Luncheon in the Polish Center of WI in Franklin, WI. From the left: Andrzej Wozniwicz, Heather and Rob Kaminski, Paul and Susan Zwicker, Mieczysław Misztal, Malgosia Daugherty, Dorothy and Bob Broihier, Mary Drella, Mike Wichowski, Kristine and John Laka

Christmas with the Kowalskis

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more expensive gifts, wrapping paper fancier than last year's, and Christmas carols blaring over shopping-mall loudspeakers since October. (...) To a nation with as troubled a history as Poland's, it is only natural that things which represent continuity, stability, and familiarity are valued more highly than constant change and innovation."

In today's Poland, the "born to buy" and "shop till you drop" mentality may still not be as widespread as in America, but it's getting there. In recent year, people have been complaining that the grave candles of votive lamps of All Saints and All Souls Day (Nov. 1-2) are still warm, when Christmas motifs begin appearing in the media and at the mall. And yes, Jingle Bells, White Christmas, the Chestnut song and Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer

as well as English carols and Polish kolędy can now be heard over discount-store loudspeakers from early November.

Incidentally, the few Polish Americans who visit Poland at this time of the year are usually surprised that many Polish shopping malls "are more modern than what we have in America." The reason is simple: malls have been around for more than half a century in the US, whereas the Polish ones are only a few years old. But in both countries, there is an overwhelming abundance of merchandise of every conceivable type, much of it naturally "Made in China" which recently surpassed America as the world's biggest economy.

In Poland, too, kids get high-tech electronic gadgetry, computer games, tablets and remote-controlled toys for Christmas. And, if the parents can't afford

it, they take out bank loans to keep up with the...Nowaks or Wiśniewskis. Sound familiar? All too often, the kolędy are no longer sung by the family but only listened to on the radio, TV or off a CD. And if the parents hire a Święty Mikołaj to pass out the presents, it will be an American-style ho-ho-ho Santa guy that knocks at their door.

So today's Polish Christmas combines the old with the new, the traditional, and the commercial. Depending on a given family's value system, one or the other element may dominate. It's anyone's guess what Poland's Christmas holidays will be like in five, ten, or 20 years from now. But if things continue as they have for the past two decades, chances are they will be more like today's American-style Yule and less like the tradition-minded Boże Narodzenie we have come to cherish.

Pioneer and Founder Br. Augustine Zeytz, OFM (3)

BY BR. JERRY TOKARZ, OFM

Friar Priests are Contacted and Invited to America

Br. Augustine persisted in his letter-writing campaign to various friars in Europe, sharing his enthusiasm with them, hoping to enkindle in them zeal to join the enterprise. One was Fr. Erasmus Sobocinski, a friar who, like Br. Augustine, had also been expelled from Poland by the Russians. He was born on December 21, 1841, in Skempe (Plock diocese), where he joined the Franciscans at Szczawin in 1861, and pronounced solemn vows on July 14, 1864, in Miedniwice (Warsaw Diocese). Due to the suppression of religious Orders, he was forced to leave Poland and went to Italy where he completed his studies and was ordained to the priesthood on May 22, 1869, in Anagni by Bishop Klement Pagliari. He was then sent to France, residing with the friars of the Province of St. Bernardine of Siena until 1880. Before being contacted by Br. Augustine in 1886, Fr. Erasmus was in Verona, Italy, waiting for an obedience to join the province in Galicia. Interested in the invitation to America, Fr. Erasmus began writing letters to other members of his province, telling them about this new venture. Committed to Br. Augustine's cause, he wrote to friars in exile, Fr. Stanislaus Jeka in Rome, Fr. Jerome Schneider in France, and other friar priests and Brothers dispersed in various parts of Europe, asking them to do likewise.

Fr. Stanislaus Jeka, born in Tupadlo, Poland (diocese of Chelm in Western Prussia) on May 10, 1844, entered the Franciscan Order (Immaculate Conception Province in Russian-controlled Poland) on September 26, 1868. Although Czar Alexander II had suppressed the province, Fr. Stanislaus was able to finish his studies in Prussian-controlled Poland and be ordained to the priesthood in 1874. When the May Laws were enacted by Chancellor Otto von Bismarck, he was forced to leave the country, taking refuge in Nice, France, where he remained until 1878. Other assignments took him to Venice

in Italy, Munich in Bavaria, and, by 1881, back to France at Kenty. He possessed an unsettled, restless spirit that appeared connected to an unspecified health problem, the reason he often gave in seeking one transfer after another. Eventually Fr. Stanislaus made his way to Rome where he received, in 1887, an invitation to join the Pulaski venture. Although he had reservations, he disregarded them and reluctantly accepted the invitation to America.

Fr. Jerome Schneider was born in Wapiersk, Poland, on July 5, 1847, and entered the Franciscan Order on July 3, 1871. He was from the same province as Fr. Stanislaus, being ordained two years after him on June 22, 1876. Like Fr. Stanislaus, he was a victim of the cruel May Laws that brought education entirely under state control and placed the Catholic clergy under strict supervision. Forced to leave his native land, he went to France from where he, too, was invited to America to work among the Poles in settlements around Pulaski, Wisconsin.

The letters sent by Br. Augustine and Fr. Erasmus, proposing the new foundation and appealing to friars to join did not convince all recipients. Some friars, like Fr. Jerome and several Brothers, appeared eager; others preferred giving the invitation more thought. Fr. Stanislaus expressed reluctance, hoping to return to Prussia. A recent agreement between the government and the Holy See allowed members of religious Orders reentry. If his return were not possible, he would consider going to America. Among the more willing friars, however, enthusiasm heightened and dreams and plans were shared.

The whole mission appeared a certainty, until disruptions around schedules and travel arrangements created one delay after another. Plans were altered and long postponements eroded the interest of some and sapped the spirit of others. Adverse or confusing news drifted in, sowing suspicions and fears until everything began to look hopeless. It was not clear as to who, among the friars, would ultimately arrive.

(to be continued)

Hania (13)

A NOVELLA
BY HENRYK SIENKIEWICZ

In the last episode, the duel between the two opponents came to an end with both fainting – Selim from a loss of blood and Henryk from terror when he realized he had almost killed his friend.

Henryk awoke in a chamber lying in bed. He moved in and out of consciousness. Gradually,

he recognized that his father was present. He then learned that his father had found him and brought him home. Selim was taken to his home by family servants.

Henryk learned that his family had feared for his life as he lay recovering. He had a terrible pain in his head and a fever. The priest had administered the sacraments. As his health improved, he learned that Hania was also in the house. She had contracted smallpox.

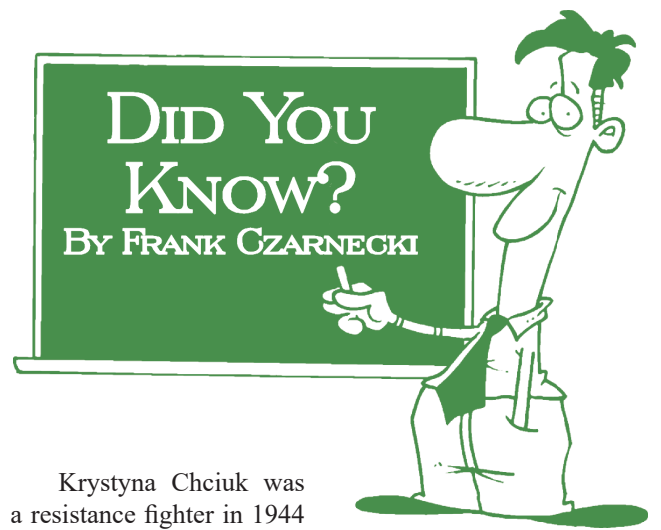
Henryk asked if she was afflicted with the marks of the disease. When told that she was indeed, he asked to see her. His first reaction was horror. He strained not to show his reaction. That beautiful, angelic face was now marred by terrible sores. His loving feelings for her dissolved at the sight.

Later, when his father acknowledged that Henryk had had strong feelings for her, he asked Henryk if he would still want to marry her. Henryk replied, "I will do it not for love but for honor."

When Selim came to visit, he stated that he would still be willing to marry her. Hania strongly rejected his proposal. She did not want to inflict herself on anyone in her present state of deformity. As Hania recognized that her relationship with the two young men was over, she made a life decision. She entered a local nunnery and became a Sister of Charity.

After a number of years, Henryk met Hania unexpectedly. Peace and calm were depicted on her angelic features. All traces of the terrible disease had disappeared. In the black robe and white head-dress of the cloister she was beautiful as never before.

THE END



Krystyna Chciuk was a resistance fighter in 1944 Poland. Although living in America, at age 88, she and others received recognition from the Polish government.

Her story: At age 15 she secretly followed her older cousins into a building and hid while a priest administered an oath of allegiance to the gathering. When he discovered her, she said, "It's too late, Father, because I already took the oath with everybody." While the priest fretted about what to do, a woman's voice came from the dark, "I'll take her." That is how she joined the resistance.

She relates that the saddest moment was "when I had to give up my gun.

The men were trying to kill themselves and we had to talk them out of it." They were placed into cattle cars – "50 people in one wagon, we could not sit or stand" – and were sent to German work camps.

When interviewed after her recognition, Krystyna said her experience is a reminder to "treasure your freedoms. Don't be so complacent about your freedoms here. America is the best country, and hopefully we are far from harm's way. But freedom you have to fight for. You have to teach your children to guard it and fight for it every day."

POLISH SURNAME CORNER

This Christmas: A gift of Polish Heritage?

A concise, several-page custom-researched analysis of the meaning and origin of a Polish surname will make an unusual and memorable Polish-flavored Christmas gift for a loved one (or yourself).

It will explain what the name means, how it originated, how many people share it, where they are from and whether a noble coat of arms accompanies it. If one is found, its image and the story behind it will be provided.

If interested, kindly airmail a \$19 personal or bank (cashier's) check or money order (adding \$13 for each additional surname you wish researched) to:

ROBERT STRYBEL
UL. KANIOWSKA 24 • 01-529 WARSAW
POLAND

You will also be able to check your family records in Poland, track down ancestral homesteads and graves or possibly even turn up long-lost relatives thanks to a helpful genealogical contact sheet included with each order. Please include your email address if you prefer to receive the analysis online. For more information please contact: resarch60@gmail.com

The **Ślepowron** coat of arms was shared by the noble lines of over nine hundred variously surnamed families including: Barański, **Żak**, Chrzastowski, Roman, **Łącki**, Sobolewski, Nosek, Lipiak Malinowski, Wojno, Górski, Chudol, Dąbrowski, Roman, **Święcki**, Wolski Dobrowolski, Komorowski, Kozłowski, Kuźma, Lewandowski, Szymański, **Żukowski** & Wolski.



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