



# Polish Genealogical Society of Minnesota NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 4

WINTER 1996-97

NUMBER 4

## Polish Poet Wislawa Szymborska Wins Nobel Prize

### Five Polish Born Writers Have Won This Award

The 73 year-old reclusive Polish poet, **Wislawa Szymborska**, has won the 1996 Nobel Prize for Literature. In the citation announcing the winner in October, the Swedish Academy of Letters described her as a "Mozart of poetry," one who mixed the elegance of language with "the fury of Beethoven." The Los Angeles Times stated: "(her) . . . seductively simple verse has captured the wit and wisdom of everyday life for the past half century." Three books of her poetry have been translated into English. They are: View with a Grain of Sand, People on a Bridge and Sounds, Feelings, Thoughts: Seventy Poems.

Szymborska is the fifth Polish-born writer to win the Nobel Prize for Literature. Others who have won are: Czeslaw Milosz in 1980, Isaac Bashevis Singer in 1978, Wladyslaw Reymont in 1924 and Henryk Sienkiewicz in 1905.

It is literature that often most accurately and realistically portrays the everyday life of common people. Readings in Polish literature can recreate the everyday life of your Polish ancestors. Each of the above Nobel winners has written works that are of interest to the Polish researcher. Several of the short stories of **Sienkiewicz** portray the trials Polish immigrants faced upon arrival in America. Sienkiewicz spent two years traveling the United States (1876-78) and visiting Polish immigrant communities. The Peasants, by **Reymont**, has been described as "the richest and artistically the most perfect picture of peasant life in world literature."\* The fiction of **Singer** vividly recreates Jewish life in Poland, an aspect of the Polish world that has, for the most part, been tragically lost. Though he is primarily a poet, The Issa Valley by **Milosz**, is a nostalgic novel of growing up in rural Polish Lithuania.

Future issues of this newsletter will feature Polish writers whose translated works are of interest to Polish researchers. Several bibliographies of English translations of Polish literature are available through inter-library loan at your local public library. These include: Paul Theodore Kulas, Polish Novels in English Translation, Jerzy Maciuszko, The Polish Short Story in English, and Boleslaw Taborski, Polish Plays in English Translation.

--Paul Kulas

\*Manfred Kridl, A Survey of Polish Literature and Culture, 437.

From "The Joy of Writing"  
by Wislawa Szymborska

*The joy of writing.  
Power of preserving.  
The Revenge of a mortal hand.*

### In this issue . . .

1. Polish Nobel Prize Winner:  
Wislawa Szymborska
2. President's Letter
3. The Bulletin Board
4. Letters to the Editor:  
Where did Grandfather Block  
come from?  
Where did Sister Marcina  
come from?
6. "Lost and Found": A PGS-MN  
Success Story  
by Shirley Mask Connolly
8. Silesia to America -- A Heritage:  
Polish Silesian Settlement in  
Central Minnesota  
by Robert Prokott
10. Tracing Polish Ancestors in the  
Former Soviet Union  
by Ed Brandt
12. Library Corner . . . Book Reviews  
Polish Pioneer Families in the  
Parish of Brudenell to 1870.  
"PGS-MN Church and Local  
History Collection: A Progress  
Report"
14. Missing Branches
16. Success Story #3: Question Oral  
Family History  
by Blanche Krbecek

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## Polish Genealogical Society of Minnesota Newsletter

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The Polish Genealogical Society of Minnesota Newsletter is published quarterly in Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter. Submission of items for publication is encouraged. Deadlines for inclusion of submitted material are Feb. 10, May 10, August 10 and Nov. 10 respectively. All articles, letters, book reviews, queries, news items, etc. should be sent to:

Paul Kulas, PGS-MN Newsletter, 12008  
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## President's Letter

by Greg Kishel

It's near the end of another year, and it's been a good one for our Society. Our membership grew by almost 75 between 1995's annual meeting and 1996's, and we will surpass 200 sometime in early 1997. Our *Newsletter* expanded by another four pages, to accommodate the larger volume of quality material submitted for publication, and our effort to have a presence in outstate Minnesota got underway. Expressing enthusiasm for the PGS-MN's mission and a wish to learn and to help, several members accepted nominations for newly-vacant seats on our 1997 board, and were elected.

There's a different kind of growth that we can and will continue, though it's not really measured by the numbers. When the Society was founded nearly five years ago, it defined its mission as encouraging interest in genealogy for all persons whose roots lay within the historical boundaries of Poland. As history teaches us, that's a tall order, and a diverse one; at its height in the seventeenth century, the population of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth included a wide array of ethnic and religious groups. Most Christian Americans of Polish extraction can claim descent from the *Polanie*, the Slavic tribe whose language and culture became the dominant one in late-medieval Poland. However, immigration historians point out that a large percentage of Jewish Americans--by some estimations, a majority--have roots in nineteenth-century Galicia, then part of the Austrian Partition of Poland. Beyond this, the Commonwealth was an abundantly multi-ethnic state; its subjects included Kaszubians, Lithuanians, Latvians, Rusyns, Germans, Ukrainians, Belarussians, Tatars, and others.

There is a certain reverberation here for us, as citizens of a late-twentieth century America that has taken in numerous newcomers from cultures alien to ours. There's certainly something to admire, in the fact that our forefathers adopted laws of religious toleration at a time when Western Europe was racked by wars of denominational strife, nearly two centuries before Thomas Jefferson's Virginia Statute of Religious Liberty. For us as a nation, there's also something to learn from, and to avoid, in the tragic fluctuations between welcome and isolation, tolerance and anti-Semitism, that later plagued Poland through recent times.

The point, though, is that the local world of our ancestors was one of rich cultural variety, one that is largely unknown to latter-day Americans and one that is utterly fascinating to reconstruct. Through our immigrant grandparents' pluck and hard work, that world helped create our own; in subtle ways, it colors our own lives still. We do them, and ourselves, a disservice if we insist that our organization's sole focus should be just on the lives and culture of the dominant group.

This is why, from the very inception of the organization, the PGS-MN's programs and publications went outside the

commonly-conceived "mainstream" of Polish and Polish-American genealogy--we've featured presentations on family history by speakers of Kaszubian, Rusyn, and Jewish ancestry. It's also why we hope to host another presentation or two like this, over the coming year. There were quite a few more nationalities in the Commonwealth, and several of them sent their sons and daughters to Minnesota. Their origin and their destination alike bring them within our interest, as much as those Roman Catholic, Polish-speaking immigrants whose stories will continue to take the majority of our group's attention.

Ultimately, this is a good thought for this time of the year, when the holy days of all of our religious traditions proclaim light in the darkness, peace, and goodwill to all, regardless of their differences. We'll all try to carry this thought forward, in our common effort to reach back across the generations. *Wesołych Świąt* to all of you, then, whatever your persuasion!

## The Bulletin Board

AT PGS-MN'S ANNUAL MEETING in November, three new directors were elected to the board. **Mary Ellen Bruski, Terry Kita** and **Joanne Lisson** will replace **John Pawlak, Dan Nedoroski** and **Bernie Szymczak** on the Board of Directors effective 1 January 1997. All other officers were reelected. We welcome the newly elected board members and thank **John, Dan** and **Bernie** for their service during the past year.

OUR ORGANIZATION was well represented at the 1996 Fall Conference of the Polish Genealogical Society of America in Chicago on October 25-27. PGS-MN members **Kathleen Dembinski, Alfred Fritz, Diana Gustafson, Margaret Kowalewski, Dr. David Kroska, Paul Kulas, Mary Alice Rekucki** and **Ann Wrampelmeier** all attended this informative conference. In addition, PGS-MN member **John Radzilowski** gave two presentations at the conference.

PSG-MN MEMBER **Edward R. Brandt, Ph.D., A.G.\*** (\* Accredited Genealogist with a specialty in German Research) was the featured speaker for the Polish Genealogical Society of Michigan's Annual Seminar on November 23, 1996 at Madonna University in Livonia, Michigan. The theme of the seminar was "Tracing Ancestors from the Prussian Partition of Poland." Good work, Ed.

OUR NEWSLETTER DEPENDS on contributions of articles from our members. This issue features articles by PGS-MN members **Ed Brandt, Shirley Mask Connolly, Greg Kishel, Blanche Krbechek** and **Bob Prokott**. We thank you all for contributing. This good supply of articles, however, has resulted in the delay in publishing the next part of the series, "**Polish Catholic Churches in Minnesota**." The next part of this series, which features **St. Adalbert's Church in Silver Lake**, will appear in the Spring 1997 issue.

A REOCCURRING COMMENT in our questionnaire returns concerned **receiving practical help in researching one's genealogy**. It is PGS-MN's major goal to provide our members with just that. All of our activities -- our program speakers, the advice of knowledgeable researchers at our meetings, our library collection, Polish nights at the library, our newsletter -- are intended to aid you in your research. In this issue of the newsletter, Ed Brandt offers tips for researching Polish ancestors from areas in the former Soviet Union, Shirley Mask Connolly shows how placing a query in our newsletter resulted in finding long lost relatives, Bob Prokott's article concerns Polish settlement in central Minnesota and Blanche Krbechek's success story shows how she located her ancestors in Kashubia. In addition, our "Library Corner" column features reviews of helpful items new to our collection, and our "Missing Branches" column continues to advertise your search for your ancestors. Also, the "Letters to the Editor" column in this issue offers advice to two of our members concerning their particular research problem. **We invite you to use all of our services to help you in your research.**

WE CONTINUE TO LOOK at suggestions from our questionnaire returns to improve our organization and our newsletter. For example, the "In this issue. . ." index on page 1, the emphasis on problem solving, the "success stories," the 12 point type size, the listing on

*Bulletin Board, continued on page 5*

## Wesołych Świąt Bożego Narodzenia

i Szczęśliwego Nowego Roku





## Letters to the Editor Listy do Redaktora

### Where did Grandfather Block come from?

Please -- I need some help. I haven't been able to find where my grandfather came from in Poland. I found out where my grandmother came from in the northeast corner of Poland -- a small town of Kaletnik, northeast of Suwalki. The records people there were very cooperative in finding my grandmother's family near Suwalki. I sent them a few letters with money for research and reproduction and they did a great job. Although my grandparents met in the U.S. (Minnesota) and were married in Carlton County on 21 September 1902, I also asked the people of Suwalki to check on my grandfather's family -- no success. I went through the Warsaw office to further check. I asked them to check the area of Warka (south of Warsaw) because I had heard talk that my grandfather "may" have had relatives there -- no luck.

The 1900 Wisconsin census had my grandfather living in West Superior, Wisconsin in 1900. The 1910 Minnesota census had records of my grandparents on their homestead in St. Louis County (about halfway between Ely and International Falls near the small town of Buyck).

My grandfather was born on 8 May 1874 and died 21 June 1954 in Virginia, Minnesota.

Any help you can give me will be greatly appreciated in finding any information about my grandfather Julian Block, also spelled Julyan Bloch before he came to the U.S. supposedly in April 1900 at New York.

I am sending you the information I have obtained which may help you --

- 1) 1900 U.S. Census, Wisconsin, Douglas County.
- 2) 1910 U.S. Census, Minnesota, St. Louis County.
- 3) Homestead application with additional papers including naturalization papers.
- 4) Marriage record.
- 5) Request for copies of ship passenger arrival records.
- 6) Certificate of Death.

Thank you,  
Donald A. McCavic, 5487 Lehigh St.  
Ventura, CA 93003-4009

*Editor's reply: You have done considerable basic research already. In reviewing your documents there are four additional things that you could easily do if you have not yet done so.*

1. *Advertize. Place a query in our newsletter. Someone may well respond. The article on page 6 of this newsletter is a good example of the results one may receive. Information of your grandfather's birthplace in Poland may well come from an very unexpected source.*

2. *You have the civil record of your grandfather's marriage. You should also write for the church record of his marriage in Split Rock township. Origins in Poland are often (but not always) given in church marriage records. St. Joseph's Church in Split Rock is now a mission church of Holy Family Church in Moose Lake. Its address is: Holy Family Church, Moose Lake, MN 55767-0467. Ask that they send you a copy (a direct photocopy, not a certificate) of your grandparent's marriage record. Specify: St. Joseph's Church in Split Rock, your grandparent's names and the date of their marriage. You may want to include a contribution to the church.*

3. *Obituaries often include the decedents place of birth. Look for an obituary of your grandfather in the Virginia newspapers in 1954 (This can easily be done at the Minnesota Historical Society). I think Virginia had two weekly newspapers at the time. Also if Buyck had a newspaper or was served by another local newspaper (Orr, maybe), it also should be checked.*

4. *Check the Hamburg passenger indexes to see if your grandfather left Europe through Hamburg. Many Polish emigrants left from Hamburg and the Hamburg records usually indicate the last place of residence of the immigrant. There are direct and indirect indexes and both should be checked. Local branch LDS Family History Centers usually have microfilmed copies of these indexes (The Family History Center in Crystal has the Hamburg passenger indexes in their permanent collection).*

*Good luck with your research. Let us know when and if you are successful.*

*If any of our readers have suggestions for Mr. McCavic, be sure to send them to him.*

State of Minnesota, }  
County of Carlton } I HEREBY CERTIFY, that on the 9<sup>th</sup> day of  
September, 1902, in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and two  
at Split Rock town in said County, I, the undersigned, a Catholic  
and State of Minnesota } and State of Minnesota }  
in presence of: }  
Marie Subacki }  
Lou Karonic }  
Rev. W. Lewis

Portion of the civil record of the marriage of Julian Bloch and Emilia Suistor in Split Rock Township, Carlton County, Minnesota.

## Where did Sister Marcina come from?

The nun on this holy card has some connection with my family from Poland (Klarkowski and Lamczyk), and I am wondering if you could translate what town, village, or parish she could be from. This might finally give me a hint of their hometown. If Piesnowie is a town, I can't find it on the map.

Do you have any idea where I could write to find out what order she belonged to - or what her last name was?

The Klarkowski's and Lamczyk's settled in St. Paul, and lived around St. Adalbert's Church.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Bonita A. Erickson, 22 Lake Avenue, Box 7,  
Madison Lake, MN 56063



*A translation of the biographical information on the holy card is as follows:*

Sister M. Marcina born 20 March 1869 in Piesno, Grand Duchy of Poznan. Entered the convent 4 July 1885. After three years illness, having received the Final Rites, she fell asleep in the Lord's care at 9 am 14 October 1899.

*Translated by W. Kornel Kondy.*

*Editor's reply: The holy card gives the birthplace of Sister Marcina. Your next step is to check Słownik Geograficzny (reviewed in the Summer, 1994 issue of this newsletter) to find out if the village of Piesno has its own church. If not, this gazetteer will give the location of the parish to which the village belongs. Słownik Geograficzny is available on microfiche at the MGS Library in St. Paul and on microfilm at the LDS Family History Center in Crystal (If your local Family History Center does not have this resource in its permanent collection, it can be ordered from the Family History Library in Salt Lake City). You can then determine if the Family History Library has filmed the records of this parish and order the films.*

*Kornel Kondy translated this as well as another item in this newsletter. He will do translations for others for a fee. His address is: 619 SE 7th St., Minneapolis, MN 55414-1327. Phone: (612) 378-1739.*

## Bulletin Board, continued from page 3

this page of someone who does Polish translating, the articles on Kushubia and Silesia, all resulted from suggestions made by members on their questionnaire returns. In addition, a principle agenda item at our next board meeting will be to consider ways to implement other suggestions made on the questionnaires. Your opinions are important to us. We want this to be a member directed organization.

### OUR POLICY ON MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS:

Our membership year, the terms of our officers and board, our fiscal year, our newsletter publication year, run from January to December. Therefore, **all membership renewals for 1997 are due on January 1.** If you joined in 1996 prior to 1 October, you were considered to be a member for all of 1996 and you were sent all newsletters published during the year. If you joined after 1 October you are considered to have joined for 1997 but will receive complimentary, this last newsletter of 1996. If you have not yet renewed for 1997, inserted in this issue is a letter indicating that your membership dues are due. Any questions concerning your membership should be directed to our Treasurer and Membership Chair, **Barbara Rockman, 2217 Wight Bay, Brooklyn Park, MN 55443.**

WHEN RENEWING your membership, please consider making a donation to our library fund. There are many items we would like to purchase for our library. One of the suggestions from the questionnaire was that we should purchase a complete set of detailed maps of both current and 19th century Poland. This would be very desirable but unfortunately the size of our library fund does not permit an expenditure of this sort. If every member would contribute just \$2.00 and Twin City area members who have regular access to our collection would contribute \$5.00 we could easily afford this purchase.

POLISH NIGHT AT THE LIBRARY continues at the MGS Library on the **second Thursday of each month** from 6:30 to 9:30 pm. One of our experienced genealogists is there to assist you on these nights. Complete library hours are: Tuesdays, 6:30 to 9:30 pm; Wednesdays, 10:00 am to 4:00 pm; Thursdays, 10:00 am to 4:00 pm and 6:30 to 9:30 pm; and on Saturdays, 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. The library is located at 1650 Carroll Avenue in St. Paul. Come and make good use of this facility, of our Polish collection and of Polish nights at the library on the second Thursday of each month. **NOTICE: The MGS Library will be closed for the holidays from 16 December through 1 January.**

## "LOST AND FOUND": A PGS-MN SUCCESS STORY

by Shirley Mask Connolly, PGS-MN member  
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

I must confess that when I submitted a query into the MISSING BRANCHES section of the newsletter of the POLISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF MINNESOTA, I really didn't believe I would find the missing link of my VISNESKIE family tree. That was in the autumn of 1994. Almost a whole year went by and then, eureka, I received a reply!!

My grandmother, Stella Mask, nee Visneskie had often shown me old photos of our American relatives, the family of her father's sister, Mary Visneskie, Mrs. Stanley Katzmark of St. Paul, Minnesota. Both of us were rather thrilled to think that not all of our family had settled in the Canadian bush. There seemed something rather exotic about our American city cousins. For years my grandmother had corresponded with her Aunt Mary, and then after Mary's death in 1959, with her cousin Estelle, Mrs. Ratte. Aunt Mary and cousin Estelle had once come to visit my grandmother and her relatives. Never had my grandmother even imagined visiting them, but I did. And so in the summer of 1994 when I planned a trip across the northern United States to Calgary, Alberta, I thought I'd look up some of these "American cousins". By this time my grandmother's contact with Estelle had ceased, her cards returned stamped: "moved - address unknown". My grandmother correctly assumed that her cousin had died. On an overnight stopover in Minneapolis, I studied the telephone directory and noted the names that looked like Visneskie and or Katzmark/Kaczmarek, but all my phone calls were fruitless. The query in the PGS-MN Newsletter in the autumn of 1994 seemed my only chance.

Mary Visneskie was the first born child of Frank Wisniewski and Martha Jolkowska of the village of Swiecie/Schwetz, in the province of Poznan, in the German Empire. Frank and Martha arrived in Canada in August of 1884 on a steamship of the Allan Line, the S.S. Sardinian. They travelled from Liverpool to Quebec, probably after taking a ship from the port of Hamburg, Germany to Hull, England. With them they had their daughter Mary, age 7, and their sons, Frank (6) and Andreas/Henry (a baby of less than a month old). Henry was my grandmother Stella's father. They emigrated approximately two years after Martha's parents, Frank and Marianna Jolkowski (now spelled Yolkowski), her brother,



Seated: **Martha Jolkowska** (1855-1925). Standing on the right: **Frank Wisniewski** (1847-1935). Standing on the left: son, **Andrej/Henry** (1884-1950). Martha and Frank are the author's great-great grandparents and newly found Ed Katzmark's grandparents.

Albert and sisters, Frances, Barbara and Julianna. Both families settled in Hagarty township, in a Kashubian Polish community in Ontario, Canada, that was established in 1859. The Visneskies and the Yolkowskies were joined by a couple of other families from their parish, including the Borutskies and Afelskies. They spoke both Polish and German fluently. Why they came to this Canadian community is unknown. They were not Kashubs. The Visneskie family grew with the addition of six more children. There were also many Yolkowski cousins.

Mary lived for twelve years on the Visneskie homestead in Hagarty township. Essentially she and her family lived in the bush, too far from the nearest school in Wilno for an education to be possible. It was a tough life trying to eke out a living on this land. It was also a lonely life with farmhouses built far from any serviced road. But Mary was pretty, and despite her isolated location, she soon came to the notice of the local Polish lads and several came courting. At the age of 19, on September 14, 1896, she married. Stanislaus Kaczmarek won her heart with his flowing moustaches and proud bearing, beating out another would-be suitor who plied her father with liquor and sweet talk. No doubt their wedding followed in the tradition of lasting three days, with those who couldn't go home sleeping in the Visneskie hayloft or granary and as many women as possible bunking in the house. An outside platform was constructed as a dance floor and the orchestra was made up of anyone who could play a musical instrument, mostly violins. No doubt there was lots to drink, primarily home brew, berry wine and bush whisky, and in many cases there was too much to drink. Father Yankowski, the parish priest of

St. Stanislaus Kostka Church in Wilno, did his best to curb and curtail wedding festivities and the inevitable fights and uncontrolled behaviour, but he had little success. As a people who worked so hard with so little in return, weddings were "the big social events" of their lifetime and they (especially the men) certainly did not wish to tame them down!!

Mary's new husband seems to have come to Canada alone. Father Yankowski entered their marriage in the Wilno parish books and recorded his parents' names as Stanislaus Kaczmarek and Victoria Zneyslona (sp?). Where exactly in Poland he came from is unknown, although Stanley and Mary corresponded with his Polish family. The letters do not contain return addresses and the envelopes are long gone. Why he initially chose Canada is unknown. It appears that he came from a family of ten children -- two siblings stayed in Poland and eight eventually settled in the United States. Perhaps Stanley was lured by the thought of land free for the taking? He did not last long as a farmer, however, although he attempted to please and pacify his new bride by moving onto property not far from her parents. He hated the futility of working a land so relentlessly stony and sandy. After all he had a trade, having been trained in woodworking and cabinetry in the "old country". Surviving photos of his family indicate by their clothing that they may have been fairly well to do. It didn't take him long to realize that he would get nowhere fast on the land, so shortly after Mary gave birth to their son, Ludovicus, they left Canada. It was a big sacrifice for Mary to board the train which would

take her away from her family, but her duty was to her husband. She knew he sought something that he would never find on the fields of Renfrew County.

In Michigan he took the first of several jobs working in lumber mills. By 1901, the Kaczmareks, now called Katzmarks, resided in the Polish-American community in St. Paul, Minnesota. The family grew with the addition of three more children, for a total of two girls and two boys. When Stanley dreamed of moving on to Texas, Mary put her foot down and determined that she would never move again.

And so it was that Ed Katzmark and his brother Louis, and sisters Agnes and Estelle were raised "worlds" apart from their Canadian cousins. They didn't miss these people whom they had never met. They had Kaczmarek uncles and an aunt in America. Then an uncle, Bronis Visneskie, whom they called Alec, joined them in St. Paul. Alec was Mary's brother. He came in the year 1918, married and went by the name Viniski. They had a good life, a city life full of people and promise, but their mother didn't forget her Canadian country connection. She recruited her children to write letters for her to her mother and siblings in Canada.

In Canada, little Stella Visneskie ran over the fields to her grandmother's house to read the mail for her. Stella was thrilled by the photos that occasionally were received. Mary's family dressed so well. . . . often cousin Ed wore a little sailor suit, the girls lovely gowns. Stella had to share shoes and Sunday clothes with twelve siblings. Only a few could go to church taking turns wearing their only shoes. Stella's feet were tough but her face was beautiful. She forgot to be envious because it was more her friendly nature to be fascinated by people. So it was that Stella got to know her American aunt and uncle and cousins, through the letters she read and wrote for her grandmother.

Cousin Ed often wrote the letters for his mother, a job he disliked because she was fussy about the wording and often made him do several rewrites. Although he addressed the envelopes to Killaloe and Wilno, in Ontario, Canada, he never really wondered about these places. After all, life was much more interesting at home in St. Paul where he met and married a wonderful Polish-American gal by the name of Bernice Nalipinski. They raised their seven children with the money he earned as a set-up man in a St. Paul brewery. They attended the parish of St. Casimir's in St. Paul while Stella and her husband and family attended their own St. Casimir's Church in Round Lake Centre, Ontario, Canada. Life was good to them both and the years passed by. "Lost and Found," *continued on page 13*

#### Family Group:

**Stanley Kaczmarek** (anglicized name to Katzmark, 1868-1938) holding his daughter, **Agnes** (Mrs. Otto Marston, 1910-1986), beside: **Estelle** (Mrs. Louis Ratte, 1901-1994), standing: **Mary** nee **Wisniewska** (1877-1959) and **Louis** (1897-1981).



## Silesia to America -- A Heritage: Polish Silesian Settlement in Central Minnesota

by Robert Prokott

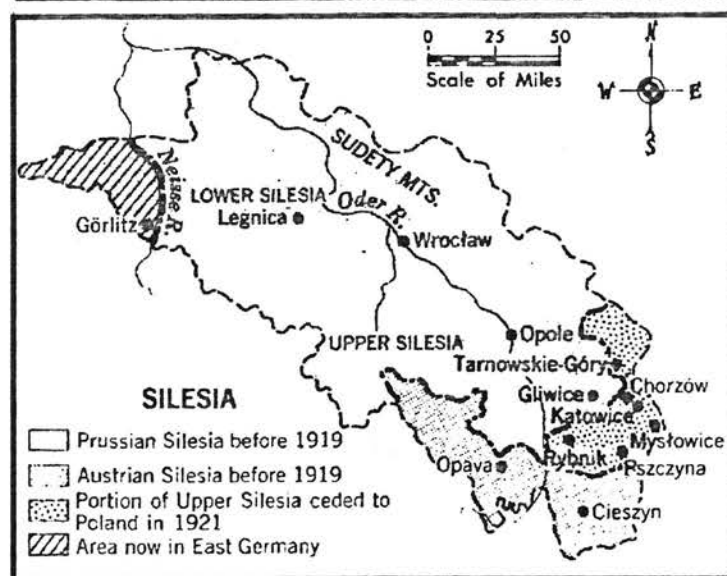
Newspapers of the latter 1800's referred to them as "Polanders." These new settlers in the southern part of Morrison County came from the Opole province of Upper Silesia in what is now southwestern Poland. The Silesians were part of the Polish Nation from the date of its founding in 966 A.D. and remained under the rule of the Piast princes until 1335 when Casimir III the Great gave up claims to Silesia and recognized it as part of the Kingdom of Bohemia. Silesia retained an essential link to Poland in that its archbishopric at Wroclaw remained subordinate to the Primate at Gniezno, but political rule of Silesia passed to the Kingdom of Bohemia. In 1526, Silesia, along with Bohemia and Moravia, came under the rule of the Hapsburgs. Silesia was part of the Hapsburg Monarchy for over 200 years until the War of the Austrian Succession. By the Treaty of Breslau in 1741, all of Lower Silesia and most of Upper Silesia came under the Prussian rule of Frederick the Great. Prussian rule ultimately became German rule and Silesia remained under German rule until 1945. Following World War II it again became a part of Poland and so remains to the present time. Opole is the chief City in Upper Silesia while Wroclaw (called Breslau by the Germans) is the historic capital of Lower Silesia.

The Prussian government made no serious attempts to suppress the cultures and language of the area until Bismarck came into power. In the 1860's under Bismarck's rule, school instruction was required to be in the German language. Bismarck also felt that the Pope in Rome was a threat to his rule and attempted to suppress the Catholic faith of Silesia. These actions, along with poor economic times and letters from Father Xavier Pierz that extolled the virtues of central Minnesota, led to a large migration to America.

The people who came to Morrison County in Minnesota were farmers who had lived to the north of the city of Opole in Silesia. The first to arrive was John Schwintek, along with his wife Margaret and sons Frank, Albert, and John. They arrived in New York on June 15, 1870 and took the train to St. Cloud. They then went to the vicinity of North Prairie and settled in Two Rivers Township. They were followed by friends and relatives, most of whom came from the parishes of Falkowice (Falkowitz in German), Stare Siolkowice (Alt Schalkowitz), and Dobrzen Wielki (Gros Dobern), all located in the farming area to the north and northwest of the City of Opole (Oppeln in German).

Essentially all of the Silesians who came to central Minnesota were farmers. They initially settled in Two Rivers Township, near North Prairie. North Prairie originally was located in the northeast corner of Stearns County, about four miles from its present location in Morrison County. The area was a small strip of prairie land on the western bank of the Mississippi and was initially known as the "German Settlement." By 1866 the number of families had increased to about 20, mostly farmers of German nationality. In 1866, Jacob Tramer offered to sell 40 acres of land to the Catholic Church for \$50. This offer was accepted and a small church with floor space of about 18 by 24 feet was built. This was built at the location in Morrison County of what is presently North Prairie. The North Prairie Post Office had been established in 1867 on the homestead of William McNeal in northeastern Stearns County. In 1873 the post office was moved to the present North Prairie location in Morrison County and the name, German Settlement, disappeared and was thereafter known as North Prairie.

Reverend Edward J. Nagl, a native of Bohemia, was ordained a priest in 1876 and from late 1876 until 1893 was stationed at North Prairie. He was most helpful to the new Silesian settlers, helping them with the acquisition of land, language problems, etc. By the time he arrived, the number of Silesians far outnumbered the German people who first settled in the



From: *Encyclopedia Americana*, 1986 ed., s.v. "Silesia." Poland has regained most of historical Silesia. Exceptions are the Opava and Cieszyn areas which are in the Czech Republic and the area west of the Neisse River which is in Germany. This map shows that even encyclopedia makers make mistakes. The Sudety Mountains are along the southwestern border with the Czech Republic and not where indicated on this map.





The official crest of the city of Opole. Source: Andrzej Plewako and Jozef Wanag, *Herbarz Miast Polskich*, 150. A copy of this work is available in the Polish Collection at the MGS Library. The majority of the Silesians that settled in Central Minnesota came from rural villiages near Opole. Many rural Silesians maintained their Polish language despite the fact that Silesia was formally separated from the Polish state for over 600 years. In fact, Polish is still spoken in Central Minnesota by some descendents of these Silesian immigrants. The following was translated from *Herbarz* by **W. Kornel Kondy**: OPOLE (Provincial capital). Received its charter in the year 1234. The city's name originates from the word *opole*, which refers to the territory of the ancient Slavic community (this was the capital of the Opolan tribe). The crest is divided vertically in the center. The right half is represented by half a golden Upper-Silesian eagle; the left with half a gold cross on a field of azure. The crest is in keeping with the tradition of the capital of the Duchy of Upper-Silesia, whilst the cross symbolizes the relic of the Holy Cross, located in the first parish church. This heraldic device was employed on 14th century seals and coins.

area. During his 17 years as pastor in North Prairie, Father Nagl built churches at Elmdale, Swan River (Sobieski), Brockway, as well as a new church and parish house in North Prairie.

In the years through 1880, an agriculture census was taken every 10 years. The 1880 census indicated that a typical farm in Morrison County would consist of a total of 80 acres, of which about 70 acres would be woodland and forest, eight acres of tilled land, and two acres of permanent pasture, meadow, etc. Each farmer had either two working oxen or work horses, one or two cows, one or two swine, and 15 to 20 chickens. The tilled acres were planted in wheat, oats, barley and potatoes with annual production of perhaps 100 bushels of wheat, 25 bushels of oats, 10 bushels of barley and 10 to 20 bushels of potatoes.

As indicated earlier, the first people from Silesia came in 1870. By 1880 there were over 60 farmers from Silesia living in Two Rivers Township and over 20 in Swan River Township -- both townships in Morrison County. Additional persons from Silesia had established farms in Brockway Township and Holding Township in the northern part of Stearns County, east and south to Elmdale and Sobieski as well as Flensburg in Morrison County. They also moved east of the Mississippi River to settle much of Langola Township in southwestern Benton County as well as much of Bellevue Township and the Village of Royalton in Morrison County. To the present time, many of the farms in these areas are being operated by the descendants of the immigrants who came here from Silesia over a century ago.

The settlement in Morrison and Stearns County was the largest settlement of Silesian Poles in Minnesota. Other settlements of Silesians in Minnesota include Browerville, Delano, Perham, and the Ivanhoe area of southwestern Minnesota. Another large group of Silesians came to Trempealeau County in and around Independence, Wisconsin.

This area is located northeast of Winona, Minnesota. Many farmers in that area at the present time are descendants of the Silesian Poles who came to America over 100 years ago.

Listed below are surnames of some people who emigrated from the Opole region of Silesia:

Baron, Barton, Benusa/Bieniusa, Bieniek, Blasczyk, Bobick/Bobik, Boros/Borasch/Borash, Brenny, Bursey/Bursy, Bzdok, Cekalla/Czekala, Cichon/Cichy, Czech, Dombovy/Dombowy, Doschka/Doska, Dubiel, Fabian, Fautsch, Filip/Philip, Filla, Fussy, Gaida, Gallus, Gamroth, Gmyrek, Golla, Harmans/Harmanza, Hyla, Jagusch, Jakubik, Jambor, Janek, Janey/Jany, Janish, Janski, Jendro, Jendrysek, Jesok/Jezok, Jonietz, Kalis, Kampa, Karasch, Kasella, Kasperek, Klimek, Klisch/Kleszcz/Klyszcz, Kloss, Kokott, Kolodziej/Kollodge, Karoll, Kostreba, Kowalczyk, Kroll/Krol, Krystosek, Kuka, Kuklok, Kulig, Kulla, Kupka/Kopka, Langer, Lasota, Lempart, Lempka, Maciej, Manka/Mainka, Marsolek, Masog, Matros, Misch/Mish/Mis', Moczko/Motzko, Mrosek, Mrosla/Mrozla, Opatz/Opacz, Palluch, Pierzina, Pietrick, Pietron/Petron, Pietrzak, Pintok/Pientok, Pogrzeba, Pollok, Posch, Prokott/Prokopp, Przybilla, Psyk/Psyck, Puchalla, Pyka/Peka, Radziej, Rossa, Roszczek, Rudek, Scepurek/Szczepurek, Scheitza/Sheitza, Schelonka/Zielonka, Schibilla, Schlichting/Szlichzin, Schwientek/Swintek, Skroch, Smieja, Sobania, Sobiech, Solorz/Szolors, Sowada/Zowada, Soyka/Sojka, Speda/Spieda, Stanek, Stellmach, Stiller, Stodolka, Sura/Szurra, Surma, Suska, Switalla, Symalla/Szymala, Tomala/Tomalla, Trettel, Trutwin, Urban, Walek/Wollak, Waletzki, Waletzko, Warzecha, Wawarek/Wawarek, Welna, Wiatrak, Wieczorek, Wilczek, Wochnick, Wodarz, Wojtaszek, Wrobel, Yorek/Jorek/Jurek, Yourczyk, Zur, Zwack/Czwak.

## More Information About Tracing Polish Ancestors From What Is Now The Commonwealth Of Independent States

by Ed Brandt

In the Autumn 1996 issue, I mentioned some articles in the Jewish periodical, *Avotaynu: The International Review of Jewish Genealogy*, which might be useful for tracing Polish ancestors from present-day Ukraine. I want to supplement this with other, mostly Christian-oriented sources and proven channels for obtaining information about or from the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Many of the records for eastern interwar Poland, which was transferred to the Soviet Union as a result of World War II, are in two archives in Warsaw:

Urząd Stanu Cywilnego  
Warszawa Śródmieście  
Archiwum Akt Zabużańskich  
ul. Jezuicka 1/3  
PL 00-281 Warszawa  
Poland

Archiwum Główne Akt Dawanych w Warszawie  
ul. Długa 7  
PL 00-950 Warszawa  
Poland

In general, the records for the 1890-1945 period are at the first listed archives, while the earlier and later ones are at the second address, but the actual contents of the two archives show that their holdings cannot be categorized that simply.

The Zabużański Collection is at a civil registry office and generally channels its correspondence through Polish consulates in North America.

You can reach the Archive of Old Documents (second address), which is part of the state archival system, by writing in English to the national directorate, enclosing \$20 for an initial search:

Naczelną Dyрекcyję Archiwów Państwowych  
ul. Długa 6 -- skrytka pocztowa Nr. 1005  
PL 00-950 Warszawa  
Poland

For the most detailed published information about these resources, see two articles by Brian J. Lenius in the *East European Genealogist*: (1) "The Zabużański Collection: New Information on Jewish, Lutheran, Mennonite and Catholic Records for Galicia and Volhynia" (December 1992) and (2) "Accessible Vital Records for Jews, Germans, Ukrainians, and Poles in Galicia, Volhynia, Lithuania, and Latvia: A Second "Zabużański Collection" (June 1995).

This quarterly is published by the multi-ethnic East European Genealogical Society, Inc., P.O. Box 2536, Winnipeg, MB R3C 4A7, Canada, with Lenius as editor. He is an expert on Galicia, which he has visited for research purposes. Articles by many other authors, dealing especially, but not exclusively, with the Austrian Partition (crownland of Galicia) have also appeared in this journal.

By the way, Lenius's *Genealogical Gazetteer of Galicia*, previously reviewed in this newsletter, lists the former Polish and present Ukrainian names of most communities in the transferred territory.

With respect to obtaining information from records of the former Russian Empire which are now in the Commonwealth of Independent States, numerous channels of access have sprung up. But to the best of my knowledge, the most reliable one is the Genealogy and Family History Society in Moscow, a research service by former Russian archivist Vladislav Soshnikov, who is fluent in English and spoke at the FEEFHS convention held here in June.

His research includes not only the centralized records of the former Russian Empire in Moscow and St. Petersburg, but also obtaining information from archives in Ukraine and Belarus, where there were many pockets of Polish settlement. (See Map 30 on p. 99 of Paul Robert Magocsi, *Historical Atlas of East Central Europe* [Copy available in the Polish Collection at the MGS Library] for Polish enclaves extending as far east as Odessa. See also map on p. 9).

Soshnikov has good connections with many archives in these two CIS countries, but will undertake field travel, if necessary.

This service developed as a result of the Russian-American Genealogical Service (RAGAS), which started as the Soviet-American Genealogical Service (SAGAS) during the *glasnost* period.

He can be reached by e-mail at: [vladrag@glas.apc.org](mailto:vladrag@glas.apc.org)  
His Russian address is:

Russia  
127349 Moscow  
P.O. Box 459  
Genealogy and Family History Society

Note that the order of the address is the reverse of what we use in the West.

Alternatively, you can obtain research request forms, which are sent to Moscow regularly, from:

RAGAS  
1929 18th St. N.W., Suite 112  
Washington, DC 20009-1710

This is also the address for the *RAGAS Newsletter*, which provides quarterly updates about new developments in the CIS. It is edited by Patricia Eames of the National Archives (also a FEEFHS speaker), who was Soshnikov's American counterpart during the period when RAGAS was engaged in the tasks which were necessary in order to get such a research service started.

What kind of records can you expect to find in the former Soviet Union?

At least 647 duplicate Catholic registers for 1801-1918 are at:

Russia  
410710 Saratov  
Kutyakova St., Building 15  
Regional Government Archive

The dean of the Historical Faculty at Saratov State University has done extensive research in the archives at Saratov and Engels, but does not know English. He can be reached by e-mail at [igor@pleve.saratov.su](mailto:igor@pleve.saratov.su), by fax at 011-7-095-3273, with the notation, "for Pleve at Saratov," or at:

Russia  
410 005 Saratov  
B. Gornaja St. 272, kv. 2  
Pleve, Dr. Igor R.

He has done research principally on the Volga German to date. However, about one-third of the Catholics in the Russian Empire were Poles, so the same collections should be applicable to them. His work is very thorough, since he will provide complete pedigree charts and family lists, but his services are relatively expensive.

There are also Catholic parish registers for Volhynia in the archives in Zhytomyr (Ukraine). Volodymyr Paliwoda wrote a brief article on "The State Archive of Zhytomyr Oblast: A Note on Its Holdings" (*East European Genealogist*, March 1995). He is willing to provide further information on this subject and to undertake research. But since his article was translated from Ukrainian by John-Paul Himka, Mr. Paliwoda presumably does not know English. His address is:

Ukraine,  
261400 Berdychiv, vul. Sverdlova 13/5  
Ukrainian-Polish Research Bureau -  
"Memento"  
Volodymyr Paliwoda, Director

Although the records which have been discovered thus far are by no means complete, since CIS archives have very inadequate finding guides, if any at all, other records which have been identified, in part include:

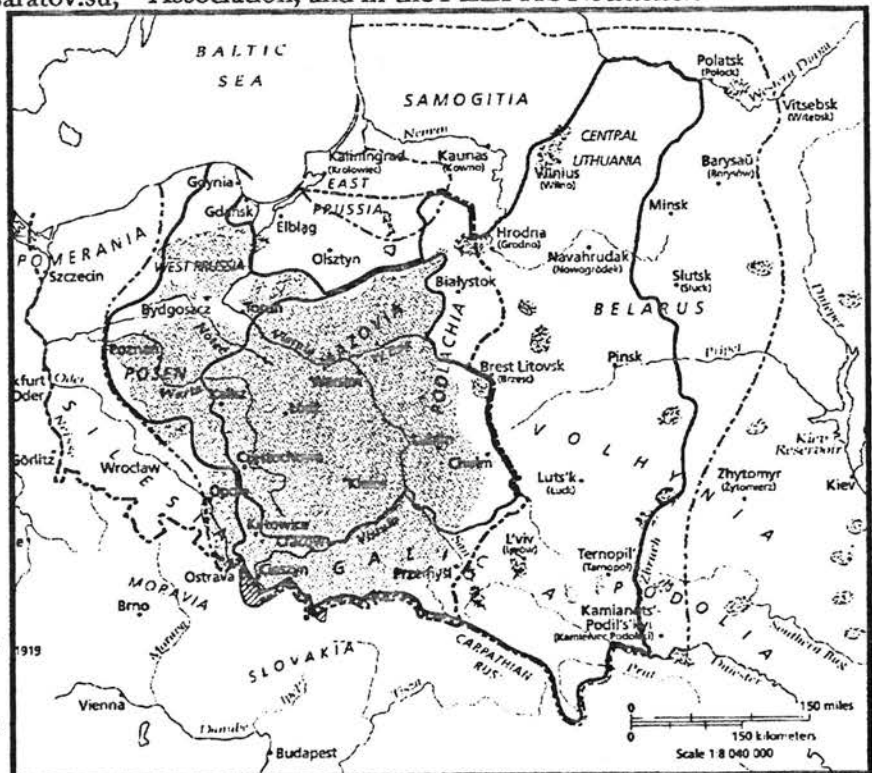
(1) Revision lists of the former Russian Empire (poll tax lists, but with contents similar to those of a census). Such revision were prepared, in reverse chronological order, in or about 1857-59, 1849-52, 1833-35, 1815-25, 1811-12 (incomplete; interrupted by the Napoleonic Wars), 1794-1809, 1775-88, 1761-69, as well as earlier.

(2) Civil registers for the former Austrian Partition, which were mandated in 1874.

(3) Records pertaining to nobles and prominent burghers.

(4) Duplicate Lutheran parish records for 1833-85 for Ukraine, Belarus and western Russia, which have been microfilmed, but probably include few Poles.

For more information about various records, especially revision lists, see Kahlile Mehr's articles in the *Genealogical Journal*, published by the Utah Genealogical Association, and in the *FEEFHS Newsletter*.



**Poland in the 20th century.** Source: Paul Robert Magocsi, *Historical Atlas of East Central Europe*, Map 39a, p. 131 (Copy available in the Polish Collection at the MGS Library). Shaded areas indicate where Polish speakers were a majority (ca. 1900). Note shaded areas as far east as Kiev and as far north as Polatsk. This map does not show areas where Polish and other local languages (principally in areas in Prussia, Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine) were almost evenly divided. Nor does it indicate the areas in West Prussia where Kashubian was dominant. For this see : Magocsi, Map 30, p. 99.

## LIBRARY CORNER

The book, **POLISH PIONEER FAMILIES IN THE PARISH OF BRUDENELL TO 1870**, by Shirley Mask Connolly, deals with pioneer Polish parishioners in a small parish in Renfrew County, Canada. You might ask yourself what this Canadian reference book could have of relevance to American genealogists? For some American descendants of Winona's Polish pioneer families, there is a great deal of information. A number of the families in this book eventually moved to the U.S., a few to Winona. Some lived in the village of Renfrew or in the rural area of Renfrew County for a few months to several years before they joined other Kashubian families who had made their way to the U.S. Others who stayed on in Canada had siblings and relatives in America. Many of your Winona and Minnesota/Wisconsin Polish pioneers sailed on the same ships as these Canadian families. Many American Polish families arrived in North America through the port of Quebec, Canada. They came from the same Polish parishes. They shared the same names and like you, they still have a strong Polish identity in their community.

Of particular interest to the American Polish researcher are the following pages and families:

- p.29: the Zblowski family.
- p.31: the John Blazkowski family.
- p.47: the Michael Dzieminski family.
- p.52: the Joseph Grzenia family.
- p.54: the Michael Grudnowski family.
- p.57: Joseph Hinc/Hinz.
- p.59: the Peter Kaldunski family.
- p.62: Francis Kubik.
- p.65: the Libera family.
- p.66: the Lica/Litzer family.
- p.78: the Hommernik/Omernic family.
- p.89: the Retza/Reca family.
- p.94: the John Rogala family.
- p.97: the Mathias Sadowski family.
- p.101: the Shushack family.
- p.102: the Skiba/Skibo family.

Some other common names mentioned throughout are: KNOPIK, ZYWICKI, CZAPIEWSKI, BOSKA, LITERSKI, TURZYNSKI, PELLOWSKI, JAZDAZEWSKI, KAIZER, ROLBIECKI/LORBETSKI, MACHUT/MACHUD, BURANT and JERECZEK.

The author hopes that perhaps her American KASHUB COUSINS can clear up the mystery of what happened to some of the families in this book. --S. M. Connolly

## THE PGS-MN CHURCH AND LOCAL HISTORY COLLECTION: A PROGRESS REPORT

By Greg Kishel

Publications like church histories, church anniversary and jubilee pamphlets, building dedication books, and reports by local chapters of fraternal benefit organizations show the process by which our Polish immigrant ancestors became Americans. They also often contain valuable genealogical information. To help carry out its mission of preserving the institutional history of Polonia in Minnesota, then, the PGS-MN started a Church and Local History Collection in 1994. We asked members to make such items available for the collection, either by donating original copies or by loaning them to us so we could make a photocopy to deposit in the collection. We have also purchased church histories through the Society's Library Fund as we have found them for sale. Several members came forward with publications from their family parishes throughout Minnesota, making a good start on the collection.

### POLISH PIONEER FAMILIES IN THE PARISH OF BRUDENELL TO THE YEAR 1870



Shirley Mask Connolly, *Polish Pioneer Families in the Parish of Brudenell to the Year 1870*. May be ordered from the author at: 21 Granville Ave, Ottawa, Ont., Canada, K1Y 0M5. Cost: \$20.00 American. Copy available at the MGS Library.

The collection is housed as part of the PGS-MN's library at the Minnesota Genealogical Society's facility at 1650 Carroll Avenue in St. Paul. Materials are located in two different ways. We have asked the MGS library staff to individually catalogue significant items, like hardbound books and lengthy pamphlets. These items are shelved with other MGS library materials, by the Minnesota county in which the subject institution was or is located.

MGS library regulations require this treatment, and prohibit us from shelving them with our main collection. Shorter pamphlets, articles, clippings, and "ephemeral" materials are consolidated in a binder that we keep on our main collection's shelves. These items are not catalogued by MGS. We keep a listing of them in the front of the binder, as well as a list of all of the other parts of the CLH Collection that are catalogued and separately shelved. Thus, researchers who want to ascertain the full extent of the collection need only consult the binder. We intend to update the listings as we acquire new items.

## BOOK REVIEWS

The following is a list of the significant items acquired to date for the collection:

- 1 *Golden Jubilee, 1905-1955, St. John the Baptist Catholic Church, Virginia, Minnesota* (photocopy)
- 2 *75th Anniversary Diamond Jubilee, 1883-1958, St. Mary, Star of the Sea Parish, Duluth, Minnesota, bound with 100th Anniversary, St. Mary, Star of the Sea Parish, 1883-1983, Duluth, Minnesota* (photocopy)
- 3 *St. Joseph's Church, Gnesen, Minnesota, 100th Anniversary, 1874-1974* (photocopy)
- 4 *Jubilee Memoirs: 1873 to 1948, Saint Stanislaus Kosta Parish, Winona, Minnesota* (photocopy)
- 5 *Centennial Celebration, 1881-1981, Church of St. Adalbert, St. Paul, Minnesota* (photocopy)
- 6 *75th Anniversary, 1900-1975, The Holy Rosary Church, Lancaster, Minnesota* (original)
- 7 *St. John Cantius Church of Wilno [Minnesota], 1883-1983* (original)
- 8 *Sts. Cyril & Methodius Catholic Church, Taunton, Minnesota, 1985-1995* (original)
- 9 *Church of the Holy Cross, 1886-1986, Minneapolis, Minnesota* (original)

It is interesting that this first group of submissions literally goes to the four corners of the state. For the availability of these items, the PGS-MN is indebted to the following members and friends: GREG KISHEL, FATHER PATRICK McDOWELL of Duluth Central Catholic Parish, BETTY JOYCE, FRANCINE FITTING, MARY ELLEN BRUSKI, FRED AND FRANK WILEBSKI, and all donors to the PGS-MN Library Fund. *Dziękujemy bardzo!*

Needless to say, we want to collect as many such items as we can, from all over Minnesota. If you have a spare copy of something to donate or that we can copy from, contact Greg Kishel or Paul Kulas through the PGS-MN main address. A hint: keep your eyes open when you're helping that great-aunt clean out her basement or attic--if she doesn't want that stuff, we do!

In the next issue of the *Newsletter*, I will summarize the uncatalogued materials filed to date in the CLH Collection binder. In the meantime, don't hesitate to use the collection--you may be surprised at what you find!



Ed Katzmark (b. 1913 in St. Paul, MN) with his first cousin Stella Mask nee Visneskie (b. 1910 in Hagarty township, Renfrew County, Ontario). Photo taken in Canada in the summer of 1996.

"Lost and Found," continued from page 7.

It was Ed who replied to my query in the Polish Genealogical Society Of Minnesota Newsletter. A relative of his wife's had passed it on. Ed felt a need "to fill in the missing piece of our roots and relationship. . . as I am the last one of the Katzmarks. I am 82 years old and my time is running out". Arrangements were made for Ed and his wife and members of his family to fly to Ottawa in October of 1995 and then they returned in July of 1996. Ed was thrilled to meet my vivacious grandmother, Stella (then 85), and several other first cousins and relatives. He said a prayer at the graves of his grandparents and great grandparents. We visited the Visneskie homestead in Hagarty township where his mother had lived. The pouring rain that fell that day, masked the tears on his face as he looked at the spot where the old house had stood. Now all that remains is a stable at the end of the bumpy, tree-lined laneway. But more important, what remains for him and for us all is "a family connection" more enduring than any building or place!

### STILL SEARCHING:

**Shirley Mask Connolly**, 21 Granville Ave., Ottawa, Ont., K1Y 0M5, seeks information on the KATZMARK/KACZMAREK family. Apparently 10 siblings: Joseph (Rice Lake), Michael (Duluth), John and Stanley (St. Paul), Ignatius (Poland), Sister M. Ledvina (Wierton, W. Va.), Elizabeth, Mrs. Lenszal (Milwaukee, Wis.), Victoria, Mrs. Schmitz (Anaheim, Sask.), Agnes, Mrs. Plaziak, (Rice, Minn.) and another sister in Poland. Seeking information on where they came from in Poland, time of arrival, etc.

## Missing Branches:

**QUERIES:** Each issue of this newsletter contains a research information exchange section. Members are invited to place inquiries pertaining to the exchange of family information, requests for help or offers to aid others researching the same family lines. Send to: **Paul Kulas, PGS-MN Newsletter, 12008 West River Road, Champlin, MN 55316.**

**Karen Coyne, 27068 La Paz Rd. #522, Aliso Viejo, CA 92656** is researching KOPROWSKI, PRZYBILSKI, LISOWSKI, SZYKOWNY surnames.

**Paul Kulas, 12008 West River Road, Champlin, MN 55316-2145** is researching KULAS, DUCZMAL, NAMYST, KOKOT, TALAGA, WITEK, SOLTYS, KARAKOW, OWCZARZ, MAZUR, KARCZMARZ, STOCZYNSKI, GMUR, SKOTARKA, JUNIK, KOLODZIEJSKI, WYRWAS, MORAS, OBALCZAK, BIELAWNY, SZOSTAK, SZKUDLARZ ancestral family names. All were located in the neighboring parishes of Jankow Zalesny, Koryta, Lutogniew and Rozdrazew in what was southern Posen Province of Prussian occupied Poland. His grandparents, JAN KULAS and JOZEFA JUNIK and great grandparents, MICHAL JUNIK and MAGDALENA KOLODZIEJSKA, emigrated in 1888 and settled in the Polish community that founded Immaculate Conception parish in St. Anna (northern Avon and southern Holding Townships), Stearns County, Minnesota. Researcher is convinced that many of the early settlers of the St. Anna area are from the very same area in Poland and is willing to exchange information with anyone interested.

**Thomas E. Ross, 5230 Fiore Terrace, K119, San Diego, CA 92122** is seeking the date, place and cause of deaths of Albert ZYWICKI (b. 1805, Kashubia) and his wife Mary KOLINSKA (b. 1812, Kashubia). Emigrated from Kashubia in 1859; settled in Renfrew, Ontario. Anglicized surname to ROSS; used ZYWICKI and ROSS interchangeably. Last trace of Mary is on 1871 Canadian census. Last trace of Albert is on 1880 US census for Mounds View Township, Ramsey County; residing with son Stephen and family. Another son, Charles, resided in Milwaukee.

**NEW MEMBERS:** We welcome the following:

**Rita Kasowski Anderson, 620 11th St., Granite Falls, MN 56241** is researching the KASOWSKI name in Posen, Poland and in Shamolein, PA, Chicago, IL and Brighton, IA.

**Pat Bumgarner, 524 NE 20 Av., Mpls. MN 55418** is researching CZECH, SMUDA, TREBIATOWSKI, COPA, DRODZINSKI family names in Boroskovy and Lakin in Poland and in Minnesota.

**Thomas G. Bonna, 516 - 17th Ave NW, New Brighton, MN 55112** is a new member.

**Mary Cox, 4713 7 Ave S, Great Falls, MT 59405,** e mail: mcox@gfgas.ewst.com, is researching OLSZEWSKI, CICHOSZ names in Lipusz, Prussia. Also English and Irish names in Devonshire, England and County Mayo, Ireland.

**Bonita A. Erickson, 22 Lake Avenue, Box 7, Madison Lake, MN 56063** is searching for the location in Poland of her grandfather JOSEF KLARKOWSKI and his mother MICHAELENA KLARKOWSKI, and her grandmother MARTA LAMCZYK KLARKOWSKI and her parents JOHN and EVA LAMCZYK. Their location in Poland was supposedly around Poznan. They all lived in St. Paul, Minnesota and died there. Recently she has information that maybe they were from Piesnowie, Poland, but cannot locate that town or villiage.

**Mary Fehrman, 902 W Idaho, St. Paul, MN 55117** is researching the FELS, SKIBINSKI family names that originated in Prussia.

**John M. Franks, 80 Foster Avenue, Malverne, NY 11565-1938** is researching LUDWIKOWSKI, BRILOWSKI names in Marshall Co., Minnesota.

**Mrs. Rod Grell, 609 LaBelle Pl., Little Falls, MN 56345-3560** is researching JENDRO, PEKA/PYKA, GOLOMBECKI names in Silesia and Prussia and in Morrison County -- Little Falls, MN and surrounding areas.

**Roger Grusznski, 4912 Abbott Ave S., Minneapolis, MN 55410** is researching GRUSZNSKI, WESOLOWSKI family names.

**Mike Jaros, 559 State Office Building, 100 Constitution Ave, St. Paul, MN 55155-1298** is researching Bukowinian and Galician Poles in Bosnia, Serbia, Croatia, Germany, Poland, Slovenia, Austria, Canada and Australia and in Duluth, MN and Portland, Oregon.

**Donald A. McCavic**, 5487 Lehigh St., Ventura, CA 93003-4009 is searching for the origin in Poland of his grandfather, **JULIAN BLOCK** (aka **JULYAN BLOCH** prior to 1900). He immigrated in April 1900, worked first in Superior, Wisconsin and then homesteaded near Buyck, Minnesota in 1902. He died in Virginia, Minnesota in 1954.

**Ben and Mary Manderfeld**, 6480 134th St. E., Northfield, MN 55057 are researching **POLINGO**, **JANIKULA**, **FLOREK** names in Opole Province, Silesia, Poland and in Delano, Minnesota.

**William F. Muchlinski**, 6253C Magda Dr., Maple Grove, MN 55369 is researching the **MUCHLINSKI** name in the city/suburb of Muchlin perhaps of/in Posen and in Wisconsin and California.

**John Myslajek**, 1820 Long Lake Rd., New Brighton, MN 55112 is researching the **MASLAJEK** name in Mieczybrodzie, Poland and in Minneapolis and the **MIGATZ/MIGACZ** name near Warsaw, Poland and in Minneapolis and Coal City, PA.

**Barbara Odette**, 8219 S. Kilbourn, Chicago, IL 60652-3063 is researching **CZUBERNAT**, **CZOP**, **HODOROWSKI**, **STARSZEWSKI**, **GRANICZNA** names in Nowy Targ and Radlow in Poland and in Chicago, the East Coast and maybe in Minnesota.

**Helen M Richard**, Rte 1, Box 280, Burtrum, MN 56318 is researching **KRZESZEWSKI**, **ROSINSKI** family names in German Poland and in Buffalo, NY, Duluth, MN and the Little Falls area.

**Susan Riebeling**, 1406 Galtier St., St. Paul, MN 55117 is researching **GRUBA**, **DOLNEY**, **WARAS**, **JARoch**, **BOIKE**, **MIOCH** names in Grenville, South Dakota, Stanley and Thorpe, Wisconsin and St. Paul, Minnesota.

**Thomas E. Ross**, 5230 Fiore Terrace, K119, San Diego, CA 92122 is researching **ZYWICKI** (anglicized to **ROSS**), **KOLINSKA**, **ENGELER**, **KULAS**, **RYBAK** (anglicized to **FISHER**), **NOVAK** names in the parishes of Lesno and Lipusz in Kasubia and in Wagrowiec, Poland (near Poznan), in Renfrew, Ontario, Canada and in Mounds View Township,

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List locality in North America where immigrant settled: \_\_\_\_\_

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Please make checks payable to **Polish Genealogical Society of Minnesota** and mail to **Barbara Rockman, Treasurer** 2217 Wight Bay, Brooklyn Park, MN 55443.

## Success Story #3

By Blanche Krbecek

### QUESTION ORAL FAMILY HISTORY

I received an invitation to the Pepliński family reunion in Barry's Bay, Ontario, a reunion for all Pepliński families who could trace their roots to the Leśno or Lipusz parishes.

After exhausting several paths, I finally had another starting avenue. I ordered the films of the two parishes from the Mormon Family History Center. There were many Paul Peplińskis, but none with the birth date oral family history established. I did have a death certificate from Michigan with a solution I had overlooked. There, of course, was a death date, but no birth date, only the age in years, months and days at the time of death. I ignored this since a quick guess calculation seemed to give about the time established by oral history. One day I finally decided to count back exactly which gave me a different birthdate. Then I found a Paul with this birthdate in the Leśno baptism records. I knew names of brothers and sisters who also had come to America. Paul's parents had other children with those same names. This was my Paul who was baptized in the Leśno parish and whose family resided in a small village of Skoszewo in that parish.

An invitation to an extended family reunion naming Polish parishes, and a more careful reading of a documented death certificate instead of depending on oral family history led to my discovering an ancestral village in Poland.



The griffin (above) is the historical symbol of Kusbubia. Both Leśno and Lipusz are in Kusbubia. Blanche and others are exploring the possibility of forming the **Kaszube Association of North America**. If interested you may contact her at: **2041 Orkla Drive, Mpls. MN 55427**.

Minnesota Genealogical Society  
**Polish Genealogical Society of Minnesota**  
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From the invitation to the  
**Annual Christmas Appreciation Gala**  
 of the  
**Dolina Polish Folk Dancers**

Paul Kulas :97/92  
 12008 West River Road  
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