



The Polish Genealogical Society of Minnesota

PGSMN Newsletter

Volume 29 #3

Fall 2021

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The Polish Genealogical Society of Minnesota wishes to thank its members for their past generosity and support and we look forward to continuing to provide resources, tools and support in your Polish Genealogy research. Please note renewals are due by 12/31/2021.

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Polish Genealogical Society of Minnesota

A branch of the Minnesota Genealogical Society

Committees

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Nominating -	Peggy Larson

The Polish Genealogical Society of Minnesota hosts meetings on Polish Genealogy and Culture six times each year. Meetings take place from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. on the first Saturday of the month, noted below, at the Minnesota Genealogy Center, Wm. J. Hoffman Library, 1385 Mendota Heights Road, Mendota Heights, MN.

* **March**
* **April**
* **May**

* **September**
* **October**
* **November**

Upcoming PGSMN Events

Nov 6, 10 am—12 pm

Land: Navigating Research and Demystifying Records

Records are created when land is sold, transferred, used, disputed, or recorded, creating an incredibly rich source of information. Included in this session will be an overview of different types of land records, why they exist, and how they can differ (city vs. farmland, for example) and where to locate, read and understand them. The presenters will be Jennifer Wagner and Jenny McElroy, Reference Librarians at the Minnesota Historical Society. This event will be streamed online

A link to the YouTube video will be sent to all members one week prior.

From the President

10/8/21

Our hope that Fall Programs meetings could be conducted at the Hoffman Research Library did not materialize. All 2021 programs including that for November were virtual only as are various Board and Committee meetings. We have not made a decision about the January Annual Meeting, but we will decide next month. In anticipation of the two options, physical or virtual, recall the delicious, sociable lunches from previous years, and recollect previous Polish recipes, meals and holiday traditions from your past.

Now for a brief commercial request: PGS-MN depends on our membership dues to be able to provide our six annual programs, to keep the website up to date and available, to provide "Poles in Minnesota," (which is nearing completion, available on our website), to maintain our library book and map collections at the Hoffman Research Center, to provide up to date Polish genealogical information, and to pay the rent. Our only significant revenue source is your membership dues, which will be due on December 31, 2021, payable in cash, by check or online with PayPal.

One of the best membership values that we provide, year round, is the opportunity to meet one on one at the Hoffman Research Library (HRCL with a Polish specialist). To partake of this opportunity, verify that the HRC is open, via the MGS website (www.mngs.org), then bring your questions and concerns with you. See details under "Polish Night at the Library" in the HRL information page of each newsletter.

Finally our last 2021 program, Land Navigating Search & Demystifying Records will be held on November 6, at 10:00 am.

Stay Well,

Terry Kita



November 1, Poland celebrates All Saints' Day (official public holiday in Poland); People light candles on graves of their loved ones and pray for their souls. Some people believe that these candles help the departed souls find their way through the darkness.



National Independence Day is a national holiday in Poland celebrated on 11 November to commemorate the anniversary of the restoration of Poland's sovereignty as the Second Polish Republic in 1918 from the German, Austro-Hungarian and Russian Empires

Polskie Rody Szlacheckie I Ich Herby—Author Tadeusz Gajl

Do you know that ... every tenth Pole is a noble?

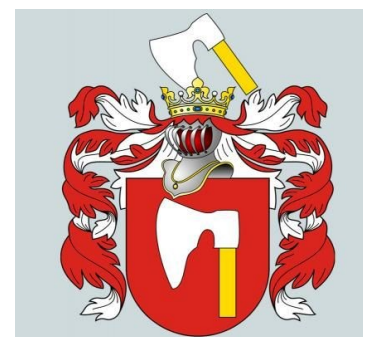
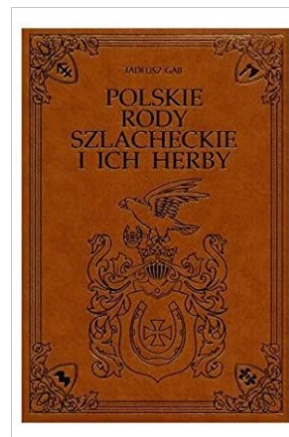
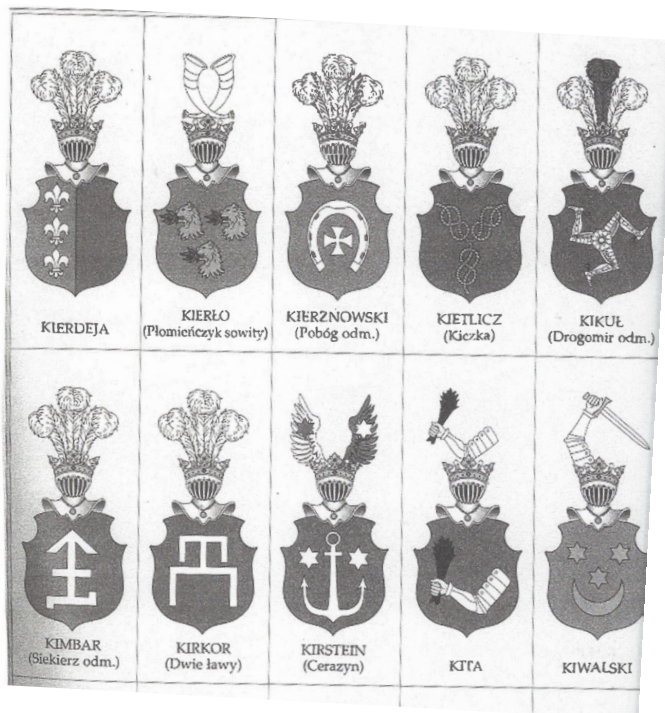
Perhaps our Polish ancestors played a more important role in Polish history than we think? Perhaps years ago we were not wanted to know that we bear a noble surname? Now you can check it out!

Tadeusz Gajl is a Polish artist and graphic designer, most noted for his contemporary illustrations on Polish coats of arms, borne by the historical nobility (*szlachta*) of Poland.

Gajl graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Łódź in 1966. He labored as a design specialist for the textile industry. When Poland was under martial law, he worked as the director of graphics for the "Kontrasty" monthly, as well as editor in chief and graphics director for the weekly "Plus." In 1990, he authored graphical and artistic efforts for numerous publishing houses, on a variety of publications.

In 1983, Gajl developed an interest in Polish heraldry. Over the past several decades he has devoted his efforts and created an impressive synthesis of all of the achievements of Polish heraldry to date. Two of his books, detail the crests of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and has prepared more than 4500 illustrations. On such publication is the *Polskie Rody Szlacheckie I Ich Herby*—a treasure highlighting Polish noble families and their coat of arms—it contains over 20,000 names, 1275 colored coats of arms, 200 coats of arms in black and white. (PGSMN members can find this book and others in the Hoffman Research Library, MGS).

His work has been often used via the internet and by many foreign publications. They are often referred to as *herbami gajlowskimi* (Gajlesque Armorial). He is also the author of modern emblems, created for Cities and Voivodeships (Białystok, Podlaskie Voivodship, et al).



Polskie Rody Szlacheckie I Ich Herby by Tadeusz Gajl—page from text (see the Kita coat of arms)

Topór (coat of arms), Polish armorial from the Middle Ages to the 20th century, designed by Tadeusz Gajl Gdańsk, 2007, photo

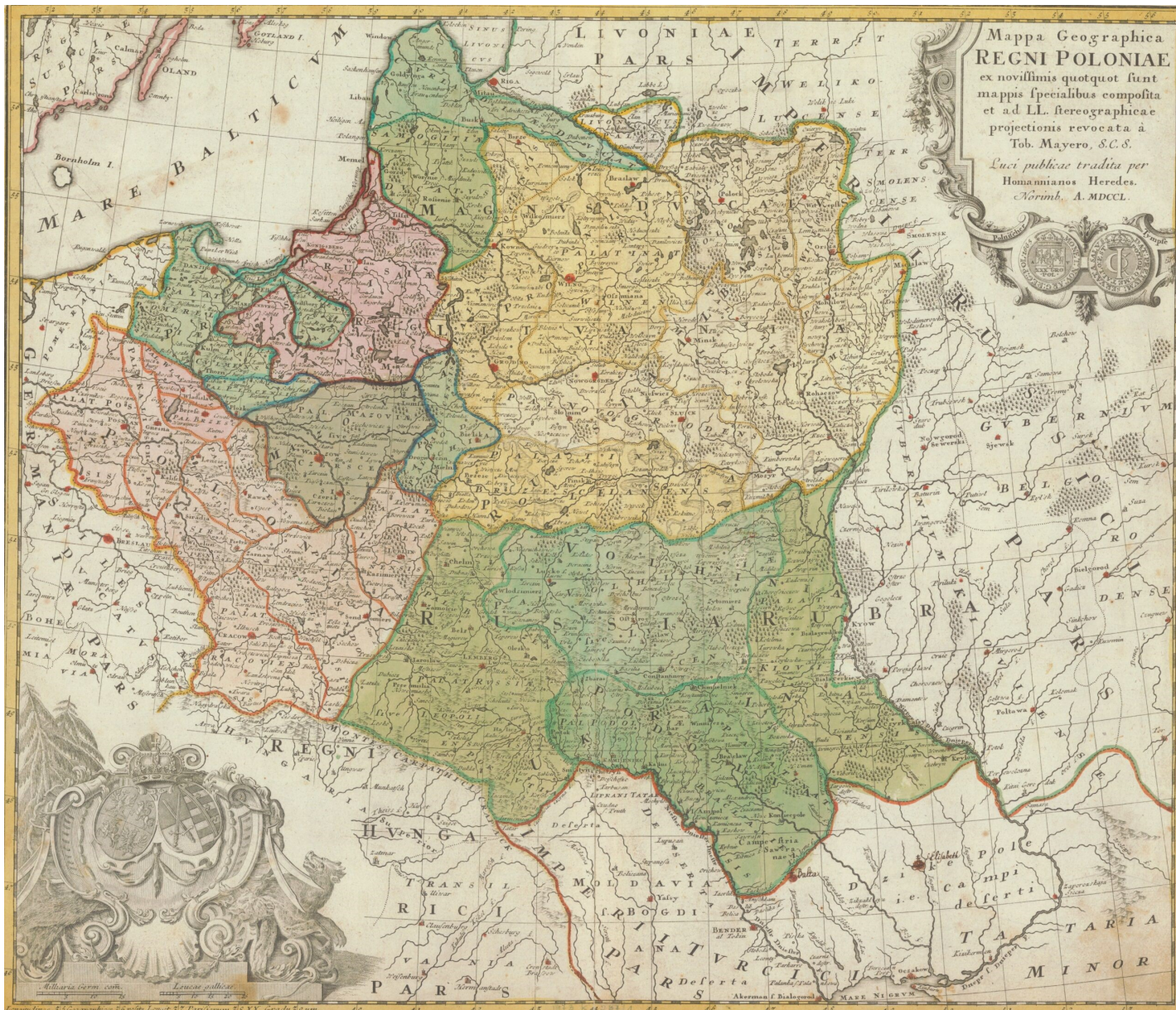


Property Inventories—Where to Find the Inventories

Author—Piotr Zelny

Originally published 24 May 2021 by Zenonin, Polish Genealogy Research; Life of Our Ancestors and appeared in Polish Origins as a 5 part series. (PGSMN has included the entire series).

Sources for genealogical research on peasant and townspeople families in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth between 15th and mid-19th centuries



Have you ever considered how to conduct your genealogical research when there are no vital books? Have you ever asked yourself about the possibilities of finding your ancestors living prior to the partitions of Poland? Have you ever thought about their conditions of work and everyday life? This article is for everyone who has ever asked themselves these kinds of questions.

Property inventories apart from commonly known vital records, are one of the basic sources (one of many) for genealogical research on the peasant family. **Their genealogical value cannot be overestimated, as they contain registers of feudal obligations which list peasant families living in the particular localities.** They occur in mass numbers, which is one of the reasons why they play such a significant role. It is believed that tens of thousands of such sources have survived to this day. The exact number is unknown. The oldest documents of this type, preserved to the present, come from the turn of the 15th and the 16th centuries. The registers of feudal obligations (containing lists of peasants) disappeared from the pages of the property inventories in the 1860s as the result of abolition of the feudal system. Since feudal obligations (serfdom and others) were abolished, there was no longer any reason to prepare the registers.

INTRODUCTION – THE FEUDAL SYSTEM IN THE POLISH-LITHUANIAN COMMONWEALTH

The image shows a handwritten register from 1772. The title at the top reads: "Inwentarz Osadników Rodzących w Wsi Wielowieś z Opisanem ich Stanu i Zobowiązań 1772 roku". The table has several columns, including names, surnames, and various numerical entries representing obligations. The entries are organized into two main sections: "Rozmowa Rzeczpospolita" (free peasants) and "Lagrodnicy Rzeczpospolita" (serfs). The bottom left corner of the image contains the text "Archiwum Narodowe w Krakowie".

Register of subjects and their feudal obligations of the village of Wielowieś from 1772

Since 1569 The Kingdom of Poland and The Grand Duchy of Lithuania constituted one united country which was commonly known as The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth or the Commonwealth of the Two Nations or simply as Poland. The country covered a vast amount of territory in Central Europe and included territory now in contemporary Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus and Latvia. The highest authority was the King of Poland who was also the Grand Duke of Lithuania, elected by the nobles '*szlachta*'. The country

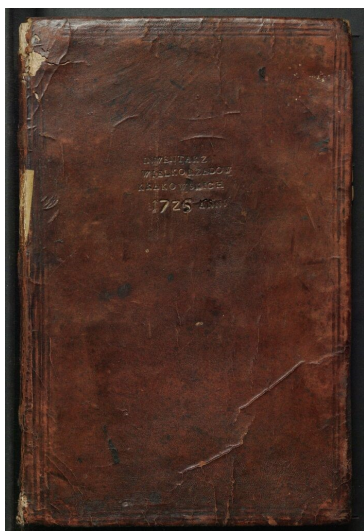
existed until 1795 when, as a result of the Partitions of Poland, it was dismembered and divided between its neighbours (Russia, Prussia and Austria) and disappeared from the map of Europe.

During that time, the prevailing social-economical-political system in Europe was feudalism. Broadly defined, it was a way of structuring society around relationships that were derived from the holding of land in exchange for service or labor. Each European country had its own specific local system of feudalism. Also, the feudal system itself evolved over the course of centuries. In the Polish-Lithuanian state, feudal society was divided into four basic social classes. These were the nobility, the clergy, the burghers and the peasantry. However, each class was very diverse and divided into smaller social subgroups having their own rights, limitations and obligations. One of the most important rights was the right to possess land. At that time, the overwhelming majority of the members of peasant society had no right to possess land in its own right. A plot of land was allocated to peasant families by the possessor (owner or leaseholder) of the land (and/or of the village).

The peasants were serfs and subjects of the landlord. As serfs who occupied a plot of a lord's land, they were required to work (as serfs) for the landlord on his farms as well as pay him rent and tributes. As subjects of a particular lord, a serf's freedom to leave the village (the estate property) belonging to the lord was highly restricted since moving to another village (belonging to another lord) would mean abandoning their current lord and the obligations owed to him. In return, subject peasants were entitled to protection, justice, material support and the right to build a house and cultivate their allotted field in order to maintain their own subsistence. The system existed deep into the 19th century when it was abolished in stages in the territories of the three partitioning powers. The abolition of the feudal system and the emancipation of the peasantry began in 1807 in the Prussian partition of Poland and the process lasted there until 1872; in 1848 in the Austrian partition of Poland; and in 1861 and 1864 in the Russian partition of Poland.

The feudal system recognized three basic categories of land property. These were: royal, ecclesiastical and noble properties. The lands that were part of the royal domain consisted of court counties, non-court counties (tenements), and economies. Ecclesiastical lands were the property of individual bishoprics, monasteries or parish churches. Noble lands were owned by individual noble families and great magnate houses. The land property (the royal, the ecclesiastical or the noble domains) comprised areas consisting of individual villages and towns or only their parts as well as agricultural and forest areas. They could form huge property areas numbering hundreds of villages and towns and covering many thousands of square kilometres as well as small, one village properties or properties covering only part of a village. The great complexes of properties had their own central administrative management. To make them easier to manage, they were divided into smaller and more convenient economic units (not to be confused with state or church administration units) called properties, estates, states, tenements, counties etc. Each of these units had its own local management office. The local managements supervised the farms located in the villages which belonged to the landlord (the king, the church, or a noble). Peasants living in these villages were subjects of the landlord, hence they were obliged to serve (feudal obligations) on the farms of their lord as well as pay him rent and tributes. The local management offices produced many types of documents. One type, property inventories, which includes registers of feudal obligations, is extremely important for understanding the feudal system of the time. Together with other types of documents property inventories paint a vivid picture of the relationship between landlords and their peasant subjects.

What Were The Property Inventories and Why They Were Created.



Manuscript of inventory of the economy of Krakow, 1725. AGAD Warsaw

Property inventories were documents of an economic, financial, and legal character. The documents achieved a level of standardisation in the 17th century. However, when dealing with such a great amount of documentation dispersed over such a large area and which occurred over such a long period of time, frequently we encounter a problem in the sense that the contents of individual documents may differ considerably one from another.

Property inventories may present a more or less accurate picture of particular lands, villages and towns. They may contain descriptions of buildings, lands and crops. They may contain registers of feudal obligations which list inhabitants of particular villages and cities along with information concerning their property status and obligations towards the landlord. Eventually, they may contain a detailed description of the system of feudal duties of the particular village being described.

On the one hand, they could sanction the existing regulations, norms and relations between subjects (peasants or townspeople) and the feudal lord, or, on the other hand, they could invalidate the existing rules and introduce new ones. The inventories served as the basis for controlling the condition as well as for estimating the profitability and valuation of individual land properties.

Often the property inventories were prepared for various types of transactions, such as purchase, sale, lease, pledge etc. On other occasions the inventories dealt with the circumstances related to the inheritance of property, i.e. the takeover of the inheritance as well as the division of property between the heirs. The inventories provided a database for estimating the profitability and valuation of the property which affected the amount of lease obligations and property divisions between the heirs. They also appeared due to border disputes arising between the owners of neighbouring properties.

The inventories were produced by clerks managing the farm, the property or the entire complex of properties when the supervisor was to be changed. In such circumstances the property inventory was produced to illustrate the state of the property at the time when it was to be taken over by a new official. Sometimes this documentation could have been created as a result of the official controls carried out by supervisory authorities. The audits were usually conducted by commissioners travelling around their territories. In this way, the activity of the managers of individual farms and entire properties was controlled on site.

The reorganization and reform of property management was another reason why the inventories were created. The goal of this activity was to present an actual picture and description of the condition of the property or to introduce the intensification of agricultural production. In the latter case, the inventory did not present the actual state of affairs, but presented and sanctioned the newly introduced and binding changes in the amount of peasants' obligations towards their landlord.

Register of subjects and their feudal obligations of the village of Słomki, 1765. AGAD Warsaw

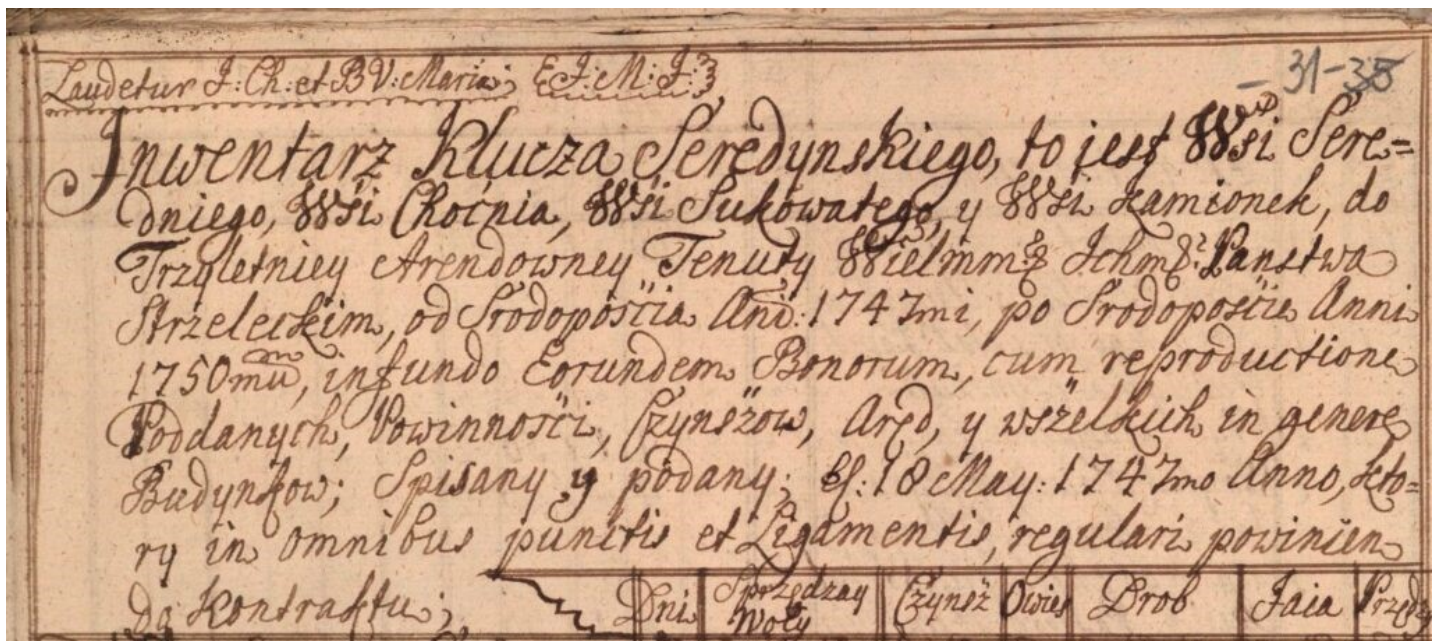
The persons responsible for the compilation of property inventories were various types of officials reporting to the landowner. They were workers of administrative and economic departments. Depending on their individual function and position, they were called officials, economists or commissioners. These officials were assisted by scribes who manually drew up the relevant documentation. In general, each inventory was to be made on-site in the form of a site visit.

However, it sometimes happened that officials simply copied data from older documents or introduced new regulations not based on the site visit, but on the basis of the data from older inventories. In addition to the site inspection, old inventories and the other documents, an important source of information was the local population, which made declarations to the official regarding the property status, the size of the cultivated land, the amount of livestock and the size of the family as well as the type and amount of feudal obligations.

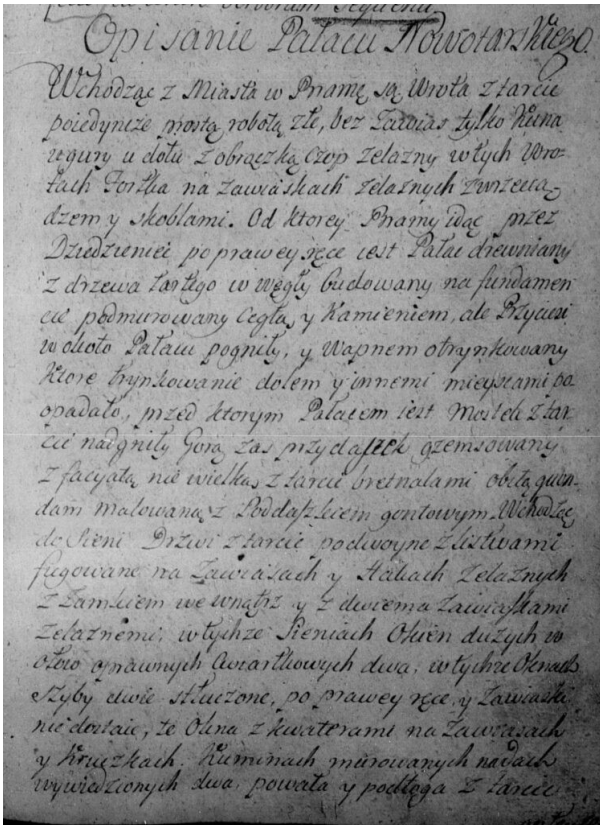
What the Property Inventories Contain.

Generally, property inventories consist of three basic parts. The title, the descriptive part, and the normative part. This type of documentation may refer to a single settlement or to an entire complex of properties, which could include many villages and towns. They can be in the form of a separate book (a manuscript), a notebook, a loose document or a record entry in court books.

The title of the inventory provided the collective name of the complex of properties e.g. the property of Serednie, as well as the names of individual localities included in this property inventory. Depending on the circumstances of preparing the documentation, the purpose of its creation and its content may be specified, too. The title contained the name of the owner or owners of the properties and, if the properties were on lease, also the lessee. The date of the origin of the document and, in the case of a lease, the period of its validity were included.



The second part of the document, i.e. the descriptive part, usually contained a detailed description of a manor, farm buildings and agricultural land. The areas of individual villages were divided into the noble (the manor farm), the ecclesiastical (the church area) and the rural (peasants' fields) terrains. The manor area was the part of the village managed directly by the officials of the landlord. It consisted of an administrative and residential building, i.e. a manor house, farm buildings and farm land. The whole entity was called the manor or manorial farm. The descriptive part of the inventory provided the location of the manor and farm buildings, the external appearance of these buildings and their internal layout, the number and area of rooms, equipment and their condition. There was a description of the farmland, agricultural crops, pastures, meadows, gardens and a register of the livestock. The peasants were obliged to serve and fulfil various duties on this manorial farm. Some more complex inventories also provided very precious descriptions of peasants' cottages as well as inns and other rural buildings located in the specific village.



Descriptive part of an inventory. Description of the palace in Nowy Targ, 1767. AN Krakow

The third part of the document, i.e. the normative portion, was divided into two parts. The first part contained a register of population along with the property of individual families as well as their feudal obligations. The second part provided detailed instructions and regulations in regard to the relations between peasants and the landlord as well as rules of the village's internal system.

The register of population usually was presented in tabular form. It listed the first and the last name, or only the first name, or the first name and the nickname of the head of individual peasant families living in the village. Other family members were frequently omitted. The population was divided into various categories. Belonging to a particular category depended on property status. The state of property of a particular family determined the amount of feudal service and other tributes required. For

this reason, the inventories sometimes provided more detailed information about the area of land being cultivated by a particular family. Families belonging to a particular category usually farmed a specific amount of land e.g. 'a field', 'a half-field', 'a quarter-field', 'a garden'. Also the census included the number of oxen and horses owned by a family or more frequently, just the number of the animals used by the family to cultivate the lord's farm as part of the peasant's feudal obligation. It was very important information because it determined the type of the feudal service required of the serf (with animals or on foot) and the number of duties related to transportation.

Subsequent columns listed the number of days of feudal service required of the serf (in division on its type) per week, and also the number of oxen and horses, the amount of rent in money, the amount of oats in bushels and the other tributes such as: geese, capons, chickens, eggs, yarn etc. Unfortunately, not all the categories of rural population were listed in the registers. The usual categories listed included the part of the population which owned houses and farmed the land allocated to them or, if not farm fields, at least land sufficient for a garden. The categories found were: 'kmięć' (a peasant farmer cultivating about 1 'łan' of farming land, depending on a region and a historical period it was equal to at least 40 acres), 'półrolnik/ółkmięć' (a peasant farmer cultivating about a half of the 'łan' of farming land), 'zarębnik' (a peasant farmer cultivating about a quarter of the 'łan' of farming land), 'zagrodnik' (owner of a cottage with a small amount of land), 'ogrodnik' (a gardener), and 'chałupnik' (a cottager).

Families which did not have their own houses and did not cultivate any land, i.e. 'komornik' (a landless peasant) and 'kątnik' (a landless peasant) were mentioned less frequently. Other groups of the population, such as farm workers, maidens, hired workers or servants were almost always absent or occurred very rarely in the registers. Apart from the rural inventories, there were also municipal inventories which contained lists of the population of individual towns. They provided data regarding the property of townspeople as well as their burdens such as taxes, rents, fees and tributes.

Register of subjects and their feudal obligations of the village of Trościaniec, 1765. AGAD Warsaw

At the end of the normative part of the inventory, were found detailed instructions regarding the performance of the feudal duties of serfdom, the so-called regulations or descriptions of obligations. The instructions developed in detail and precisely regulated the duties of the communities towards the landlord and determined the internal system of the village. The instructions regulated the amount of time to be worked, the number and length of breaks during the workday when a serf fulfilled his

feudal obligations, working conditions related to variables such as the weather, the use of agricultural tools and draft animals. They enumerated the types of annual agricultural work as well as regulated matters related to the other duties and fees, such as the transport of goods, deadlines for paying rents and for paying tributes in the form of agricultural products, animals and cash. They also regulated important issues such as land trades between peasants, etc.

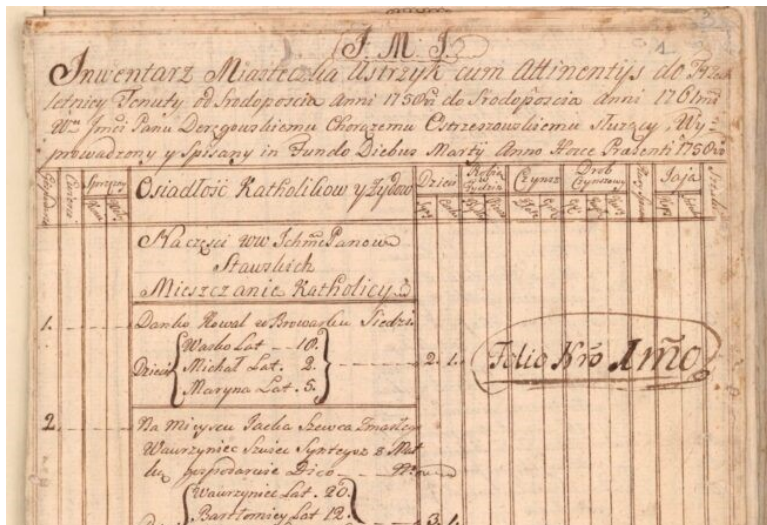
Normative part of an inventory. Regulations of obligations of Kalnica, 1767. AP Przemysl

In addition to such complete inventories containing all three parts, there also exist partial documents containing only some of the above-mentioned elements. For example, if there was neither a manor house nor a manor farm in a particular village then the inventory would not contain a descriptive part of these elements. The most painful fact for genealogists is that some documents may not contain a list of peasant or town families, their property status and feudal obligations. On the other hand, there are also some documents which may contain much richer material.

Documents of this type were written by thousands of scribes and officials employed in offices. Their content corresponded to the needs and purposes necessary for managing a particular property. Hence their content and accuracy largely depended on the need of the moment and the experience of the clerk drawing up the document.

Assessment of the Source

Generally, the property inventories are rated very highly by historians. These are sources that provide a lot of data on such a subject matter as the organization and functioning of individual villages and towns included in the particular properties, the size of individual settlements, their population, property, buildings and economic conditions and finally the relations between the feudal lord and his subjects.



Register of townspeople of Ustrzyki, 1758. AP Przemysl

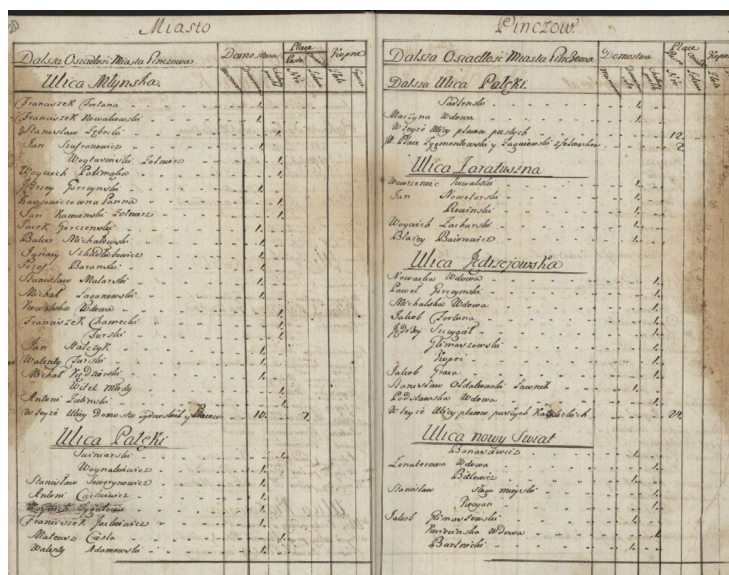
These sources are generally reliable, although some data should be treated with caution and, if possible, compared with other types of documentation. As mentioned above, the inventories were drawn up by the hands of thousands of officials and scribes of various degrees of experience and levels of work and motivation.

In the case of property valuation for the purpose of sale, lease or division, the parties drawing up the document controlled each other, a situation which

affected the credibility of the document. It was similar in the case of the taking over of the property by a new official from the hands of the former official. On the other hand, when inspections had been completed by commissioners overseeing the particular territories, local supervisors may not always have been willing to disclose true data regarding the condition of the property. If they managed them badly, such data could be embarrassing to them and so efforts were made to conceal or distort the information.

The peasants themselves, who were a main source of information, were usually reluctant and distrustful about disclosing their family and property data, fearing the imposition of higher feudal burdens. It also happened that villages which were considered too burdened, demanded the preparation of a new inventory and the introduction of a new order or the restoration of the older norms of the serf system.

Register of townspeople of Pińczów, 1769. AP Kielce

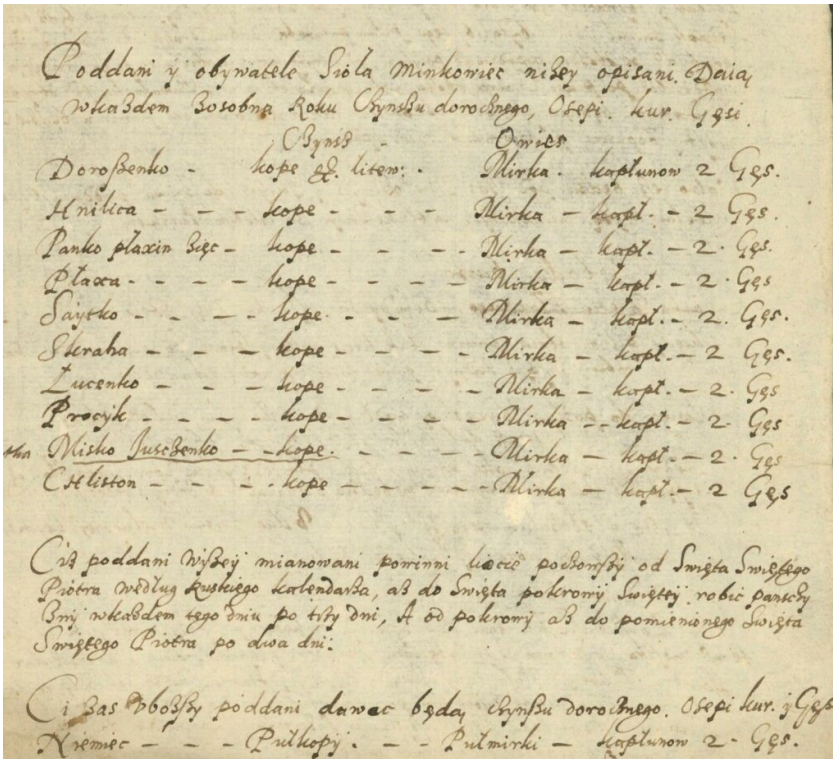


However, even the things which were theoretically written down reliably and truthfully on site, in practise often may not have corresponded to reality. The peasants tried their best to avoid the obligations of serfdom. In each village, there were so-called voids 'pustki', i.e. uninhabited and not cultivated plots. However, people were usually not interested in taking over these plots/voids for one's own, because that would lead to an increase in the number of days of feudal service and other obligations. Local peasants could lease them for a relatively small amount of a rent. Hence, it was better to pay a relatively low fee every year and sow 'nobody's' voids instead of taking them over and settling on them.

'Komorniks' (a landless peasants), who did not have their own houses or fields and thus theoretically belonged to the poorest class of the population, and did the lowest level of feudal service, in practice could have been at a much higher level of material position. Having a sufficient number of draft animals or hiring them and paying a relatively small rent, they cultivated empty plots ('voids'), which brought them good

profit, whereas their burden of feudal service and other taxes did not increase because these were not their own plots of land. It must also be remembered that inventories often did not present the real state of affairs, but the state of affairs which was to be introduced as a result of reforms.

Many problems may have resulted from very different terminology used in the property inventories by different officials and scribes. Such discrepancies occurred mainly in terms used to describe categories of population, jobs, works, tools, units of measure etc. Contemporary scientific compilations as well as dictionaries of older Polish language usage are necessary in order to interpret and analyze the documents properly.



Register of subjects and their feudal obligations of the village of Minkowice, 1642. AP Krakow

Surnames of peasants form an additional complication. As was previously stated, the oldest inventories date back to the 15th century. However, in that early period, peasant's surnames appear rather rarely since usually only first names and nicknames were then in common use. Thus the value and use of such early registers is limited by the lack of permanent surnames.

The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was a very large and diverse country compared to other European countries, especially those of Western

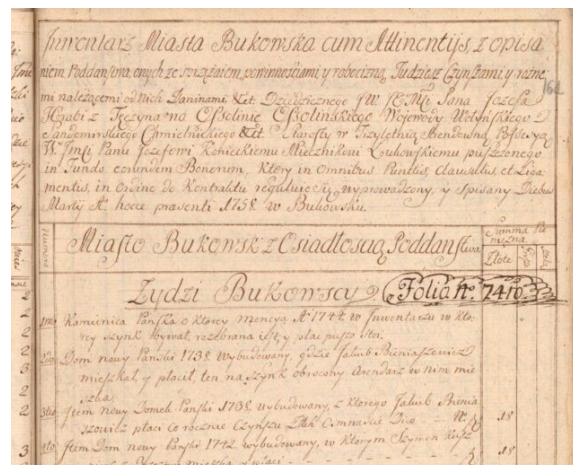
Europe. The extreme diversity of the Polish State was typical of much of the area of Central Europe. The time when peasants' surnames were formed was not uniform throughout the Commonwealth and varied depending on the region of the country as well as the social and the material status of the peasant family. However, peasant's surnames began to appear on a massive scale at the beginning of the 17th century but the process of their formation and mutability lasted up to the end of the 18th and even into the early 19th centuries. It must therefore be assumed that the practical use of the inventories in genealogical research will be limited in most cases back to the 17th century.

Where to Find the Inventories

Property inventories from the period of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and then during the Partitions of Poland (until the 1860s) are found in hundreds if not thousands of archival collections scattered around almost all the state archives in the areas of contemporary Poland, Lithuania, Ukraine, Belarus, Latvia, and Russia. These countries, or only some of their current territories, used to be the part of the Polish-Lithuanian state. A very significant number of inventories is also stored in libraries, archives of scientific institutes, museum archives, diocesan archives as well as monastery archives.

In order to find the property inventories relating to the areas of research interest (villages, towns), first it is necessary to determine the category of the land property, whether it belonged to the royal, the ecclesiastical or the noble domain. Then it is necessary to determine the specific owner or tenant. Depending on the owner or tenant of the area, as well as the purpose of drawing up the document, the property inventories may be kept in the archival collections of individual families, bishoprics, monasteries or central and county, fiscal and court state offices. Unfortunately, in the old Polish administration the division between private and state affairs was not strictly observed. Therefore, a huge number of state documents (e.g. inventories of various royal properties), which theoretically had to be kept in the appropriate state offices, remained in private hands. That is why today many of them can be found in the archival collections of individual families instead of the archival collections of state royal offices.

Inventory of the town of Bukowsko. Register of Jews, 1758. AP Przemysl

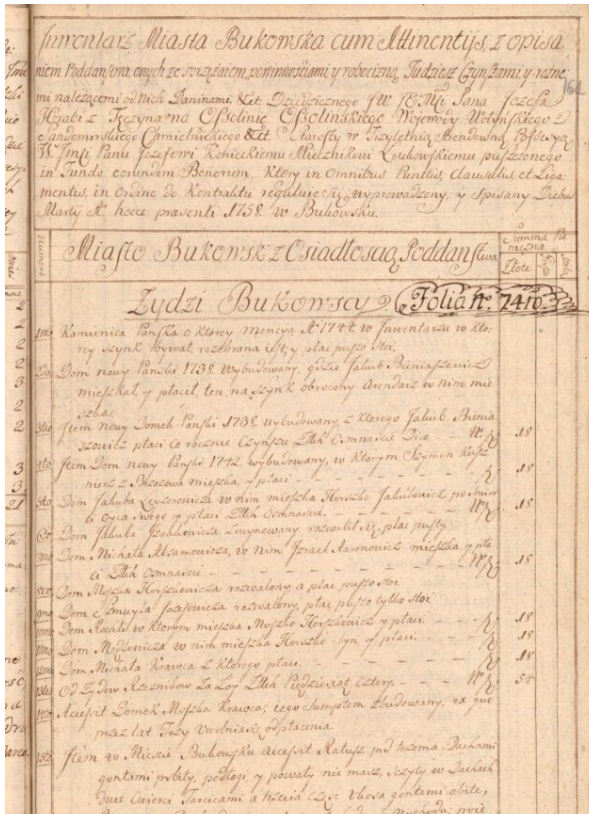


The biggest collections of property inventories are kept in the following collections: The Archive of Royal Treasury 'Archiwum Skarbu Koronnego', The Archive of Camera 'Archiwum Kameralne' (The Commission of His Royal Highness in The Central Archives of Historical Records in Warsaw); The Tribunal of Treasury of The Grand Duchy of Lithuania 'Trybunał Skarbowy Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego', The Commission of Treasury of The Grand Duchy of Lithuania 'Komisja Skarbowa Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego' in The Lithuanian

State Historical Archives in Vilnius; The Collection of Aleksander Czolowski in The Stefanyk National Science Library in Lviv, collections of The Library of Ossolineum in Wroclaw, collections of The Library of Princes of Czartoryski in Krakow, collections of Polish Academy of Science, collections of The Kornik Library and many more; collections of court books of county 'grodzki' and land 'ziemski' courts can be in the state archives in Gdansk, Krakow, Lodz, Lublin, Poznan, Torun and Warsaw in Poland, Kyiv and Lviv in Ukraine, Vilnius in Lithuania, Minsk in Belarus, Riga in Latvia, Moscow in Russia and Berlin in Germany; collections of the greatest houses of Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth – the houses of Branicki, Chodkiewicz, Czartoryski, Lubomirski, Potocki, Radziwill, Sanguszko and many more; archives of every bishopric, monastery and parish which existed prior to the mid-19th century; papers of every noble family which possessed manorial estates prior to the mid-19th century; collections of individual collectors...

This is just an illustrative list which is intended to give a general overview of the issue. In searching for such files a certain type of specialization is definitely very useful. The researcher simply must know the local history where the research is to be conducted and be acquainted with the main collections of central archives (as in regard to Poland, in Warsaw, Krakow and Lviv) and main libraries as well as the archives and libraries which are important to the region being researched. There are tens of thousands of inventories from the 15th/16th to the mid-19th centuries to be found.





Inventory of the town of Bukowsko. Register of Jews, 1758. AP Przemysl

Register of subjects and their feudal obligations of the village of Niechworów, 1786, 1787, 1788. AGAD Warsaw (2)

CONCLUSION

Property inventories have been created since the middle of the 17th century in mass quantities, though some of them date back almost to the Middle Ages. **They are documents containing census lists from a particular village or city.** From the genealogical point of view, the register of population is the most important part of the presented source. However, we must emphasize that it is almost never a complete census. It contains selected categories of the population. These are usually the families which had their own houses and cultivated parcels of farmland or at least a plot for a garden. That makes up the majority of the population. The families are listed by the name and the surname of the main representative or representatives of the family. The feudal world was predominantly patriarchal. Other members of the family infrequently are found in the registers.

On the other hand, **the documents provide invaluable information regarding the family's property, social status, position within rural society, everyday work, the type and number of days required for providing feudal service, rental rates, tributes rates and the other duties.** The feudal peasant society was predominantly personal serfdom which meant that change of place of residence by individual families was highly restricted. Taking this fact into consideration, we can assume, with a dose of reserve, that families of the same surname appearing in different years in the same settlement in documents from the feudal period until the beginning of the 19th/middle of the-19th centuries are the sequential generations of the same extended family.

Despite their shortcomings, property inventories remain a valuable historical source for genealogical research. These are the documents that allow genealogical research on peasant and burgher families into the depths of the eighteenth and sometimes even seventeenth centuries. Properly analysed they can provide invaluable data. **They allow us to paint a kind of 'background' and to see the shadows of our ancestors on this canvas.** These are names and surnames from the distant past which provide a snapshot of their daily work and their daily life.

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This article was written by **Piotr Zelny** – a genealogist, a historian, archivist, mountain guide and a staff member of the Historical Museum in Sanok; a researcher and a genealogy guide in the PolishOrigins.

PolishOrigins mission is to make the journey of uncovering your roots in old Poland fruitful, smooth, and eventful experience. The organization creates tours to Poland, from big cities to small villages, perform genealogical research, from simple to complex; reunite clients with living relatives (some you may not know exist); provide a genealogical forum to assist with specific questions. Their website is <https://polishorigins.com> and also maintain a Facebook page.



Polish Genius FB advises that If you're doing research on ancestors who lived in Haczów , gmina Haczów , powiat Brzozów in southeastern Poland, there is a Facebook page devoted to the genealogy of Haczów Genealogia Haczów

Most of the posts are in Polish but you can use an online translator. Feel free to post in your native language.

Genealogy IOI : Using Google Search Operators

By Michael Speare

Google is a great tool. However, it can seem daunting when we are looking for specific information, but we get way too many confusing hits.

Better results come when we focus our queries. Are we searching for the military records of a great grandfather (born 1892) who lived in the Russian Partition? We can Google "Jozef Lichota military records" and get 95,900 hits. A better approach is to first focus on the conflictS Russia was engaged in after 1892. Begin by searching for "Russian military conflicts 1892-1930". You will find a list of at least twenty such events. Then search for "Russian Partition Military Requirements". Results from that indicate men would be required to serve 6-9 years in at least a reserve capacity beginning at age 21. Now you have narrowed potential dates. You know he was too young for the 1904-05 Russo-Japanese War but not WWI or the Russian Revolution, among other events. Armed with this information you can narrow your search and go to Fold3, My Heritage, and/or other databases for specific wars.

Every word matters so do not confuse the search with extraneous words. Use "Polish Partition Conscription requirement" versus "How long did Polish men have to serve in the Russian military if they lived in the partition?" Word order matters. Try "family tree" vs. "tree family" as an illustration. Searching is not case sensitive (Poland= poland). If you are looking into a new area, start broad and then narrow. Start with "polish military" and then move to "polish military WWI" if your results are too vague.

Other powerful tools to use in Google searches are called "operators". There are many. In a normal search of a name like John Robert Doe, you will get listings focusing; individually on John, Robert, and Doe. Google will include variations on spelling of each of those names and yield 17.7 million results. If you enclose this name in quotation marks "John Robert Doe", you will get results for anything containing that name, in that exact order, and only with that spelling, yielding 1,380 results.

Is the above too limiting? Use the asterisk (*). The asterisk is a way to search when you are unsure of the spelling or order of the words or names you are seeking. We would use "John * Doe" to yield results where the Robert is only shown as middle initial or perhaps another middle name altogether.

Another trick is to use the term OR. In our name search example using the asterisk we are missing listings that might show Doe, John Robert. To overcome that we use OR (must be in capital letters) to include variations. We would enter "John Robert Doe" OR "Doe, John Robert". We could also include the asterisk(*) as a variation. Numrange (..) is another operative. Do you have a tree with many Stanislaus Timinskis? Use numrange to show a date range. Your search would be "Stanislaus Timinski" 1865 .. 1910 and would include the lifespan of that person.



The operator define followed by a colon (:) is useful in learning the meaning of words or phrases. It seems to work for foreign words, as well. Type "define:dziadzia" to see the results.

Minus(-). This item tells the search to eliminate a result that has a certain word. A search for a relative named "Franklin Roosevelt" is dominated by the late President. Using "Franklin Roosevelt" -Delano would eliminate much of the FDR results. Be sure not to leave a space after the minus (-) sign.

These are just a few of the operatives that can be used to enhance your G-Oogle search. Try them the next time you are searching. They will save you time and improve your results.

Michael Speare is the current Vice President and Membership Chair of the Polish Genealogical Society of Greater Cleveland. The Purpose of PGSGC is to be a resource for persons interested in researching Polish ancestry and to foster an interest in Polish history, culture, and genealogical research. They support the exchange of ideas and information related to genealogical practices and experiences. These efforts are undertaken by providing programs for instruction and education and to disseminate, preserve and share genealogical, biographical, and historical material related to families of Polish descent. PGSGC publishes a quarterly newsletter "Our Polish Ancestor."



Minnesota Genealogy Society Organizing Your Family History Research (Classes)

Learn tips for safely organizing your research findings so you or others can find the records.

Cost: Members \$30 and Non-members \$40

When—11 Dec 2021 10:00 AM—11:30 AM (UTC-06:00)

Location—Minnesota Genealogy Center

This is tentatively planned to be in person, although it may change to online depending on state of affairs.



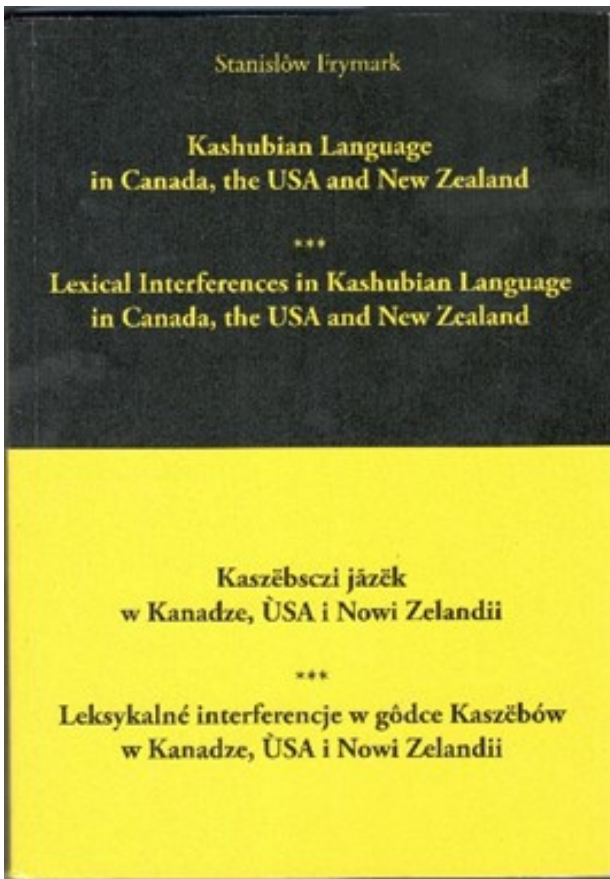
A Beginner's Guide to Polish Genealogy, Revised Edition

From Shepard's and Shoemakers—Online / Free—Sharing insights, resources, strategies and musings as you discover your family history and beginnings

<https://fromshepherdsandshoemakers.com/>

Enjoy the upcoming holiday season





Book Review

Kashubian Language in Canada, the USA and New Zealand

By Stanisław Frymark, 312 pages (156 pages in English/flip the book for Kashubian). 2020.

Non-Fiction.

The ancient language spoken by Kashubians, a true ethnic minority, with West Slavic background from Poland dates back to the 5th and 6th century, would be all but extinct without the efforts of people like Mr. Frymark and many others. Mr. Frymark's book is a written record of the Kashubians and specifically the language of those who came from that area and settled in Stevens Point and Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Winona, Minnesota, Canada, and other parts of the world that would have lost their homeland dialects. "It is urgently necessary to record what is becoming lost with time and aging of generations". (Frymark, page 14)

It was not unusual for the immigrant family (1880's) who came from the Kashubian region on (of what is now known as Poland) the Baltic Sea and southwest of Gdansk, would be looked down upon for not being able to speak "Proper Polish" or by fellow Countrymen, Teachers or Parish Priests when they arrived. Mr. Frymark explains there are three dialects of Kashubian all with in that region.

This is a unique and rare book about the evolution of the Kashubian Language and Kashubia's history of. This book is in fact written in both English and Kashubian language.

This book consists of Field research and interviews. Examples of a simple Kashubian-English dictionary, collected vocabulary from Mr. Frymark's trips to Canada, New Zealand, and the USA.

Overall, I enjoyed this book and feel it is the new must have book for anyone who wants a further their understanding of Kashubia and its language.

Mr. Frymark is the author of many other scholarly books, including working with Blanche Krbechek in translating "Life and Adventures of Remus" by Aleksander Majkowski. Mr. Frymarks work was recognized as the best Bachelor work in the 2017/2018 academic year of the Gdansk University.

Mr. Frymark is making this book available for the cost of shipping (\$25.00 or \$35.00 depending on how fast you want it delivered via US mail from Poland). Payment may be made by check or cash by sending to: Stanley Frymark, Kaszuba 11, 89-634 Leśno, Poland. stanleyfrymark@yahoo.com

Respectfully submitted 24 Sept 2020 by Nadine Guilbault, Appleton, WI
nadine17543@yahoo.com

The Hoffman Research Library

PGSMN strongly supports and encourages use of the MGS Hoffman Research Library. Located at the Minnesota Genealogy Center in Mendota Heights, MN, it is a destination research facility for the Midwest region, with unique resources for studying family history. The 30,000+ items contained in the HRL collection represent the state of Minnesota; including counties and larger cities; all fifty states of the US plus specialized regions (e.g. New England); covering a wide spectrum of nationalities and countries from around the world. The depth of coverage varies across states and countries, and many items are in their language of origin.

Online catalog can be found at www.mngs.org. A handful of titles are listed below and are well used in Polish Genealogy. The listings also have maps from various time frames for your research efforts. Enjoy. *Additional information on page 18.*

The Polish Peasant in Europe and America by William I. Thomas and Florian Znaniecki

Polish Roots, 2nd ed. by Rosemary A. Chorzempa

Sto Lat: A Modern Guide to Polish Genealogy by Cecile Wendt Jensen

Going Home: A Guide to Polish-American Family History Research by Jonathan D. Shea

In Their Words: A Genealogist's Translation Guide to Polish, German, Latin, and Russian Documents by Jonathan D. Shea and William F. Hoffman

Roman Catholic Parishes in the Polish People's Republic in 1984 by Lidia Müllerowa

A Translation guide to 19th-century Polish-Language Civil-Registration Documents by Judith R. Frazin

Poles in Minnesota by John Radzilowski

Reconnecting with our Polish Heritage—Jedrocha and Babczakiewicz Families

Other resources, available online, to research Polish beginnings

Poznan Project

Searchable marriage indexes for the 19th century within the former Prussian province of Posen (now Poznań, Poland) and neighboring districts.

PolishOrigins, polishorigins.com

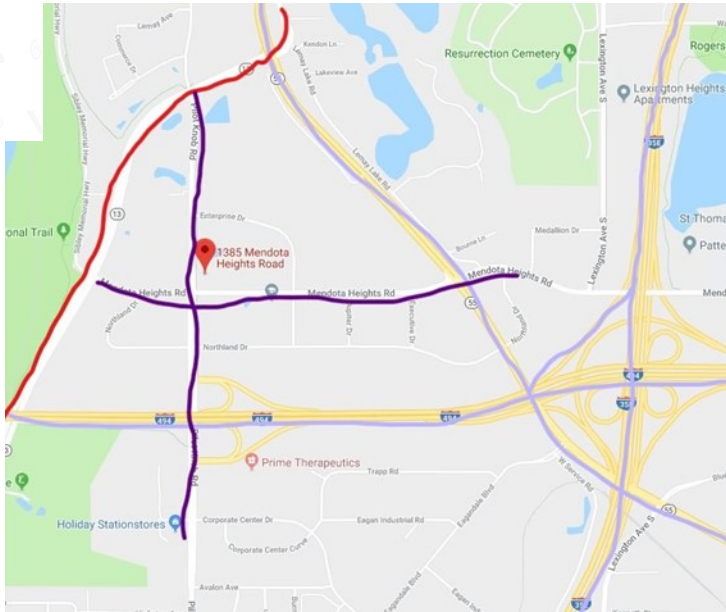
Offers one place to search various databases and websites by name, place, or other keyword. Also provides a forum for discussion of research and sharing of tips.

PolishRoots, polishroots.com

Provides links to online resources for immigration, geography, research tips, and more.

Polish State Archives, archiwa.gov.pl/en/for-archive-users/genealogy.html
Information on the holdings of state and church archives.





**The Polish Genealogical Society
of Minnesota**

**1385 Mendota Heights Road
Suite #100**

Mendota Heights, MN 55120



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Highway 55 (south) - cross Mendota bridge east-bound - keep right onto MN 55 East - turn right on MN 13 (south) - turn left on Pilot Knob Road - take left on Mendota Heights Road to first driveway on left. From west or east on 494: Take 494 to Pilot Knob Road - go north - take right on Mendota Heights Road, take left into first driveway on left. From 35E - Take 35E to Pilot Knob Road - go west on Pilot Knob towards Mendota Heights Road. Address on northside of Mendota Heights Road, just prior to Pilot Knob. **Parking is directly in front of building.**

2021 MGS LIBRARY HOURS

Saturdays, 10 am—4 pm

Thursdays, 4 pm—8 pm

Please call to confirm the library will be open

The library is closed if volunteers are not available.



PGSMN is located with the MGS Building at 1385 Mendota Heights Road, Suite #100, Mendota Heights, MN.

POLISH NIGHT AT THE LIBRARY

“ A Polish genealogist will be available at the Hoffman Research Library: First Saturday of each month, 10-4:00 pm
Second Thursday of each month 4-8:00 pm
verify date & time at: www.MNGS.org, "volunteering" then "volunteer calendar."

Please note that due to the COVID-19 concerns, the library may be closed to the public. Please call ahead to check on library openings 651-330-9312

CLOSED in 2021 on the following dates:

Saturday, July 3; Thursday, September 30; Saturday, October 2; Wednesday, November 24; Thursday, November 25; and Saturday, January 1, 2022.

PASS IT ALONG - Do you know someone who has an interest in Polish Genealogy - give them this membership flyer. Thank you

Need further information - check out our website at

www.pgsmn.org



Polish Genealogical Society of Minnesota

A Branch of the Minnesota Genealogical Society
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Membership Application

Membership fee is \$20 for one year, ending December 31. Membership includes a subscription to the PGS-MN newsletter and free access to the Minnesota Genealogical Society Hoffman Research Library in Mendota Heights.

Thank you for helping to preserve and foster interest in Polish heritage!

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PGS-MN endeavors to connect individuals researching their family roots. If information is included in the chart below, it will be published, along with your name and email, so other researchers can contact you. Adding information in the chart below indicates your acceptance of this release of information through both digital and paper formats by the Polish Genealogical Society of Minnesota.

Polish Surname(s) Currently Being Researched	Location in Poland Where Surname Originated	U.S. Location Where Immigrant Settled

Szukam cię – I'm looking for you

Welcome New Members!

We are excited that you have joined the Polish Genealogical Society of Minnesota. We strive to provide you with inspiration and knowledge that will help you on your quest in discovering your family. Take advantage of all the exciting resources we have to offer. New and renewing members will be available in the password-protected Members Only section of the www.pgsmn.org website.



New Members

Barta, Joseph, irondds@gmail.com, Researching: **WOS**.

Filipczak, Joseph E., kathyjoe2005@gmail.com, Researching: **FILIPCZAK** of Sanok.

Guilbault, Nadine, nadine17543@yahoo.com, Researching: **PUZDROWSKI** from Stezyca.

Hall, Barbara, bghall815@gmail.com, Researching: **KRAMARZ; KUDUK; KRAMASZ; MIAZGA**.

Hennemann, Renee, rhennema@icloud.com, Researching: **KOCIEMBA** from Krytoszyn settled in Stearns County, Minnesota.

Jurek, Andrew, avjurek@yahoo.com, Researching: **JUREK** of Opole County, Komprachice & Polska Nova Wiese settled in Stillwater, MN and Duelm, MN; **WOJCIAK** Felix and Angela of Krakow; **KLISS** Viktor and Angela of Radziechowy settled in Blaine, MN and Stillwater, MN.

Kavajecz, James, james.kavajecz@gmail.com, Researching: **ROGALLA**.

Kruzeski, Sheri, gmakruzeski@gmail.com, Researching: **KRUZESKI; KRUSZEWSKI; KOZLOWSKI**.

Scott, Cynthia, cmscott51@yahoo.com, Researching: **SCHRAMSKI/SZRAMSKI** of Gosciejewo, Rogozno settled in Wisconsin and Minnesota; **STENZEL** of Gosciejewo Rogozno settled in Waseca City, MN; **BRUCH** of Zawady, Ryczywol.

Wasik, Steven, stevenalbertwasik@gmail.com

Zwickey, Leone, zwickey3330@centurylink.net, Researching: **WOS/VOSS** settled in Minneapolis, MN; **KUDAK** settled in Minneapolis, MN; **GABRYCH** settled in Minneapolis, MN; **WIECZOREK** settled in Minneapolis, MN.

PLEASE NOTE: Existing member's Missing Branches information will **no** longer be printed in the newsletter. This was done to reduce printing and mailing costs. In the future Missing Branches for all members will be available in the Members Only section of the www.pgsmn.org website. And, of course, Missing Branches information can be found in past newsletters. New members will continue to be published in one edition of the newsletter.





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by 12/31/2021.
Thank You***

Please Note that all PGSMN Monthly meetings and events have been canceled until further notice due to COVID-19. Check out the webpage for "virtual meetings."

Membership Renewal

Please check your mailing label for expiration date, is it time to renew? Please use the Membership Application form inserted in this newsletter or print form

Address/email changes or membership questions? Contact Connie Waldherr at waldh001@umn.edu

The PGSMN Newsletter is published quarterly in Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter. Newsletter subscription is included with membership.

Submitting items for publication is welcomed and highly encouraged. We require feature-length articles to be submitted exclusively to PGSMN. Mail articles, letters, book reviews, news items to the PGSMN Editor—Marie Przyński

Contact Us for more information about our services and meetings

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