



Our Polish ANCESTORS



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The Poles of Jamestown

By Trina Goss Galauner

It is documented that the very first Polish immigrants to America were those that were recruited to Jamestown, Virginia in 1608. But why were Poles part of this group of English born settlers? The story begins with Captain John Smith and the Virginia Company of London.

In the early 17th century, England had depleted much of its natural resources, specifically pertaining to its trees, which threatened their economic stability. England's dependence on lumber for their industries had required that they look elsewhere for its supply. Merchants engaged in trade with the Baltic countries, including Poland, to obtain the materials needed for their businesses.



Image of "Polish in Jamestown"
Painting by Arthur Szyk, 1939

Poland was rich with forests of which England could obtain the lumber and pitch and tar for their shipbuilding industry. Both Queen Elizabeth I and King James I took great care to cultivate good political relations with Poland's King Sigismund III. However, Polish wars with the Ottoman and Swedish Empires threatened England's import arrangement with Poland. England needed to look to the New World for natural resources.



Historical marker on Jamestown Road near the historic settlement site commemorating the first Polish settlers

An adventure seeker since he was a small boy, John Smith studied warfare and dabbled in piracy. In 1601 at the age of twenty, he signed on with the Austrian Army during the Ottoman Wars against the Turks. From his military studies he devised a creative attack for his regiment which was successful over the Turks. He was awarded the title Captain John Smith and given his own company. But in 1602, he was wounded in the Battle of Rottenton, captured by the Turks and

sold into slavery. When he escaped, he traveled back to England through Poland and was overwhelmed by the hospitality and ingenuity of the Polish people.

Smith joined the Virginia Company of London a few years later in 1606 on their expedition to the New World and helped set up the colony in Jamestown. The Virginia Company's aim was to establish merchant colonies in order to mine the land for riches to be shipped back to England. However, the original colony was filled with gentlemen and treasure seekers who did

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Welcome

If you are not already a member of the PGSGC and would like to become one and receive this quarterly newsletter (cost is \$24.00 per year), please contact Membership Chairman, Ron Kraine, at ronkraine@aol.com for more information.



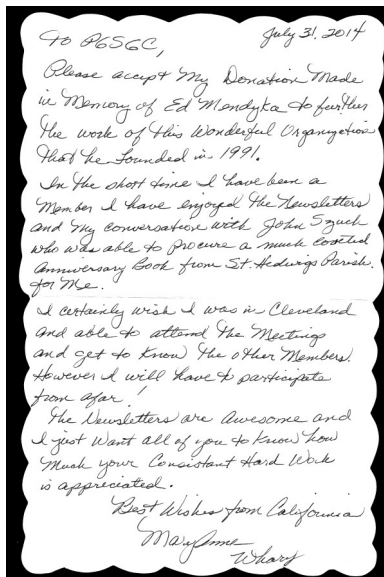
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Letter from the President

Another Summer has passed us by! I thought they went fast when I was a kid, but they seem to go as fast or faster after I got older and retired! The same goes for the years in general. With that in mind, here are some genealogical thoughts to keep in mind. Even if you are not a PGSGC member or into genealogy, try to keep your family information in some sort of order for a future family member to pick up and work with. That goes for any documents such as birth certificates, wedding licenses, military discharge papers, etc. Label the back of family photos as to who the people are (I'm sure you all have some

old photos with unidentified people in them and anyone who would know them is now deceased). Just keep in mind, how nice it would have been if some family member had done that for you when you started your family research.



July 25th marked the end of the final chapter of the book on the founder and first President of the PGSGC, Ed Mendyka. The family held a small farewell ceremony at the Ohio Western Reserve National Cemetery in Rittman, OH, where Ed's ashes were laid to rest. Seven members, Roseanne and Paul Ewazen, Ralph and Jean Lysek, Len Pryer and his daughter, Wanda Slusarski (Ed's sister) and her son, Ed, and myself came to pay our respects. Roseanne, Ralph, Frank Kowalski and Father Ralph Bodziony were the people who helped Eddie get the PGSGC off the ground. Probably the one person who contributed the most to getting us started was Roseanne! Ed had put her in charge of the St. John Cantius Heritage Room at their festival in Fall of 1992. It was in that room that Ed had set up a little display about Polish Genealogy with a sign up sheet for people who were interested in forming a new club. The room was the attraction and the sign up sheet turned out to be the bonus. It was from that sign up sheet that the organization was started.

The PGSGC was Ed's brain child and it was he who laid the foundation for our present organization. Thanks to Ed's foresight, many of us have had our life's changed because of the doors that our genealogical research has opened for us. We have discovered much about our heritage and family background, some even to the extent that they have traveled to Poland and met relatives there. I'm sure that when I say THANK YOU EDDIE, I am speaking for all members, past and present of the PGSGC.

John F. Szuch, President

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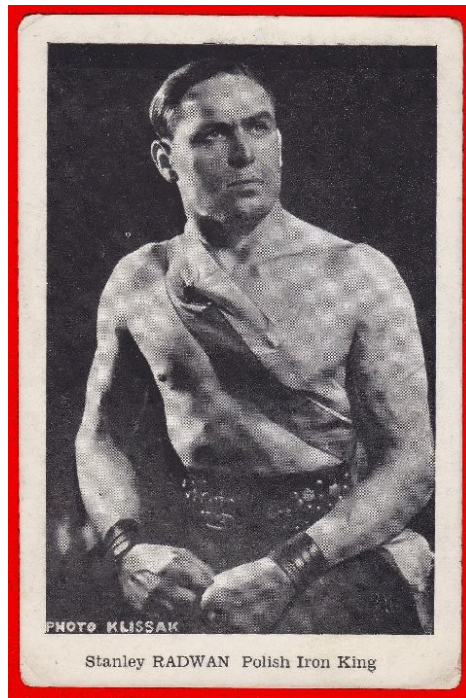


In Search of Stanley Radwan, Polish Iron King

By John F. Szuch

Growing up in Cleveland, Ohio in the 1940's had one thing in common with growing up there in the last 20 years. Professional wrestling was a big thing on television in its infancy. Virtually, almost every night had wrestling programs televised from such places as Chicago and New York City. Locally, we had live shows from the Cleveland Arena and the old Central Armory. The local shows were not televised. Like my neighborhood buddies I had my favorites, Cyclone Anaya, Don Eagle, Argentina Rocca, and the beautiful Nell Stewart.

It was no wonder that I got excited when my Uncle Steve Malicki told me one day in November, 1949 that he was taking me to the wrestling matches at the Central Armory in downtown Cleveland on November 15th. I was mainly excited because Cyclone and Nell, two of my favorites were on the card that night. But that wasn't the reason he was taking me though! He explained that Stanley Radwan, the "Polish Strongman" would also be wrestling and that was why we were going! One disappointment of the evening took place after the matches. Nell, who was featured on the program cover, was set up at a card table in the lobby for the purpose of autographing the program. I was in such awe of this beautiful woman that I was to embarrassed to get in line, something I've regretted to this day!



Postcard of the old Central Armory site of many wrestling matches

Even though at the time I didn't know who Stanley was, as the years went on I found out more about his exploits and how he, like another Clevelander, Stella Walsh, was revered by the Polish communities of Cleveland and elsewhere.

It wasn't until some 35 years later that I took an interest in the vintage wrestlers of my youth, and in particular those that I saw at the only wrestling match I was to attend as a youth. I was amazed that I couldn't find any wrestling references to Stanley, it was almost as if he hadn't existed! I did however have that wrestling program from that November, 1949 evening and there it stated that Stanley was wrestling in the first match of the evening against another Pole, Fred Bozic (who later owned an auto wash at 22220

Lorain Rd., Fairview Park, OH). Also wrestling on the card was another Pole, Dr. Ed Meske of Akron, Ohio.

An article in the program states that "Stash.... has been impressive in his three wins to date. Not that he has shown great wrestling skill but that his strength has been great enough to beat wrestling skill". Stash weighed in at 170 pounds and most of his opponents outweighed him by 50+ pounds! Although some wrestling sites on line state that Stan's professional wrestling career spanned 20 years, I find that he started in the Fall of 1949 and ended by Summer 1950, a period of less than one year! I base my findings on going through my extensive collection of local wrestling programs. Since he basically wrestled locally, I figure they are an accurate measuring stick.

<p>KIEFER'S TAVERN 2019 Detroit Ave. STEAKS—CHOPS—SEAFOOD All Popular Brands of Beer and Liquors Dancing on Friday and Saturday 2 PRIVATE DINING ROOMS for PARTIES WM. KIEFER, Mgr. CH19544</p>	<p>LUCKY NUMBER PRIZES A number of prizes are given away each week at the Wrestling Matches through the Lucky Numbers announced between the 2nd and 3rd matches. Be sure to listen to these numbers and claim your award immediately if you are a winner. The names of all winners will be published weekly. Buy your copy of Sports Week Magazine, read the stories and BE SURE to listen for the Lucky Number announcements... YOU MAY BE THE WINNER.</p>	<p>The Arthur F. Luthi Co. SIGNS Gold Leaf Name Signs Theatrical Lobby Posters Parade & Convention Displays SHOWROOM — Silk Screen Process Real Estate Ballotins — Walls CH very 2177 304 Superior Ave., N. W. Cor. W. 3rd St.</p>								
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<p>FOR INFORMATION ON Advertising Rates and Space IN THIS MAGAZINE WRITE OR PHONE CLEVELAND SPORTS WEEK MAGAZINE CENTRAL ARMORY PB. 4121 LARRY SHERLOCK, Editor</p>	<p>How To Get Reserved Seats You can secure tickets for the wrestling matches at RICHMAN BROTHERS Ticket Office, 736 Euclid Ave., MAIn 0879 OR CENTRAL ARMORY Ticket Office, Prospect 4121 Tickets will be held at Reservation Window up until 5:30 p.m. TUESDAY No Reservations taken on Tuesday Box Office opens at 7 p.m.</p>	<p>Program centerfold from wrestling match on Nov. 15, 1949</p>								



By way of background, Stanley (Stanislaw) J. Radwan was born on May 15, 1908 in Krakow, Poland. Stanley's father was a wrestler and he passed his skills on to him at an early age. At the age of 8, Stan started breaking spoons with his teeth. As time went on, he developed his strength and skills at breaking chains, bending iron bars and biting through metal. Stan attributed his strength and teeth to eating a lot of carrots and other vegetables, along with eggs and lean meat. Prior to World War II, Stan had the titles of "Polish Iron King" and strongman "Champion of Europe-1938", winning the title on September 17, 1938 at a 33 nation competition in Budapest, Hungary.

When WW II started, Stan was a Lieutenant in the Polish Navy. He was wounded and taken prisoner by the Germans at Gdynia and spent 6 years as a POW at the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in Germany. It was while a prisoner there that several of the most famous stories about Stan occurred. One story was that Stan attempted to escape by pushing over a brick wall with his bare hands. When Hitler heard about this, he supposedly visited the camp and ordered Stan to perform his feats of strength in Berlin for Der Fuher's friends. When Stan refused on the grounds that it would be an insult to his fallen comrades and country, a Gestapo guard shoved a luger into Stan's mouth and taunted him to bite it! Stan gladly obliged by biting the barrel closed. Hitler was so impressed he ordered the guards to give Stan more rations.

TO BE CONTINUED IN THE NEXT ISSUE.....

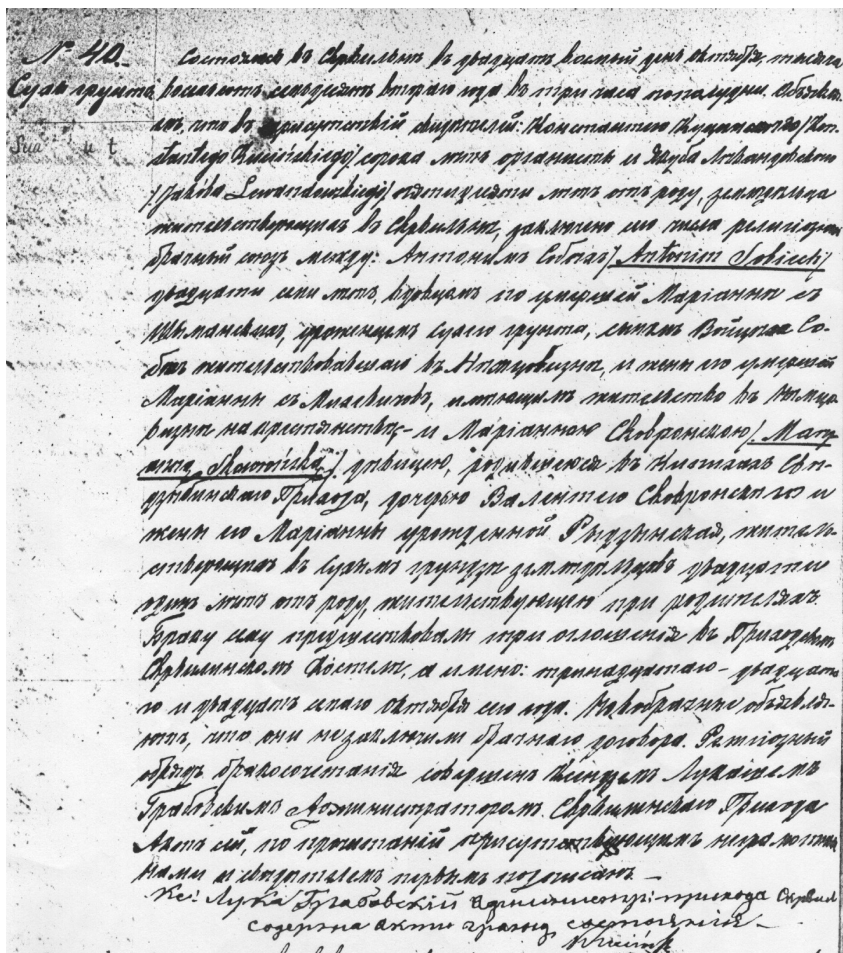
Can You Translate This?

By Trina Goss Galauner

Several years ago I discovered this family marriage record of my great great grandparents in the microfilm of Skrwilno (Rypin), Bydgoszcz, Poland. Handwritten in Russian Cyrillic script, I first needed to translate the handwritten letter to printed letter, then translate the Cyrillic to Latin and then to English. Needless to say, I learned a little about Russian Cyrillic lettering.

Through some online help and some additional research into the history of the family, we were able to come up with this rough translation.....

"It came to pass in the village of Skrwilno on the 28th of October 1872 that Konstanty Kuciszski age 40 and Jakoba Lewandowski age 50 of Skrwilno testify that Antoni Sobiech age 20 from Suchy Grund, widower* of Maryanna Lewandowski, the son of Wojciech Sobiech and Maryanna Michowicz and Maryanna Skowronska age 20 the daughter of Walenty Skowronski and Maryanna Rydzenski of Suchy Grund were married at the church in Skrwilno."



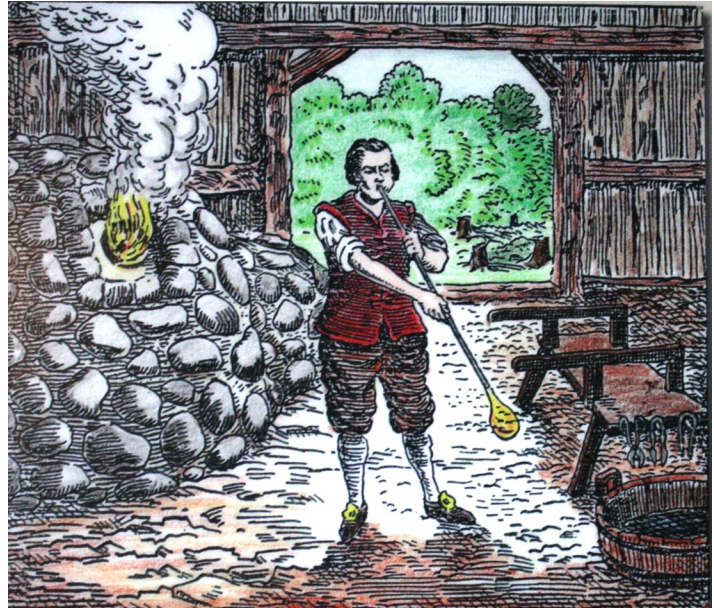
One confusion for me in this record is reference to Maryanna "Lewandowski". Since translation from Russian Cyrillic script is difficult we believe that the record was indicating "not to be confused with" the Antoni Sobiech married to Maryanna Lewandowski or that possibly the recorder was in error regarding Antoni's previous marriage. Antoni Sobiech was in fact previously married to Maryanna "Szymanski" until at least 1870. More perplexing is that there is no marriage recorded for Antoni Sobiech and Maryanna Lewandowski although there is one for an Antoni Sobiech and "Antonina" Lewandowski but this Antoni has totally different parents and is from another village. One more mystery to add to the pile!



The Poles of Jamestown continued from page 1.....

not understand the basics for survival in an uncharted wilderness. For the survival of the colony, Smith drew on his experiences in Poland and suggested to the Virginia Company the hiring of Poles to produce (and train others to produce) pitch, tar, glass and soap-ashes. His survey of the land in Virginia found its value in its soil. On October 1, 1608, the Second Supply of colonists arrived on the *Mary and Margaret* with "eight Dutchmen and Poles". The "Dutchmen" were likely Germans and the Poles would later be identified as Michael Lowicki, a nobleman born in England, Zbigniew Stefanski of Wloclawek, Jan Mata of Cracow, Jan Bogdan of Kolomyja and Stanislaw Sadowski of Radom.

These first Jamestown Poles were not poor laborers, they were Polish merchants and skilled tradesmen that pos-



Drawing at Jamestown Glasshouse by Elmo Jones



Drawing at Jamestown Glasshouse by Elmo Jones

essed the knowledge needed by the colonists to reap the benefits of the land and establish a viable settlement. Michael Lowicki (sometimes called Nowicki) acted as the business manager of the group of Poles. Jan Bogdan was a shipbuilder and knowledgeable in the production of pitch and tar, Zbigniew Stefanski was a glass maker, Jan Mata was an expert soap manufacturer and Stanislaw Sadowski was engaged in lumber production. These Poles built a glass furnace about one mile away from the settlement and the Jamestown Glasshouse would become America's first official factory. The glass goods produced were exported back to England or

used for trade with the Indians. The Poles also built sawmills and dug a water well necessary for the survival of the settlement. John Smith had great respect for the Poles and claimed he was rescued by some Polish colonists when he was attacked by an Indian while walking the mile back to the settlement from the glasshouse.

While the colony appeared to be thriving the Virginia Company's expectations were unrealistic. Jamestown settlers had to endure Indian attacks, harsh weather conditions and illness as well as grow and produce enough food necessary for survival of the many colonists. Tensions were brewing among the settlers. Smith had been able to facilitate some good relations with the Powhatan Indians in order to trade for food for the colony but the relationship was tenuous. There was much distrust between the colonists and the Indians.

In August of 1609, more than 300 new settlers arrived but the main supply ship had been shipwrecked at Bermuda. Food supplies were low, population had increased and winter was around the corner. Glass production ceased as there were



Remains of the original Jamestown Glasshouse furnace rediscovered and excavated in 1948
Photo by Trina Goss Galauner



more pressing needs of the colony.

In September of 1609 having returned from an expedition, John Smith's musket accidentally discharged leaving him with grave injury. Some historians question whether or not the shooting was accidental as there was a faction of colonists that disagreed with Smith's leadership. In great pain and needing surgery for his wounds, Smith was obliged to leave the struggling colony and return to England for treatment. Jan Bogdan, Zbigniew Stefanski and Stanislaw Sadowski were said to have also returned to Europe at that time.

When John Smith left Jamestown, conditions became worse for the colony. During the winter of 1609-1610 more than 300 Jamestown colonists died of illness and starvation. Believing their ally John Smith was dead, the Indians refused trade with the colonists in an effort to destroy them. It would be called "The Starving Time". When replenishments finally arrived in the spring of 1610, only 60 colonists remained. Jan Bogdan and Zbigniew Stefanski and their wives also returned along with more Polish workers including Gwidon Stojka, Tomasz Mietus, Karol Zrenica, Ignacy Machowski, Mateusz Gramza, Wojciech Malaszko and Jan Kulawy. Later Polish arrivals included Herman Kromka, Eustachy Micinski, Michal Korczewski, Wlodzimierz Terlecki, Mikolaj Syrynski, and Jan Pargo.

With their hard work and diligence, the Polish workers were able to repay their travel costs to the Virginia Company and become free citizens. But they were not equal citizens. Only English colonists were allowed to vote in the Jamestown colony. The Poles were embittered and organized the first labor strike in America in 1619 stating "No vote. No work." It was also America's first civil rights battle. Realizing the value of the Polish laborers, the Virginia Company granted the Poles voting privileges. The court record of the Virginia Company in July 1619 reads, "Upon some dispute of the Polonians in Virginia, it was now agreed...they shall be enfranchised and made as free as any inhabitant there whatsoever."

But the Jamestown settlement continued to struggle. In April of 1622, one third of the Jamestown settlers were massacred by the Indians. Records of those killed in the massacre only indicate one Pole as "Mathew, a Polander". There is no mention of Polish colonists in Jamestown after this time.

The Stefanskis again returned to Europe but it is believed the rest of the Polish colonists remained in Jamestown. A census of Virginia was done in 1624 and of the 1,033 listed names none appear to be Polish. The colony continued to struggle to exist being constantly scourged by Indian attacks and fires. In 1699, after yet another fire that destroyed the statehouse in Jamestown, the colony's legislature was moved to Middle Plantation which was eventually renamed Williamsburg. It is unknown if there are any descendants of the original Polish settlers of Jamestown in the United States today.

The Missing Merchant's Memoir

By Trina Goss Galauner

The basis for the names of the original Polish settlers of Jamestown lies in the supposed existence of a memoir written in 1624 by Polish colonist Zbigniew Stefanski called "Pamietnik Handlowca". This personal written account was supposedly discovered by an unknown individual in war torn France in 1947. Curator of the Polish Museum in Chicago, Mieczyslaw Haiman, was contacted and offered the book for purchase for \$5,000. Haiman was unable to raise the funds necessary but was able to view the book and make some notes with the help of historian, Arthur Waldo. After that the book disappeared. No immediate information about the first Poles in Jamestown came out until the 1970s when Waldo published his book "True Heroes of Jamestown" listing the names of the first 5 Polish settlers of Jamestown from notes obtained from the original viewing. Scholars have attempted to verify his writings by locating the original 1624 manuscript to no avail. All we do know for certain is from John Smith's accounts written in "The True Travels, Adventures and Observations of Captain John Smith" published in 1630 that there arrived "8 Dutchmen and Poles".



Vjesci in Kaszubian Poland

By Trina Goss Galauner

Popular culture has been fascinated by vampires since the book, "Dracula" by Bram Stoker was published in 1897. Numerous movies portray Dracula with a Slavic accent living high in the mountains of Transylvania. But Bram Stoker's story is not totally fictional. Vampire legends have been associated with the eastern Slavic area of Europe far before Stoker wrote his book. Vampire killing rituals were as real as the Salem witch burnings.

In Kaszubian Poland, vampires were known as "Vjesci". According to the myth, if a baby was born with a caul (amniotic sac remnants covering the head or face like a cap at birth sometimes called "cradle cap") they were destined to become a vjesci. The only way to prevent this fate was to remove the caul, dry it, grind it up and feed it to the child when he or she is 7 years old. If a child was born with a caul and with teeth, he becomes a "wupji" or "upior" and there was no remedy for it. It is said that a vjesci or wupji can be identified by their hyperactive personality and a red or ruddy complexion but sometimes cannot be distinguished from a completely normal person. But at death, if the person's body does not cool and stiffen and retains its color, he or she was believed to be a vampire.

In the past, illness came often and in many disguises. No one knew the cause of many afflictions so superstitions and belief in occult curses was common. Blaming a series of deaths on vampirism was a scapegoat and vampire killing was a cure to ease the minds of the living. There were many rituals used to bury a suspected vampire. A bit of earth could be placed in the coffin, a crucifix or coin put under the tongue, a net placed over the body or a bag of seeds placed inside the coffin, the body may be buried face down, a nail could be driven through the forehead or the head would be removed and placed between the vampire's legs. Sometimes, the body of a suspected vampire was exhumed to examine the corpse for vampire signs. If a corpse was not embalmed (as most were not in the old days) the skin would have shrunk making the nails appear to have grown postmortem. Decomposition of organs and drying of tissues could produce a gurgling noise and sometimes blood would appear coming out of the mouth. Exhumers believed all these were signs that the person was "undead" and therefore a vampire when in actuality this was just natural decomposition of a human body. Recently, construction workers near Gliwice, Poland, discovered several skeletons buried with the skull between its legs signifying a vampire burial.

Not long before Bram Stoker published his famous vampire novel, there lived a prominent and influential citizen of Wejherowo (German: Neustatt-an-der-Rheda) named Franz von Poblocki. In 1870 at 63 years of age, Franz died of consumption or tuberculosis. Less than two weeks later his son, Anton, also died of "Galoppierende Schwindsucht" or galloping consumption, named that way for its rapid advancement of the disease. Soon, Franz's wife, Josephine, her young daughter and a brother in law also became ill complaining of nightmares and anxiety. The family became concerned and concluded that Franz must be a vampire inflicting ill on his family. Before the burial of his brother, the remaining son of Franz von Poblocki went to the grave digger at the cemetery in Rozlazino and offered him a sum of money requesting he dig his brother's grave close to his father's so that he could reach without difficulty the coffin of Franz von Poblocki to decapitate his corpse and place his head between his legs. The grave digger agreed but then told the local pastor who condemned the ritualistic act. The pastor reported the deed to the authorities but not before the illegal act was accomplished. A trial ensued and Franz's son and accomplices were found guilty and sentenced until an appeal overturned the verdict on the grounds that the perpetrators were acting in self defense.

The Kaszubian Poles supposedly imported their vampire superstition to Wilno, Ontario, Canada when they settled there in 1859. In 1969, an author named Jan Perkowski was contracted by the National Museum of Man in Canada to do a study for the Canadian Centre for Folklore Studies about the Kaszubian vampire superstition

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Were the Jamestown Poles Catholics?

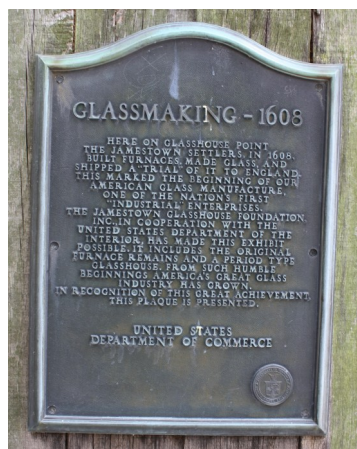
by Trina Goss Galauner

Sources disagree as to the religious preference of the Poles in Jamestown. If we are to believe the information contained in the memoir of Zbigniew Stefanski in 1624 and that indeed the memoir did exist at one time, we would assume the first 5 Polish colonists of Jamestown were Calvinists or Protestant. Stefanski indicates that fellow settler, Stanislaw Sadowski was Protestant. And early laws of Jamestown allow no Catholic worship (likely due to the Catholic relationship with Spain and Spain being a rival of England at that time). However, relics such as rosary medallions have been found at the Jamestown site that strongly indicate that there were Catholics in Jamestown. While it is probable the first few Polish immigrants were not Catholic it is possible the later arrivals were and likely worshipped in secret.

The Jamestown Glasshouse: America's First Industry

By Trina Goss Galauner

On my recent trip to Virginia, I visited the replica of the Jamestown Glasshouse. The first building was constructed by the Jamestown Glasshouse Foundation in 1957 for the 350th Anniversary Jamestown Festival but



was destroyed by fire in 1974. The second replica was built by the Glass Packaging Institute in 1976 and stands today. Inside, volunteers reenact the glassblowing that the original Polish colonists did in the early 17th century. The artisans produced common green glass or Waldglas (forest glass) and probably made window glass, bottles, and drinking glasses. Remnants of glass were made into beads and traded with the Indians who used them as decoration.



Exterior of the Jamestown Glasshouse replica, 2014
Photo by Trina Goss Galauner



The interior of the Glasshouse and glassmaking in progress
photos by Trina Goss Galauner



PGSGC Family Tree

By John F. Szuch

It was an exciting summer for a number of our members! Our meeting hostess, Anthonette Baciak had an exciting one with graduation parties for two of her grandchildren. First off, her granddaughter, Katelyn Peterson, graduated from Ashland University where she majored in "Athletic Training". She's attending the University of Florida for graduate work in the same field.



Secondly, Anthonette's grandson, Brandon Baciak, graduated from Berea-Midpark High School and will be attending Kent State University this Fall. He wants to be a history teacher. Sounds like a good candidate for the PGSGC. That's how I started!

Another one our busy ladies is our Newsletter editor/Web-site master, Trina Galauner. Her oldest child, Brigitte, graduated from Brecksville-Broadview Hts. High School and is attending the College of Wooster. She will study German, History and Dance. The young lady is quite an accomplished dancer and received a dance scholarship from Wooster!



Also keeping Trina busy this summer are her two sons, Adam (a soccer player) and Erik (a hockey player). Driving the two of them to practices and games year round keeps her quite busy. Both played in tournaments this summer in Washington D.C., Buffalo, Niagara Falls and Toronto.



And in my family, Gregory Szuch, my oldest grandson graduated from a police academy in Florida. He was the class president, and was "Top Gun" in marksmanship! He later passed the State exam and is working at a facility in Punta Gorda, FL.

Also in my house, I celebrated my 55th anniversary of graduation from John Carroll University. It was there that I did a family tree project for one of my classes in my senior year. I tucked it away when I was done, but dug it out when the PGSGC started!



I'd like to hear what's going on in your family so we can share it with fellow members. Email me at pulaskipro@aol.com. Thanks!

John F. Szuch

Schedule of Speakers for Upcoming Meetings

October 7th: John Szuch, member, *Casimir Pulaski*

November 4th: TENTATIVE: Father Eric Orzech, Pastor of St. Stanislaus Church and St. Casimer Church, subject to be determined

December 2nd: PGSGC Christmas Party



Cleveland's Polonia: Lakewood "Birdtown"

The current city of Lakewood was once part of Rockport Township, just west of the city of Cleveland. It was known as East Rockport until it became Lakewood hamlet in 1889 and later Lakewood village in 1903.

Lakewood's first official settler was James Nicholson who acquired 300 acres of land from Madison Avenue to Lake Erie. Lakewood was mostly agricultural consisting of orchards and vineyards. After the Civil War, farmhouses were replaced with mansions. Many of those mansions still stand today.

In 1891, the National Carbon Company purchased land in the southeast section of present day Lakewood. This property consisted of 155 acres that was bounded by Madison Avenue on the north, Halstead Avenue on the west, West 117th Street on the east and the railroad tracks on the south. The company built factory buildings and developed a residential neighborhood for National Carbon workers.

This residential neighborhood that was just west of the factory was nicknamed "Birdtown" because it had many streets with bird names such as Thrush, Robin, Quail and Plover. The area was also called, Ducktown, Bird's Nest, the Village and the Carbon District. Eastern European Slavs were some of the first people to make their residences in Birdtown and they established churches and schools that catered to their ethnicity.

But by 1893, news of good jobs at National Carbon and other nearby businesses attracted Polish immigrants as well. Many of these Poles attended the Slovak church of SS Cyril and Methodius but were eager to form their own Polish Catholic church. In 1909, Bishop Farrelly responded to their request and created St. Hedwig's Parish.

In 1911, the year Lakewood was incorporated into a city, land was purchased on Madison Avenue between Halsted and Dowd and construction of the church building began. It was completed in the summer of 1914.

Lakewood (St. Hedwig's)

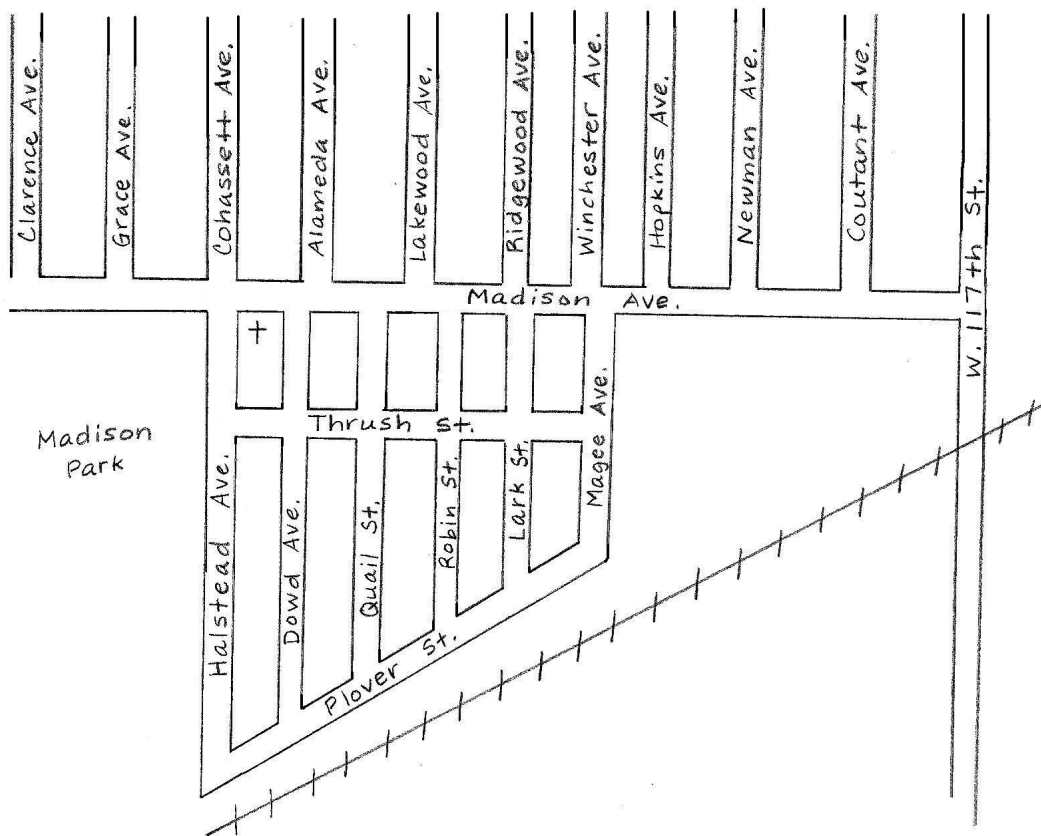


Illustration by Trina Galauner



Vjesci in Kaszubian Poland continued from page 7.....

surrounding Wilno. The result was a publication called "Vampires, Dwarves, And Witches Among The Ontario Kashubs" in which he stated the Kaszubian's belief that "if a vampire is not destroyed before he is buried, he will rise again and carry off his relatives". His report created a scandal and was condemned by the House of Commons. Evidently, his findings were based on interviews with anonymous residents and there were no documented vampire killings ever performed there. While there may have been some in modern day Wilno believing in vampires, the majority believed it was just legend.

We can safely say that vampires do not and have never existed but our Polish ancestors certainly may have believed otherwise. The legend of the vampire will continue to fascinate the world.

Jan z Kolna, the Polish Explorer

By Trina Goss Galauner

While it is widely accepted that the Poles that came to Jamestown in 1608 are the first Polish immigrants to America, they may not have been the first Poles to reach American soil. There is a little known theory that a Polish navigator sailing under the Danish flag was the first European to reach the eastern banks of North America in 1476. His name was John Scolvus or, in Polish, Jan z Kolna.

Supposedly, Jan z Kolna was born in the town of Kolno (thus z Kolna = of Kolno) and studied at the Jagiellonian University in Krakow. He first sailed for the Danish king Christian I on the Oldenburg in 1476. Allegedly, he reached Labrador and on his next expedition landed near present day Boston, MA. His arrival was before Christopher Columbus and well before settlements were established. Though no definitive proof exists, impartial Portuguese and Spanish historians from the 16th and 17th centuries have credited Jan z Kolna (AKA John Scolvus) with discovering of the New World.

The name has been documented as Kolna, Scolvus, Scholnus, Skolp, Skolny, Scolus and Scolno among other spellings. These various versions are found in literature from Scandinavia, Poland, Russia, Spain, Portugal, France, Germany and Italy. A Peruvian author states that Jan was actually Christopher Columbus since Columbus also used the name Colon which is similar to Kolno or Kolna. It is doubtful we will know for sure the true heritage of this explorer but we do know that a majority of historians from that time believed this Pole was the first to find America.

More About the Poles of Jamestown

Zbigniew Stefanski from Wloclawek was thought to be the son of Stefan Stefanski, a well-known glassblower

Jan Mata's surname may have been shortened from Matajewicz.

Jan Bogdan's surname many have been shortened from Bogdanski or Bogdanowicz

Michael Lowicki was born in England but his parents were from Poland

Stanislaw Sadowski was said to have been a Calvinist from Radom but historians say he was actually from Ostroleka but fled when his life was threatened after publishing a brochure condemning Jesuit priests of Wilno.



Portrait of Jan z Kolna as imagined by Arthur Szyk

The Polish Genealogical
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Visit us on the web at:
www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~ohpgsgc/

**Please submit all correspondence to:
PGSGC Newsletter
c/o the return address above**

About Us

Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month from September through June. They are held in the parish hall of St. Mary's PNC Church. St. Mary's is located on the corner of Broadview Rd. and Wexford Ave. in Parma, Ohio. Meetings begin at 7:30 PM and are usually over before 9:30 PM. There is ample parking in the parish parking lot. The entrance is on Marietta Ave. Membership dues are \$2.00 per month through January, then \$24.00 per year.

At many of our meetings, we have guest speakers who address the group on subjects in which we have an interest. The subjects may include genealogical matters, Polish history, heritage and traditions. When we do not have a guest speaker, we have "**Show and Tell**" nights when fellow members discuss their genealogical problems, ask for advice from anyone with a similar problem, tell us of their discoveries, or let us know what they've learned about their ancestors.

Our group maintains a library which is a popular resource our members enjoy. It contains various books, maps, pamphlets and newsletters from other genealogical groups. Materials can be borrowed from the library for a period of one month. We employ the honor system with regard to borrowing of books and other related materials.

We also keep a surname research list. This list includes the surnames of our ancestors which our active members are researching. In the past, members have discovered that they were investigating names that other members were also researching.

We publish a quarterly twelve page newsletter entitled, *Our Polish Ancestors*. Articles for the newsletter are selected that are of interest to our membership. Many are based on materials gathered from the many fine research facilities in and around the Greater Cleveland area, such as: The Cleveland Public Library, The Western Reserve Historical Society, The Cuyahoga County Archives, The Family History Centers and the many Polish-American churches in this part of northern Ohio. Articles written by our membership are always welcome.