



## BLESSED JERZY POPIELUSZKO

“Overcame Evil With Good”\*

On Monday, June 7, 2010, the Cleveland Plain Dealer had a small story, consisting of only three sentences on page A6 that could easily have been overlooked, entitled “Church beatifies Polish Priest.” The priest is Father Jerzy Popiełuszko, who was beaten and murdered by three Security Police officers on October 19, 1984. His body was dumped into the Vistula Water Reservoir near Wloclawek, where it was finally recovered on October 30, 1984. On November 3, 1984, more than 250,000 people attended his funeral, including Lech Walesa.

Born September 14, 1947 in Okopy near Suchowola, Poland, he had come from humble beginnings. He became associated with the workers and trade unions of the Solidarity movement after he was assigned as chaplain to the Warsaw Steelworkers. His monthly Homeland Mass (Msza za Ojczyzne) on an outdoor balcony at Warsaw’s Saint Stanislaus Kostka Church regularly attracted up to 20,000 faithful. Father Popiełuszko was outspoken against the Communists in his sermons, which were broadcast throughout Poland by Radio Free Europe. He became a symbol of resistance, but always preached nonviolence.

On December 19, 2009, Jerzy Popiełuszko was officially recognized as a martyr by Pope Benedict XVI. The Mass in Warsaw on Sunday, June 6th to celebrate his beatification was celebrated by Vatican Archbishop Angelo Amato, and was attended by more than 100 bishops, 2,000 priests, the Polish Prime minister Donald Tusk, as well as the priest’s mother, Marianna. More than 100,000 people gathered in the square in central Warsaw to witness the event. The beatification was followed by a four hour, 7.5 mile long procession bearing the martyr’s relics through Warsaw to the Church of Divine Providence in Wilanów. The feast day of Blessed Jerzy Popiełuszko will be celebrated on October 19th.

\*The trademark of Blessed Jerzy Popiełuszko and the words that were lettered across the altar roof on the day of his beatification.



Tombstone of Father  
Jerzy Popiełuszko  
Age 37  
Assassinated  
19 Oct. 1984

Photo by  
Edward Mendyka  
1988

# Stanley (Stanislaw) Kowalski's Journey to fight for Poland in Haller's Army

by Patricia V. (Wilson) Bakaitis

While growing up I heard a story from my mother (Ladislava "Lottie" Kowalski Wilson) about her oldest brother, Stanley, going off to fight for Poland in World War I. Stanley was born in Poland on 14 November 1895. He came to the United States with his mother the first time, in 1898, around four years of age and grew up in Cleveland Ohio. The family returned to Poland for about one year (1908-1909) when he was about 13 years old. His second voyage to the United States was in June 1909. This time the family returned and again they resettled in Cleveland.

In researching my Polish ancestry I heard about Haller's Army. I then recalled the tale of my Uncle Stanley fighting for Poland during World War I. My mother told of him joining the Canadian Army, training with them, transferring to the French Foreign Legion, then going to France where he transferred into the Polish Army. I wondered if he was among the men who belonged to Haller's Army. I started to collect information about Haller's Army to see if this information meshed with the story my mother told me.

In researching the history of Haller's Army I found these men were from all over the globe, Canada, England, Argentina, and of course the United States. It was known by several names, "Blue Army" (due to the color of their uniforms), the "Polish Legion of France" and "Haller's Army". The United States recruits had to meet certain criteria. They could not be in the age range for enlistment in the United States Army (or needed some other reason to be refused entrance in the U.S. Army); they could not be an American citizen nor could they have applied for citizenship; and must be single without any dependents. The recruits from the United States trained in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Canada before going to France. They fought with the French during World War I. Jozef Haller was the general who in October of 1918 had taken over the command of the Armed Forces which was then recognized as an independent Polish Army. Only for about seven months was it really known as "Haller's Army" and they were then sent to Poland, in 1919 to be a part of the Polish Army. Jozef Haller was their new commander. They were merged into the Army of Poland. The merged army now fought against the Russians, who were threatening the survival of the newly reorganized Polish Republic.

By 1920 many of the soldiers, who came from the United States, wanted to return. Even though they helped fight for Poland, many were disillusioned over their treatment when the two armies merged. As they were demobilized they were sent to in a camp in Skierniewice where they stayed until returning to the United States. The dilemma now was how to return them back to America. Neither the Polish government (who was still fighting the Russians) nor the Polish organizations in the United States (who recruited them) could afford to pay for their passage back to the U.S. Because they were not fighting as United States Army members nor were they American citizens, a special act of the U.S. Congress was passed to pay for their passage to the United States. They started returning in April of 1920, on some of the same ships that took them to Europe.

After reading the history of how volunteers in the United States were recruited and trained, I decided to see if my uncle may have been a member of this army. He was in the age range for enlistment in the United States Army (but had poor eyesight) and he was not an American citizen, had not applied for citizenship and was single without dependents. He met the criteria to join the other men fighting for the people of Poland. It sounded like he could have been in "Haller's Army".

The Polish Genealogical Society of America (PGSA) has a site with an index of surnames in Haller's Army recruitment records. I found his name and sent for his records. They are in Polish but are fairly easy to decipher.

His medical papers for enlistment state he could fight in the front, but my mother said this was not allowed as he could have shot one of his fellow soldiers, if he lost his glasses. So he stayed in the rear and performed duties such as stringing telephone wire and other tasks important to support the troops in the



Solidarity banners opposite tomb of Father Jerzy Popiełuszko in St. Stanislaus Kostka Churchyard in defiance of martial law in Warsaw, Poland photo by Edward Mendyka 1988



Stamp issued on the occasion of the beatification of Fr. Jerzy Popiełuszko

November 6 is the Sesquicentennial of the 1860 birth of Ignace Jan Paderewski, pianist, composer, recruiter for Haller's Army, and prime minister of Poland (1919), who died on June 29, 1941.

The Genealogy Department of Cuyahoga County Public Library's Fairview Park Branch will offer a journaling program on the first Wednesday of every month from 7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. Jumpstart Your Journaling is an opportunity to record your memories, be inspired by journaling prompts and meet others who enjoy journaling. Join us at the Fairview Park Branch to write and share your work on Wednesday, September 1st, October 6th, November 3rd and December 1st.

**JONI MIHELICH**  
**SUBJECT SPECIALIST - GENEALOGY**  
**Cuyahoga County Public Library**

front lines.

In 1920 Stanley needed to make a decision to stay in Poland or to return to the United States. I am under the impression he first thought he may stay in Poland but the saying “you can never go home” was true. Poland, after the war, was not the same Poland he remembered as a youth. So, for the third and final time he came to the United States. He came back with the other returning Haller’s Army soldiers. They sailed from Danzig, on June 16, 1920 as a passenger on the U. S. S. Mercury. His name is found on the manifest on list M 40, line 4. He stated he was returning to Cleveland and to the home of his father, Ignatius Kowalski. The ship docked at the Port of New York.

I may not have discovered very much about Stanley’s experience while fighting for Poland and the family that still remained there but I learned through different documentation that my mother’s simple story was true. Stanley did go to Canada, then to France, then to Poland and finally back to the United States. On June 8, 1928 about eight years after his last return he took the oath of allegiance and became an American citizen.

I wish to thank Cindy Spikowski for sharing her information that she researched about Haller’s Army. This got me to think, I too can write about a member of my family and how they contributed to history.



Stanley Kowalski with his youngest sister Genevieve (Kowalski) Taylor, a member of the Women’s Army Corps. (W.A.C.) during WW II

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## How to search Ohio death certificates on familysearch.org

by Ben Kman





## Schedule of Speakers for Upcoming Meetings

Sep. - Members' Research Update

Oct. - Deneen Kassouf, supervisor of Public Outreach Department of the Office of the Cuyahoga County Recorder

“Property Deed Research and Services of the Public Outreach Department”

Nov. - Members' Favorite Polish Family Recipes and their Origin

### Welcome--New Member--Witamy

David Simmer

GROMECK SZYMCZAK WILKOWSKI

### Letter from the President

by John F. Szuch

Well, the summer months have breezed by rapidly! Unfortunately, those summer months were really hot ones and not conducive to doing cemetery hopping etc. Most of us, if we had air conditioning, probably elected to stay indoors. If you have a computer, maybe you spent some time doing some research online? I look forward to hearing at a future meeting what success you may have had. For you out of town members, drop us a note and we'll try to get it into a future bulletin.

On a sad note, in recent months we lost long time member PETER PALSHOOK, and KEN GOSS: the father of Trina Galauner who does our PGSGC web-site. Our condolences and prayers go out to their families. To view their Plain Dealer obituaries and pictures, see papers for July 8 or May 29-31, or on <http://obits.cleveland.com/obituaries/cleveland/> enter their names, click the down arrow, click “Past year”, click Search, and at the end of the first three lines click More.



At the June meeting, we had the pleasure of having Amy Fellner of Arizona State University speaking on researching Polish records at state archives in eastern Europe. She is pictured here on the left with President John F. Szuch and Georgene Jasinski, who is the Program Director for the PGSGC.

THE POLISH GENEALOGICAL  
SOCIETY OF GREATER CLEVELAND  
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***OUR POLISH ANCESTORS***  
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OF GREATER CLEVELAND



Everyone who is interested in Genealogy, and more specifically Polish Genealogy, is welcome to join our group. We meet the first Tuesday of the month from September thru June at St. Mary's PNC Church; 5375 Broadview Rd. (corner of Broadview & Wexford); Parma, Ohio. Parking is available in the parish lot, the entrance of which is on Marietta Ave. Meetings begin at 7:30 PM and usually end at 9:30-10:00 PM. Membership dues are \$25.00 a year.

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