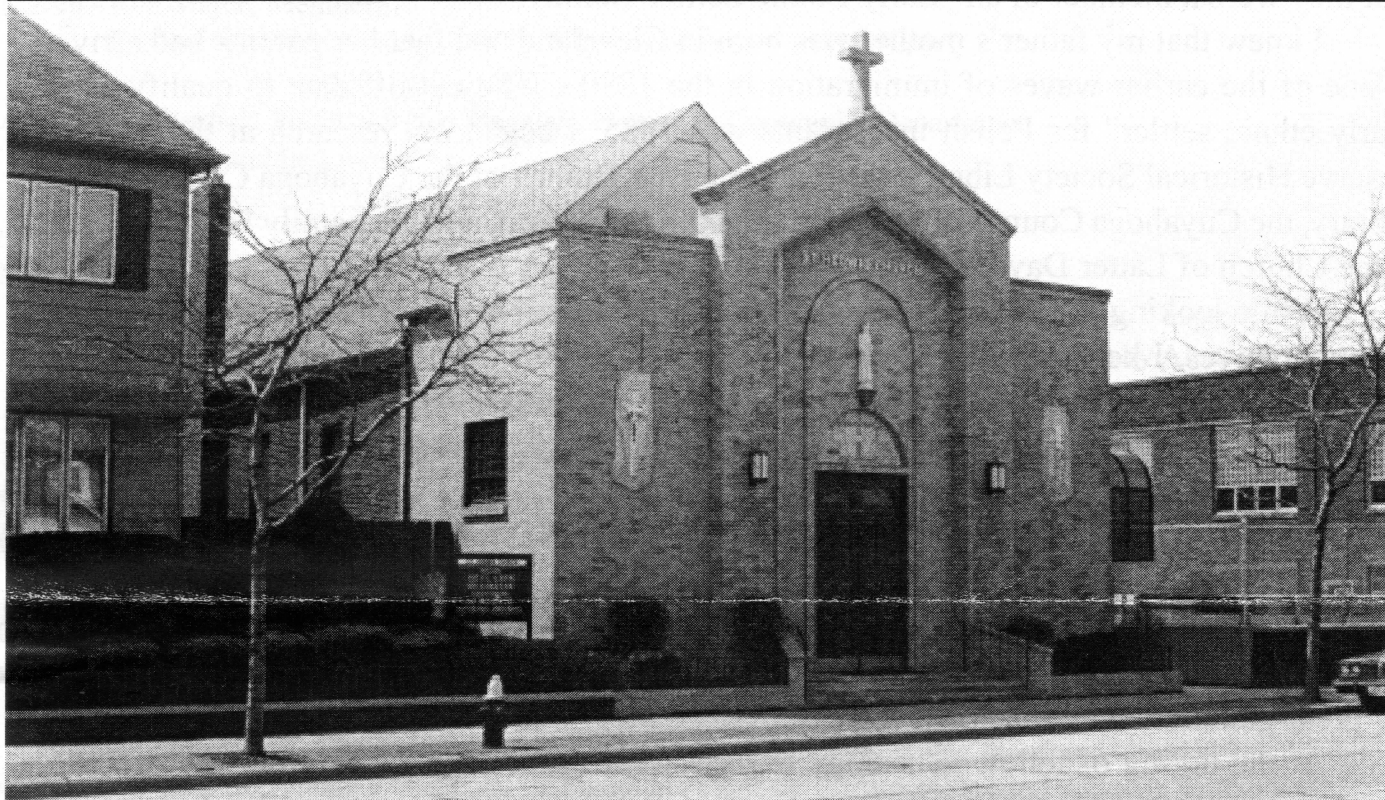


Our Polish
ANCESTORS

THE QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE POLISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF GREATER CLEVELAND
JAN. / MAR. 2010 VOL. 19 No. 1



St. Hedwig Church, 1905 - January 17, 2010, photo by Edward Mendyka

It will be missed, the little church at Madison and Halstead Avenues that had provided solace to so many Polish Catholics. Most of the early church members had been employees of the National Carbon Company and had lived in "The Village", which was what they called the Pleasant Hill Allotment, a subsidiary land company set up by National Carbon, in order to make housing available for their workers. The houses were close together on 424 narrow lots and each house was crowded with families and boarders.

They worked long hours and made incredible sacrifices to raise funds to build their church. There were carved statues from Bavaria and carved angels made by parishoner Ed Zebrak. The ceiling was adorned with murals, and there was a mural of St. Hedwig behind the main altar, painted by the renowned Cleveland artist, Romeo Celleghin. In later years, after Romeo Celleghin had died, the pastor of St. Hedwig's, Father John Bryk, asked Romeo's son, Nestor, to arrange for the mural of St. Hedwig to be transformed into a mosaic. When the beautiful mosaic of Romeo Celleghin's original mural of St. Hedwig arrived from Italy in twelve sections, Nestor installed it in the church. (For more about the murals of St. Hedwig's, see *The Art of Romeo Celleghin, Preserving our Religious Art Heritage, A Cleveland Case Study* by Susan L. Whitelaw, Ph.D.)

Now, the Masses in Polish, the processions, Baptisms, first Holy Communions, weddings and of course, the Holy Saturday blessing of the baskets of food for Easter, will be but a memory, especially for Richarda Ksiazek Jambrozy and Rita Sroka Brady, members of our genealogical society, who graduated from St. Hedwig's School.

The Grucza Family in Cleveland

by Lucia Wicinski Dominak

In 1996, the City of Cleveland was celebrating its 200th anniversary. As part of the celebration, people who could document the arrival of their family in Cleveland by a certain date, which varied by ethnic group, were eligible to receive a plaque or certificate indicating that they were a member of an "Early Ethnic Settler" family.

I knew that my father's mother was born in Cleveland and that her parents had arrived in one of the earlier waves of immigration in the 1880's. The cut-off date to qualify as an "early ethnic settler" for Polish immigrants was 1885. I began my research at the Western Reserve Historical Society Library, the Fairview Park Branch of the Cuyahoga County Public Library, the Cuyahoga County Archives on Franklin Boulevard, and the Family History Center at the Church of Latter Day Saints in Westlake.

While looking for my great-grandfather, Bernard Grucza's naturalization papers at the county archives, I kept on finding records for other Grucza's. My father told me that he had never heard of these people and that we were not related. I discovered that Bernard had come to Cleveland with his wife and two oldest children in 1888, three years too late for early ethnic settler distinction.

I searched through old city directories and found that at least one of these Grucza's that we were 'not related to' was living at the same address as my great-grandfather on Poland Street which later became East 66th Street. (I understand that it was renamed "Poland Street" recently.) This was Simon or Szymon Grucza, who I would discover was a younger brother of my great-grandfather.

At the urging of fellow genealogy buffs, I went to the LDS Library in May of 1996, never expecting to find any information about my Polish Catholic ancestors. When I entered the name "Grucza", I was shocked and amazed to find my great-grandfather's and my great-grandmother's names, as well as an ancestral record that went back to 1790. Mr. Norbert Winter of Michigan had compiled all of this information by using microfilmed records. Mr. Winter's grandmother, Emilia Grucza Dysarz, was a cousin of my great-grandfather. I am very grateful to Mr. Winter and the work he did.

Through his work, I learned that the Grucza's were from an area in Poland about 80 km due south of Gdansk that was part of West Prussia then. The villages mentioned in the records are Getomie, Neukirch (Polish name: Nowa Cerkiew), and Pelplin. My father recalled an older cousin telling him that the Grucza's were from Stargardt. In reality, they were from an area near Starogard Gdansk. He remembered that his grandparents spoke German as well as Polish, and that 'when they went to town, they were in Germany'. Parts of these reflected childhood memories from when the cousins conversed were true and provided additional confirmation of the LDS information.

Using old city directories, census information, obituaries, naturalization information, *Germans to America* volumes, a series of books listing World War I veterans, as well as talking

to my father, his siblings, and his cousins, I have pieced together a history of the Grucza family in Cleveland that is mostly stored in my head and on pieces of paper in file boxes in my home office...someday to be concisely documented — perhaps in retirement.

What I have learned is that my great-great-great grandfather was Roch Grucza (born 1790). He married Catharina Dering (born 1793) and they had eleven children. My great-great grandfather, Martin Grucza (born 1821), was the fourth of those children and he married Marianna Lisewska (born 1828) and they had ten children. My great grandfather, Bernard Grucza (born 1853), was the third of those children and he married Joanna Seroka.

The desire to immigrate to America must have been great, because of the ten children of Martin Grucza, seven came to live in Cleveland. Most were married and had several children before arriving. The seven siblings who came to Cleveland were:

Joseph Grucza (born: 1849) arrived in Cleveland in 1881 (?)

Bernard Grucza (born: 1853) arrived in Cleveland in 1888

Rosalia Grucza Ruminski (born: 1855) arrived in Cleveland in 1883

Edmund Grucza (born: 1859) arrived in Cleveland in 1885

Simon Grucza (born: 1864) arrived in Cleveland in 1890

Joanna Grucza Sledz (born: 1866) arrived in Cleveland in 1885

Francisca Grucza Dombrowski (born: 1869) arrived in Cleveland in ?

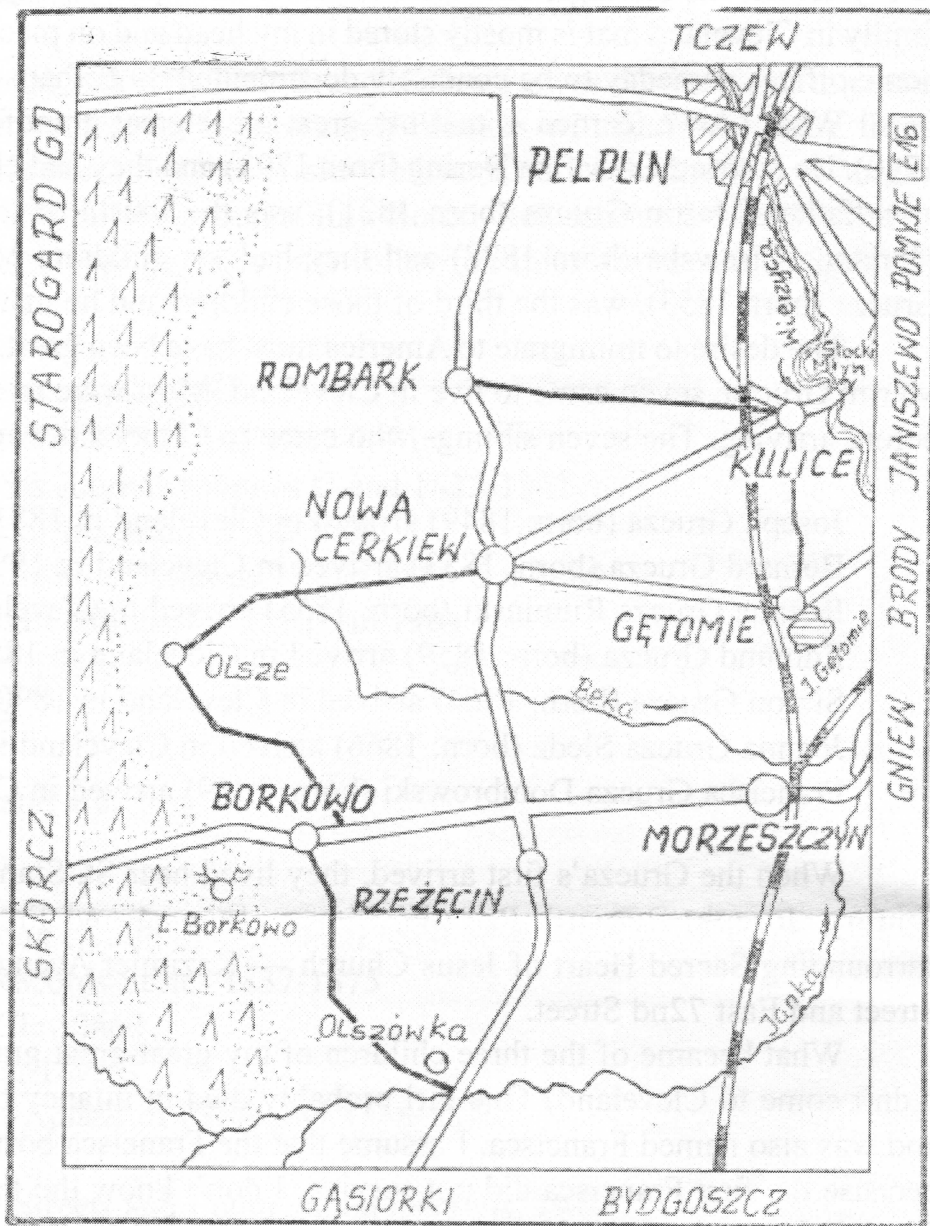
When the Grucza's first arrived, they lived near St. Stanislaus. Around the turn of the century, Joseph, Bernard, Rosalia, Simon, Joanna, and Francisca moved to the streets surrounding Sacred Heart of Jesus Church — Kazimier Avenue, Krakow Avenue, East 71st Street and East 72nd Street.

What became of the three children of my great-great grandfather, Martin Grucza, that didn't come to Cleveland? One girl probably died in infancy because she was born in 1851 and was also named Francisca. I assume that the Francisca born in 1869 was given the name because the first Francisca did not survive. I don't know the fate of a "Franz" born in 1857. But I do know the fate of Johann who was born in 1862.

In the summer of 2007, while visiting Poland I had the opportunity to visit the small villages of Getomie and Nowa Cerkiew. With the assistance of my traveling companion Sonia Chapnik and her friend Maria Giedtz we were able to get some information. Sonia and Maria talked to the priest at the church in Nowa Cerkiew and he gave us some leads to people who were Grucza or Seroka descendants. An old couple in Getomie, Mr. and Mrs. Seroka, didn't know of any relatives that went to the United States. One man in Stocki Mlyn was not receptive to our inquiries. A woman in Pelplin said she had some documents to show us, but she was busy and wanted us to come back the next day. Another elderly gentleman in Pelplin invited us in his small apartment. The walls were covered with old photos of his grandparents, parents, and other family members. He showed me some old documents. He was the grandson of Johann (Jan) Grucza, my great-grandfather's brother. His name is Eugeniusz Kwiatkowski.

Since our meeting in June 2007, I have been in correspondence with Mr. Kwiatkowski. We send each other copies of old photos, documents, etc. The most interesting thing that Mr. Kwiatkowski has sent me is a copy of a letter written by the Kniola Agency to his relatives in the summer of 1912. It appears that they made an inquiry about coming to Cleveland. They wanted to find out if it would be possible to find a job as a church organist in Cleveland when they arrived. The Kniola agency responded that most people find jobs working in the factories, and that to find a job as a musician might be a difficult task. They also inquired about the safety of ship travel during the winter months. Since this letter was written after the Titanic's sinking in April of 1912, I am sure that this event was on their minds.

After 120 years of separation, it is great to know that a connection can still be made between the Grucza's of Poland and the Grucza's in the United States.



OKOLICE NOWEJ CERKWI

Map by Bogdan Solecki
Gdansk 1990

The Bernard Grucza Family, circa 1908



Frances Grucza
daughter 1896-
1970 (Sr. Loyola,
Felician Nun)

Rosalia Grucza
Proch - daughter
- 1887-1969

Bernard Grucza -
son - 1891-1966

*Marianna Grucza
Wicinski - daughter
- 1894-1927

Martin Grucza
- youngest son -
1899-1930

John Grucza - eldest
son - 1881-1940

Joanna Seroka (Sroka?)
Grucza - mother - 1861-
1932

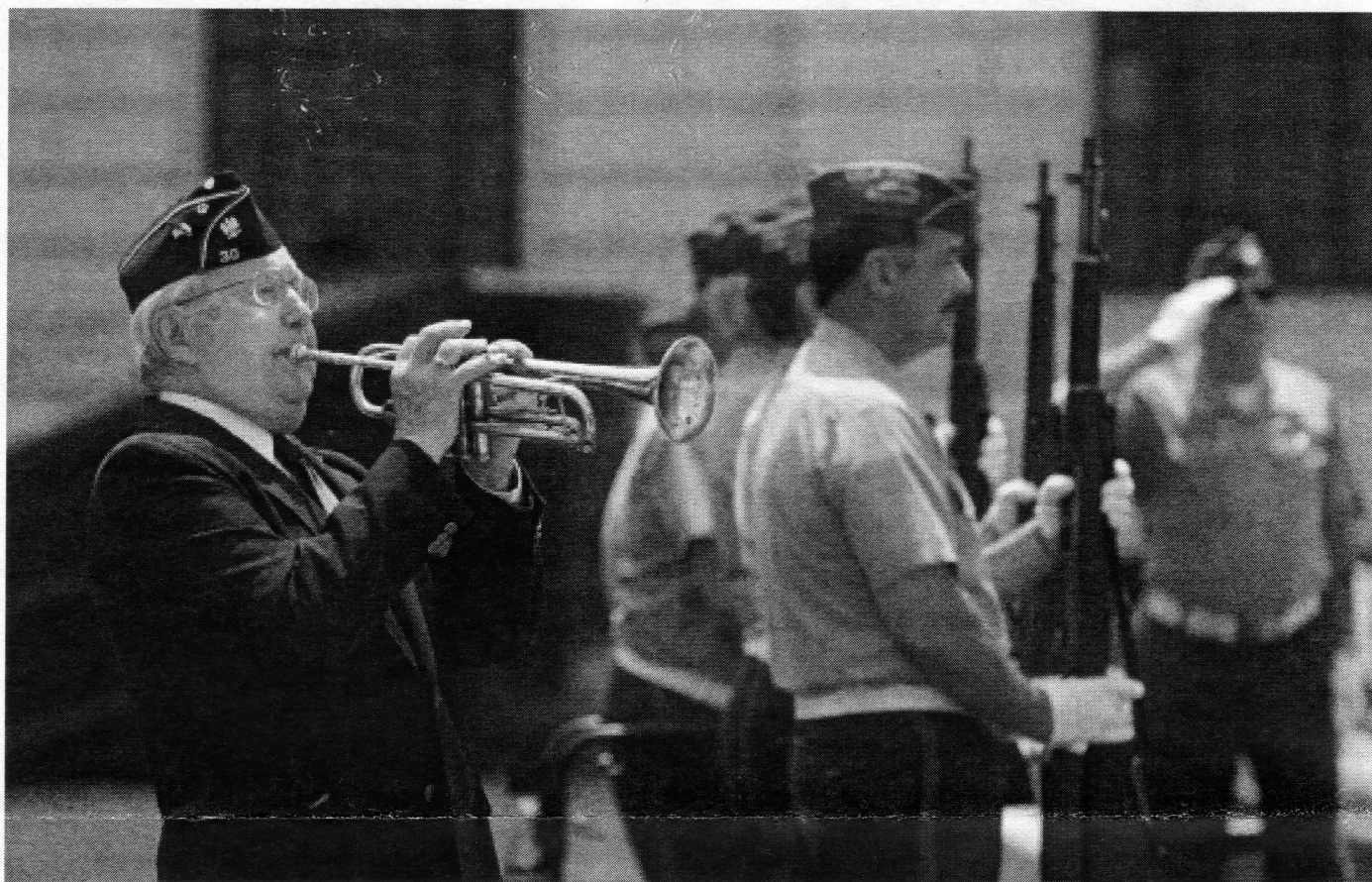
Sophie Helena
Grucza -
youngest
daughter -
1903-1994 (Sr.
Sulpicia II,
Felician Nun)

Bernard Grucza -
father - 1853-1925

Missing: Joanna Grucza - eldest daughter - 1884-1921 (Sr. Sulpicia I, Felician Nun)

*Grandmother of Lucia Wicinski Dominak

ED ZELEK PLAYS TAPS: A PRAYER, A THANK-YOU, A FAREWELL



Memorial Day 2006

Photographed by Scott Shaw/The Plain Dealer

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At the November meeting of the Polish Genealogical Society of Greater Cleveland, we honored our veterans as members of our society shared their military experiences. An especially moving part of the evening was when Ed Zelek played taps on his bugle to honor all the deceased veterans. Ed has been a member of Pulaski Post 30 of the Polish Legion of American Veterans (PLAV) for over 55 years. Ed's father, Stanley Zelek, who was born in Poland, became a charter member of Post 30 following his discharge from the United States Army after serving in World War I.

After graduation from Lincoln High School, Ed enlisted in the United States Army and was stationed in Heidelberg, Germany. He played the trumpet with the 61st AGF Band of the 3rd Army. Now, Ed plays the bugle at the burials of veterans at the Rittman National Veterans Cemetery, as well as at other veteran affairs, parades churches and memorials. In 2008 he was honored as "Veteran of the Year" by the Polish Legion of American Veterans. Ed and his wife of 58 years, Clarice (Connie) are members of our genealogical society.

“THERE IS ALWAYS A SENSE OF RENEWAL FOR A MAN WHO GOES BACK TO HIS BEGINNINGS”

-John Cardinal Krol

Last November, while doing research about St. Hyacinth Parish in Cleveland, in order to write an article to mark its closing, I encountered an article written by Cardinal John Krol, a former member of the parish. The article was written by the Cardinal, and appeared in the *Cleveland Press* on Tuesday, October 17, 1972. The occasion was the trip the Cardinal had made to Poland for the beatification of the martyred Franciscan friar, Father Maximillian Kolbe.

Cardinal Krol's father had come to Cleveland from Siekierzyna, a small village in Poland, located 230 miles south of Warsaw in the Tatra mountains. The article contains the Cardinal's thoughts as he visits the village. He sees his parents in the villagers he encounters. He said that if he had met his father that day in Siekierzyna, his father would not have said: "Ah, Yan" he would have said 'Ah Kardynale'...He was a man of old-world courtesy, however. When I was ordained a priest, he called me 'Keladz' (priest). And when I became a Bishop, it was 'biskup.' That was his way: a man was entitled to the titles he had earned, especially a priest of the church he loved and respected." John Cardinal Krol was ordained a priest on February 20, 1937 in Cleveland by Bishop Joseph Schrembs. Monsignor Krol was consecrated Auxiliary Bishop of Cleveland on September 2, 1953. He became Archbishop of Philadelphia on February 11, 1961. He was installed in the College of Cardinals at the Consistory in the Vatican on June 26, 1967. Cardinal Krol's father had died February 27, 1958.

The Cardinal continues in his thoughts to mention that his father would not have been impressed by the scarlet robes of the Cardinal, nor his automobile, but rather his father would have been concerned that he was a good Cardinal. "Don't embarrass me" or, as they used to say on Fleet Avenue, a Polish neighborhood in Cleveland, 'Don't make shame for me.'"

As he continues to the little town of his ancestors, the people are waiting for him with the Chieb (bread) and Sol (salt), and the ziemia (earth). He notices that the handshakes are the same "the feel of a working man's hand, hard calloused: It's a place of hard soil and long winters." He tells that the problems are the same there as when his father left - "There isn't enough land to go around, not enough for a man to divide up among his children."

Cardinal Krol was in Poland for six days in 1972. He said that during that time he had said Mass in many places, "in great cathedrals, against rich and historic backgrounds of marble, silver and gold." He felt, however, that the beautiful cathedrals housing great treasures were not the greatest of the Polish church's treasures. He felt that the greatest treasure was on the other side of the communion rail - the Polish people.

The full text of Cardinal Krol's article can be found in the Tuesday, October 17, 1972 issue of the *Cleveland Press* on page A7. There is also an article in *Time* magazine on page 18 of the October 30, 1972 issue entitled "Pilgrim in Poland."

by Cindy Spikowski

Leo Melanowski

by Cindy Spikowski

The 1997 book by Thomas F. Saal and Bernard J. Golias entitled *Famous But Forgotten :The Story of Alexander Winton, Automotive Pioneer and Industrialist*, also mentions a brilliant engineer who has also been forgotten.

A Lakewood resident, Alexander Winton was born in Grangemouth, Scotland June 20, 1860. He arrived in the United States in 1879, eventually joining his sister Catherine and her husband, Thomas Henderson in Cleveland. A marine engineer like his father, Winton began with a bicycle shop in Cleveland. By 1896 he had started the Winton Motor Carriage Company located at what is now East 45th Street and Payne Avenue in a section of the Brush Electric factory. He employed sixteen men and the first motor carriage was completed by September 1, 1896, according to the July 24, 1897 *Scientific American*.

On April 1, 1860, two months before Alexander Winton was born in Scotland, Leo Melanowski was born in Warsaw, Poland. Educated in France, Melanowski apprenticed for the Otto Gas Engine Company in Vienna and worked for Panhard and Levassor in Paris. On August 11, 1894 he arrived in New York on the *SS Paris* with his wife Celine. He lists his occupation as "inventor" and plans a "protracted sojourn" in the United States.

In April, 1902. the Winton Motor Carriage Company applied for a permit to build a new factory on twelve acres of land located at Madison Avenue and Berea Road. According to the November 1902 *Auto Era*, a magazine published every month by the Winton advertising department, the factory was finished and producing automobiles six months after the permit was issued and 300 workers were employed there. After one year of operation, the workforce numbered 800. It was the largest automobile factory in the United States in 1903.

There are conflicting reports as to exactly when Leo Melanowski worked at Winton Motor Carriage Company, and also whether he was a consulting engineer or a manufacturing foreman. What is known, however, is that U.S. Patent #716,076 was issued on December 16, 1902 to Winton Motor Carriage Company. The invention is listed as a "Brake" and the inventor is "L. Melanowski."

In the summer of 1903, Horatio Nelson Jackson, Sewell K. Crocker and "Bud," a homeless bulldog made an historic drive from San Francisco to New York City in 64 days (46 actual days of driving) in a 1903 Winton 20 horsepower touring car. The Winton had been manufactured in Cleveland by Alexander Winton's Motor Carriage Company consisting of 800 workers under the supervision of a Polish-born inventor/engineer, Leo Melanowski.

Bibliography for Leo Melanowski

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Dragon Automobile Company Brochure 1906. <http://www.scripophily.net/draucoil.html>
Love, John W. "Recommended Ford for Job as Mechanic." *Cleveland Press*, December 16, 1931.
Passport Application for Leo Melanowski, May 9, 1924

Saal, Thomas F. and Golias, Bernard S. *Famous But Forgotten: The Story of Alexander Winton, Automotive Pioneer and Industrialist*. Twinsburg, Ohio: Golias Publishing Inc., 1997.

Wagner, Richard. *Golden Wheels: The Story of the Automobiles Made in Cleveland and Northeastern Ohio 1892-1932*. Cleveland: John T. Zubal, Inc., 1986.



HOW TO USE YOUR DIGITAL CAMERA TO PHOTOGRAPH MICROFILM

by Rosemary Chorzempa

Use your digital camera instead of photocopying the microfilm on the reader-printer.

Benefits are:

It's free.

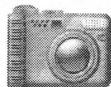
Makes a much better quality copy than the reader-printer.

Take the images home and put them right into your computer.

Import the images directly into your genealogy program, no need to scan the photocopies.

On your computer screen, you can use your picture viewer program to zoom in and enlarge the image.

Delete any images you don't want to keep, be "green" and uses no paper.



Share them via the internet or make a CD-rom or print the images from your computer's printer.

How-to do it:

Study your digital camera's manual. Learn how to use the different settings.

At the microfilm reader:

Set your camera to the highest quality image size. In the menu, select the highest pixel size (example: if your camera is a 7 mega pixel, select that image size. Or select the biggest image your camera can deliver (example: "for prints up to 11 x 13 inches").

Set your camera for close-up shooting by selecting the "macro" setting. This is used to make close-up images like the ones you want, clearly and in focus.

Turn off the flash. Using a flash will leave a bright and unreadable spot in the center of your image. There is enough light on the reader screen to make a good image.

The best setting is probably "automatic." But do some trials the first time with different camera settings if you wish, and check out the results on your computer screen. Use the best setting for your camera.

Take at least two shots of each page. Keep the best image.

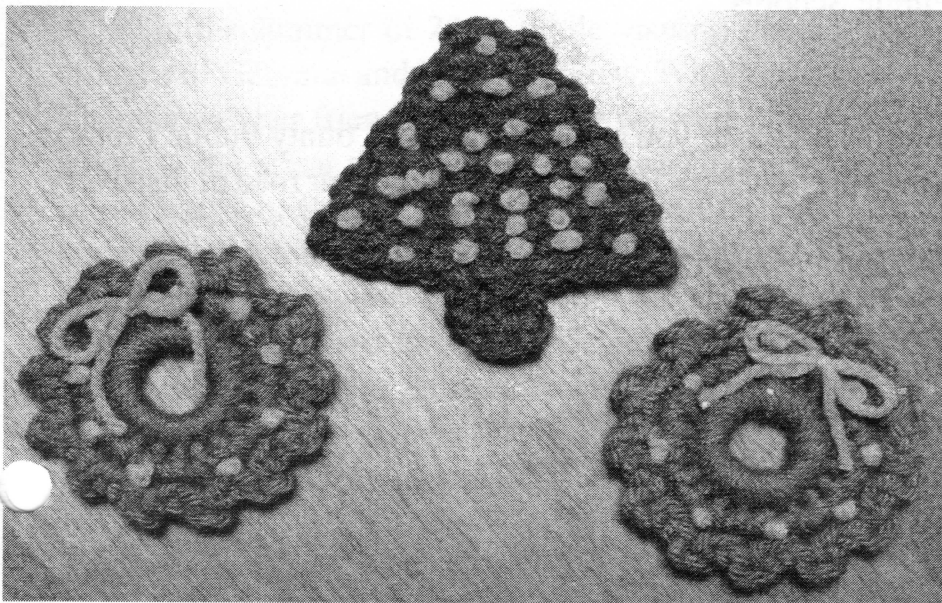
Stand and lean into the reader (if it's the "cave" type). Keep the camera as perpendicular to the screen as possible. Avoid pointing the camera at a sharp angle.

Above article is reprinted from Toledo Polish Genealogical Society Newsletter, Volume 3, Issue 2, Winter 2009, page 3, with permission from Rosemary Chorzempa, author of:

My Family Tree Workbook: Genealogy for Beginners, Dover Publications, 1982.

Design Your Own Coat-of-Arms, Dover Publications, 1987.

Korzenie Polski: Polish Roots, Genealogical Publishing Co., 1993.



We thank Elaine Marec for the beautiful crocheted favors she made for the members who attended the annual Christmas party. The wreath pin/ornament is from the 2008 party and the Christmas tree refrigerator magnet was from the 2009 party. We appreciate Elaine's contribution of time, talent and expense.

Microfilm You May Have Missed!

The Genealogy Collection at the Fairview Park Branch Library owns thousands of microfilm and microfiche to aid you in your genealogy research. Visitors will find everything from a Poughkeepsie, New York City Directory to a History of the 83rd Regiment OVI to Virginia County Maps and The Japanese Final Accountability Roster Relocations Center Records. If you find your research stays closer to home, the following microforms are available for Cuyahoga County research:

Auditor of State Tax Duplicates 1816-1838
Clerk of Courts Alien Docket 1818-1859 and 1859-1901
Clerk of Courts Common Pleas Journal volumes C-end 1823-1852
Clerk of Courts Declarations of Intentions 1902-1906
Common Pleas Court Naturalization Petitions 17 Oct 1888-Oct 1889
Clerk of Courts Naturalization Petitions Jan 1902-Jan 1904
Marriage License Index 1810-1998
Marriage Records 1810-1949

Resources specific to Cleveland are:

Cleveland City Directories

Annals of the First Presbyterian church of Cleveland 1820-1895
Annals of Cleveland Court Records Series 1837-1875
A Chapter in the History of Cleveland
Cleveland Congregationalists, 1895
Cleveland Newspaper Digest/Annals of Cleveland 1818-1876
Cleveland Necrology File
Cross Index to Selected City Streets and Enumeration Districts, 1910
Early History of the Cleveland Public Schools
History of Dentistry in Cleveland, Ohio

These are just a few of the resources available to you at the Cuyahoga County Public Library. Visit the Genealogy Collection at the Fairview Park Branch and start on your road of discovery.

JONI MIHELICH
Subject Specialist - Genealogy
Cuyahoga County Public Library

Frederic Chopin 200th Birthday Websites

<http://en.chopin.nifc.pl/institute/>

<http://en.chopin.nifc.pl/chopin/places/poland>

<http://chopin2010.pl/en>

Schedule of Speakers for Upcoming Meetings

March - Ron Marec, Member:

“Frederic Chopin - March 1, 1810, 200th Anniversary of His Birth”

April - Ron Burdick, Public Service Manager, History & Geography Department,
Cleveland Public Library:

“Genealogy and Research at the Cleveland Public Library”

May - Mary Kay Pieski, President, Ohio Chapter of the Kosciuszko Foundation:

“Arts Enriched English Camp in Poland” and “The Kosciuszko Foundation, Ohio Chapter”

Copies of *The Peasant Prince*, *Thaddeus Kosciuszko* and *The Age of Revolution* by Alex

Storozynski, Director of the Kosciuszko Foundation, will be available for purchase at this meeting.

Concert at the Shrine Church of Saint Stanislaus

See this beautiful, historic church, located at 3649 East 65th Street in Cleveland's Slavic Village.

Free will offering.

“**The Plague and the Moonflower**” Richard Harvey and Ralph Steadman

CityMusic Cleveland celebrates Spring by emphasizing GREEN with this concert dedicated to a single work concentrating on the environment. This performance, the first ever in America, will inspire everyone and raise our awareness of the fragile state of the world if left to the devices of those who choose to ignore its potential destruction. This fabulous multi-media work with tiers of music, word and visual elements will invite you to hear everything around you with your eyes and see everything around you with a mind and heart warmed by the blood uniting the universe as one creation of one Creator.

Saturday, April 24, 2010 8:30 PM

Letter from the President

by John F. Szuch

Welcome to a new decade for the PGSGC. First off, I would like to thank you for reelecting me to my 18th term as your president. Without the support of my fellow officers and a number of members with specific duties, our organization would not continue to grow and prosper as it has. Once again, my thanks to Ed Mendyka for founding our group in 1991 and encouraging me to run for president after his first year in the position.

Once again, our Christmas party last December was a huge success. I hope you mark your calendar now for this year's party on Dec. 7th. It's a great time to socialize with your fellow members, plus enjoy some great food. My thanks to all who prepared and helped serve the food, in particular my “Kitchen Angels” Shirley Lazar and Charlotte Welch.

Set yourself some genealogical goals for this year, be they large or small. Maybe they might be to find out some ancestors' names that have eluded you, or maybe when or from where they immigrated. These challenges and successes are always fun to share with your fellow members either at a meeting or through the bulletin.

Wishing and praying for a healthy 2010 for all of us.

THE POLISH GENEALOGICAL
SOCIETY OF GREATER CLEVELAND
c/o ST. MARY'S PNC CHURCH
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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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