



Gen Dobry!

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***** WELCOME! *****

to the latest issue of *Gen Dobry!*, the e-zine of PolishRoots®. If you missed previous issues, you can find them here:

<<http://polishroots.org/GenDobry/tabid/60/Default.aspx>>

***** READER'S DUE DILIGENCE HELPS ORGANIZATION DISCOVER PAPERWORK SNAFU *****

by Fred Hoffman <wfh@langline.com>

In a recent issue of *Gen Dobry!*, I included an article that gave information on an organization I felt offered researchers great opportunities. I did not have extensive information on this group, but I'd heard a fair number of good things about it, and felt reasonably comfortable bringing it to the attention of our readers. I can't really *vouch for* such organizations; I don't usually know enough about them to go quite that far. But I am glad to pass along word whenever it seems to me an organization, group, or society offers something potentially beneficial to our readers—yet always, always, with the understanding that the buyer should beware.

I was somewhat concerned, therefore, when I heard from a reader who'd looked into this organization and intended to have dealings with it—but discovered there was a troubling inconsistency with its non-profit status. Our reader contacted the organization and asked about this problem.

The administrator responded that he was surprised to hear of this problem, and immediately looked into it. He found that there was, indeed, a problem he had not been aware of. Subsequent investigation turned up missing paperwork that had caused an automatic change in status. The organization is working to provide the missing documentation and restore its status, and I expect to hear when it has succeeded.

I'm not naming names because it seems clear this was nothing more than a paperwork snafu, and it would be unfair to all involved to suggest there was any more to it than that. Besides, that's not really the point. The only reason I'm bringing this up is because it demonstrates a principle we all need to be reminded of from time to time:

Find out everything you can before signing on the dotted line!

In this case, an alert reader did some digging, and asked appropriate questions. This actually benefitted not only him, but also the organization in question, which was alerted to a problem that might have remained undiscovered for a long time. Everything turned out well—but it could have been otherwise, so easily.

This principle applies to everything we do, obviously. But it's particularly relevant to genealogy. One of the problems genealogy has long suffered with is its past. There was a time when many of the people who traced their family lines did so out of vanity, a selfish desire for status, or even plans to practice deception. That's one big reason genealogy has been slower to take off in Poland than in the United States. Many Poles associated it with snobs, with nobles who inherited their status and did nothing to earn it, and with frauds trying to steal their way into positions they could not hope to attain without lying. It's only in recent decades that people have started to realize genealogy can be a legitimate branch of history, one designed at establishing fact, not flattering vanity or aiding con men.

So as we begin a New Year, I wish you all great success in everything you do. And if you can stomach a little advice from me, avoid being a skeptic who knows the facts about everything and the value of nothing—but do ask questions, and seek the truth. If you're dealing with people of integrity, they will welcome your questions as a chance to prove themselves. If they evade your questions ... well, keep an open mind, but not so open your brains fall out!

***** LETTERS TO THE EDITOR *****

Subject: Dęborski or Tyburski

Editor—I wanted to publish, with permission, an edited version of this note I received from one reader. It proves that good, solid, persistent research can bring success, even when you're looking for the wrong name!

I just read through the latest *Gen Dobry!* Newsletter and thought you might like an update on some of my Polish ancestors' surnames. When I looked back at my e-mail, I realized that I first contacted you exactly 11 years ago today—what a coincidence!

I asked you about three topics:

My family surname - **Deborski**;

The surname of a great grandmother - thought to be **Koranko**, **Kurina**, or something similar;

The notations in some obits of the place of origin of the Koranko, etc. family - **Wongrovitz**, **Bongrovits**. You pointed me to Wągrowiec near Poznań and this was right on the money!

As for the Deborski name, your note said:

“It's virtually certain this name was originally DE~BORSKI, using E~ to stand for the Polish nasal vowel written as an E with a tail under it, usually pronounced much like “en” but changing to “em” when preceding B or P. So DE~BORSKI would be pronounced (and probably sometimes spelled) DEMBORSKI.”

I have recently been working with Łukasz Bielecki and his group and we found the birth records for my grandfather, his siblings, and the marriage record for their parents. The family surname turns out to be **Tyburski**. Using the website <<http://www.ivona.com/us/>>, I found that **Deborski** and **Tyburski** sound nearly identical when the Polish speakers say them. This solved a mystery that has intrigued me for years, since every Deborski I have ever been able to find has turned out to be a direct descendent of my great-grandparents. The last place of residence for this Tyburski family was Szczutowo in the parish of Świedziebnia.

As for the Koranko, etc. surname, without an accurate spelling, you declined to speculate.

Also working with Łukasz Bielecki, I have found the birth, marriage, and death records for several ancestors. This family is quite interesting, as the records show the name as Kuranka, Kurenke, Koranka, and a few others. Again, most of these are phonetically quite similar to one another.

My speculation is that the name might actually be **Koronka**, which is the only variation that I have found with a connection to a Polish meaning. It is also the only one that shows up in the Moikrewni database.

I guess my greatest learning from all of this is the need to pay close attention to how names are pronounced in Polish, which can be quite different from how they may sound in Americanized English.

If you are interested, the Polish surnames uncovered so far are as follows:

Pankowski and Kuranka family near Wągrowiec: Nowakowska, Szcześniak, Mitke

Tyburski and Klimowska family near Szczutowo: Szemborska, Krajnik, Trędowicz

I really enjoy your updates and learning about new sources of information about Polish genealogy!

Gary Deborski

Editor—Well, so much for my notion the name was Dęborski! At least I was right about Wągrowiec ... But in my defense, **Dęborski** is a legitimate surname, so it wasn't too silly to suggest it. Fortunately, Gary kept digging, and hooked up with an excellent researcher, who helped him find the truth, that the name was actually **Tyburski**. As for **Koronka**, I can't say for sure, but I think he's on the right track there. It means "lace," and some 275 Poles went by that name in 2002. With any luck, further research will shed light on this.

I also want to emphasize Gary's use of Ivona.com to hear what Polish names sound like. We've mentioned this before, but it bears mentioning again. It's one of the simplest, easiest ways to help get past spelling inconsistencies. Go to <<http://www.ivona.com/us/>>. In the upper left of the home page, beneath "Quality You Can Hear," is a box where you can select from voices for different languages, including numerous options for Polish. You can select "Polish, Agnieszka," or "Polish, Jan," and so on. You type in (or paste in) text into the box just below that, then click "Play." In a few seconds you will hear the text pronounced in artificial voices that are really quite good. This can be valuable for hearing a surname pronounced, for instance ... Or if you're trying to practice speaking a few phrases in Polish, this site can help enormously. Don't overlook it!

***** WWW.GENTeam.AT - APPROXIMATELY 150,000 NEW RECORDS

Vienna, December 16, 2012

New at GenTeam:

- 1 – New: Währing IKG cemetery (Jewish Community Cemetery) 1784-1879, approximately 29,000 burials
- 2 – New Records: Memorial Cards from Tyrol, approximately 20,000 entries
- 3 – Obituaries of Pester Lloyd: the gap between 1888-1890 closed
- 4 – Lodges – approximately 12,000 entries were added
- 5 – Catholic Indices from Upper- and Lower Austria, approximately 50,000 new entries
- 6 – Catholic Baptisms in Vienna: approximately 40,000 new Records

Dear Colleagues,

On my own account:

This new online database gives the 18,000 registered users immediately approximately 7,4 million entries at their disposal. Thus, about 2,4 million new records were added within the last 12 months.

I would like to express here my heart-felt thanks to all those individuals who have furnished GenTeam in the last 35 months with vital information, all those who work on long-term projects, but also those who work behind the scene to ensure that GenTeam functions properly and continuously is able to expand.

All Databases at GenTeam can be called up free of charge. GenTeam is a non-profit organization, and there is no membership fee connected to this organization. GenTeam is an association of historians and genealogists who work independently or as a team on databases and furnish this data free of charge to all researches.

Mailing List—connecting genealogists

The GenTeam Mailing List for the countries of the former Austria-Hungarian Monarchy has grown in the meantime to more than 1,200 members. The mailing list is used for questions within the country as well as abroad. So take advantage of this superb list and register! It is bilingual and moderated.

<<http://list.genteam.at/mailman/listinfo/austria>>

1 – New Database: Währing Jewish Community (IKG) Cemetery 1784-1879, approximately 29,000 Entries

Mrs. Traude Triebel reviewed the death registries of the Jewish Community (IKG). In this

database you will find surnames and given names, along with the maiden name of women, their husband's name, marital status, city and country of origin, profession, age, date of death, date of interment, information of the parents, place of death and address.

Thank you, Traude, for this fantastic database!

2 – New Database: Memorial Cards from Tyrol, approximately 20,000 entries

Mrs. Christine Schwemberger has created an extensive database with numerous memorial cards from Tyrol similarly like the already existing memorial cards stemming from World War II.

3 – Obituaries Pester Lloyd: The Gap of 1888-1890 is closed

Georg Gaugusch has reviewed and completed the database of the obituaries of Pester Lloyd in Budapest between 1888 and 1890; thus, all obituaries of the Pester Lloyd, between 1878 and 1910 are in the database including surname, given name, maiden name, date of publication, date of death, religion, age and place of publication.

4 – Lodges – Members of diverse Lodges 1785-1931, approximately 12,000 new records

Members of various Johannis Lodges were added in Berlin, Munich, Erlangen, Nuremberg, Hannover, Mannheim, Frankfurt, Breslau, Kassel, Stuttgart, Wiesbaden, Hanau am Main, Heilbronn, Beuthen, Leipzig, Dortmund, and Hamburg, as well as B'nai B'rith Lodges in Prag, Kattowitz, Posen, Bielitz, Kraukau, Lemberg, Königshütte, Warschau, Przemysl, Lodsch, Stanislawow and Berlin. Not only surname and given name are listed, but also, among other things and depending on the lodge, profession, address of the work place, the private address, when member registered, as well as the date of death of already deceased members. You will find all back issues in the help phase at GenTeam.

5– New Indices from Roman Catholic Matrices

Approximately 50,000 entries of Indices were added from Catholic registries in Upper and Lower Austria. The researcher has herewith approximately 1,5 Million records and about 2,4 Million names at his disposal in this very important database. This index is not a simple index, for in addition to names you will find in some of these databases information concerning parents, addresses, profession and age. Naturally, the search in these fields will be by surname. You will find the parishes along with the time frame at GenTeam under Help.

Lower Austria:

Indices from the following communities were added: Griesbach, Maria Laach, Nöchling, Ottenschlag, Vitis, Weitra, and Zwettl Stadt.

Upper Austria:

Indices from these communities were added: Leopoldschlag and Pierbach.

I would like to express my appreciation to Martina Gelbmann, Marianne Hofer, Silvia Klose, Adolf Leutgeb, Marta Melchart, Karin Scharrer, Franz Spevacek, Christine Sinhuber und Judith Starke for their tireless and valuable collaboration.

My special thanks go particularly to the Heraldisch Genealogischen Gesellschaft Adler (the Adler Heraldic Genealogical Association), which furnished GenTeam with the Josef-Heider-Indices from Upper Austria.

6 – Baptismal Index in Vienna between 1585 und 1900, already approximately 120,000 databases are Online

Approximately 40,000 entries were added from the Parish St. Karl in the 4th District of Vienna, the Parish of Alser Suburb of (8th District) and Schottenfeld (7th District; 1856-1900).

At this point I would like to express my special thanks to Mrs. Mireille Trauner and Mr. Werner Zinser.

During the 19th century, approximately 3,5 Million people migrated from countries in the Hapsburg Monarchy (and beyond) to Vienna. By 1910 Vienna's population had grown to 2,1 Million. At that time Vienna was the sixth largest city in the world. Almost all families in the monarchy had family connections to Vienna.

Unfortunately, Vienna still has no central birth index, besides the Jewish Birth (and marriage and death) Index, which can already be found at <<http://www.GenTeam.at>>.

Therefore, GenTeam intends to produce a general index for all Vienna baptisms, and I invite you all to help along with this fascinating project. You will not require to travel or visit parishes; the indices can be furnished in digital form. Some indices are typed, some are in beautiful handwriting and some are in not so beautiful handwriting; I am sure every interested volunteer can find a part to help.

Sincerely yours,

Felix Gundacker

e-mail: <kontakt@GenTeam.at>

profession: <<http://www.ihff.at>>

databases: <<http://www.GenTeam.at>>

Facebook: <<http://de-de.facebook.com/pages/GenTeam/121165227901751?ref=ts>>

Forum: <<http://ahnenforschung.plusboard.de/>>

Genealogical Society: <<http://www.adler-wien.at>>

***** WHEN IS “CRACKOF” NOT “KRAKÓW”? *****

Roman Kałużniacki posted an interesting note on the Polish Genius list, and I thought it was worth showing those of you who didn't see it:

Seems like there is very little activity on this forum at the moment. That gives me an opportunity to request your aid.

As I was performing some research on Ellis Island records, I came across the following transcribed location: Crackof.

It does not appear to exist in Poland. Could some kind souls please provide me with the proper spelling?

Thanks and I will provide a follow-up tomorrow based on the responses.

I've dealt with Roman often, and I knew he loves to teach people, not just hand them answers. I felt sure there was a lot more to this than met the eye. Roman would never miss the obvious answer, "Kraków."

I didn't have time to look into the matter further. But I followed the thread, and found a very interesting reply by another gentleman named Roman, whose online name is "RomanS" (I don't recall his last name.) He said the correct answer is "Piaski," and did a good job justifying his conclusion. If you are a member of any Yahoo Groups, you can read RomanS's analysis here:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/polish_genius/message/20079>

The next day, Roman K. posted this:

And today I would like to expand somewhat on that note.

The first inclination might be that this is an easy one - Kraków is the obvious answer. "What a silly question, indeed!"

But then one might be inclined to reflect on the situation a little longer. Puzzled, you might wonder why is he asking such a trivial question? Is an application of Occam's Razor really valid in this case? See

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occam%27s_razor>

if you haven't run across this term previously. The Razor (the simplest assumption) should not be invoked unless you have researched all other competing possibilities and none provide good explanations. Aha, there is more to this than at first meets the eye.

Until RomanS came along with a researched response, almost everyone else took the easy path without much thought and provided the obvious answer. Several of you sent me private responses. One person did imply something smells fishy here, and another kindly suggested that I follow my own advice, that is, provide a link to the source.

The correct answer is, indeed, Piaski. Who would have thought!

Some of you might wish to check it out and see just how ‘crackof’ can be logically derived from ‘Piasky’. Use the Morse search form and enter the location to find the passenger manifest.

The whole point of this exercise is to make you aware that an activity such as genealogy involving research into the past cannot rely on assumptions and quick conclusions. Research takes both time and effort. Be willing to go that extra step. The word ‘transcribed’ in my note above should be treated as a red flag. It suggests not only that there is some doubt about faithfulness of the transcription but also that the source may be available for direct observation - if so a person versed in scientific methods and analysis will take the time to check out that source. The results might be surprising.

Best of luck in your genealogical research,

And to RomanS — kudos! Well done!

It is a natural human inclination to jump to the obvious conclusion. But in genealogy, as in other human pursuits, that can be a huge mistake. Thanks to Roman K. for giving us a lesson in this matter, and to RomanS for showing us the right way to approach such questions.

***** UPCOMING EVENTS *****

August 4 – 9, 2013

33RD IAJGS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON JEWISH GENEALOGY

This annual event—which is almost always a magnificent success—will be held in 2013 in Boston on August 4 through 9. Learn more at <<http://www.iajgs2013.org/>>.

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October 23 – 26, 2013

CZECHOSLOVAK GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL 2013 GENEALOGICAL AND CULTURAL CONFERENCE PROGRAM

The Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International (CGSI) will hold its 14th Genealogical and Cultural Conference at the Westin Lombard Hotel in Lombard, Illinois, October 23–26, 2013.

Hotel reservations can now be made for the Conference at the Westin Lombard Hotel in Lombard, Illinois. Click on the Reserve icon when you get to the Hotel page.

The keynote speaker will be our own Paul S. Valasek! Other notable speakers are Lisa A. Alzo, Grace DuMelle, Leo Baca, Lou Szucs, and many more.

For more information on the program, see this Web page:

<<http://www.cgsi.org/content/2013-genealogical-and-cultural-conference-program>>

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November 13 – 14, 2013

POLISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA CONFERENCE

The 2013 Conference will be held at the Hilton Lisle in Naperville, Illinois. In the months ahead, the Website, <<http://www.pgsa.org>>, and the *PGSA Notebook* will post additional details.

***** MORE USEFUL WEB ADDRESSES *****

<<http://www.neweasterneurope.eu/node/591>>

Phyllis Zach Budka recently had an essay, “From East to West and Back Again,” published in the online version of the quarterly journal *The New Eastern Europe*. Her essay was submitted as part of *New Eastern Europe*’s 2012 “East to West” Report competition and received the prize of “Honourable Mention.” You can read it at the above URL -- and you might want to bookmark the *New Eastern Europe* site for frequent reference. The Journal can also be read on the Kindle; the current issue is \$5.99 and is available at <<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B00AIWPEF6>>.

<<http://goo.gl/ZIFsO>>

This link takes you to a brief explanation of the term *vulgo*, which people often see with names in old records. I know I’ve been asked what it means numerous times, so I figure this link is worth sharing. (Tom Klein pointed it out in a posted message to the JewishGen mailing list.)

<http://blog.eogn.com/eastmans_online_genealogy/2012/12/what-your-ancestors-endured.html>

In a recent issue of *Eastman’s Online Genealogy Newsletter* [EOGN], Richard said, “Melissa Strojek wrote an interesting article that has been published in the *Mansfield* (Ohio) *News Journal* that should be required reading for all Americans.” The article is called “A Little Tenacity Goes a Long Way,” and it’s about what our immigrant ancestors had to go through. You can try accessing the article through the EOGN page given above, or if that doesn’t work, get it directly from this URL: <http://www.mansfieldnewsjournal.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2012312090016&gcheck=1&nclick_check=1>

<<http://tinyurl.com/ann7ru5>>

On the Polish Genius list, Debbie Greenlee spoke highly of *Galician Trails: The*

Forgotten Story of One Family. The URL above takes you to a page of the Polish Art Center website where you can learn more about the book and buy it, if you wish.

<<http://blog.pjvoice.com/diary/2842/is-your-jewish-family-from-poland-originally-from-spain>>

Paul S. Valasek sent me this link, to an article in the *Philadelphia Jewish Voice*, “Is Your Jewish Family from Poland Originally from Spain?” We generally assume Jews from Poland were Ashkenazic, but this article tells how some who ended up in Poland were actually Sephardic Jews who had relocated from Spain.

<<http://goo.gl/xyKe3>>

Karen Glowacz of PGSA sent out a note about this entry in Tony’s Genealogy Blog, by Tony Kierna, who has nice things to say about my book on Polish surnames. The above URL should take you to it, if you’re interested.

<<http://www.newspapers.com/>>

The December 2nd issue of *Nu? What’s New?* mentioned that Ancestry.com has launched a new website at this URL, and it has a collection of over 800 U. S. newspapers from the late 1700s. A subscription is required, as you might expect.

<<http://genealogyindexer.org/directories>>

The December 9th issue of *Nu?* mentioned yet another addition to Logan Kleinwaks’s Genealogy Indexer site: searchable directories of *Vsja Rossiia* for 1895, 1899, and 1900, now indexed. These were business directories covering the whole Russian Empire. They are listed among the many sources available at the above URL, and are included in the index—but searches must be for names using the Cyrillic alphabet. For info on how to use the indexer, see the home page, <<http://genealogyindexer.org/>>.

<<https://groups.google.com/forum/?fromgroups=#!topic/soc.genealogy.jewish/igoSiQBPMbg>>

Stanley Diamond of JRI-Poland announced news of future cooperation between JRI-Poland and the Polish State Archives that will greatly benefit researchers of Polish Jewish Records. You can read his announcement at this URL.

<[https://www.familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Ukraine,_Western_Ukraine_Catholic_Church_Book_Duplicates_\(FamilySearch_Historical_Records\)](https://www.familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Ukraine,_Western_Ukraine_Catholic_Church_Book_Duplicates_(FamilySearch_Historical_Records))>

On the Poland mailing list, Al Muth posted a note saying that FamilySearch.org has posted almost a million church records from Ukraine in the collection “Ukraine, Western Ukraine Catholic Church Book Duplicates, 1600-1937.” The records are from eastern Galicia and were filmed at the Central State Historical Archive in Lviv (TsDIAL); you can learn more at the above site, or at <<http://goo.gl/rMwNG>>. Chris Smolinski added a follow-up saying that as best

he can tell, you have to access the records from a Family History Center, or you have to be an LDS member to view them online; and while most of the records are for Greek Catholic parish churches, there are some with Roman Catholic records as well. So there are some limitations. But it's good news that these records are available at all; if you have to go to a Family History Center to view them, well, what are you waiting for?

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