



Gen Dobry!

***** GEN DOBRY! *****

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*** WELCOME! ***

to the latest issue of GEN DOBRY!, the e-zine of PolishRoots(R). If you missed previous issues, you can find them at

http://polishroots.org/gendobry/gendobry_index.htm.

Visit PolishRoots.org, the sponsor of _Gen Dobry!_, and take advantage of the many resources offered there.

In connection with the response to recent pleas for contributions to PolishRoots(R), Don Szumowski wanted to make a few remarks, which follow.

*** CONTRIBUTIONS TO POLISHROOTS(R)! ***

I'd like to personally thank all of the people who responded with such generosity to my appeal for money to support PolishRoots' continued operations.

For those of you who have thought about contributing, but haven't taken the next step, there is still time to make your voice heard by sending in your checks, or, better yet, going online to the PolishRoots site and clicking on the "Donate now through Network for Good" link. The link is right there at the bottom of our home page. It will take you to Network for Good's secure web server where you can make your much-needed contribution by credit card.

Do you have old photos, books, postcards or other memorabilia that are looking for a home? If so, please consider sending them to Polish Roots (R) c/o Dr. Paul S. Valasek, 2643 W. 51st St, Chicago, IL 60632-1559, USA.

Our plans are to put selected materials online to enhance the visitor experience at PolishRoots.

Z wyrazami szacunku,

Don Szumowski
President, PolishRoots(R)

*** TRANS-ATLANTIC SHIPPING ***

by Paul S. Valasek <paval56@aol.com>

Many times I've been asked about details on how our immigrant ancestors came to America. As I've never found one source which explains all of the answers, I'd like to share some recently received information for the traveler which I think will be of interest to our readers.

The following is excerpted from an 1890 Travel booklet included in an Immigrant's travel wallet from the Hamburg-American Line. At this time, the German lines were starting up in full force to compete against the ruling British lines, especially Cunard and White Star. As the British and American Steamship companies held priority status, the German steamship companies were forced to set up their piers and docks on the New Jersey side of the Hudson River at Hoboken, as no berths were made available for them on a regular basis in Manhattan.

* Hints for Travelers *

The steamers of the Hamburg-American Packet Co. sail from the Hamburg Piers, foot of First Street, in Hoboken, adjoining the New York Ferries. The Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad, the New York, West Shore and Buffalo, the New York, Lake Erie & Western, the Pennsylvania, and the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Companies all terminate on that side of the Hudson, in close proximity to the Hamburg Docks. Hoboken is reached from New York by the Barclay Street ferry (down-town) or the Christopher Street ferry (up-town), both landing at the same place in Hoboken, adjoining the Hamburg Piers.

The Express Steamers leave New York Thursdays for Southampton and Hamburg.

Passengers landing at Southampton receive free railroad transportation to London or any other place in the south of England. The railroad trip from Southampton to London takes only two hours.

Through tickets are issued to Paris, which may be reached from Southampton, via Havre, in twelve hours, or via London in ten hours. Passengers are booked through to Havre without extra charges.

The Express Steamers leave Hamburg on Thursday, touching Southampton on Friday. Passengers are booked from London or Havre without extra charge. Through tickets from Paris.

The Regular Steamers leave New York regularly once a week direct from Hamburg.

Returning, the Steamers sailing from Hamburg on Sundays touch Havre on their way to New York. Departure from Havre on Tuesdays. Cabin passengers will be forwarded from Southampton or London to Havre at the Company's expense. Through tickets from Paris at reduced rates.

Steamers leaving Hamburg on Wednesday sail direct for New York.

Passports are at present only needed by American travelers in Europe when visiting Berlin (Prussia), Russia, Turkey, Egypt, Spain, or Portugal; but, at the same time, a passport is useful for obtaining admission to certain museums, for obtaining letters from post-offices, and for establishing identity whenever necessary.

Passports can be procured from Washington for such as desire them within forty-eight hours. The Government charges a fee of \$1.00 while notary's and other fees amount to \$2.00 more.

Hamburg - After landing passengers and mail in Southampton, the steamer immediately proceeds to Hamburg, which is reached in about twenty-four hours. Passengers are landed at the fine new landing place of the Hamburg-American Packet Co. Hamburg is a city of over 500,000 inhabitants, the principal commercial emporium of the continent of Europe, and one of its most beautiful towns. It is a most important railway centre and has frequent and direct express trains to all parts of the interior.

In Foreign Parts. - On landing in Europe the traveler's baggage will be examined, but Custom Houses in Europe are not as difficult to pass as in America. Spirits, tobacco, and cigars are the articles mainly looked for, and if they are found that have not been declared, they will be confiscated.

Second class hotels in Europe are far better in their way than those of the same grade in America; they are plain and simple, but excellent in their way.

[Paul adds that he can provide plenty more information if you want it!]

*** LETTERS TO THE EDITOR ***

Subject: Polish Totem Poles

I don't remember having seen anything in Gen Dobry about the Polish Totem Poles. However, this certainly be a topic of interest. Their origin, their significance etc.

Are they connected to the totems of North West United States, Western Canada, Alaska and Taiwan? I am sure that they exist in other places. Are they related to our Mongolian/Chinese history?

Francis Przygoda
<FAPHOBOKEN@aol.com>

[My answer was: "Well, one reason there's never been anything about Polish totem poles in _Gen Dobry!_ is because I've never heard of them before. This is a new one on me! I'll print your note in the next issue, however, and maybe someone who knows something about them will provide a little info." So folks, what about it? Can any of you enlighten us on this subject?]

*** UPDATE ON MORSE'S ONE-STEP PORTAL TO THE ELLIS ISLAND DATABASE ***

Many researchers have been upset because the Ellis Island Foundation recently pressured Stephen P. Morse to take his "Searching the Ellis Island Database in One Step" offline. Most of us found Morse's site much easier to use than the official Ellis Island site, which explains why so many were angry at being deprived of this resource.

Then Gary Mokotoff stepped forward -- he is the publisher of the Jewish genealogical periodical Avotaynu and editor of the e-zine "Nu? What's New?". Mr. Mokotoff decided to host the fully functional portal on the Avotaynu Website, at <http://www.avotaynu.com/ellis.html>. For what it's worth, my hat's off to him for making the effort to keep this resource available to us.

On Sunday, September 29, a note from Stephen P. Morse himself was posted to various genealogical mailing lists:

- > Let me thank each and every one of you for your support and
- > encouragement during this past month. Your outpouring of e-mails has
- > made me realize how important my websites have been to so many people,
- > and how much you've all relied on them to find links to your past.
- >
- > I've done some soul-searching and have decided to reopen many of my
- > websites. Go to <http://home.pacbell.net/spmorse/> and press the button
- > for the website that you want.
- >
- > My apologies for any inconvenience that this may have caused.
- > -- Steve Morse

I went to the address he gave, which provides links to all his sites (if you've only tried the Ellis Island one, you should check out the others!). At that time the Ellis Island site was back up. Also working was his site "Searching for Ships in the Ellis Island Microfilms in One Step." His site for "Searching the Ellis Island Database in One Step (Jewish Passengers)" was still down, but most of the others were fine.

Then Monday morning, September 30, I checked again, and the basic Ellis Island page was down again! So were half the others. But the page on the Avotaynu Website devoted to his Ellis Island One-Step portal was functioning.

Obviously the situation is changing rapidly, and by the time you read this, who knows what will be going on? For now, it seems your best bet for using the One-Step Portal to the Ellis Island Database is to visit the Avotaynu page, <http://www.avotaynu.com/ellis.html>. It seems clear Gary Mokotoff intends to keep it going unless and until Morse's original site is back for good. When and if that happens, the Avotaynu site will say so and have a link to it.

If you want to keep up on the latest developments, you might try subscribing to "Nu? What's New" at <http://www.avotaynu.com/nuwhatsnew.htm>. That will probably be the most reliable source of info on this subject for the foreseeable future.

*** CANON LAW AND PARISH REGISTERS ***

[In a note posted to POLAND-ROOTS-L@rootsweb.com, Joe Armata <JArmata@gsphdean.gsph.pitt.edu> made a very interesting point about priests who are reluctant to let anyone look at their parish records. It may suggest why some priests are reluctant to let researchers see their books.]

Priests who refuse to allow anyone else to handle the parish records do have some backing in Canon Law:

Canon 535, Para 4. Each parish is to have a registry or archive in which the parish books are kept along with episcopal letters and other documents which ought to be preserved due to necessity or usefulness; all these are to be inspected by the diocesan bishop or his delegate during his visitation or at another suitable time; the pastor is to take care that they do not come into the hands of outsiders.

The priest could interpret "outsiders" as referring to anyone except the parish priests.

Joe Armata

*** GENEALOGICAL ADVISOR: ***

[Editor: Not long ago a gentleman wrote to say he'd discovered a site he thought might help him with his research. I thought I'd quote his note and my reply, for anyone else who might be interested:]

Question: A few weeks ago, I discovered a site, <http://www.myroots.com>. People there told me they have enough information to send me information about the origins and history of my surname, important ones who had the surname, and about the coat of arms! It all sounds interesting for me but would like to ask you if you know that site and its works and if the info they could send me could be reliable.

Answer: I have not done business with this particular company, so I can't say for sure how reliable they are. I can say, however, that some of the claims they make on their Website are familiar, and I have an opinion on them.

Over the years I have seen a lot of offers of this sort, including offers from companies

that promised me mugs with the Hoffman coat of arms! Now since I happen to know all of my Hoffmans were about as noble as warthogs, it didn't take any great insight to realize these guys had made no effort whatsoever to determine whether I had any right to a coat of arms. They'd found some mention in a book somewhere of a Hoffman family that was noble, and had generously decided to include me in the clan. I suppose Dustin Hoffman, the late Abbie Hoffman, and the actor Philip Seymour Hoffman are noble too, since obviously if we have the last name we must all be related!

The name Hoffman is extremely common, and generally indicates an ancestor worked as an overseer who bossed the peasants of an estate -- certainly not noble! But you see, truth and reality are irrelevant here. In my opinion, companies who make these offers are preying on the gullibility of saps who'll pay to be told they're noble, with or without justification in fact.

The ONLY way to establish that you have a any connection with a coat of arms is to trace your family back, generation by generation, till you make a direct connection to a noble with the acknowledged right to those arms. The only way a company could legitimately establish that connection would be to do detailed research into your family history, in consultation and cooperation with you. They're certainly NOT going to do that kind of extensive, expensive research without first finding out if you'll pay for it. If you're dealing with legit researchers, you pay and THEN they find out if you're the descendant of nobility -- not the other way around.

I do know some folks who have bought the materials these companies publish, and under some circumstances they can be worth the money. Typically they provide lists of people with your name, and information on families with your name. There is no guarantee the people in question are actually related to you, and these companies do nothing to prove they are. They just slap together anything that mentions your surname -- usually stuff you could get for free, if you invested the necessary time and effort. That's the key -- if you can't afford the time and effort to find this stuff for yourself, you may feel this data is worth the money. As long as you know what you're getting and make an informed decision that it's worth it to you, you are not being cheated. My only complaint is that most folks don't realize they're paying for stuff of no relevance that they could find for free -- there is absolutely no guarantee any of this stuff applies to them!

To summarize, offers of this sort may be legitimate. And I may be Hitler's maiden aunt. Care to make a wager?

*** HUMOR ***

[Editor: this has nothing to do with genealogy, although it does have to do with computers and thus is tangentially relevant to the subject matter of _Gen Dobry!_, which is using technology to help with genealogical research. But for my money, a good laugh needs no justification -- and it's been a while since I laughed at anything as hard as I

laughed at this. I hope you enjoy it, even if it doesn't have anything to do with genealogy!]

The reuse of some object-oriented code has caused tactical headaches for Australia's armed forces. As virtual reality simulators assume larger roles in helicopter combat training, programmers have gone to great lengths to increase the realism of their scenarios, including detailed landscapes and, in the case of the Northern Territory's Operation Phoenix, herds of kangaroos (since disturbed animals might well give away a helicopter's position).

The head of the Defense Science & Technology Organization's Land Operations/Simulation division reportedly instructed developers to model the local marsupials' movements and reactions to helicopters.

Being efficient programmers, they just re-appropriated some code originally used to model infantry detachment reactions under the same stimuli, changed the mapped icon from a soldier to a kangaroo, and increased the figures' speed of movement.

Eager to demonstrate their flying skills for some visiting American pilots, the hotshot Aussies "buzzed" the virtual kangaroos in low flight during a simulation. The kangaroos scattered, as predicted, and the visiting Americans nodded appreciatively... then did a double-take as the kangaroos reappeared from behind a hill and launched a barrage of Stinger missiles at the hapless helicopter. (Apparently the programmers had forgotten to remove that part of the infantry coding.)

The lesson? Objects are defined with certain attributes, and any new object defined in terms of an old one inherits all the attributes. The embarrassed programmers had learned to be careful when reusing object-oriented code, and the Yanks left with a newfound respect for Australian wildlife.

Simulator supervisors report that pilots from that point onward have strictly avoided kangaroos, just as they were meant to.

From June 15, 1999 Defense Science and Technology Organization
Lecture Series, Melbourne, Australia, and staff reports

*** UPCOMING EVENTS ***

[Note: It's always a good idea to check the PolishRoots Events Calendar, as it contains more info than we have room for here:

<http://www.polishroots.org/coming_events.htm>]

24th Annual PGSA Conference

October 4 - 6, 2002

Ramada Hotel O'Hare
6600 N. Mannheim Road
Rosemont, Ill 60018

For more information contact:

Bernadine Saelens, 630-833-1355 <BSaelens@aol.com>

Pulaski Day Parade

October 6

Down 5th Ave. in New York City

The parade will feature Rik Fox (nee Ryszard Suligowski) in full authentic 16th-Century Winged Hussar regalia on horseback, as the lead-in for the Greenpoint, Brooklyn contingent.

Carpatho-Rusyn Society "Lake Erie Chapter"

October 6, 2002

2 p.m.

Mercyhurst College, Erie, Pennsylvania

First meeting of this group which covers eastern Ohio, Northwestern Pennsylvania, and Western New York.

For more information see upcoming events at
<http://www.carpathorusynsociety.org/evnt.htm>

Polish Genealogical Group of Arizona Meeting

October 26, 2002

Place: Salt River Project Information Systems Building

1600 N. Priest Drive, Tempe, AZ

Time: 9:30 a.m. - noon

"Genealogy In the Palm of Your Hand"

Speaker: Jeannie Rogers

For more information: Carole Buskin (480) 839-8215 or e-mail <cfbuskin@srpnet.com>.

Exploring the Polish Culture

October 26 - November 23

Part of the Lorain County Community College College for Kids program
Elyria, OH

Fee: \$60 (5 sessions)

Children in grades 1-6 only

More information: <http://www.lorainccc.edu/discover/programs/noncredit/>

Polish History

October 26 - November 14

Non-Credit course offered by the Lorain County Community College
St. Joseph Community Center
Lorain, OH

Fee: \$38 (8 sessions)

More information: <http://www.lorainccc.edu/discover/programs/noncredit/>

*** MORE USEFUL WEB ADDRESSES ***

<http://www1.umn.edu/ihr>

Alan J. Kania <ajkania@attbi.com> quoted this address on Poland-Roots-L@rootsweb.com as the online home of the University of Minnesota's Immigration

History Research Center. As Alan said, "Enjoy -- it's an extensive online center."

<http://www.przodkowie.com>

On HERBARZ-L@rootsweb.com Marek Jerzy Minakowski <minak@onet.pl> gave this address for a site devoted to a new CD-ROM edition of Boniecki's Herbarz (a well-known armorial of Polish coats of arms and the families that bore them). It is to be priced about US \$20-30, with data on "over 12,000 families (articles); over 0.4 million people mentioned; about 18 million characters of pure text, equivalent to 10,000 pages of standard typescript 6562 pages scanned (17 volumes)." The site gives some info; obviously the CD will give much more. If you think your ancestors were noble this might be worth looking into.

<http://www.historykpress.com/wwi.htm>

At this site Historyk Press offers information on their newest publication, *Marylanders of Polish Heritage in World War I*. "This 4-volume set is available on CD-ROM in Microsoft Word format. You can buy each volume individually or as a complete set and save!"

<http://www.luteranie.pl/>

On Poland-Roots-L@rootsweb.com Debbie Greenlee <daveg@airmail.net> gave this as the address of the Lutheran Diocese Website for Poland.

<http://www.theshipslist.com/Research/Resource.htm#pictures>

On Posen-L@rootsweb.com James Birkholz <James.Birkholz@usa.okmetic.com> said this site has links for sources of ship pictures and for the mailing list TheShipsList-L. In a follow-up note, Connie Sundberg <sundberg@mtaonline.net> recommended Michael P. Palmer's List of Merchant Ships -- <http://www.geocities.com/mppraetorius>. And Laura Anderson <kalkowski@mindspring.com> suggested visiting the following page at the Website of the Peabody Essex Museum in Massachusetts:

http://pem.org/phil_photographs.html. She said the Museum has an extensive collection of photos and drawings of ships. "I have ordered a photograph from them, it was \$20 (US) for photo and shipping. I was pleased with the service."

<http://www.wsd.tarnow.pl/php/adresy/wykaz.php?pl-b>

On Poland-Roots-L@rootsweb.com Pat Smith <pita@westol.com> shared this address of a site for "the Diocese of Tarnow which you can access alphabetically ... [which] provides each village/town with the church name, address, Mass schedule, email address which is central but eventually the church will receive it. I've also found photos of the church or articles which pertain to that particular parish."

She also gave this address with a list of gminy in Tarnow, with the gmina, postal code, address, phone number and e-mail address:

<http://www.sgipm.krak.pl/GMINY/TARNOW.htm>.

<http://www.mytarg.net>

In another note on Poland-Roots-L@rootsweb.com Pat Smith <pita@westol.com> quoted a note from Paul Bingham, founder of Tatra Area Research Group [TARG] that reported on the status of the Group and said they have a new Website at the address given above. If you have roots in the Tatra area, you might want to take a look!

<http://www.strony.wp.pl/wp/brozbar16/galicja.html>

On the mailing list Galicia@topica.com, Debbie <seraph@dc.rr.com> gave this address for a Galicia Map Website. She said, "This seems to be slow in booting up, and is in Polish, but it may be of assistance to someone."

<http://www.webster.edu/~corbetre/haiti/misctopic/ethnic/poles.htm>

On HERBARZ-L@rootsweb.com, Felix Grabowski <grabfelix@hotmail.com> posted a note discussing a book called Lost White Tribes: The End of Privilege and the Last Colonials in Sri Lanka, Jamaica, Brazil, Haiti, Namibia, and Guadeloupe by Riccard Orizio (New York: The Free Press, 2000). Beginning on page 124 is a chapter entitled: "Haiti: Papa Doc's Poles." A little later he posted a note saying the Website given above has some information on the subjection, as well as excerpts of another book on the subject, Poland's Caribbean Tragedy.

In a later note, he added that the Polish Nobility Association Website has pages with more on Poles in Haiti: <http://www.geocities.com/von56.geo/PolesinHaiti.html> and <http://www.geocities.com/von56.geo/PolesinHaiti2.html>.

If you've ever been interested in the descendants of Poles who came to live in Haiti in connection with Napeoleon's forces and remained there -- and believe it or not, I've been asked about this several times over the years! -- you might want to visit these sites.

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