



Gen Dobry!

Volume VII, No. 7

31 July 2006

ISSN 1555-774X. Copyright © 2006, PolishRoots®, Inc.
Editor: William F. “Fred” Hoffman, E-mail: <wfh@langline.com>

CONTENTS

Welcome
Place Names: More Important than Surnames?
Letters to the Editor
A Remarkable Piece Of Research On A Town Now On The Fringe
Proud to be Polish
World War II “Old Man’s” Draft Registration Database
Polish Trivia Questions
Upcoming Events
More Useful Web Addresses
You May Reprint Articles...

*** WELCOME! ***

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

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

If you’d like *Gen Dobry!* in PDF form, this issue is available for downloading here:

http://www.polishroots.org/gendobry/PDF/GenDobry_VII_7.pdf

*** PLACE NAMES: MORE IMPORTANT THAN SURNAMES? ***

by Fred Hoffman <wfh@langline.com>

I think lately I've been irritating people who write to me for information on their surnames. I keep saying things like "Focus on the family, not the name," and "Where they came from is more important than their name." They probably think I'm nuts, but I'm convinced there's truth in what I'm saying. Let me see if I can explain.

Surnames are, of course, a great help in tracing your ancestors. I think inexperienced researchers rely on them too much, however. Surnames are rarely distinctive enough to tell you where your people came from. They're subject to constant misspelling and misreading, and sometimes they were changed outright when immigrants started trying to "fit in" and realized their names were getting in the way. Yes, you need surnames to get back to Poland; but I'm coming to think the place name is what really matters. If you can establish which village your ancestors came from, you can then get a look at the local records. In those records you may spot your family, even if the surname has changed, just by comparing first names and dates and places.

On the other hand, if all you know is your ancestor was Kowalski and he came from Poland, you're out of luck! There's simply nowhere to start. If there were some central repository of all records for every person who ever lived in Poland, maybe you'd have an outside chance. But most records were kept locally; so a surname gets you nowhere unless you also have the name of a town or village where you can look for it.

Let me give you a practical example from my recent experience.

I was contacted by a gentleman who knew the original Polish form of his surname, but he'd discovered this name was widespread all over Poland. So, wisely, he kept digging, and on the Ellis Island Website he found the passenger manifest entry that documented his grandfather's admission to the U.S. It said his grandfather came from "Kosfarovd," and he was Austrian-Polish. The gentleman explained he'd looked all over for a Kosfarovd and came up empty. He was going to visit Poland in a few weeks, and would love to visit this place his grandfather came from, if he could just find it. He wondered if I had any ideas.

Bless his soul, he provided a direct link to the specific entry in the Ellis Island database, so I could go right to it and take a look. I knew "Kosfarovd" couldn't be right, and hoped I could do a better job deciphering the handwriting than the indexing volunteer had done. I looked closely at the name and thought, "Well, it looks to me like Kosterowce. I've never heard of such a place, but let's do a little searching."

I checked Brian Lenius's *Genealogical Gazetteer of Galicia*, since a person described as "Austrian-Polish" surely came from Galicia. There was only one name close: Kosterowce, in Sanok *powiat*, served by the Roman Catholic parish church in Strachocina and by the Greek Catholic church in Czerteż. I thought "Bingo!" A quick look at the *Słownik geograficzny* (Vol. 4, page 474) confirmed this information was valid, at least as of the late 1800s. You can access the *Słownik* online at <http://www.mimuw.edu.pl/polszczyzna/SGKPi/indexse2.html#x3-50002>, but note that it requires the DjVu browser plugin, available here: http://www.lizardtech.com/download/dl_options.php?page=plugins.

I took another look at the manifest, and confirmed that “Kostarowce” was almost certainly the correct reading of the name. I felt we were starting to get somewhere.

To make sure I knew exactly where this place was, I went to <http://mapa.szukacz.pl>. At the upper right, under the red box saying “Pokaż na mapie,” is a box labeled “Miejscowość” (Locality). I typed in KOSTAROWCE, then clicked on “Pokaż.” If there’s more than one place by the name you’re looking for, you get a map showing all those places, and a list on the right where you can click on individual links. (Obviously, in that case you’ll need to dig up some info that helps you establish which of those places is the one your ancestors came from.)

In this case there’s only one Kostarowce, so the search took me right to a map of it, plus a smaller map at upper right that shows where it is in Poland — way down by the southeastern tip of the country. With this map, with a red circle showing the location of Kostarowce, you can zoom in (“Zbliź”) or out (“Oddal”).

Now that I was reasonably certain there was no other place with a similar name to confuse us, and I knew where Kostarowce is, I could try to establish what parish would have the records for this place. Normally I check the Family History Library Catalogue first, http://www.familysearch.org/Eng/Library/FHLC/frameset_fhlc.asp. Just to be sure, I did check it, drawing a blank, as I expected. Kostarowce is in southeastern Poland, and the FHL has generally not been allowed to film in that area; for some reason the authorities have refused to cooperate. Which means the parish church is probably the place to start.

My correspondent’s ancestor had a Polish name, not Ukrainian, so I figured his family probably went to the appropriate Roman Catholic church to register births, deaths, and marriages. In the late 19th century the parish church that served Kostarowce was in Strachocina; I needed to know if that’s still true. I checked my copy of Lidia Müllerowa’s *Roman Catholic Parishes in the Polish People’s Republic in 1984*, and established that there was no mention of a church in Kostarowce, but Strachocina still had a Roman Catholic parish church, in Sanok-West deanery of Przemyśl Archdiocese. That could have changed since 1984, but this gave me a decent notion what diocese to look in.

Next I visited one of the most useful sites I know of, the “Finding Parish Addresses” page at <http://www.rootsweb.com/~polwgv/parish.html>. I clicked on the first link to get a map of the dioceses of Poland, to see which diocese Strachocina would be in today, in case it’s changed since 1984. The map showed it would still be in Przemyśl Archdiocese, so I scrolled down and clicked the link to that Website, <http://www.przemysl.opoka.org.pl/>. Once there, I clicked on “Dekanaty i parafii” (Deaneries and Parishes). I had to search a little before I found Strachocina listed, under Jaćmierz deanery; but it wasn’t too hard to find. The Web page provided the parish address:

Parafia rzymsko-katolicka pw. św. Katarzyny
Strachocina 1
38-507 JUROWCE
POLAND

It also says the phone number is (0-13) 462 63 06, and the church has a Website at <http://www.strachocina.przemysl.opoka.org.pl/>.

Let's sum up. The gentleman who wrote to me knew his ancestor's surname, but it was too common and widespread to provide any real clue where to look. If that had been all he knew, I couldn't have told him anything useful. But because he had a place name—even though it was mangled—I could help him. He was smart enough to give me the link to the Ellis Island index page, and it didn't take long to figure out "Kosfarovd" was actually "Kostarowce." This information let me locate the parish serving that village, which led to the Przemyśl Archdiocese Website, which provided the parish address and a Website for the parish. Elapsed time since I started reading his note: approximately ten minutes, including time to go refill my coffee cup.

I'm not trying to show you how smart I am; I'm trying to show you how quickly you can make progress *if* you have the right information. In a matter of minutes I went from "Who knows?" to "Try contacting the parish at Kostarowce, and here's the address." Now that this researcher knows exactly where to look, he has a very decent chance of tracing his family there. And the key was ***not*** the surname; it was the place name.

So a word to the wise: surnames are important, but if you really want to make progress, get a place name! Until you do that, you're spinning your wheels. The instant you figure out where to look, however, your odds of success start climbing.

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

Subject:

Editor—Here's a note I received from a lady in Australia who could use a hand:

My name is Karen Henskens. My grandmother Marta Leoniuk recently died in Australia. She came to Australia on the *SS Castel Bianco* in 1949 with my grandfather Victor Leoniuk and my mother Maria Leoniuk. I am trying to find out why my great grandmother could not come to Australia when her husband Basil Leoniuk came in 1950. It is believed she was in a prison camp. Jailed because her son stole an animal and bike. Her name was Martja z Bechebow and her husband was Bazyli Neonuyk or Leoniuk. Her married name was Martja Leoniuk. She had 4 children Victor, Aleksandra, Walevia and Joe. Only Victor came to Australia.

Victor Leoniuk date of birth 15.7.1924

His wife name: Marta Zalewska 17.2.-27

They married at Neustadt/Holstein on 1946 or 1947.

Could you please help me find some information about the family? Especially about Martja z Bechebow Leoniuk.

Karen Henskens <stevenpriestley@bigpond.com.au>

Editor—I told Karen I don't have access to information on individual persons or families, and if she couldn't find anything with the info she has, I can't help her. But I promised to print her note in Gen Dobry!, to see if any of you have some good ideas.

Subject: Possible relative mentioned in *Gen Dobry!*

Editor—This note came to Paul Valasek, asking if he could give further information on a family whose name appeared in an article Paul wrote for Gen Dobry! Paul has done his best to help, but we figure it can do no harm to share this with our readers, as well:

My name is Jan Olko; I am 60 years old. I am trying to contact all Olko families in the world. I know Poland very well, many Olko's families. I am searching the paths of my uncle, Kazimierz Olko, who migrated to Argentina, probably in 1932. After World War II contact was broken, address lost, his brothers and sisters died. My father tried to find his brother thru the Red Cross, but without results.

On the site http://www.polishroots.org/gendobry/PDF/GenDobry_VII_5.pdf I found another Olko, Ignac, who emigrated from another village (Kamień), and I know his family. They do not have contact with him either.

My question for you: is it possible to find family of Casimir/Kazimierz, or the parish of Olko's in Argentina, or more data about his coming to Argentina? Could you please help me in searching? Some directions could be appreciated.

Jan Olko, Dębica, Poland

Editor—As I said, Paul Valasek has tried to help Jan. If you have any ideas, contact Paul at <Paval56@aol.com> and he'll pass word along to Jan.

Subject: Polish Soldiers in the Napoleonic Wars

Editor—Here's another request I couldn't help with, and Paul Valasek did what he could:

I saw a note from you from Polish Roots and was wondering if you can help me locate a list of Polish soldier names from Galicia (specifically - Lubenia, Rzeszów, Siedliska (near Lubenia), Sandomierz, Tycn [Tyczyn?], Nisko) who might have fought during the Napoleonic Wars. I am trying to determine if any of my ancestors had any involvement:

Surnames are:

Baran
Bieda (or Bida)
Borowiec
Dudek
Godowska
Gugala
Kalandyk
Materna
Mytych

Ossolinska
Pajak
Statkiewicz
Szczech
Tofil

If you cannot help me on this matter can you direct me to anybody else or the specific material that I can review?

John Bieda <jbieda@lambdacorp.com>

Editor—Here's what Paul wrote back:

Fred Hoffman forwarded your email to me. I sure wish I could help, but I have been looking for the names of Poles who fought in Napoleon's Grand Armée for a number of years. At best, I've seen books which only list high-ranking officers and not much else. They are just starting to come out with the fact that most of the Grand Armée (at least a sizable percentage) which went into Moscow was made up of Poles and Lithuanians, not Frenchmen. Though the officers almost always were French.

Since your ancestors came from Galicia, they would have been under Austrian rule. Their records, if they served in the Austrian army, would be in the Kriegsarchiv in Vienna. BUT, you have to know what unit they fought in for them to find out the records. Quite frustrating and usually a waste of time because that is what you are looking for in the first place. Officers were indexed, enlisted men were not, but again, most officers would be Austrians, not Galician Poles.

I have asked a number of knowledgeable military enthusiasts as well as French Genealogists and archivists, and no one seems to have a handle as to where these rosters may be. I'm sure they wrote down the names of these men (remember, *Jan* becomes *Jean*, *Franciszek* becomes *François*, etc, etc. and they usually do butcher the last names) but these lists must be somewhere. I would suspect that your ancestors would have been in the Austrian armies against Napoleon, unless they deserted and took arms on the opposing side. I would suggest that Fred prints your e-mail (mine too, if you want) and lets see what happens.

Paul Valasek <Paval56@aol.com>

Editor—If you can add any information, John and Paul would both like to hear from you.

Subject: Evil PDF's!

Thanks for printing that Polish Language humor item I sent and giving me credit. Gee, Fred, I should be getting my own column in *Gen Dobry!*

Now here's a really important contribution for you to make, but it's got nothing to do with Polish or genealogy, but you could go down in history if you could explain for person-kind just how evil PDF files work! (I just noticed that *Gen Dobry!* is available in that format). But all good genealogists do other things too, and if you could spend a few minutes educating us, you would be rising even higher on our esteem charts.

I, and folks I that I know who are part of the unwashed, PDF-uneducated masses who don't believe in reading instruction manuals, constantly use the preface "evil" whenever the subject comes up. "Slow to load, you can't save as a document, etc.," I thought! Then I complained to the right person—somebody who knew about them.

He explained to me that if I had bothered to look at the toolbar of a PDF file, I would see a copy of the little "hand" icon up there and adjacent to it, a "T" icon that indicates "text select." Using Adobe Acrobat v. 6.0 or better, selecting on that "text select" option will remove the miserable "hand" from your mouse and allow you to select text just as if you were using Word or some other text program.

You still might be stuck with narrow columns and possibly ads or other items that have been inserted in the text to hilite specific points made by the text, as many newsletters printed in columnar formats are found as PDF files. But you can copy them and at your convenience clean up and reformat them as you wish. Possibly the easiest way might be to save as a text file.

But I notice in the Acrobat v. 4.0 that you use, the "text select" option is located on a different, lower tool bar line and you can click on it and hilite text. But in both attempts that I have tried, I was unable to copy the item I wanted. In another newsletter from someone other than you, what got copied was a mess of alphabetical gibberish. When I attempted to copy the Polish Language humor piece, what came out was the last item that I had copied for a different project.

Is it possible to copy text from a PDF file using version 4? Might you have to do something to enable that? Might I have to read and learn something?

If you can provide one of your usual succinct answers to this problem, Fred, you'll probably get a "Webby Award" next year or something greater because satisfied *Gen Dobry!* subscribers will be sending your name and solution all over the world in their unmitigated joy.

Ray Marshall <raymarsh@mninter.net>

Editor—Well, after that buildup, I wish I could come through for you. I can't help you with your problem, perhaps because I can't duplicate it on my system. I have version 7.0 of Acrobat Reader installed, which may be a factor. All I know is, when I open PDF files, I usually have no trouble copying and pasting text from them. As you say, often there are formatting issues; my system often inserts unwanted line feeds, for instance. But they're easy to remove; if it were a big enough problem, I'm sure I could set things up to stop that from happening.

*I should explain that when I create the PDF form of *Gen Dobry!*, I intentionally choose to make it compatible with older versions of Acrobat. It's maddening when you try to do something online and keep getting messages saying you can't do it because your software is outdated. I try to*

prevent that by using settings that won't cause those problems. I've set the program that creates PDF files, Distiller, for compatibility with version 5.0 and later.

In my experience, problems with PDF's often go away if you install the latest version of Acrobat's Reader. It's free, available at <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html>. If that doesn't work, I guess I don't know what to tell you.

Darn, I was really wanting to get one of those Webbys, too....

***** A REMARKABLE PIECE OF RESEARCH ON A TOWN NOW ON THE FRINGE *****

by Edward David Luft <edwardluft@hotmail.com>

I have been twice in Piła, called *Schneidemühl* by the Germans. The second time, about 10 years ago, having had lunch in the best hotel in the city for next to nothing. I invited the local Conservator of Monuments to be my guest, and he assured me that he was still discovering items, such as old archival documents, in barns where they were hidden during World War II. So there is still some hope of finding new things. Unfortunately, due to its position as an armaments manufacturing town, Piła was bombed extensively, not only in World War II, but even in World War I; so little is left of the original town or records. Thus, it is all the more surprising and gratifying to see what one writer has collected for a provincial town.

I have known Peter Cullman since about the time of my return from the second trip and was really pleased to receive his new book for review here. Peter has done one of the finest research projects on one small town that I have ever seen, taking 15 years of work to produce:

Cullman, Peter Simonstein, *History of the Jewish Community of Schneidemühl: 1641 to the Holocaust*, Bergenfield, NJ: Avotaynu, ©2006, 390 pp., including bibliography, pp. 361-365, and index, pp. 375-390. At the Library of Congress and other research libraries, DS135.P62P4728 2006; and available at <http://www.avotaynu.com/books/cullman.htm>. That website lists the book's table of contents. The book contains an extensive list of Jews who lived in Schneidemühl, with 22 pp. of photographs and 4 maps of Schneidemühl.

Although the book centers on the Jews, it goes without saying that there is much here also for the researcher into Gentile genealogy. The Jews did not exist in a vacuum, and what occurred in Piła/Schneidemühl was similar to what occurred elsewhere in Prussia and later in the German Empire. The Prussians were all too eager to impose their notions of order and conformity, not least upon their own civil servants, who dutifully set in order as much as possible of the kings/emperor's apparatus as they could. So it is valuable to read Cullman's book even if you have no interest in Piła but only want to know how the Prussians organized things, such as records of all types.

The author traces the fate of most of the Jewish community from the 1930s to ultimate destruction during the Holocaust, a major feat of research all by itself. Many emigrated and almost all of the rest perished. For those deported, there is often a detailed, person-by-person chronology, detailing the various towns, labor camps, and hospices to which the Jews were sent prior to their murder. That list contains in excess of 500 persons. An annotated Jewish burial register, 1854-1940, lists the names of more than 900 persons.

Now for some caveats: The book has some annoying small faults that a good editor could fix. For example, there are many words with a hyphen in them at an inappropriate place. Perhaps the words were originally at the end of a line and had to be hyphenated for space reasons, but the final version placed other words at the end of the line. Those hyphens and spaces could have been removed quite easily. Some wording is sometimes awkward, such as using “that” instead of “who” to refer to people, but these are minor faults that can easily be overlooked.

Unfortunately, there are also some missing footnotes, a more serious problem. I would have liked to know what footnote 136 on p. 31 said. After all, the research is a great strength in the book. Indeed, other researchers would do well to emulate Cullman’s research in the production of similar books. In addition to a very good index and a somewhat eclectic bibliography, the author has inserted 702 footnotes in the text, or at least almost all of them. There are other very useful items in the appendices, such as a timeline of events, called a “Calendarium.” For those interested in understanding Hebrew, Yiddish, Polish, Russian, German, and some other terms used in the text, the appendix contains a very useful list of definitions. Although the author does not indicate where he found the 1774 census data, he probably found it in Stern, Selma, *Der preußische Staat und die Juden*, listed in the bibliography. Consulting that book will yield where Selma Stern obtained the records, of use to non-Jews as well as Jews for those listed in that census. An item of interest to all those interested in Piła will be Cullman’s list of “Schneidemühl’s Street Names—Then and Now.”

Finally, I have one disagreement with the author as to emphasis with respect to compulsory military service for Jews. He states on pp. 58-59 that the King of Prussia did not envisage compulsory military service, apparently in the 1 June 1833 Decree on the Naturalization of the Jews in the Grand Duchy of Posen. I have reviewed a number of Jewish vital records lists for the period of 1834-1845 and held by the Mormons on microfilm. I carefully noted that in every case the reports were reviewed annually by the military for military purposes. The author is technically correct that compulsory military service was not in that Decree. However, in a curious way, we can see a kind of pressure on absolutism at work here, the beginnings of democracy in Prussia.

The large landowners dominated the Posen parliament, known as the Posen *Provinziallandtag*. It was only in the meeting of 1845 that the Government dared to raise the Jewish compulsory military service issue there among so many anti-Semitic reactionaries. It was only at that date that the Government felt that it could muster the necessary votes and did. So we see here some democracy at work in a perverse way. The Government would have preferred to incorporate the equal compulsory service in the original Decree, just as it had done elsewhere earlier.

Indeed, prior to the Decree of the 11th of March 1812, naturalizing the Jews in the “old” provinces of Prussia but excluding Posen until the issuance of the 1833 Decree, there had been much discussion in both the Jewish and Christian leadership on the issue of compulsory military service for Jews. Many of the more conservative elements in the Prussian government opposed such compulsory service in a “Christian state” but not the taxes raised from the Jews, of course, including the tax for not serving, called the *Rekrutensteuer*. However, the Jewish leadership prevailed upon the king not to make a distinction in military service eligibility or service between Jews and Gentiles. By 1812, the king finally agreed with the Jewish leadership. It was the Jews, and not the Government, which originated and argued for compulsory military service of Jews on

an equal footing with Christians. The Jewish leaders did not want any perception that Jews were unequal or less capable of fighting for their king and country. By the time of the 1833 Decree for Posen, the issue was no longer under serious discussion in the Government, but the fact trailed the conception and was not implemented until 31 December 1845 because there were far more Jews in Posen than in the rest of Prussia combined, and the *Provinziallandtag* was too conservative to accept Jewish equality in so conservative a function as the military in a “Christian state.” Thus, the Government was not prepared to deal with so many Jews in the military until 1845. Posen Jews were not treated equally with other Jews in the kingdom. Some traditional Jewish leaders deplored the changes as eroding their position in the Jewish community. See Vital, David, *A People Apart: The Jews in Europe 1789-1939*, Oxford University Press, ©David Vital, 1999, 944 pp., at p. 126. DS135.E83V58 1999. Voluntary military service for Jews existed from 1797. See Graupe, Heinz Mosche, translated by John Robinson, *The Rise of Modern Judaism: An Intellectual History of German Jewry, 1650-1942*, Huntington, NY: R. E. Kreiger, 1978, i. e. 1979, 329 pp., at p. 188. BM316.G713.

Such small points do not detract from the obvious value of the book, which should be used as a blueprint for how to write similar studies; it is a remarkable piece of work.

Editor—Note that a complete and up-to-date list of Edward Luft’s writings appears at:
<http://www.GetCited.org/mbrx/PT/99/MBR/11078005>.

***** PROUD TO BE POLISH *****

Editor—This was posted on the Polish-Surnames mailing list, and I thought it was amusing and pretty much on target. I could not find out who the original author was; if anyone knows, please tell me so I can give proper credit. In any case, I wanted to reprint it for those who might have missed it.

If you come from Chicago, Buffalo, Cleveland, Hamtramck, or Milwaukee, there is a large church called “Saint Stanislaus,” or “Saint Hedwig,” within one block of your childhood home (that is, unless you’re one of those suburban exiles, in which case the church is within one block of your *babcia*’s house!)

The neighborhood you grew up in is called “Little Warsaw,” “Slavic Village,” “Polish Hill,” or something of that sort. You like to celebrate St. Patrick’s Day but only because “the Irish are oppressed too”!

Your knowledge of the Polish language is limited to ‘naughty’ words (e.g., *dupa*, *gówno*, *gatki*, etc), names for food (e. g., *pierogi*, *kapusta*, etc), and drinking toasts (e.g., *na zdrowie*, *sto lat*, etc).

You occasionally add the suffix “-ski” to English words for no apparent reason (e.g., “I’m gonna go put the car-ski in the garage-ski”). [If you also happen to know a few basic conversational phrases in Polish, you are considered “old school” by friends and relatives.]

You call your grandma “*babcia*” or “*busia*” and your grandpa “*dziadzia*.”

You know how to dance the polka, but you only do it at weddings after kicking back a few generous shots of vodka.

You like to drink. Especially beer. Especially cheap beer.

When frustrated, you slap your forehead, shake your head, and say “O Jezu Marija!”

You have one grandma that wears a babushka and galoshes every single day of the year and another grandma that wears a lot of jewelry and too much make-up.

You have a grandma who uses every single part of animal carcasses to make sausages, soups, dumplings, etc.

You have at least one uncle named “Stan,” or “Staś.” You have at least one relative who works, or used to work, for the Big Three.

Your relatives are devoted to saints, the Blessed Virgin, the Pope, the Democratic Party, the U.S. Steelworkers, etc.

Your grandma has a shrine complete with votive candles and a picture of the “Our Lady of Częstochowa” or “Infant of Prague.”

Your parents have at least one crucifix or religious picture mounted on a wall in their house with palms tucked behind it.

Your grandparents and other relatives habitually kiss everyone they meet.

You refer to your two dozen or so cousins by childhood nicknames (e.g., Stannie, Nicky, Louie, Joey, Chickie, Honey, etc.) irrespective of their ages.

You refer to grandparents and aunts by pet names (e.g., Aunt Honey, Aunt Chickie, Grandpa Jo-Jo, etc).

You regularly attend Friday fish fries, harvest festivals, parish festivals, Vegas nights, and/or bingo.

You bowl regularly and/or on a team sponsored by a local bar.

You get your food blessed at Easter and your house blessed at Christmas time.

Your family has a Wigilia meal on Christmas Eve at which you share *opłatki*.

Your family likes to play card games like hearts and pinochle, and this often culminates in full-scale brawls.

You always prefer rye bread to white or wheat. Your dad has forced you to eat horseradish, claiming that it will “put hair on your chest” (even if you’re a female!).

You like to go “mushroom hunting.”

People in your family have their wedding receptions at places called “Polish Legion Hall,” “Sacred Heart Center,” etc.

You know the words to “Sto Lat” and sing it at all birthday parties.

You can outdrink all of your friends.

You have waited in line at a church or bakery to buy *pierogi* or *pączki*.

You frequently add “dere” (there) and/or “ya know” to the end of sentences. Words like *kiszka*, *kielbasa*, and *kolaczki* actually mean something to you.

You know the difference between Czechs, Slovaks, and Slovenes, and you think they’re all inferior to Poles despite the numerous glaring similarities.

You used to get a day off from school on Saint Joseph’s Day (March 19).

You actually know who Kościuszko and Pułaski are, and why they’re important.

You have at least one relative who plays the accordion.

You are inclined to blame all the world’s ills on Germans and Russians.

You have an easier time getting along with Irishmen and Italians than with non-Polish Slavs.

You’re either completely overdressed or completely underdressed for every occasion.

If you’re a woman, you wear make-up at all times - even if it’s 90 degrees outside and you’re 88 years old.

Your idea of “healthy” is boiled *pierogi*, light beer, and filtered cigarettes.

You walk into a crowd of people you don’t know and talk to them like they’re your best friends in the whole world.

You hoard vast amounts of money in your house.

You have at least one bar in your house—usually in the basement.

Your family always has an excuse to hold a “*poprawiny*” — e.g., when someone dies, or when someone gets married.

You’ve never been to Poland, but you have mysterious relatives there to whom you send gifts and money every Christmas.

Your front yard is filled with lawn ornaments — e.g., pink flamingos, jockey, Mary in the halfshell, etc.

You have relatives who are priests and nuns.

You collect “prayer cards” from funerals.

You or someone in your family owns a highly outdated Dodge or Plymouth.

You regularly attend Mass but spend most of the ceremony sleeping and/or looking at the parish bulletin.

You’ve haven’t been a practicing Catholic for years but everyone in your family insists that it’s “just a phase.”

You often visit cemeteries, light votive candles for dead relatives, and generally spend an unhealthy amount of time obsessing about death.

You like to gossip and generally talk too much.

People often have trouble pronouncing your last name.

Your family is so loyal that even a second cousin would take a bullet for you.

You drink your coffee black and take your liquor straight up.

Polish people are GREAT!

Editor—Incidentally, there’s a particularly good version of this article, complete with photos, on Ed Marek’s “Talking Proud” Website at <http://www.talkingproud.us/Culture013106.html>.

***** WORLD WAR II “OLD MAN’S” DRAFT REGISTRATION DATABASE *****

Editor—Here’s some info Tom posted on some Lithuanian genealogy lists, and he thought our readers might also like to know about it, since, as he pointed out, “You get 116,686 names when you type in POLAND for place of birth.”

by Tom Sadauskas <Thomas.Sadauskas@tma.osd.mil>

FYI - Ancestry.com has posted WW II Draft Registration Cards for men born between 28 April 1877 and 16 February 1897. I found my grandfather and a number of others in it.

When you type in Place of Birth - Lithuania, it results in 22,668 names. Unfortunately, it currently only contains results for 14 states (incomplete records for New Jersey/New York). Some cards have the actual place of birth (though usually spelled incorrectly) versus just “Lithuania.”

See below for more information:

The U.S. officially entered World War II on 8 December 1941 following an attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Just about a year before that, in October 1940, President Roosevelt had signed into law the first peacetime selective service draft in U.S. history, due to rising world conflicts. After the U.S. entered WWII a new selective service act required that all men between ages 18 and 65 register for the draft. Between November 1940 and October 1946, over 10 million American men were registered.

This database is an indexed collection of the draft cards from the Fourth Registration, the only registration currently available to the public (the other registrations are not available due to privacy laws). The Fourth Registration, often referred to as the “old man’s registration”, was conducted on 27 April 1942 and registered men who born on or between 28 April 1877 and 16 February 1897 — men who were between 45 and 64 years old — and who were not already in the military.

Information available on the draft cards includes:

- Name of registrant
- Age
- Birth date
- Birthplace
- Residence
- Employer information
- Name and address of person who would always know the registrants whereabouts
- Physical description of registrant (race, height, weight, eye and hair colors, complexion)

Additional information such as mailing address (if different from residence address), serial number, order number, and board registration information may also be available.

Which states are currently available in this database? This database currently contains draft cards for the following states:

- Arkansas
- Connecticut
- Delaware
- Indiana
- Maryland
- New Hampshire
- New Jersey*
- New York*
- Pennsylvania
- Puerto Rico
- Rhode Island
- Vermont
- Virginia
- West Virginia

*The collection of records for these states in this database is incomplete. Therefore, it is possible that an ancestor who fits the age requirement of this registration and is from one of these states, will not currently be found in this database. Records for additional states will be added to this database as Ancestry can acquire them.

*** POLISH TRIVIA QUESTIONS ***

Editor: In the last issue we gave 5 questions from a Polish trivia game PolishRoots Vice President Paul Valasek <paval56@aol.com> came across. The answers to those questions appear below, followed by this month's questions, the answers to which will appear in the next issue. We want to thank Tom Bratkowski for permission to reprint these.

Answers to the Questions in the June Issue:

Category: Bonus

- Q. Where was the world's first oil well reported to be drilled?
- A. In Bóbrko, near Krosno, Poland [*Editor—probably a typo, I'm pretty sure it should be "Bóbrka"*]

- Q. What prompted Austria and Germany to declare a new Kingdom of Poland from occupied territories in 1916?
- A. They needed Polish volunteers to fight Russia.

- Q. To whom is Chopin's "Polonaise in A-Flat Major" dedicated?
- A. To his first piano teacher, Wojciech Żywny.

- Q. What were the "Flying Universities" of Poland?
- A. The classes taught in homes in occupied Poland

- Q. In the Warszawa legend, how did the mermaid mark the site for the founding of the city?
- A. With a golden arrow

New Questions for the July Issue

Category: Humanities

1. On what river is Wrocław located?
2. What is the historic religious hill in Częstochowa called?
3. Which major American university has a commons named Kosciuszko Square?
4. How many lakes are there in Poland currently (1985)? (within 100)
5. For what is the town of Busko-Zdrój noted?

Reprinted with permission from Polish American Trivia & Quadrivia, Powstan, Inc. If interested in learning more, contact Paul Valasek <paval56@aol.com>.

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

August 4 – 6, 2006

**EEGS/FEEFHS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
“DISCOVERING OUR ROOTS: FROM EAST EUROPE TO THE NEW WORLD”**

Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

The East European Genealogical Society (EEGS) and the Federation of East European Family History Societies (FEEFHS) will hold a conference to explore East European ancestry on August 4 to 6, 2006 at the Victoria Inn, 1808 Wellington Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

The conference will feature presentations by renowned specialists from the U.S.A. and Canada focusing on areas in present day Poland and Ukraine as well as the Russian, Austro-Hungarian, and German Empires. Presentations will cover research procedures, records, sources, language, and scripts and many other topics. There will also be a generic track for beginners to genealogy with general research topics including computer and others.

Winnipeg is the “gateway to the west” for East European settlement in Canada. It has many Ukrainian, Mennonite, Jewish, Polish, and other ethnic museums and research centers as well as institutions of genealogical importance such as the provincial archives, provincial genealogical society, two universities with Slavic and German studies and others. Winnipeg hosts the Folklorama Festival, a two week event that begins on the last day of the conference and features over 40 pavilions with ethnic food, entertainment, and cultural displays for many areas of east and central Europe. Pavilions include Warsaw-Poland, Krakow-Poland, Ukraine-Lviv, Ukraine-Kyiv, Russian, Czech and Slovak, German, Hungarian, and others. (see: <http://www.folklorama.ca> for more info).

EEGS website: <http://www.eegsociety.org>

FEEFHS website: <http://www.feefhs.org>

AUGUST EVENTS IN WILNO POLISH HERITAGE PARK, WILNO, CANADA

Editor—Shirley Mask Connolly <maskconn@magma.ca> sent this information on upcoming events:

The **Music Tribute** planned for Sunday, July 30, between 2-4 p.m. at Canada’s Polish Kashub Heritage Park, Wilno, had to be **postponed** because of a delay in the production of the CD’s of Songs and Dances from Canada’s First Polish Community. Tentative plans are to reschedule this event for Saturday, August 19th. To be confirmed.

Other dates to mark on your calendar:

August 16: Music in the Park in Wilno between 2-4 p.m. All are welcome.

August 20: Ottawa Valley/Madawaska Valley Rendezvous in Wilno. Activities at Wilno Polish Kashub Heritage Park in the afternoon. I will send you the details as soon as I am given the final schedule.

September 8 – 10, 2006

**THE 28TH FALL CONFERENCE of the
POLISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA**

“From Research to *Rodziny*”

Held at the Schaumburg Marriott in Schaumburg, Illinois.

For more information see the PGSA Website at <http://www.pgsa.org>, or contact Linda Ulanski at lulanski@aol.com.

Friday and Saturday, September 22 and 23, 2006

2006 POLISH GENEALOGICAL CONFERENCE

sponsored by

**POLISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF CONNECTICUT AND THE NORTHEAST,
INC.**

and

**THE ENDOWED CHAIR OF THE POLISH AND POLISH AMERICAN STUDIES,
CENTRAL CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY**

Place: Central Connecticut State University, Student Center, New Britain, CT

Friday, September 22, 2006 — Beginner’s Workshop: Getting Started: Finding the Missing Pieces of Your Polish-American Family History

Saturday, September 23, 2006 — (full schedule)
Registration will close September 12.

Fee: \$40 Friday and Saturday
\$35 Saturday only
\$10 Friday only

Includes Polish-American buffet lunch (Saturday only)

Registration forms are available online at http://www.pgscetne.org/confintro_ccsu.html or e-mail Diane Szepanski, Conference Chair at [<pgsconf@yahoo.com>](mailto:pgsconf@yahoo.com) or [<Szepanski@ccsu.edu>](mailto:Szepanski@ccsu.edu) for more information.

November 4, 2006

The Polish Genealogical Society of Michigan's Annual Seminar

At the Polish Cultural Center: **2979 E Maple Rd., Troy, MI 48083**

3 Lectures by Matthew Bielawa:

- 1. Vital Genealogy: Records across Poland (Parts I & II)
- 2. Polski Komputer & Your Genealogy
- 3. Going East: Preparing for Your Trip to Poland

Registration before Oct. 25th is \$50; after Oct. 25th it is \$60. A Polish-style lunch is included.

Mail Registration Form from Website and check to:

PGSM
c/o Burton Historical Collection
Detroit Public Library
5201 Woodward Av.
Detroit, MI 48202-4007

For more info see the PGSM Website: <http://www.pgsm.org>

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

http://teki.bkpan.poznan.pl/index_regesty.html

On the Herbarz mailing list Klaus Liwowsky [<KlaLiwo@web.de>](mailto:KlaLiwo@web.de) explained that this site offers access to “the gigantic collection of extracts from registers and obituaries related to Wielkopolska made by the great Polish genealogist Prof. Włodzimierz Dworzaczek ... Many thanks to the Biblioteka Kórnicka.”

http://www.suetterlinschrift.de/Lese/Namen_schreiben.htm

Ceil Jensen (<http://mipolonia.net>) told me about this site, which lets you write your ancestors names in Suetterlin, the old German script. It could help you if you're looking for a specific name in one of those old records!

<http://www.jgene.org/wiki>

On the soc.genealogy.jewish newsgroup, Nicky Carlin <nixxyc@gmail.com> offered this new site for Jewish Genealogy. “This is in no way meant to compromise the wonderful, and extensive, work done by JewishGen, but rather to add to it! ... It is only in the beginning stages and a bit of an experiment, but I’m hoping it will be a successful one! If you have any comments, suggestions or need help, please mail me off-list.”

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/13662242/>

Bill Rutkowski <billrutkowski@comcast.net> pointed this article out to me, a rather interesting one about how practically all of us are related to royalty. The article is available on many Websites; the URL above is the shortest one I could find. I should add that Rafał Prinke and Andrzej Sikorski wrote a book some years ago called *Królewska Krew* [Royal Blood] that claimed the majority of Poles living today descend on the distaff side from Mieszko I, and also from such medieval European rulers as Charlemagne, William the Conqueror, Gedymin and St. Włodzimierz. Prinke and Sikorski are scholars, so they didn’t just make an assertion; they tried to prove it. Their arguments seemed pretty strong to me, and I’m inclined to believe there’s a lot of truth to this.

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/POLISHAUSTRALIANGENEALOGY/>

On the Poland-Border-Surnames list Lucyna Artymiuk <lartymiuk@optusnet.com.au> announced this group for “Polish Kangaroos” (Australians). It’s meant to help Australians, since “the migration and settlement process for our parents and forefathers in this lonely continent so far from Europe is somewhat different from those who went to North America, stayed in Europe or travelled elsewhere ... I will try and add as many relevant links to this webpage. And also find information on Polish migration and settlement to the land down under.”

<http://polishdiaspora.net/>

Lucyna also posted a note on the Galicia_Poland-Ukraine list to talk about this site, “the website for an oral history project where Polish Displaced Persons and ex-Servicemen and Women from all over the world tell their stories. Members and students of the Polish Diaspora are invited to become involved by sharing their experiences and documents. Indeed, it is very gratifying to receive encouragement from those interested in Polish history, regardless of where they live, be it the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada or Australia. This move towards global collaboration will be enhanced by the digitization of the data, resulting in global access to the records.”

She posted another note mentioning a valuable site she had recently discovered:

http://kresy-wschodnie.webpark.pl/ksiazka_gosci.html

Finally, she posted a note on the PolandBorderSurnames list: “If you intend to travel around Poland by rail - this is an excellent website. Have a look at the price promotions section:”

<http://www.polrail.com/sections/travel/index.html>

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/g2/story/0,,1825469,00.html>

Ray Marshall <raymarsh@mninter.net> sent me this link to a story about Poles who have left the country since 2004. The story, “Why Would You Leave a Place Like Wrocław?”, is too long to reprint here, but you can read it at the above address.

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

Paul Valasek told me about this site, where you can find Poles in France, 1890-1990. He found some people there who are probably distant relatives!

<http://www.genealogienetz.de/misc/letters/>

On the German-Surnames list there was a lot of interest when one member offered to send people form letters in German useful in research. LaVerne <ltboehmke@sbcglobal.net> pointed out that these letters are readily available at this site. She explained the site is “in English and there are 4 letters one can use in writing to Germany. One is for churches, one is for registration offices, one is for archives, and one is for organizations. The letters are also shown in French and other languages. This site is a good one to explore for all kinds of advice for research.”

<http://polishroots.netfirms.com/>

The RootsWeb Review, 26 July 2006, Vol. 9, No. 30, mentioned this site, “a directory to Polish genealogy resources, databases and websites related to Polish ancestry and research of roots with links to Austrian, Belarusian, German, Jewish, Russian, Ukrainian and worldwide genealogy-related sites. Please note that it is *not* affiliated with our organization, PolishRoots®.

http://blog.eogn.com/eastmans_online_genealogy/2006/07/nara_proposes_a.html

Dick Eastman’s online newsletter *EOGN* had a high-priority item dated 25 July 2006, “NARA Proposes a Change in Research/Exhibit Hours in DC Area.” If you live in the Washington DC area, or plan to do research at NARA, you might want to learn more about this, as it may have a big effect on your plans and pocketbook!

<http://www.JamesCMartin.com>

Fans of James Conroyd Martin’s book *Push Not the River* will want to look at his new Website, at this address. It has information on his new book, *Against a Crimson Sky*, as well as *Push Not the River*. There are also links to the schedule of his book signings.

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

Also, in the July 19th issue of *EOGN* Dick Eastman sang the praises of this Website, saying, “One of the great unsung genealogy resources on the Web is Linkpendium. It is a compendium of links to U.S. genealogy-related information on the World Wide Web. Its home page proclaims that it presently contains links to 4,987,236 genealogy sites.” Sounds like something worth checking out to me!

http://www.familysearch.org/Eng/Library/FHLC/frameset_fhlc.asp

Joseph Martin mentioned that he had found films available at the Family History Library which give information on passports for those leaving Europe via Hamburg. On the Catalogue Search page (the link given above) do a Keyword search for “Hamburg Passport” (oddly enough, a Title search for this phrase comes up empty). Three links appear, the first of which is labeled

“ReisepaßDF-Protokolle, 1851-1929.” It is described as “Passport applications recorded by the police information office in Hamburg. Each volume has its own index. Indexes show the name, birth date and place of the applicant, the year and file number. After 1897 another index was kept separately. This index includes some entries as early as 1881.”

YOU MAY REPRINT articles from *Gen Dobry!*, PROVIDED: (1) the reprint is used for non-commercial, educational purposes; and (2) the following notice appears at the end of the article: Written by [author’s name, e-mail address, and URL, if given]. Previously published by *Gen Dobry!*, Vol. VII, No. 7, 30 July 2007, PolishRoots®: <http://www.PolishRoots.org/>.

Copyright 2006, PolishRoots®, Inc. All rights reserved.