

PROJECT TO DISCOVER  
SCHENECTADY **COUNTY'S** EASTERN EUROPEAN ROOTS  
NEWSLETTER

April 2016 Vol. 3 No. 2

Our objective is to discover, document and digitally preserve genealogy, stories, and pictures of Schenectady County's Eastern European immigrants.

Please share your family history, help pass the (electronic) word. The next deadline is July 1<sup>st</sup> 2016, then October 1st. To submit your family story, pictures, etc, e-mail Phyllis Zych Budka: [abudka@nycap.rr.com](mailto:abudka@nycap.rr.com) Without your stories, there can be no newsletter. To be added to the newsletter e-mail list, contact Phyllis.

**The Schenectady Digital History Archive** To find our newsletters on-line:

<http://www.schenectadyhistory.org/resources/eer/>

**Polish American Historical Association Link (PAHA)**

Dr. Maja Trochimczyk, webmaster of the PAHA website, added a link to our Project Newsletter archive on the "Schenectady Digital History Archive."

From the PAHA Home Page at

<http://www.polishamericanstudies.org/>

Click on "Resources" then "Lists of Resources."

Thank you, Maja!

**Polish Genealogical Society of America (PGSA)**

Thanks to William F. Hoffman, PGSA newsletter editor, for printing our Table of Contents and contact information in "Rodziny" the PGSA newsletter. PGSA Home Page is found at

<http://pgsa.org/>

**Facebook: Schenectady Polish Heritage Facebook Group**

Thanks to Brianna Jolie (Guckemus) for starting this Facebook group. It's described as a "closed group" which only means that you can request membership and an "administrator" will give you permission.

**Save the Date: Saint Adalbert's Dozynki Festival – Sunday, October 16<sup>th</sup>.**

Our Project will have an exhibit. Stop by and say "Hello!"

**Thanks to Bernice Izzo and Carole McCarthy for their help in editing this newsletter!**

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**More About Mushrooms  
Jurate Malinauskiene**

[Ed. Jurate Malinauskiene is a cousin on my Korycinski grandfather’s side of the family who lives in Vilnius, Lithuania, and speaks English. Several months ago, when Bob Yunick asked if I knew anyone who spoke Lithuanian, I said, “Yes, but she lives in Lithuania.” Jurate and Bob corresponded about his memories of mushroom name phonics, but he didn’t know spellings. With Jurate’s input, Bob wrote an article about hunting mushrooms with his Lithuanian roots family in Schenectady in the January 2016 issue of this newsletter. I then asked Jurate if she had a mushroom story. Below, with a little editing, is what she wrote:]

Dear Phyllis,

Actually I haven’t much more to add about mushrooms than what Bob described. He told about traditions and mushroom hunting particularly. Only one story, which happened to my parents. My mom told, when they were just married and went to the forest for mushroom hunting. My mom picked up mushrooms, which she knew, such as boletus. According to my mom, my father picked up all mushrooms, which he found. Mom said that they were not edible; dad said that they were good. They got into a quarrel. Eventually mom said, that she wouldn’t cook them. If my dad wanted, he could cook them himself. So dad prepared and consumed the mushrooms, himself. My mom watched and almost wept to see what happened. The matter was, my mom was born in the southern part of Lithuania, where there are more conifers and a better variety of mushrooms. My dad was born in the northern part, where there is more leafy forest, better soil, but poor variety of mushrooms, and he knew more about edible mushrooms.

**April 30, 1950 Albany, Times Union**

## **Schenectady Polish Groups to Mark Triple Anniversary in City Today Banquet Tonight To Be Feature of Program**

[Ed: Thanks to Brianna Guckemus for submitting (and retyping) this newspaper article clipped from the Albany Times Union in 1950. Brianna says, "I found it interesting because it talked about the origins of the Polish people in Schenectady, where they worked, and when the PNA [Polish National Alliance] Home was built. It also gave background as to how the PNA was formed in the U.S."]

A Triple anniversary will be celebrated today by Council as the Schenectady branch of the Polish National Alliance of America. The Council will commemorate the founding of the parent body 70 years ago, the Golden Jubilee of the Ladies Auxillary, and the opening to the public of the PNA home on Crane street, 17 years ago.

The afternoon program will start with a parade of all lodge members and delegations from PNA Councils of Albany, Amsterdam, Cohoes and other nearby cities. The Amsterdam PNA drum corps will also participate.

At 1:30 the parade will form, at the PNA home on Crane street and proceed to St. Adalbert's church. Vespers will be held at 2'oclock with the Rev. Ladislaus Guzielek, pastor, as celebrant. The parish choir will sing during the services, under the direction of Stanley Chylinski.

At 3:30 The celebration will open in St. Adalbert's hall, with Michael A. Rekucki as chairman. The Most Rev. Ignatius **Krauze**, CM., Bishop of China, will give the invocation. Isabel Pawlik of Albany will direct the Kalina choir in renditions of American and Polish anthems. Chopin's choir also will present several selections, under the direction of Bruno Warlik. Among the principal speakers during the afternoon will be Mayor Owen M. Begley of Schenectady; Mrs. Frances Dymek of Chicago, vice-president of the mother organization; Joseph **Mruk**, mayor of Buffalo; the Rev. Ladislaus Guzielek, president of the Polish Welfare Council; and Adolf K. Passak, president of Council 53. Benediction will follow, by the Rev. Ladislaus Guzielek.

A banquet will be held at 6 o'clock at the PNA home with Felix Slowakiewicz acting as chairman, and Adolf K. Passak, toastmaster. Speakers will be Oswald D. Heck, Speak of the Assembly; K. C. Sarnowski , chairman of the Board of Directors of Council 53; Mrs. Mary Zmyslowski, vice president of Council 53; Samuel S. Stratton, City Councilman; Mayor Begley; Mayor Mruk. Mrs. Dymek; and Stanley Plocharczyk, organiser for Council 53.

A large delegation from Albany, headed by Anthony Ostrowski, president of the Albany PNA Council, will attend the celebration.

Agaton Giller, a member of the National government of Poland, was largely responsible for an alliance in this country, when he sought forces to fight for Polish Independence. Julius Andrzejkowicz of Philadelphia heeded the plea and called together ten of the most prominent Poles in the city. It was voted then to organize an alliance. An appeal was sent to all the known Polish societies and clubs throughout the country to cooperate.

Six Polish societies from San Francisco, Chicago and Shenandoah, Pa. responded to the appeal, and the alliance was formed with 109 members. The first convention was held in Chicago on August 20, 1880. The name Polish National Alliance was adapted, and Julius Andrzejkowicz was unanimously elected first president. Philadelphia, "The Cradle of American Liberty," became the "Cradle of the Polish National Alliance." It is now the largest Polish Organization in the United States with 1,700 lodges and 816,422 members.

Lodges of Council 53 date back to 1895 when Schenectady was still in its infancy with a population 27,000. The Polish population was very small at the time with most of the people working at the old Ellis Locomotive Company.

**April 30, 1950 Albany, Times Union**

## **Schenectady Polish Groups to Mark Triple Anniversary in City Today Banquet Tonight To Be Feature of Program**

With the arrival of the Edison Electric Works, a new era was born and with it many Polish people settled there.

On October 13, 1895, Dr. Carroll Lewakowski Group 262, was organized. It was the mother lodge of the PNA in Schenectady. In later years, it changed its name to Wolnosc (Freedom).

With the great influx of people to the city in the next ten years, four more lodges were organized.

In June 1905, Wolnosc and Swoboda (Liberty) Group 509, banded together and organized the federated PNA lodges. The following month the first meeting was held with representatives of Mloda Polska (Young Poland) Group 331, and Prawda 1 Praca (Truth and Work) Group 436, joining the federation.

The first officers of the federated group were: Walster Osielski, president; Walter Chlewinski, vice president; Wadsworth Baclawski, recording secretary; Casimir Jankowski, financial secretary, and Ignatius Dobroczynski, treasurer.

In 1912 the federated group was granted a charter by the national headquarters in Chicago and Council 53 was official recognized.

Council 53 purchased the land on which the PNA home now stands, on November 27, 1912. The purchase price was \$5,500. W. T. Bednarkiewicz, Maryan Malinowski and John B. Wieczynski fostered the idea.

K.C. Sarnowski, at a council meeting in 1931, proposed the construction of a home on the plot. The following year ground was broken and the cornerstone laid November 6, 1932. The home was opened to the public April 30, 1933.

The Council is active in combating juvenile delinquency. Its youth organizations sponsor classes in music, dancing and hobbies. There are lectures and other educational activities, library and reading facilities, sports, outdoor activities and summer camping for children. An annual scholarship to Alliance College at Cambridge Springs, Pa. is also offered to an outstanding High school student.

Each year material contributions are made to such institutions as the Isolation hospital, Sunnyview Crippled Children's Home, the Children's Home, and the Veterans hospital at Saratoga Springs.

Council 53 has 119 delegates in its governing body from 11 lodges in Schenectady, two in Mechanicville, one in Port Henry, and one in Withersbee. The delegates represent 3,600 members, which is a representative body of more than 10,000 Americans of Polish ancestry.

The present officers of the Council are: K. C. Sarnowski, honorary president; Theodore Zasada, vice president; Mrs. Mary Zmyslowski, vice president; Michael A. Rekucki, recording secretary, Charles Wendolowski, financial secretary; Frank Rosiak, sergeant-at-arms and Henry Buzanowski, treasurer.

## The Urbanski Family John Urbanski



It was the fall of 1915. Some members of the growing Urbanski family posed for a photo in the yard of the family residence at 229 Front St. Schenectady. Pictured are the Mother of the family, Stanisława Urbanski (standing on the left), along with three of her daughters: Gertrude (later Williams) standing on the left, Helen (standing in the rear), and Katherine (Malewicz) who is seated with her three young children: Edward (on her lap) and Virginia and Helen to her left. In front of Stanisława is her youngest child, Edmund, who is my Father. Gertrude later married and had one son while Katherine had a total of seven children, and Edmund had two children.

The father of the family, John (Jan) Urbanski, emigrated to the US around 1882 from Wylatowo, Poland (Posen region of Prussia at that time) along with at least one brother, Andrej. He was approximately 20 years old at that time. John worked at the Westinghouse Farm Machinery Co. at the end of Erie Blvd. near the entrance to the present GE. Around 1885, he arranged to bring, from Wylatowo, his Mother Julianna Urbanski (Dobrzynski), along with Stanisława Wozniak and her three siblings (Joseph, Vincent, and Rosa). John and Stanisława were married in St. Joseph's church in Schenectady on 9/7/1886.

The Urbanskis and Wozniaks immigrated to the US apparently to escape German control. As children, they had to learn German as well as Polish. Stanisława was about 18 when she left Prussia. She did not have living parents at the time she emigrated but worked on a farm owned by Germans. Life was tough for her since she was also supporting her three younger siblings. Work on the farm was demanding since she later communicated



## The Urbanski Family

### John Urbanski

to her family that the owner of the farm expected her to work as an adult if she expected to receive the wages of an adult.

After marrying, they lived on a farm in Scotia and later moved to 229 Front St. where they lived to 1925. Their house in Scotia was near the train tracks and John would sometimes hop a slow freight train to and from work. He owned a team of draft horses that were retired from the fire department and he used them to plow the fields and to use them in the part time job of hauling dirt with a dump wagon at construction sites in the area. On one occasion, the horses were tied up outside a Schenectady saloon and when fire bells went off, the horses ran with the empty wagon through the streets and across the narrow wooden Washington Ave bridge across the Mohawk river to their Scotia home.

The larger house on Front St. provided needed room for the growing family. The yard ran to the Mohawk River and allowed them to have a large garden which was tilled by hand, and they also had chickens, and a few fruit trees. The back of the house had a summer kitchen with a wood fired stove so that the coal fired stove in the kitchen could be turned off and not heat the house during the summer. John used his river access to till and plant potatoes and cabbage on an island between Schenectady and Scotia. Crops were stored in a root cellar and extras were sold in the neighborhood. Edmund recalled helping his father till the garden in the spring when he was young. During a hot day, he gave Edmund a nickel and asked him to run to the local saloon to fill the beer pail. Both would drink from it to quench their thirst and the rest was spilled in the garden. He also recalled helping his older brother erect a pole in their Front St backyard in the 1920s with an antenna for a crystal radio set which they took turns listening to. The family moved to Vale Place in 1925 to be closer to St. Mary's church and school and because Stanisława was becoming concerned that her sons were spending too much time in the saloons around Front St. that catered to ALCO employees. Front St became a wave of workers at shift change. In fact, 3 sons worked for their entire careers in ALCO. However, John worked at GE from approximately 1890 until around 1930 when he retired.

John and Stanisława had twelve children between 1890 and 1911. Nine lived to adulthood and four of those married and had families. Tuberculosis and diphtheria took two children, and a drowning in the Mohawk River took John Jr. In 1917, Joseph Urbanski (the fourth oldest child) enlisted in the Army for duty in World War 1. Until that time he and his older brother Steve worked for Proper Ice Co in harvesting and delivering ice. Joe left Schenectady telling his mother he would bring the Kaiser home on a chain. He was assigned to the 312<sup>th</sup> Infantry of the 78<sup>th</sup> Division and was killed in action on 11/1/1918 near Grand Pre France. He is buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

All the males in the family worked during the depression either at ALCO, GE, or in the government sponsored WPA. They were known for their hard work and commitment to their families. Edmund served in the US Army during World War II. John died in 1941 and Stanisława died in 1961 at the age of 94. The house on Vale Place stayed in the Urbanski family until 2004 when Edmund, the youngest and last living sibling, died at the age of 93.

## The Budka Trumpeters Phyllis Zych Budka

My parents told me about the custom in our Schenectady Polish American community of a small musical ensemble greeting wedding guests at the entrance to a reception. They said that my husband Al's father, Walter Budka, (Fig 1) played the trumpet in such a group at their wedding in July 1940. Recently, finding pictures of Walter with his ensemble in an attic box, brought him and his connection to other Budka family trumpeters into my thoughts.



Fig. 1 Walter Budka (left with trumpet) and his band. Brother Benjamin Budka is on Walter's left. Date probably late 1940s.

## The Budka Trumpeters

### Phyllis Zych Budka



Fig. 2 The Polish group sponsored by the Polish Welfare Council of Schenectady taking part in the program today on Hetcheltown Road, off Saratoga Road. Front row, left to right, Alicia Morawska, Joseph Krupa, Helen Ciulik, Louis Zajaczkowski, Leona Bednarkiewicz, Regina Giniecka, Febronia Krupa, Wacław Krupa, Mary Prokop, Władysław Lesiakowski. Center row, Walter D. Przybyłek, K. C. Sarnowski. Back row, Eugene Huzar, Walter Budka, Chester Chlopecki, John Weclawiak, and Michael Huzar. [Ed. I've corrected a few misspellings.] The Knickerbocker Press, August 19, 1934.

I never knew Walter because he died suddenly when my husband was 12 years old. It was only years later that Al and I figured out what suddenly killed the young trumpet player: it must have been asbestosis, since Walter had worked as a steam fitter during WWII.

Not long ago, when I reconnected with the Budka family in Lutocin, Poland, I was surprised to learn that Walter's youngest brother, Jan, who stayed behind in Poland, had also played the trumpet and been a choirmaster there. Currently, my granddaughter, also a Budka, and Walter's great granddaughter, is on her way to a professional career as a classical concert trumpet player.

Perhaps one day a gene for trumpet talent will be discovered and will surely be found to exist in the Budka family.



## Timeline: Schenectady Sojourn (1901-1925) of Julianna *nee* Polek Jakubczak – Later Years (1918-1925) Leonard F. Jakubczak, Ph.D., Gaithersburg, Maryland, U.S.A.

This series of articles describes the lives of Julianna Polek Jakubczak (1895-1957) and her extended Polish-immigrant family during her temporary stay in Schenectady, New York, at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Julianna (a.k.a. Julia) spent that time growing, working, marrying, and grieving in the *Electric City*, eventually leaving it for Buffalo, New York.<sup>1 2 3</sup> Her experiences perhaps were shared by hundreds of other Schenectadians of the day.

The present article describes Julianna's final years in Schenectady (1918-1925). During this time, she continues to witness births, marriages, and deaths within the Polek-Spiewak families, the end of World War I, reunification of Poland, Prohibition, the women's right to vote, and the final disbursement of her father's death benefits. She also experiences the loss of her own firstborn child. This period ends with Julianna and her husband, John (Jan) Jakubczak, leaving Schenectady for Buffalo, Erie County, New York, the *Queen City of the Great Lakes (a.k.a., The City of Light)*.<sup>4 5 6</sup> The following events provide further snapshots of her life-course, that of her extended family, and, indirectly, those of Schenectady and the U.S.A.

**1918** Charles A. Simon is the Republican mayor of Schenectady (1918-1919);<sup>7</sup> Charles Seymour Whitman is the Republican governor of New York State (1915-1918);<sup>8</sup> Woodrow Wilson is the Democratic president of the U.S.A. (1913-1921);<sup>9</sup> and Bishop Thomas Cusack (1915-1918) is the head of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany, in which Schenectady's Saint Adalbert Parish (Julianna's parish) is located.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Leonard F. Jakubczak, "Timeline: Schenectady Sojourn [Sojourn] (1901-1925) of Julianna *nee* Polek Jakubczak (b. 1895; d. 1957)", *Project to Discover Schenectady County's Eastern European Roots Newsletter*, July 2015, Vol. 2, #3, e-newsletter, (<http://www.schenectadyhistory.org/resources/eeer/eeer-2015-07.pdf>), 14-17.

<sup>2</sup> Leonard F. Jakubczak, "Timeline: Schenectady Sojourn [Sojourn] (1901-1925) of Julianna *nee* Polek Jakubczak (b. 1895; d. 1957)", *Project to Discover Schenectady County's Eastern European Roots Newsletter*, October 2015, Vol. 2, #4, e-newsletter, (<http://www.schenectadyhistory.org/resources/eeer/eeer-2015-10.pdf>), 10-15.

<sup>3</sup> Leonard F. Jakubczak, "Timeline: Schenectady Sojourn (1901-1925) of Julianna *nee* Polek Jakubczak – Middle Years (1913-1918)", *Project to Discover Schenectady County's Eastern European Roots Newsletter*, January 2016, Vol. 3, #1, e-newsletter, (<http://www.schenectadyhistory.org/resources/eeer/eeer-2015-10.pdf>), 16-23.

<sup>4</sup> University of Buffalo, State University of New York, "The Queen City Hub: A Regional Action Plan for Downtown Buffalo," *The Urban Design Project* (<http://urbandesignproject.ap.buffalo.edu/projects/hub/> : accessed 24 November 2015), projects.

<sup>5</sup> Verlyn Klinkenborg, *The Last Fine Time* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1991).

<sup>6</sup> Wikipedia contributors, "Buffalo, New York," *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, [https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Buffalo,\\_New\\_York&oldid=704853398](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Buffalo,_New_York&oldid=704853398) (accessed February 16, 2016).

<sup>7</sup> Susan Rosenthal, *Images of America: Schenectady* (2000), 56; digital images, *WorldCat* (<http://www.worldcat.org/title/schenectady/oclc/44993767?referer=di&ht=edition> : accessed 15 January 15, 2016) .

<sup>8</sup> Wikipedia Contributors, "List of Governors of New York," *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*:

([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_Governors\\_of\\_New\\_York](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Governors_of_New_York) : accessed 16 January 2016; # 41, Whitman.

<sup>9</sup> *PresidentsUSA.Net*, "Presidents and Vice Presidents," website, (<http://www.presidentsusa.net/presvplist.html> : accessed January 16, 2016) #28 Wilson.

<sup>10</sup> Roman Catholic Church, *Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany*, "About Us," website, (<http://www.rcda.org/AboutUS.html> : accessed February 15 2016) a brief history.

## Timeline: Schenectady Sojourn (1901-1925) of Julianna nee Polek Jakubczak – Later Years (1918-1925)

### Leonard F. Jakubczak, Ph.D., Gaithersburg, Maryland, U.S.A.

**11 November 1918** Before any of Julianna's relatives are drafted for military service, World War I ends with an armistice between the *Central Powers*<sup>11</sup> and the *Allies*<sup>12</sup> taking effect on "the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month."<sup>13</sup> More than nine million soldiers, sailors, and airmen, as well as seven million civilians, have died as a result of "the war to end all wars."<sup>14</sup> An independent Poland, which has been absent from the map of Europe for 123 years, is reborn as the *Second Republic of Poland* (1918-1939).<sup>15</sup> From now on birthplaces of the Jakubczaks, Poleks, Spiewaks, or Suidys will be listed in current American records as *Poland*, rather than as provinces of Austria-Hungary, Prussia (Germany), or Russia.

Soon after the Armistice, the Polish *Blue Army* (much of which had been recruited by the *American Falcons*), led by General Jozef Haller,<sup>16</sup> is released by the French army, with which it had fought Germany, and sent to Poland to help the newly-revived country fight Russian Bolshevik invaders. For many *Blue Army* soldiers, however, the redeployment leads to disillusionment and a desire to return to their adopted homeland (America), as soon as possible.<sup>17</sup> Once World War I ends, and Poland attains and maintains her independence, Schenectady Poles, including the Jakubczaks, Poleks, Spiewaks and Siudys, turn their attention from Poland's future to their own as American citizens.<sup>18</sup>

**1919** Father Joseph Gogolewski, the founding pastor (1903-1916) of Schenectady's Saint Adalbert Parish, returns to Poland upon the invitation of his close friend, Premier Ignacy Jan Paderewski, to help in the reconstruction of war-torn Poland,<sup>19</sup> especially its educational system.

Bishop Edward Gibbons is the head of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany (1919-1954).<sup>20</sup> He is the sixth Irish-American bishop of the diocese in a row. This dominance of Irish bishops leads to tensions between the diocesan Chancery and some non-Irish ethnic parishes, whose foreign-born members want to continue some more colorful religious devotions that were native to their own countries of origin, e.g., the Poles' sharing *Oplatki*

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<sup>11</sup> Central Powers: Germany, Austria-Hungary, Ottoman Empire and Bulgaria.

<sup>12</sup> Allies: Primarily France, Britain, Russia and eventually the United States.

<sup>13</sup> History.com Staff, "This day-in-history, World War I ends," A+E Networks, *history.com*, 2010 (<http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/world-war-i-ends>; accessed 16 October 2015), November 11, 1918.

<sup>14</sup> Wikipedia contributors, "World War I," *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, [https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=World\\_War\\_I&oldid=683520722](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=World_War_I&oldid=683520722) (accessed October 9, 2015); introductory page.

<sup>15</sup> Wikipedia contributors, "History of Poland during World War I," *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, [https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=History\\_of\\_Poland\\_during\\_World\\_War\\_I&oldid=647977527](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=History_of_Poland_during_World_War_I&oldid=647977527) (accessed October 20, 2015), recovery of statehood, para. 3.

<sup>16</sup> Michael Krupinsky, "The Polish Army in France in WWI – Haller's Army," *Haller's Army -- Polska Armia w Francji* (<http://www.hallersarmy.com> : accessed October 17, 2015), para. 3.

<sup>17</sup> Ruskoski, David Thomas, "The Polish Army in France: Immigrants in America, World War I Volunteers in France, Defenders of the Recreated State in Poland." Dissertation, Georgia State University, 2006 ([http://scholarworks.gsu.edu/history\\_diss/1](http://scholarworks.gsu.edu/history_diss/1) : accessed 12 December 2015) 113, 163-164.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid*, 110-111.

<sup>19</sup> St. Adalbert Roman Catholic Church, *1903 Church of St. Adalbert 1978, Schenectady, New York* (New York: Park Publishing Company, 1978), 9.

<sup>20</sup> Roman Catholic Church, *Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany*, "About Us," website, (<http://www.rcda.org/aboutUS.html>, accessed 7 February, 2016); a brief history.

## Timeline: Schenectady Sojourn (1901-1925) of Julianna nee Polek Jakubczak – Later Years (1918-1925)

### Leonard F. Jakubczak, Ph.D., Gaithersburg, Maryland, U.S.A.

(wafers) on Christmas Eve, or *Swieconka* (the church-blessing of traditional Easter baskets on Easter Eve).<sup>21</sup>

**28 June 1919** Five years to the day after the assassination of Franz Ferdinand, Archduke of Austria-Hungary, which ignited World War I, the war ends officially with the signing of the *Treaty of Versailles*. Negotiated among the Allied powers with little participation by Germany, it constricts Germany's boundaries and foreign colonies, and forces her to pay reparations for the war's damages.<sup>22</sup>

**28 October 1919** Congress passes the *Volstead Act* over President Woodrow Wilson's veto. The Volstead Act provides for the enforcement of the 18th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, also known as the Prohibition Amendment, which bans the sale, production, importation, and transportation of alcoholic beverages (not their consumption!) from 1920 to 1933. Prohibition ushers in "speakeasies," "bootlegged" liquor,<sup>23</sup> "flappers," and red hot Jazz.<sup>24</sup> Young Schenectady Poles, like Julianna's brother, Joseph, begin to dance *The Charleston* instead of polkas and Polish regional folk dances, such as the *Krakowiak*, the *Mazur*, or the *Oberek*.<sup>25</sup>

**1920** George R. Lunn is the Democratic mayor of Schenectady (1920-1922);<sup>26</sup> Al Smith is the Democratic governor of New York State (1919-1920);<sup>27</sup> and Woodrow Wilson remains the Democratic president of the U.S.A. Bishop Edmund Gibbons remains the bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany (1919-1954).<sup>28</sup>

**6 January 1920** According to the Fourteenth Census of the U.S.A., twenty-four-year-old Julia [Julianna] "Yakubslia" [*sic*, Jakubczak] works at a machine in a wire and cable shop, and 28-year-old John, her husband, works as a laborer in a steel shop. They board with the head of household, John (Jan) Spiewak, Julianna's maternal uncle, his wife Katherine, and his sister Julia Spiewak, at 418 Cutler Street. John Spiewak is a laborer in a porcelain shop; Katherine does "domestic work" in offices, while his sister, Julia Spiewak, Julianna's aunt, works at a machine in an electric shop.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Leonard F. Jakubczak, "The Swieconka," *Rodziny: Journal of the Polish Genealogical Society of America*, Vol. 30, (Spring 2007), 17-18.

<sup>22</sup> History.Com Staff, *History.Com*, "Treaty of Versailles," website (<http://www.history.com/topics/world-war-i/treaty-of-versailles> : accessed 10 January 2016) 28 June 1919.

<sup>23</sup> History.Com Staff, *History.Com*, "Congress enforces Prohibition," website (<http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/congress-enforces-prohibition> : accessed December 30, 2015) 28 October 1919.

<sup>24</sup> Stanford University Libraries, *The Jim Cullums Riverwalk Jazz Collection*, Website, Program 171, "Speakeasies, Flappers & Red Hot Jazz: Music of the Prohibition." (<http://riverwalkjazz.stanford.edu/program/speakeasies-flappers-red-hot-jazz-music-prohibition> : accessed 31 December 2015, 1<sup>st</sup> "page."

<sup>25</sup> Diane M. Rusczyk, *Do Gory*, "Poland[']s Five National Dances", website, (<https://lowiczanka.wordpress.com/2010/10/11/polands-five-national-dances> :accessed January 29 2016); Mazuur, Kujawiak, Oberek.

<sup>26</sup> Susan Rosenthal, *Images of America: Schenectady* (2000), 54.

<sup>27</sup> Wikipedia Contributors, "List of Governors of New York," *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*; #42, Al Smith.

<sup>28</sup> Roman Catholic Church, *Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany*, "About Us," website, (<http://www.rcda.org/aboutUS.html>), accessed 7 February, 2016); a brief history.

<sup>29</sup> 1920 U.S. Census, Schenectady County, New York, population schedule, City of Schenectady, ward 9, p. ?, enumeration district 163, sheet 10-B, 418 Cutler Street, dwelling 92, family 179, lines 91-95, John Spiewak household; NARA microfilm publication T625, Roll 1263 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.); FHL microfilm 1,821,263; photocopy in possession of Leonard F. Jakubczak, Gaithersburg, Maryland.

## Timeline: Schenectady Sojourn (1901-1925) of Julianna nee Polek Jakubczak – Later Years (1918-1925)

### Leonard F. Jakubczak, Ph.D., Gaithersburg, Maryland, U.S.A.

**12 January 1920** Julianna's uncle, Piotr [Peter] Spiewak, lives in rental quarters with his wife, Rosalie, together with their five children, at 138 Crane Street.<sup>30</sup> He works as a laborer in "coal work." Their children (Julianna's cousins) are: Anna (11 years old), Jan (10 years old), Jozef (6 years old), Maryanna (3 years old), and Karolina (1 year old). All of the children were born in the State of New York. Anna and Jan are attending school.

**15 January 1920** Julianna's widowed mother, Mary [Marianna] Polek, lives in a rented flat with her four remaining children at 38 Lansing Street.<sup>31</sup> Mary is a 47-year-old head of household, claims being naturalized in 1900 [*sic*; no evidence of husband's naturalization<sup>32</sup>], and literate. Her children are: Anna (20 years old <*sic*, 21 years old>), Joseph (20 years old <*sic* 19 years>), Josephine (17 years old), and Felicia (16 years old). All of the children claim to be natives of the State of New York. No one is attending school. Anna and Joseph are laborers in an electric works, while Josephine is a stenographer. No occupation is listed for Marianna, or Felicia.

**26 August 1920** *The 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution* is signed into law, allowing women to vote. The amendment is the culmination of more than 70 years of struggle by suffragettes.<sup>33</sup> According to family lore, Julianna felt that civil disobedience by the suffragettes was unladylike.

**14 January 1922** Anna and Joseph Polek are paid \$150 each -- their shares of their father Jan's death insurance benefit.<sup>34</sup> This amount of 1922 dollars will be worth about \$2,143 in 2015.<sup>35</sup>

**22 January 1922** In Schenectady's St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church, Julianna's 21-year-old brother, Joseph Polek, living at 38 Lansing Street, marries 21-one-year-old Katherine Kaczmarek, living at 10 Spaulding Street.<sup>36</sup> Joseph works as a wire-insulator, while Katherine's occupation is "housework." Their vows are witnessed by Anna K. [*sic*, C.] Polek and John S. Kaczmarek, while the Reverend Francis S. Ren, living at 826 Eastern Avenue, Schenectady, officiates. The groom's father is John Polek [deceased], and the mother is Mary Polek. The bride's father is Joseph (Jozef) Kaczmarek, and her

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<sup>30</sup> 1920 U.S. Census, Schenectady County, New York, population schedule, City of Schenectady, ward 9, p. ?, enumeration district 161, sheet 9-B, 138 Crane Street, dwelling 81, family 169, lines 75-81, Peter Spiewak household; NARA microfilm publication T625, Roll 1263 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.); abstract in possession of Leonard F. Jakubczak, Gaithersburg, Maryland.

<sup>31</sup> 1920 U.S. Census, Schenectady County, New York, population schedule, City of Schenectady, ward 9, p.?, enumeration district 470, sheet 20-B, 38 Lansing Street, dwelling 229, family 434, lines 95-99, Mary Polek household; NARA microfilm publication T625, Roll 1263 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.); FHL microfilm 1,821,263; photocopy in possession of Leonard F. Jakubczak, Gaithersburg, Maryland.

<sup>32</sup> Onondaga County, New York, County Clerk, 7 May 1997 letter reporting negative naturalization-record search for Jan Polek, 1802-1929.

<sup>33</sup> History.Com Staff, "19th Amendment adopted," *History.com*, website, (<http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/19th-amendment-adopted>) : accessed 3 January 2016); 26 August 1920.

<sup>34</sup> Jan Polek insurance policy, no. 14481, issued 13 May 1901, Polish Roman Catholic Union of America (PRCUA), Chicago, Illinois; photocopy of file-remarks page "Uwagi" ("Comments") supplied by PRCUA to Leonard F. Jakubczak, Gaithersburg, Maryland, ~1997; photocopy privately held by Jakubczak.]

<sup>35</sup> *davemanuel.com*, "Inflation Calculator," website (<http://www.davemanuel.com/inflation-calculator.php>) : accessed 24 October 2015).

<sup>36</sup> Schenectady, New York, Marriage License and Return, 1922, number 10244, 21 January, 1922, Joseph Polek to Catherine Kaczmarek; City Clerk's Office, Schenectady, New York, photocopy in private papers of Leonard F. Jakubczak, Gaithersburg, Maryland, U.S.A.

## Timeline: Schenectady Sojourn (1901-1925) of Julianna *nee* Polek Jakubczak – Later Years (1918-1925)

### Leonard F. Jakubczak, Ph.D., Gaithersburg, Maryland, U.S.A.

mother is Magdalena *nee* Sliwinski, both born in “Germany” [i.e., the Prussian partition of Poland].

**20 February 1922** Schenectady Radio Station WGY, one of the first in the country, signs on for the first time at 7:47 P.M. The broadcast lasts for about one hour and consists of live music and announcements of song titles and other information.<sup>37</sup> It is unlikely that any of Julianna’s relatives own an AM radio receiver to receive the WGY signal, since, even as late as 1930; neither John Siudy nor Peter Spiewak owns one.<sup>38 39</sup> The Jan (John) Jakubczaks, however, own a *crystal* short-wave radio receiver.<sup>40</sup>

The Polish language newspaper, *Gazeta Tygodniowa (The Weekly Newspaper; 1908-?)*, keeps Schenectady Poles informed about the local, state, national and international news, as well as community activities.<sup>41</sup> Polish papers are more descriptive of events than English papers, and more firm about getting readers to attend and support events put on by other Polish-Americans.<sup>42</sup>

**1923** C. A. Whitmire is the Republican mayor of Schenectady (1923);<sup>43</sup> Nathan L. Miller is the Republican governor of New York State (1921-1922).<sup>44</sup> U.S. President Warren G. Harding (1921-1923)<sup>45</sup> suddenly dies in office, and is succeeded by Calvin Coolidge (1923-1929).<sup>46</sup> Both are Republicans. Rev. Edmund Gibbons is the bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany.<sup>47</sup>

**12 May 1923** Casimer Polek, Julianna’s new nephew, son of Joseph and Katherine *nee* Kaczmarek Polek, is born in Schenectady, New York.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>37</sup>Wikipedia contributors, “WGY (AM),” *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*,

[https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=WGY\\_\(AM\)&oldid=688727690](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=WGY_(AM)&oldid=688727690) (accessed December 31, 2015).

<sup>38</sup>Ancestry.com. *1930 United States Federal Census* [database on-line].(Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2002); Roll: 1645; Page: 12A; Enumeration District: 0059; Image: 964.0; FHL microfilm: 2341379; *John Siudy*.

<sup>39</sup> Ancestry.com. *1930 United States Federal Census* [database on-line]. (Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2002). Roll: 1645; Page: 21B; Enumeration District: 0054; Image: 798.0; FHL microfilm: 2341379; *Peter Spiewak*.

<sup>40</sup> Personal knowledge of author, Leonard F. Jakubczak, Gaithersburg Maryland, whose father, John, showed him, during the 1940s, the crystal radio receiver he had used in Schenectady during the early 1920s.

<sup>41</sup> *PolishRoots.Com*, “United States Resources,” website, (<http://www.polishroots.org/Research/USResources/tabid/222/Default.aspx> : accessed 3 January 2016); New York, Polish Language Newspapers, Schenectady.

<sup>42</sup> “Newspapers of Schenectady’s Immigrants,” *Gremis-Doolittle Library Collection Blog*, Friday, January 29, 2016,

(<http://gremisdoolittlelibrary.blogspot.com/2016/01/newspapers-of-schenectadys-immigrants.html> :accessed 17 February 2016) ‘Enthusiasm of the Polish Press.’

<sup>43</sup> Susan Rosenthal, *Images of America: Schenectady* (2000), 56.

<sup>44</sup> Wikipedia Contributors, “List of Governors of New York,” *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*; #43, Miller..

<sup>45</sup> *PresidentsUSA.Net*, “Presidents and Vice Presidents,”) #29 Harding.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.* #30, Coolidge.

<sup>47</sup> Roman Catholic Church, *Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany*, “About Us,” website, (<http://www.rcda.org/aboutUS.html>, accessed 7 February, 2016); a brief history.

<sup>48</sup> “United States Social Security Death Index,” database, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org> : accessed 26 October 2015), Casimer Polek, March 1986; citing U.S. Social Security Administration, *Death Master File*, database (Alexandria, Virginia: National Technical Information Service, ongoing).



## Timeline: Schenectady Sojourn (1901-1925) of Julianna *nee* Polek Jakubczak – Later Years (1918-1925)

### Leonard F. Jakubczak, Ph.D., Gaithersburg, Maryland, U.S.A.

**20 May 1923** A series of tragedies comes to the Polek-Spiewak extended family. Casimer's mother, 23-year-old Katherine *nee* Kaczmarek Polek, wife of Julianna's brother, Joseph Polek, dies at 6:00 AM in Ellis Hospital, Schenectady, New York. The [primary] cause of death is pneumonia with meningitis. Contributory causes are "symptoms complicated with septic peritonitis and childbirth," according to the attending physician, Dr. Eleanor Mann, who ministered to Katherine from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> of May, 1923.<sup>49</sup>

**23 May 1923** Katherine Kaczmarek Polek is buried in St. Mary's Parish Cemetery, Schenectady, New York, by the Leszczynski Funeral Home, 772 Eastern Avenue.<sup>50</sup> Katherine's parents and sister take care of infant Casimer until his father, Joseph, remarries (1924), according to Polek-Jakubczak family lore.<sup>51</sup>

**27 September 1923** At approximately 10:00 A.M., a son, Eugeniusz [Eugene] Jakubczak, is born to Joannes [Jan, John] and Julianna [Julia] *nee* Polek Jakubczak, 410 Pleasant Street, and is baptized the same day by Father Stanislaus Chmielewski, pastor of St. Adalbert Roman Catholic Parish, Schenectady.<sup>52</sup> The infant's sponsors are Mieczyslaus Gorski and Julianna's sister, Felicia Polek. This is Julianna's second pregnancy, the first having ended in an early miscarriage, which resulted from poor prenatal advice from a midwife.<sup>53</sup>

**28 September 1923** Eighteen-hours-old Eugeniusz (Eugene) Jakubczak, son of Joannes [John] and Julianna [Julia] Jakubczak, dies at 4:00 A.M., at 410 Pleasant Street, due to brain injury resulting from a "contracted pelvis" during birth, according to the attending physician, Dr. Goodman."<sup>54</sup>

Eugeniusz is buried the same day,<sup>55</sup> in St. Adalbert's Cemetery in nearby Carman (Rotterdam, New York) by the A. B. Brzozowski Funeral Home (154 Crane Street, Schenectady),<sup>56</sup> and rests next to his maternal grandfather, Jan (John) Polek, in Lot A-

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<sup>49</sup> Schenectady, New York, death certificate, registered # 475 (1923), Catherine Polek; New York State Division of Vital Statistics, Albany; photocopy obtained in the late 1990s, in possession of Leonard F. Jakubczak, Gaithersburg, Maryland, 2015.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, lines 21-23.

<sup>51</sup> Jakubczak-Polek family oral history regarding Casimer Polek, Schenectady, New York, as reported during the late 1900s by Genia Las (Buffalo, Erie, New York), daughter of Julianna *nee* Polek Jakubczak (1895-1957), to the latter's son, Leonard F. Jakubczak (Gaithersburg, Maryland).

<sup>52</sup> Saint Adalbert Roman Catholic Church (Schenectady, New York), "Baptism Register, June 2 1921 – May 11, 1947," page 31, entry 100, baptism of Eugeniusz Jakubczak (1923); photocopy supplied by Mrs. Anne L. Dearing (parish secretary), 1990s.

<sup>53</sup> Jakubczak-Polek family oral history regarding Julianna *nee* Polek Jakubczak, Schenectady, New York, as confirmed during the late 1900s by Genia Las (Buffalo, Erie, New York), daughter of Julianna to the latter's son, Leonard F. Jakubczak, Gaithersburg, Maryland.

<sup>54</sup> New York State Department of Health, death certificate 55393 (1923), Eugeniusz Jakubczak; Division of Vital Statistics, Albany; photocopy obtained in the late 1990s, in possession of Leonard F. Jakubczak, Gaithersburg, Maryland, 2015.

<sup>55</sup> Saint Adalbert Roman Catholic Church (Schenectady, New York), *Deaths Register, July 1922-1986*, "Record of Interments," page 3, entry 4, Burial of Jakubczak, Eugeniusz (1923); photocopy supplied by Mrs. Anne L. Dearing (parish secretary), 1990s.

<sup>56</sup> A. B. Brzozowski Undertaker and Embalmer (Schenectady, New York), *Ledger of Funerals*, 2 October 1923, p. 155, entry for Eugeniusz Jakubczak funeral and burial, 28 September 1923; business records privately held by former funeral director Mario A. Bottieri (Schenectady, New York), who bought the funeral business from the widow of Zygmunt Brzozowski, the son of A.B. Brzozowski; photocopy in possession of Leonard F. Jakubczak, Gaithersburg, Maryland, U.S.A.

## Timeline: Schenectady Sojourn (1901-1925) of Julianna nee Polek Jakubczak – Later Years (1918-1925)

### Leonard F. Jakubczak, Ph.D., Gaithersburg, Maryland, U.S.A.

73 (in unmarked graves).<sup>57</sup> Curiously, in the future (late 1990s), a record card in the parish office shows the name “Kotarski” also associated with Lot A-73.<sup>58</sup>

**19 November 1923** Bringing further sadness, at 4:00 P.M., 44-year-old John [Jan] Spiewak of Schenectady, Julianna’s uncle and fellow “flat” mate, the husband of Katherine, dies of a broken neck resulting from an automobile accident in the Town of Malta, Saratoga County, New York,<sup>59</sup> 16 miles Northeast of Schenectady.<sup>60</sup>

**22 November 1923** John [Jan] Spiewak is buried in Schenectady [most likely in the parish cemetery], according to the Rev. Stanislaw Chmielewski, pastor of St. Adalbert Parish.<sup>61</sup>

**1924** William W. Campbell is mayor of Schenectady (1924-1925);<sup>62</sup> Al Smith again is governor of New York State;<sup>63</sup> Calvin Coolidge remains president of the U.S.A. Bishop Edmond Gibbons remains the head of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany.<sup>64</sup>

**9 January 1924** Polish Roman Catholic Union of America (PRCUA) pays the \$500 life insurance benefit to Katherine Spiewak, Schenectady, widow of John (Jan) Spiewak (1879-1923). Five-hundred dollars in 1923 is worth \$7,042 in 2015.<sup>65</sup> (This disbursement of benefits is timelier than that to Jan Polek’s survivors, which extended from 1913 to 1924.) Within two years, the widow is living as a lodger in the Szymanski residence on Elmwood Road, in nearby Rotterdam, New York, listing her occupation as housekeeper.<sup>66</sup>

**30 January 1924** Jozefa (Josephine) and Feliksa (Felicia) Polek, are finally paid \$150 each -- their shares of their father Jan’s death insurance benefits.<sup>67</sup> This is the final disbursement of Jan Polek’s \$1000 PRCUA insurance policy. One hundred and fifty 1924 dollars will be worth \$2,113 in 2015.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Saint Adalbert Roman Catholic Church (Schenectady, New York), “Parish Cemetery Deed Stubs,” page 18, 15 October 1923, to Mrs. Marianna Polek for graves of Jan Polek and Eugeniusz Jakubczak, Section A, Lot 73; photocopy supplied by Mrs. Anne L. Dearing (parish secretary), 1990s; in possession of Leonard F. Jakubczak, Gaithersburg, Maryland..

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, *Post-it* note, attached to deed-stub, photocopied and signed (late 1990s) by “Anne” [L. Dearing].

<sup>59</sup> Malta, Saratoga County, New York, death certificate 22 (1923), John Spiewak; New York State Division of Vital Statistics, Albany; photocopy obtained in the late 1990s, in possession of Leonard F. Jakubczak, Gaithersburg, Maryland, 2015.

<sup>60</sup> *Distancesonline.com*, website, (<http://distancesonline.com/Schenectady,NY/Malta> : accessed 30 October 2015).

<sup>61</sup> Jan [John] insurance policy file, no. 58575, issued 13 May 1910, Polish Roman Catholic Union of America [PRCUA], Chicago, Illinois, via Local 242 (St. Adalbert Church, Schenectady, New York), photocopies of entire file supplied to Leonard F. Jakubczak, Gaithersburg, Maryland, by Mr. Jerry Kucharski, Resident Vice-President PRCUA, ~1999, particularly “Certification by the Local Pastor,” vol.12, page 28,

<sup>62</sup> Susan Rosenthal, *Images of America: Schenectady* (2000), 56.

<sup>63</sup> Wikipedia Contributors, “List of Governors of New York,” *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*; #42, Al Smith.

<sup>64</sup> Roman Catholic Church, *Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany*, “About Us.”

<sup>65</sup> *Dave Manuel.Com*, “Inflation Calculator,” website, ([www.davemanuel.com](http://www.davemanuel.com) : accessed 30 October 2015), (1910; \$500).

<sup>66</sup> “New York State Census, 1925,” database, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:KSHC-VS9> : accessed 3 November 2015), Katie Spiewak, Rotterdam, A.D. 02, E.D. 05, Schenectady, New York, United States; records extracted by Ancestry and images digitized by FamilySearch; citing p. 21, line 45, New York State Archives, Albany.

<sup>67</sup> Jan Polek insurance policy, no. 14481, issued 13 May 1901, Polish Roman Catholic Union of America (PRCUA), Chicago, Illinois; photocopy of file-remarks page “Uwagi” (“Comments”) supplied by PRCUA to Leonard F. Jakubczak, Gaithersburg, Maryland, ~1997; photocopy privately held by Jakubczak.]

<sup>68</sup> *Dave Manuel.Com*, “Inflation Calculator,” (1924; \$150).

## Timeline: Schenectady Sojourn (1901-1925) of Julianna *nee* Polek Jakubczak – Later Years (1918-1925)

### Leonard F. Jakubczak, Ph.D., Gaithersburg, Maryland, U.S.A.

**8 May 1924** Joseph Polek (Julianna's brother) and Stella Grubalska apply for and are granted a marriage license.<sup>69</sup> The groom is Joseph Polek, a white, 23-year-old machinist, living at 410 Pleasant Street, Schenectady, who had been born in Syracuse, New York. His father, John Polek, and mother, Mary *nee* Spiewak, had been born in Poland [*sic*; formerly Austria Hungary]. This is the groom's second marriage (his first wife, Katherine Kaczmarek, having died). The bride is Stella Grubalska, a white, 20-year-old factory worker, living at 112 Second Street, Schenectady, of which she is a native. Her father is Stanislaw Grubalski; her mother is the former Katarzyna [Catherine] Cyrunkowska. Both parents had been born in "Poland" [*sic*; its former Russian partition]. This is the bride's first marriage.

**11 May 1924** The Rev. John Pieniazek (a.k.a. Pienigel), 127 Crane Street, Schenectady [St. Adalbert Parish], marries Joseph Polek and Stella Grubalska in the presence of Felicia G. Polek (Julianna's sister) and Frank Kasper.<sup>70</sup>

**26 May 1924** The *Immigration Act of 1924* of the U.S. Congress limits the annual number of immigrants who can be admitted to the U.S. from any country. The law is primarily aimed at restricting immigration of Southern and Eastern Europeans, which includes relatives of the Jakubczaks, Poleks, Siudys, Spiewaks, and others.<sup>71</sup>

**1925** William W. Campbell still is the Republican mayor of Schenectady; Democrat Al Smith still is governor of New York State; and Republican Calvin Coolidge still is president of the U.S.A. The Rev. Edmond Gibbons remains the bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany.<sup>72</sup>

**1 June 1925** The 1925 New York State Census fails to find John and Julianna Jakubczak in Schenectady. Instead, the census finds them 272 miles to the West, in Buffalo, Erie County, New York, at the Western terminus of the Erie Canal. Having moved from Schenectady, 34-year-old machine-shop worker, John [Jan] Jakubczak, and his 30-year-old "house-worker wife," Julia [Julianna], live at 165 Playter Street, in the Broadway-Fillmore neighborhood of Buffalo's East Side ("Polonia"). John is still an "alien."<sup>73</sup> Their migration to Buffalo may have been precipitated by conflicts between Julianna and her mother,<sup>74</sup> the many recent deaths of family members, including son Eugeniusz (Eugene), and greater opportunities for employment in Buffalo, where some of John's cousins live.

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<sup>69</sup> Schenectady, New York, Marriage License and Return, 1924, number 11959, "affidavit for marriage license application," 8 May 1924, Joseph Polek to Stella Grubalska, Frame 62; City Clerk's Office, Schenectady, New York; photocopy in private papers of Leonard F. Jakubczak, Gaithersburg, Maryland, U.S.A.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid. "Marriage license return (certificate)."

<sup>71</sup> Wikipedia contributors, "Immigration Act of 1924," *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, [https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Immigration\\_Act\\_of\\_1924&oldid=684404955](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Immigration_Act_of_1924&oldid=684404955) (accessed October 24, 2015).

<sup>72</sup> Roman Catholic Church, *Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany*, "About Us."

<sup>73</sup> "New York State Census, 1925," database, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:KSWF-1S3> : accessed 13 November 2015), John Jakubczak, Buffalo Ward 10, A.D. 05, E.D. 03, Erie, New York, United States; records extracted by Ancestry and images digitized by FamilySearch; citing p. 45, lines 46-47, New York State Archives, Albany.

<sup>74</sup> Jakubczak-Polek family oral history regarding Julianna *nee* Polek Jakubczak, Schenectady, New York, as confirmed in 2016 by Genia Las (Buffalo, Erie, New York), daughter of Julianna to the latter's son, Leonard F. Jakubczak, Gaithersburg, Maryland.

## Timeline: Schenectady Sojourn (1901-1925) of Julianna *nee* Polek Jakubczak – Later Years (1918-1925)

### Leonard F. Jakubczak, Ph.D., Gaithersburg, Maryland, U.S.A.

It was time for John and Julianna to *Shuffle Off to Buffalo!*<sup>75</sup> By 1930, however, all of the Poleks will follow.

John's first cousin,<sup>76</sup> 57-year-old Frank [Franciszek] Jakubczak, lives at 29 Marion Street, in the Black Rock neighborhood of Buffalo. He is the head of the household, had been born in Poland [Same place as John: Village of Ostrowas, County of Nieszawa, Province of Warszawa, Russia], has been in the U.S. for 36 years, was naturalized in Buffalo in 1896, and is a laborer. Living with him are his wife, 56-year-old "Mary" [Marcyanna; *nee* Chojnacki], a registered midwife, and their children, sons-in-law, and a grandchild.<sup>77</sup> Living close by, are Franciszek's 3 other married daughters and their families.<sup>78 79 80</sup>

Prior to John's and Julianna's departure from Schenectady, John received an ornate golden pocket watch and chain<sup>81</sup> from members of the four-voice "Jutrzenka" ("dawn") choir (1907-1932), at which time it was reorganized as the award-winning St. Adalbert Choral Society.<sup>82</sup> The watch was given in appreciation for his years-long participation in the choir, and as a going-away gift. Julianna, also, was a member of the choir. The watch will remain in the Jakubczak family, minus a crystal and second hand. The damage will have resulted from "innocent" attempts by a Jakubczak toddler to "repair" the family heirloom with a hammer!<sup>83</sup>

#### POSTLUDE

**8 June 1957** An obituary in *The Buffalo Evening News*: "Mrs. Julia Polek Jakubczak [a.k.a. Jacobs], 62, of 1266 Sycamore St., [Buffalo, New York] co-owner of bakeries at the Sycamore St. address, in the Broadway Market, [and on Genesee St.] died Friday

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<sup>75</sup> *Disappearingidioms.com*, "'Get out of Dodge,' 'Shuffle Off to Buffalo': Two idioms, Tale of Two Cities," website, (<http://disappearingidioms.com/get-out-of-dodge-shuffle-off-to-buffalo> : accessed 13 February 2016). "Shuffling off to 'The City of Light,' aka, Buffalo."

<sup>76</sup> Jan Jakubczak (1889- 1960) and Franciszek Jakubczak (1868-1952) are 1st cousins. Their common ancestors are Wojciech Jakubczak (~1813-1897) and Maryanna Trawinski (1820-1903), based on documents in possession of Leonard F. Jakubczak, Gaithersburg, Maryland, 2016.

<sup>77</sup> "New York State Census, 1925," database, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:KSW7-2R7> : accessed 25 January 2016), Frank Jakubczak, Buffalo Ward 21, A.D. 02, E.D. 12, Erie, New York, United States; records extracted by Ancestry and images digitized by FamilySearch; citing p. 81, lines 32-42, New York State Archives, Albany.

<sup>78</sup> "New York State Census, 1925," database, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:KSW7-2C2> : accessed 25 January 2016), John Augustyauski, Buffalo Ward 21, A.D. 02, E.D. 12, Erie, New York, United States; records extracted by Ancestry and images digitized by FamilySearch; citing p. 68, lines 16-20, New York State Archives, Albany.

<sup>79</sup> "New York State Census, 1925," database, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:K9YV-39B> : accessed 25 January 2016), Frank Rozanski, Buffalo Ward 16, A.D. 05, E.D. 01, Erie, New York, United States; records extracted by Ancestry and images digitized by FamilySearch; citing p. 16, lines 19-24, New York State Archives, Albany.

<sup>80</sup> "United States World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918," database with images, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:KXTJ-RCF> : accessed 25 January 2016), Bolschii Or Boleslard Ren, 1917-1918; citing Buffalo City no 13, New York, United States, NARA microfilm publication M1509 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.); FHL microfilm 1,712,238.

<sup>81</sup> Golden Pocket Watch and Chain, "b&b royal 20 years," #24977192, Elgin National Watch Company U.S.A., 1921; privately held by Leonard F. Jakubczak, Gaithersburg, Maryland (2016)

. Ornate case engraved with "J J" on the front and a cabin and fir trees on the back; missing crystal and second hand. Awarded to John (Jan) Jakubczak by the St. Adalbert Parish Church Choir, Schenectady, New York, ~1924, and inherited from him by his son, Leonard F. Jakubczak, 1960.

<sup>82</sup> St. Adalbert Roman Catholic Church, *1903 Church of St. Adalbert 1978, Schenectady, New York* (New York: Park Publishing Company, 1978), 22.

<sup>83</sup> Jakubczak-Polek family oral history regarding John Jakubczak's *Elgin* pocket watch, as reported during the late 1900s by Genia Las (Buffalo, Erie, New York), daughter of Julianna *nee* Polek Jakubczak (1895-1957), to the latter's son, Leonard F. Jakubczak (Gaithersburg, Maryland).

**Timeline: Schenectady Sojourn (1901-1925) of Julianna nee Polek  
Jakubczak – Later Years (1918-1925)**

**Leonard F. Jakubczak, Ph.D., Gaithersburg, Maryland, U.S.A.**

(June 7 1957) in the Roswell Park [Cancer] Institute. Mrs. Jakubczak came here 32 years ago from Hazleton, Pa. [*sic*, Schenectady, N.Y.]. She and her husband, John, operated the bakery at their residence for 28 years and had a bakery stand in the Broadway Market for 25 years [and another at 1593 Genesee Street, opposite the *Genesee Movie Theater*]. She was a member of the Bakers Union; Polish Women's Alliance of America; St. Barbara's Society of St. Luke's Church, and Group 180, Polish Union of America. Surviving besides her husband are a daughter, Panna [Miss] Genia Jakubczak [a.k.a. Las]; a son, Leonard; a brother, Joseph Polek, and three sisters, Anna and Josephine Polek, and Mrs. William Deptula [Felicia].”<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> “Mrs. John Jakubczak,” (Buffalo, New York) *Buffalo Evening News*, 8 June 1957, obituaries; quoted with permission (12 November 2015).



## The Kornackis – Part IV Martin Byster



Fig.1: Katarzyna (Katie) and Feliks Kornacki, Married June 7, 1913

My maternal grandparents, Katarzyna (Katie)<sup>i</sup> Borek<sup>ii</sup> and Feliks Kornacki both arrived at New York in 1910, my grandmother from Rotterdam, Netherlands aboard TSS Nieuw Amsterdam<sup>iii</sup> in June, my grandfather from Hamburg, Germany aboard the SS Amerika in August.

### **Jedzie Boat<sup>iv</sup>**

--- Frank Wojnarowski ---

Je - dzie Je - dzie Je - dzie Boat,

Ko - ła się ru - sza - ją.

Tyl - ko gwia - zdy świe - cą,

A chłop - cy śpie - wa - ją.

Katie's destination, 17 Jefferson ST<sup>v</sup> in Schenectady, NY<sup>vi</sup> is written in the ship's manifest, but for Felix his destination is not so clear. He eventually arrives in Schenectady but the anecdotal record suggests he, at the suggestion of a friend of the family<sup>vii</sup> who had immigrated to Pennsylvania, may have first tried his hand at coal mining.

Katie boarded a New York Central-Hudson River Railroad train<sup>viii</sup>, at a new recently opened New York Grand Central Terminal<sup>ix</sup>, going north along the east side of the Hudson

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River crossing at Rensselaer and arriving at a new Schenectady Union Station<sup>x</sup>. Her sister Mary Ann Rybicki, and cousins Antoni and Frank Dobies<sup>xi</sup>, would welcome her undoubtedly with Wladislaw Sychala, brother of the young lady under whose name she had traveled<sup>xii</sup>.

*“There had been a large Polish immigration to Schenectady from 1890 to 1910 which although declining slowly thereafter peaked at 4,316 immigrants in 1920. In the 1880s immigrants settled at the west end of State Street, ...Water, Railroad, South Church and South Ferry streets ...hemmed in by the Erie Canal, the Mohawk River and lower State Street next to the Stockade, the site of the original Dutch settlement. Later they settled near the General Electric works in the 5th Ward and at the northern end of the city near the American Locomotive works in the 3rd Ward. From uptown to the three river wards with nearly three-fourths of all the Poles in the 3rd Ward”<sup>xiii</sup>*

Both Feliks and Katie had relatives who immigrated to the United States. Her father and her mother’s uncle had come and returned, her sister and two cousins were in Schenectady; Budzichs from her grandmother’s side and Dobies from her grandfather’s side had already settled elsewhere in IL, NJ, NY and WI<sup>xiv</sup>.

The Nieuw Amsterdam, the railroad stations, even the locomotives, all were 5 or less years old. Polish immigration to Schenectady was at its peak. Katie had come to truly a new world; it must have been an exhilarating once in a lifetime experience.

*“...from 1880 to 1930...Schenectady saw the growth of new industry and an almost unbelievable surge in population (in 1910, the city’s census figure of 72,826 had more than tripled that of 1880)”<sup>xv</sup>*

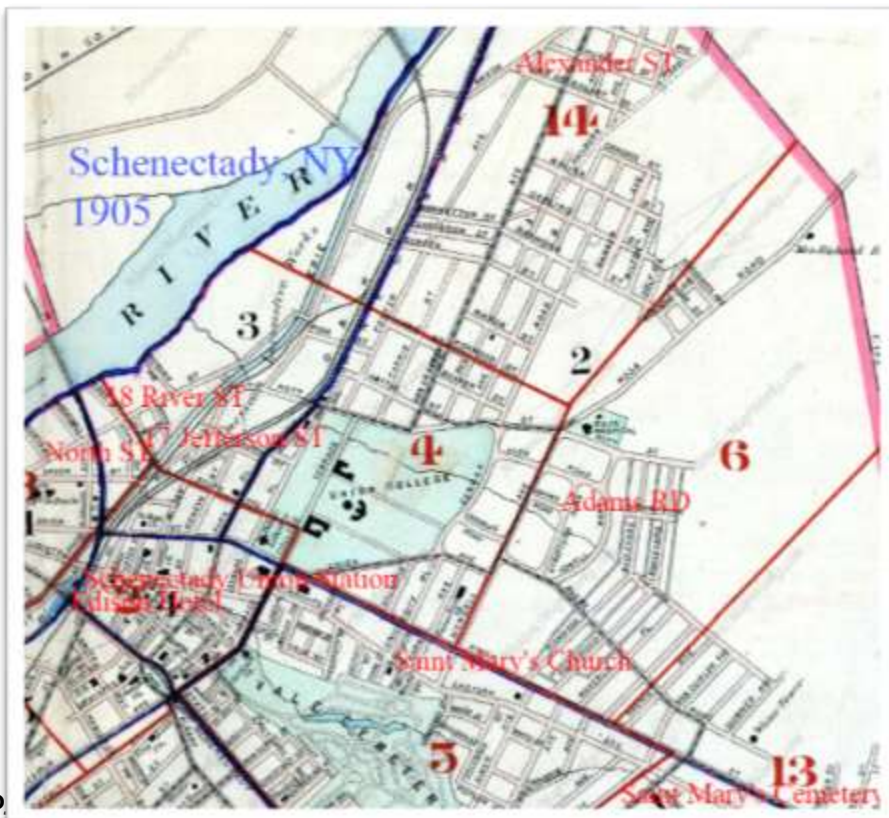


Fig.2: Map Schenectady 1905; River front Wards 5, 1, & 3 (Nos. in black, outline in blue)<sup>xvi</sup>

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She first boarded at 18 River St. with her cousin Frank's Family who with his brother Antoni were renters. Charlie Ernst had built the house between 1885 and 1888 which was only a short walk toward the Mohawk River from 17 Jefferson St. Katie and Feliks later bought the house in 1925 for \$2300 where they raised their family and lived for the rest of their lives. She found work in a kitchen nearby crossing the Erie Canal to the Edison Hotel<sup>xvii</sup> that stood near the Union Station. She once remarked on how upset she felt to be nearby when a lobster, one of which she had never seen before, was cooked for supper.

At the turn to the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a growing General Electric Company purchased the GE Realty Plot, land east of Union College, from which lots were sold primarily to employees of GE who with their growing families hired on live-in maids and part-time domestic help. Although the periods she worked there are a bit speculative she had worked as a domestic for two families on Adams RD, most likely first, before she had children of her own, for Dr. Ernst Alexanderson whose work was germane to the development of radio and television and Dr. Charles Wesley Woodall a personal physician to Dr. Charles Proteus Steinmetz whose work was germane to convincing Thomas Alva Edison of the advantages of alternating current (AC) over direct current (DC) in distributing electric power.

The details of Feliks' travels from the time he departed Hamburg, Germany through his meeting Katie on the front porch of 18 River St. remain unaccounted for. My grandmother said Feliks at the time they first met was a boarder on Jefferson St., after which the story picks up again with their marriage. Presumably he was employed at the American Locomotive Company.

*On New Year's Day 1892, Father Joseph Dereszewski, sent to Schenectady to organize a Polish parish by Bishop Francis McNeirney of the Diocese of Albany, said Mass and delivered a sermon to a large Polish congregation at St. Joseph's church after which, meeting with the congregation, a new parish, Matki Boskiej Chestochowskiej [Saint Mary's] was created. The first church and school were built. In 1903 the first church was replaced with the existing structure; the school was replaced in 1913. Father Dereszewski died in 1911 and Father Alexander Kowalski succeeded him.<sup>xviii</sup>*

Katie and Felix were married in Saint Mary's Church, Liberty St [later Eastern Ave]; (Father Alexander Kowalski officiating, Angelo Bielak and Bronislawa Cinkiewicz witnesses) Saturday, June 7, 1913.

(To be continued)

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<sup>i</sup> Katarzyna is the name my grandmother preferred to use for herself; Feliks Kornacki referred to her as 'Katie'.

<sup>ii</sup> Katarzyna Borek traveled under the alias "Anna Spychala" a young woman from Lutocin, Poland who had delayed her departure and arrived at NYC later in the following October.

<sup>iii</sup> The Nieuw Amsterdam was the ship at sea in 1912 that reported the icebergs, one of which the Titanic struck then sunk. The tragic loss of life brought to the forefront provision for adequate lifeboats of which the Nieuw Amsterdam was found lacking and subsequently fitted with 6 additional lifeboats.

<sup>iv</sup> A polka by Frank Wojnarowski with Polish words appropriately sung by young men shipboard leaving their homeland on a steamship to America: "Sail on, sail on, sail on this ship; the propellers bite, stars shine bright; we sing to urge it on"

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--- *World Charts Presents The Polish Songbook*; Charles Hansen; Hansen House, Miami Beach, FL; 1976 <https://www.google.com/#q=World+Charts+presents+The+Polish+Song+Book>

<sup>v</sup> Jefferson Street to the earliest Poles to settle in Schenectady once had the unusual and peculiar name "Lover's Lane".---Schenectady [County] Sesquicentennial, Historical Souvenir Program; 1959

<sup>vi</sup> Seventeen, 17 Jefferson Street was a saloon which apparently was a well known location and easily found.

<sup>vii</sup> Katarzyna Kornacki told Martin Byster that Feliks Kornacki had been to Pennsylvania to work in the coal mines at the suggestion of a female friend of Feliks' oldest brother Joseph who lived in Poland at the time but decided that he would not work in the mines. It is uncertain when Feliks was in PA but Martin's estimate is Feliks may have been there immediately after arriving at New York City in August 1910. Feliks may have had a reason to go to PA but what reason had he for going to Schenectady?

<sup>viii</sup> Katarzyna Borek may have actually traveled on a train pulled by a locomotive which her father had a hand in building Working at the locomotive works in 1905 during his stay in Schenectady with his oldest daughter, Katarzyna's sister, Maryanna Rybicki.



Fig. 3: New York Central-Hudson River Railroad, Steam Locomotive Schenectady Locomotive Works; 1905

[http://alcoholhistory.blogspot.com/2006/10/new-york-central-hudson-river-railroad\\_17.html](http://alcoholhistory.blogspot.com/2006/10/new-york-central-hudson-river-railroad_17.html)

<sup>ix</sup> "On June 5, 1910 [the day before Katarzyna Borek arrived in NYC aboard the Nieuw Amsterdam], the Owl, as the midnight train was known, left Grand Central Station for Boston. It was the last to depart from the old station. Demolition began immediately."

--- *From the book "Grand Central" by Sam Roberts. Copyright © 2013 by Sam Roberts.*  
[http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/20/nyregion/the-birth-of-grand-central-terminal-100-years-later.html?pagewanted=all&\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/20/nyregion/the-birth-of-grand-central-terminal-100-years-later.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0)

<sup>x</sup> "The Schenectady Union Station, built by the New York Central and Hudson River Railroad, a stone and brick-faced Beaux-Arts structure with a fine arcade, replaced a temporary structure ... the tracks throughout the city were ... raised to eliminate grade crossings. ...the [completion of the] new depot and its elevated platform, was ...[celebrated] in February 1908."



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Fig. 4: New York Central-Hudson River Railroad, Schenectady Union Station

<http://www.greatamericanstations.com/Stations/SDY>

<sup>xi</sup> Katarzyna referred to her cousin Frank Dobies as “wuj” which translated literally as “uncle” but she used it to distinguish Mr.Dobies being from her as opposed to Feliks’ family..

<sup>xii</sup> Wladislaw’s sister Anna Spychala arrived in October 1910 at New York aboard SS Cleveland.  
--- <http://www.libertyellisfoundation.org/profile> [Note: Enter Anna Spychala]

<sup>xiii</sup> Adopted from an original transcript

--- *Electric City Immigrants: Italians and Poles of Schenectady, N.Y., 1880-1930*; Dr. Robert R. Pascucci; (State University of New York at Albany, Department of History, 1984).  
<http://www.schenectadyhistory.org/resources/pascucci/1.html>

<sup>xiv</sup> Family immigrants: Dobies from Katarzyna’s grandfather’s side and Budzich from her grandmother’s side; Kornacki from her husband, Feliks’ side.

	<b>Imigrants to US</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Notes</b>	<b>Related to Katherine Kornacki</b>	
	Dobies	Frank	Schenectady, NY	1st cousin	
	Dobies (2)	Antoni	Schenectady, NY	1st cousin	
	Budzich	Adam	Long Island,NY	1st cousin 1x removed	
	Budzich	Bronislaw	Long Island,NY	1st cousin 1x removed	
	Budzich	Marianna	Chicago,IL	1st cousin 1x removed	
	Kornacki	Jan	Schenectady, NY	4	brother in law
	Borek	Adam	Schenectady, NY	2	father
	Dobies	Andrzej	New Brunswick, NJ		mother's brother
	Dobies (1)	Antoni	Douglaston, LI, NY	7	mother's brother
	Dobies (Douglas)	John	Milwaulkee, WI	3	mother's father's brother's son
	Dobies (Czizik)	Marianna	Long Island,NY	6	mother's sister
	Budzich	Matthew	Long Island,NY	2	mother's uncle
	Borek (Rybicki)	Marianna	Schenectady, NY	5	sister
Notes: 1. Named as related to me by Katherine Kornacki; 2. Returned to Poland; 3. Last contact, Ann Snopek; 4. Last contact, Pauline Zampella; 5. Last contact, Chester Rybicki; 6. Last Contact, Stanley Czizik; 7. Last Contact, @ Parlin, NJ					

<sup>xv</sup> --- From the book, “Schenectady’s Golden Era 1880-1930”; by Larry Hart; copyright 1974, 3rd and revised edition, p.IX



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<sup>xvi</sup>Map of Schenectady with the demarcation of the Wards 5, 1 and 3 along the south bank of the Mohawk River through Schenectady.

--- Map of City of Schenectady and Village of Scotia; D.L. Miller & Co.; 1905

<http://www.historicmapworks.com/Map/US/32280/Index+Map+and+Plate+001/Schenectady+County+and+Village+of+Scotia+1905/New+York/>

<sup>xvii</sup> --- Ibid., p.253

<sup>xviii</sup> ---From the pamphlet, "Pamiętnik, 1892-1947; ZLOTY JUBILEUSK, Parafji Matki Boskiej Czestochowskiej; Schenectady, NY