

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

April 2015 Vol. 2 No. 2

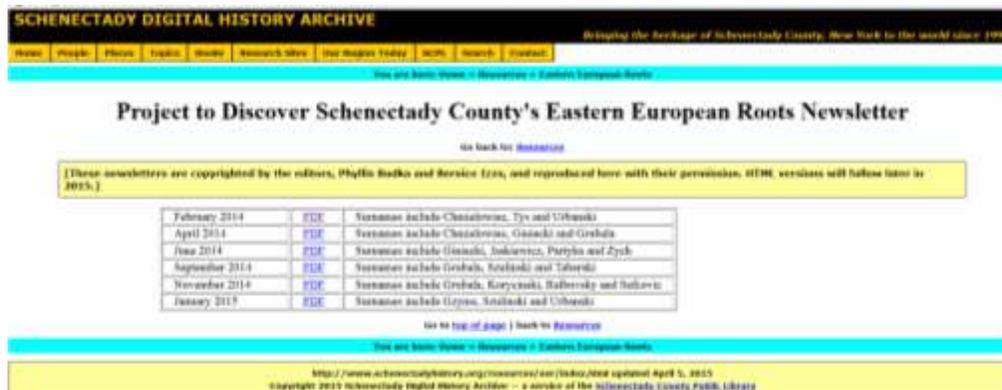
Our objective is to discover, document and digitally preserve genealogy, stories, and pictures of Schenectady County's Eastern European immigrants. Thanks to Robert Sullivan, Schenectady County Public Library, we're on our way! To find our newsletters on-line:

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



Click "What's New" on the right side panel, then, under Recent Additions, look for "April 5, 2015," and the link to "Project..." OR enter the URL below directly:

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



We need each of you to share family history, help pass the (electronic) word. The next deadline is July 1st. Future deadlines will be October 1st and January 1st 2016. To submit your family story, pictures, etc, e-mail Phyllis Zych Budka: abudka@nycap.rr.com Without your stories, there can be no newsletter.

To be added to the newsletter e-mail list, contact Phyllis.

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The next newsletter deadline is July 1st.

Pani Katarzyna Kornacka

Part 1 Going Home

Martin Byster

This story begins in Poland, in a tiny village, along a dusty road, in a small wooden cabin, under a thatched roof (*Fig. 1*). The sun is setting; mother and daughters finished with their chores are about to listen to a traveler's tale about America, the family dog lies nearby, all are gathered together at the hearth, around the fireplace (kominek), in the glow and warmth of a fire⁽¹⁾. It is the first decade in the 20th century.

The village, Parlin⁽²⁾, near Lutocin, is today in Zuromin County, Masovian Voivodeship, Republic of Poland⁽³⁾, 37 miles north of Plock on the Wisla River, 23 miles south of Lidzbark and 8 miles south west of Zuromin, the county seat⁽⁴⁾. In the first decade of the 20th century this village was within the Kingdom of Poland province of Plock (Gubernia Plocka). Tsar Nicholas II was titular King of Poland.



Fig. 1 Wooden cabin with thatched roof [1926 *National Geographic*, *Struggling Poland*, p.227]

Earlier, in the 18th century, internal disorders had weakened Poland and in a series of agreements between 1772 and 1795 Russia, Prussia, and Austria partitioned the nation among themselves⁽⁵⁾. In 1815 Tsar Alexander I created a Constitution for the Kingdom of Poland within the Russian Empire.

A Polish government under that constitution in the early 1830s proclaimed the abolition of serfdom, land to become property of the tenants all declared free and equal citizens of Poland⁽⁶⁾. Parlin, even today, has families that may be descendants of a manor lord (a szlachcic to some) but more likely a small land owner, perhaps minor nobility, who managed to acquire enough land and enough money (zlotys) for a dowry for perhaps an especially attractive daughter with a penniless husband⁽⁷⁾. As the story goes, Parlin was once within Elzbiecin, an estate (wies) of such a landowner.

Marcin (Martin) Budzich (b. 1817), land owner, was born two years after the Kingdom of Poland was created in 1815. He had three sons and two daughters. He may have had two wives, one after the other. In his early 20s in the early 1840s with his wife Katarzyna (Katherine) he had two sons and two daughters⁽⁸⁾. At 40 or so, in the late 1850s perhaps with a second wife, Martin had a third son named Mateusz (Matthew).

Pani Katarzyna Kornacka

Part 1 Going Home

Martin Byster

With the rising struggle in Poland for independence, freedom from serfdom, democracy and equal rights in the 1830s through the early 1860s, Martin's two sons and one daughter in anticipation of land reform which could deprive them of much of their father's legacy, took their land, sold it and departed to Germany.

Martin's wife and youngest daughter Marianna (Mary Ann) at 13 were moved out of their household in the mid 1850s with help from Russian soldiers but remained in Elzbiecin. Martin's youngest son Matthew was born in the early 1860s. Mary Ann married John (Jan) Dobies shortly after a year or so and took Matthew in with her new family.

Mary Ann Budzich and John Dobies had two sons and four daughters. The two sons immigrated to the US, one to his pig farm near what today is Parlin, NJ, the other to his potato farm near Douglaston, LI, NY. One daughter moved to Long Island; the two daughters remained in Poland. Of those two, daughters Paulina (Apolonia) Dobies married Adam Borek.

Paulina and Adam Borek had six children, five daughters and one son. All except two daughters raised families in Poland. The oldest daughter, Mary Ann Borek [b.1882] came to America, married Adam Rybicki and raised eight children, three daughters and five sons.

Katherine Borek [b.1892] followed her sister to America, married Feliks Kornacki and raised six children, five daughters and one son.

Mateusz Budzich is the traveler, Apolonia Borek is the mother, Katarzyna Borek her daughter.

The fire has settled into red hot embers; Mateusz, unable to read his notes on America, rises to stoke the fire and add a log. The dog jumps to its feet, hurries to the door and begins to bark.

"It's your father," Apolonia exclaims, with apprehension over what was about to happen.

What happened takes a while. Mateusz puts down his notes, feeds the fire as everyone braces themselves in expectation of who will be at the door. No one goes to open the door.

The Borek's oldest daughter Marianna had previously immigrated to America, married, and was living in Schenectady, NY. Adam, her father, went to visit her, perhaps for her

Pani Katarzyna Kornacka

Part 1 Going Home

Martin Byster

wedding in 1901, and remained there to work at a newly organized American Locomotive Company which was expanding along the Mohawk River north across the Erie Canal from the Schenectady Locomotive Works. In doing so he avoided being inducted into the Russian Army to fight in the Russia-Japan War. Adam may not have seen his son, Stanislaw (Stanley), who was born in 1901, perhaps just after Adam had departed for America.

Adam opens the door to a warm welcome. With him he brings a new opportunity for his 16 year old daughter.

At 16, Katarzyna Borek had already been thinking about her future. The young women and men in Elzbiecin, as they came of age, were leaving for America. Mateusz had two sons in America; he had visited them and shared his experiences with her. Katarzyna's sister had also written of her experiences. Her father added still more. She wanted to go.

In 1910 Katarzyna leaves Parlin, Elzbiecin, crosses the river Wkra in a ferry, she continues on to Zuromin, then north across the Prussian boarder to Lidzbark with her ticket for a train ride to Rotterdam and steamship passage to America. She is standing in for another young lady too ill to make the trip. The engine's whistle blows. All aboard, with a rush of steam, the railcars are pulled in line and the train departs. Katarzyna Borek, with tears streaming down her cheeks, waves good bye.

“Iść z Bogiem” (Go with God)



The door closes to where she will never return. She is going home.

---- To Be Continued

Fig. 2: Katarzyna [Katherine] Kornacka [Family Tree Maker – Four Generations]

Pani Katarzyna Kornacka

Part 1 Going Home

Martin Byster

Footnotes:

¹ This story was related to me (Martin Byster) usually over a cup of coffee and babka, across the kitchen table from 1972 to 1993 in the evenings by my Grandmother, Pani Katarzyna Kornacka. Her maiden name was Borek.

² There is more than one "Parlin" in Poland. My wife Barbara and I visited Poland in 1991. Two daughters of my grandmother's youngest brother Stanley, with one of their sons, took us there from Warsaw to my grandmother's birthplace. Descendants of the Borek family still lived there and not only knew of my grandmother they had pictures and letters that my mother and aunts had sent them over the years. Return addresses on envelopes dated in the 1950s that my grandmother had saved included the word "Wies", meaning a village, an estate or generally the countryside and followed by the name "Elzbiecin". We were shown the exact site of the cabin. It survived into the 1950s or so and was last used as a chicken coop.

³ CIA; Library, World Factbook; Europe::Poland; Website 3/12/2015

⁴ Google Maps; Parlin, Zuromin County; Website 3/11/15. Reference points included here were mentioned frequently by my grandmother.

⁵ (CIA)

⁶ Iwo Cyprian Pogonowski; Poland a Historical Atlas; Dorset Press, New York, NY, p.24

⁷ James A. Michener; Poland; Random House, New York, NY; 1983, p.xvii

⁸ There is a degree of uncertainty if Martin Budzich had one or two daughters. The daughter's name may have been Anna. The names of the two sons are unknown.

Who Are These Women and What Is the Organization?

Bernice Izzo

The pictures below were discovered in my Grandmother Cecilia Grubala Finley's picture box when we started doing the family history. Cecilia is in the touring car picture taken at Lake George (Fig. 1). My Grandmother is the center person in the picture from Sylvan Beach (Fig. 2). The people in Figure 3 are unknown.

So, were these pictures taken at outings of a group or organization to which Cecilia belonged? The problem is, I have no idea what the group or organization was and I would like to know.

If anyone knows the organization or recognizes someone in these pictures, please contact me at niece1220@nycap.rr.com.



Fig. 1 Lake George August 1920

Who Are These Women and What Is the Organization?
Bernice Izzo



Fig. 2 Sylvan Beach - Cecelia Grubala Finley is the middle person.



Fig. 3

Ciocia Jean Budka Gajewska Kowalczyk's Babka Recipe

Phyllis Zych Budka

Ciocia Jean Budka Gajewska Kowalczyk was my husband, Alfred Budka's father's sister. The family loved her Polish sweet bread, or babka. While I have tasted other versions of babka, Ciocia Jean's was my favorite. On a visit to our home in the early 80s, I asked her to teach me the recipe, and I wrote it down.

She advised that the dough would take two sessions of kneading, each about 20 minutes long. It was a good idea to make sure another family member was available to do some of the stirring and kneading. The recipe is still a family favorite today. Although it was probably traditionally made for Easter, I have made it on special occasions at various times of the year – with one variation, not approved by Ciocia Jean.

Shortly after my 80s era babka lesson, I acquired both a food processor and a word processor. I found that the gooey dough could be quickly transformed to the required consistency with a few pulses of the food processor button. Delighted with this labor-saving discovery, I happily told Aunt Jean. "It won't taste the same," she pronounced. But it did!

Ciocia Jean's Babka Recipe

2 cups milk, scalded	1 teaspoon salt
½ pound butter	1 ¼ cups sugar
½ cup water	1 teaspoon sugar
2 packages dry yeast	1 teaspoon vanilla
6 eggs, separated	1 tablespoon rum
7-8 cups flour	½ box golden raisins

Let yeast rise with 1 teaspoon sugar and ½ cup scalded but cooled milk. Melt butter in remaining milk. Beat egg whites until stiff. Mix flour, sugar and salt. Add milk / butter to flour mixture. Stir. Add risen yeast / milk mixture (It will increase in volume). Add beaten egg whites. Add rum, water, egg yolks and vanilla. Stir until bubbles rise. Beat by hand 15 to 20 minutes OR put all ingredients into a food processor and pulse 7 or 8 times. The dough should be smooth and satiny. Cover, set aside in a warm place (no drafts) and let rise until doubled. Examine raisins and remove any stems or dark pieces. Add raisins to dough and mix well. Grease 4 bread pans (glass pans are recommended). Divide dough into 4 parts, place in pans and let rise again. Brush tops lightly with milk.

Preheat oven to 300F. Bake bread for 10 minutes; lower temperature to 275F and bake for 20 to 25 minutes. Cool in pans about 5 minutes; remove from pans and cool on a rack.

I usually double the recipe at holidays and make 8 loaves. Enjoy!!

Ciocia Jean Budka Gajewska Kowalczyk's Babka Recipe
Phyllis Zych Budka



The dough is sticky



Mmmmmm!

All Saints Day in Poland – A Tradition That Didn't Cross the Ocean

Phyllis Zych Budka

As a child, I would often accompany my Babcia Rozalia Aleksandra Rozanska Zych and Uncle George Zych on a trip to St. Adalbert's Cemetery on Hamburg Street to water plants, cut grass and generally tend the graves of my grandfather Jozef Zych, and Babcia's first born children, Jan and Janina, who died young in 1913. I recall cemetery processions and ceremonies on Memorial Day to honor those who died while serving in the armed forces. However, despite my Polish heritage, I was completely unprepared for what I experienced in Warsaw, Poland's Piry Cemetery on November 1, 2014, Dzień Zaduszny.

As I planned my Warsaw trip for late October, I was advised by a Polish friend that November 1st, All Saints Day, is a holiday in Poland. With November 2nd, All Souls Day, the period is called "Zaduszki" – my rough translation – "For Souls." Everything is closed; everyone visits the cemeteries, he advised.

As I walked around Warsaw on October 31st, I was curious to find if our American Halloween traditions existed in Poland. I saw only a few small children in costume and there were some jack-o-lanterns in a restaurant. No, as of 2014, Halloween has not yet entered Polish culture to any extent.

Warsaw cousin Justyna Klyz arrived the next day with friend Rafal and his car. It was Dzień Zaduszki. "Would you like to visit the cemetery where Maria Kaluzna is buried?" asked Justyna? I would! Maria, Babcia Victoria Gzyms Korycinska's first cousin, was one of the first people I met on my very first (of 6 to date) visit to Poland in 1999. Maria, then 94, with a bouquet of flowers in her hand, greeted me at the airport with her nephew, my cousin Chris Oleksiak. Maria passed away 4 years later.

As we approached the cemetery in Rafal's car, traffic was light – until we suddenly encountered cars parked everywhere along the sides of the road, and people walking in and out of the traffic. As Rafal skillfully avoided adding to the cemetery residents, I could not believe my eyes!

The cemetery entrance was filled with vendors selling fresh flowers, vigil lights, baked goods and candy traditional to the day. A procession led by a priest, altar boys and people reciting the rosary aloud approached the entrance. Justyna bought some of the traditional pink and white taffy-like candy and gave us each a piece. She found her great aunt Maria's gravesite and told us that at such a gathering it is traditional to tell stories of the deceased person's life, which she proceeded to do.

All Saints Day in Poland – A Tradition That Didn't Cross the Ocean
Phyllis Zych Budka



Fig 1 Procession of people reciting the rosary on their way into Pyry Cemetery, Warsaw, Poland.



Fig. 3 Grave of cousin Maria Kaluzna and husband Maksimilian



Fig 2 Flower vendors at cemetery entrance



Fig. 4 Remembering a loved one.

"The Tatra Eagle" – A Surprise 68 Years Later
Phyllis Zych Budka

Several years ago, while leafing through a collection of old Polish newspapers that had belonged to my paternal grandmother, Rozalia Rozanska Zych (aka Babcia Zych), I came across the "Tatrzanin" publication, tucked between the pages. Dated September 1947, Vol. 1 No. 1, and subtitled "The Tatra Bulletin," it was written mostly in Polish, which I scanned for familiar names, but found none. Despite my brain's attempt to understand the Polish text, I gave up. Happily, I could read page 3, written entirely in English. I noted that it was published in Passaic, New Jersey.

Both paternal grandparents were born in Nowy Targ, southern Poland, often referred to as the Podhale region. Thus, the connection to "Tatrzanin," which means "A person from the Tatras."

"The Podhale (literally "under the Mountain meadows") is Poland's southernmost region, sometimes referred to as the "Polish highlands". The Podhale is located in the foothills of the Tatra range of the Carpathian mountains" Wikipedia, Podhale.

I scanned the 4 page publication (See images below) to preserve it and nearly forgot about it – until an e-mail, all in Polish, appeared in my In Box a few weeks ago. It was a request to subscribe to the "Tatrzański Orzeł," the "The Tatra Eagle." The title rang a bell. I noted that the subscription address was Passaic, New Jersey.



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"The Tatra Eagle" – A Surprise 68 Years Later
Phyllis Zych Budka



Page 3



Page 4

For no good reason, I hunted up my "Tatrzanin" file and sent it in reply to the sender, Thaddeus Gromada. Gromada's response stunned me! He said he had started this newspaper when he was in high school with his sister, Jane. It was later renamed "Tatrzański Orzeł" (The Tatra Eagle). The e-mail was signed Thaddeus V. Gromada, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus of European History New Jersey City University

We subsequently had a phone chat, sharing interests. As a result, I am now the owner of Gromada's recent publication, "Tatra Highlander Folk Culture in Poland and America, Collected Essays from "THE TATRA EAGLE," by Thaddeus V. Gromada. I am learning a lot about my own heritage which goes back to at least the 17th century in Nowy Targ.

Thinking that our newsletter readers might be interested in this book, I asked Dr. Gromada to send me ordering information. The order form is found on the next page.

In the September 1947 "Tatrzanin," Gromada writes (in Polish), "We strongly believe that the Tatrzanin will grow quickly..." Indeed!

Tatra Highlander Folk Culture in Poland and America
Collected Essays from "The Tatra Eagle"
By Thaddeus V. Gromada

The sixty--fifth anniversary of *The Tatra Eagle* is what prompted the compilation of this book, *Tatra Highlander Folk Culture in Poland and America*. It contains a collection of essays that appeared over the span of more than half century in this unique quarterly publication devoted to the folk culture of the Tatra Mountain region in Poland and to the Tatra highlanders (*górale*) who brought this culture to America in the late 19 century and early 20th century. The essays were authored by Thaddeus V. Gromada, who founded and coedits this periodical with his sister Jane Gromada Kedron. He was smitten by the folk culture of his immigrant parents Jan and Aniela Gromada that has had a significant impact on the "high" culture of Poland. His essays were designed to spread the "good news" of the richness of this folk culture not only to persons of Polish *góral* origin but to all people interested in cultural pluralism and in getting a new and refreshing perspective on Polish culture.

The essays in the book are divided into five parts: a. *Introduction* b. *Podhale, Poland's "Mystical Altar"*, c. *Górale and American Polonia*, d. *The Gromada Family and Góral Folk Culture in America*, and e. *Profiles of Eminent Personalities*.

About the Author - Thaddeus V. Gromada received his Ph.D. in East Central European History at Fordham University. He is Professor Emeritus of European History at New Jersey City University. He served as Executive Director of the Polish Institute of Arts & Sciences of America from 1991 to 2011 and its President from 2008 to 2011. Member of the Editorial Board of *The Polish Review*; editor and contributor of several books and author of many articles in scholarly journals dealing with Polish--Czech--Slovak relations, Immigration and Ethnic History and Polish Tatra folk culture. He is founder and co--editor, with his sister, Jane Gromada Kedron of the quarterly, *The Tatra Eagle* (*Tatrzański Orzeł*). Elected honorary member of the *Związek Podhalan* (Highlanders Alliance) in Poland as well as in America. In 2000 he received the Commander's Cross of Merit from the President of Poland.

BOOK AVAILABLE FROM "TATRA EAGLE PRESS" 31 Madison Avenue, Hasbrouck Heights, NJ 07604; tel. 336 940--5656 or 201 288--3815

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**Schenectady County Historical Society Exhibit Features Schenectady's
Immigrant Heritage – Including OURS!
Phyllis Zych Budka**

Humans are always on the move. We seek new opportunities and face challenges as we adapt to changes in the world around us. For thousands of immigrants, Schenectady County offered its own opportunities and challenges. *Boomtown: Immigration, Technology, and Urban Schenectady* explores why people immigrate, and the unprecedented impact of immigration and technology on urban Schenectady." SCHS



SCHS exhibit includes my Korycinski family portraits, Babcia Korycinska's dressmaker's dummy (left) and some of her tatted handwork, including her tating shuttles (right).

Please visit the exhibit and let the folks at the SCHS know that you are part of "The Project to Discover Schenectady County's Eastern European Roots!"

Last day of the exhibit is June 13th!