

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

January 2018 Vol. 5 No. 1  
Our Fifth Year!

Our objective continues to be to discover, document and digitally preserve genealogy, stories, and pictures of Schenectady County's Eastern European immigrants. Welcome to the many people who visited our table at St. Adalbert's Dozynki Festival and are now newsletter subscribers. We hope you will SOON add your family stories!

Congratulations to Leonard F Jakubczak on the publication of additional family information in the fall 2017 issue of "Rodziny," The Journal of the Polish Genealogical Society of America. The Schenectady period of Len's family story was published in this newsletter in the July and October 2015 and January and April 2016 issues.

Please share your family history, help pass on the (electronic) word. The next deadline is April 15<sup>th</sup> 2018. Subsequent deadlines: July 1<sup>st</sup> and October 1<sup>st</sup>. 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 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/>

**Polish Origins –**

<https://polishorigins.com/>

Website allows one to enter surnames and places of interest; a good website.

**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.

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

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**New this issue: Seeking Family Connections** – To be included in the next newsletter, please send your information request to [Phyllis.abudka@nycap.rr.com](mailto:Phyllis.abudka@nycap.rr.com)

Your Name	Your e-mail	Family Surnames of Interest	Villages Voivodeship (Province) and also the Powiat (county) and Gimma (city) (if known) of Interest
Shannon Opitz	shanskie@gmail.com	Romaniszyn  Opic / Opitz	Baligrod, Poland in Lesko county, a Subcarpathian Voivodship in southeast Poland. The Gmina was also called Baligrod.  Lower Silesia

<i>Family</i>	<i>Perzanowski</i>	<i>Halas</i>	<i>Kserył</i>	<i>Sielicki</i>
<i>Village</i>	<i>Długolęka</i>	<i>Korzyce</i>	<i>Stelagi</i>	<i>Nowosiółki</i>
<i>Town</i>	<i>Różan</i>			<i>Wilino or Vilnius</i>
<i>Gimma (City)</i>	<i>Opinogora</i>	<i>Szydłowiec</i>	<i>Sterdyn</i>	<i>Originally was Poland, then Russia when they lived there – today its Lithuania</i>
<i>Powiat (County)</i>	<i>Ciechanow</i>	<i>Szydłowiec</i>	<i>Sokołow</i>	
<i>Voivodeship (Province)</i>	<i>Masovian or Mazowieckie</i>	<i>Masovian or Mazowieckie</i>	<i>Masovian or Mazowieckie</i>	

Immigration Year      1907                      1913                      1913                      1912

Contact: Barbara Bentley [bentley4@satx.rr.com](mailto:bentley4@satx.rr.com)

## 1901 Gazette - A Sad Article Is This Your Family?

Thanks to Robert Sullivan, Schenectady County Public Library Research Librarian for passing along the article below. He writes:

"1901 Gazette (8/7 page 6). I have not been able to determine what family this is, as the description (1 year old died 8/5) doesn't match any of the published obits. In case it matches any family stories I am passing it along."

**LIGHTED MATCH  
THROWN IN CRADLE**

A Baby Burned to a Crisp in  
Mont Pleasant on Monday  
Afternoon.

A Polish family living in Mont Pleasant left their one-year-old child in the care of their children for a short time on Monday afternoon and during the mother's absence one of the children threw a lighted match into the cradle. In an instant the bed clothing and that of the child was ablaze.

The mother returned at the time and attempted to save the little one's life and extinguished the flames, but it was too late, as in many places the flesh had been burned to a crisp.

Dr. Bryant was hurriedly called and did all in his power to relieve the little one's sufferings, but the child died at 9 o'clock Monday night.

The mother's hands and wrists were badly burned in trying to put out the flames.

Coroner Dettbarn has taken charge of the case.

**Living in the Front Street (Third Ward)  
Area During the 1920s and 1930s  
Sandy Chmielinski Dimke**



1926 - Joseph and Konstancya Kalinowska Górzyński and family

My story is primarily about my maternal grandparents, Joseph and Konstancya Kalinowska Górzyński, however it encompasses the broader story about many of the Polish immigrants who came to Schenectady in the early 1900s and lived in the Front Street Neighborhood near ALCO (American Locomotive Company), where most of them labored.

Some general background information may be helpful. The majority of the Polish immigrants came from the part of Poland ruled by Russia, and the rest were from the German/Prussian parts or from Galicia which was ruled by the Austria-Hungary. Most of the Russian Poles who came to Schenectady were from Warszawa, Płock, Łomża and Suwałki districts. Both my grandparents were born in the Płock region, although they didn't meet and marry until they came to Schenectady.

New immigrants wrote letters home to Poland encouraging family members to join them. They told about the constant demand for workers by the expanding "Locomotive Works," as ALCO was originally known, and General Electric Company. Polish friends and family (as well as German and Italian immigrants) soon made their way to Schenectady. The population of Schenectady more than doubled between 1900 and 1910 from 30,000 to 78,000, a jump that made housing inadequate. Many of these immigrants settled in Schenectady's Third Ward since it was within walking distance of ALCO. They lived in the area known simply as "Front Street," which took in the area between the Mohawk River and the Erie Canal, primarily Front, Monroe, Jefferson, John Streets and Mohawk

## **Living in the Front Street (Third Ward) Area During the 1920s and 1930s Sandy Chmielinski Dimke**

Avenue. Many of the houses were 3 story, resembling tenements, where large families lived and also took in boarders. These boarders were most often newly arrived, unmarried men, beginning their new jobs.

The Górzyński family, originally from a small farming area called Zbójno in the Plock Gubernia (region/state), had left their small village in search of work in other parts of Poland. These were strong, hard-working and family oriented people. The oldest (and definitely the wisest) was Franciszek, who had married when he was 24 and soon was the father of a little baby. He knew he had to look farther to find a better life for his wife and daughter. In 1902, Franciszek and Maryanna and their one-year old daughter Lena sailed for America and headed for Schenectady, where they had heard about available factory work. He was able to start work almost immediately at the Locomotive Works and make enough money to support his family and start to send money to Poland for his younger brothers to join him. His 18 year old brother Jozef, my grandfather, arrived the next year (in 1903) and in 1905 they brought their 23 year old brother Jan to Schenectady. Jan had already left Zbójno and was working in Sokołowo as a blacksmith before he left for America. Together by 1913 they were able to bring their youngest brother, Antoni to America when he turned 18.

All the Górzyńskis originally settled in Schenectady's 3rd Ward, on Front Street, Jefferson St and Mohawk Avenue. As noted, this area was desirable since it was a short walk to ALCO, but also because they were comfortable living among other Polish immigrants, speaking Polish at home, in church, on the streets and often also at work. Walking down the sidewalks you only heard Polish or Italian, rarely English. In October of 1906, Joe married Konstancya Kalinowska, another immigrant from Maleszewo, a small village town near Lipno that was about 20 miles from his own home town. On Mohawk Avenue, Joe and his wife Konstancya and their 7 kids were surrounded by other large Polish families: The Juskiewicz family with 4 children; the Pokzywnicki family with 7 children, Budka family with 6 children, and the Kaczmarczyk family with 6 children. However, in the Front Street Area, Poles and Italians lived side by side and my mother always remarked on how some of her fondest moments growing up were the wonderful aroma of bread at Mastrianni's bakery nearby.

Both skilled and unskilled, most of the Górzyński brothers and sons were machinists, boilermakers, blacksmiths, molders and patternmakers. Wages at ALCO were slightly higher than at GE and our families were willing to accept long hours in often unhealthy working conditions. They also had to endure frequent layoffs when the demand for locomotives slowed. Mom and Pop grocery stores, bakeries, ice houses, even shoe repair shops all served the Polish and Italian people in the area. My family also spoke of the large number of "beer taverns" where men would spend evenings in conversation and young men, especially my Uncle Ziggy, would spend Saturday night dancing till the wee hours. Many met their future wives there or at other Polish Dances held on weekends.

The Górzyński surname also changed spelling as they learned to cope with English pronunciations. In Polish, Górzyński has the accented "ó" pronounced as "OO" (like GOO), the dot over the "ż" to give it a "ZUH" sound and an accent over the "ń" sounding like "EEN". GOO-ZHEEN-SKI. This pronunciation was not like it looked at all. It looked like it should be pronounced GORSINSKI. Franciszek died in 1918 and never changed

## **Living in the Front Street (Third Ward) Area During the 1920s and 1930s Sandy Chmielinski Dimke**

the spelling of his name. My grandfather Joe also kept the spelling the same, but of course, everyone in his Polish community and church knew how to correctly pronounce his surname. His brother Jan, however, began spelling it GURZĘNSKI and his youngest brother Tony used GURZYNSKI.

Just as the Górzyński brothers were settling down and starting families in Schenectady, St. Mary's Church with its beautiful Gothic granite design was already under construction on Eastern Avenue. The pastor, Father Dereszewski, was the most respected and influential person in the community. The newly arrived immigrants, including the Górzyński families, were not yet ready to assimilate. They felt that creation and support of St. Mary's (and St. Adalbert's) parochial school was essential to the Polish Community. It was important to them to keep Polish customs and language alive and feared that their children would lose their Polish heritage and identity. The Sisters of the Resurrection arrived in 1907 from Poland and spoke only Polish. Lessons were taught in Polish and children only learned English as a separate "subject". In those early years, it is unlikely that many of the Polish speaking adolescents who spent six years at St. Mary's would have been up to grade level if they chose to continue on to Junior High. This was not an issue for their Polish born parents. Polish Nationalism, not assimilation, was the norm! Further education past 6th grade was deemed unnecessary (less than 20% of Polish children continued onto Junior High till the end of the 1920s). Luckily for most of my aunts and uncles, in 1916 the bishop intervened and decreed that all education in the parochial schools of the Albany diocese must be done in English. Additional lay teachers were hired temporarily to help the nuns. Parochial education began to vastly improve.

Living in the Front Street neighborhood, my mother, aunts and uncles all made their way from Mohawk Avenue, up Eastern Avenue hill each day to St. Mary's school. My Uncle Staś boasted that in the 1930s, when he attended St. Mary's, he even walked home for lunch hour a few times a week. We were a hearty, healthy bunch! My oldest uncle, Ziggy (born 1908), started school at St. Mary's when he was six or seven, in 1915. His sisters Sadie (born 1910) and Lottie (born 1913) joined him a few years later, but these three oldest only had 6 years of schooling, then began working to help out the family. Their younger siblings Helen (born 1916), Ted (born 1918), Sophie (born 1920) and Stanley (born 1924), however, all completed high school.

During the 1930s and the Depression, the proximity of the Mohawk River was also a draw for immigrants to stay in the Front Street area. Family rowboats were tied up at the end of each dead end street on the banks of the river. The Górzyńskis, still living on Mohawk Avenue, also farmed a small plot of land on an island off the base of the Western Gateway Bridge. They would row out in the spring with hand tools to cultivate the land, plant the seeds and then return throughout the summer to tend, weed and water. In fall they reaped their harvest. I'm sure this was public land that was owned by the state, but no one minded that families farmed there. My aunts and uncles considered this both work and fun, since they could take breaks and swim. The railroad bridge was also a popular spot for diving and a rope was fastened to make for a speedier return. Public Health and Safety was not a big concern in the 1920s and 30s.

All the Górzyński /Gurzenski/Gurzynski families eventually moved from Front Street and Ward 3 to a better life of newer houses elsewhere in Schenectady, with front and

## **Living in the Front Street (Third Ward) Area During the 1920s and 1930s Sandy Chmielinski Dimke**

backyards and gardens. They all chose other "Polish" neighborhoods but were able to give their families a few more comforts.

Jan and his wife Maryanna Dzikowska and their seven children were the first to leave. Although he still worked at ALCO, by 1915 they had moved to a new Polish neighborhood, a few blocks from St. Mary's on Porter Street. Frank's widow, Mary, started work at GE and moved to DeGraff Street, also near St. Mary's, when her daughter Lena married Ted Zasada in 1922. Soon after she began to make her home with her daughter and son-in-law.

Antoni married Maryanna Gronczewska in 1915 and they continued to live on Front Street. However, by 1923 he and his wife and two children had saved enough money to sail to Poland to visit relatives. Upon their return in 1924, they bought a house on Park Street in Mont Pleasant.

For Joe, my grandfather, content where he was, the decision to move was made for him. ALCO decided to physically expand their factories in the late 1930s and the homes on east side of Mohawk Avenue closest to ALCO, where my grandparents and mother and aunts and uncles lived, were demolished. He owned the home (worth \$2000 in the 1930 census) and was paid adequately for the inconvenience. My grandparents and their adult children still living at home, bought a two family house, walking distance to St. Mary's at 1004 Eastern Avenue - still in the midst of Polish speaking immigrants and first generation Polish-Americans. They didn't go far out of their comfort zone.

The Front Street Neighborhood (Third Ward) through the 1930s was the backbone of Polish (and Italian) workers. It was a microcosm of early Schenectady industrial immigration and was a safe haven to thousands of Polish workers and their children.

Phyllis's note: Something to keep in mind: In 1920, when Lithuania became a country after WWI and Lithuanian became the official language, people with Polish surnames were required to change the spellings to Lithuanian standards. For example, the Polish language has no "v"; Lithuanian has no "w." When I visit my relatives in Lithuania and hear surnames, I mentally "translate" their surnames into what I imagine was the original Polish spelling.

## **Family History – An On-Going Process**

### **Bernice Izzo**

When you have done genealogy for a long time, finding new information becomes harder and harder, but it can be done. Recently, in the Schenectady “Gazette” scrapbook section appeared a picture of a second cousin, Edward Rice, who played the violin for the Schenectady Symphony. We had a picture of him at a very young age taken with his brother, my grandfather and my uncle. Explaining this, I sent the new picture to my cousin. He went hunting and found Edward Rice’s father’s obituary on Fulton History (aka fultonhistory.com) but could not find his mother, our great aunt, Theresa Rothaupt Rice’s obituary. So I started hunting. After hunting Fulton History a number of different ways and finding nothing, I went to the library to look at their obituaries indexes. They did not cover the period I needed. Her husband had died in 1953 and Theresa had died before this. The indexes are more recent obituaries. Edward’s obit said he was buried at the Most Holy Redeemer Cemetery. So I called the cemetery and they were able to give me Theresa’s date of death, December 25, 1946. So I went back to the library to look at the microfilm copies of the newspapers for this period. There were no reels for the Schenectady “Gazette” for this period but there were copies of the “Union Star,” and that was where it was located. And as far as I can see, the “Union Star” is not located on the Fulton History Web site. And it looks like the 1946 Schenectady “Gazette” is missing.

By the way, Ancestry did not have the death date. I will tell you the reason is because she did not have a Social Security Number and there is no Find a Grave entry. I have located date of death both ways. The Social Security Death Index will appear within a couple of days of death.

In October, The Schenectady Historical Society ran a trip to the National Archives located in the Alexander Hamilton Customs Building located at One Bowling Green, New York City. It is across the street from Battery Park. It is worth the trip just to see the building which was artistically beautiful. It is an old building that could never be built today, mammoth structures in front and a beautiful rotunda on the second floor. The Archives are located on the third floor with free access to Ancestry and an index of a number of different documents, including ship passenger listings and Naturalization papers. My reason for going was to locate Naturalization papers for my Polish uncle but the docent’s introductory talk taught me how to check the census to see if he ever filed them. Come to find out, he never had. But I got to spend quiet time working on Ancestry and made a big discovery on the other side of the family.

For 11 years, we have been looking for a death date for my great, great grandfather, John Rothaupt, Theresa’s father. We thought that he died in Minnesota, where he had been living in 1880 and his wife was living in 1900. But there was no record or death certificate listed on the Minnesota Index. His grave was not in the cemetery where his wife and some of his children were buried. I had talked to the local Historical Society and they worked on it, even talking to the man who maintains the cemetery and the records. Nothing. So what did I find this day in New York City? There was a New York State record for John Rothaupt who died in Schenectady. There was a Find a Grave record showing he was buried in Vale cemetery, here in Schenectady, right under my nose.

## **Family History – An On-Going Process**

**Bernice Izzo**

Of course the first question, I asked myself was “Is this my John Rothaupt? The record gave me the index number so I can request the death certificate from the state of New York. But in the meantime (it takes the state up to 8 weeks to send the results) I was going to call Vale Cemetery. Yesterday, I was checking Ancestry and found a 1892 Schenectady census listing for my Aunt Theresa Rothaupt. Listed was John Rothaupt and his family, my great great grandmother Amelia, and all children except my Great grandmother who was married and living Minnesota. This convinces me even more that my great grandfather died in New York State and is buried in Vale Cemetery.

Now on the third piece of information which I got last month. A couple of years ago I requested my mother’s baptism Certificate from St. Mary’s. By the way, St. Mary’s records are kept at St. John the Evangelist. To my surprise, she could not locate it. I really thought everything my Polish family did was done at St. Mary’s. When my mother was born, they lived on Catherine St. So in my mind the closest church to Catherine St. was St. Joseph’s, I thought. When I called St Joseph’s, the archivist did locate the record, but not at St. Joseph’s. It was at St Columbus and St Columbus was closer to Catherine St than St. Joseph’s. I really was surprised at this until I talked to someone about the four Catholic Churches located on Hamilton Hill. St. Columbus was Irish, Sacred Heart was French, Our Lady of Mount Carmel was Italian and St Joseph’s at the bottom of the hill was German. Well, my grandfather was Irish, so that was the reason for St. Columbus. By the way, St. Joseph’s does have the records for St. Columbus and Sacred Heart.

As you can see, researching your family history is an on-going process. My words of wisdom is keep going, the information is out there and people are adding to the databases every day. So keep looking. And in reference to that point, the State of New York is creating an online data base of their birth, death and marriage records. No more going to the State Library to look at the microfilm which gave you a number so you could request it. The data are located under the Department of Health. You do have to search for it. They are working backwards starting with 1967.

### **The Archaeology In My Spit Phyllis Zych Budka**

archaeology; noun: archeology

The study of human history and prehistory through the excavation of sites and the analysis of artifacts and other physical remains.

I reported the results of my “Ancestry” DNA analysis in the January 2016 issue of this newsletter, page 15: 91% Europe East (whew!), 2% Europe West, 2% Finland / Northwest Russia and, the big surprise, 5% Great Britain. Recently, I spoke with a woman whose ancestors, like my paternal grandparents, came from the southern Poland town of Nowy Targ. As we exchanged genealogy information, she told me her DNA results, which included 4% Great Britain.

Right after our conversation, I was in touch with a person from the Polish Genealogical Society of America, who suggested that perhaps this ancestry could date back to the period when Henry VIII of England persecuted Catholics and many left for Catholic Poland-Lithuania.

So, my question / request: How about sharing your DNA results with our newsletter readers for publication in the next issue? Please send to me, [abudka@nycap.rr.com](mailto:abudka@nycap.rr.com)

# Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany Record Access Courtesy of Amy Andrews, Archivist

## How Do I...

- Get a copy of my baptismal, marriage or other certificate?
- Find out about my Catholic family history?



Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany  
40 North Main Avenue  
Albany, New York 12203  
Archives Office | [www.rcda.org](http://www.rcda.org)

### HOW DO I GET A COPY OF MY SACRAMENTAL CERTIFICATE?

Each parish within the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany holds its own sacramental registers. The best place to start when seeking a record of your baptism, marriage or other sacrament, is the parish in which you received it. Each parish has its own procedure in place for requesting information about sacramental records. Where a parish has closed, those registers typically go to the successor parish. Need help? Call the Archives at 518-453-6669 and we can help you determine where the records might be.

### HOW DO I GET A COPY OF SACRAMENTAL INFORMATION FOR GENEALOGY PURPOSES?

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany follows the timeline set forth by the United States Census Bureau for census record availability and is consistent with the recommendations of the Association of Catholic Diocesan Archivists. **Currently sacramental records after 1941 are closed to the general public.** Requests for certificates for sacramental records after 1941 will be released only to the following:

- The person of record on whom the sacrament was conferred;
- The legal guardian of the person of record, if under 18;
- The next of kin if the person of record is deceased;
- Parish staff and officials of the Diocese of Albany or authorized officials of other Dioceses;
- Parties identified in a court order or subpoena, summons or state or federal statute.

The best place to start is the parish in which the sacrament took place. Each parish has its own procedure in place for requesting information about sacramental records for genealogy purposes.

The Diocesan Archives offers very limited services for genealogical research requests. Those services mainly include reviewing and reporting findings of available sacramental register books within the collection of the Archives. Sacramental registers are accessible only to the Archivist; registers are not physically accessible to researchers. Sacramental registers through 1941 are open to those doing genealogical research on their ancestors and to genealogists doing research on behalf of other parties. A fee will be charged for each genealogical request for individual sacramental record information. Research on general family lines cannot be conducted.

Requests must be submitted in writing. Please contact the Archives at 518-453-6669 for more information. Visits to the Archives must be scheduled in advance. **There is no walk-in service.**

#### Mission Statement

In accordance with Canon Law, the mission of the Diocesan Archives is to collect, organize, preserve, and provide access to the official and ancillary records which reflect the work of the people, parishes, institutions and departments of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany, New York.

- No fees are charged for individuals or tribunals seeking records for sacramental purposes.
- Please note – any sacramental record relating to an adoption is subject to the laws regarding privacy for New York State. This includes sacramental records created before January 1, 1941.
- Visit our website at [www.rcda.org](http://www.rcda.org) for more information.

Updated October 2017

St. Adalbert's Parish Office: 518 346-4204

Tips: Be sure the name you request was a parishioner.

Allow several weeks; archivists can be part time with other duties.

# The Kornacki Family

## Part 11 – The Thirties Come To a Close

### Martin Byster



Fig. 1: New York Times: German Army Attacks Poland, September 1, 1939 <sup>1</sup>

As the '30s came to a close, Katie and Felix Kornacki had new concerns for the families they left behind in Poland and those with them in the United States.

Five families, including Katie's, had established themselves in Schenectady; Katie's sister Mary with Adam Rybicki on Alexander Street east of the locomotive works; her cousins the Dobies, Antoni with Katherine and Frank with Cadie respectively on Ingersoll Avenue and North Street along the Mohawk River waterfront; and Feliks' brother John and Anna Kornacki on the hill at Park Place near Saint Mary's Church.

In the first four decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, ten Polish immigrants, who became husband and wife among five families, raised 31 children, 16 girls and 15 boys who in 1940 were between 38 and 3 years old.

#### Feliks and Katie Kornacki

NAME <sup>2</sup>	AGE (1940)	BORN
<b>Kornacki, Feliks</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>1886</b>
<b>Kornacki, Katarzyna Borek (Katie)</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>1892</b>
Kornacki, Josef [Joseph] (Joe)	24	1916
Kornacki, Apolonia [Pauline] Byster	26	1914
Kornacki, Josefa [Josephine]	21	1919
Kornacki, Wictoria [Victoria] (Vicki)	19	1921
Kornacki, Genowefa [Genevieve] (Janet)	18	1922
Kornacki, Getruda [Gertrude] (Gert)	11	1929

<sup>1</sup> ---

<https://www.google.com/search?q=invasion+of+poland&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjN18-h5rXYAhVCSN8KHZLICucQiR4ltwE&biw=1920&bih=855#imgrc=TjLloadUyrvHfM:>

<sup>2</sup>NOTE: Czeslawa, a girl, first born to the Kornackis died at birth.

## **The Kornacki Family Part 11 – The Thirties Come To a Close Martin Byster**

Pauline, my mother, was first born followed three years later by her only brother Joseph. In 1936 Pauline married Benjamin Byster<sup>3</sup> and together they took residence in the first-floor apartment at 18 River Street, paid rent and assisted Katie and Feliks pay off their 15-year mortgage. At the close of the decade both were working, Pauline at the American Laundry and Ben, a machinist, at General Electric. I was first born second generation Kornacki in 1941<sup>4</sup>.

The US recovery from the “Great Depression” was a blessing for the Kornackis. By 1936 Feliks was back to working at the locomotive works, Katie was doing laundry for the Diggs and Woodall families, Joseph, a machinist, was at GE, and the Bysters were paying rent. Times felt good enough to purchase two new GE refrigerators, one for the Bysters a second for the Kornackis. The old iceboxes were gone.



Figure 2: General Electric Monitor Top Refrigerator<sup>5</sup>

Josephine graduated from Schenectady High School in 1936. In 1939 she entered Mount Sinai Nursing School in New York City. Viki was assembling radio tubes at the GE. Janet graduated high school and Gert finished sixth grade at Saint Mary’s parish school up on the hill on Irving Place.

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<sup>3</sup> 1918.0912 John Bystry, Registration Card Ser No, 1298, Order No. 819; Local Board, Division No.3, City of Schenectady NY. NOTE: The surname name “Bystry” was formally changed to “Byster” after my father Ben and his older brother Edward were subject to a background check for their employment at the General Electric Company.

<sup>4</sup> NOTE: Martin Benjamin Byster is first in the second generation of Kornackis born to Pauline and Benjamin Byster on November 12, 1941.

<sup>5</sup> NOTE: This model of the refrigerator is very likely to have been the last model before the refrigeration unit in the monitor top was installed within the cabinet. This model may also mark the last GE refrigerators manufactured in Schenectady. It is distinctly different from the earlier models whose door was flat, which stood on four discernible legs and did not have a storage drawer at the bottom of the unit. Katie’s refrigerator ran for nearly 70 years.

## The Kornacki Family Part 11 – The Thirties Come To a Close Martin Byster

Somehow, the family acquired a pump organ to which both Pauline and Gert occasionally put their fingers. Janet applied her talent to a trumpet.

As the '40s approached the family was intact; 18 River Street was still home.

### Adam and Mary Rybicki

NAME	AGE (1940)	BORN <sup>6</sup>
<b>Rybicki, Adam</b>	<b>66-69</b>	<b>1871</b>
<b>Rybicki, Mary (Katie's Sister)</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>1883</b>
Rybicki, Frank J	38	<b>1902</b>
Rybicki, Walter	35	<b>1905</b>
Rybicki, William (Billie)	23	<b>1917</b>
Rybicki, Chester	20	<b>1920</b>
Rybicki, Edward	17	<b>1923</b>
Rybicki, Regina	32	<b>1908</b>
Rybicki, Klara <sup>7</sup>	29	<b>1911</b>
Rybicki, Stella	26	<b>1914</b>

The Kornackis had one son and five daughters, the Rybickis had five sons and three daughters. Frank, Regina, and Klara are missing from the 1930 census. In a bit of

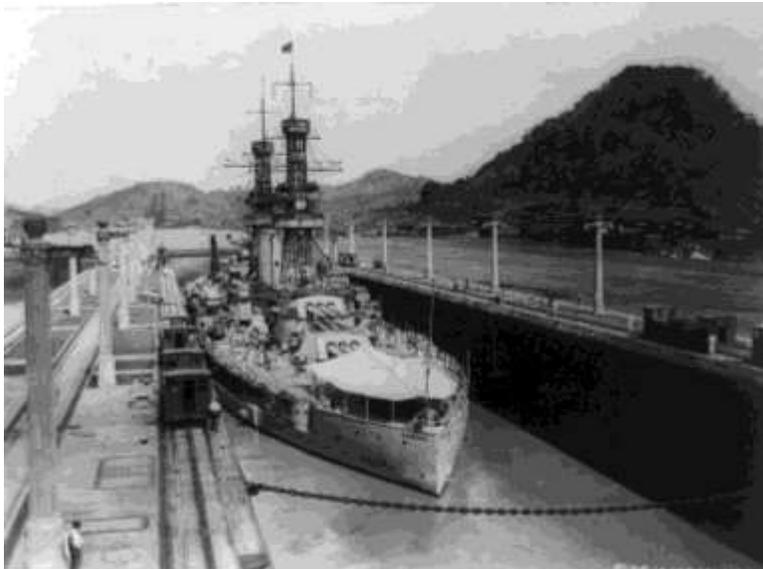


Figure 3: USS Arizona BB-39 Crossing Panama Canal, Atlantic to Pacific Oceans, 1921<sup>8</sup>

<sup>6</sup> NOTE: The years listed are contrived from the dates recorded in the census. The birth records were not researched,

<sup>7</sup> NOTE: Klara is the name she chose to go by. Clara, Clair, Clare are other names I have used in error and which can be found in the record.

<sup>8</sup> The USS Arizona passed through the Panama Canal to the Pacific Ocean in 1921 (Figure 4)

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speculation, all three may have left home because of Walter's service on the USS Arizona (Fig. 3) in 1925 and coincidentally his return home temporarily in April when the census was recorded.



Figure 4: USS Chaumont (AP-5)  
Arriving off the Bund at Shanghai, China 1937<sup>9</sup>

Curiously in the Kornacki family archives, is an envelope addressed to Walter aboard the USS Arizona with a complete mail order course from the US School of Music in New York. The course is to learn to play the piano. Included are test papers he filled out but never submitted. If Walter had intended to play the piano after leaving the Navy, that plan changed after he married. What remained of his abandoned plan was later passed on to Gert either by Walter or someone else in the Rybicki family.

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NOTE: The USS Arizona begins ... [1925] ...at San Pedro. ...engages in gunnery practice ...along the southern California coast through April. ...heads to **Honolulu** ...arriving on April 28 ...sails back to the United States in June, spending time in **San Francisco** and Washington state. ...returns to southern California in September, anchored at **San Pedro** through the end of the year.  
--- <http://speccoll.library.arizona.edu/online-exhibits/neatline/accessible/uss-arizona-chronology>

<sup>9</sup> The U.S. Navy troop transport USS Chaumont (AP-5) arriving off the Bund at Shanghai, China, with the 6th Regiment, U.S. Marine Corps, on 19 September 1937. The Marines had been sent to reinforce the 4th Marine Regiment in guarding the U. S. sector of the International Settlement during the Sino-Japanese war.  
--- Official U.S. Navy photo [NH 77810](#) from the U.S. Navy [Naval History and Heritage Command](#)

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Figure 5: Frank Rybicki, Machinist Mate First Class, MM1, US Navy

The test papers had return addresses on them in Honolulu, HI; San Francisco, CA; and San Pedro, CA. in the order of the ports of call for the Arizona in 1925.

Walter married Elizabeth Dobransky in 1936 and continued his career in the Navy through WWII until he retired as a Lieutenant in 1954.

Regina moved to California; Klara was a hostess on a cruise ship; all more or less, following in Walter's footsteps.

Frank left and joined the US Navy. The record shows Frank Rybicki, MM1 (Figure 5) in the later part of the '30s was serving aboard the USS Chaumont AP-5 (Figure 4) when he reenlisted at Manila, PI on October 18<sup>th</sup>, 1939. From her home port at San Francisco, the Chaumont had a career of trans-Pacific troop service that initially consisted of voyages between California and Manila via Honolulu and was occasionally diverted to Shanghai. Again, a bit of speculation, Frank may well have been serving aboard the Chaumont on her trip to Shanghai in 1937 and again in 1938. When the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, Chaumont was on one of her regular voyages from Hawaii to Manila, Frank was reported in the record on December 18<sup>th</sup>, 1941 to be in San Francisco. He was later reassigned to continue serving in the Navy during WWII.

Chester, Edward and Stella remained at home at 416 Alexander Street. Edward enlisted later to serve in the Navy during WWII.

### Anthony and Katherine Dobies

NAME	AGE (1940)	BORN
Dobies, [Dobiesz] Anthony	48	1893
Dobies, [Dobiesz] Katherine	43	1898
Dobies, [Dobiesz] William	19	1921
Dobies, [Dobiesz] Natalie	23	1917
Dobies, [Dobiesz] Wanda	17	1923
Dobies, [Dobiesz] Jeanette	15	1925

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Anthony works in the pattern shop at the locomotive works. The family is intact living at home at 19 Ingersoll Avenue, a duplex with the other apartment rented. William will serve in the US Army during WWII.

### Frank and Catherine Dobies

NAME	AGE (1940)	BORN
<b>Dobies, Frank</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>1886</b>
<b>Dobies, Catherine (Cadie)</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>1886</b>
Dobies, Victoria	24	<b>1916</b>
Dobies, Joseph	28	<b>1912</b>
Dobies, Eugene	22	<b>1918</b>
Dobies, Henry	21	<b>1919</b>
Dobies, Theodore	18	<b>1922</b>

Dobies family is intact at 10 North Street, Schenectady.

### John and Anna Kornacki

NAME	AGE (1940)	BORN
<b>Kornacki, Jan [John]</b>	48	<b>1892</b>
<b>Kornacki, Anna</b>	37 <sup>10</sup>	<b>1903</b>
Kornacki, Andrew (Andy)	7	<b>1933</b>
Kornacki, Pauline	3	<b>1936</b>

Kornacki family is intact at 938 Park Avenue, Schenectady. Andy attends Saint Mary's Parish School. The invasion of Poland is a grave concern for John who has assumed the role as caretaker of the family farm in Poland.

Katie maintained correspondence with her family in Poland and very often sent and received pictures. What was saved is very difficult to sort and establish in some understandable order. John, Feliks' brother, corresponded with their family in Poland.

Perhaps someday much more will be written about how the families left behind in Poland managed to live through the 30s and survive the 40s.

“The Forties”  
(TO BE CONTINUED)

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<sup>10</sup> NOTE: Anna's age is simply a reasonable guess