

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

October 2015 Vol. 2 No. 4

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

You are receiving 2 files with this newsletter. The other file is an index to our first 8 newsletters, thanks to the efforts of Bernice Izzo. It lists authors, persons and places mentioned in the stories, volume number, date and page numbers. Such an index will be of value to people doing genealogical research.

We need each of you to share family history, help pass the (electronic) word. The next deadline is January 1<sup>st</sup> 2016, then April 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/index.html>

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

Dr. Maja Trochimczyk, webmaster of the PAHA webwite, 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: NEW 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.



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SUMMER 2015 IN LITHUANIA AND POLAND  
Phyllis Zych Budka

“Thank you for not forgetting about us,” was a phrase I’ve heard (in Polish) several times on each of my 3 visits to Korycinski family relatives in Lithuania. This summer, my granddaughter and I attended the second Korycinski family reunion in Tracki, Lithuania. More than 35 of our 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> cousins gathered for a day of catching up on family news, in some cases getting acquainted for the first time, and lots of good food. The occasion of 2 visitors from the US was the impetus for the gathering.

We spent two weeks in Lithuania treated to other family gatherings, complete with delicious meals and attempts at communication in my fractured Polish and, sometimes, their fractured English. Several young cousins are learning English; a few are already quite proficient. Granddaughter delighted everyone with her eagerness to learn Lithuanian. With Vilnius as our base, kind and generous cousins took us on sightseeing trips to Tracki, Kaunas, Klaipeda, the Baltic shore’s Curonian spit and its resort town of Neva.

A cousin’s bread preparation for the reunion brought a surprise: a large ball of yeast dough rising in a bowl under cold water. The “Drowning Man’s Bread,” known to a local Byelorussian friend as “Diving Man’s Bread,” is not yet known to the internet. When baked with a plum filling, it tasted great!

We spent 5 days in Warsaw and invited Polish cousins to please visit us there. Four cousins from Torun, a 3 hour ride, arrived together. They are 2 each from different sides of my family and became acquainted through me two years ago. It was a Sunday, and another set of cousins arrived at the same time, from Lutocin, 2 hours away.

The Lutocin visitors were my husband, Alfred Budka’s family, Al’s first cousin, her husband and their two teen granddaughters. To my surprise and delight, they brought along a photo album with old pictures of my children and some wedding photos that must have been sent long ago by Al’s Schenectady Aunt Jean Gajewski.

The experience of renewing acquaintances and establishing new connections with living people is, for me, the real fun of genealogy. With the help of the very international Facebook, posts are now appearing on my FB page in Lithuanian, Polish and, yes, several cousins speak Russian. Despite distance and lapses in communication, in return, I can say to my Poland and Lithuania cousins, “Thank you for not forgetting about us.”

## THE BIG MOVE

Bernice Izzo



7 Paulding Street, Schenectady



16 Paulding Street, Schenectady

When I was a child, I remember going to Paulding Street in Schenectady to visit my mother's aunts. The house I remember was at the end of the street and the dining room windows over looked Vale Cemetery. In doing family history, the only address I found was 7 Paulding Street, which was at the beginning of the street. I wondered how the two aunts ended up at the other end of the street? The answer came when I used the Old Fulton NY Post Card Website:

<http://fultonhistory.com/>

I found a legal notice (See below) announcing the auction of 7 Paulding Street and the proceeds going to my uncle John and my aunt Vicki Gilbert's names. Shortly after they sold the house at 7 Paulding Street, they bought the house at 16 Paulding Street, which was the house I visited

I left in the spelling errors that appeared in the Gazette.

### NOTICE OF ADMINISTRATORS

SALE AT AUCTION STATE OF NEW YORK SURROGATE'S COURT COUNTY OF SCHENECTADY IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF VICTORIA JASKEWICZ and JOHN GILBERT. AS ADMINISTRATORS OF THE GOODS, CHATTELS AND CREDITS OF FRANK GRUBELE (FRANK GRUBALA) Deceased FOR AN ORDER TO MORTGAGE, LEASE OR SELL THE REAL PROPERTY OF SAID DECEDENT.

Notice is hereby given that we, the undersigned. Administrators of the Goods, Chattels and Credits of Frank Grubele, the decedent above name, will pursuant to an order of Hon. William W. Campbell, Surrogate of the County of Schenectady, granted on the 17th day of June, 1947, sell the premises hereinafter described at public auction in the Schenectady

## THE BIG MOVE

Bernice Izzo

County Court House, Schenectady, New York, on the 17th day of July, 1947, at 11:00 o'clock in the forenoon of that day, to wit :ALL THAT CERTAIN LOT, PIECE OR PARCEL OF LAND, with the buildings thereon, situated, lying and being in the 4th Ward of the City of Schenectady on the Easterly side of Paulding Street, known and distinguished on the Map of building lots in said ward surveyed and laid out for E. A. Grover A. D. 1872 by J. D. Featherstonhaugh. Surveyor. as Lot No. 164, bounded and described as follows: Viz: Northerly by Lot No. 165 as designated on said map one hundred twenty (120) feet along the same; Easterly by Walnut Street thirty (30) feet along the same; Southerly by Lot No. 163 as designated on said map one hundred twenty (120) feet along the same and Westerly by Paulding Street thirty (30) feet along the same. Being the same premises as described in a Full Covenant Deed from Edward E. Krlegsmann to Frank Grubele and Micholena Grubele, his wife, dated September 13. 1898 and recorded in the Schenectady County Clerk's Office October 3, 1898 in Book 113 of Deeds at Page 327.

The above described premises are commonly known as 7 Paulding Street. Schenectady. New York. VICTORIA .TASKEWIC7, and JOHN GILBERT, Administrators of the Goods, Chattels and Credits of FRANK GRUBELE. deceased. HTMAN 3. SACHAROFF and EDWARD E. WEBER, Attorney for Administrators.

### My Thoughts:

After fifty years of living on Paulding Street, my aunts and uncles could not move to another neighborhood. They were just so ingrained in that neighborhood that moving someplace else just was not in the thought pattern. My great grandfather died in May 1940 and they waited seven years before they did anything. I think they waited until a house they wanted in the neighborhood went up for sale. It was a two family house, just like they had at 7 Paulding Street.

My other thought is that I liked the legal notices Old Fulton NY Post Card Website. It gives me an insight into their life. My great grandfather and his brother, Christian, appear quite frequently. They were either selling something, asking the city for something or suing someone. They seem to have adjusted to the American way of life, much more than I had been led to believe!

## PANI KATARZYNA KORNACKA - PART 3 – PAN FELIKS KORNACKI Martin Byster

About 50 miles southeast of Parlin where my maternal grandmother was born, is Gmina<sup>1</sup> [the administrative district of] Młodzieszyn along the southern bank of the Wisla within Sochaczew County, Masovian Voivodeship, in east-central Poland 3 mi north of Sochaczew, the county seat, and 32 mi west of Warsaw, the capital of Poland<sup>2</sup>.

At the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century it was at the interior edge of a sugar beet agricultural area that spread out north and west from Warsaw to the border between the Kingdom of Poland and the then Prussian Empire<sup>3</sup>. South of this agricultural area, roughly parallel to its interior edge, a rail line ran from Czar<sup>4</sup> Nicholas II's hunting lodge at Spala northeast to Warsaw from where it continued northeast to the Czar's lodge at Białowieża today at the border with Belarus<sup>5</sup> (Fig.1).

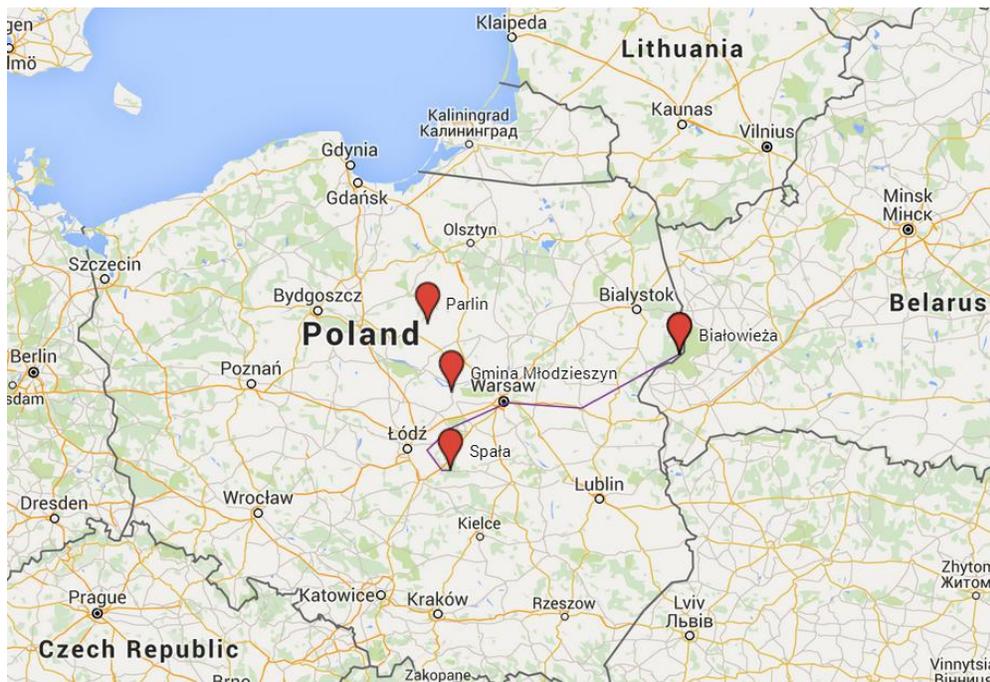


Figure 1: Poland; Gmina Młodzieszyn-Parlin; Spala-Białowieża<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Gmina" – municipality; Stanislawski, J.; Dictionary, Polish-English; David McKay Company, INC., New York, NY

<sup>2</sup> Google Maps:

<https://www.google.com/maps/place/Gmina+M%C5%82odzieszyn,+Poland/@52.3182287,20.1828723,12z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m2!3m1!1s0x471bf8c6d23e9dfb:0xc8df976940cf0812>

<sup>3</sup> Pogonowski, I.C.; Poland a Historical Atlas; Dorset Press; New York, NY; 1989; p.169

<sup>4</sup> Lukowski, Jerzy and Zawadzki, Hubert; A Concise History of Poland, 2nd Ed revised; 2006; p.344 [NOTE: Czar Nicholas II titular King of Poland (1894-1917), [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nicholas\\_II\\_of\\_Russia#cite\\_note-Poland-2](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nicholas_II_of_Russia#cite_note-Poland-2)]

<sup>5</sup> SAMOCHODOWA MAPA POLSKI, Panstwowe Przedsiębiorstwo Wydawnictw Kartograficznych; 1989

<sup>6</sup> Google Maps" <https://www.google.com/maps/d/edit?mid=zeG69CI1CbUQ.kD0HmBROoUhU>

PANI KATARZYNA KORNACKA - PART 3 – PAN FELIKS KORNACKI  
Martin Byster

My maternal grandfather, Feliks Kornacki, was born<sup>7</sup> on a sugar beet farm in Młodzieszyn to Andrzej and Teofila (Wrzesinska) Kornacki in 1887 (Fig. 2).

Family Group Sheet for ANDRZEJ KORNACKI	
<b>Husband:</b> ANDRZEJ KORNACKI	
Birth:	MŁODZIESZYN, POLAND
Death:	POLAND (@ 64 yrs)
Marriage:	MŁODZIESZYN, POLAND
Father:	
Mother:	
<b>Wife:</b> TEOFILA WRZESINSKA	
Birth:	MŁODZIESZYN, POLAND
Death:	POLAND (@ e 52 yrs)
Father:	
Mother:	
<b>Children:</b>	
1	Name: ANTONI (ANTHONY) KORNACKI
M	Birth: MŁODZIESZYN, POLAND
	Death: 20 Apr 1937 in MŁODZIESZYN, POLAND
	Marriage: never married
2	Name: PIOTR (PETER) KORNACKI
M	Birth: MŁODZIESZYN, POLAND
	Death: MŁODZIESZYN, POLAND
	Spouse: nm
3	Name: FELIKS (FELIX) KORNACKI
M	Birth: 23 Mar 1887 in Parafia Młodzieszyn, POLAND
	Death: 26 Feb 1954 in SCHENECTADY, NY
	Burial: Saint Mary of Czeszochowa Cemetery; Schenectady, NY
	Marriage: 07 Jun 1913 in ST. MARY'S; SCHENECTADY, NY
	Spouse: KATARZYNA (KATHERINE - "KATIE") BOREK
4	Name: JAN (JOHN) KORNACKI
M	Birth: 19 Jun 1892 in MŁODZIESZYN, POLAND
	Death: 01 Oct 1986 in SCHENECTADY, NY
	Marriage: SCHENECTADY, NY
	Spouse: ANNA BUCZINSKA
5	Name: JOZEF (JOSEPH) KORNACKI
M	Birth: MŁODZIESZYN, POLAND
	Death: MŁODZIESZYN, POLAND
	Marriage: never married
<b>Notes</b>	

Figure 2: The Immediate Family of Feliks Kornacki by Birth<sup>8</sup>

I lived with my parents on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of a two story duplex on River Street in Schenectady, NY; my grandparents lived on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. When my sister was born in 1949 I was offered, and happily accepted, my own room upstairs in my grandparents' apartment. I had to make my own bed and keep it clean but at eight years old I had a place to keep my stuff, practice the clarinet, sleep on the back porch and spend hours in conversation with my grandparents.

Almost every morning over the next 4-5 years, until he passed away, my grandfather and I would, over a fresh cup of coffee, talk from 6 am 'til I got ready for school or church. We worked around the house or rowed out on the Mohawk River to the family garden on Hog Island.

It wasn't until 1972 however, after my grandfather died, I finished school and returned home from the Navy that I began to collect whatever I could find, his tools, his papers and the memories. Over the years those conversations we had together with what he left behind brought new meaning and understanding of what his life in Poland may have been.

Perhaps, his work at the farm was too mundane; perhaps the farm could not support a family of seven. Whatever the reason, Feliks Kornacki at 16 in 1903 obtained a Russian passport (Fig. 3)

<sup>7</sup> Birth Certificate (in Polish); Felix Kornacki; "Proboszcz Parafji Młodzieszyn"; 3/21/1921 [Original held by Martin Byster]

<sup>8</sup> BYSTER-KORNACKI-BUDZICH-1; Family Tree Maker-2010; [Original held by Martin Byster]

PANI KATARZYNA KORNACKA - PART 3 – PAN FELIKS KORNACKI  
Martin Byster

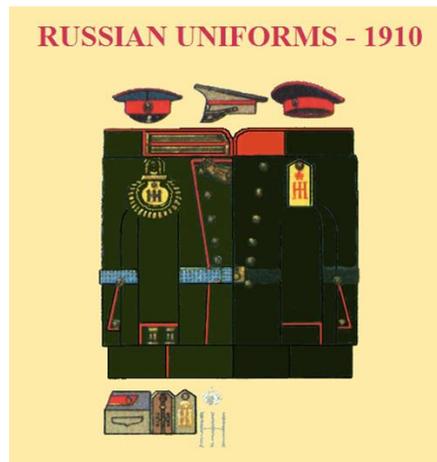


Figure 3: Russian Passport 1903 issued to Feliks Kornacki<sup>9</sup>

He went to work on a railroad where he learned some German; he could count in German to 100. He was injured, but not seriously, while coupling or uncoupling rail cars. His passport however remains indecipherable of his passing beyond Poland's border. The passport states he is subject to a draft and he was drafted in December of 1908 and assigned as a private to a platoon of the 9<sup>th</sup> Grenadier Siberian Regiment<sup>10</sup> near Warsaw (Fig. 4).

<sup>9</sup> The Russian Passport was issued with no expiration date at an office in Sochaczew County [Original held by Martin Byster] Note: The available transposition of the passport includes a statement that Feliks Kornacki will be subject to a military draft in 1908. It is not clear in the transposition whether or not the passport was ever used to cross the borders of the issuing jurisdiction.

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.xenophon-mil.org/rusarmy/shenk/shenklist.htm>



[Uniform of the “9<sup>th</sup> Grenadier Sibirskii, General Fieldmarshal, Highness Prince Nikolai Nikolaievski Regiment”]

PANI KATARZYNA KORNACKA - PART 3 – PAN FELIKS KORNACKI  
Martin Byster



Figure 4: ЗАПИСНАЯ 9 ГРЕНАДЕРСКАГО СИБИРСКАГО ПОЛКА  
[Notebook 9<sup>th</sup> Grenadier Siberian Regiment]<sup>11</sup>

His Service History states Feliks Kornacki was later transferred in 1911 to the Reserve Siberian Brigade of Grand Duke Nicholas Nikolayevich (Fig. 5).

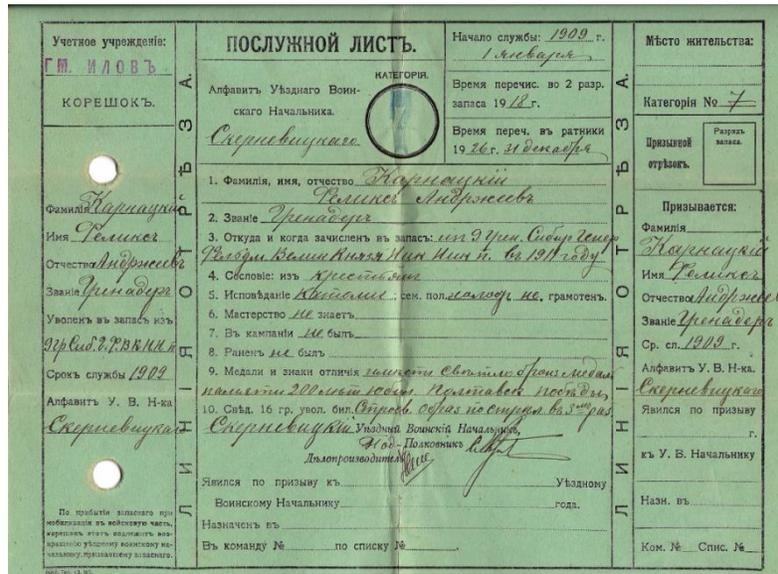


Figure 5: ПОСЛУЖНОЙ ЛИСТЪ<sup>12</sup>  
[Service History]

It would be here remiss to not tell a remarkable story of Feliks Kornacki's encounter, while in service with the Russian Army, with Czar Nicholas II.

<sup>11</sup> "ЗАПИСНАЯ 9 ГРЕНАДЕРСКАГО СИБИРСКАГО ПОЛКА" - Notebook 9<sup>th</sup> Grenadier Siberian Regiment [Original held by Martin Byster]

<sup>12</sup> "ПОСЛУЖНОЙ ЛИСТЪ" -Service History [Original held by Martin Byster]

## PANI KATARZYNA KORNACKA - PART 3 – PAN FELIKS KORNACKI Martin Byster

Somewhere along the rail line connecting the Czar's lodges at Spala and Bialowieze, a train stopped providentially where Feliks Kornacki was posted as security. My grandfather, needless to say, was surprised to see the Czar step out from a railcar. How they greeted each other I do not know and often wonder if my grandfather even remembered to salute.

The Czar approached my grandfather and asked him to spare paper and tobacco to roll a cigarette. My grandfather was a smoker and shared what he had with the Czar. Czar Nicholas (Fig. 6) rolled his cigarette and my grandfather rolled his. Who provided the light I do not know. A few puffs later the Czar returned to his car leaving my grandfather a gold coin (Fig. 7) and СПАСИБО [thank you].



Figure 6: Czar Nicholas II...chain smoker, at Spala<sup>13</sup>

Note: Archival photo, representative of the Czar at the time he met with Private Feliks Kornacki



Figure 7: Russian, 10 Ruble Gold Coin; Czar Nicholas II on the obverse<sup>14</sup>

[NOTE: Archival photo representative of the gold coin the Czar gave to Feliks Kornacki.]

I believe my grandfather arrived in the USA in 1911<sup>15</sup> around the time of his reassignment to the Reserve Siberian Brigade; however, I have not found a passenger manifest with his name with that arrival date. For sure, Feliks Kornacki had the gold coin Czar Nicholas gave him when he arrived.

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<sup>13</sup> <https://www.pinterest.com/IamSarcasticus/the-last-czar/> [Note: Archival photo, representative of the Czar at the time he met with Private Feliks Kornacki]

<sup>14</sup> [http://www.coinquest.com/cgi-bin/cq/coins?main\\_coin=11514](http://www.coinquest.com/cgi-bin/cq/coins?main_coin=11514) [NOTE: Archival photo representative of the gold coin the Czar gave to Feliks Kornacki.]

<sup>15</sup> The personal records of Felix Kornacki created after he arrived in the USA that are available to me at this writing indicate he arrived in 1911. His personal military record, "*Notebook 9<sup>th</sup> Grenadier Siberian Regiment*" contains entries thru as late as November 1911 which jibes with his personal records created in the USA. The best fit from Ancestry.com for Feliks Kornacki's departure from Europe for the USA is however significantly different being dated as 1910 while his notebook contains entries through 11/1911. If the departure date in the Hamburg Passenger List was 1912 it would be a very close fit with the other available data from which to determine an arrival date in the USA.

Search: Home Ancestry.com / FELIKS /KORNACKI/1887/MODRZIESZYN, POLAND/ SCHENECTADY, NY

Yields: **1930 United States Federal Census** / ARRIVAL: 1911

Search: Home Ancestry.com/ FELIKS /KORNACKI/1887/Schenectady, Schenectady, New York, USA

Yields: **Hamburg Passenger Lists, 1850-1934** /Age: 25/Residence: Borowo /Departure Date: 7-28-1910/Ship Name: AMERIKA/Port of Departure: Hamburg

# TIMELINE: SCHENECTADY SOUJOURN (1901-1925) OF JULIANNA nee POLEK JAKUBCZAK

Leonard F. Jakubczak, Ph.D.

Julianna (a.k.a. Julia) *nee* Polek Jakubczak (1895-1957) and her Polish-immigrant family spent the first quarter of the Twentieth Century growing, working, marrying, and dying in the City and County of Schenectady, New York, and eventually leaving Schenectady for Buffalo, Erie County, New York. The previous article <sup>1</sup> set the stage by detailing where Julianna and her family came from. The present article describes their early years in Schenectady, the *Electric City*. During that time, Julianna matures from childhood to late adolescence, and witnesses the arrivals and marriages of her newly-immigrated Spiewak aunts and uncles, who, like her parents, are taking advantage of work opportunities in Schenectady. Sadly, this happy period ends with an untimely death and its resulting financial hardship for Julianna's family.

SECOND INSTALLMENT: EARLY YEARS (1901-1913)

13 May 1901 Julianna's parents, Jan (John) and Marya (Marianna) Polek, join the Polish Roman Catholic Union of America at a local chapter, probably at St. Mary's Roman Catholic Parish in Schenectady.<sup>2</sup> The union is a Polish-American legal reserve fraternal benefit society, with headquarters in Chicago, Illinois. Jan Polek's certificate number is 14481 and Marianna's is 14482. Each spouse is the beneficiary of a \$1,000 life insurance policy (worth about \$29,000 in 2015 dollars.)<sup>3</sup> The current and future children share in the coverage.

20 February 1903 A sixth child, Julianna's second living sister, is born to the Jan Poleks.

22 February 1903 The infant is baptized in St. Mary's Church, Schenectady, by its founding pastor Father Joseph Dereszewski. The child is named Jozefa (Josefa, Josephine), and is sponsored by Joseph Leokany and Josephine (Jozefa) Spiewak, the child's aunt and the future wife of Jan (John) Siudy.<sup>4 5</sup>

Jozefa Spiewak was born on 15 April 1884 in the Village of Nowa Wies, County of Kolbuszowa, Province of Galicja, the Empire of Austria-Hungary, to Gabriel and Anna *nee* Klubek Spiewak. Jozefa immigrated to the U.S.A. on the S.S. *Saale* through Bremen, Germany, arriving at the Port of New York on 25 May 1900. Last place of residence: Noravic [*sic*, Nowa Wies].<sup>6 7</sup>

Jan (John) Siudy, arrived at the Port of New York on the S.S. *August Victoria*, via the Port of Hamburg, Germany.<sup>8</sup> He was born on 27 August 1885 in the Village of Gawluszowice, County of Mielec, Province of Galicja, Austria-Hungary. He disembarked at the Port of New York on 4 August 1900.

St. Mary Roman Catholic Church, established in 1892, is the first Polish-American Roman Catholic Church in Schenectady, but closed in 2009.<sup>9</sup>

23 May 1903 The Reverent Jozef (Joseph) Gogolewski is sent by the Most Reverent Thomas Martin Aloysius Burke, the Bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany, to take over the organizational tasks

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<sup>1</sup> Leonard F. Jakubczak, "Timeline: Schenectady 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> Polish Roman Catholic Union of America (Chicago, Illinois) to Leonard F. Jakubczak, letter, initiation date 13 May 1901, extracting data on Jan and Marya *nee* Spiewak Polek); privately held by Jakubczak, Gaithersburg, Maryland, 2015.

<sup>3</sup> *Dave Manuel.Com*, "Inflation Calculator," website, ([www.davemanuel.com](http://www.davemanuel.com) : accessed 16 September 2015), (1901; \$1,000).

<sup>4</sup> St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church (Schenectady, New York), Sacramental Certificate (privately owned by Leonard F. Jakubczak, Gaithersburg, Maryland, 2015), Jozefa Polek baptismal certificate (22 February 1903 baptism); issued 6 September 1995, citing *Baptism Registry Book I*, page 167.

<sup>5</sup> St. Adalbert Roman Catholic Church (Schenectady, New York), *Marriage Register 1903-1922* (Latin Copy), page 32, entry 10, Siudy-Spiewak marriage (1906), photocopied page, provided 22 June 1994.

<sup>6</sup> Ship Manifest," digital images, *Statue of Liberty—Ellis Island Foundation* (<http://libertyellisfoundation.org> : assessed 22 August 2015), manifest, S.S. *Saale*, May 25 1900, image 0146, line 16, Josefa Spiewak [*sic*], age 16 years, passenger I.D. # 604173050076.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, "Passenger Record."

<sup>8</sup> County Clerk's Office (Schenectady, New York) to Leonard F. Jakubczak, letter, 9 March 1995, extracting immigration/naturalization data for John (Jan) Siudy, petition # 1978, certificate # 789287, naturalized 25 September 1917 in the Supreme Court of Schenectady, New York; privately held by Jakubczak, Gaithersburg, Maryland, 2015.

<sup>9</sup> Michael Goot, "St. Mary's Family Bids Farewell at Last Service," *The Daily Gazette* [Schenectady], June 29, 2009, on line archives ([http://www.dailygazette.com/news/2009/jun/29/629\\_st\\_marys\\_service/?print](http://www.dailygazette.com/news/2009/jun/29/629_st_marys_service/?print) : accessed 28 June 2015), 1.

## TIMELINE: SCHENECTADY SOUJOURN (1901-1925) OF JULIANNA nee POLEK JAKUBCZAK

Leonard F. Jakubczak, Ph.D.

as the first pastor of the new Polish American parish of St. Adalbert in the Mont Pleasant area of the City of Schenectady, New York.<sup>10</sup>

Born on 10 August 1867 in the Russian partition of Poland, Fr. Gogolewski had studied at the seminary in Wloclawek, and was ordained in 1890. Soon after, as prefect of institutions of higher education, he was persecuted by the Russian authorities, and forced to leave his homeland. He made his way to the United States, and was accepted by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany.

4 June 1903 The Certificate of Incorporation of St. Adalbert Roman Catholic Church, City and County of Schenectady, State of New York, is signed by Fr. Joseph Gogolewski, Pastor, Francis Trajakowski, and Paul Pieszczocho, Trustees.<sup>11</sup>

The parish is located in the Mont Pleasant area of Schenectady. It is bounded by Crane Street (first known as Engine Hill), Yorkston Street, Lansing Street, and the top of a steep bank overlooking Veeder's Pond, buildings of Schenectady Milling Company, and Broadway Street.<sup>12 13</sup> It is the second Polish Roman Catholic Parish in Schenectady, St. Mary's being the first. The Jan Poleks belong to St. Adalbert Parish for the remainder of their stay in Schenectady (1903 -1929).

According to family lore, the path from the foot of Lansing Street down the steep bank to the hollow below turned into a cascade of water, making the path and stairway difficult to traverse during a rainstorm.<sup>14</sup>

8 September 1903 Approximately 200 children are enrolled in the St. Adalbert Parish new school. Initially, they are divided into four groups according to age, and size to facilitate the learning process.<sup>15</sup> It is likely that eight-year-old Julianna is among them. Eventually, they are organized into Grades 1 through 6. Consistent with Pastor Gogoleski's educational and nationalistic philosophies, the Polish language, as well as Polish history and literature are emphasized, along with subjects required by the New York State Board of Regents. Until 1917, all subjects are taught by laypersons, except religion, which is taught by priests. In 1917, the Sisters of the Resurrection become the new faculty.

2 March 1904 The German passenger ship *SS Grosser Kurfuerst*, having sailed on the 20th of February from Bremen, Germany, arrives at the Port of New York. On it is Julianna's uncle, Jan (John) Spiewak. According to the ship's manifest, he is a 24-year-old, unmarried laborer, an Austrian [*sic*] but of the Polish "race," who last resided in the Village of Kolbuszowa, Galicja, Austria-Hungary. Jan's final destination is Schenectady, and whose trip is paid for by his sister, Jozefa, whom he is going to join. She lives at 1106 Douglas Road, Schenectady.<sup>16</sup>

On the same ship are two other Spiewak relatives of Julianna, 19-year-old, unmarried laborer, Piotr (Peter), and 38-year-old, married laborer, Ignacy (Ignatius).<sup>17</sup> Both passengers last resided in the Village of Nowa Wies, County of Kolbuszowa, Province of Galicja, Austria-Hungary. Their final destination is, like Jan Spiewak's, 1106 Douglas Road, Schenectady, Piotr to his sister, Jozefa. Just how Ignacy is related to her is not legible on the ship's manifest.

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<sup>10</sup> St. Adalbert Roman Catholic Church, *1903 Church of St. Adalbert 1978, Schenectady, New York* (New York: Park Publishing Company, 1978), 4.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*, 4-5.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*, 7, diagram 1, 1903-1909.

<sup>13</sup> Sanborn Map Company, *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Schenectady, Schenectady County, New York, 1921*, microfilm, Reading Room, Geography and Map Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.; map:"Schenectady, N.Y., 94 (38-65-68)," the area of Schenectady bounded by Crane, Yorkston, and Veeder Streets, including Veeder's Pond and Lansing Street; photocopy held by Leonard F. Jakubczak, Gaithersburg, Maryland, 2015.

<sup>14</sup> Jakubczak-Polek family oral history regarding early path and stairs descending steep hillside at the rear of the Church of St. Adalbert, Schenectady, New York, as reported by Genia Las (Buffalo, New York), daughter of Julianna nee Polek Jakubczak (1895-1957), to the latter's son, Leonard F. Jakubczak (Gaithersburg, Maryland).

<sup>15</sup> St. Adalbert Roman Catholic Church, *1903 Church of St. Adalbert 1978, Schenectady, New York*, 5, 8-9.

<sup>16</sup> Registers of Vessels Arriving at the Port of New York from Foreign, Ports, 1897-1942, microfilm publication T-715 (Washington: National Archives and Records Service), roll 433 (vol. 819), *SS Grosser Kurfuerst*, for Jan Spiewak, list 2, page 74, line 29.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, for Piotr and Ignacy Spiewak, list 14, page 13, lines 29-30.

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This same year, another of Julianna's uncles, Jozef Jan (Joseph John) Spiewak, emigrates from Austria to the U.S.A.<sup>18</sup> He will spend some time in New York State, where his first child, Susan, will be born in 1909. By 1910, however, when his second child, Carl, is born, Jozef Jan, his wife, Catherine, and children will be living in Pittsfield, Berkshire County, Massachusetts,<sup>19</sup> where some or all of them will remain, at least through 1942.<sup>20</sup> On his U.S.A. World War II Draft Registration Card, sixty-one-year-old Joseph John Spiewak will report that he was born in "Nowawics"[sic; Nowa Wies], "Austria-Poland" [sic; Austria-Hungary]. The Jan and Jozefa Siudys of Schenectady, New York, and the Jozef Jan Spiewaks of Pittsfield, Massachusetts, keep in touch over the years, according family lore.<sup>21</sup>

1 May 1904 A seventh child, Julianna's third living sister, is born to John (Jan) and Mary (Marianna) nee Spiewak Polek in Schenectady.<sup>22</sup>

8 May 1904 The infant, Felicia (Feliksa), is baptized in St. Adalbert's Church. The child is sponsored by Ignatius (Ignacy) Balkiewicz and Josephine (Jozefa) Spiewak, the child's aunt and the future wife of Jan (John) Siudy.<sup>23</sup>

1905 With the completion of construction of the Pleasant Valley Bridge spanning Schenectady's Cotton Factory Hollow, easier access to the Mont Pleasant neighborhood contributes to the further growth of St. Adalbert parish.<sup>24</sup> Women who work in that factory are called "Cotton Dolls."<sup>25</sup>

15 January 1905 The St. Adalbert Society, Local # 242 of the Polish Roman Catholic Union of America (PRCUA) is organized at St. Adalbert Parish with 266 members. Besides providing life insurance benefits to its members, the society is involved in all major Polish functions at the parish, including their financial support.<sup>26</sup> The Jan Poleks, who have been members of the PRCUA since 1901, transfer their membership to Local # 242, probably from the local at St. Mary's, where they had been parishioners.

4 February 1906 Julianna's maternal aunt, Jozefa Spiewak, from Kolbuszowa, Galicja, Austria-Hungary marries Joannes (Jan, John) Siudy from Village of Gawluszowice, County (Powiat) of Mielec, Province of Galicja, Austria-Hungary, son of Franciszek (Francis) and Katarzyna (Catherine) nee Jamrozy, witnessed

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<sup>18</sup> Frank & Dot Siudy (Schenectady, New York) to Leonard F. Jakubczak (Gaithersburg, Maryland), letter, 5 February 1995; privately held by Jakubczak, 2015, 2. [Frank Siudy and Leonard F. Jakubczak were 1st cousins 1 time removed.

Their common ancestors were Gabriel Spiewak and Anna Klubek. The information had been based on Siudy's personal experience gained during visits between the Siudys and Jozef Jan Spiewaks.]

<sup>19</sup> "United States Census, 1920," database with images, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MXTK-QR1> : accessed 17 July 2015), Joseph Spiewak, Pittsfield Ward 1, Berkshire, Massachusetts, United States; citing sheet 17A, family 331, NARA microfilm publication T625 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.); FHL microfilm 1,820,680.

<sup>20</sup> "United States World War II Draft Registration Cards, 1942," database with images, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:V12Z-S31> : accessed 17 July 2015), Joseph John Spiewak, 1942; citing NAID identifier , NARA microfilm publication M1936, M1937, M1939, M1951, M1962, M1964, M1986, M2090, and M2097 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.); FHL microfilm.

<sup>21</sup> Personal knowledge of Joseph Siudy, son of Jan Franciszek and Jozefa nee Spiewak Siudy, Schenectady, New York, told in the mid 1990s to Leonard F. Jakubczak, Gaithersburg, Maryland. Joseph and Leonard were first cousins once removed, their common ancestors being Gabriel Spiewak and Anna Klubek.

<sup>22</sup> Delia Marie nee Deptula Wasierski of Cheektowaga, Erie, New York, daughter of Felicia Deptula nee Polek, queried by Leonard F. Jakubczak via mailed questionnaire, 3 January 1997; completed questionnaire privately held by Jakubczak, Gaithersburg, Maryland, 2015, page 2, question #5 (baptism). Leonard is cousin of Delia and nephew of Felicia.

<sup>23</sup> St. Adalbert Roman Catholic Church (Schenectady, New York), Baptismal Register (English Copy), page number not provided, entry 65,

"Polek, Felicia," (8 May 1904), photocopy of entry received by Leonard F. Jakubczak, 8 September 2015.

<sup>24</sup> St. Adalbert Roman Catholic Church, *1903 Church of St. Adalbert 1978, Schenectady, New York*, 5.

<sup>25</sup> Larry Hart, "Early Neighborhoods Had Their Share of Quaint Names," *The Daily Gazette*, 25 September 1995, online archives (<https://news.google.com/newspapers?id=MnxGAAAIBAJ&sjid=GukMAAAIBAJ&pg=1397%2C5951281> : accessed 16 August 2015), B2, Schenectady, page 7, col. 4, para. 1, line 4.

<sup>26</sup> St. Adalbert Roman Catholic Church, *1903 Church of St. Adalbert 1978, Schenectady, New York*, 38.

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by Joannes (Jan, John) Dydo and Joannes (Jan, John) Spiewak (Jozefa's brother), with the Rev. Jozef Gogolewski officiating.<sup>27 28</sup>

1907 Having sung during masses since the beginning of the parish, the St. Adalbert Choir officially adopts the name "Jutzenka"<sup>29</sup> ("Morning Star"), and retains it for about twenty-five years.<sup>30</sup> At a future time, as adults, Julianna Polek and Jan (John) Jakubczak will meet during choir practice, and eventually marry, according to family lore.<sup>31</sup>

22 August 1908 Julianna's maternal uncle, Piotr (Peter) Spiewak, marries Rozalia (Rosalie) Rebosz (sp?), both from Kolbuszowa, Galicja, Austria-Hungary, with the Rev. Gogolewski, Pastor of St. Adalbert's, officiating.<sup>32 33</sup> Parents of the groom are Gabriel and Anna nee Klubek Spiewak, while those of the bride are Franciszek (Francis) Rebosz and Franciszka (Frances) nee Chudzik. Both sets of parents are from Galicja, Austria-Hungary, village and parish of Kolbuszowa. The witnesses are Bronislaw Kuzmicki and Jozef Fifielski (sp?).

7 November 1908 Three months later, another of Julianna's maternal uncles, Joannes (Jan, John) Spiewak, 27 years old, 234 Bailey Street, employee of the American Locomotive Company (ALCO), marries Katarzyna (Catherine) Pientka, 24 years old, of the same address, a house worker. He is from Kolbuszowa, Galicja, Austria-Hungary, and she from nearby town of Pilzno, Galicja. The Rev. Joseph Gogolewski, Pastor of the St. Adalberts officiates.<sup>34 35</sup>

1909 Julia Spiewak, Julianna Polek's young aunt, almost the same age, arrives in the U.S.A., probably at the Port of New York. She is mentioned in the 1915 New York State Census<sup>36</sup> and the 1920 United States Census<sup>37</sup> as sister of Peter (Piotr) Spiewak and John (Jan) Spiewak, respectively, at which times she is working at an electric works, probably the General Electric Company. In the 1915 Census she is mentioned as a twenty-year-old female, while in the 1920 Census as a twenty-seven year-old [sic] one, having been in the U.S.A. for six and ten years, respectively. Within a few years thereafter, however, Julia Spiewak permanently returns to Kolbuszowa in the reconstructed Poland ("The Second Republic," 1918-1945), according to family lore.<sup>38</sup>

9 October 1909 The Church of St. Adalbert, a wooden structure, is completely destroyed by fire of unknown origin. The school is spared. The parishioners immediately decide to replace the church by a brick edifice.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> St. Adalbert Roman Catholic Church (Schenectady, New York), *Marriage Register 1903-1922* (Latin Copy), page 32, entry 10, Siudy-Spiewak marriage (1906), photocopied page, provided 22 June 1994.

<sup>28</sup> New York State Department of Health, Certificate and Record of Marriage 5490/30957 (1906), Joannes Siudy-Josepha (sic) Spiewak (photocopy, provided in 1993, privately held by Leonard F. Jakubczak, Gaithersburg, Maryland); Bureau of Vital Statistics, Albany.

<sup>29</sup> Tadeusz Grzebienowski, *Langenscheidt's Pocket Polish Dictionary*, new ed., revised (New York: Langenscheidt, 1999), "Jutzenka."

<sup>30</sup> St. Adalbert Roman Catholic Church, *1903 Church of St. Adalbert 1978, Schenectady, New York*, 22.

<sup>31</sup> Jakubczak-Polek family oral history as reported by Genia Las (Buffalo, New York), daughter of Julianna nee Polek Jakubczak (1895-1957), to the latter's son, Leonard F. Jakubczak (Gaithersburg, Maryland).

<sup>32</sup> St. Adalbert Roman Catholic Church (Schenectady, New York), *Marriage Register 1903-1922* (Latin Copy), page not specified, entry 18, Spiewak-Rebosz marriage (1906), photocopied page, provided 1994.

<sup>33</sup> Schenectady, New York, Marriage Records, vol. 1: 61, no. 304, Peter Spiewak- Rosalyn Rebosz [sp?], 1908 (Microform copy); Office of the City Clerk, Schenectady.

<sup>34</sup> St. Adalbert Roman Catholic Church (Schenectady, New York), *Marriage Register 1903-1922* (Latin Copy), page (not supplied), entry 24, Spiewak-Pientka marriage (1908), photocopied item, provided 22 June 1994.

<sup>35</sup> Schenectady, New York, Marriage Records, vol. 1: 87, no. 434, John Spiewak- Katarzyna Pitka [sic], 1908 (Microform copy); Office of the City Clerk, Schenectady.

<sup>36</sup> "New York, State Census, 1915," database, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:K9P8-JZ3> : accessed 11 July 2015), Julia Spiewak, Schenectady Ward 09, Schenectady, New York, United States; from "New York, State Census, 1915," database and images, *Ancestry* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : 2012); citing p. 15, line 26, state population census schedules, 1915, New York State Archives, Albany.

<sup>37</sup> "United States Census, 1920," database with images, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MVSC-PKY> : accessed 11 July 2015), John Spiewak, Schenectady Ward 9, Schenectady, New York, United States; citing sheet 10B, family 179, NARA microfilm publication T625 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.); FHL microfilm 1,821,263.

<sup>38</sup> Personal knowledge of Joseph Siudy, son of Jan Franciszek and Jozefa nee Spiewak Siudy, Schenectady, New York, told in the mid 1990s to Leonard F. Jakubczak, Gaithersburg, Maryland. Joseph and Leonard were first cousins once removed, their common ancestors being Gabriel Spiewak and Anna Klubek.

<sup>39</sup> St. Adalbert Roman Catholic Church, *1903 Church of St. Adalbert 1978, Schenectady, New York* (New York: Park Publishing Company, 1978), 6.

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14 December 1909 The future husband of Julianna, twenty-year-old laborer Jan (John) Jakubczak of Ostrowas, Powiat of Nieszawa, Province of Warszawa, Empire of Russia arrives in the Port of New York on the Holland-American Line's S.S. *Noordan*. He is lawfully admitted to the U.S.A. for permanent residence, and is destined for Detroit, Michigan (*sic*).

Spring 1910 The cornerstone of the new Gothic church of St. Adalbert parish is laid.

22 April 1910 According to the 1910 United States Federal Census, Julianna [a.k.a., Julia], 15 years old, is living with her parents and four siblings in a rented flat at 104 Fourth Avenue, Schenectady.<sup>40</sup> Her forty-year-old father, John (Jan), who immigrated to the United States in 1892, claims to be a naturalized citizen. He is a currently-employed carpenter in the housing industry, but who had been out of work for twelve weeks during the previous year (1909). Julianna's thirty-seven-year-old mother, Mary (Marianna), who immigrated to the States in 1893, reports that she has had eleven children (*sic*), five of whom are alive. The parents have been married seventeen years. Julianna is working in an electric works, probably the General Electric Company. She has not attended school this academic year (1909-1910), while the other children Anna (11 years old), Joseph (10 years old), Josephine (7 years old), and Felicia (6 years old), continue to attend the St. Adalbert parish school.

1911 Jan Jakubczak, Julianna's future husband, works as a sexton at her parish, St. Adalberts, according to the 1911 *City Directory of Schenectady, New York*.<sup>41</sup> He is from the same area of the Russian partition of Poland as Pastor Gogolewski. Some of the Polek children attending the parish school fear Jan's stern visage, according to family lore.<sup>42</sup>

1 April 1911 The newly constructed church of St. Adalbert parish is formally blessed by the Most Reverent Thomas Burke, Bishop of the Albany Roman Catholic Diocese.<sup>43</sup> In the 190-foot-high steeple, hang three new bells forged by the Meneely Bell Foundry of Troy, New York: *Zygmunt* (2,030 pounds), *Wladyslaw* (1,041 pounds), and *Stanislaw* (536 pounds). They were presented to the parish by the businessmen of the parish, the Sts. Peter and Paul Society, and the Holy Trinity Society. A fourth and smaller bell (100 pounds), salvaged from the original church, also hangs there.

16 December 1912 Julianna's father, Jan Polek, a carpenter (43 years and 6 months old), 50 Lansing Street, Schenectady, dies of stomach cancer, leaving wife Marianna (40 years old) and children: Julianna (17 years old), Anna (14 years old), Joseph (13 years old), Josephine (10 years old), and Felicia (9 years old).<sup>44 45 46</sup>

19 December 1912 A. B. Brzozowski, Funeral Director, 644 Crane Street, buries Jan Polek (150 Lansing Street) from St. Adalbert's Church, in the parish's cemetery in adjacent Carman, Town of Rotterdam,. The cost of the funeral is \$173.50, and is paid by Mary [Marianna] Polek.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> 1910 U.S. Census, Schenectady, Schenectady County, New York, enumeration district 204, sheet 7b (penned), lines 52-58, John Polek [family]; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 13 July 2015); citing National Archives and Records Administration microfilm publication T624, roll 1076.

<sup>41</sup> *City Directory of Schenectady, New York; 1911, microfilm reprint, City Directories of the United States, 1902-1935, Schenectady, New York, 1910-1912* (Woodbridge, Connecticut: Research Publications, 1985), Reel 3, p 288, Col 2, Line 1, Jan [John] Jakubczak.

<sup>42</sup> Jakubczak-Polek family oral history as reported by Genia Las (Buffalo, New York), daughter of Julianna nee Polek Jakubczak (1895-1957), to the latter's son, Leonard F. Jakubczak (Gaithersburg, Maryland); 1995.

<sup>43</sup> St. Adalbert Roman Catholic Church, *1903 Church of St. Adalbert 1978, Schenectady, New York* (New York: Park Publishing Company, 1978), 6-8.

<sup>44</sup> New York State Department of Health, certificate of death, registered number 790 (1912), John Polek, district number 4601; photocopy obtained from Division of Vital Statistics, Albany, in possession of Leonard F. Jakubczak, Gaithersburg, Maryland, 1996.

<sup>45</sup> St. Adalbert Roman Catholic Church (Schenectady, New York), Funeral Register (Latin Copy), page (not supplied), entry 35, Polek Joannes (1912), photocopied item, provided 22 June 1996, in possession of Leonard F. Jakubczak, Gaithersburg, Maryland.

<sup>46</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" supplied by PRCUA to Leonard F. Jakubczak, Gaithersburg, Maryland, ~1997.

<sup>47</sup> Mario A. Bottieri, Funeral Director, Brzozowski Memorial Chapel (Schenectady, New York) to Leonard F. Jakubczak, photocopy, 23 November, 1997, funeral record for Jan Polek, 150 Lansing Street, buried 19 December 1912, p. 116; privately held by Jakubczak, Gaithersburg, Maryland, 2015.

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June, 1913 Upon the request of Marianna Polek, Julianna's widowed mother, M.W. Trzeinski (sp?), the secretary of the St. Adalbert Society, Local #242 of the Polish Roman Catholic Union of America, intervenes with the fraternal benefit society's national president, Stanislaw Adamkiewicz, headquartered in Chicago, Illinois. Mr. Trzeinski (sp?) writes that Mrs. Polek's portion (\$200; ~\$4,900 in 2015 dollars<sup>48</sup>) of her late husband's life insurance benefit has not yet been paid her, even six months after his death. On Mrs. Polek's behalf, he urges that her portion of the benefit be paid immediately to help her support her children, none of whom is twenty-one years old, at which age their respective portions of the insurance benefit will be paid to them. He concludes: "I beg that her request be granted because she is in great need."<sup>49</sup>

(To be continued in Installment 3 of this series: 1914-1925.)

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<sup>48</sup> *Dave Manuel.Com*, "Inflation Calculator," website, ([www.davemanuel.com](http://www.davemanuel.com) : accessed 20 September 2015); (1913; \$200).

<sup>49</sup> Secretary of the St. Adalbert Society, Local #242 of the Polish Roman Catholic Union of America [PRCUA] (Schenectady, New York) to "Mr. Stanislaw Adamkiewicz," President of PRCUA (Chicago, Illinois), letter, about June, 1913; Jan Polek file # 4644, translated from the Polish and privately held by Leonard F. Jakubczak, Gaithersburg, Maryland; 2015. Jan Polek's entire file was obtained from Mr. Jerry S. Kucharski, Resident Vice-President, PRCUA, 1999.