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The Poles In The Early History of Texas

by

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THE POLES IN THE EARLY HISTORY OF TEXAS

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I.

FIRST POLES IN TEXAS

Panna Maria, Texas, is justly proud of the fact that it is the oldest purely Polish settlement in the United States. But its founders who over eighty years ago made their difficult and dangerous march from Galveston to establish a village bearing the name of the Heavenly Queen, in the wilderness were not the first Poles who trod the soil of Texas.

The first vestiges of Poles in Texas appear several decades earlier.

Texas was formerly a Spanish province. But the Spaniards were too busy with the affairs and wars of Europe to be interested in this beautiful and rich American possession. They neglected it well nigh completely for two centuries after the discovery of America. The only inhabitants of the land till the end of 17th century were Indian nomads. The short-lived and ill-fated colony of La Salle on Matagorda Bay, founded in 1685, at last attracted the attention of the Madrid government to the forgotten province.

The 18th century marked the first attempts of Spain to colonize Texas. These efforts, however, were so incompetent, desultory and hasty that even as late as 1820, the vast area of Texas contained only three white settlements: San Antonio, Goliad and Nacogdoches, apart from a score of Catholic missions and presidios. Only four thousand white people inhabited it at that time.

When Napoleon I, Emperor of the French, sold Louisiana to the United States in 1803, the

Spaniards came face to face with the danger of the province being overrun by the bold and enterprising Americans. They therefore promptly placed obstacles in the way of their progress. They barred American immigration to Texas under severe penalties and made new efforts to find proper human material for colonists, after their own standards: Catholics who would be loyal to Spain and who could be relied upon to defend the province against foreign encroachments. But the new efforts were carried out with the old inefficiency. Moreover, Spain was then involved in Napoleonic wars and this made impossible any influx of Spanish colonists on a large scale.

In this crisis a project to use Poles for the purpose of colonizing Texas came to life on this side of the Atlantic. Its object was, not only to impede the progress of Americans, but also to weaken Napoleon in Europe and to thwart his designs as to America; the Mexicans suspected the Emperor of sending his agents to their country with the aim of inciting a revolution there, and of conquering the whole of Latin America.

The author of the project was Diego Morphi, Spanish consul at New Orleans. In his memorandum submitted to his superiors in 1812, he pointed out that there are many Poles in Napoleon's army who, he believed, would eagerly grasp the opportunity to desert his banners if they were promised transportation to Texas where they could devote themselves to agriculture and useful arts, thus securing their own prosperity and the welfare of the province. Morphi proposed to grant

them a strip of land seven leagues square¹ situated on the Gulf of Mexico, near the frontier of Louisiana; to exempt them from all taxes and to allow them self-government as well as other privileges. The same proposal was made to the Germans who served under Napoleon.²

Morphi's plan was based on the supposition that these prospective Texan colonists were serving the French under compulsion only, and that it would be an easy task to induce them to desert. He did not err much as to the Germans, who later actually did turn against the French. But as to the Polish soldiers they were the most loyal element in Napoleon's army. It is true that service in Spain was displeasing to them. To fight against the defenders of liberty of any country was against their own hopes and wishes; but they deemed Napoleon the only power on earth that could restore their own unhappy country to freedom. It is not surprising that Morphi, removed so far from the theater of events in Europe, was ignorant of this.

His superior local authorities and the regency in Spain were, however, better informed. The project met with little favor among them. The regency justly thought that settlements of foreigners, and especially of foreign veterans, on the threatened border would be dangerous; that it would be indiscret to expend large sums of money from the treasury, depleted by war, for the benefit of aliens who had been contaminated

1. A league is 4,428 acres.

2. Mattie Austin Hatcher, M. A., "The Opening of Texas to Foreign Settlement", *University of Texas Bulletin*, No. 2714, April 8, 1927, p. p. 219-220.

by long years of association with the French, and who would, perhaps, betray Spain at the first opportunity. They feared especially that the Poles and Germans would rather help the United States, Spain's worst enemy on the American continent, particularly in view of the fact — as they remarked — that many Poles and Germans already lived in that country. They feared also that no sooner would Napoleon learn of the plan than he would send his trusted lieutenants who feigning to be Polish or German deserters, after settling in Texas, would easily capture the province for him.

Only one member of the regency considered the plan an excellent scheme to weaken Napoleon but he insisted that Poles should not be settled in Texas under any condition because of their loyalty to the Emperor; of the Germans he would admit only those deserters who were Catholics and who would be willing to serve first with the Spanish army in Spain before their embarkation to Mexico.

This put an end to Morphi's plan, and the Poles never came to Texas as Spanish colonists. But they were actually there a few years later.

The downfall of Napoleon dispersed his veterans throughout the world. Many of them came to America. Among these were not a few Poles who, after shedding their blood in the interests of a foreign cause for many years, received as their sole reward a wanderer's staff and a surfeit of forlorn hopes.

A number of these veterans formed at Philadelphia an association for establishing a colony of their own. Their purpose was mainly political.

Their chief object was the rescue of their Emperor from the Island of St. Helena. They had also other strange plans, such as placing Joseph Bonaparte on the throne of Mexico as King of Spain and the Indies. But to attain success it was necessary to keep the veterans together, inasmuch as such a colony would also help them to make a living. The Congress of the United States, by act of March 3rd, 1817, granted these exiles a strip of 92,000 acres of land in Alabama, near the confluence of the Black Warrior and Tombigbee rivers, "for the culture of wine and olive". This group founded Demopolis, Ala., but they had to change their settlement twice thereafter and in the end failed in their undertaking. Another band of veterans under the leadership of Generals Henri Dominique Lallemand and his elder brother, Charles Francois Antoine Lallemand, organized a new expedition at Philadelphia by the end of 1817. Their objective was Spanish Texas which they preferred because situated nearer Louisiana whence they hoped to obtain aid for the realization of their ambitious plans. Early in 1818 they landed in Texas, four hundred men strongly armed, seized a tract of land west of Galveston and established a military colony which they called Champ-d'Asile.

One of the prominent members of both of these colonies was Constantin Paul Malczewski, a Polish artillery officer in Napoleon's army and brother of the famous Polish poet, Anthony Malczewski³. After spending many years in the Em-

3. A poem by Anthony Malczewski, *Marya*, was recently translated into English by Prof. Arthur P. Coleman of the Columbia University and published by the Electric City Press, Schenectady, 1935.

peror's service, with the hope of regaining Poland's freedom, he remained faithful to his chief to the end. Soon after Waterloo where he fought under the Lallemands, he appeared in America together with his commanders and many other comrades-in-arms. Originally he was a member of the "Vine and Olive Colony" in Alabama, where he was allotted one hundred sixty acres of land 4. However, when the Generals Lallemand organized their expedition to Texas he abandoned this settlement and joined them. He was one of the four officers of artillery who planned and directed the building of the forts which protected Champ-d'Asile 5. These forts raised by the cooperation of all the colonists, privates as well as officers, were "of amazing solidity", built according to the principles of the best authorities on military engineering 6.

The settlers of Champ-d'Asile were organized on a strictly military basis and were divided into three "cohorts". Malczewski belonged to the third "cohort" 7.

Beside Malczewski there were other Poles

4. Gains Whitfield, Jr., "The French Grant in Alabama", *Transactions of the Alabama Historical Society*, 1899-1903, Montgomery, 1904, p. 337.

5. Hartmann et Millard, *Le Texas; Le Champ-d'Asile au Texas*, Paris 1819, p. 56; C... D..., *Le Champ-d'Asile au Texas*, Paris 1820, p. 20. Both booklets wrongly give his name as Manschesky.

6. Jesse S. Reeves, "The Napoleonic Exiles in America," *Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science*, Series XXIII, No. 9-10, Baltimore 1905, p. 84.

7. Hartmann et Millard, *Le Texas; Le Champ-d'Asile au Texas*, p. 56; C... D..., *Le Champ-D'Asile, au Texas*, p. 30.

who were members of the colony 8. The roster of the "1-re cohorte" contains two unmistakably Polish names: Skierdo and Salanav 9; in the "3-re cohorte", besides Malczewski, there was also Boril 10.

A Mexican army sent against the invaders did not dare to attack them. But hunger, sickness and other misfortunes did their work and Champ-d'Asile broke up eight months after its establishment. The colonists dispersed, some of them returning to Alabama, while others made their way to Louisiana 11.

8. Jesse S. Reeves "Napoleonic Exiles in America", p. 82.

9. Hartmann et Millard, *Le Texas; Le Champ-d'Asile au Texas*, p. p. 51 and 53; C... D., *Le Champ-D'Asile, au Texas*, p. 29.

10. Hartmann et Millard, *Le Texas; Le Champ-d'Asile au Texas*, p. 57; C... D..., *Le Champ-d'Asile, au Texas*, p. 31.

11. Many of the latter afterwards returned to France. Malczewski evidently belonged to the group which choose Louisiana as their temporary abode. He later emigrated to Mexico where he became a General of the Mexican army. He lived there still in 1834-1837 (Paul Soboleski, *Poets and Poetry of Poland*, Chicago 1881, p. 458). A tragic incident in this connection is related by Thomas Dunn English, the American poet, in his treatise on "The Poetry of Poland" (*The Gentleman's Magazine*, Philadelphia, vol. III, 1838, p. 250): "Among the Poles who emigrated to this country, after the termination of their disastrous struggle for liberty in 1830-31, was one by the name of Jakubowski. He obtained a situation as teacher in a highly respectable family, where he was much esteemed for the goodness of his heart, and the brightness of his mind. He soon heard that a relative of his, a brother of the great Malczewski was a general of artillery in the Mexican army. He went in pursuit, and found him; but the haughty manners of his proud relative hurt the high spirit of the boy, for he was little else, and he returned in sadness to the United States. Before he reached the place from whence he set out, he died of broken heart. Besides his fugitive pieces, he wrote a small work in English called 'The Remembrances of a Polish

A few years later we find another Pole in Texas with the second expedition of Dr. James Long ¹². This expedition numbering fifty-two men sailed aboard three small vessels from Bolivar Point toward La Bahia (now Goliad), to conquer Texas for the United States. They seized the town and its presidio and held them for three days. On the fourth day the Spaniards surrounded La Bahia and demanded their capitulation. Long declined. The Spaniards began a siege. For two days the small band valiantly defended themselves against the superior enemy. However, they were forced to surrender on the third day of the siege, October 9th, 1821. All members of the expedition including their leader were made prisoners and remained such till December 1822, when they were freed through intervention of the United States.

Among the Americans, Englishmen, Swedes, Germans, Frenchmen and others who formed this "army" of Long, there was also a Pole, Captain Joseph Alexander Czyczeryn (Tshitscherin). His nationality is expressly marked on the list made before the captives "were placed in charge of En-

Exile.' " The booklet was published at Albany, N. Y., in 1835, with "Introductory Remarks" by W. B. Sprague. Its author, August Jakubowski, was a natural son of Anthony Malczewski. Undoubtedly it was his illegitimate birth which estranged him from Gen. Malczewski. Jakubowski died in 1837. His person and his poems only recently attracted the attention of historians of Polish literature.

12. It is possible that some Poles belonged to the first expedition of Dr. Long in 1819. With an army of three hundred men of many nationalities he seized a part of Texas at that time and even organized his own government at Nacogdoches, but the Spaniards soon forced him to retire.

sign Don Joaquin Saens, for the disposal of the Commanding General" 13. Very likely Captain Czyczeryn was also a Napoleonic veteran.

Among the first colonists of Stephen F. Austin there was a James Hensky, most probably a Pole. His name appears on the list of the inhabitants of San Felipe de Austin, the first American colony in Texas, who voted for Baron De Bastrop, a German in the Spanish service and a friend of Austin, as their representative to the constitutional convention of the province, April 20th, 1824 14. In all probability then there was also a Pole among the handful of pioneers who finally opened the way for American immigration into Texas.

The next early immigrant closely connected with the Polish cause was Dr. Anthony Michael Dignowity. Though a Bohemian by birth, he joined the Polish army as a volunteer during the Polish Insurrection of 1830-31. After its suppression by Russia he fled with other Polish soldiers to Hamburg. Thence he came to New York by the steamer *Ship of Good Hope*, on October 8th, 1832, and soon appeared in Texas, probably with some other Polish exiles. He settled in San Antonio in 1833, and became the first Czech pioneer in Texas. A mechanical engineer by profession, he studied medicine in America, winning a high reputation as a physician and citizen of his adopted country 15.

13. *The Papers of Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar*, No. 1653.

14. "The Austin Papers", *Annual Report of the American Historical Association for the year 1919*, Washington 1924, vol. II, part 1, p. 772.

15. Estelle Hudson, *Czech Pioneers of the Southwest*, Dallas, 1934, p. 41.

During the third decade of the past century the population of Texas began to grow rapidly. There were about ten thousand whites in 1827, and about twenty thousand in 1830, i. e. five times more than in 1821. But the Mexican authorities soon began to look with growing suspicions on the influx of the Americans. Fearing American influence and the possible loss of the province, they resumed their old Spanish policy. President Guerrero issued a decree in 1829, abolishing slavery, aimed solely against the Texas colonists who coming mostly from the South, brought their slaves with them. Not satisfied with this, the Mexicans again shut off all immigration from the United States in 1830. Other obnoxious edicts, as the quartering of military garrisons, rigorous levying of taxes, interfering with local matters, arresting of colonists, at last evoked a revolution in Texas in 1835. At first it was a fight for the return of liberties guaranteed by the constitution of 1824, but because of new violences it was soon transformed into a war for independence.

At the first news of the insurrection many volunteers from the United States rallied to the Texan banners. Among them came a handful of Poles, mostly veterans of the disastrous Polish Insurrection of 1830-31.

It is impossible to estimate the exact number of Poles who fought for the freedom of Texas. Several of them were in the ill-fated army of Colonel Fannin. This group, composed of about four hundred men, mostly American volunteers, was surrounded by a force five times greater under Gen. Urrea, near the same town of Goliad which was the scene of Dr. Long's adventure. The Texas

army fought valiantly and in the Battle of Prairie, March 10th, 1836, repelled successfully all the attacks of the enemy. But on the following day they were overpowered. The prisoners, all in all over two hundred officers and soldiers, were brought under guard to Goliad and confined in a church. On Palm Sunday, March 27th, the Mexicans marched the prisoners out by detachments under the pretext of setting them free and shot down nearly all of them. Even the wounded fell victims of this brutal butchery. Only a handful of prisoners managed to save their lives by escaping.

The list of members of Fannin's command 16 contains the following Polish names: N. Dembrinske, F. Petreswich and J. Kortickey 17. Ac-

16. *The Papers of Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar*, No. 478a; D. C. W. Baker, *A Texas Scrap-book*, New York, Chicago and New Orleans 1875, p. 572; John Henry Brown, *History of Texas*, St. Louis 1892, vol. I, p. 626; J. C. Duval, *Early Times in Texas*, Austin n. d., p. 252.

17. All these names are wrongly spelled. N. Dembrinske most probably was Michael Dembinski, a veteran of the Polish Insurrection of 1830-31, born in Zyda, Province of Chelm, Poland, of John and Agnes Dembinski, on Sept. 28th, 1800. Following the suppression of the Insurrection he together with his brother, Lawrence, also a Polish soldier, emigrated to France and thence to the United States. It appears that before coming to Texas he married in New Jersey. Some documents mention him also as Nicolaus. The records in Poland expressly state that it was this Michael or Nicolaus Dembinski who lost his life at Goliad, while his brother fought at some other point in Texas. (Private letters of Mr. Hipolit Konczak of Bydgoszcz, Poland, to the author, dated August 21st, September 18th and October 22nd, 1935). There is also a slight possibility that N. Dembrinske was identical with Napoleon Dembicki, a Lieutenant in the Polish army and one of the 235 Polish officers and soldiers deported by the Austrian Government to New York in 1834, and endowed with a grant of land in Illinois by the act of Congress in June 30th, 1834. (A list of Polish exiles attached to their petition to the 23rd Congress, 1st Session, of April 9,

according to a relation of Dr. Barnard, one of the eyewitnesses of the slaughter, who saved their lives, the "brave" Petreswich¹⁸ commanded the artillery of Fannin. After he "fell and several of the artillerymen were wounded, the guns were not used much in the latter part of the fight"¹⁹. Lamar mentions Kortickey as the only Pole who escaped the hands of the assassins²⁰.

Another eyewitness of the slaughter, Capt. Jack Shakelford, mentions two other Polish names as those of participants in the battle of Goliad, namely Srenicki and Cornika²¹. It is impossible to ascertain whether they were other Poles from Fannin's command, or whether Shakelford merely misspelled the names of those formerly mentioned. In the first case there were at least five Poles with Fannin, four of whom gave up their lives for the freedom of Texas.

The Mexican President Santa Anna personally directed the action against the insurrection and employed ruthless means to suppress the movement. Having captured the Alamo, he put its entire garrison to the sword.

1834, No. 165). The same list contains also the names of Theodor (Teodoro) Piotrowicz, a former Private of the Polish army (No. 67) and of Felix (Felice) Kartuski, a former Polish Lieutenant (No. 101). It is possible that F. Petreswich and Teodoro Piotrowicz, and J. Kortickey and Felix Kartuski were identical persons.

18. His spelling of the name is Petrewich.

19. John Henry Brown, *History of Texas*, vol. 1, p. 626.

20. *Papers of Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar*, No. 478a.

21. Henry Stuart Foote, *Texas and the Texans*, Philadelphia 1841, vol. II, p. 228. The aforementioned list of Polish deportees of 1834 contains the name of Joseph (Giuseppe) Srenicki, a noncommissioned officer of the Polish army (No. 51.)

From that time Goliad and the Alamo became the watchwords of the Texans. The tyrant soon met with an ignominious defeat at the hands of Gen. Sam Houston at San Jacinto. A small band of seven hundred freemen routed an overwhelming Mexican force at this place. Santa Anna himself was taken prisoner and purchased his liberty with a promise to cease war and to recognize the independence of the Texas Republic.

One of the Polish heroes of San Jacinto was Felix Wardzinski (Wardryski). Born in Poland in 1801, he came to Texas in January 1836, to aid in the cause of freedom. He enlisted with Houston's army on February 13th, 1836, and made a glorious record for himself during the campaign 22.

22. Sam Houston Dixon and Louis Wiltz Kemp (*The Heroes of San Jacinto*, Houston 1932, p. 122), give the following particulars about Wardzinski: "The muster of Dec. 31, 1836, shows him in Capt. Smith's Co. on Galveston Island. He was described by Capt. Robert Oliver August 9, 1837, as being five feet, 7 and ½ inches high, light complexion, blue eyes, brown hair, and by profession soldier. In 1838, he was issued a headright certificate for one-third of a league of land by the Harris county board". Texas Centennial Exposition's bulletin of January, 1936, says of him:

"The same impulse that urged Felix Wardzinski to quit his native Poland for America sent him headlong into the wilderness of Texas in the early spring of 1836. Felix hardly had touched the plank in New York harbor before he began hearing of Texas.

"New York, well that was just another city. He had left Poland to escape population congestion only to find himself in another great city of street lamps, uniformed policemen, hacks, swaggering gentlemen and expensively gowned women. In New York there were no Indians, nothing but music halls, banging pianos, taverns, shops, push carts, steam boats and truck horses. Nothing new to Felix.

"In Texas Felix found himself a lone maverick. There were none of his countrymen, but excitement was

Frederick Lemsky (or Limski) was another Pole, though perhaps Germanized, of San Jacinto

on every hand. The Texans were waging a revolution. They were sick and tired of a tyrannical foreign rule and they wanted to be free. Felix wanted to be free, too. He wanted to live his life as he would choose, so he threw in with the Texas volunteers and went to war against Mexico.

"Captain Amasa Turner was organizing a company to join with General Sam Houston. The young Polander enlisted and on April 21, 1836, he was in the command of Houston and at San Jacinto. In just 20 minutes of fighting the Mexicans were routed, hundreds slain, and Santa Anna, Mexican President-Dictator and commander of the Mexican forces, was running for his life.

"But Santa Anna was captured. A treaty was made and Texas became a free state to govern itself as its citizens decreed. San Jacinto stands today as one of the 16 most decisive battles in the history of the world.

"The heroes of San Jacinto live again in this Centennial year in Texas. In the Hall of Heroes in that million dollar Texas Hall of State at the Centennial Exposition, opening in Dallas June 6, Felix Wardzinski's name will be inscribed along with that of Sam Houston, liberator, and Stephen F. Austin, colonizer and father of the Lone Star empire.

"Following the revolution Felix was given a bounty of 320 acres of land in what is now Harris county. In establishing title to his property he maintained he was a professional soldier. He had fought over Europe for the fun of fighting, but here in his adopted land he was given land for his heroic services. Felix became one of the first citizens of the new republic, a tiller of the soil and an exponent of political and religious freedom. He was born in Poland in 1801."

This biographical sketch needs a correction. Wardzinski did not come to America "to escape population congestion" in Poland, but as a victim of oppression. Again he did not fight in Europe "for the fun of fighting", but to free his native country from this oppression. A veteran of the Polish Insurrection of 1830-31, he came to the United States shortly after its failure as one of those groups of Polish patriots who sought freedom from tyranny in this country. The aforementioned list of Polish deportees of 1834 contains the name of Andrew Wardzynski, a Lieutenant of the Polish army (No. 39). It is possible that an error was made in the entry of his Christian name, or Andrew might have been the name of one of his relatives; attracted by his presence in America, Felix could have come over from Europe. We might also add that Felix Wardzinski fought in the Mexican War.

fame. He was a musician and played his trumpet to keep up the courage of his comrades during the battle 23.

Still another Pole who fought for the freedom of Texas was Victor Labinski, who belonged to Colonel Morehouse's New York battalion and came to Texas in 1835 24.

The founding of the new free commonwealth on the American continent did not fail to awaken new hopes in the hearts of Polish political exiles then scattered throughout the world. Their lot was for the most part a miserable one, not excepting those who lived in the United States. They felt as strangers everywhere. They were badly suited to their new conditions of life. Some of them were mature men who spent their lives in military service, while others were for the greater part students who abandoned their books to fight for Poland. Many who were accustomed to wealth, now found themselves homeless, cut off from their relatives and without a means of livelihood. The memory of their unhappy country,

23. Lemsky's record, as given by Dixon and Kemp (*op. cit.*, p. 100), is as follows: "Lemsky, Frederick, one of the musicians; played the tune 'Come to the Bower', during the battle of San Jacinto. He was born in Germany and came to Texas in February, 1836. He enlisted in the army March 13, 1836. He later became musician in Capt. Wm. E. Howth's and Nicholas Lynch's companies. At the muster December 31, 1836, he was a fifer in Lt. McCaskey Company. Mr. Lemsky was one of the charter members of the German Union of Texas, incorporated January 21, 1841. In March, 1842, Lemsky had 30 men employed in digging the Brazos and San Luis canal. He was living in Houston as late as May 1, 1856". At that time a large part of Poland was under German rule. Polish immigrants in the United States cooperated very often with German-Americans during the first half of the past century.

24. D. W. C. Baker, *A Texas Scrap-book*, p. 604.

and of their tragic failure to restore her liberty, together with their shattered hopes, followed them wherever they went.

Probably not a small number of Poles came to Texas from the United States during the Republic. The Polish exiles in European countries, especially in France, also often contemplated going to the new country in the hope of finding there better conditions and more freedom. Ashbel Smith, the Texas Minister to France, wrote to Anson Jones, the Texas Secretary of State, from Paris, September 19th, 1843, concerning one of these mass emigration plans:

“Some Poles of respectability have called on me about emigrating to Texas. They say they can muster several hundred families. I told them that arriving in Texas in a number of not less than hundred families, the Government would very probably grant them lands, but not other aid, and I enjoined on them the importance of carrying out means for their subsistence for a twelve-months. They appear disposed to go...” 25

However, the exiles evidently found these conditions too difficult to meet. There is no evidence that these plans were ever executed on this scale. If the Poles ever came to the Republic of Texas directly from Europe they must have come singly, or in small groups. One of the traces of this immigration is, perhaps, the act signed by the founders of Castroville, a little settlement on the Medina River, twenty-five miles west of San

25. George P. Garrison, “Diplomatic Correspondence of the Republic of Texas”, *Annual Report of the American Historical Association for the Year of 1908*, Washington 1911, vol. II, part 3, p. 1464.

Antonio. Henry Castro, a French Portuguese, received a grant of land from the Texas Government for his help in procuring a loan from France in 1842. After transporting colonists from France he gave each of them forty acres of land, loaned them cattle and provided them with food at the beginning of their new venture. The grateful settlers lauded him for his humanity in their act of September 12th, 1844, written at the formal acquisition of their lands, and named their settlement Castroville in honor of him. Among the twenty signers of the document two were probably Poles, namely Antony Goly and Louis Grab 26.

During the Republic of Texas and even later, the struggle between the whiteman who penetrated deeper and deeper into the American continent and between the redman who passionately defended his country, was still in full swing. In this strife Polish blood flowed more than once on the soil of Texas.

In 1840, the Comanches attacked the white settlements, but a treaty was to be signed to provide against their further invasions. Texas commissioners escorted by two companies of troops met for this purpose a party of sixty-five Comanche chiefs and warriors and their families at San Antonio, on March 19th. The Indians were to deliver all their prisoners into the hands of the commissioners. However, they brought only one, a white girl. As to others, they said, they had none. But the girl informed the commissioners that the

26. A. J. Sowell, *Early Settlers and Indian Fighters of the Southwest Texas*, Austin 1900, p. 138.

Indians are concealing many more prisoners for the sake of ransom. The commissioners arrested twelve chiefs in order to compel the Indians to give up their other captives. The redmen made a sudden attack on the Texans with the hope of liberating their men. In the uneven struggle which ensued thirty Indians and three Indian women, together with two of their children, were slain, while others were taken prisoners. The Texans lost only a few men. Among their killed was Private Kaminski 27, one of the many Poles who served in the regular Texan army.

Another death of a Pole in the struggle with the Indians was recorded in 1849. Horses and wagons were then still the only means of transportation in Texas. The first railroad was built there in 1852. Up to that time its functions were performed by chains of wagons which traversed the country in many directions. It was a slow method of travel, fraught with many dangers and hardships. In 1849, one of such trains coursing between San Antonio and El Paso was attacked by the Comanches. It consisted of nearly a score of wagons. Each driver was armed and alert to all occasions. At a place called the Dead Man's Pass they were ambushed. A fight ensued. Two of the drivers, a certain Brown and Charles Blawinski (Blavinsky), a Pole, bravely left the barricade and with deadly aim returned the Indian fire. Brown fell dead first. Blawinski continued fighting "but at length he was hit and fell mortally wounded".

27. John Henry Brown, *History of Texas*, vol. II., p. 175; Sam Houston Dixon, *Romance and Tragedy of Texas History*, Houston 1924, vol. 1, p. 265.

The drivers succeeded in repelling the attack of a superior force, but not before two more of them lost their lives. "The brave Polander lived on through most of the night, but finally succumbed to the terrible wound he had received" 28. Before long he and his companions found their graves in the lonely wilderness of Texas.

Among the oldest Polish settlers of Texas there was also a Buczowski or Baczewski (Butchofsky), an inhabitant of El Paso, where he married a Mexican woman 29. Emil Kriewicz 30 (Krajewicz?), doubtless a Pole, brought the first German settlers to Castell, on the north bank of the Llano River, in what is now Llano County, in 1847. It was he too, who led the Germans in the settling of Leiningen, a village situated a few miles below Castell, now extinct. A high social position was attained by Erasmus Andrew Florian, a former Lieutenant of the Polish army and one of the deportees of 1834. His real name was Florian Liskowacki. After spending nearly twenty years in the banking business in Memphis, Tenn., he landed in Indianola, Tex., in 1853, but immediately settled in San Antonio and continued living there until his death in 1876. He was a prominent and successful businessman and an efficient public officer 31.

28. A. J. Sowell, *Early Settlers and Indian Fighters of the Southwest Texas*, p. p. 172-174.

29. Fr. W. Johnson, *A History of Texas and the Texans*, Chicago and New York, 1914, vol. V, p. 2410.

30. Rudolph Leopold Biesele, *The History of the German Settlements in Texas, 1831-1861*, Austin 1930, p. p. 152 and 154.

31. *Gazeta Polska Katolicka*, Chicago, August 24, 1876; *Encyclopedia of the Great West, 1881*; family documents in the possession of Mr. Paul A. Florian of Chicago.

The man who opened Texas to Polish mass immigration and started a new chapter in the history of Polish immigration in the United States was Father Leopold Moczygemba, a Franciscan monk. He was born in Wielka Pluznica, Polish Upper Silesia, in 1825, and studied for the priesthood at Gliwice and Rome. A few years after his ordination the General of the Franciscan Order sent him to Texas with four other Fathers who were Germans. He labored at Braunsfels and afterwards at Castroville as early as 1851. He was so much taken up with the new country that he conceived the plan of importing large numbers of his countrymen into it.

His letters to his family and friends in Silesia started an emigration fever. The first group of this movement numbered about one hundred families from Wielka Pluznica, Toszek, Blotnica, Warwentow and other Polish villages in the vicinity of Father Moczygemba's birthplace. They chartered a sailing vessel and landed at Galveston in 1854, bringing with them not only their household goods and agricultural implements, but also a large crucifix and bells from their church in Poland ³². After a six months trek through the

32. Among this group were four brothers of Father Moczygemba: Joseph, Anthony, August and John; Philip Przybysz, Constantin Wajss, Urbanczyk, Dziuk, Krawiec and others. Father Moczygemba left Texas in 1857, and after laboring for a number of years among Poles in the Northeast of the United States, died in Detroit on March 23, 1891. (Ks. Wacław Kruszką, *Historja Polska w Ameryce*, Milwaukee 1905, vol. VI, p. p. 12-24; Ks. Adolf Bakanowski, *Moje Wspomnienia*, Lwów 1913, p. p. 29 and 144; Stanisław Zieliński, *Mały Słownik Pionierów Polskich*, Warszawa 1932, p. 132; Kalikst Wolski, *Do Ameryki i w Ameryce*, Lwów 1876, p. 227-29; *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. XII, p. 205).

prairie these pioneers settled in Karnes County and founded the village of Panna Maria. A year later, in December 1855, another group of Polish Silesians arrived and settled in Panna Maria and its vicinity, founding a number of villages, some of them bearing purely Polish names 33.

33. Frederick Law Olmsted who made a journey on horseback through Texas in 1855, also visited this Polish colony. In his book *A Journey Through Texas*, New York 1857, p. 270, he says of it: "About five miles above (Helena), upon the west bank, a sort of religious colony of Silesian Poles has been established since our return. One or two hundred arrived on the ground in February 1855, seven hundred more in autumn and some five hundred additional in 1856. The site was chosen by their ghostly spiritual father, who accompanied them, without discrimination, and the spot has proved so unhealthy as to induce a desertion of about one-half of the survivors, who had made a settlement in the eastern upper corner of the Medina County". On p. 283 of his work Olmsted mentions the extortion of which these Polish farmers were made victims by the "wolfish sharpers who beset their path", ship agents and land speculators.

II.

POLES IN THE WAR WITH MEXICO

Texas surrendered her independence and became a part of the United States, in 1845. This was one of the causes of our war with Mexico.

Though only meager parts of military records of this war were ever published, it may be said with some certainty that about two hundred Poles fought on the American side.

Many Polish exiles enlisted in the American army at that time, as this gave them the only chance of making a living. Many others served as volunteers after the outbreak of hostilities. They were quite numerous in the New York regiments 1, but were found also in various other detachments.

The presence of the Poles as American soldiers was even noted by the Mexican authorities. When Pedro de Ampudia, commander-in-chief of the Mexican army, issued an appeal on April 2nd, 1846, trying to induce foreigners to desert the American colors, he said in part:

“Germans, French, Poles and individuals of other nations! Separate yourself from the Yankees and do not contribute to defend a robbery and usurpation. Come... and array yourself under the tri-colored flag!”²

1. *The “High Private” with a full and exciting history of the New York Volunteers and the “Mysteries and Miseries” of the Mexican War*, by “Corporal of the Guard”, New York, 1848, part I, p. 10.

2. T. B. Thorpe, *Our Army on the Rio Grande*, Philadelphia 1846, p. 25.

Similar appeals were made by other Mexican generals who promised the American deserters pecuniary remuneration, land and their military grades in case they would enlist with the Mexican army. During the war nearly five thousand American soldiers went over to the Mexicans. The entire Mexican battalion of San Patricio was composed of them. But when the battalion was captured by the Americans at Contreras and Churubusco, only one Pole was found among the deserters.³

Most of the Poles made the victorious campaign gloriously. Some of them won high distinctions. Their records as far as could be reconstructed from various official and non-official sources are as follows:

BARTOWSKI (Barturkey) CHARLES, Corporal, First Division of Gen. Worth. Severely wounded at Molino del Rey, September 8, 1847.⁴

BRAUNEK, FLORIAN, a former officer of the Prussian Guards, of the French Foreign Legion and of the Egyptian army; a veteran of the Greek War for Independence and of the Polish Insurrection of 1830-31. He came to Texas in 1835, took part in the Mexican War, probably also in the Texas Revolution. He served afterwards in the Texas Rangers and lived in Texas till 1860, when he returned to Poland and died there in 1871.⁵

3. Abiel A. Livermore, *The War with Mexico reviewed*, Boston 1850, p. 160.

4. *Battles of Mexico*, New York 1848, p. 113; *The Weekly Union*, Washington, October 30th, 1847.

5. Teodor Żychliński, *Kronika Żałobna Rodzin Wielkopolskich od 1863 do 1878*, Poznań 1877, p. p. 32-34.

†BUZAR, MATHIAS, Private, Company C, Fifteenth United States Infantry. Enlisted on April 7, 1847. Died at Puebla during the war. 6

CAMAK (Kamyk?), S., Private, Fourth Division of Gen. Quitman. Wounded in action near Mexico City, August 14th or 15th, 1847.⁷

CHENISKY, JOSEPH, Private, Company E, Second United States Artillery. Enlisted at New London, Conn., March 29, 1845. Discharged March 29, 1850.⁸

COLCLONZHH (Kollontay?), JOSEPH, Private, Company D, Second Illinois Regiment. Enlisted at Alton, Ill., June 21, 1847. Discharged because of disability at Jalapa, Mexico, January 18, 1848.⁹

CORRITSKA (Korecki), ALEXANDER, Private, Company E, Third Ohio Volunteer Infantry. Age 24 years. Enlisted June 4, 1846. Discharged June 19, 1847.¹⁰

†CRIMINSKY (Krzeminski), JAMES M., Private, Indiana Mounted Riflemen. Enlisted at

6. *Official Roster of the Soldiers of the State of Ohio in the War with Mexico*, Norwalk 1895, vol. XII, p.p. 544, 547 and 593.

7. *Battles of Mexico*, p. 119; *Complete History of the Late Mexican War*, New York 1850, p. 96.

8. Adjutant General, *Records of Service of Connecticut Men*, Hartford 1889, part III, Mexican War, p. 173.

9. I. H. Elliott, *Record of Services of Illinois Soldiers in the Black Hawk War, 1831-32, and in the Mexican War, 1846-48*, Springfield 1902, p. 252; Mrs. Isaac D. Rawlings, "Polish Exiles in Illinois", *Transactions of the Illinois State Historical Society for the year 1927*, Danville 1927, p. 97.

10. *Official Roster of the Soldiers of the State of Ohio*, vol. XII, p. 443.

Logansport, Ind., in 1846. Died at General Hospital, Vera Cruz, Mexico, April 16, 1847.¹¹

DWORAK (Dworzak), JAMES, Private, Company F, Fourth Ohio Volunteer Infantry. Age 27 years. Enlisted at Cincinnati, O., April 29, 1847.¹²

†HOLUBEC (Holubek), JOSEPH, Private, First Division of Gen. Worth. Died of wounds received in action at Molino del Rey, September 8, 1847.¹³

JARAUSKI, MICHAEL, Corporal, Company K, Second Infantry, Second Brigade, Second Division of Gen. Twiggs. Severely wounded in action at Contreras, August 19th, or at Churubusco, August 20, 1847.¹⁴

†KAMINSKI, —, Sergeant, Company K, Second United States Dragoons. Killed in action at Mexico City, August 11, 1847.¹⁵

KARTA, HENRY, Private, Company B, Missouri Volunteer Artillery.¹⁶

KISKI, CONRAD I., Third Corporal, Company E, Fourth Indiana Volunteers. Enlisted at Jeffersonville, Ind., June 12, 1847. Discharged July 16, 1848.¹⁷

11. Oran Perry, *Indiana in the Mexican War*, Indianapolis 1908, p. 478.

12. *Official Roster of the Soldiers of the State of Ohio*, vol. XII, p. 446.

13. *Battles of Mexico*, p. 112.

14. *The Weekly Union*, September 25th, 1847.

15. T. F. Rodenbough, *From Everglade to Canon with the Second Dragoons*, New York 1875, p. 158.

16. Wm. E. Connelley, *Doniphan's Expedition*, Topeka 1907, p. 578.

17. Oran Perry, *Indiana in the Mexican War*, p. 432.

KOSCIALOWSKI, NAPOLEON, Captain, Company E, Third Missouri Infantry. Took part in the famous Doniphan's Expedition. He was a veteran of the Polish Insurrection of 1830-31. After the war he lived at Jacksonville, Ill.¹⁸

KOWALSKI, BERNARD, enlisted at New Orleans and made the campaign with Gen. Taylor's army. He was one of the "forty-niners" of California. In 1861 he settled in Cameron County, Texas. During the Civil War he served in the Confederate army. He died at Brownsville, Tex., in 1889.¹⁹

LAPAKI (Lopacki), BERNARD, C. W., Private, Company C, Arkansas Battalion. Age 18 years. Enlisted at Smithville, Ark., June 18, 1846.²⁰

MALACHOWSKI (Malachwoski), MAURICE, Second Lieutenant, Company K, First New York Volunteer Infantry. Wounded in action at Contreras or Churubusco, August 19 or 20, 1847.²¹

18. F. B. Heitman, *Historical Register of the United States Army*, Washington 1890, p. 734; Wm. E. Connelley, *Doniphan's Expedition*, p. 150; Mrs. Isaac D. Rawlings, "Polish Exiles in Illinois", p. 94; B. Bolesławita, *Z Roku 1867, Rachunki*, Poznań 1868, vol. II, p. 112.

19. Frank W. Johnson, *A History of Texas and Texans*, Chicago and New York 1914, vol. IV, p. 1867; Clarence R. Wharton, *Texas under many Flags*, Chicago and New York 1930, vol. III, p. 157. His son, Benjamin Kowalski, was Postmaster and afterwards Mayor of Brownsville, Tex.

20. The Arkansas History Commission, *Bulletin of Information*, No. 6, June 1913, p. 240.

21. F. B. Heitman, *Historical Register of the U. S. Army*, p. 745; *The Weekly Union*, September 18, 1847; *Official List of Officers who Marched with the Army under the Command of Maj. Gen. Winfield Scott from Puebla upon the City of Mexico*, Mexico 1848; Cadmus M. Wilcox, *History of the Mexican War*, Washington 1892, p. 681.

MARA, THOMAS, Second Lieutenant, St. Louis Legion; First Lieutenant, Powell's Battalion, Missouri Volunteers.²²

†MINOT (Minal), STANISLAUS, Sergeant, First Division of Gen. Worth. Killed in action at Molino del Rey, September 8, 1847.²³

†MISSIL, JACOB, Private, Second Division of Gen. Worth. Died of wounds received in action at Molino del Rey, September 8, 1847.²⁴

MOROSKI (Morawski), STANISLAUS, First Brigade, Second Division of Gen. Twiggs. Wounded in action at Mexico City, between September 13 and 15, 1847.²⁵

PALCZEWSKI (Palezewski), JOSEPH, First Lieutenant, De Russy's Infantry of Louisiana.²⁶

†PIECHOWSKI, —, Company C, Second United States Dragoons. Killed in a night attack of Mexican guerilla detachment on the American cavalry at Santa Fe, April 21, 1847. The Mexicans cruelly cut his body to pieces.²⁷

POLOCK (Polak), H., Fourth Division of Gen. Quitman. Wounded in action at Mexico City, September 14 or 15, 1847.²⁸

22. P. B. Heitman, *Historical Register of the U. S. Army*, p. 737.

23. *The Weekly Union*, October 30, 1847; *Battles of Mexico*, p. 110.

24. *The Weekly Union*, October 30, 1847.

25. *Battles of Mexico*, p. 115; *Complete History of the late Mexican War*, p. 92.

26. F. B. Heitman, *Historical Register of the U. S. Army*, p. 739.

27. T. F. Rodenbough, *From Everglade to Canon with the Second Dragoons*, p. 144.

28. *Battles of Mexico*, p. 119.

PUCHALSKI, EUGENE, Private, Company G, Second Pennsylvania Regiment. Age 32 years. Discharged July 20, 1848.²⁹

RADZIMINSKI, CHARLES, Second Lieutenant, Third United States Dragoons. He was one of the most eminent Poles who took part in the Mexican War. He was First Lieutenant of the Polish army in the war for independence of 1830-31. Deported to the United States by the Austrian Government in 1834³⁰, he became an able civil engineer and for some time was associated with James River and Kanawha Canal Co. of Richmond, Va.³¹ Entering the United States Army after the outbreak of the war with Mexico, he was commissioned Second Lieutenant of the Third Dragoons on March 8, 1847, Regimental Quartermaster on June 15, 1847, and Regimental Adjutant on March 16, 1848.³² After the war he was a member of the commission to survey the new boundary between Mexico and the United States. A surveyor of the Commission at first, then its secretary, he crossed in his official capacity the whole length of American South, covering thousands of miles on horseback or on foot through a wild country. The survey lasted three years and was ended in autumn of 1855. The

29. *Pennsylvania Archives*, ser. 6, vol. X, p. 401.

30. No. 129 on the aforementioned list of deportees.

31. *Eleventh Annual Report of the President to the Stockholders of James River and Kanawha Canal Company*, p. 70. Separate Documents, Miscellanea, Virginia State Library, No. 12, 714.

32. F. B. Heitman, *Historical Register of the U. S. Army*, p. 537; Thomas H. S. Hamersly, *Complete Army Register of the United States*, Washington 1881, part I, p. 707; B. Boleslawita, *Z Roku 1867, Rachunki*, vol. II, p. 112.

American expedition not only made actual surveys, but also explored the newly acquired country from the standpoint of natural history. Radzimirski, as its secretary, prepared many of its reports which have high scientific value.³³

33. *Report on the United States and Mexican Boundary Survey*, by William H. Emory, Washington 1857. Further biography of Radzimirski is very interesting. He was commissioned First Lieutenant, Second United States Cavalry, in 1855, and as such made many campaigns against the Indians in the Southwest, continuing at the same time boundary surveys. During one of these expeditions he died in the field, September 18, 1858. A military camp on Otter Creek, twenty miles northeast of its sources, at the foot of Wichita Mountains, in Kansas, was named after him. The camp existed until 1859 (Thos. H. S. Hamersly, *Complete Army Register*, part II, p. 150). A mountain in Oklahoma still bears the name of Mount Radzimirski. Prof. Joseph B. Thoburn, Curator of the Oklahoma Historical Society, supplied the author with the following valuable information on the subject:

OKLAHOMA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Oklahoma City

"Joseph B. Thoburn
Curator

"In Camp, near Kenton, Oklahoma
August 22, 1930

"My Dear Sir:—

"Your letter of July 21st, addressed to the Department of the Interior, making inquiry concerning Mount Radzimirski, in Oklahoma, was referred to the Board of Surveys, Map Information Office, which, in turn, referred it to the director of the Oklahoma Geological Survey, who referred it to me for attention:

"Replying to your inquiry, I will state that Mount Radzimirski is located in Southwestern Oklahoma, in the southern part of Kiowa County, about a mile northwest of the village of Mountain Park. It is a detached elevation of the western group of the Wichita range of mountains and is composed of massive granite rocks, most of which are bare and devoid of vegetation though it supports a sparse growth of oak, red cedar and other trees, bushes and shrubs on its slopes. Its altitude above the level of the surrounding prairie is possibly 1,200 feet and the view from its summit is an inspiring one.

"Mount Radzimirski received its name from Camp Radzimirski, a temporary military post, or cantonment, which was established in October 1858, and garrisoned by troops of the old Second (now Fifth) U. S. Cavalry and the Sixth U. S. Infantry, until in December of the fol-

ROWENSKI (Rowinski), J., First Division of Gen. Worth. Severely wounded in action at Molino del Rey, September 8, 1847.³⁴

†S H W A R Y K O R V T (Szwarykowicz?), CHARLES, Private. Killed in action at Molino del Rey, September 8, 1847.³⁵

SKOLINSKI, CHARLES, First Division of Gen. Worth. Wounded in action at Molino del Rey, September 8, 1847.³⁶

SOLENSKI, C. W. H., Second Lieutenant, Company K, Second Pennsylvania Regiment. Enlisted as Private at Pittsburgh, Pa. Commissioned Second Lieutenant for bravery in action at Mexico City, October 27, 1847. Discharged July 12, 1848.³⁷

lowing year, during which time it was the center of operations against hostile Indians of the Comanche and Kiowa tribes. It was located some miles south of Mount Radzinski, just where the valley of Otter Creek makes a bend to the westward, toward the North Fork of Red River, of which it is an affluent.

"Camp Radzinski was named in honor of Lieutenant Charles Radzinski, a native of Poland, who received a commission in the Second Cavalry, when that famous corps was organized in 1855. He died, presumably, at or near Fort Belknap, Texas, only a few weeks before the establishment of the post which bore his name. He had been an officer in the Army, during the War with Mexico in 1846-47. He was appointed from Louisiana and was doubtless a resident of New Orleans. Whether the War Department record would throw further light on the subject, I do not know. This is the extent of my own information.

"Yours truly,

"Mr. M. Haiman, Associate Editor
The Polish Union Daily,
Chicago, Illinois.

Joseph B. Thoburn."

34. *Battles of Mexico*, p. 113; *The Weekly Union*, October 30, 1847.

35. *The Weekly Union*, October 30, 1847.

36. *Ib.*; *Battles of Mexico*, p. 112.

37. *Pennsylvania Archives*, ser. 6, vol. X, p. 427.

SOMINSKY (Sominski), CHARLES, Third Sergeant, Company H, Second Illinois Regiment. Enlisted at Alton, Ill., June 16, 1846. Discharged at Buena Vista, Mexico, May 31, 1847.³⁸

SONIAT, PETER, Captain, First Louisiana Regiment.³⁹

STAMPOFFSKI (Stempowski), BERNARD, Company F. Second United States Dragoons. Took part in the battles of Palo Alto, Resaca de la Palma and others.⁴⁰

SUMANA, JOHN L., Private, Company E, Third Indiana Volunteers. Enlisted at New Albany, Ind., June 18, 1846. Discharged at New Orleans, La., June 24, 1847.⁴¹

SUMOWSKI (Szumowski), IGNACY, First Sergeant, Company D, Second United States Dragoons. Distinguished himself in action at Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma. Captain Graham, who commanded the Company, said in his official report: "I cannot speak in too high terms of the conduct of the enlisted men of my Company in the battles of the 8th and 9th of May, but I would particularly mention the services of First Ser-

38. I. H. Elliott, *Record of the Services of Illinois Soldiers*, p. 240; Mrs. Isaac D. Rawlings, "Polish Exiles in Illinois", p. 97.

39. F. B. Heitman, *Historical Register of the U. S. Army*, p. 743.

40. After the war he resided at Chicago, where he organized Company F, Ninth Illinois Cavalry, after the outbreak of the Civil War. He commanded the Company as Captain for some time (A. T. Andreas, *History of Chicago*, Chicago 1885, vol. II, p. 261; M. Haiman, *Historja Udziału Polaków w Amerykańskiej Wojnie Domowej*, Chicago 1928, p. 101).

41. O. Perry, *Indiana in the Mexican War*, p. 405.

geant Ignacy Sumowski, who acted with the most distinguished gallantry on both days.”⁴²

SZULAKIEWICZ, JOSEPH, Company C, Second United States Dragoons. Rewarded with a Certificate of Merit for his “distinguished services” by President Polk.⁴³

SZYMANSKI, CHARLES, Private, Captain Gaston Mears’ Company, Arkansas Mounted Volunteers. Age 31 years. Deserted at Buena Vista, January 22, 1848.⁴⁴

†TARN, JOHN, Private, Fourth Division of Gen. Quitman. Killed in action at Mexico City, September 14 or 15, 1847.⁴⁵

TORNIS, JOHN, First Division of Gen. Worth. Wounded in action at Molino del Rey, September 8, 1847.⁴⁶

†TORSKAY (Turski), C., Private, Company D, Third Infantry, Division of Gen. Twiggs. Killed in action at Monterey, September 23, 1846.⁴⁷

TUROWSKI, LOUIS A., Private, Company B, Arkansas Regiment, Mounted Volunteers. En-

42. T. F. Rodenbough, *From Everglade to Canon with the Second Dragoons*, p. 499.

43. *Ib.*, p. 499.

44. Arkansas History Commission, *Bulletin of Information* No. 6, p. 262. Military action had ceased by that time and this circumstance greatly diminishes Szymanski’s guilt of desertion. At any rate he was the only Pole of whose desertion from the American Army during this war the author was able to learn.

45. *The Weekly Union*, October 30, 1847.

46. *Battles of Mexico*, p. 112.

47. *Ib.*, p. 104; Samuel C. Reid, *The Scouting Expedition of McCulloch’s Texas Rangers*, Philadelphia 1848, p. 240.

listed at Washington, D. C., June 9, 1846. Age 37 years. Discharged to reenlist in Captain Mears' Company, Arkansas Mounted Volunteers, July 2, 1846. Advanced to the rank of Second Sergeant. Wounded at Buena Vista, February 23, 1847.⁴⁸

WAJAN, THOMAS, Musician, Division of Gen. Twiggs. Wounded at Monterey, September 21, 1846.⁴⁹

WARDZINSKI, FELIX, Private, Company I, Tennessee Regiment. Lost during the storming of Monterey, but returned later to his Company. He was the hero of San Jacinto.⁵⁰

WENGIERSKI, ADOLPH, (also Thomas), secretary and interpreter to Col. Childs, commander of the American forces at Puebla. Wounded during the siege of Puebla. Col. Childs in his report of October 13, 1847, said: "To Mr. Wengierski, secretary and interpreter, I am much indebted for invaluable services. Mr. Wengierski, in addition to his appropriate duties, conducted the operations of the spy company and through his suggestions and active exertions, I received much valuable information and many

48. Arkansas History Commission, *Bulletin of Information* No. 6, p. 194; *The Weekly Union*, April 3, 1847; G. C. Furber, *The Twelve Months Volunteer*, Cincinnati 1857, p. 487. Turowski was First Lieutenant of the Polish army during the Insurrection of 1830-31 and one of the deportees of 1834; he was one of the first Poles of this group to reach Illinois in 1834 (No. 113 on the aforementioned list of deportees; Mrs. Isaac D. Rawlings, "Polish Exiles in Illinois," p. 91).

49. *Battles of Mexico*, p. 104; *Complete History of the Late Mexican War*, p. 81.

50. *Battles of Mexico*, p. 106; Samuel C. Reid, *The Scouting Expedition of McCulloch's Texas Rangers*, p. 246; G. C. Furber, *The Twelve Months Volunteer*, p. 115.

successful expeditions of spies into the city were made. Mr. Wengierski commanded the detachment on the roof of my quarters, and was the first man wounded. From his later efforts, his wound proved severe and painful; still he performed his various duties night and day, and is worthy of my approbation.”⁵¹

WENZYK (Wężyk), ——.52

WIERZBICKI, FELIX PAUL, the famous California pioneer. Took part in Col. Jonathan D. Stevenson’s expedition to California in 1846.⁵³

WOJCIECHOWSKI (Washihoski, Woyciehoskie), EDWARD, Private, Company K, Fourth Regiment, Indiana Volunteers. Enlisted at Jeffersonville, Ind., June 7, 1847. Discharged March 14, 1848.⁵⁴

WNOROWSKI, LONGIN JOSEPH, Sergeant, Company C, First Illinois Infantry. A vet-

51. *The Weekly Union*, November 20, 1847; J. J. Oswandel, *Notes on the Mexican War*, Philadelphia 1885, p. 360; A. G. Brackett, *General Lane’s Brigade in Central Mexico*, Cincinnati 1854, p. 333.

52. B. Bolesławita, *Z Roku 1867, Rachunki*, vol. II, p. 112. This author gives the name of Wężyk, as one of the Poles who took a prominent part in the Mexican War. His relation is based on datas furnished by Dr. Henry Kalusowski of Washington, D. C., an eminent leader of the American Poles in the past century. The author, however, was unable to find the name of Wężyk in any official or semi-official records of the war.

53. He published *California as it is*, at San Francisco in 1849, the first English book printed west of the Rockies and “the most important book that was ever printed in California.” (“Wierzbicki, The Book and the Doctor”, by George D. Lyman, *California as it is and as it may be*, Grabhorn Edition, San Francisco 1933, p. p. V-XXX; M. Haiman, *Feliks Paweł Wierzbicki i jego “California”*, Chicago 1933).

54. O. Perry, *Indiana in the Mexican War*, p. 445; A. G. Brackett, *General Lane’s Brigade in Central Mexico*, p. 334.

eran of the Polish Insurrection of 1830-31, he enlisted with the United States Army at St. Louis in 1835. According to records, he was then 31 years old, had blue eyes, light-brown hair, light complexion, and was five feet five inches tall. Discharged in 1838, he settled at Salem, Ill., where he reenlisted at the outbreak of the war with Mexico.⁵⁵

YERAK (Jerzak), AUGUSTINE, Private
Company B, United States Mounted Riflemen.

55. Wnorowski was born at Tulowszczyzna, Province of Polesie, Poland, on March 19, 1804. His parents were Napoleon and Sophie Wnorowski, landlords. He was educated for the priesthood, but during the Polish Insurrection of 1830-31, he joined the national army. Imprisoned by the Russians, he managed to escape to Galicia with the aid of a friendly Russian officer, only to be reincarcerated by the Austrians. Arriving in America about 1833, he enlisted with the United States Army and during the three years of service at the St. Louis arsenal he learned the art of a wheelwright which became his trade for the rest of his life. He married Martha Jackson of Salem, Ill., and had three children by her, but this did not keep him from serving his adopted country when the Mexican War broke out. After the war he returned to Salem and resided there till his death in 1891. A contemporary clipping says of him: "Uncle Joe, as he was called by every one, lived in Salem more than 50 years, and was known to all the old settlers and to many of the new ones. He was for many years coroner of the county and filled the office with credit to himself and to the satisfaction of the people. He was of a remarkably pleasant disposition, always seemed to be happy and jovial, had a pleasant word for everyone he met, and if he ever had an enemy we never heard of it. He leaves a faithful and loving wife and three children to mourn his loss, and many friends who will often think of him. His was a long and checkered life. Exposed as he was to the dangers of four wars on two continents, he passed through them with but two wounds, one in the head and one in the hand, and neither serious". (I. H. Elliott, *Record of Services of Illinois Soldiers*, p. 212; Mrs. Isaac D. Rawlings, "Polish Exiles in Illinois", p. 97; family papers kindly lent to the author by Mrs. Ruth Wnorowski of Sparta, Ill., granddaughter of Wnorowski).

Age 18 years. Enlisted July 21, 1846. Discharged August 28, 1848.⁵⁶

ZABRISKIE, CHRISTIAN B., Assistant Surgeon, First Illinois Infantry. Enlisted at Alton, Ill., June 25, 1846.⁵⁷

ZABRISKIE, ELIAS B., Second Lieutenant, Company B, First Illinois Infantry. Enlisted at Alton, Ill., June 26, 1846.⁵⁸

†ZABRISKIE, JACOB W., Captain, First Illinois Infantry. Killed in action at Buena Vista, February 23, 1847.⁵⁹ His funeral at New York was a great patriotic demonstration. *The Weekly Union* of Washington, D. C., July 31, 1847, described the occasion: "The body of Captain Zabriskie arrived in the city this afternoon, and was duly conducted under a military escort to the steamboat for New Jersey. Flags were at half-mast during the day, and minute guns were fired at intervals. Honor to the brave!"

ZALIKIWICK (Zaklikiewicz), —, First Division of Gen. Worth. Wounded in action at Molino del Rey, September 8, 1847.⁶⁰

The above roster contains a total of fifty-four names, for the most part unquestionably Po-

56. *Official Roster of the Soldiers of the State of Ohio*, vol. XII, p. 557.

57. I. H. Elliott, *Record of Services of Illinois Soldiers*, p. 194; F. B. Heitman, *Historical Register of the U. S. Army*, p. 747; Mrs. Isaac D. Rawlings, "Polish Exiles in Illinois", p. 97.

58. I. H. Elliott, *Record of Services of Illinois Soldiers*, p. 196; F. B. Heitman, *Historical Register of the U. S. Army*, p. 747; Mrs. Isaac D. Rawlings, "Polish Exiles in Illinois", p. 97.

59. F. B. Heitman, *Historical Register of the U. S. Army*, p. 747.

60. *Battles of Mexico*, p. 110.

lish; only a few of them are doubtful as to their national origin.

Of this group eleven gave up their lives for the United States, thirteen were wounded in action. Four were singled out for their bravery. Only one is listed as a deserter and this at the end of the war. Nine were commissioned officers, namely: four Captains, one Lieutenant, four Second Lieutenants, and one Assistant Surgeon.⁶¹

Many other Polish names remain buried in the documents pertaining to the Mexican War, still for the most part unpublished.

On the Mexican side there was one Pole who performed a gallant mission of mercy during the war. He was Dr. Severin Galenzowski, a pupil of the famous Sniadecki brothers at the University of Wilno and a physician in the Polish Army in 1830-31. After the Polish Insurrection he emigrated to Mexico and became one of the most prominent physicians of that country. It was he who reorganized the medical department of the University of Mexico. During the fight for the possession of the Mexican capital he served both sides in his professional capacity, untiringly administering help to the wounded Mexicans, as well as to the Americans. Two American Generals were under his care.⁶²

61. Wierzbicki, although a Doctor of Medicine, made the campaign as Private and Sergeant.

62. Soon after this war, when a new attempt at regaining Poland's independence was made, he returned to Europe through the United States. The movement, however, was suppressed before he reached his country. Subsequently Dr. Galenzowski settled in France, where he also won a high reputation as a physician, humanitarian and patriot.

To complete these notes on the part played by the Poles in the Mexican War, we should add that at that time there was a "Camp Kusciusko", situated near Reading, Pa., ⁶³ and also a "Kosziusko-Garde", a detachment of militia infantry at Cincinnati, O., organized by and composed chiefly of Cincinnati Germans.⁶⁴

63. Not mentioned by Thomas H. S. Hamersly in his register of American military camps (in the *Complete Army Register of the U. S.*). The existence of this camp is attested by a rare lithograph "Camp Kusciusko, Reading, Pa., May 19, 1842, during the Visit of Mj. Gen. Scott and Staff", by A. Koellner, now in the possession of the Rev. Joseph P. Wachowski of Toledo, O. For description of this camp see *Huddy and Duval's U. S. Military Magazine*, May 1842.

64. *Der Deutsche Pionier*, vol. I, 1869-1870, p. p. 169-180.

III. — CONCLUSION

There were many other early Polish settlers who left high records in the history of Texas. Some of them played a prominent role in the Civil War. Among the latter Colonel Vincent Sulakowski, an able engineer, who built many fortifications along the Texas and Louisiana coast, especially distinguished himself. Gen. J. B. Magruder called him "an officer of the highest grade of merit."¹

These particulars sufficiently prove the presence of Poles among the earliest pioneers of Texas. Polish blood helped to win liberty for Texas, it flowed in the struggles with Indians and it helped to extend the frontier of the United States to the Rio Grande and to the Pacific. Polish efforts helped to achieve the present greatness and prosperity of Texas.

Jerry P. Garrison calls his history of Texas *A Contest of Civilizations*.² If the history of this state may justly be called a contest between the Spanish and the Anglo-Saxon civilizations, then the Poles, indeed, deserve a just share of credit for extending the Star Spangled Banner over the country of the Lone Star.

All these facts more clearly show forth the merits of the group of Poles from Upper Silesia, who braved terrors of the Texan wilderness under the leadership of Father Moczygemba, in 1854, and by their toil transformed the prairie into flourishing settlements. They arrived in

1. M. Haiman, *Historja Udziału Polaków w Amerykańskiej Wojnie Domowej*, Chicago 1928, p. p. 131-140.

2. Boston and New York 1903.

Texas only thirty-three years after real colonization began, only eighteen years after the territory won its liberty, and only nine years after it was annexed by the United States. They came at a time when the immense state, capable of harboring the whole population of the American Union, was still a wild and barren country, inhabited only by three hundred thousand people.

The founding of Polish settlements in Texas may be considered the beginning of the Polish economical immigration to the United States, which lasted until the World War and gave America four millions of Polish people, mostly of peasant stock, of whom Ignace Jan Paderewski, one of their countrymen and "A Modern Immortal", said in one of his inspired speeches two decades ago:

"The Polish immigration in the United States is but a vigorous branch of an old — thank God, a powerful — tree... The Poles in America are more numerous than the Norwegians in Norway, Danes in Denmark, and Swedes in Sweden. They are more numerous than Serbs in Serbia, Belgians in Belgium — all small nations. There are over four millions of them in this country.

"The Poles in America are hard-working people, contributing by their efficient and conscientious labor to the development of natural resources and to the progress of industry and growth of American prosperity. They are not rich, they are just making their honest living. Out of four millions of them not one is a millionaire, and yet they are fulfilling their duty im-

posed upon them by circumstances with loyalty, determination and enthusiasm.”³

3. M. Haiman, *Polacy w Ameryce*, Chicago, p. 81.

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