



Gen Dobry!

Gen Dobry! 30 June 2001

***** GEN DOBRY! *****

Volume 2, No. 6. 30 June 2001. Copyright (c) 2001, PolishRoots(tm), Inc. Editor:
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*** WELCOME! *** to the latest issue of GEN DOBRY!, the e-zine of
PolishRoots(tm). If you missed previous issues, you can find them at
<http://PolishRoots.org>.

I received some really good comments from experienced researchers addressing
questions raised in the last _Gen Dobry!_. They appear in this issue, to my delight. Ever
since we started this e-zine, I hoped the dialog with our readers would reach the point that
most of what appears here comes from you, as you share your experience and skills with
others. That day is clearly arriving, and I am delighted (less work for me!).

Thanks to all who've taken the time to send me comments, suggestions, and contributions. If you have anything you'd like to say, please E-mail me at <WFHoffman@prodigy.net>.

And remember to visit PolishRoots.org, named one of the 101 best new family history Web sites in the August 2001 issue of Family Tree Magazine!

*** WHY CAN'T I KEY IN POLISH LETTERS? ***

This may not seem like a subject of any great relevance to genealogy, but think again! The last few weeks I've seen a number of notes posted to public forums by people who tried unsuccessfully to use search engines or other services to find Polish names. Their lack of success came from trouble with the codes for Polish characters. Clearly there is some confusion on this -- and I'm just the fellow to plunge in and make it worse.

To start with, you must understand that when you hit a key on your keyboard, it sends an electronic pattern to the processor, which compares it to stored patterns and interprets it as a numerical code. That code number is then interpreted in context as a letter, digit, punctuation mark, etc.

In theory, as long as each computer is used in total isolation, it would be irrelevant what codes were assigned to what characters. On one machine, code 1 might represent A, code 2 B, etc. On another, code 1 might be the digit 1, 2 might be 2, etc. As long as the codes were interpreted consistently on each machine, it wouldn't matter which specific number matched up with what character.

But the moment you want to share data from one computer to another, that won't work. If my computer sees code 1 as A and yours sees it as the number 1, what makes sense on my screen would be gibberish on yours. Very early in the game, computer makers realized there had to be a convention whereby these character codes were consistent from one machine to another.

* ASCII ("ass-key")*

The code scheme they adopted was developed in 1968 and is called ASCII, pronounced "ass-key." That's an acronym for "American Standard Code for Information Interchange." It assigns to 7-bit patterns numeric values corresponding to 128 characters (codes 0-127). Each code stands for a specific letter, numeral, punctuation mark, control character, or common symbol. ASCII is built into virtually all personal computers.

The value of ASCII was twofold: everyone accepted it as standard, and it was easy on memory. Memory used to be extremely expensive, so hardware and software experts were always looking for concise ways to get the job done. ASCII only required one byte of memory per character -- in fact, just 7 out of the 8 bits per byte.

Files coded in ASCII are usually called "text files," or "ASCII files." In the DOS and Windows environment the file names usually end with .txt. Such files are consistent from one machine to another, can't harbor viruses, and are easy to use. I send _Gen Dobry! out as a text file, although the service we use adds minimal HTML coding. (Just enough so that Website URLs, which appear as underlined blue addresses, can be live links to the sites; pure ASCII doesn't include codes to make that happen.)

* EXTENDED ASCII *

The original ASCII set only gave 128 possibilities -- enough to cover the English alphabet, the numerals, punctuation, and certain control codes (such as ASCII 13, "carriage return," or 10, "line feed,"), but no more. Computer users wanted more flexibility, more codes to use. Software experts shrugged and said, "Well, there's that 8th bit of each byte we're not using for anything vital. Using all 8 bits gives us 256 different codes." So they developed the "extended ASCII set," which gave 128 more characters.

On Windows machines you key in those extra 128 codes by pressing Alt while keying in 0 and the 3-digit code on the number pad (Num Lock must be on for this to work). Most software gives you some easier, quicker way to do this, but if you want to do it by hand, you can. To produce the character associated with code #241, hold Alt down while you key in 0241 on the number pad. And presto, code #241 appears!

The question is, what character is code #241? And that's the problem. The original ASCII set of characters, 0-127, is totally consistent from one machine to another; extended ASCII, characters 128-255, is anything but consistent. There are a jillion different flavors. On machines running the version of Windows configured for use by English-speakers in the U.S., code 241 produces ñ, the n with tilde used in Spanish words such as "Señor." But code #241 is something else entirely on a Mac -- if my notes are right, on a Mac code 241 produces a capital O with a grave accent (code 210 on U.S. Windows machines). On a Mac n-tilde is code 150.

What's more, systems designed for use in other countries assign those extra codes to different characters entirely. Polish, for instance, doesn't use the n-tilde -- why waste a precious code on it? So in the character set Windows 1250 (Latin 2), used on most Polish Websites, that code stands for the accented n. If you visit a site that uses that encoding, AND if your system is configured to interpret those codes correctly, you'll see Poznan spelled with an acute accent over the final n. If your system is not configured to interpret the codes correctly, you'll see the default U. S. coding -- the n-tilde.

To help you deal with the Windows-1250 set, here is a list of the Polish characters and their codes. As usual, I represent diacritical marks with the tilde ~ (z~ = accented z and z* = dotted z).

[Why do I have to use these cumbersome tildes? Remember -- this is going out in plain old ASCII. Even if it weren't, I doubt many of you have set up your computers to interpret extended ASCII codes as Polish characters. I could send them out coded

correctly, but you'd see superscript 1 instead of a-with-tail, superscript 3 instead of slash l, and so on.]

a~ - 185 (on English-configured pages = superscript 1)
c~ - 230 ("" = ae as a single letter)
e~ - 234 ("" = e with a caret ^)
l~ - 179 ("" = superscript 3)
n~ - 241 ("" = n with a tilde ~)
o~ - 243 ("" = o with acute accent)
s~ - 156 ("" = oe as a single letter)
z~ - 159 ("" = Y with umlaut)
z* - 191 ("" = upside-down ?)

A~ - 165 (on English-configured pages = the symbol for Yen)
C~ - 198 ("" = AE as a single letter)
E~ - 202 ("" = E with a caret ^)
L~ - 163 ("" = the British pound sign)
N~ - 209 ("" = N-tilde)
O~ - 211 ("" = O with acute accent)
S~ - 140 ("" = OE as a single letter)
Z~ - 143 ("" = a blank square)
Z* - 175 ("" = an overline)

Unfortunately, there is more than one coding system used for Polish! The ISO 8859-2 set has different codes for 6 letters:

A~ - 160 (on English-configured pages = the degree symbol)
a~ - 177 ("" = the plus-or-minus symbol)
S~ - 166 ("" = vertical line)
s~ - 182 ("" = end-of-paragraph sign)
Z~ - 172 ("" = not sign)
z~ - 188 ("" = 1/4)

If we go any further into this we'll find ourselves in deep waters, so let's pull back and stay in the shallow end. The point is that we all use the same 256 codes, but differently configured machines interpret them differently. If you'd like more info, these sites offer some details:

<http://nl.ijs.si/gnusl/cee/iso8859-2.html>
<http://nl.ijs.si/gnusl/cee/app/httpd.html>
<http://www.microsoft.com/truetype/unicode/1250.htm>
<http://czyborra.com/charsets/iso8859.html>

* UNICODE *

There is a way out of this: Unicode, developed by the Unicode Consortium between 1988 and 1991. It uses more memory -- 16 bits, or two bytes, per character -- but can accommodate 65,536 codes. That's enough for almost all the characters used in the world's written languages -- Russian, Hebrew, Arabic, you name it -- to be represented by a single character set. With Unicode, if you enter the Polish accented n, it is assigned a code used for no other character (U0143), and every machine using Unicode in the whole

world will show it correctly.

Unfortunately, the world's software makers are taking their sweet time implementing Unicode. Windows gives it half-baked support: you have to install "Multilanguage support" from your original system disk, and pick which specific languages you want enabled. That's for word processors and such. If you want your Web browser to deal with different language encoding, you have to install a special plug-in. And so on, blah blah blah.

One day these dweebs will wake up and implement Unicode fully in all software. When will that day come? When you demand it! -- and not a day sooner.

I hope this clarifies things a little. I welcome questions, corrections, etc. But if possible, send them in straight ASCII text -- that way we can both be sure I can read them!

*** COMMENTS ON "WHAT IS CORRECT?" ***

In the last issue of *_Gen Dobry!* Richard Kosinski <rjkosinsk@worldnet.att.net> asked a really good question: how do you know if the data you find is the right answer when some of it works and some doesn't? For instance, Richard mentioned that a 1907 ship passenger list entry supplied much info that fit perfectly what he'd already found; but the ship's name was incorrect, and the entry indicated his grandfather was headed to Ohio, something years of research had never turned up anywhere else. Richard asked, "Because of the ship's name being different than what was indicated on his naturalization papers, and the previously unknown information about his life in Ohio, would one accept this passenger list entry as my grandfather? I did, but I do have some doubts." I asked you what you think.

Two experienced researchers sent thoughtful answers, and I believe you'll find a lot of common sense and good advice in them. First we hear from Christine Elia, then Bill Tarkulich:

* Christine Elia <ChrisE365@aol.com> *

Here are my comments regarding Richard Kosinski's search for his grandfather's immigration records.

First, there are many possible reasons why this could be the correct record but some of the information is incorrect:

1. The date of immigration that is listed on naturalization papers may be the person's best guess, as these papers were filled out many years after immigrating. I read that many citizens-to-be wanted to speed up the naturalization process. Since there was a list of which ships arrived on what days in each port, they would pick the closest one they could. But if it was not correct, this actually slowed down their paperwork since INS had to verify they were on the manifest, and, if not found, they were denied and had to apply again. It was actually better if they put down what information they knew for sure, even if it was not complete.
2. If is possible that the grandfather was planning to originally go to Steubenville, Ohio, but then changed his plans. Or he didn't know where was going to, but had to give some answer, so he used the same answer as someone else traveling on the same ship.
3. I have an ancestor who traveled on someone else's passport and a pre-bought ticket. She used that person's identity and later said so when she applied for naturalization. The INS was able to verify the "other" person's arrival and all other information agreed, so she was granted naturalization. Possibly Richard's grandfather's identity was used by

someone else and he arrived later.

4. If the ship's name is incorrect, was there such a ship in port at the same time that arrived from someplace else? The ancestor may have picked up something from another ship or had been photographed in front of it, and thus remembered another ship.

I suggest that Richard pursue this by obtaining more information:

1. If he hasn't already done so, look for all immigrants with the same/similar name going to New York in a 3-4 year time range, centered on the most likely date. If there are other likely candidates, pursue their records too, as if they all could be his grandfather, until he can definitely eliminate them. (Note: some people arrived more than once.)

2. Check city directories and the 1910 census for both Steubenville, Ohio and Mass. to see if other relatives lived there, particularly who else was in the household. Once he finds his grandfather in the census, this will help confirm the year of arrival.

3. Find him in the 1920 census to see if the year of arrival agrees.

4. If the person was granted naturalization, look for any notations on the papers of intent that would indicate the INS could/could not verify his arrival. On the arrival record he found, see if there are any marks (e. g., dates) that could have been made at a later time that would indicate the INS was verifying the arrival.

Good Luck on following more leads. Hopefully, these ideas will lead to new information.

* Bill Tarkulich <bill@iabsi.com> *

The question posed is, "When an ancestor appears to go to somewhere unexpected, per the ship manifest, can we believe the data found in AFIHC?"

In my experience, almost NOTHING in a manifest can be taken as fact until it has been corroborated. Too many chefs in the kitchen.

Step one is carefully note all data, right or wrong. Add footnotes to qualify it and note the reasons for your skepticism. It may be shaky information today, but you may find it useful later on.

I have experienced exactly the same scenario that Richard has, on several occasions. I have now inspected well in excess of 500 original manifests of my E. European ancestors, families and friend. Here is some anecdotal evidence, from my own research. Most times the men emigrated first (married or not), with the primary objective of earning a lot of \$dough\$. They often followed a friend or family member who preceded them -- nothing worse than coming to America and not knowing anyone, or where the work was! There were two primary goals: a) earn a boatload of money and return home, or b) earn enough money to bring their families over. Of course there were other goals, but these were the predominant ones.

Also, do not sell your immigrants short. They may have been busier than you thought. I found my grandfather had gone back and forth a couple of times. I also found several cousins who had worked in the U.S. for several years, then went back. No one in the family was aware of these activities.

The Immigration Act of 1905 was most valuable to genealogical researchers. Among other things, it mandated that several more pieces of data be added to each manifest, including, most importantly, who/where the immigrant was going to live with, and next of kin back in the country of origin. These are *most* important items. It is interesting that often the immigrant cited a specific address as a destination.

If the ancestor went to stay with others of the same surname, the answers and verification of data often become readily apparent. If not, I would argue that the immigrant was

probably going somewhere s/he already knew someone. That, combined with the tenet that most immigrants rarely travel alone, is what I build my case on.

The critical step most researchers miss is to research the immigrant's friends' travel patterns. Up until April 2001, it was a fairly arduous and time-consuming process to do this. One had to physically pull microfilm rolls, search SOUNDEX, and piece it together. It took me over a year to put together less than a dozen co-travelers using this method. With the advent of <http://www.ellislandrecords.org>, this method takes on new life and becomes an expeditious research method. Using the database, I collected over 150 friends, across a dozen surnames, in about a month's time.

I was surprised to find an early entry for my Rusyn GP going to Corning, NY. I never knew a single ancestor from Corning. Corning was known for their Irish immigrants; it didn't make sense. But after following the trail of his friends and co-travelers, I found almost a dozen Rusyns from the same/nearby villages who traveled there. When I contacted the county historian, she was quite surprised. The historian pulled out a 1905 census for the area and, to her amazement, found one residence with over 25 Ruthenians/Slovaks/Ukrainians in it!

My wife's Greek GF went to work in mines in New Mexico. The mines were known only for their Irish and German immigrant labor. Another surprise. Eventually, both of these GF's made their way back to more established communities with a large(r) base of similar immigrants.

With these data, you can now begin to test the hypothesis. I do not trust a single database data point. However, if I see the same data evidencing itself again and again, credibility begins to be established in my own mind.

The point here, is that often when you run out of direct corroborative evidence, indirect research can be extremely productive and useful.

*** LETTERS TO THE EDITOR ***

Subject: Ellis Island info

I was wondering if you have heard of anyone having the problem that I have experienced in trying to use the Ellis Island site. I have input a number of names and not received any information in return. OK, so maybe there was a misspelling somewhere. So then I tried some names that I know are correct and that I have found in the index and in the passenger list of the ship they came over on in the National Archives in Washington. Still no information on any of them. I sent an e-mail to the Ellis Island site manager, but all I got in return was a stock e-mail answer that does state that they can't answer individually. Which was no answer to my question.

Charles Sokolski <sokolski@shentel.net>

Subject: About Ellis Island

I finally was able to get into the passenger ship list. I found my father and my grandfather but my grandmother I could not find. Her name Katarzyna Lizak. I have a copy of the ship's manifest: the date of arrival was Feb. 2, 1902 and her name is on the 22nd line. The ship's name was SS Grose Walderssee. When you get into the records and put in her full name, about 5 or 6 will come up, but 1902 is not any where to be found. For some reason this microfilm was not available, or maybe damaged. It is hard to read, and I must say

that it must have been one hell of a job to transcribe all the information from the different lists and then input the information.

I will try and search some more, but it may be to no avail. I consider myself lucky to find what I found, and in my grandmother's case I have a copy of the ship's manifest, so I guess I should not complain. Just thought you may want to past this information along to others that are having problems. The Ellis Island website still has bugs, and there were a couple of times I was in the website and it threw me out.

Cathy Dupree <CKDuprey@Willscot.com>

Subject: Ellis Island Database Shows You the Wrong Manifest

[This note appeared originally on PolandBorderSurnames-L@rootsweb.com. It offers help when you try to look at the original manifest for one ship, and the site insists on giving you that of another instead.]

When a typed manifest page is not associated properly with the scanned image of the original page, it is an AFIHC (American Family Immigration History Center) database error.

There is a work-around for this, but it requires patience and persistence. The idea is to go back several pages in the text version of the manifest, until you find a text version that is correctly associated with the proper original manifest. From there, you can increment ahead in the images until you find your "lost" image.

Here is an example, using Passenger Jan Zahara, S.S. Pretoria, who arrived on May 31, 1902. When switched to the "View Original Manifest," the database erroneously takes you to a sheet for the S.S. Palatia.

1. Find the text version of the manifest for Jan Zahara.
2. At the top right of the text manifest you will see: "Page # 154" and "previous | next" immediately below. This is page number 154 of the text manifest (note: this is not the NARA page number).
3. Now press the "previous" button described in step 2.
4. You are now on page 153. Press "View Original Manifest" to see if the correct original manifest is now presenting. Nope, the S.S. Palatia is still showing.
5. If the manifest is still incorrect, press "previous" button, and repeat steps 3 and 4 as many times as necessary. I have used this method on four separate instances, and typically had to go back about four pages. In the case of Jan Zahara, I had to go back ten pages, to Page # 144. Keep track of how many pages back you went.
6. Click on "View Original Manifest" while at Page #144. Note that "The Pretoria" is now correctly showing. Notice also to the right of the image the following: "Frame #0592" and directly below it "previous | next". The frame number is the system used to track the actual images.
7. Click on the "next" described in step 6.
8. Repeat step 7 as many times as necessary to get to the manifest of interest. In this specific case, there are two original manifest pages for each text manifest page. In this example, you will have to move ahead twenty frames to find the original manifest you desire.

If you'd like to report an error to AFIHC, here are instructions, direct from AFIHC:

- > If you find, or have found what you believe to be a
- > database error and wish to notify the Foundation,
- > please contact us at dberrors@ellisland.org and
- > please delineate on the subject line of your e-mail
- > what type of error you encountered. Choose from the
- > following subjects;
- >
- > o Manifest error
- > o Spelling error
- > o Ship Image error
- > o Other Database error

There is no date for correcting the database errors and you will not receive a response to an error e-mail.

Bill Tarkulich <bill@iabsi.com>

Subject: Reunion Software

I just read _Gen Dobry!_. One person commented on the PAF program. I switched to Reunion a few years back and am very happy with it. It prints the correct characters and all.

You can use any font that is installed on your computer with Reunion, except for double-byte fonts (Chinese, Japanese, etc.). If you'd like to see how it works, I'd suggest downloading the Reunion 7 Demo from the web page:

<http://www.LeisterPro.com/>

To change the fonts, open the family file and choose Options -> Fonts.

If you'd like to read more about changing fonts in Reunion, click the Manual button and search for "fonts."

Works on a Mac and there is a link to a PC version.

Jim Presenkowski <jimpres@home.com>

*** MAPS OF POLAND ***

I was digging through some of my stuff I got on my recent trip to Poland

and was looking at some maps I purchased. They are hiking, army maps, currently produced, scaled 1:100,000. They're about the best I've seen outside of the old Austrian ordinance maps of the 1890's. They show some buildings on roads out of towns, churches, cemeteries, monuments, battles, natural wonders, etc. Also they have a select 2 pages on cities and towns of interest in that particular region. Unfortunately, those are in Polish, but they do go into some details.

Sections are approx. 180 to complete all of modern Poland and outside of the borders. I bought one that has only the Presov area of Slovakia, which includes about 1/2 inch in the corner which is Poland. So it has great details of the Slovakian areas we need.

I think they run between 1-2 dollars each. I can't remember anyone writing about these. They have been in production since 1995 and every year they add more sections. I believe they should be completed by now.

The series is called "Mapa topograficzna Polski," and here's the name and address of the organization that produced them:

Wojskowe Zaklady Kartograficzne
Al. Jerozolimskie 97
00-909 WARSZAWA
POLAND

<http://www.transprojekt.atomnet.pl/transprojekt/parkingi/wzkart/wzkart.htm>

Paul S. Valasek, D.D.S
<Paval56@aol.com>

*** THE PASSING OF JEROME ZALESKI ***

[Jan Zaleski, one of the stalwarts of PGS-Michigan, sent us this note on the death of his father, a fine man and also a key member of PGSM]:

Please be advised that Jerome S. Zaleski, Vice-President of the Polish Genealogical Society of Michigan, passed away on June 9, 2001, in Detroit, Michigan.

Jerry was born 30 Nov 1922, in Detroit, Michigan, the son of Stanley Zaleski (Stanislaw Zalewski) and Elzbieta/Elizabeth (Zglinska Raniszewski). After his retirement in 1988, Jerry worked with his son Jan (who was Editor of the Polish Eaglet 1992-2000), to document his Zalewski ancestry back to the 1700s.

Jerome S. Zaleski will be sorely missed by the Directors and members of the Polish Genealogical Society of Michigan, and his contributions both to PGSM and Polonia will not soon be forgotten.

Please remember the Zaleski family in your prayers in their time of loss.

*** UPCOMING EVENTS ***

September 2 - 15, 2001

TRIPS: JUST POLAND, or POLAND-ROME, or POLAND-LWOW

[Editor: Daniel J. Kij, who has led trips to Poland in the past, provided this information on this year's trip. If you're interested, more info is available; his snail and e-mail addresses are given at the end of the note]:

This is the first release as to dates, prices, cities, etc. on our POLAND 2001 TRIP. It's like "Three Trips in One 14-day Time Span": JUST POLAND, or POLAND-ROME, or POLAND-LWOW, all beginning with our flight from Toronto to Warsaw on Sunday, September 2, and concluding with our return from Warsaw to Toronto on Saturday, September 15, 2001.

A highlight of the trip will be the European premiere of Peter Gorecki's "Cantata in Honor of St. Stanislaus," to be performed in Wroclaw in conjunction with the 600th anniversary of the Church of St. Dorota. Mr. Gorecki, a composer/arranger/orchestrator/accompanist, has served as organist and choirmaster at the pioneer Polonia parish in New York State, St. Stanislaus BM Church in Buffalo. He has been Director of several WNY singing societies: Chopin, Paderewski, Kalina, Polish Singing Circle, and German Schwabenchor, and has recently been selected as National Choral Director of the Polish Singers Alliance of America.

If you're interested, contact me - soon! Seats are limited!

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September 12-15, 2001

THE 2001 FGS/QUAD CITIES CONFERENCE

"A Conference for the Nation's Genealogists"

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For more info:

Our email: fgs-office@fgs.org

Our website: <http://www.fgs.org>

Register Online at:

<http://www.fgs.org/2001Conf/fgs-2001.htm>

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October 5 - 7, 2001

FEDERATION OF EAST EUROPEAN FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETIES
-- INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION 2001 --

Ramada Inn South Airport
6401 South 13th Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Conference details, as they become available, will be posted at:

<http://feefhs.org/conf/01mil/01mil-hp.html>

or by return mail from:

FEEFHS, PO Box 510898, Salt Lake City, UT 84151-0898

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October 6, 2001

MASS-CONN-ECTION II

This year's first Mass-Conn-ection Polish Genealogical Conference, like the first, is sponsored jointly by the Polish Genealogical Societies of Massachusetts and of Connecticut/the Northeast. It will be held on Saturday, October 6, at General Jozef A. Haller PAV Post, Grove & Broad St., New Britain, CT. It will include a Beginners Workshop, and talks on Records in Poland, Polish Surnames, and Using the US National Archives.

There will be a Polish lunch! The price is \$35. Register early by mail:
PGSCT, c/o MASS-CONN, 8 Lyle Rd., New Britain, CT 06053-2104. Telephone:
(860) 223-5596. You can learn more by e-mailing PGS-CT/NE at:
pgsne2@aol.com.

*** MORE USEFUL WEB ADDRESSES ***

<http://www.nara.gov/publications/prologue/natural1.html>

On PolandBorderSurnames-L@rootsweb.com Geralyn W. Barry
<gbarry@proaxis.com> suggested this page at the NARA Website for "an
article that talks about naturalization laws as applied to women in
particular, which implies that government officials themselves were often
confused about what the laws were regarding naturalization of women."

<http://www.virtual.lv/>

On PolandBorderSurnames-L@rootsweb.com Jean-Pierre Sangin
<sangin@sympatico.ca> called this the "best map for Estonia, Latvia and
Lithuania. With many little villages. All Polish names in Vilnius district
were changed for Lithuanian names."

<http://www.pilot.pl/>

On Herbarz-L@rootsweb.com Kris Murawski
<kris.murawski@worldnet.att.net> thanked Jean-Pierre for noting the
preceding site, and added that this site gives a pretty good map of Poland.

<http://www.skags.org>

On PolandBorderSurnames-L@rootsweb.com Kathy Przystwor
<przest@execpc.com> was excited about this site, hosted by a parish church
in Poland. "The records they have, have never been filmed by the LDS. A
lot of people that came to Chicago, Indiana and Texas were from this
parish. They list the names and for a small fee will supply you with all
the info.... All money that the church gets goes for the restoration of
their church in Poland."

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