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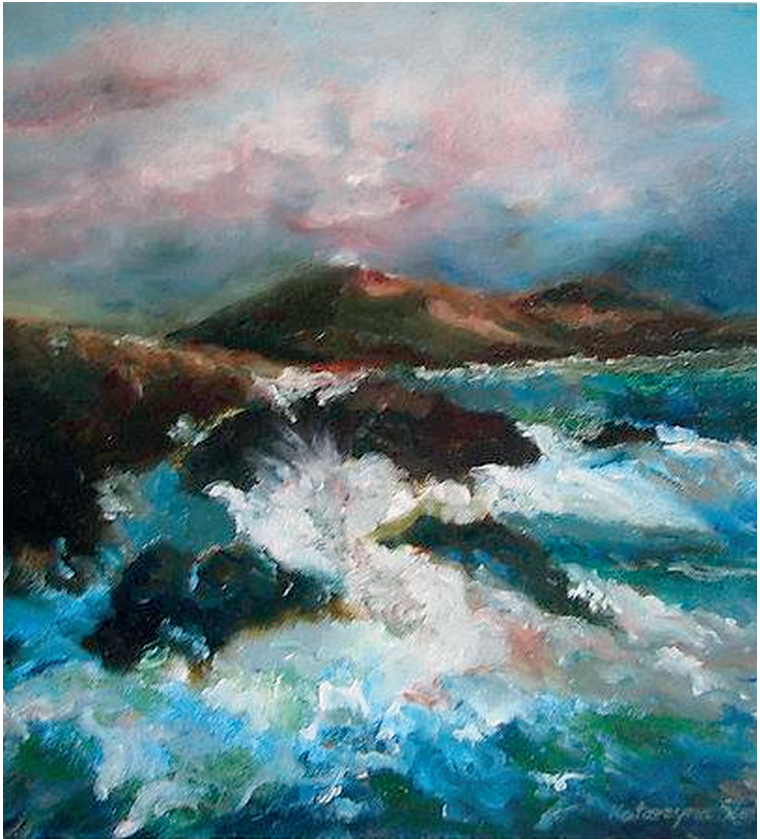
# The Irish Polish Society Yearbook

Rocznik Towarzystwa Irlandzko-Polskiego, tom VII, 2020

Irish Polish Society



Towarzystwo  
Irlandzko - Polskie



**The Irish Polish Society Yearbook, vol. VII, 2020**  
Rocznik Towarzystwa Irlandzko-Polskiego, tom VII, 2020

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# **The Irish Polish Society Yearbook**

vol. VII 2020

## **Rocznik Towarzystwa Irlandzko-Polskiego**

tom VII 2020

Edited by:  
Jarosław Płachecki

Dublin 2020

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## EDITORIAL NOTE

Quarantine. Pandemic. Covid-19. It is early August 2020 and these are the matters that we have all had to learn very quickly. Only yesterday in Poland eight hundred and nine people were infected and thirteen people died. Sixty nine were infected and five died in Ireland. Comparable figures were seen in the North. Telephone call to a friend who lives alone: stay home, the second wave is coming. Self-isolation. Facemasks. Sanitising fluid displayed in the local shop. Holidaying in Poland means a risk a fortnight's quarantine. Some fly through Belfast or Slovakia to avoid it. Some still believe that the Coronavirus is a hoax and it does not really exist. The virus is attacking vital organs and there is a wedding next month in Warsaw. Ireland remains alert. In the safe comfort of my home in Maynooth I look back to the notes, texts, archival documents and photos stored in the memory of my computer. 2019 was a good year...

On the 19<sup>th</sup> October 2019 the largest room at the Polish House in Dublin was filled up with visitors and a very special conference took place. Marking the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Irish Polish Society, the oldest, existing Polish organisation in Ireland, the conference summarised years of research bringing to light some old documents, rare photos, memories and original stories on the history of the Polish Diaspora in Ireland. The speakers' presentations were moderated by Dr Joanna Pyłat – an excellent time keeper. The IPS Chairperson Joanna Piechota made the opening speech and Prof. Jolanta Góral – Półrola, the Rector of Old Polish University greeted the visitors and unveiled the commemorative plaque in the Polish House. A newly appointed Polish Ambassador H.E. Anna Sochańska congratulated the IPS for 40 years of cultural activities and presented some IPS members with letters of appreciation for their efforts in 'strengthening ties between Poland and Ireland'. The Irish Polish Society's history and anniversary was the central part of the conference, but as the speakers proved, the IPS was not the first nor the only Polish organisation, and there are gaps to be filled. The Irish-

Polish Circle (1934) and later in the 50s the Polish Students' Union, the Irish-Polish Cultural Society or the Polish Trade Mission are still awaiting discovery. There is also some evidence of Polish espionage activities in Ireland in the late 50s, linked directly to the Polish Prime Minister Comrade Józef Cyrankiewicz. Moving even further into the past, the history of the Płachecki family which emigrated to Ireland in the mid 1800's and the story of young Margaret Płachecki, who came to live in Co. Cork and then Kilmacthomas in Co. Waterford. In 1871 she married an Irishman James Thomas Burns in the local church. A part of the Joseph Conrad's ship 'Otago' was found in house in Cork and deposited in the Polish House in February 2019. We do not know, what is the part for or what its name is. On the old photo from 1935 a group of elegant visitors gathered in Kilcroney House in Co. Wicklow at the Garden Party reception organised by the Polish Consul-General W.T. Dobrzyński. The group includes Mr Barry Brown and his Polish wife Wanda Petronella Brown, contributors to a number of cultural organisations like the National Library of Ireland, the Royal Hibernian Academy and the Palestrina Choir of St. Mary's Pro-Cathedral. Thanks to their funds the Polish House in Dublin was bought in 1986. Where are they on the photo? The people's stories, the Poles and the Irish, just like us, are still to be told. All exciting and all awaiting for further research.

This seventh edition of the Irish Polish Society Yearbook 2020 features collection of rare material and photos, some never shown publicly before. The conference was an original reason to find and to unfold them. The other was for the purposes of research; for a book I eventually published in 2019 under the title: *The Polish House in Dublin. An Illustrated Chronicle*. The publication was printed in October 2019. The research for the chronicle and for the conference presentations has left many documents and photos unmarked. It took some time to categorise them, sort them chronologically and label them. This material would finally find its place in the Yearbook 2020 in the main chapter titled The IPS 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference Presentations, Essays & Archives. It contains the materials gathered by the conference speakers: Ian Cantwell, Helena Johnston, Hanna Dowling and Patrick Quigley. Some of the photos, obtained from

the private collections are printed in colour like the historic visit of Pope John Paul II to Ireland, the visit of Cardinal Glemp in the Polish House, pictures of traditional Polish celebrations in the early 90s, events with Seamus Heaney or the then young Polish pianist Krzysztof Jabłoński. The oldest pictures are black and white: Eamon de Valera and Count Markievicz, Consul General W.T. Dobrzyński, Kilcroney House reception, General Anders in Dublin and many other are presented, dated and marked as precisely as possible. This section is followed by the more recent IPS material: Reports and Correspondence. The Poetry section is occupied by Tomasz Wybranowski's poem *Dublin at Night*, echoing the fears and hopes of every migrant on Earth and illustrated by Katarzyna Sudak's drawing *Eccles Street. Dublin* (black pen on paper). Her beautiful painting *On the Shore. West Coast* (oil on canvas) is reprinted on the front cover of this Yearbook. This year's Reviews section contains my own review of Maciej B. Furtas's publication *The Irish Constitutions and their Evolution, 1919–2019*, Warszawa 2020 and Patrick Quigley's review of the book *Towards Independence: Polish and Irish Ways to Sovereignty*, Poznań 2019, edited by Krzysztof Marchelewicz & Adam Kucharski. The Polish Language Section of the Yearbook began with Hanna Dowling's *Recollection of the Years Past: Remembering Jan Kamiński and his Native Biłgoraj*. This very eloquent and personal text about Jan gives a new perspective on his life and activities. Jan was an important figure for the Irish Polish Society and widely known in Ireland. The article *Tytus O'Byrn of Irlandka, the 1863 Uprising Rebel* is another text by Katarzyna Gmerek, known from previous editions of the Yearbook. The author provides us with the recipe for understanding the typical Irish and Polish phenomenon – freedom fighting. The O'Byrn family estate named 'Irlandka' could easily be misspelled in Polish and it means 'an Irish lady'. The section is concluded by Maciej Bogdalczyk's essay *Andrzej Wejchert. A Polish Architect in Ireland*. The text is fully translated in English and copied in the Articles section too, throwing the light on the life and career of the young Polish architect who found himself in Ireland in the mid 60s. The majestic architecture of the UCD campus was not his only contribution to the landscape of

modern Dublin. The next article in English is a text by Ian Cantwell. The author is not a debutant in regards to African affairs and the questionable role of Europeans in the so-called 'dark continent'. The text titled *Charles Stokes. An Irishman in the Heart of Darkness* is an introduction to the life and commercial activities of Charles Stokes – an Irishman, missionary and arms dealer in colonial Africa of the 80s and 90s in the XIX century. Whether the parallels to the fictional character of Kurtz in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* drawn by the author are justifiable, and was the accusation of smuggling and profiting from war reasonable, can be decided by readers of Ian Cantwell's essay. The Yearbook begins with two articles by Hanna Dowling, *Remembering Jan Kamiński and his Native 'Shtetl' Bilgoraj* and the English language copy of the interview taken in 2013 and published in IPSY 2014 titled *Jan Kamiński Uncovers the Truth about Himself*. Jan Kamiński died in May 2019 and the first article is a form of personal recollection. The Polish version of Hanna's article is longer and more detailed compared to the English text. Some information on his native *shtetl* Bilgoraj (in Yiddish: a small Jewish town or village in Eastern Europe) were added for a better understanding of the interview with Jan, his ethnic background and decision to unveil his family name – Chaim Zybner. English version of the interview contains the editor's introduction and short epilogue with Jan's photo taken on the occasion of receiving Polish citizenship, information on the date of his death and burial place. Both Hanna Dowling's essays are solid pieces of documentary written in excellent Polish and English with a personal touch.

For technical and operational reasons, the seventh and the sixth edition of the Yearbook had to be prepared simultaneously. This task would not be possible without the help of my good friends from the IPS committee. Once again words of my special gratitude should be directed to Patrick Quigley for his proofreading, Hanna Dowling for data gathering, Jason Dolan for taking the high quality photos and keeping them organised in the IPS Folders at Google Drive (without it many pictures and data would be lost in time). I also wish to thank Helena Johnston for sharing, selecting and helping to mark the archival documents and Dr Mariusz Kamiński from

Poland for his efficient and professional translations. My special thanks go to Marta Pobereszko, the editor in the Publishing House of the Łukasiewicz Research Network – Institute for Sustainable Technologies in Radom, where the Yearbook is printed. Her meticulous proofreading of the Polish text and ability to spot the tiniest misspellings and editorial lapses helped to keep the high standard of this publication. Many editorial errors were avoided, for which I am especially thankful. The entire issue was peer reviewed by Professor Jolanta Góral – Półrola (Rector of Old Polish University), Professor Wawrzyniec Konarski (Rector of Vistula University) and Professor Barry Keane (Warsaw University). Once again it was a joint effort which enables me as editor to finish this publication and send it to the main academic libraries of the English speaking world, institutions in Poland and Ireland and many individual readers.

The concept of the IPS Yearbook was initiated in January 2013, the first application form sent to Dublin City Council and later in March the integration grant was approved. With some financial help, the IPS Committee was able to print the first edition of the Yearbook 2014 in 300 copies. Subsequent editions were printed in 500 copies and copied in Pdf version. The Polish Educational Association for a few years provided us with free transport of books from Poland. Today the Old Polish University in Kielce is taking part as an active supporter. Thanks to all the sponsors the editorial team is able to give or send complimentary copies and have the Pdf version ready for downloading from the IPS website free of charge. We trust that we shall be able to continue doing so into the future.

*Jarosław PŁACHECKI*  
*Maynooth, 7 Aug. 2020*



Hanna DOWLING

## Remembering Jan Kamiński and his Native *Shtetl* Biłgoraj

**Abstract:** Jan Kamiński, a longstanding member of the Irish Polish Society, died on Tuesday, 21<sup>st</sup> May 2019. He was one of the founders of our Society and its first Chairman. He addressed Pope John Paul II on behalf of the Polish community, on the 30<sup>th</sup> of September 1979, in the garden of the Apostolic Nunciature. Jan was born in Biłgoraj. It is a small town in south-eastern Poland. Since its foundation in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, an important part of Biłgoraj's community was Jewish. By the time WW2 broke out, over half of the town's population was Jewish. Jan concealed his Jewish identity for many years (including his name: Chaim Zybner). Up to January 2013, when he gave some recollections during the Liveline RTE Radio programme on Irish Prisoners of WW2, he had never spoken about his Jewish background and his extraordinary story of survival as an orphan Jewish child in Nazi occupied Poland.

**Keywords:** Jan Kamiński, The Irish Polish Society, *shtetl* Biłgoraj, Polish Jews, Polish Diaspora in Ireland, Concorde Travel, the Polish House in Dublin.

### Year 1979

Jan Kamiński, a longstanding member of the Irish Polish Society, died on the 21<sup>st</sup> of May 2019. He was one of the founders of our Society and its first Chairman. He was an active member of the Society's committee for many years, until around 2014/15 when his health seriously deteriorated. My first memory of Jan is his addressing Pope John Paul II on behalf of the Polish community, on 30<sup>th</sup> September 1979, in the garden of the Apostolic Nunciature.

It was a memorable event and I even recorded Jan's and the Pope's addresses on a tape (I still have the tape!).

It was the first time I was in Ireland. I had travelled from Yugoslavia together with my husband Philip (he was working in Yugoslavia at that time). We arrived to Dublin on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of September. I had no idea that the 'Polish Pope', John Paul II, was just coming to Ireland. There was a tremendous excitement and joy for this historic papal visit. There was information in the press about his planned meeting with the Irish Polish community; Philip rang somewhere and got me a ticket. I was driven to the Nunciature at six in the morning on September 30<sup>th</sup>. It was the first time I had met the Irish *Polonia* but only two people stuck in my memory: Jan Kamiński and Maciej Smoleński (who was teaching us how to sing for the Pope). In 1979 Jan was one of the founders of The Irish Polish Society and its first Chairman.

## Life in Ireland

Jan Kamiński came to Ireland thanks to a scholarship granted by the Polish Veritas Foundation in London. He began his academic studies initially in Cork, and in 1954 moved to Trinity College Dublin where he studied economics and political science. He completed his studies with honours and the degree of MA. He started to work in Dublin as a *restaurateur* – he bought and ran the first Steak House in Ireland, and the first night-club. Later he got involved in the travel business and founded the very successful Concorde Travel Agency which was operating world-wide.

Up to January 2013, when some reminiscences were given by him during the Liveline RTE programme, he had never spoken about his Jewish background and his extraordinary story of survival in Nazi-occupied Poland. Following this programme I spent days talking with him, listening to his WW2 epic and asking questions. In Poland, I researched on historical events of the wartime, focusing mainly on issues related to Jewish communities in the regions of Biłgoraj, Zamość and Lublin. I decided to put Jan's story on paper, in the form of an interview. He gladly supported my idea. The

interview was made in the Polish language, and with Jan's consent it was published in 2014 in the Irish Polish Society Yearbook. At the request of many people I translated this interview into English, which has been published in this edition of the Yearbook.

## **Biłgoraj**

Jan Kamiński was born in Biłgoraj. It is a small town in south-eastern Poland, about 80 km from Lublin and not very far from the Polish-Ukrainian border. Before the Second World War, Biłgoraj was situated in the central, rather than the eastern part of Poland (i.e. in southern-central Poland); this is due to a radical change of Polish frontiers which resulted from WW2 – in 1945 Poland was 'shifted' nearly 300 km to the west.

Since its foundation in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, an important and large part of Biłgoraj's community was Jewish. By the time WW2 broke out, the population of Biłgoraj was about 8300 of which over 5000 were Jews. They were mostly traders, craftsmen and merchants. Most of Biłgoraj's shops were Jewish owned. In 1728 a synagogue was built. In 1909 a Jewish printing press was established and up until 1939 it continued to publish numerous books in the Hebrew and Yiddish languages. There were Jewish banks, schools, cultural and charity institutions, trade unions. The majority of Jews lived in the town centre, around the main market square and its adjoining streets. They enjoyed full rights as anti-Semitism was almost non-existent in Biłgoraj. But it was a poor and underdeveloped town. Most of the houses were made of wood; many were very simple one-storied cottages.

Biłgoraj was a typical *shtetl* – a small Eastern European town with a vibrant Jewish community. WW2 began in Biłgoraj on 8<sup>th</sup> September 1939, with heavy bombing by the Luftwaffe (German Air Force). On 11<sup>th</sup> September a huge fire was started by the Germans, which destroyed the synagogue and its surrounding area. The second bombing took place on 14<sup>th</sup> September. The town was captured by the Germans on 17<sup>th</sup> September, after a prolonged battle and another fire. On 28<sup>th</sup> September Soviet troops entered

the town (in accordance with the Ribbentrop-Molotov pact) but they retreated after a short time. About 20% of the town's Jews left for the Soviet Union together with the retreating Soviet Army. In early October 1939 Biłgoraj became part of the Nazi-ruled so-called General Government.

A policy of persecution of Jews started immediately. The *Judenrat* (a Council to administer the Jewish areas) was established. Jews had to wear armbands with the Star of David. They were ordered to register all their personal property with the German municipal authorities. All Jewish public and religious celebrations were forbidden. Jewish children were forbidden to attend schools. Food shortages were frequent – food was rationed and the rations provided were poor, but for the Jews they were even more meagre than the rations for Polish people. In June 1940 a small ghetto was established around 3 *Maja St.* [3<sup>rd</sup> May Street]. Initially its inhabitants were allowed to leave the ghetto at fixed hours. Soon after round-ups, shootings and deportations began. During 1941 and 1942 a number of deportations to extermination camps were carried out. The final liquidation of Biłgoraj's Jews took place on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 1942. Some 400 were shot and about 2,500 remaining were kept in barracks. The following day, on 3<sup>rd</sup> November, they were forced to walk to Zwierzyniec<sup>1</sup> and deported to the death camp at Belzec.

Belzec extermination camp was established by Nazi Germany in autumn 1941 and operated from March to the end of December 1942. It was the first Nazi camp built for the purpose of carrying out *Operation Reinhard* (to exploit modern technology to achieve the so-called 'Final Solution'). Nearly 500,000 Jews are believed to have been murdered there (mainly from districts of Krakow and Lvov), together with 1,500 Catholic Poles who had tried to help Jews. The camp was closed down in spring 1943; all was demolished and a pine forest was planted. The lack of survivors of Belzec camp, and any related documentation, is the main reason why this camp is little known despite a very high number of victims. On January 15, 1943, 27 Jews who had remained hiding in Biłgoraj were shot. It is

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<sup>1</sup> At Zwierzyniec there was a transit, resettlement camp [H.D. note].

estimated that 80% of the Jews from Biłgoraj perished during WW2. Two families survived, sheltered during the war by a local forester, Jan Mikulski.

After 1945 Biłgoraj was rebuilt. Now its population is over 27,000. But its Jewish community was all gone and would never be back. Strongly connected with Biłgoraj was Isaac Bashevis Singer, the winner of the 1978 Nobel Prize for Literature. His father and grandfather were rabbis, and his mother, Batsheba (Baszewa in Polish), was a daughter of the rabbi of Biłgoraj. He was born in a small village near Warsaw, at the time under the control of the Russian Empire. (The exact date of his birth is uncertain, but most probably it was November 21<sup>st</sup>, 1902 – a date which he himself gave to his official biographer as well as to his secretary. The often-quoted date, July 14<sup>th</sup> 1904 was probably made by him in his youth; most likely he made himself younger to avoid being conscripted during the Great War). In 1908 the family moved to Warsaw. In 1917, because of the hardships of the Great War, the family split up. Isaac's mother took him and his younger brother Moshe to her hometown. They lived in Biłgoraj until 1920. At that time it was a world totally untouched by 20<sup>th</sup> century civilization. There was no electricity, no sewage or piped water system. He listened to legends and Jewish folktales of spirits, ghosts, dybbuks, witchcraft, prejudices, sprites and hobgoblins. The climate and local histories influenced and shaped the style and themes of his writing. In 1935, Bashevis Singer emigrated to the United States. He published at least 18 novels, and a number of stories and essays. Most of his stories and novels reflect the world of Polish Jewry. He spoke fluent Polish, English and Hebrew but always considered Yiddish his natural tongue.

Only at the twilight of his life, Jan shared with us his Jewish heritage and background. A ceremony to celebrate Jan's life took place on Monday, 27<sup>th</sup> May 2019, at 10 am in the Victorian Chapel in Mount Jerome. It was a very special moment for his friends and family. Jan Kamiński (Chaim Zybner) is survived by his children: Orla, Jadzia, Jaś and his grandchildren.

## Summary in Polish:

### Wspomnienie o Janie Kamińskim i jego rodzinnym sztetlu Biłgoraju

Jan był jednym z założycieli Towarzystwa Irlandzko-Polskiego w 1979 roku i jego pierwszym prezesem. Pochodził z Biłgoraja, z rodziny żydowskiej. Ukrywając swoją tożsamość jako dziecko żydowskie i sierota, udało mu się niemal cudem przeżyć okupację niemiecką w Polsce. Dopiero po wielu latach opowiedział swoją niesamowitą historię wojenną i ujawnił prawdziwe imię i nazwisko: Chaim Zybnier. Podkreślał wielokrotnie, że zawsze czuł się Polakiem. Miał irlandzkie obywatelstwo, ale mając prawie 80 lat zaczął starać się o polski dokument tożsamości. 28 maja 2013 roku miała miejsce specjalna uroczystość w Ambasadzie RP w Dublinie, podczas której otrzymał potwierdzenie polskiego obywatelstwa. Warto dodać, że przed przyjazdem na studia do Irlandii Jan opowiedział jednej tylko osobie swoją „żydowską historię”. Osobą tą był polski ksiądz katolicki obrządku greckiego (bizantyjskiego) – O. Krauze. I on Jana ochrzcił. Jan Kamiński był zaangażowany w działalność Towarzystwa Irlandzko-Polskiego do roku 2014/15, gdy poważnie zachorował. Sponsorował wiele wydarzeń Towarzystwa. 2 maja 2014 r. z rąk ambasadora RP Marcina Nawrota otrzymał medal *Pro Memoria*, nadawany za szczególne zasługi, a 28 maja tegoż roku podczas specjalnej uroczystości w Ambasadzie RP w Dublinie długo wyczekiwane potwierdzenie polskiego obywatelstwa. Jan odszedł od nas 21 maja 2019 roku. Został pochowany na cmentarzu Mount Jerome w Dublinie. Pozostawił po sobie wdzięczną pamięć irlandzkiej Polonii, skupionej wokół Towarzystwa Irlandzko-Polskiego i Domu Polskiego w Dublinie, grono przyjaciół i bliskich, w tym troje dzieci: Orle, Jadzię, Jasia oraz wnuki.

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Hanna DOWLING

## **Jan Kamiński Uncovers the Truth about Himself**

The Interview took place in Jan's Dublin house at Roebuck Manor (March–April, 2013). Original Polish text of the interview printed in IPS Yearbook, vol. I, 2014: pp. 93–105. Full text in Pdf. available also at <http://irishpolishsociety.ie/pl/rocznik-towarzystwa-irlandzkopolskiego/>. English version translated by Hanna Dowling [J.P.-note].

**Hanna Dowling:** *I listened to the 'Liveline' radio programme on 13<sup>th</sup> January [2013]. You took part in the programme. How did that come about?*

Jan Kamiński: I did not telephone the radio. It was my daughter, Jadzia, who phoned me to say that Joe Duffy was making a programme about WW2 prisoners of war. It was she who phoned them and then the Radio contacted me.

**HD:** *For so many years we have known you and we had absolutely no idea that you had had such dramatic experiences as a child.*

JK: Well but you see... I was always afraid to own up to my Jewish origins. For a long time I never said anything to anyone about this. I was so afraid. I had the feeling that to be a Jew was some sort of crime, almost a death penalty. I did not understand it. I never owned up to the fact that I had had a family in Poland which I had lost.

**HD:** *Do you remember your family?*

JK: I have a hazy image of them. I had two sisters, one older and one younger than me. They were called Matla and Rywka. And there was a little brother. I scarcely remember my father, I think he was

in trade and he was continually away from home. I remember his outline... he seemed to be a big man, strongly built.

**HD: *Did you speak Polish or Yiddish at home?***

JK: Polish. But I remember that the family used to go to the synagogue.

**HD: *The Biłgoraj Jews' prayer centre was an old synagogue. It was destroyed by the Nazis. Do you remember it?***

JK: I don't remember the synagogue. I do remember that there were some traditional celebrations at home and special candles used to be lit... I did not like it. Perhaps I was too small to understand its meaning.

**HD: *Do you have any photographs or family memorabilia?***

JK: I have some documents which I got almost accidentally. I went to Biłgoraj several times and I found our old home. But for long time I concealed who I was. I was afraid all the time, especially in Poland.

**HD: *Did you go there after the fall of Communism in Poland or earlier?***

JK: Earlier. I was there several times. We had lived in 3 Maja Street [3<sup>rd</sup> May Street] and I checked up on this when I went to Biłgoraj.

**HD: *So you found and recognized your family home?***

JK: I knew that we had lived near a church. A large historic Catholic church. Biłgoraj had been bombed at the beginning of the war and it sticks in my memory how one steeple of the church burned down, while we fled... The church was rebuilt after the war. I went to Biłgoraj, took taxi and went to this church. I even had a talk with a priest but I did not say who I was. I said I was trying to trace an old friend. I walked on and found the street. When I looked at the house I knew at once that that was the place. I looked at the house which was a simple low building, almost like a poor cottage. I went there several times. One time I made up my mind and knocked on the door which was opened by a lady. I was afraid to say who I was.

I said I lived abroad and that before the war a friend of mine lived here, and that I remembered that I used to play with him here and would like to find out what had happened to him. He was called Chaim Zybner...

**HD: *Your name was not Jan Kamiński?***

JK: No.

**HD: *In those days many people changed their names. Not only Jews. Many people had false documents.***

JK: I said there had been a big garden behind the house and asked if I could see it. But they did not let me into the house. I stood by the door and said that if my friend should turn up or if the lady should hear anything about him...I don't know if the house still exists as it seems that everything was to be knocked down and the street rebuilt. Well, later, on my third or fourth visit to Biłgoraj I found the town council offices. This was where they kept old documents. I decided to tell the ladies who worked there the truth. I said who I was and that I did not know what my father used to do. As far as I could recall he was seldom at home. Probably he was a tradesman. When war broke out and the Germans came I was in town one day with my elder sister. Suddenly we heard shrieks, shooting and dogs barking. "Let's run away" I said to my sister, but she wouldn't. But I ran to the fields out of the town. I went on the run until the end of the war. "Perhaps you have some of my documents?" I asked. The office lady said it was unlikely because the Germans had burned most of them. "But let's see". She searched and said: "I've got letter Z. The register for names beginning with Z had survived!" When she showed it to me I almost burst in tears. My name was there, and so were my sisters. My brother was not there. It was probably the Jewish tradition not to register children immediately after they were born. My brother was probably born just before the outbreak of war. In this way I obtained my birth certificate and copies of all the documents.

**HD: *And when the raid or round-up took place, did you return home afterwards?***

JK: I was afraid to go back. I don't remember well. I may have gone to the house and found that there was no longer anyone there...I don't remember the whole 'mechanics' of the name change. I changed it myself. From fear I wanted to conceal who I was. I may have had a friend, a Pole, who was called Jan Kamiński. Before the war I had various friends. I used to play with a whole gang of boys in the field near my home. There was a river there, and an iron bridge and sawmill. There was a market square and the church nearby. I changed to a Polish first name and a Polish surname, and I changed my date of birth. I created myself and Kamiński...

**HD: *What happened after that? After all you were a child, only nine or ten years old!***

JK: I roamed around the villages in the vicinity of Biłgoraj. I would knock on cottage doors and ask them to give me work. I would do all kinds of work. I was a cattle-herd; I used to feed the cows. I helped in the fields. I would dig potatoes, and peeled them, and helped with housework chores. I remember, on one of those farms it was my duty to make sure that there was plenty of grass to feed the cattle. I used to pick the grass near a pond. And I remember that I used to bind my feet with rags as the place was full of leeches and they would stick to my feet.

**HD: *Did these people not realise that you were a Jew? At that time people were threatened with instant execution for sheltering Jews.***

JK: Whenever they stared at me a bit too hard or began asking me questions, I would run away. I would push on and find another family. Later I found myself with one of those families in a camp at Zwierzyniec. I remember that well. It was not a camp for Jews.

**HD: *There was a transit, resettlement camp at Zwierzyniec. From there Jews were transferred to extermination camps. And in 1942-43 the Nazis conducted mass deportation of the Polish***

***population from Zamość region and the deportees were indeed temporarily kept at Zwierzyniec<sup>1</sup>.***

JK: I remember that we went by train. In closed cattle trucks. The train was crammed with children. These were Polish children. Perhaps I was one of those 'Zamość children'?

***HD: The so-called Zamość children were selected in the resettlement camps and Zwierzyniec was one of those camps. They were separated from their families. Some – those who were 'Aryan- looking' – were deported to the Reich for Germanization.*** [According to Nazi notions Germanic people were the purest Aryan race and should be preserved in its purity – HD].

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<sup>1</sup> In 1942–43 the Nazis carried out mass deportations of the Polish population from the Zamość region. It was called Action Zamość and its aim was to clear the area from Polish inhabitants and prepare the land for new German settlers. It was the beginning of the implementation of a secret German Plan (*Generalplan Ost*) for 'ethnic cleansing' on a vast scale, and colonization of Central-Eastern Europe. In just few months – between November 1942 and March 1943 – over 100,000 native Poles were evicted from some 300 villages. They were transported to labour camps in Germany (if healthy and fit to work) or to extermination camps (e.g. Auschwitz, Belzec, Majdanek). The evictions were accompanied by burnings, beatings and butchery. Children suffered a terrible fate as they were forcibly taken from their families. They were transported in cattle wagons to special temporary camps in the Reich. Many died during transportation – cold, starvation and diseases were fatal to them. There were some stations where transports stopped and people took a chance and risked to rescue the children (Jan was lucky to be saved this way!) Many children were sent to the concentration camp for children *Kinder-KZ Litzmannstadt*, which was located beside the Łódź Ghetto (Litzmannstadt was the German name for Łódź given by Nazis after it was incorporated into the Reich, in 1939). Children went through special 'racial selections'; German anthropologists and doctors carried out detailed racial examinations, and thorough medical and psychological tests to determine if they were of 'good racial quality'. Children with Nordic/Aryan racial characteristics were selected for 'Germanization', while children of 'little racial value' were sent to concentration camps, or to perform slave labour (e.g. farm work in Germany). According to historical sources about 30,000 'Zamość children' were taken from their parents and some 4,500 of them were deported to the Reich for Germanization. Germany's deteriorating situation after the Stalingrad battle forced the Nazis to stop deportations in August 1943.

JK: I was rescued by a tailor. I think it was in Siedlce. The train stopped there. I think this tailor ransomed me.

**HD: *Apparently Polish railwaymen passed on information about the children's transports to the inhabitants of towns where the trains stopped. At these stations some Polish people tried to snatch children from the hands of the Germans. They would bribe the guards. Siedlce was one of the stations where trains stopped.***

JK: I was pulled from the truck literally by the scruff of the neck. I worked for this tailor. I sewed button-holes, sewed on buttons and so on. Next, I remember, I was sent in the summer to a kind of children's camp. And there the boys found out that I was a Jew. Some of them wanted to inform on me, while others advised me to push off fast. I did a bunk. I don't know how I'd got there but I found myself next in Lublin. This must have been the summer of 1944. There were heavy bombing raids, and I took cover with a lot of people in a shelter. Then suddenly one day I was looking out of the window and saw Polish troops. I don't know what army was that, probably General Berling's. These were troops who had come from the East.

**HD: *Lublin had been liberated from the Nazis in July 1944. These were Soviet troops but in that army there was a Polish Division. There were many Polish soldiers, former deportees to Russia, who had not managed to reach Anders's army and who had joined Berling's. Initially, the Red Army received a lot of assistance from AK soldiers<sup>2</sup>. At that time people did not yet know Stalin's plans...***

JK: When I saw the Polish troops I ran out and began to cry. I said I was an orphan and asked them, even implored them, to take me with them. I said I would help them and would work. So they took me.

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<sup>2</sup> AK (Armia Krajowa) Home Army – underground resistance military force.

**HD: *You seem to have become a mascot for these troops!***

JK: Yes, in a way. This was the 21<sup>st</sup> Artillery Regiment. I was with them for some time, by the river Bug, in Włodawa where their camp was. An officer took care of me. Later – but I can't say when exactly – the unit left for Kraków. We were in Kraków when the war ended. I well remember the day that the war ended. From Kraków, I remember, one day we went to the West of Poland for *szaber*<sup>3</sup>. Later the unit was transferred to Jelenia Góra. This was near the frontier where there were various groups of people who used to cross the border into Germany. I joined them and landed up in Germany.

**HD: *Could you cross the border just like that? Did you have any documents?***

JK: I was a child aged 12 or 13. Nobody asked me for any documents. I was with the army so perhaps they had arranged some papers for me. But from then on I was Jan Kamiński. I crossed into Germany with a military group and at first we were at a camp at Ingolstadt. After that I was transferred to Murnau. UNRRA was operating there and they took charge of me<sup>4</sup>. I lived in a hotel. In this hotel there were quarters for Polish refugees. There, at Murnau for the first time I got some education.

**HD: *Up to then you had never studied? You could not read or write?***

JK: Absolutely not. At Murnau a school was set up for Polish children and it was only then I began to study.

**HD: *At Murnau during the war there was a large POW (prisoners-of-war) camp, Oflag VII, for Polish Army Officers.***

JK: It was crowded with Poles there. Poles who had come from various camps, from German labour camps, from POW camps,

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<sup>3</sup> "Szaber" – the looting of former German homes after the abrupt movement of the border at the end of WW2.

<sup>4</sup> UNRRA – the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration.



1945–1946. Jan Kamiński, when he was with General Anders Army in Italy (photo courtesy of IPS)

people who had fled from Poland. A lot of soldiers had come from Italy, from Anders's army.

**HD:** *The headquarters of Anders's 2nd Corps was at that time at Ancona in Italy. But the 2nd Corps had an outpost at Murnau.*

JK: They [Anders's army soldiers – HD] used to come from Italy and arrange exit documents for families. There were people who had escaped from Poland. They even created fictitious families for transfer to Italy. I too found myself in Italy this way, on the Adriatic coast in Grottamare, a place near Porto San Giorgio. There was an officers'

centre there. I made friends with a soldier who worked in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Corps stores in a small town called Iesi. From him I got various items and began trading.

**HD:** *Were these your first earnings? What sort of goods were they?*

JK: Various items: uniforms, blankets...

**HD:** *And where did you sell them? On the street?*

JK: No, not on the street. I kept them where I was living. Italians came and bought them. It was already known that the 2<sup>nd</sup> Corps would be leaving Italy and everything was gradually disposed of. I made a lot of money then.

**HD:** *The Jewish flair for trading showed itself in you...*

JK: Evidently [laughs].

**HD:** *But did you study in Italy? Could you read and write?*

JK: Very poorly. In Italy I had no education. All the education I had was that couple of months in Germany. There came an order that we

were to leave for Britain. I had a lot of money and a problem arose as to what to do with it. I was told that Italian liras were worth very little in Britain. But that Italian nylons were highly valued there.

**HD: *What nylons?***

JK: Nylon stockings. So I bought a whole lot of stockings. I was a child and did not realise that there could be a problem with customs. I had whole suitcases full of these stockings and almost nothing else. But fortunately I was not checked at the frontier. We were travelling by train and landed up at Petworth in Sussex. This was a transit camp. There was also a camp for cadets there. There was drill and training. That was where I was – and I sold those stockings.

**HD: *Where did you sell them?***

JK: At the camp. There were various women there and they would buy them. Nylon stockings were the latest fashion at the time! After a while I learned that there were a large number of Poles from the army in London and that this was a big capital city. So one day I went to London, by train. This was probably in 1947. I wandered near Victoria and suddenly spotted a Polish officer. I went up to him and said that I had come from Petworth and was looking for a place to spend the night. He told me that not far away, in Sloane Square, there was a Polish YMCA. He went with me there. At reception desk was a lady. I told her that I had come from the camp at Petworth, I had no family and would like to stay in London and do something and go to school. The lady who attended me was called *Pani* Zosia Sarnowska. [*Pani* in Polish means lady, Miss or Mrs – HD]. She said that I could stay for some time at the YMCA. I went back to Petworth to collect my things and then back to London. I don't remember exactly how it happened but *Pani* Zosia took care of me officially. She enrolled me in an English language school in Bayswater. It was a school for Poles.

**HD: *Did you learn the language quickly?***

JK: Yes, quickly. I was quick at learning. I also discovered the *Ognisko Polskie* (Polish Hearth Club) in Kensington where there were a number of Poles. There was a whole 'Polish quarter' – cafes, restaurants, a church.

**HD: *And were you by now able to read and write in Polish?***

JK: No, absolutely not. But there was a hostel in Earls Court run by a Polish priest, Fr Kirstein. There were Poles there who were older than me, students and former soldiers. They helped me a bit. One of them said to me: "I'll give you a very interesting book. You will love it". He gave me *The Deluge* (*Potop* by Henryk Sienkiewicz). And with *The Deluge* I learned to read in Polish.

**HD: *Not an easy book for learning Polish!***

JK: Students from that Polish hostel helped me. I was totally absorbed in it.

**HD: *All this time you were Jan Kamiński. Did you remember your real first name and surname?***

JK: I knew my name perfectly well. I would repeat it to myself all the time but I was afraid to say it... After some time *Pani* Zosia sent me out of London to Purley, in Sussex, to a Polish-English family. Years later I learned that they were all connected with the Polish émigré government. During the war they had worked in intelligence. Including Zosia Sarnowska. This family enrolled me in an English school – Coulsdon High School. Then it was decided that I ought to study something practical. I was sent to a technical school near Peterborough. This was a school for Poles. From there after a time I was sent to Scotland, to Edinburgh. I lived in a hostel run by a priest, Fr Boniface Slawik. This was the well-known Polish Hostel and School for Boys. It was set up in 1942 for the sons of Polish soldiers who found themselves in Scotland during the war. I attended a Polish secondary school, Holy Cross Academy. I met Artur Tyszkiewicz there. He was in the same school. [Artur Tyszkiewicz – who came from an old Polish aristocratic family – was Jan's close friend-HD]. Later I was sent to an English secondary school in Edinburgh. I don't remember how long I was there, but after a time I returned to London. I lived in digs and attended a night school – Regent Street Polytechnic. All these things are remembered somewhat randomly. They were a kind of 'landmarks', turning points in my adolescent days.

**HD: *When did your connection with Ireland begin?***

JK: One of my friends who studied medicine in Cork wrote to me suggesting that I visit him. He had completed his studies and was planning to get married. I made my way for the first time to Ireland. Hitch-hiking through Wales, then on ferry, then hitch-hiking in Ireland to Cork.

**HD: *Had you taken already your final exams?***

JK: No, not yet. A terrible tragedy took place in Cork. Just imagine.... this friend of mine together with his wife went sailing and both were drowned... From Cork I was going to Dublin. And I met some people and a priest. They all said: you should go to Lough Derg, there is an island on the lake.... So I went.

**HD: *Did you visit the island called St Patrick's Purgatory where pilgrims come to confess, pray and fast?***

JK: Yes. I think I was there three days. I had only tea with nothing added and toasts. One night there was a vigil. So as not to fall asleep after prayers all sorts of jokes and stories were told! I went to Dublin. I met some Poles who were studying at Trinity College. I decided then that, after doing my exams in London, I would come to Ireland to study. I went back to London, completed my night school studies and passed exams in five subjects. This entitled me to study at university. But before going to Ireland I was in Wales working for a while. And I visited an old priest whom I knew previously. He lived at Llandullas, a small village in Wales but he used to go to London, and I had met him several times. He was a Catholic priest but of the eastern (Byzantine) rite. His name was Father Krauze. He took care of me for a while. And I told him all about my Jewish background and he christened me.

**HD: *And did he give you the Christian name Jan?***

JK: Of course! After all, I already had this name... It was 1953. I found myself in Ireland. I obtained a scholarship from the Veritas Foundation to study in Cork. But in 1954 I transferred to Dublin. Here it was still necessary to take a kind of entrance exam in order to study in Trinity. Just imagine I had to sit an exam in Latin. And I passed!

## HD: How did you learn Latin?

JK: You tell me! But I give you my word - I passed. I had a choice between Irish and Latin. I preferred Latin.

## HD: Perhaps it was thanks to all the Catholic priests who had looked after you. In those days services were conducted exclusively in Latin.

JK: I shared lodgings with another student, a Russian. I studied economics and political science. At Trinity I was very active, and for



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THURSDAY, 30 OCTOBER, 1958

### FANTASY

CONTINENTAL countries are frequently the destination of students during the summer vacation and even if they only bask in the sun they can't help noticing the different atmosphere which is all part of the way of life. And though they appreciate what they see, they rarely bother to bring back anything but souvenirs. No delicious recipes; none of the fine clothes which are superior to ours in cloth, cut and colour; none of the splendid architectural designs (particularly for stations).

But what is it that makes the Continental way of life so different from ours? In a word, Fantasy. Everywhere, manifestations of their creative imagination can be seen. Once home, we are satisfied to don our dark suits with baggy trousers and absurd bowler hats and eat the most monotonous food imaginable, consisting mainly of monstrous potatoes, not to mention the lack of wine. And yet it is our climate that needs something to brighten it; some of those colourful verandahs with flower-boxes and sun shades. Most of all, perhaps, a few Continental Bars with a wide range of inexpensive drinks and tasty dishes served until midnight by well-trained waitresses in pleasant surroundings. Too many people eat to live instead of living to enjoy their meals, but first a good sense of taste must be acquired and a few cheifs with the Continental know-how.

### Profile:

## JAN KAMINSKI—Ex-Chairman Plus

One day last term a particularly attractive American tourist arrived at Front Gate, announced that she had just dropped in from Florence, Italy, and asked doubtfully if anyone around had heard of a certain Jan Kaminski. To her surprise a dozen different voices started to tell her where they had last seen him - bullying the Committee of International Affairs, holding a front-page story to the printers, or rubbing their palms over events in the Coffee Bar. The episode is typical. It is hard not to know Jan, for he is a person who creates an impression wherever he is, whether it be in Trinity or among the Americans in Florence. Charmer, fighter, dreamer and cynic, his presence is always strongly felt. Yet few people in College know more of Jan than he wants them to know, and his varied activities in the present, his fabulous

has interested him ever since. Here began a series of adventures worthy of the most exciting "thriller." He lived off the land in W. Poland until 1944, when the Russians had taken over, they caught him removing some of their stores from a camp. To avoid punishment he joined the Polish Army - this at the age of 11 - and was used, along with other children, as a scout for spying in the enemy lines. Wounded at Warsaw, he was sent to hospital in England, and at 13 escaped over the border into Germany. Varied adventures there, and in Austria and Italy as liaison officer, barrow-boy and smuggler brought him finally to England, where he was educated at Purley County School, and in the Holy Cross Academy in Edinburgh. There he tried an engineering course - was in a factory ("the proletariat was too much for me"), and, at last, Trinity, where he is studying Economics.

It would not be surprising if, after such a hectic life, Jan decided to take things easy. But this is for him temperamentally impossible. He must try everything, and he cannot rest till he has succeeded at everything he tries. He has been Chairman of the Association for International Affairs (it was under his rule that the Carnival of Nations moved to the Mansion House and became part of An Tostal), Chairman of "Trinity News" ("if I haven't got a story I'll make one"), Vice-President of the Polish Students' Union in Dublin, member of the Economics Society and the Hist. He is inordinately proud of the goal he scored once for the 2nd Trinity soccer team.

As for vacation work, he has organised camps for teddy-bears in Dun Loughaire ("till the tax collector caught up with me"), broadcast on Radio Free Europe and Voice of America, travelled Europe as companion to a diplomat, fished on a yacht in the Adriatic.

Jan has seen more of life already than most of his fellow students ever will. He shows no bitterness about the past and looks on the present as both a challenge and a joke. Always eager for new fields of interest and success, he is at present trying in vain to persuade his friends that he has no designs on the past and the future "freshmen". His plans for the future "freshmen". His plans for the future "freshmen".

With food and song, and the means to pay for all three, which, interpreted in serious terms, means that he wants to work in international trade. With his flowing hair, large grin, unbuttoned shirt and fabulous plans, Jan has become one of the "characters" of college. His opinion of Jan Kaminski? "I think he's a jolly good fellow. We all agree."

### Trinity Second

On Friday, October 24th, a meeting in connection with Orlanthea Week was held in Ragout House. It took the form of an inter-University debate in the Border. The question of the Border is more important than you know. The Theosophical

### 50th ANNIVERSARY

The Provost has held a reception at Trinity for the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the opening of the Hall. Women were admitted to Trinity in

## College Observed

Are freshmen—so much to do—so much to choose from and all the excitement of new and different things—like the opening of a strange realm; wondering what's inside—tools, toys or a tarantula? And which is which? Which useful, which amusing and which best to avoid dancing? The week is filled with excitement and anxiety—is brimming with assurance and fear; fear of doing something that seems silly.

Which lectures are funny, but shouldn't be laughed at, and which of them ought to be heeded at all, although they aren't funny but think they are? Which societies should not be joined? Which College newspaper should be read? (although the answer to this is obvious even to the Freshmen.)

How do you find decent digs—why even did I get landed in Hall?

How much should you pay for a gown and where's the Coffee Bar?

And how much will the others be in the trial rugger game? What's your tutor supposed to do?

All these questions and a multitude of more subtle, more personal ones have to be answered, and in the meantime there are receptions, which are supposed to help you decide which societies interest you most—actually they only increase the confusion. Each of them is so eager to prove itself best—each seems as glamorous as the Library on the film.

Is the Hist. really better than the Phil.? Should I join the Lit. or a really so pretentious as it sounds? All these questions don't, however, hide the nastiness of them all: When do I start working?

Aspe cili—so much noise. Why do they have to talk at the tops of their voices? Oh I think I'll take Little Go some time after Christmas. Ugh. I suppose when November comes they'll stand in front of the fire and toast their backside while we freeze in our arm-chairs—er—come if Henderson is still around—won't he too?—and a good at looking after that fire... I suppose we need the subscription for that shirt that doesn't—don't—better.

Is the Hist. really better than the Phil.? Should I join the Lit. or a really so pretentious as it sounds? All these questions don't, however, hide the nastiness of them all: When do I start working?

I suppose I'd better do some work this term... bet she's doing Med. Lang...

Fair graduates—commencements today, you lucky blighters—perhaps, and

30 Oct. 1958. Jan Kamiński - Chairman of the Trinity News and Vice-President of the Polish Students' Union in Dublin (courtesy of IPS)

one year I was Editor of *Trinity News*. My scholarship from the Veritas Foundation amounted to £5 a week and on that I lived splendidly. Wojciech Dłużynski and Stas Grocholski from the London Veritas helped with this. It was only in Ireland that real life began for me.

**HD:** *You completed yours studies with honours and you went on to complete an MA. What happened next?*

JK: I had permission to live in Ireland only for a period of my studies. But I wanted to stay here. I worked for a time in Belfast, for International Computers and Tabulators; but I did not much like the work and I started looking for something different. And I hit on something new, rather by chance. I well remember. I was waiting for a girl at a cinema near O'Connell Street...

**HD:** *This story was once recounted by the Polish paper, Polska Gazeta, after a conversation with you. I quote the paper: 'I was waiting for a girl at a cinema and spotted an advertisement in a newspaper. It said: "All-night restaurant for sale at any price". I ran from the cinema, found the seller, an Italian, and asked how much he wanted. He replied: "How much are you offering?" Gritting my teeth I said: £50. He agreed to take £150 or so, but it was all the same to me as I didn't have a penny anyway.' Is that how it was?*

JK: More or less. It was called The Last Post Restaurant. By the river, on Ellis Quay. I borrowed the money from a friend and bought it. I left computers and became a *restaurateur*. I changed the restaurant into The Steak House because I had been told that steak, or beefsteak, is Ireland's favourite dish. I worked there day and night. It went splendidly because there was no restaurant like it anywhere in Ireland.

**HD:** *What were the customers like?*

JK: Very mixed. From the whole of Dublin and the suburbs. The restaurant was on a main road leading from outside the city to the centre of Dublin. There would be people returning from seeing friends or from shows that would come in for some refreshment.

Taxis would come. There would even be politicians. Charlie Haughey used to come with his circle. I knew a Greek who was from a rich family. He had money, I had experience. Together we bought an old stable in Baggot Street and converted it a night club. It was the first night club in Ireland. Crazy times – the club had no licence to sell alcohol which none the less flowed in torrents! My old friend, Artur Tyszkiewicz, joined us.

**HD: *From the 'gastronomic' business you later transferred successfully to tourism.***

JK: Yes. In the '70s I established the Concorde Travel Agency. It developed rapidly.

**HD: *You became a very successful businessman. Despite a dramatic childhood and haphazard schooling you completed your studies brilliantly at a prestigious university and achieved huge success in business. To what do you attribute this?***

JK: If I were very religious, I would say that God has helped me. And perhaps I did even believe this... I think I possessed a certain inborn 'know-how'. A 'flair' for seizing the initiative and taking risks. Moreover, I have never been drawn to a regular life. When I worked with computers after some time the work became a routine. Each day was the same. For me it was like a poison. That advert found accidentally in a newspaper and the restaurant which I bought – this was like winning a lottery.

**HD: *You left Poland in 1945 without any documents. More than sixty years later you decided to apply for a Polish identity document. Why? Is this because of your feelings for your native country?***

JK: This is a rather emotional matter. I have always felt Polish. However, mainly I did this because at a certain moment I asked myself: why do I have to go through my whole life falsifying my own identity? Pretending to be someone other than what I am? In Poland, during the German occupation it was necessary. Later, in Italy and

in Britain, there was still a bit of fear. At times there I sensed anti-Semitism. But now, here in Ireland? I have had finally to tell the truth about myself.

*Dublin, Roebuck Manor (March – April, 2013)*

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## Epilogue



25.05.2013. Jan Kamiński (at the centre) often emphasized that he always considered himself a Polish citizen. He had Irish citizenship, however; at almost 80 years of age he applied for a Polish passport. On the 28<sup>th</sup> May 2013 a special ceremony took place in the Polish Embassy in Dublin. From the Ambassador Marcin Nawrot, Jan received his document of Polish citizenship. It was a very emotional moment for all of us invited to the Embassy on that day. Jan Kamiński died on Tuesday, 21<sup>st</sup> May 2019 survived by his children: Orla, Jadzia, Jaś, his grandchildren and friends. He was buried at Mount Jerome cemetery in Dublin [J.P. – note] (photo courtesy of the Embassy of Poland in Ireland)



Ian CANTWELL

## Charles Stokes. An Irishman in The Heart of Darkness

**Abstract:** Following Paul Taylor's excellent article: A Difficult Friendship, Joseph Conrad Korzeniowski and Roger Casement (*Irish Polish Society Yearbook*, Vol. IV 2017), there is another possible Polish-Irish connection for the inspiration behind the creation of Kurtz in *The Heart of Darkness*, Charles Stokes (1852–1895) was born in Dublin to John and Louise (nee Wherland), a long established merchant family, who moved to Enniskillen when his father was appointed Railway Engineer. When the father died in 1872, his widow and family migrated to Liverpool. After a short spell as a shipping clerk, he joined the Church Missionary Society (CMS) and was sent to Zanzibar in 1878 where he soon discovered a talent for organising camel caravans to service the far-flung missionary stations in British East Africa. In 1882 he married Ellen Sharratt, a CMS nurse, but tragedy struck when she died the following year from childbirth complications from the birth of their daughter. Around this time he abandoned the CMS and began trading as an ivory and guns merchant, also picking up a transport franchise for the German colonies of Tanganyika and Urundi-Ruanda. He was then excommunicated when he married Limi, an aristocratic relative of the chief of the Wanyamwesi clan who provided his caravan porters. In 1890 he arrived at Mengo (Kampala) in his Lake Victoria steamer with guns and powder in the middle of a three-way war of succession between the Catholic, Protestant and Islamic factions to become the next king of Buganda. After tortuous negotiations with Frederic Lugard, representing the British Imperial East Africa Company, (later Uganda Protectorate) who supported the Protestant faction, Stokes 'lent' him his consignment that led to a Protestant victory. In thanks, the new king gifted Stokes with a princess and her servant, Nanjala and Zaria, with whom he had children. Charles Kajaja, son of Nanjala, after medical training in Scotland, returned to Uganda and founded the first Blood Transfusion service. In 1894 Stokes led a large trade expedition to north east Congo that ran afoul of King Leopold's policy of transferring ivory trade exports through the Atlantic ports rather

than the traditional Arab-Swahili route via Zanzibar, which followed Belgian victory in the Belgian-Arab War 1892–1894. As he was also suspected of gun-running he was arrested by Captain Lothaire, who immediately found him guilty of smuggling at a drumhead court-martial and executed him, i.e. hung him from a tree, the following morning. It became a cause celebre in England when the news became known and through public pressure the English Government, who would have preferred to sweep it under the carpet due to Stokes' dubiously legal activities, took it up with King Leopold. Several trials of Lothaire went nowhere as no evidence was ever produced and he was ultimately promoted. However, Leopold reluctantly paid £8,000 compensation to the British and German Governments after pressure from Queen Victoria. Leopold's commission of inquiry into the running of his private empire was a public relations exercise and was never heard of again. The episode was a contributing factor in the movement against his autocratic and despotic management of the Congo that led to Casement's damning report. As an addendum it is hardly surprising that the British accused Casement of 'meddling' during his trial as now the two countries were allies in the war against Germany, a sharp reversal of the three countries' co-operation and bonhomie during the 1911 Border Commission that finalised the borders between Congo, Ruanda and Uganda. This did not extend to 1918 when the British attempted to annexe Urundi-Ruanda from the Germans even though it had been conquered by Belgian forces in 1916; they subsequently assisted the British in the conquest of Tabora and the ultimate defeat of German forces in Tanganyika.

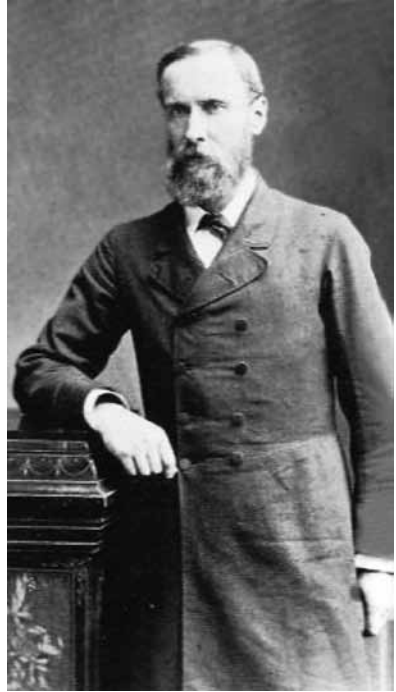
**Keywords:** Charles Stokes, King Leopold, Congo, Captain Lothaire, weapons supply, Roger Casement.

## A missionary and the arms dealer

Charles Stokes (1852–1895) was born in Dublin to John and Louise (nee Wherland) and was educated in Enniskillen; the family moved there when his father was appointed Chief Railway Engineer but died 1872. He migrated to Liverpool with his mother (died 1897) and was employed as a shipping clerk. Inspired by Henry Morton Stanley he joined the Church Missionary Society (CMS) as a lay evangelist and arrived in Zanzibar in 1878 and put in charge of the organisation of supply caravans to the widespread network of East African missionaries. In 1882 he married Ellen Sherratt, a nurse, in

Zanzibar; she died the following year a week after the birth of their daughter, Ellen Louise.

In 1885, Stokes abandoned the CMS and was excommunicated when he became an independent trader specialising in the arms for ivory trade and married Limi, a relative of the chief of the Wanyamwesi clan who supplied his porters. He developed good contacts and even though his trade was theoretically illegal the English turned a blind eye. In 1890, he lent Lugard, a consignment of 300 rifles during the royalist power struggle that allowed the Protestant faction to become rulers of Buganda and the English their colonial masters. The King gave him Nanjala Malyamu Magudaleene, relative of the Prince of Koki, and her handmaiden Zaria as a gift; they became his concubines. He also supplied German East Africa military in Tanganyika from the same year and became an Assistant Commissioner. In 1894, he led a large expedition to north-east Congo to trade with Swahili merchants there and landed in the middle of the Congo-Swahili trade dispute; he brought weapons for trade for ivory when Leopold had ordered that all ivory be shipped through Kinshasa.



Charles Stokes (1852–1895)  
(photo courtesy of Ian Cantwell)

## **Trial**

He was captured while his men were foraging for food, brought to Lindi where Captain Lothaire set up a drumhead court-martial. He was found guilty of smuggling and hanged from a tree the



Nanjala in the 1950s  
(photo courtesy of Ian Cantwell)

following morning. It became a cause celebre in England, largely driven by the media given the dubious legality of the trial as the government would have been happy to ignore it. The Belgian Government, under pressure, set up several commissions of enquiry and predictably found Lothaire innocent of any wrongdoing. Queen Victoria however pressured Leopold to grudgingly pay £8,000 compensation to the British and German governments. It was one of the many reasons used by campaigners against Leopold's regime in Congo and his life and death are said to have partially inspired Conrad's Kurtz in *The Heart*



Minnie Watson and Charles Kasaja Stokes (photo courtesy of Ian Cantwell)

*of Darkness*. Eventually, it was another Irishman, Roger Casement, who exposed the horrors of Leopold's regime.

His daughter, Ellen Louise, was after a court case, transferred from her mother's relatives to be raised by her father's sister. She married and emigrated to Canada. His son by Nanjala (died 1968 aged 90) was Charles Kasaja Stokes who was raised by Minnie Watson, a missionary of Kikuyu, (one of her students was Jomo Kenyatta) He trained as a medical orderly in Scotland, returned to Uganda and, after independence, organised and ran the blood transfusion service. He married Sarah Nambalilwa and six of their eight children married and live in Uganda, Kenya, UK and USA. Zaira was the mother of his half-sister Louise.

## Epilogue

According to the *Review of Public Events*, 1895, 'It was alleged that [Stokes] had large quantities of arms, ammunition, and ivory, and that he had bought the ivory at a low price from Kibonge, the assassin of Emin Pasha. Captain Lothaire, an official, an official of the Congo State, with a strong force, was then advancing from Stanley Falls to attack this Arab chief Kibonge, in revolt against the Congo State. On Lothaire's arrival at Kilunga, Kibonge was already a prisoner in the hands of his own native subordinates, who refused to join him in fighting the State. Stokes applied to Lothaire for protection of his ivory and goods, which he desired to carry towards the East Coast. Lothaire claimed that letters were found among Kibonge's effects which went to prove that Stokes had sold large quantities of arms and ammunition to this chief, to be used in war against the Congo State. Mr Stokes was arrested by Captain Lothaire's orders, brought before a court-martial composed of two non-commissioned officers and Lothaire, and sentenced to be hanged. The execution took place the following morning' (<http://www.executedtoday.com/2009/01/15/1895-charles-stokes-congo-free-state/>).

## Appendix to the story

*The Rise of our East African Empire: early efforts in Nyasaland and Uganda*, Frederick Lugard, London 1968 (He also wrote *The Story of the Uganda Protectorate*, London, 1900)

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Jackson states that it was supposed that there was a considerable amount of ivory buried in Uganda, most of which belonged to the *Fransa* party. This ivory was only to be disposed of for arms and powder, and he believed that if the *Wa-Fransa* acquired these arms they would attack their rivals. Gedge had instructions to retire to Usoga with the *Wa-Ingleza*, rather than allow the Christians to come to blows. He adds it as his opinion that 500 drilled and disciplined soldiers and 16 Europeans were required to hold the country, and Gedge was instructed to buy off Stokes sooner than allow him to sell arms in Uganda.

\* \* \*

On the 5<sup>th</sup> May Mr Stokes arrived, and heralded his approach by sending me indignant letters, repudiating the accusation that he had brought arms and ammunition from the coast. We, however, became very friendly, and he promised most emphatically not to attempt to import arms or powder. This was an important matter, for though I might prevent his doing so openly, he himself pointed out that he was able to evade my efforts in many ways, – as for instance, by issuing powder to his elephant hunters at the south of the lake, and conniving at their selling it in Uganda. He said that the demand for powder here was so great now, that he could make a profit of something like £250 on every porter load! Possibly, as a matter of fact, he could have made (for a small quantity only) something like half that sum. I spoke very strongly to him on the subject, saying that the import of powder at the present moment would mean civil war, and he agreed that it would be little better than murder. On the other hand, I promised to facilitate his legitimate trade, and agreed that natives sent by him with goods could come to Uganda and traffic on

his behalf. I promised also to store his ivory, and, so far as I might be able, to buy his goods and promote his interests with the Company.

Later he took advantage of these offers, and a party of his men traded, under our protection, during the whole time I was in Uganda, while we stored his ivory, which otherwise (a year later) would have been lost in the war. I told him to submit proposals in writing for the sale of his goods, and he did so. They included 50 loads of gunpowder, 4 loads of gun-caps (70lb each), and 250 guns! Yet he said, when he first came, that he had no powder or arms, and resented my letter, in which I stated that it had been reported he had this stuff! The prices he asked were so enormous that I would not buy, and he then begged me to store it for him, so that he might not be tempted to sell it. This I willingly agreed to do and I sent down for it as I shall narrate presently. Stokes left (14<sup>th</sup> Feb), after giving me promise that he would place his powder and arms under my charge; and I told him frankly, that if he behaved honourably in the matter, I on my part would help him in every way I could. He had not reached the south of the lake, however, before he wrote to say he had changed his mind, and would retain his arms and powder himself.

\* \* \*

As regards other matters, I heard that Bagge had made a successful trip to the south of the lake, and had brought up all Stokes' guns and powder, which were safely stored in Kampala. Mwanga tried to claim a percentage in taxes, but Williams had, in a very plucky way, sent down his handful of men to the lake and brought everything up without yielding to Mwanga's demands. His prompt action probably saved trouble, for, from what I heard, it appeared as though Mwanga had intended to seize what he wanted.

## II

Thomas Pakenham, *Scramble for Africa: White Man's Conquest of the Dark Continent from 1876 to 1912*, London, 1991

\* \* \*

Stokes had dined well (at Bagamyö). He woke up the party, shouting strange oaths in an Irish brogue, and kicking on the door, “undecided between pugilism, and excessive affection”. He dragged Stairs out of bed to shake him by the hand, then tried to make off with the Marquis’s boots in the confusion.

\* \* \*

(Kampala) The most immediate threat, as it turned out, came from that incongruous white trader, Charles Stokes, who owned a steamer based on the southern side of the lake, the shore controlled by the Germans. Stokes arrived at Mengo on 5 February 1891, an indignant Irishman dressed in Muslim robes, protesting his innocence of arms smuggling. He swore he hadn’t an ounce of powder with him. Lugard gave him a candle-lit dinner in his camp and calmed him. No doubt he told Stokes about the provisions of the Brussels conference. What he wanted was an assurance that Stokes would not sell guns or powder to Mwanga or either of the two factions. They were already 2,000 or 3,000 muzzle-loading guns in the country, any more guns would make war virtually inevitable. Stokes explained he could make £1,440 for every load of powder sold. But he was fed up with the heavy-handedness of the Germans (though they paid him £1,000 a year to organise supplies), and would prefer to come north and work with the British Company. Would Lugard buy his current stock, which incidentally included fifty loads of powder and 250 guns, worth £5,000? Lugard bought some cloth and proposed that he develop the ivory trade in Buganda. Stokes asked Lugard to give him a chance and not to put too much temptation in a poor man’s way. Would he agree to store the powder for him at Kampala to keep him from selling it to Mwanga? Lugard could hardly believe his ears. Of course he was delighted to oblige.

\* \* \*

(Belgian Congo) It was this majestic self-confidence that had kept the shine on Leopold’s armour throughout the last, dangerous phase of the Scramble. Only once, in 1895–1896, had the armour

shown a conspicuous dent. There was the unfortunate business of the British trader, Charles Stokes, who had insisted on selling Congolese ivory to German East Africa, and German guns to the Congolese. In January 1895 he was caught gun-running in the Congo, then tried and hanged by a Belgian officer, Captain Lothaire. The story of the hanging had somehow slipped into the English newspapers and there had been a fine hullabaloo. Salisbury's government protested about legal irregularities. As a result, Captain Lothaire had to endure three trials himself. He was conveniently acquitted, through lack of State evidence, and promoted director of the main concessionary company in the Congo. Leopold found the whole business distasteful. He had no wish to publicize the rough-and-ready way in which justice was dispensed on the Congo's eastern front and he took steps to protect the good name of the Congo. He set up a commission to investigate human rights with some well-known people that apparently never made any report.

## Summary in Polish

### Charles Stokes - Irlandczyk w jądrze ciemności

Po lekturze artykułu autorstwa Paula Taylora „A Difficult Friendship, Joseph Conrad Korzeniowski and Roger Casement” (*Irish Polish Society Yearbook*, Vol. IV 2017) uważny czytelnik odnaleźć może inne polsko-irlandzkie prawdopodobne źródło inspiracji dla postaci Kurtza w „The Heart of Darkness”. Charles Stokes (1852–1895) urodził się w Dublinie w rodzinie Johna i Louoise (z domu Wherland) o długiej tradycji kupieckiej. Kiedy ojciec dostał posadę inżyniera na kolei, rodzina przeprowadziła się do Enniskillen. Po śmierci ojca w 1872 wdowa przeprowadziła się wraz z rodziną do Liverpoolu. Przez krótki czas Stokes pracował jako urzędnik zajmujący się wysyłką, a następnie wstąpił do Kościelnego Zgromadzenia Misyjnego (CMS). W 1878 r. wysłano go do Zanzibaru, gdzie wkrótce sprawdził się jako utalentowany organizator karawany wielbłądów, zaopatrujących odległe stacje misyjne w Brytyjskiej Afryce Wschodniej. W 1882 r. poślubił pielęgniarkę z CMS Ellen Sharrott. Jednak rok później wydarzyła się tragedia: żona zmarła w następstwie komplikacji porodowych, wydając na świat córkę. Wówczas Stokes porzucił CMS i zajął się handlem kością słoniową i bronią. Zajmował się również franszyzą transportową dla niemieckich kolonii w Tanganice i Ruandzie-Urundi. Został ekskomunikowany po tym, jak poślubił

Limi, artystokratyczną krewną szefa klanu Wanyamwesi, który dostarczał pracowników do karawany. W 1890 r. przybył do Mengo (Kampala) na swoim statku parowym „Lake Victoria” wyposażonym w broń i proch w środku wojny pomiędzy trzema zwaśnionymi stronami walczącymi o sukcesję do tronu króla Bugandy: katolikami, protestantami i frakcjami islamskimi. Po ciężkich negocjacjach z Frederikiem Lugardem, reprezentującym Brytyjską Kompanię Wschodnioafrykańską (późniejszy Protektorat Ugandy) i wspierającym frakcję protestancką, Stoke „pożyczył” mu towar, przyczyniając się do zwycięstwa protestantów. W podziękowaniu nowy król podarował Stokesowi księżniczkę Nanjalę i jej służącą Zarię. Później miał z nią dzieci. Syn Nanjaly, Charles Kajaja, po odbyciu szkolenia medycznego w Szkocji powrócił do Ugandy i założył pierwsze laboratorium transfuzji krwi. W 1894 r. Stokes przeprowadził dużą ekspedycję handlową do północno-wschodniego Konga, która naruszyła politykę króla Leopolda nakazującą prowadzenie eksportu kości słoniowej przez porty atlantyckie, a nie tradycyjnymi arabsko-suahilijskimi szlakami przez Zanzibar. Miało to miejsce po belgijskim zwycięstwie w wojnie belgo-arabskiej (1892–1894). Ponieważ był również podejrzany o przemyt broni, został aresztowany przez kapitana Lothaire'a, który natychmiast postawił go przed sądem wojennym i uznał go za winnego przemytu, a następnie skazał na karę śmierci. Egzekucja odbyła się najszybciej rano przez powieszenie na drzewie. Wydarzenie to odbiło się głośnym echem w Anglii i pod wpływem presji społecznej rząd angielski – który raczej wolałby tę sprawę zamieść pod dywan ze względu na podejrzane interesy Stokesa – postanowił zająć się królem Leopoldem. Wytoczono kilka procesów przeciwko Lothaire'owi, które doprowadziły donikąd z powodu braku dowodów i ostatecznie Lothaire otrzymał awans. Jednakże pod wpływem interwencji królowej Wiktorii król Leopold zapłacił, choć niechętnie, 8000 funtów rekompensaty dla rządu brytyjskiego i niemieckiego. Komisja dochodzeniowa króla Leopolda powołana do badania sprawy jego prywatnego imperium była jedynie kampanią promocyjną, która wkrótce szybko umilkła i nikt już o niej nie słyszał. Epizod ten przyczynił się do nasilenia ruchu przeciwko jego autokratycznym i despotycznym rządów, które w konsekwencji doprowadziły do powstania raportu Casementa ujawniającego nadużycia króla. Warto dodać, iż nie ma się co dziwić Brytyjczykom, którzy oskarżyli Casementa o wtrącanie się do śledztwa, gdyż wówczas te dwa kraje zawarły sojusz w wojnie przeciwko Niemcom. Był to nagły zwrot od przyjaznej polityki współpracujących ze sobą trzech państw, które w roku 1911 powołały Komisję ds. Granic, by sfinalizować granice między Kongiem, Ruandą i Ugandą. Sytuacja ta trwała do 1918 r., kiedy Brytyjczycy dokonali próby aneksji Ruandy-Urundi i odbicia jej z rąk Niemców, pomimo tego, iż kraj został wcześniej podbity przez wojska belgijskie w 1916 r. Doprowadziło to do ostatecznej klęski niemieckich wojsk w Tanganice.

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Maciej BOGDALCZYK

## Andrzej Wejchert. A Polish Architect in Ireland

**Abstract:** Andrzej Wejchert – born 21.05.1937, died 12.05.2009, Killiney (Dublin). He graduated with honors from the Faculty of Architecture at the Warsaw University of Technology. Started his professional practice in the Urban Design Office in Warsaw. Took part in many design contests. In 1964 he was the winner of an international competition for the design of a new campus for art edifice, administration and the Aula Maxima of the University College in Dublin (UCD), Ireland.

**Keywords:** Andrzej Wejchert, Danuta Wejchert, Polish architect, Poles in Ireland, Belfield UCD Campus.

### Introduction

It is time to shed new light – and this is what the author hopes to accomplish – on Andrzej Wejchert, the outstanding Polish architect who, thanks to his talent, knowledge and skills, decorated many projects in Ireland and Poland at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century<sup>1</sup>. However, let us not start from the end – from the great success that the representative of the Polish architectural school in Ireland achieved. Every success is paid for by perseverance and hard work, patience as well as a reliability in the fulfilling of professional duties. Undoubtedly, the profession of an architect must go hand in hand with the development of a man. A man who is mature and aware of the challenges in the professional field as well as in private life. Architecture as art stretches back to ancient Greece in the classic canon of truth, goodness and beauty.

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<sup>1</sup> Article translated from Polish by Tomasz Podstawski; <http://salientify.com/>

While philosophers were seeking for the truth about the world and the good (Plato), artists-architects were focused on what was beautiful and functional. The ancient monuments of culture confirm the ancient Greeks' love of beauty, even though their full splendor has been diminished by time. Architects are also philosophers. The knowledge of proportions, mathematics and harmony made them highly meditative. They had to look for the answer to the question of where the idea of proportion comes from, whether man created it or rather it was given to him. It should also be mentioned that architecture and its form often surrounded buildings whose essence was cult (Acropolis, Parthenon or Erechtheum). Was this the source of architect Andrzej Wejchert's inspiration? Was the knowledge that he had acquired 2,000 km from Dublin, in Poland, applicable in Ireland? And do the completed projects, in addition to "pleasing the eye", still inspire further research of what is beautiful and, at the same time, useful in architecture?

## **The beginnings of his career**

We shall therefore capture the beginning of Andrzej Wejchert's life and career. The Polish architect was born in times difficult for Poland: just before the Second World War, in Gdansk, in 1937, when, due to the escalating Polish-German conflict, the prospect of a joyful childhood was very uncertain.

Andrzej Wejchert graduated with honours from the Faculty of Architecture of the Warsaw University of Technology in 1962. Also in Warsaw, in the Municipal Design Office, he started his professional practice. During his professional activity, he participated in many design competitions. In 1964, an international design competition for the new campus of University College in Dublin was announced. The project included buildings for the Aula Maxima and administration buildings. Andrzej Wejchert won the competition and, as the designer of the project, came to Dublin in 1964 to not only receive the prize, but also to oversee the project. The news of the prize did not convince the Polish architect. Only the second telegram urging him to come to Dublin dispelled the doubts. The journey to Dublin

itself was very spontaneous. A one-way ticket. Insufficient funds to come to Dublin with additional luggage and clothes. A big surprise for the authorities of UCD was the fact that Andrzej Wejchert, despite his young age, with little experience, after graduating only two years earlier, won such a prestigious international architectural competition (A&D Wejcherts and Partners, p. 9). Undoubtedly, Andrzej's wife, Danuta Korhaus, was a valuable support in his professional and personal life. Danuta Wejchert, born in 1938 in Lwów – also a difficult time for Poland and an unfriendly place – understood her future husband very well probably thanks to their common experiences.

## **In Dublin**

The Belfield campus is characterized by a linear development of connections between the different buildings. Educational and administrative facilities are separated by a distance of about 500 m, so that a person can quickly, in about 6 minutes, move from one building to another. Communication is also made easier by bridges connecting the buildings. After arriving to Ireland and completing the winning project, Andrzej Wejchert fully started his career as an architect. In 1974, together with his wife and local architects, he founded his own architectural company under the name “Andrzej and Danuta Wejchert and Partners”. A&D Wejchert has also created projects for several other educational institutions, including Dublin City University, University College Cork, University College Dublin, University of Limerick and Waterford Institute of Technology.

The fame achieved by winning the aforementioned international competition for the UCD buildings made it possible to work independently and thus to have further successes. The subject of Wejchert studio's projects were buildings not only for educational purposes, but also for those associated with economics or even health care. The famous reinforced concrete water tower with an artificial lake was also noticed. Winning competitions for the design of administrative buildings and the sports centre brought further distinctions. Another successful competition for adapting the

entrance to the Aillwee Cave in Western Ireland, which combined natural environment with modern technical solutions, made Andrzej Wejchert's career and the development of the "Andrzej & Danuta Wejchert and Partners Architects" gained even more momentum. A number of successful competitions for educational as well as sacral buildings not only confirmed the reputation of the studio, but also made architect Andrzej Wejchert an important and renowned figure in the world of architecture. Andrzej Wejchert's architectural studio has been successful in more than 46 countries, overtaking in terms of design more than 126 participants of various competitions (A&D Wejchert and Partners: 9).

Many of the Polish architect's projects were characterized by their lightness of construction and the use of natural light – thanks to the wide use of glass as a construction material illuminating the internal spaces of the designed buildings. The role of Danuta in Andrzej Wejchert's life and his work became evident in the project of the psychiatric hospital in Naas. Danuta's experience gained in Poland, where she was involved in construction projects related to health care, undoubtedly contributed to the success of this project. The idea of referring to the functional layout of a hospital and to the typical triangular roof style of the Naas area confirmed the high level of projects combining functionalism with elements of the local architectural style. This assumption means that the projects are naturally recognized as suitable for a given site. Despite the obvious and natural exchange of ideas in the team, in this case we can speak of Danuta Wejchert's own project management (*principal architect*), as in the case of most health care facilities. A lot of experience, originating from the Biuro Projektów Służby Zdrowia (Health Care Design Office) in Warsaw, proved useful here. A similar solution was applied in the design of the Holy Trinity Church, where three Divine Persons – an important dogma of the Christian faith – are presented as a triangle in the structure of the sacred body. Apart from these projects, the studio was also interested in revitalization projects of old post-industrial sites now used for housing purposes. The above idea of adaptation to the changing economic conditions and the needs of the population emerged in the Dublin district

of Smithfield, where the old chimney was adapted for a viewing platform, and industrial buildings for housing as well as a cultural and entertainment centre. The project involved the conversion of a former whiskey distillery into apartments and a cultural and entertainment centre for the modern city. The skillful adaptation to the new needs of the old historic elements – including the chimney, which today serves as a viewing platform – still makes a great impression.

A number of buildings for educational, health care, commercial, workplace, and daily living purposes, as well as sacral and leisure facilities and places, demonstrate the extraordinary talent and skills of the Polish architect.

## **The Style**

History came to a close circle when the fame of Polish architects reached Poland after the 1989 transformation. Andrzej Wejchert's studio was asked to design modern buildings for the dynamically developing and changing Warsaw. Projects of Sobański Palace or Media Business Centre – ITI were also noticed and awarded in the country where the Wejchert couple started their architectural adventure.

The architectural style of Andrzej Wejchert clearly fits into architectural individualism as a style that does not have to succumb to the spirit of the times or technical progress. Architecture in this case refers more to the context, often regional or historical, to the functions of a given project and to the preferences of the investor and the architect. In this approach to architectural art, contrary to modernism, there is a discovery that tradition is an inexhaustible source of inspiration and motivation for specific projects placed in a specific reality. Symbolism, ornament or symmetry are restored to grace. This means that the designed buildings are given an individual and unique character. Despite the use of traditional forms of expression through individual design, a defined architectural result is achieved. Urban planning shaped traditionally over hundreds of years has an important value. The layout of objects and details have a deep sense and meaning.

The architecture of Andrzej Wejchert's style is characterized by a pluralism of the means of expression and complexity. It often eclectically refers to previous historical forms of expression, is decorative, and the façade of objects is treated as a garment, clothing for people. The approach of A&D Wejchert to the understanding of architecture focuses intensively on the use of modern technologies as a structural element of the building, as well as in the layout of the interior furnishings. Sometimes some technical elements, such as blinds or solar batteries, are treated as a building ornament. The effect of surprise, irony or even absurdity is the means of expression of this style. The style does not have a pattern as such, but only freely refers to the pattern, which makes the memory of the participant/observer in the architecture come alive. It should be emphasized that this approach combines elements of a borrowed pattern embedded in culture with the architect's own views and the final function of a given building.

The return to archetypes, forgotten architectural patterns and traditional building materials constituting the basis for the projects, made Andrzej Wejchert's projects meet the expectations in the public perception. Moreover, the diversity of forms used during the design process gave rise to a more adaptive use of space for the needs of the local community. The only thing Andrzej Wejchert's style preserved from modernism is the widespread use of greenery as an element of nature on the designed objects. Plants not only provided protection against strong winds in Ireland, but were also an important decorative and compositional element. In addition, the greenery marked out communication, walking and road routes and constituted a soundproof protective screen separating roads from pedestrian crossings. The characteristics of the greenery material make it an ideal, because easy to shape, diverse, interesting – because it changes in time – element of streets, squares as well as buildings. Plants present on a large scale on the Campus in Belfield intensify the social life of the students. The didactic and educational function of greenery, in addition to the aforementioned ecological and architectural ones, is indisputable. Green areas are conducive to relaxation, establishing contacts between people, alleviate stress

and emotions caused by everyday activities. Greenery at institutions such as hospitals and sanatoriums, apart from its health functions, has a positive impact on the psyche of patients, supporting the healing and rehabilitation process. Green areas together with sports facilities allow for comprehensive satisfaction of needs, practicing various forms of rest and recreation, especially the very popular in Ireland Gaelic football and related field sports.

Undoubtedly, Andrzej Wejchert represented his own design style in which his projects meet their goals and expectations resulting from everyday life of the local community. According to this vision, the architecture of the buildings began to be based on surprising, absurd solutions, contradictions and playing with conventions. To this day, the richness of form and its complexity are enthralling. These are not strictly modern constructions, because this style freely reaches for architectural elements of the past and combines them with contemporary visions. The buildings are full of ornaments, symbols and symmetries.

The Sobański Palace in Warsaw is a perfect example. In Andrzej Wejchert & Partners' project, it was awarded three times, receiving the following awards and nominations: the award of the Minister of Culture and National Heritage for the best modernization of a historic building 1989–1999; nomination for the main prize in the category of public buildings: nationwide edition 1989–1999; and the award for the best building in Warsaw in the category of public buildings 1989–1999. The opinion of the jury deciding on the ministerial award was clear:

*It is an accompanying kind of building, but nevertheless present, discreet, elegant. The prize was awarded for a masterful combination of high-tech architecture of the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century with a historic palace complex, creating a new spatial and artistic value which multiplies beneficially; creative transformation and adjustment of the historic palace residence to new business and commercial functions; high architectural culture, expressed in appropriate decisions of the architect: from the overall idea of spatial and*

*functional adaptation and extension of the palace complex to the selection of interior finishing details.*

Sobański Palace is a historic residence in a picturesque garden, located at the Royal Route, in Ujazdów Avenues – the most representative street in Warsaw. It houses a restaurant open to guests and the Polish Business Roundtable Club. In the Crystal Room of the Sobański Palace, significant balls of pre-war Warsaw took place. The present shape of the Palace is due to Countess Emilia Sobańska (Łubieńska), who decided to rebuild the Renaissance villa designed by Leonard Marconi in 1876. The famous architect placed in front of the building a copy of the statue of David made by one of the most outstanding sculptors of the Italian Renaissance – Donatello. The sculpture standing in the garden in front of the palace symbolizes victory, courage and ingenuity. The architect's work on the Sobański Palace resulted also in the addition of an office building on the site of the former annex. This aroused considerable controversy, as the building was planned to be very modern. The building was separated from the guardhouse by a glass connection. On the other hand, the aluminum-glass façade with external blinds clearly stands out from the historic substance.

Wejchert's flagship project was a shopping centre in north-west Dublin. The centre was to be strongly combined with the surrounding green areas, regional technical college, office buildings, library, art centre, service buildings and hotels. The whole area covered 40 hectares. The shopping centre itself had 120 shops, many restaurants and a multiplex cinema with nine screens. It should also be added that the project included a comfortable and large car park, which was essential for the functioning of the facility. The use of materials such as brick or visible steel constructions combined with a geometric layout present in small forms of expression make the object human-friendly and 'easily familiar' for the average observer. Bright interiors, created by extensive natural light and the use of ceramics and stone in finishing works, make the object architecturally accessible to the user. Even today, the fruitful development of the Blanchardstown Shopping Centre project owes

its dynamism and ingenuity to Andrzej Wejchert. The development, which started in 1972, was the result of an urban recommendation from 1960. The facilities are located in a place inhabited by the population of 120,000. Urban data is still impressive today: 15 million visitors, free parking for 7,000 cars, 20 restaurants, more than 600 buses connecting this district of Dublin with other parts of the city every day.

The design of the Holy Trinity Church in Donaghmede, mentioned previously, is a noteworthy example of sacral architecture. One of the objectives of the project was to shorten the physical distance between liturgy participants and those who perform liturgical acts. Easy access to the altar made the church more open to those who attended the mass. The dynamic and sharp design forms of the top of the roof clearly and visibly indicate the unique system set in the shape of a cross. The arrangement of geometrically mounted and glazed triangles on top of the church provides sufficient natural light. The four entrances to the church, symbolizing the four sides of the world, also make the church open to every human being. The church is erected on a cross plan, which, connecting with the pattern of the cross on the vault, reflects the symbolic meaning of the truth of the Christian faith, according to which the cross of Christ connects heaven with the earth and with all people.

## **Andrzej & Danuta Wejchertowie**

“Andrzej & Danuta Wejchert, architects”, founded in 1974, was later joined by local architects, which resulted in a company called “Andrzej & Danuta Wejchert and Partners Architects”. The opportunities for independent work stem not only from winning an international competition, but also from further successes, such as the Gold Medal of the Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland (RIAI) for the administrative building at the university (1972) and the sports centre (1981). The ferroconcrete water tower, a favourite of its creators, brings another award, this time from the Irish Concrete Society (1979). Another RIAI award, as well as a number of others – including Europa Nostra – is brought also by the completion of

the original entrance to the Aillwee Cave in Western Ireland (1979), which in an extraordinary cultural way introduces the essential elements of technology into the natural environment. Successive competitions also bring further interesting technical solutions, such as schools in Ballincollig (1976) and Ballynanty (1978), the bodies of which were made of plastics. There are also new proposals for the spatial design of schools, which are being developed in further projects in Dalkey (1984), Brookfield (1985), Finglas (1986) and Blessington (1987). Exceptionally interesting are the churches built by this studio, such as the twice-mentioned Church of the Holy Trinity in Dublin (1978), in Bloomington (ca. 1980) or in Cork (1992). The mortal remains of Andrzej Wejchert and his wife are buried in the southern Dublin Shanganagh Cemetery (row 10, plot 44).

Full Polish version of the article on page 89.

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Hanna DOWLING

### Opowieść o latach minionych. Wspomnienie o Janie Kamińskim i jego rodzinnym Biłgoraju

**Abstrakt:** Jan Kamiński był jednym z założycieli Towarzystwa Irlandzko-Polskiego w 1979 roku i jego pierwszym prezesem. Jan Kamiński pochodził z Biłgoraja, z rodziny żydowskiej. Ukrywając swoją tożsamość jako dziecko żydowskie i sierota, udało mu się niemal cudem przeżyć okupację niemiecką w Polsce. Dopiero po wielu latach opowiedział swoją niesamowitą historię wojenną i ujawnił prawdziwe imię i nazwisko: Chaim Zybner. Podkreślał wielokrotnie, że zawsze czuł się Polakiem. Miał irlandzkie obywatelstwo, ale mając prawie 80 lat zaczął starać się o polski dokument tożsamości. 28 maja 2013 roku miała miejsce specjalna uroczystość w Ambasadzie RP w Dublinie, podczas której otrzymał potwierdzenie polskiego obywatelstwa. Przed przyjazdem na studia do Irlandii Jan opowiedział jednej tylko osobie swoją „żydowską historię”. Osobą tą był polski ksiądz katolicki obrządku greckiego (bizantyjskiego) – O. Krauze, który Jana ochrzcił. Jan Kamiński był zaangażowany w działalność Towarzystwa Irlandzko-Polskiego do roku 2014/15, gdy poważnie zachorował. Sponsorował wiele wydarzeń Towarzystwa. W maju 2014 r. z rąk ambasadora RP Marcina Nawrota otrzymał medal *Pro Memoria* nadawany za szczególne zasługi w utrwalaniu pamięci o ludziach i ich czynach w walce o niepodległość podczas II wojny światowej i po jej zakończeniu.

**Słowa kluczowe:** Jan Kamiński, Towarzystwo Irlandzko-Polskie, *Sztetł* Biłgoraj, polscy Żydzi, Polonia w Irlandii, Concord Travel, Dom Polski w Dublinie.

### Rok 1979

40-lecie Towarzystwa Irlandzko-Polskiego przypomina mi mój pierwszy przyjazd do Irlandii. Było to we wrześniu 1979. Wcale nie

wiedziałam, że miał tu wtedy być papież Jan Paweł II. Przyjechałam razem z Philipem (moim mężem), wracaliśmy samochodem z Jugosławii, gdzie on wtedy pracował. Byliśmy na miejscu 23 września. Irlandia z entuzjazmem przygotowywała się do papieskiej wizyty i była wiadomość w prasie, że papież będzie mieć spotkanie z polską społecznością. Philip gdzieś tam zadzwonił i załatwił dla mnie przepustkę na to spotkanie. Odkryło się 30 września w Nuncjaturze Apostolskiej w Dublinie. Wyruszyłam na to spotkanie przed 6-tą rano. Wtedy po raz pierwszy miałam okazję spotkać irlandzką Polonię, ale zapamiętałam tylko dwie osoby: Macieja Smoleńskiego – bo ćwiczył z nami śpiewy, którymi mieliśmy powitać papieża, i Jana Kamińskiego, który podczas spotkania Jana Pawła II z polską społecznością, przemawiał w imieniu irlandzkiej Polonii. Jego przemówienie nagrałam na taśmę, którą mam do dziś. W 1979 roku Jan Kamiński był prezesem Towarzystwa Irlandzko-Polskiego, które wtedy powstało. W załączkach Towarzystwo istniało już wcześniej, ale bodźcem do jego formalnego założenia była właśnie wizyta w Irlandii papieża-Polaka.

## **Na emeryturze**

Osiedliśmy z mężem w Dublinie w 1980 roku. Byłam na kilku zebraniach Towarzystwa Irlandzko-Polskiego, ale początkowo nie angażowałam się w żadną działalność, jaką Towarzystwo prowadziło. To nastąpiło znacznie później. Jana Kamińskiego widywałam sporadycznie, najczęściej w jego biurze Concorde Travel. Spotykałam go podczas niektórych imprez organizowanych przez Towarzystwo, ale bliżej poznaliśmy się i zaprzyjaźniliśmy dosyć późno, gdy on już przechodził na emeryturę. Miał ponad 70 lat, gdy sprzedał swoje świetnie prosperujące biuro podróży, ale był nadal pełen energii i wcale nie zamierzał przejść „w stan spoczynku”. Prowadził jakieś swoje biznesy, a jednocześnie bardzo aktywnie włączył się do działania na rzecz Towarzystwa Irlandzko-Polskiego. W latach 2006–2007 i 2007–2008 pełnił funkcję wiceprezesa Towarzystwa. To było już po wejściu Polski do UE, gdy do Irlandii – całkiem nieoczekiwanie – zaczęła przybywać masa Polaków. Jan uważał, że Towarzy-

stwo powinno się aktywniej angażować na rzecz tych nowych Polaków i miał nawet różne plany, jak zamienić dom na Fitzwilliam Place w prawdziwe centrum irlandzkiej Polonii. Przygotował cały projekt i nawet kontaktował się w tej sprawie ze znanym adwokatem. Dwa razy zabrał mnie na konsultacje z tym prawnikiem. Był zaangażowany w organizowanie ważnych imprez Towarzystwa. W roku 2009 sponsorował pierwszą dużą wystawę *IPS Art Exhibition*, zorganizowaną z okazji obchodów 30-lecia Towarzystwa. Wystawa miała miejsce w gmachu *City Council* Dublina, a swoje prace wystawiło 15 artystów. Wspólnie z Maciejem Smoleńskim Jan był organizatorem kilku wyjazdów turystycznych do Polski, połączonych z koncertami.

Niezapomniany był weekend Towarzystwa Irlandzko-Polskiego w Warszawie 16–18 listopada 2007 roku. W programie weekendu był świetny koncert w sali „Podchorążówki” (Muzeum Wychodźstwa Polskiego im. I. J. Paderewskiego), w warszawskim Parku Łazienkowskim. Był to koncert pieśni i piosenek różnych narodów, a wykonawcami byli Maciej Smoleński – bas baryton, i sopranistka Gráinne Thomas, uczennica Macieja w Royal Irish Academy of Music. Akompaniowała pianistka Rosemary Hill. Współorganizatorem imprezy było Towarzystwo Polsko-Irlandzkie z Poznania. Ambasador Republiki Irlandii Declan O'Donovan objął patronat honorowy. Po koncercie wszyscy byli na przyjęciu w warszawskiej rezydencji ambasadora.

Jan jeździł dosyć często do Polski, gdzie prowadził jakąś swoją działalność biznesową, obserwując jednocześnie zachodzące w Polsce zmiany społeczno-ekonomiczne. Były to czasy „celtyckiego tygrysa” i w Polsce powstał niemal mit Irlandii i jej gospodarczego sukcesu. Mówiło się, że zrobimy z Polski drugą Irlandię! Będąc w Krakowie w latach 2006–2007, Jan nawiązał kontakt ze stowarzyszeniem o nazwie Akademia Szkoleń i Kompetencji – organizacją pozarządową, która prowadziła kursy dla pracowników urzędów zatrudnienia, samorządów i administracji publicznej. Dla kursantów tej Akademii Jan zorganizował wycieczkę edukacyjno-turystyczną do Irlandii. Wzięli w niej udział pracownicy PSZ (Publiczne Służby Zatrudnienia) z różnych części Polski. Stopa bezro-

bocia w Polsce była wtedy dosyć wysoka. Uczestników tej wyprawy interesowały doświadczenia Irlandii w polityce rynku pracy, funkcjonowanie agencji i służb zatrudnienia, rozwój przedsiębiorczości i rola instytucji unijnych w tej dziedzinie. Jan zorganizował spotkania z pracownikami FAS (Training and Employment Authority) w kilku różnych rejonach kraju. W Domu Polskim odbył się wykład szkoleniowy. Nie zabrakło też turystyki – było zwiedzanie Dublina, Newgrange i Monasterboice. Miałam przyjemność pomagać Janowi podczas tego ciekawego przedsięwzięcia.

Był okres, kiedy Jan często się ze mną spotykał. Mieszkam dosyć blisko Clonskeagh, gdzie on miał swój dom, okazały Roebuck Manor. Czasem spotykaliśmy się na kawie w pubie Goat, bo to było „w połowie drogi” między naszymi domostwami. Dyskutowaliśmy na różne tematy. Nigdy nie wspomniał o swoich żydowskich korzeniach. Nie miał semickiego wyglądu, mówił biegle po polsku, bez „żydowskiego” akcentu. Pamiętam, jak spotkaliśmy się z dziennikarką, która pisała do polskiej prasy o irlandzkiej Polonii – było to w sierpniu 2007 roku. Na spotkaniu na Fitzwilliam Place, które trwało ponad cztery godziny, był wtedy Jan Kamiński, jego bliski przyjaciel Artur Tyszkiewicz, Maciej Smoleński i ja. W miłej atmosferze rozmawiało się m.in. o naszej przeszłości i o tym jak znaleźliśmy się w Irlandii. Jan unikał tematu wojny. Powiedział tylko, że wtedy trzeba było stale uciekać, a on był jak futbolowa piłka „kopany z miejsca na miejsce” – z Lublina do Niemiec, przez Austrię do Włoch, a potem do Anglii. „Dopiero w Irlandii zaczęło się moje prawdziwe życie” – mówił.

Opowiadał dużo o swoich pierwszych sukcesach w Irlandii. O tym, jak po studiach w Trinity College za pożyczone pieniądze kupił podupadłą nocną restaurację i zamienił ją w pierwszy Steak House w Irlandii. I jak otworzył klub nocny przy Baggot Street, przerebiony ze starej stajni. „Szalone lata, klub nie miał licencji na alkohol, który i tak lał się litrami”. Artur Tyszkiewicz dodał, że z Janem poznali się w Szkocji, ale „kto by dokładnie wszystko pamiętał – bo życie nas rzucało... wczoraj człowiek był w Polsce, dziś gdzie indziej...” Sądzę, że Artur wiedział trochę o losach Jana (albo się domyślał). Ale wojennej prawdy oni wtedy nie mówili. Artykuł napisany po tym spotkaniu przez autorkę Dorotę Zdrojewską był opublikowany

w listopadzie 2007. Zatytułowany jest „Droga (nie) usłana różami. Historia irlandzkich Polonusów”. Mam jego kopię.

Byłam pod wielkim wrażeniem, gdy Jan zdecydował podać prawdę o sobie. Postanowiłam o tym napisać. Prowadziliśmy długie rozmowy. Robiłam porządny „research” przez kilka miesięcy, kwerendę biblioteczną w Polsce. Jan wielu szczegółów nie mógł sobie przypomnieć (np. nie był pewien, gdzie wyciągnięto go z pociągu – czy to były Kielce czy Siedlce? Sprawdziłam dokładnie, jak przewożono dzieci zamojszczyzny – trasę i gdzie zatrzymywano pociąg – stąd wiem, że to były Siedlce).

Jan pochodził z Biłgoraja, a to miasteczko był to typowy *SZTETŁ* – małe skupisko miejskie, zdominowane przez społeczność żydowską o tradycyjnej obyczajowości. Wspominając Jana, warto podać trochę informacji o Żydach Biłgoraja.

## **Biłgoraj**

Biłgoraj to niewielkie miasto położone w południowo-wschodniej Polsce, dosyć blisko granicy z Ukrainą. Przed drugą wojną światową Biłgoraj znajdował się w środkowej części Polski (południowo-środkowej) – w 1945 roku granice Polski zostały przesunięte o około 300 km na zachód.

Początki Biłgoraja sięgają XVI wieku. Przez setki lat Biłgoraj był licznie zamieszkiwany przez Żydów. Pierwsi przybyli do Biłgoraja około 1580 roku, zaproszeni przez polskiego króla, by rozwinąć handel. Tuż przed wybuchem wojny w 1939 roku Żydzi stanowili ponad 60% mieszkańców miasta. Zajmowali się głównie handlem i rzemiosłem. Byli właścicielami większości sklepów. W 1778 roku zbudowano bóżnicę, która w latach 70. XIX wieku została rozebrana i na jej miejsce wzniesiona została duża, murowana synagoga. Od 1909 roku funkcjonowała żydowska drukarnia i do wybuchu wojny 1939 r. drukowano w Biłgoraju książki w językach hebrajskim i jidysz. Były w Biłgoraju żydowskie banki, instytucje kulturalne i charytatywne, szkoły (również jesziwa – wyższa szkoła talmudyczna), związki zawodowe. Były równe prawa dla ludności żydowskiej, panowała tolerancja i antysemityzmu się tam raczej nie spotykało.

Żydzi mieszkali przeważnie w centrum miasta, w okolicach rynku. Było to jednak bardzo biedne i gospodarczo zacofane miasto. Zabudowa miasta była uboga, większość budynków to były drewniane parterowe domki (często z charakterystycznym podcieniem).

Druga wojna światowa rozpoczęła się w Biłgoraju bombardowaniem miasta 8 września 1939 roku. 11 września Niemcy dywersanci wywołali ogromny pożar, została spalona synagoga oraz pobliska dzielnica żydowska. Drugie olbrzymie bombardowanie Luftwaffe miało miejsce 14 września. 15 i 16 września trwała bitwa o Biłgoraj. 17 września wojska niemieckie zajęły miasto. 28 września weszły wojska radzieckie, po krótkim czasie wycofały się zgodnie z porozumieniem z Niemcami (według paktu Ribbentrop-Mołotow powiat biłgorajski miał być wcielony do ZSRR, ale po małej „poprawce granic” przekazano go Niemcom). Biłgoraj znalazł się pod okupacją niemiecką, włączony do tzw. Generalnego Gubernatorstwa (GG). Około 20% biłgorajskich Żydów uciekło do ZSRR z wycofującym się radzieckim wojskiem. Działania wojenne we wrześniu 1939, bomby i pożary zrujnowały Biłgoraj. 80% zabudowy centrum miasta uległo zniszczeniu. Wielu mieszkańców straciło domy. Zapanowała bieda. Niemcy wprowadzili racjonowanie żywności. Szczególne restrykcje objęły ludność żydowską. Utworzony został Judenrat. Żydom wydano nakaz noszenia na ramieniu opaski z gwiazdą Dawida, rejestrację całego majątku, zakaz uczęszczania do większości miejsc publicznych i kultywowania tradycyjnych obyczajów. Dzieciom żydowskim zakazano chodzić do szkoły. Żydzi otrzymywali mniejsze racje żywności i byli zmuszani do ciężkich robót drogowych. W 1940 roku utworzono tzw. małe getto przy ulicy 3 Maja (początkowo pozwalano mieszkańcom getta wychodzić w określonych godzinach). Wkrótce rozpoczęła się eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej. Były łapanie, aresztowania, masowe egzekucje, deportacje do obozów. Ostateczną likwidację biłgorajskich Żydów rozpoczęto 2 listopada 1942 roku. Tego dnia wymordowano około 400 osób, a około 2500 poprowadzono do baraków. Następnego dnia zostali oni popędzeni pieszo do Zwierzyńca (około 21 km), skąd wywieziono ich transportem kolejowym w bydłych wagonach do obozu zagłady w Bełżcu.

Obóz w Bełżcu został założony w ramach tzw. akcji „Reinhard” (plan eksterminacji europejskich Żydów na terenie GG). Był to pierwszy obóz zagłady tej akcji i był obozem eksperymentalnym. Zamordowano w nim blisko 500 tysięcy osób, w tym ok. 1500 Polaków za pomoc udzieloną Żydom. W początkach 1943 roku Niemcy całkowicie zlikwidowali obóz. Rozebrano baraki, teren został zniwelowany i obsadzony drzewami iglastymi, aby zamaskować to miejsce. Została zniszczona cała obozowa dokumentacja. Dlatego historia tego obozu jest mało znana.

Według szacunkowych obliczeń 80% Żydów Biłgoraja zabito podczas drugiej wojny światowej. Dwie rodziny przeżyły ukryte przez miejscowego leśnika Jana Mikulskiego.

Z Biłgorajem związany był Isaac Bashevis Singer, laureat literackiej nagrody Nobla za rok 1978. Jego matka Baszewa była córką biłgorajskiego rabina. Przez kilka lat wychowywał się w Biłgoraju i to miasto, jego legendy, podania, przesady i czary miały znaczący wpływ na jego późniejszą twórczość.

Dziś Biłgoraj liczy ponad 27 tysięcy mieszkańców, ale żydowski świat tego miasta zginął na zawsze.

Jan Kamiński zmarł 21 maja 2019 r. po długiej chorobie. Jego żona Margaret zmarła 15 lat przed nim, w lutym 2004 r. Pozostawił dwie córki i syna, ich rodziny, licznych irlandzkich i polskich przyjaciół. Jest pochowany na cmentarzu Mount Jerome w Dublinie.

## Summary in English

The celebration of the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Irish Polish Society foundation reminded me of my first visit to Ireland. It was September 1979 and there was a great excitement as Pope John Paul II was coming to Ireland. The whole of Ireland was preparing for this historical visit. Reading some newspapers I learned that the Pope was to meet with the Polish community, and I got permission to attend this meeting. It took place on the 30<sup>th</sup> of September in the garden of the Apostolic Nunciature. There, for the first time, I met members of the Irish Polish Society, but only two people stuck in my memory – Maciej Smoleński – who was teaching us to sing Polish hymns, and Jan Kamiński who addressed the Pope. I even recorded Jan's and the Pope's addresses on a tape. I still have the tape!

I moved to Ireland with my husband in 1980. Initially I was not very involved with the Irish Polish Society. I would meet Jan occasionally, sometimes it was during Society's events but mainly in the office of his Concorde Travel Agency. We became friends later, when he was to sell his successful travel business and retire. However, being an active personality it was a 'temporary' retirement. He continued some business (mainly in the construction sector in Poland) and he devoted a lot of time to activities in the Irish Polish Society. With Poland's entry to the EU in 2004 a lot of Poles came to Ireland unexpectedly. Jan maintained that the Society did too little in helping the newcomers. He wanted to transform the Polish House into a true centre for the Irish *Polonia*. During the years 2006–2008 he was the Society's vice-chairman. He was involved in organizing various events and sponsored several of them. Together with Maciej Smolenski he organized some trips to Poland which were like escorted tours with concerts. A particularly memorable one was the Irish Polish Society weekend in Warsaw, November 16<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup>, 2007. The highlight of this trip was an Evening of Songs and Ballads which took place in the splendid Łazienki Park in 'Podchorążówka' hall (the former Officer Cadets School, now the Polish Emigration Museum). The performers were: Maciej Smolenski (bass-baritone), Gráinne Thomas (soprano) and Rosemary Hill (piano accompanist). The Ambassador of Ireland to Poland, HE Declan O'Donovan, was the honorary patron of this concert and after the performance we were all invited to his Warsaw residence for a reception. Jan also organized a trip to Ireland for a Polish non-governmental association from Krakow (ASiK, *Akademia Szkoleń i Kompetencji*). Polish Public Employment Service and Local Council's employees were participants of the trip. They visited a number of jobs centers run by FÁS (Training and Employment Authority) and an informative lecture with discussion took place in the Polish House. It was at the time of the 'Celtic Tiger' and they were keen to learn how the Irish experience could be helpful to Poland (particularly in the area of job creation, employment services, community-based enterprises, social welfare etc.)

There was a time when I often met Jan. Sometimes it was coffee in the Goat pub – a convenient place halfway between my home and Jan's Roebuck Manor. We discussed various topics. He never said a word about his Jewish background. I was impressed when his extraordinary story of survival in Nazi-occupied Poland appeared on Irish radio. I spent days talking with him, listening to his incredible WW2 saga and asking questions. I also did my own research on wartime in Poland focusing mainly on the Jewish situation in the region of Zamość and Lublin – the part of Poland where Jan came from. His native town was Biłgoraj, a typical Jewish *shtetl* – a small Eastern

European town with a large Jewish population. Before WW2 the population of Biłgoraj was about 8300 of which some 5000 were Jews. It was largely poor working class – traders and craftsmen. WW2 began in Biłgoraj on 8<sup>th</sup> September 1939. On 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> of September the battle against the Nazis took place and the town center was severely destroyed. From October 1939 Biłgoraj became a part of the Nazi-ruled GG (General Government) and the extermination of the Jewish population began. It is estimated that 80% of the Biłgoraj Jews were murdered during WW2 (many in Belżec concentration camp). Two families survived, sheltered during the war by a local forester. Biłgoraj was rebuilt after the war but the 'Jewish world' of this small town was gone forever. Jan Kamiński died on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2019. He is buried in Dublin's Mount Jerome cemetery.

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Katarzyna GMEREK

## Tytus O'Byrn z Irlandki, powstaniec 1863 roku

**Abstrakt:** Tytus O'Byrn (1839–1897), powstaniec styczniowy, potomek irlandzkich emigrantów, tzw. Dzikich Gęsi z hr. Laois, urodził się w majątku Irlandka koło Brześcia Litewskiego (dziś Białoruś, przy granicy z Polską). Posiadłość Irlandka została tak nazwana przez dziadka Tytusa na cześć kraju pochodzenia. Jak wskazuje na to nekrolog Tytusa, dumę z irlandzkiego pochodzenia powstaniec z 1863 r. przekazał także własnym dzieciom. Jego przodek James O'Byrn, syn Sir Gregory Byrne'a z Timogue, był zawodowym oficerem, należącym do Dzikich Gęsi, katolików irlandzkich, politycznych emigrantów, którym brytyjskie Prawa Karne [Penal Laws] uniemożliwiły zarówno posiadanie ziemi, jak i karierę państwową lub wojskową. Był on kapitanem Gwardii Królewskiej Augusta II Wettina, króla Polski i elektora Saksonii. Historia jego przybycia do Polski została udokumentowana dzięki Archiwum Saskiemu w Dreźnie. Ponieważ Sir Gregory walczył w bitwie nad rzeką Boyne, a matka, Lady Alice Fleming, córka Lorda Slane też miała w rodzinie Jakobitów wiele wskazuje na to, że James również służył w jakiś sposób Stuartom, przed przybyciem do Polski, a może także po jej opuszczeniu. Nie ma na ten temat jednak niezbitych dowodów, dysponujemy jedynie poszlakami. James znikł z dokumentów polskich po 1741 r., pozostawił jednak potomstwo, a jego synowie uzyskali indygenat polski w 1766 roku. Tytus O'Byrn spędził dużą część życia poza granicami dawnej Rzeczypospolitej. Jego młodość była pełna przygód. Wykształcenie oficerskie zdobył w Sankt Petersburgu, jednakże jako młody kapitan sztabu opuścił armię rosyjską i przyłączył się do powstania na początku 1863 r. Ranny w bitwie pod koniec roku 1863, opuścił kraj i przebywał na emigracji we Francji, próbował emigrować do Kanady, ale powrócił stamtąd do Paryża. W Paryżu studiował muzykę, lecz także działał w stowarzyszeniach emigracyjnych o profilu demokratycznym. W 1870 r. wziął udział w wojnie francusko-pruskiej, daremnie próbował zorganizować Legion Polski do pomocy Francuzom; prawdopodobnie wskutek nieporozumienia znalazł się później na krótki czas w więzieniu razem ze zwolennikami Komuny Paryskiej. Przeniósł się później do austriackiej części Polski, gdzie do końca życia pracował jako in-

zynier nadzorujący budowę linii kolejowych. Jego postać jest tak słabo znana w Polsce, że wielokrotnie, z powodu podobieństwa nazwisk, niektórzy historycy mylili go z przedstawicielami innej rodziny polskiej pochodzenia irlandzkiego, O'Brienami de Lacy, z którymi nie miał nic wspólnego poza krajem przodków. Autorka niniejszego artykułu ma nadzieję, że uda się jej tę wiedzę choć trochę uzupełnić.

**Słowa kluczowe:** Emigracja irlandzka w Polsce, Irlandczycy w Polsce, jakobici irlandzcy, powstanie styczniowe 1863 r., wojna francusko-pruska.

## Z majątku Irlandka

Artykuł opowiada historię Tytusa O'Byrn (1839–1897), powstańca styczniowego, najbardziej znanego przedstawiciela polskiej rodziny O'Byrn/d'Obyrn, potomków szlachty irlandzkiej pochodzącej z hr. Laois (wcześniej, wg tradycji, z hr. Wicklow). Po śmierci Tytusa jako skromnego inżyniera mieszkającego w Nowym Targu ukazał się nekrolog:

*Ś.p. Tytus O'Byrn (...) jak na to nazwisko jego wskazuje, pochodził z Irlandii, gdzie przed kilku wiekami, według tradycji, rodzina jego była panującą* (Nowa Reforma, 1897 Nr 61: 3).

Jeśli ktoś nie znał Tytusa, mógłby z tego pierwszego zdania nekrologu wywieść mylny wniosek, że zmarły urodził się w Irlandii, a nie w majątku Irlandka koło Brześcia Litewskiego. Informacje powyższe były niewątpliwie przekazywaną z pokolenia na pokolenie historią oralną O'Byrnów, mitem tożsamościowym, odziedziczonym po przodkach.

## Kontrowersje wokół nazwiska O'Byrn vs O'Brien

Wątpliwości pojawiły się najpierw w szacownym dziele S. Zielińskiego *Bitwy i potyczki powstania styczniowego* już w 1913 r. (Zieliński, 1913). Próbował je słusznie wyjaśnić Edward Maliszewski, jednakże głos jego nie został dołyszany (Maliszewski, 1924). Sam Zieliński, Wielkopolanin nie znający terenów dzisiejszej Białorusi, miał wątpliwości, pisząc O'Byrn de Lassy lub O'Brien de Lassy.

Wątpliwości były słuszne. Tytus przez cały okres powstania 1863 występował pod pseudonimem, a służył daleko od rodzinnych stron. Być może niektórym zostało w pamięci, że nosił nazwisko irlandzkie na literę B – znane były u nas tylko O'Byrn i O'Brien. Z tych znacznie bardziej znana była rodzina O'Brien de Lacy z Augustówka koło Grodna – zamożna, często wspominana w gazetach, począwszy od kroniki towarzyskiej po doniesienia o industrializacji i rozwoju rolnictwa (Gmerek, 2015). Historia ich była nieco inna niż O'Byrnów i do Polski przybyli oni później. Maurice de Lacy, z bardzo sławnej rodziny Dzikich Gęsi z zachodniej części Irlandii, być może krewny marszałka Petera de Lacy (Ciesielski, 2012), służył w armii carskiej i po rozbiorach otrzymał od carowej pałacyk Stanisława Augusta pod Grodnem. Nie mając, jak się wydaje, syna, adoptował siostrzeńca, Patricka, który również wstąpił do armii carskiej, a później założył rodzinę pod nowym nazwiskiem O'Brien de Lacy. Żyjąc pośród Polaków, dzieci i wnuki Patricka spolszczyły się, coraz bardziej niechętnie służąc w armii rosyjskiej. Starając się za wszelką cenę utrzymać własność ziemską, O'Brienowie de Lacy nie brali jednak udziału w powstaniach. Nawet Norman Davies, pisząc *Boże Igrzysko*, uległ sugestii niektórych polskich historyków, wspominając „Patryka O'Brien de Lacey”, rzekomego ochotnika irlandzkiego w powstaniu styczniowym, walczącego pod Żyrzynem (chodzi więc na pewno o „Grzymałę”).

## O'Byrnowie polscy

W artykule tym nie ma miejsca na dokładne przedstawienie okoliczności i tła historycznego oraz wszystkich źródeł dotyczących przybycia O'Byrnów do Polski. Autorka zajmuje się badaniami nad tym tematem już od kilku lat i opublikowała jeden artykuł (Gmerek, 2018). Badania są i będą kontynuowane. Tu przedstawione zostaną jedynie najważniejsze wątki robocze prowadzonej kwerendy.

Od lat prowadzone są w Polsce badania nad cudzoziemcami w wojsku Rzeczypospolitej, jednakże Irlandczycy osiedleni w naszym kraju występują w nich raczej na marginesie (Bajer, 2008). Pojejmowano temat Petera de Lacy (Ciesielski, 2012) oraz irlandzkich

oficerów w armii austriackiej prowadzących zaciąg w Polsce (Baczkowski, 2015). Jednakże nie udało się odnaleźć prac dotyczących wyłącznie Irlandczyków w Polsce poza pewną bardzo starą (O'Rourke, 1925). Publikacji irlandzkich na temat jakobitów i emigrantów politycznych jest sporo, jednakże podejmują one głównie tematykę wydarzeń w Irlandii i najbliższych jej krajów zachodnioeuropejskich, do których emigrowało najliczniejsze grono Irlandczyków. Można wymienić będące w otwartym dostępie online dziewiętnastowieczne kompendia takie jak (O'Callaghan, 1867) czy (D'Alton, 1855). Kilka książek o Irlandczykach w dawnej Europie opublikowano w ramach projektu realizowanego w National University of Ireland, Maynooth, *Irish in Europe*. Losami irlandzkich katolików w XVII wieku zajęli się autorzy kompilacji (Power and Whelan ed. 1990). Z perspektywy historyka kultury kwestię jakobitizmu w Irlandii podejmuje praca (Ó Ciardha, 2004). Na temat klanu O'Byrne opublikowano dotychczas cykl książek historyka rodu (Byrne-Rothwell, 2010–2015), któremu jestem wdzięczna za pomoc. Obecnie Daniel Byrne-Rothwell przygotowuje piątą część cyklu, *The Heraldry of the O'Byrnes*, w której po raz pierwszy opisana zostanie polska gałąź rodu i jej herb. Dla potrzeb badań autorka wykonała kwerendy archiwalne i biblioteczne – najważniejsze w Sächsische Hauptstaatsarchiv Dresden oraz w Bibliotece Książąt Czartoryskich w Krakowie; udało się także pozyskać cenne dokumenty z Metryki Litewskiej. Ponadto wykorzystano metryki dostępne online w serwisach genealodzy.pl oraz familysearch.org (Mormonów). Szukanie O'Byrnów wymagało bardzo szerokiej kwerendy metrykalnej obejmującej liczne parafie z rejonów Prużany, Brześcia Litewskiego i Słonimia; prowadzona online, zajęła ona kilka miesięcy. Biorąc pod uwagę warunki prowadzenia badań metodą tradycyjną (mikrofilmy), zajęłaby zapewne lata<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Jestem niezmiernie wdzięczna za pomoc P.J. Piotrowskiemu z Wielunia, który hojnie dzielił się ze mną wiedzą na temat metrykaliów kresowych, a także wspomagał w badaniach.

## Rodzina Byrne z Timogue i Byrnesgrove

Zgodnie z materiałami z Archiwum Saskiego w Dreźnie historia rodu w naszym kraju zaczyna się około 1725, z chwilą kiedy oficer w służbie saskiej zwany Jacques O'Byrn lub d'Obyrn zaczął starać się o pozyskanie regimentu w Polsce (HD, O'Byrn James; O'Byrn John James; Von Flemming Jacob Heinrich. 1725–1726); w tym czasie jego brat John James zmieniał miejsce służby z Hessen-Darmstadt na Saksonię (Garland, 1983; Bergmann, 2016). Może jednak powinniśmy podać wcześniejszą datę 1718 – gdy ich matka, Alice Byrne, z domu Fleming, córka Lorda Slane, napisała w liście do generała saskiego Jacoba Heinricha von Flemming (Vötsch, 2005) prośbę o przyjęcie jednego z jej synów na służbę, najlepiej do katolickiego króla Polski (HD, Byrne, Alice. 1718). W pozyskaniu wsparcia pomogła O'Byrnom mniemana koneksja rodzinna – von Flemming wierzył, że może być spokrewniony z irlandzkimi Flemingami (co raczej nie było prawdą). Alice była, jak wynika z listów, inteligentną i dzielną kobietą, walczącą o lepszą przyszłość dla synów jej zmarłego męża, Gregory Byrne'a z Timogue.

Gregory był weteranem bitwy nad rzeką Boyne, gdzie walczył jako kapitan piechoty (Royal Irish Foot Guard; formacja wślawiła się podobno szarżując szablami na armaty wroga) (O'Callaghan, 1855); później wiele wskazuje na to, że zarówno on, jak i jego małżonka krążyli pomiędzy Irlandią a kontynentem; grób jego nie jest znany. Umierając osierocił sporą gromadkę dzieci, przy czym resztki majątku odziedziczyć mógł tylko najstarszy syn, protestant „dla chleba”. Po roku 1690 wprowadzono w Irlandii prawa dyskryminujące katolików, którzy nie mogli ani dziedziczyć ani dzierżawić ziemi na długi okres, nie mogli też być urzędnikami ani służyć w armii nawet jako szeregowcy. Tzw. Prawa Karne spowodowały masową migrację irlandzkich mężczyzn do różnych armii Europy, a z powodu legendy o powrocie do domu dusz zmarłych jako ptaków nazywano ich Dzikimi Gęsiami. Z rodziny O'Byrnów na pewno odpłynęło na kontynent trzech, „polski” James, jego brat John James, który osiedlił się w Saksonii, oraz Henry, którego los zaprowadził do Portugalii.



Ruiny kompleksu zamkowego Timogue, hr. Laois; dom i wieża.

The ruins of the Timogue Castle, Co. Laois, house and Mill Tower (photo courtesy of K. Gmerek)

Autorka pragnie wyrazić wdzięczność Daniełowi Byrne-Rothwellowi oraz Edwardowi Byrne z Deerfield hr. Carlow za informacje, wsparcie oraz pomoc w dotarciu do niektórych miejsc, gdzie mieszkała rodzina Jamesa O'Byrna. Kompleks dworski Timogue w hr. Laois, należący kiedyś do Sir Greogry'ego jest dziś ruiną, a Byrnes-

grove w hr. Kilkenny, gdzie mieszkał jeden z braci Jamesa, to tylko nazwa na mapie.

James O'Byrn zadomowił się w Polsce szybko, jak wynika z metryk Kościoła Św. Krzyża w Warszawie. Jako oficer królewski brał tam ślub 23.03.1729 z panną o trudnym do odcyfrowania francuskim nazwisku Marianna Durcaux/de Urcant (SK, 9243/D- Unit: 304). Tam chrzcił później dzieci jako kapitan gwardii królewskiej. Znikł z zachowanych dokumentów polskich po 1741 r. Wydaje się, że wszyscy późniejsi O'Byrnowie polscy wywodzą się od jego najstarszego syna Jerzego d'Obyrn (1732–1790), później pułkownika wojsk Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego, który otrzymał indygenat w 1766 (LVIA, ML 190, No 38)<sup>2</sup> – razem z bratem, ks. dr. Jakubem d'Obyrn (1738–1798) („Antonii Onuphrii de Okęcie Okęcki...”, 1917).

## Tytus O'Byrn „Grzymała” (1839–1897)

Rodzina O'Byrnów, począwszy od Jerzego, związana była ze wschodnią częścią dawnej Rzeczypospolitej, być może dlatego że indygenat zobowiązywał do zakupu ziemi, tańszej na wschodzie, a może dzięki protekcji Famillii Czartoryskich, powiązanej z von

<sup>2</sup> Kopię indygenatu z mikrofilmu otrzymałam dzięki uprzejmości dr. Mariusza Machyni, za co bardzo jestem zobowiązana.

Flemmingami. W 1801 r. Jan O'Byrn, prawnuk Jamesa (jego gałąź używała formy O'Byrn, podczas gdy inna, żyjąca do dziś, d'Obyrn) zakupił ziemię na terenach dzisiejszej zachodniej Białorusi (BCzart, „Dokument kupna folwarku Hwoźnica i Brodiatyń...”, 1802). Można się zastanawiać, dlaczego nazwał swój majątek Irlandka. W tym samym roku Irlandia trafiła na łamy gazet polskich z powodu Unii i likwidacji Parlamentu Irlandzkiego, pisano także o Zjednoczonych Irlandczykach. Można spekulować, że O'Byrnowie doszli do wniosku, że „spadli z deszczu pod rynnę”, emigrując z jednego podbitego kraju do innego.

Metryki rzucają ciekawe światło na pochodzenie Tytusa po kądzieli. Urodził się on (LDS, Births 1835–1839) 4 stycznia 1839 r. w Irlandce. W niektórych późniejszych życiorysach wpisywał nazwę miejsca urodzenia Brześć, zapewne dla uniknięcia nieporozumień co do kraju. Ojcem jego był Feliks O'Byrn, syn Jana, a matką Aleksandra Falconi (Falkoni), protestantka córka rosyjskiego oficera pochodzenia holenderskiego (nazwisko to, ani holenderskie, ani rosyjskie, kryje genealogiczną tajemnicę, której na razie nie da się wyjaśnić). Noszący je oficer armii carskiej, inżynier z Bredy znany jest rosyjskim encyklopediom biograficznym („Falkonij, Ivan Ivanovic”, 1901). Zgodnie z prawem tamtych czasów córki Aleksandry były chrzczone i konfirmowały w kościele ewangelickim, zaś synowie byli ochrzczeni po katolicku i tak wychowani. W roku 1850 być może było to powiązane z trudnościami ekonomicznymi i sprzedażą Irlandki. Zaledwie jedenastoletni Tytus wysłany został do Korpusu Kadetów, siedmioletniej publicznej szkoły wojskowej w Petersburgu. Służyło tam wielu Polaków, ponieważ status Ziem Zabrzanych jako terytorium „rdzennie” rosyjskiego nakładał na szlachtę wymóg „dobrowolnej” służby w wojsku dla utrzymania statusu.

Rosyjski słownik uczestników ruchów rewolucyjnych i niepodległościowych wymienia oprócz Tytusa jeszcze dwóch O'Byrnów – Jana, zwolnionego z korpusu kadetów za nieprawomyślne zachowanie w 1859 r., i Karola O'Byrna, podoficera piechoty, którego podejrzewano o udział w jakichś spiskach i z tego powodu przeniesiono do Woroneża w październiku 1861 r. (Diakov, 1967: 125). Nie wiemy, jakie więzy pokrewieństwa łączyły ich z Tytusem (słow-

nik nazywa tylko Tytusa Feliksowiczem i opuszcza *otczestwo* jego krewnych). Przez długi czas mogło się wydawać, że Tytus nie ma nic wspólnego ze swoimi nieprawomyślnymi krewniakami. Był zdolny. Oprócz nauki w szkole oficerskiej musiał jednocześnie uczyć się, być może prywatnie, gry na fortepianie, ponieważ później kontynuował studia muzyczne w Paryżu. Po ukończeniu Korpusu Kadetów przez trzy lata służył jako porucznik w piechocie, po czym dostał się do prestiżowej Akademii Sztabu Generalnego. Ukończył ją w grudniu 1862 r. jako kapitan, wziął urlop – i już z niego nigdy nie powrócił, pomimo że czekało na niego przeniesienie do Sztabu Generalnego.

## 1863

Nie jest jasne, co robił pomiędzy styczniem a majem 1863 r., choć jego nekrolog mówi, że brał udział w powstaniu od samego początku. Pomimo że niektórzy autorzy wierzą, iż służył w oddziale Żuawów Śmierci Rochebruna, nie ma na to dowodów. Żuawi byli jednostką dowodzoną przez byłego żuawa francuskiego. Rochebrune stawiał im wysokie wymagania zawodowe oraz domagał się przysięgi, że nie cofną się ani nie poddadzą. Zasłynęli wielkim męstwem, okupionym dużymi stratami w bitwach; nosili też widowiskowe mundury. Wśród oficerów istotnie był „Grzymała”, co było późniejszym pseudonimem Tytusa, tyle że „Grzymałów” było w 1863 r. więcej i jak na razie nie znaleziono dowodu na tożsamość tego oficera. Oddział przestał istnieć wiosną 1863 r. – skłócony z polskimi władzami powstańczymi Rochebrune wyjechał do Francji w marcu, w tym samym miesiącu po bitwie pod Grochowskimi „Grzymała” wyprowadził do Galicji resztki oddziału. Niedobitki żuawów walczyły jeszcze do pierwszych dni maja 1863 r. Wizja Tytusa O’Byrna jako żuawa jest bardzo atrakcyjna, w jego tożsamość wierzy Robert Osiński, regionalista, dowódca Grupy Rekonstrukcji Historycznej „Pułk Żuawów Śmierci”, sam przyznając jednak, że nie ma na to dowodów (Osiński, 2016). Jest kilka przesłanek za identyfikacją Grzymały z oddziału Żuawów jako Tytusem. Podstawowym może być jego wysoki poziom wykształcenia wojskowego, który mógł go przyciągnąć na początku powstania do elitarnego oddziału kiero-

wanego przez doświadczonego oficera francuskiego; liczyłaby się też znajomość języków – żuawi byli oddziałem międzynarodowym. Tytus niewątpliwie miał kwalifikacje na oficera takiej jednostki. Na zdjęciu w stroju powstańczym ma u boku szablę, która wygląda jak wyposażenie kawalerii austriackiej z lat 50. XIX w., zatem mógł ją nabyć w Galicji, gdzie Żuawi mieli bazę, broń ta jednak była bardzo popularna. Być może w przyszłości zostanie odnaleziony dowód na tożsamość „Grzymały” z oddziału Żuawów i O'Byrna.

Z całą pewnością wiemy, że Tytus O'Byrn w maju 1863 r. wstąpił do oddziału generała „Kruka” Heydenreicha, absolwenta tej samej Akademii Sztabu w Petersburgu, i brał udział w bitwie pod Żyrzynem 8 sierpnia 1863 r. Jego kariera powstańcza zakończyła się niedługo po przegranej bitwie pod Kockiem 25 grudnia 1863 r. Pod koniec starcia garstka zawodowych oficerów i żołnierzy osłaniała odwrót kolegów; był wśród nich Tytus, który został ranny w nogę. Niestety, po latach, gdy jako wdowiec z dziećmi Tytus pisał podanie o przyjęcie do Towarzystwa Weteranów we Lwowie, pozostawił puste pole formularza „w jakich był oddziałach i w jakich bitwach brał udział”, dopisując tylko w polu „czy i gdzie był ranny” bitwę pod Kockiem oraz w polu „stanowisko”, deklarując, że był (*de facto* przez krótki czas) Naczelnikiem [Wojennym] Województwa Podlaskiego<sup>3</sup>.

Na początku roku 1864 r. O'Byrn wyjechał za granicę, może w celu wyleczenia kontuzji. Odnaleziona niedawno przez P.J. Błocha fotografia rzuca ciekawe światło na jego perypetie, jednocześnie prowokując jeszcze więcej pytań (Bloch, 2016: 345). Zdjęcia powstańców styczniowych w strojach polowych były w tym czasie popularne – w Galicji i za granicą zachęcano przybyłych emigrantów do pozowania na pamiątkę wydarzeń i w celu propagowania Sprawy Polskiej. Nie byłoby zatem w tej fotografii nic nadzwyczajnego gdyby nie miejsce jej wykonania. Z obszernego nekrologu wiemy, że po powstaniu Tytus przez krótki czas przebywał w Londynie. Jednakże pojawia się dowód, który trudno zinterpretować bez dodatkowych informacji. Odnalezione przez Błocha zdjęcie podpisane

<sup>3</sup> Za tę informację serdecznie dziękuję administratorowi bazy Katalog Powstańców Styczniowych: <<https://genealogia.okiem.pl/powstaniaes/>>



Prawdopodobnie zdjęcie portretowe Tytusa O'Byrna wykonane w Kanadzie przed 1866 r.

Probably the portrait picture of Tytus O'Byrne taken in Canada before 1866 (picture courtesy of Katarzyna Gmerek)

jest Tytus O'Byrn oraz nosi nazwę zakładu: „J.H. Griffiths Photographer, London”. Zakład ów mieścił się nie w stolicy Wielkiej Brytanii, lecz w Kanadzie, London C.W. (provincia Canada West, od 1867 zwana Ontario). Kontakt z Biblioteką Brytyjską oraz Biblioteką Publiczną w London, Ontario, pozwolił wyjaśnić, że w angielskim Londynie było dopiero od 1870 studio „John Griffiths”, ale nie „J.H. Griffiths”; studio J.H. Griffiths/John H. Griffiths w London, Ontario, istniało przez wiele lat, założone w 1863 r. (David, 1989)<sup>4</sup>.

Nie wiemy jednak, jak Tytus znalazł się w Kanadzie, kogo tam znał i co robił. Mógł szukać pracy, zwłaszcza że w okolicach London w dzisiejszym Ontario trwała w tym czasie wielka budowa linii kolejowych, w których uczestniczyli także Polacy (znany Kazimierz Gzowski). Tytus miał później

pracować w Galicji przy budowie dróg i kolei, być może wykorzystywał tam doświadczenie zdobyte w Kanadzie.

Jednakże nie mamy na ten temat najmniejszej wzmianki w pozostałych po nim skąpych dokumentach. Kwerenda mailowa w Library and Archives Canada nie przyniosła pod tym względem rezultatów. Nie są znane też listy pasażerów płynących do Kanady w 1864 r. (Mary Munk, korespondencja e-mail 10.02.2017). Znamy przypadki rodaków mniej mobilnych niż Tytus O'Byrn, którzy

<sup>4</sup> Informacja dzięki uprzejmości London Room, London Public Library (Ontario), mail z 10.01.2020.

próbowali emigrować za ocean i wrócili (Cyprian Kamil Norwid). Być może Tytus powrócił do Francji, ponieważ uświadomił sobie, iż nie chce mieszkać tak daleko od kraju, bo kiedyś będzie chciał wrócić. Jednakże w jego wypadku mógł zadziałać jeszcze inny czynnik. Z uwagi na irlandzkie nazwisko Polak mógł mieć kłopoty zupełnie nieoczekiwane. W drugiej połowie lat 60. XIX w. w Kanadzie, kolonii brytyjskiej wybijającej się powoli na autonomię, istniała analogiczna konspiracja republikanów irlandzkich (Fenian) jak w starym kraju, która doprowadziła do powstania (wystąpienia zbrojne w Kanadzie 1866 r., w Irlandii roku 1867). Dowódcami powstańców irlandzkich byli w tym czasie zwykle weterani armii USA pochodzenia irlandzkiego. Przybywający wówczas do Kanady młodzi mężczyźni o nazwiskach irlandzkich, deklarujący się jako zawodowi oficerowie, byli więc prawdopodobnie pilnie śledzeni. Znając wolnościowe ideały Tytusa (w 1872 r. pisał on, że Polacy gotowi są do „krzewienia sprawy wolności narodów zawsze i wszędzie”) można domyślać się jego pozytywnego stosunku do walki Irlandczyków, być może lepiej jednak nie spekulować. Niewątpliwie kwerenda w archiwum dokumentów władz kanadyjskich mogłaby rzucić światło na te pytania.

## Paryż

Wszystko wskazuje na to, że pobyt w Kanadzie nie trwał długo i już najpóźniej w 1866 r. przybył on do Paryża. Mieszkał tam, wedle własnych słów, utrzymując się z pracy nauczyciela muzyki i jednocześnie studiował w konserwatorium w klasie fortepianu. (BCzart, O'Byrn, 1881). W roku 1866 był jednym z sygnatariuszy *Odezwy powołującej emigrację polską do zjednoczenia na zasadach demokratycznych*, (podpisał się Tytus O'Byrn „Grzymała”), co mogłoby świadczyć o jego przekonaniach.

Po wybuchu wojny francusko-pruskiej wstąpił do wojska i brał udział w walkach z Prusakami. Był w oddziale ochotników (Francs-Tireurs) pod dowództwem płk. Mocquardt, w armii, którą dowodził marszałek francuski MacMahon, pochodzący z rodziny irlandzkiej również mającej potomków wśród Dzikich Gęsi. Kiedy Napoleon III otoczony pod Sedanem poddał Francuzów bez walki, Tytus nie za-

mierzał się z tym pogodzić. Udało mu się uciec z niewoli, po czym (według relacji własnej) zgłosił się ponownie do armii francuskiej, gdzie jednak nie chciano go przyjąć jako cudzoziemca. Ponieważ spotkał w tym czasie w Lyonie Polaków starających się o zorganizowanie polskiego legionu we Francji, zaangażował się w to przedsięwzięcie. Na dowódcę Legionu Polskiego Garibaldiego, mającego wejść w skład Armii Wogezów, przeznaczony był Jarosław Dąbrowski, przebywający w tym czasie w oblężonym Paryżu, a Tytusowi znany zapewne z konspiracji polskiej w Petersburgu. O'Byrn z chęcią więc podjął się zadania – Dąbrowskiego podziwiał i zdania nie zmieniał nawet później pod wpływem publikacji krytycznej opinii generała na jego temat. Właśnie z czasu walki o organizację Legionu pochodzi negatywna opinia o Tytusie Jarosława Dąbrowskiego (była ona zawarta w listach z czasów intensywnych walk francusko-pruskich, pisanych na gorąco i bez możliwości zbadania sytuacji). Przekazał ją już po śmierci generała jeden z bardziej znanych Polaków we Francji, Bronisław Wołowski, cywilny organizator Legionu, który sam oskarżał Tytusa o „przesiadanie w kawiarniach” oraz noszenie pince-nez – obraz leniwego fircyka mało pasuje do O'Byrna z czasów powstania oraz późniejszych.

Francuzi w tym czasie walczący z Prusami liczyli na wsparcie Rosji, zachowywali więc konsekwentnie rezerwę wobec demonstrowanych przez Polaków aspiracji niepodległościowych. Co za tym idzie, nie zabraniając organizacji wprost, *de facto* odmawiano Legionowi wszystkiego, zaczynając od sztandaru, a kończąc na najbardziej istotnych finansach. Jednocześnie piętrzyły się pretensje i wzajemne podejrzania tak pomiędzy Polakami, jak Francuzami a Włochami, dlatego w rezultacie Legion Polski nigdy nie zdołał dołączyć do oddziałów skierowanych do walki przeciwko Prusom. Walcząc z brakiem podstawowych środków do życia dla żołnierzy, tymczasowy dowódca w końcu poddał się i spod jurysdykcji Garibaldiego przeszedł do gen. Frapollego, czego później Bronisław Wołowski nie mógł mu wybaczyć. Legion zakończył żywot jako oddział żandarmerii patrolujący okolicę. Tytus O'Byrn pisał o tym, odpowiadając na zarzuty Wołowskiego w cyklu artykułów opublikowanych w krakowskim czasopiśmie „Kraj” (O'Byrn, 1872). Z artykułów tych

wyłania się obraz chaosu towarzyszącemu klęsce Francji i problemów, jakie czyniono Polakom chcącym utworzyć własny Legion, a także (jak podejrzewał O'Byrn) pewnych skierowanych przeciwko Polakom starań agentury rosyjskiej. Wypowiedź ta jednak jest dziś mało znana (w przeciwieństwie do popularnego dziełka Wołowskiego, choć od niedawna krakowski „Kraj” dostępny jest online („Kraj”, 1869–1874). Jest to niesprzyjająca okoliczność, że jedyna opinia o pułkowniku O'Byrnie, jaką mamy, jest nie tylko negatywna, lecz także emocjonalna; z kolei obrona Tytusa, choć bardziej wyważona, nie może być obiektywna, bo wyszła ze strony samego zainteresowanego. Bronisław Wołowski, choć brał udział w powstaniu 1830, był dziennikarzem i działaczem polonijnym, nie zawodowym oficerem. Jego książka miała na celu przede wszystkim obronę Józefa Dąbrowskiego przed zarzutami zwycięskich Wersalczyków; jej charakter był przede wszystkim polemiczny i niektórzy badacze odnajdywali w niej nieścisłości i koloryzację dla dobra sprawy. O'Byrn był dla niego mało ważnym pionkiem i tak został odmalowany; umniejszenie otoczenia Dąbrowskiego miało zapewne ukazać samego bohatera w jak najlepszym świetle – można by po latach zapytać, czy generał naprawdę tego potrzebował. Jeśli nawet Tytus nie poradził sobie z raczej beznadziejnym zadaniem organizacji Legionu (niechcianego przez Francuzów), to oskarżanie go o nieudolność wraz z uwagami natury osobistej wygląda przynajmniej na pierwszy rzut oka na dziennikarską nagonkę. Zapewne dzieje Legionu Polski we Francji 1870 zasługiwałyby na rzetelne zbadanie w świetle dokumentów francuskich przez współczesnego historyka wojskowości. Nekrolog Tytusa podaje dość ciekawie brzmiącą informację o tym, że później działał on jako oficer rekrutujący dla Garibaldiego w Algierii, co byłoby mało prawdopodobne, gdyby, jak twierdził Wołowski, O'Byrn naraził się Garibaldiemu swoim postępowaniem we Francji.

Na temat jego dalszych przygód przed powrotem do Polski wiemy niewiele, ponieważ sam o tym nie chciał pisać, jednakże prawdopodobnie byłoby sporo do opowiedzenia. Upadek Komuny Paryskiej wiązał się z surowymi represjami. Aresztowano i rozstrzelano także niektórych Polaków, z których część istotnie brała udział w Komu-

nie, ale inni byli ofiarami przypadkowymi – znaleźli się w niewłaściwym czasie w niewłaściwym miejscu. Spotkało to także Tytusa, który po zawarciu pokoju i rozwiązaniu jego oddziału żandarmerii udał się do Paryża, aby wyegzekwować od władz wojskowych wypłatę należnego żołdu. Napotkał trudności natury biurokratycznej, które przedłużyły jego pobyt w stolicy Francji (Tytus O'Byrn, 1871). Po upadku Komuny Paryskiej spędził 10 dni w więzieniu – i być może tylko dzięki wstawiennictwu znajomych nie został rozstrzelany. „Czas” krakowski twierdził, że aresztowanie O'Byrna miało związek z incydentem w kamienicy, w której mieszkał, a z której padł jakiś strzał; zrobiwszy rewizję, znaleziono w mieszkaniu pułkownika broń i zabrano go do oślawionego obozu w forcie Satory, gdzie znalazł się wśród około 30 aresztowanych Polaków („Czas”, 1871). Jak pisał „Dziennik Poznański” 22 czerwca:

*Przesiedział 10 dni w więzieniu w Wersalu. Aresztowany najniewinniej, byłby rozstrzelanym i winien ocalenie swoje staraniom wojskowych francuskich* („Dziennik Poznański”, 1871).

Trudno powiedzieć, komu ostatecznie Tytus zawdzięczał ocalenie – o zwolnienie uwięzionych Polaków, w tym O'Byrna, starał się gen. Ludwik Bystrzonowski, jednakże w jego pamiętniku nie znaleziono wzmianki o skutkach tych starań. Hr. Bystrzonowski był oficerem starszego pokolenia, należącym do obozu Czartoryskich; obracał się przeważnie wśród arystokracji polskiej i francuskiej, a Tytusa ledwo znał (w pamiętniku mylnie pisał jego nazwisko jako O'Bryn) (Bystrzonowski, *Pamiętnik*, BP 441)<sup>5</sup>. Warunki w przepelnionym forcie Satory były według relacji prasowych z epoki opłakane, a życie więźniów nie liczyło się zupełnie. W gazetach trwała nagonka na Polaków, których uznano za niebezpiecznych rewolucjonistów, prawdopodobnie głównie z powodu znanej wszystkim postaci Dąbrowskiego. O'Byrn jednak nie uznał za stosowne odnieść się w swojej relacji do osobistych przeżyć. Pisał jedynie:

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<sup>5</sup> Autorka serdecznie dziękuje prof. Hubertowi Chudzio z UP w Krakowie za dostęp do kopii dużego fragmentu *Dziennika* Ludwika Bystrzonowskiego 1.06.1870–31.12.1871 z Biblioteki Polskiej w Paryżu.

*Nie mamy sobie nic do wyrzucenia wobec zawsze samolubnej i ciasnej polityki Francji, i wobec barbarzyńskiego i w najwyższym stopniu niesprawiedliwego jej postępowania z rodakami naszymi po wzięciu Paryża.*

Nie wiemy co dokładnie robił po zwolnieniu z Sartory. Jeśli wspomniany w nekrologu pobyt w Algierii nie był jakimś nieporozumieniem wynikającym z wcześniejszej służby w oddziale Garibaldiego we Francji, nie mógł przebywać tam długo (oddziały stworzone przez Garibaldiego zajmowały się tłumieniem powstania Algierczyków, co O'Byrnowi podobać się nie mogło). Zapewne jednak głównie tęsknota za krajem sprawiła, że zdecydował się powrócić do Polski (mógł wrócić tylko na ziemie zaboru austriackiego).

Sytuacja finansowa większości emigrantów postyczniowych nie była dobra, w Galicji zaś nie było dla nich dobrze płatnej pracy. Tytus początkowo osiadł we Lwowie, gdzie zajęcie nauczyciela muzyki nie przynosiło mu przyzwoitych dochodów. Dlatego zdecydował się zatrudnić w Wydziale Dróg Krajowych przy budowie dróg. Nie mamy żadnego świadectwa jego działalności politycznej, prawdopodobnie kierował się tu własnymi niemal pozytywistycznymi przemyśleniami, które w ostatnim artykule z 1872 r. zawarł w następujących słowach:

*Może to i lepiej się stało, że legion nie mógł dokończyć swej organizacji; naród nasz przynajmniej nie opłakuje nowych strat i ofiar. (...) Niech krew Dąbrowskiego, Bosaka i wielu innych będzie ostatniem datkiem Polski dla tej zmateralizowanej Europy, która nam zawsze odpłacała niewdzięcznością nie pojmując naszej polityki wprowadzającej w sprawy państwowe chrześcijańskie zasady życia potocznego. Pracujmy w swoim kraju, u siebie i dla siebie, nie oglądajmy się na drugich, nie lećmy za byle jakim promykiem nadziei, a wówczas Europa nas, a nie my jej, będziemy potrzebować. Liczmy tylko na siebie, nie oglądajmy się na drugich, kształćmy się ciągle i w każdym kierunku – a dojdziemy z pewnością do tej wolności, do której od stu lat wzdychamy.*

## Galicja

Po kilku latach pracy O'Byrn otrzymał stanowisko p.o. inżyniera wydziału krajowego, na którym pracował aż do śmierci. W Bibliotece Czartoryskich znajduje się jego list z CV napisany we Lwowie w 1881 r., w którym prosi niewymienionego z nazwiska rodaka poznanego niegdyś w Paryżu, a należącego do kręgu powiązań Czartoryskich o pomoc w znalezieniu lepszej pracy i o wstawiennictwo „u Księcia”, może Witolda Czartoryskiego. W liście tym opisuje swoją sytuację (nie zarabia źle, ale od 10 lat jego praca zależy od corocznej decyzji parlamentu galicyjskiego przyznania bądź nie funduszy na budowę dróg; w każdej chwili może zostać bez zajęcia i bez odszkodowania, jak to się już raz zdarzyło), rzucając ją na tło stosunków galicyjskich.

*... bo kraj jest bardzo biedny i nie ma w sobie ducha przedsiębiorczości, w takich warunkach trudno jest człowiekowi pracy znaleźć dla siebie odpowiednie pole do użytkowania swojej wolności, energii i dobrych chęci (...).*

„Rozbitkowie” powstania 1863 r. znajdują się w sytuacji gorszej niż tubylcy, ponieważ:

*...znaczną część obywateli czuje do nich pewien żal za klęski, jakie wskutek tego powstania spadły na cały kraj nasz. Straciwszy majątek, poświęciwszy całą swoją przyszłość i życie dla sprawy narodowej nie tylko że nie zasłużyliśmy na uznanie, ale owszem jesteśmy solą w oku dla tych, którzy całe swoje szczęście pokładają w dobrobycie materialnym. Dopóki byłem kawalerem, wszystko to było mi obojętnym, bo spełniwszy mój obowiązek obywatelski, miałem czyste sumienie. (...) Nie zrażam się jednak przeciwnościami, ale wytrwale dążę do celu (...) (BCzart, O'Byrn, Tytus. 1881).*

Listy i artykuły O'Byrna stwarzają wrażenie, że mamy do czynienia z zupełnie inną osobą niż „fircykowaty” oficer, którego krytykował Wołowski. Tutus spędził większość życia na wędrówkach wśród obcych, a jego tożsamość polska była raczej produktem wychowa-

nia i świadomego wyboru niż „genów”. Jest możliwe, że mówił z obcym akcentem, jego obejście było pełne rezerwy, a zarówno aparycja, która nie budziłaby zdziwienia w Dublinie, jak i talent muzyczny dopełniały wrażenia jakiejś mało swojskiej ekscentryczności. Irlandzkie dziedzictwo musiało być dla niego ważne, skoro w nekrologu z 1897 r., który zapewne powstał przy udziale córek, znalazło się zdanie „pochodził z Irlandii, gdzie przed kilku wiekami, według tradycji, rodzina jego była panującą” („Nowa Reforma” 1897, Nr 61: 3). Dla wyjaśnienia sugestii wysokiego pochodzenia należy wspomnieć o legendzie rodzinnej. Podobnie jak wielu O'Byrnów, potomkowie Daniela Byrne, ojca Sir Gregory'ego, przekazywali sobie ustnie legendę o pochodzeniu od Feagha MacHugh O'Byrne (Fiach Mac Aodha Ó Broin, 1534–1597), bohatera walk z Anglikami, jednego z wodzów klanu. Pooglądy historyków na możliwość przeżycia potomków Fiacha są sprzeczne; miał on jednak tak wielu synów, że nie wydaje się to niemożliwe pomimo eksterminacji jakiej poddano ród. Jednakże z powodu wojen, zniszczeń i braku metryk katolickich w Irlandii wersji tej nie da się potwierdzić. Daniel wg przekazów ustnych miał być młodszym synem ziemianina z Wicklow; na temat jego pochodzenia są



Herb na kamieniu grobowym Daniela Byrne, zmarłego w 1715 r., zawierający charakterystyczne cechy heraldyczne O'Byrnów. Daniel Byrne, najstarszy brat Jamesa miał w herbie krokiew, trzy dłonie (czwarta dłoń w środku oznacza tytuł baroneta, jest to jego indywidualny wybór), w klejnocie – syrena, dewiza – *Certavi et vici* (Walczyłem i zwyciężyłem). The COA on the gravestone of Daniel Byrne, died 1715, the eldest brother of James – a chevron, three palms, (the hand within an escutcheon placed in the centre of the shield is a sign of a baronet, his individual choice), mermaid and the appellation *Certavi et Vici* (I have striven and conquered) (photo courtesy of Katarzyna Gmerek)

sprzeczne opinie; gdyby istotnie był potomkiem wodza z Glenmalure, ukrywanie tego faktu byłoby zrozumiałe. Wobec trudnej sytuacji finansowej jako młody człowiek zajął się rzemiosłem, w rezultacie osiągając fortunę jako krawiec i kupiec. Gregory uzyskał szlachectwo i dobra dzięki jego finansom; później popadł w tarapaty przez udział w wojnie po stronie Stuartów. Używając wszelkich możliwych sposobów, jego rodzina walczyła o możliwość pozostania na swojej ziemi. Wojowniczy charakter rodu, a także umiejętność przetrwania w najtrudniejszych warunkach przekazana chyba została polskiemu O'Byrnom.

Niewiele wiemy o życiu O'Byrna w Galicji, zapewne było ono spokojne. Jak na to wskazują cytowane dokumenty Towarzystwa Weteranów we Lwowie, nie lubił się chwalić swoimi osiągnięciami militarnymi i nie udzielał się publicznie na arenie szerszej niż Nowy Targ, w którym zmarł – wiemy że był tam pierwszym prezesem Towarzystwa Gimnastycznego Sokół; grywał na pianinie podczas różnych uroczystości patriotycznych, ale nie był politycznie aktywny. Według nekrologu zmarł 11 marca 1897 r., mając 59 lat, do czego przyczyniła się praca w trudnych warunkach, a także może przedwczesna śmierć żony i jedyne go syna (Jan Bolesław zmarł w 1895 r.). Pozostawił po sobie dwie córki, z których Antonina Maria urodzona w 1880 została nauczycielką („Czas”, 1899: 2). Miejsce pochówku Tytusa nie jest pewne (metryka zgonu tego nie wymienia). W literaturze (Białynia-Chołodecki: 9) pojawia się Łyczaków we Lwowie, co się zdaje wątpliwe wobec ubóstwa O'Byrna oraz braku danych z dość dobrze przebadanego cmentarza.

Artykuł ten powstał po 6 latach pracy nad historią rodziny O'Byrnów, zapoczątkowanej odkryciem, iż „ochotnik irlandzki” z 1863 r. był Polakiem, i próby prześledzenia jego genealogii. Praca ta, pomimo pewnych rezultatów, w żadnym wypadku nie jest jeszcze ukończona...

## Summary in English

### **Tytus O'Byrn of Irlandka, the 1863 Uprising Rebel**

This paper tells a story of Tytus O'Byrn (1839–1897) a descendant of the Wild Geese from Co. Laois who fought in the Polish uprising against Russia in 1863. He was born in the estate Irlandka (the name meant 'Irish female' and clearly Tytus's grandfather wished to commemorate the old country). Irlandka is not on the maps anymore. It was near Brest Litovski (nowadays Belarus, near the Polish border after 1945). As his elaborate obituary indicated, Tytus was proud of his Irish roots, and this feeling passed into his children. James O'Byrn, his ancestor, was one of the younger sons of Sir Gregory Byrne of Timahoe in Co. Laois, though family tradition placed their origins in Co. Wicklow and among the elite of the clan. As a Catholic, Penal Laws forbid him from being a landowner, a State employee or even a soldier. As with many others in a similar position, at least two of his brothers included, James emigrated to the continent. Between 1725 and 1741 he served in the army of Poland, the records make him a Captain of the Royal Foot Guards in Warsaw. The story of his arrival in Poland is documented in the Sächsische Hauptstaatsarchiv Dresden, Germany. In the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> cent. the Kingdom of Poland was in the union with the Principality of Saxony and the monarch in 1725 was August II Wettin. As Sir Gregory fought in the Battle of the Boyne, and his wife Lady Alice Fleming, daughter of Lord Slane, also had Jacobites in her family, it is probable that James served the Stuart family as well. He might have fought for the cause before his arrival to Poland and perhaps after leaving the country, but we have here only hints and assumptions. He disappeared from Polish records after 1741, and as his sons received Polish Indygenat (confirmation of nobility) in 1766, most probably he was dead by that time. His descendants are still living in Poland, the surviving branch is using the d'Obyrn form of the name, as their oral history, impossible to prove, claimed French nobility status as well. Tytus O'Byrn spent a good part of his life beyond the borders of the old Commonwealth of Poland and Lithuania. He was an adventurous youth. He graduated as a Staff Captain from a military academy in St. Petersburg; he left the tsarist Russian army to join the Polish January 1863 rebellion from the very beginning. Wounded in December of this year, he emigrated to France; he later emigrated to Canada but did not live there for long. He returned to Paris, where he was active in Polish democratic emigration circles, but also tried to study music. In 1870 he took part in the Franco-Prussian war, tried to organize a Polish Legion there but failed. Probably as a result of misunderstanding, spent a short time in prison together with the French Communards. On his release, he moved to the Austrian

part of Poland. To the end of his life he lived there, working as an engineer supervising railroad building in the Tatra mountains. He did not leave any male issue. Tytus O'Byrn is not very well known in Poland. Because of the similarity of surnames, he is often confused even by historians with one of the O'Briens de Lacy, another Polish noble family of Irish origin, although both clans had nothing in common except the country of their ancestors.

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Maciej BOGDALCZYK

## Andrzej Wejchert. Polski architekt w Irlandii

**Abstrakt:** Andrzej Wejchert urodził się w 21.05.1937, zm. 12.05.2009, Killiney (Dublin). Studia architektoniczne ukończył z wyróżnieniem na Wydziale Architektury Politechniki Warszawskiej. Rozpoczął praktykę zawodową w Biurze Projektów Miejskich w Warszawie. Brał udział w wielu konkursach projektowych. W 1964 r. był zwycięzcą międzynarodowego konkursu na przygotowanie projektu nowego kampusu dla gmachu sztuki, administracji oraz Auli Maxima dla University College (UCD) w Dublinie, Irlandia.

**Słowa kluczowe:** Andrzej Wejchert, Danuta Wejchert, polscy architekci, Polacy w Irlandii, Belfield UCD Campus w Dublinie.

### Wstęp

Najwyższy czas ukazać w nowym świetle – na co autor ma nadzieję – postać wybitnego polskiego architekta Andrzeja Wejcherta, który swoim talentem, wiedzą oraz umiejętnościami ozdobił wiele projektów powstałych w Irlandii i Polsce pod koniec XX i na początku XXI wieku. Nie zaczynamy jednak od końca – od wielkiego sukcesu, jaki przedstawiciel polskiej szkoły architektonicznej odniósł w Irlandii. Każdy sukces jest okupiony wytrwałością i ciężką pracą, cierpliwością, a nadto rzetelnością w wypełnianiu obowiązków zawodowych. Niewątpliwie wykonywanie zawodu architekta musi iść w parze z rozwojem osobistym człowieka, w pełni dojrzałego i świadomego wyzwań rzucanych na polu zawodowym, jak również w życiu prywatnym. Architektura jako sztuka sięga korzeniami starożytnej Grecji w klasycznym kanonie prawdy, dobra i piękna. O ile filozofowie poszukiwali raczej prawdy o świecie i tego, co dobre (Platon), o tyle artyści architekci raczej tego, co piękne i funkcjonalne. O umiłowaniu

piękna przez starożytnych Greków do dziś świadczą wybitne pomniki kultury, choć ich pełny blask przesłonił przed nami upływ czasu. Jednak architekci to także filozofowie. Znajomość proporcji, matematyki i harmonii czyniły z nich osoby mocno refleksyjne. Musieli poszukiwać odpowiedzi na pytanie, skąd się bierze idea proporcji, czy człowiek ją stworzył, czy też raczej został nią obdarowany. Należy wspomnieć, że architektura bardzo często swoją formą otaczała budowle, której prawdziwą materią był kult religijny (Akropol, Partenon czy Erechtejon). Czy z tego czerpał swoją inspirację architekt Andrzej Wejchert? Czy wiedza, którą nabył 2000 km od Dublina, w Polsce, okazała się aktualna na Zielonej Wyspie? I czy zrealizowane projekty wciąż nie tylko „cieszą oko”, lecz także inspirują do dalszych poszukiwań tego, co piękne i jednocześnie użyteczne w architekturze?

## **Początki kariery**

Wrócimy zatem do początku życia i kariery zawodowej Andrzeja Wejcherta. Polski architekt urodził się w niełatwym czasie dla Polski, tuż przed II wojną światową, w Gdańsku w roku 1937, kiedy z uwagi na narastający konflikt polsko-niemiecki perspektywa dorosłego dzieciństwa była bardzo niepewna.

Studia architektoniczne Andrzej Wejchert ukończył z wyróżnieniem w roku 1962 na Wydziale Architektury Politechniki Warszawskiej. Również w Warszawie, w Biurze Projektów Miejskich, rozpoczął praktykę zawodową. Podczas swojej aktywności zawodowej brał udział w wielu konkursach projektowych. W 1964 roku ogłoszono międzynarodowy konkurs na przygotowanie projektu dla nowego kampusu University College w Dublinie. Projekt dotyczył budynków dla gmachu Aula Maxima oraz budynków administracyjnych. Andrzej Wejchert wygrał konkurs i jako autor projektu przybył w 1964 roku do Dublina, aby nie tylko odebrać nagrodę, ale by również sprawować opiekę i nadzór nad realizacją projektu. Wieści o wygranej nie przekonały polskiego architekta. Dopiero drugi telegram przynagający do przybycia do Dublina rozwiął wątpliwości. Sama podróż do Dublina była bardzo spontaniczna. Bilet w jedną stronę. Niewystarczające środki, aby przybyć do Dublina z do-

datkowym bagażem z ubraniami. Dużym zaskoczeniem dla władz UCD był fakt, że Andrzej Wejchert pomimo tak młodego wieku, z niewielkim doświadczeniem, po studiach ukończonych zaledwie dwa lata wcześniej, wygrał tak prestiżowy, międzynarodowy konkurs architektoniczny (A&D Wejcherts and Partners: 9). Niewątpliwie późniejsza żona Andrzeja, Danuta Kornaus, była nieocenionym wsparciem w życiu zawodowym i osobistym dla Andrzeja Wejcherta. Danuta Wejchert, urodzona w 1938 roku we Lwowie – również w niełatwym czasie dla ówczesnej Polski i w niedogodnym miejscu – zapewne dzięki wspólnym doświadczeniom historycznym bardzo dobrze rozumiała się z przyszłym mężem.

## **W Dublinie**

Campus w Belfield odznacza się liniowym rozwinięciem połączeń między poszczególnymi budynkami. Obiekty edukacyjne i administracyjne są od siebie oddzielone dystansem ok. 500 m, aby w miarę szybko, w czasie około 6 minut, osoba mogła przemieścić się z jednego budynku do drugiego. Komunikację ułatwiają również mosty łączące budynki. Po przybyciu do Irlandii i po zrealizowaniu zwycięskiego projektu Andrzej Wejchert w pełni rozpoczął swoją pracę w zawodzie architekta. W 1974 roku wraz z małżonką i miejscowymi architektami założył własną firmę architektoniczną pod nazwą „Andrzej i Danuta Wejchert and Partners”. A&D Wejchert stworzył również projekty dla kilku innych instytucji edukacyjnych, m.in. Dublin City University, University College Cork, University College Dublin, University of Limerick oraz Waterford Institute of Technology.

Sława płynąca ze zwycięstwa we wspomnianym wcześniej międzynarodowym konkursie na budynki dla UCD umożliwiała samodzielną pracę i tym samym odnoszenie kolejnych sukcesów. Przedmiotem projektów pracowni Wejchertów były budynki nie tylko o przeznaczeniu edukacyjnym, lecz także gospodarczym czy nawet związanym ze służbą zdrowia. Słynna i znakomita w swoim rysunku żelbetowa wieża wodna wraz ze sztucznym jeziorem również została zauważona. Wygrane konkursy na projekty budynków administracyjnych oraz ośrodka sportowego przyniosły następne

wyróżnienia. Kolejny wygrany konkurs na projekt adaptacji wejścia do jaskini Aillwee Cave w Irlandii Zachodniej, łączący naturalne środowisko z nowoczesnymi rozwiązaniami technicznymi, sprawił, że kariera Andrzeja Wejcherta oraz rozwój Pracowni Wejchert and Partners nabrały rozpędu. Szereg wygranych konkursów na budynki edukacyjne, a także budynki sakralne nie tylko potwierdziły renomę pracowni Wejchertów, ale sprawiły także, że architekt Andrzej Wejchert stał się ważną i znaczącą postacią w międzynarodowym środowisku architektonicznym. Pracownia architektoniczna Andrzeja Wejcherta odniosła sukces w ponad 46 krajach, wyprzedzając pod względem projektowym ponad 126 uczestników różnych konkursów (A&D Wejchert and Partners: 9).

Wiele projektów polskiego architekta cechowało się lekkością konstrukcji oraz użyciem naturalnego światła – dzięki szerokiemu zastosowaniu szkła jako materiału konstrukcyjnego – do oświetlenia wewnętrznych przestrzeni projektowanych budynków. Rola małżonki Danuty w twórczości Andrzeja Wejcherta uwidoczniła się przy projekcie szpitala psychiatrycznego w Naas. Doświadczenie pani Danuty wyniesione z Polski, gdzie w swojej pracy była ona zaangażowana w projekty budowlane związane ze służbą zdrowia, niewątpliwie przyczyniło się do sukcesu w tym projekcie. Idea nawiązania do układu funkcjonalnego szpitala i do typowego dla okolicy Naas stylu trójkątnych dachów na szczycie potwierdziła wysoki poziom projektów łączący w sobie funkcjonalizm z elementami lokalnego stylu architektonicznego. Takie założenie sprawia, że projekty naturalnie są rozpoznawane jako odpowiednie dla danego miejsca. Mimo oczywistej i naturalnej wymiany myśli w zespole w tym przypadku można mówić o autorskim prowadzeniu projektu (*principal architect*) przez Danutę Wejchert, podobnie jak w przypadku większości obiektów związanych ze służbą zdrowia. Przydatne okazało się tutaj duże doświadczenie, zapoczątkowane już w warszawskim Biurze Projektów Służby Zdrowia. Podobne rozwiązanie zostało zastosowane w projekcie kościoła pod wezwaniem Świętej Trójcy, gdzie troistość osób boskich – ważny dogmat wiary chrześcijańskiej – zostaje przedstawiony jako trójkąt w strukturze bryły sakralnej. Obok tych projektów zainteresowaniem pracowni cieszyły się

także projekty rewitalizacyjne dawnych przestrzeni poprzemysłowych przeznaczanych teraz na cele mieszkaniowe. Powyższa idea adaptacji, w miarę zmieniających się warunków gospodarczych i potrzeb ludności, ujawniła się w dublińskiej dzielnicy Smithfield, gdzie dawny komin zaadaptowany został na platformę widokową, a budynki przemysłowe na lokale mieszkalne oraz ośrodek kulturalno-rozrywkowy. Projekt dotyczył przebudowy dawnej destylatorni whiskey na mieszkania oraz na ośrodek kulturalno-rozrywkowy współczesnego miasta. Duże wrażenie do dziś robi umiejętne zaadaptowanie do nowych potrzeb starych zabytkowych elementów – komina, który dziś służy jako platforma widokowa.

Szereg budynków o przeznaczeniu edukacyjnym, związanym ze służbą zdrowia, o przeznaczeniu komercyjnym czy określającym miejsca pracy oraz codziennej egzystencji, a także budynków i miejsc sakralnych oraz przeznaczonych do wypoczynku pokazuje niezwykły talent i umiejętności polskiego architekta.

## Styl

Historia zatoczyła koło w momencie, kiedy sława polskich architektów dotarła do Polski po transformacji 1989 roku. Pracownia Andrzeja Wejcherta została poproszona o wykonanie projektów dla nowoczesnych budynków dynamicznie rozwijającej się i zmieniającej Warszawy. Projekty Pałacu Sobańskich czy budynku Media Business Center – ITI zostały również zauważone i nagrodzone w kraju, w którym małżeństwo Wejchertów rozpoczęło swoją przygodę z architekturą.

Styl architektoniczny Andrzeja Wejcherta wkomponowuje się wyraźnie w indywidualizm architektoniczny, który nie musi ulegać duchowi czasu ani postępowi technicznemu. Architektura w tym wydaniu nawiązuje bardziej do kontekstu, często regionalnego czy historycznego, do funkcji danego projektu oraz do upodobań zarówno inwestora, jak i samego architekta. W takim podejściu do sztuki architektonicznej w odróżnieniu od modernizmu następuje odkrycie, że tradycja jest niewyczerpanym źródłem inspiracji i motywów dla konkretnych projektów umiejscowionych w konkretnej

rzeczywistości. Symbolika, ornament czy symetria zostają przywrócone do łask. Oznacza to, że projektowanym budynkom nadaje się indywidualny i niepowtarzalny rys. Pomimo użycia tradycyjnych form ekspresji przez indywidualne projektowanie osiąga się konkretny architektoniczny efekt. Tradycyjnie ukształtowana urbanistyka na przestrzeni setek lat posiada swoją doniosłą wartość. Rozplanowanie obiektów oraz detale mają głęboki sens i znaczenie.

Architektura stylu Andrzeja Wejcherta cechuje się pluralizmem środków wyrazu i złożonością. Często eklektycznie nawiązuje do poprzednich historycznych form ekspresji, cechuje się dekoracyjnością, a elewacja obiektów traktowana jest jak szata, ubiór u ludzi. Podejście pracowni A&D Wejchert do sposobu rozumienia architektury intensywnie skupia się na wykorzystaniu nowoczesnych technologii jako elementu konstrukcyjnego budynku, jak również w układzie wyposażenia wnętrza. Czasami niektóre elementy techniczne, takie jak żaluzje czy baterie słoneczne, traktowane są jak ornament budynku. Środkami ekspresji tego stylu jest efekt zaskoczenia, ironii czy nawet absurdu. Ów styl architektoniczny nie posiada wzoru jako takiego, a jedynie swobodnie się do wzoru odwołuje, co sprawia, że pamięć uczestnika/obserwatora w architekturze odżywa. Należy podkreślić, że takie podejście łączy w sobie elementy zapożyczonego wzoru osadzonego w kulturze z własnymi poglądami architekta oraz z funkcją celową danego obiektu budowlanego.

Powrót do archetypów, zapomnianych wzorców architektonicznych oraz do tradycyjnych materiałów budowlanych stanowiących bazę dla projektów sprawił, że w odbiorze społecznym projekty Andrzeja Wejcherta spełniały swoje oczekiwania. Ponadto zróżnicowanie użytych form podczas projektowania powoduje lepsze i bardziej adaptatywne wykorzystanie przestrzeni na potrzeby lokalnej społeczności. Jedyną rzeczą, jaką styl Andrzeja Wejcherta zachował z modernizmu, jest powszechne zastosowanie zieleni jako elementu natury na projektowanych obiektach. Zieleń nie tylko stanowiła ochronę przed obecnymi w Irlandii silnymi wiatrami, lecz również była ważnym elementem dekoracyjnym i kompozycyjnym dla projektowanych budynków. Ponadto zieleń wytyczała szlaki komunikacyjne, piesze i drogowe oraz stanowiła dźwiękoszczelny ekran

ochronny oddzielający drogi od przejść dla pieszych. Cechy materiału, jakim jest zieleń, sprawiają, że jest ona idealnym, bo łatwo kształtowalnym, różnorodnym, interesującym – bo zmiennym w czasie – elementem ulic, placów, a także budynków. Zieleń obecna na dużej skale na Campusie w Belfield intensyfikuje życie społeczne tamtejszych studentów. Funkcja dydaktyczna i wychowawcza zieleni, obok wcześniej wspomnianej funkcji ekologicznej i architektonicznej, jest niepodważalna. Tereny zielone sprzyjają odprężeniu, nawiązywaniu kontaktów między ludźmi, łagodzą stres i emocje powstałe w czasie codziennych zajęć. Zieleń przy instytucjach takich jak szpitale czy sanatoria oprócz tego, że pełni funkcje zdrowotne, korzystnie wpływa na psychikę pacjentów, wspomagając proces zdrowienia i rehabilitacji. Tereny zielone wraz z obiektami sportowymi pozwalają na kompleksowe zaspokajanie potrzeb, praktykowanie różnych form wypoczynku i rekreacji, szczególnie bardzo popularnego w Irlandii futbolu gaelickiego i spokrewnionych z nim dziedzin sportowych.

Niewątpliwie Andrzej Wejchert reprezentował swój własny styl projektowy, w którym jego projekty spełniają swój cel i oczekiwania wynikające z codziennego życia lokalnej społeczności. Zgodnie z tą wizją architektura budynków zaczęła się opierać na zaskakujących, absurdalnych rozwiązaniach, sprzecznościach i zabawie konwencjami. Do dziś zachwyca w nich bogactwo formy oraz jej złożoność. Nie są to konstrukcje *stricte* nowoczesne, styl ten bowiem swobodnie sięga po elementy architektoniczne przeszłości, łącząc je ze współczesnymi wizjami. Budowle są pełne ornamentów, symboli i symetrii.

Warszawski Pałac Sobańskich jest tego przykładem. Został on w projekcie Andrzeja Wejcherta & Partners wyróżniony potrójnie, otrzymując następujące nagrody i nominacje: Nagrodę Ministra Kultury i Dziedzictwa Narodowego za najlepszą modernizację zabytkowego obiektu 1989–1999, nominację do nagrody głównej w kategorii obiektów użyteczności publicznej: edycja ogólnopolska 1989–1999, oraz nagrodę za najlepszy budynek Warszawy w kategorii obiektów użyteczności publicznej 1989–1999. Opinia jury decydującego o nagrodzie ministerialnej była jednoznaczna: „Budynek z rodzaju towarzyszących, tym niemniej obecny, dyskretny, elegancki.

Nagrodę przyznano za: mistrzowskie zestawienie architektury high-tech przełomu XX i XXI wieku z zabytkowym zespołem pałacowym, tworzące nową korzystnie multiplikującą się wartość przestrzenną i artystyczną; twórcze przekształcenie i dopasowanie historycznej rezydencji pałacowej do nowych funkcji biznesowo-komercyjnych; wysoką kulturę architektoniczną, wyrażającą się w odpowiednich decyzjach architekta: od całościowej idei przestrzenno-funkcjonalnej adaptacji i rozbudowy zespołu pałacowego po dobór detali wykończenia wnętrza". Pałac Sobańskich to zabytkowa rezydencja w pięknym ogrodzie, położona przy Trakcie Królewskim, w Alejach Ujazdowskich – najbardziej reprezentacyjnej ulicy Warszawy. Mieści otwartą dla gości restaurację oraz Klub Polskiej Rady Biznesu. W sali kryształowej Pałacu Sobańskich odbywały się huczne bale przedwojennej Warszawy. Swój obecny kształt Pałac zawdzięcza hrabinie Emilii z Łubieńskich Sobańskiej, która postanowiła przebudować renesansową willę według projektu Leonarda Marconiego w 1876 roku. Słynny architekt umieścił przed budowlą kopię posągu Dawida wykonanego przez jednego z najwybitniejszych rzeźbiarzy włoskiego renesansu – Donatella. Stojąca w ogrodzie przed frontem pałacu rzeźba symbolizuje zwycięstwo, odwagę i pomysłowość. Prace architekta przy Pałacu Sobańskich wiązały się z dobudową budynku biurowego w miejscu dawnej oficyny. Wzbudziło to niemałe kontrowersje, gdyż budowlę zaplanowano jako bardzo nowoczesną. Od kordegardy oddzielono budynek szklanym łącznikiem. Natomiast aluminiowo-szklana elewacja z zewnętrznymi żaluzjami w wyraźny sposób odróżnia się od zabytkowej substancji.

Flagowym projektem pracowni architektonicznej Wejcherta było centrum handlowe umiejscowione w północno-zachodnim Dublinie. W zamierzeniu projektowym ośrodek handlowy miał być mocno powiązany z otaczającymi go terenami zielonymi, z regionalnym college'em technicznym, biurami, biblioteką, centrum sztuki, budynkami usługowymi oraz hotelami. Cały teren obejmował powierzchnię liczącą 40 hektarów. Natomiast samo centrum handlowe liczyło 120 sklepów, było w nim wiele restauracji oraz kino multiplex z dziewięcioma salami kinowymi. Należy również dodać, że projekt posiadał niezbędny dla funkcjonowania tego obiektu wy-

godny i duży parking. Użycie takich materiałów jak cegła czy widoczne stalowe konstrukcje połączone wraz z geometrycznym układem, uobecnione w małych formach ekspresji czynią obiekt przyjazny dla człowieka i „łatwooswajalny” dla przeciętnego obserwatora. Jasne wnętrza dzięki szerokiemu wykorzystaniu naturalnego oświetlenia oraz użycie ceramiki i kamienia przy wykończeniu czynią obiekt architektonicznie łatwo dostępnym dla użytkownika. Nawet dzisiaj owocny rozwój projektu Centrum Handlowego w dzielnicy Blanchardstown zawdzięcza swój dynamizm oraz wielkość pomysłowości Andrzejowi Wejchertowi. Zapoczątkowany rozwój centrum handlowego w 1972 był rezultatem rekomendacji urbanistycznej z 1960 roku. Obiekty ulokowane są w miejscu zamieszkanym przez 120 000 mieszkańców. Dane urbanistyczne nawet dzisiaj robią wrażenie: 15 milionów odwiedzających, darmowy parking dla 7 tysięcy samochodów, 20 restauracji, ponad 600 autobusów łączących codziennie tę dzielnicę Dublina z innymi jego częściami.

Z architektury sakralnej godnym uwagi jest wspomniany wcześniej projekt kościoła Świętej Trójcy w Donaghmede. W założeniu architekta jednym z celów projektu było skrócenie fizycznego dystansu między uczestnikami liturgii a sprawującymi akty liturgiczne. Łatwy dostęp do ołtarza czynił kościół bardziej otwarty dla uczestników mszy świętej. Dynamiczne i ostre formy projektowe zwieńczenia dachowego jasno i wyraźnie wskazują na unikatowy system osadzony w kształcie krzyża. Aranżacja geometrycznie zamontowanych i przeszklonych trójkątów na szczycie świątyni dostarcza wystarczającą ilość naturalnego światła. Również cztery wejścia do świątyni, symbolizujące cztery strony świata, czynią ją otwartą dla każdego człowieka. Świątynia wzniesiona jest na planie krzyża, który łącząc się ze wzorem krzyża na sklepieniu, oddaje symboliczne znaczenie prawdy wiary chrześcijańskiej, według której krzyż Chrystusa łączy w sobie niebo z ziemią i ze wszystkimi ludźmi.

## **Andrzej & Danuta Wejchert**

Do założonej w 1974 roku firmy Andrzej & Danuta Wejchert, architects z czasem dołączyli lokalni architekci, tworząc firmę pod

nazwą „Andrzej & Danuta Wejchert and Partners Architects”. Możliwości samodzielnej już pracy wynikają nie tylko z racji wygranego międzynarodowego konkursu, ale i z dalszych sukcesów, takich jak zdobycie Złotego Medalu – nagrody Królewskiego Instytutu Architektów Irlandii RIAI za powstały na terenie uniwersytetu budynek administracyjny (1972) oraz ośrodek sportowy (1981). Znakomita w swym rysunku – ulubiona przez jej twórców – żelbetowa wieża wodna na tym terenie przynosi kolejną nagrodę, tym razem wyspecjalizowanego towarzystwa Irish Concrete Society (1979). Kolejną nagrodę RIAI, a także szereg innych – w tym Europa Nostra – przynosi również realizacja oryginalnego wejścia do jaskini Aillwee Cave w Irlandii Zachodniej (1979), która w nadzwyczaj kulturalny sposób wprowadza w naturalne środowisko nieodzowne elementy techniki. Kolejne wygrane konkursy przynoszą też dalsze ciekawe rozwiązania techniczne, jak np. szkoły w Ballincollig (1976) i w Ballynanty (1978), których konstrukcja wykonana została z tworzyw sztucznych. Są tam również nowe propozycje przestrzennego ukształtowania szkoły, które zostają rozwinięte w dalszych projektach szkół w Dalkey (1984), Brookfield (1985), Finglas (1986) i Blessington (1987). Bardzo ciekawe są powstałe w tej pracowni kościoły, jak wspomniany dwukrotnie kościół Świętej Trójcy w Dublinie (1978), w Bloomington (ok. 1980) czy w Cork (1992). Doczesne szczątki śp. Andrzeja Wejcherta i jego małżonki spoczywają na południowym cmentarzu Dublina w Shanganagh (rząd 10, kwatera 44).

Full version of English translation of the article on page 47.

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## REVIEWS

***The Irish Constitutions and their evolution. 1919–2019***  
by Maciej B. Furtas, – Softcover, ISBN 978-83-8158-737-2,  
ISBN e-book 978-838158-738-9, published by C.H. Beck,  
324 pp., 179 PLN

It is with great expectations and interest that we receive another publication concerning the matters that are at the heart of every researcher of Ireland, namely the history of ‘the Irish Question’, this time considered in a strictly legal context. Maciej Bartosz Furtas, the author of the monograph, is a Doctor of Law and lecturer of law at the Dublin Branch of the Old Polish University in Kielce. In his book entitled *The Irish Constitutions and their evolution 1919–2019*, with great erudition he strikes the right balance between a detailed analysis of over 200 legal acts and constitutional judicature, and a comprehensive description of the historical background necessary to understand the entire context of the discussion. Were it not for the background, the understanding of the 100-year evolution of the Irish constitutionalism and the development of independent statehood would not be an easy task.

The author begins with a brief summary of the oldest traces of the Brehon laws used in the island since prehistoric times of Celtic settlement. The relics survived almost until the nineteenth century, that is until the time of the complete reception of British law. The struggle to break free from the dependency on England and then Britain lasted almost 800 years, and a real breakthrough came only with the events that are known to historians of Ireland as the Easter Rising of 1916 and the announcement of the provisional Dáil Constitution as the most important legal act of the independent assembly of the Irish Parliament of 1919. The formation of the government of the self-proclaimed republic in the Mansion House building in Dublin and the beginning of the War of Independence

with the British waged by the Irish Republican Army. On 6 December 1921 this led to the signing of the peace treaty and the creation of the Free Irish State. Ireland gained relative independence and dominion status, but it lost six counties in the north. This had a long impact on the future of the whole island. The treaty became effective on 6 December 1922, and was the legal basis for the text of the Constitution of the Irish Free State of 1922.

For the first time in history, the Irish won 'the freedom to achieve freedom'. As a result, in 1937 they broke away from British dependence and established the real political sovereignty of the state in the form of *Bunreacht na hÉireann*, that is the Irish Constitution of 1937. The new constitution permanently introduced, along with English-language nomenclature, the Irish name of the state *Éire* (Ireland), *Taoiseach* (prime minister), *Tánaiste* (deputy prime minister), *Oireachtas* (national assembly), *Dáil Éireann* (lower house of parliament), *Seanad Éireann* (senate) and *Uachtarán na hÉireann* (president). Above all, however, it contained a definition of the republican nature of the state, confirmed *expressis verbis* by the Republic of Ireland Act of 1948, which, since its ratification in 1949, has established Ireland as a republic. Consequently, it also meant Ireland's exit from the British Commonwealth. The history of Ireland's gradual liberation from the constraints of imperial ambitions of its larger neighbour has set a permanent mark in the history of Irish constitutionalism.

Although the current Irish constitution belongs to the so-called 'rigid constitutions', the text underwent numerous changes. Each time the changes were implemented through the formalized procedure of a national referendum, and each time it took place in a historical moment important for Ireland. The changes concerned political issues (Ireland's neutrality, voting age, ratification of international agreements, including EEC and EU agreements, the Belfast Agreement), social issues (recognition of same-sex marriages, women's rights, divorce, abortion and adoption) and ideological issues (removal of the provision on the special role of the Catholic Church, abolition of criminalization of blasphemy or the death penalty). In the political and economic context, the

most important is a referendum authorizing the ratification of the accession agreement with the European Communities (accession in 1973), and of the Single European Act and subsequent treaties with the European Union, that is the Treaty of Maastricht and the Treaties of Amsterdam, Nice and Lisbon. Without their ratification, there would also be no enlargement of the European Union to Poland and Poles in Ireland.

The publication by Dr Maciej Furtas developed under the watchful eye of academics at the Koźmiński University in Warsaw, including prof. Jan Wawrzyniak, who provided the kind foreword. Written in an intelligible language, the book introduces a Polish reader to social, legal and constitutional topics of Ireland. The author's clear style accustoms an attentive reader to complex legal nomenclature, including Gaelic terms, which are intelligible to native Irish people and which newcomers from Poland or other countries are just learning. On the pages of the monograph, a historian, a constitutionalist and a lawyer will discover a necessary compendium of knowledge about Ireland. A lover of a green island, a university student and every reader interested in the world will find there an explanation of the dramatic and bloody history of the country where it is not by accident that Poles feel good, settle and start families. The publication is available in bookstores of J.H. Beck and also in the pdf version, as an e-book.

In academic, intellectual and cognitive terms, the book meets the expectations of a demanding reader. It is a pity that the work is available only in Polish and that it lacks a short summary in English. However, it was worth waiting for the long-awaited release of this important publication.

*Jarosław PŁACHECKI*

***Konstytucje Irlandii i ich ewolucja. 1919–2019*** Maciej B. Furtas, – (miękka okładka), ISBN 978-83-8158-737-2, ISBN e-book 978-838158-738-9, wyd. C.H. Beck, 324 ss., 179 PLN

Z wielkimi oczekiwaniami i zainteresowaniem przyjąć należy kolejną publikację dotyczącą spraw bliskich każdemu badaczowi Irlandii, a mianowicie dziejów „kwestii irlandzkiej”, tym razem ujętych w kontekście rozważań *stricte* prawniczych. Autor monografii, Maciej Bartosz Furtas, jest doktorem nauk prawnych i wykładowcą prawa w dublińskiej Filii Staropolskiej Szkoły Wyższej w Kielcach. W swojej książce pt. *Konstytucje Irlandii i ich ewolucja. 1919–2019*, z wielką erudycją zachował właściwe proporcje pomiędzy szczegółową analizą ponad 200 aktów prawnych i orzecznictwa konstytucyjnego a wyczerpującym opisem tła historycznego, niezbędnym dla zrozumienia całego kontekstu rozważań. Bez tego zrozumienie 100 lat ewolucji irlandzkiego konstytucjonalizmu i budowania niezależnej państwowości nie byłoby zadaniem prostym.

Autor rozpoczyna swój wykład od skrótowego przybliżenia najstarszych śladów *prawa brehonów*, stosowanego na wyspie od prehistorycznych czasów osadnictwa celtyckiego. Jego relikty dotrwały niemalże do XIX w., tj. aż do czasów całkowitej recepcji prawa brytyjskiego. Zmagania o wyrwanie się spod zależności angielskiej, a potem brytyjskiej trwały niemalże 800 lat i dopiero wydarzenia znane historykom – irlandystom, jako powstanie wielkanocne 1916 roku i ogłoszenie tymczasowej konstytucja pierwszego *Dáilu*, jako najważniejszego aktu prawnego niezależnego zgromadzenia parlamentu irlandzkiego z 1919 r., stanowiły prawdziwy przełom. Utworzenie rządu samostanowienia republiki w budynku Mansion House w Dublinie i rozpoczęcie nierównej walki z Brytyjczykami przez Irlandzką Armię Republikańską doprowadziło w konsekwencji do podpisania pokojowego traktatu z dnia 6 grudnia 1921 r. i utworzenia Wolnego Państwa Irlandzkiego. Irlandia uzyskała względną niezależność i status dominium, ale okupiła to stratą sześciu hrabstw na północy. Fakt ten na długo zaważył na przyszłości całej wyspy. Traktat zaczął obowiązywać od 6 grudnia 1922 r., stanowiąc pod-

stawę prawną tekstu Konstytucji Wolnego Państwa Irlandzkiego z 5 grudnia 1922 r.

Po raz pierwszy w swojej historii Irlandczycy wywalczyli „wolność, aby osiągnąć wolność” (*the freedom to achieve freedom*), doprowadzając w 1937 r. do zerwania z zależnością brytyjską i ustanowienia faktycznej suwerenności politycznej państwa w postaci *Bunreacht na hÉireann*, tj. Konstytucji Irlandii z 1937 r. Nowa konstytucja wprowadziła na stałe, obok nazewnictwa anglojęzycznego, określenie irlandzkiej nazwy państwa *Éire* (Irlandia), *Taioseach* (premier), *Tánaiste* (wicepremier), *Oireachtas* (zgromadzenie narodowe), *Dáil Éireann* (izba niższa parlamentu), *Seanad Éireann* (senat) oraz *Uachtarán na hÉireann* (prezydent). Przede wszystkim zawierała jednak określenie republikańskiego charakteru państwa, potwierdzonego *expressis verbis* w brzmieniu Ustawy o Republice Irlandii z 1948 r., która od momentu jej ratyfikacji w 1949 r. ustanawiała Irlandię republiką. W konsekwencji oznaczało to też wyjście Irlandii z brytyjskiej Wspólnoty Narodów. Historia stopniowego wyzwania się Irlandii spod wpływu imperialnych ambicji jej większego sąsiada wyznaczyła trwałą ślad w dziejach irlandzkiego konstytucjonalizmu.

Chociaż obowiązująca konstytucja Irlandii należy do tzw. konstytucji „szytych”, jej tekst podlegał wielokrotnym zmianom. Za każdym razem odbywało się to w drodze sformalizowanej procedury ogólnokrajowego referendum; i za każdym razem odbywało się to w jakimś ważnym dla Irlandii momencie historycznym. Zmiany te dotyczyły zarówno kwestii politycznych (neutralności Irlandii, wieku uprawniającego do uczestniczenia w wyborach, ratyfikacji umów międzynarodowych, w tym z EWG i UE, czy porozumienia wielokopiatkowego), społecznych (uznania małżeństw jedнопłciowych, praw kobiet, kwestii rozwodów, aborcji i adopcji) oraz światopoglądowych (usunięcie przepisu o szczególnej roli Kościoła katolickiego, zniesienie penalizacji bluźnierstwa czy kary śmierci). W kontekście politycznym i gospodarczym za najważniejsze można uznać referendum zezwalające na ratyfikację umowy akcesyjnej ze Wspólnotami Europejskimi (akcesja w 1973 r.), a następnie Jednolitego Aktu Europejskiego oraz kolejnych traktatów z Unią Europej-

ską, tj. traktatu z Maastricht, traktatu amsterdamskiego, nicejskiego i lizbońskiego. Bez ich ratyfikacji nie byłoby także rozszerzenia Unii Europejskiej o Polskę i Polaków w Irlandii.

Publikacja dr. Macieja Furtasa powstała pod czujnym okiem akademików z Akademii Leona Koźmińskiego w Warszawie, w tym prof. Jana Wawrzyniaka, który opatrzył ją życzliwym słowem wstępnym. Napisana została zrozumiałym językiem, przybliżając polskiemu czytelnikowi tematykę społeczną i prawniczo-konstytucyjną Irlandii. Klarowna stylistyka autora przyzwyczają uważnego czytelnika do skomplikowanego nazewnictwa prawniczego, w tym do określeń gaelickich, zrozumiałych dla rodzimych Irlandczyków, a których nowi przybysze z Polski czy innych krajów dopiero się uczą. Badacz historii, konstytucjonalista i prawnik odkryje na stronach monografii niezbędne kompendium wiedzy o Irlandii. Miłośnik zielonej wyspy, student uniwersytetu i każdy ciekawy świata czytelnik odnajdzie w niej wyjaśnienie dramatycznej i krwawej historii kraju, w którym nie przez przypadek Polacy dobrze się czują, osiedlają i zakładają rodziny. Publikacja dostępna jest w księgarniach wydawnictwa J.H. Beck, a także w wersji pdf jako e-book.

Pod względem naukowym, intelektualnym i poznawczym książka spełnia oczekiwania wymagającego czytelnika. Szkoda, że praca dostępna jest tylko w języku polskim, i że zabrakło w niej krótkiego streszczenia w języku angielskim. Na długo wyczekiwane wydanie tej ważnej publikacji warto było jednak czekać.

*Jarosław PŁACHECKI*

***Ku niepodległości. Polskie i irlandzkie drogi do suwerenności***  
/ Towards Independence: Polish and Irish Ways to Sovereignty,  
1918–1922, edited by Krzysztof Marchelewicz & Adam  
Kucharski, Irish Culture Foundation, Poznań 2019, ISBN:  
978-83-63374-89-1.

The years between 1918 and 1922, which have enormous significance in Ireland and Poland, were celebrated in a conference held in Poznań in November, 2018. Poland gained independence at the end of the Great War on 11 November 1918, giving a boost to Irish nationalists who won a tremendous electoral victory a month later in the Westminster elections. Polish independence was fragile with uncertain borders leading to a number of wars, the most serious being the Polish-Russian war of 1919–1920. Irish nationalism faced a comparable struggle in a war against the British military to win partial independence in the Anglo-Irish Treaty in 1922.

In both cases independence was not a gift of an occupying power, but the result of years of struggle and was maintained by bloodshed. The events commemorated are important milestones in the histories of Poland and Ireland and shaped the collective memory and identity of both countries. While there were many different circumstances the contemporaneous dates make the commemoration of such events moving and important occasions in our present.

Some commentators would have us believe that nationalism is a tribal aberration, a tribal response to the complexities of the modern world. But this is a simplification; there are forms of nationalism that are not xenophobic or racist which cherishes the memory of the past and the sacrifices made by so many to establish the freedoms we enjoy. Both countries had the benefit of an idealistic and revolutionary generation who devoted their lives to regenerating their respective nations.

*Towards Independence* is the third publication on aspects of Polish-Irish history from the Irish Culture Foundation in Poznań.

(See IPSY vol. 3 2016 p. 130 for a review of *Poland & Ireland – A Common History?*) Observers of Irish-Polish relations will recognize the ICL as the creation of Krzysztof Schramm and Justyna Mazurek-Schramm who have done so much to promote Irish culture and history in Poland. The 2018 conference was organised in collaboration with the Institute of History at the Adam Mickiewicz University and supported by the Irish Embassy in Warsaw, the Honorary Consulate of Ireland in Poznan and sponsored by the Santander Bank. It was opened by the Irish Ambassador to Poland, Emer O'Connell.

Dr Adam Kucharski, a specialist in Irish-Polish historical connections, author of *Historia Irlandii w źródłach (Sources for Ireland's History) 1155–1998* (2013) and *Placing Poland at the Heart of Irishness: Irish political elites in relation to Poland in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century* (2020) provides the introduction in which he states the aim of the conference was to expose the public to new research of 'an informative and popularising nature'. The organisers have certainly succeeded in producing a collection of varied and fascinating papers that engage the reader with their vitality and freshness. The translators from Polish to English have done an especially good job in eschewing jargon and the occasional practise of jamming multiple clauses into sentences. The contributions are printed in both languages and provide a wide range of approaches to the history of the period.

Liz Gillis from Dublin is one of the best-known popularisers of modern Irish history with books such as *Women of the Irish Revolution* and *The Burning of the Custom House, 1921*. Her paper highlights the central and often overlooked role of women from the Easter Rising to the War of Independence. Countess Markievicz was a major figure here, but there were many others who deserve to be remembered.

In contrast the Polish contributors focus on aspects of military history such as the central role of Jozef Pilsudski, the formation of the Polish armed forces in the turbulent days after November 1918 and the role of the Polish army in the Wielkopolska region. These

were especially useful for an Irish reader as there is very little material in English about this critical period.

The Irish contributions continue with Catherine Scuffi's cold eye on the Celtic Revival which she claims was based on "a romantic – if totally inaccurate – historical portrayal of the Irish nation and its traditions with Irish people shown as 'noble savages'..." Despite this caveat she acknowledges that this movement had an enormous influence on the revolutionary generation and gave Ireland such symbols and images as Celtic crosses, round towers, wolfhounds etc that persist to the present day.

Paul O'Brien's lecture on the Irish armed forces mirrors some of the Polish contributions on military history while Cuan O Seireadain emphasises the role of Irish language advocates in the Gaelic League on the formation of Irish national identity.

The contributions are on separate, occasionally parallel tracks, except for the concluding essay by associate editor, Krzysztof Marchelewicz, on the role of Polish and Irish emigration in the independence process during 1914 – 21. He makes the point that hundreds of thousands of dollars from emigrants in the United States helped to finance the independence movements in Poland and Ireland.

Such is the richness of this collection that it is impossible to summarise each contribution or to give them the attention they deserve, but each essay is accessible and thought-provoking. The collection deserves to be widely read and not just in academic circles. Copies may be hard to find in Ireland, but should be available through the Irish Culture Foundation/Fundacja Kultury Irlandzkiej website: [fki.home.pl](http://fki.home.pl)

*Patrick Quigley*



*Eccles Street. Dublin.* Drawing by Katarzyna Sudak.  
Black pen on paper. Reprinted courtesy of the artist.

# POETRY

Tomasz WYBRANOWSKI

## DUBLIN NOCĄ

Wiśniówka z colą  
niewinny drobiazg  
potrafi zaszumieć  
albo malinowy cider ze Szwecji...

w sercu celtyckiego Dublina Polacy  
ich fobie i sny o potędze,  
smutek i euforia,  
żal za grzechy swoje i cudze  
(jak to w naszej naturze)  
i nietzscheanizm w najczystszej  
bo spirytusowej formie

i jeszcze deszcz  
– prawda wieczna w tym kraju



## REPORTS & CORRESPONDENCE

Hanna DOWLING

### Summary of the Irish Polish Society activities in the year 2019

- **5<sup>th</sup> January, 2019** – The “Little Christmas” party organized together with POSK. A traditional social event.
- **20<sup>th</sup> January, 2019** – An event on mental health took place in the Polish House. First Fortnight (European Mental Health, Art & Culture Festival) in partnership with the Irish Polish Society presented a Belgian documentary film *Labyrinthine*. The film screening was followed by a discussion on mental health services for ethnic minorities in Ireland. Guest speakers from different non-governmental organizations took part (e.g. Emilia Marchelewska – *Cairde*, Krystian Fikert – *My Mind*, Constantin Tui – Romanian Psychotherapist) and others. Irina Maldea, Romanian film editor who co-directed with historian and film maker, Brendan Culleton, a documentary series for TG4 “*An Irish State of Mind*” also took part.
- **10<sup>th</sup> February, 2019** – A concert of Polish music performed by Polish classical musicians. Pianist Tamara Niekludow, and violinist Tomasz Siarkiewicz played music by Polish composers (Chopin, Wieniawski, Paderewski, and others).
- **3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2019** – Polish *Ostatki* (Shrovetide) was celebrated; there was a concert of light Carnival music given by a pianist Anna Kiselyova. Polish *pączki* (donuts) and *faworki* (Angel wings) and other traditional dishes were served. In spite of dreadful weather (it was snowing with gales) there was a joyful atmosphere and a good turnout!

- **22<sup>nd</sup> March, 2019** – An Evening with the Author. Well-known Polish writer and scientist, Janusz Leon Wisniewski, was co-hosted by our Society and POSK. His most famous novel *S@motność w Sieci* (Loneliness on the Net) was published in 2001 and translated into several languages. There is a Polish film based on the novel. The event was in Polish language.
- **7<sup>th</sup> April, 2019** – Family workshop. Easter Eggs Painting for children was organized by Marysia Harasimowicz.
- **11<sup>th</sup> April, 2019** – ‘Was Countess Markievicz really a Feminist?’ – An evening with Mary Kenny. The event was organized to mark the centenary of the appointment of Constance Markievicz as the first female Government Minister. Well-known writer and journalist Mary Kenny, in conversation with Pat Quigley, gave an interesting portrayal of Constance Markievicz. She also read extracts from Con’s prison letters to her beloved sister Eva. Irish poetess, Mary Guckian, took part in discussion and read one of her poems.
- **May/June 2019** – The IPS committee meetings held on May 17<sup>th</sup> and June 14<sup>th</sup> were entirely dedicated to preparations for the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our Society. Another important topic discussed at the meetings was the album edited by Jarosław Płachecki, entitled *The Polish House in Dublin – An Illustrated Chronicle*. Several Society members (present and former) were very busy seeking information on the early years of the House (archival materials, photos, articles, press records etc.). It is worth emphasising that if the IPS was not established 40 years ago, the Polish House would not be in Ireland today.
- **27<sup>th</sup> July, 2019** – Garden party with barbecue organized together with POSK. It was also a farewell party for the Consul, Mrs Katarzyna Kasperkiewicz who completed her diplomatic work in Ireland.
- **11<sup>th</sup> October, 2019** – As part of the IPS 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations the Annual Art Exhibition was officially launched by Mr Ruairi Ó Cuiv, Public Art Officer DCC. It was open for the public from the 26<sup>th</sup> of October to the end of November 2019. Eight artists exhibited their works.
- **19<sup>th</sup> October, 2019** – A Conference ‘*Integration, Friendship, Tradition: 40 years of the Irish Polish Society*’; it was the

main event celebrating 40 years of our Society. The Conference was opened by the Society's chairperson, Joanna Piechota. The special guests were the Polish Ambassador to Ireland Ms Anna Sochanska, the Consul, Mr Grzegorz Sala, Mr Jerome Mullen, Honorary Consul of Poland in Northern Ireland, Prof. Jolanta Góral-Pótróla (Old Polish University), and Dr Joanna Pyłat (World Research Council on Poles Abroad). The Conference consisted of two parts – the unveiling commemorative plaque in the Polish House basement and a panel of speakers chaired by Dr Joanna Pyłat. Letters of congratulation were read. Ms Sochanska, the Ambassador, addressed the Conference outlining the importance of the Irish Polish Society as 'an ambassador' of Polish culture, art, history and the links between our two countries. Seven members of the Society received letters of appreciation from the Polish Embassy (Joanna Piechota, Helena Johnston, Hanna Dowling, Marysia Harasimowicz, Patrick Quigley, Jarosław Płachecki and Jason Dolan). Four talks were given. Ian Cantwell spoke about the roots of the Irish-Polish relationship, and Helena Johnston recalled the Society's beginnings; she also showed the audience very interesting documents from the Society's early days. The topic of Hanna Dowling's talk was the IPS 40 years of engagement in promoting the arts of music, painting and literature in Ireland. Patrick Quigley spoke about forgotten connections between our two nations. (See more information about the Conference in IPSY 2020, chapter Archival Documents & Essays).

- **9<sup>th</sup> November, 2019** – The celebration of 11<sup>th</sup> November Poland's Independence Day. There was a meeting with the representatives of the IPN (Institute of National Remembrance) with a lecture on Polish history. A short piano recital was given by Anna Hryniewicz.
- **8<sup>th</sup> December, 2019** – A special event on the occasion of the Nobel Prize for Literature awarded to Polish author Olga Tokarczuk. The programme included an illustrated talk, a short documentary film, and reading fragments from her books. The event was bilingual.

Besides the events related to the IPS, committee members worked on various issues and events organized outside the Society,

but on behalf of it and in its interest. Some of these activities are worth mentioning:

- **21<sup>st</sup> January, 2019** – Jarosław Płachecki took part in the Radio WNET programme '*Poranek WNET z Dublinu*' ('Radio WNET morning from Dublin').
- **February 2019** – Chairperson Joanna Piechota attended the meeting with members of the Polish Parliament who were in Ireland. They had meetings with Polish schools and with representatives of Polish organizations in Ireland.
- **12 April, 2019** – Edyta Dolan, Ula Retzlaff O'Carroll and Krzysztof Kiedrowski took part in the Diversity Day organized by KLEAR Adult Education Centre in Kilbarrack. The event was opened by the Lord Mayor and the attendance was very high. Our IPS stand was quite busy as people were keen on taking part in Ula's paper cutting workshop (artistic paper cut-outs). Edyta was interviewed by Near FM community radio and did an excellent job.
- Chair of our Society Cork Branch, Chris Wolny, attended several events organized in Co Cork in connection with Great War and the centenary of historical 'rebirth' of Poland and Ireland as independent states.
- On the **17<sup>th</sup> October, 2019**, a very offensive sign was posted above the door of the social welfare centre in Hanover Street, Cork ('*Jobpath Macht Frei*' was pasted – a take on the Nazi concentration camp Auschwitz phrase '*Arbeit Macht Frei*'). The sticker was noticed by Polish people and Chris alerted the centre manager. Thanks to his prompt action the offensive sticker was removed in twenty minutes. The event was reported in the Irish media.
- **4 December, 2019** – Krzysztof Kiedrowski assisted the Irish Multimedia journalist, Juliette Gash, in preparing a feature programme on different Christmas traditions. She asked the IPS to meet someone to talk about the Polish Christmas, and Krzysztof did it.
- The IPS Yearbook's two volumes (vol. IV, 2017 and vol. V, 2018) edited by Jarosław Płachecki were published. It is worth mentioning that *The Irish Catholic* (**16<sup>th</sup> January, 2020**) published a laudatory review of the IPSY 5<sup>th</sup> volume.

Hanna DOWLING

## **Podsumowanie wydarzeń Towarzystwa Irlandzko-Polskiego, zorganizowanych w 2019 roku**

- **05.01.2019** – Tradycyjne spotkanie świąteczno-noworoczne zorganizowane wspólnie z POSK-iem.
- **20.01.2019** – Wydarzenie poświęcone problemom zdrowia psychicznego. Towarzystwo Irlandzko-Polskie we współpracy z festiwalem *First Fortnight Europe* przedstawiło belgijski film dokumentalny *Labyrinthine* (Labiryntowy). Po pokazie odbyła się dyskusja poświęcona kwestii zdrowia psychicznego mniejszości etnicznych w Irlandii, głównie społeczności polskiej i rumuńskiej. W panelu dyskusyjnym wzięli udział m.in. Emilia Marchelewska (*Cairde*), Krystian Fikert (założyciel internetowego serwisu zdrowia psychicznego *My Mind*), Constantin Tui – rumuński psychoterapeuta, rumuńska reżyserka filmowa Iri-na Maldea, która – wspólnie z filmowcem i historykiem Brendanem Culletonem – wyreżyserowała dla irlandzkiego kanału TG4 serię filmów dokumentalnych nt. historii irlandzkich instytucji psychiatrycznych.
- **10.02.2019** – Koncert muzyki polskich kompozytorów (Chopin, Wieniawski, Paderewski i inni). Wystąpili polscy artyści muzycy: Tamara Niekłudow (fortepian) i Tomasz Siarkiewicz (skrzypce).
- **03.03.2019** – Polskie „Ostatki”. Impreza towarzysko-rozrywkowa z okazji kończącego się karnawału. W programie był koncert popularnej muzyki klasycznej i rozrywkowej w wykonaniu mieszkającej w Irlandii ukraińskiej pianistki Anny Kiselyovej. Przy muzyce degustacja faworków, pączków i innych karnawałowych przysmaków. Wieczór, pomimo strasznej pogody (wichura i deszcz ze śniegiem), odbył się w prawdziwie karnawałowej atmosferze!

- **22.03.2019** – Spotkanie z autorem. Gościem spotkania, zorganizowanego przez Towarzystwo Irlandzko-Polskie i POSK, był Janusz Leon Wiśniewski, znany polski naukowiec i pisarz. Jego powieść *Samotność w Sieci* (internetowa korespondencja, nowoczesna technologia i klasyczny romans!), stała się bestsellerem w Polsce i w Rosji, była sfilmowana i przetłumaczona na wiele języków. Bardzo ciekawe spotkanie prowadzone było w języku polskim.
- **07.04.2019** – Warsztaty dla dzieci prowadzone przez Marysię Harasimowicz. Malowanie pisanek wielkanocnych.
- **11.04.2019** – Wieczór dyskusyjny z Mary Kenny, zorganizowany z okazji stulecia wyboru Constance Markiewicz na stanowisko ministra pracy, przez co stała się ona historycznie pierwszą kobietą ministrem. Dyskusję pt. *Czy hrabina Markiewicz była rzeczywiście feministką?* prowadził Patrick Quigley, rozmawiając z panią Mary Kenny, znaną pisarką i dziennikarką o wszechstronnych zainteresowaniach. W dyskusji przedstawiła ona ciekawy wielostronny obraz Constance Markiewicz. Przeczytała fragmenty ze swojej ostatniej sztuki, monodramu pt. *Dear Old Darling*, opartego na listach, które Constance pisała z więzienia do swojej ukochanej siostry Ewy. W dyskusji wzięła także udział irlandzka poetka Mary Guckian i przeczytała jeden ze swoich wierszy.

W maju i czerwcu 2019 r. komitet Towarzystwa Irlandzko-Polskiego nie zorganizował żadnych imprez, ponieważ członkowie komitetu zajęci byli przygotowaniem obchodów 40-lecia Towarzystwa. Odbyły się dwa zebrania – 17 maja i 14 czerwca, podczas których przedyskutowano szczegółowo plan organizacyjny obchodów. Drugim ważnym tematem, który omawiano podczas zebrań, był projekt wydania publikacji *Dom Polski w Dublinie* w formie albumu-kroniki. Projekt był wsparty finansowo przez Ambasadę RP. Dr Jarosław Płachecki, który redagował album, zwrócił się do obecnych i byłych członków Towarzystwa Irlandzko-Polskiego o pomoc przy wyszukiwaniu materiału do tej publikacji. Chodziło przede wszystkim o fotografie, ale również o inną dokumentację – publikowane artykuły, wycinki z prasy, listy informacyjne i inne archiwalne materiały. Szczególnie cenna była dokumentacja z lat 80. ubiegłego wieku, dotycząca początków Towarzystwa Irlandzko-Polskiego i otwarcia

domu przy 20 Fitzwilliam Place. Warto podkreślić, że gdyby przed 40 laty nie powstało Towarzystwo Irlandzko-Polskie, Dom Polski w Dublinie by dziś po prostu nie istniał.

- **27.07.2019** – Impreza towarzyska grill-*barbecue* w ogrodzie, zorganizowana wspólnie z POSK-iem. Było to jednocześnie uroczyste pożegnanie p. Katarzyny Kasperkiewicz, która zakończyła swoją pracę w Konsulacie RP w Irlandii.
- **11.10.2019** – Oficjalne otwarcie wystawy artystycznej Towarzystwa Irlandzko-Polskiego. Było to pierwsze wydarzenie, zorganizowane w ramach obchodów 40-lecia Towarzystwa. Uroczystego otwarcia dokonał Ruairi Ó Cuiv z DCC (*Dublin City Council* – Rada Miasta Dublina). Ośmiu artystów malarzy wystawiło swoje prace. Wystawa była otwarta dla publiczności od 26 października do końca listopada 2019 r.
- **19.10.2019** – Konferencja „*Integracja, przyjaźń, tradycja: 40 lat Towarzystwa Irlandzko-Polskiego*” była głównym wydarzeniem jubileuszowym 40-lecia Towarzystwa. Konferencję otworzyła Joanna Piechota, prezes Towarzystwa Irlandzko-Polskiego. Specjalnymi gośćmi byli: JE Anna Sochańska – Ambasador Polski w Irlandii, Konsul p. Grzegorz Sala, honorowy Konsul Polski w Irlandii Północnej Jerome Mullen, Prof. Jolanta Góral-Półrola ze Staropolskiej Szkoły Wyższej, dr Joanna Pyłat (Światowa Rada Badań nad Polonią). Zostały odczytane listy gratulacyjne, m.in. od przewodniczącego EUWP, który przekazał Towarzystwu srebrny medal EUWP za szczególne zasługi dla Polonii europejskiej. Pani Ambasador Sochańska w swoim przemówieniu dziękowała Towarzystwu Irlandzko-Polskiemu za działalność na rzecz zbliżenia Polski i Irlandii, określając Towarzystwo jako swoisty rodzaj „ambasadora” polskiej kultury, sztuki, historii i więzi łączących nasze dwa kraje. Siedmioro członków Towarzystwa otrzymało listy gratulacyjne od Ambasady RP (Joanna Piechota, Helena Johnston, Hanna Dowling, Marysia Harasimowicz, Patrick Quigley, Jarosław Płachecki i Jason Dolan).

W pierwszej części konferencji odbyło się uroczyste odsłonięcie tablicy pamiątkowej w dolnej kondygnacji Domu Polskiego. W drugiej, głównej części, miał miejsce panel dyskusyjny, prowadzony

przez dr Joannę Pyłat. Wystąpiło czterech prelegentów. Ian Cantwell mówił o korzeniach irlandzko-polskich związków. Helena Johnston opowiedziała o początkach Towarzystwa Irlandzko-Polskiego w latach 1978–1980; pokazała też bardzo ciekawe dokumenty z tamtych, odległych lat. Wystąpienie Hanny Dowling było zatytułowane: „Towarzystwo Irlandzko-Polskie: 40 lat zaangażowania na rzecz promocji i wspierania sztuki w Irlandii, w dziedzinie muzyki, malarstwa i literatury”. Patrick Quigley mówił o zapomnianych więzach między naszymi dwoma narodami. Po dyskusji podano przekąski i napoje, przy których była okazja do dalszej rozmowy, wymiany opinii i nawiązania kontaktów. (Zob. sprawozdanie z konferencji w kolejnym rozdziale Rocznika Towarzystwa Irlandzko-Polskiego, 2020).

- **09.11.2019** – Obchody Święta Niepodległości 11 Listopada, zorganizowane w Domu Polskim wspólnie z POSK-iem. W programie był m.in. wykład historyczny przedstawiciela Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej i krótki recital fortepianowy w wykonaniu Anny Hryniewicz. Impreza odbyła się w języku polskim.
- **08.12.2019** – Wydarzenie kulturalne zorganizowane z okazji przyznania literackiej nagrody Nobla polskiej pisarce Oldze Tokarczuk. W programie był odczyt ilustrowany zdjęciami, krótki film dokumentalny i czytanie fragmentów z książek noblistki w języku polskim i w przekładzie na język angielski. Impreza prowadzona była w dwóch językach.

Poza wydarzeniami i imprezami organizowanymi przez Towarzystwo Irlandzko-Polskie członkowie komitetu uczestniczyli w projektach i przedsięwzięciach, które miały wprowadzić miejsce poza sferą działalności Towarzystwa, ale związane były z Towarzystwem i były dla naszej organizacji korzystne. Niektóre warto wymienić:

- **21.01.2019** – dr Jarosław Płachecki wziął udział w nadawanym na żywo programie radia Wnet „Poranek WNET z Dublina”. Mówił m.in. o Towarzystwie Irlandzko-Polskim i zbliżającej się 40. rocznicy powstania tej najstarszej organizacji irlandzkiej Polonii. Program prowadzili dziennikarze: Krzysztof Skowroński i Tomasz Wybranowski.

- W **lutym 2019 r.** prezes Towarzystwa Irlandzko-Polskiego Joanna Piechota uczestniczyła w spotkaniu z parlamentarzystami z Polski, którzy byli z oficjalną wizytą w Irlandii.
- **12.04.2019** – Edyta Dolan, Urszula Retzlaff O’Carroll i Krzysztof Kiedrowski wzięli udział w specjalnym wydarzeniu, zorganizowanym w Kilbarack przez Centrum Edukacyjne dla Dorosłych KLEAR. Wydarzenie międzykulturowe otworzył burmistrz Dublina. Przybyło bardzo dużo osób. Stoisko Towarzystwa Irlandzko-Polskiego cieszyło się dużym powodzeniem, głównie dzięki prowadzonym przez Urszulę Retzlaff O’Carroll warsztatom wycinanek dekoracyjnych. Edyta Dolan udzieliła świetnego wywiadu dla radia Near FM.
- Wiceprezes Towarzystwa Irlandzko-Polskiego Chris Wolny, który prowadzi „odnogę” naszego Towarzystwa w Corku, uczestniczył w różnych oficjalnych wydarzeniach organizowanych w hrabstwie Cork. Były to głównie obchody ważnych historycznych rocznic, zarówno polskich jak i irlandzkich.
- **17.10.2019** – nieznani sprawcy zamieścili obraźliwy napis nad wejściem do ośrodka opieki społecznej (*social welfare*) w Corku, przy Hanover Street. Naklejono słowa: *Jobpath Macht Frei*, imitując napis z bramy w niemieckim obozie koncentracyjnym Auschwitz *Arbeit Macht Frei* (Praca czyni wolnym). Paru Polaków zauważyło ten napis, Chris natychmiast zawiadomił dyrekcję ośrodka i dzięki jego szybkiej interwencji obraźliwy napis został usunięty w ciągu 20 minut. Incydent był opisany w prasie.
- **4.12.2019** – Krzysztof Kiedrowski pomagał dziennikarce Juliette Gash w zebraniu materiału do przygotowywanego przez nią programu RTE. Tematem programu były zwyczaje i tradycje Bożego Narodzenia różnych narodowości, które obecnie mieszkają w Irlandii. Juliette Gash zwróciła się do Towarzystwa Irlandzko-Polskiego z prośbą o informacje dotyczące polskiej tradycji bożonarodzeniowej – Krzysztof z ochotą jej odpowiedział!
- Zostały wydane dwa tomy rocznika Towarzystwa Irlandzko-Polskiego, redagowane przez dr. Jarosława Płacheckiego (tom IV, 2017 i tom V, 2018). Warto zaznaczyć, że tygodnik *The Irish Catholic* (wydanie z dnia **16 stycznia 2020 r.**) zamieścił bardzo pochwalną recenzję tomu V Roczника 2018.

*Letter from H.E. Ambassador Anna Sochańska to the IPS members (18 Oct. 2019)*

Ambasada  
Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej  
w Dublinie

Dublin, 18 października 2019 r.

**Towarzystwo  
Irlandzko - Polskie**

*W imieniu Ambasady RP w Dublinie oraz moim własnym mam ogromną przyjemność przekazać serdeczne gratulacje dla wszystkich członków komitetu zarządzającego z okazji Jubileuszu 40 – lecia działalności Towarzystwa Irlandzko – Polskiego.*

*Z wielką satysfakcją i najwyższym uznaniem gratuluję wszystkim autorom tak wspaniałego sukcesu. Znamienite osiągnięcia, które są wynikiem działalności Towarzystwa na przestrzeni lat jego funkcjonowania, niewątpliwie przyczyniły się do integracji i pogłębienia wzajemnego zrozumienia pomiędzy naszymi społecznościami.*

*Dzięki zaangażowaniu każdego z Państwa możliwym stało się przybliżenie społeczności irlandzkiej bogactwa polskiej kultury i sztuki, za co chciałabym wyrazić szczególnie podziękowania.*

*Jeszcze raz życzę wszystkim członkom Towarzystwa wszelkiej pomyślności, energii w dążeniu do wyznaczonych celów, wspaniałych pomysłów i inicjatyw, ale przede wszystkim kolejnych pięknych jubileuszy.*

**Anna Sochańska  
Ambasador RP**

5 Ailesbury Road  
Ballsbridge  
Dublin 4  
[www.dublin.msz.gov.pl](http://www.dublin.msz.gov.pl)

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Fax: (353-1) 2698309  
[dublin@msz.gov.pl](mailto:dublin@msz.gov.pl)

*Letter from H.E. Ambassador Anna Sochańska to Dr Jarosław Płachecki (18 Oct. 2019)*



Embassy  
of the Republic of Poland  
in Dublin

**Dr Jarosław Płachecki**

*Dear Doctor Płachecki,*

*Please accept my most sincere congratulations on 40th Anniversary of Irish-Polish Society.*

*Let me take this opportunity to express my deepest appreciation of your exquisite work, determination and heart put into relations, friendship, mutual understanding and cooperation of Polish and Irish communities. Thank you for cherishing of the interest in Polish culture, art, history and traditions and for organising events that strengthen ties between Poland and Ireland.*

*The work of Irish-Polish Society has a substantial influence on upbringing of the young generation of Poles living in Ireland and on shaping of their patriotic attitudes.*

*Once more thank you for this important role and work for Polish-Irish relations.*

*I wish you further unbounded enthusiasm in continuing this unique mission and responsible work.*

*Your sincerely,*

**Anna Sochańska**  
**Ambassador**

5 Allesbury Road  
Ballsbridge  
Dublin 4  
[www.dublin.msz.gov.pl](http://www.dublin.msz.gov.pl)

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[dublin@msz.gov.pl](mailto:dublin@msz.gov.pl)

*Letter from the President of EUWP Tadeusz Pilat to the Chairperson of the IPS  
Joanna Piechota (9 Oct. 2019)*



**EUROPEJSKA UNIA WSPÓLNOT POLONIJNYCH**  
**UNION OF POLISH COMMUNITIES IN EUROPE**

L.dz. P-1004/IR/2019

Szwecja, Landskrona – 9 października 2019 r.

Szanowna Pani **Joanna Piechota**  
Prezes Towarzystwa Irlandzko-Polskiego  
D u b l i n

*Szanowna Pani Prezes,*

Bardzo dziękuję za zaproszenie na Konferencję, 19 października w Dublinie, z okazji Jubileuszu 40-lecia Towarzystwa Irlandzko-Polskiego. Niestety, nie mogę wziąć udziału w waszym jubileuszowym spotkaniu ze względu na wcześniej zaplanowany ważne zobowiązania służbowe, w tym samym terminie. Europejską Unię Wspólnot Polonijnych na konferencji i uroczystości reprezentować będzie Sekretarz EUWP – Wojciech Białek.

Od wielu lat, z wielką satysfakcją przyjmujemy informacje o Waszej ważnej i pożytecznej działalności, to wielka zasługa Waszych działaczy i prezesów. Moje podziękowania kieruję w sposób szczególnie do wszystkich tych, których tak dobrze wspominamy z naszych corocznych europejskich spotkań.

Gratulując Wam w imieniu Europejskiej Unii Wspólnot Polonijnych dotychczasowych sukcesów, składam Pani i kierownictwu Towarzystwa serdeczne podziękowanie za zaangażowanie i dotychczasową ofiarną pracę. W dowód naszego uznania Sekretariat EUWP uhonorował Towarzystwo Irlandzko-Polskie Srebrnym Medalem EUWP za szczególne zasługi dla Polonii Europejskiej, który zostanie wręczony podczas jubileuszowej uroczystości.

Życzę Pani, członkom Towarzystwa oraz wszystkim organizatorom i uczestnikom jubileuszowej konferencji, wszelkiej pomyślności oraz wielu dalszych sukcesów w pracy dla Polski i Polaków w Irlandii.

*Łączę wyrazy szacunku*

**Tadeusz Adam Pilat**  
Prezydent EUWP

*Award Letter from the President of EUWP Tadeusz Pilat  
to the IPS members (10 Oct. 2019)*

# EUROPEJSKA UNIA WSPÓLNOT POLONIJNYCH



*przyznaje*

*Towarzystwu Irlandzko-Polskiemu*

*w 40. rocznicę powstania*

## SREBRNY MEDAL EUWP

*za szczególne zasługi na rzecz integracji  
i rozwoju Ruchu Polonijnego w Europie*

**Tadeusz Adam Pilat**  
Prezydent EUWP

Szwecja, Landskrona – 10 października 2019 r.

*Letter from the President of SRBNP Wiesław Gołębiewski to the IPS members  
(18 Oct. 2019)*

**The Irish-Polish Society**

**Polish House,**

**20 Fitzwilliam pl., Dublin 2.**



**Warszawa, 18.10.2019**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

On behalf of the World Research Council on Poles Abroad we wish a happy 40th anniversary of the establishment of the Irish-Polish Society.

Your commitment to the variety of activities, promoting integration between Irish and Poles and organising social events for people of any age is widely known and deserves respect and admiration. Your art exhibitions, Polish musical and book promotions have created a distinguished legacy of which you should be proud.

We applaud your efforts and celebrate this milestone with you. Best wishes for your continued success.

**Chairman of the World Research Council on Poles Abroad:**

**Wiesław Walter Gołębiewski**

**v-ce chairman of the board - dr Joanna Pylat**

# THE IPS 40<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS, ESSAYS & ARCHIVES

Jarosław PŁACHECKI

## 40 years of the IPS, the Conference Announcement



*Irish Polish Society*

### Integration, Friendship, Tradition

## 40 years of the Irish Polish Society

*(19<sup>th</sup> October 2019, The Polish House, 20 Fitzwilliam Pl., Dublin 2)*

In 2019 the Irish Polish Society is celebrating the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its founding. How do Poles in Ireland retain their national identity? Why does the Polish Diaspora integrate so well into Irish society? Are the Poles and Irish similar in their national characters? This Conference includes a range of papers that explore the borders of similarities between two nations, the meaning of friendship, integration and traditions for Poles living in Ireland.

*W roku 2019 Towarzystwo Irlandzko – Polskie obchodzi 40. rocznicę utworzenia. W jaki sposób Polacy w Irlandii podtrzymują swoją narodową tożsamość? Dlaczego irlandzka Polonia tak dobrze integruje się z Irlandczykami? Czy jesteście do siebie podobni? W trakcie konferencji prelegenci przybliżą uczestnikom granice podobieństw pomiędzy dwoma narodami oraz znaczenie przyjaźni, integracji i tradycji dla Polaków żyjących w Irlandii.*

#### Registration

16.45 Registration and distribution of conference materials: Krzysztof Kiedrowski (IPS)

#### Unveiling the plaque commemorating the opening of the lower floor of the Polish House

17.00 Opening speech: Joanna Piechota (IPS)

17.10 Greetings from Prof. Jolanta Góral-Półroła (Old Polish University)

#### Conference: 40 years of the Irish Polish Society

**Panel Chaired by Dr Joanna Pyłat** (World Research Council on Poles Abroad)

17.20 Greetings and Presentation of the Guests - Joanna Piechota (IPS) & Dr Jarosław Plachecki (IPS)

17.40 Ian Cantwell - Roots of the Irish-Polish relationship

18.00 Helena Johnston (IPS) – Early Days of the Irish Polish Society

18.20 Hanna Dowling (IPS) – Irish Polish Society: 40 Years of Engagement in Promoting and Encouraging the Arts of Music, Painting and Literature in Ireland

18.40 Patrick Quigley (IPS) - Two Nations: Forgotten Connections

19.00 Q&A: Dr Joanna Pyłat (World Research Council on Poles Abroad)

19.20 Social Evening with Music and Refreshments

20.00 Conference closes

**Chair of the IPS Conference:** Joanna Piechota (IPS)

**Organising Committee:** Dr J. Plachecki, Dr J. Pyłat, Prof. J. Góral-Półroła, J. Dolan, K. Kiedrowski.

Registration by email: Krzysztof Kiedrowski (IPS) at [krystofkiedrowski@gmail.com](mailto:krystofkiedrowski@gmail.com) or [ips.dublin@gmail.com](mailto:ips.dublin@gmail.com)

To include conference papers in 2020 IPS Yearbook please send your proposals to: [plachecki.dublin@gmail.com](mailto:plachecki.dublin@gmail.com)

Proceedings will be held in English and Polish  
All Members and Friends Welcome

*Towarzystwo Irlandzko Polskie*



Ian CANTWELL

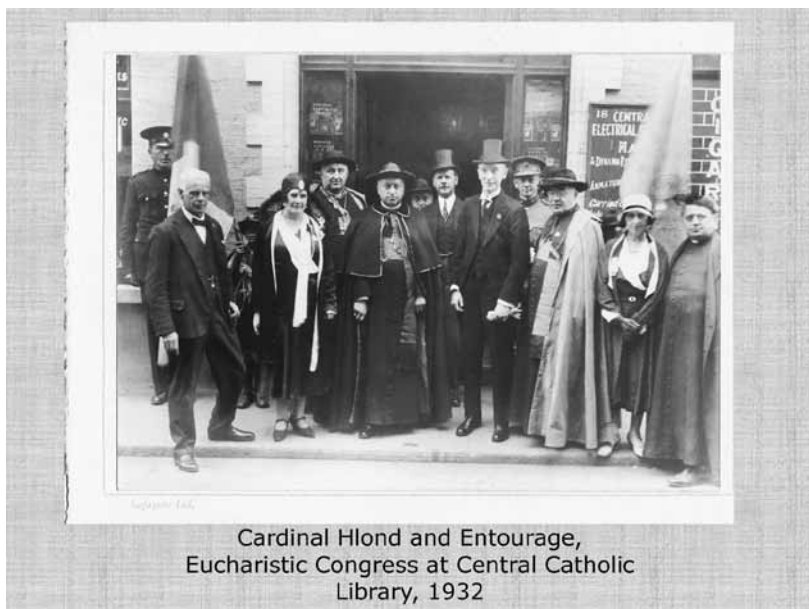
## Roots of the Irish – Polish Relationship

*19 Oct. 2019. 'Roots of the Irish – Polish Relationship'.  
The original presentation given by Ian Cantwell  
at the Conference 40. Anniversary of the IPS in the Polish House*

(all pictures in the presentation courtesy of Ian Cantwell)











June 1844. ‘Brother, brother, we’re both in the wrong’. An Allegory on similar fate of Poland and Ireland printed in “Mr. Punch” cartoons. The Emperor Nicolas of Russia was at this time on a visit to the Queen [Victoria– J.P. note]. ‘Mr. Punch’ drew a parallel between the Czar’s difficulty in Poland and the Queen’s in Ireland, suggesting faults in both cases (courtesy of Ian Cantwell)



April 1929. Wacław Tadeusz Dobrzyński appointed the Polish Consul – General to the Irish Free State (courtesy of Ian Cantwell)

11 May 1934. The Irish –Polish Society (Circle) was formed. The founding members were: Lord Longford (as a President), Consul W.T. Dobrzynski, M. Barry Brown, Rev. John J. Coyne S. J., Sir Joseph Glynn, Mr F. M. Summerfield, Colonel J.J. O'Connell (Portobello Barracks), Justice Reddin, Capt. D.A McManus, Dr Denis J. Coffey (first President of UCD) and Dr Michael Tierney (UCD). The Irish Times announcement dated 10 May, 1934 (courtesy of Ian Cantwell)

### IRISH-POLISH SOCIETY.

At the Gate Theatre, Dublin, to-morrow, at 4.30 p.m., an important step in furtherance of Irish relations is being taken in the inauguration of an Irish-Polish Society. M. Dobrzynski, Consul-General for Poland; Dr. Coffey, President, University College, Dublin; Colonel J. J. O'Connell, Portobello Barracks; the Earl of Longford, Captain D. A. McManus and other well-known persons who are initiating the organisation will attend.

The object of the new organisation is to establish a lively interchange between Poland and Ireland in the fields of education, the arts, sport, trade and travel. Mutual cultural and economic advantages to the two countries should follow. The performance of Irish plays, exhibits of works of art in Poland and *vice versa*; the exchange of university tutors, the mutual reception of football teams and athletes, and the fostering of trade will be actively undertaken.

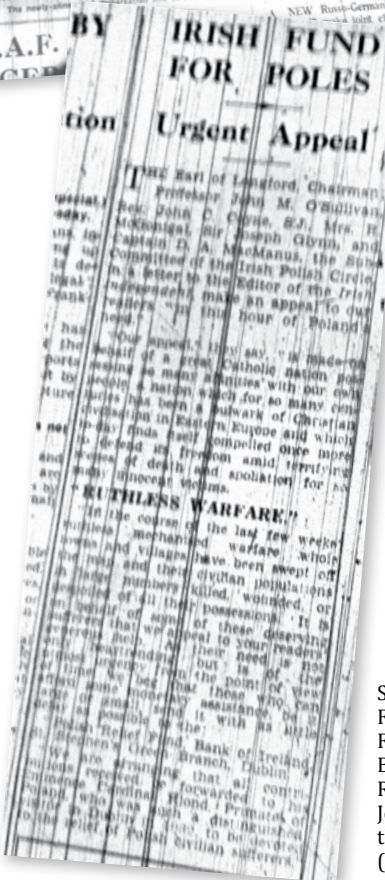


15 July 1935. Garden Party at Kilcronev House, Co. Wicklow. A reception hosted by W.T. Dobrzyński (front row, third from right). Madame Dobrzynska (front row, third from left). Among the visitors also M. Barry Brown and his wife Wanda Petronella Brown (courtesy of Ian Cantwell).



Sept. 1939. The Irish Independent news. Women of Poland at War. Officers of the Women's Legion at Lwów inspecting a flag received from Marshal Rydz-Śmigły (courtesy of Ian Cantwell)

23 Sept. 1939. The Irish Independent, Saturday news. Moscow Pact Fixes New Partition of Poland. The newly-announced demarcation line in Poland. Russia to supply raw materials to Germany. Both countries 'will make joint efforts for peace' (courtesy of Ian Cantwell)



Sept. 1939. The Irish Independent news. Irish Fund for Poles. Urgent appeal for 'Polish Relief Fund' in Bank of Ireland, St. Stephen's Green Branch by Earl Longford, Prof. John O'Sullivan, Rev. John J. Coyne S. J., Mrs R. McGonigal, Sir Joseph Glynn, and Captain D.A. MacManus from the Subcommittee of the Irish Polish Circle (courtesy of Ian Cantwell)

Hanna DOWLING

## **Irish Polish Society. 40 Years of Engagement in Promoting and Encouraging the Arts of Music, Painting and Literature in Ireland**

Irish Polish Society Conference, 2019

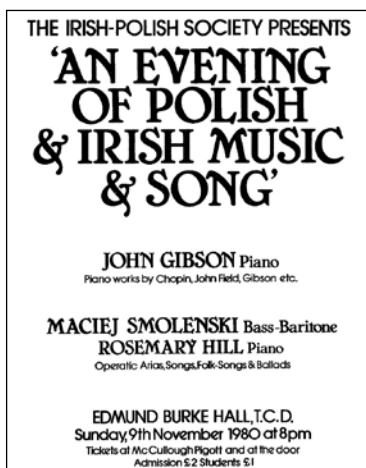
Since its foundation over 40 years ago the Irish Polish Society (IPS) has been engaged in presenting all sorts and kinds of activities, placing particular importance on the promotion of culture and arts.

### **Music**

Initially the events organized by the Society were social rather than cultural; the members would meet to celebrate the Polish National Day, Christmas traditional Polish 'Opłatek', egg painting at Easter, etc. However, there were also musical events; this was thanks to Prof. Maciej Smoleński who – regrettably – is not with us anymore. In 1974 Maciej was appointed Professor of Singing at the Royal Irish Academy of Music in Dublin. Generations of Irish singers studied under his direction. He was the main organizer and performer of numerous concerts, together with his wife, a pianist, Rosemary Hill.

The first major public concert of the Irish Polish Society, organized by Maciej Smoleński, took place on the 9<sup>th</sup> of November 1980, in Trinity College (Edmund Burke Hall).

When Martial Law was imposed in Poland (1981–83), the Irish Polish Society organized several events to raise money in aid of the Polish Relief Fund. On the Society's initiative a Chopin Piano Recital was given by the Irish pianist Miceál O'Rourke, in the National Concert Hall, on the 7<sup>th</sup> of March 1982. The concert raised £ 3,750.



9 Nov. 1980. An Evening of Polish & Irish Music & Songs' in Edmund Burke Hall (courtesy of Hanna Dowling)

On the 20<sup>th</sup> of March 1994, the Irish Polish Society presented a memorable event in the John Field Room of the National Concert Hall. A lecture was given by Master Terry de Valera *John Field, his Life & Work and his influence on Chopin*. Piano works by both composers were played by Irish pianist Dearbhla Collins. Terry de Valera (the youngest son of Eamon de Valera) spent over 40 years studying the life and work of John Field and Frederic Chopin. He was considered a world authority in this area. In 1993 he gave scholarly lectures in Poland and thanks to his activities Field's music became more known in Poland. The

Irish Embassy in Poland, in co-operation with the Chopin Society of Warsaw, funded a special John Field Medal and a Prize which was awarded to piano students for the best interpretation of Field's nocturnes. The Irish Polish Society received permission from Mr. de Valera to publish his lecture and a couple of years later *John Field, his Life & Work and his influence on Chopin* – in the form of a booklet – was for sale in the National Concert Hall (price £ 2.50).

In November 1994 the Polish soprano, Agnieszka Kurowska, came to Ireland to perform in the National Concert Hall in Górecki's famous *Symphony of Sorrows*. Maciej Smoleński contacted her at once and on November 19<sup>th</sup> 1994 presented a Concert of Polish Songs (Chopin, Moniuszko, Różycki, Karłowicz, Szymanowski). The concert took place in the Royal Irish Academy of Music and was sponsored by the Irish Polish Society, the Polish Embassy and the Ireland-Poland Economic Association. It was probably one of the best presentations of Polish vocal music ever given in Ireland.

Maciej loved the Polish language and he taught some of his students to sing in Polish. A young Irish soprano, Gráinne Thomas, was particularly successful. Several concerts in which she took part were organized by the IPS. An important one took place in St. Audeon's RC Church on the 15<sup>th</sup> of February 2009 – *An Evening of Songs and Ballads by Polish, English, French and American composers* (Gráinne Thomas – Soprano, Maciej Smolenski – Bass Baritone, Rosemary Hill- Piano). Similar concerts were given in Poland; organized by the Irish Polish Society with the support of a Society member, Jan Kamiński (and his travel agency). The concerts took place in Warsaw, Jabłonna, Wrocław, Poznań, Grudziądz, Suwałki, and Malbork Castle. A particularly beautiful one was the concert in Warsaw, Łazienki Park's 'Podchorążówka' (Museum of Polish Emigration), on the 17<sup>th</sup> of November 2007.

It took place in the 'Great Galeria of Portraits' hall and was packed with people. It was organized together with the Polish Irish Society (based in Poznań) and under the patronage of the Irish Ambassador

THE POLISH EMBASSY, THE IRISH-POLISH SOCIETY  
and THE IRELAND-POLAND ECONOMIC ASSOCIATION

present

The Celebrated Polish Soprano

**AGNIESZKA  
KUROWSKA**

With

Rosemary Hill (Piano)

in a recital of

POLISH SONGS

BY

Chopin, Moniuszko, Szymanowski, etc.

Nov. 1994. Recital of Polish Songs by Chopin, Moniuszko, Szymanowski, etc (courtesy of Hanna Dowling)

**Wieczór pieśni i piosenek  
irlandzkich i polskich  
a także angielskich i francuskich**

**GRÁINNE THOMAS (sopran)  
MACIEJ SMOLENSKI (bas-baryton)  
ROSEMARY HILL (akompaniament)**

Honorowy patronat pana Declana O'Donovana,  
Ambasadora Republiki Irlandii w Polsce

17 Nov. 2007. An Evening of Irish, Polish, English and French Songs. Front page of the Programme. Concert in Łazienki Park's 'Podchorążówka' in Warsaw (courtesy of Hanna Dowling)



**Maciej Smoleński**, urodzony w Polsce, osiadł na Wyspach Brytyjskich w wyniku II Wojny Światowej. Zanim wybrał karierę śpiewaka ukończył Akademię Sztuk Pięknych i zajmował się grafiką użytkową. Niebawem jednak wstąpił do Royal College of Music Opera School w Londynie. W trakcie studiów i po ich ukończeniu występował w m. in. W Królewskiej Operze Covent Garden, Sadlers Wells, telewizyjnych programach operowych, grał różne, często główne, role w operach, dawał wiele recitali. W roku 1974 otrzymał stanowisko profesora śpiewu w Irlandzkiej Królewskiej Akademii Muzycznej w Dublinie. Wychował kilka pokoleń artystów. Dziś, będąc już na emeryturze, wciąż prowadzi życie zawodowe nauczając i występując, nierazko w asyście własnych uczniów.



**Gráinne Thomas**, urodzona w Dublinie ukończyła Wydział Muzyczny St. Patrick College w Maynooth. Od wielu lat pracuje jako nauczyciel muzyki, języka angielskiego i prowadzi chór. Studiowała w klasie śpiewu w Royal Irish Academy of Music pod kierunkiem profesora Macieja Smoleńskiego. Brała udział w licznych konkursach w Dublinie, a także występowała w recitalach i przedstawieniach między innymi w Galway Cathedral, Wexford, Dalkey Castle & Heritage Centre i Polskim Ośrodku Kulturalnym w Dublinie. W styczniu 2007. wystąpiła w Solistice Centre w Navan wykonując wraz z Maciejem Smoleńskim polskie i irlandzkie pieśni. Otrzymała liczne stypendia, między innymi „Dorothy Stokes Exhibition”, „Annie Irwin Memorial Exhibition” i „Vandeleur and Vandeleur Recital Scholarship”. Ponadto posiada dyplom Profesora Śpiewu (A.R.L.A.M.).



**Rosemary Hill**, studiowała w klasie fletu i pianina w Royal College of Music w Londynie. Ma wieloletnie doświadczenie w akompaniamencie, a jej specjalnością jest praca ze śpiewakami. Występowała w wielu recitalach i konkursach. Po przybyciu do Irlandii brała udział, jako akompaniator, w wielu recitalach, w tej liczbie w „House of Lords”, „Hugh Lane Gallery”, „National Gallery”, „John Field Room”, radio RTE. Od roku 1975 jest akompaniatorem Feis Ceoil. Pełni także funkcję wykładowcy w klasach fletu poprzecznego i prostego w Royal Irish Academy of Music”.

### Organizatorzy:

Towarzystwo Irlandzko-Polskie w Dublinie  
i Towarzystwo Polsko-Irlandzkie w Poznaniu

Współorganizator:

Podchorążówka - Muzeum "Łazienki Królewskie"  
w Warszawie

to Poland, Mr Declan O'Donovan. After the concert a wonderful reception was given in the Ambassador's Warsaw residence.

Maciej Smoleński helped Polish students and musicians to study and to give concerts in Ireland. For example, by working together with the Polish Embassy and the IPS, he 'launched' the young Polish soprano, Marta Natoniowska, in presenting her 'Début' (A Recital of Polish, English and Irish Songs) on January 20<sup>th</sup> 2006, in the Dublin Atrium, OPW (Office of Public Works) and in Cobh, Co. Cork, on February 26<sup>th</sup> the same year.

- On 26<sup>th</sup> May 1996, an illustrated lecture (with video and tapes) entitled *Mieczysław Karłowicz and his contemporaries* was given by Dr Michael Murphy of the Music Dept., University College Cork. Maciej Smoleński arranged this event for the IPS.
- In 1996 the piano was bought for the Polish House. A 'gala concert' was given by John O'Connor, on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1997. Numerous piano recitals were organized. It would be difficult to list every concert given, so only some will be mentioned.
- October 11<sup>th</sup> 1997 – to celebrate the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the opening of the Polish House – the IPS invited an eminent Polish pianist, Krzysztof Jabłoński; he played music by Bach, Beethoven and Chopin.
- 24<sup>th</sup> June 1999 – Patrycja Prątnicka, a young Polish pianist gave a piano recital in the National Gallery of Ireland. She was a recipient of a special prize (funded by the Irish Embassy in Poland) for her interpretation of John Field's nocturnes. She also played in the Polish House on the 26<sup>th</sup> of June.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2001 – a piano recital was given by the Irish pianist and composer, John Gibson. He played music by Chopin, Field, Paderewski and his own compositions.
- 11<sup>th</sup> November 2001 – a special concert took place to celebrate Poland's Independence Day. The programme included choral music by Haydn, Mozart and Bruckner performed by the Camino Singers.
- 19<sup>th</sup> May 2002 – *A Song & Flute Concert* – some popular and classical favourites were performed by four young talented Irish musicians and their teachers (Maciej Smoleński and Rosemary Hill).

- 4<sup>th</sup> May 2003 – to mark Poland's National Holiday (3<sup>rd</sup> May Constitution Day) the IPS presented a Polish pianist, Katarzyna Mościcka. She gave a piano recital at the Hugh Lane Gallery, as a part of *Sundays at Noon Concert Series*. The programme included music by Beethoven, Chopin, Field and Szymanowski. She played the same programme in the Polish House the following day, May 5<sup>th</sup> 2003. In 1993, as a first-year student of Bydgoszcz Academy of Music, Katarzyna was awarded the special prize by the Irish Embassy in Poland for her interpretation of the John Field's nocturnes.
- 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2003 – a Concert of *Music for Cello and Piano* – was given in the Polish House. The performers were Irish musicians, Darina Gibson (piano) and Jane Hughes (cello).
- 21<sup>st</sup> September 2003 – a special event entitled *Maria Szymanowska. A Pupil of John Field* took place. A talk was given by Mr. Terry de Valera complemented by music played by a known Irish pianist and teacher, Darina Gibson.
- 6<sup>th</sup> May 2007 – the Irish Polish Society, with the support of the Polish Embassy, presented the Polish pianist, Katarzyna Mościcka, at the Hugh Lane Gallery (*Sundays at Noon Concerts Series*) once again. She played music by Beethoven, Chopin, Szymanowski and Scriabin.
- 4<sup>th</sup> May 2008 – to celebrate Poland's National Holiday (3<sup>rd</sup> May Constitution Day) the IPS presented a concert of Polish patriotic, folk, romantic and soldiers songs *Welcome to May's New Dawn (Witaj majowa jutrzeńko)* with Marta Natoniewska (soprano), Maciej Smolenski and Rosemary Hill. Similar concert took place in the Polish House a year later, on May 3<sup>rd</sup> 2009. This time the soprano was Gráinne Thomas.

An important and quite different event took place in the John Field Room, National Concert Hall, on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2000. A Salon Entertainment by Michał Znaniecki (Polish director at the Wexford Festival Opera 1999) entitled *En Attendant Chopin (Waiting for Chopin)* with music by various composers (Chopin, Bellini, Rossini, Liszt, Thalberg, etc.) and some text by George Sand. Four actors (Polish, Italian and Irish) took part, with Irish pianists (Dearbhla

Collins and Thérèse Fahy) and Irish soprano (Elisabeth Woods). The performers of this entertaining spectacle wore 19<sup>th</sup> century costumes. The event was sponsored by the Irish Polish Society, the Embassy of Poland & the Laski Foundation.

In 2004, during Ireland's Presidency of the EU and the accession of Poland into the EU, a significant number of Polish cultural events took place. The Irish Polish Society presented a Celtic Musical Group from Poland, *Carrantuohill*. They played in the Polish House on the 18<sup>th</sup> April, 2004 and in St Ann's Church, Dawson Street, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> April.

The year 2010 marked the bicentenary of Frederic Chopin's birth and was celebrated as International Chopin Year. The Irish Polish Society organized several events:

- February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2010 – 'Chopin's Birthday' celebration with video documentary and live music played by Darina Gibson (piano) and Aisling Drury Byrne (cello).
- 25<sup>th</sup> April – Chopin Piano Recital given by Irish Polish pianist, Danusia Oslizlok.
- 16<sup>th</sup> May – Chopin Piano Recital given by a young Polish Syrian pianist, Fares Marek Basmadji.
- 13<sup>th</sup> June – Chopin Piano Recital given by a young Korean pianist, Soo-Jung Ann.
- 24<sup>th</sup> September – another Piano Recital by Soo-Jung Ann (she was preparing to compete in the 16<sup>th</sup> International Chopin Piano Competition which was starting in Warsaw on the 1<sup>st</sup> of October).
- 17<sup>th</sup> October – a concert dedicated to Chopin's Polish songs. A young Polish mezzo-soprano, Agata Schmidt was the singer. The concert was organized in co-operation with the Embassy of Poland.

Soo-Jung Ann gave more concerts in the Polish House that were extremely successful. On the 10<sup>th</sup> of February 2013 she played during an IPS event *Chopin and Polish Carnival* ('*Ostatki*' – Shrovetide). She played in the Polish House on the 8<sup>th</sup> of May 2016 and on the 15<sup>th</sup> of September 2017. The September concert was her special *Birthday Concert* (she was born on September 15<sup>th</sup> 1987) and was organized by her husband, David Kim (a member of the Irish Polish Society).

An interesting 'Chopin event' took place in the Polish House (with video and tape) on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of March 2014 entitled *Chopin – Ireland links. Are there any?* Chopin's music was played by a very talented young Polish pianist, Tamara Niekludow. To celebrate the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Poland's accession to the EU, the IPS presented Tamara at the Hugh Lane Gallery *Sundays at Noon Concert Series*, on May 11<sup>th</sup> 2014. She played also during Polska/ÉIRE 2015 festival during a poetry event presented by the IPS on March 21<sup>st</sup> 2015.

A wonderful concert of Polish music took place on the 10<sup>th</sup> of February 2019 as a part of the Irish Polish Society's '*Sto Lat Poland*' celebrations (marking one hundred years since the restoration of Poland's independence). The music by Polish composers (Chopin, Wieniawski, Paderewski, etc.) was played by Tamara Niekludow (piano) and Tomasz Siarkiewicz (violin).

## Visual Arts

The Irish Polish Society's Art Exhibitions, and in particular Exhibitions of Paintings, have always had a special position in the promotion of culture.

On May 27<sup>th</sup> 1982 a special Art Exhibition was opened in St. James Hospital Assembly Hall. Paintings by well-known contemporary Irish artists were exhibited. It was organized by the IPS in aid of the Polish Relief Fund (the Exhibition took place at the time of Martial Law in Poland).

The first exhibition by Polish artists living in Ireland was held in the Polish House in September 1988. The artists were: Ursula Retzlaff O'Carroll, Maria Romanowska, André Siehen and Maciej Smolenski. The Exhibition was organized as a Polish cultural contribution to the Dublin Millennium.

In 1991 Dublin was the European Capital of Culture. The Society's contribution to this was the Exhibition of Paintings by Ursula Retzlaff O'Carroll '*Beneath the Glass*'. It took place in the Polish House from November 27<sup>th</sup> to December 7<sup>th</sup> 1991. About 120 people were present for the opening of the Exhibition – Senator David Norris and Dick Spring were among the guests.

URSULA RETZLAFF O'CARROLL



EXHIBITION OF PAINTINGS  
*"Beneath the Glass"*

27th November - 7th December 1991  
Open Monday - Saturday • Noon to 6 p.m.

*Irish Polish Society*  
20 FITZWILLIAM PLACE,  
DUBLIN 2.  
TELEPHONE (01) 762515

EMBASSY  
THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND  
IN DUBLIN

DUBLIN  
1991  
CITY OF CULTURE

7 Dec. 1991. Exhibition of Paintings by Ursula Retzlaff O'Carroll 'Beneath the Glass' (courtesy of Hanna Dowling)

From December 10<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> 1991 an Exhibition of paintings by Maciej Smolenski "The Singing Painter" took place in the Polish House. (*The artist paints purely for relaxation and pleasure in a variety of 'styles' and colours – according to the artist's catalogue.*)

In October 1999 the Exhibition ANAM – Three Polish Painters of Irish Landscape – was sponsored by the Irish Polish Society and the Polish Embassy. The artists were our Society members: Marek Bogacki Staszkievicz, Ursula Retzlaff-O'Carroll and Adam Kos. The Exhibition was opened in the Polish House on the 21<sup>st</sup> of October, and was also shown in the South Dublin County Council Hall.

On the 9<sup>th</sup> of April 2000 the Irish Polish Society held an event dedicated to V. Nijinsky to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his death. The programme consisted of music (*Le Spectre de la Rose* by

John Gibson) and the exhibition of paintings by Marek Bogacki Staszkievicz 'Studies upon the Artist's Life'.

An exhibition of Artistic Fabric Works by Polish artist, Renata Brickley, took place in the Polish House from November 30<sup>th</sup> to December 3<sup>rd</sup> 2000. A unique combination of hand-painted original designs mainly in silk (such as scarves, wraps, cushions, wall-hangings, etc.) were displayed.

1<sup>st</sup> June 2000 – to mark the International Children's Day the IPS presented an Exhibition by Sheila Mangan 'A Homage to Polish Children'. The Exhibition consisted of six small paintings and two three-dimensional pieces. It was Ms Mangan's work made for the Fine Arts Faculty of the Nicolas Copernicus University in Toruń (Poland). The Exhibition was organized in co-operation with the Dun Laoghaire Institute of Design and Technology.

8<sup>th</sup> March 2002 – A talk on Polish Poster Art and Graphic Design was given by Ursula Retzlaff-O'Carroll. The event was organized in association with the exhibition of Polish posters entitled *The Collection* which was shown in the South Dublin County Hall and in the American College.

9<sup>th</sup> October 2002 – The Role of 'Promised Land' in the Creative Works of Paul Gauguin, Roderic O'Connor, and Władysław Ślewiński – Painters at Pont-Aven – a talk with slides given by Marek Bogacki Staszkievicz. The event took place at Alliance Francaise (Kildare Street).

20<sup>th</sup> July 2008 – An exhibition of Architectural Drawings by Martin Reynolds opened in the Polish House.

In connection with Ireland's Presidency of the EU and Poland's entry to the EU in 2004, an Exhibition of Paintings produced by IPS members was held at Dublin's ILAC Library. The paintings displayed were by the following artists: Ursula Retzlaff-O'Carroll, Helena Johnston, Marysia Harasimowicz, Marek Bogacki Staszkievicz, Roman Furgalski and Adam Kos.

In 2009 the Irish Polish Society celebrated 30 years of its formal foundation. Two major exhibitions were organized to mark this occasion. An Art Exhibition at Dublin City Council, Wood Quay, was

officially opened on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of June 2009 and ran until July 3<sup>rd</sup> 2009. Fourteen artists displayed their paintings.

The second IPS exhibition was a historical one. It was a part of a major Exhibition commemorating the defeat of Communism in Poland entitled 'History from behind the Iron Curtain'. It was organized by the European Solidarity Centre and the Embassy of Poland. The exhibition was opened in the EU House in Dublin (Dawson Street), and ran from the 2<sup>nd</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> 2009. The Irish Polish Society had five panels and presented historical material depicting the Society's activity during the communist regime in Poland (particularly humanitarian aid when Martial Law was imposed in 1981–1982).

From 2010 the IPS Art Exhibition became an annual event. Curated by Marysia Harasimowicz the Exhibition has become prominent and gained prestige, and it is now one of the most important events organized by our Society.

## Literature

Both Ireland and Poland are renowned for their great poetry. During many events organized by the Irish Polish Society pieces of poetry were read, quoted, or even recited from memory. Besides some 'amateur' presentations, the Society was lucky to be able to have several excellent poetic events. The following is a list of some of these events:

- In 1986 Seamus Heaney (Nobel Laureate for Literature 1995) read his and Miłosz's poetry for the IPS members. The event took place in Miltown Park.
- February 23<sup>rd</sup> 1995 – Poetry Evening by Mr. Ernest Bryll – Polish ambassador and poet.
- November 10<sup>th</sup> 1996 – an event dedicated to Wisława Szymborska, the 1996 Nobel Prize for Literature.
- 1998 – Poetry reading by Polish actors Jan Englert and Beata Ścibakówna of 'Kwiaty Polskie' – *Polish Flowers* – by Julian Tuwim.

- 12<sup>th</sup> November 2000 – poetry reading by Polish actress Małgorzata Kożuchowska.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2001 – the launch of the book Jan Kochanowski's *Threnodies* and *The Dismissal of Greek Envoys* by Barry Keane (a verse translation with commentary).
- 17<sup>th</sup> January 2002 – a special literary event *In Praise of Miłosz* presented by Dr. Seamus Heaney. The Ambassador of Poland, Mr Janusz Skolimowski welcomed the distinguished guest.
- 8<sup>th</sup> February 2007 – an Evening with the Translator – an event with Anita Dębska, a well-known translator of Polish poetry.
- 24<sup>th</sup> February 2008 – *Kindred Spirits: Wyspiański and Yeats*. A performance of Polish and Irish poems with Anita Jones Dębska (translator) and musicians Aisling Ennis (harp), Grainne Thomas (soprano), Maciej Smoleński (bass baritone), and Rosemary Hill (piano).
- 27<sup>th</sup> May 2008 – an evening entertainment entitled *Adam Mickiewicz in Poetry and Song*. Poetry reading and live music performed by singers, an oboist and a pianist.
- 16<sup>th</sup> October 2008 – *Tribute to the Poetry of Zbigniew Herbert* – a talk given by Seamus Heaney to commemorate the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Herbert's death. The event took place in the Irish Writers' Centre and was organized by the Irish Polish Society, the Embassy of Poland.
- 15<sup>th</sup> January 2012 – a special audio-visual event dedicated to Polish poet, Czesław Miłosz the Nobel Laureate for Literature 1980.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2012 – to celebrate Poland's National Holiday (3<sup>rd</sup> May Constitution Day) an Evening of poetry and music with Anita Jones Dębska took place. She presented her own handmade collection of translations from the works of Polish poets (J. Kochanowski, A. Mickiewicz, J. Lechoń, L. Staff, K.I. Gałczyński. K. Baczyński and others).
- 9<sup>th</sup> May 2013 – the launch of the book *Contact Zone Identities in the Poetry of Jerzy Harasymowicz* by Ewa Stańczyk. A reading of translations of the poetry of Harasymowicz by John Kearns (editor of the journal *Translation Ireland* and our Society's member).

- 27<sup>th</sup> April 2017 – *Poetry for Pleasure* – the Glowing Hearth Poetry Group in co-operation with the Irish Polish Society presented a special event to celebrate Poetry Day Ireland. The event took place in the Polish House.

Aside from these poetry events, the Irish Polish Society also held some prose readings throughout the years. Some authors of note include:

- Mary Morrissy – on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2002 she read from her book *The Pretender* (the book was listed for the International IMPAC Dublin Literary Award 2002). The event was organized by the IPS in association with the Central Catholic Library Readers' Group.
- Michael Slavin (broadcaster and author) – on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2008 he gave a lecture with slides entitled *The Ancient Books of Ireland*.
- *Liberatura* – an evening with Zenon Fajfer and Katarzyna Bazarnik the creators of a new literary *genre*. The event took place on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2012 and was a part of *Bloomsday* Dublin celebration. Some *Liberatura* books were presented.
- Marek Stokowski (Polish writer and poet, a curator of the Malbork Castle Museum) – he was a special guest in the Polish House on the 12<sup>th</sup> of May 2013. A presentation of his latest book *The Forest Tuner* (Stroiciel lasu) took place.
- Danuta Wałęsa (Poland's former First Lady – Lech Wałęsa's wife) on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2013 met the Polish Irish community and presented her book *Dreams and Secrets* (Marzenia i tajemnice). The book was written in secret and released in 2011. It immediately became a bestseller in Poland. Q&A session was run by Mr Piotr Adamowicz, the editor of the book.

A presentation of a significant but quite a different book took place on the 14<sup>th</sup> of November 2008. *Ósmy ułan Beliny* (The Eighth Cavalryman of Belina) is based on notes, diaries, recollections and letters of General Józef Marian Smoleński (1894–1978) the father of Maciej Smolenski. The material for book was collected and prepared by Maciej and it took him over six years to complete this huge undertaking. The book (about 750 pages) was published in Poland in 2008 and was edited by Dr Grzegorz Nowik (historian

with a special interest in modern Polish history and particularly the Polish-Soviet War and WW2).

On the 1<sup>st</sup> of February 2014 Antonia Lloyd-Jones was publicly interviewed by John Kearns in the Polish House. She is one of the leading translators of Polish literature into English. She has translated many of Poland's most important writers, including Olga Tokarczuk, the Nobel Laureate for Literature 2018. The event was presented by the Irish Translators' and Interpreters' Association and supported by the Irish Polish Society and the Polish Embassy. The interview was published in *Translation Ireland* a special Polish/Irish Issue.

Olga Tokarczuk's book *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead*, translated by Antonia Lloyd-Jones, was shortlisted for the Man Booker International Prize 2019. The title of the book is taken from William Blake. It is a kind of eco-thriller with elements of black comedy. Based on the book a film *Pokot* (Spoor) was made by Agnieszka Holland.

Patrick QUIGLEY

## Two Nations. Forgotten Connections

Irish Polish Society Conference, 2019

**Abstract:** The article highlights some little-known historical connections between Ireland and Poland. It ranges from an historical meeting between the Irish saint, Oliver Plunkett with a Polish priest in the Vatican in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century to the visit of General Wladyslaw Anders to Ireland in 1957. Some connections are on a high level such as the interest in Poland by Sir Shane Leslie to more obscure figures such as Bessie O'Brien who became a governess in 19<sup>th</sup> Century Poland and the Irish connections in the life of Stanisław (Stasko) Markiewicz, son of Kazimierz and Constance Markiewicz.

**Keywords:** Irish-Polish connections, Sir Shane Leslie, Paul Strzelecki, General Władysław Anders, Countess Markiewicz, Stasko Markiewicz, Jan Kamiński.

### Introduction

*There have always been connections between Ireland and Poland.*

These were the words of the Polish Honorary Consul in Ireland, Tadeusz Dobrzynski, at a meeting in Dublin's Gresham Hotel in February, 1944. Such connections existed from the time of the Wild Geese, the name given to Irish soldiers forced to leave Ireland in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Century. The main speaker was an aristocrat from County Monaghan, Sir Shane Leslie, on the topic: 'Historical and cultural relations of Ireland and Poland'. Leslie began by saying:

*I have often thought of the Poles as the Irish of Middle Europe and the Irish as the Poles of the Atlantic (Irish Press, 22/02/1944).*

He cited the Irish Brigade who fought the English at the battle of Fontenoy in 1745 under the command of the King of Polish son. Among the Wild Geese was a soldier O'Rourke of Breffni, whose descendant Count Edward O'Rourke (1876–1943), was born in Minsk and became the first Catholic Bishop of Danzig in 1925. In response to Leslie's remarks Mr Dobrzynski added that the Irish Red Cross had been helping Polish prisoners since the outbreak of the war. For a long time, people had the impression there were very few historical connections between Ireland and Poland, but the deeper we search the more we discover. Some connections were made by aristocrats, poets and bishops, others by obscure individuals, but they all played their part in the tapestry of relationships between our two nations. Earlier this year we had a wonderful opportunity at a conference, organized by Dr Galia Chimiak of the Polish Embassy, to learn about another of the Wild Geese, the cavalier Charles Wogan from Kildare, and his role in the rescue of Princess Clementyna of Poland in 1719.

## St. Oliver Plunkett



Portrait of Oliver Plunkett  
(courtesy of Downside Abbey,  
Somerset)

For centuries Rome has been the centre of a worldwide spiritual empire, a meeting place for Catholics of all races. One of the earliest recorded Polish-Irish encounters took place in the year 1669 and concerns the Irish cleric, Oliver Plunkett, who was canonized in 1975. As a priest in Rome he often visited the hospital of Santo Spirito to comfort the sick. He was visiting for the last time before his return to Ireland and made his farewells to the prior, Dr Jerome Mieskow 'a Polish priest of extraordinary sanctity of life' (according to the original Italian manuscript), embraced Oliver and said:

*My Lord, you are now going to shed your blood for the Catholic faith* (Moran: 19).

Oliver replied that he was unworthy of such a favour, but over a decade later he suffered a martyr's death in London where he was hanged, drawn and quartered. There must have been many friendships between Polish and Irish scholars in the city's convents, schools and churches over the centuries as most educated Catholics used the universal language – Latin. Who knows what stories are buried in the vaults of the Vatican archives?

## Shane Leslie

An early 20<sup>th</sup> Century visitor to Poland was the afore mentioned author and diplomat, Shane Leslie, who travelled in the country after meeting Tolstoy in Russia in the winter of 1907. He wrote in his autobiography, *The Film of Memory*, that

*Poland under Russian rule suggested analogies with Ireland. I was shown Polish schools where language and religion were kept alive despite the heavy hand of Moscow ... I was lifted with enthusiasm for the cause of Poland as I have never felt a cause in my blood.*

He ascribed this emotion to a strain of Polish blood he could trace from a love affair between an English grandmother and a Polish diplomat.

*It accounts for my frenzy of enthusiasm for the Polish cause. When I returned to Ireland, I collected thousands of signatures from Irish children which I sent to the children whose schools I had visited in Poland (Leslie: 300–302).*

This book of signatures exists in the Czartoryski Library in Krakow, bound in a green cover embossed with a golden harp. The first pages contain a message in Polish, Irish and English which states:

*It is with great sorrow that we hear of the efforts being made to rob you of your land and language. We have seen with joy the heroic defence you have made in your schools and we pray that you may*

*soon enjoy the rights and liberties which we now enjoy and which our fathers fled to the mountains and woods rather than lose. God save Poland* (Gmerek: 90; the Journal, 15/06/2019).

What was the point of such an enterprise? Did it make any impact on the Polish children? It must have been the equivalent of a modern-day Facebook post where people measure support by counting 'likes'. Truly, there is nothing new under the sun. It appears that a 100-year-old 'thank-you' book with over 15,000 signatures from Polish children was prepared with the intention of sending it to Ireland, but due to the disruption of the Great War the volume has disappeared. Perhaps it exists in the vault or archive of some religious institution, waiting to be rediscovered.

## Page Dickinson & the governess

When Casmir Markievicz lived in Dublin, one of his close friends was architect and socialite, Page Dickinson, who travelled via Poland to Georgia in 1909.

*Warsaw is one of the few European capitals that the tourist has not yet wooed, he wrote. A few governesses in high Polish families are practically the only resident British subjects, and these ladies are mostly Irish because they must be Catholics...*

He thought the city was not beautiful

*with a damaged look as though it had been battered from time to time by some sullen enemy* (McCabe: 26).

One such governess was a young lady called Bessie O'Brien whose story was told in *The Farm by Lough Gur* published in 1937, with an introduction by our friend Shane Leslie. Bessie came from County Limerick and was educated by Ursuline nuns in Belgium. One day a letter arrived from the Reverend Mother to say Bessie had been offered the post of governess to a Madame Swinarski in Poland. The family were delighted, but puzzled. Where exactly was Poland? They consulted the atlas, but Poland could not be found, although they located Bessie's destination in Poznań.

Bessie wrote back with a detailed account of her employer:

*She cries sometimes in speaking of the wrongs they (the Poles) all suffer; we compare stories and what a resemblance we find between our two nations... The people are always gay even in their greatest distress. I could go on for hours proving to you that oppression is the cause of their and our faults, otherwise why could there be such a striking resemblance between the two nations, so far apart, having no communication and of different race (Carberry: 276–277).*

The story had a happy ending in that Bessie married a Serbian Captain in the Russian Cavalry who caused a stir in Limerick with his white military jacket and silver buttons.

### Stanislaw ‘Stasko’ Markiewicz

Stasko, the son of Casimir Markiewicz from his first marriage, first came to Ireland with his father and stepmother, Constance, when he was 7 years old in 1903. He was educated at a school for children of Irish nationalists, St Benedict’s in County Wexford from 1908. One of the visiting teachers was Shane Leslie, who caused a stir by walking the 60 miles from Dublin. Leslie stayed for several months and lectured on Irish history, but he must have held conversations with Stasko about his Polish homeland. When Stasko was leaving Dublin in 1915 to return to the Markiewicz home at Zywtowka there was a last-minute effort to improve his native knowledge, but no Polish tutor could be found (Quigley: 158).



July 1927. Photo of Casimir & Stasko at Constance Markiewicz funeral (courtesy of Lissadell Papers, PRONI)

By 1924 he was in Poland and working for the Century Timber Company who were cutting down the great forest of Białowieża. Stasko was initially concerned with his manager from Banagher in County Offaly. Arthur Bell was the brother of Resident Magistrate Alan Bell who was shot dead by the Irish Republican Army in March 1920. Stasko was relieved that Bell did not hold a grudge against him because of Constance's involvement with the movement who killed his brother. Communication between Ireland and Poland was very difficult in the 1920s. When Constance lay dying in Dublin in 1927 the BBC World Service broadcast a message to Warsaw. Casimir and Stasko took a train to Paris and another to Calais, crossed the English Channel to Dover, took another train to London and onward from Euston to Holyhead and the Mailboat. It must have been an exhausting journey, but they appeared at her hospital bedside four days before her death. Such a difference in a century; no wonder family visits were rare in those days.

## **Kathleen Smith**

The story of the Smith sisters is an intriguing one; Kathleen Smith is first mentioned in a letter from Constance to Stasko when she acted as courier between Dublin and Warsaw. From brief mentions in Stasko's letters we learn that her sister fell in love with a Polish officer and married him. Kathleen lived with the couple in Warsaw and came back and forth to Ireland. Stasko became unemployed in 1928 and had some hard years in Poland, living on translation and teaching jobs. The Smith sisters supported him, even giving him shelter in their apartment. Kathleen encouraged his project to write a biography of Constance in the early 1930s and typed his manuscripts which included a film script. When Stasko returned to Ireland he left a collection of family documents with the sisters in Warsaw, unfortunately destroyed during the wartime destruction of the city. Kathleen survived and was still alive in the early 1960s, but we know nothing of what happened to her sister and husband. Someone, somewhere must know more about the Smith sisters and their lives in Poland. There was occasional interest in Ireland in

the Polish press, especially when the new President of the Free State Executive Council, Eamon DeValera, unveiled a statue to Constance in June 1932. This was a life-size experiment in limestone which was eventually vandalised and replaced by the present memorial in St Stephen's Green.



June 1932. DeValera & Constance statue – unknown Polish newspaper (courtesy of Patrick Quigley)

Stasko's half-sister, Maeve, wrote a sarcastic letter in November 1935 when she heard he was returning to live in Ireland after an absence of twenty years. "I expect you know that Stasko has got a job in Dublin. My only fear is that he will lose it & land on some of us. I can't see him saving his fare back to Poland (Lissadell Papers)". However, Stasko was a social success on his arrival in Dublin. Friends of Constance found him a job in the Irish Hospital Sweepstakes, the National Lottery of the day. He was only here a few weeks when his photograph appeared in national newspapers at a Rotary Club luncheon in the company of Dobrzynski and the diplomatic corps of Britain, France, Czechoslovakia and Germany. For a while he was a celebrity, interviewed and broadcast on radio, his social engagements reported in the newspapers. He met all sorts of people and impressed them with plans for his Constance biography. Everything was going well until his visit to Constance's ancestral home at Lissadell for the Christmas of 1935. The family reunion was spoiled by a row with Maeve, serious enough to ensure that Stasko was never invited to Lissadell again.

## **Stella L'Estrange & the Libickis**

Casimir's family had been urging him for years to bring Maeve to meet her Polish relations in Żywotówka. The Great War and the Russian Revolution spoiled such plans, but Stasko revived the notion when he invited Maeve and her cousin, Stella L'Estrange to visit Poland in the 1930s. Maeve changed her mind about Poland, but Stella made the journey and stayed with the Libicki family in the summer of 1936 in Kraków. A lecturer in Economics, Janusz Libicki, was married to Wanda, daughter of Casimir's sister, Bronislawa. Stella loved her time in Poland, took photographs of the Libicki family and visited Zakopane. She kept a travel diary, which is still in the family. When given a tenure at the London School of Economics Janusz and Wanda took the opportunity to visit Maeve in Kent. From the photographs taken at the time she enjoyed this rare visit from her Polish cousins. Maeve was the image of her mother at the same age, but her politics were the opposite. She had adopted the lifestyle



1936. Wanda & Janusz Libicki with Maeve de Markiewicz (courtesy of Anna Libicka)

of an educated Englishwoman and renounced her Irish heritage, but she retained her Polish name with its rebellious connotations. I suggest she possessed a streak of Polish stubbornness that led her to keep the Markiewicz connection when she could easily have changed it to an anonymous English one.

The Libickis returned to Poland and Janusz resumed work at the Jagiellonian University. When Germany and Russia invaded Poland in 1939, he joined the cavalry reserve and was captured by the Soviets. Along with thousands of Polish officers, he disappeared in the spring of 1940. Nothing was heard about him until his corpse was discovered in a mass grave in April 1943 at Katyń. I find this story especially moving; when one reads about thousands of people murdered each death is a statistic. But when you read the backstory and look at the photographs you get a powerful sense of the individual life and tragic death. But that is not the end of the Libicki connection; the Markiewicz descendants in Poland are keen to maintain the connection with Ireland. In 2019 a grand-nephew of Janusz, Senator Filip Libicki, contacted Ireland to organize a student exchange between Ireland, Poland and Ukraine. Across the centuries, despite the interruptions caused by death, time, war and politics, the threads are taken up again...

Stasko enjoyed the high life for a while, but without the income to sustain such a lifestyle. By 1940 he was in debt, without a job and the book was unfinished. He wanted to join the Polish war effort, but felt his age and experience in the Great War entitled him to an officer's commission. Negotiations dragged on for over three years and he left Ireland in April 1943 for a job as a clerk with the RAF in London. The Second World War ensured that almost every Irish person was aware of Poland's fate. The Nazis exiled Bishop Edward O'Rourke from Danzig and he died in Rome in June 1943. One of his last visitors was the Irish Ambassador to the Holy See, Dr Thomas Kiernan, who wrote:

*He was a Russian Pole, but on his death-bed he was an Irishman and glad to have an Irishman beside him when he breathed his soul to God (McCabe: 43).*

Bishop O'Rourke's ashes were returned to Poland in 1972 where they are kept in the Oliwia Cathedral in Gdańsk.

## **Leslie & Strzelecki**

The arrival of the Polish Government in London renewed Shane Leslie's interest in the country. After reading about Sir Paul Strzelecki's work on famine relief in 19<sup>th</sup> Century Ireland, he searched for Strzelecki's grave in London's Kensal Green cemetery and found it badly damaged. He organized a commemoration committee with himself as President and representatives from Poland, Ireland, Australia and Great Britain. The committee restored the grave with a new plaque and published a book in 1943: *Life of Sir Paul Edmund Strzelecki, Polish Scientist, Explorer and Philanthropist, 1796–1873* with an introduction by Leslie. The London Poles organized a special reception for Leslie with Prime Minister General Sikorski and President Raczkiewicz. Around this time Leslie contacted the Irish Red Cross with a letter from Sikorski, urging them to assist Polish children trapped in Siberia. In February 1944 he inherited the title and appeared in Dublin to lecture on the historical and cultural relations between Ireland and Poland. It was an opportunity to inform the audience about Strzelecki whose role had also been forgotten in Ireland.

## **General Anders in Ireland**

The visit of the legendary General Anders to Ireland in May 1957 is an intriguing event. The Irish government was one of the few that still recognized the Polish Government in Exile in London. However, the Poles had split into two factions – the supporters of President August Zaleski who refused to resign when his seven-year term ended in 1954 and his opponents in the Council of National Unity who elected a Council of Three, of which Anders was a member. By 1955 the Irish Government were faced with the dilemma of choosing between the factions in the London Poles or to accept realpolitik and recognize the communist government in Warsaw.

## Leader of Poles-in-exile



His Grace Most Rev. J. C. McQuaid, D.D., Archbishop of Dublin, talking to General Władysław Anders, wartime leader of the Polish Forces in Exile, who arrived in Dublin for the Polish National Day celebrations yesterday. Included in the party are: L. Lubienski, F. Piekarkiewicz, T. Schmidt, W. Schmidt, T. Melleber, A. Klebanowski and T. Kamiński. Mr. Piekarkiewicz is President of

May 1957. Leaders of Poles-in exile in Dublin meet the Primate of Ireland, Most Rev. J. Charles McQuaid. General Władysław Anders – third from the left. Jan Kamiński second from the right (photo by The Irish Press)

There was no official welcome when Anders arrived in Dublin Airport on Thursday 2 May. He was greeted by Jarek Piekarkiewicz, President of the Polish Student Council in Ireland, and his deputy, a young Economics student from Trinity College, Jan Kamiński. A press statement claimed Anders was on a private visit to celebrate Poland's Independence Day. The General's first engagement was a meeting with one of the most powerful individuals in Ireland – the Archbishop of Dublin, John Charles McQuaid. He followed this with a visit to Trinity College and went to stay with his hosts, Captain and Madame Schmidt, at Dunsany Castle in County Meath. On Friday morning he visited a stud farm at Killeen and came to Dublin for separate meetings with the Minister for External Affairs, Frank Aiken, and the Taoiseach, Eamon DeValera. It is hard to believe that

the issue of recognition of the Polish-Government-in-exile was not discussed. The day ended with a dinner in the Shelbourne Hotel where Anders was introduced by Piekalkiewicz and welcomed by Dr Donal O'Sullivan of the Irish Council of the European Movement as "the noblest son of an ancient and glorious nation." Anders spoke on the topic: "Poland To-day and Western Europe" in which he stated his "belief that Divine Providence would allow Poland to regain her freedom and independence." He declared that "after 12 years of Communist rule our country is ruined (Irish Press, 05/05/1957)".

He appears to have relaxed over the weekend with only a social gathering of Polish people in Jury's Hotel on the Saturday evening where they listened to a Chopin recital. On Monday he had lunch with the President of Ireland, Sean T O'Kelly, in the Phoenix Park and visited the Portland Bottle Company in Bray before flying back to London. On the surface it appeared a quiet affair of low-level diplomacy, but Anders was struggling to sustain a government without a country. Although he met some of the most powerful people in Ireland there are no records of the meetings. Irish politicians and the public were sympathetic to Poland, but politicians were pragmatic and Poland was a source of cheap coal. In July 1957 DeValera wrote to Zaleski, regretting the necessity of ending diplomatic relations with the London Poles and closing the Dublin office.

## **Pawel Debta**

A cohort of Polish students were resident in Ireland in the 1950s. As well as Jan Kamiński there was Tadeusz Gieryski, a Warsaw Rising veteran, who got a first-class honours degree in philosophy at University College Dublin in 1951 and had a long academic career in the United States. Nor should we forget the philosopher, Prof Łukasiewicz, who lived just down the street from us in Fitzwilliam Square. And there was Paweł (Paul) Debta who fought in the Warsaw Uprising of 1944 and studied engineering in Trinity College. He wrote about his wartime experiences in a series of dramatic articles in the *Sunday Press* beginning on 30 August, 1959. For the following six weeks the paper carried the features with many

original photographs spread over two pages. In those days before Irish television *The Sunday Press* was the leading Irish newspaper with peak sales of almost half a million copies each week and a readership of one third of the population. Dehta's articles informed an entire generation of Irish people about the tragedy of the Warsaw Uprising. The tone of the articles and the headlines such as 'Warsaw – the Ghastly Truth' suggest that the full story had been obscured in the post-war years.

For six weeks readers followed the unfolding heroic struggle and ultimate tragedy. According to Dehta the disaster in Warsaw was compounded by the failure of the Allies to provide assistance. He attributed the greatest blame to the Russians, although the British and Americans were condemned for half-hearted attempts to help the Poles. Like many of the Poles who came to Ireland in those years Dehta found little opportunity in a depressed economy and left for the United States in the early 1960s. Readers wrote to express their thanks for the chance to learn the truth about the uprising. There was one dissenting anonymous voice who denied sympathy to the Poles, accusing them of refusing to help the Jewish Ghetto Uprising of 1943. It was left to the artist, Sean O'Sullivan, to



30.08.1959. Warsaw! *The Ghastly Truth*  
(photo by The Sunday Press)

rebut the claim. However, it is remarkable that 60 years later, we find similar allegations against Poland from ill-informed and hostile critics.

I have mentioned only a few of the faces that appear and disappear in the ever-growing story of connections between Ireland and Poland. I can say to the Polish people here that you are part of a long tradition. We are uncovering fragments of stories, histories and connections, and in time a full picture will emerge. We are discovering in this 21<sup>st</sup> Century that everything in this world is connected.

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- Strzelecki Committee: *Life of Sir Paul Edmund Strzelecki, Polish Scientist, Explorer and Philanthropist, 1796–1873 with an introduction by Shane Leslie*, London, 1943.
- Lissadell Papers, Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, Belfast.
- *The Journal* online newspaper, 15/06/2019.
- *The Sunday Press*, August – October, 1959.
- *The Irish Press*, May, 1957.
- *The Irish Press*, 22/02/1944.

Helena JOHNSTON

## **Early days of the Irish Polish Society**

Irish Polish Society Conference, 2019

It is very fitting and appropriate that we celebrate 40 Years since the foundation of the Irish Polish Society today in the second half of October [2019 – J.P. note]. There are a few dates which are directly linked to the foundation of the IPS – the election of the Polish Pope, Karol Józef Wojtyła, who, on 16<sup>th</sup> of October 1978 became the first non – Italian Pope in 455 years and 22<sup>nd</sup> of October Papal inauguration, which is now a Feast day of St John Paul, called by some The Great. Also, it was on the eve of the Papal inauguration on the 21<sup>st</sup> of October that the Polish Community and their Polish and Irish families met in the Pro-Cathedral in Dublin, where the Archbishop of Dublin, Dermot Ryan, concelebrated a special Mass on the election of a new Pope.

This most joyful and enthusiastic of all gatherings would not have been possible without the research by the Polish Jesuit missionary, Klaus Peter Cieszyński, based at the Jesuit House for Studies, Milltown, Dublin 6, who investigated local telephone directories in search of Polish names. He found over thirty, which formed his first database for contacting Poles and their Irish/Polish families. The first event being the celebratory Mass in Pro-Cathedral, with tea and coffee afterwards in the church's dining hall. I was not in a telephone directory; I no longer had a Polish name, so I was lucky to have met Klaus through a visiting member of the Catholic Intelligentsia Club from Poland (a mild Catholic centre-opposition group in the People's Republic of Poland) and on the evening of Pope's election both men were at my home with my father. Klaus

predicted that the Polish cardinal, Archbishop of Kraków, may be elected.

Our joy was beyond description, like millions of Catholics and Polish people around the globe, and particularly in Poland where the prime minister Piotr Jaroszewicz of KC PZPR [Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party – J.P. note] was leading our country. The meeting of the Polish community after Mass in the Pro-cathedral was a joyful, somewhat quiet and refined celebration. We were overwhelmed with enthusiasm and hopes for changes in our beloved Poland that the election of the Polish Pope evoked. Klaus was determined to keep the Polish community together and started arranging a gathering to celebrate Christmas with *Opłatek* on 7<sup>th</sup> January 1979 [see *Appendix I*, p. 167 – J.P. note].

Traditionally Polish communities abroad celebrated Christmas with an old Polish custom of sharing Christmas wafer – *Opłatek* – rectangular in shape, made of flour and water, the composition being exactly the same as the altar bread. This old tradition that started in Poland, also known in Lithuania & Slovakia, in the 10<sup>th</sup> Century, a symbol of the unity of the family, is also a symbol of forgiveness and reconciliation. Milltown Jesuit College gave us use of their kitchen where Klaus and I cooked some Polish dishes for the upcoming *Opłatek*. Later a Polish friend and Polish community member, Urszula Scheunert, joined in to help.

*Opłatek* was a huge success. Many Poles and their Irish-Polish families attended. There was a great mixture of a few generations of Poles and their Irish families and friends. Klaus with his enormous energy after the Christmas *Opłatek* on 8<sup>th</sup> January 1979 started to organize a Frederic Chopin Birthday anniversary concert on 22<sup>nd</sup> February in St Catherine's Church in Thomas Street. Bogna Modzelewska was the pianist and Maciej Smoleński bass baritone. Here are the response letters from potential sponsors. And some refusals. We were covered against the losses for £50 from individual sponsors [see *Appendix I*, pp. 171–173, 175, 176, 179 – J.P. note]. In the morning of *Opłatek*, on 7<sup>th</sup> of January 1979, a steering committee of the Irish Polish Society met at Newpark Comprehensive School,

Newtownpark Avenue Blackrock, Co. Dublin to discuss the Irish Polish Society's future. The venue was chosen because one of the Irish sympathizers of the IPS was a teacher there. Those present were: Jan Kamiński – chairperson, Helena Johnston – secretary. Committee members: Sean Lyons, Paul Cusack (who dropped out), Artur Tyszkiewicz, Michał Scheunert and William Johnston [see *Appendix I*, pp. 168–169 – J.P. note].

The above committee was set up to investigate a possibility of having an Irish Polish Society (among other matters). When Klaus Cieszyński started to organize Frederic Chopin's birthday Anniversary it was discovered that there was already a registered **Irish Polish Cultural Society**. The Irish Polish Society's steering committee wanted to join in with the existing Irish Polish Cultural Society since our aims were the same, that is promoting Polish culture in Ireland through interaction with the Irish community. Regrettably the Irish Polish Cultural Society, whose Chairman was Dr De Courcy Ireland, declined. That led to the resignation of their secretary, Miss Flynn later [see *Appendix I*, p. 174 – J.P. note].

Jan Kamiński was negotiating with the **Polish Trade Mission of the People's Republic of Poland** and the Irish Polish Cultural Society chairman, Dr De Courcy Ireland, but an agreement could not be reached. At that meeting of 7th January 1979, we discussed the Irish Polish Cultural Society's refusal to join with them. Jan Kamiński proposed that our name should be the Irish Polish Society, without the word 'Cultural' which the other organization had.

On 18<sup>th</sup> February 1979 a form for registration of the Irish Polish Society was filled out by the steering committee members with an address at 140, Lower Baggot Street, Concorde Travel's Business address, Jan Kamiński's company. The members of the steering committee filled out the Registration Business Names Act of 1963 form: Jan Kamiński, Helena Johnston, Sean Lyons, Artur Tyszkiewicz, William Johnston and Michał Scheunert [see *Appendix I*, p. 177–178 – J.P. note].

The next committee meeting took place on 27<sup>th</sup> February 1979 after the successful Chopin's Birthday Anniversary Piano and Song Recital on 22<sup>nd</sup> February [see *Appendix I*, p. 183 – J.P. note]. Things

discussed: planned AGM with all members, registration of Society's name and its Rules. Afterwards I no longer could be actively involved in IPS matters, and Dr Janina Krzyżanowska – Lyons stepped in. William continued.

In July 1979 a papal Visit to Ireland was announced for 29<sup>th</sup> September – 1<sup>st</sup> October. Intensive preparations for the visit began. The Irish Polish Society members met His Holiness at The Apostolic Nunciature in Dublin on 30<sup>th</sup> September [see *Appendix II*, pp. 293–195 – J.P. note].

On 11<sup>th</sup> November 1979 IPS members met at the Jesuit House for Studies to discuss the recent visit of Pope John Paul II. The subscription then was 5£ Family and 3£ individual. Members were asked to contribute towards costs incurred with the organization of the papal visit and the audience (£5 per family) [see *Appendix I*, p. 185 – J.P. note].

In the 1980s the Irish Polish Society, under Dr Janina Krzyżanowska-Lyons with support of Polish and Irish members, distributed aid to Poland thanks to the enormous and unprecedented generosity of the Irish People. According to a letter from Sean Lyons in a space of 18 months, £300,000.00 worth of goods were sent to Poland. Apart from the charitable work, the Irish Polish Society members met a few times a year mostly at Milltown Jesuit House of Studies, to celebrate Polish church and national holidays. Occasional lectures and concerts were organized.

As the society's status and membership grew, the IPS committee considered the purchase of a house to meet the Society's needs. Members Henryk Lebioda, Teofil Dulka, Sean Lyons and Michał Scheunert and sub-committee members: Dr Janina Krzyżanowska Lyons and Father Dermot McNeice, were investigating the house purchase. Later, that idea was developed further and a special form was sent to members looking for their views on the proposed way of financing the purchase. A house was found at no.1 Beresford Place, Dublin, 1. The architect Andrzej Zakrzewski prepared a report on the property. An idea to establish a trust to look after the possible house came up and William Johnston was asked by Dr Janina

Krzyżanowska-Lyons to do legal work on it (1984). There were passionate letters from Sean Lyons about the prospect of a house [see *Appendix I*, pp. 187–192 – J.P. note]. The problem of the house search and its financing was solved in 1986 when a trustee of the Wanda Petronella Brown Estate, Mr Skutnicki, devoted a portion of her estate for the purchase of the Polish House in Dublin.

A detailed history of The Polish House can be found in the Album prepared by Dr Jarosław Płachecki, former chairman of the Irish Polish Society, committee member and a director of Ognisko Polskie, which holds the title of the Polish House.

\* \* \*

## Appendix I

### *The archival documents*

(courtesy of Helena Johnston)

*7 Jan. 1979. Invitation to Traditional Polish Oplatek party sent by  
Fr Klaus Peter Cieszyński to members of the Polish community in Ireland*

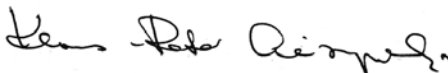
**Jesuit House of Studies**

MILLTOWN PARK, DUBLIN 6.

Telephone (01) 975729

Dear Helena & Wiliam,

On behalf of the Polish community I invite you  
to the Polish Oplatek party to be held at Milltown  
Park on the 7th January at 4.p.m.



7 Jan. 1979. Minutes of the first IPS Steering Committee – list of members (obverse)

7th January 1979

Irish - Polish Society  
Steering Committee

Chairman Jan Kamiński  
Secretary Helena Johnston

Members of the Committee

Sean Lyons

~~Just Gosak~~ Wyszczepanowski

Artur Tysskiewicz

Michał Scheunert

William Johnston

The Steering Committee was formed to investigate the possibility of having our Irish-Polish Society and a discussion took place to that effect.

to report back!

7 Jan. 1979. Minutes of the first IPS Steering Committee - goals and plans (reverse)

Minutes:

1. to carry on as an existing society  
to co-op in 1. to write letter to patrons:

2. ~~our~~ Sean Ryan -  
purpose!  
Society - to meet people: Poles.

3. Mr. Kaminiski:  
to consider

(Tapestry exhibition) -

to inform the patrons  
personally and letter.  
to establish working committee  
to continue the efforts to establish  
Irish Polish Society

to  
to follow the preliminary  
affords to establish J.P.S.

We are working committee  
President under conditions:  
1) 2)

4. Miss Flynn has been appointed as a secretary by <sup>Ms.</sup> Dennis Ryan  
- Miss Flynn resigns from a position as secretary.  
doesn't see any way to reach the gap between two societies.

5. Mr. President  
doesn't see how the gap between Dennis Ryan and our society  
can be reached.

6. Mr. Kaminiski

Today

1. to ~~provide~~ keep the patrons of this society  
2. to form society without any political aim.  
3. to form one society

8

Michael Scott - Mr. Kaminiski will be talking

Mr. President = <sup>4</sup> people from the society to be patrons =  
= to get them to agree.

to draw up.  
to approach people personally.

*8 Jan. 1979. Invitation for an Inaugural Concert of the establishment  
of the Irish-Polish Society*

Telephone: (01) 975729

Jesuit House of Studies,  
Milltown Park,  
Dublin 6.

8th January, 1979.

Dear Sir,

Fryderyk Chopin, the great Polish composer was born on 22nd February 1810, and some members of the Polish expatriate community living in Dublin would like to commemorate the anniversary of his birth by presenting an "Evening of Polish Music and Song" next 22nd February at St. Catherine's Church, Thomas Street.

It is proposed to engage Miss Bogna Modzelewska, a very talented young pianist from Warsaw, at present studying with John O'Connor at the Royal Irish Academy of Music; and the distinguished Polish Bass-baritone Maciej Smolenski, currently Professor of Singing at that same institution.

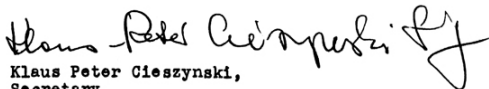
Miss Modzelewska will play piano pieces by Chopin, and Mr. Smolenski will sing Polish songs by Chopin and Moniuszko, which have seldom if ever been performed in Ireland. He will be accompanied by his wife Rosemary Hill.

It is hoped that this recital will attract a large and enthusiastic audience of Irish and Polish people interested in Chopin's music; indeed, we would like to make this occasion the 'inaugural' concert of the establishment of an 'Irish-Polish Society'.

You will appreciate that presentation of such a concert involves considerable financial outlay (hire of venue, grand piano, artist's fees, publicity, printing, advertising, etc.), so we were wondering if your organisation might be interested in supporting such a venture either by direct sponsorship, or with a guarantee against loss of perhaps a minimum of £50?

We have pleasure in enclosing a list of Expenditure and Income with the assurance that due recognition and acknowledgement would of course be given in the publicity for your support.

Yours faithfully,

  
Klaus Peter Cieszynski,  
Secretary,  
Concert Organising Committee,  
Irish-Polish Society.

*22 Jan. 1979. Bank of Ireland letter of guarantee for the  
Concert 'Polish Music and Songs'*



**Bank of Ireland**

Head Office Lower Baggot Street Dublin 2 Telephone 785744/785933 Telex 5573

Please reply to

Your ref.

Our ref.

Date January 22, 1979

Mr. Klaus Peter Cieszynski  
Secretary  
Concert Organising Committee  
Irish-Polish Society  
Jesuit House of Studies  
Milltown Park  
DUBLIN 6  
-----

Dear Mr. Cieszynski,

I am glad to be able to inform you that the Bank will guarantee your musical evening against loss to the extent of £50.

I take this opportunity of wishing you success with your Chopin and a large audience.

Yours sincerely,

Donal O'Donovan  
PUBLIC RELATIONS MANAGER  
-----

*25 Jan. 1979. Allied Irish Bank letter of guarantee for the  
Concert 'Polish Music and Songs'*



**ALLIED IRISH BANKS LIMITED**

P.O. BOX 452, OLDBROOK HOUSE,  
24/32 PEMBROKE ROAD,  
DUBLIN 4.

TELEPHONE (01) 785522/785063

25th January, 1979.

Mr. Klaus Peter Cieszynski,  
Secretary,  
Concert Organising Committee,  
Irish-Polish Society,  
Jesuit House Studies,  
Milltown Park,  
DUBLIN, 6.

Dear Mr. Cieszynski,

Thank you for your letter in connection with your  
recital of "Polish Music and Song" on 22nd February at  
St. Catherine's, Thomas Street. I am pleased to advise  
that this bank will guarantee the Concert against loss  
for £50.00.

Yours sincerely,

  
Angela Cotter,  
Public Relations Officer.



1 Feb. 1979. Letter by Irish-Polish Cultural Society to Fr Klaus Cieszyński regarding launching of the Irish - Polish Society

IRISH - POLISH CULTURAL SOCIETY  
6 Harman Street, Dublin 8, Ireland. Telephone : 780557

PATRONS : Sean O'Faolain  
Prof. Roger McHugh  
Eileen O'Casey  
Maurice Craig  
Prof. Anne Crookshank  
Dr. Michael Scott  
Maureen Charlton  
Dr. de Courcy-Ireland  
Lunia Ryan

PRESIDENT: Dr. de Courcy - Ireland

SECRETARY: Mary Flynn

Fr. Claus Cieszynski, S.J.  
College of Industrial Relations,  
Milltown Park,  
Dublin 6.

1st February, 1979.

Dear Fr. Cieszynski,

We are interested in clearing up the message we received from Mr. Jan Kaminski via the Polish Trade Representative about the plan to launch another Irish - Polish Society.

We would very much like to hear from you assuming that you are as anxious as we are in not acting as a devisive agent in representing Irish - Polish cultural activities

Yours faithfully,

*[Signature]*  
Acting secretary.

*[Handwritten signatures]*

*5 Feb. 1979. Guinness Ireland Ltd letter of guarantee for the concert  
'Polish Music and Songs'*

ST. JAMES'S GATE, DUBLIN 8. TELEPHONE DUBLIN 753645/756701 TELEX DUBLIN 5138



**GUINNESS**

5th February 1979.

**IRELAND LIMITED**

Mr. Klaus Peter Cieszynski,  
Secretary,  
Concert Organising Committee,  
Irish-Polish Society,  
Jesuit House of Studies,  
Milltown Park,  
Dublin 6.

Dear Mr. Cieszynski,

I refer to your letter of 8th January and am pleased to inform you that we have decided to grant your request that this Company should guarantee your concert against a loss of £50.

Please contact us again after the concert and let us know if you have incurred a loss.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

  
P. GALLAGHER  
Secretary

EW

Directors: Lord Iveagh Lord Moyne (British) A. J. R. Purcell (British) M. Hely Hutchinson F. W. Peard G. N. Cairns  
B. A. Slowe E. P. Galvin H. Hannon H. J. Byrne T. Sheppard Dr. F. H. Boland Dr. T. K. Whitaker J. P. Hinds (British)  
Registered in Dublin No. 59784 Registered Office: St. James's Gate, Dublin 8

*7 Feb. 1979. Irish Dairy Board letter of guarantee for the concert  
'Polish Music and Songs'*

AN  
BORD  
BAINNE



IRISH DAIRY BOARD

Grattan House  
Mount St Lower  
Dublin 2 Ireland  
Telephone 783788

NC/JH

February 7, 1979.

Mr. Klaus Peter Cieszynski,  
Secretary,  
Concert Organising Committee,  
Irish-Polish Society,  
Jesuit House of Studies,  
Milltown Park,  
DUBLIN 6.

Dear Klaus,

Further to our conversation and your letter regarding the proposed recital of 'Polish Music and Song' at St. Catherine's Church, Thomas Street, I am pleased to say that the Board will underwrite any losses incurred up to a maximum of £50.

We wish you every success for the occasion and look forward to seeing you then.

Best regards.

Yours sincerely,

NOEL CAWLEY.  
COMMERCIAL & DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR.

*18 Feb. 1979. Application form for Registration of Business Names by  
The Irish Polish Society with the list of signatories*

The statement must be sent or delivered to the  
Registrar of Business Names, Dublin Castle, Dublin 2.

See Notes on Page 4.

Postage  
Stamps  
to the  
value of  
25p to be  
affixed  
here.

Form R B N I A

Number of Certificate

**REGISTRATION OF BUSINESS NAMES ACT, 1963**

APPLICATION UNDER SECTION 4

FOR REGISTRATION BY A FIRM

*In furnishing the particulars specified below and overleaf  
the word "none" or "same", as the case may be, MUST  
be entered where applicable.*

\* The Irish Polish Society hereby apply for  
registration under the provisions of the Registration of Business Names Act, 1963, and for that purpose  
furnish the following statement of particulars:—

\*Insert  
name  
of firm.

|                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                         |                                   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. The business name.                                                                                             | <u>The Irish Polish Society</u>                                                                                                                         | See Notes<br>A and B<br>on page 4 |
| 2. The general nature of the business.                                                                            | <u>To promote greater mutual<br/>interest and understanding between<br/>the Irish and Polish Communities<br/>through social and cultural activities</u> |                                   |
| 3. The principal place of the business.<br>(Full address)                                                         | <u>140, Lower Beckett Street,<br/>Dublin, 2.</u>                                                                                                        |                                   |
| 4. The date of the adoption of the<br>business name by the partners<br>mentioned in this statement<br>(overleaf). | <u>18<sup>th</sup> Day of February 1979.</u>                                                                                                            |                                   |
| 5. Any other business name or names<br>under which the business is carried<br>on. If none say "None".             | <u>NONE.</u>                                                                                                                                            |                                   |

|                                                                                                                                                                                          | 1                                     | 2                      | 3                      | 4                      | 5                              | 6                      | 7 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|---|
| 6. The names, Christian names or names of every individual who is a partner in the firm, and the corporate name of every body corporate which is a partner in the firm.                  | JOHN KELLER-SKI                       | HELEN JOHNSON LYONS    | STAN LYONS             | BARBARA KENNEDY        | WILLIAM FRANCIS KOEHE JOHNSTON | MICHAEL SCHEINERT      |   |
| 7. Any former Christian name or name of any individual partner in the firm. If none say "None".                                                                                          | NONE                                  | NONE                   | NONE                   | NONE                   | NONE                           | NONE                   |   |
| 8. The nationality of each (body) of every individual partner in the firm.                                                                                                               | IRISH                                 | IRISH                  | IRISH                  | STATELESS              | IRISH                          | STATELESS              |   |
| 9. The usual residence of every individual partner in the firm, and the office in the State of every body corporate which is a partner in the firm. (Full address).                      | ROSEBURY ROAD, 21, DUBLIN 22, IRELAND | 21, DUBLIN 22, IRELAND | 21, DUBLIN 22, IRELAND | 21, DUBLIN 22, IRELAND | 21, DUBLIN 22, IRELAND         | 21, DUBLIN 22, IRELAND |   |
| 10. (a) Other business occupations (if any) of every individual partner in the firm, and the office in the State of every body corporate which is a partner in the firm. (Full address). | ROSEBURY ROAD, 21, DUBLIN 22, IRELAND | 21, DUBLIN 22, IRELAND | 21, DUBLIN 22, IRELAND | 21, DUBLIN 22, IRELAND | 21, DUBLIN 22, IRELAND         | 21, DUBLIN 22, IRELAND |   |
| (b) The names of all bodies corporate of which each individual partner is a director. If none say "None".                                                                                | CONCORD TRADING LTD.                  | CONCORD TRADING LTD.   | CONCORD TRADING LTD.   | CONCORD TRADING LTD.   | CONCORD TRADING LTD.           | CONCORD TRADING LTD.   |   |

Dated this ..... day of ..... 19.....

Signatures

For Instructions as to signatures, see Note "C" overleaf.

*22 Feb. 1979. Harringtons & Goodlass Wall Ltd letter of guarantee for the concert  
'Polish Music and Songs*

**Harringtons & Goodlass Wall Ltd**  
*Paint Manufacturers*

Shandon Works, Commons Road  
P.O. Box 45, Cork, Ireland.  
Telephone Cork 52381  
Telegrams PAINTS Cork  
Telex 6126

Rev. Fr. K.P. Cieszynski, S.J.,  
Jesuit House of Studies,  
Milltown Park,  
DUBLIN 6.



RM/bp

22nd February 1979

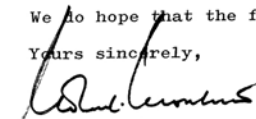
Dear Fr. Cieszynski,

I regret that due to a personal oversight I did not reply to your circular which arrived here on January 19th - concerning the evening of Polish Music and Song to be held to-night at St. Catherine's Church, Thomas Street.

I must confirm that I telephoned Milltown Park to-day and conveyed a message to your telephonist saying that we would be glad to guarantee the concert against a loss of up to £50.

We do hope that the function was a most satisfying success,

Yours sincerely,



R. Morehead  
Managing Director

*22 Feb. 1979. Budget projection for the concert 'Polish Music and Songs'*

List of Expenditure and Income for proposed recital of "Polish Music and Song" on 22nd February, 1979 at St.Catherine's, Thomas Street.

EXPENDITURE

|                                                                   |        |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| Hire of Venue .....                                               | : £40  |
| Hire of Grand Piano .....                                         | : £100 |
| Artist's Fees (Pianist: £100,<br>Singer and accompanist: £100) .. | : £200 |
| Printing (Posters, Leaflets,<br>Tickets, Programmes.) .....       | : £60  |
| Advertising.....                                                  | : £35  |
| Postage and Sundries.....                                         | : £30  |
| Contingencies.....                                                | : £30  |

|         |             |
|---------|-------------|
| TOTAL : | <u>£495</u> |
|---------|-------------|

INCOME

Rather difficult to predict. St.Catherines Church, Thomas Street has been specially converted into a small Concert Hall; seats and heating have been installed. It is a very beautiful Georgian building eminently suitable for the proposed recital. There are 400 seats, and tickets will be sold at the following prices:

|                |                |
|----------------|----------------|
| 100 @ £2 ..... | £200           |
| 100 @ £1.50... | £150           |
| 100 @ £1 ..... | £100           |
| 100 @ 75p....  | £75 (Students) |

N.B. Provided ALL the tickets are sold, there should be a profit. It is hoped that there will be a good attendance, if we have adequate publicity.

A Guarantee against Loss is however absolutely necessary.

|        |             |
|--------|-------------|
| TOTAL: | <u>£525</u> |
|--------|-------------|

*22 Feb. 1979. Programme for the concert 'Polish Music and Songs' with the list of sponsors*

P R O G R A M M E

- (I) "Smitna Rzeka." Sad River. Fryderyk Chopin, Op.74, No.3.  
Stefan Witwicki
- 
- "Gdzie lubi." Where a Young Maiden Loves.  
S.Witwicki Fr.Chopin, Op.74, No.5.
- 
- "Poseł." The Messenger.  
S.Witwicki Fr.Chopin, Op.74, No.7.
- 
- "Melodia." An Elegy.  
Zygmunt Krasiński Fr.Chopin, Op.74, No.9.
- 
- (II) Impromptu in A<sup>b</sup> Major Fryderyk Chopin, Op.29.  
Mazurka in A Minor Fr.Chopin, Op.17, No.4.  
Etude in A Minor Fr.Chopin, Op.25, No.II.
- 
- (III) "Precz z moich oczu..." Go, leave my sight...  
Adam Mickiewicz Fryderyk Chopin, Op.74, No.6.
- 
- "Naręczony." The Betrothed.  
S.Witwicki Fr.Chopin, Op.74, No.15.
- 
- "Piosnka litewska." Lithuanian Song.  
Ludwik Osiński Fr.Chopin, Op.74, No.16.
- 
- "Śpiew z Mogiły." Song from the Grave.  
Wincenty Pol Fr.Chopin, Op.74, No.17.
- 
- (IV) Ballade No.I in G Minor Fryderyk Chopin, Op.23.
- 
- I N T E R V A L 15 mns.
- (V) Four Mazurkas Fryderyk Chopin, Op.30.  
No.1 in G Minor, No.2 in B minor, No.3 in D<sup>b</sup>, No.4 in C<sup>#</sup> Min.
- 
- (VI) "Kozak." The Cossack.  
Anon. Stanisław Moniuszko.
- 
- "Dąbrowa." The Little Oak Wood.  
Jan Ciecnot S.Moniuszko.
- 
- "Dziad i Baba." The Old Man and the Old Woman.  
Jan Kraszewski S.Moniuszko.
- 
- (VII) Ballade No.I in B Minor Fryderyk Chopin, Op.20.
- 
- (VIII) "Serce Moje" Oh, My Heart.  
Andrzej Kolankowski Stanisław Moniuszko.
- 
- "Sołtys" The Village Mayor.  
Włodzimierz Wolski S.Moniuszko.
- 

This Recital is being guaranteed against loss by:

Allied Irish Banks Ltd., Arthur Guinness & Co. (Ireland) Ltd.,  
An Bord Bainne, Allied Irish Investment Bank Ltd., Bank of Ireland.

23 Feb. 1979. Remittance statement for the ticket sold at the concert  
'Polish Music and Songs'



McCullough  
Pigott Limited  
P.O. Box No. 489  
11/13 Suffolk Street  
Dublin 2  
Telephones: 773138/773161  
784735/784790

## Remittance Statement

Dr. to MACIEJ SHOLEWSKI  
2, PINK CHIS  
OLD BAWN, TALLAGHT  
23/2 1979.

'GRIST POLISH SOCIETY'

TO THE AMOUNT DUE FOR  
TICKETS SOLD  
LESS 5% COMMISSION

|       |    |
|-------|----|
| 46    | 25 |
| 2     | 30 |
| <hr/> |    |
| 43    | 95 |

Date Submitted

Examined

Authorised

Payment Passed

## 27 Feb. 1979. Minutes of the second IPS Committee Meeting

27th Feb. 1979

Mr Kamiński  
Mr Ignatowski  
Mr Johnston  
Mr Schamont  
Mrs Johnston

## Meeting.

## Program

I we are going to register.

to be prepared for general meeting.

① folk group.

② dinner dance.

③.

DATE for the general meeting of all members.

## Minutes of 7

1. form society
2. to accept the constitution.
3. chairman's report (program of the society).
4. acceptance of the constitution (everybody has a copy at the meeting).
5. election of the committee.
6. new chairman is elected for the meeting.
7. new chairman conducts the meeting.

## 27 Feb. 1979. Draft for the Rules of the Irish Polish Society

RULES OF THE IRISH POLISH SOCIETY

1. The society shall be called *The Irish Polish Society*
  2. The office for correspondence is at *140, 315, Bally Road, Dublin 2* and shall not be changed except by resolution of the committee.
  3. The purposes for which the society is established are to *afford its members the means of providing for their mutual interest and to promote the friendship between the two peoples*
  4. All money received on account of ~~entrance fees~~ *subscriptions, donations, and interest on investments* and all other funds belonging to the society shall be applied in carrying out the objects of the society in accordance with these rules.
  5. Any individual of ~~not less than 21 years of age~~ *18 years of age* shall be eligible ~~for election~~ *to become* a member.
  6. ~~A candidate for election as a member must be proposed by one and seconded by another member.~~
  7. The name, address, and occupation of the candidate with the names of his proposer and seconder, shall be entered in a nomination book at least seven days before the day on which his name is submitted for election.
  8. ~~The election shall be by (the committee) (the members of the society at a general meeting).~~
  6. ~~Every member shall pay an annual subscription of £3 which shall become due on his election. Until the entrance fee and the subscription are paid the member shall not be entitled to any privileges of the society. Subsequent subscriptions shall be paid on the first day of February in each year.~~
  7. ~~Any member who has not paid his subscription within sixty days after it has become due shall cease to be a member.~~
  8. ~~A member may at any time retire from the society by giving to the secretary notice of his wish to do so.~~
  9. ~~A person who has ceased to be a member may, upon payment of any arrears of subscription, be re-elected without entrance fee.~~ *renew his membership*
  10. ~~The committee may expel from membership any member wilfully disobeying any of these rules, or guilty of any conduct rendering him unfit in their opinion to be a member of the society. Provided that before expelling him the committee shall call upon him for an explanation of his conduct, and shall hear what he may wish to urge in his defence. A member expelled in accordance with this rule shall have no claim against the society, and shall not be eligible for re-election as a member.~~
  11. ~~The committee may from time to time elect for life, or for such other period being not less than one year, a president and 4 vice-presidents who shall be honorary members of the society and entitled to all the benefits of membership, and these rules (except rules 5 to 7 inclusive) shall be deemed applicable to them.~~
  12. ~~The management of the society shall be entrusted to a committee consisting of not more than 10 members elected annually by ballot at the annual general meeting, together with the officers appointed as provided by rule 14. Any member of the committee may be removed by resolution of a special general meeting which may proceed to fill the vacancy.~~
  13. ~~The name of every candidate for membership of the committee shall be proposed and seconded by two members of the society.~~
  14. ~~The members of the society shall appoint at every annual general meeting of the society, a chairman of the committee, a secretary, and a treasurer.~~
  15. ~~The committee shall meet at least once a year. For general business.~~
- Four*

11 Nov. 1979. Invitation and agenda for the meeting of the IPS Committee

PLEASE SEND ALL REPLIES TO:

DR JANINA LYONS  
30 COOLMINE WOODS  
BLANCHARDSTOWN  
CO. DUBLIN -  
TEL: 213116

IRISH-POLISH SOCIETY

140. Lower Baggot St. Dublin 2.

The next meeting of the Irish - Polish Society will be held on the 11th of November 1979, at 4.00 p.m. in the Jesuit College, Milltown Park.

Programme for Meeting.

1. Lecture: Belloc and Poland, by Mr. Keneely, Chairman of Belloc Society.
2. Discussion: Effect of Pope's visit on our Society.
3. Display of photographs of Meeting with His Holiness, in the Nunciature. - orders can be placed.
4. Plans for Wigilia / Polish Christmas Supper /
5. Any other business.

In order to defray expenses which were incurred for the Papal visit, all who participated in the Audience at the Nunciature are asked to contribute:

£5.00 per family

£3.00 per single individual with no family.

Any additional contribution will be welcome and used for future activities of the Society.

Those who have not joined the Society and wish to do so ~~may~~ send the Membership fee together with their contribution to 300, 30 Coolmine Woods Blanchardstown, Co. Dublin. Membership fee: £5.00 per family. £ 3.00 per single person.

During the Papal visit we were united by this joyful experience of a lifetime. Let us hope that the Irish - Polish Society will thrive and that each one of us will contribute to and benefit from belonging to the Society.

Janina Lyons Secretary.  
Janina Lyons Secretary.

*5 Nov. 1982. Proposal letter by William Johnston to form the Irish Polish Society Trust (first page only)*

RK/WJ/TOF

Maciej Smolenski Esq.,  
2 Cill Cais,  
Old Bawn,  
Tallaght,  
Co. Dublin

5th November 1982

Re: The Irish-Polish Society Trust  
-----

Dear Matt,

During the past few months we have had intermittent discussions concerning the setting up of a Trust which would have charitable status. This was originally the idea of Sean Lyons and was suggested as I understand from Sean that the Trust, if a charity, could receive funds from the European Economic Community.

Exemption from Tax Liability

The most important benefit to arise from being a charity, which is recognised as one by the Revenue Commissioners, is that the Trust would be exempt from the payment of most if not all taxes.

(i) Capital Acquisitions Tax

A tax which would be particularly applicable to the Trust is Capital Acquisitions Tax which encompasses both Gift Tax and Inheritance Tax. At present if the Society receives gifts or inheritances totalling in excess of £10,000 it is liable to pay Capital Acquisitions Tax on the excess at a rate of up to 60 per cent. All gifts and inheritances are aggregated in the hands of the person receiving the gifts and inheritances.

1983. Proposal for purchasing of the Irish/Polish House/Club



*Irish Polish Society*

Replied to:- Sean Lyons,  
30, Coolmine Road,  
Blanchardstown,  
Co. Dublin.

Telephone 213116.

Dear

It has long been the desire of members of our Society to have our own Irish/Polish House/Club. This can be a reality if we approach the financing of such a house in the following manner:-

1. Say a property of 3,000 sq.ft., in a Centre City location can be purchased for £150,000.
2. 150 people could take £1,000. shares plus stamp duty plus legal fees straight away - immediate purchase.
3. This £1,000., could be paid, say, £250. down and the remaining £750. plus over the next five years or longer.
4. An Administration Committee to be elected from the shareholders on a yearly basis to administer the property.
5. If a shareholder wishes to withdraw he would be required to give first refusal to the remaining shareholders.
6. The value of the share on withdrawal would be valued at the going market rate for such a property.
7. The shareholders in their wisdom may decide to use only portion of the property for their own use and the remainder as a source of income.
8. A number of people may purchase a share.
9. All shares carry equal votes.

There is such a property on the market for a long time quoting £135,000. or £45. per sq.ft., freehold and vacant possession.

This is just a first idea on this matter and if you are interested in it we would very much appreciate hearing from you at an early date.

If enough people are enthusiastic about the idea a meeting will be called to discuss the matter, see the property and perhaps proceed.

*Towarzystwo Irlandzko Polskie*

contd/.....

- 2 -

...../contd.

Persons other than those in the Society may wish to become involved, e.g., your friends or others.

This should be looked upon as an investment for yourself and your children. Now seems to be a good time to purchase as the market appears to be in a depressed state.

Attached is a reply form which is not to be taken as a commitment, but at the same time should indicate more than a passing interest.

We must get sufficient members if the project is to be viable.

Please reply now even if it is in the negative so that we may know where we stand. Time is of the essence.

Hoping to hear from you in a favourable light.

I/We remain,

Yours sincerely,

Maceij Smolenski  
Chairman.....

*Maceij Smolenski*

Ewa Lewczynska.  
Secretary.....

*Ewa Lewczynska*

Sean Lyons  
P.R.O.....

*Sean Lyons*

Michael Scheunert.  
Treasurer.....

*Michael Scheunert*

*1984. Correspondence regarding the purchasing the Irish/Polish House/Club**Irish Polish Society*

Replies to:- Sean Lyons,  
30, Coolmine Woods,  
Blanchardstown,  
Co. Dublin.

Telephone No. 213116.

Dear

It has long been the desire of members of our Society to have our own Irish/Polish House/Club. We think that this house could have various functions which would bring us closer together within the Society, as well as the Society closer to people interested in Poland. It would propagate even in a small way, the Polish culture. It would be a permanent place in which we could meet in larger numbers as we did recently at the "Wigilia" and "Easter celebrations, as well as in smaller groups. In connection with this we could have a restaurant (which would serve among "others" Polish dishes) a members bar, Library, Reading Room, Polish school where we would hope to have regular lessons of the Polish language. We would have a Chapel. An information centre to deal with the large number of enquiries we get and a Polish Cepelia shop where we would hope to sell Polish dolls, wall hangings paintings, etc.

We could have guest rooms, one or two intended particularly for representatives of Polonia.

Our Society is now sufficiently established and tested (mainly through aid to Poland £300,000.00 in the last eighteen months) as a lasting and working organisation, to have our own Irish/Polish house, a permanent base from which to increase friendship between those who come from Poland and the people of Ireland, the Country which has become for them their new home from the time they or their families, for various reasons had to leave their own Country.

All of this can be a reality if we were to approach the financing of such a house/club in say the following manner:-

1. Say a property of 3,000 sq.ft in a centre city location can be purchased for £150,000.
2. 150 people could put up £1,000 plus stamp duty and legal fees straight away - immediate purchase.
3. This £1,000 could be paid, say £250. down and the remaining £750. plus over the next five years or longer.
4. We have approached a Bank and they would be willing to lend us money at 18%
5. The Bank would also be willing to lend money to

*Towarzystwo Irlandzko Polskie*

contd/.....

1984. Correspondence regarding the purchasing the Irish/Polish House/Club



## *Irish Polish Society*

-2-

...../contd.

individuals who wanted to get involved in the project.

6. An administration Committee to be elected from amongst the members involved on a yearly basis to administer the property.
7. A number of people may together put up \$1,000.
8. The members, in their wisdom, may decide to use only portion of the property for their own use and the remainder as a source of income.

There is such a property on the market for a long time quoting "155,000, or £45. per sq. ft, but negotiable with vacant possession. We have examined this property had an Architect do a report on it for us and, as a result we would recommend this House to the Society.

We have also examined the property from an income point of view and we feel we could get a nett income of £500 per week or £25,000 p.a. from it and still have plenty of space for the Irish/Polish Society.

Basically what we are saying, if enough people put up the money to enable the property to be acquired now, in a few years the money can be given back and the Society will have a property of it's own.

As a small reward, those of us who put up the money now, may be given life membership, if that is what is decided by the members involved.

This is just a first idea on this matter and if you are interested in it we would very much appreciate hearing from you at an early date.

If enough people are enthusiastic about the idea a meeting will be called to discuss the matter, see the property and perhaps proceed.

Persons other than those in the Society may wish to become involved, e.g., your friends or others.

This should be looked upon as a cultural and heritage investment, particularly for your children. In fact the house itself has a protection order on it because of its architectural and historical value. Now seems to be a good time to purchase as the market appears to be in a depressed state.

Attached is a reply form which is not to be taken as a commitment, but at the same time should indicate more

Contd/.....

*Towarzystwo Irlandzko Polskie*

1984. Correspondence regarding the purchasing the Irish/Polish House/Club



-3-

*Irish Polish Society*

...../contd.

than a passing interest.

We must get sufficient numbers if the project is to be viable.

Please reply now even if it is in the negative so that we may know where we stand. Time is of the essence.

Hoping to hear from you in a favourable light.

We remain,

Yours sincerely,

Henry Lebioda.....

*H. Lebioda*

Teofil Dulka....

*Teofil Dulka*

Sean Lyons....

*Sean Lyons*

Michael Scheunert....

*M. Scheunert*

Members of sub-committee investigating house purchase.

Dr. Janina Lyons

Relief Co-ordinator....

*Janina Krupianowska - Wypa*

Fr. Dermot MacNiece O.S.M.

Chaplain to the Society....

*Fr. Dermot MacNiece O.S.M.*

*Towarzystwo Irlandzko Polskie*

31 May 1984 Letter of intention to form the Irish Polish Society Charitable Trust



Mr. William Johnson  
McCann Fitzgerald Sutton  
Dudley  
30 , Pembroke St.  
Dublin 2 .

*Irish Polish Society*  
30 , Coolmine Woods  
Blanchardstown.Dublin 15  
tel 213116

31.5.84

Dear William ,

Further to our conversation I wish  
to confirm that the Society has decided to  
proceed with arrangements for becoming a  
Charitable Trust , and we would like you to  
undertake the necessary legal steps

With kind regards

Yours sincerely

*Janina*  
Dr. Janina Lyons  
Chairperson

*Towarzystwo Irlandzko Polskie*

\* \* \*

## **Appendix II**

### ***The archival photos***



(29.09.1979) Pope John Paul II visit to Ireland. Boeing 747 'St. Patrick' with His Holiness on board prepares for landing at Dublin Airport. Photo by William Johnston.



(29.09.1979) Over 1.25 million people in expectation for the Holy Mass celebrated by JP II at the Phoenix Park. The Pope's Cross will be a symbol of this event. Photo by William Johnston.



(29.09.1979) After the Mass in 'the Papamobile'. People cheering at the Phoenix Park. Photo by William Johnston.



(30.09.1979) John Paul II meets the Irish Poles in the garden of the Apostolic Nunciature at Navan Rd. in Dublin. Photo by William Johnston.



(30.09.1979) John Paul II in the garden of the Apostolic Nunciature at Navan Rd. in Dublin. Photo by William Johnston.



30. (Feb. 1988) Cardinal Józef Glemp in the Polish House – at the top, right corner by the window. Photo courtesy of Helena Johnston.



(1989) Henryk Lebioda, IPS Chairperson and members of the Polish delegation meet Seán Haughey, the Lord Mayor of Dublin in the Mansion House, Dublin.



(April 1990) Easter celebration in the Polish House. Dr Janina Lyons and little Basia Taylor dressed in a traditional Polish folk costume. Photo courtesy of Helena Johnston.

(April 1990) Easter celebration in the Polish House. Henryk Lebioda and Maura Scannell on the left. On the table traditional Polish food, Mazurek cake, painted Easter Eggs and the willow catkins as a decoration. Photo courtesy of Helena Johnston.



(28.01.2001) The 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Solidarity movement. The exhibition in the Polish House opened by Dr Janina Lyons, Ambassador Janusz Skolimowski and Helena Johnston. Photo by William Johnston.



(28.01.2001) The 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Solidarity movement. Jan Kamiński and Helena Johnston at the exhibition in the Polish House. Photo courtesy of Helena Johnston.



(1993) St. Patrick's Day in the Polish House. Helena Johnston, the IPS Chairperson fundraising for The Irish Hospice Foundation. Photo courtesy of Helena Johnston.



(11 Oct 1997) The Polish pianist Krzysztof Jabłoński at the concert for the 10 Anniversary of the Polish House. Photo courtesy of Helena Johnston (on the left).



(1990/1991) Krystyna Dobrzyńska, the IPS Chairperson at a lecture in the Polish House. Photo courtesy of Helena Johnston.



(Autumn 1990) Seamus Heaney poetry reading in the Polish House. From the left: Hanna Dowling, Seamus Heaney, Helena Johnston and Margaret Kamińska. Photo courtesy of Helena Johnston.



(13.02.1996) An illustrated talk on Polish Renaissance and Jan Kochanowski's poetry organised by Hanna Dowling (IPS). Seamus Heaney and his wife Marie (on the right) in the Polish Embassy. Behind the projector Philip Dowling. Photo courtesy of Helena Johnston.



(13.01.2008) Patrick Quigley and Helena Johnston fundraising for The Great Orchestra of Christmas Charity-WOSP in a Dublin pub. Photo courtesy of Helena Johnston.



42. (13.01.2008) Helena Johnston and Sebastian Wideł fundraising for The Great Orchestra of Christmas Charity-WOSP in a Dublin pub. Photo courtesy of Helena Johnston.



(12.07.2011) Chairman Martin Reynolds representing the IPS at the Garden Party at Arás an Uachtaráin with the President of Ireland Mary McAleese and her husband Dr Martin McAleese. Photo courtesy of Helena Johnston.



# PHOTO ALBUM 2019



5 Jan. 2019. A traditional Christmas carols singing in the Polish House – party organized together with POSK, photo by Jason Dolan.



20 Jan. 2019. First Fortnight (European Mental Health, Art & Culture Festival) organised in partnership with the Irish Polish Society – Krzysztof Kiedrowski greeting the visitors. A Belgian documentary film *Labyrinthine* screening was followed by a discussion on mental health services for ethnic minorities in Ireland. Guest speakers: Emilia Marchelewska – *Cairde*, Krystian Fikert – *My Mind*, Constantin Tui – Romanian Psychotherapist and others, photo by Jason Dolan.



3 March 2019. Polish '*Ostatki*' (Shrovetide) – a concert of light Carnival music given by a pianist Anna Kiselyova, photo by Jason Dolan.



3 March 2019. Polish '*Ostatki*' (Shrovetide) – Kevin O'Neill rehearsing before his performance during the Carnival celebration, photo by Jason Dolan.



7 April 2019. The judges at work – first from the right: Giovanni Remigi, Jason Dolan and Krzysztof Kiedrowski. Easter Eggs Painting – a family workshop organized by Marysia Harasimowicz, photo by Edyta Dolan.



11 April 2019. 'Was Countess Markievicz really a Feminist?' A Writer and journalist Mary Kenny in conversation with Patrick Quigley, photo by Jason Dolan.



12 April 2019. Community Inclusion Day organized by KLEAR Adult Education Centre in Kilbarrack. Ula Retzlaff O'Carroll – presenting artistic paper cutting techniques, a traditional Polish '*wycinanki*', photo by Jason Dolan.



11 Oct. 2019. Opening night of the IPS Annual Art Exhibition officially launched by Mr Ruairi Ó Cuiv, Public Art Officer DCC (standing against the window). Jarosław Płachecki of the IPS Committee introducing the visitors, photo by Jason Dolan.



11 Oct. 2019. Edith Poole and Kieran Devitt (in the background) at the opening night of the IPS Annual Art Exhibition. Edith's gorgeous painting *Safe Harbour* (oil on canvas) was chosen for the IPS Yearbook, 2018 front cover page, photo by Jason Dolan.



11 Oct. 2019. Orla Kaminska and Richard Callanan at the opening night of the IPS Annual Art Exhibition, photo by Jason Dolan.



11 Oct. 2019. Deidre Holland, Edyta Dolan and Deidre Lennon wearing beautiful smiles while working hard in the kitchen before the opening night of the IPS Art Exhibition – a quiet contribution never to be forgotten. *Go raibh maith agaibh ladies*, photo by Jason Dolan.



11 Oct. 2019. Artists and guests. From the left: Deidre Holland, Janina Lyons and Orla Kamińska enjoying the beautiful scenery of the Exhibition, photo by Jason Dolan.

13 Oct. 2019. General parliamentary election for the Polish Sejm and Senate. A Polling Station nr 92 for the first time in the Polish House. Jarosław Płachecki (L) before casting his vote, Dr Janina Lyons and Krystyna Pycińska-Taylor behind the table as members of the voting commission, photo by Krzysztof Kiedrowski.



19 Oct. 2019. Prof. Jolanta Góral-Półrola (Rector of the Old Polish University in Kielce), Grzegorz Sala (Head of the Consulate Department at Polish Embassy in Dublin) and Joanna Piechota (IPS Chairperson) unveiling the commemorative plaque before the official opening of the conference 'Integration, Friendship, Tradition: 40 years of the Irish Polish Society', photo by Jason Dolan



19 Oct. 2019. The plaque commemorating the official opening of the newly renovated lower floor of the Polish House on 20 May 2018. Designed and funded by the Old Polish University in Kielce, installed and unveiled on 19 Oct. 2019 by the steps at the entrance to the basement, photo by Jason Dolan.



19 Oct. 2019. Minutes before opening the conference 'Integration, Friendship, Tradition: 40 years of the Irish Polish Society'. First row from the left: Mr Jerome Mullen (Honorary Consul of Poland in Northern Ireland) with his wife Krystyna (L), Prof. Galia Chimiak (Cultural & Media Affairs at the Consular Section of the Polish Embassy), Krystyna Pycińska-Taylor (President of POSK) and Grzegorz Sala (Head of the Consulate Department at the Polish Embassy in Dublin). Empty seat reserved for H.E. Ambassador Anna Sochańska, photo by Jason Dolan.



19 Oct. 2019. Wojciech Białek (EUWP Board Member) presenting IPS (Chairperson Joanna Piechota) with the silver medal of EUWP for 'special merits in integration and development of the Polish Diaspora in Europe', photo by Jason Dolan.



19 Oct. 2019. H.E. Ambassador Anna Sochańska met with cheers and applause while entering the conference, photo by Jason Dolan.



19 Oct. 2019. H.E. Ambassador Anna Sochańska (R) addressing the conference outlining the importance of the Irish Polish Society as 'an ambassador of Polish culture, art, history and the links between our two countries'. The IPS Chairperson Joanna Piechota on the left, photo by Jason Dolan.



19 Oct. 2019. Hanna Dowling (long standing IPS Honorary Secretary) receiving the letter of appreciation from the H.E. Ambassador Anna Sochańska, photo by Jason Dolan.



19 Oct. 2019. Ian Cantwell's opening presentation 'Roots of the Irish-Polish relationship' with rare archival photos and documents, photo by Jason Dolan.



19 Oct. 2019. All participants of the conference received complimentary IPS 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary commemorative pins designed by Jarosław Głowa, photo courtesy of IPS.



25 Oct. 2019. Album *'The Polish House in Dublin. An Illustrated Chronicle'*, Dublin 2019, ed. by J. Plachecki, printed in Poland and sent to various Polish and Irish institutions and individual readers, photo by Sebastian Jabłoński.

## Notes on Contributors

**Hanna DOWLING**, educated in Poland and Italy, interpreter and freelance correspondent in Poland and Ireland, for many years Secretary for Irish Polish Society, since 1980 lives in Ireland. Wrote feature articles for newspapers and journals in Poland and commented on Polish-Irish relations in both Irish and Polish media. Currently collecting archival material for the book related to the history of the Irish Polish Society and the Polish House.

**Ian CANTWELL**, grandson of Waław Tadeusz Dobrzyński, the first Polish diplomat to Ireland. Ian is an international interdisciplinary researcher and historian and co-winner of a 2013 World Summit Award in culture and tourism category. He has a small online archive of WTD's articles, lectures and interviews at [www.iancantwell.com](http://www.iancantwell.com).

**Maciej BODGALCZYK**, PhD in Philosophy, graduate of the Faculty of Philosophy of the Pontifical University of John Paul II in Cracow, and the Faculty of Law and Administration of the Jagiellonian University. Author of numerous publications in the field of philosophy of religion and Polish Disapora in Ireland. Holder of National Science Centre grant, Prelude 3.

**Katarzyna GMEREK**, graduated in the Faculty of Polish and Classical Philology, later Faculty of English (PhD in 2009, on the cultural-historical relations between Poland and Celtic lands in the long 19th Cent.) Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań. A research librarian in the Adam Mickiewicz University Library. Her historical investigation focuses on the Polish-Irish historical relations, with the emphasis on biographies of Poles in Ireland and Irish in Poland. Recently has been working on a history of the O'Byrn/d'Obyrn Wild Geese family in the Commonwealth of Poland and Lithuania.

**Helena JOHNSTON** – has lived in Dublin for nearly 45 years. Holds a MA in Economics from the University of Gdańsk, and has served as a Russian language tutor at Maynooth University and for the Department of Foreign Affairs in Ireland. Co-founder and former chairperson of the Irish Polish Society. During her time as chairperson (1992–1993, 2000–2004, 2007–2008), Helena significantly strengthened the Society's reputation through stronger ties with Irish municipal and governmental institutions. Thanks to her leadership, the Society became a member of The European Union of Polish Communities. Helena is a talented painter who participates in annual art exhibitions the Society holds at the Polish House, as well as in other Dublin cultural institutions. Although retired, Helena continues to provide the Society with her advice and support.

**Patrick QUIGLEY**, former public servant, writer, novelist and columnist for magazine 'Polish Neighbour'. His first novel 'Borderland' was published in 1994. Author of *The Polish Irishman: Life and Times of Count Casimir Markiewicz* (Dublin, 2012) and *Sisters against the Empire. Countess Constance Markiewicz and Eva Gore-Booth, 1916–17* (Dublin, 2016). Chairman (2004–2007) and for many years Treasurer of the Irish Polish Society. He is an active member of the Powys Society.

**Tomasz WYBRANOWSKI**, graduated at Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin (Editing and Journalism). Editor of Polish language papers: *Wyspa monthly*, *Irlandzki Niezbędnik-Irish ABC* and *Kurier Polski*. Former correspondent for Polskie Radio and Informacyjna Agencja Radiowa. Editor and Presenter of *Polska Tygodniówka* in Ireland and *Radio WNET* (Warsaw, Kraków, Wrocław). Author of poetry albums: *Eyes which...* 1990, *Czekanie na świt* 1992, *Białe* 1995 and *Night Vigil* 2012. His poems were printed in various anthologies in Poland. Nominated to *Polak Roku w Irlandii Award 2011*, recognized as a *Journalist of 2010, Ireland*.

**Jarosław PŁACHECKI**, PhD in political sciences, academic teacher, Director of the Dublin Campus, Old Polish University in Kielce and a professional bus and truck driver with Dublin Bus. Author of *Ireland's Political System* (Warszawa, 2010) and various academic papers. Editor of *Polish Emigration in Ireland in the 20<sup>th</sup> and the 21<sup>st</sup> Centuries* (Dublin, 2012), *The Poles in Ireland. Ten Years of Polish School in Dublin* (Dublin, 2017) and *The Polish House in Dublin. An Illustrated Chronicle* (Dublin, 2019). Editor of the *Irish Polish Society Yearbook* (2014–2020). Chairman of the Irish Polish Society (2011–2014). Director and Hon. Treasurer of the Ognisko Polskie CLG, a managing company for the Polish House in Dublin.

*“This Yearbook and the Irish Polish Society could be an inspiration to other migrant groups.  
It could prompt them to set up their own national society which would invigorate  
their own communities and facilitate their successful integration into Irish society ...”*

**J. Anthony Gaughan**, *‘The Irish Catholic’*, *Reviews*, 16.01.2020

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## Inside:

Editorial Note – Jarosław Płachecki

Articles:

- ***Remembering Jan Kamiński and his Native Shtetl Bilgoraj*** – Hanna Dowling
- ***Jan Kamiński Uncovers the Truth about Himself*** – Hanna Dowling
- ***Charles Stokes. An Irishman in the Heart of Darkness*** – Ian Cantwell
- ***Andrzej Wejchert. A Polish Architect in Ireland*** – Maciej Bogdalczyk
- ***Recollection of Years Past. Remembering Jan Kamiński and his Native Town Bilgoraj*** – Hanna Dowling
- ***Tytus O’Byrn of Irlandka, the 1863 Uprising Rebel*** – Katarzyna Gmerek

Reviews:

- ***The Irish Constitutions and their Evolution 1919–2019***, by Maciej B. Furtas, C.H. Beck, 2020 – Jarosław Płachecki
- ***Towards Independence: Polish and Irish Ways to Sovereignty 1918–1922***, ed. by Krzysztof Marchelewicz & Adam Kucharski, Irish Culture Foundation, Poznań 2019 – Patrick Quigley

Poetry:

- ***Dublin at Night*** – Tomasz Wybranowski

Documentary Section:

- ***Reports & Correspondence*** – Joanna Piechota, Hanna Dowling
- ***The IPS 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference Presentations, Essays & Archives*** – Jarosław Płachecki, Ian Cantwell, Hanna Dowling, Patrick Quigley, Helena Johnston
- ***Photo Album 2019*** – Jason Dolan, Edyta Dolan, Krzysztof Kiedrowski, Sebastian Jabłoński

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Cover illustration: *On the Shore. West Coast of Ireland.*  
Painting by Katarzyna Sudak.  
Reprinted courtesy of the artist.