

# Out on the Wi

LIFE IN MINNESOTA'S POLISH FARMING COMMUNITY

John Radziłowski

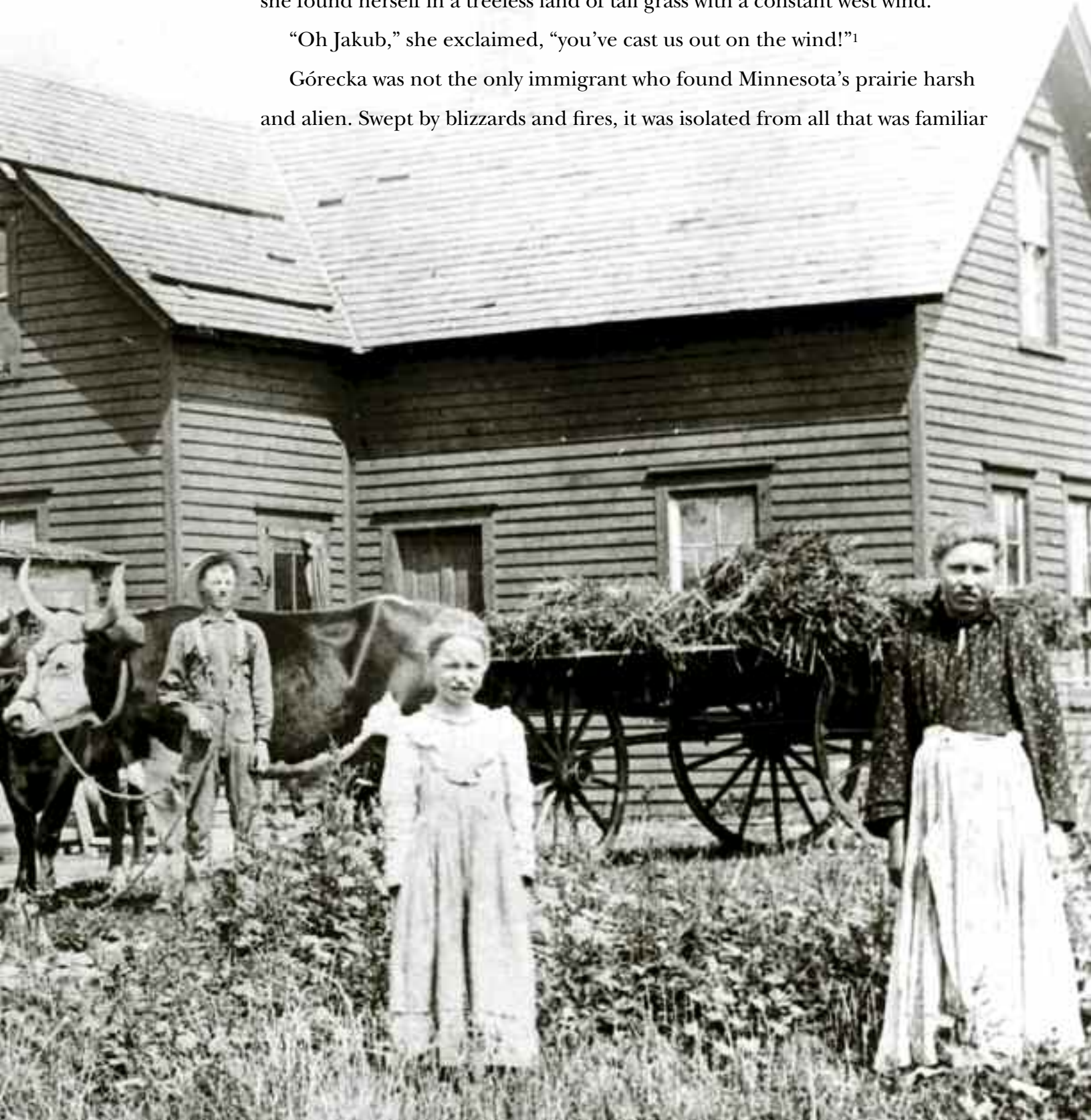


# nd NITIES

IN 1883 RÓŻA GÓRECKA, an immigrant from western Poland, arrived at her new home on the prairie of western Minnesota with her children and husband, Jakub. When he convinced her to leave Chicago for the promise of a farm in Minnesota, she found herself in a treeless land of tall grass with a constant west wind.

“Oh Jakub,” she exclaimed, “you’ve cast us out on the wind!”<sup>1</sup>

Górecka was not the only immigrant who found Minnesota’s prairie harsh and alien. Swept by blizzards and fires, it was isolated from all that was familiar



**Overleaf: The family of Polish immigrant Franciszek Otto on its Lincoln County farmstead ca. 1900; masthead detail from Winona's Polish-language newspaper *Wiarus*, published 1886–1919. The symbols represent the lost Polish Commonwealth: the White Eagle of Poland, the Horseman of Lithuania, the Archangel Michael of Ukraine, and, in the center, the Virgin Mary shown as Our Lady, Queen of Poland, the nation's patroness.**

and comforting. Yet Polish immigrants such as the Góreckis transformed their environs into places they and their children could call home. In addition, they created an inner cultural and spiritual realm filled with drama and emotion that helped them make sense of their new world. Far from home, amid Poles they hardly knew and strangers from other ethnic groups, they formed communities and a hybrid culture that blended American and Polish customs into a coherent whole.

**BETWEEN THE CIVIL WAR AND WORLD WAR I**, most of Minnesota's Poles settled in the Twin Cities, Duluth, and Winona. They also established some 50 communities in rural Minnesota and another half dozen in the eastern Dakotas, with more than 40 Roman Catholic parishes, four Polish National Catholic parishes and chapels, and at least one Missouri Synod Lutheran congregation. Although central Minnesota boasted the largest concentration of rural Polish settlements, they were scattered throughout the state. Strangely, while these immigrants and their descendants constitute about a third of Minnesota's sixth largest ethnic or racial group, their history, like that of other Poles in the North Star state, has thus far received little attention.<sup>2</sup>

The first significant Polish immigration to Minnesota began in 1855, when Kaszubs from Poland's Baltic region arrived in Winona to work in lumber mills. The first to take up farming in the state may have been Winona workers who bought or rented small plots of land outside the city. In the 1860s immigrants

from Polish Upper Silesia (in today's south-central Poland) began settling in Wright County around Delano. These Poles spoke German as well as Polish and may have learned about Minnesota from German neighbors in the Old Country. At about the same time, Poles began trickling into McLeod County, where they settled beside Czech immigrants in the Silver Lake area. In the 1870s Kaszubs and Silesians established several small settlements in North Dakota's Walsh County, as well as Opole in Minnesota's Stearns County, Wells in Faribault County, New Brighton in Ramsey County, Gnesen in St. Louis County, and Edison township in Swift County.<sup>3</sup>

The first rural settlers were often family groups direct from Europe, sometimes even from the same village, attracted by information provided by a few pioneering compatriots. Most had been peasant subsistence farmers. The end of serfdom in east-central Europe in the midnineteenth century had enhanced freedom of movement and opportunities to earn cash through wage labor, opening their eyes to worlds they had not known before. While transforming labor obligations into cash rents, this change also impoverished many peasants, who emigrated in hopes of providing a better future for their children.<sup>4</sup>

Poland had been partitioned, or divided, at the end of the eighteenth century between Prussia (Germany), Austria, and Russia. Polish peasants had few educational options and little access to their national culture. As a result, their primary loyalties were to family, village, church, and region, rather than to any abstract notion of statehood or to a nation that no longer existed. As a result, immigrants in diaspora often developed a sense of Polish national identity before their stay-behind counterparts.<sup>5</sup>

Most Poles who settled in rural Minnesota came from the Prussian or German-controlled western partition. Many were among the earliest Polish settlers in America, arriving well before the majority of their compatriots in the 1890s, 1900s, and 1910s. Although a few left for political reasons, most simply wanted a life that offered more opportunities than were available in their economically backward and politically oppressed homeland.

Polish communities grew slowly and steadily through the arrival of the first settlers' families and friends. By the late 1870s, other efforts began attracting Poles to planned colonies in Minnesota. Whether

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organized by railroad companies, the Catholic Church, or one of two rival Polish American fraternal societies in Chicago, the colonies recruited potential farmers from the growing urban Polish communities of the Midwest, primarily in Chicago. For example, Ignacy Wendziński, publisher of the Chicago newspaper *Przyjaciel Ludu* (The People's Friend), tried forming a colony in Benton County, which led to the establishment of a Polish community in Gilman township. In September 1878 more than 30 Polish Lutheran families established a colony at Sauk Rapids. By 1881 the St. Paul and Manitoba Railroad employed a Dr. Warsabo, who visited urban Polish communities to find potential settlers. In that year he and other railroad agents escorted Polish colonists from Michigan to the Red River valley.<sup>6</sup>

The Wilno colony in southwestern Minnesota's Lincoln County that attracted Róża and Jakub Górecki "out on the wind" was typical. It was formed by brothers Franciszek and Grzegorz Klupp with the support of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and the Chicago and North Western Railroad. The Klupps belonged to the "Nationalist" faction in Chicago's Polish community and were connected with the Polish National Alliance (PNA), a fraternal society that sought the liberation of Poland as one of its major goals. Many who initially purchased land in the Klupps' colony were important members of the PNA. The archdiocese provided approval for the colony's Polish parish and Polish-speaking priest, and the railroad sold land to prospective settlers and provided plots for a church and cemetery.<sup>7</sup>

Colonists were recruited through newspaper ads and by agents who received commissions for the set-



Letterhead of a colonization company that worked with the Great Northern Railroad to promote Polish settlements in northwestern Minnesota, 1895; Polish church in Florian, 1914, called Stanisławowo on the letterhead.



tlers they signed up. Franciszek Klupp canvassed the streets of Chicago and La Salle, Illinois, and Pennsylvania's coal-mining towns for Wilno recruits. Unlike settlements formed gradually by chain migration from the Old Country, planned colonies like Wilno were created almost overnight from immigrants living in American urban enclaves. In 1883, 40 new Polish settlers bought

land in Lincoln County's Royal township, where there had been only one Pole the year before, and St. John Cantius parish and the hamlet of Wilno were founded.<sup>8</sup>

The settlers' arrival caused some consternation through the 1880s and early 1890s. "Mr. Alexander of Royal has sold his farm to Polanders and gone south. This township will soon be exclusively occupied by Polanders," reported the *Lake Benton News*. The new farmers, for their part, sought to lure more compatriots to the new community. In 1887 local agent, postmaster, and store owner Marcin Mazany wrote to Winona's *Wiarus* newspaper:

The Polish colony of Wilno, Minnesota, consists of 200 Polish families who work as farmers. The soil here is extraordinarily fertile, the water healthful and clear as crystal, and the people are free; the land provides easy sustenance to those who are willing to work on a farm and who wish for clear air and a life that is more agreeable than in the great, overcrowded cities. . . . In order to satisfy our spiritual needs, we have a lovely church and a pastor in the person of Fr. H. Jażdżewski, who as a Pole is universally esteemed by us as by other nationalities.<sup>9</sup>

The Polish colonists established farms and homes in the new land despite tremendous hardships, and they soon saw visible results. In 1888 a writer in *Wiarus* noted: "Three years ago there was only a miserable desert here, with no schools and no church. Today in Wilno there is a church and a happy Polish settlement around it. Morning and evening the church bells ring out over the prairie, reminding the people of their distant Catholic homeland."<sup>10</sup>

**WHILE POLES WHO SETTLED** in rural Minnesota brought rich cultural and religious traditions, these were by no means static. Instead, the immigrants adapted them to the American reality, creating hybrid rituals that suited the new people they took themselves to be and made the Minnesota landscape feel more like home.

**Lincoln County immigrants, including Fr. Józef Ciemiński (seated, lower left), brought shotguns, fishing poles, a cook stove, and refreshments (a whiskey bottle and beer tap are visible on the wagon) on an outing to Fish Lake, South Dakota, ca. 1900.**





Although the setting might be unfamiliar, was it not the same earth and sky they had known back in Poland? The letters they wrote to compatriots elsewhere in the United States stressed how Polish and familiar their new prairie homes could be. One 1889 letter from Swift County published in *Wiarus* explained that “the past year we built a church, but now it is already too small. . . . We have here for sale five good farms, up to 160 acres, and so whoever wishes may buy, even on credit. . . . We wish that many Poles would take up farming, because to us the earth is like a mother.” Mazany, the Wilno postmaster, even contributed to the same paper a short poem, “A Prayer from Wilno,” with these sentiments: “O God. . . ./Let everyone in his demesne/Be his own master, his own king,/Let us in Polish forever your praises sing!”<sup>11</sup>

The sense of being masters of their own fate, something long denied them in Europe, was powerful for Minnesota’s rural Poles. Attempts to abridge their freedom and rights as human beings and as new Americans invariably met with fierce resistance. In 1895 a land survey ordered by a Lincoln County court in a dispute was feared to be a legal subterfuge. (In Europe such tactics had been used to confiscate land from Poles and give it to Germans.) The county surveyor, also editor of the *Lake Benton News*, described the local reaction to the attempted survey:

About a mile had been run when fierce and determined opposition to further progress was experienced. The [surveying] chain and flag pole were taken and thrown as far as could be, and for an hour a perfect torrent of invective and abuse was let loose, coupled with threats and violent demonstrations if the whole party did not leave immediately. It was absolutely useless to attempt to argue with excited individuals who seemed to think we were taking a part of their land. In vain were they told that the survey was by order of Judge Webber . . . and that it was the court and not the surveyor who had the legal authority to establish the boundaries of their land. The answer would be that the judge had nothing to do with their lands, as they, not the judge, had purchased and paid for it. . . . The crew returned to town and complaints were lodged against Messrs Yasinski [Jasiński] and Zerambo [Zaremba], as they had been the leaders in opposing the survey. The next day we started back to finish the surveying, closely followed by the sheriff and deputy.

Upon arriving . . . a larger crowd began assembling than on the previous day. Two men and three women came in one crowd, the women being armed with pitchforks, while four men and one woman came from another direction, each armed with a club. The sheriff took the two men he was after and brought them to town and the rest gradually dispersed and surveying was resumed.<sup>12</sup>

Nor did the Poles direct their outrage at civil authorities alone. Because the parish was the center of community life, Polish Americans lavished great attention on their churches and deeply resented outside interference. In Minnesota, this meddling came most often from Archbishop John Ireland, an Americanizer who made no secret of his dislike for east Europeans in general and Poles in particular. In Wilno, he repeatedly placed obstacles in the path of parish expansion, opposing efforts to open a convent and rectory. In 1897 he removed the popular Fr. Apolonius Tyszka, a move that sparked vigorous protest. Parishioners appealed to Ireland and sent a delegation to St. Paul, but he received them coldly and called them unworthy, rebellious vagabonds. By one account he even said that Poland had deservedly been torn apart by her neighbors.<sup>13</sup>

Many Wilno parishioners considered breaking with the archbishop and creating an independent parish: “When the [archbishop’s] message arrived at the Polish farms in Lincoln County, people started to lament and curse. They urged Fr. Tyszka to break loose from the bishop’s control and remain in charge of their parish. They promised to stand by him firmly and perpetually.” Fr. Tyszka, however, refused to go that far and acquiesced. Adding insult to injury, Ireland then appointed a Polish-speaking Czech priest, Fr. František Römer, to the parish. Römer did not last long, however; one parishioner remembered that “If the priest wasn’t Polish—he was no good. They didn’t like Römer because he was a Bohemian. He had to get out.”

**DESPITE THE CONFLICTS** endemic in nearly every Polish American parish, the church remained the center of the community and the place where it committed most of its resources. Yearly church rituals provided a ready-made set of events and celebrations for parishioners. The Christmas Eve midnight Mass at St. Casimir’s in Cloquet, for example, typified the elaborate rituals beloved by Polish immigrants:



**Interior of St. John Cantius Church, Wilno, ca. 1905. Barely visible at far right is a replica of Christ's empty tomb, a common symbol in Polish and Polish American parishes to this day.**

About a dozen or more altar boys with their red and white vestments and high collars and gold braid would help serve Mass. The altar would be jammed with lighted trees and the manger scene. Long before midnight there would be standing room only in St. Casimir's. About 11:30 P.M., the organ would start playing, accompanied by violins. . . . The choir . . . would literally make the rafters ring with their rendition of "Dzisiaj Betlejem" (Today in Bethlehem).<sup>14</sup>

Weddings were equally elaborate rituals. One account from Sobieski in central Minnesota notes that the festivities began when the best man, "sometimes clothed in a uniform and upon a regal horse, would stop at each home and in a clear voice recite by rote a lengthy invitation address in Polish rhetoric." The wedding usually lasted two or more days.

A great selection of food was laid out, including innumerable pastries. Music and dancing were the mainstays. Young men were encouraged to dance with the bride only after they had offered a small monetary gift in exchange. A plate was set out for the men to deposit

their payment for the pleasure of the dance. The coin was thrown violently onto the plate in hopes that it would break. . . . The festivities would occasionally end at the end of the second day. The next Sunday an extension of the celebration took place. The participants may have been fewer but the leftovers . . . were enough to carry the party on for some time.<sup>15</sup>

Celebrations on important feast days like Corpus Christi could be equally dramatic. Altars were set up a mile from the church in each of the cardinal directions, and the entire community processed from one to another. At each one, the priest read from one of the four gospels. In 1893 the procession consisted of all Wilno's school children, followed by the Rosary and St. Michał Societies, six altar boys, 20 girls dressed in white, Fr. August Zalewski, the choir, and finally the rest of the parishioners.<sup>16</sup>

One characteristic of Polish immigrant celebrations and rituals was that there was little separation between participants and spectators. Each organization and individual was represented at least symbolically. Political or personal conflicts that kept people from





A saloon in Wilno, ca. 1900, probably on a Sunday afternoon after Mass, when immigrants from scattered farmsteads mingled and socialized



celebrating were long remembered as a stain on the community's good name.

Although religious processions were held in many Minnesota immigrant communities, the Wilno Poles also created unique rituals. In 1893 the community celebrated its first silver-wedding anniversary. Not an event typically celebrated in Poland, it was unlike an American anniversary, too. It was, instead, a new creation, carefully planned by the pastor and the village's leading men and women.<sup>17</sup>

The event began on a Wednesday afternoon in early January. With the St. Michał's Society leading Michał Tykwiński and the women's Rosary Society leading Magdalena Tykwińska, the party processed to the church carrying banners and candles. Waiting at the door was a large group of parishioners, who pulled out rifles and revolvers and fired into the air, making noise

1901 wedding photo of the Janiszewskis of Wilno—Stefan (age 20) and Barbara (age 19), wearing prairie wildflowers on her veil. Their hands already give proof of lives devoted to farm work.

like “the broadside of a battleship.” Before the gunshots had died away, bells began ringing and the choir began singing “Veni Creator,” creating a memorable tapestry of sound.

The first death that occurred after the Wilno Poles arrived “out on the wind” was an occasion not only to mourn the deceased but also to reflect on being buried in an alien land far from the graves of friends and relatives. The 1886 funeral of Anna Felcyn (who left behind several small children) featured a 30-wagon procession. Beginning at her home at 8 in the morning and wind-

ing past nearly every farm in the community, it lasted for six hours before reaching the church. Everyone stopped work for the entire day to attend the funeral Mass. A final trip to the cemetery—nothing more than a plot of land on the vast windswept prairie—ended in an emotional graveside sermon by the pastor that moved everyone present to tears.<sup>18</sup>

**RURAL MINNESOTA’S POLISH RITUALS** and celebrations were not only religious in nature. Patriotic rituals honoring a Poland whose independence had been lost

Three generations of Góreckis at the family farmstead in Lincoln County, Limestone township, 1909. Seated at right are Jakub (age 60) and Róża (age 54).





**Browerville's St. Joseph Catholic church, built by Polish immigrants in 1909 and now on the National Register of Historic Places. The rock grotto at right is the work of designer Joseph Kiselewski, an award-winning native son.**



before any of the immigrants had been born also proved a vital way to build community among the disparate people who had settled in each rural enclave.

On November 30, 1892, Wawrzyn Pawlak wrote to a Polish newspaper to describe one such celebration held in the farming community of Silver Lake. The holiday commemorated the unsuccessful Polish uprising of 1830–31 against Russian rule:

We wish to inform you that we commemorated the anniversary of the November Uprising. . . . Our big basement was literally crammed with men and women. This shows that patriotic feelings are on the rise every year. . . . Every member of our military forces came to the commemoration and in full dress marched from the hall to the church and back again. After singing the national anthem, our most reverend pastor, Fr. Tyszkiewicz, opened the celebrations. In his speech, he presented three types of heroes of the November Uprising: the peasant, the townsman, and the nobleman. The pictures he painted with words were so moving that we had to wipe away our tears every few minutes. . . . Mr. Pauszek spoke next about how we, Poles in America, should celebrate the memory of all the heroes of the November Uprising. . . . His speech was interrupted with continuous applause.<sup>19</sup>

After the speeches, a group of schoolgirls, many also with tears in their eyes, recited patriotic poems so that “one could see their sincerity, that they understood what they said.” Following patriotic songs, the pastor took the floor again: “We, exiled from our homeland, are united with those who passed on, and with those who remain in Poland; there is no power that can sever these bonds of love. An enemy can take our land and fetter our bodies, but there is no force that can enslave our national spirit.” The celebration ended with everyone singing “Boże coś Polskę” (God Save Poland).

Polish immigrants in rural Minnesota worked hard to create and sustain their community life. At one

**Fr. Franciszek Rakowski with a group of Wilno school-children dressed for a patriotic play, 1917. This photo is one of the earliest showing Polish folk dress, which did not become common among Polish Americans until the 1930s.**

time, for example, tiny Silver Lake claimed three military units with historic dress: one was a cavalry company, another scythe men honoring a famous peasant unit led by Tadeusz Kościuszko that charged Russian artillery in the epic battle of Raclawice in 1794.<sup>20</sup>

As others have pointed out, Poles viewed the present as a constant echo of the past, a spiral in which history, memory, and the dead infused everyday life with meaning and intense emotion.<sup>21</sup> Polish immigrants in rural Minnesota provided themselves with constant reminders of their past, of their beleaguered homeland, and of the great sense of loss and separation felt because of distance from family and friends.

This common memory and sense of Polishness was an American creation. For economic, political, and social reasons, Poles in Europe had had few connections to elite Polish culture: its literature, music, and art. In America, however, they had both the means and opportunity to learn about their homeland. This sparked a sense of Polish identity that borrowed emotional intensity from their Polish and Catholic heritage and was expressed in new rituals and celebrations uniting Old and New World forms and ideas. Some events seem to have modeled on popular Anglo-Protestant Chautauquas that featured skits, declamations, and musical numbers meant to enlighten as well as entertain viewers. An 1898 commemoration of the November Uprising of 1830, for example, began with the selection of a chairman and a secretary to take notes on the proceedings, followed by several speeches, declamations, songs, the collection of contributions for the Kościuszko Monument, and a final singing of “Bożę coś Polskę.”<sup>22</sup>

Rituals and celebrations bound together communities made up of diverse and often divisive immigrants from different villages with different customs, experiences, and political views. They temporarily held in



**Gathering in Sobieski in 1919 to celebrate the end of World War I and the rebirth of Polish independence, these second-generation women wear handmade red-and-white outfits adapted from traditional clothing from a Poland few had ever seen.**

abeyance, if only symbolically, the strange, chaotic world around them and mitigated the pain of loss caused in no small part by the immigrants’ own life choices to emigrate. The rituals expressed a new concept of who the Poles, now Polish Americans, were and what they could do, none of which had been possible in the Poland they left behind. Finally, these celebrations and rituals suggest that rural Polish immigrants, far from being peasants living monochrome lives, possessed inner worlds filled with passion and emotion. □

## NOTES

Research for this article was supported by a grant from the Minnesota Historical Society with funds provided by the State of Minnesota.

1. Katherine Górecki-Ross, interview by Thaddeus Radzilowski, Aug. 24, 1972, transcript, Southwest Regional History Center, Southwest State University, Marshall, MN (hereinafter SWRHC).

2. F. Niklewicz, *Polacy w Stanach Zjednoczonych* (Green Bay: n. p., 1937), 18–20, 26, 34; Frank Renkiewicz, research notes,

history of Poles in Minnesota, uncataloged, Central Archives of Polonia, Orchard Lake Schools, Orchard Lake, MI; parish history questionnaires, 1949, Chancery Archives, Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis. Ancestry statistics are from United States, *Census*, 1990, *Characteristics of the Population*, vol. 3. I am indebted to Paul Kulas, editor of the Polish Genealogical Society of Minnesota newsletter, for correcting and adding to the list of communities.

The only existing history of the state’s Polish people is

Frank Renkiewicz, "The Poles," in *They Chose Minnesota: A Survey of the State's Ethnic Groups*, ed. June D. Holmquist (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1981), 362–80.

3. Leo M. Ochrymowycz, "Polish People of Southeastern Minnesota: Ethnic Heritage," in *Lectures on Perspectives on Regionalism*, ed. Ahmed El-Afandi (Winona: Winona State College, n. d. [late 1970s]), 28–44; Paul Libera, "Polish Settlers in Winona, Minnesota," *Polish American Studies* 15 (Jan.–June 1958): 18–29; *The Polish Kashubian Community of Southeastern Minnesota* (Chicago: Arcadia, 2001); *Delano: Founded 1868, Incorporated 1876* (Delano: n. p., [1976?]), unpaginated; *Church of St. Mary, Czestochowa, 1884–1984* (Delano: n. p., 1984), 9; Wacław Kruszka, *Historia Polska w Ameryce* (Milwaukee: Kuryer Publishing, 1907), 11: 9–14; "Krótki rys historyczno-statystyczny osady polskiej Silver Lake," *Przegląd Emigracyjny* (Lwów), Apr. 15, 1894, p. 76–77; "St. Adalbert's Parish, Archdiocese of St. Paul, Silver Lake, Minnesota," *Polish American Encyclopedia* (Buffalo: Polish American Encyclopedia Committee, 1954), 49–50; *Church of the Holy Family* (Silver Lake: n. p., 1995), 3–4; Renkiewicz, "The Poles," 362–65.

4. See John Radziłowski, "Hidden Cosmos: The Life Worlds of Polish Immigrants in Two Minnesota Communities, 1875–1925" (Ph.D. diss., Arizona State University, 1999), 88–106.

5. Political repression of Poles was relatively mild in Austria (where, after 1848, they were free to express themselves culturally) but severe in Russia (where tens of thousands were arrested, tortured, and killed or deported to Siberia for political crimes). Thanks to modest investment in modern agriculture, conditions in Prussia were relatively good until the 1870s, when Chancellor Otto von Bismarck's Kulturkampf targeted Polish Catholics as potentially disloyal and subversive. Austrian Galicia, by contrast, was desperately poor. Although the Poles attempted to free themselves from foreign rule in a series of ill-fated insurrections, it was not until 1918 that Poland re-emerged as an independent nation. Here and below, see Piotr Wandycz, *The Lands of Partitioned Poland, 1795–1918* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1993), 112–38; Norman Davies, *God's Playground: A History of Poland*, vol. 2, 1795 to Present (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981), 81–161.

6. *Minneapolis Tribune*, Jan. 5, 1878, p. 1; Sept. 26, 1878, p. 1; Aug. 17, 1881, p. 3; Aug. 24, 1881, p. 2.

7. On the Klupps and links between Wilno and the PNA, see Radziłowski, "Hidden Cosmos," 120–24. On the ideology of late-nineteenth-century Polish immigration, see John Radziłowski, *The Eagle and the Cross: A History of the Polish Roman Catholic Union of America, 1873–2000* (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 2002). On the archdiocese and railroad, see John Radziłowski, *Out on the Wind: Poles and Danes in Lincoln County, Minnesota, 1880–1905* (Marshall: Crossings Press, 1992), 22–24. See also articles written or transcribed by parish historian Rose Parulski of Ivanhoe in the St. John Cantius Parish history file, Immigration History Research Center (IHRC), University of Minnesota, Minneapolis; parish history questionnaires, 1949; Kruszka, *Historia Polska w Ameryce*, 11: 14–15.

8. *Marshall News Messenger*, Apr. 17, 1885, p. 3; Jean Guggisberg, *St. John Cantius Church Centennial History* (Hills,

MN: Crescent Publishing, 1983), 21–29, 67; Tax List, Royal Township, Lincoln County, 1882–83, SWRHC.

9. *Lake Benton News*, Apr. 28, 1885, p. 1; *Winona Wiarus*, June 30, 1887, p. 3. See also Charles B. Lamborn to C. B. Richard and Co., Mar. 24, 1893, box 1, vol. 4, p. 253–54, Land Dept. Records, Northern Pacific Railway Company, Minnesota Historical Society (MHS), St. Paul. Lamborn, an NP land agent, wrote: "Do not send out any Polacks. There is a great prejudice against them. The M[innesota] and Manitoba people have refused to sell land for a colony of Polacks to settle on, as they claim they keep good settlers from coming in. A few stray Polacks, Chinese, or any thing else won't do any harm, but too many of a kind set down together in a new country will be detrimental."

10. *Wiarus*, June 21, 1888, p. 1.

11. *Wiarus*, Mar. 31, 1887, p. 3; Dec. 27, 1889, p. 1. For other verses extolling Minnesota Polish communities, see "Oda perhamska" [Ode of Perham], *Winona Katolik*, Feb. 22, 1894, p. 5; S. T. Modrzewski, "Kroźé Polska Kolonia w Minnesocie koło Hallock," in *Red Lake Rezerwacya i Red River Dolina w Minnesocie* (1896), p. 16, promotional pamphlet, folder 1, Land Dept. Records, Great Northern Railway Company, MHS.

12. *Lake Benton News*, May 22, 1895, p. 1.

13. Here and below, *Wiarus*, Mar. 25, 1897, p. 1; Guggisberg, *Saint John Cantius*, 38; Ross interview, p. 6. On John Ireland, see Radziłowski, "Hidden Cosmos," 167–71; Keith P. Dyrud, "East Slavs," in *They Chose Minnesota*, 408; Myron B. Kuropas, *The Ukrainian Americans: Roots and Aspirations, 1884–1954* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991), 54–56.

14. Ed Jankowski, *St. Casimir's Roman Catholic Church (Queen of Peace Chapel), Cloquet, Minnesota, 1910–1994* (Cloquet: n. p., 1994), 4.

15. [Gene Retka], *St. Stanislaus Parish, Sobieski, Minnesota: Centennial, 1884–1984* (Sobieski: n. p., 1984), 20, 21.

16. *Lake Benton News*, June 7, 1893, p. 4.

17. Here and below, *Wiarus*, Feb. 2, 1893, p. 4; *Lake Benton News*, Feb. 1, 1893, p. 1.

18. *Wiarus*, July 1, 1886, p. 4.

19. Here and below, *Wiarus*, Dec. 8, 1892, p. 4.

20. *Wiarus*, May 15, 1891, p. 1.

21. See, for example, Norman Davies, *Heart of Europe: A Short History of Poland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), 355; Thaddeus Radzialowski, "View from a Polish Ghetto: Reflections on the First 100 Years in Detroit," *Ethnicity* 1 (1974): 125–50.

22. *Chicago Zgoda*, Dec. 16, 1897, p. 3; Jan. 20, 1898, p. 4. Chautauquas were summer events held in many small Minnesota towns. See John Radziłowski, *Prairie Town: A History of Marshall, Minnesota, 1872–1997* (Marshall: Lyon County Historical Society, 1997), 44–46.

*The Florian and Browerville church photos, as well as the Kolonia Polskie letterhead from the Great Northern Railway Co. Land Department files, are in the MHS collections. The Wiarus masthead graphic is from the Dec. 5, 1889, issue. The photo on p. 27 is courtesy Bernadine Kargul, Redford, MI. The other images are courtesy the St. John Cantius, Wilno, Minnesota, Collection, Immigration History Research Center, University of Minnesota.*



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