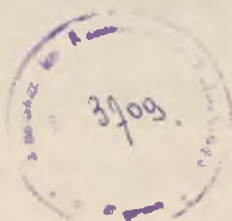
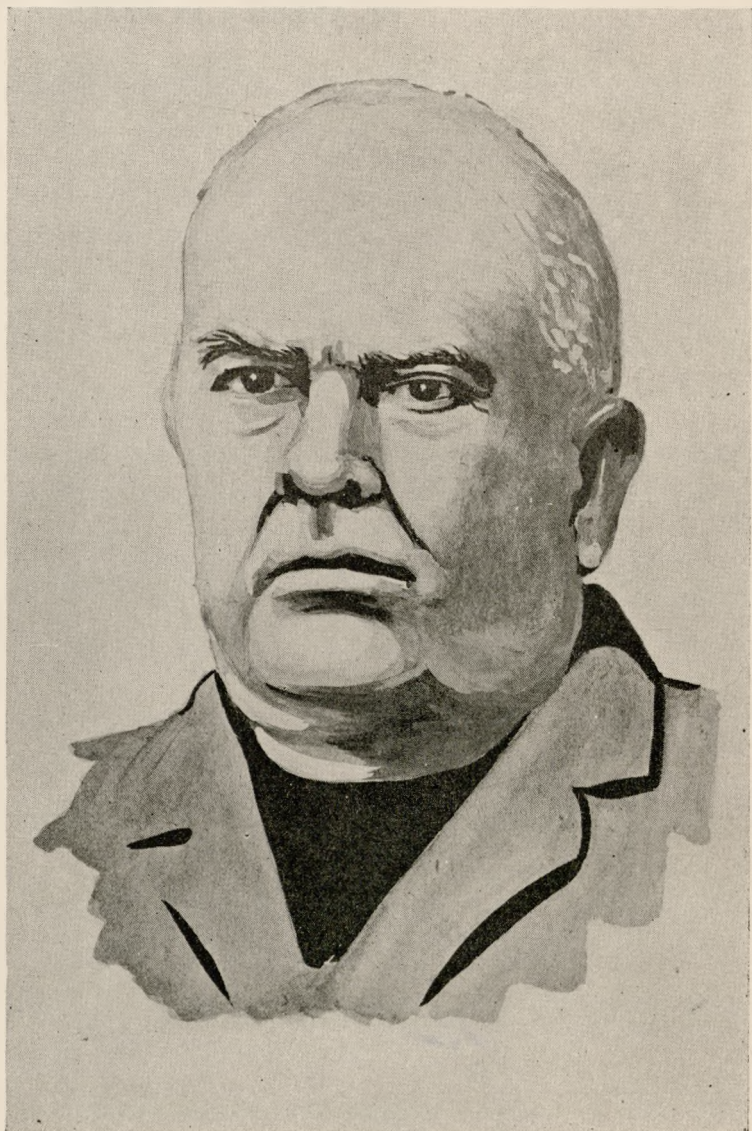


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THE FIRST POLISH COLONIES
OF AMERICA IN TEXAS



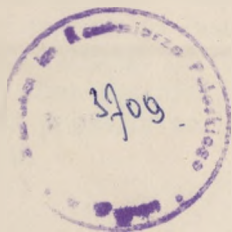


REV. LEOPOLD MOCZYGEMBA, O. F. M. ^{M. C.}
Founder of the First Polish Colony in America

THE FIRST POLISH COLONIES OF AMERICA IN TEXAS

*Containing Also the General History of the
Polish People in Texas*

Compiled by
Rev. Edward J. Dworaczyk



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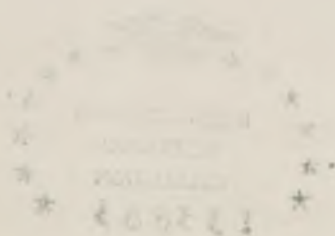
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PREFACE

An adequate "Texas Centennial" history of the Panna Maria parish demanded generalities, at least, of the colonies that sprang from beneath the shadowing branches of the old historic tree standing in the churchyard of the first Polish settlement in America. At a suggestion of the Reverend Paul J. Foik, C. S. C., Ph. D., Chairman of the Texas Knights of Columbus Historical Commission, the remaining half of the State was included in this volume.

Fortunate as we were in gathering the information, we still wish we could bring the dead back to life for with them was buried much more than will ever be recorded. But perhaps it is better that they cannot be with us because we would only have to hang our heads in shame and say: "Your children, with all their opportunities, can no longer do what you so nobly accomplished."

We are grateful to all who so kindly contributed in any way towards this work, and for the letters of encouragement that spurred us on our way. We beg the readers to deal compassionately with us for the imperfections of the presentation. Our only excuse is, that the idea of research was born too late to cover properly so broad a territory in so limited a period.

INTRODUCTION

There is hardly another State so cosmopolitan as Texas. It is a "Melting Pot of the Nations" into the caldron of which poured in streams the Irish, German, French, Dutch and the Czechs, all seeking happiness and opportunity. Into the heart of this new State came, too, the pioneering Poles contributing their share to its early development.

In Texas are found the first Polish colonies of America, the oldest of which is Panna Maria, in Karnes County, about fifty-five miles south of San Antonio. Earlier Polish immigrations date back to the very beginning of the United States, but these were caused by political and religious conditions, and were only temporary. The colonists arriving in Texas, in the second half of the nineteenth century, settled permanently with no intention of ever returning to Poland.

Catholic Encyclopedia, V. XII, p. 205:—

"The immigration of Polish masses began in 1854. In 1855 the church in Panna Maria, Texas, was built, the first Polish church in America. Within a year other little colonies were established in Texas; and shortly after colonies were founded in Parisville, Michigan, and Polonia, Wisconsin, and in 1862 a parish was being organized at Milwaukee"

W. Kruszk, "Historja Osad Polskich w Ameryce":—

"In Texas are the first and the oldest Polish colonies in America Aside from that, they are small and distinctly remote from the heat of political life. From Texas we shall proceed to Wisconsin and Illinois, for there were established the next Polish settlements"

Mieczyslaw Haiman, "Historja Udzialu Pola-

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kow w Amerykanskiej Wojnie Domowej":—

"The New York Immigration Bureau, estimating the Polish immigration from 1851-1860, numbered 816 persons more through the New York port than the Federal Board's estimation through all the ports. Yet within those ten years, Polish colonies were established in Texas; yes, even the first Polish parishes were existing"

Notes of S. S. Cyril and Methodius Seminary, Orchard Lake, Michigan:—

"The first Polish parish on this hemisphere and the oldest in America is, without doubt, that of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, in Panna Maria, Karnes County, Texas, in the Diocese of San Antonio"

Frank Niklewicz, who gives the statistics of all the Polish parishes in the United States in 1927, taking them in the order of states and dioceses, numbering seven-hundred seventy-three parishes, writes in his "Dzieje Pierwszych Osadnikow w Ameryce" (Annals of the First Settlers in America):

"The Polish immigrants who came in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and the first half of the nineteenth century, scattered as they were and lacking their native element, were soon lost to the Poles. Only in 1854, came one-hundred families from Upper Silesia, German Poland, who settled in Texas and formed the first colony and parish on the American land"

Before proceeding with the history of Panna Maria, now an almost deserted hamlet, but still a colony around which is woven a story born in tragedy, filled with deeds of heroic bravery and struggle, finally crowned with success,—let us view retrospectively Poland itself, the Israel of modern history.

Poland is one of the oldest countries in Europe,

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and one thousand years ago was noted for its liberal ideas regarding liberty of conscience and enlarged human freedom. As the centuries passed by, its name was written high on the scroll of fame by Sobieski, Casimer, Stanislaus, Kosciusko, Pulaski and many other distinguished patriots and statesmen. Poland's sons were ever generous, ever ready to lend a helping hand to those who were struggling for freedom. Their strategic and timely defense of Europe against Moslem invasion preserved Western civilization.

Its political misery began in the days of feudalism when the lords usurped the power of the Kings and reduced the National Parliament to impotence. Surrounded by the autocratic kingdoms of Russia, Prussia and Austria and offering an outlet to the Baltic, Poland became a bone of contention for the three nations. After being overrun by Catherine II of Russia, in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, the three fell upon the unhappy little nation, tore it apart and divided the spoils. But Poland's people, apportioned among their enemies like so many cattle, became increasingly conscious of their separate nationality and never ceased to cherish the hope of liberation.

Napoleon freed a part of Poland in 1817 and created the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, but, at the Congress of Vienna, Prussia and Russia made an agreement whereby the former took Saxony, and the latter, most of Poland. The Russian Czar, Alexander, formed the kingdom of Poland and gave it a constitution with a Polish administration and army. But the people chafed under the restrictions, remembering the time when they, and not the Russians, ruled Eastern Europe. In 1830 they revolted. Enthusiasm and an invincible national spirit created an army which, without training, held out against

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Czar Nicholas and his Russian legions for some time, but Poland was finally conquered and the subsequent punishment seemed to write the last chapter in its turbulent history. A Russian army of occupation was set up in the country and Russian was made the official language.

But Poland has again its happy moment. After three-quarters of a century, during which time thousands had left for newer lands, the World War brought freedom. In the reconstructed map of Europe we find Poland, like the Job of old, has not only gained back all she lost, but even more.

Polish immigrations had their play in the early history of America. There is a good foundation for the tradition that a Pole, John of Kolno, (a town in Masowia), in the service of King Christian of Denmark, commanded a fleet which reached the coast of Labrador in 1476. (*American Pioneer*, I,) The well known Zabriskie family of New York is descended from Albert Zborowski, who not later than 1662 settled on the Hackensack River, New Jersey. His signature is found affixed as interpreter to an Indian contract of purchase in 1679. (*New York Records XXIII*). In 1659 the Dutch on Manhattan Island hired a Polish school master. (Conway, "Catholic Education in U. S.>"). In 1770 Jacob Sodowski settled in New York, and his sons were among the first white men to penetrate as far as Kentucky. It is said that Sandusky, Ohio, was named after him. ("American Pioneer," I, 119), (Roosevelt, "Winning of the West" I, 164). Previous to that there were Polish settlers in Virginia. (Kruszka, I, 54), (*John Hopkins Studies*, XIII, 40). Among the European champions of American Independence, few, if any, were more prominent than the noble Polish patriots, Thadeus Kosciuszko and Casimer Pulaski, the brilliant cavalry officer.

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Several of the aids of Pulaski's famous Legion were Polish noblemen. The Polish Revolution in 1830 brought a considerable contingent of Poles, mostly soldiers and members of lower nobility. Part of Napoleon's Legion had been dispatched to San Domingo, whence, such as did not perish miserably or return to Europe, came to the United States. A considerable number of Poles were in the American armies, fighting the Seminole Indians in the South. Among Americans of that time, enthusiasm in Poland's cause ran high, and the tourist, who visits the Polish National Museum in the ancient Hapsburg castle in Rapperschwyl, Switzerland, can see many tokens of sympathy sent to the struggling Poles by their American admirers. In 1835 there existed a "Polish National Committee in the U. S.", whose members were prominent Americans, and whose president, as is learned from a pamphlet (Sept. 30, 1835), was a Mr. Carey. American sympathy took concrete form when the Congress made the Poles a grant of thirty-six sections of land, and surveyed two townships for them near Rock River, Illinois.

In 1842, a number of 1830 Revolutionists organized the "Stowarzyszenie Polakow w Ameryce" (Association of Poles in America) and called upon all the Poles in America to affiliate themselves with the organization. In 1852, the second Polish organization in the United States was founded. "Towarzystwo Demokratyczne Wygnancow Polskich w Ameryce" (Democratic Society of Poles in America) was an ardent anti-slavery organization. The Poles coming through this period of political immigration were persons of culture and were freely admitted into American society which looked upon them as martyrs for liberty. Their Americanization was frequently concomitant with loss of

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their faith. With a few noteworthy exceptions, these exercised no influence upon the Polish immigrations of the succeeding generations. At the solicitation of Bishop Carroll, a number of Polish priests, all former members of the disbanded Society of Jesus, came to America; one of the most prominent of these was Father Francis Dzierozinski. In the thirties, several Polish Franciscans were laboring in the United States, among whom the most notable was Father Anthony Rossadowski, (the second pastor of Panna Maria, Texas), a chaplain in the Polish army of the 1830 Revolution. (Cath. Ency. V. XII, p. 204). The Congress of the United States, by Act of March 3rd, 1817, granted Polish exiles, who fought under Napoleon's banners, a strip of 92,000 acres of land in Alabama, near the junction of the Black Warrior and Tombigbee rivers, for "cultivating there the wine and the olive." This group founded Demopolis, Alabama. They were not, however, successful. Some of them attributing their failure to the climate, sought a more favorable location. Their ambitious plans to rescue Napoleon from his exile at the Island of St. Helena failed. Napoleon was their only hope in the freedom of Poland. Among these were Generals Lallemand and Rigaud.

Another band of veterans, under the leadership of Generals Henri Dominique Lallemand and his elder brother Charles Francois Lallemand, organized a new expedition at Philadelphia by the end of 1817. Their objective was the Spanish Texas which they preferred because situated near Louisiana whence they hoped to obtain aid for the realization of Napoleon's liberation. Early in 1818 they landed in Texas, four-hundred men strongly armed, proceeded up Galveston bay and the Trinity river, seized a tract of land west of Galveston and estab-

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lished a military colony which they called Champ-d'Asile. But scarcity of provisions, the privations they underwent, and the jealousy of the Spaniards, soon induced them to return to Galveston. Many remained on the Island, others proceeded to New Orleans. (Yoakum, "History of Texas," Vol. I, p. 195). (M. Hatcher, "The Opening of Texas to Foreign Settlement").

In 1831, small groups of Polish immigrants settled among the French of New Orleans with whom sympathetic ties were formed during their stay in France. A number of Poles and Hungarians, because of the Hungarian uprising, settled in the vicinity of Richmond, Henrico County, Virginia, in 1850, and called their colony "Hungaray." (M. Haiman, "Historja Udzialu Polakow w Amerykanskiej Wojnie Domowej").

Broadly speaking, the causes of these Polish emigrations were political and religious. The settlements formed either disappeared, or, for lack of their native element, were gradually fused into the general Americanism that encompassed them.

The Polish immigrations that settled in Texas permanently were more for economic reasons though political and religious causes were an additional impetus. In Prussia, Prussianizing rendered the progress of Prussian Poland distasteful to the Poles. Whatever progress was made, had to be along Prussian lines. The Kulturkampf, however, gave the American Poles many of their noblest priests through whose influence thousands of Poles came to America.

After the Revolution of 1830, Russian Poland experienced the full force of militarism and a state of terrorism in the great manufacturing districts. By abandonment of the feudal system, whereby one child of the family received the inheritance intact,

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the decreasing death-rate and increasing birth-rate, have cut the peasant's acre into tiny patches, which, under the most careful cultivation, were insufficient for a population of two-hundred and forty-one to the square mile. (Catholic Encyclopedia VII, 205).

Thus, while political and religious causes led the Poles into America in the earlier days, economic causes assumed a major role now. Poverty, and not so much patriotism, became the factor of Polish emigrations. Memories of European conditions caused the Poles in America, particularly those settled in Texas, to forget any intention they might have had of returning to the mother country. Early county records show that not only the people, in spite of the most trying conditions in their new settlements, but the clergy as well, filed intentions of citizenship. Thousands of Poles in the divided Poland turned their eyes westward beyond the seas—towards America, the land of freedom and opportunity.

It is rather a strange coincidence that the year of 1830 which saw the revolt of Poland should have also been the beginning of the revolt in Texas. It was a law of this year, passed by the Mexican Government, barring the settlement of people from the United States, that started the chain of events resulting in the formation of the great State of Texas, in the depth of which, twenty years later, were firmly implanted the first Polish colonies of America.

Yet before proceeding with the eventful march of the immigrants from Galveston to the locality which they called Panna Maria, it must be noted that, though they founded the first purely Polish colony in America, other Poles figured in the scheme of Texas earliest colonization.

Texas was formerly a Spanish province, but

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the Spaniards were too busy with the affairs and wars of Europe to be interested in this beautiful American possession. The unfortunate colony of La Salle on Matagorda bay, founded in 1685, at last attracted the attention of the Madrid government to the forgotten province. Spain's subsequent attempts to colonize Texas were marked by gross incompetency. When Louisiana was sold to the United States in 1803, the Spaniards became conscious of the danger of invasion of their province by enterprising Americans. They, therefore, placed obstacles in the way of the threatening contingency. American immigration was barred under severe penalties. The Spaniards made new efforts to find proper subjects for colonization, men after their own hearts,—Catholics who would be loyal to Spain and who could be trusted to defend the province against foreign encroachment. But the new efforts were carried out with the old inefficiency. Moreover, Spain was then involved in Napoleonic wars and this made impossible any influx of Spanish colonists on a large scale. At this critical moment, a project to use the Poles for the purpose of colonizing Texas came to life on this side of the Atlantic. Its object was, not only to impede the progress of the Americans, but also to weaken Napoleon in Europe. The author of the Polish project was Diego Morfi, Spanish consul at New Orleans. In his memorandum submitted to his superiors in 1812, he pointed out that there are many Poles in Napoleon's army who, he believed, would eagerly grasp the opportunity to desert his standards if they were promised transportation to Texas, where they could devote themselves to agriculture and useful arts, and thus secure their own prosperity as well as the welfare of the province. Morfi promised to grant them a strip of land, seven leagues

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square, (a league is 4,428 acres), situated on the Gulf of Mexico, near the frontier of Louisiana; to exempt them from all taxes and to allow them self-government as well as other privileges. The same proposal was made to the Germans who served under Napoleon.

Morfi's plan was based on false premises. He supposed that the prospective colonists served France under compulsion only. He did not err much as to the Germans, who later actually did turn against the French. But as to the Polish Legions, they were the most loyal element in Napoleon's army. It is true that services in Spain were displeasing to them. To fight against the defenders of liberty of any country was against their grain; but they deemed Napoleon the only power on earth to restore Poland's freedom.

The consul's superior local authorities and the regency in Spain, however, were better informed. The project met with little favor among them. In the first place, it seemed too dangerous to have foreign veterans on the threatened border; it would be indiscreet to expend large sums of money from the treasury depleted by war, for the benefit of aliens who had been contaminated by long association with the French, and who would perhaps betray Spain at the first opportunity. They feared especially that the Poles and Germans would rather help the United States, Spain's worst enemy on the American continent, particularly in view of the fact,—as they remarked,—that many Poles and Germans already lived in that country.

Only one member of the regency considered the plan an excellent scheme to weaken Napoleon, but he insisted that the Poles should not be settled in Texas, under any condition, because of their loyalty to the Emperor; of the Germans, he would admit

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only those deserters who were Catholics and who would be willing to serve first with the Spanish army in Spain before their embarkation to Mexico. This put an end to Morfi's plan, and the Poles never came to Texas as Spanish colonists. But they were there a few years later, in 1818, as narrated previously, when four-hundred strong they established a military colony west of Galveston, in the interests of Napoleon's rescue from his exile. (Mattie Austin Hatcher, M. A., "The Opening of Texas to Foreign Settlement." *University of Texas Bulletin*, No. 2714, April 8, 1927, pp. 219-220) (*Chicago Polish Daily*, April 11, 1936).

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CHAPTER I

PANNA MARIA, TEXAS

Parish of the Immaculate Conception
(1854)

San Antonio Diocese

As early as 1851, Father Leopold Moczygemba, a Franciscan, was laboring among the German people of Braunfels and the settlers of Castroville. Seeing the growing prosperity of the late colonists, in spite of their pioneering distress, his concern for close relatives and friends in the Upper Prussian Silesia grew in bounds. It is true that the Germans had settled the richer lands, but Texas comprises an extensive territory. He made known his desire to colonize, and looked for a suitable location. Through his missionary activity he made the acquaintance of Mr. John Twohig, who, in 1840 already owned a considerable portion of land in the Hobson section and around the junction of the San Antonio and Cibolo rivers. (Hernandez Grant). In the early part of 1854, Father Leopold and John Twohig spent several days riding over the land and looking at it from various angles. The location above the junction of the two rivers mentioned pleased Father Leopold, and he entered into a contract whereby he was to settle a large number of Polish families on the lovely plateau, at a point two miles north of the junction.

Without delay he wrote to his father and others, advising them of what he had found. His instructions were: to organize themselves into groups, sell all they had and come as quickly as possible to the new country. It was an undertaking of no small concern. Many doubted a betterment of conditions

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in a foreign land; others still clung to the hope of domestic relief and feared the unknown dangers of such a bold move. However, the beginning of October, 1854, saw one hundred families leaving the land where they had been obliged to slave under their conquerors. It was the first collective and definite Polish emigration to America. After nine weeks of sailing they landed in Galveston, Texas. The sufferings endured on the voyage, as told yet by the old-timers, are beyond our conception. What could the hygienic conditions be on any ship eighty-two years ago, especially a small boat crowded with eight-hundred men, women and children, nine weeks on water! Two or three died on the voyage. At this time, and for the next two years, the yellow fever wrought its ravages along the Gulf Coast. It had no mercy on the new arrivals at Galveston. Here a few, stricken with the plague, had to remain; others, because of the hardships of the sea and the sudden change of climate, lacked the strength to proceed. The city had its attractions for a few youth, ambitious and adventurous. The rest, hiring Mexican carts, on which they piled their belongings, such as a few feather-beds, crude farm implements and a cross from their parish church, (the church bell was brought with immigration of 1858) and walking they reached Indianola, two weeks later. (Indianola, along the shores of Gulf of Mexico, fourteen miles below Port Lavaca boasting of a few shacks and a stone building, was completely washed away in 1886; only the foundation of a stone building and a grave stone remain.) From Indianola the picturesque procession wended its way north-westward. The vast rolling country of fertile acres must have looked like paradise to them. Here they could have their own homes; raise their own cabbages and potatoes; worship their God as they

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pleased; speak their own tongue and see their children educated and reared as they would have them. Such were their dreams. Gradually, as the procession proceeded, these dreams grew wan and dismal. The sufferings they endured on the sea were nothing to what they were to suffer on land. Few had any money, none of them ever had the proper nourishment and, due to change of climate, their bodies were susceptible to the slightest disorder. Many more died on the way. Even babies were born by the wayside. Some starving and unshod, for even wooden shoes were a luxury, carried small children. Others weary and silent, homesick, and fearful of Indian raids, plodded along the vast wilderness, no longer sensible to the wet wintry days,—felling only for the crying children that clung to mother's protecting skirt or a frozen hand.

Discouragement on the part of some, contentment in settling in locations along the wayside that seemed promising, caused many to drop out of the procession. Thus, a few remained in Victoria, others around the German settlement of Yorktown. The bulk of the original one hundred marched on to their destination. Judging from the vast emptiness around them, where for miles and miles, as far as the eye could reach, no sign of human habitation was perceptible, only herds of wild cattle, they no longer dreamed of the land of milk and honey. But hope dies slowly in the breasts of the desperate. Promises of one they knew and trusted, their countryman who had preceded them, fanned the dying spark of hope. On they marched, taking time only to bury their dead along the highway, to look for Father Leopold in San Antonio. The Memoirs of L. B. Russell, who as a boy witnessed the arrival of the first Polish settlers in America, reads (Dallas

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Morning News, Jan. 24, 1932, by G. H. Cook):

"The arrival of the colony was one of the most picturesque scenes of my boyhood. The highway between Port Lavaca and San Antonio passed directly in front of our home. Up to that time, the people of Texas were entirely English speaking but for a few colonies from Germany. The consequence of this was, that simple frontier people like ourselves have never seen anything like the crowd which passed along the road that day. There were some eight or nine hundred of them. They wore the costumes of the old country. Many of the women had what, at that time, was regarded as very short skirts, showing their limbs, two or three inches above the ankle. Some had on wooden shoes and, almost without exception, all wore broad-brimmed, low-crowned black felt hats, nothing like the hats that were worn in Texas. They also wore blue jackets of heavy woolen cloth, falling just below the waist and gathered into folds at the back with a band of the same material."

Hopeless and thoroughly discouraged were they when Father Leopold rushed from Castroville to San Antonio to take care of his new charge. At last, December 24, 1854, they sighted the junction of San Antonio and Cibolo rivers. On top of a hill, where stood a few sturdy live-oak trees, the only large trees in sight, they dumped their belongings and took stock of their situation. Doleful it was, and with no promise! The first Mass celebrated, that first mid-night, under the largest of the oaks, was not only a Mass of thanksgiving, but a petition to the Almighty for strength and enlightenment to face the hopeless task before them—even as they were accustomed to pray in a solemn body on the field of battle in sight of the enemy. That oak tree, a mute testimony of this, still stands, and, next to

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the church, remains the most revered relic of that memorable day.

These pioneers, the tribulations of the voyage still fresh in their memories, were sorely perplexed by the newer difficulties now facing them. Reading of them, this day of civilization and development, sounds like a yarn of the imagination. "For a bed,



THE OAK TREE UNDER WHICH THE FIRST MASS WAS
SAID DECEMBER 25, 1854

they had the hard ground, and for a cover, the heavens above." (W. Kruska). Everyone tried to remedy his evil the best way he could. Some stayed under the oak trees; others, began digging holes in the ground and covered them with the grass that grew thick and tall, and, like so many rats, kept themselves and their families warm. This squalid condition was aggravated by the rainy seasons. Not

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only were their material possessions exposed to rapid deterioration, but fevers and sickness decimated their ranks. Many an orphaned child was helplessly thrown on the mercy of others, who had more than they could handle in their own families. Distress and calamity stalked hand in hand, and left their impression on mind and body.

"Bitter, almost maddening were the first years of this colony. The first settlers arrived around Christmas, 1854, at the locality designated, and called it Panna Maria. (Virgin Mary). The settlement received this name from Father Leopold. He could not forget the beautiful church of the Virgin Mary in Krakow, Poland. While having a mission on the Cibolo, some fifty miles from the present Panna Maria, he saw in a dream this beautiful church of Krakow and the memory of it remained indelible. There is no doubt that this dream gave birth to the name of his first colony," (Buffaloski "Polak w Ameryce").

The founder of this, the first Polish colony and parish in America, Father Leopold Moczygemba, *O. F. M.*, was born in Prussian Silesia, in the year 1825. His classical studies were done at the Krakow University; theology in Rome, where he joined the Franciscan Order of Minor Conventuals. Here he remained for six years. After visiting his close relatives for a few weeks, he was ordered, together with Fathers Keller, Dominic, Alfonse and Miller from the Bavarian Province, to enter the missionary field in America. With the arrival of his countrymen in Karnes County, a few years later, newer and bitter experiences were in store for him as well as for his new parishioners. "No one, except his Maker, will ever know what he had to endure. As the Israelites in the desert murmured against Moses that he brought them out of the land of Egypt, so many

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of the immigrants murmured against Father Leopold for bringing them into Texas. Some of them in their madness, wanted to hang him so that he had to seek refuge in flight." (Kruszka, "Historia Osad Polskich").

The colonists began building for themselves small homes of pickets and mud, and for a roof, they used the tall grass. Food was another problem. Flour was too expensive to buy; besides, it could not be had immediately. Corn, though in small quantities, was at their disposal. Necessity had to invent crude corn grinders, and pans for the corn cakes, as they called them. But the malarial fevers persisted.

Within the next few months, the thickly populated colony dwindled considerably. Unbearable conditions and numbers demanded expansion. Some turned in the direction from which they came, going northeast to Meyersville; others along the San Antonio river towards northwest of San Antonio, and along the banks of the Cibolo, towards Martinez (now St. Hedwig). Still others, following the banks of the San Antonio and Medina rivers, went as far as Bandera; all looking for opportunity, thus giving birth to newer colonies. The westward emigration was more or less inconsequential in so far as subsequent establishment of newer colonies was concerned. Greater importance must be attached to colonies that arose north and east of Panna Maria.

Among the few settlers to remain in this first colony, were the four brothers of Father Leopold: Joseph, Anton, August and John; others, with their families, Philip Przybysz, Constantine Wajass, John Dziuk, Gervas Gabrysch, Frank Manka, John Rzeppa, Joseph Kyrish, Frank and Simon Bronder, Mathew and Anton Urbanczyk, Theodor Kniejski, Joseph and Nicholas Krawietz, Paul Labus, Philip

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Czerner, Casimer Szguda, Stanislaus Kiolobassa (Baptism and Marriage Records). The first baptism recorded in the parish archives is that of Pauline, the daughter of Simon Bronder and Julia Polarczek, February 9, 1855, baptized by Father Leopold Moczygamba. The last mentioned, Mr. Kiolobassa, after raising a small crop of corn, decided to make his home farther west because of the malarial con-



THE "MEXICAN SHACK" WHERE SERVICES WERE HELD WHEN
INCLEMENT WEATHER WOULD NOT PERMIT WORSHIP UNDER
THE OAK TREE

ditions which prevailed in Panna Maria. (History of Southwest Texas, Vol. I.) Scattered and buried though the original one hundred families were, the few, who remained in Panna Maria, bravely determined to organize, to build. Sufferings had to be endured, dissension, even among the few, had to have its part; but the colony made progressive strides under the stoical example of its founder.

In the early spring of 1855, plans for building a church were formed. In the meantime, services

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were held in a nearby "Mexican shack" which some ancient shepherds had deserted. According to John Gawlik, a member of the second immigration, 1855, living yet in 1902, (W. Kruszka), Father Moczygemba received three thousand dollars from the Bavarian Province of Franciscans, which money was entrusted into the care of Mr. Twohig, at that time the owner of all the lands which the Polish people began to settle.

"In regard to the sum of money," writes Father Niedbalski, later a pastor in Panna Maria, "it hardly seems possible, and I find it difficult to believe, that these monks would give such a sum which evidently had never been returned. However, there must be some truth in it, since the first settlers never gave anything towards the building of the church. Father Leopold was even paying them for their labor on the building, as Joseph Moczygemba, a brother of Father Leopold, informs me. I could not ascertain even, whether Father Leopold belonged to the Bavarian Province. Father Moczygemba bought for the parish three hundred acres of land which he sold among the people, excepting twenty-five acres which he gave to the bishop. It may be that he thus regained the money invested. Let it, however, suffice to say, that the people were forced to contribute only in finishing the church building."

It may be a salutary thought to keep in mind that these people were accustomed to a different mode of taxation in the old country. "The failure of certain immigrants to come to the material support of the Church is most frequently explained by adducing the fact of a State-supported Church in the mother country." (Catholic Encyclopedia V. XII. 206). In the light of that fact, not to say anything about the financial distress of these first settlers, it

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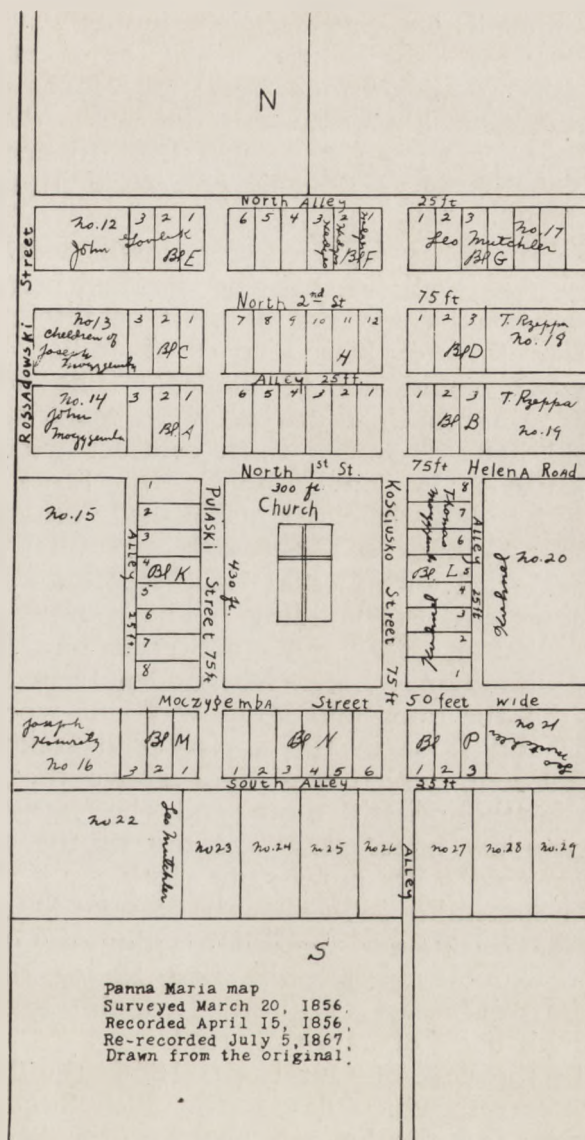
was practically impossible to build. Some indirect taxation was necessary.

This fact, too, may account for the exorbitant prices paid John Twohig for his land, though in many other ways he was considered one of the greatest philanthropists in his day and generation. The Polish people paid from \$5.00 to \$10.00 an acre, even as high as \$25.00, later, for land near the river. For that time, these prices were excessive, for even today the land is not worth more. We must remember, too, that very good land in the vicinity could be had for \$1.00 to \$2.00 an acre. Regarding John Twohig, it may be said, in his justification, that he left all his property to Bishop Neraz. But at the probate of the Will, close relatives appeared. In a compromise the bishop received a small portion; thousands of acres of better land went to the contestants. The Diocese of San Antonio, therefore, did not profit to such a great extent, particularly, since it had to re-emburse two of John Twohig's sisters financially.

In regard to the three-thousand dollars mentioned before, since no record of returning the money can be traced, and disregarding the theory of indirect taxation, it very probably was a donation of the "Ludwig-Missionaverein," a Bavarian Mission Society founded by Louis I, of Bavaria, who lost his throne in 1848. In that eventuality, the exorbitance of Mr. Twohig's demands, who, as the old-timers yet attest, would close his door in the face of those seeking reduction in price, was simply taking advantage of the priest, as well as the people, whose notion of prices, according to European standards, was anything but small.

About the summer of 1855, Father Leopold closed the building contract with a certain Mr. Pauli, a German Catholic of San Antonio. Work

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began immediately, but scarcely were the walls fifteen feet in height, (the contract called for twenty), Mr. Pauli had to discontinue operation, for all of his masons became ill. About this time came the second immigration. Among these was the aforementioned John Gawlik, an architect by profession. In the early part of 1856, John Gawlik resumed the work of Mr. Pauli. A verbal contract was closed, work began and the rock walls reached the specified height. The roof, however, could not be built because the lumber from Powder Horn, (part of Indianola, later destroyed), could not be hauled. The new contractor being confined to bed with malaria, Father Leopold had to close a third contract with a Mr. Stork, also a German Catholic. Mr. Stork cut the lumber but left the work unfinished, evidently for the lack of funds. The fourth and final contract was transacted with Gervas Gabrysch and a Mexican who completed the building. The roof was a personal donation of an army officer in San Antonio, (name unknown). Later, Mr. Boden from San Antonio did the door and window frame-work, built a door and floor in the sacristy and stairs to the priest's room, which was built above the sacristy. Only in the priest's room and the sacristy were glass window panes used; the rest of the windows were covered with home-spun cloth.

On September 29, 1856, the feast of St. Michael, with the permission of Bishop Odin of Galveston, Father Leopold blessed the first Polish church in America. This act of Father Leopold, recorded in the parish book of baptisms, reads:

"In the year of Our Lord, 1856, the 29th day of September, which day is the 20th Sunday after Pentecost and the Solemn Feast of the Seven Sorrows of the Mother of God, I, Brother Leopold Bonaventura Maria Moczygamba, of the Order of

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St. Francis of Minor Conventuals, and the Superior of the Missions of that Order in Texas, have blessed the church in Panna Maria for the glory of the Almighty God and the Blessed Virgin Mary, and I have said therein the first Mass. Witnesses were: John Gawlik, John Dziuk, Catherine Kuhnelt and Frances Bomba."

Another record found in the same book, reads:

"In the year of Our Lord, 1856, the 21st day of March, said day being the Thursday of Easter



THE FIRST POLISH CHURCH IN AMERICA BUILT IN 1855.
DRAWN FROM DESCRIPTION

week, I, the undersigned, have blessed the first Cross, in the town of Panna Maria, erected before the main door of the church. Said Cross, the image of which was brought from Silesia by John Rzeppa, was constructed by him and Francis Cebula. Thus testifies, Father Leopold B. M. Moczygamba, Ord. Min. Conv. Sup. Miss."

This church no longer stands. It was built of a very poor stone and inferior lime. (Lime was made by the people themselves by burning oak wood

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and softer rock). It is, however, a matter worthy of consideration to have here recorded the description of it. It was seventy-six feet long, thirty-six feet wide; the walls were two feet thick and twenty feet high. The number of windows was the same as in the present church: eight large ones and four small. These windows, when the church was torn down, were carefully preserved and built into the second and present church building. Besides these windows, there was a round one, four feet in diameter, right above the altar. The sacristy, which was built along the Gospel-side wall, was fourteen feet long, twelve feet wide, and nine feet high. The priest's room, just above the sacristy, was of the same dimensions, only the roof was slanting. In the sacristy, were one window and two doors, one of which led into the sanctuary, the other, outside. In the priest's room, were two windows and one door. Stairs to this room were on the outside along the wall. There was no floor in the church; only sand. There were no pews, no choir-loft, nothing that forms the church's furniture, but the small altar.

At this time, Father Leopold received from Rome the privilege of the "Portiunculi" in perpetuum, which privilege the parishioners are yet enjoying. This feast is an annual occasion, which, even the people from neighboring parishes anticipate with eagerness. Even those of the saintlier disposition, who receive the sacraments but twice a year, make this one of the two occasions.

The second immigration came to Panna Maria around December 15, 1855. Quoting the words of Thomas Kosub of St. Hedwig, as recorded by Nesterowicz in his "Notatki z Podrozy": "When we arrived in a body at San Antonio, the majority went to Panna Maria, where a number of families had settled the year previously. The thirteen of us pro-

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ceeded to Martinez where we settled forming the colony of St. Hedwig."

This immigration was about the same as the first as to the numbers, around seven hundred persons; but the people were, in a degree, more independent financially than the first. As in the case of emigrations from these parts, at the present time, it is the thoroughly discouraged, and hopelessly poor, that first seek opportunity elsewhere. If these find it more suitable, others, verging on the same state of helplessness, follow them.

After sixteen weeks on water, this immigration landed in Galveston and followed the route of the first to San Antonio. The two ships that brought them across were the "Otto Ten" and "Wesor." A few wagons, crated, were brought along; also farm implements. A wagon at that time was worth two-hundred eighty dollars. Only the wealthier had wagons. The rest hired carts or walked. Those walking did not have to exert any additional speed to have the companionship of the more fortunate ones since the carts were drawn by oxen.

Soon after the arrival of these, came the most trying times for the colonists. The snakes, which congregated in this junction of the two rivers, and the malarial condition still persisted. It is told that Father Leopold, who at first stayed very little in Panna Maria, because of other missions, had later built a hut similar to those of the people. In this palatial home he entertained some of the new arrivals, and served them with a dinner of his own cooking. Great were the lamentations of the new comers that they ever came into such wilderness. The good Father tried to console them, but, scarcely had he placed the bowl of soup before them, a rattle-snake, perched in the low, grassy roof, miscalculated its next move and landed in the center of the table.

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The consternation of these novices knew no bounds, and their sorrow was unfathomable. "Oh, had they never left the home of their fathers, this never would have happened to them." (Kruszka, "Historya Osad Polskich w Ameryce.")

In 1856 a severe drought wrought its ravages on the settlers. There was no rain for fourteen months. Nothing could be planted, and any vegetation that existed gradually disappeared, leaving but the bare earth. All produce became so expensive that very few could buy anything. Flour was twenty-four dollars a hundred pounds, and corn three dollars a bushel. Wives and young girls packed in a bundle the little clothes they had and walked to San Antonio and other large towns looking for work. Those that did have some ready cash, soon found their coffers depleted, and general suffering ensued. A number of families decided to leave for good. Following the old cow trails that led to the north, they later formed a new colony about fifty miles from St. Louis, Missouri, near the German parish of St. Gertrude, and were instrumental in calling it "Kra-kow." Father Moczygemba did everything in his power to alleviate the sufferings in Panna Maria; he consoled, tried to bolster up their courage, save the despairing from themselves, but he could do nothing to appease hunger. The people wanted bread, and as the measure of agony increased, feeling of bitterness arose against their priest.

"Russell, writing his recollections, remembers a sad and painful experience his family had in connection with one of the Polish girls, which shows the stoic, uncomplaining nature of a people so long held in bondage, and also their faithfulness to a trust:

" 'Within a short time after their arrival we had one of the girls to assist mother in the household

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work. The girl's name was Joanna. I was then five years old and was playing around one afternoon with another child of the same age. Mother had gone away for the day, leaving us in charge of Joanna. We youngsters strayed into the kitchen and saw the girl scrubbing the floor with a tin quart cup. While this struck us as peculiar, we thought she knew what she was doing, and so passed on to play. We came back half an hour later and found Joanna lying on the floor unconscious. We gave the alarm, help soon came and lifted her tenderly to a bed; but she never regained consciousness. She had brain fever, but she had never made a complaint and nothing was known of her condition until she was dead.'” (Gertrude Harris Cook, “Dallas Morning News”).

“Oh, what we suffered in our beginning. We had no homes, only the few trees and small bushes for shelter. There was no other human being around us to help us. Occasionally, a cowboy would pass through our settlement, but that brought us little consolation since we could not speak English. One, would have a good laugh at us; another, would indulge in some practical joke and ride on his way. The grass everywhere was so tall that we could not see a few steps ahead of us. Snakes, particularly the rattlesnake, were everywhere. People were dying of starvation. Some yet had some money left, but it was useless for there was nothing to buy. Leaving his shelter, one was never sure to return safely. Some died of snake bites. The cries of women and children were pitiful. All, without exception, had to walk around with a stick or a hoe as a protection against the crawling reptiles. When our wretchedness forced us to leave our families and seek money and food, we were shown, by some, the practical end of a gun and were told to dance for our pay

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which, eventually, we did not get. That was the hardest blow of all. After weeks, even months of hard labor, we were forced to return home penniless where children cried for bread" (Bakanowski, "Pobył Siedmiolećni W Ameryce" r. 1866.)

Fortunately for these colonists, there were no Indian attacks, though, now and then, a few Indians made their appearance in later years, stealing cattle, killing and scalping any one who got in their way. It was at the hands of these that a Polish youth, tending the sheep of one of the Americans, allegedly suffered death. That single incident, however, bears the earmark of a legend. But hundred times worse than the Indians, were the American gangs of cut-throats that infested the neighborhood, who took everything in sight, even in broad daylight. Feeling that there was safety in numbers, or protection in a gun, they laughed at the strange, silent foreigners, and, in some instances took pains to make themselves conspicuous in doing it.

But there were honest and hospitable Americans too. Were it not for the decency of some Americans in the then new Helena, the first county seat, there would have been few settlers left. There were honest farmers and stockmen whose small wages (fifty cents a day) insured the settlers against starvation. John Twohig also sent loads of corn. Mr. William Butler, a Karnes County pioneer, hearing that the people were in sore straits, drove twelve fine steers into the village and made a present of them with the injunction to kill, eat and be merry. West of Panna Maria, on the San Antonio river, was the ranch of Andreas Coy, who had an abundance of corn. He gave the Polish people enough for bread and seed. With the end of the drought, small patches of corn, or Indian wheat as it was called, appeared on the plateau. Thus with the

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assistance of the neighborly Americans, and with faith in God and His Divine Providence,—faith likened to Abraham's who left his native land for a country flowing with milk and honey,—God provided as He did for Abraham and He blessed their labors.

Providing for the people of his first colony, materially and spiritually, Father Leopold Moczygamba left, around November of 1856, for newer fields of labor. He never again returned to Panna Maria to take charge permanently. His two visits later, were only of a few days duration. "He recognized his error; and the lamentations and murmurings of his people were hard to bear." (*Siedmioletni Pobyt W Ameryce*). His first act on departure from Panna Maria, was to visit Rome. (He made two more visits to the Eternal City later on, and the second time remained there longer, as a confessor, for the English speaking at St. Peter's.) On his second arrival in Texas, he spent some time in San Antonio, and later in Louisville, Kentucky, as superior of missions. He was active as a missionary in the State of New York, viz. Utica and Syracuse. In Syracuse he built a magnificent church in which, on the wall, next to the altar, a golden plaque speaks of the name and incessant labors of this illustrious and zealous missionary. In the history of the Diocese of Syracuse, he is mentioned as one of the pioneer priests of the diocese. A few years later, he returned to Louisville, whence he went to Chicago. Here, on "Jasna Gora" (Bright Mountain) he founded a new parish and began immediate plans for a new church, rectory and school. His last three years were spent in Detroit and vicinity, as a confessor to the Sisters of Charity, in Derbob, Michigan, and the Felician Sisters in Detroit, and as a pastor pro tem in a

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parish church. The hardships of his missionary work began to leave their impression. His health finally broke down. His death occurred March 23, 1891, in Detroit where he lies buried. Before his death, he provided for the education of two of his nephews: Monsignor Thomas Moczygemba, of St. Michael's, San Antonio, and Father Emanuel Wrobel at one time laboring in Texas and, later, in the State of Indiana.

Father Anthony Rossadowski, a Franciscan from London, England, who labored in and around



JOHN TWOHIG'S BARN, BUILT IN 1855,
NOW FRANK SNOGA'S GROCERY STORE

San Antonio since 1852, took Father Leopold's place in Panna Maria. He took to heart seriously the poverty of the community, especially the newly blessed church. As mentioned before, there was no floor, only sand; no pews or choir-loft; no glass panes in the windows, only cloth. Before long, improvements were made and order was established. The walls on the inside were polished, a stone floor was built; oak boards, nailed to posts, constituted pews; the outside of the church was plastered.

Then, at the end of 1856, came the third immigration, of about thirty families. These found many things that the first and second did not. They saw the church standing, poor though it was, and John Twohig's large stone barn (Tom Kowalik—

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living 1936—age eighty-five). The first stone home built in Panna Maria, three years later, was the home of John Gawlik which still stands just across the alley, north of the public school building. It is now used as a barn by Theodor Pollock. The other two stone buildings that made their appearance about the same time, were those of Albert Kasprzyk and John Rzeppa. The home of Mr. Kasprzyk, now only crumbling walls, was built about five hundred yards east of the Gawlik home. The Rzeppas built their strong little block house, of which only a part remains, about six hundred yards southeast of the Kasprzyks. Jesse Mika now lives on the location. Twohig's barn was built for the third of the corn crop that the settlers paid for renting his land. Corn was the major product. A partition in the barn set aside a room which served as a school and the second place of worship while the building of the church was in progress. That building still stands in a well preserved condition, (repaired in 1918) and is used by Frank Snoga in his grocery business. Across the street north of the church, lives Felix Mika in the home, now remodeled, of August Moczygemba, a brother of Father Leopold. A few more homes gradually made their appearance, even two story stone building, as, for instance, the home of the Whetstones, later sold to Frank Manka, which today is used by a Mexican family but preserved almost in its original stability. West of the church, down the hill, still stand the walls of Philip Przybysz's home. Walking up the hill to the cemetery, we find another quaint stone relic which was built by the Dupniks. Originally, it must have been intended for a home, but it was used as a black-smith shop. Scattered over the hills in the vicinity we find these monuments of patience and hard labor, white and shining in the distance, standing like old sentinels at

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post, a source of wonderment to the strangers that pass.

Among the later arrivals also came John Smialek, a carpenter. He built the pulpit, communion railing and the choir-loft. The church bell, a donation from John and Tecla Rzeppa, as the inscription on it bears testimony, ordered after the completion of the church, was brought by the arrivals of 1858. It was placed in the tower built by Mr. Bronder.



THE GAWLIK HOME
THE FIRST STONE HOME IN PANNA MARIA. BUILT IN 1858

Though the bell was small and the tower strongly built, the walls shook when it was rung; so it had to be taken out and placed on a platform built outside of the church. The walls of the church soon began to crack, and when lightning struck it in 1877, it had to be torn down and a new one built, as we shall see later.

May 1860, Father Rossadowski left Panna Maria and, for a while, labored in Castroville and later, among the German and Polish people in San Antonio. Thence he went to join Father Leopold

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Moczygemba where he died two years later in the presence of other members of his Order. Father Leopold, his superior, and the only one of his nationality, nursed Father Rossadowski in his sickness. He gave him the last sacraments and buried him in the German Catholic cemetery of Syracuse, New York. Over four thousand German and Irish followed his bier to its resting place. (Polak w Ameryce). Before Father Rossadowski's departure from Panna Maria, the Polish missions spread to Martinez (St. Hedwig), Meyersville, St. Michael's in San Antonio and Bandera, all outposts of Panna Maria. Father Julian Przysiecki, the third pastor of Panna Maria, took care of all the missions on horseback and served them all alone until that tragic moment three years later when, on his way to Martinez, November 25, 1863, he fell off his horse and was killed. Father Julian Przysiecki was buried at Martinez by Father Amandius Cramer, O. S. B., pastor of the German congregation in San Antonio. Father Julian was but thirty-eight years of age. With his death, Texas lost its only Polish priest, and then came sorrowful times for the Polish immigrants. For the next three years, they were deprived, not only of one they could understand, but, for long periods, even of the ministrations of any priest. Many people died begging for the sacraments. During that time, the Polish missions were attended by the Benedictine Fathers of German and French nationality: Fathers Amandius Cramer, J. Connard, Theodor Grundner, P. Richard and A. DeZielinski. To keep up their faith, the people assembled in the small crumbling church on Sundays, even though there was no Mass, and chanted the Rosary, the Little Hours of Blessed Virgin Mary, sang hymns, read from their prayer-books the Mass in the vernacular, and closed the assembly of prayer with bitter

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tears. A priest came only once a month or even less frequently, which created a feeling of entire isolation from the rest of the world. The Confederate war was at its height and any communication with Polish priests in the North was impossible. The consolations of religion, from the lips of their native priest, would have given them strength and courage to carry on in the midst of other tribulations. But being deprived of this, their only sustaining grace, the doors of stoicism were broken down. What war does not storm human hearts! Wars across the seas touch us keenly at times, but wars at home are unfathomable in their devastations.

CIVIL WAR

In April of 1861, with the fall of Fort Sumter, the Civil War began in earnest. Noble men fought on both sides. In the Union, as well as in the Confederacy, men fought for their respective ideals. In the South, the feeling against the abolition of slavery was perhaps more dominating than patriotism. The attitude of masses in general, however, must be relegated to other branches of history and we must confine ourselves to the part played by the Polish pioneers in the heart of Texas.

The attitude of all the Poles, be they with the Union or the Confederacy, could be only sympathetic with the emancipation of the negro. By nature violently opposed to all forced servitude, they could not sympathize with the American system of absolute oppression of the colored race. To a liberty-loving nationality, trained in Catholic traditions, slavery could but be repugnant.

When prominent men of the Nation tolerated slavery and supinely looked upon it as a necessary evil,—when none as yet had even dreamed of negro

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emancipation in this country, Thadeus Kosciusko, in his Last Will and Testament, drew attention to the negro race and sought means of its betterment.

(Translation from M. Haiman):

"I, Thadeus Kosciusko, leaving America, hereby dispose and declare, on my failure to return, my friend Thomas Jefferson authorized to use all my possessions in the States of America to buy any of his slaves and the slaves of others and in my name give them freedom and opportunity in education; prepare them for their new life by training them in their moral obligations that they might become good neighbors, good fathers and mothers, husbands and wives; that by training in their civic duties, they might become defenders of their own freedom and their country; and, in general, teach them everything that might make them happier and useful. I name the above mentioned Thomas Jefferson as the executor of my Will.

Thadeus Kosciusko"

May 5, 1798

The first negro schools of Kosciusko established a precedent for other benefactors. This created bitter opposition in later years, especially in the State of Virginia.

The negro found other notable defenders among the Poles: Julian Jirzwickiewicz, the editor of "Polacy w Ameryce" (1836), and T. Lewinski, editor of "The True American" which was begun by Henry Clay in 1845. Adam Gurowski, otherwise a moral degenerate, was a staunch defender of the negro emancipation, and his "History of Slavery" deserves no little consideration.

The Polish "Towarzystwo Demokratyczne Wygnancow Polskich w Ameryce" (Democratic Society of Poles in America), though originally founded in

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view of Polish freedom in Europe, branched out to the emancipation of the negro in America.

Thus, long before taking sides on the field of battle, the Poles, in heart and sentiment for emancipation, carried on the standard of the oppressed colored race, just as they fought for the freedom of the Nation from the oppression of England.

The fact that they contributed to the Confederate side does not belittle their sense of freedom. Kasper Tochman, the most notable leader of the Poles in the South, in reality defended the institution of slavery. His Confederate activity, however, is more a defense of the Constitution and, in his opinion, of the violated freedom and sovereignty of the State than a recognition of slavery.

In consideration of these facts, the part played by the Polish settlers in the heart of Texas, can only be surmised. Records of the Union activities have been preserved, and an examination of them speaks well of the various nationalities that took part in action. Confederate documents have not been preserved with the same diligence and care. Many of them were lost in the general disorder that followed, especially in Texas.

Let it suffice to say, that, from what records are available, all men of age, in the settlement of Panna Maria and its closely related colonies, enlisted. Were it a question of choice, as had been from the beginning, when many joined out of financial distress, the number would have been very small.

Quoting from the Recollections of Mr. L. B. Russell:

"My father, an old regular from the U. S. Army, was given the job of drilling four companies assembled on the Cibolo river, northeast of Panna Maria. The companies were commanded by Cap-

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tains: J. A. Tivey, Littleton, Thomas Rabb, and the fourth company, entirely composed of Polanders, was commanded by Capt. Joseph Kyrish, one of the first immigrants. The drill master found that the Polish company took the highest honors of the whole battalion, and he concluded that it was due to their military discipline in the old country and to their habit of obeying orders, an irksome routine to the American companies."

Some of the names from Panna Maria, appearing on the list are: John and Frank Moczygemba, Alex Dziuk, John and Jacob Lyssy, John Gawlik, Martin Dugi (living 1936), Adam Skloss, Tom Jendrey, John, Frank and Anton Brysch, Charles Korzekwa, John Kolenda, Vincent Tycman, Joseph Morawietz, Julius Jurecki, Jacob Pollock, Tom Kolodzieczyk, Anton Sekula, Mathew Urbanczyk.

On the nothern side: Albert Lyssy, Peter Kiolobassa, August Czyzek, Frank Dworaczyk, Leopold Biela, Theodor Kroll, John Rzeppa, Michael Gonsor, Julius and Joe Sowa, Joseph Pollock, Ignatz Kiolobassa, Philip Gonsor, Joseph Kalinowski, Jos Dlugosz. The first two mentioned served in the Confederate army for eight months after which they were captured by the Union soldiers. Thereafter Mr. Kiolobassa served as captain in the Union.

Quotation of Alex Dziuk of the first settlers, as recorded by S. Nesterowicz: "At the age of 18, I was forced into the Confederate ranks and was ordered to go to Arkansas. With me were taken F. Moczygemba, Jo. Brysch, T. Kolodziejczk and J. Lyssy. The food was of the poorest,—ears of corn soaked in water,—and the guns were old instruments taken from the colonists. I remained in the Confederate army till the end of the war, and when I returned under the paternal roof, even my mother did not recognize me."

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The war brought its hard times and sufferings. Many things, which we now consider necessary to everyday life, were then the greatest luxuries, or could not be had at all. Calico was worth fifty dollars a yard in Confederate money. Coffee often could not be bought at any price, because there was none in the country. The people, however, found that a fair substitute for coffee could be made from parched sweet potatoes, rye, corn or okra-beans, and this was generally used. For soda they burned corn-cobs and used the ashes; while for medicines they were compelled to use roots and herbs and the bark of certain trees. (Barker, Texas, p. 219).

Yet though the conditions during the war were serious, it must be admitted that the sufferings of the Texans were slight in comparison with those inflicted on the Southerners of other States. True, there was a drain on the strength of the citizens and on material resources but Texas saw little of the horrors of invasion. Only three or four attempts were made by the Northern armies to invade Texas, but all of them failed. Crops were planted and gathered while the conflict was in progress, and business went on with a degree of security that prevailed nowhere else in the South. (Garrison, Texas, P. 291).

So far, corn planting constituted the major agricultural labors of the pioneers. With the emancipation of the negro, small colonies of the colored appeared here and there. A colony of these settled about fifteen miles northeast of Panna Maria. The locality became known as the "Colonia de los Negros." These people were well versed in the treatment of cotton plantations. The colony proved a blessing in a way to the Polish colonists. With their help, small fields of cotton soon appeared.

CHAPTER II

When the Civil War ended, the first Polish colony in America was due to pass through a more progressive era. In its time, two religious Congregations, one of men the other of women, were destined to have their foundation here. Both lasted a short time, but they served a good purpose. The settlers suffered greater handicaps than ever before, but, through the timely influence of monastic courage, the wrongs inflicted on the secluded colony served towards the betterment of conditions here and in the entire county and immediate vicinity. So far, the settlers waged a battle of odds against environment; now it would be a fight against man who threatened their very existence as a settlement. Through the very zealous efforts of Bishop Dubuis of Galveston, Panna Maria and surrounding Polish missions became the charge of the Resurrection Fathers, of Paris, France. This was the beginning of the Resurrectionists in the United States, (although they had already labored for nine years in Canada but German and in German missions) which culminated in Chicago, as we shall see later. The first Resurrectionists to come to Texas were: Fathers, Adolf Bakanowski, as Superior of Missions, Vincent Barzynski and Felix Zwiardowski, the last a cleric ordained some time later. Out of the three only one, Father Felix Zwiardowski, remained to offer himself a full sacrifice to the missionary labors in Texas. Father Bakanowski left Texas four years later, in 1870, transferring the seat of his monastic responsibility to Chicago where, four years later, followed Father Barzynski. The change of the Resurrectionists to Chicago was occasioned by Peter Kiolobassa's three months visit to Panna Maria, which brought the news of extensive

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field among the Poles of the North.

In order to appreciate fully some of the activities of the Resurrectionists, mention must be made of the contract entered into between Bishop Dubuis and the Resurrectionist Congregation in Rome. Bishop Dubuis saw the extreme need of Polish missionaries in Texas. As quoted by Father A. Jelowicki, Superior of Polish missions in Paris, France: "If I saw ten thousands souls stretching their arms to a priest and if I knew their tongue, I would go through fire to get to them," the bishop was determined to get laborers into his diocese at any cost, though it required a bit of exaggeration as to the number in the flock. In consideration of the contract mentioned above, the religious congregation obliged itself to supply all the priests needed in the Polish missions, and in turn, the bishop gave over to their jurisdiction all the Polish missions in Texas, including the secular priests laboring therein, and their attendant material benefits in perpetuum.

A part of the contract is herein given. It is a poor copy of a very good original, as given by W. Kruszk, and preserved in Rome, the translation of which follows:

"A contract is hereby entered into between His Excellency Claudius Marianus Dubuis, Bishop of Galveston, Texas, and the Rev. Father Alexander Jelowicki, Missionary Apostolic and the Superior of Polish missions in Paris, France, acting in the name and according to the intention of the Most Reverend Father Jerome Kajsiewicz, General Superior of Priests of the Congregation of the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. The following agreement between the parties is reached:

"Monsignor Claudius Marianus Dubuis, Bishop of Galveston, Texas, gives over to the Congregation of the Resurrection Priests the Mission of all the

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Polish colonies existing in the present Galveston Diocese, (at that time embracing all Texas), viz. Panna Maria, San Antonio, Bandera, Martinez, (St. Hedwig), Yorktown;

"The above mentioned Congregation will provide, as much as it can, the number of priests corresponding to the needs of the Mission;

"Assisting priests, who would desire to offer their services to the said Mission, shall by the authority of the bishop, be subject to the aforementioned Congregation;

"Monsignor, Bishop of Galveston, gives to the Congregation all the churches existing, and that in the future may be built, in all the Polish colonies of the present diocese, and all the priests laboring therein, with all material benefits in perpetuum (en usufruit perpetuel);

"Scholastics of the Congregation will have the right to receive their theological training in the diocesan seminary, at the expense of the bishop. But if the Congregation should desire to supervise their training personally, it shall receive from the bishop for every student, till the time of ordination, the sum of thousands francs, including therein all the expenses;

"The traveling expenses of the members of the Congregation, who are appointed to this Mission, to the place of destination shall be borne by the bishop.

"Given in Paris, twenty-eighth day of September, in the year of Our Lord 1866, the feast of St. Wacław, the patron of Poland.

C. M. Dubuis, Bishop of Galveston
Alexander Jelowicki, Missionary
Apostolic, Superior of Polish
Missions in Paris, a Priest of the
Congregation."

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November 1, 1866, Father V. Barzynski took his appointment in San Antonio, and Father A. Bakanowski with Felix Zwiardowski took charge of Panna Maria.

"After their arrival here,"—(Memoirs of Father Kajsiewicz, Sup. Gen. of the Resurrectionists in Rome) "the Fathers were edified with the piety of the colonists, especially in Panna Maria. For three days the doors were not closed until all the people contented themselves with visiting. An example of their submissiveness: shortly before the season of Lent, a small delegation approached Father Bakanowski begging permission to have one of their village dances. The permission was granted. To show that there was no abuse, every one was present in the church the next morning to hear Mass."

Some time after his arrival in Panna Maria, Father Bakanowski writes (translation): "We arrived here shortly after the Confederate war. The conditions of the civil government were abominable, and a proper regulation of affairs seemed to be far in the future. The self-will of some of the Americans was most irritating. There was no limit to their free lives. We suffered wrongs untold before the Federal government finally brought in order and discipline"

That was true in every respect. The southern states, where the cultivation of cotton was one of the major industries, depended largely on the labor of the negro slave. White and free labor could not compete. This created two radically distinct classes: one possessing all the wealth, and the other, the untutored and poor whites, regarding all labor as a share of the slave since no white man could draw sufficient pay to subsist.

"The period of reconstruction, in many ways, was more distressing to the people of Texas than

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the war had been. The garrisons scattered here and there over the State, were a constant irritation, and frequent quarrels between the citizens and the soldiers kept the country in an uproar. General Sheridan and his officers removed many of the state and county officials, claiming that they were not in sympathy with the plan of Congress. Some of the offices remained vacant, but many of them were filled by the appointment of "carpet-baggers" and "scalawags." (After the war a great many men from the North came south in the hope of being appointed to office under the reconstruction government. They frequently brought all their belongings in a carpet-bag and for that reason were called "carpet-baggers." The "scalawags" were southern white men who sided with the carpet-baggers and with the negroes.) People had very little respect for these. It became impossible to enforce the law and crimes of the worst sort became shockingly common . . . " (Barker's, *Texas History*).

Continuing the *Memoirs of Father Bakanowski*. "The Texan Americans, particularly the cowboys with little training and less education, knew only how to ride horse-back, an accomplishment acquired since childhood. They rode far and wide chasing cattle, a trade they knew best. The higher class of Americans, used to the services and command of the negro slave, was very slow in mastering the art of earning one's own bread, and in some instances did not see a legitimate way of acquiring such an accomplishment. The lower class, misunderstanding the new freedom which the looseness of the government permitted, killed and murdered for any provoking reason. In a word,—we hit very hard times . . . Texas lands, more or less, belonged to people who acquired them during the time of slavery. Even to-day, in 1866, they tend to look down on all

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foreigners as white slaves and abhor the idea of our being on their level as citizens. When they saw how the Polish people earned their own livelihood and, without the help of others, slowly progressed and developed, they resolved to drive them out of their homes. The Polish people became an object of frequent attacks. Seeing that the Polander could not speak English,—a farmer simple and without education, it seemed to them that he should be subject to the same treatment as the negro. The negro was declared free, so it was fit to profit yet from the strange foreigner. Whether traveling or at home, we had no peace, not even the church was free of their antics. In many instances it might have been just horse-play, but it had serious effects on the victims. These cowboys entered the church during the services with their hats on and smoking cigarettes. They would come around the altar during the Mass and curiously examine the contents of the chalice. One of them wanted to ride into the church on horseback and see how many targets he could score on the walls. On the road they would shoot at the Polander's feet, in many instances wounding him. A woman, caught alone on the road, was found with a knife-stab in her back. These and many other calamities we endured. As a protection against such and against the snakes that crawled everywhere, I provided myself with a revolver. A rosary in my pocket and the revolver hanging in a scabbard on my saddle I went along that everyone who did not believe the word of God would believe my revolver—the god of the Americans”

A recollection of John Kuhnel: “One night a number of these prying thieves entered the store of John Kuhnel. After accomplishing their purpose in the store they proceeded to hang the proprietor and were it not for the intervention of John Rzeppa,

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a shot with an enviable reputation, they would have succeeded. The miscreants heard the rasping order behind them and turned to see the business end of a heavy rifle leveled at their midriff. 'By all that was good and healthy, there would be a few less out-laws in the country if they didn't scam for cover.' Repetition of the order was not necessary "

Continuation of Father Bakanowski's Memoirs:

"The evening of Holy Saturday, when all the people were in church, there arrived a crowd of Americans, it seemed from all the parts of the country. There must have been a good eighty on horse-back, and a number of carts and carriages filled with ladies who stayed in the background watching how the men would have some good, clean fun, perhaps a fist-fight or two. All of them were armed as usual, but the settlers left their guns at home, for who ever thought that guns would be necessary in church. As the people were leaving the services, the fight began with stones. A heavy-set man leveled his double-barreled gun at the women and children assembled in the front of the church and pulled the triggers. Fortunately, the gun did not discharge. When I looked upon that farce and heard the howls of glee from those American ladies, deprived even of the womanly instincts, I must confess, something happened within me. Through the rear of the church I rushed to my room above the sacristy, took my revolver and fired above ther heads, barely resisting the temptation to shoot lower. In a moment the place was cleared. In the meantime, some of the parishioners, now armed with their own guns, came to my side and, in the little shack as from a fort, we awaited a real battle. In about fifteen minutes, eight of the braver ones appeared waving their guns and shouting provocations. I gave orders to my men to hold fire until they fired first. For a time un-

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decided whether to proceed or stand ground, they finally gave way and disappeared into the woods nearby. The women and children were now all grouped closely in the church, the mothers hardly more contained than their numerous children. So ended the disturbance It was a sad thing. I did not know what to do. To make charges against such attacks,—but where? And to whom? The sheriff himself, with his deputies and other guardians of peace, sided with the Americans. There was no alternative but to appeal to higher authority.

"The next day, I carefully worded my petition, had it signed by the people and forthwith proceeded to seek one who would take it to the army authorities. I could find none. Americans are a vengeful people, they would say, and at any time would they take their revenge. Better leave matters stand as they are for they might even kill the priest and was that called for in their pastor? I felt that such fear had no merit either before God or man. The next day Father Felix and myself, with rosaries in hand and revolvers in our scabbards, left on our journey. Nothing happened to us. After stating to the army officials the purpose of our visit, we returned home."

A few days later there was stationed in Helena, five miles east of Panna Maria, a troop of cavalry. A contingent of these soldiers were encamped in Panna Maria, standing guard at their various posts, the church doors included. Sister Veronica of the Incarnate Word, then a girl, recalls how the shy little maids of the village feared those rough looking soldiers. But, she recollects, it was not as bad as being chased around the church by the cowboys and being roped.

With the arrival of the cavalry, the people lived a new life. The soldiers stayed eight months. Dur-

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ing that time everything changed. New order was established, new officials were elected and life in general went on peacefully. When the captain and his troop were leaving, it was said that over a hundred thieves and murderers were apprehended during their stay here. Most of them were punished with death, either by hanging or by fire-arms. And today, many a traditional tale of hanging men is told about the old county seat at Helena.

Obviously, in the midst of such conditions, the people were brought together the more closely, in everything avoiding the Americans, for physical as well as moral reasons. The persecution was a strong incentive in preserving their customs as well as their uncorrupted morality, and, above all, their Catholic religion. Ignorance of the language of the country, the wilderness in which they lived, the barbarity of the southern scum on the loose, all served them well to lead a life of concord and Christian solidarity, as in a big family. This served later in bringing into parish activity, order, peace and greater love of neighbor, an illustrative page from early Christianity.

In Father Bakanowski's "Pobyty w Texas" we read: "The center of Polish missions is Panna Maria. The first settlement now numbers one hundred twenty families. When we took over the mission, there was nothing but the church, not even a decent shelter for the priest. We lived in the room, over the sacristy, which had not been used for three years and showed its neglect. Scorpions and spiders were multiplied by the hundreds. We had to learn Texas ways and punish these dangerous tenants with death. In the church and the sacristy it was even more dangerous. It was no longer a novelty for the settlers to see snakes crawling on the church floor. But to us new-comers it was most repulsive and dangerous. The first baptism I had, I found two snakes

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wrapped around the bowl used for baptismal water. The people rushed in and, notwithstanding any sacredness the reptiles might have thus acquired, summarily dispatched them. Because of cold winter, we could not stay in our room. In the sacristy was a small fire-place, so Father Felix moved down and I moved into a nearby cottage which proved to be a barn for the pastor's horse. There was no window and the roof was just hanging. I asked the people to build me a small fire-place, which they did. Above my head I spread a canopy of cloth, for I feared what might come from between the cracks. Here I decided to spend the winter. After placing a bed and a small table, I barely had room to turn. Later I had installed a shutter to let in some light. When cold wind blew in I had to shut the door and the shutter, and what light I needed was provided by the fire. From this often came gusts of smoke which choked me and blinded me until tears streamed down my cheeks. For lack of covering, I kept the fire going all night. Sometimes I overslept and the fire went out completely. Teeth chattering and stiff of bone, I had to make fire to melt the ice for washing purposes. Next to my shed lived Mr. Barzynski, the father of Father Vincent, who arrived two months after my coming and who served now as an organist. His home was of his own making, out of odd pieces of wood; with the help of string and nails he managed to keep his Texas palace in one piece. Here also was his laboratory of old watches, peculiar little machinery, inventions, even a contraption of perpetual motion. My parishioners would often visit me and very generously promised how soon they would build me a beautiful home. But two winters passed and I still lived in my little cottage "

March 27, 1867, a contract to build a two-story

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stone building was signed. The lower floor was to be used for school, and the upper as living quarters for the priests. The contract was entered into between the building committee, composed of Father Bakanowski, pastor, Frank Biela, architect, Albert Kniejski, assistant-architect, John Kowalik, advisor, and the masons, Joseph Kyrish and John Gawlik. The parishioners obliged themselves to provide the stone from a nearby quarry, lumber and sand, and their home-made lime, also the water. (Water had



PAROCHIAL SCHOOL. THE FIRST POLISH SCHOOL
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to be hauled from the river two miles away. Water was an expensive item. Father Felix Zwiardowski later writes of paying from 25 to 35 cents a barrel).

Before this contract was put into effect, a very gruesome task had to be performed. The site chosen for the building was the old cemetery. (Hence the numerous ghost stories centering around the school building and the rectory which even the school children to-day can tell.) Bodies of the dead were excavated and carried in solemn procession to the new cemetery, three-fourths of a mile north of the location. Between fifty and sixty bodies were found.

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Most of the deaths occurred the first year after the arrival. The bodies were entirely decayed, a head here, a limb there. Those who knew their own were allowed to take them up and provide a coffin for them. Mother Veronica, mentioned before, remembers her father took the four bodies of his parents, brother and sister, and placed them in one casket. Many of the bones were placed in a big box since none seemed to know just whose relics they were. Mother Veronica also recalls how her father took her by the hand and showed her the bones of her grandmother. He told her to cut a lock of the hair that still clung around the skull, as a remembrance. The little girl, however, did not have the courage.

The location was cleared and the building began. It, however, met with difficulties. That same day Father Bakanowski writes to his superior: "Heavy is our beginning in building the future cloister. We undertook it too early. It is to be something very splendid, but I have no idea how it will ever be completed. Three thousand dollars will not be sufficient, and because of that, there is much dissatisfaction and quarreling in the parish. I have even lost my temper with some. They feel that something disagreeable is in store for them."

The building was far from being completed that year.

May 27, 1867, we read:

"The bishop has promised to help us in building a large house, and according to that promise people considered such heavy plans. Now, the promise has failed us and the people are not in a condition to continue. The four walls, scarcely begun, are standing there, and we a laughing-stock. Four times have I collected among the people, but with little success. The bishop has even become

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angry with me that I bear such pretensions. He had to help in the building of churches in San Antonio, Yorktown and other places "

The bishop's promise regarding his help in the building might have been made in the light of the contract entered into between him and the Resurrection Congregation, otherwise why his plans to build such a large school building in Panna Maria and the building of churches elsewhere. The Congregation bound itself to supply all the Polish missionaries needed in the diocese. This it did not do. Authorities in Rome desired it, but the superior of the Polish missions in Texas did not, and his reasons are given in the following letter.

March 12, 1867, Father Bakanowski writes to Paris:

"In regard to the Fathers you are about to send here, I must honestly confess I see no future. The desire of the bishop that there be as many priests in Texas as possible is wholesome, but I do not know whether it is to be commended. He wishes the Congregation to make its headquarters here in Panna Maria, and at the same time his French priests can not derive their material sustenance. I, personally, know two of them that have nothing on which to live, and I have been compelled to help one of them. Were the new men to be sent to a locality where there are only twelve or thirteen families, they would have to endure the hardships that one has to suffer in Bandera where the twelve families have enough with themselves, not to mention the support of a stationary priest. There is room for three, at most, but not for more "

The Congregation had taken this note into consideration and failed to provide new men. This released the party of the second part. Automatically it failed to bring the necessary funds for continua-

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tion of the building in Panna Maria. Parish records show that with the help of loans and subsequent heavy collections made by the people, completion was finally possible. May 15, 1868, the school was dedicated.

In the early part of 1869, Father Bakanowski again writes to Paris:

"We now have a teacher in Panna Maria. Carol Warenski is sixty-eight years of age and a good teacher. The school is now divided into two groups: Mr. Warenski has charge of the boys, Father Felix teaches the girls and I give instructions in catechism. The children study very diligently. We have with us an English speaking widow, a late convert, who helps teaching English and sewing. Financially, we are in the red. With debt on the building and financial resources at a stand-still, the future is very dark. We thought that the school might bring its assistance in paying off some of the debts, but that has failed too, since we have to teach for fifty cents. To expect a higher tuition, we loose our pupils To increase our plight, heavy floods surrounded us in Panna Maria. Situated between the two rivers, the floods have wrought great damages to the settlers. The San Antonio river, rising forty feet above its banks, took fences and washed away the fields. The Cibolo spreading even farther, destroyed twelve homes, leaving but lamentations and cries of distress. I made my rounds on horse-back, giving every assistance I could give"

February 3, 1870, in "Zwiastunie Gornoszlas-kiem" is found a description of services that took place. The occasion was the replacing of the stations of the cross. These stations were imported from Rome where they were hand-painted in 1856 and are still preserved in Panna Maria. The serv-

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ices, as described, took place in the following order: "small girls from six to ten years of age, carried the stations, two a-piece. The girls were dressed in white and wore on their heads bouquets of leaves and white roses. In the lead, were other small girls, also in white, carrying banners. Following the girls with the stations, came the priests with the choir. Behind these came a guard of fifty men carrying their guns. At every adoration of the station, the guard fired a salute. Finally, came the people. Inside the church, Father Vincent Barzynski, an orator of repute, explained the meaning of each station. His holy discourse lasted three hours."

About this time Father Bakanowski writes to his superior:

"After three years of our labors here, the Polish people have built a beautiful two-story stone building, (fifty-seven feet long, forty feet wide and twenty-three feet high). The building is located near the church on top of a hill, and beautiful is the scenery around us. From one side, one can see the villagers and, beyond them, the woods; from the south side, one sees fields and meadows and a wide expanse of thousands of acres. First, appear the well kept fields of cotton and corn, farther, begins a decline culminating in the San Antonio river on the banks of which grow large pecan trees; the foliage is thick and the stream clear as a crystal. There one comes across congregating rabbits, wild cats and panthers"

The sight of panthers and their nightly prowling, even to-day in 1936, has ungodly effects on fishermen simple, as can be attested by Ignatz Kowalik, Sylvester Kuhnel and John Pyle.

". . . Herons, wild turkeys in abundance flock to the water. Sometimes one has to gaze with awe on the crocodile basking in the sunshine, not to say

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anything about the repulsive snakes in their right-ful surroundings. Our porch, where, worn out with the heat of the day, we relax in the evenings, faces this life of mystery ”

In his “Pobyty w Ameryce,” Father Bakanowski speaks of the howling of wolves, of storms and thunder of which he never had any conception in Europe. Heavy hail fell, some weighing as much as four and five pounds. He speaks of the ordination of Father Felix Zwiardowski, the first solemnity of



THE HOME OF JOSEPH MOCZYGEMBA BUILT IN 1868
NOW THE RESIDENCE OF TOM MOCZYGEMBA

its kind in Panna Maria. To this came all the Polish priests of Texas, and people from all the Polish settlements. The solemnity thereof lasted five days,—not with blowing of trumpet, but with much firing of guns and rejoicing. He writes of his adventures attending the missions from Inez to Bandera which had to be attended on horseback. After three years in Texas, churches and rectories were built in San Antonio and Martinez. There were no mail facilities to reach these localities. The only mail route in the territory wended its way

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from San Antonio through Panna Maria, on to Helena, Goliad and Victoria. Side branches were attended by carriers on horseback. He recollects how on the arrival of the stage-coach, which at times brought a passenger or two, fresh horses were ready in Kuhnel's stables for exchange. John Kowalik had charge of this mail route for a short time. There was no road to some of the small settlements. With compass, like the Ancient Mariner, the missionary sought these missions in the wilderness. "One had to carry along his frying pan and a hunk of the farmer's bacon, and often, without repugnance to conscience, eat his pork which was intended for Saturday's dinner and not Friday's supper. I had to sleep under the canopy of starlit nights, and often the stars hid behind drizzling clouds. There were few people living between these localities and many were suspicious of the clerical garb, afraid to be approached by strangers so that it was dangerous to near an unknown dwelling "

(Vol. III, p. 127, "Pobyty w Ameryce"): We find Father Bakanowski was energetically active in local politics. "The anger of some of the Americans has reached the point where they wanted to kill me. I must confess that I delved too deeply into politics thereby incurring the righteous indignation of many "

His political intervention may not only be excused but even commended, considering the fact that the Polish people, who constituted a majority in the county, lacked other leadership and were still regarded as interlopers. His activity was instrumental in securing the recognition of the Polish settlers. Karnes County Commissioners' Minutes show filing of intentions for citizenship in November of 1869. Whether there were any earlier records can not be ascertained, since almost all the records were burned

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in 1865. In April 1870, Emanuel Rzeppa was elected Justice of the Peace. The minutes show Polish names on the list of jury selected. Among the committee appointed to examine the court house building, damaged by fire in the summer of 1865, we find the names of Joseph Kyrish, John Gawlik and John Kusar. The name of Joseph Kyrish is on the list appointed to complete the court house building, with full power to draft resolutions, take contracts and bonds. Alex Dziuk and Emanuel Rzeppa were appointed members of the County Board of Revision and Appeals, the former also judge of election; Joseph Kasprzyk served as special guard during the sessions of the Board of Revision and Appeals. From that time on, the Polish people took active part in the interests of the county. Emanuel Rzeppa remained Justice of the Peace for years; Albert Kasprzyk and P. Jurecki, similarly, had the constable's office; and Alex Dziuk, a commissioner for fifteen years in office, was followed by Adelbert Banduch and others.

Father Adolf Bakanowski left Panna Maria July 15, 1870, and Father Felix Zwiardowski was appointed Superior of the Polish Mission in Texas. Since 1868, the date of the dedication of the school, to 1872 the records show that the people in Panna Maria contributed over four thousand dollars, cash and labor towards the reduction of debt and additional improvements on the school building. With the departure of Father Bakanowski, Father Felix, with the assistance of Peter Kiolobassa from Chicago, who took Mr. Warenski's place as teacher June 1, 1870, and other local professorial talent, carried on the educational system.

This system, however, was far from being satisfactory.

Father Felix made application for teachers to the

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REV. FELIX ZWIARDOWSKI, C. R.
DIED AUGUST 31, 1895

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Immaculate Conception Sisters in Europe. For reasons unknown, these Sisters could not come. Fortunately, there were Sisters of the Divine Providence in Castroville, Texas. On application for two teachers, Mother Andrew sent three Sisters: Mary Joseph, Mary Louise and Mary Josephine. Father Barzynski writes November 20, 1872:

"Father Felix brought three German Sisters from Castroville who are studying Polish, and teaching the children in English on which the people look with displeasure. Father Felix gave them the entire building and himself lives in the old room above the sacristy"

The Sisters, in their spare moments, studied Polish under the tutorship of Father Felix. Being German, it was not difficult to read it. By the end of the year they mastered the language creditably. During the year a local girl, Pauline Urbanczyk, (now Sister Veronica) helped the Sisters in teaching Polish. She was also of great help in the conversations between the Sisters and the people.

At the end of the year Father Felix learned that Mother Andrew had decided to substitute other Sisters for those at Panna Maria. This was a sorrowful communication since so much trouble had been taken in training the Sisters for this particular mission. Father Felix brought his difficulty before the bishop and with his permission resolved to found a new community of Sisters. The three Sisters stationed in Panna Maria were joined by four Polish girls who made vows for one year. The girls were: Barbara and Konegunda Krawietz, Pauline Urbanczyk and Cecilia Felix of San Antonio. These formed the first members of the Community of Immaculate Conception. The three Sisters from Castroville changed only the vow of obedience to another superior but kept all the other religious ob-

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servances. Their habit was of blue material and was designed by Father Felix himself. The habits were blessed before the whole congregation in church and given to each Sister. The Sisters were often called the "Blue Sisters" because of their costume. The community gradually increased to seventeen members among whom we find the following names: Anna Moczygemba, Lucy Nemiec, Albina Sowa, Marciana Czerner, Ida Nitzer, Faustina Donstin and Albina Muscot, and three more Sisters from Castroville, whose names can not be recalled. The Sisters opened schools in Cestochowa, Meyersville, St. Hedwig's, Bandera and San Antonio.

Shortly before his departure for Chicago in the autumn in 1874, Father V. Barzynski writes:

"At this time Father Leopold Moczygemba is visiting with us. He is overjoyed with the progress made. The people have contributed very generously in completing the new building, a visible sign of gratitude to their founder and benefactor"

The new Bishop Dominic Pellecer, first Bishop of San Antonio, (1874) now appointed Father Felix Zwiardowski his vicar general. Panna Maria became the charge of Father Henry Chichowski. Father Chichowski stayed here till 1877. During that time he would say Mass once a month at Cestochowa where the people, about fifty families comprising part of Panna Maria parish, built their own school in 1873. (That community is often referred to as St. Joe because of the St. Joseph School). In his time was built the present rectory at Panna Maria. Father Chichowski went to Chicago where the rest of his co-laborers of the South now congregated. The vicar general again took over Panna Maria and Cestochowa. The latter, a year previously, began to shape plans for a church. The church in Panna Maria was struck by lightning in the same

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year (1877). The people at Cestochowa, taking advantage of the catastrophe which practically destroyed the building in Panna Maria, determined to make Cestochowa the center of the widely settled Polish territory. But Father Felix exhorted the people of Panna Maria to tear down the old church and build a new one. The plan called for a building of which the interior measurements were seventy-five feet long, thirty-four feet wide, height of walls twenty feet; the tower with the cross one hundred feet. The people at Cestochowa formed their own plans for a new church and labored strenuously for subscriptions. Land was donated and a considerable amount of cash was given. It became more of a battle of wits rather than of men-power or financial considerations. Cestochowa wanted the people of Panna Maria. The more reasonable element saw no cause for the division, so much so that the masons, John Gawlik and Joseph Kyrish who lived in the St. Joe community, signed contract to build Panna Maria church. Cestochowa was temporarily disconcerted. Gervas Gabrysh, a resident of Panna Maria, finally agreed to help them.

Panna Maria was left with only seventy families. Considering the times and the humble beginning of these people, it is a praiseworthy fact to note that they raised sufficient cash to build the church and still had the staggering surplus of seventy cents in the parish treasury. Undoubtedly, the competition of the neighboring village, four and a half miles distant, served as no other stimulus could. Providing \$4,364.00, labor, local rock and even the water, most of which was carried by women and children from the river, the church, except for the tower completed in 1882, was built to withstand storms and even an invasion from an enemy in war time.

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On August 19, 1877, the corner stone was blessed. In the parish archives we read this translation:

"Panna Maria, Karnes County, Texas, Year of Our Lord, 1877, August 19th, the 13th Sunday after Pentecost, under the reign of Pope Pius IX, Most Rev. Anthony Dominic Pellicer, Bishop of San Antonio and Rev. Felix Thomas Zwiardowski, Superior of Polish Missions in the above mentioned Diocese, a Priest of the Congregation of Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ, in the presence of Rev. Leopold B. M. Moczygemba of the Order of St. Frances, R. B. Hayes being the President of the Federal States of America and in the presence of a great congregation of Polish people, I the above mentioned, have blessed, according to the Ritual of the Holy Roman Catholic Church, the corner stone of the Church of Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Panna Maria.

"The contractors and builders were John Gawlik and Joseph Kyrish. May the Almighty God deign to bless them, in this life and hereafter, and all whose names appear in this book as benefactors, and all future benefactors, and may He preserve the coming generations in unity with our Holy Mother, the Catholic Church.

"We entrust this document, recorded in the parochial book and placed in the corner stone, to the pious memory of our pastorate in the Polish colony.

Felix Zwiardowski, C. R. Vic. Foraneus
Superior of Polish Missions
Rector of the Church in Panna Maria."

A list of the original seventy that formed the second beginning of the present parish:

Joseph Moczygemba, John Moczygemba, Tom Moczygemba, Philip Przybysz, Mathew Urbanczyk,

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John Gawlik, Joseph Kyrish, Albert Kniejski, Mary Schultz, Jacob Opiela, each a hundred dollars donation for the new church.

Other benefactors: Albert Czermer, Philip Czermer, Frank Biela, Tom Urbanczyk, Joseph Opiela, Albert Pawelek, Anton Urbanczyk, Walter Pawelek, Paul Snoga, Tom Lyssy, Frank Kallus, Dominic



THE SECOND AND PRESENT CHURCH OF PANNA MARIA

Keller, Frank Manka, Jr., Paul Banduch, John Kowalik, Frank Brysch, Jr., Michael Brysch, Sr., John Niemiec, Philip Dziuk, Alex Dziuk, John Moczygemba, Jr., Frank Moczygemba, Jr., Joseph Kolodzie, Joseph Kasprzyk, John Dziuk, John Manka, Joseph Moczygemba, Jr., Joseph Piegza, Frank Manka, Sr., Anton Kroll, John Snoga, Mike Sowa, John Pollock, Marcian Pollock, John Kowalik, John Kuhnel, John Labus, Tom Kowalik, Polikarp Jurec-

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ki, Joseph Dupnik, Nick Kowalik, Mike Adamiec, Frank Yosko, Jacob Yosko, Adam Labus, Mary Dugi, Joseph Halamuda, Frank Opiela, J. N. Hedges (non-Catholic), Mrs. Joseph Opiela, Philip Niestroj, John Styrz, Joseph Pawlik, Anna Opiela, John Wrobel.

Father Przewlocki writes:



THE INTERIOR OF THE CHURCH OF IMMACULATE CONCEPTION,
PANNA MARIA

"Feb. 10, 1878, we blessed the churches of Panna Maria and Cestochowa with the greatest solemnity, but also with much hard feeling from Cestochowa. Father Felix suffered the edge of their impetuosity. Bishop, in his sermon, tried to ameliorate the bitter feeling, but they began quarreling with the bishop"

April 1st, he writes:

"All is now quiet. Cestochowa still remains refractory"

Things took a peaceful turn when the bishop

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appointed Father Pelczar as stationary pastor of Cestochowa. Father Felix, in the meanwhile, his health failing, left for Chicago where he stayed only a month.

Internal misunderstandings in the community of the "Blue Sisters" demanded his presence in Panna Maria. After five years existence here, the Mother House of the Immaculate Conception Sisters was transferred to St. Hedwig and there, two years later, the community was dissolved. The disbanded members were permitted to enter other Congregations if they wished it. Four of them entered the Incarnate Word Convent. They were, Pauline Urbanczyk (Sister Veronica), Anna Moczygemba (Sister Ephrem), Barbara Krawietz (Sister Cecilia) and Lucy Niemiec (Sister Mary Louise), the last two of whom are now deceased.

His superior needed Father Felix in Chicago. In his letter of March 15, 1880, we read:

"Under no pretext can I leave for Chicago, not even in the name of vow of obedience. That is my firm determination. I will not retreat from the battle-field. No censure nor suspension, not even expulsion from the Congregation, shall move me in my decision. I will not leave Texas as a villain and a scoundrel "

In spite of the determined front, however, Father Felix left Texas. After fourteen years of labor in Texas, the last Resurrectionist was gone. November 1, 1880, Father Leopold Moczygemba writes: "Father Felix came to Chicago very sick. But now his appetite is Lithuanian and he eats the measure of three "

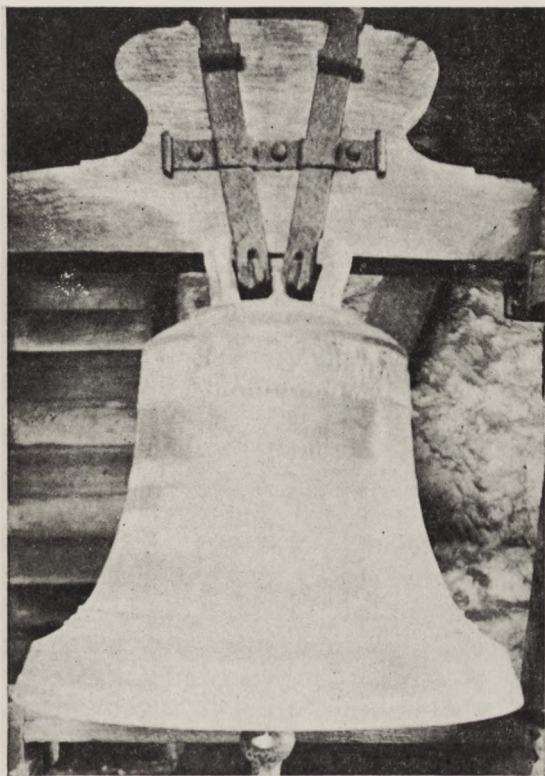
July 1881 found Father Felix back on the old camping ground. The old missionary had Texas in his blood, though rheumatism gnawed at his bones. In spite of his sickness, persecution from his people,

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and enticements from his co-laborers in the North, he began new missionary endeavors in Bandera.

For ten years, 1881-91, Panna Maria was without its own pastor. It was a mission of Cestochowa.

In that time it was attended by Fathers Pelczar,



THE CHURCH BELL BROUGHT BY THE IMMIGRANTS
OF 1858

Lisicki, Tyszkiewicz and Father Felix, who spent his last years in Cestochowa.

The community records of the Incarnate Word, 1881, recount the opening of schools in Panna

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Maria, Cestochowa and St. Hedwig. "No honors or notable achievements were promised the daughters of the Incarnate Word, only an abundance of incessant labors and self-sacrifice. Sister Francis, with a community of three Sisters took charge of St. Joseph's School in Panna Maria. The school was opened in mid-winter, the weather was intensely cold and the journey had to be made in the familiar "prairie schooner." But a hearty welcome was accorded the Sisters by the pastor, Father Lisicki, who, to show his appreciation, had the church bell rung and the parishioners summoned to share in the greeting. The kindly disposed people endeavored to make Sister Francis and her companions comfortable in their new home, and St. Joseph's began its quiet but steady career. For a number of years after, St. Joseph's was conducted as a public school and the teachers received their salary from the State. In 1903, however, the parish assumed the responsibility and the school has since been parochial." (Sister M. Helen Finck).

The Incarnate Word Sisters have been teaching in Panna Maria ever since, except for two very short periods. September 1905 to May 1906 the parochial school was taught by Frank Kolodzie and Winona Butler. In 1921 John Hardy and his sister taught one year. A school for Mexicans was taught by a Mexican teacher in the old pool-room on the north-side of the church.

From 1881 to 1888, Father Felix left no trace of himself as far as his Congregation was concerned. He ceased all correspondence with his superiors. At last he takes pen in hand:

"Reading in the San Antonio Daily Express, I came across a letter published for my benefit. I am overwhelmed with shame that I should stoop to such gross neglect in correspondence. I am still

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living, but as if hypnotized, I did not let it be known to my Mother House. That my presence in Texas is the Will of God, I do not doubt. But what purpose it has served here, only God knows. Three days of the week I spend in Panna Maria, the other three at Cestochowa; one Sunday here, the other there. In regard to my livelihood, it seems that twenty years of roving and eating with cowboys, Jews, and gypsies taught me a few tricks and gave birth to a novel idea. Native-like, I have taken to my own cooking, laundrying and sewing, the last of which is as important as food because shirts disintegrate very quickly, especially the flannel ones. Tomorrow I am engaging a servant, of the feminine gender, who is known to God and man. Her parents are most respectable and her close relatives constitute half of the population in Panna Maria and Cestochowa, people all upright and godly *primae classis cum octava*. She will attend to all the necessities of the house and church, viz. vestments, ringing of the bell, food, laundry, sewing, greasing of the buggy, harnessing the horses, also feeding him. When I will pay her wages of seven dollars, I will add ten or twelve more and I will be provided adequately, not like years ago when I could not subsist at forty dollars a month. The Congregation has not left Texas without leaving some trace. It has left the bodies of its members. Father Bronislaus was buried in the church at Bandera, and another (viz. himself) is tottering in his infirmities "

His superiors still insisted on his leaving Texas. In answer he replied:

"According to orders of the doctor, who knows me for twenty-two years, I have to go to Mexico for hot-bath treatments. Thank God, because of my close relations with the bishops, past and present, I now enjoy the privileges of the House, whence I take

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RIGHT REV. MONSIGNOR THOMAS MOCZYGEMBA

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RIGHT REV. MONSIGNOR THOMAS MOCZYGEMBA

Pastor of
St. Michael's Church
San Antonio, Texas

Monsignor Moczygemba, the son of Joseph Moczygemba and Caroline Szguda, was born Dec. 11, 1863, in Panna Maria, Texas.

His priestly studies were done at the Victoria Seminary. Ordained Jan. 7, 1891 by Bishop Neraz of San Antonio, Texas received its first native priest.

His first appointment was in Panna Maria, the colony his uncle, Father Leopold, founded. Here he remained as pastor for six years. For the subsequent fifteen and a half years till Oct. 1, 1912, Father Tom served as pastor of Yorktown, Texas. His third and present pastorate has been spent at St. Michael's.

His investiture as Domestic Prelate took place Nov. 26, 1935, at the San Fernando Cathedral.

His parents were the second couple to be married in Manna Maria. The ceremony took place under the old live-oak tree, Nov. 20, 1855. The first marriage record is that of the Monsignor's uncle, Anton Moczygemba and Philipina Wenz.

my trips to the baths. The treatments refresh me, but the chronic rheumatism will be remedied only with death. Not only my years but my days are numbered, and, dear Father, it is time to be preparing for eternity "

A final command from his superior took Father Felix back to Chicago, but his sickness brought him back to Texas a month later.

"Though I am only fifty years of age, like the Apostle, I have become an abomination to God, angels and men "

Panna Maria was again blessed with a permanent pastor. In 1891 Father Thomas Moczygemba, the first native priest of Texas, born and raised in Panna Maria, received his appointment in the colony his father and uncles founded. The next year, April 20th, Father Felix celebrated his sacerdotal silver jubilee in Panna Maria.

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Shortly before his death, he wrote his last letter at Cestochowa, March 1895:

"Things here are in a very bad state. A four-year drought has reduced everything to a pitiable condition. People are in despair; cattle are dying by the thousands, and misery general"

Father Felix Zwiardowski died August 31, 1895. His body rests in the cemetery of his first labors, in Panna Maria. His grave, below the left arm of the large cemetery cross, is marked by a tombstone and surrounded by a low iron fence, both a donation of the people of Panna Maria.

Consigning the body of this zealous missionary, of whom even non-Catholics to-day speak reverently, to the earthly grave, it would be unworthy not to bring our attention to his splendid life once more.

Father Felix Zwiardowski felt in his element when he could roam over the Texas prairies. Difficulties, fatigue, failures, dangers held no fear for him; on the contrary they were an incentive to greater efforts in his mission. From 1866, the time of his arrival in America, till his death in 1895 only a few months were spent outside of Texas. During this time, almost thirty years, many missionaries came and went, but he remained at his post.

His winning personality won the admiration, not only of his own, but of all classes, races and creeds as well. There is no town or village, that at one time or another, he did not visit. A contemporary co-laborer, Father Mozejowski writes of him:

"Knowing Latin, Italian, and French, Father Zwiardowski also learned Spanish which became very convenient in helping Father Neraz, a French missionary among the Indians and Mexicans. (Father Neraz became Bishop of San Antonio in 1881). Together with Father Neraz and others, he labored

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among the Indians as earnestly as among his own Polish people who began to settle along the Mexican frontier. The privations that all the missionaries in these localities had to endure need not be left to the imagination. Thirst, hunger, death from poisonous reptiles or the savage Indian were in the line of duty.

They ate when and what they could get. At night they slept under the open sky; some used the skin of an ox for a bed, others slept on the bare ground. With a life spent in such conditions there is no wonder that rheumatism and other diseases claimed their lives early. Father Felix would have liked to have spent his last days in more comfortable surroundings, as his superiors in Chicago expected him to do, but Texas climate alone could ameliorate what the comforts of Chicago could not "

CHAPTER III

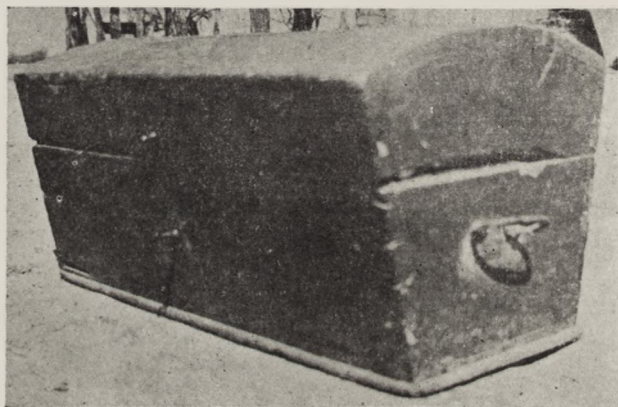
Father Thomas Moczygamba remained pastor in Panna Maria till 1896. In his time, two and a half acres of land were added to the cemetery. The land was grubbed, rocks, which constituted a fence around the old cemetery, were removed, new fences built, numerous donations and offerings were made towards beautifying the church, a new organ was bought, and Adelbert Kniejski donated the large church bell.

Succeeding Father Moczygamba came Father Theodor Jaron. During his pastorate, the church was renovated, a new pulpit and pews were built. Father Jaron, now dead, is remembered especially for his charity and hard manual labor in beautifying the church grounds. It is said that when a beggar came seeking alms, Father Jaron would give away his best pair of trousers, then stay in bed until the housekeeper patched the older ones. Years have passed since his death, but people, particularly in Kosciusko where he is buried, remember him yearly on All Souls' Day and have a yearly Requiem High Mass for the repose of his soul. He spent only two years in Panna Maria. During the time of Father Niedbalski, from 1898 to 1903, the main altar was remodeled and new statues bought. Fathers Henry Milmo and Francis Jahimiak stayed here a short time. The latter died Sept. 14, 1904, shortly after his arrival and is buried next to Father Zwiardowski in Panna Maria. An iron cross marks his resting place.

Father Kruszka writes in 1905: "The parish of Panna Maria boasts of seventy-one families. The little town, which formerly numbered twenty families within its city limits, today has only a few. Many of them moved to towns located along the

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San Antonio and Aransas Pass railroad," which reached Falls City in 1884 and Karnes City in 1886. "Mr. Frank Moczygemba owns two stores in Panna Maria. Financial condition of the people is not the worst. All have their little farms. It is true that droughts of the past few years left their impression. The year 1900 was fruitful. Morality and temperance are holding their own in this colony, which fact caused the removal of the saloon. Faith is fostered and old religious customs, brought from the



THIS STRONG BOX AND OTHERS LIKE IT BROUGHT BY
THE FIRST SETTLERS IN 1854 STILL IN USE

old country, are jealously guarded. Most of the people can speak English; but none are ashamed of their native tongue.

"Rosary and Scapular Societies and the Apostleship of Prayer are strongly active. The parochial school, attended by one hundred twenty-six children under the care of the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word, teaches them English and Polish. The school and rectory, however, need restoration.

"August 15, 1880, the parish celebrated its sil-

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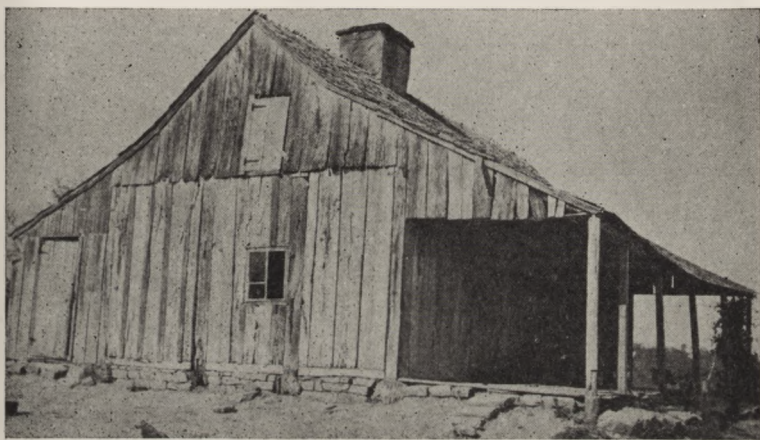
MOST REV. ARTHUR J. DROSSAERTS, D.D., LL.D.
ARCHBISHOP OF SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

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ver jubilee. It is hoped that 1905 shall see the celebration of the golden jubilee, the fiftieth year of the first Polish colony in America ”

However, there was no celebration on that memorable occasion.

With the death of Father Jahimiak in 1904, Father Joseph Marzotas came to Panna Maria. He stayed a year. Father S. Przyborowski remained seven years; Father Jactyl three years; and Father Ignatz



Once the home of Thomas Moczygemba, built of oak lumber in 1870. Since there were no saw mills, the hatchet and plane were very useful articles in shaping the four inch boards. Exterior and interior were formerly plasted to keep out the cold wind.

Mazurowski one year. Father Vincent Klosek served as pastor from 1915 to September 1921. In his time, the public school building, which was built on a lot west of the rectory, just across the fence, was moved to its present location.

On April 6, 1917, the United States was drawn into the great war which Germany thrust upon the world in August of 1914. Congress immediately passed a law for drafting into military service millions of men between twenty-one and thirty-one

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years of age. Because of the pleasant winter climate of Texas, the government established military camps and training schools at San Antonio, Fort Worth, Houston, Waco, Dallas, Leon Springs and other places. Thousands of Texans volunteered and entered camps for officers before the draft law was passed. In 1918 the draft law was amended to include men from eighteen to forty-five. Farmers were called upon to raise more food and cotton. (Barker, Texas).



THE HOME OF JOHN MANKA, AN ORIGINAL SETTLER WHO DIED IN THE CENTENNIAL YEAR. THE HOME WAS BUILT IN 1865

Demand for supplies raised prices of farm products sky-high. In 1917, only a few localities grew a very good crop of cotton. In DeWitt County, which the writer left with his father to move into Karnes County, small farmers lost track of all the bales of cotton they hauled to the gin. Price of cotton rose to forty cents a pound and many were warned about their income tax. In Karnes County, particularly around Panna Maria and Cestochowa, drought worked its damages. The cotton crop was

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very short and the complaints of a disappointed farmer were heart-rending. Later, rains set in and many a farmer wallowed in money. But white sugar and flour were apportioned in limited quantities. Trade in this small town was heavy, nice new cars were in vogue and merchants began playing the market. Even some of the farmers wanted a higher price for their cotton. The sudden fall in prices left many undecided, and today, a few bales



THE HOME OF PHILIP DZIUK BUILT IN 1869, NOW THE RESIDENCE OF HENRY DZIUK.

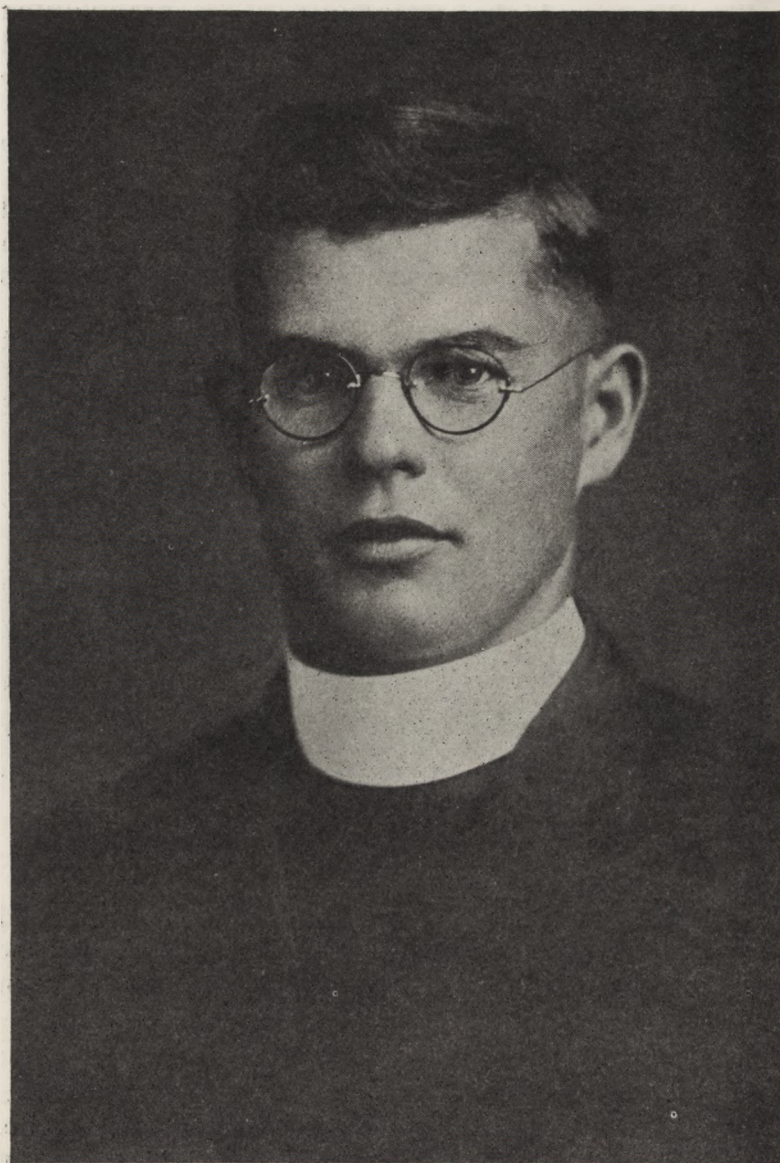
here and there, can be traced to the reign of prosperity.

Many of the boys in Panna Maria volunteered their services in the army; others were drafted. One was killed in action; others came back broken down in health.

A list of those who went across the seas were:

Joe Pawelek, John Pawelek, Mike Janysek, Edward Janysek, Leon Kruciak, Mike Foegelle, Charles Foegelle, Louis Opiela, Joe C. Manka, Tom Krawietz, Walter Zaiontz, Bron Moczygamba,

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REV. LEO MOCZYGEMBA

THE FIRST POLISH COLONIES IN TEXAS

REV. LEO MOCZYGEMBA

Pastor of
Holy Trinity Church
Falls City, Texas

Father Moczygemba, the son of Jacob Moczygemba and Joanna Keller, was born April 8, 1894, in Panna Maria, Texas. Father Leo is the Monsignor's nephew.

His elementary studies were done in the Panna Maria parochial school; his preparatory classes at the Sacred Heart College, Conowa, Oklahoma, St. Joseph's Seminary, St. Benedict, Louisiana and St. S. Cyril and Methodius Seminary, Orchard Lake, Michigan; studied philosophy and theology at St. Meinrad Seminary, St. Meinrad, Indiana.

Ordained priest June 9, 1919, his first appointment was as assistant pastor of Shiner, Texas. Six months later was appointed pastor of St. John's, Moravia. At present, pastor of Holy Trinity Church, Falls City, Texas, since May 1923.

Ignatz Moczygemba (Killed in Action,) Ignatz Zaiiontz, Eufry Zaiiontz, John Manka, August Dziuk, Louis Moczygemba, Remuald Moczygemba, August Moczygemba, Nick Kroll.

In the regular army: Joe F. Manka, Theodor Labus, Theofil Ploch, Lawrence Pawelek.

Those who joined the National Guard were: Peter Snoga, Floryan Yosko, Peter Moczygemba, Jerome Pawelek, Tom Kruciak, Ed. Brysch, Elias Moczygemba, Edward Urbanczyk, Felix Manka, Theodor Opiela, John Dragon, Louis Pawelek.

Jesse Mika served in the United States Navy.

"May 15th, 1918," records Father Klosek in the parish book, "St. Joseph's School celebrated its golden jubilee with much joy and devotion. The following year was one of special benediction upon the parish. Father Leo Moczygemba, the nephew of Father Thomas Moczygemba, was ordained to the priesthood."

Shortly before the golden jubilee of the school, a new roof was put on the building.

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Father John Tokarz received his appointment in Panna Maria, Sept. 1, 1921. During his time, when prosperity was at its height, heavy donations, offerings and improvements were in evidence. A list, as recorded in the parish archives, is presented: painting of church on the interior, \$1200.00; concrete walks in front and around the church and school, \$2,000.00; donation of chalice by Mrs. Mary Pawelek, \$235.00; ostensorium donated by Mrs. Alex Dziuk, Sr., \$100.00; new roof on the old part of the rectory, \$850.00; a parish hearse, donated by Anton Urbanczyk, and a shed for it built, \$100.00;



Not as effective as the electric iron, but it pressed the Easter bonnet. The cloth was wrapped around the roll,—then rolled and rolled and rolled.

improvements in school, \$200.00; carpet for church donated by Anton Dziuk, \$100.00; new fence around the church grounds, \$150.00; school cement floors, \$300.00; organ donated by Jerome Labus, \$400.00; two chasubles and a white cope donation of Mrs. Mary Moczygamba, \$100.00; new stations of the cross, \$300.00; fence around the cemetery, \$700.00; school roof, \$400.00; white chasuble donated by Jos. Janysek, \$100.00. Total of donations and improvements, \$8,320.00.

The seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of Panna Maria was celebrated with a great homecoming May 7, 1929. The mother colony of Polish settlements in America, which had dwindled from

THE FIRST POLISH COLONIES IN TEXAS



REV. EDMUND DRAGON

THE FIRST POLISH COLONIES IN TEXAS

REV. EDMUND DRAGON

Pastor of
St. Anthony's Church
Runge, Texas

Father Dragon, the eight child of Joseph Dragon and Caroline Jaskola, was born November 15, 1905, in Panna Maria, Texas.

Completing his elementary studies in the Panna Maria parochial school, he entered the St. John's Preperatory Seminary, San Antonio, Texas, September, 1919, where his classical and philosophical courses were done. Two years of theology were taken at the St. Meinrad Seminary, St. Meinrad, Indiana, and the remaining two years were finished at the St. John's Major Seminary, San Antonio, Texas.

Ordained March 25, 1930, the Feast of the Annunciation, by the Most Rev. Arthur J. Drossaerts, at the San Fernando Cathedral, his first appointment three months later was as the assistant pastor to Rev. F. O. Beck of Yoakum, Texas. Father Dragon was made pastor of Runge, Texas, October 29, 1932.

the original one-hundred families to only four within its city limits, had on this day of diamond jubilee some six thousand guests, and over half of them were of Polish blood.

The queen of the feast was grandma Albina Yosko, ninety-nine years of age. (Died the following year past her hundredth birthday.) The little old lady joined actively and joyously in welcoming the returning children of old Panna Maria. Several other pioneers in the welcoming line, were: Anna Kowalik (now ninety-one years of age), Anton Sekula, (now eighty-eight years of age), John Manka (died at eighty-four, in 1936) and Charles Korzekwa (died at eighty-seven, in 1933) and with them several of the younger generation living in the community. Felix Mika, Louis D. Lyssy, Anton Foegelle, A. W. Dziuk, Tom Janysek and Victor Pilarczyk were the committee of the celebration. Among some of the distinguished visitors were the Right Reverend Paul Rhode, Bishop of Green Bay,

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Wisconsin, and Edward Przybysz, an attorney and the head of a large Polish bank in Chicago, who was born and reared in Panna Maria. Under the his-



THE RESIDENCE OF MRS. A. M. URBANCZYK BUILT IN 1862

toric oak tree, where the first Mass, seventy-five years ago was said, Bishop Rhode preached a sermon in his native tongue. Most Reverend Arthur J. Drossaerts of San Antonio and a dozen others of



THE PANNA MARIA RECTORY

the cloth, representing the parishes of Polish settlements in Texas, and three seminarians, Edmund Dragon, Theodor Janysek and Edward Dworaczyk, were present. At noon of the grand jubilee day,

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REV. THEODOR JANYSEK

THE FIRST POLISH COLONIES IN TEXAS

REV. THEODOR JANYSEK

Pastor of

S. S. Cyril and Methodius Church
Cistern, Texas

Father Janysek, the eight child of Joseph Janysek and Caroline Reiman, was born April 19, 1905, in Panna Maria, Texas.

Completing the Panna Maria parochial grades, he entered the St. John's Seminary in September of 1920. Two years of theology were done at the St. Meinrad Seminary and the remaining two years at the Diocesan Seminary.

Ordained priest March 25, 1930, by the Most Rev. Arthur J. Drossaerts, at the San Fernando Cathedral, his first appointment three months later was as the assistant pastor of Sacred Heart Church, San Antonio, Texas. He was made pastor of Cistern, Texas, December 1, 1934.

came the huge barbecue, a feast long to be remembered. How grandma Yosko must have remembered and compared the great banquet with the days of want here in the early years and in the days of bondage of tragic old Poland; how her heart must have rejoiced that her people have been led out of the land of captivity to a land of such freedom and plenitude.

In the afternoon, a historical parade was held. Relics of the first days were shown;—the covered wagon drawn by oxen which trekked slowly up the rolling prairie seventy-five years before, bringing the immigrants to Panna Maria, the church bell brought with the pioneers, the first home-made plows, the dresses of the first ladies of the land, and the spinning-wheel. And watching this pageant of long ago were the descendants, not only of the mother colony but of the daughter settlements of Cestochowa, Kosciusko and Falls City. With them were residents of the neighboring towns, Hobson, Karnes City, Kenedy and Yorktown.

A week before the jubilee, a severe hail storm wrought untold damages. That too represented a relic of the old days, when people, as yet, did not

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have their homes built. Crops were a total loss and house tops were splintered.

March 25, 1930, the largest class in the history of St. John's Seminary, San Antonio, was ordained to the priesthood in the San Fernando Cathedral, Archbishop Drossaerts officiating. Among the twelve were two sons of Panna Maria, thus raising the number of priests from the parish to four. Fathers Edmund Dragon and Theodor Janysek had their first Solemn High Masses in Panna Maria the 27th. Elaborate preparations were in progress for the occasion, and notwithstanding the heavy rains which marred the festivity, healthful appetites and good spirits did justice to the two celebrants.

During this time Father Tokarz was confined to bed from long illness which ultimately resulted in the amputation of a leg. June 7, 1930, Father Edward Dworaczyk, just ordained, was appointed assistant. The following year, Father Tokarz left for Ohio where he died six months later, December 29th. Father Dworaczyk has remained in charge of the parish ever since (1936). With his appointment came the depression, few absolutely necessary improvements in church, rectory and school have been made. But with the strictest economy and a few church suppers and annual barbecues, the parish treasury has grown steadily. Last year a parish light plant has been installed and it is the hope of the parishioners that in a year or two, the church may be enlarged. It is too small for the one-hundred twenty families. A few donations of the people may be here listed: missals donated by Veronica Urbanczyk and Carolyn Dragon; light vestments donated by Elias Moczygemba and Alex Dugi; gold-plating of the processional cross by Anna Moczygemba; gold-plating of monstrance by Joseph Janysek; gold-plating of cross above tabernacle by Frank

THE FIRST POLISH COLONIES IN TEXAS

Snoga; processional cross by Mrs. Stanly Moczygemba; Sacred Heart vestment by Carolyn Dragon; Blessed Sacrament canopy by Jacob Moczygemba.

The parochial school, since September 1934, has been under the Public School system. Three Sisters of the Incarnate Word, Mother Anthony, Sister Attracta and Sister Bronislaus, teach in the parochial building. Mr. Jay Poth and Miss Mary Manka take care of the children in the Public building. Mrs. Lyda Boucher teaches the school at Ecletto. All of the one-hundred thirty children attend daily catechetical instructions after the regular class hours.

In April of 1932, Father Peter Foegelle, the fifth son of the parish to be raised to the priesthood, had his first Solemn High Mass in Panna Maria. The day was a much brighter one than the day when his two predecessors were celebrants on like occasion. Crowds of people thronged the church and the grounds. The celebration did not last five days midst the firing of guns and horse-racing as sixty-five years previously, when Father Felix Zwiardowski was ordained in Panna Maria; but nevertheless, the day was filled with less energetic demands on the host and much feasting of the guests on the proverbial barbecue and its attendant delicatessen.

The parents of Father Foegelle, on the occasion of their golden wedding, November 1935, renewed their marriage vows in the presence of their priestly son, who was also the celebrant of the Solemn High Mass. Many clergy were present.

In June of 1935, the little settlement of Panna Maria was subject to heavy floods. For three days it was completely isolated from the rest of the world. Telephone communications were down, bridges were washed away and thousands of acres of corn along the river banks were inundated. Old timers give testimony that the waters were greater

THE FIRST POLISH COLONIES IN TEXAS



REV. EDWARD DWORACZYK

THE FIRST POLISH COLONIES IN TEXAS

REV. EDWARD DWORACZYK

Pastor of
Immaculate Conception Church
Panna Maria, Texas

Father Dworaczyk, the son of Julius Dworaczyk and Mary Jarzombek, was born October 7, 1906, at Yorktown, Texas.

His elementary studies were done in the parochial schools of Yorktown, Cestochowa and Kosciusko, Texas. Entered the St. John's Preperatory Seminary, San Antonio, Texas, September 1920, where his classics and philosophy were finished. Two years of theology were done at the St. Meinrad's Seminary, St. Meinrad, Indiana, and the remaining two years at the St. John's Major Seminary.

Ordained to the priesthood March 25, 1930, by the Most Rev. Arthur J. Drossaerts at the San Fernando Cathedral, his first appointment was as the assistant pastor to Rev. John Tokarz of Panna Maria. With the departure of Father Tokarz, June 1931, who died five months later, Father Dworaczyk has remained in charge of the parish.

than the floods of 1869 when twelve homes of the people were carried away. This marked the beginning of the rainy season that has persisted ever since. Numerous cases of typhoid and malaria developed as a result.

The first Polish colony has undergone many changes in its eighty-two years of existence. Very few of the original pioneers are now living, and the native generation has developed modern tendencies. Their Americanization, however, is a development and not a veneer. And the fact that the native clergy are American in thought and speech and thoroughly Polish in sympathies, makes towards healthy conservatism and precludes violent rupture with traditions of the past. Faith and religious customs are retained in their original purity, and any modern innovation, or abolishing of these ancient customs, meets with severe condemnation verging on fanaticism. Distance, rain or any weather inclemencies do not bar attendance at these functions.

THE FIRST POLISH COLONIES IN TEXAS



REV. PETER FOEGELLE

THE FIRST POLISH COLONIES IN TEXAS

REV. PETER FOEGELLE

Assistant Pastor of
St. Joseph's Church
Yoakum, Texas

Father Foegelle, the son of Michael Foegelle and Frances Wrobel, was born January 12, 1901, in Panna Maria, Texas.

Completing the Panna Maria parochial school grades he entered the Diocesan Seminary at the bishop's residence. His preparatory course was continued at the new St. John's Seminary where he finished philosophy. His studies were discontinued for the next six years. Re-entered St. John's Seminary, September 1928, and was ordained to the priesthood April 4, 1932, by the Most Rev. Arthur J. Drossaerts, at the San Fernando Cathedral.

His first appointment was as temporary pastor of St. Michael's, San Antonio. Subsequently served as pastor at Poth, Texas. At present assistant pastor to Rev. F. O. Beck, Yoakum, Texas.

Funerals are always largely attended. Notwithstanding the fact that every family has relatives comprising half of the population in the parish and the neighboring parishes, the entire parish is present to pay its last respects to the dead. Only one mixed marriage has been recorded in the annals of the colony. There is very little intermarriage with other nationalities. All take their husband or wife from among the neighboring localities, and never does a marriage take place except with a Nuptial Mass. Divorce has never been heard of here or through the thickly populated section twenty-five miles north and west of Panna Maria. Large families are still in evidence, and the sight of four or five children following the mother into the church is not uncommon though their cries and coughing in the church are at times disconcerting. The Polish women, even the modern wives, are careful in the observance of the custom of being church-ed after childbirth.

Poland was but little affected by the religious rebellion of the sixteenth century, and, hence, the Catholic medieval spirit is still in the hearts of its

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natives. The Christmas and Easter carols heard in the church are the exact counterpart of those sung by the peasants of pre-reformation England, and are the expression of child-like faith of the people.

The sponsors in baptisms are regarded as relatives by the interested families. Even if it is an uncle or an aunt, the child grows to maturity calling his sponsor "potek" or "potka," dispensing with the "uncle" or "aunt." On the death of a parishioner, all the church bells are rung immediately after the



THE PUBLIC SCHOOL TENNIS COURT, BUILT IN 1933

Angelus until after the funeral, giving the impression more of joy than of sorrow. Though Latin is used at the Masses, the people still love their own vernacular hymns, and one may hear them chant in Polish the Rosary or the "Little Hours" before the High Mass on Sundays and days of obligation. During Lent, immediately after the High Mass, the "Gorzkie Zale" (Bitter Sorrows) are chanted. On Holy Saturday, at sundown, the "Resurekcya" takes place. The priest and the laity go in solemn procession thrice around the church, carrying the figure of Christ resurrected and singing hymns of alleluja while all the bells are ringing. The Corpus Christi

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procession is still in observance, and the people take pains in making their altars as beautiful as possible. The first Sunday in October, a procession similar to that of Corpus Christi takes place. Five altars are built, and at each is said a decade of the rosary. As the procession winds around the church, the choir, accompanied by the congregation, sings hymns of the Blessed Virgin. Many other customs are observed, the enumeration and description of which would take too much space.

In regard to educational activity,—besides the five priests, Panna Maria can boast of numerous school teachers, two notable attorneys, one of whom is a former Judge of DeWitt County. Any other higher product is not, at present, visible. The activities of other alumni, particularly of those residing outside of the colony, were never followed. The school at Panna Maria, the first Polish school in the United States, was formerly the center of county education, and offered the best elementary advantages that the generation of that time could desire. It was patronized extensively even by the non-Catholics. Many children were boarded by the Sisters and the people here. No list of attendants is possible, but such names of non-Catholics as Whetstone, Hedges, Spencer, Morrow, Edmisons, Lorenz are recalled. Yet all along, education had its drawbacks. Teachers had to contend with parents whose poverty and old-world view-point were factors in keeping the children at home upon every pretext and withdrawing them from school forever on the day of their First Solemn Communion. But notwithstanding this, schools were not relegated to a second place. The establishment of a school always coincided with the organization of a parish. The first parish buildings erected in Cestochowa and Kosciusko, daughters of this colony, were schools

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which served as school and church for some years until a church could be built, when the first building would be used entirely for school purposes.

The colony never held potentialities for worldly greatness, either as a town or a parish. Its land was not of the best; its market facilities, difficult. A railroad, designated originally through Panna Maria, met with difficulties, so it was built elsewhere. With its advent, commercial activity was divided, and towns, that sprung up along the railroad, progressed and flourished. The



Tractors could not be had to plow up the old cotton plantation. Home made implements as that at the side were used to pull up the cotton stalks one by one. To the right a home-made hoe.

territory comprising the colony became limited by boundaries of Karnes City, Hobson and Cestochowa, thus leaving little room for popular expansion. Fields, which were not so large in the first place, were divided among the sons of the family, bringing newer disadvantages to the farmer whose land already began to show traces of long wear. There are some one hundred twenty families residing in this territory, and any additional subdivision would only bring

conditions that the pioneers faced before leaving their small cabbage and potato patches in Prussian Poland. It has been said that the prosperity of a community

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can best be measured by the size of its tombstones. There are many tombstones in the Panna Maria cemetery but only a few large ones.

S. Nesterowicz in his "Notatki z Podrozy" writes in 1909:

"The town of Panna Maria, with its stone, aged buildings, a mute testimony of early habitation and trade, had once been a large colony. Were it not for the separation of Cestochowa and Falls City; were it not that the people refused to give right of way for the railroad, Panna Maria would have been a large town to-day; it would not be the quiet, deserted village it is.

"But being a relic of Texas' early development, I had rather see it as it is. The uproar of a big town would only be a desecration of this secluded nook, drenched with sweat and tears of the exiles who sought shelter from poverty and oppression and wanted no more than freedom and a piece of bread."

Thus ends the story of a little hamlet in Texas. Let us hope that it may have a happier sequel. Its children may grow and prosper; their bodies will be confined to oblivion; their names and language will be fused into the great American life ahead, but Panna Maria will ever remain the first Polish colony in America from which sprang much that contributed to progress in early Texas. And when it shall commemorate its centennial, may its first monuments of stone still stand and be graced with newer achievements; and may the spirit of its founders, which still lives, ever remain a source of strength and encouragement to future generations.

List of parishioners, end of year 1935:

David Banduch, Paul Banduch, Mike Bednorz, John F. Brysch, John T. Brysch, Jesse Brysch, Felix Brysch, Edmund Brysch, Henry Dziuk, Anton Dziuk, Joseph Dziuk, Alex Dziuk, John Dragon,

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Peter Dragon, Jos Dupnik, John Dupnik, Edward Dupnik, Peter Dugi, Alex Dugi, Jake Dugi, Vincent Dugi, Tim Dugi, Mike Foegelle, Sr., Anton Foegelle, John Foegelle, Jacob Felux, Vincent Gawlik, Mike Janysek, John Janysek, Edward Janysek, Tom Janysek, Frank Janysek, L. T. Johnson, Vincent Kowalik, John Kowalik, Jr., Ignatz Kowalik, Anton Kowalik, Vincent Kotara, Alex Keller, Zepherin Kel-



Mr. Adam Jendrej of Inez, Texas, born beneath one of the oak trees the first night the immigrants camped on the location they were about to call Panna Maria. The first Polish colony had nothing on its first born as the smile indicates.

ler, Anton Kruciak, Leon Kruciak, John Kruciak, Albert Kaczmarek, John Kroll, Mrs. Leon Kyrish, Henry Kyrish, Tom Krawietz, Aloys Kotzur, Peter Kortz, Leon Kortz, Nick Kortz, Vincent Labus, Theodor Labus, Ignatz Labus, Izidore Labus, Tom Lyssy, Alex Manka, Henry Manka, Joe C. Manka, Joe F. Manka, Louis Manka, Felix Manka, Paul Mika, Felix Mika, Jesse Mika, Elias Moczygemba, Tom Moczygemba, Mike Moczygemba, C. W. Moczygemba, Stanly Moczygemba, Louis Moczy-

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gemba, Clem Moczygemba, John F. Moczygemba, Frank Moczygemba, Henry Moczygemba, Bron Moczygemba, Frank Morawietz, Peter Opiela, Frank Opiela, John Opiela, Joseph Opiela, Jerome Pawelek, Frank Pawelek, Louis Pawelek, John Pawelek, Nick Pawelek, Ben Pawelek, Ignatz Pawelek, Philip Piegza, Anton Pieprzyca, Mrs. Pauline Pieprzyca, Aloys Pieprzyca, Leon Pieprzyca, Henry Pieprzyca, Paul Pilarczyk, Louis Pilarczyk, Peter Pollock, Jesse Pollock, Lawrence Pollock, Clem Pollock, Felix Pollock, Theodor Pollock, Charles Pollock, John Pollock, Sam Pollock, Jay Poth, Jos. Reiman, John Rutkowski, Theodor Richter, Felix Snoga, Emil Sprencel, Mrs. A. M. Urbanczyk, Edward Urbanczyk, Nick Urbanczyk, Alex Urbanczyk, Frank Urbanczyk, Peter Waczlawczyk, Mrs. Frank Wrobel, Frank Yosko, Floryan Yosko, Henry Yosko, Walter Zaiontz, Mrs. Jos. Yanta, and Jos. Pawelek.

Single persons: Mary Pilarczyk, Jos. Janysek, Jos. Dragon, John Kowalik, Beata Brysch, Anna Kruciak, Sophie Lorenz, Mary Morawietz, Anna Moczygemba, Mary Pawelek, Veronica Piegza, Frank Snoga, Eva Dugi, Tom Kowalik.

History Of Panna Maria Post Office

The records indicate that the office was established as "Pana Maria" August 30, 1856.

It is indicated that for one year, from July 1, 1849, through June 30, 1850, T. R. Thielkeld, of Port Lavaca, was the contractor for service from San Antonio to Goliad. From July 1, 1849, to February 27, 1850, the service was once a week and back; from February 27, 1850, through June 30, 1850, the service was twice a week and back.

The records indicate that in July, August and

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September, 1850, service between Victoria and Goliad, Texas, was performed by J. W. Stoddard. It does not appear that a regular schedule was followed during that time.

It is indicated that D. A. Saltmarsh, of Victoria, was the contractor for service from January 16, 1851, through June 30, 1853, twice a week and back in four-horse coaches, as follows: From San Antonio, by Yorktown, Sulphur Springs, and Victoria, to Port Lavaca. Beginning June 1, 1852, the route was extended to Indianola.

The records indicate that beginning July 1, 1853, H. Butler and L. Sargeant, of San Antonio, were contractors for service from San Antonio, once a week and back, as follows:

From San Antonio, by Helena, Hortonsville, Goliad, Carabajal's Crossing of the Cibolo, to Lamar.

It is indicated that Panna Maria was established on a route, as follows: from San Antonio by Sebastopol, "Panna Maria," Helena, Charco, Goliad to Victoria. The records indicate that the contractor on the route was J. R. Jefferson, of Seguin, Texas, and that the service was once a week and back, beginning July 1, 1855.

It is indicated that beginning June 1, 1857, J. R. Brantly, of Gonzales, Texas, was contractor for service 25 miles and back, once a week, from Yorktown, by Helena to "Panna Maria."

The records indicate that F. P. Sawyer and B. A. Risker, of Austin, Texas, were contractors for service, 120 miles and back, twice a week, in two-horse coaches, on a route as follows: from San Antonio by Lodi, "Pana Maria," Helena, Charco, Goliad, to Victoria. It is indicated that the service began July 1, 1858, and was suspended May 31, 1861, due to the Civil War. About October 18,

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1865, the service was resumed with F. P. Sawyer as contractor, twice a week and back. The contract was to extend to June 30, 1866.

PANNA MARIA, KARNES COUNTY, TEXAS

DATE APPOINTED	POSTMASTER
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This office was established as Pana Maria, Karnes County, Texas, August 30, 1856.

Samuel L. Hedges, August 30, 1856; Alice J. Toutant, March 20, 1858; Christian Kolodzie, July 18, 1866; Silas W. Crosley, August 2, 1867; Emanuel Rzeppa, April 1868.

This office was discontinued, January 31, 1870.

This office was re-established, June 15, 1871.

Peter Kiolobassa, June 15, 1871; Alexander Dziuk, September 6, 1871.

This office was discontinued, April 22, 1872.

This office was re-established, February 13, 1874.

Samuel N. Hedges, February 13, 1874; Ludwig Jendrusch, April 22, 1879, Maria Schulz, January 29, 1880.

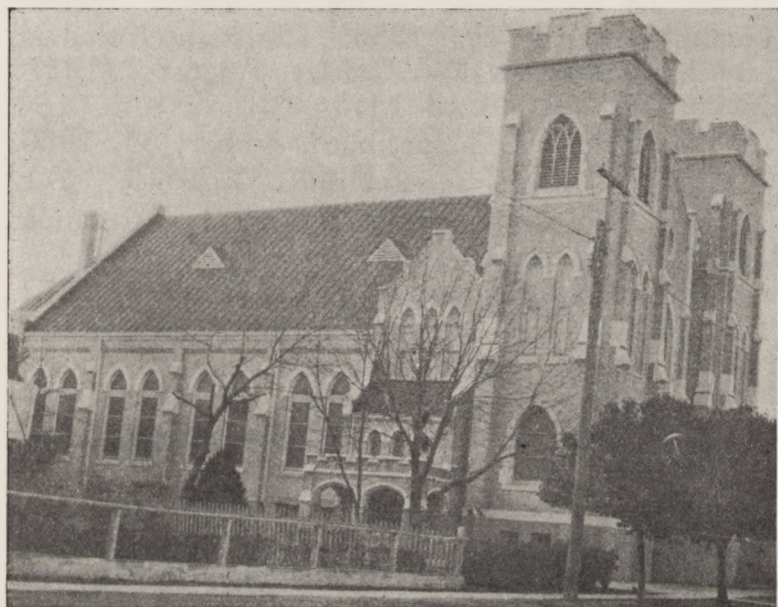
The name of this office was changed to Panna Maria,, December 4, 1883; Maria Schulz, December 4, 1883; Edward J. Huthmacher, January 16, 1901; Frank Opiela, July 30, 1903; Joseph E. Lyssy, March 6, 1905; Peter Pilarczyk, November 9, 1908; Frank Snoga, May 10, 1910; Louis T. Lyssy, April 20, 1916; Felix Mika, June 26, 1917.

U. S. Post Office Records, Washington, D. C.

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SAN ANTONIO St. Michael's Parish (1855) San Antonio, Texas

In San Antonio, about fifty-five miles from the first Polish colony, stands St. Michael's, the only Polish church in the city. The beginning of its parochial organization dates back to the latter part



of 1855. It was originally attended by Fathers Moczygemba, Rossadowski and Przysiecki, who were stationed in Panna Maria, the center of all the Polish missions in Texas.

Actual organization of the parish began with the arrival of Father Vincent Barzynski, C. R., Nov. 8, 1866, Father Barzynski was the first residential

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pastor. The first Mass of the newly organized parish was celebrated in the San Fernando Cathedral, Nov. 18, 1866. Subsequently, Father Barzynski rented for religious purposes a building of Emanuel Rzeppa, on the east corner of Matagorda and Goliad Streets, which was used as a store-house and a bakery, (old Richter's place). Here the people attended divine services until the new parochial building, intended for school and church, was built. First services in the new church were held January 6, 1868. (Memoirs of Father Zwiardowski).

The following list comprised the small congregation of thirty-six families:

Jacob Zaiontz, Floryan Musiol, J. Halamuda, Carol Dobrowolski, Anton Cieslik, Isidor Zizik, Anton Pyka, Frank Pollock, Mary Brysch, Frank Oczko, George Halamuda, Sebastian Roswadowski, Jake Waczlawczyk, Paul Panek, Thomas Dziuron, Albert Dlugosz, John Szaparczyk, Emanuel Rzeppa, Albert Halamuda, Ignatz Faska, Frank Felix, Albert Mondrala, Jake Brysch, Winfred Kedziora, Thomas Kiolobassa, John Kus, Mrs. Kiolobassa (Widow), Mrs. Panka (Widow), Anton Moczygamba, Susan Oczko, John Moczygamba, Ed Kotula, Jos. Morawietz, Frank Wiczorek, M. Adamiec, Edward Kurka.

The new church was built of stone and was rather small and very low. It was intended to be used for school and church purposes until the parish should be able to build a larger church. The priest's residence was attached to the building. The plans of Father Barzynski, however, did not materialize as soon as he expected. The church building could not be used exclusively for school purposes for a long time. His instructions to the children were given in his residence. (Pobyty w Texas).

January 1873, Father Jos. Barzynski took Father

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Vincent's pastorate at St. Michael's, and Father Vincent went to St. Hedwig. Here he writes July 15, 1873; "I have taken charge of Martinez, leaving my brother at St. Michael's. The Polish parish in San Antonio has decreased by one-fourth. Martinez has profited by this. This small colony has been increased by these as well as other arrivals"



ST. MICHAEL'S SCHOOL

"In 1876 Father S. Wojciechowski arrived in San Antonio He writes that there are only thirty-three families in the parish" (Pobyt w Texas).

By the end of 1900, the population increased very little, the total embracing only forty-five families. The main reason, among others, for the lack of growth was the lack of a school where children could be taught their native tongue. A parochial

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school could not be supported for want of a sufficient number of children. Between the years 1873 and 1880, the school was opened for a short time when the "Blue Sisters," (Sisters of Immaculate Conception of Panna Maria), had charge. Subsequently, the Ursuline Sisters built, on the church grounds, a school building at their own expense. The school building was given to the parish on the condition that a Polish Sister would always be provided. (Kruszka, *Historya Osad Polskich w Ameryce*). The Sisters of Divine Providence took over the school later and have been supervising it ever since.

In 1905, Father Kruszka writes:

"The Polish people of the parish are in a good condition financially. Edward Kotula's possessions are estimated at about \$300,000.00; W. Dobrowolski has built a solid real-estate reputation and owns large livery-stables; August Zizik is in the undertaking business; Bernard Kiolobassa owns an excellent brewery. The people are also very active socially and politically. The St. Albert's Society gives testimony of the national as well as the Catholic spirit existing in the parish. The parish has its own cemetery in the city."

In 1922 the old church was torn down and a larger, beautiful building of white brick was erected. The corner stone was laid July 4th, and the dedication took place in September of the same year. The cost of the building alone was \$48,000.00 including the stone of the old building valued at about \$5,000.00. Total cost of the church is \$70,000.00. The generosity of its present pastor, Monsignor Thomas Moczygamba, and his interest in the beautiful edifice deserve special commendation. Besides the \$5,000.00 which he donated towards the erection of the church, he has very generously donated

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a pipe organ, the cost of which was over \$4,000.00, a heating system, valued at \$2,600.00, and an automatic electric bell ringer, valued at \$1,100.00.

The parochial school is attended by many children from outside of the parish. At present the Sisters of Divine Providence take care of some one hundred eighty children. There are but sixty-five families and, as Monsignor Moczygemba attests, about forty widows in the parish.

The St. Michael's Dramatic Club, the pride of the parish, and a consolation to any pastor, rightfully deserves a historical remembrance. Herein is given its history as presented by Miss Dorothy Grams:

"St. Michael's Dramatic Club of San Antonio, also officially recognized under the sub-title S.M.-D.C., was organized on August 18, 1932. Reverend P. L. Foegelle, acting pastor during the absence of Reverend Thomas Moczygemba, was elected president, and upon his departure a short time later, was appointed honorary president. Reverend Thomas Moczygemba, now Reverend Monsignor, was also appointed honorary president and spiritual director. L. J. Zimmermon Jr. was elected active president with George P. Kosub as vice-president; Elizabeth Grams, recording secretary; and Frank Stanush, treasurer. Charter members, besides the above officers, include: Sofie Strzelczyk, Chrystine Zizik, Lucille Brady, Elizabeth Gieniec, Dorothy Grams, Margaret Kelly Snapp, Agnes Margozewitz, Dorothy Kress, Claude Stanus, Clemens Ploch Jr., Henry V. Ploch, Edward Grams, Joseph Burda, Bob Burda, Clarence J. Horendeck, Elizabeth Ploch, Rose Gorrell, Constance Gorrell, Richard Perner, John Cleveland, Marcella Kolodzie.

"The Club, organized to foster dramatics and promote social activities in the parish, presented its

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first play "Kicked Out Of College" on October 9, 1932 at St. Albert's Hall. From every view point it was declared a tremendous success. Other plays staged, listed chronologically, include: *'The Hoodoo,' 'Just Country Folks,' 'The Eighteen Carat Boob,' 'The Yellow Shadow,' 'Here Comes Charlie,' 'Be An Optimist,'* and *'The Dutch Detective.'*

"The Club entertains its members each month, except during the lenten season, with a social, indoors or outdoors, in accordance with weather conditions. An annual banquet is held celebrating the Club's organization anniversary. The Club also sponsors a Parents' Day celebration each year, honoring the parents of the members. Various parties are given by different members, or groups of members most outstanding of which are those given by the losing sides of the ticket-selling contests. Numerous benefit raffles have been held.

"The S.M.D.C. has entered floats in the Battle of Flowers parade for the past three years and has been awarded second prize and honorable mention by the Fiesta judges; and this, the Centennial year, it has been awarded first prize among the junior organizations.

"In March 1933 the first issue of the Club's official organ, the "Spotlight," was published under the editorship of Bob Burda. Its circulation, which at first included members only, has increased to two hundred readers.

"In 1934, the original Constitution of the Club was revised and rewritten. Individual copies of the Constitution, including the parliamentary ruling adopted by the Club, were printed and bound in booklet form by a committee of members.

"Finances of the Club are governed by percentages. Each year, one half of the net play receipts are donated to the Church. In October 1935, an emer-

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gency fund was established from which no money is drawn unless sanctioned by two-thirds of the membership body. This is a fund separate and distinct from the General Fund from which current expenses are paid.

"The members have taken an active part in the celebration honoring their beloved pastor, Right Reverend Monsignor T. J. Moczygamba, on the occasion of his investiture as Domestic Prelate in November 1935. The Club receives Holy Communion in a body once a month, and the boys of the Club act as ushers during all church services.

"The present members number forty-eight. The officers include: Edward Grams, president; Theo Magott, Jr., vice-president; Dorothy Grams, recording secretary; Agnes Margozewitz, corresponding secretary; Dorothy Kress, treasurer; Dorothy Grams, Spotlight editor; Agnes Sueltenfus, sick-committee chairman; Sophie Strzelczyk, membership committee chairman; Constance Gorrell, dramatic director; Agnes Sueltenfus, publicity agent; and James Ploch, custodian of properties. Little Stanly Gorrell, Jr., is the Club's mascot."

It has been noticed that the spirit of the Club members is most edifying. To give a concrete example: before presenting their plays, the participants in the back stage call for a priest and ask his blessing on their presentation.

Here's more POWER to you, S. M. D. C.!

The Catholic Knights, Catholic Daughters and the Altar Society also have contributed generously to the reduction of the parish debt which has now ceased to be the stumbling block it was.

Pauline Zienc (Sister M. Clara) and Anna Pytel (Sister M. Martha) of the Incarnate Word Convent, both deceased, were from the parish.

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But we must not forget to add an excerpt from the "History of Southwest Texas," concerning the Kiolobassa family, long noted in Polish circles for an extensive activity in civic life, particularly since it was one of the few to found the first Polish colony in America and later took active part in the development of St. Michael's parish.

We read in Volume I, Page 189-191:

"Bernard Kiolobassa, superintendent of the sanitary department in San Antonio, possesses many of the qualities of the successful leader and for many years has been recognized as a man of influence among the Polish citizens of southwestern Texas. He was born in Prussian Poland, August 16, 1846, his parents being Stanislaus and Francisca (Burda) Kiolobassa. The father was a member of a good family of Poles and was a well educated man, thus being qualified for practical and responsible duties in life. In 1847-48 he was a member of the Prussian Reichstag from Poland at Berlin. Seeking a home in the new world to enjoy the advantages of liberty in a republic, he came with his family to Texas in 1854, making the long tedious voyage in a sailing vessel. He settled at Panna Maria in Karnes County, being one of the pioneers who founded the Polish colony at that place. After raising one crop there he decided to make his home farther west because of the malarial and unhealthful conditions which prevailed at Panna Maria. There he established a farm and, with the aid of his sons, built a house which was unique, being the first and only one of the kind in the country. It was constructed of grooved mesquite blocks, mesquite wood being the most available building material at that time, and there were no sawmills in the country to saw up lumber. Later he located at the head of Atascosa creek, in Medina County, about six miles south of Castroville. Stanis-

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laus Kiolobassa and his family found the pioneer hardship of this section rather trying and, although with kind and tactful treatment of the Indians, they managed to get along without disturbance from the red men, a bad drought and consequent crop failure induced Stanislaus Kiolobassa to come to San Antonio. He moved to the city in 1858, established his home on Villita Street and afterward on Presa Street. Subsequently he removed to South Alamo Street, and thence to North Street, where he died on the 10th day of May, 1862. His wife long survived him and passed away in this city in 1888.

"In the family were six children and, with the exception of the youngest, all were born in Poland. These are: Thomas, now living in San Antonio; Peter, who died in Chicago, June 23, 1905; Mrs. Josephine Seffell; Frank, living in Wisconsin; Bernard, of this review; Jacob, deceased; and Mary. Of this number, Peter Kiolobassa enlisted in the Confederate army at San Antonio and participated in the campaigns in Louisiana and Arkansas in the early part of the war. He was taken prisoner at Little Rock and, after being paroled, decided to join the Federal army, for he had come to the conclusion that the northern cause was the just one, and, being a young man of independent thought and action, he did not hesitate to carry out his honest convictions. Accordingly, he joined the Union army in Arkansas and was transferred to a point east of the Mississippi river, where, in recognition of his gallantry and meritorious conduct as a soldier, he won rapid promotion from a private to the rank of corporal, sergeant, second lieutenant, first lieutenant and, lastly, captain with the rank of major in command. During the last year or two of the war he was engaged largely in recruiting service, principally in Chicago, where his qualities of leadership and influence made his

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services particularly valuable in securing recruits among the Polish young men of that city. After the war, he settled in Chicago and was married there. He became a business man of that city and from 1870 until the time of his death, in June 1905, he was an active leader in Democratic circles. He served as alderman, was also a representative in the state legislature, president of the board of public works and city treasurer. In the latter position, it is recalled, he filed the largest bond ever given by a city treasurer, amount to over fifteen million dollars. He was well qualified by his natural talents and characteristics. Being a leader in political circles, through several administrations his leadership among the Polish citizens of Chicago was undisputed. The Kiolobassas are all of strict Catholic faith.

"On meeting with Bernard Kiolobassa one is impressed with the fact that he is an educated and a cultured man. He is particularly well equipped as a linguist, for he speaks several languages fluently. Because of the pioneer experiences of his boyhood and the ensuing war he was deprived of much school training that he would otherwise have received. However, he entered the St. Mary's College at San Antonio, but the course of instruction seemed to him to cover so long a period and he was so anxious to get to work and make a start in the business world that he left the school after thirty days and accepted a position as waiter in the Menger Hotel. Instead of spending his nights in pleasure, he read and studied, buying text-books and other volumes and becoming a close student, in which way he advanced until he was recognized as a man of scholarly attainments. He enlisted in the Confederate army as a drummer boy but was advised by Captain McAllister to remain at home and take care of his mother, as the other boys had gone into

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the war, and Mr. Kiolobassa followed this advice. After the close of hostilities, he established a small mercantile business in Bexar County, about eighteen miles from the city, but later moved into town and went into business. For many years he was a dealer in fancy groceries, first on East Commerce Street and later on East Houston Street, his last place being at the corner of Houston and Navarro, where Peck's Furniture Store is now located. He continued in trade until 1890, when he retired from merchandising. He had prospered in the undertaking and, as the result of the large line of goods which he carried and his reasonable prices, enjoyed a liberal patronage.

"Bernard Kiolobassa possesses many of the qualities of leadership which were shown by his brother Peter, and for a long period has been recognized as a man of influence among the Polish citizens and other residents of foreign birth in San Antonio. In 1888 he was elected county commissioner, filling the position for two years. At present he is superintendent of the city sanitary department and it is largely through his energetic and efficient services in this connection that San Antonio has gained its splendid reputation as one of the cleanest cities, from a sanitary standpoint, in the country. This accounts to a large extent for its known healthfulness. Mr. Kiolobassa takes a public-spirited interest in all worthy institutions and enterprises and supports all measures which are a matter of civic virtue and of civic pride.

"He was married in San Antonio to Miss Louisa Seng, a native of this city, and they have three children: Bernard, Edward and Helena, the last named, the wife of William Heye. Mr. Kiolobassa has spent the greater part of his life in Texas, his residence here covering more than a half century, and for a long period he has lived in San Antonio. From his

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boyhood days down to the present he has manifested many good qualities and is accorded a prominent position in public regard."

BANDERA

Parish of St. Stanislaus
(1855)

San Antonio Diocese

Another colony dating from the early days of Polish colonization in Texas is Bandera. Originally, it was a Mormon colony. But with the arrival of eleven Polish families in 1855, the Mormons moved elsewhere, as writes Father Strobel. This thriving little town lies about forty miles northwest of San Antonio. In its beautiful hills one still sees deer and wild turkey, a paradise for the hunter.

The organization of the parish began in the latter part of 1855. Its first people were part of the immigrants that settled in Panna Maria in 1854. The first little church, twenty by thirty, was built in 1858. Since no priest could be had, the people congregated regularly for prayer and Polish congregational singing. Later on, a priest from Panna Maria would come once or twice a month. The second church, eighty by thirty-four, built under the Resurrectionists in 1876. was of hard stone which, together with the labor, was provided by the parishioners. That church is the present building. The exact number of colonists that arrived here in the succeeding immigrations of 1855 and 1856 cannot be ascertained. However, it is believed that it was as large as any subsequent settling in the other early colonies. In time, due to its isolation from any other town, the lack of market facilities, a difficult mode of livelihood, very many moved to other locali-

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ties. In 1900 there remained but about fifty Polish families in Bandera.

In 1866, Bandera had its first pastor, Father Clemens Kucharczyk who arrived in Texas with the Resurrectionist Fathers. From 1869 to 1870, Father Felix Zwiardowski attended to the parish needs.

Father Bakanowski in his "Pobyt w Texas," writes September 18, 1869: "... In Bandera, a se-



cluded town of about two thousand inhabitants, live thirty families. On the south and west side flow clear streams of water, the Medina and the Julianna. On top of the hill stands the church at the side of which has been built the small home of Father Felix. The people busy themselves mostly with tilling of the soil; some are engaged in making shingles which they market in San Antonio."

Father Felix, January 31, 1870 writes from

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Bandera: " . . . The rheumatic pains at times become unbearable in Panna Maria because of the bad climate. Here in Bandera the climate is much more invigorating and the water is very good . . . I have only seventeen farmers on whom I can depend for means of sustenance, and half of these are infected with the teachings and doing of my predecessor and ex-Reformer. I have found here many Freemasons, Americans and Germans, even one Pole from Krakow by the name of Paul Martin.

"The water here at least can be had free of charge, unlike in Panna Maria where I had to pay from twenty-five to thirty-five cents a barrel . . ."

July 15, 1870 when Father Bakanowski left for Chicago, Father Felix had to take his place in Panna Maria, whence he attended to Bandera once a month "armed because of the frequent encounter with the Indians." March 2, 1876 Father Felix writes from San Antonio:

"We are beginning the building of a new church in Bandera. The bishop has blessed the corner stone, the second Sunday in Lent . . ."

The church, however, was not completed until the following year when Bandera again had a stationary priest, Father Bronislaus Przewlocki.

This pastor writes March 22, 1877: "Bandera has a few stores and three schools: a Masonic, Methodist and a Polish . . . We have Sisters." . . . The Sisters were the "Blue Sisters" of Panna Maria. "There are now twenty-six families all of whom congregate for divine services most faithfully." Father Przewlocki died in Bandera January 23, 1879, and was buried in the church. He was succeeded by Fathers Jablonski and Pelczar, the latter remaining for two years. Subsequently came Fathers Magot, Cichocki, Wolenczewicz.

Father Felix, visiting Bandera in March of 1891,

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writes about visiting the grave of Father Przewlocki who died twelve years previously. "Praying at the grave of our departed brother I noticed that his body, which can be seen through the glass, bears strange marks of preservation. His hands and his face, after those twelve years, have remained the same as in time of death, even the hair remains the way I combed it at the time of the funeral."

From 1892 till 1899 the Polish colonists went through a rapid mode of Americanization. In all that time there never was stationed, or even attending, a Polish priest. During that time, Fathers Roberts and Neisenz attended Bandera. Though there was a Polish school in the parish, the latter pastor would not permit any Polish Sisters in the community. With the arrival of Father Matysiak, the people regained some of their original spirit in parish activity.

The first rectory on the present location was built in 1881. In 1898 was built a larger rectory but on ground owned by the Sisters of Incarnate Word, and has since been their possession. These Sisters have been teaching in Bandera since 1882.

A recording of Sister Mary Helen Fink, in regard to the trip of the Sisters to Bandera, will cast some light on the difficulties that had to be endured by the nuns and others engaged in the ministry.

"Sister Dominic and two other Sisters were sent to Bandera in 1882. The journey to Bandera had to be made in wagons as no railroad connected Bandera with San Antonio. Father Felix, the pastor, came in his buggy to conduct the Sisters to their new mission, bringing two large vehicles into one of which the bedding and furniture were packed while the community occupied the other.

"The road lay through one of the most picturesque sections of Texas; instead of bleak prairies, which are wearisome to travelers, there were hills

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and valleys, fields of corn and cotton with, here and there, groves of pecan and oak. When night overtook us we camped in a valley, where, in spite of our remonstrances, Father made the fire and, aided by the drivers, prepared supper. Breakfast was served by the same willing hands. We had just recommenced our journey when change came in the weather; the rain began to fall so heavily that the road was converted into a respectable river. Slowly we plodded along until it became evident that the horses could no longer draw the furniture wagon, and it was left by the side of the road. Only a mile or so were covered when it became impossible to move the second vehicle now buried to the hubs in mud; it, too, was abandoned. As a last resort, we exchanged the wagon for Father's buggy and continued thus until the torrents of rain compelled us to stop at a very small and poor-looking house. In answer to Father's request for hospitality the people, not without apprehension of their unknown and strange looking guests, silently consented. They seemed to be afraid of us and managed to keep out of sight. We were, however, grateful for the shelter and were wondering what we should do for supper since we had forgotten to provide ourselves with something to eat when we abandoned the wagons. Fortunately, Father had some meat in his buggy; this he brought and one of us summoned enough courage to ask for a frying pan. In response to the request, a woman stood in the doorway and at arm's length handed Sister the pan. We did justice to the meat without any bread or anything else. In spite of our strange surroundings we slept until Father called us at day-break and said he was ready to start. Towards noon we reached Bandera after a three days trip."

Father Joachim Kwoka succeeded Father Matysiak in 1900 who, in turn, was followed by Father

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Laporte a year later. After that, the people of Bandera again were deprived of the ministrations of one of their tongue. However, by now a generation Americanized and speaking very little of the tongue of their fathers, they did not suffer any religious inconveniences.

The following is the list of priests attending Bandera subsequently: 1904, Fathers L. Monasterio and St. John O'Sullivan; 1905, Father John Robling; 1909, Fathers G. Gulbach and A. J. Miedanner; 1910, Father C. Gallegher; 1912, Father W. E. Heffernan; 1919, Father J. Harnowski; 1920, Father T. J. Taradellas; 1921, Father P. Boivin; 1924, Fathers H. Kickx and P. Boivin; 1928, Father P. Endler; 1930, Father H. Kickx who died and was buried in Bandera cemetery January 17, 1935. Father A. Henkes became administrator for a few months. Father F. S. Strobel is the present pastor.

The parochial school, a two-story building, was erected in 1922 for a cash consideration of \$10,000.00. Here the stone, too, was provided from local quarries, and the native art in shaping the stone is really admirable.

The present rectory, a home modern in every respect, is a remodeling of the old one. Father H. Kickx, a man of architectural abilities and a generous heart, made this possible in 1934.

He had made plans to build a private home, on the east side of the parish rectory, where he had hoped to spend his old age. But scarcely had the foundation been built, when Father Kickx went to his reward.

As a Polish colony, Bandera is lost to the Poles. Though about three hundred and twenty souls in the parish bear Polish names, none of them speak the old mother tongue.

Otherwise, the parish, though small in numbers

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and for years suffering materially because of droughts, is in a healthy condition spiritually. A proof of its devotion and piety may be seen in the daily evening services, a custom originated in recent years, which are attended by practically all the Catholics of the town. The parish boasts of one son of Polish decent in the priesthood, Father Ed. Postert, O. M. I., ordained in 1933. A daughter of the parish, Elizabeth Kalka, died in the Incarnate Word Convent as Sister M. Chantal.

ST. HEDWIG

Parish of St. Hedwig

(1855)

San Antonio Diocese

St. Hedwig is a settlement in Bexar County, about eighteen miles southeast of San Antonio, and three miles from Atkins station on the Gulf Shore railway line. Some of its parish territory lies in Wilson County. It was formerly called Martinez, because of the Martinez creek; hence, often referred to as Martina. Its present name had its derivation from the first church patroness, St. Hedwig, the saintly duchess, patroness of Silesia.

The first Polish settler was John Demmer who owned a considerable portion of land at the time the immigrants arrived. Mr. Demmer, an army captain of the 1830 Polish Revolution, arrived in Texas in 1835 and settled in this territory in 1852. In the beginning, he lived on deer and wild turkey. In time he changed his name to Dorstyn and married into an American family. The old-timers, who remember him well, speak of him as an approachable and an amiable character ever ready to help the settlers in their transactions with the Americans.

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(S. Niesterowicz. "Notatki z Podrozy," 1909, p. 181).

Niesterowicz continues:

"Thomas Kosub's information about the original settlers may be regarded as authentic since at his arrival, in 1855, he was sixteen years of age.



" 'When we arrived in a body in San Antonio,' the old gentleman recalls, 'the majority went to Panna Maria, where a number of our families settled the previous year. The rest of us, numbering thirteen families, settled here forming the colony. The thirteen were: Adam and Martin Pierdola, Jos. Michalski, F. Tudyk, M. Tudyk, Jacob Zaiontz,

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Thomas Krawietz, Anton Kosub, Frank Kosub (my father), Martin Cibis, Valentine Aniol, Paul Kaczmarek and Walter Stanush.

" 'Those with ready cash bought land immediately. Some rented small fields; others worked for the Americans. Our main crop was corn. No one had any idea about cotton. There were no fences, so our cattle grazed far and wide; thus we lost many head of cattle.

" 'In the latter part of 1856, we began building our church. We cut the thick live-oak trees for that purpose. Many of the Americans came to watch how we handled the heavy lumber. Without convenient or the necessary implements we lifted the heavy logs into wagons drawn by oxen and hauled them to the place of building.' "

Following John Demmer into the territory came Nicholas and Ignatz Tudyk, who evidently came with the first immigrants to Panna Maria in 1854. The other settlers, exclusively from Gross Strehlitz, Upper Silesia, came in the subsequent expeditions of 1855 and 1856. Before 1872 a great number of Polish people from San Antonio settled around St. Hedwig. (Father Joseph Barzynski, November, 1872).

The immigrants of 1855 spent sixteen weeks on water, landing in Galveston. Thence they proceeded to San Antonio where they met Mr. Demmer. Whether this meeting was pre-arranged or accidental cannot be ascertained. Mr. Demmer recommended the Cibolo locality so highly that a committee was formed to investigate. The report of the committee was favorable and arrangements were made to settle one-half section of land near the Martinez creek. The land was distributed in tracts of 30 and 40 acres on easy-payment terms. The price paid was

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two dollars an acre. The land secured was from the James Spencer Grant.

There was little farming done in that part of the section before the advent of the Polish people. Few of the Americans cared to work the soil. At that time, work was looked upon as degrading. The settlers from Silesia, however, did not have such traditions. They did not have the slaves the Americans had, and had to delve into the soil themselves. The tradesmen among them built wheelwright and blacksmith shops, opened stores, and, as if over night, St. Hedwig became an established settlement, confident and self-supporting.

There was no misapplication of work or talent, one of the reasons why St. Hedwig has always been a prosperous community. These people brought with them their farm implements; even wagons, taken apart and crated, were shipped to Texas. They built their homes of logs, or pickets, and thatched their roofs with prairie grass. Corn was planted as soon as the season permitted. Several loads of this corn at a time were taken to Miller's Mill at Seguin to be ground for meal purposes. Not to lose time in their work, these trips were made at night, returning usually about daybreak.

The first church was built on the property of Ludwig Zaiontz. It was not completed until the latter part of September, 1857. The first baptism recorded in the parish book by Father J. Przysiecki was that of Francis, the son of Martin Pierdola and Frances Witon, under date of December 2, 1857; previous baptisms were recorded at the San Fernando Cathedral. Father Rossadowski was the first pastor to attend the Martinez colony. (History of the Catholic Church in the Diocese of San Antonio, Parisot-Smith). Evidently the two priests took turns in attending here until their respective appointments

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in Panna Maria. Father Julian Przysiecki of Panna Maria while on his way to Martinez, November 25, 1863, was thrown from his horse and killed instantly. He was buried in the cemetery around the log church, by Father Amandius Crammer, O. S. B., pastor of the German congregation in San Antonio. After that, the Civil War time, the Benedictine Fathers had charge of St. Hedwig until the arrival of the Resurrectionists in 1866.

Quoting the aforementioned Mr. Kosub:

"When the negroes were freed in 1865, many came to our colony. Some of these bought little patches of land and began the cultivation of cotton. It was from them that we learned the methods of treating this product, new to us.

"Due to the freedom of the slaves, too, many of the Americans, unused to hard manual labor, were fast falling into indigence. Much good land could be had for fifty cents an acre. Fearing the questionable title of much of the land owned, however, we did not profit by the bargains offered."

Father Felix Orzechowski, took the first permanent pastorate of St. Hedwig.

Father Orzechowski, together with Fathers Joseph Bilkowski and Clemens Kucharczyk, joined the three Resurrectionists, A. Bakanowski, V. Barzynski and F. Zwiardowski in Paris, France, whence they sailed with them for Texas to labor there with the permission of the bishop of Galveston, but under the jurisdiction of the Resurrectionists.

Letter of Father Jelowicki, September 30, 1866:

"A seminarian, Orzechowski, sailed with Father Barzynski and two Polish Bernardine Fathers. . . ."

The Bernardine Fathers were Fathers Kucharczyk and Bilkowski. The former received his first appointment in Bandera; the latter was sent to Maulberry (Praha).

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Father Orzechowski remained in St. Hedwig till March, 1867. Father Felix Zwiardowski, recently ordained in Panna Maria by the bishop of Galveston, succeeded as pastor.

Father Felix immediately began plans for building a new church. A stone church, (seventy-six feet long, thirty feet wide, and thirty feet high) was built which was enlarged in 1900, and a second time in 1924. April 25, 1868, the corner stone was blessed by Father Bakanowski of Panna Maria, the superior of the Resurrectionists in Texas.

It is edifying to read the entry of the laying of the corner stone which Father Felix made in the parish book. Both, to show the pious disposition of the priest and to furnish the historical data which the entry contains, the translation is herewith presented:

"In the name of the Holy Trinity, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, and under the protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary, this day the feast of St. Mark the Evangelist, with the permission of the Right Reverend Claudius Marianus Dubuis, Bishop of Galveston and in the presence of Father Vincent Barzynski, pastor of the congregational Polish church of San Antonio, and in the presence of the congregation of Martinez, after a Holy High Mass, the corner stone of the church was blessed.

"The church is built on the property donated by Martin Pierdola, Joseph Michalski, Anton Tudyk, Thomas Krawietz.

"In testimony of which I, the undersigned, attach my name as witness:

Father Felix Zwiardowski

Order of the Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Missionary Administrator of St. Hedwig's Church at Martinez.

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25th day of April, 1868, A. D. the second year of my priesthood."

Father Felix remained here till February, 1869, when Father Theofil Bralewski succeeded. After eight months stay, Father Bralewski died a strange death, November 2, 1869.

Father Bakanowski writes in his "Pobyty w Texas"; "Since the beginning of the Polish missions in Texas, (sixteen years), two Polish priests have died, and both at Martinez. The first, Father Przysiecki, evidently in a rush, fell off his horse and was killed instantly, at the age of thirty-eight. The other, Father Theofil Bralewski, an ex-Benedictine, died in a peculiar manner. After services in the church, Father Theofil laid down to rest a little. His sleep lasted forty hours in which he died without once regaining consciousness. He was forty-seven years of age. Their bodies rest a few steps from the front door of the old church. It is there that the parish has its cemetery. The new church was built on a location in the vicinity. Life at Martinez had been very lonely; nothing but bushes and other wild growth, not even a straight lane to distinguish the settlement from the rest of the wilderness. The church and homes were surrounded by woods so that one could not be seen from the other. There are forty-eight Polish families residing here now (1870), and things have changed some. The grounds around the church have been cleared; new homes and stores have been built, and the main road now reaches us. Attached to the church are the priest's living quarters. In one of the rooms I found some belongings of Father Bralewski, which I had to give away. We did not know him formerly. But with his arrival at Panna Maria we received him with hospitality, in spite of the opposition from diocesan quarters. He labored with

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us eight months, living a hermit's life, ever alone, and busy continually. During Mass, shortly before the Gospel, Father Vincent Barzynski in San Antonio received notice of the critical condition of his co-laborer at Martinez. Immediately he announced the sad news to the congregation and on horseback galloped the eighteen miles to his bedside, giving him conditional absolution and the holy oils "

After Father Bralewski's death, Father V. Barzynski attended Martinez from San Antonio till 1873, when he took it over exclusively. His brother, Father Joseph Barzynski, took charge of St. Michael's.

March 1, 1873, Father Vincent writes: "Martinez is now twice as large as the Polish parish in San Antonio. We are building a school, a two-story building, fifty-six feet long and thirty feet wide. The upper story will be used as living quarters for teachers *viz.* brothers, priests or nuns. The people have undertaken the burden of the five thousand dollars cost. New missions in German and English have opened for Martinez. I had to begin studying the German language as well as English. I have already heard confessions in the former and, once have had an address after a wedding ceremony but I had to read it "

Leaving for Chicago, Father V. Barzynski writes August 14, 1874:

"I closed the parish books, and, through the person of Father Felix, gave the people a financial report, for such is the custom here. The expenses covered the completion of the tower, and the choir; the pews alone cost \$600.00. The main expense was on the school, \$3,606.25; the total exceeds \$5,000.00. The people gave \$3,500.00 and a debt of \$1,500.00 remains."

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Father Felix again took charge till 1877. While visiting the various outposts of the diocese with the bishop, as his vicar general, Father Henry Cichowski filled his vacancy at Martinez. From 1877 Father W. Tyszkiewicz remained as pastor of St. Hedwig's till 1881, followed by Father W. Pelczar, and Father A. Snigurski till 1887. The following years, Father Ludwig Dombrowski served as pastor of St. Hedwig's. Father F. Wlasowski succeeded him in 1897. Father "Laslow," as he shortened his name, remained till January 1898 when Father T. Jaron was appointed pastor for the next seven years. From 1905 the pastor here was Father Stefan Urbanski.

Father Kruszkza in 1905 writes:

"The parish of St. Hedwig numbers over two hundred families. It is the largest of the Polish parishes in the diocese. It is the second largest in Texas; the first place must be given to the Polish parish in Bremond, in the Galveston Diocese. Bremond has three hundred sixty families.

"The church built in 1868 in a short time was too small for even half of the congregation. A large addition was built in 1900, leaving the church of 1868 as the sanctuary of the new building. From that we may form an idea of the parish's growth. The dimensions of this church now are one hundred twenty-four feet by forty-five feet"

In 1878, the Immaculate Conception Sisters of Panna Maria, transferred their headquarters to St. Hedwig's where they have been teaching almost since their foundation. In the early part of 1881, the Order was here dissolved.

The Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word took charge immediately and taught till June of 1935 when the Felician Sisters, all Polish, took over the school.

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In 1905, Father Kruszka speaks of two hundred children attending school.

Besides that, there were a few small public schools. He speaks of St. Clair as a mission of St. Hedwig's.

Father Mosler served as pastor of St. Hedwig's parish from September, 1905 till January, 1910, when Father John Jactyl succeeded. Father J. Kromolicki followed in 1913. In 1914 Father S. Przyborowski, from Yorktown, took his appointment here and remained as pastor for nineteen years, till March, 1933, when Father Voitanis succeeded for the next three months. Father Vincent Klosek is the present pastor.

In 1924 the church was enlarged the second time to accommodate the two hundred and fifty families. This took over \$20,000, leaving some \$4,000.00 debt. The parish, however, does not feel the weight of it since the money is a loan of individual parishioners. Four Felician Sisters teach but sixty-five children; Sunday school attendance numbers fifty pupils. The remainder of the children attend instructions every Saturday.

The following Societies exist in the parish: Sacred Heart, Holy Rosary, Children of Mary. The Sacred Heart Society, to which are attached material benefits, has been existing from days memorial. It has long assumed a secular character. Though its members bind themselves to visit with their sick fellow members, as long as they are confined to bed, they receive pecuniary remuneration for the service; annual picnics are a part of the program for which the society pays.

Spiritually, the parish is healthy. The baser element of a large city, easily reached by auto, however, has had a marked influence on some of the in-

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experienced, simple country folk. The dance hall always has had a startling patronage.

Materially, the people of St. Hedwig are perhaps more independent than in any other Polish settlement. St. Hedwig is situated on the red sand of Bexar County, on which the field crops and orchards do well. Being close to a large city and living near a highway, the market facilities, too, are more accessible.

On the walls of many a home hang pictures of fathers, sons and husbands in uniform who served in the Civil War, the Spanish-American War and the World War.

A list of girls from the parish that entered the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word:

Sister M. Clotilda, Anna Stanus (Deceased); Sister M. Incarnation, Eva Stanus; Sister M. Dominic, Clara Stanus; Sister Mount Carmel, Julia Golla; Sister M. Caroline, Anna Kulesza; Sister M. Joseph, Anastasia Krawietz (Deceased); Sister Margaret Alacoque, Matilda Krawietz (Deceased); Sister M. Elizabeth, Balbina Krawietz (Deceased); Sister M. Dominic, Elizabeth Winkler (Deceased); Sister M. Wincelous, Dorothy Franckowiak (Deceased); Sister M. Lucille, Emilia Lyro; Sister John Nepomucene, Barbara Rakowicz (Deceased).

Sister Joseph (Anastasia Krawietz) was one of the three to form the first novitiate of the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word in San Antonio, January, 1871.

Incidentally, the "Pioneer Cart" in the Battle of Flowers parade, April 24, 1936, won the first place for the St. Hedwig's School in the Class B rural school competition.

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YORKTOWN

Parish of the Holy Cross
(1855-65)

San Antonio Diocese

Yorktown, a town of about two thousand inhabitants, thirty-three miles east of Panna Maria, was founded in the early fifties by German people who came from the various parts of the State to



better their conditions. They were soon joined by several Polish families. (History of Catholic Church in the Diocese of San Antonio, Parisot and Smith). The Polish colony here, originally numbering about twelve families, had its parish organization between

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1860-1865, the time of the Civil War when all the Polish missions were without even a single priest of their ancestry.

Before proceeding with its history, however, we must go back a few years to Meyersville, a much earlier colony twelve miles southeast of Yorktown. As a Polish parish, Meyersville no longer exists. The Fathers of the Holy Family attend the small congregation of English speaking people as one of their missions. The Polish people of that parish, with the exception of a very few, now attend Yorktown.



RECTORY

The colony of Meyersville dates back to the very early days of Polish colonization in Texas. Wherever the Polish people settled, their colonization was always concomitant with organization of a parish. Thus, speaking of the foundation of a Polish colony, one necessarily must think in terms of parish organization.

Meyersville was founded in 1856, and was attended as a mission of Panna Maria by Fathers Rossadowski and Przysiecki. During the Civil War days, the Benedictine Fathers, who were brought to Texas by Bishop Odin in 1859 and assigned to the old San Jose Mission, administered to all the

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Polish missions. Unfortunately, very few of the people could speak German or French. With the advent of the Resurrectionist Fathers in 1866, Meyersville became their charge.

Folowing the Polish settlers into this colony came the German people who settled what is now called the Upper Meyersville, about three miles east of Meyersville proper. The first church of the Polish settlers was just a small shack. In later years, they built a more dignified house of worship which still stands. Because of the German congregation in Upper Meyersville, which outnumbered its Polish neighbor two to one, the Polish church of St. Peter never had a residential pastor. When Polish priests from neighboring colonies could not be had, it was attended by the pastor of the German congregation.

In those days, as for years afterwards, a strong antagonism between the two nationalities existed, no doubt due to the strained conditions prevalent in the old country. The Polish people, more or less, kept to themselves, fighting for their own mother-tongue and customs. Under ordinary circumstances, people left without the ministrations of one of their own, gradually grow colder in their faith. Credit, therefore, is due to these pioneers who took such a unanimous and firm stand in the defense of their mother tongue, a strong nourishment of the faith of their fathers. Though deprived for such a long time of the ministrations of one they could understand, faith remained firmly rooted. Thankful credit, too, must be given Father Gerlach, now Right Reverend Monsignor. A German, whose great bulk of congregation was of his native land, he did whatever was in his power to help his Polish parishioners. Through his efforts the Polish people occasionally enjoyed the ministrations of one of their own; a Polish Sister taught Polish in the parochial school.

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Unlike elsewhere, the people were not forced to send their children to schools where the mother-tongue was taught. A strange fact of school attendance must here be recorded. There were over sixty Polish pupils, whereas only ten of other nationality attended. (W. Kruszkza). "Holy Faith lives," are the words of Father Gerlach to Father Niedbalski of Panna Maria, "and it will bloom, as long as the mother tongue lives." No doubt, this must have been the experience of many an early missionary who witnessed speedy process of Americanization. Father Gerlach resigned from Meyersville in 1898, after six years of hard labor. His resignation was tendered to his bishop with the words that "not being Polish himself he could not do justice to his congregation."

Father F. Walslowski, succeeded Father Gerlach. He, however, remained but a few months. In spite of the clamor for a Polish priest, one of the German nationality took Father Laslow's place. Coleto was a mission of Meyersville. Father Bakanowski, the superior of the Polish missions in Texas, refers, May 27, 1875, to plans for a new church there. Coleto was the first appointment of the notorious Rev. John Frydrychowicz, under the jurisdiction of the Resurrectionists.

"Reverend Frydrychowicz," writes Father Felix, "moved to Yorktown after six months stay in Coleto"

In 1905, the Polish colony of Meyersville consisted of about sixty families. Because of appointment of pastors, not of their ancestry, these people gradually drifted to Yorktown. Their church, though otherwise a substantial edifice, stands closed and neglected. No differences of national feeling any longer exist. This generation, still sympathetic with the feelings of aged parents, however, will at-

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tend where the mother-tongue prevails. But in the course of the coming generation, Meyersville stands an opportunity of its original parish activity.

Under the direction of the Resurrectionist Fathers of Panna Maria, the first church of Yorktown, the building of which began in 1867, was completed the following year. It was blessed under the patronage of the Immaculate Conception.

In June of 1868, Yorktown received its first stationary pastor, Reverend Frydrychowicz. He however, did not remain long. It became an administration of Fathers Bakanowski and Zwiardowski from Panna Maria.

The first school was built in 1870. Here, for some short time, taught the Sisters of Immaculate Conception of the first Polish colony.

In 1871, Reverend Frydrychowicz, stationed at Maulberry, (now Praha), was excommunicated, and, without permission of his superiors, planted himself in Yorktown, where, severing all relations with his Church, he organized "his own heretical party." From 1872-1874, Father Adolf Snigurski was the pastor of Yorktown.

"I asked the bishop," writes Father Felix April 29, 1872. "what to do with Yorktown since the parish was, as it were, under a censure. The bishop did not reply but sent Father Snigurski there. . . ."

After Father Snigurski came the following: T. Kubutowicz, Joseph Barzynski, F. Zwiardowski, F. Smelcer, A. Heinke, Gerlach, Hagel, till August 1, 1888.

In 1887 the church was too small for the congregation. Forty feet were added to the building, making it ninety feet long. At that time, the people themselves went to the bishop, begging permission for the enlargement. Casper Kasprzyk did the collecting among the parishioners. It was mainly

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through his efforts that this improvement was accomplished, as writes August Styra in 1900, an old settler who for a long time had been actively leading in the affairs of the parish.

Father R. Magott was pastor from August 1, 1888 till January, 1892; Father J. Wolenczewicz till February, 1897; Father Thomas Moczygemba till October 1, 1912 during which time he attended Runge as a mission, where he also built the first church, and Bandera, when the people needed a Polish confessor.

With his arrival in Yorktown, Father Moczygemba found himself in the midst of a large congregation. Some one hundred Polish families, thirty-five Bohemian and a few German. The majority of the Germans of the locality were Lutheran. In the first place, good parochial teachers were necessary. Accordingly, an application to the Incarnate Word Convent was made. Sister Mary Helen Fink writes in her history of the Congregation:

"In 1897, a community was sent to Yorktown, with Sister Mary Louise as superioress. The conditions in Yorktown were by no means comfortable; an old lumber building, provided with two windows on each side and a door at either end, was courteously called the school, and the equipment was in keeping with the surroundings. The community had the happiness of seeing this primitive structure replaced by the present St. Mary's School, which, supported and appreciated by the people, has had a successful existence."

A new rectory was built and the old one converted into a Sisters' home. The old school was torn down in 1898 and a new one built. At this time, one hundred twenty-one children attended.

The church, enlarged a few years previously, still proved too small for the congregation. It was

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badly in need of repairs, too; and was poorly supplied with sacred vestments. The second addition was made in 1901. The old main altar was replaced by one more becoming; vestments, chalice and statues were donated by private individuals.

The morale of the people gradually improved, too. There are many legendary tales of Father Tom's disciplinary accomplishments in the parish. Before his time, some of the erudite in the doctrines of the Church always found it necessary to leave the church during the sermon. The commonest excuse was: "the horses are restless and are liable to break up the old buggy." But with Father Tom's ascension into the pulpit, even the jack asses listened and the old grey mare was as gentle as Mary's lamb!

The cemetery, a donation of A. Kozielski from the very beginning of the parish, also received greater attention than it ever did in the past.

Succeeding Father Tom, came: Father S. Przyborowski till May, 1914; Father John Jactyl till October, 1921.

April 7, 1915, the church burned down, even the bells melted.

The site of the recent conflagration, a mile out of town, was again chosen for the new building. The logical location should have been in the center of the busy, prosperous town where appropriate lots were offered. After much bickering, sentimentality had its way. Fortunately, insurance on the building realized six thousand dollars for the parish. Through the zealous efforts of Father Jactyl, a large, beautiful brick church was built for the sum of forty-eight thousand dollars. (Building—twenty-eight thousand; furnishing—twenty thousand). Building material was still at a low cost. Had the parish waited longer, the cost of building would have been doubled. Shortly afterward, economic condi-

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tions turned a turbulent current, culminating in the high prices of the World War. About one hundred seventy families contributed. The corner-stone was blessed September 14, 1915, and the name of the church was changed to Exaltation of the Holy Cross.

October, 1921, the Very Reverend Dean P. Grzesiak took charge of the parish. In his time, 1926, the present rectory was built. The lumber from the old residence was used in enlarging the Sisters' house. The total cost of the two buildings amounted to twelve thousand dollars.

In his time and under his direction, were built the Mexican churches in Nordheim and Yorktown.

Father Grzesiak died March 16, 1932. In the presence of the archbishop and some sixty clergy and a great concourse of people, his remains were carried to the parish cemetery for burial.

Two months later, Father V. Klosek was appointed pastor, and remained in office till October 15, 1933, when Father P. Voitanis, the present pastor succeeded.

In the course of its seventy years of existence, the Yorktown parish has grown considerably. With the addition from Meyersville, it now boasts of two hundred fifty families. Only nineteen names on the parish report are non-Polish. Its boundaries cover an extensive territory, a radius of eighteen miles. The Knights of Columbus, with a council of about sixty-five members, are very active. A number of Catholic Daughters, too, are found in the parish. There are the following Societies: Holy Rosary, Altar, and St. Gregory. The debt on the rectory has been reduced to \$1,940.00.

The parochial school attendance, however, has dwindled sorrowfully. Though there have been four Silesian Sisters teaching since September,

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1935, only about sixty children are in evidence. The extensive confines of the parish make a full patronage of the parish school impractical, and boarding facilities are difficult. But there are individual cases where a full sacrifice of parental solicitude for the spiritual welfare of their children is a beautiful example. These are mostly from large families.

The parish has the honor of having three of its children in the religious life. Father F. J. Ledwig, a missionary mostly engaged in planting the word of God in localities antagonistic towards the Catholic Church; Father Emmitt Kolodzie, ordained in 1933; and Sister M. Methodius, (Mary Broll) of the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word, now deceased. In the secular life, too, the parochial school was the educational foundation of Dr. Leon Nowierski and Dr. Daniel Scheffler.

From the very beginning, the Poles, as well as the Germans, formed a substantial part of the progressive business men of the town. A number of these have moved to other localities or have gone the way of all flesh. We find such names as Frank Kolodzie, John Kolodzie, Tom Bock, V. Ramdzienski, J. Kozielski, Frank Notzon, Ben Kolodzie, P. Migura, at one time or other, contributing to the growth of the business section. At present, Frank Notzon Sr., Frank Notzon Jr., Ben Kolodzie, J. Kozielski, Migura Brothers manifestly form part of the town's trade.

CESTOCHOWA

Parish of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary
(1873)

San Antonio Diocese

In Karnes County, five miles north of Panna Maria, we find another little town, Cestochowa, akin

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to its mother colony.

The beginning of the parish dates back to 1873 when about forty families, belonging to Panna Maria parish, built a small school which at the same time served as a chapel.



Two acres of land donated by Anton Jarzombek and an acre by Frank Mutz constituted the church grounds. Father Felix Zwiardowski, stationed at Panna Maria, said Mass here once a month and at times, on week days. This continued until 1877.

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In that year, when Father Felix called on the people of Panna Maria to build a new church, the people of Cestochowa began to have thoughts like this: "If we are to contribute towards the building of a new church in Panna Maria where we have to travel such a distance, why not build our own church here." With this aim in view, the three, Steve Tycman, Anton Jarzombek and Jacob Lyssy formed plans.



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Anton Jarzombek canvassed the homes north of the Cibolo river, then Jacob Lyssy took the south side of the stream. The enthusiasm of the people must have been very encouraging since the two collected over three thousand dollars the first day. With this happy beginning, Steve Tycman, Jacob Lyssy and Lawrence Wiatrek approached Bishop Pellicer for permission to build, which permission was granted. Jacob Lyssy inquired of the bishop how much land was necessary for the project in view. To the three acres on which the

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school was built, another acre had to be added, he told them. At this time, Father Felix anticipating the division of the parish, sought the bishop. But the people of Cestochowa were forewarned of just such a move. The three mentioned above made their second visit to San Antonio. The bishop found it difficult to argue with the three determined men. To evade the difficulty, thinking they would be unable to meet the requirements, he said that four acres of land was not enough for church purposes. They had to have at least eight acres. This did not seem so difficult to the three. Anton Jarzombek and Jacob Lyssy each contributed two and a half acres, which added to the three acres already belonging to the church, constituted the required acreage. Building of the church began. The stone was quarried from the fields of Mathew Pawelek, Joseph Lyssy and Anton Skloss. The hauling was done free of charge, and the lime used cost practically nothing. Gervas Gabrysch was the contractor. Everything went well until the blessing of the corner stone. The rumor had spread that the church building would belong to the Congregation of the Resurrectionists. This would not do. The unsympathetic leaders could not consider such an outcome. Because of hard words, Father Felix refused to bless the corner stone. Another trip to see the bishop was necessary. This necessitated the bishop's presence at Cestochowa. What the true state of affairs was, will never be known. The bishop was dissatisfied with the whole affair. He had assured the people that the church would be directly under his jurisdiction as they wished and not under that of the Congregation, and commanded Father Felix to proceed with the blessing. Work on the building was resumed in regular order and, before long, the church was completed. The building, eighty-five

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by forty, including the rectory attached in the rear, was larger than the Panna Maria church but not as high. The new edifice was blessed February 10, 1878, and placed under the patronage of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. In September of that year, Father W. Pelczar was ordained to the priesthood and received his first appointment as residential pastor of the new church. Here he remained until 1881.

The building however, was still unfurnished. With his appointment at Cestochowa, Father Pelczar undertook the furnishing very seriously. The parish paid for the main altar. Above that altar was placed a large picture of "Virgin Mary of Cestochowa," a donation of Father Felix. The picture was brought from Panna Maria in a solemn procession in which Panna Maria as well as Cestochowa took part. The side altars were donations of individual parishioners.

The altar of St. Joseph is a remembrance of Jacob and Catherine Opiela; and the altar of the Sacred Heart was made possible through the offerings of Father Pelczar and some small collections from the people. All three altars were made by Albert Pawelek, a parishioner. The merit of his work must be recommended. The altars are of very fine workmanship. With slight changes in painting, they are still used in the new and present church. The stations of the cross were a donation of Jacob and Catherine Opiela.

In 1881, Father Felix left Panna Maria for Chicago. Father Pelczar was moved to St. Hedwig and Father W. Tyszkiewicz took his place at Cestochowa. Panna Maria became a mission of Cestochowa. Father Tyszkiewicz was a zealous laborer and accomplished much good in his new appointment. He organized the Society of St. John Kanty; founded a library and built a parish hall. The

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society still exists, a flourishing remembrance of the efforts of Father Tyszkiewicz.

Shortly before the arrival of Father Tyszkiewicz, Father Lisicki had charge of the two parishes for a few months. During that time the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word took over the schools in Panna Maria and Cestochowa. Irregular attendance was a serious draw back at Cestochowa, especially during the rainy season when the river, which divided the town, overflowed its banks and made fording impossible. To remedy conditions, it was thought advisable to divide the allotment and establish a school in Bartole. As the funds were insufficient to support both communities, St. Joseph, Cestochowa, became a private school (Incarnate Word Community Records). (Bartole derives its name from San Bartolo, a stone building about three miles north of Cestochowa, formerly used by some early Spaniards as a chapel. Only a stone wall of the original building remains. Wooden additions were made in later years). Father Tyszkiewicz was succeeded by Father Felix in 1886. Father Felix also attended Panna Maria until the appointment of Father Thomas Moczygemba in 1891. During the short visit of Father Felix to Chicago, where his superiors called him, Father Louis Dombrowski attended to parish needs at Cestochowa. Father Felix on his return from Chicago remained in Cestochowa until his death, August 31, 1895. For ten years, 1881 till 1891 Cestochowa was, as it were, the metropolis of the Polish missions in Texas.

With the appointment of Father Moczygemba in Panna Maria, the metropolis of short duration again became the mission of the original colony for four months. In January of 1896, Father M. Mozejowski became pastor at Cestochowa where he remained two years. Following him came Father S. Przyborow-

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ski, just ordained at the seminary in Victoria, Texas. Through his efforts, the inside of the church was painted "al fresco" by G. Flury of San Antonio. Up to that time, the church tower still remained incomplete. Because of the approaching silver jubilee of the parish, serious efforts were made for its completion. Adelbert Kniejski, who formerly donated eight hundred dollars for the church, added two hundred dollars more that in the Book of Records might be written in golden letters the round and full sum of one thousand dollars. Mr. Kniejski, ever since the foundation of the parish, was most zealous in the preservation of the beauty of the house of God. In 1902, the church tower, with four small towers on the corners, was completed.

The celebration of the parish silver jubilee in 1903 lasted three days. Bishop Forest and many clergy attended.

In 1905 Father Kruszkza writes:

"Cestochowa now has three schools: at Cestochowa proper, at Pulaski and Bartole. All three are taught by the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word. Each school has about fifty pupils. Cestochowa, a few years ago, had one hundred and seventy families, but in 1898, sixty-five families formed a separate parish and built their own church in Kosciusko, where previously services were held once a month in a school building. In 1902, Falls City, where a new church had been built, fell away from Cestochowa, thus leaving the mother parish with only seventy-five families.

"In Cestochowa are found two stores: one is owned by August Zaiontz, the other by Frank Mzyk; the latter is the local Post Master. Mr. Mzyk also owns a cotton gin. Financially, the people here are well provided. In December, 1904, Father

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Berendt gave a mission, during which over nine hundred received Holy Communion.

"In the parish the following Societies exist: Holy Rosary, Holy Scapular, Sacred Heart, St. John Kanty, St. Cecilia and a Sodality of Young Ladies."

Father Przyborowski remained in Cestochowa until 1912; Father John Jactyl till 1914. At that time Father John Kromolicki took charge. He remained only a year, but during his pastorate the present two-story rectory was built. In 1915, Father Peter Grzesiak was made pastor; and in 1918 Father Kostorz took charge until 1922. Father M. A. Dombrowski remained pastor for eleven years. In his time the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word left Cestochowa and the parish remained without Sisters until Father Voitanis' time in 1933, when the Benedictine Sisters took charge. These, however, did not remain long and the parish school was again administered by public lay-teachers.

In Father Voitanis' time, in 1913, the present and second church was built at the cost of \$30,000.00. It is a beautiful church. The money expended on the buildings, however, could have been used to better advantage had an entirely new building been built. But the people, sentimental in regard to the first foundation of the church, wanted the old walls to remain, with some additions in height. The roof has ever remained a source of trouble to the parish. Every rain leaves its harmful impression on the white walls within, in places destroying the plaster.

Father Przyborowski again took charge of the parish in 1933. The original eight thousand dollar debt on the church has been considerably reduced since his appointment. He has also provided new Sisters for the parish schools at Cestochowa and Marcelina, since 1934. There are five Felician Sisters,

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REV. S. PRZYBOROWSKI
PASTOR OF CESTOCHOWA, TEXAS

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all Polish, teaching over one hundred fifty children. The number of seventy-five families in 1902 has increased to one hundred thirty families; six hundred forty-five souls. The parish also has sent four daughters to the Incarnate Word Convent. They are: Sister Cecilia (Barbara Krawietz) deceased; Sister Bronislaus (Agnes Krawietz); Sister Stanislaus (Mary Krawietz); and Sister Sixtus (Salomea Olenik).

Father Przyborowski remains pastor at the present time. In spite of his age, he is still very active. During his first pastorate here he built the churches at Kosciusko and Falls City. The church at Kosciusko, the parishioners providing free labor and some building materials, was erected at the cost of only two thousand dollars. The church at Falls City, given to a contractor, without any labor from the parishioners, was built on a finer scale but at the cost of four thousand five hundred dollars.

The little town of Cestochowa (meaning "Saves Often," a name derived from the notable village of Cestochowa in Poland) in every respect is about as active as Panna Maria. The modern automobile has reduced the two original stores to one store and two garages.

The people are prosperous, hard-working farmers. They are thrifty American citizens with a lively interest in the annals of their historic colony, for many years excluded from the outside world by the distance from railroad and paved highway. But the automobile and the radio are bringing the whole universe even to this "secluded spot on the Cibolo."

In July, 1935, Most Rev. Joseph Gavlina, Bishop of Poland's army, who visited all the Polish colonies in the State, presented Father Przyborowski with a Golden Medal of Merit from the Polish Government, one of the highest honors given by that

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nation. Father Przyborowski and Father Szymanski of Bremond were the only two in Texas to receive this honorable recognition.

KOSCIUSKO

Parish of St. Ann
(1892)

San Antonio Diocese

The little town of Kosciusko is located in Wilson County, eight miles north of Cestochowa. The



beginning of the parish dates back to 1892 when the school was built. Active organization took form in 1898 when the first church, eighty by forty feet, was erected.

The founders of the parish, numbering sixty-five families, were mostly younger people who

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formerly formed part of the Cestochowa parish. The church, under the direction of Father Przybowski, was built by local carpenters. The cost of building was only two thousand dollars. Labor and some building material were provided by the people.

The first stationary pastor was Father Matysiak who took charge in 1901. Three years later, it again became Father Przybowski's charge of short duration. Father J. Marzotas remained till June, 1905. For the next six years, Father Theodor Jaron, a man of high spiritual qualities, served as



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pastor of St. Ann's Church. His memory remains a blessed tradition even to the present generation who never knew him except from the lips of their parents. It is not uncommon to see his name on the list of the departed to be remembered on All Souls' Day. Father Jaron died September 26, 1911. His body rests in the St. Ann's cemetery where beautiful cedars, planted with his own hands, grow profusely. The cedar trees surrounding the church are his work, too.

Following Father Jaron's death, came Fathers: J. Karcz, W. Graham, M. Garriga, H. Darbe and Arthur Hiboc, till November, 1912. At that time, Father P. Gresiak was appointed pastor and remained in that capacity till August, 1915. Father

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REV. B. J. KAMINSKI

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REV. B. J. KAMINSKI

Pastor of St. Ann's
Kosciusko, Texas

Father Kaminski, the son of Joseph and Mary Ognoski, was born October 22, 1899, at Brenham, Texas. Entered St. Mary's University at La Porte in 1915 where he made his preparatory studies. His course in philosophy was made at the St. John's Seminary, San Antonio, Texas; two years of theology at Notre Dame Seminary, New Orleans, and two years at St. Meinrad Seminary, St. Meinrad, Indiana. Ordained priest at Fredericksburg June 17, 1928, by the Most Rev. Arthur J. Drossaerts. His first appointment was as the assistant pastor to Rev. J. Jacobi at Sacred Heart Church, San Antonio. Made pastor of St. Ann's, Kosciusko, January 1930.

A. Gorek administered the parish till December, 1916. Father Grzesiak again took charge till 1921.

In Father Gresiak's second pastorate, the present Sisters' residence was built. The Sisters formerly lived in a house attached to the school building. The school was enlarged at the same time. The pastor moved into the new house and the Sisters took over the old rectory.

Father John Jactyl succeeded Father Gresiak. He moved back into the old rectory and the Sisters henceforth resided in the new building.

Because of bad health, Father Jactyl had to leave for Deming, N. M. Father Benjamin Kaminski, the present pastor, took charge in January of 1930. After a year's time in Deming, Father Jactyl left for Europe where he died August 7, 1935.

March 30, 1930, was the solemn occasion of Father E. Dworaczyk's First Solemn Mass. Father Dworaczyk is a son of the parish.

Much credit is due Father Kaminski, a Texan of Sealy, for the large building program he has undertaken in the last few years. In 1933 the church was enlarged by twenty feet and received a new coat of paint. In 1935 a new rectory, valued at

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\$6,000.00, was built on the south side of the church. It is provided with modern conveniences as well as a fresh south breeze which never could be had in the old location north of the church building. The Sisters house was raised higher; and electric lights installed. The location of the old rectory was used for building a large parish hall; new fences now grace the church grounds.

The Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word have been teaching here since 1892 when the first school was built. These Sisters at the same time attended to a school in Pulaski, a few miles west of Kosciusko. (Sister M. Helen Fink). The congregation spreading far into the northern section called "Borysownia" built a school of their own. Here the Sisters from St. Ann's School taught half the school term till 1922. When the Sisters taught at "Borysownia" or "Liberty Hill," as it was sometimes called, Mr. L. T. Urbanczyk was the school master at Kosciusko. The school at "Borysownia" no longer exists.

The parish comprises some one hundred ninety families. Its territory is very large and thickly populated. Young settlers are continually building new homes in the north-eastern section.

In Stockdale, ten miles north of Kosciusko, are found numerous Polish families who originally belonged to St. Hedwig's. They built their own little church under the patronage of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. For a time, Stockdale was the mission of Kosciusko. In 1928 it became the mission of Nixon. Its people, however, still attend services at Kosciusko. In the early nineties they sent their children to St. Ann's School where Polish was taught. Distance and subsequent Americanization of their children, however, made the local public school as good as any other.

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St. Ann's School has an attendance of about one hundred forty children at present. Children from the distant public schools attend instructions once a week. Since September, 1934, the Sisters have been teaching under the Public School system. While three Sisters teach in the parochial buildings, Mr. and Mrs. C. Boden have charge of the public building.

Two daughters of the parish entered the Convent of Incarnate Word: Sister Cyrilla (Emelia Korzekwa) and Sister Damasus (Balbina Kotara).

The customs and practices of these people are in every way similar to the customs and practices of the closely related colonies of Cestochowa and Panna Maria. They love their Polish as much as they love their Church. As in the aforementioned colonies, all reside on small farms. In this young colony, where large families struggle for betterment of conditions, poverty may be seen more plainly than in any other colony of its size. The fact that a home-made coffin is often used in burial does not constitute a mark of social disparagement for those concerned.

In the last year or two, a good number of struggling families have moved to Mission, Texas, in the Corpus Christi Diocese. This thought of seeking newer opportunity in that direction has lately assumed larger proportions. About twenty families from Kosciusko and Cestochowa have already made new homes there.

FALLS CITY

Parish of Holy Trinity
(1902)

San Antonio Diocese

Falls City, in Karnes County, is situated six miles directly west of Cestochowa. It is considered a

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thoroughly Polish settlement, though a good number of other nationalities reside within its limits. The English language, however, is spoken more freely, and social activity is conducted on a higher scale than in the neighboring Polish settlements. As



a town, it dates to 1884, when the railroad was built. At that time, a number of families from Panna Maria and Cestochowa transferred their business activity here. The Schultz Mercantile Co., in which Frank, John and Felix Moczygemba held a

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share, and the Kowalik Lumber Yard formed the heart of the business section. As a parish, comprising some seventy families, it was not organized until 1902.

June 14, 1899, a settlement of Bohemians, Germans and Poles west of the San Antonio river, seven miles directly west of Panna Maria, in the Hobson section, addressed a petition to Bishop Forest, beg-



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ging permission to build their own church. So far, most of them attended Panna Maria services. But the river, often swollen, made fording difficult and, at times, left the people helplessly stranded on their way home. The permission was granted.

The Polish territory of Cestochowa had by this time spread ten miles west of the railroad at Falls City. The people residing in this new territory began to attend the services at Hobson because of the

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nearness, though they considered themselves parishioners of Cestochowa and received the sacraments there. But at heart, they were thoroughly Polish and yearned for a church in their own surroundings. So, in 1902, plans for a building were formed.

Under the direction of Father Przyborowski, pastor of Cestochowa, and the management of the committee elected, a contract for the building was let, and for the sum of four thousand five hundred dollars the present church was erected. The San Antonio river between Falls City and Hobson served as a boundary line in the south, and the Marcelina creek, about a mile east of the town, separated the new parish from Cestochowa.

The corner stone was blessed, February 11, 1902, and October 21, of the same year, the church was dedicated by Bishop Forest. The building, measuring seventy by thirty, is of wood.

Great credit is due to Peter Kowalik, the proprietor of the lumber yard, and Mrs. Mary Schultz, of the Rzeppa family of Panna Maria, through whose efforts, particularly, the building plans took concrete form.

Father Kruszka, 1905, in "Historya Osad Polskich w Ameryce" refers to the Southern Messenger, the diocesan organ, in which the editor, in no uncertain terms, makes much ado about the religious zeal of the community where mixed marriages yet had no part.

Falls City's first attending pastor was Father Przyborowski. Following him came Father L. Etchenberg till 1906. Subsequently, came Fathers: J. Clonowski, E. Wrobel, P. Nichol, N. Bauer, I. Blechacz, J. Jactyl, T. Jaron, S. Frog, till 1910; Father J. Karcz till 1912; following, came Fathers A. Huebsch, F. Ledwig, I. Mazurowski, S. Pueyo till 1915. Father A. Wensora was pastor till his death

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on Feb., 29, 1920. Father W. Heffernan succeeded in the pastorate for a year. Father Leo Moczygemba, the present pastor, received his appointment in May, 1923.

The rectory was built in 1907. Two years previously, the Holy Trinity School was built, and the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word took charge immediately. Four years later, the Franciscan Sisters began teaching the parish school. These remained till 1913. For the following twelve years, the school was deprived of the blessing of religious teachers. With the arrival of Father Moczygemba, in 1923, efforts for parochial teachers began to have the desired results. St. Stanislaus School, five miles west of Falls City, was built, and, the following year Sisters of the Incarnate Word of the Blessed Sacrament, with Mother House in Victoria, took charge of the two schools. These Sisters have remained ever since.

S. Nesterowicz in his "Notatki z Podrozy," 1909, writes:

"The town of Falls City, numbering over one hundred families, carries many strong business interests, and almost all are in the hands of the Polish people. Besides numbers of stores and cotton gins, the town boasts of a bank. The largest possessions belong to Mrs. Schultz, a Polish widow. Mrs. Schultz formerly owned a store in Panna Maria whence she moved to Falls City, when the railroad was built. Her possessions are now valued at \$400,000.00. Besides the lumber yard of Mr. B. Kowalik, there are the business concerns of F. Neswietz, F. Kolodzie and F. Labus; E. F. Pawelek is the druggist, P. Manka and F. Pawelek own the saloons. F. Neiswietz operates a cotton gin, and M. Pollock prides himself on his stables.

"Falls City, especially in the last years, has pro-

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gressed rapidly. Polish farmers east and west of the town do all their trading here.

"With the exception of a few, the population is composed mostly of younger families. From among the few older settlers, Mr. J. Wiatrek has particularly drawn my attention. Mr. Wiatrek was the local bone-mender. Beyond that specialty, he neither professed or practiced any cures. But a new medical practitioner, who had just settled in the town, could not very well approve of such illegitimate infringement on his rightful practice. Unable to dispose of his enemy by fair means, the doctor finally condescended to a secret bribe. That was the first pecuniary remuneration Mr. Wiatrek ever received for his services. With that, he decided to retire in favor of the more qualified saw-bones"

In 1926 the Columbian Hall was built. The Knights of Columbus, with a council here, have been very active for years. At one time, the council had the reputation of being the most active of the councils in smaller towns. Numerous members from Panna Maria, Cestochowa and Kosciusko belonged. Poth received a charter for its council, which automatically decreased Falls City's membership. Depression and lack of interest on the part of the distant members of Panna Maria and Cestochowa gradually weakened the force. But considering all, the membership still may pride itself for its activity.

Falls City also has a council of Catholic Daughters who continually labor in the interests of the parish and the school.

Particular notice must be given to the Holy Trinity School Club, organized in the interests of the parochial school.

The Falls City parish, young as it is, and comprising but one hundred twenty families, has the unusual honor of nine daughters in religious life. Sis-

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ter Theresita (Doris Schultz) is a member of the Divine Providence Community. The other eight



REV. FATHER LAWRENCE, O. C. S. C., AND HIS PARENTS

REV. FATHER LAWRENCE, O. C. S. C.
(Thomas Swierc)

Abbey of Our Lady of Gethsemani
Order of Reformed Cistercians,
Trappist, Kentucky

Father Lawrence, or Thomas Swierc as he was known before entering the Order of Trappists, the son of Joseph Swierc and Salomea Kyrish, was born April 30 1907, at Falls City, Texas.

His elementary studies were done in the parochial school of Falls City. Entered St. John's Seminary, San Antonio, Texas, September 1920, where he studied two years. The following three years were spent at the St. Mary's University, also of San Antonio.

In autumn of 1926 the unhappy boy entered the Novitiate of the Trappists where he finally found contentment. Father Lawrence was ordained priest in November 1934.

belong to the Incarnate Word of the Blessed Sacrament Sisters in Victoria. These are: Sister Charlott (Margaret Moczygemba), Sister Vivian (Lillian Hale), Sister Edith (Helen Mzyk), Sister Constance

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(Gertrude Kapica), Sister Gabriel (Hedwig Huehlefeld), Sister Jane Marie (Cecilia Szczepanik), Sister Aquinas (Marcela Janacek), Sister Theofane (Regina Sprencel).

One of the sons of the parish, Father Lawrence (Thomas Swierc), entered one of the strictest Orders of the Church, the Cistercian Trappists in Kentucky.

A new parochial school was built in 1931 for the sum of four thousand dollars. There are nine Sisters taking care of the St. Stanislaus and Holy Trinity Schools, the former having an attendance of fifty-seven pupils, and the latter one hundred.

At the present date, Falls City prides itself on its extensive business operations. There is a bank, two lumber-yards, two gins, a drug-store, four general-merchandise establishments, a large hardware store, small-time hard-liquor fountains, and a number of service stations. All business is run by Polish people: the Moczygembas, Kowaliks, Paweleks, Dziuks, Urbanczyks, Morawietz, Mzyks.

The Pawelek family, of the drug-store proprietorship, is engaged chiefly in the medical profession. Vincent and Clemens Pawelek fill out the prescriptions; Doctors Izidor, Louis and Anton, all brothers, have built a solid medical reputation in Houston, Texas.

All told, Falls City is a most respectable community which has contributed much to the progress of the Church, and the betterment of conditions for its citizens in general.

Incidentally, Fabian Kowalik of base-ball fame, the "Mayor of Falls City," is a son of the parish.

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POLONIA

Parish of Sacred Heart

(1898)

San Antonio Diocese

A small and much younger colony of Poles is found near Lockhart, about sixty-five miles north-east of San Antonio. This colony is called Polonia.

The first settler here was J. Bosiewicz, in 1891. Seven years later, about twelve families bought land in the section forming the settlement. These included Frank Slawinski, Frank Zawadzki, Jos. Dzierzanowski, Ignatz Dykowski, Joseph Bonewicz, L. Pieniazek, A. Malinowski and others. In time came greater members.

Polonia is but a few miles from San Marcos where some thirty families were very active since 1870 and built their church in 1897. Polonia has a nice little church, well equipped and with beautiful statuary, a sacrificial effort of its few early settlers. Since 1902, Father Ludwig Dombrowski, of San Antonio, attended Polonia once a month. Two years later Father Joseph Zielinski was appointed pastor. In 1913 a committee of two, viz. Frank Slawinski and Frank Zawadzki, were appointed to solicit funds for a new church. June 19th of the same year the Church of Sacred Heart was blessed by the Most Reverend Bishop Shaw. The following priests succeeded Father Zielinski: Father John Plaza, Father Stanislaus Wojnowski, Father John Cis, Father John Torkarz, Father P. Voitanis.

The colony has dwindled considerably since its foundation. Many have moved to San Antonio. At present it is a mission of Lockhart, the pastorate of Father Leopold Bojnowski.

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MISCELLANEOUS

San Antonio Diocese

There has been a sprinkling of Polish settlements here and there that showed signs of development, but in time disappeared as such, and were fused into the general Americanism that surrounded them.

Because of small numbers, or, the numbers justified, the lack of a Polish priest who could hold their sympathies in unity, thus drawing other native immigrants into their midst, these people, neglected and in fact, inaccessible by any other tongue as far as their religion was concerned, gradually lost their entity as a national or a religious body.

Thus, we find Stockdale, Wilson County, where in the early eighties, thirty families, separated from St. Hedwig by about thirty miles, built their own church and, for a time, sent their children to parochial schools in Panna Maria and Kosciusko, a distance of twenty-five miles. These are now completely lost to the Poles, and are hardly considered a credit to the Church.

Another Polish settlement of about twenty-five families had a foundation in Las Gallinas, in Atascosa County, twenty-five miles south of San Antonio. The Polish people shortened the name to "Gaina." The people here also built a church of their own but, outside of the meager attention of the Resurrectionists, they never had the service of one of their own. In time of sickness they sought a Polish priest from San Antonio. Father Vincent Barzynski, in a letter of June 19, 1871, makes mention of "Gaina."

In San Marcos, which Father Felix Zwiardowski attended for a while as a Polish mission of St. Hedwig, thirty families built a church in 1897. Earlier colonists settled here in 1870. Father Ludwik Dom-

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browski, at St. Michael's in San Antonio, attended to their needs for a time.

Eighteen miles, north-east of Victoria, lies the little town of Inez. Originally it was called Garcita, or "Gazeta" as the Poles dubbed it, and was attended as early as 1871 by the Resurrectionists, as mentioned by Father V. Barzynski in a letter of that year. Its organization, however, did not take form until 1895, when the people built a church and a rectory. In 1905, they numbered some thirty families (Kruszka). A Polish priest was never stationed there, but a good measure of faith had been preserved by the attendance of Bohemian priests. Father Henry Psencik is stationed there now.

Incidentally, Inez is the home town of Mr. Adam Jendrej, who settled there in 1882. Mr. Jendrej is the first born of Panna Maria, coming into this world the first night the hundred families camped under the historic oak trees, Dec. 24, 1854.

WHITE DEER

Parish of Sacred Heart

(1909)

Amarillo Diocese

About six hundred miles from Panna Maria, at White Deer, in the Panhandle section, settled a number of Polish families from south Texas. Its original settlers were of the old stock of Panna Maria and Cestochowa. The names of Czerners, Urbanczyks, Kotaras, Haiduks and others, who formed the colony of Panna Maria, appear on the list of the founders of the White Deer colony. It is the only Polish parish in the Diocese of Amarillo.

"August 23, 1909," as writes John Kotara for the "Panhandle Pilot," "Henry Czermer of Karnes

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County, Texas, examined the land about White Deer and chose a location for a Catholic colony. Following him came John, Felix Ben and Ladislaus Urbanczyk, sons of Anton, one of the few of the first immigration of 1854 to remain in Panna Maria, Vincent and Ben Haiduk, John and Ed. Kotara, Simon Bednorz, Charles Kalka, Jerome Rapstain.

"Until 1910, the people of White Deer attended services at Groom, Texas. This, however, was



inconvenient because of the distance. Father C. J. Bier, who then resided in Amarillo, offered up the first Mass in the colony, in the home of John Urbanczyk. The thirty-five souls, of which the settlement consisted, were all present for this solemn oc-

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casion. From this memorable day till May 30, 1913, Holy Mass was celebrated monthly in the homes of the settlers.

"A block of land was bought for church purposes, June 29, 1911. With the assistance of generous donations from the Catholic Church Extension Society and the White Deer Land Co., and with the unanimous support and cooperation of the parishioners, who postponed their own work in the fields to donate their time and labor, the present church was erected.

"The building was completed and ready for divine services, April 29, 1913. The first High Mass in the new Church of the Sacred Heart was celebrated May 30, 1913, by Father C. J. Bier. From this date till 1927, the parish was attended by priests from St. Francis or Amarillo. In the spring of that year, Father John H. Krukkert, then pastor of St. Francis, and a zealous Panhandle missionary, built a beautiful brick rectory. July 9, Father M. French was appointed resident pastor"

In regard to the building of the rectory, it is recalled by the writer who was visiting there then, that the parishioners were assessed a dollar for every acre of land they owned. Some of them contributed as high as fifteen-hundred dollars.

"Since the year 1913," continues the "Panhandle Pilot," "the colony has grown and prospered so much that a new and larger church is needed and a parochial school is under advisement.

"The colony at this time comprises one hundred seventy-six souls, all prosperous, happy and contented. Father Joseph Wonderly, who succeeded Father French as pastor, is an able man and ever zealous in the interests of the Church and the community.

"The population of the parish has multiplied as

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rapidly as the population of White Deer itself. The parish since 1910 till 1927, has grown from thirty-five souls to one hundred seventy-six. The town, composed mostly of non-Catholics, and the community surrounding it, has increased from thirteen inhabitants in 1909 to twenty-five hundred at the present time (1927). The Church and town still enjoy a healthy and vigorous increase of population every year "

The reason for this rapid increase in population, is mainly due to the oil "booms" around White Deer, Pampa and Borger. These "booms" lasted little longer than ordinarily. People poured in streams, and towns were built over night. In 1927 the town of Borger, seventeen miles from White Deer, in the sixteen months of its existence, had grown three miles long, three streets deep, with buildings of every size and description.

"This increase of population in the parish," continues the "Pilot," "adds much to the spiritual and material welfare of the city of White Deer, the Church, the community as a whole and, in general, tends to the development of the entire Panhandle

"Most of the land, especially in the vicinity of White Deer, is owned by Polish farmers who enjoy good crops every year. Failures so far are unknown. Fertility of the soil is ideal; more suitable rain-falls and other weather conditions for harvesting could not be desired. The community enjoys the moderate winters and ideal summers

"Protestants and Catholics live in close harmony, with good will towards all, ever zealous for the interests of each other and the community "

Succeeding Father Wonderly in 1931, Father Ed. Clinton remained till November 1934. Father

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Charles Dvorak is the pastor of Sacred Heart at the present time.

The parochial school, at one time under advisement, has never been built. All the children attend the public school and have catechetical instructions once a week. Some of the children at one time were sent to the St. Mary's Academy in Amarillo, conducted by the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word.

At present there are thirty families in the parish, twenty-five of whom are Polish.

The spirit of White Deer at large, where at one time bigotry began to assume startling proportions, is now partial to the Catholic Church. Many non-Catholics are often seen at the Catholic services and some have shown active interest in learning more about the true religion.

In the year 1935, unusual dust storms turned the day into a veritable night, destroyed all crops and sent the terrified people scurrying for their sanctums in prayer. This year, drought and dust, though less terrifying, again left the farmers without visible means of support.

McCOOK

(1935)

Corpus Christi Diocese

The latest Polish settlement in the south Texas and the first in the Corpus Christi Diocese is that of McCook, (Hidalgo County). This has been mentioned in the history of Kosciusko, Texas. However, herewith is presented an excerpt from a letter of Father J. Michel of Mission, Texas, written March 14, 1936:

"There is a little Polish settlement in our parish of St. Paul, McCook, about twenty-five miles north-

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west of Mission. Twenty Polish families have settled there and have already secured four acres of land for a church site, school etc. Most of these families come from the different Polish settlements in Karnes County. They attend church now here at Mission; and I must say these people have the Catholic spirit. As soon as times get better they will erect a church for their own use . . . "

Immigrations after the Polish Revolution of 1863

So far we have been dealing with Polish colonies that had their beginning in Texas, a few years after the Polish Revolution of 1830. These were immigrations exclusively from the Prussian Poland and settled in the vicinity of San Antonio.

The colonies now in view, are those that began their influx about ten years later and settled in the vicinity of Houston, Texas. These are from Prussian and Austrian Poland.

The second uprising of the Poles in the 19th century against the Russian Czar took place in 1863. With great effort the Czar suppressed it again. Blood-curdling atrocities against the conquered followed: tens of thousands of Poles were shot or exiled to Siberia, and, up to the World War, Poland was treated with the heartless barbarity of primitive conquerors, and no efforts were spared to Russianize or Germanize the Polish population.

As if by prearrangement, the same year witnessed a bloody struggle for the emancipation of the negro in the United States. While hordes of Polish men, women and children were driven half naked to the cold Siberian fields of hard labor, thousands of carpet-baggers in America flooded the great confines of Texas, adding to the general disorder that followed the Civil War. Hardly a spot in the State

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was free of these marauders. We have seen what the first Polish colonists of America endured from the hands of these in Karnes County. Walker and Grimes Counties were no exceptions. Uncertain labor and neglect of fields brought about extreme poverty. But men of vision took charge. Far-sighted individuals realized that men with strong backs and a deep-seated patriotic spirit were needed to bring order. One of these was a Polish Hebrew, Meyer Levy, of Navasota, Texas, (Grimes County). Mr. Levy made two pilgrimages to the land of his birth, unhappy Poland, and told his countrymen of the great possibilities in the new country that was then in the state of reconstruction. His efforts were successful. The immigrants who followed him into the wide open spaces, like their predecessors who came into Karnes, DeWitt and Bexar Counties, practically all settled in the agricultural sections.

NEW WAVERLY Parish of St. Joseph (1870)

Galveston Diocese

New Waverly (Walker County) may be called the cradle of Polish colonization in that part of the State. From it developed, directly or indirectly, Anderson, (Grimes County), Brenham and Chapel Hill, (Washington County), Marlin, (Falls County), Bremond, (Robertson County), Bryan, (Brazos County), Bellville, (Austin County), Rosenberg and Richmond, (Fort Bend County).

The parish of St. Joseph, New Waverly, was organized in 1870 through the efforts of Father Felix Orzechowski who came to Texas with the Resurrectionist Fathers in 1866. Originally, the parish numbered forty-two families.

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Its first settler, yet living in 1909, according to S. Nesterowicz in his "Notatki z Podrozy," was W. Wrybowski who came as a small boy with his parents in 1864 from Poznan, Poland.

At that time a few Americans, already in the territory, owned land which they cultivated with the help of the negro, and raised cattle. The majority of the negroes did not know yet of their emancipation; others did not want to believe it; so all served their masters as willingly as ever.



The Wrybowski family worked for these Americans at first. Later they bought on easy-payment terms some one-hundred fifty acres of land. The land was not the best and had already been

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long in cultivation, but the new settlers were industrious and knew how to make the best use of it.

Subsequently, came other settlers. These were: Dombrowski, Fosse, Hubowski, Kochanowicz, Levandowski, Ciesielski, Gregorek brothers, Pawlak, Paluka, Bochnia brothers, Lukaszewicz, Helinski brothers and others. Many of these bought land ready for cultivation for which they paid two to three dollars an acre. Under normal conditions the land produced from one-half to three-fourths of a bale of cotton to an acre.

The present New Waverly, located about sixty miles north of Houston, on highway No. 19, is a later development of the original Waverly. The Old Waverly, as it is called today, is situated about eight miles east. The first colonists settled in the agricultural sections of Old Waverly, gradually extending their possessions in all directions. With the advent of the railroad about 1875, however, the business interests changed their location to New Waverly.

When Father Orzechowski took charge of this colony in the latter part of 1867, it was still in a poor state of development; not having even a decent road to lead one into the midst of its people. The poor missionary spent many a night in the open, living on corn bread and bacon, often on less, while visiting the colonists here and in the neighborhood where his attention was necessary. The same routine had to be repeated when he took charge of the organization in Plantersville (now a Polish parish of Stoneham, mission of Anderson) and Anderson where he was eventually stationed as pastor. Father Orzechowski became known as the *Apostolus peregrinans*.

Though the parish was organized in 1870, five years passed before the first church was built. Serv-

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ices were held in private homes. The first Mass is supposed to have been celebrated in Danville, a locality three miles south of New Waverly. The small edifice made its appearance in 1875, during the pastorate of Father Victor Lisicki, also under the jurisdiction of the Resurrectionists. In 1896, this building was converted into a school and a new church built for the sum of \$10,000.00.

Following Father Lisicki, came Fathers: Adam Laski, John Chalczarz, Polianski, Wylamowicz, Gaiduszen, Theodor Jaron and Bronislaus Walter. The last, Father Walter, after five years of zealous labor in the parish and carrying on classes in the school, left for Scranton Diocese, Morris, Penn., in 1901. Though bearing a name that sounds anything but Polish, Father Bronislaus was born in Poznan, Poland, but as a small boy came with his parents to America where he received all his education. On his departure from New Waverly, the parish became a mission of Chapel Hill. In 1899, under the pastorate of Father Walter, a new school was erected for which he himself donated five-hundred dollars. Through his efforts, innumerable improvements in the church made their appearance: new pews, confessional, statues, vestments, banners, organ; in a word, the whole church was remodeled.

In 1905, Father Kruszka in his "Historia Osad Polskich w Ameryce" writes:

"At present there are one-hundred and five families in the parish. The immigrants are from Poznan and Galicia.

"Huntsville, in the same county, is a mission of New Waverly. A Polish church in Huntsville was built even before 1875. On the list of active Polish colonies, made by John Barzynski, the brother of Fathers Vincent and Joseph, is also found Huntsville, Texas. (*Gazeta Polska Katolicka*).

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"Father Felix Zwiardowski, Feb. 8, 1872, writes of Father Orzechowski in Huntsville"

Huntsville is about ten miles north of New Waverly.

Father J. Billy received his appointment in New Waverly in 1906. He remained here until his death in 1921, and was buried in the parish cemetery. Two years after his arrival, a new church, for the sum of thirty thousand dollars, excluding the labor of the parishioners, was built. Its tower, however, was not of substantial construction. One of the bells had to be taken out in 1916 and placed on the ground, to the side of the entrance where it remains to-day. The present rectory was built at the time of the erection of the church.

Succeeding Father Billy, came Fathers: Raps, Cofey, Dycal, O'Agan. Father Henry Parmentier, the present pastor, was appointed August, 1927. There are one-hundred thirty families in the parish. Conroe, where the pastor of New Waverly says a Mass every Sunday, is a mission.

The shortage of Polish priests has been instrumental in the abrogation of all Polish customs in church services in recent years. The younger generation, half of whom do not speak the Polish language any longer, are indifferent about it; to the older people this has been a source of much irritation and sorrow, and the violent rupture with the traditions of the past has not been conducive to greater Christian perfection.

That the people bear no pretense to wealth can be inferred from the fact that over half of them use, at funerals, coffins made by one of the parishioners, which they can purchase for the small sum of ten dollars.

At one time two saw mills provided employ-

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ment for a thousand men, but were closed with the depression, and have not reopened.

The parochial school has been taught since 1910 by the Sisters of Divine Providence of San Antonio, and the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word of Shiner and Houston. At present, three Sisters of Houston take care of the one-hundred thirty-five children.

The parish can boast of two sons in the priesthood: Fathers Stanislaus and Joseph Kmiecik, cousins. Father Stanislaus was ordained in 1926; Father Joseph in 1932. Five daughters of the parish have entered the Incarnate Word Convent of Shiner: Catherine Bednarski (Sister Thomas), Veronica Bednarski (Sister Henrietta), Lucy Kmiecik (Sister Helen), and Cecilia Novak (Sister Theresa). Beatrice Bednarski (Sister Laurentia) teaches at the Fort Worth Our Lady of Victory College.

Mixed marriages have no part in the parish of New Waverly.

BRENHAM

Parish of St. Mary's
(1870)

Galveston Diocese

Brenham, with a population of ten thousand, is situated about sixty miles southwest of New Waverly. The parish was organized in 1870. The Polish people, however, did not make their appearance until the early part of 1876, after the Franco-Prussian War. For five years, they came in small groups of about fifteen or twenty families, settling in the agricultural sections around Brenham.

The oldest Polish settlers were: K. and J. Mur-ski, W. Kasproicz, A. Kopcinski, M. Kubeczka, W. Przybyski, K. Kendziora, J. Stenczynski, M.

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Skweres, M. Slavinski, M. F. Januszewicz, W. Baranowski, J. Bilski, M. Ogradowicz, J. Nowiczki.

The first residential priest was Father W. Willinowicz. The parish boundaries originally covered a large territory including Chapel Hill. The first church, which was built before the Polish people arrived, soon became too small for the congregation. Plans for building were formed. But Chapel Hill, about ten miles east, with a thickly populated sec-



tion of Polish people, separated in 1889 and a new parish was then organized. This was a loss to Brenham, but the hundred and fifty families remaining justified the building of substantial structures. Father F. Frydal, a Bohemian priest, was then the pastor of Brenham. The old church was converted into a school and the new one built on the same location.

The school was taught for some time during the pastorate of Father M. Dombrowski by a Mr. S. Sympula who also served as an organist. The teacher received but \$40.00 a month for both func-

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tions and, out of that, had to provide his own board. The school, however, had a small attendance of about forty children.

A large red brick school was built in 1924, for the sum of \$50,000.00. Father C. Wiesnerowski daringly began this building with but \$3,000.00 and today it is free of any debt. Five Sisters of Divine Providence have been teaching ever since. Out of the one hundred seventy-five children attending, one hundred twenty are Polish.

At present, under the able management of Father Wiesnerowski, a magnificent church is near completion. Dedication of it is planned for June of this year when the pastor will celebrate his silver sacerdotal jubilee. The total cost will be \$100,000.00. The contractors are Dielmans of San Antonio; \$4,000.00 was paid for the lots on which the new church stands. The amount of cash on hand, when the building began could not be ascertained. However, using the building of the school as an example, there is no doubt that Father Wiesnerowski will soon have a beautiful church, and a new rectory as well, free of any debt. May good fortune be always with him!

There are over two hundred families in the parish; one hundred fifty of these are Polish. Special services are held for the English as well as the Polish parishioners.

The parish has two sons in the priesthood; Father S. Zientek and Father Edward Murski. Four daughters entered the Divine Providence Convent.

A good number of the Polish have business interests in the town. Many of them have sold their farms and moved into the city, spending their old age in greater comfort.

Mixed marriages, too, have become more common in recent years.

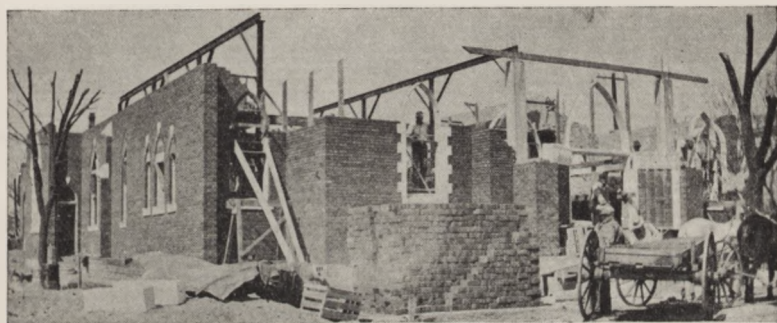
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MARLIN

Parish of St. Joseph
(1872)

Galveston Diocese

Marlin, in Falls County, eighteen miles northwest of Bremond, is a town of mineral waters, a health resort where over two thousand patients yearly from all over the United States seek health. It has many apartment houses and large, modern hotels which are an envy of many a large city.



The town received its name from Mr. Marlin who was the first one to buy land in the territory. The first deed of sale was recorded in 1850. The first trading post in the territory was on the Brazos river, about eight miles west of Marlin. As a convenience for others, who began to settle around his farm, Mr. Marlin opened a store. Sanitary conditions were healthier than along the river, so the small Marlin store grew rapidly in business. New arrivals of the Germans and Poles opened other trades.

The Polish people settling around Marlin were earlier than their brother settlers of Bremond. A small group of them have lived here since 1870.

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Some, finding the land too expensive, went farther from town; others, left for distant parts because of the malarial conditions which at times became serious even in Marlin. Thus we find a solution for the difference in recording the number of settlers, as presented by an old settler of Bremond and a later arrival in Marlin. Mr. Bartolo of Bremond in his diary speaks of sixty families living in Marlin in 1877, while Peter Gorski, who settled in Marlin in 1880, records the following:

"When I came to Marlin, there were about thirty families already settled here. Among these were: J. Przybylski, E. Wilganowski, S. Novacki, W. Glaska, Ig. Gorski, M. Lechowski, Majchrzach brothers, L. Chmielski, T. Topolewski, W. Przybylanski, J. Poludnik.

"At that time, none owned land yet. They either paid three dollars an acre as rent or gave a third of their crop. The first one to acquire any land within twenty years, was J. Przybylski, paying fourteen dollars an acre. E. Wilganowski followed his example. Personally, I worked rented land for twenty-two years and thus saved enough, in the course of time, to buy one hundred acres, paying forty-two and a half dollars an acre, a cash consideration. I would not sell the land for twice the price paid"

Land around Marlin is sold from ninety-five to one hundred ten dollars an acre. Numerous families have tried renting, but that is almost impossible. Others of the younger generation, finding the territory too limited, had to move to larger cities. About twenty Polish families sold their possessions in the country and moved into Marlin.

The date of St. Joseph's parish organization is uncertain. But when Father Mosiewicz of Marlin became pastor of Bremond in 1879 Marlin be-

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came a mission of the latter. It was later attended by Father Litwora, also of Bremond.

The first church, a very small building, was built on the west side of the town's square. In 1890, a Mr. Reed offered to build a school for the parish if it would buy a certain piece of property in the city. The parish paid the thousand dollars wanted and the school, still standing, was built. This property was a large tract of land, including the present hospital grounds. Most of that land was sold when the second church was built.

The new school house became the second place of worship. But even this became too small as the congregation increased. Plans were formed for building a church on the present location. The contract called for nine thousand dollars, but, when all was furnished, the expense was twelve thousand.

In January of this year, the church, showing dangerous cracks, was torn down and a new one is being erected. A contractor's bid for the new building was thirty-eight thousand dollars. The man, however, generously condescended merely to supervise the work for a consideration of eight hundred dollars. Since the parishioners are providing the labor, there will be a saving of seventeen thousand for the parish.

The first residential priest was Father Krypatrz. Succeeding him, came Fathers: Battalong, Schoner, B. C. Pfiffner, George Apelman, Ch. Weisnerowski, S. A. Zientek, George Berberich and the present pastor, Father S. L. Kmiecik, who has been there the last seven years.

The Sisters of Divine Providence, of San Antonio, have been teaching the parochial school since 1905. Seventy-eight children attend the Sisters' school, while twenty-six, from the country, attend weekly instructions. Out of the children attending

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the parochial school, about sixty are of Polish descent.

Though only eighty-seven families belong to the parish, the church attendance, including the mineral-wells patients, gives the parish a very large membership. Seventy-one of the families are Polish, though about sixteen of them are immigrants from Russia and show this distinctive characteristic in their speech. These, however, do not love to be called such. Of the remainder, there are about six Irish families, four Italian, four Bohemian and two Hungarian.

The Poles intermarry freely here, and mixed marriages average about two a year. Large families, even as high as sixteen children, are still in evidence. About seven of the original settlers are yet living (1936).

BREMOND

Parish of St. Mary's
(1876)

Galveston Diocese

One hundred forty-seven miles northwest of Houston, on highway No. 6, we find the largest Polish parish in the State. The settlement of Bremond is entirely composed of Polish people, and all business is in their hands. A notable fact about the business men, is that practically all are related. But notwithstanding this, the greatest harmony and co-operation prevail. In the early ninetens, a great conflagration destroyed almost an entire block of the busiest trade section. New brick buildings, however, now occupy the places of the old ones.

The organization of the parish dates to 1876. In the beginning, it was attended by Father Mosiewicz

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from Marlin, a Polish parish, eighteen miles northwest of Bremond. For some time, Father Casimer Polulanski was stationed as resident pastor. In 1888, Father Peter Litwora succeeded in the pastorate. Father Litwora, ordained in Tarnow, Po-



land, had his trip from Europe, and expenses connected with it, paid by the colonists of Bremond. His brother, Felix, served as an organist. In January, 1904, Father Litwora was moved to Anderson, but still continued to help out at times in Bremond, for the next four years. Following him, came Father Francis Mohan, an ex-Franciscan Czech, till June 1904; then came the assistant from Bryan, Father Anthony Criptonis, a Lithuanian, who remained

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here till his death in November, 1907. Father Crip-tonis was buried in the Bremond cemetery. New Year's eve, 1908, the present pastor, Father Joseph Szymanski, was appointed. Father Szymanski came from Poznan, Poland, as a boy. His studies were done in Nanticoke, Pa., in the Detroit seminary and the seminary of Cincinnati, Ohio. His ordination took place in Cleveland. His first appointment was in Brenham, where he remained for five and half years. Thence, he came to Bremond.

Father Szymanski built the present church, one hundred twenty-five by fifty-two feet, in the first year of his pastorate. The church is a credit to his ability, as well as a token of esteem from his parish-ioners. The cost of the large brick building was only twenty-seven thousand dollars. Were the labor of the people and a good deal of material not donated, the cost would have been thirty-two thousand. The old church was converted into a parochial school. At that time, but forty children attended.

The first Polish settler in Bremond was Joseph Bartolo. Mr. Bartolo was in the habit of putting down in writing all events of historical interest, but with the loss of his right hand, his diary ceased and was never resumed by any one else.

The following are a few of his notations:

"As a cart-wright I left my home-town, Pil-znenski, Galicia in 1873, and, together with wife and five children sailed for America. Landing in Galveston, we proceeded to New Waverly, whence, two years later, we came to Bremond to settle permanently. In the course of the trip, I lost three sons and all the possessions I had.

"Besides my family, there was the Polish family of F. Bojanski. The town at that time was much larger. Soon after us, came Pietrzykowski with three daughters and son, and Ochendalski, wife and two

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children. These were followed by the families of Martin Matysiak, Michael Pasket, Floryan Bachinowski, Frank Knot and Joseph Bojerowski. Mr. Matysiak was the first one to buy fifty acres of land for which he paid five hundred dollars. The first Polish child born here was my son, Joseph.

"Four times a year we enjoyed the coming of Father Biusant, a Frenchman, who held services for us at the home of Roberts. In 1877, Father Mosiewicz was appointed pastor of Marlin, where already some sixty Polish families congregated. Father Mosiewicz visited us once a month and held services on the farms. Two years later, when our colony began to make rapid strides in population, we built our own church. By that time we had fifty families, viz:

Fr. Bojanski, Fl. Bojanski, J. Bukmanski, A. Baranski, J. Bojerewski, F. Bulanowicz, J. Balcerek, J. Cierlewski, J. Cholewiak, M. Cwikul, J. Drajus, J. Fojut, A. Grabowski, F. Golosinski, S. Knopik, A. Gazmierowski, A. Kresinski, F. W. Knofy, M. Knofy, J. Kubiak, A. Lemanski, F. Lozina, M. Matysiak, W. Matysiak, A. Miller, J. Ochydalski, M. Pieniazek, W. Pietrykowski, M. Paszkut, K. Rybacki, F. Ruminski, E. Schepert, M. Szulc, A. Standera, J. Stachowiak, A. Strugala, J. Suchowiak, M. Surma, W. Urbanski, W. Zucholski, J. Zapalacz, J. Sadowski, F. Kempinski, A. Adamik, W. Wisniewski, M. Szturemski, J. Kazmierowski, and L. Starzewski.

"Large as our congregation was, we were able to collect but one hundred and fifteen dollars. It is doubtful whether the building, which cost twelve hundred, would ever have been built were it not for the help from the Americans. J. S. Roberts himself contributed two hundred and fifty dollars, and other large sums came from all over the county. The

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first services in the new church were held by Father Mosiewiez, on Pentecost Sunday.

"Shortly after, came to us Father Polulanski. In his time, the parish became divided. The outcome of the affair was, that the pastor, Father Mosiewicz, resigned. But the same state of affairs persisted until the arrival of Father Litwora.

"From the beginning, we were so poor that we gave the pastor but little of the little we could raise in the fields. Father Mosiewicz himself planted a few acres of land in which the children helped him at times. Heavy were the times for all of us"

But better times followed.

"Today," writes S. Nesterowicz in 1909. "There are three hundred and twenty-five families in the parish, and the people have been repaid a hundred fold for their failures in the beginning."

The land about Bremond is mostly sandy and easy to plow. The poorest land, on which grows the post oak, is to the west of the town.

Many of the first colonists, tradesmen by profession, saw greater advantages in farming. All, however, found farming difficult, especially under the Texas sun.

Some of the first settlers, F. Golasinski for one, took part in the 1863 Polish uprising against the Russian Czar. Mr. Golasinski was but fifteen years of age at that time. After eight months in captivity, young Golasinski made his escape and joined the Polish Lancers in the army of the Austrian Maximilian and was placed on an English ship for Peru and, after forty days, reached Vera Cruz, Mexico. After the death of Maximilian, he received his passport into the United States.

"Walking most of the way," continues Golasinski, "I finally reached Houston, Texas. Later, in Rock Port I was engaged for some time at the iron

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monger's trade. Thence I went to Bremond where I rushed into buying land which proved to be the poorest in the locality."

At present, there are three hundred forty Polish families in the parish. The parochial school was taught by four Sisters of St. Joseph, of Stevens Point, Wis., from 1911 till 1918; by the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word from Shiner, Texas, till 1932; the last four years the Felician Sisters, all Polish, have been taking care of the two hundred thirty-two children.

Father Szymanski celebrated his sacerdotal jubilee in 1927 for which occasion the Most Reverend Bishop Byrne and numerous clergy were present. Five years later, the pastor commemorated the silver jubilee of his pastorate in the parish, another solemn occasion of much rejoicing. In July 1935, Most Reverend Joseph Gavlina, Bishop of Poland's army, who visited all the Polish colonies in the State, presented Father Szymanski with a Golden Medal of Merit from the Polish Government, one of the highest honors given by that nation. Father Szymanski and Father St. Przyborski of Cestochowa were the only two in Texas to receive this honorable recognition.

St. Mary's parish of Bremond has the unusual honor of having seventeen daughters in the religious life. Seven girls entered the St. Joseph's Convent of Stevens Point, Wisconsin; two are members of the Incarnate Word of Shiner; and eight are Sisters of the Felician Order of Chicago.

St. Soseph's Convent:

Sister M. Ludwina, (Rose Koscielniak); Sister M. Petronia, (Christine Jerzak); Sister M. Akwina, (Victoria Jerzak); Sister M. Neola, (Emily Lango-wski); Sister M. Floriana, (Valeria Muszynska);

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Sister M. Dorothy, (Catherine Koscielniak); Sister M. Gorgonia, (Angela Novak).

Incarnate Word Convent: Sister M. Louise, (Josephine Dziedzic); Sister M. Casimira, (Leocadia Zator).

Felician Convent: Sister M. Dilecta, (Veronica Civik); Sister M. Benedetta, (Gertrude Wozniak); Sister M. Salome, (Mary Mikolajewska).

Candidates:

Sister Adelaide Urzesinska, Sister Theresa Baskinski, Sister Barbara Jerzak, Sister Frances Bielamowicz, Sister Ladislawa Homiak.

Considering the large number in the parish, it is a source of wonderment that there are no mixed marriages among the people. With the spiritual foundation existing, there are good prospects for the future of Bremond.

As in the Polish parishes of San Antonio Diocese, many of the younger families, as the population became too thick for the limited territory, have moved to larger cities. Thus, many from Bremond found homes in Houston, Fort Worth, Beaumont and Waco.

Besides the societies of exclusively religious nature, there are in the parish the Polish National Union, under the patronage of St. Joseph, and the Catholic Union, both enjoying large membership.

Besides the customs and practices peculiar to the Poles in the San Antonio Diocese, as described in the history of Panna Maria, the people of Bremond, and in most of the other Polish parishes of Galveston Diocese, still observe the "Oplatki" (Wafers). Shortly before Christmas, usually the organist distributes wafers resembling those used for Holy Mass, and at this distribution each parishioner makes a small offering to the organist or the altar-boys who

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bring the wafers. These are sent to relatives and friends in Europe, and the latter do not forget those in America. On Christmas eve, the family gathers to partake, first of all, of the wafer, in token of continued love, mended friendship, and good will to all men.

ANDERSON

Parish of St. Stanislaus
(1876)

Galveston Diocese

Anderson lies about twenty miles, air line, west of New Waverly. Despite the fact that it is the seat of Grimes County, the town has progressed very slowly.

The parish of St. Stanislaus was organized in 1876, when Father Felix Orzechowski attended there from New Waverly and held services in homes of the farmers.

The Polish settlers began to arrive about 1869. The names appearing on the list are: Koronka, Weiczorek, Laskowski, Chrapecki, Walkowiak, Piatkowski, Podraza, Bendkowski, Hertmanek.

About eighteen miles south, around Plantersville, a few more settled: Myszkiewicz, Pawlak, Urbanowski, Ciesielski, Graczyk, Filipiak, Kula and others.

The first priest to attend the parish was Father Orzechowski. Later, Anderson was attended by Fathers: Mosiewicz from Marlin, A. Laski from Bryan, and C. Polulanski from Bremond.

In 1880, one hundred families from Poznan, Poland, settled permanently in Anderson.

During Father Laski's time, in 1888, the colonists bought a public school building which they

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converted into a church. Succeeding Father Polulanski came Fathers: J. Chalcarz, Theodor Jaron and A. Sulek till March of 1895. Father Joseph Klein, from Plantersville, attended St. Stanislaus till August, 1897. Father F. Prus was the first resident pastor and remained till December, 1903, and the first church was built under his direction. The small building is still below the



hill on which now stands majestically a large new house of worship.

Father Litwora from Bremond next took charge of Anderson, till 1914. Following him, came Father M. A. Dombrowski, who in turn was succeeded by Father N. T. Domanski, on Easter Sunday of 1916. Father Domanski is still the pastor.

S. Nesterowicz, writing in 1909, informs us that at that time the parish, including Plantersville, (Stonehem parish at present), comprised some one hundred seventy families. From the beginning there

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was a parochial school near the church which was taught, for some time, by J. Zasku. With his death, in 1904, the school was closed. The same writer speaks of a German Catholic church in Plantersville, but that the Polish people there attended Anderson. The Poles and the Germans of this community lived in the greatest sympathy towards each other, particularly, since the perpetration of great wrongs on the Poles by the Prussian regime.

Since much credit is due the early pioneer of the Church in Grimes County, Father Felix Orzechowski, it is only appropriate to quote from the "Nawasota Daily Examiner, Dec. 18, 1935":

"After about six years here, Father Orzechowski found the summers too oppressive for one who had been born and reared in Poland, so he returned to his beloved Warsaw. During his stay in the United States, he had been remade a free man and enjoyed free speech, free thought and religious tolerance. He expressed himself in Warsaw that Russia needed the same freedom. He was adjudged a dangerous radical, tried, convicted and sentenced to the hell-hole, Siberia, where thousands upon thousands went but whence few, if any, ever returned. Father Orzechowski's heart, that beat for mankind, was stilled by death after a short time in prison, and the nature of his death was never known, whether he was mercilessly beaten or starved. But he had not lived in vain, for his little flock of seventy-six, when America was celebrating its Centennial, reviewing one hundred years of independence, liberty and freedom, has grown to two hundred and seventy-two families from among whom fifteen-hundred are frequent communicants

"Other priests took up where cruel fate had befallen the pioneer, who gave his life for freedom of speech and thought. The Catholic Church seemed

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content to get along for a time as it had in the past. But a crusader of progress, in the person of the Reverend Father N. T. Domanski, was sent here from Chapel Hill. He, too, is a Pole and for thirty-four years a resident of America. Ordained to the priesthood in Galveston, in 1914, he dreamed a dream of a new church and schools for the youth so that they could be trained for the fourth grade of the public schools. In less than a month after his appointment, he called his flock together and addressed them that " 'the church must do better than we have done in the past. It is only in keeping with civilization that we march hand in hand with the period in which we are now living.'

"In less than two years, he completed the finest building in Grimes County, at a cost of nearly \$40,000.00. His parishioners took the spirit and came with teams to excavate and to do all they could to reduce the cost of construction. What a day it was for the Grimes County Catholics when the new edifice was dedicated to God. The church, the modern pastoral home and the new grounds, just acquired, were a good start. Plans are formed to erect a school for the education of Catholic boys and girls."

The Daily Examiner further quotes the words of Father Domanski:

"It is a blessing that we have such high-grade public schools. And it is not the Catholic organization's thought to discredit, but an interest in our boys and girls that we hold them and give them religious and secular education at least in the primary grades. Our school is in the future, and we will have to bide our time until the clouds of depression have cleared away and the members are feeling abler financially to carry on the work. They have done

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wonders so far in building the new church and the priest's home "

The parish celebrated its golden jubilee in 1926.

Stonehem, all Polish, is a mission of Anderson. Two daughters of that mission entered the Incarnate Word Convent of Houston.

BRYAN

Parish of St. Joseph

(1876)

Galveston Diocese

Bryan, on highway No. 6, one hundred miles northwest of Houston, is a town of Irish, Bohemians, Poles and Italians. The people of the railroad section, as far back as 1868, were practically all Irish, and it is from them that the town received its name. In the early seventies the Polish and the Bohemians began to settle in and around Bryan. Every year brought a small contingent of both nationalities so that now no particular section of the county can be claimed by either. Though most of them settled in the agricultural sections, none can be called "country folk." Fertile lands, bearing under normal conditions from one bale to a bale and a quarter of cotton to an acre, gave the farmer advantages of education for his children as well as modern conveniences. Surrounded by other nationalities equal in numbers, none of whom could claim a superiority, either economically or religiously, friendly relations and social activities assumed a broader scope than in localities where only one nationality existed. The Italians settled in the lower lands along the Brazos river. Since the organization of the parish, the four nationalities attended one church until about 1920, when the Italians built their own house of worship.

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The first Mass in Bryan was said in the home of Mr. M. Boneville, Sr., a Frenchman, about 1869. Father Anthony, as he was known in the locality, was the first priest to attend. Mr. Boneville was one of the founders of the parish and has been considered its greatest benefactor. Blessed financially,



he gave unstintingly to the early missionaries and provided them with food and shelter on their visits. Following Father Anthony, came other missionaries, even His Excellency Bishop Dubuis himself. The good bishop especially showed his zeal during the yellow fever epidemic when he came to administer to the needs of the sick and brought with him seminarians to render service wherever possible. Father C. Claire was the first residential pastor. Services

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were held in private homes for about three years.

In March of 1873, came the first Polish settler, A. Krezesinski, from Tarnow, Poland. He was soon followed by P. Chmielski, L. Starzewski, J. Grabowski, J. and E. Bulmanski and others. Most of the Polish settlers here were from Galicia.

At about the same time came the Czechs: Frank Horak, Frank Vavra, Bartolomej Luza, Frank Wymola and others. With the arrival of this new addition to the congregation, it was decided to rent, for church purposes, a house three blocks northeast of the present site. In 1876 this place of worship was destroyed by fire. Some wanted to build a new church at the time, so Father Claire took stock of all the Catholic population in the district and began the organization of the parish. The Poles and Bohemians, who were very poor, however, feared contracting debts. It has been remarked that nowadays the descendants of these pioneers would buy the White House with a smile on their lips and think of the payment only afterwards. Not so with the first. They were not going to take the risk of losing everything. Better to wait a little longer. Mr. Boneville, who owned a large store, was approached again with the result that permission was granted to use one-half of the upper story. Here the people worshiped for five years, at the end of which time the congregation bought a Masonic school house and converted it into a church, at an expense of about twelve hundred dollars.

Following Father C. Claire, who served as pastor from 1876 till 1878, came Father V. Lisicki till 1880, Father J. Mosiewicz till 1881, Father V. Lisicki again till 1884, Father A. Laski till 1888, Father J. Granberger from Brenham, and Father P. Litwora from Bremond till 1889, Father J. Dunne one year.

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A newly ordained priest, Father Joseph Pelnar, succeeded in 1890. To him is given the credit of making the parish what it is today. He worked zealously and faithfully, organizing societies, encouraging activity in the parish and, in general, strengthening the foundation now so firmly rooted in the hearts of the parishioners. Under his pastorate, the parochial school was erected.

Father C. Calen was appointed Father Pelnar's successor in 1900 and remained pastor for about two years, at the end of which time came Father J. Machan. Father Machan remained but fifteen months, but during that short stay he built the new church at the cost of eight thousand dollars.

On March 25, 1904, the Right Reverend Monsignor J. B. Gleissner of Hearne was appointed pastor of St. Joseph's parish of Bryan, and has since remained in this capacity. Monsignor Gleissner remodeled the frame church built by Father Machan, and stuccoed the building, at an expense of four thousand dollars. In 1927, he built a new parochial school at a cost of fifteen thousand dollars.

Father T. J. Valenta, ordained May 28, 1933, is the assistant pastor. It must be mentioned that Father Valenta has two brothers in the priesthood. The three brothers, real Texans in spirit and hospitality, are a credit to the diocese and a pride of the Valenta family.

In 1926, the parish celebrated its golden jubilee.

At present, the parish comprises about two hundred families, sixty of whom are Polish and seventy Bohemians. The Poles say the Rosary and the Angelus in Polish, the first Sunday of the month; the Bohemians, also in their native tongue, have the second and third Sundays. The latter still have the Stations of the Cross on Sundays; the Poles,

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however, have their Stations with the Bohemians or with the English-speaking.

Monsignor Gleissner learned the Moravian tongue to be able to minister to the Bohemian as well as his Polish parishioners. Of late years, only the English is necessary as all speak it fluently and are content with English instructions, though the mother tongue still has a gladdening appeal.

The Ursuline Sisters, with a convent near the church, taught the parochial school since 1900 until five years ago, when they sold their property and moved to Dallas and Galveston. At the present time, four Sisters of the Incarnate Word and the Blessed Sacrament from Houston are teaching about one hundred and ten children.

Calvert, Hearne and A. & M. College are missions of Bryan. At the College, about two hundred and fifty of the students are Catholic.

The parish also boasts of five daughters in religious life. These are: Sister Juliana, (Julia Kapchinskies); Sister Seraphine, (Mary Kapchinskies); Sister Augustine, (Mary Vavra); Sister Cyrilla, (Mary Wolf); Sister De Matel, (Mary Meleskies).

The first four are Ursuline Sisters, and Sister De Matel is a member of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament of Houston.

CHAPEL HILL

Parish of St. Stanislaus
(1889)

Galveston Diocese

Chapel Hill, a town of scarcely a thousand inhabitants, is located on highway No. 20, ten miles east of Brenham. A few Polish people have business interests in the town. But it has been said that, in

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the early nineties, other business men learned enough Polish to carry on their trade; even the negroes spoke broken Polish. For miles, east and south, are farms of Polish people. The land is very fertile and under normal conditions produces from a bale to a bale and a half of cotton to an acre, and corn from sixty to eighty bushels to an acre. Thirty years ago, people paid as much as seventy-five dollars an acre for their land.



CHURCH AND SCHOOL

Still, some found the slow process of making money very discouraging.

John Gorka, one of the original settlers, recalls how he saved nine hundred dollars in the course of three years. With that he went out into the world looking for a good investment. After hard and long labor, mostly in factories of large cities, he returned home broken in spirit as well as in his material possessions. But he was determined to profit by his experience abroad and make his new start on the farm a more fruitful one. In the course

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of time, he was able to buy two hundred sixty acres of land valued at eleven thousand dollars.

The first to settle in this territory was Swiatkowski; the second family was that of Gutkowski. Following them immediately, came with their families: Kasprowicz, Twardowski, Krolczyk, Tomczak, Oknowski, Przbylski, all from Poznan, Poland. The colony began a rapid growth in 1894 and grew largely every year.

The Polish people resided here for a long time before building their church. For a good while they attended services at Brenham. In 1889, the parish was organized by Father Grabinger of Brenham. Following Father Grabinger, came Father Laski and Father Prida.

Father Theodor Jaron was the first residential pastor and built the first church. A storm destroyed it in 1900, and the parishioners were forced to build a new one.

Father Francis Nona was appointed pastor in 1898. That was his first appointment. Father Nona came to America, a boy of sixteen. His major studies were done in the Polish seminary of Detroit.

The parish at that time numbered two hundred twenty-five families. S. Nesterowicz in his "Notatki z Podrozy" of 1909 writes this:

"Father Nona is a zealous priest as well as a good manager. The church and other parish buildings are kept in the best conditions, and, at that, without any debt. Plans are being formed for the building of a new school, for which the pastor is accumulating ready cash. No building, however, would be done until everything could be paid for immediately. The parishioners of Chapel Hill, old and young, have to speak the Polish language, and Father Nona takes much pains over this. But he is just as zealous that all learn English which they

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need. The parish school is attended by one hundred twenty-five children of the Polish colonists. The teacher is Mr. Ossowski, a youth who speaks Polish and English fluently. The people here have been paying him better than teachers get paid elsewhere. Besides providing a home and the fuel, they pay him sixty dollars a month. Mr. Ossowski organized an orchestra composed entirely of Poles"

Following Father Nona, September 1921, came the present pastor, Father M. A. Budnik. Father Budnik is a Texas boy. Round Top is the place of his birth. Three months later, December 4th, the second church was destroyed by fire.

A new church was begun in January, 1922, and completed in August of the same year, at a cost of forty thousand dollars.

At present, there are over three hundred families. Two boys, who had their elementary education in the parochial school, were ordained to the holy priesthood: Father B. J. Kaminski and Father S. Kowalski, the latter is at present in Chicago. Two girls entered the Convent of Divine Providence. The Sisters of Divine Providence take care of two hundred children in the parish.

The Polish people of Chapel Hill settled far and wide to the south and formed new colonies. Thus we find them all the way to Bellville, Sealy, Rosenberg and Richmond. In the last named, a new parish, fifty percent of which are Polish, was organized in February of 1935.

The faith still flourishes among the Poles of Chapel Hill, and the fact that no mixed marriages take place is the best testimony.

It must be mentioned too that Dr. J. J. Cegelski, a prominent dentist of San Antonio, is a Chapel Hill boy.

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BELLVILLE

Parish of St. Mary's
(1900)

Galveston Diocese

The parish of Bellville is a mission of Frydek. Bellville is situated on highway No. 36, eighteen miles south of Brenham.

The first Catholics in Bellville were the Polish family of Thomas Wolnitzek. Mr. Wolnitzek settled there in the early sixties. The first Masses were offered on the upper floor of his home. He, however, did not live there continually. Most of his time was spent in Houston and Panama. His death occurred January 4, 1935, at the age of eighty years, leaving a wife, two sons, Oscar of Bellville, and Alvin of Corpus Christi, and two daughters, Mrs. Alma Garrett and Miss Norma, both residing at Bellville. His parents, Peter Paul and Frances, died December 1910 and September 1909, respectively, at Bellville.

The first priests to attend here, were Father Weimar and Father J. A. Rapp from the Galveston Cathedral. Father Rapp, at present pastor of Sacred Heart Church, Houston, at that time a young man, learned enough of the Polish language to administer to the needs of the people. After him, came Father William Skocek from Industry. All three were present at the dedication of the new brick church built in 1905, under the supervision of Father Rapp, at the cost of five thousand dollars.

The first Polish Catholics besides the family of Wolnitzek, were M. Trojanowski, I. Artman, F. Nowitzki, Jos. Lemiesz, M. Topolewski, Jos. Hildebrandt, J. Pesky, Jos. Zebielski, Jos. Gutowski, J. Starrom, Ramon Huszinski, Ludwik Zaczek, Lud.

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Nowitzki, Jos. Janczak, Stan Hintzel, Jan Wion-szek, J. Ignasiak.

Other families came in 1905 and 1908, among whom were: Wlad. Kaliszewski, Jos. Skobler, Charles Brewko and Adelbert Janczak.

Father Rapp attended Bellville, till February 1909; Father Shocek, till summer of 1911; Father M. A. Dombrowski, from Brenham, till New Year's of 1912. Father Charles Weisnerowski, from Brenham, till September 1912; for the next ten years, Bellville was the mission of Father P. F. Nemec of Sealy. September 1922, it became the charge of Father John Kolas of Frydek till the end of the year 1925. Father George Black of Galveston attended there for half a year and Father Joseph Hanak of Sealy, one year, till Sept. 1927. Since then, it has been in charge of Father A. W. Nesvadba of Frydek.

The church building was modernized, beautifully stuccoed on the interior and exterior, last year, (1935).

"Today" writes Father Nesvadba, "there are forty-five families, twenty-five of whom are good Polish Catholics. They are accommodated in their language, having services twice a month. They recite the Rosary, sing and have the Stations of the Cross in Polish. Most of them are very faithful in their religious duties; the majority receive the sacraments monthly. There is no parochial school but the children have the benefit of instructions and the summer school. There are hardly any mixed marriages or intermarriages."

ROSENBERG

Parish of Holy Cross
(1910)

Galveston Diocese

Rosenberg, a clean little town of two thousand

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population, is located on highway No. 90, thirty-three miles southwest of Houston. The parish, at present, is composed mostly of Bohemians. However, at one time, the Poles formed the majority. The organization of a new parish in Richmond,



three miles northeast of Rosenberg, took away about fifty Polish families.

The Poles settled mostly in the southeastern part of the agricultural districts of Rosenberg. They were, in reality, only an extension of the thickly settled territory of Chapel Hill.

The beginning of the parish dates back to 1910, but the actual organization took place in October, 1911, when the first church was built. Only twelve families formed the nucleus. In 1925, the present church was built at a cost of thirty-five thousand dollars. It is a beautiful stuccoed structure and the

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grounds around it and the rectory are kept in an excellent condition.

Here must be recorded a most unfortunate phase of the Poles in that section of the State, but it should not reflect discredit on the those in the parishes of Rosenberg or Richmond. Purely historical interest, however, demands a reference, at least, to the event.

In 1926, about forty Polish families formed their own "Independent Church." Various reasons for this are given. However, the fundamental one lies in the fact that those who were more nationally inclined determined to have their old Polish traditions and mother tongue preserved from any infringement of Americanization.

"Historically, the Poles have been so circumstanced that their racial and religious sympathies completely coincide. So fused and intensified are these sentiments that it has been well said that the soul of Poland is naturaliter christiana. Conditions leading to ruptures with ecclesiastical authorities have been many, and it would be exceedingly unjust to place all the blame upon the masses of Polish people. The Poles are easily led by fiery eloquence, and 'independence' among them was the result of deliberate deception on the part of rebellious priests, who, to carry on their deception more successfully, had some of their number consecrated bishops by the Old Catholic bishops of Europe. The 'Independents' are possessed of no unity and represent no heretical or schismatic movement in the real sense. The movement was strongest from 1895 to 1900, and spread with astonishing rapidity, becoming most destructive in Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland and throughout Pennsylvania, in which State it still continues, a demoralizing factor. It is impossible to estimate, with any degree of accuracy, the numerical strength of the movement when at its

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height, but today, the total number cannot exceed thirty thousand. Protestants, notably Baptists, Presbyterians and Episcopalians, have fraternized with the 'Independents' and given them a respectability. In recent years, many of the immigrants have been drawn into the movement in good faith" (Cath. Ency. Vol. XII, p. 206).

To add fuel to the seething discontent of these forty families in the vicinity of Rosenberg, there appeared a Pole of the North, a scoundrel in every respect, who saw a good prospect of fat material gain. Over six thousand dollars were collected for a new church from families that otherwise had little. The collection was pocketed by the apostle and no one ever heard of him again. This should have been a solid reminder of the blind course these people were taking. Another man appeared, and began collections for pews in the rented building the "Independents" used. He too left the much richer for newer fields of labor. This last act of perfidy checked the movement but did not destroy it. Though the original number of adherents dwindled considerably, a small following still carries on services in a rented building in Rosenberg. Efforts have been made to bring back these misguided people, but so far without avail.

The present membership of Holy Cross parish is one hundred ten families and only about one-fifth are Polish.

The following is the list of priests who have attended the parish: Father A. Montreal, Father E. J. Hajek, Father I. J. Valenta, Father J. V. Kveton and the present pastor, Father Jerome J. Tydlacka.

There is no parochial school but plans for one are cherished and hope to be realized as soon as the parish debt is paid.

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The Poles here intermarry freely, and a few mixed marriages have taken place.

RICHMOND Parish of Sacred Heart (1935) Galveston Diocese

Three miles northeast of Rosenberg we find the prosperous town of Richmond. The population is about fifteen hundred.



The Sacred Heart parish is of the latest organization, Feb. 8, 1935. The church, costing ten thousand dollars, excluding the free labor of parishioners, was built by Father J. K. Reybaud, a son of St. Mary's Cathedral. The dedication took place, May 10, 1935. It is a building of red brick, and the amount expended seems trivial judging from its imposing appearance. At present, a rectory of the same material is being attached to the church, at a cost of seven thousand dollars.

Father Reybaud has much confidence in the de-

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velopment and progress of this new parish. Out of the one hundred families, about one half are younger families of the devout Polish stock of Chapel Hill and surrounding territory. The Poles reside on farms and their children are numerous. Eighty-two children attend catechetical instructions.

CONGREGATION OF THE HOLY FAMILY OF NAZARETH IN TEXAS (A Congregation of Polish Nuns)

The Congregation of the Holy Family of Nazareth has a deserving place in the history of the Poles in Texas. It was brought in its infancy into the United States by Father Vincent Barzynski, of the Resurrectionist Order to which much credit is due for the early part in the development of the Polish missions in Texas.

Mother Frances Siedliska, the Foundress of the Congregation, was born of Polish nobility, on November 12, 1842, at Roszkowa Wola, Poland, the ancestral home of her family. In the year 1873, with the blessing of his Holiness, Pope Pius IX, the young foundress, together with a small group, began to labor in Rome, as a contemplative-active community under the name of "Holy Family of Nazareth Congregation." Very soon many branches were put forth, and transplanted in Poland, America, England and France. The Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth are engaged in schools, hospitals and orphanages.

On July 4, 1935, the Order of the Family of Nazareth celebrated the golden jubilee of its establishment in the United States. From the history of the Congregation, published on the occasion of this memorable day, the following words, as related by His Excellency Vincent Sardi, Titular Arch-

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bishop of Caesarea, in his biography of the Venerable Mother Frances, are quoted:

"The deplorable situation of unfortunate Poland, oppressed by the neighboring powers, who lawlessly divided the country amongst themselves, brought about the sad result that the majority of the inhabitants dispersed throughout the world. The wealthier classes set out for the European capitols; whereas the poorer, obliged to survive in hardship and toil, emigrated to distant America. Their small colonies settled in the vicinity of churches, where the parish priests extended their paternal care over the entrusted flock. Making all efforts for the material welfare of their brethren, they endeavored chiefly to preserve and foster the piety and lively faith, inculcated by their fathers, which they brought from the native country. Cast in the midst of a population chiefly concerned with earthly interests and ill-disposed towards Catholicity, they were threatened with the danger of losing their faith, which, together with the devotion to their country, was deeply imbedded in their hearts. To counteract these influences, the missionary Fathers of the Congregation of Resurrection labored zealously. Despite their attempts, obviously, they were unable to encompass that field of work alone. To complete the great task already begun, they felt keenly the need of the cooperation of some self-sacrificing individuals,—they needed nuns."

Father Vincent Barzynski, the rector of St. Stanislaus Church in Chicago, who spent his first eight years in America amidst the Texas Polish missions, was the second to ask such help. In the history of Panna Maria, we recall Father Felix Zwiardowski, also of the Resurrectionists, trying to get the Immaculate Conception Sisters of Europe to establish a home in Panna Maria. Failing in this, he

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founded there a new Community of the Immaculate Conception, also known as the "Blue Sisters" because of their habit. The newly founded Order, however, lasted but eight years.

Father Barzynski wrote several times to the Reverend A. Lechert, (his confrere) and spiritual director of Mother Frances, inquiring about the possibility of having some Sisters take charge of the parochial school and orphanage.

The Mother Foundress and her little company departed from Rome on the 17th day of June, 1885, and arrived in New York on July 4th. Two days later, they were escorted by Fathers Barzynski and J. Radziejewski to their quarters on Beldon Ave., in the vicinity of St. Josphat's Church and School.

The Order grew so rapidly that it was soon divided into three Provinces: Sacred Heart of Jesus, Immaculate Conception, and St. Joseph. Present statistics show: one thousand, four hundred twenty-six professed Sisters, sixty-nine novices, forty-one postulants, and one hundred aspirants. The Order takes care of: four convent high schools, four hundred sixty-three high school students, sixty-six parochial schools, thirty-six thousand, one hundred seventy-one parochial pupils, two orphanages, one day nursery, four hundred twenty-six orphan boys and girls, and seven hospitals.

Three of the hospitals are in Texas: the Loretto Hospital at Dalhart, Amarillo Diocese; the Nazareth Hospital at Mineral Wells, and the Bethania Hospital in Wichita Falls are in the Dallas Diocese.

LORETTO HOSPITAL

"Soon after the dedication of the hospital in Clayton, New Mexico, the people and doctors of Dalhart, a neighboring city across the state bound-

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ary line,..... Texas, pressed for the establishment of a similar institution in their town. At that time, the Sisters felt that financially they were not in a position to undertake this project. Upon presenting their difficulties, they were donated by the city Chamber of Commerce a land space, where and with the gracious assistance of His Excellency, Bishop Gerken, it was possible, in 1929, to open a modern and fully equipped hospital."

NAZARETH HOSPITAL:

"The imposing Mineral Wells Sanatorium was at first under the management of the Crazy Water Hotel, then, for reasons unknown, it stood desolate for some time. Unless the building be placed in skillful hands, it was on the verge of total abandonment. To save it and the equipment from ruin, the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth were asked to take over the property. After its purchase, a complete interior renovation was made, and the dedication of 'Nazareth Hospital' took place in June, 1931.

"Mineral Wells is famous for its Crazy Crystals and mineral water baths.

"Statistics indicate that in Mineral Wells there are found but fifteen Catholic families; hence, here, too, is a broad field for missionary work."

BETHANIA HOSPITAL

"During the year 1925, Bethania Hospital, at 1600 Eleventh Street, was constructed, equipped and incorporated under the name of the Hargrave-Walker Hospital. It was opened to the public in 1926 and was operated by this corporation until December 31, 1934, when it was sold to the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth.

"The dedication, on March 9, 1935, was an im-

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pressive ceremony. His Excellency Bishop Lynch officiated and addressed the multitude. An excellent spirit was shown on this occasion, and it is certain that the institution will prosper with such wonderful cooperation.

"The Sisters regard Bethania Hospital as God's own gift on their golden jubilee of toil in America through the intercession of their saintly foundress, on whose feast Bethania Hospital was dedicated.

"The name Bethania was chosen in commemoration of Bethany, a village several miles east of Jerusalem, where Mary, Martha and their brother Lazarus lived, and where Christ often went to visit. We read in the Gospel of St. John, that 'After the toil of teaching and healing, Christ loved to rest in Bethany. He visited there gladly while He remained in Judea, and it was there that He spent His last days before death.'

"In the dawn of its activities, having been established but ten months, Bethania Hospital won the approval of the American College of Surgeons, October 1, 1935.

"The Sisters renovated and re-organized the hospital, installing such equipment as a Westinghouse X-Ray, Balfour operating tables, Ben Morgan gas machine, and the Heidbrink oxygen tent.

"Entering through the central doorway on the main floor, one finds a comfortable and dignified lobby, with offices and reception rooms on either side, guest room, doctors consultation room, the laboratory and X-Ray along the west wing; on the east, the chapel with its high elaborate altar and romanesque arrangement, is a beautiful feature of the institution.

"Rooms were redecorated in pastel shades in order that patients might enjoy cheer and charm.

"Built with a fire proof, reinforced concrete

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frame, the three story hospital is complete in every detail.

"The capacity of the hospital is forty beds. During 1936, one thousand patients were cared for. Fifty nationally known physicians constitute the staff.

"The general atmosphere of the hospital is that of quiet efficiency and helpful friendliness.

"Bethania Hospital has realized its ambition to become a worthy institution for the greater glory of God and the complete restoration of health. It merits a reputation for service sincere, prompt and courteous. Possessing the ideal atmosphere, it is known as the 'Friendly Hospital' and to that mast-head Bethania has nailed its ambitious pennant." (Golden Jubilee History of the Establishment of Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth in America).

THE FELICIAN SISTERS, O. S. F.

IN TEXAS

(Congregation of Polish Nuns)

The Congregation of Felician Sisters was founded in 1855 by Mother Angela, (Sofia Truszkowska), in Warsaw, Poland. Due to difficulties from the Russian Government, the Sisters transferred their home to Kracow, in the Austrian domain. Here the Order began its growth. The principle aim of the community was personal sanctification and works of charity, such as teaching the children of the peasants, caring for the aged, nursing the sick at their homes and giving shelter to the homeless.

In 1874, at the request of Father Joseph Domrowski, five Felician Sisters came to America to work among the Polish colonists of Polonia, Wisconsin. For years, life of the small community among the pioneers and the Indians was one of hard

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struggle. Eight years later, in 1882, the Sisters chose Detroit, Michigan, as the seat of their Mother House. Here they built a convent and an orphanage. The Congregation began to increase rapidly by this time, and now it has branched over the entire country.

The following statistics will point out the growth of its six Provinces in the United States:

1882—Presentation of the Blessed Mother,—Detroit, Michigan.

1900—Immaculate Heart of Mary,—Buffalo, New York.

1910—Our Lady of Good Counsel,—Milwaukee, Wisconsin; transferred to Chicago in 1927.

1913—Immaculate Conception, Lodi, New Jersey.

1920—Mother of Sacred Heart,—Caropolis, Pennsylvania.

1932—Our Lady of Angels,—Enfield, Connecticut.

The six provinces have three thousand one hundred seventy-five members. The Chicago province alone has eight hundred Sisters.

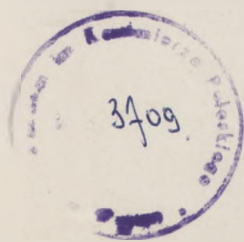
The Sisters of the community conduct the following: six academies for girls; six seminaries for the education of teachers; eight industrial schools and orphanages; one home for the aged; ten kindergartens; three homes for the working girls; fourteen high schools; two hundred eight parochial schools, having an attendance of two hundred thirty thousand, eight hundred two pupils.

At the request of Father Joseph Szymanski, five Sisters came to Bremond, Texas, in 1932. Other parishes in Texas followed:—Cestochowa 1934, St. Hedwig, Poth and Yorktown in 1935.

THE END

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