Welcome!

Kronika Bukowsko
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*** WELCOME! ***

to the latest issue of Gen Dobry!, the e-zine of PolishRoots®. If you missed previous issues, you can find them here:

<http://polishroots.org/GenDobry/tabid/60/Default.aspx>

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I have been visiting Bukowsko, powiat Sanok, old województwo Rzeszów, every other year since 1996. I have family and friends in this village – mostly family, because I am related to virtually everyone in the village. Due to my involvement in locating vital records and learning more about this impoverished village, I have become known there.

During a visit in 2008, I was given a packet of papers by a cousin, Bronisława (now deceased). I copied them and passed the originals on to another cousin, Ann, in the U.S. The papers were copies of a Polish school diary or kronika that began in 1945. It told of life in Bukowsko just after World War II and during the involuntary resettlement by Poland’s communist government of Łemkos, Ukrainians, and Poles (Akcja Rzeszów and Akcja Wisła).

I translated a little of the Kronika and realized that it had to be translated and published. There wasn’t much available in English that told of the harrowing times of the resettlements – and what I read there was heart-wrenching.

I knew my Polish was not up to the task of translating this diary. So, in the summer of 2009, I enlisted the help of a close friend of ours, Karol, who was visiting us from Poland for a month. Karol tried to translate some of the diary; but just as my Polish was not good enough, his English was not up to the task. I continued to look for someone to translate the diary.

We returned to Bukowsko in 2010, with no progress made in the translation process.

After returning home from the trip in 2010, I was going through the diary pages and rough-translating what I could to just try to glean some information. I was confounded to suddenly realize that pages were missing. I wasn’t scheduled to return to Bukowsko until 2012.

In the meantime, I tried to find out where the original pages were held. This was a problem. My cousin, Ewa, was a teacher in the school; but she didn’t know where the diary was stored, even though the diary was given to the school children to practice their handwriting. So, everyone knew about the diary, but no one knew where it was kept. I had several people in the school looking for the diary as sort of a covert mission.

I found out that the principal seemed to guard the diary with his life. In 1989, a radio personality from Rzeszów had borrowed the diary from the principal at that time, but failed to return it until the principal made a special trip to Rzeszów to recover it. As a result, the school stopped allowing the chronicle to leave the building as a matter of policy. The principals knew the diary was an important part of the Bukowsko history. So, access to the original was restricted and its exact whereabouts in the school kept confidential.
Though I made a trip to Bukowsko in 2012, I did not have the opportunity to do anything while there in regard to the diary.

In 2013, Roman Kaluźniacki agreed to do the translation. I sent Roman a copy and he also noted that pages were missing. But he began the tedious job of transcribing the Kronika from a handwritten manuscript to a computer document in Polish. Once that was complete, he would then begin to translate it.

In preparation for my trip to Bukowsko in 2014, I made an appointment to meet the principal of the school in Bukowsko. My cousin, Ewa, would make the introductions. I could only hope that I would be able to convince the principal to allow me to photograph the diaries there at the school.

I presented Principal Sitarz with a large box of school supplies that I shipped from home. I explained what I wanted and why. The principal agreed to let me photograph the diaries. Yes, there was more than one diary. In fact, the Kronika has been continued to the present day. Our time was limited, so we photographed the diaries as quickly as we could, but really didn’t look at them until I arrived home. That proved to be a tremendous mistake, as I hadn’t photographed the most important book, the first one! The principal had not given it to me.

Was this diary ever going to be published?

Back at home, I contacted an unemployed teacher from a village near Bukowsko and asked her to either photograph or photocopy the book, put it on two CDs, sending one CD to me and giving the other to the principal. She spoke English very well, so we had little trouble understanding each other. The agreement was that I would pay her for her time. Pan Sitarz agreed to let Ewelina copy the book. I thought I was finally getting somewhere. However, my copy of the CD never showed up in my mailbox and I wasn’t getting responses to my emails. Why was I having so much trouble with this project?

At Christmas in both 2014 and 2015, I shipped large boxes at Christmas time to the school filled with school supplies and small toys. My motives were mixed. First, I truly cared for the community and the school and knew just how poor many of the students were. But, second, I also knew that I would have to photograph the books again and hoped to maintain the good will that I had built up with the school to that point. (In the hope of not seeming too manipulative, let me note that I’ve continued sending big boxes of school supplies since obtaining photographs of the entire diary.)

Another trip to Bukowsko in 2016 and another box of school supplies. Principal Sitarz again received me graciously. Over coffee and cookies, I cautiously asked the big question again. Fortunately, Sitarz had no problem with me photographing the first book. In fact, he brought out all the books as well as the baptismal certificate and other keepsakes of the Kronika’s author. My husband and I went into an empty classroom and carefully photographed all the books. At that point in time – partly due, again, to only having a limited time in my schedule – I only wanted, and only photographed, those covering the difficult times between 1945 and 1977.
After we photographed the books, I met with the woman who was supposed to have copied the books for me. She gave me a present: the CD! She waited for me to return to the area to give it to me and she would not accept payment.

Once home, I sent Roman the new photos. Roman had enlisted the help of his Polish cousin in Warsaw because he was not familiar with some titles and abbreviations. He also called upon my cousin Ewa in Bukowsko for other information. I never imagined so many people would be involved in this project.

Finally, in October 2017, the book, *Kronika Bukowsko*, was finished, covering 1945 through 1977. Roman was very meticulous in his work. The book not only includes the English translation, but also includes:

- images of all the pages of the original diary;
- Roman’s transcription from handwritten Polish into typed Polish;
- a transcription, translation, and images from a 1989 dedication of a memorial plaque to the author;
- the same for a biography of the author included in the diary
- notes about the transcription and translation, Polish schools, and administrative divisions of Poland;
- a glossary;
- lists of Polish and institutional abbreviations;
- and an index of names.

The finished product includes many photographs from the original diary.

Roman sent me the final files and I decided to put the book on CD and sell it, with the proceeds going to the kindergarten in Bukowsko.

During my 2016 trip, when I was able to obtain the needed images, I was honored to be invited to attend the dedication of a second memorial to Kazimiera Kochańska in Bukowsko in June 2016. This was a big affair attended by local dignitaries, teachers, students of Kochańska, and her granddaughter. Tea and cakes were offered in the gymnasium afterwards.

**KAZIMIERA KOCHAŃSKA**

When the Kronika was started in 1945, Kazimiera Kochańska was a teacher in the elementary school, though she became principal shortly afterwards. She was educated; as a result, the diary is well written and full of emotion. Kochańska not only became the school principal but developed into a strong advocate for the village and gmina of Bukowsko, and was heavily involved in its civic life. Kochańska was loved and respected by everyone who knew her. She was a vital force in this village.
Kazimiera Kochańska wrote detailed descriptions of what was happening during the terrible siege of her village and the surrounding villages just after World War II. She describes the horror of having homes invaded, the sounds of cattle and other animals screaming as they were being slaughtered, and then the villagers being ordered to start cooking to feed the horrible invaders – all the time knowing that their homes would probably be torched and burned to the ground. The heartache comes through, and yet, so does the strength of the villagers.

Kochańska passed away on 3 January 1983 at 83 years of age.

For information on purchasing the *Kronika Bukowsko*, please contact Debbie Greenlee: <daveg@airmail.net>.

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*** LETTERS TO THE EDITOR ***
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Subject: Ukraine Podcast

Hi Mr. Hoffman, regarding your above (about 5 high) post regarding Michael Buryk’s podcast on Ukraine and Poland, I requested he post to iTunes and he did. Here is the link if you wish to share it.


Tried as I might I could not get the link you posted to download.

Nadine Guilbault

    Editor – I’m sorry to hear you had trouble using the link I posted. I always check all links before I send out *Gen Dobry!* But that guarantees nothing, as any experienced user of the Internet knows. I am glad you were able to access it, and thank you for sharing the iTunes link. If the link above fails to work for anyone, see if this TinyURL works any better: <https://tinyurl.com/ybklq8nq>.

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Subject: Family of Felix Alexander Lemkie

    Editor – This is a note sent to PolishRoots, and I wanted to pass it along in case any of our readers can help.

Greetings.
I am trying to locate relatives of Mr. Felix Alexander Lemkie. Please read and see the attached, and if you can, help me locate the relatives so that I can return this piece of an heirloom to the rightful owner(s).
Thank you for your help and assistance.

Respectfully,
George Hawryluk

Please share and help me find the owner/owners…

This soup tureen with a ladle was sent to me by a relative. When I found out that the lid is inscribed with a dedication, I decided to return this item to the relatives of the person to whom this soup tureen, (I think that that’s what it is), was presented to on June 30, 1898.

The inscription reads, “Presented to Felix A Lemkie by Henry M. Reynolds and Staff. June 30th 1898.”

I was fortunate to find Felix Alexander Lemkie’s obituary and found out that he died on March 19, 1929 in Detroit, Wayne County, Michigan, USA. Mr. Lemkie was survived by two daughters, Mrs. Charles W. Isaacs, of Walkerville, Ontario, which is now a heritage precinct of Windsor, Ontario, Mrs. James A. Wright of Detroit, Michigan, and two sons, Louis S. and Allen S. Lemkie of Detroit, Michigan, USA.
More information could be found on the attached web address; 
<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/11574514>

I am sure that the relatives of Mr. Felix A. Lemkie would like to be reunited with this family heirloom.

Please share this information, and hopefully this soup tureen will be return to the rightful owners.

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CORRECTION

Editor – In the lead article of the last issue, I included a note from Brother Joseph Martin, but I forgot to include a photograph he referred to in the e-mail version. It was in the PDF, but inserting photos into the e-mail version of Gen Dobry! requires a different procedure, and I forgot. So let me repeat Brother Joseph’s note, with the photo below.

All of my families hail from Detroit, and it is quite likely that all of them visited Belle Isle over the years. I know our family did.

This is a photo of my Kaptur family who lived in the Sweetest Heart of Mary Parish. The photo was taken on Belle Isle as evidenced by the Belle Isle Conservatory in the background. Best guess for a time frame is the late 1920s. The lady in the black hat is my great grandmother, Marcyanna (Skibinska) Kaptur and the man over her shoulder is her husband Nicholas Kaptur.
To the far left in a light-colored hat is their daughter, Emily Kaptur. But who are the rest of the folks? I have not been able to identify any others.

They could be the family of Frances (Kaptur) Siemowski, or Apolonia (Skibinska) Kowalski, or Lucy (Skibinska) Majewski. We have no photos from those other families to attempt any matching identifications. But the photo was taken on Belle Isle in Detroit.

Brother Joseph Martin

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Subject: Olzens, Gdańsk, and USA Connections

I was interested in reading the outcome of George Blazak’s quest for missing records and thought that it might be worth asking about my brick wall.

I, too, am a member of the Queensland Family History Society, as well as the Queensland Genealogy Society, and am living near Brisbane, Australia. My brick wall is August Henry Olzen.

August Henry came to Australia, according to him, arriving in the Colony of Victoria c 1879. There are no records of his arrival that I can find. So, a family story of him jumping ship may be true.

He states, on his Naturalisation Application, that he was born in Gdańsk on 25th December, 1856 and his parents were John G Olzen (b Abt 1837 Gdańsk) and Mary Hommel. I have had researchers review both Gdańsk church records and records in Berlin (given the period of birth) to no avail.

I am curious about the name Olzen and its connection to Poland, as I believe it has a more Scandinavian lilt to it. I am wondering if Gdańsk was a cosmopolitan sea port in 1850. The other thing I do know is that “Olzens” emigrated to the USA from Poland, but I have been unable to find any living relatives who might be able to add to the family tree.

I would be interested in knowing if any of your members could answer my many questions regarding the Olzen name, Gdańsk as a sea port in the 1850s, and any connections in the USA of the name Olzen.

I enjoy Gen Dobry! each month and you are to be complimented as the Editor.

Cheers

David Barnes <davidbarnes2014@bigpond.com>

Editor – Can anyone offer David some assistance on these points?

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by Fred Hoffman <wfh@langline.com>

The October 29, 2017 issue of *Nu? What’s New, the E-zine of Jewish Genealogy from Avotaynu*, announced that the Polish State Archives is going to keep all its branches open throughout next summer. It is always possible individual branches may have reduced staff due to vacations; but the plan is for the facilities to remain open to visitors.

Anyone familiar with the State Archives knows that this is a departure from previous policy. The reason for the change appears to be the decision to hold the 38th International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies’ International Conference on Jewish Genealogy, beginning on August 5. So we can’t expect this to happen every year. But it’s a tribute to IAJGS that the State Archives has recognized the value of remaining open to accommodate attendees.

For Jewish and non-Jewish researchers alike, it remains wise to make arrangements for archive visits well in advance. There will most likely be many experts, archivists, and researchers attending the conference. Do not just show up and hope for the best! But with proper planning, you may be able to benefit from this event.

Remember, however, that civil records offices, or Urzędy Stanu Cywilnego, are independent of the State Archives, and so are not affected by this decision. You need to contact the specific office for your community of interest and make sure your schedule fits in with its demands.

For more information on the IAJGS conference, visit the website, <http://www.iajgs2018.org/>. I have a feeling it will be an amazing event!

AN OVERVIEW OF RECENT PERIODICALS

*Editor*—This is an ongoing feature, meant to inform you of articles published recently in newsletters and journals that may interest you.


- An Index of Published Translations of Entries from the *Słownik Geograficzny*, compiled by William F. Hoffman, Chris Bukoski, and Paul Lipinski

• Our November Speaker, Linda Serna
• What a Wonderful Day – 2nd Annual PGS-CA Polish Cultural Day
• Upcoming Calendar
• Three Stories of Family Finds, Arlene Cooper
• Florence Lepianka – Patriot, Joyce Sharifi

Rodziny, Fall 2017, Volume XL, No. 4. Polish Genealogical Society of America <http://pgsa.org>

• From Our Correspondent in Poland: How the Tsar Decimated the Polish Nobility, Iwona Dakiniewicz
• A List of Selected Lublin Gubernia Applicants for Certification of Nobility, Iwona Dakiniewicz
• First Year of Schenectadians John and Julia (Polek) Jakubczak’s Sojourn in Buffalo, New York (1925–196): Their Cousins – The Frank Jakubczaks of Its Black Rock District, Leonard F. Jakubczak, Ph.D.
• Gems of Polish Genealogy at the Newberry Library – report on a presentation by Grace DuMelle
• Remembering Those Who Died in World War I, Richard Warmowski
• What Exactly Was a “Colony”?, William F. Hoffman
• Kronika Bukowsko on DVD, Debbie Greenlee
• Memoirs of a Peasant, Chapter Eleven, Part Three, by Jan Słomka, translated by William F. Hoffman
• From the Słownik geograficzny: Godziszewo, Gołębiewko, Gołębiewo, Kobierzyn, Górzno, and Skowarcz [all in Gdańsk powiat]

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*** UPCOMING EVENTS ***

Note: see also <http://eogn.wikidot.com/> for a large selection of upcoming events in the world of genealogy.

February 28 – March 3, 2018

Roots Tech February 28 - March 3, 2018 - “Connect/Belong”

For those who agree that the future of family history lies in technology and innovation, this event is probably a must. The program will highlight leading technologies and products from around the world. Registration is already open. For more information go to: <https://www.rootstech.org>.

[From the October 2017 issue of PGSA Notebook]
May 7 – 20, 2018

THE ROAD HOME

A genealogy oriented trip to Poland and Ukraine.

*With certified American and Polish genealogists Professor Jonathan Shea and Aleksandra Kacprzak.*

The trip includes opportunities to visit your ancestral village.

The Road Home trip will leave from New York on 5/7/18 and return on 5/20/18.

The trip cost is $2,995* per person, double occupancy if you sign up by November 1, 2017.

After November 1, 2017 the trip cost is $3,195* per person, double occupancy. There will be an additional $450 fee for single occupancy. The cost includes airfare between New York JFK and Kraków, hotels, three meals daily, professional tour guide, private tour bus, and admission to scheduled attractions.

You must sign up for the trip by December 20, 2017 and submit a $300 non-refundable deposit and fill out the pre-trip questionnaire.

You must pay for your trip in full (non-refundable) by February 1, 2018. You must have a valid passport for this trip.

If you are traveling alone, would you want a roommate and save the single supplement charge? Please let us know if you would like a roommate and we will try to accommodate you.

*Price Subject to change due to change in exchange rates or airline fees.

DAILY ITINERARY

May 7: Depart from New York
May 8: Kraków
May 9: Auschwitz/ Częstochowa May 10: Wadowice/Żywiez Brewery
May 11: Zakopane
May 12: Sanok/Solin/Polańczyk
May 13: Bieszczady/Przemyśl
May 14: Przemyśl/Depart for Ukraine
May 15: Lwów in Ukraine
May 16: Various towns in Ukraine
May 17: Zamość/Sandomierz
May 18: Krzyztopor Palace/Wieliczka Salt Mine May 19: Kraków/Wawel Castle
May 20: Depart to New York
INDIVIDUAL VILLAGE DAY TRIPS

There are a limited number of day trips available so you can travel to your ancestral village. There will be an additional cost for this service. The village must be within 75 miles of a city we are visiting. Requests must be submitted by January 2, 2018. We will notify you by January 31, 2018 if your trip is possible and the estimated cost for the trip. Payment for the village trip will happen the day of the trip in Poland.

Check us out on Facebook: The Road Home-Polish American Foundation.

To sign up or more questions e-mail: <dorena726@yahoo.com>

POLISH AMERICAN FOUNDATION OF CONNECTICUT

27 Grove Hill Street New Britain, CT

<http://www.PAF-CT.org>

Bring your family tree to life

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*** MORE USEFUL WEB ADDRESSES ***


This link takes you to an article mentioned in Eastman’s Online Genealogy Newsletter [EOGN], “Who Actually Owns Your Content When You Post It to the Web,” by David Nield. The short answer is, “You do.” However, between “fair use” and the terms you must agree to when you use a particular social service or content provider, it is entirely possible you do have little or no control over your content. If you want to make sure others don’t use content in ways you don’t like, don’t post it. If you do post it, pay attention to the terms you’re agreeing to.


This link from The Genealogy News takes you to an article on the MyHeritage blog. It deals with the myth that won’t die, that names were changed at Ellis Island. If you still believe that’s true, you should read this article to understand why it simply did not happen. Even if you know better, this article includes some good insights on why the myth lives on despite the efforts of people who know what they’re talking about.

<http://jri-poland.org/psa/plock_bor_surn.htm>

On 17 November 2017, Stanley Diamond, Executive Director of Jewish Records Indexing-Poland, announced that all 17,200 entries in the 1878–1897 Płock Books of Residents project are now searchable on the JRI-Poland website. The above URL takes you to a list of surnames indexed. He wrote, “The entries have detailed information on 17,200 individuals, a
remarkable resource for those researching ancestors living in Płock who were born as early as 1786. There are more than 4,400 different surnames (and spelling variations) and more than 700 other towns mentioned in the database.” He added, “Books of Residents are a house-by-house census of the families living in the town. Town officials updated the information for each family on an ongoing basis over time and recorded all the people living in the house and moving in and out. Each entry includes Name, Surname, Father’s Name, Mother’s Name, Occupation, Date and Place of Birth or previous place of residence. In some cases, Dates of Death, Marriage, and Draft Status or other informative notes are included.” I would expect the database to deal mainly with Jews, and a quick look at the list of surnames are distinctively Jewish. Many of them could be borne by Jews or Christians, however. If I had roots in the Płock area, I would certainly want to take a look. The web page explains how to find more information on names listed. Congratulations to JRI-Poland on a splendid accomplishment, and I hope their database continues to grow and grow!

<https://pgsa.org/polish-sites/>

The November issue of PGSA’s Genealogy Notebook mentioned a list of some 40–50 websites compiled by former PGSA Board member James Piechorowski a couple of years ago. These were sites offering “Digitized Polish Vital Records.” We’ve probably mentioned this before, but it’s worth pointing out again. Each item includes the URL for the site and a brief description of where it is headquartered and what it offers. The item in the Genealogy Notebook concludes, “Since this is a work in progress, we hope to add more sites to the list as they become known to us.” Why not visit the page, see if there’s something that helps you, or add info on sites you know about?

<http://gov.genealogy.net/search/index>

In a note Julie Roberts Szczepankiewicz posted to Facebook’s Polish Genealogy group, she wrote: “Another great gazetteer is the Genealogisches Orts-Verzeichnis (GOV), The Historic Gazetteer. This German database can be searched in English, and includes locations around the world. It searches for the character string typed in the search box (truncate by leaving off as many letters as desired; diacritics are not necessary). The results list includes the type of location, the higher-level jurisdictions, and the current postal code, and includes links to additional articles about this place for further reading.” The URL above takes you to the database. Thanks, Julie!

<https://blog.polishorigins.com/how-surnames-came-into-being-in-poland/>

I’m pretty sure we’ve mentioned this before, but a recent post from PolishOrigins on Facebook reminded me of their feature offering analysis on how specific Polish names began. This link takes you to a blog entry on the subject, and lets you connect to the forum where you can ask about your names. I used to answer questions on surname origins, but it’s getting to the point I just don’t have the time any more. Besides, why ask an American when you can ask Poles who speak English well?
The 26 Nov 2017 issue of *Nu? What’s New?* mentioned a series of articles by Hal Bookbinder that deal with safe computing, accessible at this link. The most recent is “Take Care When You Use Google.” It’s a reasonably short article on things you need to watch out for when you use Google. Bookbinder doesn’t advise abandoning Google – just use reasonable caution, especially when downloading Microsoft Word documents. If any Word document asks you to “enable macros,” be especially careful! This is one major way malware propagates.

I have often seen notes from researchers interested in photographs of ancestors taken after their death, sometimes called Memento Mori Photography. Dick Eastman had a brief article on the subject in *Eastman’s Online Genealogy Newsletter [EOGN]*, and you can see it at the above URL. He includes links to collections of postmortem photography you may wish to look through.

Another issue of *EOGN* includes an article “How to Save a Webpage as a PDF File, So You Later Can View It Offline.” The piece is brief, mainly referring you to the above link, to an article by Tyler Lacoma of the Digital Trends website. Like Eastman, I often find myself saving web pages this way, and the article shows you how to do it with a variety of different browsers and from smart phones.

This item from *EOGN* quotes an announcement from WikiTree on their Honor Code’s surpassing 100,000 digital signatures. The code promotes basic rules that reputable researchers will want to live by. You can read the article at the above URL, and you can read the code and sign up, if you wish, at <https://www.wikitreecom/wiki/Special:Honor_Code>.

The 27 Nov 2017 JewishGen digest included a post from David Lewin stating that he found this free translation service to be remarkable. I did not have time to give it a thorough test run, but I did try it out on a few paragraphs of Polish. Deepl rendered some phrases and sentences quite well, especially when dealing with contemporary texts. But it had serious problems with the kind of older Polish we see in records and historical sources. For instance, a paragraph from the Polish Wikipedia on the *sołtys*, a local administrator, told me this official’s perks included the right to have a taxi, but had a duty to serve as a military horse! Google Translate decided that last sentence meant “he was obligated to serve military service as a panache.” As you see, these computer translators struggle with archaic terms and concepts. Deepl also lets you consult a database of human translations, which is less convenient but more likely to put you on the right track. All in all, it’s worth a try – but regard the results with healthy skepticism, especially if the text you need translated deals with anything historical.
The 26 Nov 2017 issue of *The Genealogy News* included this link, which takes you to a web page with a review of *German Genealogy – Research in Pomerania: With Specific Examples of Kreis Schlawe Research*, by Donna Schilling. This book seems likely to offer a lot of help with research throughout Pomerania in northwestern Poland, not just in Kreis Schlawe (Schlawe is the German name for Sławno, now in Zachodniopomorskie province). Not having reviewed the book myself, I can’t judge its value. But the table of contents – which you can read on this web page – strongly suggests the book is worth consulting if you have ancestors in that region. The book is currently on sale for $20.96 from Family Roots Publishing.

Another issue of *EOGN* mentioned this site, Historic Map Works.com. As you might gather from the name, it is a collection of maps of cities, towns, and counties in North America, from the 19th century through the early 20th century. Those maps generally show every building and street in a particular town; and each single-dwelling home is labeled with the name of the family who resided there. The maps visible on the website are free; higher-quality printed maps can be purchased. Note that their Special Collection includes various historical maps of European countries, and can be searched here: <http://www.historicmapworks.com/Continent/Europe/List/>. You may find it worth a look.

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