

THE BUREIZA JOURNEY FROM BORONÓW, SILESIA TO PARISVILLE, MICHIGAN

By Roger Laske

Silesia was known as Śląsk by the ethnic Poles and Schlesien, Prussia by the Germans. The story starts in the village of

Boronow, powiat Lubliniec, province Katowice, Poland (Silesia) in the mid 1800s. Silesia is an area in the southwestern portion of Poland noted for agriculture and coal



Boronów, located in powiat of Lubliniec, province of Śląsk

The land is relatively flat with some rolling hills. “This part of Poland has a very unique culture and traditions that are not always known to the rest of Poles. People from Silesia are famous for their thick accent, hilarious sense of humor, rich food, and great work ethic. Silesia was always extremely important to the Polish economy due to a great number of mines located there. To this day, people from this region mine coal, silver, salt, and a variety of other

minerals. The mining traditions influenced greatly the spirit of the folks living there. The dangers of everyday life caused people to be more religious and attached to their families. If you would like to see a great display of this region’s traditions, the best time to visit would be on December 4, St. Barbara's Day. St. Barbara is considered to be a patron of miners and people of Silesia. On that day you can see (in all the big and small cities) many parades with marching

bands consisting of whole generations of miners". But this beautiful land was under a very domineering Prussian rule that was determined to eliminate any Polish heritage. *Quoted from Joan Czeryba Bode, a frequent traveler to Silesian, Poland.*



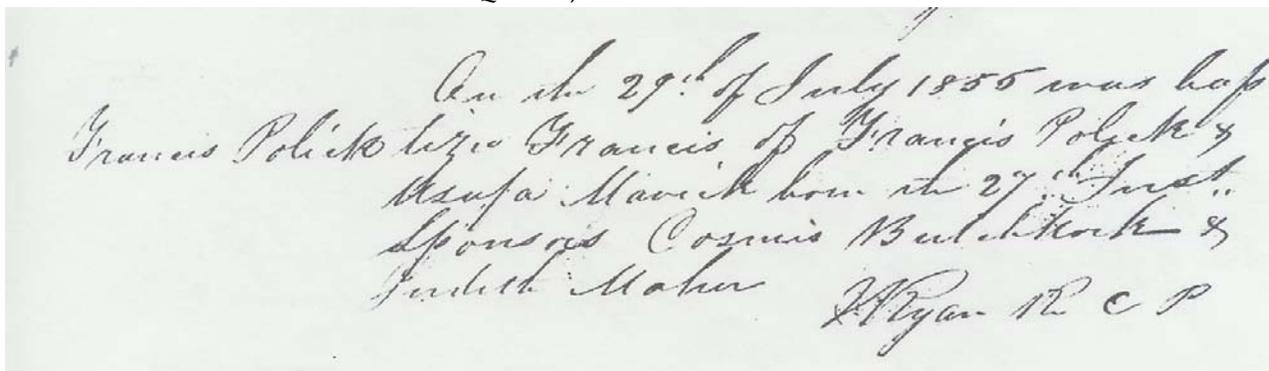
The parish church of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary, 1611; constructed on the plan of a Greek cross, with a timbered exterior and octagonal tower. The interior of the Church contains 17th-century wainscoting, and the Dzierżanowski family [Land Baron] chapel, which holds a collection of Processional placards and the memorial book of the Confraternity of the Holy Rosary.

The Bureiza family left the cruel domination of the Prussians and traveled by sail to the port of Quebec, Canada. They most likely sailed from the Port of Bremen. Since Canada did not require the ports to record ship manifests in the early days, the exact date of arrival is unknown. From Quebec,

the men worked the railroad from Upper Canada (Ontario) to the Lake Huron and crossed over to Michigan, usually at Forestville in upper northeastern Sanilac County. Upper Canada's name reflected its elevation, not its latitude, which is actually south of Lower Canada.

There were others from the village of Boronów that traveled the same route. There are baptisms recorded in the parish of Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Paris, Brant County, Ontario. Surnames in the Baptismal registers from this parish between May 1855 and August 1857 include: KUCHARCZYK BUCZKOWSKI PULCER, SUSALLA, PAWLOWSKI, POLK, and RESPONDEK.

To get a better understanding of the Polish in relation to the foreign-born in Huron County in the early years of settlement, it is best to read portions from Charles Frank Kovacik's 1970 Michigan State University dissertation: "A Geographical Analysis of the Foreign-born in Huron, Sanilac and St. Clair Counties of Michigan with Particular Reference to Canadians: 1850-1880", obtained from <http://www.lib.umi.com/dxweb/gateway>, File No. AAT 7118234.



1855 Baptismal record of Frances Polick (Polk) from Sacred Heart Church, Paris, Brant County, Ontario, Canada

In 1850, "Sanilac, which only had achieved county status (1848), contained 2,112 inhabitants. Huron County, attached as a single township to Sanilac, numbered only 210 settlers." No Polish are enumerated in the 1850 census; mostly Irish, Scottish or Canadian. *Ibid, page 98*

From 1854 to 1860 came the first wave of Polish settlers into Huron County. Some say the settlers named their Township after the city of Paris, Brant County, Ontario, Canada, where they had stopped for a period of time. Others have said it was named by a man named DesJardins after the city in France. Who knows for sure? The first option has more merit.

In 1860 "Huron County, which was finally organized in 1859, embodied 3,165 inhabitants." "...and averaged only 2.22 persons per square mile." Paris Township was part of Bingham Township in the 1860 census. The Polish surnames were badly butchered in this census: Bureiza is written as Boyer, Pawlowski as Pocaski, Respondek as Raspondski and Susalla as Saddler; obviously enumerated by a non-Pole. There are only nine pages in the census with 22 Heads of Household and 74 spouses and children giving Poland or Prupia (Prussia) as their country of birth. *Ibid, page 106 & 115; 1860 Federal Census, Huron, Bingham County.*

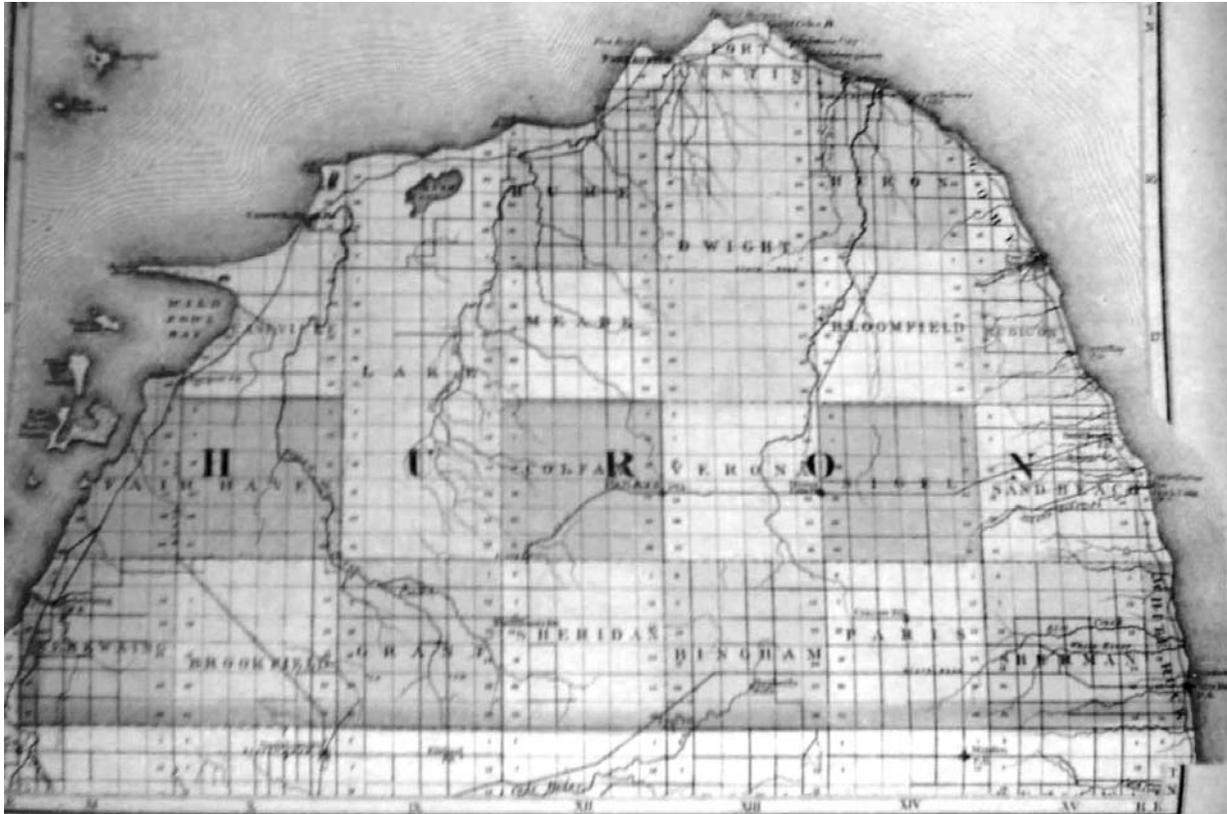
On the 1870 Federal Census: "Paris Township, although ranked seventh in population density, ranked fourth in foreign-born density. Paris was one of the three townships situated in the interior

which exceeded the mean density of foreign-born. Bingham and Sherman were tenth and eleventh." *Ibid, page 131.*

The following two decades had a large influx of Polish immigrants into Huron County. Many were from the village of Boronów and must have heard from the original settlers of the excellent soil for agriculture. "During the years of 1853, 1854 and 1855, the worst harvests were witnessed by the Polanders, ruining the farm owners financially." But it was mainly for freedom from Prussian tyranny that they left. "Another blow after the bad harvests was a commercial one. The Polish people had to depend upon the Prussian banking services. The Prussian financial men would not loan any money to the Polish land owners (a farm mortgage). With such denials, the Polish farmers became insolvent after the bad harvests." *"Parisville Poles" by Harry Milostan, page 3.*



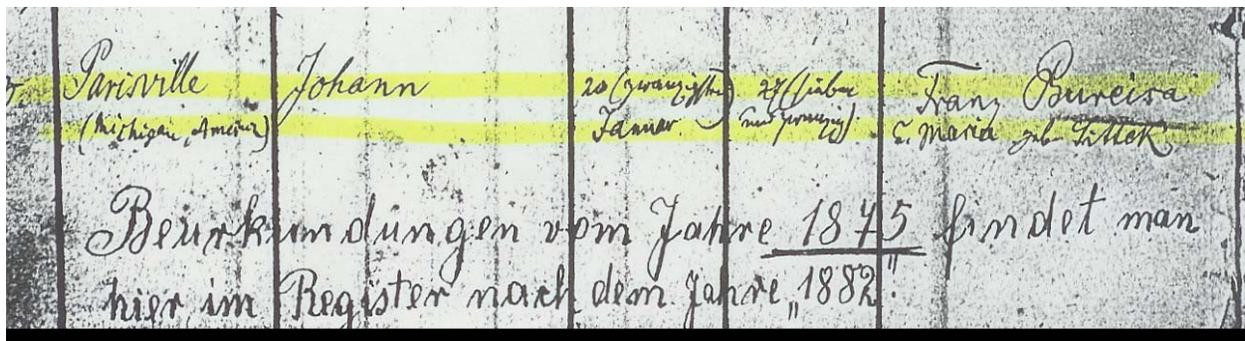
Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary cemetery and church, Boronow, (Silesia) Poland



1873 Huron County Township Map

Another show of Prussian despotism was the system of military service. "By this system, says Mr. Laing, 'every subject between the ages of twenty and twenty-five, without distinction of fortune, birth, class, or intended profession, is bound to serve as a private soldier in the ranks of the standing army for a period of three successive years.'" From the book *"Parisville Poles"*, page 5, quoting from *"Notes of a Traveler on the Social and Political State of Prussian, ...During the Present Century"*, by Samuel Laing, Esq. and also *"Miscelanea: Comprising Reviews, Lectures, and Essays, on Historical Theological, and Miscellaneous Subjects"* by M. J. Spaulding, DD, Archbishop of Baltimore, 1866, Vol. II.

Even with the cruel Prussian rule, some came to the new land but returned to their familiar former life. Franz Bureiza, nephew of Matias Bureiza, traveled to Parisville, had a son, Johann, who was baptized at St. Mary's Church in Parisville in January 1875 and returned home to Boronów according to a notation in the Boronów church, Najświętszej Maryi Panny Różańca Świętego (The Blessed Virgin Mary of the Holy Rosary), records. This nephew, Franz, had a son, Franz, born 27 June 1873 in Boronów and a son, Felix, born in nearby Althuen (Hucisko) on 18 May 1878. So, Franz was in Michigan only between 1873 and 1878.



Boronow, Poland Baptismal record showing Johann Bureisa born in Parisville, Michigan.

In the 1880 Federal Census, Poles were the third largest foreign-born group in the county, but averaged less than one per square mile. Poles outnumbered all other foreigners in Paris Township, accounting for 14.63 per square mile, 75 percent of all Thumb region Poles, and 83 percent of the Poles residing in Huron County. *"Parisville Poles", by Harry Milostan, page 154.*

The Polish contribution to foreign-born population change was slight with respect to the entire region (the Michigan thumb of three counties). However, Poles contributed significantly to change in Huron County. Within Huron County, Poles were clustered in Paris Township. Between 1870 and 1880, Paris was the only township ever to report a significant Polish density change. Poles accounted for more of the foreign-born change between 1860 and 1870 than either the Irish, English, or Scots. Only Canadian and German density change exceeded the Polish change for Huron County during the final decade (1880). Although extremely clustered in one township, Poles added considerable numbers to the foreign-born population of Huron County." *Ibid, page 171.*

The lives of these early settlers were centered on their religion and the church was most important to establishing these

new lives in a new land. St. Mary's Catholic Church was "officially" established in 1861 with the building of a separate frame church under the direction of Fr. Francis Breitkopf. Eleven acres of land were purchased on 05 March 1859 from pioneer, Anton Slawik and his wife Joanna for nineteen dollars. Prior to that date, Masses were celebrated in homes (usually Anthony Slawik) whenever Jesuit, Redemptorist or, finally Resurrectionist priests traveled to the area from cities in Ontario, Canada. The late Rev George W. Pare, historian of the Diocese of Detroit, believes the St. Mary Mission had its start in 1852, the first priest visiting the area being Fr. Peter Kluk, a Czech. The parish did not receive their first full time pastor, Fr. Simon Wieczorek, until 1868. *Notes from a "History of Parisville", by Rev. George W. Pare, Diocese of Detroit Historian.*

St. Mary's parish saw the loss of their church to no less than three fires: 1871, 1881 and 1974. The tenacity and determination of the Polanders saw to it that the church was rebuilt with haste in each instance. "The first church (a log cabin) was built from materials supplied by the surrounding fields and forests." *"Parisville Poles", by Harry Milostan, page 112.*



Old St. Mary's Church, Parisville, 1882-1925

One of the first dozen settlers was my ancestor, Matias Bureiza. His journey was similar to many others escaping Prussian rule in their homeland, either Silesia or Poznan. Matias was born of Peter and Rosine (Swiercz) on 24 February 1803. He married Rosalia Sowa, born 24 February 1808 in Boronów, on 28 January 1828 in the church of The Blessed Virgin Mary of the Holy Rosary in Boronów. About 1851 or 1852, Matias and Rosalia left the Prussian rule of their land and headed to North America. They took their children with them, all born in Boronow, Poland. Their eldest son, Joseph, was already married and followed later. *LDS Microfilms: Boronow Church Records, 2119522 & 3 and 2201332, 3 & 4.*

The records from Boronów are the best I have researched in 16 years of looking at microfilms. The records are from 1719 to 1937 and include a very inclusive index, even giving the mother's maiden name in

many instances. *"Polish Eaglet", Vol. 23, No. 3, "Boronow Parish Surnames", 1846-1866, pg. 24.*

The Children of Matias and Rosalia Bureiza:

First daughter, Franzka, born 08 September 1832 in Boronow but nothing is known of her. *LDS Microfilm, Boronow Church Records, 2199523, 1832, No. 74.*

First son, Joseph (Sr.), born 29 July 1830 (my third great-grandfather) in Boronów married Frances Bochnia on 22 Jan 1860 in Boronów, Poland. Joseph and Frances, like his father, also had eleven children. He died 30 July 1895 in Parisville, Huron County, Michigan. Joseph and his family immigrated to Parisville about 1871, some 16 years later than his parents. *LDS Microfilm, Boronow Church Records, 2199523, 1830, No. 51.*



Joseph and Frances (Bochnia) Bureiza, 1894

Second son, Charles, born 15 March 1848, in Boronów, married Frances Mazure about 1862 in Parisville, Huron County, Michigan. This branch of Matias' family is mainly a mystery as I have not found the death record of Charles or his wife. They had a total of nine children and little is known of six of their children, except for son, Frank C. and his wife, Rosalia (Schornack) and

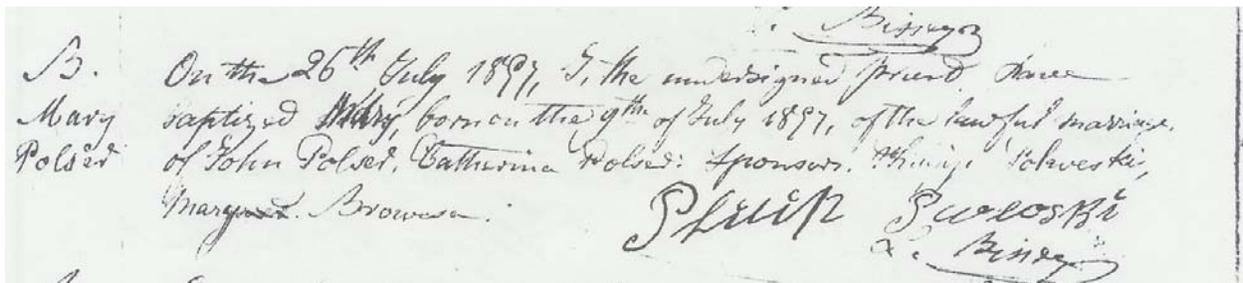
daughter Mary who died in 1902. *LDS Microfilm, Boronow Church Record, No. 2199523, 1848, No. 27; St. Mary's Interment Records, Vol. 1, Pg18.*

Third son, John, born 13 October 1841 in Boronów and married his first wife, Margaret Suida, about 1864 in Parisville who had nine births. Sadly, she died giving birth to her last, Anna, on 09 February 1890. John then married a widow, Catherine (Czacharnowska) Kosmider 04 November 1890 and had eight children with her. John died 08 August 1909 in Paris Township, Huron County, Michigan. *LDS Microfilm, Boronow Church record, No. 2199523, 1841, No. 86.*

Second daughter, Mary, born 24 December 1833 in Boronów, married Michael Respondek about 1857 in Huron County and had three sons and three daughters. It is thought he had died before 1881 since there is no Interment record at St. Mary's Church and all records before September, 1881 were destroyed in the "Great Fire of 1881." Actually, there was an earlier fire in 1871 that also swept through Michigan's

thumb, destroying the village and church, along with its records. (*Note: Michigan did not require the keeping of vital records until 1867.*) *LDS Microfilm, Boronow Church Records, No. 2199523, 1833, No. 5.*

Third daughter, Carolina, born 31 January 1836 in Boronów, married Stephan Pawlowski before 1859 supposedly on her way to Parisville or once she arrived, as the Pawlowski surname does not exist in Boronow or surrounding parishes. Stephan Pawlowski, born in either December, 1831 or 1835, (depending on which document you want to believe), was regarded as one of the original 17 settlers, arriving in 1854. The Philip Pawlowski (1836-1925) mentioned in an earlier paragraph of this article, was a witness to the Baptism of Mary "Polser" (Pulcer) on 26 July 1857, is believed to be the brother of Stephan. Stephan left Hamburg on 01 July 1854 and listed Zachrcezo as his village. *LDS Microfilm No. 1049001, Hamburg Indirect, Image 101; LDS Microfilm, Boronow Church record, 2199523, 1836, No. 7.*



Sacred Heart Baptismal Record of Mary Polser (Pulcer), witnessed by Philip Pawlowski, 27 July 1857, Paris, Brant County, Ontario, Canada

Two of the sons of Stephan and Carolina, Joseph and Stephan, were prominent in government services as postmasters, census enumerators, township officials and even

aided in writing short biographies for the "1904 Huron County Plat Book". "Huron County Plat Book of Michigan", Compiled by E. B. Foote, Imperial Publishing Company, 1904.

Fourth daughter, Josefa, born 24 April 1840 in Boronów, married Ludwig Kucharczyk also born in Boronów on 17 August 1843 in Huron County about 1866. They had a total of 17 children, all born in Parisville. Ludwig died in 1913. *LDS Microfilm, Boronow Church Record, 2199523, 1840, No. 36.*

Fifth daughter, Antonina, born 27 October 1843, in Boronów married Karl (Charles) Warczak/Warchock about 1864 in Huron County and she conceived nine children. The Warczaks were from the parish of Śliwice, powiat Tuchola, province Bydgoszcz, Poland. *LDS Microfilm, Boronow Church Record, 2199523, 1843, No. 86.*



Antonina (Bureiza) Warchock, a typical hardworking pioneer

To emphasize the tenacity of these early settlers, supplies were delivered from Detroit to Forestville by boat and there is the story that “Miss Binenza (Antonina Bureiza), now Mrs. Charles Warchock, quite a frail girl at that time, made over 60 trips for supplies for her parents and later for herself.” Another settler, John Pyonk, had a stove delivered from Detroit to Forestville where he took it apart and made some 10 trips carrying it one piece at a time back to Parisville on his back, some 20 miles each way. *“Parisville Poles, by Harry Milostan, page 204.*

Sixth daughter, Franzka, born 12 December 1846 in Boronów, nothing is known of her. In this area of Poland it was a common practice to name a child the same name of an earlier deceased sibling. (See first daughter). *LDS Microfilm, Boronow Church record, 2199523, 1846, No. 95.*

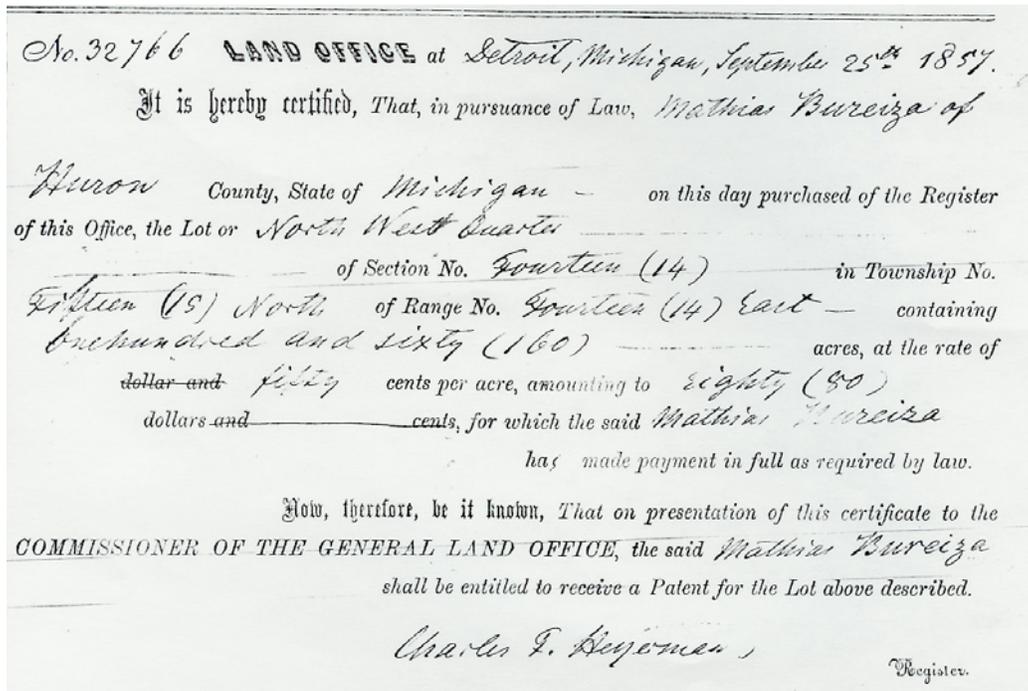
Last daughter, Anna, born 20 June 1849 in Boronow married Francis Susalla, Jr. (1835-1894) about 1865 in Parisville. They had 13 children. With her second husband, Frank (Pollum) Braker, who she married on 13 November 1895 at St. Mary’s Church in Parisville, she had another three children. Anna died in 1935 at the age of 88 and is buried in St. Mary’s Cemetery in Parisville. *LDS Microfilm, Boronow Church Record, 2199523, 1849, No. 95.*

I have made the assumption that the two daughters, both named Franzka died before the family arrived in Parisville. The first Franzka most likely died in Boronow, even though I have not found her in the records of Boronow.

Matias Bureiza was one of the first dozen settlers to obtain Land Patents for his farm lands. He purchased his 160 acres in Huron

County in September 1857 for \$80 dollars and he received his Land Patent (#32766) in 1860 from the Detroit office which was signed by President James Buchanan. One of the first purchases of land, 80 acres in

section 22 in Parisville, is documented as that of Francis Susalla on 11 September 1854 at the Detroit Land Office. "Parisville Poles", by Harry Milostan, page 25.



Matias Bureiza Huron County land purchase, 1857

Matias' son, Joseph, was my great-great-grandfather. He and his wife, Frances Bochnia had a total of 11 children: Anna, 26 July 1859, Mary, 18 June 1864, Frances, 16 December 1866, Antonina, 13 June 1870, Agatha, 04 February 1872, Casper, 06 January 1874, Caroline, 30 May 1875 and Joseph, 11 January 1880.

Joseph's son, Joseph Bureiza (Jr.), married Frances Maikrzek on 14 November 1904 in St. Mary's Church. Frances was the daughter of Michael and Josephine, nee Warwoska, Maikrzek. It was her father who is credited with building their log cabin home in Paris Township. It was moved in 1906 to Lincoln Township, one mile west of St. Joseph Church in Rapson. Michael Maikrzek built a few cabins in the

Parisville area and left his trade mark on each one. He "numbered each log, which was distinctive. Each log was squared off, dovetailed, notched and fitted into place."



Log cabin of Joseph and Frances Bureiza, now located in Bad Axe, Michigan

graduation
Ex 6

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, E

CERTIFICATE }
No. 32,766 }

To all to whom these presents shall come, Greeting:

Whereas *Matthias Bureiza* of *Huron County Michigan*

has deposited in the GENERAL LAND OFFICE of the United States, a Certificate of the REGISTER OF THE LAND OFFICE at *Detroit* whereby it appears that full payment has been made by the said *Matthias Bureiza*

according to the provisions of the Act of Congress of the 24th of April, 1820, entitled "An act making further provision for the sale of the Public Lands," for *the North West quarter of Section fourteen in Township fifteen north, of Range fourteen east, in the District of lands subject to sale at Detroit Michigan containing one hundred and sixty acres,*

according to the official plat of the Survey of the said Lands, returned to the General Land Office by the SURVEYOR GENERAL, which said tract has been purchased by the said *Matthias Bureiza,*

NOW KNOW YE, That the United States of America, in consideration of the premises, and in conformity with the several acts of Congress in such case made and provided, HAVE GIVEN AND GRANTED, and by these presents DO GIVE AND GRANT, unto the said *Matthias Bureiza,*

and to *his* heirs, the said tract above described: To have and to hold the same, together with all the rights, privileges, immunities, and appurtenances, of whatsoever nature, thereunto belonging, unto the said *Matthias Bureiza*

and to *his* heirs and assigns forever.

In testimony Whereof, I, *James Buchanan* PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, have caused these letters to be made PATENT, and the SEAL of the GENERAL LAND OFFICE to be hereunto affixed.

GIVEN under my hand, at the CITY OF WASHINGTON, the *first* day of *May* in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and *sixty* and of the INDEPENDENCE OF THE UNITED STATES the *eighty fourth*



BY THE PRESIDENT: *James Buchanan*
By *J. N. S. Leonard* Secretary.

Matias Bureiza's Land Patent granted 01 May 1860 for 160 acres, signed by President James Buchanan

The log cabin was discovered within the house, when it was being torn down. It was donated to the Bad Axe Historical Society and moved to Bad Axe where it now stands in Pioneer Log Village behind the county hall. The Village includes a group of six authentic log buildings that were built between 1877 and 1895 around Huron County. Each building is a museum displaying various phases of pioneer life. The various displays include a chapel, general store (the Bureiza cabin), school, a barn and blacksmith shop. *"Huron County's Log Cabin Days", compiled by the Bad Axe Historical Society, 1989*



Bureiza.siblings: Caroline (Bureiza) Partyka, Anna (Bureiza) Kolasa, Mary (Bureiza) Peyek, Joseph, Agatha (Bureiza) Korzfkka, and Frances (Bureiza) Wieszczecinski, (missing are Casper and Antonina), 1923

The first daughter of Joseph (Jr.) and Frances was Anna, my great-grandmother. She and her sister, Frances, moved to Bay City, Michigan to work as domestics in the lumber camps about 1880. Anna married Stephan Kolasa in St. Mary's Church on 10 October 1881, one of the first recorded marriages after the "Great Fire of 1881" (September 1881). Her sister, Frances, married Frank Wieszczecinski 26 October 1886 at St. Stanislaus Kostka Church in Bay City, Bay County, Michigan.

Anna's husband, Stephan Kolasa (1843-1924) arrived in Bay City about 1879 according to the *"Polk Bay City Directory of 1879/1880"*. His ancestral village and immigration is my current search. Anna and Stephan had one son, Joseph (1883-1968) and seven daughters: Kathryn (1885-1965), Rose (1886-1977), Julia (1888-1969), Martha (1890-1966), Frances (1892-1978), Anna (1899-1931) and Helen (1901-1985).

Frances Kolasa (1892-1978) was my grandmother. She was a very typical Polish American grandmother who awoke in the early hours to start her baking and was the happiest when she watched her grandchildren devour her delicious home-cooked meals. She married Stanley Musialowski in Bay City in 1912 and moved in 1915 to Detroit, first on Ferry Street, and then on Moran Street, just south of East Grand Boulevard. Their story was published in the Spring 2006 issue of the *Polish Eaglet*, Volume 27, Number. 1.

When I was about age eight I remember our Saturday walks to the Chene-Ferry Market west of Chene Street, between Palmer and Ferry. It was amazing to a little boy to see chickens hanging by their feet in the alley, and grandma picking out a fat one for soup and telling the dealer that she would pick it up after he de-feathered it, and her other shopping was complete. Or, in the fall, my grandmother would buy a live duck for the making of duck or goose blood soup, *czarnina*. I could never develop a taste for the soup as it was too rich for me with its addition of plums or raisins. But her pies were out of this world and when she knew I was coming, she would bake my favorite apricot pie, even after I was an adult.



Author, Roger Laske, age 10 with uncle, Sylvester Wruble, and grandfather, Stanley Musialowski, 1950

How I wish that my grandparents were still here for me to enjoy their comforts. They were not demonstrative, but would show their love by cooking and baking, Christmas traditions, and grandpa letting me “putter” about his workbench in the basement. In the summers, my grandparents would drive to Rapson to visit relatives and let me stay on the farm of grandma’s cousin, Angeline (Bureiza) Wrubel. I would stay there for weeks at a time, working and playing along side my second cousins and learning to drive a tractor at the age of ten. Uncle Sylvester Wrubel and my grandfather, Stanley Musialowski would take me fishing for perch off Harbor Beach and catch enough for many meals. Those were wonderful days.