



Wojciech Grzymała

Polish patriot, statesman, banker, and friend of Frederick Chopin

By Stanislas Yassukovich

The Franco-Polish connection has a long and distinguished history. In the 16th century Henri III, the last of the Valois kings of France, was elected King of Poland/Lithuania, and ruled in both kingdoms for three years. There were several royal inter marriages, and a long list of French princes stood as candidates for Poland's elective throne during the 17th and 18th centuries. The most

lasting physical manifestation of the Franco-Polish relationship is undoubtedly the Place Stanislas in Nancy (Lorraine, France), conceived by Stanislas Leszczynski, twice King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania, and ultimately Duke of Lorraine, and executed by architect Emmanuel Héré de Corny between 1752 and 1755. Not too many French schoolchildren remember that Stanislas married his daughter Marie to Louis XV and so was the French king's father-in-law, as history is in sad decline in French schools. Perhaps an exception may be those fortunate enough to have attended the Collège Stanislas in Paris, the largest and most fashionable private school in France. But most will have



heard of the Place Stanislas in Nancy, now a UNESCO World Heritage site. It is known colloquially as the "place Stan", and at one point Napoleon had the unmitigated nerve to rename it after himself.

Nevertheless, Napoleon can claim a major place in the story as he founded the Duchy of Warsaw during his great Eastern European imperial surge in 1805/1806, thus igniting a flame of hope for a Poland freed from the tripartite occupation of Prussia, Austria and Russia. His great paramour Marie Walewska claimed in her memoirs that she allowed herself to be seduced

by the French Emperor out of patriotism for a free Poland. If Napoleon had prevailed against Russia, he would have undoubtedly incorporated Poland into his European empire. But, after his defeat at Waterloo, Poland fell back under the Russian yoke, and Marie died in comfort in Paris, having divorced her husband and married Count d'Ornano. Patriotism has its limits.

Perhaps no one has done more to consummate the

Franco-Polish love affair than Frederick Chopin, as music does more for cultural intercourse than war. He might also be called the most famous child of Napoleon's short lived Duchy of Warsaw as he was born in 1810 at Zelazowa Wola, near Warsaw. Chopin's French future was predestined by his father Nicolas, a Frenchman from Lorraine who had emigrated in 1787 to tutor families of the Polish *szlachta*, marrying Justyna Krzyzanowska, a poor relation of the Starbecks, one of the families which employed him. Many presume Chopin's exile in Paris was prompted by the November Uprising of 1830 against Russian domination, and that his musical

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NEWS AND NOTES

By Irena Udereska, herb Niezgoda

SPANISH PRINCESS'S TAX FRAUD—Cristina, the 50-year-old sister of King Felipe VI, was ordered to stand trial after an investigation into whether her husband, Inaki Urdangarin, and his business associates siphoned off about 6 million euros. The princess has denied wrongdoing.

THAI MAN FACES PRISON FOR INSULTING ROYAL DOG—Bangkok-Thailand's strict laws making it a crime to insult the monarchy entered new territory on Monday when a factory worker was charged with disparaging the King's dog. A possible 37 years for a sarcastic social media post.

SAUDI KING CHANGES LINE OF SUCCESSION—King Salman of Saudi Arabia issued a series of surprise royal decrees early Wednesday, shaking up the line of princes slated to succeed him to the throne, replacing a number of ministers and further enhancing the power of his own line.

JAN KULCZYK, 65, RICHEST POLE—Warsaw—Jan Kulczyk, Poland's richest man, who made his fortune during its economic transformations, died on Tuesday in Vienna, where he had undergone surgery. Poland's edition of Forbes Magazine estimated his wealth at \$4 billion. Divorced, he is survived by a son, Sebastian and daughter, Dominika.

RUSSIA'S LAST RULERS—The remains of Tsarevich Alexei and Grand Duchess Maria are scheduled to be interred alongside those of their parents and siblings

Scheduled for February.

WARSAW—the city is positioning itself as Eastern Europe's chic cultural capital with thriving art and club scenes and serious restaurants.

ROMANIA—Heart of Queen Marie of Romania is Laid to Rest. The heart of British-born Queen Marie of Romania has been laid to rest in the palace in the Carpathian Mountains where she died, ending a journey of more than 70 years, the former Royal's family said. The wife of King Ferdinand I, who reigned from 1914 to 1927. Marie-born in England in 1875 as Princess Marie of Edinburgh, her father was Prince Alfred, a son of Queen Victoria. Her grandson, King Michael I, was forced to abdicate by Romania's communist regime in 1947.

ROMANIA'S KING MICHAEL RETIRES FROM PUBLIC LIFE, CITING POOR HEALTH, AND PASSES THE CROWN TO PRINCESS MARGARET—I am sure that my daughter, Margaret, the Crown Custodian, will find the wisdom and strength to represent me and to accomplish all my public actions.

The Freedom of the City of London: Peculiar Privileges to Die For!

“Would You Prefer a Silk or Hemp Noose?”

© Wieslaw George, Marquis de Helon KCSG, GCEG, FCL, PNA, JP (Qual.): Australia, 2016

Shortly to be inducted as a Freeman of the City of London (Guildhall, 12 September 2016) I have been asked to write this brief on the history of “one of (England’s) oldest surviving traditional ceremonies still in existence today.”¹



‘View of London Bridge’ (1632) by the Dutch Painter Claude de Jongh (circa 1600-1663). Open Source.

FREEMAN: *from Old English. “A man who is personally free, with the rights and liberty of a citizen, not a tyrannical or occupying power;”² “someone who was not the property of a feudal lord but enjoyed privileges such as the right to earn money and own land. Town dwellers who were protected by the charter of their town or city were often free – hence the term Freedom of the City.”¹*

“From the Middle Ages (to) the Victorian era, the Freedom (of the City) was the right to trade, (thus) enabling members of a Guild (Association) or Livery (Trade Company) to carry out their trade or craft in The Square Mile (City of London³);”¹ it “meant that (one) could own land and earn money in his own right.”⁴

“A fee or fine would be charged, and in return the Livery Companies would ensure that the goods and services provided would be of the highest possible standards.”¹

The granting of “the Freedom of the City of London was not a courtesy title nor a simple invitation to wander the city at will.”⁴

Steeped in long-held tradition, “the first Freedom of the City of London was given in 1237”⁴ during the tenure of the first City Chamberlain “John Wachter who took office in (that year).”⁵

In early medieval England, unrestricted trade was the “exclusive privilege ... (of) a freeman”⁶ who “was the subject of the king, ... (whereas) a serf (was) the exclusive property of the owner of the soil.”⁷

A freeman was “protected from feudal duties (including the duty of military service) because he had rights under the charter of the city;”⁴ however, the rights of freeman occasionally conflicted “with the rights of the monarch.”⁴ City authorities though were careful “to ensure that so far as possible the monarch was central to the granting of the freedom.”⁴

From the mid-thirteenth century a “man whose father had been a freeman at the time of his birth could exercise his own rights as a freeman without more ado unless his status was challenged in the course of a legal action, when the question would be tried by a jury of the neighbourhood in which he claimed to have been born. By 1300, however, owning city property probably did not of itself confer the freedom.

“There were then three main methods of gaining it: if not a man’s by birth (‘by patrimony’), then it had to be obtained ‘by apprenticeship’ (as a time-served or released apprentice; later, as a former apprentice who was a member of one of the city’s trade companies) or ‘by redemption’ (purchase). Sometimes it was granted ex officio or, relatively rarely, as an honour. And the rules governing the freedom continued to be tightened after 1300.

“From 1387 onwards, even those who had a right to claim the freedom because their father had been a freeman at the time of their birth were required to claim it formally, by registering with the city chamberlain and being sworn in as freemen.

“In 1433, residence became obligatory for all freemen who were merchants or other traders (that is, those who were not honorary freemen), and the freedom could be lost if the holder lived outside the city for more than a year.”⁸

Today, “there are several ways (for persons of any nationality) to apply for the Freedom: by servitude, by patrimony, by nomination or by presentation via a Livery Company.”⁹

“Freemen enjoyed a number of privileges denied to other city residents: they could sell wholesale, they could play some part in determining how the city would be governed, and in return they supported city government financially and practically. They also benefited from the legal privileges won by the city on their behalf.”¹⁰

Traditionally, the right of electing “Aldermen and Common-Council Men”¹¹ belonged to, and was reserved for “freemen of the City of London,”¹² “being householders, and paying in scot, and bearing lot when required;”¹³ that is, “they owned city properties and paid city rates, even if they were not residents, and regardless of whether or not their fathers had been freemen.”¹⁴

In order to avail themselves of, and to exploit those intrinsic rights, liberties and privileges of their position, freemen had to be acquainted with, and accept the many laws, rules, customs, obligations and responsibilities that they were expected to abide by.

Withy and Griffin’s treatise of 1765 contains 337 pages on the laws, customs, rights, liberties and privileges of the City of London.¹⁵

As the French writer and philosopher Francois-Marie Arouet (better known as Voltaire; 1694-1778) wrote: “with great power comes great responsibility;”¹⁶ and it did!

Just as they were in the nineteenth century, children of Freemen of the City of London are still afforded preferential consideration for admission to the City of London’s prestigious Freemen’s co-educational day and boarding school (the CLFS) located in Surrey.

Founded in 1854, the City of London Freemen’s School still offers Foundation Scholarships to “any child or children of a deceased Freeman of the City of London.”¹⁷

Curiously, as it was once “permitted to be drunk and disorderly without fear of arrest”⁴ “many freemen refused to leave their houses without taking (their parchment of attestation – much like a modern day diplomatic passport) with them ... (as it) confirmed their status as freemen.”⁴

Today, if Police of the City of London “find a freeman drunk and incapable, they will bundle him or her into a taxi and send them home rather than throw them into a cell.”¹⁸ Not that one would recommend to another to put this precept to the test.

Along with hereditary peers guilty of capital crimes, and poachers who killed the King’s royal deer, condemned Freeman of the City of London were extended the luxury of being “launched into eternity by a silken rope”¹⁹ which meant a quick and painless departure from this earth, rather than a slow death by strangulation and asphyxiation hanging in a rough hempen noose.

Central to the privileges of Freemen of the City of London were the rights “to herd sheep over London Bridge, ... to walk about the city with a drawn sword, ... (or to) insist on being married in St Paul’s Cathedral.”⁴

But contrary “to popular belief, City Freemen do not have the (inherent) right to herd sheep, or animals of any kind over London Bridge, or any other bridges; this belief probably stems from the Freemen’s historic exemption from tolls on animals brought into the City for sale.”²⁰

There is however a highly regulated indulgence organised by the “The Worshipful Company of Woolmen”²¹ which welcomes Freemen of the City of London to participate in their highly regulated annual Sheep Drive across London Bridge. I will be participating in this year’s Sheep Drive which will be held on Sunday 25 September 2016.

Notes:

1. City of London Corporation. *Freedom of the City: History and Origins*. Guildhall: London (extracted 17

April 2016); URL - <https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/about-the-city/about-us/Pages/freedom-of-the-city.aspx>.

2. *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary on Historical Principles*, 6th Edition. Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2007; Vol. 1: A-M; p. 1038.

3. Rockwood, Camilla (ed.). *Brewer’s Dictionary of Phrase & Fable*. Chambers Harrap Publishers Ltd: London, 2009; p. 1258.

4. Quinn, Tom. *The Right to be Hanged by Silk 1237. London’s Strangest Tales: Extraordinary But True Stories*. Portico / Anova Books: London, 2006; unpaginated.

5. Weinreb, Ben & Hibbert, Christopher (eds.). *The London Encyclopaedia*. MacMillan London Limited: London, 1983; p. 161.

6. Mildmay, Sir William. *The Method and Rule of Proceeding Upon All Elections, Polls and Scrutinies, at Common Halls and Wardmotes, Within the City of London*. Henry Kent Causton and Co.: London, 1841; p. lxiv.

7. *ibid*; p. liv.

8. Tucker, Penny. *Law Courts and Lawyers in the City of London: 1300-1550*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2007; pp. 23-24.

9. City of London Corporation. *Freedom of the City: How to Apply*. Guildhall: London (extracted 17 April 2016); URL - <https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/about-the-city/about-us/Pages/how-to-apply.aspx>.

10. Tucker, Penny. *op. cit.*; p. 24.

11. Mildmay, Sir William. *op. cit.*; p. 83.

12. Mildmay, Sir William. *op. cit.*; p. 88.

13. Mildmay, Sir William. *op. cit.* pp. 83-84.

14. Tucker, Penny. *op. cit.*; p. 23.

15. Withy, R. and Griffin W. *The Laws and Customs, Rights, Liberties, and Privileges of the City of London: London, 1765*.

16. *Oeuvres De Voltaire, Tome XLVIII (Volume 48)*, 1829.

17. City of London Corporation. *Report – Board of Governors City of London Freemen’s School. Appendix A: Regulations for the Admission and Maintenance of Foundation Scholars. Presented to the Common Council, Thursday 7 March 2013*. Guildhall: London; p. 3.

18. *Freedom of the City of London*. Wikipedia (extracted 25 April 2016); URL - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Freedom_of_the_City.

19. Wasson, Ellis. *A History of Modern Britain: 1714 to the Present (2nd Ed.)*. John Wiley & Sons Ltd: West Sussex, 2016; p.16.

20. London Metropolitan Archives. *London, England, Freedom of the City Admission Papers, 1681-1925: Rights and Privileges. Information Leaflet No. 14* (extracted 25 April 2016); <http://search.ancestry.co.uk/search/dbextra.aspx?dbid=2052>.

21. *The Worshipful Company of Woolmen. Sheep Drive Across London Bridge 2015* (extracted 28 April 2016); URL - <http://woolmen.com/sheep-drive-across-london-bridge-2015/>.



Source: https://americanedsfatima.org/Our-Blessed-Mother/our-lady-of-czestochowa-marvelous-story-of-an-embattled-icon.html?utm_source=sm-anf&utm_content=E.15120

In the monastery-fortress of Jasna Gora, in Czestochowa, Poland is venerated an ancient icon of Holy Mary and the Infant God, with a fascinating history. Tradition has it that it was painted by St. Luke the Evangelist on a table built by Our Lord Jesus in St. Joseph’s workshop. Empress Saint Helena who found Our Lord’s Cross, also discovered this icon in Jerusalem,

and took it to Constantinople where her son, Constantine, built a church to enshrine it.

The image remained in Constantinople for 500 years until, through dowries, it was taken to Russia to a region that later became Poland.

From the Desk of the Chairman

Dr. Roger Chylinski-Polubinski



Thank you members and friends for your continued financial support and volunteer time working on the "White Eagle Journal". I would like to use this issue to introduce you to and welcome some new members of the Board.

As you may know Dr. Felix v.L. Holewinski retired some time ago and the position of president has been vacant. Thomas L. Hollowak, long time member and contributor of articles for the White Eagle Journal is now the president. Wieslaw George, Marquis de Helon will receive the prestigious award "Admission to the Freedom of the City of London" in an ancient ceremony in London presided over by Murray Craig, Clerk of the Chamberlain's Court, Guildhall, at 3:00 p.m. September 12, 2016. W. George has invited PNAF members and friends to attend the ceremony. W. George can be contacted at ghelon@yahoo.com.au



Tomas L. Hollowak

Thomas L. Hollowak has been active in Maryland and National Polish Organizations, as well as researching and writing on Maryland's Polish community for over thirty years. His interest in Baltimore Polonia history began in 1982 while an undergraduate at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC). In 1984

he received UMBC's Joseph D. Reese Historical Essay Prize for his senior thesis, "Baltimore's Polish Community." His Masters' Thesis, "The Rise of Independency among Baltimore's Polish Catholics, 1868-1898", at the University of Maryland, College Park chronicled the events leading to the founding of an Independent Polish Catholic Church. His articles on Maryland Polonia have appeared in the *Polish American Encyclopedia*, *Polish American Studies*, *PNNC Studies*, *Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly* and the *Maryland Historical Magazine*.

He is the author of *University of Baltimore* (Arcadia Press, 2000), co-editor of *From Mobtown to Charm City: Papers from the Baltimore History Conference* (Maryland Historical Society, 2002) and *Baltimore '68: Riots and Rebirth in an American City* (Temple University Press, 2010). In 2015 he published *A Testament to Faith: The First Polish Evangelical Lutheran Congregation of Christ the Lord*.

He was the Baltimore City Archivist & Records Management Officer from 1985 until 1989. In 1992 he founded Historyk Press to publish historical and genealogical books about Maryland's Polish Community. Tom retired in 2013 from the University of Baltimore as the Associate Director for Special Collections, *Emeritus*.

We have added three voting members to the Board as well; all are proven, dedicated and active in areas that relate to the Polish Nobility Association Foundation (PNAF), and I will share with you their pictures and biographies.

Irena Uderska, formerly London, New York since 2010
(No Picture Available)

Irena Uderska was born in Epsom in 1947. She is the only child of Lech Felix Uderski (herb Niezgoda) who, like many other Polish soldiers, remained in the UK after the end of World War II. She was educated at St. Teresa's Convent and SOAS, London University. She has held a variety of jobs. Since 2010, following her marriage to an American of Italian parentage, she has lived in Long Island.

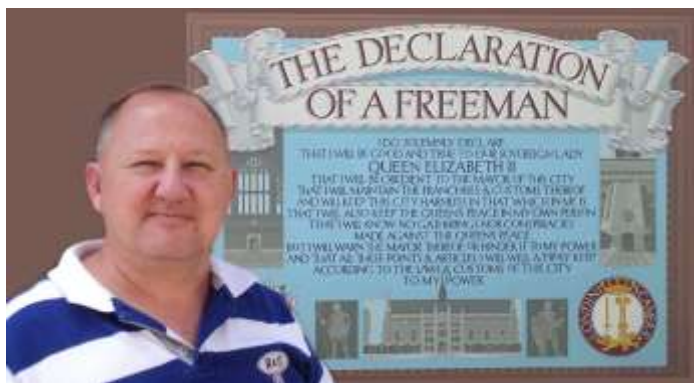
In September 2003 Irena was part of the PNAF delegation attending a Royal Gala reception and banquet in London to celebrate the 300th anniversary of the founding of St. Petersburg. Hosted in the name of HH Prince Nicholas Romanov, and under the patronage of the Almanac de Gotha in association with the London Debutante Season. Held at Lambeth Palace, residence of the Archbishop of Canterbury. Other members of the delegation were Dr. Felix v. L.

Holewinski, PNAF President Emeritus, Kelly Witt and Neil Matthews.

Wieslaw George, *Marquis de Helon, Australia*

KCSG, GCEG, FCL, PNA, JP (Qual.)

A member of the PNAF since March 2000, and a regular contributor to the WHITE EAGLE, George is a noted author, etymologist, ethnographer, researcher and philanthropist. A Freeman of the City of London, George is well-established and distinguished in the fields of Polish nobiliary and heraldic customs, culture and family traditions.



George is the custodian and curator of the HELON Theology Reference Library (HTRL) which is a private library promoting biblical and theological appreciation and exegetical research and scholarship.

In February 1940, three generations of George's family were deported from their estates in Poland by the Soviet NKVD; in exile several members of his family perished as slave labourers in the wastelands of Siberia. For almost sixty years the family has fought successive Soviet, Polish and Ukrainian governments for recompense and restitution, and as reported in the 2009 Fall/Winter edition of the WHITE EAGLE (page 8), the Ukrainian Ministry of Internal Affairs (YMBC), Ternopil Regional Authority, did decree on 24 September 2009 the noble dynasty 'vindicated' and victims of political repression, marking the official 'rehabilitation' of the most noble and ancient House of Helon. Albeit the fight still continues to make such a dream, a reality!

A more definitive – albeit slightly dated - biography can be found in the 2005 Fall/Winter edition of the WHITE EAGLE (page 10).

Richard P. Poremski

Personal Information:

My grandparents emigrated from the area of Silesia, Poland in the later 1800s.

My parents were both American born in Baltimore, MD, making me a second generation Polish American. Our begotten family consisted of 8 children: 5 boys and 3 girls, with me being the second youngest child born on June 2, 1945.

Since 1965 I have been gainfully employed in the Port of Baltimore consecutively as a longshoreman, elected union official, and now representative for two management/union benefits trust funds for longshoremen/women.



Current Polonia Credentials:

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Vice President: Polish Nation Alliance, Baltimore.

Vice President: Polish National Alliance, Lodge 238, Baltimore.

Judge Advocate: Polish Legion of American Veterans, Districts of Maryland and Washington, DC.

Washington, DC/Baltimore Bureau Chief: *Polish American Journal*, Buffalo, NY.

Representative: At the Polish American Congress-WMAD for the National Katyn Memorial Foundation (NKMf)

Member: Of many Polish-American local/national fraternal and cultural organizations.

The Knight's Cross, Order of Merit, Republic of Poland:

Awarded by the hand of Ambassador Przemyslaw Grudzinski, at the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Washington, DC, by the 2001 order of President Aleksander Kwasniewski.

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On behalf of the Foundation thank you all for your continued support.

Thomas Hollowak, President, PNAF

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(*Received in 2015 not shown in 2015 Journals)

A HABSBURG FOR HUNGARY—
 Georg (Gyorgy) von Habsburg, youngest child of Otto von Habsburg. HRH Archduke Georg supports enlargement of the European Union. In May 2004 he was chairman of the “Grand Europe Ball”. He served as President of the Hungarian Red Cross and was named as Hungary’s Ambassador extraordinary to the European Parliament in 1996. He is also a Knight of the Order of the Golden Fleece. He, his wife Princess Eilike von Oldenburg, and their three children live in Soskut, a village about twenty Kilometers from Budapest.

The Russian Nobility Association held its annual Spring Charity Ball on Friday, the thirteenth of May at the Grand Ballroom of the Pierre Hotel. The Ball is an annual event and raised funds used to aid to assist charitable organizations which provide food, shelter and medical treatment for disadvantaged persons in Russia, Europe, South America and the United States. For information regarding the 2017 Ball write to: C/O Princess Elizabeth Galitzine, 20 Flitt Street, West Nyack, NY 10994.

Our Lady of Czestochowa continued from page 5

This icon, now known as Our Lady of Czestochowa, has an embattled history.

While still in Constantinople, placed on the wall of the city, the icon so frightened an army of besieging Muslims that they took flight.

Under a Holy King

In the 15th century, the Polish King Saint Ladislaus installed the

holy image in his castle. Tartar invaders besieged the castle and an arrow pierced the image in the region of the throat, leaving a scar.

Interestingly, repeated attempts to repair the damaged painting failed. The scar always reappears.

Wishing to protect the icon from subsequent attacks, Saint Ladislaus took it to his town of birth, Opala.



Interior of the Basilica of Czestochowa

On the way, he stopped at the city of Czestochowa to rest, placing it in the wooden church of the Assumption in the nearby place of Jasna Gora (Bright Hill).

In the morning, the horses pulling the carriage containing the icon refused to move. Taking this as a sign, St. Ladislaus re-installed the image in the church

of the Assumption and confided

sanctuary and monastery to the Pauline Fathers.

It was on this day, August 26, 1382 that Saint Ladislaus established the feast of the Madonna of Czestochowa and it is still observed today.

Vandalized

Next, the Hussites, followers of the heretic John Hus from Prague, attempted to harm the holy icon. In 1430 they stormed the monastery and stole the image. Placing it in a wagon, they were carrying it away when the vehicle stopped and could not be moved. The attackers hurled the image to the ground, breaking it in three pieces. One man pulled his sword and struck the image twice on the cheek leaving two deep scars. On attempting to slash it thrice, the man went into agonizing convulsions and died.

The two scars on the holy image as well as the one on the throat have always reappeared after attempts to repair them.

Besieged

The holy icon's great epic was the Siege of Czestochowa in 1655

when an army of 12,000 Swedish Protestant invaders led by a General Miller, attempted to take the monastery-fortress of Jasna Gora. The year before, a vision of a scourge in the face of the sun had been seen over the area. Indeed, King Karl Gustav, and the Swedes invaded and conquered most of Poland with the help of Calvinist Polish nobles, ousting King Jan Kasimir.

One monastery, led by a heroic prior, Fr. Augustine Kordecki, refused to surrender. Taking in five Catholic Polish nobles, the monastery resisted with only 300 men. The besieged faced treason, threats, and numerous assurances of the enemy's "good will" in attempts to seduce them into an inglorious "peace".

But placing their full trust in Our Lady, whose image they guarded, the monks answered, "Better to die worthily than to live impiously." Thus began the 40-day siege, and nothing was spared to bring down the walls of Jasna Gora.

Meanwhile, the forty monks and the besieged prayed before the Holy Icon of Czestochowa. They prayed and fought, fought and prayed. And a mysterious "Lady", dressed in a white or blue mantle, whom the Swedes called a "witch" began to appear on the ramparts, herself supplying the canons. The sight of her terrified the invaders.

A mysterious fog also enveloped the holy hill, which at times gave the illusion of the monastery-fortress being higher, at others lower, the result being that the canon-balls missed their target.

Finally, the mysterious lady appeared in the night to General Miller himself. After procuring a copy of the icon of Czestochowa, Miller said, "It is absolutely not comparable to that virgin who appeared to me; for it is not possible to see anything comparable on earth. Something of the celestial and divine, which frightened me from the beginning, shone in her face."

In the end, spooked and discouraged by these supernatural occurrences, the Swedes lifted the siege. From the victory of Czestochowa, the Poles again took heart, and rallying around King Jan Kasimir, took back their country.

fame grew from there, but in fact he already had a reputation as a child prodigy in Poland, playing in such houses as the Czartoryski, Zamoyski, Radziwill and, of course, Starbeck. Chopin left for Paris a month before the beginning of the uprising. Nor were Chopin's people and entourage particularly politicized or active in fomenting rebellion. In fact Chopin played before, and composed a piece, for the Grand Duke Constantine, acting as Regent for Tsar Alexander I, who was increasingly disregarding the constitutional arrangements agreed for Congress Poland at Vienna in 1815. The Kingdom of Poland (with the Tsar as king) retained its own army and it was a cadet at its military school, Pyotr Wysocki, who lit the fuse, which is why the uprising is sometimes called the Cadet Revolution. It was brutally suppressed by the Russian Army under Paskevich, and Poland was then subjected to a campaign of russification under Nicholas I.

Chopin in Paris, having discovered to his surprise that some of his work was already published there, settled down to a busy social life and increasingly successful musical career, marked by his friendship with Liszt and his torrid affair with Georges Sand, the French novelist, who dressed as a man. But of central importance to this account, Chopin became the musical muse of the coterie of Polish exiles centered at the Hotel Lambert, the Paris residence of Prince Adam Jerzy Czartoryski, known as the unofficial king of Congress Poland. Czartoryski, of a great family of Lithuanian magnates, was one of the most brilliant and far-sighted statesmen to emerge from the political turmoil of the Napoleonic era. He had enjoyed distinguished service in Imperial Russia as a confidante of Alexander I, chairman of the Imperial Council of Ministers and Minister for Foreign Affairs, traveling with the Emperor to attend the Congress

of Vienna in 1815. An early proponent of the pan-Slavic cause, Czartoryski was not anti-Russian at first, famously saying that Russia would be better off surrounded by friends than by slaves. But, already restive at the virtual elimination of the Kingdom of Poland's autonomy under Nicholas I, the uprising of 1830 brought him back to public life and the leadership of the Paris exiles at the Hotél Lambert.

One of Chopin's closest friends in this circle – and his eventual musical executor, was a Polish pianist and polymath of Italian origin called to name Julius Fontana, who traveled the world and married the widow of an American merchant with estates in Cuba. Fontana did everything, and knew everyone in the Parisian intellectual world of the mid 1800s, from Adam Mickiewicz, Poland's national poet, to Margaret Fuller, the pioneering American feminist. Flitting between Havana, New York, Paris and Poland, Fontana published a previously unpublished collected works of Chopin in 1855 (opus 66-73) and a collection of songs in 1857 (opus 74- including some set to Mickiewicz's verses). Certainly not the most political of the Paris exiles, Fontana was perhaps the most traveled and the busiest promoter of Chopin's music.

The most intriguing member of this circle and Chopin's closest friend was Wojciech Grzymala – also known as Albert. Often Chopin's adviser, Grzymala “gradually began to fill the role of elder brother in his life”, according to Adam Zamoyski, Chopin's biographer. Born on 23rd April, 1793 in Dunajowce in what was then the Duchy of Warsaw, and is now in the Ukraine, Grzymala was of an ancient family with an unusual heraldic tradition: the Grzymala *herb* (coat of arms) is also Grzymala (one variant, or **odmian** – Slasa). Such convergence is

rare but not entirely uncommon, particularly for very ancient families. First mentioned in the 13th century, the Grzymala coat of arms is thought to be of German origin, but the clan's homeland is the Voivodeship of Masovia. The clan war cry is, naturally, Grzymala, for “thunder”. Certainly, the knight in full armour at the portals of a castle battlement, is more evocative of Teutonic knights than would be typical of Sarmatian iconography. Almost three hundred families share the arms, one of the oldest in Polish heraldry.

Grzymala's family suffered an early tragedy, having had all their property sequestered in 1794 by General Sheremetief, in punishment for Grzymala *père* having participated in Kosciuszko's insurrection, and young Grzymala ended up as hostage in the household of a military surgeon named Wejchert until the age of ten, during which sojourn he learned German. His mother rescued him and ensured his education, allowing him to enter the Military Academy under General Fiszer. In 1809, young Grzymala was attached to the staff of first General Josef Zajacek and then of Prince Josef Poniatowski. He participated in the Russian campaign and the battle of Borodino in 1812. The largest foreign contingent in Napoleon's army for that epic engagement were the Poles, followed by Westphalian units. Under the command of Prince Josef Poniatowski, there were two divisions of infantry – 16 battalions, and a cavalry corps commanded by General Kamienski which included light cavalry under the command of Prince Sulkowski, with squadrons of *chasseurs à cheval* and huzzars. These distinguished themselves in particular, but the entire Polish contribution drew praise from Napoleon who, after the battle, said “Dauntless heroes! Murat, Ney, Poniatowski – it is to you the glory is due”.

Grzymala served as an adjutant on the staff of General Sabastiani commanding the 5th Cavalry Corps, was wounded at Tarutino, and, for having carried dispatches from Poniatowski to Murat, was awarded the *Virtuti Militari*, the highest Polish decoration for valor in battle, equivalent in importance to the Victoria Cross or the Medal of Honour. Established by King Stanislas II August, its award was suspended from time to time, first by Catherine the Great, and then reinstated, the history of the medal tracking in some degree the Polish struggle for independence. Of interest to those disquieted by the recent decision in the US to allow women in combat units, is the fact that, in 1809, the *Virtuti Militari* was awarded to its first female recipient, Sergeant Joanna Zubr for valor in the assault on Zamosc. A few years later, three more women were decorated: a surgeon, a surgeon's assistant, and, most notably, a cadet in the cavalry, one Bronislawa Czartoryska. No doubt her famous name helped her gain admission to the cavalry, although we all know women ride better than men.

Briefly a Russian prisoner of war, on his return to Warsaw, Grzymala exploited his connection with General Zajaczek, and particularly Madame Zajaczek, wife of the Governor, so that he became known as *le favori de la vice-reine*. Grzymala began to play a prominent role in the social and political world of the new Poland. The fall of Napoleon and the Congress of Vienna ended the Duchy of Warsaw and Poland's brief return to independence. Although again a protectorate of Russia, fresh constitutional arrangements, creating what was known as Congress Poland, allowed a resurgence of political activity in the 1820s.

Grzymala rapidly gained prominence and was a principal orator at the funeral of Stanislaw Staszic in 1826. Staszic was a major personality in the Polish enlightenment. Born in 1755 – not of the

szlachta, but son of the burgomaster of Pila, he rose to be a prolific author, poet, philosopher, translator and statesman – in fact a polymath of huge intellect and influence, having begun his career as an ordained priest. Of liberal persuasion, he proclaimed that the *szlachta* had failed the nation as administrators, arguing for a greater concentration of power with the King. Although essentially a republican, he even suggested Poland might be better served by an absolute monarchy. No one had told him that the abiding characteristic of the *szlachta* was loyalty, and certainly not efficiency. 20,000 people are said to have attended Staszic's funeral and one wonders how Grzymala can have coped without the aid of a public address system.

The political atmosphere was becoming intense as Grzymala began a civilian career. As already noted, the constitutional arrangements so carefully crafted by Adam Czartoryski, at Alexander I's side in Vienna, were being slowly unpicked by a Russia now alarmed by the autonomy it had allowed the new Congress Kingdom of Poland. This new Poland was greatly reduced in size, particularly since Lithuania had now been fully incorporated into the Russian Empire. The old Commonwealth had represented more than twice the size, with some 10 million souls, compared to just over 3 million in Congress Poland. Grzymala had become a Freemason, but Alexander banned the Freemasons in 1821, no doubt considering them a hot bed of dangerous liberal thought. This suggests Grzymala's political activity became increasingly surreptitious. Indeed, the Sejm began meeting secretly in 1825. The Viceroy was supposed to be elected by the *szlachta*, but this became a sham. Grand Duke Constantine, Alexander's appointment as Viceroy began assuming powers not envisaged in the constitution. A secret police, under Nicolai Nicolaievich Novosiltsev, began

monitoring and requiring the disbandment of a variety of associations. Grzymala was a member of the *Towarzystwo Patriotyczne* – The Patriotic Society, definitely a proscribed association. For that, he was incarcerated in the Fortress of Peter and Paul in St Petersburg in 1828, by order of Nicholas I. No doubt, of the many political prisoners incarcerated there, those with rank and money were able to assure some degree of comfort but this episode was to seriously dent Grzymala's reputation. In testimony before a board of enquiry, he tried to implicate one A. Plichta who he claimed had enrolled him in the Society as part of some foreign plot against pan-Slavism. In a letter to Grand Duke Constantine, he pleaded piteously to have his mother join him in prison – this when he was being delivered baskets of luxury foods and fine wines by the wife of General Zajaczek. Grzymala escaped in 1829.

Back home, Grzymala joined the Board of the First Bank of Poland, founded in 1828 and chaired by Prince Drucki-Lubecki, a great magnate who was particularly adept at remaining in the good books of his imperial master in St. Petersburg. Grzymala resumed political activity and the November 1830 so-called Cadet Insurrection saw him a member of several patriotic societies. But he supported a conservative approach to the question of total independence, favoring Prince Czartoryski's original position, and even founding a counter-revolutionary journal called *Polish Conscience* which argued against disorder. The Russian reaction to events must have altered Grzymala's view as he ended up in Paris and began negotiating for the supply of arms to the insurrectionists. In June of 1831, he is reputed to have negotiated a loan of 4 million pound sterling from the house of "W. Morgan" in London in favor of a new Poland, but the failure of the insurrection put paid to its execution. I can find no

record of a banking house named W. Morgan in London in 1831. The famous American House of Morgan was not established until much later in the 19th century.

Settled in France, Grzymala soon joined the exiles at the Hôtel Lambert under Prince Czartoryski. None were aware of his cringing letter to the Grand Duke Constantine. Grzymala began a literary career, founding a Polish literary society and a revue - *Le Polonais*. He was popular in the fashionable *salons* of the time, often declaiming his own works, such as "The Truth About Peter the Great and Modern Russia". Grzymala became an intimate friend of Chopin's and corresponded with Georges Sand, (the non de plume of Amantine-Lucile-Aurore Dupin), who asked him for advice on her stormy relationship with the famous pianist/composer. On tour in Scotland and England, Chopin wrote him name dropping letters, having been introduced to the Scots aristocracy by Lord Dudley Stuart, kinsman of the Butes. Chopin addresses Grzymala as "My dear life". A painting by Kwiatkowski titled *The last moments of Frederick Chopin* shows Grzymala seated at the foot of the death bed.

Grzymala became rich, no doubt speculating in an active Paris stock market during the industrial revolution. He became friendly with Delacroix and collected his paintings. He remained a social butterfly and was more a sympathizer than an active member of the Polish monarchist party in exile. But the Second Empire of Napoleon III and the war of 1870 saw Grzymala's financial demise, as markets crashed in the face of the Prussian advance. Grzymala fled to Switzerland, where he died in Nyon, on the 16th of December 1871.

Stanislas Yassukovich



Author's note: I am grateful to Count Adam Zamoyski for having encouraged me to write this, and to Professor Krzysztof Marchlewicz of Adam Michiewicz University and my cousin Janek Schlenkier for help in research.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Stanislas Yassukovich was born in Paris in 1935. His father was an emigré from Bolshevik Russia of Lithuanian/Polish origin (he transliterated from the Cyrillic the family name Jasiukowicz - herb Jasioneczyk) Stanislas was brought up in the US and educated at Deerfield Academy and Harvard College. After service in the US Marine Corps, he pursued a career as an international investment banker in the City of London. He is credited with helping to develop the international capital markets there and was made a Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts (FRSA). He lives in Provence, France with his wife Diana, born and brought up in Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe). His double memoir "Two Lives", recounting his father's and his own career is soon to be released by publishers Austin Macauley in London.

