

Our family in Poland at the beginning of the 20th century

The following information was written by Wanda Werbicki Fortenberry sometime in the late 1980s concerning stories told to her by her mother, Pelagia Bregetta Jaroszewska Werbicki, born 1898, known to her grandchildren as Bachie. In 1956, Pelagia (Pauline in English) sent to Poland for a record of her birth and that document appears below.

Because Wanda's narrative is 12 handwritten pages long, I will divide it into segments and it will appear in multiple posts.

Notes: Anything in **bold type** was added by Andie for clarity and to make for easier reading. "Momma" in this narrative refers to Wanda's mother, Pauline. Polish surnames usually reflect a spelling based upon gender. Females use an "a" at the end of the name and males use an "i" as the final letter. As the years passed, many of the "extra" letters in Polish names were dropped. For instance, Wierzbicki became Werbicki. This document was updated in April, 2014 after researching Polish church records.


POLSKA RZECZPOSPOLITA LUDOWA
Województwo Warszawskie
Powiat Piotrkowski
URZĄD STANU CYWILNEGO
w Piotrkowie
Nr 24/1898/90

Wyciąg aktu urodzenia

Wydano dla celów rodzinnych i dowodowych
zobacz art. 101 § 1 k.c.

Zaświadczam, że Pelagia Jaroszewska
syn — córka Jana i Antonii z Cybulskich
(nazwisko) (imię)
urodził(a) się dnia 15.11.1898
tyjcie wieczek dwunastego isnego
(imię) (imię)
roku w Grodzisku
dnia 15.11. 1956 r.
Klefonyk
Urzedu Stanu Cywilnego



CWD - MSW-M-7 — zam. Nr 1687/S/Lż. — PWPW-5542-56-632.800.

Next, you will see a brief lineage so that the names you are about to encounter will make sense to you. Since the story is about Wanda's grandmother's family, you only see the female relationships until you get to Jacob Cybulski. Recently the marriage record for Jakub Cybulski and Franciszka Jablonska was found showing they married on January 29, 1872 in the village of Druchowo, Koziębroydy Parish, Poland.

Wanda Werbicka Fortenberry

Daughter of

Pelagia Bregetta Jaroszewska Werbicka

Daughter of

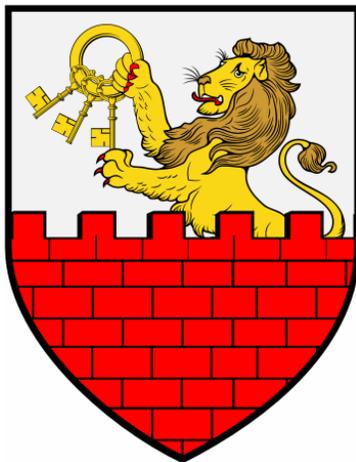
Antonina Cybulska Jaroszewska

Daughter of

Franciszka Jablonska and Jacob Cybulska

Wanda's Cybulski family narrative – Part 1

Momma's mother, Antonina Cybulska, was born **(1873)** near the village of Plock in Poland. The family seems to have lived there from at least before Poland was Christianized in the 900s (see the family battle standard/crest). Her parents were Jacob and Franciszka Cybulski. Jacob was a Jashlak (decision maker) **(I cannot find a translation for this word**



online.) which was a hereditary position equivalent to a mayor in this country. He spoke and read in Polish, Russian, German, French, and English. The people in the village would bring him the letters they received and he would translate them. During his lifetime, that part of Poland was under Russian control. They had a strange educational set up. The children learned in Polish for part of the day and in Russian for the rest of the day. The teacher was paid by the children's parents. Jacob had an understanding with the school teacher that he was to be informed which children were not in school. Then, he would visit the homes himself and if the parents couldn't pay, Jacob would pay the schooling for at least 3 months, long enough for the children to learn to read and do simple arithmetic. If they learned to write, it was fine, but not necessary. He did the letter writing for the people in the village. He owned a flour mill and ground the rye that the farmers raised. The custom at

that time was that $\frac{1}{2}$ the flour ground was set aside for the Czar. His **(the Czar's)** part was taken out of the farmer's share which he **(Jacob Cybulski)** took to Warsaw and sold. At one time, he and his two oldest sons were sent to Siberia because someone reported that he was cheating the Czar by not setting aside the full share that was due to the Czar. The rye crop was small and the farmers would not have had enough flour to see them through the winter. Momma didn't remember how long they were in Siberia but it was long enough for one of the sons to die there. She remembered when they came back and the whole village came to see him **(Jacob)** (it must have been a few years before Momma came to America). **See this link for the Russian use of Siberia as Imperial punishment; it was brutal:**
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Katorga>

Being a miller you would think that Jacob raised rye; he didn't. He raised flax since his wife was a master weaver and could weave linen as fine as organdy or chiffon. Since the process of changing flax into linen was handed down from mother to daughter through the generations, I'll set down what my mother told me for any of you who would be interested; again mother to daughter. **(Later post)**



This is a picture of Ewa (Eva) and Pelagia (Pauline) most likely taken just before Eva's marriage in November of 1913. Pauline would have only arrived in America a couple of months before.



Raymond Werbicki
(Wanda's father),
Antonina Cybulska
Jaroszewski,
Pauline
Jaroszewka
Werbicki, Felix
Werbicki at Felix's
wedding.

Felix (born in 1931)
was Wanda's
brother.