
The Grabski/Szwaczyk Family of South Chicago Polish Immigrants from the Russian Partition

I will leave you now my dear children and will watch over you. May God love you as I do. Please stay together as a family. Your loving Mother Lottie Grabski -The closing lines of the third and final will of Antonina“Lottie” Grabski (nee Szwaczyk), 15 May 1972.

1. ANTONINA SZWACZYK (*Shva-chik*) was born 7 October 1893 in Rokitki (*Ro-keet-key*), Kuyavian-Pomeranian Voivodeship (Province), Poland, then in the Russian Empire.¹ She died 19 September 1972 in Chicago, Cook County, Illinois.² Antonina married TOMASZ GRABSKI on 8 October 1913 at St. Michael the Archangel Roman Catholic Church, South Shore, in Chicago, Cook County, Illinois.³ Tomasz was born 12 December 1886 in the village of Baby (*Bah-bee*), Łódzkie Voivodeship, Poland, then in the Russian Empire.⁴ He died 19 May 1930 at the Municipal Tuberculosis Sanitarium in Chicago, Cook County, Illinois.⁵

ANTONINA GRABSKI (nee SZWACZYK) later married EDMUND STANLEY BUKOWSKI on 22 October 1938 in Chicago, Cook County, Illinois.⁶ He was born 26 February 1886 in Russia (now Poland).⁷ He died July 1977 in Chicago, Cook County, Illinois.⁸

A BRIEF HISTORY OF POLAND

In 1795, the nation of Poland disappeared from the map. In three steps, it had been absorbed or *partitioned* by the surrounding empires of Russia, Prussia and Austria.⁹ The Napoleonic Wars (1803-1815) further shifted boundaries between the empires.¹⁰ Poland would not be restored as an independent nation until the end of World War I in 1918.¹¹ As a result of this political upheaval, both the Grabski and the Szwaczyk families found themselves Polish subjects of The Russian Empire.¹²

ANTONINA’S UNSETTLED CHILDHOOD

Antonina Szwaczyk (later *Antoinette* or *Lottie*) was the eldest of six known children born to Antoni Szwaczyk (1869-1923) and Józefa Smigiel (1874-1950).¹³ Both Antoni and Józefa were illiterate, and both

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¹ *Book of Births, Marriages and Deaths of the Roman Catholic Church in Radziejow from 1893*, Polish State Archives in Toruń, branch in Włocławek, Book No. 120, p. 30, Antonina Szwaczyk, 7 October 1893. Copy in author’s files.

² *In Loving Memory of Lottie A. Grabski* (Prayer Card). Copy in author’s files.

³ “Illinois, Chicago, Catholic Church Records, 1833-1925,” database with images, *Family Search* (www.familysearch.org), Film number 00428446, image 95, Thomas Grabski and Antonina Szwak; citing “Chicago Church parishes, Chicago Diocese, Chicago;” FHL microfilm 1,579,565.

⁴ “Parish Dabrowice, 1886 (book),” database with images, *Geneteka* (geneteka.genealodzy.pl), Province, Lodzkie; Parish, all locations; Person, Tomasz Grabski; Range of years. 1886-1886), Birth tab, Tomasz Grabski, Year 1886, Record 127; citing books held in the State Archives in Lodz, Poland

⁵ State of Illinois, Department of Public Health, Division of Vital Statistics, Standard Certificate of Death No. 14760 (1930), Thomas Grabski, Cook County Clerk, Chicago, Illinois. Copy in author’s files. Also, Supplemental Report: Correction of Death Record, Reference No. 14760 (1930), Thomas Grabski, Cook County Clerk, Chicago, Illinois. Copy in author’s files.

⁶ “Illinois, Cook County Marriages, 1871-1920,” database, *FamilySearch* (www.familysearch.org), Edmund Bukowski and Antoinette Grabski, 22 October 1938; citing FHL microfilm 102483076. Also, “Illinois, Archdiocese of Chicago Cemetery Records, 1864-1989,” database, *FamilySearch* (www.familysearch.org), film number 004401813, image 4400 Lottie Bukowski (Grabski).

⁷ “U.S., World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918,” database with images, *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com), Edmund Stanley Bukowski; citing Illinois, Cook, Roll 1493512, Draft Board 19.

⁸ “U.S., Railroad Retirement Pension Index, 1934-1987;” database, *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com), E Bukow [Edmund Bukowski], Claim ID A531610; citing “Records of the Railroad Retirement Board 1934-1987;” Record Group 184, NARA at Atlanta, Morrow, Georgia. Also: “Illinois, Archdiocese of Chicago Cemetery Records, 1864-1989,” database with images, *FamilySearch* (www.familysearch.org), film number 004401813, image 4380, Edmund Bukowski, 30 July 1977.

⁹ Dominic A. Pacygra, *Polish Immigrants and Industrial Chicago: Workers on the South Side 1880-1992* (University of Chicago Press, 2003), p, 17-18.

¹⁰ IBID. Also, Jaroslaw Szubaty, translated by Ursula Phillips, *The Duchy of Warsaw, 1807-1815: A Napoleonic Outpost in Central Europe* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016).

¹¹ *Britannica* (www.britannica.com), “Partitions of Poland.”

¹² Piotr S. Wandycz, *The Lands of Partitioned Poland, 1795-1918* (The University of Washington Press, 1996), see map p. 66. For Antonina Szwaczyk: “New York, Passenger and Crew Lists (including Castle Garden and Ellis Island), 1820-1957,” database with images, *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com), Line 26, Antonina Szwaczyk, age 19, arrived New York 13 December 1911 aboard Noordham. For Tomasz Grabski: “New York, Passenger and Crew Lists (including Castle Garden and Ellis Island), 1820-1957,” database with images, *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com), Line 14, Josef (Tomas) Grabski, age 22, arrived New York 13 February 1909 aboard Scharnhorst. On the records both Antonina and Tomasz identify as a Polish subject of Russia.

¹³ *Book of Births, Marriages and Deaths of the Roman Catholic Church in Radziejow from 1893*, Antonina Szwaczyk. For Other Children: Warsaw Governorate, Russian Empire, partial *Passport*, 15 May 1903, names five children: Antonina 7 October 1893, Marianna 29 July 1895, Jan, August 30 1897, Bronislawa 14 April 1899, and Anna 14 July 1901. Original document held by Antonina’s granddaughter (name withheld for privacy). Copy in

worked as servants and physical laborers that moved from village-to-village.¹⁴ Antonina's paternal grandfather, Michał Mateusz Szwaczyk, had been born out of wedlock and worked at least part of his life as a Carter or cart driver; the equivalent of a modern-day trucker.¹⁵ Perhaps this explains the Szwaczyk family's tradition of wandering and their apparent lack of attachment to any particular estate, village, employer, or land.

The travels of Antonina's family are well-documented in the records of their church parishes. Her parents were married in Byczyna (*Beh-ch-nya*) on 6 November 1892.¹⁶ Antonina was born eleven months later in the village of Rokitki, about 3 miles southwest.¹⁷ Official records for the births of her sister Marianna (1895) and brother Jan (1897) have not been found, which could suggest a family on the move.¹⁸ Sister Bronisława (*Bron-ee-swa-va*, 1899) was born in the village of Szczebłotowo (*Scht-blo-to-vo*).¹⁹ Next came Anna (1901) in Latkowo.²⁰ The youngest, Anelia (1903), was born in Radziejów (*Rahd-jay-off*).²¹ In a little more than a decade, Antonina's family lived in at least five different villages all within about ten miles of each other.²²

When Antonina was ten or eleven years old (abt. 1904), her father Antoni immigrated to the United States. The rest of the family would not follow for another *seven* years.²³ Such separations were not uncommon among Polish immigrants of the day. Men often emigrated alone and later sent for their families, presumably after they had found work and saved enough money to pay for the additional passage.²⁴ In 1900, the cheapest ticket from Europe to America cost roughly \$30, or \$877 in today's dollars. To bring over Józefa, Antonina, and the rest of the children, Antoni needed the equivalent of nearly \$6,200.²⁵ This could explain the seven-year gap between Antoni's emigration and that of the rest of his family.

Sadly, two of Antonina's younger sisters did not survive the long separation. Bronisława passed away on 7 May 1908 at the age of nine.²⁶ Little Anelia died just a week to the day later at the age of four.²⁷ What took the girls is not known. No mention has been found of a pandemic, natural disaster, or other calamity in The

author's files. Also, *Book of Births, Marriages, Deaths of the Roman Catholic Church in Radziejów from 1903*, Polish State Archives in Toruń, branch in Włocławek Book No. 102, p. 25, Aniela Szwaczyk, 23 July, 1903. Copy in author's files.

¹⁴ Vital records for the Szwaczyk family from various villages name Antoni's occupation as servant or physical worker. Antoni and Józefa's marriage record names Józefa's occupation as servant. All vital records for the family note Antoni and/or Józefa were illiterate. These records include: *Book of Births, Marriages and Deaths of the Roman Catholic Church in Radziejów from 1892*, Polish State Archives in Toruń, branch in Włocławek, Book No. 17, , p. 44, Antoni Szwaczyk and Józefa Śmigiel, married 6 November 1892 in Byczyna. Copy in author's files. *Book of Births, Marriages and Deaths of the Roman Catholic Church in Radziejów from 1893*, Polish State Archives in Toruń, branch in Włocławek, Book No. 120, Antonina Szwaczyk, born 7 October 1893 in Rokitki. Copy in author's files. *Book of Births, Marriages, Deaths of the Roman Catholic Church in Byczyna from 1899*, Polish State Archives in Toruń, branch in Włocławek, Book No. 42, p. 10, Bronisława Szwaczyk, born 14 April 1899 in Szczebłotowo. Copy in author's files. *Book of Births, Marriages, Deaths of the Roman Catholic Church in Osiećiny from 1901*, Polish State Archives in Toruń, branch in Włocławek, Book No. 55, p. 13, Anna Szwaczyk, born 14 July 1909 in Latkowo. Copy in author's files. *Book of Births, Marriages, Deaths of the Roman Catholic Church in Radziejów from 1903*, Polish State Archives in Toruń, branch in Włocławek Book No. 102, Aniela Szwaczyk, born 23 July, 1903 in Radziejów. Copy in author's files

¹⁵ For Birth out of Wedlock: *Book of Births, Marriages, Deaths of the Roman Catholic Church in Orle from 1836*, Polish State Archives in Toruń, branch in Włocławek, Book No. 31, p. 7, Michał Mateusz Szwaczyk, born 20 August 1836. Copy in author's files. For occupation: *Book of Births, Marriages, Deaths of the Roman Catholic Church in Radziejów from 1862*, Polish State Archives in Toruń, branch in Włocławek, Book No. 23, p.105, Michał Mateusz Szwaczyk and Antonina Dkoniczna, married 12 October 1862. Copy in author's files. For Carter Definition: *Wiktionary* (<https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/carter>), "Carter."

¹⁶ *Book of Births, Marriages and Deaths of the Roman Catholic Church in Radziejów from 1892*, Polish State Archives in Toruń, branch in Włocławek, Book No. 17, Antoni Szwaczyk and Józefa Śmigiel, married 6 November 1892. Copy in author's files.

¹⁷ *Book of Births, Marriages and Deaths of the Roman Catholic Church in Radziejów from 1893*, Antonina Szwaczyk. For Distance: *Google Maps* (www.google.com/maps), Byczyna, Poland to Rokitki, Poland.

¹⁸ The births of Marianna and Jan established by: Warsaw Governorate, Russian Empire, partial *Passport*, 15 May 1903. The following Roman Catholic parish records were searched for their birth records without results: Byczyna, Radziejów, Osiećiny, Piotrków, and Orle Radziejowskie.

¹⁹ *Book of Births, Marriages, Deaths of the Roman Catholic Church in Byczyna from 1899*, Bronisława Szwaczyk.

²⁰ *Book of Births, Marriages, Deaths of the Roman Catholic Church in Osiećiny from 1901*, Anna Szwaczyk.

²¹ *Book of Births, Marriages, Deaths of the Roman Catholic Church in Radziejów from 1903*, Aniela Szwaczyk, 23 July.

²² *Google Maps* (www.google.com/maps), Byczyna to Rokitki to Szczebłotowo to Latkowo to Radziejów, all within Radziejów County, Kuyavian-Pomeranian Voivodeship.

²³ "Pennsylvania, Passenger and Crew Lists, 1800-1962," database with images, *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com), "List or Manifest of Passengers for The United States Immigration Officer at Port of Arrival, 28 March 1911, Philadelphia aboard Ypiranga." Line 12, Josefa Szwack, age 36; Line 13, Anna Szwack, age 8. Columns 18-23 notes Josefa is joining husband, Antoni Szwak in Chicago "here seven years." Also, the last known child born to Josefa was Anelia in 1903, which supports an absent husband after that time.

²⁴ W.S. Kuniczak, "The Face of Poland in America," *American Heritage* (April/May, 1978, Vo. 29, Issue 3), online republication (www.americanheritage.com), "Polonia," paragraph 5 establishes men typically came alone. Also, WBEZ, Chicago's NPR News Source (www.wbez.org), "Poland Elsewhere: Why So Many Poles Came to Chicago."

²⁵ For Cost of Passage: *Oh, Ranger* (www.ohranger.com/ellis-island/immigration-journey), "Step Two, On Board." Also, PBS, *Destination America* (www.pbs.org/destinationamerica/usim_wn_noflash_4.html), "U.S. Immigration, When Did They Come?" For Equivalent in Today's Dollars: "CPI Inflation Calculator," *In 2013 Dollars* (www.in2013dollars.com), input "\$30," "1904" and "2020."

²⁶ *Book of Births, Marriages, Deaths of the Roman Catholic Church in Radziejów from 1908*, Polish State Archives in Toruń, branch in Włocławek, Book No. 69, p. 135, Bronisława Szwaczyk, died 14 May 1908. Copy in author's file.

²⁷ *Book of Births, Marriages, Deaths of the Roman Catholic Church in Radziejów from 1908*, Polish State Archives in Toruń, branch in Włocławek, Book No. 77, p. 137, Anelia Szwaczyk, died 7 May 1908. Copy in author's file.

Russian Empire that could explain such a tragedy, and the death records for the sisters do not mention how they died.²⁸ In America at the time, common causes of childhood death included pneumonia, typhoid fever, measles, diphtheria, and croup.²⁹ It is not difficult to imagine that two little girls in Russia succumbed to the same or similar illnesses. For Antonina, who was likely charged with looking after her younger siblings in her father's absence, the loss must have been incalculable.

Three years after the deaths of her sisters, Antonina and her siblings Marianna and Jan were left behind once again when their mother, Józefa, and their youngest surviving sister, Anna, finally left for America; their passage paid by Antoni. The pair departed Hamburg, Germany on 14 March 1911, arrived in Philadelphia on the 28th, and from there were destined to meet Antoni in Chicago.³⁰ Josefa and young Anna, then nine years old, travelled *zwishendeck*, which translates to *middle deck*, or *steerage*.³¹ It was the cheapest possible passage.³² Although conditions varied by ship, steerage passengers typically endured the ocean journey in cramped and filthy cargo holds.³³ An inspection of steerage accommodations in the year Józefa and Anna emigrated found horrific conditions:

*The ventilation is almost always inadequate, and the air soon becomes foul. The unattended vomit of the seasick, the odors of not too clean bodies, the reek of food and the awful stench of the nearby toilet rooms make the atmosphere of the steerage such that it is a marvel that human flesh can endure it... Most immigrants lie in their berths for most of the voyage, in a stupor caused by the foul air. The food often repels them... It is almost impossible to keep personally clean. All of these conditions are naturally aggravated by the crowding.*³⁴

Józefa's departure left Antonina, then 17, alone in Russia with her 15-year old sister Marianna and 13-year old brother, Jan. Like her parents before her, Antonina took work as a servant.³⁵ Her father finally arranged for their passage more than nine months after Józefa left in December 1911. Antonina and her siblings somehow traveled nearly six hundred miles across Europe from Radziejów, Russia to Rotterdam, Netherlands, where they boarded the S.S. Nordham on 2 December and sailed for New York.³⁶ Although their class of passage is not known, their inspection at Ellis Island strongly suggests that they traveled *zwishendeck*, or below deck, as had Józefa and Anna.³⁷

Upon their arrival and inspection on 13 December, the group was detained for special inquiry; likely because Jan and Marianna were minors and Antonina—then 18 but claiming to be 19—was a woman travelling without a spouse or other male family member.³⁸ Under The Immigration Act of 1882, Antonina and her siblings could have been classified as LPCs, or persons Liable to become Public Charges.³⁹ LPCs were typically deported unless a male relative vouched for them or other economic means were established.⁴⁰ Based on the number of meals they were served, it appears Antonina and her siblings were held for several days before being

²⁸ Google searches for “Russian Empire Pandemic 1908,” “Childhood Diseases in Russian Empire 1908,” and “Childhood Mortality Russian Empire 1908” produced no results to explain the deaths of the girls. Consultation with professional researcher Tom Szymkowiak of Genealogy Tour, Wrocław, Poland, produced no explanation. The author's decade-long study of Polish/Russian history has revealed no explanation. For Brownisława's death record: *Book of Births, Marriages, Deaths of the Roman Catholic Church in Radziejów from 1908*, Brownisława Szwaczyk (supra). For Anelia's death record: *Book of Births, Marriages, Deaths of the Roman Catholic Church in Radziejów from 1908*, Anelia Szwaczyk (supra).

²⁹ Department of Commerce and Labor, Bureau of the Census, *Mortality Statistics: 1908* (Government Printing Office, 1909), electronic PDF (www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/vsushistorical/mortstatbl_1908.pdf), “Deaths by Sex and Age,” p. 8, and “Causes of Death,” pp. 13-17.

³⁰ “Pennsylvania, Passenger and Crew Lists, 1800-1962,” database with images, *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com), Josefa Szwack and Anna Szwack.

³¹ “Hamburg, Passenger Lists, 1850-1934,” database with images, *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com), “Hamburg Amerika Linie, 15 March 1911, Hamburg aboard Ypranga,” Line 21, column 2 Josefa Szwack, age 36, Line 22, column 2, Anna Szwack. Accommodation noted as *Zwishendeck*. For *Zwishendeck* Meaning: “Hamburg Passenger List Terminology,” *Family Search* (www.familysearch.org).

³² *Oh, Ranger* (www.ohranger.com/ellis-island/immigration-journey), “Step Two, On Board.”

³³ *Gjenvick-Gjonvik Archives* (www.gjenvick.com/Immigration/Steerage), “Steerage-Immigrant Journeys to Their New Home.”

³⁴ *Oh, Ranger* (www.ohranger.com/ellis-island/immigration-journey), “Step Two, On Board,” citing 1911 report to President Taft.

³⁵ “New York, Passenger and Crew Lists (including Castle Garden and Ellis Island), 1820-1957,” database with images, *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com): citing “List or Manifest of Alien Passengers for The United States Immigration Officer at Port of Arrival,” New York, 13 December 1911. Antonina's occupation listed as *servant*.

³⁶ *IBID*.

³⁷ *Oh, Ranger* (www.ohranger.com/ellis-island/immigration-journey), “Step Three, Inspection.”

³⁸ “New York, Passenger Lists 1820-1957,” database with images, *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com); “Record of Aliens Held for Special Inquiry, arrived 13 December 1911 aboard Noordam,” Line 78, Antonina Szwack, age 19; Line 79, Maryanna Szwack, age 17; Line 80, Jan Szwack, age 14. For Reason for Detention: *Sassy Jane Genealogy* (www.sassyjane.com/immigrants-detained-at-ellis-island/).

³⁹ U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (<https://www.uscis.gov/about-us/our-history/overview-of-ins-history/early-american-immigration-policies>), “Early American Immigration Policies.”

⁴⁰ *JewishGen* (www.jewishgen.org/InfoFiles/Manifests/bsi/). “Manifest Markings; Records of Aliens Held for Special Inquiry.” Also, *Wikipedia* (www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Public_charge_rule), “Public Charge Rule.”

released, likely to their father.⁴¹ They then had to travel another 800 miles via means unknown to their final destination in Chicago.⁴² Antonina stood just four-foot, eleven-inches, but there is no doubt she was a tough young woman.⁴³

TOMASZ THE STEELWORKER

By his own measure, Tomasz Grabski was not much taller than Antonina; he stood just five-foot, four.⁴⁴ Like Antonina, he was Polish immigrant who settled in Chicago. And like Antonina's father, he worked in a steel mill on the city's south side.⁴⁵ His daughter Marie often recalled that Tomasz over-exerted himself in the steel mill one day trying to save jobs by proving a man could outwork a machine. Marie always believed Tomasz fell ill from the heroic effort and never recovered.⁴⁶ In truth Tomasz died of tuberculosis. However, the story underscores just how large a figure Tomasz was to Marie and likely to his entire family.

Tomasz Grabski was born on 12 December 1886 in the Polish village of Baby (*Bah-bee*), then in the Russian Empire.⁴⁷ He was the third of nine known children born to Jan Grabski and Magdalena Maćczak (*Mahch-tuk*), both of whom were born in Baby. Tomasz's eight siblings were also born in Baby. They include his older sister Marianna (1883-1884), who survived just seven months; his older brother Józef (1885-1974); and his younger siblings Józefa (1889-1968), Antoni (1894), Jan (1896), Bronisława (1898), Fekiska (1900-1901), who also died as an infant, and Władysław (1902).⁴⁸

Records place members of the Grabski family in the tiny village of Baby as far back as 1828.⁴⁹ Their long tenure there might be explained by the fact that the Grabski men were farmers. Tomasz's father, Jan, was a farmer, as was Jan's father, Franciszek; and his father, Wojciech; and his father, Łukasz.⁵⁰ And as early as Tomasz's grandfather, (Franciszek), the Grabskis were also landowners. Franciszek's marriage record of 19 November 1847 identifies him as a *bachelor peasant who owns some land*.⁵¹ This land has been in the Grabski family ever since, and although they no longer farm it, descendants of Tomasz's brother Józef still live on the land in Baby today.⁵²

⁴¹ "New York, Passenger Lists 1820-1957," database with images, *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com), Antonina Szwacik. The group was provided seven breakfasts, twelve dinners and nine suppers."

⁴² "New York, Passenger and Crew Lists (including Castle Garden and Ellis Island), 1820-1957," database with images, *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com), Antonina Szwacik. Her destination is identified as Chicago.

⁴³ *IBID*. Antonina's height is noted on the record.

⁴⁴ "Illinois, Federal Naturalization Records, 1856-1991," database with images, *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com), citing National Archives at Chicago, "Declarations of Intention for Citizenship, 1903-1981," NAI Number 6756420, Record Group Title: *Records of District Courts of the United States, 1685-2009*; Record Group Number: *RG 21*, see Tomasz Grabski "also known as Joseph Grabski, declaration number 51876, 9 March 1927 (indexed on Ancestry as Tomasz Crabski). His height is noted on the record.

⁴⁵ For Tomasz's Occupation: 1920 U.S. Census, Cook County, Illinois, population schedule, Chicago, Ward 8, Enumeration District 497, sheet 24 (penned), household 196, family 466, Thomas Grabski. Also, 1930 U.S. Census, Cook County, Illinois, population schedule, Chicago, Ward 7, Enumeration District 16-314, sheet 32 (penned), household 350, family 559, Thomas Grabski. Both censuses note Tomasz's occupation as worker in steel mill. For Antoni's Occupation and Place of Employment: State of Illinois, Department of Public Health, Division of Vital Statistics, Standard Certificate of Death No. 25176 (1923), Anthony Swaczek. Copy in author's files.

⁴⁶ Family tradition as told by Tomasz and Antonina's daughter Mary "Marie" Ryan (nee Grabski, 1915-2001) to her children and grandchildren including author.

⁴⁷ "Parish Dabrowice, 1886 (book)," database with images, *Geneteka* (www.geneteka.genealodzy.pl) search criteria: Province, Lodzkie; Parish, all locations; Person, Tomasz Grabski; Range of years. 1886-1886, Birth tab, Tomasz Grabski, Year 1886, Record 127; citing books held in the State Archives in Lodz, Poland.

⁴⁸ For Jan Grabski's birthplace: *Book of Births, Marriages, Deaths of the Roman Catholic Church in Dabrowice from 1857*, book held at the State Archive in Łódź. p. 7, record No. 28, Jan Grabski, 31 May 1857. Copy in author's files. For Magdalena Maćczak's Birthplace: *Book of Births, Marriages and Deaths of the Roman Catholic Church in Dabrowice from 1865*, Book held by the State Archive in Łódź, p. 10, record No. 57, Magdalena Maćczak, 8 May 1865. Copy in author's files. For Tomasz's siblings: Digital images of birth records for the nine Grabski children are found on *Geneteka* (www.geneteka.genealodzy.pl), search name and year of birth in Province Lodzkie. Copies in the author's files.

⁴⁹ *Book of Births, Marriages, Deaths of the Roman Catholic Church in Dabrowice from 1928*, Polish State Archives in Lodz, Book No. 31, p. 6, Polish State Archives in Lodz, Franciszek Grabski, born in Baby 28 March 1828. Copy in Author's files.

⁵⁰ For Jan's Occupation: "Parish Dabrowice, 1886 (book)," database with images, *Geneteka* (www.geneteka.genealodzy.pl), Province, Lodzkie; Parish, all locations; Person, Tomasz Grabski; Range of years. 1886-1886. Tomasz's father, Jan, is identified as a farmer. For Franciszek's occupation: *Book of Births, Marriages, Deaths of the Roman Catholic Church in Dabrowice from 1857*, p. 7, record No. 28, Jan Grabski, book held at the State Archive in Lodz. Copy in author's file. Jan's father, Franciszek, is identified as a farmer. For Wojciech's occupation: *Book of Births, Marriages, Deaths of the Roman Catholic Church in Dabrowice from 1828*, page 6, record No. 31, Franciszek Grabski, book held at the State Archive in Lodz. Copy in author's file. Franciszek's father Wojciech is identified as a farmer. For Łukasz's occupation: *Book of Births, Marriages, Deaths of the Roman Catholic Church in Dabrowice from 1863*, page 6, record No.32., Wojciech Grabski, Copy in author's file. Wojciech's father, Łukasz, is identified as a farmer.

⁵¹ *Book of Births, Marriages and Deaths of the Roman Catholic Church in Dabrowice (Poland) from 1847*, book held by the State Archive in Lodz, p. 34, Record 11, marriage of Franciszek Grabski and Lucja Pruszyńska, 19 November 1847. Copy in author's files. The marriage record states Franciszek was a "bachelor peasant who owned some land."

⁵² Telephone conversation between author and Descendant A (name withheld for privacy), 4 July 2020. Also, Telephone conversation between Tom Szymkowiak of Genealogy Tour, Wrocław, Poland (www.genealogytour.com) and Descendant A on 23 July 2020. Also, in-person conversation in Baby, Poland between Tom Szymkowiak and wife of Descendant B (name withheld for privacy), 14 May 2020. Notes in author's files.

Like all of his siblings, Tomasz likely stood to inherit a share of the Grabski land. It was the Polish custom at the time for men to split their land between all of their children—although not necessarily in equal shares—rather than leave all of their land to the eldest son.⁵³ The Grabski descendants who still live in Baby confirm that the family’s land has always passed down through the generations in this manner; from the father to all of his children.⁵⁴ Therefore, it is likely Tomasz would have inherited some of the land had he stayed in Baby. However, it is also possible that as the land was divided into smaller and smaller parcels with each generation, Tomasz would not have inherited a large enough share to support himself and a family.⁵⁵ This eventuality could have pushed Tomasz to try his luck in America.

Whatever his reasons, Tomasz left Baby and arrived in New York on 11 February 1909.⁵⁶ He was the only member of his family to make the journey, although it does not appear he traveled alone. There was another young man on the same ship named Jan Pawlowski who was also from Baby and who also ended up in South Chicago.⁵⁷ Three years after Tomasz and Jan emigrated, Tomasz’s younger brother, Antoni, followed.⁵⁸ However, the rest of the Grabski family likely remained in Baby. Tomasz’s brothers Józef and Jan, and his sister Józefa are all buried in Baby.⁵⁹ No evidence has been found that they, their parents, or any of Tomasz’s other siblings ever left Poland.⁶⁰ Additionally, the Grabski descendants still in Baby have no knowledge of other Grabskis that emigrated.⁶¹

TOMASZ AND ANTONINA

How Tomasz met Antonina is not known. Family tradition says that Tomasz saw Antonina dancing on the opposite bank of a river in the old country and vowed to one day marry her.⁶² The last known villages of both Tomasz and Antonina prior to their emigration are located within 80 miles of each other near the western bank of The Vistula River.⁶³ The Vistula is a major waterway that winds its way from south-to-north through central Poland until it spills into the Baltic Sea.⁶⁴ Along the way, The Vistula splinters off into many branches,

⁵³ Jason Kruski (www.kruskigenealogy.webs.com), *Advanced Polish Research*, webinar presented online to The Northwest Suburban Genealogical Society (www.nwsgenealogy.org), 7 November 2020. Recording available in member’s only section of NWSGS website. Polish inheritance traditions discussed in Q&A at 1:39:25 of recording. Transcript in author’s files.

⁵⁴ Telephone conversation between author and Descendant A (name withheld for privacy). Also, Telephone conversation between Tom Szymkowiak and Descendant A. Also, in-person conversation in Baby, Poland between Tom Szymkowiak and wife of Descendant B.

⁵⁵ Jason Kruski, *Advanced Polish Research* (webinar).

⁵⁶ New York, Passenger and Crew Lists (including Castle Garden and Ellis Island), 1820-1957,” database with images, *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com), Line 14: Josef Grabski, age 22, arrived New York, New York, 13 Feb 1909 from Bremen, aboard the ship Scharnhorst. Note: Tomasz immigrated under the name Joseph (See Declaration of Intent, infra). “Illinois, Federal Naturalization Records, 1856-1991,” database with images, *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com), citing National Archives at Chicago, “Declarations of Intention for Citizenship, 1903-1981,” NAI Number 6756420, Record Group Title: *Records of District Courts of the United States, 1685-2009*; Record Group Number: RG 21, see Tomasz Grabski, declaration number 51876, 9 March 1927 (indexed on Ancestry as Tomasz Crabski). Declaration states Tomasz Grabski was “also known as Joseph Grabski.” For Proof Tomasz Immigrated Under the Name *Joseph Grabski*: Debra Koehler, “*Two Brothers, One Passage Record: Negative Evidence, an Alias, and a Birth Record Addendum Prove Tomasz Grabski Immigrated to The United States Under the Name of His Older Brother Joseph.*” (Appendix A).

⁵⁷ For Jan Pawlowski’s Immigration: New York, Passenger and Crew Lists (including Castle Garden and Ellis Island), 1820-1957,” database with images, *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com), Line 15: Jan Pawlowski. For Jan Pawlowski’s residency in South Chicago: 1910 U.S. Census, Cook County, Illinois, population schedule, City of Chicago, Enumeration District 459, sheet 17 (penned), household 110, family 292, Anthony Gawrysiak; image, “1910 United States Federal Census,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com), citing NARA publication T624, roll 1,178. Jan Pawlowski is listed on line 45 as a Boarder.

⁵⁸ “New York, Passenger and Crew Lists (including Castle Garden and Ellis Island), 1820-1957,” database with images, *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com), Line 17: Anton Grabski, age 18. The record states Anton had last lived with his father, Jan, in Kutnowski, Warsaw, and was bound to meet his brother, Thomas in Chicago. Anton’s prior town of Kutnowski (Kutno) references either a county, or a village within it, located less than 20 miles from Baby.

⁵⁹ Tom Szymkowiak, *On-site genealogy research May 2020, Grabski* (research report). Copy in author’s files. Tom visited the cemetery in Baby and provided photos of the graves of Jan, Józef, and Józefa.

⁶⁰ In the author’s search of the 1920 U.S. census on *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com) and *Family Search* (www.familysearch.org) for like Grabskis, no results matched.— In the author’s search of the 1930 U.S. census on *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com) and *Family Search* (www.familysearch.org) for like Grabskis, no results matched.— In the author’s search of the 1940 U.S. census on *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com) and *Family Search* (www.familysearch.org) for like Grabskis, no results matched.— In the author’s search of immigration records on *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com), *Family Search* (www.familysearch.org), and *One-Step Web Pages by Stephen P. Morse* (www.stevemore.com) for like Grabskis, no results match other than the 1909 Józef Grabski passage linked identified as that of Tomasz.

⁶¹ Telephone conversation between author and Descendant A (name withheld for privacy). Also, Telephone conversation between Tom Szymkowiak and Descendant A. Also, in-person conversation in Baby, Poland between Tom Szymkowiak and wife of Descendant B.

⁶² Family tradition as told by Tomasz and Antonina’s daughter Mary “Marie” Ryan (nee Grabski, 1915-2001) to her children and grandchildren including author.

⁶³ For Tomasz’s last residence: “New York, Passenger and Crew Lists (including Castle Garden and Ellis Island), 1820-1957,” database with images, *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com), Josef Grabski. His last place of residence is listed as with his father Jan in Baby, Russia. For Antonina’s last residence: “New York, Passenger and Crew Lists (including Castle Garden and Ellis Island), 1820-1957,” database with images, *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com), Antonina Szwacik. Her last place of residence is listed as Radziejow, Russia.

⁶⁴ *Britannica* (www.britannica.com/place/Vistula-River), “Vistula River.” Antonina’s last village of Radziejow and Tomasz’s village of Baby are both located on the west side of the river.

and there are minor rivers in the area as well.⁶⁵ So, it is geographically possible—though not likely—that Tomasz and Antonina found themselves on opposite riverbanks, and he noticed her dancing on the distant shore and instantly fell in love.

Whether the romantic tale is true or not, both Tomasz and Antonina ended up in South Chicago, where Tomasz worked in a steel mill, as did Antonina's father, Antoni.⁶⁶ The mill was likely the sprawling South Works of U.S. Steel on the southwestern shore of Lake Michigan. The church where Antonina and Tomasz were married and the home they subsequently shared sit a little over a mile from the site of the former mill in a tiny neighborhood still known as *The Bush*.⁶⁷ *The Bush* was one of the original mill hoods established when the South Works opened in 1880, and it provided some of the only housing near the mill that was available to recent immigrants.⁶⁸ In 1911, when Antonina arrived, more than half the residents of *The Bush* were Polish. Most lived in dark and poorly-ventilated apartments within older, wooden structures one-to-three stories high. Only one in four apartments had indoor plumbing. Established families often took in boarders to help pay the rent. Some kept pigs and chickens in their flats.⁶⁹ Everything in *The Bush* was constantly bathed in soot from the steel furnaces in the mill.⁷⁰ One visitor observed *the pall of heavy smoke darkens the sky by day, while at night the lurid glare from the furnaces tells of unceasing toil*.⁷¹ Despite these hardships, early Polish immigrants to *The Bush* raised funds to buy land at 83rd and South Shore so they could build a Catholic church to serve their growing numbers.⁷²

Tomasz and Antonina were married in that church—St. Michael the Archangel Roman Catholic Church, South Shore—on 8 October 1913.⁷³ They would go on to have seven children, all of them born in or near *The Bush*. Daughter Charlotte (1914) was the first, followed in quick succession by Mary “Marie” (1915), John (1917), Evelyn (1919), Walter (1920), Janina (1923), and Joseph (1924).⁷⁴

Just as Antonina's parents had lost two children, and Tomasz's parents had lost two children, Tomasz and Antonina lost two of their own. Their first son, John, died in August 1921 of bronco pneumonia and secondary meningitis. He was just four years old.⁷⁵ Daughter Janina, born in January 1923, lived just twenty-one days. Like John, Janina succumbed to bronco pneumonia. She also suffered from furunculosis or an outbreak of pus-filled boils.⁷⁶ Tomasz and Antonina's daughter Marie often recalled that little Janina was “covered in red spots” when she died, and that she was so tiny their father (Tomasz) placed her body in a shoebox and held it in his lap as he wept.⁷⁷ Antonina's grief had to have been unimaginable. She had lost two young sisters within a single week in the old country, and now she had lost two of her own children to pneumonia in less than two years.

⁶⁵ Farlex, *The Free Dictionary* (<https://encyclopedia2.thefreedictionary.com/Vistula+River>), Vistula.

⁶⁶ For Tomasz's occupation see: 1920 U.S. Census, Cook County, Illinois, population schedule, Chicago, Ward 8, Enumeration District 497, sheet 24 (penned), household 196, family 466, Thomas Grabski; image, “1920 United States Federal Census,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com), citing NARA publication T626, roll 2076. For Antoni's Occupation and Place of Employment: State of Illinois, Department of Public Health, Division of Vital Statistics, Standard Certificate of Death No. 25176 (1923), Anthony Swaczek. Copy in author's files.

⁶⁷ *Google Maps* (www.google.com/maps), Steelworkers' Park to St. Michael Catholic Church South Shore.

⁶⁸ James R. Grossman, Durkin Keating, and Janice L. Reiff, *The Encyclopedia of Chicago* (The University of Chicago Press, 2004), p. 427, “Iron and Steelworkers,” and p. 767, “South Chicago.”

⁶⁹ Pacyga, *Polish Immigrants and Industrial Chicago: Workers on the South Side 1880-1922*, pp. 99-103.

⁷⁰ Grossman, *The Encyclopedia of Chicago*, p. 767.

⁷¹ Pacyga, *Polish Immigrants and Industrial Chicago: Workers on the South Side 1880-1922*, p. 98.

⁷² Rev. Msgr. Harry C. Koenig, S.T.D., Editor, *A History of the Parishes of the Archdiocese of Chicago, Volume 1*, “St. Michael Church,” (Catholic Bishop of Chicago, 1980), pp. 641-645.

⁷³ “Illinois, Chicago, Catholic Church Records, 1833-1925,” database with images, *Family Search* (www.familysearch.com), Thomas Grabski and Antonina Szwak (image 95); citing Chicago Church parishes, Chicago Diocese, Chicago; FHL microfilm 1,579,565.

⁷⁴ For Charlotte: “Illinois, Cook County Birth Certificates, 1871-1940,” database, *FamilySearch* (www.familysearch.org), Charlotte Grabski, 7 July 1914, Chicago, Cook, Illinois; referencing certificate 200486, Cook County Clerk, Cook County Courthouse, Chicago. For Mary (Marie): State of Colorado, “Certificate of Death,” Cert. No. 16-355171, Marie Theresa Ryan (nee Grabski), issued 8 April 2003, date of birth 8 September 1915., certified copy held by author. For John: State of Illinois, Department of Public Health, Division of Vital Statistics, Standard Certificate of Death No. 18 (illegible digits) (1921), Johny Grabski, date of birth 20 June 1917, death 30 June 1921. Copy in author's files. For Evelyn: “in the U.S., Social Security Death Index, 1935-2014,” database, *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com), Evelyn Henderson (nee Grabski), SS no. 345-09-5848, born 17 January 1919. For Walter: “U.S., World War II Draft Cards Young Men, 1940-1947,” database with images, *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com), Walter Thomas Grabski, date of birth 12 October 1920. For Janina: State of Illinois, Department of Public Health, Division of Vital Statistics, Standard Certificate of Death No. 4981 (1923), Janina Grabski, date of birth 28 January 1923, death 20 February 1923. Copy in author's files. For Joseph: “U.S., World War II Draft Cards Young Men, 1940-1947,” database with images, *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com), Joseph Donald Grabski, date of birth 18 February 1924.

⁷⁵ “Cook County, Illinois, Deaths Index, 1878-1922,” database, *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com), John Grabski (1917-1921).

⁷⁶ State of Illinois, Department of Public Health, Division of Vital Statistics, Standard Certificate of Death No. 4981 (1923), Janina Grabski. For Furuncles: *Healthline* (www.healthline.com/health/furuncle), “What to Know about Furuncles (Boils).”

⁷⁷ Family tradition as told by Tomasz and Antonina's daughter Mary “Marie” Ryan nee Grabski (1915-2003) to her children and grandchildren including author.

Both John and Janina were buried at Holy Cross Catholic Cemetery in Calumet City, Illinois, although the exact locations of their graves within the cemetery are not known.⁷⁸ Seven months after the death of Janina, Antonina buried her father Antoni in the same cemetery.⁷⁹

TILL DEATH DID THEY PART

Little is known of the Grabskis in the years following the death of Antonina's father. Tomasz continued to work in the steel mill, and although they changed addresses, the family lived within a few blocks of *The Bush*.⁸⁰ For at least some of his time in the mill, Tomasz worked as the First Helper in the Open Hearth, a type of furnace that used excessive heat to oxidize impurities out of pig iron to make steel.⁸¹ As First Helper, Tomasz might have fueled the furnace with gasses, guided heavy equipment operators as they swung buckets of molten metal overhead, or shoveled lime and other materials into the furnace to affect the outcome of the steel.⁸² Like all jobs in the mill, it was dangerous work. In one year alone (1906), 48 workers were killed at the South Works, and another 368 permanently disabled.⁸³ One of the most common causes of death or injury in the mill was being hit by falling objects. However, many workers were hurt or killed due to their own falls, suffocation, or electrocution, or by being crushed or scorched. At least one worker died because he was *thrown from a high place by the wind*.⁸⁴

Despite the hazards of his job, it appears Tomasz escaped serious injury.⁸⁵ However, the constant exposure to ore dust and other toxins in the mill may have increased his susceptibility to the tuberculosis that ultimately claimed his life.⁸⁶ When Antonina—then using the name Antoinette—filed her Petition for Naturalization in June 1929, she noted that her husband lived not at home, but at *The Municipal Sanitarium*.⁸⁷ The sanitarium she referenced was The Municipal Tuberculosis Sanitarium of Chicago.⁸⁸ Tomasz died there of tuberculosis on 19 May 1930, nearly a year after Antonina filed her petition. He was just 44 years old.⁸⁹

The origin of the family story that Tomasz died of exhaustion after outworking a machine is not known. However, it is possible there is some truth to the tale. Tuberculosis is a bacterial infection that can linger in the body in a latent state without causing symptoms for months and even years until the immune system becomes too weak suppress it.⁹⁰ If Tomasz had latent tuberculosis, and if he tried to outwork a machine as his daughter Marie recalled, it is possible the super-human effort left his body so weakened that his latent tuberculosis transformed into the deadly form of the disease. There is no way to know if that was the case, or if perhaps Antonina made up the story to give her children pride in their father's memory. However, given that extreme

⁷⁸ For John: State of Illinois, Department of Public Health, Division of Vital Statistics, Standard Certificate of Death No. 18 (illegible digits) (1921), Johny Grabski. For Janina: State of Illinois, Department of Public Health, Division of Vital Statistics, Standard Certificate of Death No. 4981 (1923), Janina Grabski

⁷⁹ "Illinois, Archdiocese of Chicago, Cemetery Records, 1864-1989," database with images, *FamilySearch* (www.familysearch.org), Antoni Szwaczek, interred Holy Cross Cemetery, 25 September 1923.

⁸⁰ By 1927, the Grabskis had moved to 8343 Muskegon Avenue, Chicago: "Illinois, Federal Naturalization Records, 1856-1991," database with images, *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com), citing National Archives at Chicago, "Declarations of Intention for Citizenship, 1903-1981," NAI Number 6756420, Record Group Title: *Records of District Courts of the United States, 1685-2009*; Record Group Number: RG 21, see Tomasz Grabski, declaration number 51876, 9 March 1927 (indexed on Ancestry as Tomasz Crabski). This address is three blocks due west of The Bush proper. By 1930, the family had moved to 8555 Burnham Avenue, Chicago: 1930 U.S. Census, Cook County, Illinois, population schedule, Chicago, Ward 7, Enumeration District 16-314, sheet 32 (penned), household 350, family 559, Thomas Grabski; image, "1930 United States Federal Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com), citing NARA publication T626, roll 2667. This address is two blocks further west from Muskegon.

⁸¹ For Tomasz's occupation: IBID (1930 U.S. Census, Cook County, Illinois), his occupation is noted as "First Helper Open Hearth." For Open Hearth: *How Stuff Works* (<https://science.howstuffworks.com/iron4.htm>), "How Iron and Steel Work." Also: *Britannica* (www.britannica.com/technology/steel/Open-hearth-steelmaking), "Open Hearth Steelmaking." Also: *The Free Dictionary* (<https://encyclopedia2.thefreedictionary.com/Open+hearth+furnace>), "Open Hearth Furnace."

⁸² *Dictionary of Occupational Titles* (<https://occupationalinfo.org/51/512362010.html>), "First Helper (steel and rel.)." Also: *Rivers of Steel* (<https://riversofsteel.com/uploads/files/SteelHer-WorkersandJobs.pdf>) "Workers."

⁸³ Grossman, *The Encyclopedia of Chicago*, p. 585, "Occupational Safety and Health."

⁸⁴ Pacyga, *Polish Immigrants and Industrial Chicago: Workers on the South Side, 1880-1922*, pp. 90-93.

⁸⁵ Author's familial knowledge.

⁸⁶ Pacyga, *Polish Immigrants and Industrial Chicago: Workers on the South Side, 1880-1922*, p. 89.

⁸⁷ "Illinois, Federal Naturalization Records, 1856-1991," database with images, *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com), Mrs. Antoinette Grabski, petition number 78961, 6 June 1929.

⁸⁸ 1930 U.S. Census, Cook County, Illinois, population schedule, Chicago, Ward 40, Enumeration District 16-2775, sheet 19 (penned), household 8, Thomas Grabski, patient; image, "1930 United States Federal Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com), citing NARA publication T626, roll 2667.

⁸⁹ State of Illinois, Department of Public Health, Division of Vital Statistics, Standard Certificate of Death No. 14760 (1930), Thomas Grabski. Also, Supplemental Report: Correction of Death Record, Reference No. 14760 (1930), Thomas Grabski.

⁹⁰ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Latent TB Infection and TB Disease," (www.cdc.gov/tb/topic/basics/tbinfectiondisease.htm).

exhaustion could trigger latent tuberculosis, there is room for Marie's story and Tomasz's cause-of-death to co-exist.

Antonina laid Tomasz to rest at Holy Cross Catholic Cemetery, next to her father.⁹¹ For many years after, a Memorial day picnic at the family plot endured as a Grabski family tradition.⁹²

LIFE AFTER TOMASZ

Tomasz's passing left Antonina a widow with five children. The youngest, Joseph, was just six. The eldest, Charlotte, was fifteen. How Antonina supported herself and her children is not known.⁹³ She finally obtained her citizenship in January 1931.⁹⁴ Her eldest daughters, Charlotte and Marie, each married in 1934.⁹⁵ Four years later, Antonina herself re-married, although it does not appear the union was a happy one. She wed Edmund Stanley Bukowski, a railroad machinist, on 22 October 1938.⁹⁶ Like Antonina, Edmund was a Polish immigrant. He was also a widower with three grown children and two teenagers.⁹⁷

Edmund and Antonina shared a household in 1940, along with three of his children and her sons, Walter, then 19, and Joseph, who was 16.⁹⁸ Edmund even appears in a family photograph taken nine years later at Joseph's wedding.⁹⁹ But other than that, there is little awareness of Edmund among Antonina's descendants. In fact, one of her granddaughters was stunned to learn her *Mem*—as she called Antonina—had a second husband; although she does recognize Edmund as a man she addressed as *Mister* during her childhood.¹⁰⁰

The relationship between Antonina and Edmund is little understood or remembered on Edmund's side as well. The wife of one of his grandsons offers this insight:

*He [Edmund's grandson] remembers vaguely that there may have been a second marriage...but his mother and her siblings did not ever talk about it. It was very hush-hush and we don't know why...we do know they were not together long so maybe it was a bad situation. Unfortunately my mother-in-law and her siblings are deceased...so we have no one to ask.*¹⁰¹

No record of a divorce between Antonina and Edmund has been found.¹⁰² However by 1950, they may have lived apart. On 28 January 1950, Antonina's mother, Józefa, died in a home at 8817 Luella Avenue in south Chicago.¹⁰³ The home was less than three miles west of the South Works, but it was worlds away from the

⁹¹ State of Illinois, Department of Public Health, Division of Vital Statistics, Standard Certificate of Death No. 14760 (1930), Thomas Grabski, Cook County Clerk, Chicago, Illinois.

⁹² Memories of and photographs held by Tomasz and Antonina's granddaughter Eileen Koehler, as shared with author.

⁹³ 1930 U.S. Census, Cook County, Illinois, population schedule, Chicago, Ward 7, Enumeration District 16-314, sheet 32 (penned), household 350, family 559, Thomas Grabski. This census was enumerated the month prior to Tomasz's death. Antonina and her eldest daughters were not employed and her other children were too young to work.

⁹⁴ "Illinois, Federal Naturalization Records, 1856-1991," database with images, *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com), citing National Archives at Chicago, "Declarations of Intention for Citizenship, 1906-1991," NAI Number 6756404, Record Group Title: *Records of District Courts of the United States, 1685-2009*; Record Group Number: RG 21, see Mrs. Antoinette Grabski, petition number 93506, 23 September 1930 (resubmitted due to incompetent witness on 1929 petition), Oath of Allegiance 13 January 1931.

⁹⁵ For Charlotte: "Cook County, Illinois, Marriage Index, 1930-1960," database, *Ancestry* (ancestry.com), Charlotte V. Grabski and Robert H. Boger, 5 June 1934; citing Cook County Genealogical Records, File 1409418, License No. 215D547F-3E22-4926-A99E-3A69D913126B. For Marie: St. Peter and Paul Church, Chicago, Illinois, "Marriage Certificate," Marie Grabski and Francis Ryan, 29 November 1934, copy in author's files.

⁹⁶ For marriage: "Illinois, Cook County Marriages 1871-1968, database, *FamilySearch* (www.familysearch.org), Edmund Bukowski and Antoinette Grabski, 22 October 1938; citing FHL microfilm 102483076. For occupation: "U.S., Railroad Retirement Pension Index, 1934-1987," database, *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com), E Bukow [Edmund Bukowski].

⁹⁷ For Polish ethnicity: "U.S., World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918," database with images, *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com), Edmund Stanley Bukowski. For Widow Status and Children: 1930 U.S. Census, Cook County, Illinois, population schedule, Chicago, Ward 7, Enumeration District 16-322, sheet 30A (penned), household 236, family 557, Edmund Bukowski (indexed as *Bakowski*); image, "1930 United States Federal Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com), citing NARA publication T626, roll 2667.

⁹⁸ 1940 U.S. Census, Cook County, Illinois, population schedule, Chicago, Ward 10, Enumeration District 103-647, sheet 1A (penned), household 7, Edmund Bukowski, image, "1940 United States Federal Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com), citing NARA publication T627, roll 4643.

⁹⁹ "Cook County, Illinois Marriage Index, 1930-1960," database, *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com), Joseph Grabski and Joan M. Kaminiski, 29 August 1949; citing Cook County Genealogical Records, File 2099691, License No. 564E55F6-9E7a-4430-AFFF-54765290F8CD. Photo held by Joseph's daughter (name withheld for privacy). Copy in author's files. Edmund Bukowski confirmed to be the man in the photo known as *Mister* by Edmund's grandson (name withheld for privacy) in email exchange with author, 11 March 2016, copy in author's files.

¹⁰⁰ Personal memory shared with author by author's mother who is Antonina's granddaughter. Notes in author's files.

¹⁰¹ Email exchange between author and [name withheld for privacy], wife of Edmund's grandson, March 2016, copy in author's files.

¹⁰² Divorce records are held at the Cook County Archives Department, Room 1113, Daley Center, Chicago. They could not be accessed due to closures. A digital collection of same was not found at *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com), *FamilySearch* (www.familysearch.org), or listed on the *Illinois Divorce Wiki* (https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Illinois_Divorce_Records) or on the Cook County, Illinois wiki (https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Cook_County_Illinois_Genealogy).

¹⁰³ State of Illinois, Department of Public Health, Division of Vital Statistics, Standard Certificate of Death State File No. 3040 (1950), Josephine Szwaczyk. Certified copy held by great granddaughter (name withheld for privacy), copy in author's files.

belch and stench of *The Bush*. Antonina's granddaughter—the one who recognized Edmund as *Mister*—recalls her *Mem's* house on Luella. She also recalls that *Mister* did not live there.

*This was a beautiful, brand new home....there was a large living room, dining room and a modern kitchen with a window overlooking her beautiful backyard....[it] was filled with all sorts of beautiful flowers that surrounded a lush lawn...excellent for entertaining the big and growing family [of grandchildren.]...**On some special family occasions, Mister, as we children called him would be there**..... Across the street was a huge vegetable garden. The neighborhood was newly developed and still lacking homes on that side of the street.....it was home to tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, corn, beans, etc. She was my first gardening mentor, letting me water the garden, pull weeds and pick blossoms.¹⁰⁴*

It is logical to assume that Edmund provided Antonina with her new home. But that was not the case. It was purchased by Joseph Grabski, Antonina's youngest son, in January 1948.¹⁰⁵ Bud, as the family called him, had served in World War II.¹⁰⁶ It is possible he obtained a loan under the G.I. Bill and used it to buy the home for his mother.¹⁰⁷ Bud lived in the Luella home with Antonina until his marriage in 1949. Antonina's other son Walter also lived there for a time, as did her youngest daughter Evelyn until she married in 1953.¹⁰⁸ These must have been happy times for Antonina. Although in a way, she never left the old neighborhood near the mill. As her granddaughter recalls:

Lottie [Antonina] purchased new furniture with plastic covers to protect the sofa and chair from wear and tear. But the plastic was uncomfortable so Marie [Antonina's daughter] offered to sew fabric slipcovers to cover the plastic. Lottie thought the slipcovers were so beautiful they needed to be protected. So she covered them with blankets.¹⁰⁹

One can only imagine how difficult it must have been for Antonina to keep the furniture clean during all those years in *The Bush*.

ANTONINA'S DYING WISH

In her final years, Antonina wrote three wills; one in May 1956, the next in May 1960, and the last in May 1972. In each of the handwritten wills, Antonina expressed the same message; that she loved all of her children equally; that she wanted the family to stay together; and that she wanted her youngest daughter Evelyn to get her mink coat because Evelyn *did so much more for me—she stayed with me the longest*.¹¹⁰

In addition to the mink, Antonina had about \$13,000, or \$81,000 in current dollars, when she died and a trailer home she purchased so that she could easily move around and visit each of her children.¹¹¹ Upon her death, she instructed that \$50 be spent on her burial dress, and that she *get the same [head] stone as Daddy*. Then she wanted the rest of her money along with the proceeds from the sale of her trailer split equally between her children.¹¹² In her May 1956 will she warned: *please do not make trouble between you...I love you all*.¹¹³ In her final will she wrote: *I love you all very much. I don't want to leave you. But when God wants me to leave this earth please stay together as a family*.¹¹⁴

Antonina "Antoinette" "Lottie" Grabski Bukowski (nee Szwaczyk) died four months after her final will on 19 September 1972 at the age of 79. She is buried at Holy Cross Cemetery in Calumet City, Illinois, next to Tomasz.¹¹⁵ To their left are her parents, Antoni and Józefa Szwaczyk. Also buried in the same plot are John

¹⁰⁴ Eileen Koehler, *Remembering my Grandmother*, loose leaf personal reminiscence, 2019. Copy in author's files.

¹⁰⁵ *Indenture (Deed)*, Liberty National Bank of Chicago and Joseph D. Grabski, for Lot 35, Block 5, South Shore Gardens, 20 January 1948. Copy obtained by author from Cook County Clerk Recorder on 16 September 2019 and held in author's files.

¹⁰⁶ Knowledge of Joseph "Bud" Grabski's WWII service provided by his daughter (name withheld for privacy). Also, "U.S., Department of Veterans Affairs BIRLS Death File, 1850-2010," database, *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com), Joseph Grabski, Enlistment 5 May 1943, Release Date 11 November 1945.

¹⁰⁷ History (Channel) (<https://www.history.com/topics/world-war-ii/gi-bill>), G.I Bill.

¹⁰⁸ Eileen Koehler, *Remembering my Grandmother*.

¹⁰⁹ IBID.

¹¹⁰ Lottie Grabski, *To My Children*, May 1956, handwritten will. Also, Lottie Grabski, *To Jest Miaie Receme Testament*, May 1960, handwritten will. Also, Lottie Grabski, *To All of My Children*, May 1972, handwritten will. Originals held by Eileen Koehler, granddaughter. Copies in author's files.

¹¹¹ For Assets, Lottie Grabski, *To All My Children*, May 1972. For Purpose of Trailer, Eileen Koehler, *Remembering my Grandmother*.

¹¹² Lottie Grabski, *To All My Children*, May 1972.

¹¹³ Lottie Grabski, *To My Children*, May 1956.

¹¹⁴ Lottie Grabski, *To All My Children*, May 1972.

¹¹⁵ "Illinois, Archdiocese of Chicago Cemetery Records, 1864-1989," database with images, *FamilySearch* (www.familysearch.org), film number 004401813, image 4400 Lottie Bukowski (Grabski) and film number 004401986, image 2181, Lottie Grabski, both 22 September 1972; FHL microfilms 1,523,093 and 1,523,092 respectively.

Szwaczyk and his wife Stella; Marianna Pilarska and her husband Leon; and Anna Konicki and her husband Andrew.¹¹⁶ Anna Konicki is Antonina's youngest sister, Anna, who came to America with Józefa in March 1911. John (Jan) Szwaczyk and Marianna Pilarska are the younger brother and sister Antonina accompanied to Chicago several months later. The Szwaczyk family, which endured seven years of separation to emigrate, is together forever in a single family plot, along with their spouses.

Edmund Stanley Bukowski died 26 July 1977 in Chicago.¹¹⁷ He too is buried at Holy Cross Cemetery next to his first wife, Helen (nee Rybicki).¹¹⁸

Tomasz and Antonina Grabski had seven children:

- + 2 i. CHARLOTTE GRABSKI, born 7 July 1914 in Chicago, Cook County, Illinois and Died 2 April 1993 in Friendswood, Galveston, Texas.¹¹⁹ She married Robert Harry Boger (1915-1985) on 5 June 1934 in Chicago, Cook County, Illinois.¹²⁰
- + 3 ii. MARY THERESA "MARIE" GRABSKI, born 8 September 1915 in Chicago, Cook County, Illinois and died 1 April 2003 in Lakewood, Jefferson County, Colorado.¹²¹ She married Francis Joseph Ryan (1907-1985) on 29 November 1934 in Chicago, Cook County, Illinois.¹²²
- 4 iii. JOHN GRABSKI, born 20 June 1917 and died 30 July 1921 in Chicago, Cook County, Illinois.¹²³
- + 5 iv. EVELYN GRABSKI, born 17 January 1919 in Chicago, Cook County, Illinois and died April, 1986 in Naperville, Du Page County, Illinois.¹²⁴ She married Joseph Henderson on 4 November 1953 in Chicago, Cook County, Illinois.¹²⁵
- + 6 v. WALTER THOMAS GRABSKI, born 12 October 1920 in Chicago, Cook County, Illinois.¹²⁶ A record of his death has not been found. He married Lorraine M. Whalen on 9 October 1941 in Chicago, Cook County, Illinois.¹²⁷ He later married Sylvia Robinson on 15 June 1953 in Chicago, Cook County, Illinois.¹²⁸
- 7 vi. JANINA GRABSKI, born 28 January 1923 and died 18 February 1923 in Chicago, Cook County, Illinois.¹²⁹
- + 8 vii. JOSEPH GRABSKI, born 18 February 1924 in Chicago, Cook County, Illinois and died 15 November 1992 in New Lenox, Will County, Illinois.¹³⁰ He married Joan Ann Kaminski on 29 August 1949 in Chicago, Cook County, Illinois.¹³¹

¹¹⁶ Observations of author during cemetery visit, 19 September 2019. Photos in author's files.

¹¹⁷ "U.S., Railroad Retirement Pension Index, 1934-1987," database, Ancestry (www.ancestry.com), E Bukow [Edmund Bukowski].

¹¹⁸ Illinois, Archdiocese of Chicago Cemetery Records, 1864-1989," database with images, *FamilySearch* (www.familysearch.org), film number 004401813; image 4380 Edmund Bukowski, 30 July 1977; image 3200 Helena Bokowski, both citing FHL microfilms 1,523,093.

¹¹⁹ For birth: "Illinois, Cook County Birth Certificates, 1871-1940," database, *FamilySearch* (www.familysearch.org), Charlotte Grabski, 7 July 1914. For death: "U.S., Social Security Death Index, 1935-2014," database, Ancestry (www.ancestry.com), Charlotte Boger, 2 April 1993, SS No. 332-34-4835.

¹²⁰ "Cook County, Illinois, Marriage Index, 1930-1960," database, Ancestry (www.ancestry.com), Charlotte V. Grabski and Robert H. Boger, 5 June 1934.

¹²¹ For Birth and Death: State of Colorado, "Certificate of Death," Cert. No. 16-355171, Marie Theresa Ryan (nee Grabski).

¹²² St. Peter and Paul Church, Chicago, Illinois, "Marriage Certificate," Marie Grabski and Francis Ryan, 29 November 1934.

¹²³ For Birth and Death: "Cook County, Illinois, Deaths Index, 1878-1922," database, Ancestry (www.ancestry.com), John Grabski (1917-1921).

¹²⁴ For Birth and Death: "U.S., Social Security Death Index, 1935-2014," database, Ancestry (www.ancestry.com), Evelyn Henderson (nee Grabski).

¹²⁵ "Cook County, Illinois, Marriage Index, 1930-1960," database, Ancestry (www.ancestry.com), Evelyn Grabski and Joseph Harold Henderson, file no. 2293726, license no. 16E5EA13-2F9F-428C-B626-26A8D46B014, 17 January 1919.

¹²⁶ "U.S., World War II Draft Cards Young Men, 1940-1947," database with images, Ancestry (www.ancestry.com), Walter Thomas Grabski.

¹²⁷ Familial knowledge provided by Walter's niece (name withheld for privacy). Also: Cook County, Illinois, Marriage Index, 1930-1960," database, Ancestry (www.ancestry.com), Walter Grabski and Lorraine Whalen, file no. 1703548, license no. AB6DE0BD-C7CD-442F-B5C7-490CE3F5BE3F, 9 October 1941.

¹²⁸ Familial knowledge provided by Walter's niece (name withheld for privacy). Also: Cook County, Illinois, Marriage Index, 1930-1960," database, Ancestry (www.ancestry.com), Walter Grabski and Sylvia Robinson, file no. 2275119, license no. F6180947-42D1-4449-A8F0-C4262AC0B87, 15 June 1953.

¹²⁹ For Birth and Death: State of Illinois, Department of Public Health, Division of Vital Statistics, Standard Certificate of Death No. 4981 (1923), Janina Grabski.

¹³⁰ For Birth: "U.S., World War II Draft Cards Young Men, 1940-1947," database with images, Ancestry (www.ancestry.com), Joseph Donald Grabski. For Death: "U.S., Department of Veterans Affairs BIRLS Death File, 1850-2010," database, Ancestry (www.ancestry.com), Joseph Grabski.

¹³¹ "Cook County, Illinois Marriage Index, 1930-1960," database, Ancestry (www.ancestry.com), Joseph Grabski and Joan M. Kaminski, 29 August 1949.