

**The Daily Life of Polish Soldiers
Niagara Camp, 1917-1919
The Newspaper Columns of Elizabeth Ascher,
St. Catharines Standard, 1917-1919**



**Compiled by Stan Skrzyszewski, Curator
Museum and Archives of the Polish Armed Forces
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Introduction

The following chronology is based primarily on news items and columns which appeared in the St. Catharines Standard from 1917-1920¹. Most of the camp news was included in columns entitled “Niagara-on-the-Lake: Breezy Budget of News from Prettiest Town on Canada’s Frontier” and later simply “Niagara-on-the-Lake.” Although the name of the correspondent is not given most of these columns were written by Mrs. Elizabeth Ascher (1869-1941), the acknowledged ‘Niagara-on-the-Lake correspondent of the Standard’. Local news from St. Catharines, which included some news from Niagara-on-the-Lake was reported in a column entitled “City and Vicinity”. No name is given for the author of these columns.

These columns have been augmented by information from some other sources including the Niagara Falls Gazette (NY).

Together these news items give an amazing, detailed day-to-day report on what was happening at the camp and describes conditions in the camp and in the town. They provide a remarkable snapshot of the life of Polish soldiers in Camp Niagara from the establishment of the camp in 1917 to its closure in 1919.



Mrs. Elizabeth Ascher
Niagara-on-the-Lake Correspondent to the Standard

¹ The compiler acknowledges with thanks the St. Catharines Public Library which houses and provides access to the St. Catharines Standard Microfilm Collection.

Background

Starting in 1914, the Polish community in America seriously began to consider ways to help Poland gain independence through military means. Small groups of American Poles made their way to Poland to join different military units. Not all of them made it.

Late in 1914 (November) the PCKR (Polski Centralny Komitet Ratunkowy / Polish Central Relief Committee) “dispatched a three-man delegation from Chicago (including Dr. Teofil Starzynski, President of the Falcons)² on a mission to Ottawa ‘to discuss the matter definitively with the government there...The PCKR delegation was prepared to offer an ‘entire regiment’ of four thousand men to be raised by the Falcons, and an additional three-thousand to be formed by the smaller Związek Wojsk Polskich [ZWP – Alliance of Polish Forces], another paramilitary organization.”³ They did not get a positive response to this visit. Interesting as well is the fact that there is no documentary evidence of this meeting having taken place.

On February 10, 1915 a delegation of the Polish Falcons under Dr. Teofil Starzynski visited President Wilson who stated that “when United States will sit at the Peace Conference all efforts shall be made to see that Poland is free again.”⁴

In the fall of 1916 Wincenty Skarzynski and Andrzej Malkowski approached the Canadian authorities. They first met with industrialist Sir William Price on September 12 and proposed the foundation of a Polish Legion in Canada. Price was a prominent Quebec businessman and was close to Prime Minister Borden. “In October, Price arranged for Malkowski and Skarzynski to meet directly with Sam Hughes and Chief of Staff, Major General Sir Willoughby Gwatkin. Price urged the project.

“The outline plan, prepared by Malkowski and Skarzynski on September 25, envisioned the creation of “The Polish Legion of Canada” composed of three battalions...Canadian interest in this project was sufficient to send a delegation of General Staff officers to meet with Falcon leaders later in the month at Detroit. At this meeting Franciszek Dziob, the naczelnik (military commander) of the Falcons, joined in the negotiations.”⁵

Prime Minister Borden was sufficiently interested that he had External Affairs make a lengthy and formal inquiry to London about the possibility of such a Legion. Colonial Secretary Bonar Law responded quickly that London would have ‘no objection’ as long as scrupulous concern for American sensibilities was observed.

In the summer of 1916 Jan Maria Horodyski was sent to North America, jointly sponsored by the War Office and the Foreign Service, to recruit Poles to be sent to Canada for the Canadian Army. Horodyski met the leadership of the Falcons who “ordered their Canadian efforts, which had been begun by Malkowski and Skarzynski and later joined by Dziob, to be halted at once. By the end of 1916, Horodyski had become the major actor in the creation of a Polish force in North America.”⁶

In December 1916 Horodyski and Dziob met with Canadian officials including General Gwatkin to arrange for the training of a cadre of volunteer officers.

² The Union of Polish Falcons was formed in 1893 as an athletic and patriotic society whose aim was to fight for an independent Poland.

³ Biskupski, M.B. “Canada and the Creation of a Polish Army, 1914-1918” in *The Polish Review* (Vol. XLIV, No. 3, 1999:339-380).

⁴ Paul S. Valacek, *Haller’s Polish Army in France* (Paul S. Valacek, 2006), 28

⁵ Biskupski, M.B. “Canada and the Creation of a Polish Army, 1914-1918” in *The Polish Review* (Vol. XLIV, No. 3, 1999:339-380).

⁶ Biskupski, M.B. “Canada and the Creation of a Polish Army, 1914-1918” in *The Polish Review* (Vol. XLIV, No. 3, 1999:339-380).

At the end of 1916 the Canadian military authorities agreed to form a Polish officer's training school in Canada. Lt. Colonel A.D. LePan was instructed to lead the training of Polish officers. He describes his reaction to this instruction as follows:

"As Officer Commanding, School of Infantry, M.D.#2, I was rather startled as you may well imagine to receive early in 1917 in Toronto, instructions from headquarters to receive a class of Polish boys from the United States as officers. This strange order was filled by the arrival of 23 recruits...That class was qualified and disappeared into the unknown from whence it had come. Classes in increasing numbers then came to the school till in the summer of 1917 at Camp Borden we had about 150 Polish Probationers in training for officers. Then on September 14th, 1917 came an equally illuminating communication instructing the School of Infantry staff to move to Niagara to take charge of a Polish Army Camp to be established there. Of this camp no information could be obtained as to numbers or duration."

Remarks of Lieutenant Colonel LePan

Commandant, Polish Army, Camp Niagara

At Banquet given by National Polish Department, Buffalo, NY, March 4, 1919⁷

On January 3, 1917, 23 Falcons arrived at the training school in Toronto and were met by Lt. Colonel A.D. LePan and were accepted into the School of Infantry, Military District No. 2. Originally they were to be part of the Canadian Expeditionary Force. However, Britain was informed that the Russian General Staff wanted the formation of Polish units in Canada.

"The Engineering Building (University of Toronto) was used by the School of Infantry under Colonel A.D. LePan until the spring of 1917, when the training of Polish soldiers expanded so rapidly that most of the school was moved out of the city."⁸

When the Polish Army Camp was set up in Niagara-on-the-Lake not all the residents were pleased. Lt. Colonel LePan reports:

"And an old lady expressed very generally the sentiments of the population when she said: 'Oh My God, these fellows will murder us in our beds', but fortunately before a protest could be made, the foreign invasion had taken place and the people of Niagara-on-the-Lake, while at first sceptical, now speak most openly and enthusiastically of the conduct of these men. Never before, they say, has there been such a quiet and such an orderly camp in that historic place."⁹

⁷ Quoted in J. Trevor Hawkins, Robert G. Mayer and Lynne Richard-Onn, *Camp Niagara Remembered*, (Unpublished Manuscript, May 1991), p.44-45

⁸ *We Will Do Our Share: The University of Toronto and the Great War*, Exhibition and catalogue by Harold Averill, Marnee Gamble, and Loryl MacDonald (Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto Archives, 27 January-2 May 2014), 46

⁹ Quoted in J. Trevor Hawkins, Robert G. Mayer and Lynne Richard-Onn, *Camp Niagara Remembered*, (Unpublished Manuscript, May 1991), p.45-46

Day to Day Life at Camp Niagara

April 7, 1917, p. 3 – “Marquise de Turczynowicz Coming Here”

Former St. Catharines Lady who married a Polish nobleman and experienced conditions in that country under German occupation

Much interest is being shown in the announcement of a lecture to be given in St. Catharines on Saturday evening, April 14th by the Marquise de Gozdawa Turczynowicz. This talented lady whose recent book, “When the Prussians Came to Poland,” has been so widely read, is at present making a tour of the principal cities of Canada where she is giving an account of the deplorable and unhappy condition of conquered Poland and her own wonderful experiences at the time of the German occupation.

Madame Laura de Turczynowicz was formerly Miss Laura Christine Blackwell and before going to reside in the States and later on the continent was known to many St. Catharines people. The lecture is to be held under the auspices of the St. Catharines Red Cross Society in the St. Paul St. Methodist Church, the use of which has been kindly granted for the occasion. Madame Laura de Turczynowicz is addressing audiences in Montreal, Ottawa and Toronto before coming here and St. Catharines is fortunate in having the opportunity of hearing her.



Laura de Turczynowicz in Red Cross Uniform¹⁰

April 13, 1917, p.3

Several Niagara folk are planning a trip to St. Catharines to hear the address of **Madame Turczynowicz** on “When Prussians Came to Poland.” The address is to be given in St. Paul Street Methodist church, under the auspices of the Red Cross Society, and will be well worth hearing. Information gleaned from personal experience, regarding the struggle for liberty in Europe is being eagerly sought just now and what this native of St. Catharines, whose home was of recent years in Poland, will have to say will be invaluable. As the proceeds of the event go to help the work of the Red Cross, no doubt many will be present.

April 16, 1917, p.7: “Prussian Atrocities Told To Local Audience By Former Resident of St. Catharines”

Countess De Turczynowicz (nee Laura Christine Blackwell) Depicts Polish Sufferings – Propose a ‘Peace Relief Ship’

[The following are extracts from a very long article]

De Turczynowicz was given a congregational salute by handkerchiefs and hand applause from a big audience of St. Catharines residents who overtaxed the seating accommodation of St. Paul Street Methodist church on Saturday evening.

The demonstration of welcome came immediately after the Countess had been introduced to the audience by Rev. S.E. Marshall for her lecture upon “The Sorrows of Poland.”

Clad in Polish Red Cross costume of soft dove grey, with a short cape of the same material, white collar and cuffs, a flowing veil of black over a close-fitting white cap, long grey boots, and the red cross on

¹⁰ Photo from Laura de Gozdawa Turczynowicz, *When the Prussians Came to Poland* (G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1916),

her breast, Countess de Turczynowicz was indeed a beautiful and appealing figure as she told the woes of war-scarred little Poland during the last two and a half years.

The countess has been touring both the States and Canada in the interests of the Russian Red Cross and the Polish War Relief. On her committee in New York, the countess has many influential and noted people.

A Peace Ship

Her plan is for a 'peace ship'. She made an urgent plea for the establishment of an organization that would aid poor Poland, where conditions are practically unknown to the outside world. The horrors of Belgium were before the world, but what was going on in poor Poland was kept from the world. Those who were able to get out became refugees. There are still several million of these prowling about Russia as beggars.

She is planning to procure if possible one of the German interned ships from the United States, have it loaded with relief material, seeds etc., and have it landed in Poland after the war is over.

A hearty vote of thanks was presented to the speaker on motion of Ven. Archdeacon Perry and Mayor Burgoyne.

April 17, 1917 – Polish Falcons in St. Catharines

The male members of the Polish Falcons¹¹ of this city, including Austrian and Russian Poles, are preparing to answer the call to arms as sent out from their organization in the United States. The Poles have asked permission to raise an army of 100,000 men to be used by the United States in any manner the Government may see fit. There are about 150-200 young men in our midst who will respond to the call when it is formally issued.

Austrian Pole-Russian Pole argument was settled in police court this morning when Magistrate Campbell imposed a fine of \$1 and costs, a total of \$8.10 on the wife of a Russian Pole for assaulting an Austrian Pole. The Austrian Poles have a society in the city which also includes the Russians and they were having a lease prepared to rent a hall on Concord Avenue from one of the Russian Poles. However the Austrian Pole appeared on the scene as arrangements were being completed for the signing of the lease and announced that they had secured another hall. The defendant ordered the complainant out of the hall and he refused to leave so she picked up a stick and struck him. The events occurred on Thursday last in the Concord Avenue hall.

May 7, 1917, p.4 – Celebration by Polish Falcons: Organizing to Send Large Force from United States and Canada in Fight for Fight for Democracies of the World

The voice of a down-trodden people hopeful for an eventual united nationality under the banner of freedom was heard in solemn, sober but determined utterances at the Polish hall on Facer Street on Sunday afternoon when a celebration of the signing of the Polish constitution scores of years ago was held under the auspices of the Polish Falcons.

The chair was occupied by Casimir Rotacriuski (Lieut. Rycozutci?). Hearty applause greeted the introduction of Mayor Burgoyne and Chief of Police Greene by President Leo Tatko.

Leon E. Wozniak, probation officer for the supreme and county court for Erie County, at Buffalo, N.Y., a high official in Polish Falcons of New York State addressed the gathering and particularly the visitors, in English, explaining the work of the Falcons which was started 25 years ago in America for the purpose of upholding the Polish tongue and Polish ways and to assist their suffering countrymen in Europe. A misconstruction on their aims had been placed by some unfriendly to the cause, but he maintained that their aim was just, honest and straight-forward. Whether they came from Germany, Russia or Austria, they were Poles and nothing else.

"We are not anarchists or partisans working against any government, said Wozniak, "but are seeking to promote our own welfare. Many of our boys are now in the uniforms of Britain and France fighting for the freedom of Poland. We Falcons in the States are trying to organize an army of 100,000 to fight under the flag of that country for the freedom on nations and for the democracies of the world. There is no question about what we are striving for. We are with the president of the United States who is fighting hand-in-hand with the allies. We are siding with the nations willing to help us. We have here, too, boys of the same spirit who are willing to go to the front."

¹¹ A branch of the Polish Falcons (Nest 645) was established in St. Catharines in 1915

Mayor Burgoyne expressed extreme pleasure in extending a greeting to the Polish citizens of St. Catharines and the district there assembled and best wishes for happiness and success as citizens and part of the population of the Dominion. He honored them for their pride, interest and love for their motherland and congratulated them upon establishing and maintaining a Christian church in the city.

The mayor felt certain of a brighter future for Poland, torn and persecuted for centuries and finally partitioned into three sections and absorbed by three adjacent countries. The progress of the war had brought a silver lining to the dark cloud that had overhung Poland for so many years and he did not think that it would again be possible within the lifetime of any present for any country to be so partitioned by a military autocracy. The creation of an army of 100,000 Polish men in the United States was well within reason and possibility. He could not help reminding his hearers that there was a place in our splendid Canadian army for Poles just as well as for English, Irish, Scotch, Italians and Russians. He would be glad indeed to see the young Polish citizens fill up the gaps that had been made in the recent triumphant battles that had been fought by our brave Canadians, 25,000 thousand of whom occupy graves in France and Flanders – having fallen while fighting “our battles and your battles” in the cause of freedom and righteousness.

He looked forward to the time when Poland would be a reunited nation under self-selected rulers and such a war as is now going on would never again be possible.

Mr. Wozniak volunteered the information that a representative of the Falcons is at present in Canada making arrangements for a share of the Falcons to join the Canadian army.

Chief Greene responded in a few fitting words to the cordial welcome extended and an address was made by P. Niec, after which a collection was taken up for the poor children in Poland, which will be transmitted to the old land via Switzerland.

May 10, 1917, p.5 – “Acknowledgement of Collection”

The following letter has been received by the secretary of the local Red Cross Society and refers to the money contributed at the recent meeting held in St. Paul Street Church, when an address was given by the Countess de Turczynowicz:

60 Wall Street

My dear Miss Newman – I beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter of April 18th, enclosing cheque for \$260. Being the amount of collection received at meeting under the auspices of the St. Catharines Branch of the Canadian Red Cross Society for the benefit of the Polish Fund. May I express to you on behalf of the committee in charge of this fund our appreciation of this donation, which is gratefully received on behalf of Poland.

You are no doubt aware that the fund is to left to accumulate until after the war and conditions are sufficiently settled to enable the work of reconstruction in Poland to be carried on advantageously.

Yours very truly,

W.K. Brice, Treasurer

In addition to the above amount, fifty dollars was given directly to the Countess de Turczynowicz, which with the sum of \$7 for expenses, makes a total of \$317.00, the total collection for the evening.

Thanks are due the officials and members of the St. Paul Street church for the use of the church and Miss Anna Williams for her services as organist.

May 11, 1917, p. 4 – Polish Falcons

The Polish Falcons of the city showed their loyalty when at their regular monthly meeting they took up a collection which netted \$8.10 for the Patriotic and Red Cross Campaign. The local Poles have always done their bit in any patriotic move in the city and they take great pleasure in being able to add their mite for the cause.

May 17, 1917, p. 11 – “Poland’s Fate is Uncertain” by Lowell Mallet, UP

The ancient kingdom of Poland just now presents the attentive attitude of the mouse that waits to see which way the cat will jump.

It might be possible to express the situation in a more pleasant way, but the expression is that of Dr. Leon Litwinski, spokesman for the Poles in London. Poland, first caught in the mangle of the Russian advance and German retreat and then in the mangle of the German advance and Russian retreat, probably has suffered as greatly as any country of Europe, not including Belgium or Serbia. A million and

a half of her sons have been enrolled as belligerents 900,000 in the Russian armies and 600,000 in the German and Austrian armies.

But Poland's position in present Weltpolitik is that of desperate neutrality. Both Germany and Russia have promised her much. Poland wants to cash one of those promises. Of the two, Russia offers the more – a complete independence. But there is this drawback, Dr. Litwinski explained. Russia is promising independence to territory occupied by German troops.

And there is more or less of a string attached to Germany's proposal which is a completely reunited Poland with its own government, under the wing of the German Empire somewhat like the position of Bavaria. The string is the unrelenting emphasis on the suggestion that Poland raise an army of her own against Russia.

"A reunited Poland would be a great betterment of our before-the-war situation," said Dr. Litwinski, "but what we want, of course, is both a reunited and an independent country. We have been immensely encouraged by the proclamation of the new Russian government, though previous Russian assurances naturally did not impress us very much."

"Do you consider that President Wilson's mention of Poland in his discussion of possible peace terms has had effect?"

"Oh, colossal!" echoed Dr. George de Swietochowski. "Colossal, colossal" repeated the other Poles in the room.

"It was this way," said Dr. Swietochowski. "There's been a lot of generalizing about small nations and there's been some mention of Belgium and Serbia, but beyond that nobody has ever gone. The case of Poland has been handled very gingerly. There has been the fear, perhaps, that it might be necessary to do a lot of compromising when it came to settle Poland's case. President Wilson left no room for doubt, so far as he was concerned; he declared it should be a reunited autonomous, independent Poland! Now we know where we've got one real friend."

"Suppose it becomes an independent Poland, will it be a republic or a monarchy?"

"That is uncertain. Hitherto the Poles have had in mind a new Kingdom of Poland. But monarchies seem to be going out."

"If our independence comes through Russia, where the democratic ideal has taken a real hold, undoubtedly the disposition would be to make Poland a republic. If through Germany, limited monarch would seem most likely – unless there is a decided change in Germany in the meantime."

June 2, 1917, p. 3 – "Poles Eager to Desert from German Army"

A Canadian soldier, well-known in many sections of the United States, to-day told of the eagerness of Poles to desert the Germans and fight against the Kaiser.

"I was out in a sap one night when three Poles stumbled into the trench, threw up their hands and whispered 'kamerade'. They belonged to the 34th Polish regiment, removed from the eastern front because they dogged it against the Russians. They were placed in the Bavarian army corps and frightfully abused. In bitter cold weather their clothing was thin and their shoes leaky. Word was sent back to their comrades, that the British would not shoot deserters coming in over a certain frontage. Next night a dozen Poles climbed over and surrendered, on one company alone. Thereafter the same Canadian company received 12 more, and on the rest of the battalion line the number was proportionate.

June 19, 1917, p.1 - "Formal Break by Poles with Austrian Government Precipitates Acute Crisis"

Affairs in Austria have reached an acute crisis through a formal break by the Poles with the government, according to despatches received here today via Switzerland. Fall of the ministry and possibly even more far-reaching results may come, it was reported.

One despatch described a tumultuous scene in the Vienna Reicharat when a Polish deputy openly denounced Germany for mistreatment of Poles, charging that hundreds had been executed.

The Poles have formally announced that they will not deal with the present cabinet.

"...the Polish Council was formed in 1917 in Toronto. It transferred to the Rectory of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in St. Catharines, thought to be a suitable location because of the thousands of Polish soldiers from the United States then undergoing military training in Niagara-on-the-Lake."¹²

¹² John N. Jackson and Sheila M. Wilson, *St. Catharines: Canada's Canal City* (The St. Catharines Standard, 1992), 183

September 6, 1917, p.1 – “Drop Polish Kingdom”

Zurich, Sept.6 – The Central Powers have abandoned their project for a Polish Kingdom, wireless dispatches received here from Vienna asserted. The ‘immediate’ reason, it was stated, was failure to raise a Polish army.

In place of the kingdom, the Germans propose now to annex parts of Russian Poland, necessary to ‘rectify the strategic frontier and the Austrian will annex the remainder. Emperor Carl of Austria will proclaim himself king of a new section, the dual monarchy by this acquisition becoming a triple monarchy.

Under such an arrangement, it was declared all Poles would immediately become liable to military service.

September 7, 1917, “Poland will be Divided.”

Austria will take nine-tenths and Emperor will be King.

Zurich, Switzerland, Sept.7 – According to information received here from Vienna, the Central Powers have decided to carry out the partition of Poland. Germany will annex such parts of Russian Poland as she needs ‘to rectify her strategic frontier,’ amounting to one-tenth of the territory. Austria will annex the remaining nine-tenths, and Emperor Charles will promulgate a decree uniting Russian Poland with Galicia, and proclaiming the whole territory to be the United Kingdom of Poland, with himself as King.

The new Hapsburg Poland will have its own Parliament, but its foreign policy, army and finances will be controlled by Austria. The immediate effect will be to make the Poles liable to military service in the Austrian army.

September 11, 1917, p.3 – “Chicago Poles Pledge Help”

Chicago, Ill., Sept. 11 – A telegram was sent to President Poincare yesterday pledging the support of 400,000 Poles in Chicago in the effort to free Poland.

Henry Frankulin Bonillon, head of the French commission, told a mass meeting of Poles that an array of Poles was now being formed in France, which will operate independently of the French army. Its purpose will be to achieve the freedom of Poland.



Polish Recruiting Station, Chicago¹³

September 22, 1917, p.2 – St. Mary’s Polish Church, Niagara Street

On Sunday, Monday and Tuesday, a Forty Hours Devotional service will be held in St. Mary’s Polish Church Niagara Street, when many priests will be present from Pittsburgh, Erie, Buffalo and other cities. Dean Morris will officiate at vespers on Tuesday evening.

¹³ Photo from *Czyn Zbrojny Wychodstwa Polskiego w Ameryce* (Stowarzyszenie Weteranow Armii Polskiej w Ameryce, 1957), p.436

[Henry Radecki reports that as soon as the creation of a Polish Army was announced thousands of Polish Americans wanted to volunteer and wanted to join the training camp in Niagara. "Canadian immigration authorities were unwilling to admit many of them to Canada. Those who originated in the Russian part of partitioned Poland were accepted as allies – Russia and Canada were on the same side of the conflict. Those without American citizenship who came from Austrian or German parts of partitioned Poland, however, were defined as enemy aliens, subjects of countries with which Canada was at war at the time." The Polish National Council "after a quick consultation with the Canadian government representatives, members of the Council's Toronto office established a Bureau at the Polish parish office in St. Catharines. It was directed by Rev. J.T. Chodkiewicz and staffed by five Polish-American priests: Revs. Sperski, Tarasiuk, Staszkiwicz, Piatkiewicz and Tarnowski."¹⁴ They issued Polish 'passports' to those deemed to be Polish and on that basis were granted Canadian entrance visas. From 1917-1918, 443 visas were issued. The consular services ended in 1920.]

September 24, 1917, p. 2

Army engineers are very busy at Camp Niagara, Niagara-on-the-Lake, today in preparing for the arrival of a large number of Polish soldiers from the United States. These men have been recruited in the States and will be trained at Camp Niagara by French officers under supervision of the French Government. Preparations this morning consisted of the pitching of tents, stringing of electric wires and other details in connection with camp life. It is expected that 40,000 Polish soldiers will pass through this camp on their way to France to fight in the great struggle for the freedom of the world.

September 25, 1917, p.7

Major J.A. McGiffen, command engineer of the military division and other officers were here on Sunday and yesterday for the purpose of making arrangements for a winter training camp and were busy laying out the grounds all day yesterday. With the officers came the advance guard of an engineer detachment, the remainder of which came in yesterday and so did a party of the Army Medical Corps with a view to opening up a branch hospital. The Engineers are busy connecting up the camp, water and light services with the town's with a view to supplying the camp with both while Army Transport and Ordnance men are bringing in equipment and supplies, including 1200 tents in which the men will be housed for the present. We understand that the troops who will be trained here for overseas services are the "Polish Cadets" who are now at Halifax and who arrive at Niagara Camp on Thursday. Their officers were trained at Camp Borden during the summer. Canadian officers recently returned from the front, will be sent here for instruction purposes and it is said the camp will be kept here all winter, though this report could not be verified at the time of writing. The presence of 5000 or more of these troops in Niagara will be a big thing for the town and vicinity as it will mean an increase in the business that is done.



¹⁴ Henry Radecki, *The History of the Polish Community in St. Catharines* (Project History, 2002), 67



Polish Camp Panorama – Photos: Niagara Historical Society & Museum

September 26, 1917, p.7

Sergeant Barrow, of the Army Medical Corps, spent the last few days in camp, making arrangements for opening the camp hospital.

J.C. Hamra of Toronto was in town yesterday and may return later to open a stand on Picton Street during camp.

Captain Bartholomy of the Engineer Corps has been in town for several days looking after matters in connection with the coming camp for which large quantities of supplies of all kinds are arriving daily by boat and train.

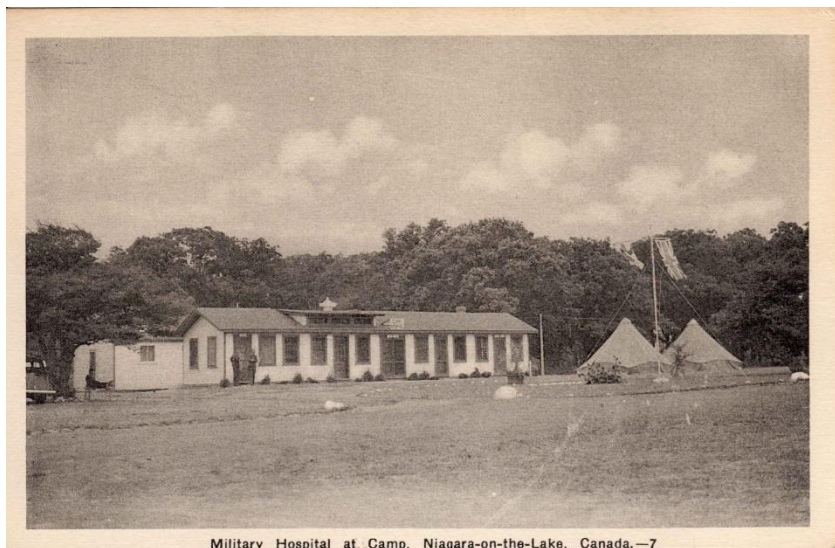
The coming of the military camp will very likely put an end to the Wednesday half-holiday for the present, though as yet nothing has been settled regarding it.

A.J. Armstrong & Son are busy just now with work in connection with the water services at the camp which work they have ably attended to for a number of years.

The opening of a camp at this place has caused those who closed up their restaurants, ice-cream parlors, etc., last week because of lack of business, to re-open them with a fresh stock of goods and with the usual summer staff in attendance while those whose stands etc., that were not opened at all this summer, will probably be opened now as some business is expected to develop. Just how long this camp will last is not definitely known but, as preparations are being made for the mobilization of 10,000 troops and as much building is to be done it is thought that the military authorities may contemplate a winter camp. The troops could be just as comfortably housed here in cold weather as in other places and they would have plenty of space for training and free of the temptations to distract their attention that prevail to a certain extent in larger places.

Mayor McClelland has issued the usual proclamation calling on owners of horses and cows to keep them off the camp grounds during the time the troops are in training here, this being done by special request of the military authorities. As people are delighted with the opening of the camp, no doubt those to whom the appeal is addressed will comply with it at once.

A special meeting of the Council was held on Monday evening at which Mayor McClelland, Reeve Masters and Councillors Sherlock, Inksater, May and Macphee were present. The meeting was called to consider a letter received that day from Major R. McGiffin of the Divisional Engineer in which he asked the town to supply electric light and water for a camp, not exceeding ten thousand men, for a time, the said camp to be ready for occupancy by Oct. 15th. An early reply was requested. After considering the letter it was moved by Councillors Inksater and Macphee "That the request of the Militia Department for water and light to be used at the camp grounds be granted under the usual conditions." Carried unanimously. Mayor McClelland reported having, in response to a request from the military authorities, issued a proclamation prohibiting horses and cows running at large on the camp grounds. Quite an animated discussion on the cattle question took place between some of the Councillors following the opinion expressed by one that it might be well to make this prohibition a permanent one as cattle on the streets were a nuisance to the people and a detriment to the town.



Military Hospital at Camp, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Canada.—7

**Camp Hospital, Niagara Camp
Photo: Niagara Historical
Society & Museum**

September 27, 1917, p. 5

The wisdom of our town authorities in improving the main roads of the town was never better appreciated than it is just now, when such heavy traffic is passing over them. Immense motor trucks have been brought here by the Army Service Corps to transfer military stores from the wharf to the camp grounds and the loads they draw are very heavy. Were the roads in the old condition, mud, ridges and ruts about a foot deep everywhere, the work would have been exceedingly difficult, but now, with good macadamized roads, there is no difficulty of this kind and the work proceeds as it should. There are all kinds of supplies arriving and the men in charge of the transport are busy all the time. Camp stoves, tents, mattresses, blankets, rubber sheets, and all kinds of necessary things for the use, comfort and training of the soldiers are coming in and it looks as if the camp will be here for some time. A trench digger arrived on Tuesday and was taken out to the Mississauga Common where some of the trenches built last year still remain, while the rifle ranges, targets etc., are all to be put in order at once. The camp will be composed of Polish Americans, who have been recruited in the United States. The officers were trained at Camp Borden this summer by request of the U.S. Government and are ready to go to work as soon as the camp opens. The advance guards arrive today and the main body of troops later in the week. It is said that the U.S. Government could find no suitable place for the training of these troops and finally prevailed on the Canadian Government to loan Niagara Camp where everything in the way of conveniences and equipment are ready for use.

September 27, 1917, p.12 – Camp to open October 1, 1917

Thomas Hart has returned from Youngstown and is busy preparing his restaurant, etc., on Picton Street for re-opening in view of the arrival of a camp at this place.

In the report of the recent council meeting which appeared in Wednesday night's paper, a printers' error made it appear that the camp at this place would not open till October 15th. The camp will open next Monday, October 1st, when most of the troops will be ready to begin training. Advance guards are constantly arriving, also large quantities of supplies, equipment of every kind and the work of preparation is being pushed forward as expeditiously as possible so as to have everything ready when the main body of the troops come in. A trench digger, which arrived a few days ago, is being used for digging sewers on the Fort George Common and is making this work doubly easy for those in charge. Some say the camp will be here till November 8th only but nothing official has been made known. The townspeople are pleased at the prospect of a camp late in the season though it be, and will do what they can to make things pleasant for the men while they are here.

The coming of the camp has caused the officials of the Canadian Steamship Lines to change their plans and it is expected that the present schedule or one equally good will be continued till further notice and also to continue the Sunday service for a few weeks longer.



**Lieutenant-Colonel Arthur D'Orr LePan
Commandant
Polish Army Camp**

September 28, 1917, p.1 “Col LePan and Staff to Niagara Camp”

Camp Borden, Sept.28 – Lieut.-Col. LePan and the staff of the School of Infantry, with some 150 probationers, entrained last evening for Niagara-on-the-Lake in connection with the military camp being established there. The N.C.O.'s class of the School of Infantry, who are at present on two week leave of absence, return to Camp Borden on Monday, October 1, where they will remain until the end of the week, when they will leave by train for Toronto, and take up their quarters in the North Residence of Toronto. Major Bramfitt will carry on as Officer Commanding with Lieut. C.B. Ferris and Lieut. Witherspoon, of the 305th Machine Gun Depot as acting Quartermaster, until such time as Lieut-Col. LePan and his staff return from Niagara to Toronto.

September 28, 1917, p.5 “Finds he fought his Own Countrymen”

Nick Kyle learns in Court that he mistook Russian Poles for Germans – More Men are examined
Niagara Falls, Sept.28. – Nick Kyle, 23 years old, who says he was born in Russia, was much surprised in police court yesterday morning when he learned that the “five Germans” whom he valiantly attacked in front of a north-end saloon last Tuesday night were Russian Poles, and that two of them went with the city's second draft contingent Wednesday morning. Kyle was sentenced to four months in the Erie county penitentiary by Judge Piper.

Frank Kargrhzysnki, one of the ‘Germans’ testified that Kyle drew a gun and fired it. Kyle denied the charge and declared that ‘the Germans’ were ‘trying to fix him’. He said that he heard the men say the Russians were crazy and that he hit one of them, whereupon the others hit him, and he hit the ground. It was testified that several weeks ago, Kyle had a quarrel with his father in which his progenitor hit him over the head with a box, and he broke down a door.

September 29, 1917, p.2 – “Coming Event at Old Niagara”

An event that promises much in the way of enjoyment will be the ball that will be held in the Town's pretty ball room in the Court House on Monday evening next, October 8th, under the patronage of Lieut. Colonel LePan, the Officer Commanding, and Staff of Camp Niagara and a number of prominent citizens of the town and other places. In view of the four-fold object for which the event is being given there is no doubt it will be the great success that its promoters anticipate. The purpose is 1st to raise funds with which to purchase comforts for the camp hospital which is now open and in need of such comforts to which the proceeds of the ball will be developed. 2nd, to introduce the officers of the new camp. 3rd, to bring the officers of the American and Canadian Expeditionary forces together and promote mutual fellowship. 4th, to bid the summer residents who are leaving Niagara shortly “au revoir”...The tickets will be \$1.00 for gentlemen and 50 cents for ladies.

The list of patrons and patronesses is a representative one and includes Lieut.-Col LePan and Staff of Camp Niagara...

September 29, 1917, p.5 – Lieut.-Col. LePan arrives

The management is making arrangements for opening this theatre [Royal George] earlier in the evening during the time the camp is here for the benefit of the soldiers who must be in camp at 8:45 at night.

Lieut.-Col. LePan and the staff of the School of Infantry together with 150 probationers have arrived at Camp Niagara from Camp Borden and will take charge of the training of the Polish-American troops, 15 car loads of whom arrived here yesterday morning. The Camp ground is being covered in the centre, where it is most sheltered, with tents, leaving plenty of space on either side for drill and tactical training. The balance of troops will arrive tomorrow and Monday and it is expected that active training will be begun at once.

October 3, 1917, p.3

Prince Poniatowski is arriving at Niagara Camp shortly to supervise the training of the Polish Americans who are destined for service in France very soon.

Mr. G.E. Frizzell of Lewiston, N.Y. was in town yesterday in search of a suitable place in which to resume business but had great difficulty in doing so. His former place, the Doyle Hotel, has been rented to one of St. Catharines Polish citizens who is now in possession. The camp has brought a number of former business men back to town and has also attracted numerous strangers, all desirous of opening business for a limited time. As the town imposes a transient trader's license fee on all temporary businesses, the more that opens up means a larger revenue of this kind. This transient traders fee has been imposed as a measure of justice to the permanent business folk who contribute to the town's revenue all the year round.

Mr. and Mrs. George F. Rand gave a charming tea at 'Randwood' (176 John Street) on Sunday afternoon, when among the guests were **Lieut.-Col. LePan**, Officer commanding Niagara camp, **Major Young**¹⁵, **Major McGiffin** and **Captain Bartholmy**, R.C.E. and other officers and staff.



Major C.R. Young, Niagara Camp Adjutant

¹⁵ Clarence Richard Young (1879-1964)

October 4, 1917, p.1 – “Polish Recruits are arriving at Old Niagara”

About 600 members of the Polish Falcon societies of Pennsylvania have arrived at the military training camp at Niagara-on-the-Lake. They are stalwart, serious faced young men, and they are eager to reach the camp.

They were in charge of a former member of the general staff of the Austrian army, who said he would not divulge his name because “if they knew they would hang me.” He said he served thirteen years as an officer in the army of the old emperor. He said the young men are training for commission in any army that would accept them. The money – he spread his hands – he did not know whether the Polish National Alliance or the British government was footing the training camp bills.

One young man, more communicative than his somber-eyed companions, said the allies were fighting the cause of his country and the Poles were anxious to have their part in the struggle. He said when the war is over and Poland is granted autonomy, the young men will rally to her standard from all the armies of the allies and form the nucleus of a Polish army, which Poland has not had since the last partition of the old empire.

October 4, 1917, p.5 – Hotels, Businesses to stay open because of Camp; Military Ball

The coming of the camp has deferred the closing up of our two remaining hotels for the winter season as both had intended and has been the reason for re-opening one that has been closed during what was usually the busiest season. The Niagara Hotel has a goodly number of guests already, so has the Lake View and both expect the numbers to be increased as soon as the camp is in full swing which will be before the end of the week.

Ruffino’s shoe shine parlors on Queen Street have also been re-opened and a good business is being done while both barber shops on Queen Street have increased their staff with a view to keeping up their business. The same satisfactory conditions are noticed in the businesses of our local tailors, both of whom expect to add to their working staffs in order to keep up with their orders. The town authorities are on the alert for transient traders and will enforce the law regarding payment of a license fee in order to protect those who are permanently located here.

Members of the military ball committee are very busy these days with their preparations for Monday evening’s event...The commandant at Camp Niagara and his staff, including **Prince Poniatowski**, will be present and also many of the officers from the camp.

October 6, 1917, p. 5

The Toronto Star seems quite at sea regarding the camp at this place. On Thursday it carefully said that ‘it is reported that about 5000 Polish-American troops are arriving at Niagara camp for training soon but up to noon today the report could not be confirmed’. We are surprised that this usually up-to-date paper is so behind the times; also that it is having such difficulty confirming a report that everyone knows is true. We have an excellent telegraphic service here, also a long distance telephone, two or three boats, trains and trolleys every day, from any of which authentic information could be gleaned. But, as the Star and all the other Toronto papers were agreed early in the Spring that the Niagara camp grounds were unfit for use and that Camp Borden was the only camp worthwhile on earth, we suppose they do not like to admit that after all, the most historic camp in the country ‘is’ fit for use and that men can be trained for overseas work just as well here as they ever were. The Star will wake up to these facts before long and so will the other papers that have belittled Niagara camp so continually for the past two years. The men who are arriving here for training are a fine, well set up body of men who will do good work for the Entente cause in the near future.



Steamer Modjeska

October 9, 1917, p.5 – Steamer Modjeska

The steamer Cayuga will be taken off the Niagara-Toronto route today and will be replaced by the steamer Modjeska which may run till the end of the month. The latter will not ply to Lewiston and she is not on the American register...

October 10, 1917, p.5

Prince Poniatowski and other leading Polish officers from Niagara Camp have been away for several days on a trip to Ottawa, where they have been in conference with officials of the Militia Department regarding the conduct of the camp, one of which has to do with the advisability of continuing the camp at this place during the winter. It is thought that the men can be housed here as completely as in any other place and that they can be as well trained here during the winter months as elsewhere. The result of the conference will be made known when the Prince and his aides return.

October 12, 1917, p.10 – Special Train

A special train came in yesterday bringing 150 Polish-Americans from Pennsylvania points to Camp Niagara to join their compatriots in training for service overseas.

October 15, 1917

Wreyford & Co., military tailors, have arrived from Toronto, and have established themselves in Mrs. Bottomley's building for the camp period.

Miss Fizette's cottage has been rented for a time being by an officer connected with the camp.

Mr. Wagner of Toronto has re-opened his pool room in the Hart block and is being well patronized by the soldiers from the camp.

Prince Poniatowski has arrived back at Niagara Camp from Ottawa where he has been in conference with the Military Authorities with a view to keeping the camp open all winter. Since his return it is reported that his mission was successful and that plans are already underway for ensuring the comfort and convenience of the men in the cold weather. It is said that buildings will be put up shortly to be used as sleeping quarters etc., that permanent sewers, water services etc., will be put in and other arrangements made of a permanent nature. No confirmation of these reports was obtainable yesterday but definite news will no doubt be available shortly. The Prince is a young man of pleasing appearance, who wears the 'Croix de Guerre' of the French Government on a uniform of French blue and two small gold stripes on his left sleeve which shows that he has been twice wounded while 'on active service' with the French army. He is assisted in his work at the camp by Polish or French officers who have also been doing good service on the firing line. More troops came into the camp on Thursday and still more yesterday and as a result the camp is being enlarged and will soon be of good size. It is expected that 6000 men will be here at once, though as the men prove fit they will be drafted eastward at intervals, leaving the recruits to fill their places.

More Polish-American recruits came in from the States on Saturday in special coaches attached to the regular train. The men arriving now are in civilian clothes but will be outfitted as soon as possible with khaki uniforms. They are fine, well set up specimens who promise to give a good account of themselves when they line up against 'Heinie' on the battlefield later on and are buckling down to the work of training with a determination that is a credit to their patriotism.

October 16, 1917, p.3 – French Officers

A large number of Polish Falcons from the United States bound for Camp Niagara where the Polish units are being trained by French officers under the direction of the French government passed through the city about 11:30 this morning. The men attracted considerable attention as they marched from the Grand Trunk station to the N.S. and T. station where they immediately boarded the Niagara-on-the-Lake cars, which were in readiness for them.

Several French officers have arrived at Niagara Camp for a short stay during which they will supervise the teaching of present day methods of conducting war. There are a number of French officers at the camp across the river, and on Sunday visits were exchanged by those at Niagara and Camp Niagara.

As a result of yesterday's storm on the lake the Modjeska maintained her schedule with great difficulty.

Quite a number of our cattle owners who disregarded the request of the military authorities to keep their cows off the military reserve were obliged to pay for their neglect yesterday as owing to the activity of the soldiery in our midst, a fine herd was gathered in off the Fort George and Mississauga Commons and rushed to the pound yard on Sunday afternoon where they remained till the said cows were claimed and the fees paid...The camp means a great deal to the town as a whole and the people owning cattle should be willing to shut them up for the time the camp is here.

October 17, 1918, p.3 – “To Berlin to Free Poland”

Four car loads of Polish-Americans for the camp came in over the M.C.R. yesterday and several car loads came in also by trolley. The men were in ‘civies’ with a red and white arm band on the left arm and carried large Polish-American flags and had big signs with them on which “Volunteers for the Polish army” was inscribed. At the rate at which recruits are arriving, the 10,000 mark will be reached very soon.

More Polish-American recruits are arriving from the United States every day and the camp grows larger. It seems to be settled that the camp will be maintained here for some time, possibly all winter, but still no definite information is obtainable. The men are preparing themselves for a struggle with the Kaiser’s troops and are working hard towards that end. A big Polish flag (a dark maroon color with a silver grey eagle in one corner) hangs in a conspicuous place near the camp headquarters and under it is a big sign bearing the words: “To Berlin to free Poland,” which proves that the men mean business. It is surmised that the troops now training at Camp Niagara will form part of a Polish Expeditionary army, which is being organized in France at the present time and which will be conducted along the same lines as the Canadian, American and Australian armies. This force is to be entirely independent of any other army; all its officers and men will be of Polish birth or descent. Polish citizens, who have wandered abroad in search of freedom they did not enjoy at home, will be welcomed to its ranks. The nucleus of the new army is composed of Poles who served in the French army since the war began: all grades of society will be represented among its volunteers, nobles will fight beside artisans, professional men beside laborers and boys of 18 beside gray-haired men of sixty. Proof of this may be found in the troops at Niagara Camp, were one disposed or allowed to seek proof there.

The presence of so many troops in camp at this place is evidenced by the increased congregations at all churches on Sunday. All of them being very largely attended. This was especially the case with St. Vincent de Paul’s church (built 1834) and as a result the Rev. Father Sweeney was obliged to make use of the big building known as the Park Theatre, in which to hold the first celebration of Mass, for the benefit of the men from the camp, as his church was not large enough. Six hundred men from the camp attended the first celebration of Mass and took part in the sacred service, with deep earnestness. The previous Sunday, St. Vincent de Paul’s was filled to its capacity at both celebrations of the mass and, as the camp was so much larger and the Chaplains had not yet arrived, Father Sweeney very wisely made arrangement for the men’s accommodation. The building that was loaned seats 1,000 people and was the only one available that was large enough for the purpose. Father Sweeney expects the Chaplains will arrive for duty at the camp sometime this week and so relieve him from so much extra duty, though it is a duty he feels it a privilege to fulfill, but if necessary the same arrangements will be made use of for next Sunday.



**Polish Army Band
Photo: Niagara
Historical Society &
Museum**

October 18, 1917, p. 5 – “Polish American Army in Canadian Camp on Common at Niagara-on-the-Lake”

There are 1100 Men and 300 Officers in Training at Historic Camp to-Day – Winter Hats Have Been Ordered

Camp Niagara: Niagara-on-the-Lake presents a very busy scene these days as detachments of the Polish American army are making their final preparations for their trip to France to fight with the French legions against the Germans in their struggle for a free Poland.

The camp situated as it is just above the lake, is a most delightful spot and the Polish men are highly appreciative of the beauty of the surroundings. Only a short distance from the Lake the mess tents and field kitchens are located. Everything is clean in and about the camp and the cook houses are also kept in sanitary and orderly conditions. South of this section of the camp the parade grounds and men's tents are situated and to the east the Y.M.C.A. and lecture tents. The hospital is located at the extreme north end of the camp and the officers' quarters to the west of the hospital.

Nearly 2000 Men

At an early hour Wednesday morning the Polish army, numbering about 1100 men and 300 officers were drilling in the sunshine, and as they drilled one could not help but notice the splendid types of men and the eagerness with which they went through the drills. The main road through Niagara divides the camp into two sections, the north section, the fields, presented a mass of moving humanity as did also the south, but there was a difference in the class of men drilling. The casual observer would notice that the men on the south road were attired in red coats and gray trousers while those on the north side were clad in American or Canadian khaki uniforms, or with only their civilian clothes. It was later gathered that the men in the red coats were taking an officers' training course and the coats were to distinguish them from the other soldiers. The battalion band was also on the parade ground during the morning and was practising while on the march.

The men in camp will not remain for any lengthy period but move out and are sent on their way to France to make way for others. It is expected that those in camp will soon be on their way across the waters, having been trained in the States, to be drilled again in France before taking part in the big scrap. The men arrive in lots of a hundred or more during all hours of the day or night. A large number landed in camp on Monday and Tuesday and the real work of drilling has only begun. The camp, it is expected, will be continued throughout the winter season, and plans have been made for the securing of a shipment of huts for housing of the soldiers of which 40,000 in all will pass through the camp.

The Polish army or as they term themselves “The Polish American Army for France, through Berlin, for a Free Poland,” have been recruited throughout the United States. They are a happy lot of men and seem to enjoy their training, smiling as they go through the various drills under command of Polish officers. The camp is under the direction of Lt.-Col. LePan, a French officer and the senior officers are all English speaking. One interesting member of the camp is a Polish prince who takes a leading part in the activities of his countrymen. The prince is clad in the uniform of a French officer; he is highly respected and holds a warm spot in the hearts of his Polish men.

The **Y.M.C.A.** began their social events on Sunday last with a sacred concert and each night during the week a social is held. Movies are shown and musical numbers are given; in all the men are shown a good time. There is also a canteen and writing room in connection with the ‘Y’ and the latter is usually occupied by young men writing their experiences to their friends.

Police duty is performed by mounted men of R.C.D. and men of the C.A.S.C. are engaged in work about the camp. Large auto trucks are utilized for the conveyance of goods and these are moving quickly in an endeavor to complete the equipment of the camp.

The men of Polish nationality are to be congratulated upon the stand they have taken in volunteering their services for overseas; their forces have been augmented by Poles in Canada and altogether the men make a formidable unit and will undoubtedly give a good account of themselves when they face the Germans; they will be fighting for civilization, for the freedom of their beloved country and with these two goals in view the Polish-American army will surely be victorious.



Armistice Parade - Photo: Niagara Historical Society & Museum



Armistice Parade, Burning the Kaiser in Effigy - Photo: Collection of Stan Skrzyszewski

October 19, 1917, p.8 – “Autonomous Polish Army”

The following is the first of a series of articles on the organization of a new Polish army for the European war, a large number of whom will be trained at Niagara-on-the-Lake:

By Henry Wood, (United Press Staff Correspondent)

Paris, Oct. 20 – An autonomous Polish army fighting on the western front for the liberty of the new and independent Poland that the Allies have pledged themselves to create is now an absolute certainty.

By the time the American army will be in readiness to take its place on the battlefield, the new Polish army will probably be ready to enter the fray. It will be a definite military factor in the unbroken front

to Allied armies extending from the North Sea to Switzerland and which at that time will see Belgians, English, French, Americans, Russians and Poles fighting side by side for their common aims.

Already at the Polish camp in France, very similar to the American camp, the first Polish troops are in training. Enlistments of Poles in foreign countries have already been made to an extent to render certain that the future Polish army will number important effectives. At the Polish camp where this army will be trained, the Poles will have the same, full liberty of action in everything pertaining to their army and its administration as have the Americans in their camp.

In fact, it is intended that this Polish army which is to enter the arena fighting for the independence of its country is to serve as a sort of nucleus about which the future Polish government will be organized. It is to become at once the combative heart and center of the future Polish state.

While the new Polish army is being organized by France, in full accord with her allies, it is nevertheless of utmost interest to the United States, for it is largely from the Poles in America that the army is already recruiting its battalions, regiments and divisions.

Under the official decree of the French government authorities the organization on French soil of an independent, autonomous Polish army. Its' rank are open to three classes. First, Poles who are already serving in the French army or in armies of the other allied nations; secondly Poles who have sought refuge in various foreign countries and thirdly, Poles living in the United States, who have become naturalized American citizens are still not subject to military duty in the United States.

It is because a full agreement has been entered into with the American government permitting this recruiting of Poles that the existence of a large Polish army on the western front has become a certainty.

The officers of the new Polish have asked from the United States permission to recruit all of their countrymen who have not yet become naturalized Americans as well as those who have, but who do not come within the age limits of the American conscription laws. This accord has been fully reached, and the military mission in France is receiving the most encouraging reports from the various recruiting centres in the United States.

Chicago has already produced a great many recruits. Other American cities are doing almost as well. Polish societies, especially the famous Polish gymnastic organizations, of Argentine and Brazil, are also reporting heavy enlistments.

The new Polish army has already selected its own uniform consisting of a very light bluish coat, trousers and cap all trimmed in amaranth a sort of purplish crimson. The white eagle of the Polish nation appears on the national flag. The eagle is also to be seen on the buttons and shoulder straps.

The distinct uniform is already seen on the streets of Paris along with those of soldiers of the United States, England, Canada, Belgium, Australia and New Zealand.

The battalions now organized have already had their review and inspection. They passed before General Faurie, commander of the Fourth Legion, and following a stirring address by him replied with equally stirring cries of "Niech Zyje Polska" (Long Live Poland).

October 22, 1917, - Autonomous Polish Army for France

The following is the second of the series of articles on the new Polish army which is being organized in France, largely of Polish recruits from the United States, several thousand of which are now being trained at Niagara-on-the-Lake:

By Henry Wood, (United Press Staff Correspondent)

Paris, October 22. When the new, autonomous Polish army that is being organized in France largely of Polish recruits from the United States, Argentine and Brazil, takes its place on the western battlefield alongside of the new American army, it will have an enviable record and tradition to sustain.

Already, several thousand Polish volunteers, who have fought in the French ranks, have left behind them military glory worthy of the best pages of Polish Military history.

When the war began they enlisted in the French army with the sole idea of fighting for France and the principles for which France has ever stood. Later when Czar Nicholas announced that an independent Poland would be created the Polish volunteers in the French army, enthused with the idea that they were fighting also for an eventual independent Poland, performed deeds of heroism and bravery that won for them citations of honor from the French military chiefs and official thanks from the French Chamber and the French Senate.

The great bulk of these volunteers have now left the French army to join their own. Many of them have passed the examination for officer's commissions and all are united in a common determination to

keep the new Polish army up to the high standards set by their comrades who have fallen on the field of honor in the French ranks.

With the outbreak of the war, practically every Pole in France who could pass the military requirements enlisted in the French army. Hundreds of these were refugees and thousands were Poles who had come to France to enjoy the political freedom denied them in the native provinces.

All of those who were able to escape from Belgium fled to France and enlisted while hundreds of others came from Costa Rica, Brazil, Argentine, the United States and almost every country to which Poles had fled from their home provinces.

Of these Poles, fighting on the western front, a future independent Poland, the greater part were from the three portions of Poland, the Duchy of Posen and Silesia.

Austrian Poland contributed the next largest number while Russian Poland was well represented.

Unfortunately, French military regulations did not now make it possible to organize them into distinctive Polish battalions. That this handful of Poles scattered through the French army was fighting really for Poland may be surmised from the following official citation on December 1, 1914, before the French Armies of one of the Polish flag bearers, "**Ladislav Szuysky [Wladyslaw Szujski], legionary of the first class, Polish patriot, killed by the enemy while gloriously planting on a German trench, the flag of re-born Poland.**"

In the offensive north of Arras on May 9, 1915, the Polish companies, because of the military valor they had demonstrated, were chosen by Colonel Pain, commanding the brigade, to lead the attack. The choice was hailed with delight by the Poles themselves and when the order was given to leap to the assault, they captured in quick succession three lines of German trenches and placed themselves solidly in front of the fourth Colonel Pain was killed leading the men to the attack while practically every French officer was either killed or wounded. The Poles themselves lost heavily but their heroism was so great that on the following day the general commanding the army corps ordered them out of the ranks and commanded a review of the French troops in their honor.

So great has been not only the enthusiasm but the intelligence and skill of the Polish volunteers that many of them in a few months of service have passed all the examinations from simple soldier to the rank of full lieutenant.

It is these veterans of three years fighting in France who not only form the first battalions of the new autonomous Polish army but who are serving as instructors for the thousands of volunteer recruits, now coming from the United States, Brazil, Argentine, Mexico and in fact almost every country in the world.

October 24, 1917, p.3 – 500 Polish-American Recruits

The camp has again increased by the arrival of 500 Polish-American recruits from Chicago and 250 from Pittsburgh who came in yesterday while more are expected at the end of the week. The building formerly used by the Paymaster's staff in the permanent group, has been fitted up as a hospital where there is a ward, with 60 beds, an operating room, a dispensary and isolation ward and a place for treating emergency cases. A captain is in charge of the hospital and has a fine staff picked from the A.M.C. to assist him. It is expected that Nursing Sisters will be added to the hospital staff later, if the camp remains here during the winter, but of this more will be known later. Most of the troops are in civilian clothes when they arrive and for a day or so afterwards present rather an odd appearance with possibly a military cap or Stetson hat or a military overcoat with a broad red band on the left arm as the sole evidence that the wearer will be in khaki shortly and part of the Polish Expeditionary Army: but all this is changed as soon as possible and the men look quite fit when the complete uniform has been put on and a few days training has been gone through. Yesterday was not a pleasant one for the men in camp, owing to the cold rain, but they were cheerful as usual and seemed disposed to "pack their troubles in the old kit bag and smile, smile, smile.

October 25, 1917, p. 5 – Autonomous Polish Army for France, Article IV by Henry Wood, United Press Staff Correspondence

Paris, October 24 – The new, autonomous Polish army that is being organized in France to fight on the western front for the eventual freedom of an independent Poland has just been augmented by the enlistment of Poles of the Russian brigade that for a year and a half past have been fighting on the French front.

While the new Polish army will be composed largely of Polish recruits from the United States, the enlistment of veterans of both the Russian and French front is considered of value.

In conjunction with the Polish volunteers who served during the first three years of the war in the French ranks and who now form the first troops of the autonomous Polish army, these picked, trained and experienced troops give the young Polish army a solid nucleus that is expected to have a great influence in the organization of the new army. These Russian and Polish veterans, with three years of actual warfare behind them, will be used largely in drilling the new recruits.

The enlistment in the new Polish army of these contingents from the Russian brigade in France was done with the full permission and sanction of the new Russian provisional government. All Russians of Polish origin or extraction were allowed their own choice of either the Polish or Russian army for future service.

The voyage of these new Russian volunteers across France to the Polish army where the new army is being organized on an independent, autonomous basis was a sort of triumphal procession marked by an incident of most striking interest. The locomotive drawing the and flew the crimson and white flag of reborn Poland, although the soldiers filling the cars wore the Russian in which they had come to France together with the medals conferred upon them by the Czar, they chattered in Polish and Polish colors were pinned on their breasts.

At every station at which the train stopped enthusiastic crowds greeted them. Then as the train came into a large station in the central part of France, strange cries were heard from the opposite track of the railway. Twenty German prisoners all from Posen who were employed in unloading freight cars yelled with surprise as they beheld the train with the White Eagle of Poland and the Polish national colors.

Their surprise turned into bewilderment, as in answer to their cries, there popped out of the windows of every car the heads of Russian soldiers, wearing the caps of the Russian army yet trimmed without exception with the Polish colors. News of the formation of the new autonomous Polish army was given, and to a man the Polish-German prisoners threw down their working utensils and begged to be allowed to join their brothers in arm, and for the independence of Poland.

It was only with the utmost difficulty that they were made to understand that under the international laws of war, they, as prisoners, would not be allowed to take on arms on French soil.

October 25, 1917, p. 3

More Polish-American recruits have arrived from Pennsylvania and other parts of the United States at Camp Niagara within the past few days and as a result the Expeditionary Army is larger than before. It seems to be settled that this camp will be kept open all winter as yesterday cars of lumber arrived and are on a camp siding for unloading while the previous day the Modjeska brought over camp kitchens as well as hospital supplies and equipment with which to equip the hospital that has been opened in one of the permanent buildings in the old camp compound. Captain Secord of the Engineer Corps was here last Friday for a conference with Col. Bob Low's aides and since then plans for a permanent camp have been taking shape, of which more will be known shortly.

October 25, 1917, p. 7

Several of the smaller cottages have been rented by officers from the camp and Y.M.C.A. officials as they expect to be here all winter and wish to bring their families while others are planning to do likewise if suitable places can be procured. There are plenty of cottages but few of them are provided with heating facilities as they are designed for summer use only.

A.R. De Conza has added a quick lunch counter to his fruit store and is doing a very good business with the soldiers.

Members of the Divisional Engineering staff have been at Niagara camp in the early part of the week laying out the site for buildings on which work is to begin immediately. The buildings are to be frame two-storied affairs with accommodation for a goodly number of men in each and will be made as comfortable as possible for the winter months as it is definitely settled that the camp will be kept open for mobilization and preliminary training purposes all winter; they will be located near John street where there is the most shelter from winter storms. It is said that from 4000 to 5000 men will be here continuously as when the draft leaves for an eastern point, another will arrive to replace it. It is expected that the town will be asked to supply water and light free for the use of the camp and as it is a big thing for the business of the town and vicinity, no doubt this request will be readily granted.

In spite of the villainous storm that prevailed on the lake, the steamer Modjeska made the trip from Toronto yesterday and got here on schedule time too.

October 27, 1917, p. 6

General Logie was at Niagara Camp on Thursday on official business and while there reviewed the troops, who are already showing the effects of their short training.

Captain Gibson Eccles of the A.M.C. was also at the camp on Thursday on official business.

The military authorities by permission of the High School trustees have taken over the gymnasium for the use of the soldiers, a number of whom are billeted there till more comfortable quarters can be procured.

The camp at this place can boast of a fine band already, its music being heard for the first time at a concert given by the Y.M.C.A. on Tuesday night. The instruments were a gift to the Polish Expeditionary Army from friends in the United States and the band will be a great addition to the camp routine.

More recruits for the camp came in by the noon train yesterday, all of them being fine, strapping specimens who look as if they'll polish Fritz off in good style when the time comes. Yesterday's fine weather was fully appreciated by the soldiers, who spent most of the day drilling on the main camp ground.

The hurricane which struck this place during the storm of Wednesday night had a most disastrous effect on the soldiers in camp and as a result most of them, instead of sleeping, passed the night steering clear of the flood, with which their tents were invaded. On Thursday, realizing that the men would have to be provided with more comfortable quarters, **Colonel LePan**, the commanding officer, enlisted the assistance of the city fathers, who soon busied themselves finding places for use as billets. For this purpose they have secured the use of the Western Home, the building formerly known as the Delhi factory, the fire hall, the two town halls, the Workmen's Hall, the Salvation Army Hall, and several other places, in which the men can be more comfortably housed till the new bunk houses are ready on the camp ground.



Niagara Central Ry. Cars leaving Simcoe Park
Niagara-on-the-Lake, Canada.

**Trolleys, Niagara-on-the-Lake
Photo: Niagara Historical
Society & Museum**

October 30, 1917, p.2 – Y.M.C.A.

Three trolley loads of Polish-American left the city for Niagara-on-the-Lake where the young men will join their comrades in the preparation for the field.

The work of the Young Men's Christian Association is in full swing at Camp Niagara and the soldiers are making good use of the facilities that are in place in their big tent and adjacent buildings. The writing room is always filled at night, the men being eager to communicate with relatives or friends elsewhere, so that hundreds of letters and cards are sent out daily. Concerts are arranged quite often as well as athletic programmes and in these concerts, the ladies of Niagara are ever glad to take an active part. One of these took place at the "Y" last Tuesday evening, when in addition to other attractive features, the following programme was rendered, "God Save the King," being the opening number:

[performers included:]

Recital – “Long Live Poland,” Miss Daisy Sherwood
Orchestra Selection – Polish Band
Recitation – Mr. Trawinski (Probationer)
Vocal Solo: Mr. Pawlowicz
Polish National Anthem – Polish Band

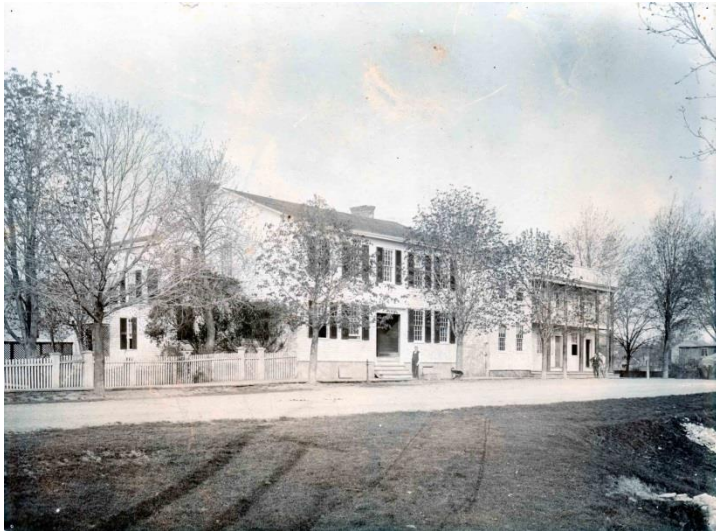
The various numbers were attractively rendered and much enjoyed by the capacity audience, with which the big tent was filled.

Work on three of the buildings that are intended to house the soldiers in camp during the winter was begun last Thursday and will be pushed forward as quickly as possible. The buildings are located near **Paradise Grove**, in the sheltered spot known locally as the “**Half Moon Battery**”¹⁶ are substantial in appearance and will be made as warm as possible in order that the men may be as comfortable as possible. Seven carloads of lumber arrived on Sunday, also several tons of nails and the work is being done by the Army Service and Engineering Corps, assisted by details of men from the camp. The spot where the buildings are being placed for the sheltering of troops is an historic one, as during the War of 1812, (a struggle between two nations that are now allies), a battery was located there, that was used to repel American invaders. No better proof that the present war has done away with the old-time disputes can be found than this – the encampment of American troops on ground that was once the scene of fratricidal strife and that has been hallowed by the blood of Canadian patriots. Truly old things have passed away and newer better conditions are taking their place.

October 30, 1917, p. 3

The steamer Modjeska has been kept on the Niagara-Queenston-Toronto route for the remainder of this week owing to the freight business for the camp, and may be on it longer if the weather is good. A large quantity of ordnance stores, clothing, building materials, etc. has been brought across the lake within the last few days, all destined for the camp, while fruit is still moving from this end of the route in goodly qualities. Hence the extension of the steamship season.

Further additions to the troops at Camp Niagara came in yesterday from Boston and other places and still more are expected today. There are now about 3,000 Polish-Americans in training for overseas at this place and besides there are detachments of the A.M.C., the A.S.C., the Royal Canadian Dragoons, the Military Police, and the Ordnance Corps, all of whom are here for special duty.



Doyle's Hotel / Hotel Kosciusko
Photo: Niagara Historical Society & Museum

October 31, 1917, p. 7 – Doyle's Hotel/Hotel Kosciusko

¹⁶ The Half-Moon Battery, which stood south of Fort George, had an underground chamber, possibly used as a powder magazine. It was destroyed when the Niagara Parks Commission extended the Parkway northward towards Fort George in 1931.

Doyle's hotel, after being known as such for half a century or longer, has changed its name and now wears a brand new sign over its broad front door, on which the legend "**Hotel Kosciusko**" is inscribed. After being closed for some time after the removal of G.H. Frizzell to Lewiston the big hotel was rented by **Mr. Climy** of St. Catharines, a Polish gentleman, who has renamed it, after one of Poland's most famous men.

Five trolley cars loaded with recruits for the Polish Expeditionary Army came in over the Niagara, St. Catharines and Toronto Railway at noon yesterday and a few minutes later the M.C.R. train [Michigan Central Railway] pulled in with two extra coaches attached in which were still more Polish-Americans bound for the camp at this place; quarters had been prepared for the new arrivals in the small canning factory on Melville street and in adjacent buildings and to these places the men marched from the depot. After depositing their personal belongings, the men went on to the camp where dinner awaited them. At the head of the procession a big flag was borne, one side of which bore the silver eagle of Poland on a maroon field and the reverse the emblem of the United States while each man wore an armlet on which the motto "Volunteers for the Polish Overseas Army" was inscribed. The men are all fine looking and seem a superior class of men while all of them have voluntarily enlisted for patriotic motives. As one motto read "On to Berlin to free Poland."

November 1, 1917, p. 5

The 7th Contingent of Polish Americans from Buffalo, consisting of 125 men, arrived at Camp Niagara by train today, which brings the camp strength up to about 2,000. The latest arrivals are housed in the canning factory (now owned by P.J. O'Neill) and in the big warehouse owned by Canada Steamship Company, where they are very comfortable. The canning factory is expected to be used as "billets" for the winter months and has been fitted up with a kitchen (or cafeteria as one of the men has dubbed it), with tables, seats and bunks, while a supply of blankets, fuel, etc., has been rushed there by the Quartermaster's department which ensures their comfort in cold seasons. The presence of so many Polish-Americans is hardly noticed here except in the early evenings, as they are kept closely at their training and the men are so quiet and orderly that there is little for the military police to do. The latter are constantly patrolling the streets, the M.P.'s taking the main streets while the Royal Canadian Dragoons are constantly on the move in the outlying parts of the town and the camp. Large shipments of uniforms, underclothing, shoes, and equipment are arriving at camp daily and the work of outfitting the men is being carried out as rapidly as possible. The recruits are in civilian clothes when they arrive but these are soon replaced by the service uniform. There are three battalions here now, the men of No. 1 being known by a red band round the left sleeve; No. 2 men wear a blue band and No.3 a red and white. The probationer officers wear the scarlet coat, black cap with red stripe and the black service great coat with brass buttons.

November 2, 1917, p.1 – Flag Raising at the Polish Camp Sunday

The officers of the Polish Camp at Niagara-on-the-Lake are making extensive preparations for the ceremony of the flag-raising at the camp on Sunday afternoon at 3 o'clock. Rev. Bishop Paul Rhode¹⁷ will officiate at the ceremony. The officers of the Polish Military Commission will attend as well as the representatives of the Polish organizations in the United States. Priests from Buffalo and the surrounding districts will also be in attendance.

Special cars will leave on the N.S. and T. Railway at 2 o'clock.

November 2, 1917, p. 6 – Medical Examinations/"King Edward"

The men of the 1st Battalion of the Polish Expeditionary Army are being given their medical examination by French doctors, one of whom has recently arrived at the camp from the firing line in France. Those men who are pronounced physically fit will be those who leave first for active service. The examination is strict and thorough but very few men have failed to pass it so far.

A number of the newest recruits for the camp were housed in the building known as the "King Edward" formerly used a dwelling for the foreign help at the canning factory, on Wednesday night, but

¹⁷ Rev. Paul Rhode was appointed auxiliary bishop of Chicago in 1908. He was the first Polish bishop appointed to serve areas where Poles formed a large percentage of the Catholic population.

moved to another location the following day, where preparations for their accommodation had been accomplished.

Owing to the fact that the Modjeska was being utilized for other than her regular service, she did not arrive here until 2p.m.; As a result people had to wait for their morning papers and mail for several hours, which created some dissatisfaction.

It is rumored that out of town parties have taken over the American Hotel for the winter and will open up a canteen and rooming house there, as about 500 soldiers are quartered in the near vicinity of this hotel and will be there for some time, the venture should be a profitable one.

November 3, 1917, p. 11

Thursday being All Saint's Day appropriate services were held in St. Vincent de Paul's Church at which the **Rev. Father Sweeney** officiated. The arrival of a Polish chaplain at the camp has relieved Father Sweeney of much extra work though this was undertaken cheerfully and without any complaint.

The officers and men of the Ordinance Corps from the camp, have secured the top floor of James Connolly's block, corner of King and Queen streets and have converted it into very comfortable quarters. The 'King Edward' is filled with Polish soldiers and so is the Navigation Company's big warehouse at the wharf, so that section of the town is well guarded. There is no truth in the report regarding the renting of the American hotel to outside parties, but it is likely that part of the ground floor may be taken over by the military for the use of officers connected with the troops that are billeted nearby as we understand that negotiations are in hand for them.

Army orders, recently issued announce the formation of a garrison board of officers, composed of Lieut. Richards of the Canadian Ordinance Corps who will act as president. The Army Service Corps officer at Niagara Camp and one officer to be detailed by the O.C. of the School of Infantry. This Board will be convened by the President and detailed to examine and report upon clothing stated to be unserviceable, on charge to the Camp Police and to the School of Infantry Detachment at the military camp at this place.

Fire escapes and other safe guards are being put in place on the factory building on Melville street where several hundred Polish soldiers are quartered and the place is being over-hauled and put in thorough repair with a view to making it as comfortable as possible; stoves and other apparatus adding to the provisions for the comfort of the men. More recruits are expected to arrive today for whom temporary accommodation will be provided in the town. It is expected that some of the first arrivals among whom are a number who have already seen service in the present war, will leave here shortly for an eastern point. These are the men who are being put through by French doctors, who have recently arrived from overseas for the purpose.



St. Vincent de Paul Church
Photo: Niagara Historical
Society & Museum

November 5, 1917, p. 1 – Polish Soldiers Receive Colors

The colors for the first two battalions of Polish troops, who are shortly leaving for overseas, were presented at the camp Sunday afternoon with impressive ceremony, witnessed by thousands of people, who came here by train, street car and auto, some as far away as Chicago. Buffalo, which supplied a great bulk of the 3,500 Polish soldiers now here, sent a big contingent of visitors. Representatives of Polish organizations from different cities in the United States, together with Polish clergymen, were on the platform with **Colonel LePan**, camp commandant, **Col. James Martin** of the French army, who was sent over here by the French Government to inspect the Polish volunteers from all over the United States, who are going over to avenge the spoliation of their country, **Prince Poniatowski** of Poland, **Camp Chaplain Captain Jaworski**, and others, among them some Polish women. Col. Martin, who is a hero of the great war, with many decorations on his breast, said he had found everything satisfactory and that France was glad to get these new sturdy fighters. After the colors were received by the Polish battalions, the massed band played "God Save the King" and the Polish "National Anthem," the soldiers all singing it with fervor. The whole strength then trooped the colors and marched past, the men showing fine marching ability. Many of the officers were at Camp Borden all summer. Sunday they wore the old time **Canadian militia's red coats and blue trousers**, while many of the men were in civilian dress. Many wore dark grey overcoats and blue flat hats and some were in part uniform and part civilian dress. All were earnest-looking and rarely was a smile seen on the face of officers or men.



Ks. Józef Jaworski,
były wikary przy kościele Matki Bożej Pocieszenia.

Rev. Fr. Jozef L. Jaworski
December 8, 1881 - January 26, 1962
Priest, patriot, Holy Ghost Father



**Canadian Militia Uniform used by Polish Soldiers at
Niagara Camp**
**From the collections of the Polish Museum of America,
Chicago**
Photo: Stan Skrzyszewski

November 5, 1917, p. 2- Facer Street, St. Catharines

On Sunday morning the police received quite a shock when the voice of an Italian announced over the telephone that the foreign butcher, who operates a shop at the corner of Concord and Facer streets [St. Catharines], had hanged himself.¹⁸ The officer in charge of the station asked if the man on the other end of the phone three times what had happened and three times he was told that the man had hanged himself. The officer then notified Chief Green and he with Coroner W. Greenwood proceeded to the home of the supposedly deceased foreigner. When they arrived they found the butcher was of Polish descent and in honour of his countrymen passing on their way to Niagara-on-the-Lake he had hung a Polish flag from his store. Italians in the neighbourhood mistook the flag for an Austrian flag and so phoned the police, fearing that trouble might ensue.

November 5, 1917, p. 7

The camp authorities have secured the use of the Park Theatre building on Queen Street for the Young Men's Christian Association during the winter and the organization is now settling down to work there. The recent storms had a damaging effect on the big tents and had the 'Y' desired to remain in the former location a more permanent domicile would have been necessary, hence the new quarters. The place was used last year as a motion picture house and the "Y" have brought in the machine and are making good use of the equipment already installed. The reading and writing equipment has been moved and is already in use, while the A.O.U.W. hall which occupies part of the space in the front is fitted up for canteen purposes and will be very useful in cold weather. The place is central and convenient and should be very popular with the men encamped here, during their stay.

Thomas Hart has fitted up a very comfortable room in his restaurant on Queen Street, for the use of the soldiers as a reading and writing room and it is proving very popular. Mr. Hart is doing an excellent business and does all he can to please his numerous patrons.

For the convenience of the soldiers at the camp, the post office is being kept open every evening till 9 o'clock and a table and writing materials have been placed in the lobby by Postmaster Healey, who has also arranged for having lights installed there with the town authorities. Like most of our public officials, the Postmaster is showing his appreciation of the camp and all it means to the business life of the town by doing everything in his power for the comfort and convenience of the soldiers. These new lights will be supplied free by the town and also the necessary amount of power.

Colonel Martin of the French Mission, who has been visiting Niagara Camp, has gone on to Ottawa for a conference with **Major-General Gwatkin** and other officials of the Militia Department on matters connected with the camp. He is accompanied by some of the headquarters staff of the camp. It is reported that a visit is to be paid the Polish troops at this place by **Jan Paderewski**, the noted musician, who has given up his engagements in order to assist in the work of raising recruits for the Polish Expeditionary Army in which he is deeply interested, but up to the time of writing this report could not be confirmed. Up to Saturday the total strength of Niagara Camp was 2082 men and further recruits are coming in to-day. These recruits would come in more quickly could better transportation be secured but the American railways are handicapped in many ways just now and cannot do any better.



Ignacy Jan Paderewski on viewing stand; Prince Poniatowski is also on the stand



Lieutenant-Colonel A.D. LePan (on left)
 Ignacy Jan Paderewski & Helena Paderewska (centre)
 Prince Poniatowski (right)
 Photo: Niagara Historical Society & Museum

November 6, 1917, p. 6

Monsieur Jan **Paderewski**, the famous musician, was unable to attend the dedication and presentation of colours at Camp Niagara on Sunday but sent a telegram in which he expressed good wishes and the hope that these colours would never be furled till Poland's freedom and world peace were assured.

The steamer Modjeska is still making one trip per day between Toronto and this place and Queenston and will continue on the route until further notice.

Sunday the following lines applied to Niagara:

All day long on the city street
 Sounded the tread of marching feet;
 All day long that free flag tossed
 Over the heads of a marching host.
 Ever its bright folds rose and fell
 On the loyal winds that loved it well

As, when the troops in training at the camp were not on the move, the new recruits, who arrived by train and trolley were, and so the streets resounded with their rhythmic tread, and people saw something which proved conclusively that we are in the war and that the said war has brought strange things to pass, viz.: the flag of free Poland unfurled and carried along the streets of our town by citizens of Poland who wish to see their much abused and best beloved country as free as is fair Canada today. The Polish flag is a beautiful one, the silver falcon [eagle] resting on a dark maroon field, and the men who carried it can surely be praised for their prideful worship of it. Each batch of recruits that come in has one or more of these beautiful emblems and carry it at the head of the parade as they march in.

The special cause of the activities of Sunday was the presentation of colors to the two first battalions of Polish troops who are leaving this week for overseas, and this was done with impressive religious and military ceremonies, which began at 10a.m. in the morning, with a celebration of the Mass, at which **Bishop Rhoda [Bishop P. Rhode]** of Buffalo presided and was assisted by **Father Jarowski [Jaworski]**, the camp Chaplain, and a number of priests from Buffalo, Welland, St. Catharines and other places. In the afternoon thousands of people came in by train, trolley and motor and gathered at the historic Fort George plains, where never before has such a sight been as the unfurling of a foreign flag to the Canadian breeze and in the midst of a gathering composed of British, Polish and American peoples. Buffalo, Cleveland, Milwaukee, Detroit, Pittsburgh, Boston and other U.S. places were well represented and it is estimated that at least 5,000 people and 3,500 troops (nearly all Poles) were present.

November 7, 1917, p. 6

A large number of Polish people from Cleveland, Chicago, Milwaukee and other U.S. points have been to Niagara recently to say farewell to members of the 1st and 2nd Polish battalions who are leaving shortly for an eastern point to complete their training. Many of these men have already been on active service with the French Army and so do not require much training, hence their early removal elsewhere. The camp will not diminish in strength as there are new arrivals coming in daily that fill any vacancies that may occur.

The three big bunkhouses on the Fort George common are well underway and a fourth has been begun. They are very large, two-storied, substantial buildings and work on them is being pushed forward as rapidly as possible. Some of the troops are still sleeping in tents and as they are not very comfortable there in the cold weather, they will move into new buildings as soon as they possibly can.

November 8, 1917, p. 7

S.W. Marchmont has the contract for the removal of garbage from the camp grounds, and has engaged a number of local men and teams to assist him in his work. It is likely they will have steady employment all winter.

Mr. Hennegan has reopened his ice cream parlor the "Princess Patricia" for the winter months after having a very poor summer business, the camp making it worthwhile to reopen.

Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Brundit have placed the American Hotel, which has been unoccupied for some time, at the disposal of the Military Authorities who are now in possession and are fitting it up for the use of the officers in charge of the troops that are quartered nearby. The large dining room and the bar room will be used for office purposes while the rest of the place, except the part that is occupied by the White family, will be used for dining, sleeping and other purposes. Like other citizens, the owners of this hotel fully appreciate the presence of so many troops in the town and are doing their share towards making them comfortable during their stay.

More recruits came into the camp yesterday from Buffalo and a larger number are expected to arrive from Chicago today. The lack of transportation facilities is hindering the movement of troops everywhere just now and it rather looks as if secret enemy influences are at work. No doubt an investigation of the matter will be made once the proper authorities have it brought to their notice.

One hundred more Polish American troops came in by the noon train yesterday and about the same number arrived by the evening train and all of them are already hard at work learning the rudiments of the art of modern warfare. Melville street, on which the quarters of the latest arrivals are located, is being utilized as a preliminary training area by instructors who put the men through the salute, right and left wheel and the various movements which mark the initiation of the average 'rookie' into the army anywhere. A great many female relatives of the Polish soldiers are in town to be near them for the short interval before the latter's removal elsewhere, and as a result all three hotels are well filled.

November 9, 1917, p. 12 – American Hotel

The School of Infantry intends to open up a canteen in what was formerly the bar room of the American Hotel and the men are now fitting the place up for that purpose. As there are about 1,000 Polish soldiers in billets in the vicinity, the venture should be a success.

November 10, 1917, p. 5

The steamer Modjeska has discontinued the service between Toronto and this place today as there is no passenger traffic and little freight.

Joseph Brundit is fitting up his refreshment stand at the corner of Melville and Delaire streets and will open it up as a canteen shortly with a view to capturing a share of the patronage of the soldiers quartered nearby.

The Polish American troops from the camp were out for their first route march yesterday and created quite an impression as they passed through Queen street headed by their band and keeping good time with the music. A good many of the men have their uniforms now and look quite fit. These are black trousers with red stripes, black coats with red shoulder straps and black caps with piping of red around the edge of the crown. The newest arrivals have not yet received their outfits but expect them early next week. The men have settled down to work in good earnest and seem disposed to make the most of their opportunities for training in military tactics. In the evenings they have several hours off and many of them visit the town and patronize the movie houses and the restaurants, the result being that a

good business is done in that time. The Y.M.C.A. is settled down in its new quarters and is doing the usual work on behalf of the soldiers. A canteen has been opened, also a reading room where things are convenient and comfortable. Concerts are being given on Tuesday and Friday evenings when talent from the camp, the town and St. Catharines take turns in furnishing the programme. **Mr. Niski [B. Niski]**, a Polish violinist of note has organized an orchestra, which promises to be of great assistance at future concerts. There are some fine musicians and some excellent singers at the camp and all of them are quite willing to assist the ... workers, whenever they need help. On Wednesday evening, a number of St. Catharines folk came to Niagara and gave a concert for the soldiers, while last night Niagara supplied the programme, both being very much enjoyed by all present.

H.R. Doyle has had his two stores on Queen Street thoroughly renovated in the past few days with a view to opening up a restaurant in one and a billiard and pool room in the other. With so many troops in town from camp during the evenings, there should be good business for this establishment which will be open for business within the next few days. It is likely other new places of business of a similar kind will be opened up on Queen street shortly.

November 12, 1917, p. 7 – Recruitment Films

A motion picture operator was in town on Saturday making films of the Polish-American troops which are to be turned over to the American military authorities for recruiting purposes. The films registered the troops in every phase of camp life and are said to be very good ones.

November 13, 1917, p. 7

On Saturday Chief of Police Sherlock handed into the custody of Police Chief Curry of Niagara Falls, N.Y., one Theodore Rydecki, 28 years old, who is said to be wanted by Chicago police on a charge of larceny. Rydecki was a member of one of the Polish regiments in training at this place.

Ignace Jan Paderewski, says the American papers, is developing qualities as a military man that may give him greater fame than his music, in the opinion of the U.S. war department, with whom he has again been conferring concerning the Polish legion for the war on Germany. The legion, which has been formally approved by the American and Canadian governments, has already taken a substantial form and is now encamped at this place, about 5000 armed and equipped men being in it, while the number is being increased daily. The force is being put through a course of intensive training by 200 young officers who have been given a primary military training in the two countries, the finishing training having been given in Canada under veteran British and Canadian officers. Paderewski is anxious to secure for this legion some of the highly trained and experienced Polish officers who have been serving with the Russian armies and who may, if Russia finally decides to quit, wish to continue service elsewhere rather than allow Poland to remain a German province; he has sought the aid of the United States government to obtain the services of these officers and fully expects to get them in a short time. So in addition to the French and Canadian officers from the front who are on duty as instructors at the camp just now, we may see Polish officers of the highest rank serving in a similar capacity, each doing his bit towards freeing his beloved Poland from the Prussian yoke, by helping to train an army to fight against the Hun and his barbarian hordes.

The troops, who have been quartered in the court house for several weeks, have moved into one of the new buildings near Fort George, where things have been made very comfortable for them. Other troops will be withdrawn to the new buildings as they are made ready for use and in a short time they will have settled down for the winter. Five buildings are under construction at present and it is said that as many more are being planned, accommodation for 5,000 men for the winter months being contemplated. The Polish soldiers attended Mass in a body on Sunday morning, when **Father Jarowski** officiated, assisted by Polish clergymen from elsewhere. The Canadian soldiers attended service in the various churches in the town. In the afternoon, the men were excused from duty and these of them who were not entertaining visitors, explored the town and surrounding country or else took part in the baseball, football and other games that were in progress.

November 16, 1917, p. 10 – Edward Pawlowicz / 500 additional recruits

Mr. **Edward Powlowicz** [Pawlowicz] one of the probationary officers from the camp, sang some very beautiful selections during the programme at the Royal George and on Wednesday evening his singing was very much enjoyed by all present, he has a splendid baritone voice and sings the most

difficult selections with the greatest ease. It is hoped that Mr. Powlowicz will consent to sing again in the near future as those who heard him once are anxious for a second pleasure.

Five hundred additional recruits arrived at the camp yesterday from the United States, several extra coaches being attached to the local train for their accommodation while several trolley cars also came in over the N.S.C. and T. Railway at night. As a result of this increase the Court House is once more being used as billets and will remain in use till another one of the new buildings is completed and ready for use.

November 17, 1917, p. 12 – 5000 Polish Americans / Lack of transportation

“The ghost walked” at Niagara camp yesterday. As a result of the visit paid by the Divisional Paymaster who put in a busy day as there are now about 5000 Polish Americans here and about 300 Canadians, the latter being here for special data. It was expected that two battalions would have been away from the camp before this but lack of transportation across the sea keeps them back. They are in fine spirits and are eagerly awaiting a chance to get back at Fritz for the way he has abused Poland and her people in the past year.

November 19, 1917, p. 7 – Y.M.C.A.

The Y.M.C.A at this place would be very glad to hear from anyone who has any magazines or illustrated papers that they would be willing to give for the use of the soldiers, now encamped here in large numbers. If word is left at the “Y” headquarters (Park Theatre) those in charge would be very pleased to call for periodicals etc. and to see that they are distributed. A reading and writing room has been fitted up in the hall (known locally as the A.O.U.W hall) in the front section of the ‘Y’ headquarters and the men gladly avail themselves of its facilities at every opportunity.

November 21, 1917, p. 7 – Polish Military Band

The Polish military band, which has greatly increased in numbers and efficiency since its organization, is now billeted in the lower floor of the Masonic Hall, where the men are very comfortable. Nearly everyone in Niagara is doing everything possible for the convenience and comfort of these troops and places for quarters are being offered everywhere, most of them free of charge, while the town supplies free light, and free water for their use while they are here.

November 21, 1917, p. 8 – Polish Joke

A new idea in learning the English language was recently invented in the fertile mind of a Polish lady. On a recent date the lady in question with a friend walked into the office of a local optician, and the fact was announced to the clerk that a pair of glasses were required with which the English language could be read by the lady, who could neither talk or read our language. The clerk had to express his sorrow that such a useful contrivance had not yet been given the careful attention of the inventors of the day.

November 22, 1917, p.7 – Accommodations/Paderewski/Poniatowski

Niagara as a whole is one vast camp as the soldiers are quartered in every section wherever buildings are available. It is estimated that fully 1000 additional recruits have come in during the past few days from the United States by rail and by trolley. On Monday night there were four special coaches attached to regular train and late that night more men came in by special trolley. On Tuesday there were many other arrivals and the same may be said of yesterday and today. As a result in addition to the permanent buildings and the four new buildings on the camp reserve, troops are quartered in the following buildings: The American hotel, Delhi factory, the King Edward, the Steamship Co.’s ware house, Miller’s garage, Salvation Hall, the Court House, the High School gymnasium, Connolly’s store, the Western Home, the Platt building, the Sizer, Weston and Wettlaufer garages, the Masonic Hall. The big new canning factory on Regent and John streets and the big apartment house on the grounds will also be available in a day or so for military purposes and so is the Hewitt property on King street. Mr. Taylor has offered the use of the big pavilion and kitchen in the park and Mr. John Carnochan the use of his cottage on Castlereagh street, both free of charge, to the military. And so it goes. Everyone is assisting the town authorities in providing for the accommodation of these men who are to form part of the Allied army on the firing line as soon as they have received preliminary training. The men like Niagara and are most

grateful for the kindness and thoughtfulness of our people. So there is mutual appreciation and a kindly feeling everywhere.

Historic Niagara has entertained many notable men in the past, some of them being prominent in the country's affairs, but yesterday and today is busy looking after the entertainment of one of foreign birth yet who is equally distinguished is **Monsieur Jan Ignace Paderewski**, the famous musician and citizen of Poland, who came to look over the camp at which so many of his compatriots are outfitting themselves for service abroad with a view to liberating their beloved country from the German yoke. With **Sieur Paderewski** came **Madam Paderewski** and several high officials of the Polish Falcons and other Polish societies, all of whom are engaged in promoting the enlistment of Polish men for the foreign legion, now in training here, and in raising funds to finance the movement. **Prince Poniatowski**, Captain Pau, Major Kirk and other staff officers met the distinguished party at the ferry landing at noon yesterday and conducted them to the camp which has been thoroughly inspected. A review and march-past was arranged in honor of the visitors who were pleased and interested in all they saw.

Through the efforts of the town authorities, ably assisted by Messrs John Carnochan, Richard Taylor, J. Eckersley and other public spirited citizens, the spacious residence and grounds formerly owned by the late Senator Plumb and now known as the Hewitt property has been placed at the disposal of the military authorities who were put in possession yesterday...it is expected that the A.M.C. and hospital will be housed there as soon as things are in readiness as the present quarters are not large enough or warm enough for winter use. **Colonel LePan** and members of the headquarters staff spent the past two days in Toronto and Ottawa on business connected with the camp, the result of which will be known shortly.



Reviewing Stand, Camp Niagara; On the stand Lieut-Col. LePan, Ignacy Jan Paderewski and Helena Paderewska, Prince Poniatowski
Photo: Niagara Historical Society and Museum

November 23, 1917, p. 8 – Concert / Accommodations

Mr. Niahl, one of the probationer officers of the Polish legion is preparing a splendid programme for the Y.M.C.A. tonight which programme will be given by the Polish soldiers entirely. The concert begins at 7:30 o'clock and will be worth hearing. Mr. Beckett, who is in charge of the 'Y' work at this place has extended a cordial invitation to Niagara friends to be present at this concert and it is likely that a number will attend.

Bishop Brothers, who are in line with other Niagara folk in the way of providing accommodation for the Polish soldiers, have turned over the Union Jack factory to the military who have installed showers, baths etc., there and are making good use of them. Councillor Sherlock has offered the use of his big garage on Regent street to the military, who will, if the camp remains here, use it as billets for a number of men.

November 24, 1917

Captain E.J. Wright who has been acting Quartermaster at the Camp for some time, leaves today for St. John's, Quebec, where a mobilization camp is being established. Major Madill¹⁹, who has been second in command at Niagara Camp, will be the new O.C. at St. John's. Major Kirk, O.C., the 2nd battalion, Polish Overseas Legion, will also go to St. Johns where the 1st and 2nd battalions are to be mobilized for a short time before going overseas. All three officers are well liked here and there is general regret at their removal.

Owing to the fact that the lower floor of the Masonic Hall has been loaned for military purposes, the future meetings of the Women's Institute will be held in St. Mark's Parish Hall.

Lieut. Norman H.S. Brown, soldier, Polish Con. Camp, Niagara, exempted till men in Class B [medical] are required.

November 26, 1917, p. 3 – Sigismund de Ivanowski²⁰

Sigismund de Ivanowski, the noted Polish artist and painter of New York, was a week end visitor at the Polish headquarters at Niagara Camp a large number of new recruits arrived at the camp with Mr. de Ivanowski who is of Polish birth and deeply interested with the overseas movement and was able to obtain much information as to its progress while here.

It is likely that the Red Cross Society's next paper collection will have to be deferred for a short time for lack of a place in which to sort and store the results as the rooms formerly used for that purpose have been loaned for military purposes by the Imperial Bank and will be used as quarters for new Polish troops soon coming in till more new bunk houses are ready on the main camp grounds.

A very pleasing incident, which occurred during the presentation of colors to the 3rd Polish battalion on Wednesday was the pleasure evidenced by **Monsieur and Madame Paderewski** at meeting Mayor McClelland and members of the Town Council who were present at the ceremony by special invitation. After being introduced, Madame Paderewski thanked the Council for all they had done and were doing for the comfort and convenience of the Polish soldiers and requested the gentlemen to convey their heartfelt thanks for their kindly generosity to the people of Niagara and to tell them that they very much appreciated everything that was being done for the men. It is needless to say that this expression of appreciation was very kindly received by the town fathers who will convey it to the townspeople in the usual way.

A special Grand Trunk train drawn by two mogal engines was here on Friday to take out the advance guard of the Polish Battalions which are leaving later for St. John's, Quebec, to complete their training before going to France for active service.

Mr. Henry Winnett of the Queen's Royal Hotel has fallen into line in the way of providing accommodation for some of the new Polish troops...

November 28, 1917, p. 6

Count Sigismund de Ivanowski, the celebrated Polish painter and artist of New York, who arrived at Niagara Camp one day last week with a large number of recruits for the Polish legion, is remaining here as he intends going overseas with them. Count Ivanowski is a man in the prime of life who is devoted to his native country and intends doing what he can towards freeing it from despotic Germany or Austro-Hungary. He is laying aside his profession for a time but hopes that when his idealistic aims are accomplished to resume it. True patriotism animates this clever man, who is a splendid sample of the man of his country. He is one of several members of the old Polish aristocratic families of Poland who have forsaken peaceful pursuits to take up arms in their country's cause and who hope to help in the conquest of their ancient enemies, the Prussians and the Huns.

An extra coach was attached to each of Monday's trains for the accommodation of more Polish-Americans, who came to join their fellow-countrymen of the Polish legion and train for service overseas.

¹⁹ Henry Harrison Madill

²⁰ Sigismund de Ivanowski painter and illustrator of portraits, nudes, genre, cityscapes, and actresses was born in Kurylowka, Ukraine in 1875 and died in Westmoreland, NH in 1944. He came to America in 1902, lived in Westfield, NJ, and kept a studio at the Hotel des Artistes in New York City. Ivanowski's address, from 1908 to 1944, was in Mountainside, NJ.

The town authorities are doing their best to provide more quarters for the newcomers and are co-operating with the military with this end in view. Two battalions are leaving here shortly for St. John's, Quebec, where the advance guard proceeded on Friday last, but the camp strength will soon be as large as ever, owing to the continuous arrival of recruits from places in the United States. The Polish troops attended Mass and Vespers in the Park Theatre on Sunday, while the Canadians went to the services in the other churches in the town. The cold snap has not interrupted the training of the soldiers, though everyone would welcome the arrival of warmer weather.

November 29, 1917, p.2 – First Death

The first death to occur among the Polish soldiers at Niagara-on-the-Lake took place on Wednesday when Stanius Krajewski passed away at the Camp Hospital. The deceased contracted pneumonia and failed to rally from the attack. He was 24 years of age and well liked among his brethren. The remains were brought to Butler and Son's Undertaking Rooms from where they were shipped to Cleveland, the home of the deceased, this morning.

November 29, 1917, p. 8

Several special Grand Trunk trains were required for the transportation of the Polish troops who left Camp Niagara for the new camp at St. John, Quebec, whence the advance guard preceded them last Friday. More recruits continue to arrive so the depletion of the camp strength is only temporary and hardly noticeable.

Councillor Sherlock in addition to placing his big garage on Regent St., at the disposal of the military authorities, has given them the use of his big brick house formerly owned and occupied by Mrs. Daniel Waters comfortably quartered there. Our town officials are setting the citizens a fine example in patriotism and lead the way in doing what will make the soldiers who will help our own armies in the fight against Kaiserism comfortable during the stay in the town. It gives one an idea of the strange things wrought by the present war to see the Polish flag hanging over the entrance of buildings everywhere in the town. It is an emblem few of us had seen up to two months ago but now its beautiful maroon color, relieved by silver gray, is a familiar sight and brings the war and its realities very close to us.

November 30, 1917, p. 9

The military authorities have been placed in possession of the Hewitt property on King Street and have had the men at work getting it ready for use for hospital and other purposes. Equipment for heating, also sanitary appliances, were necessary to make the place fit for its intended use, but this was looked after by the department having such matters in charge and they are now installed there. The town's electrician superintended the connecting up of the electric light service and as a result, the building and grounds are well lighted at night. The town is allowing the military, for the present at least, free light and water service, which is a big incentive to the retention of the camp at Niagara. A number of the officers attached to Camp Niagara for special duty have taken houses and settled down for the winter, or till such time as they are ordered elsewhere, which has also given an impetus to business. Capt. E.J. Wright has been replaced by Lieut. Marriott, a quartermaster here and is filling a similar position at the new camp at St. John's, Quebec. Major Madill has also been moved to St. John's, but all the other officers of the headquarters staff have been left here which seems to indicate the permanency of the present camp as a mobilization center for Polish recruits from the American side.

An alarm of fire was turned in at an early hour on Wednesday morning from the Western Home which is at present being used as quarters for soldiers and fire brigade.

The soldiers from the camp went on a route march yesterday and covered a goodly distance while doing so. The warm weather seemed to have an exhilarating effect on the spirits of the men who sang at the tops of their voices as they marched briskly along, their feet keeping time with the music as they sang. They are a cheerful, sturdy bunch of soldiers and seem to be well pleased with life in historic Niagara where they are made welcome and are shown that their patriotic work is appreciated. Many of these men have given up excellent positions in the States to enlist in this expeditionary army and few are found as yet, who regret doing so. They all love their native country, Poland, and are prepared to make unlimited sacrifices on its behalf. Their motto can safely be said to be "The love of country guides," as they are not thinking of anything else while preparing themselves to fight overseas.

December 1, 1917, p.11 – St. John's Quebec

Prince (Lieut.) Poniatowski left Niagara Camp last week with the 1st Battalion of the Polish troops and after a short stay at the camp at St. John's, Quebec, will go overseas as conducting officer of the 1st Contingent of the Polish American Expeditionary Army. The Prince was very much liked in Niagara and has been greatly missed since his departure.

The School of Infantry has opened a canteen in the A.O.U.W. hall, now part of the Park theatre premises, which makes three enterprises of this kind that this unit is conducting in town. One is doing business at the camp, one in the American Hotel and the third in the place mentioned above.

The local train was three hours late in arriving on Thursday night, the delay being in Buffalo where the western train was late. The Niagara train was held there as there were three hundred Polish troops to be transported to Niagara Camp. Five hundred more came in yesterday from Chicago, which has again increased the camp strength. As troops leave for the east to complete their overseas training, others are coming in, so the strength is never any smaller.

The coming of the camp having made plain to them the necessity of continuing the garbage collection, the business people have got together and made up the amount necessary to pay for employing the men who did the work so well all summer and collections are now made twice a week or oftener, if required from the business places on Queen street.

Y.M.C.A.Work

A kindly action, one of many, was done by the officials in charge of the Y.M.C.A. this week, viz, the translation of a notice of the Church Supper of Thursday from the English to the Polish language and the posting up of this notice on the front of the "Y" headquarters in order that the attention of the Polish troops might be attracted to the event and the attendance of some of them be assured.

Something unique in the work of the Y.M.C.A. is the fact that their Niagara headquarters are loaned to the Polish priest, **Father Jarofski**, [Jaworski] as a chapel every Sunday or whenever required in which to hold mass or other church services and the privilege is very much appreciated by all who receive the benefit of the arrangement. This is the first time that such an incident has occurred in the varied history of the organization and this is the only place where it has been found necessary. We mention this fact as an instance of the broad mindedness of the members of the "Y" and of their earnest desire to do the greatest good to the greatest number. In their desire to do this, the "Y" has undertaken to provide writing materials for the men wherever they can most conveniently use them and a supply of paper and envelopes are placed in 27 different places in the town and on the camp grounds – the local workers also write letters for the soldiers when-ever such service is required of them; they translate articles from English to Polish, instruct the men in the banking and care of their money, provide social and athletic entertainment and do everything possible to make the men cheerful and contented while preparing themselves for future service across the seas. Nowhere is the beneficial and helpful work of the "Red Triangle" in greater evidence than among the soldiers at the present camp; of this work we shall have more to say in the future.

December 7, 1917, p. 6 – 64th Draft

Another draft of the Polish troops, the 64th, consisting of 500 men of all ranks, left Niagara camp on Wednesday afternoon for New York en route to France; the party which makes the first stage of the journey by special train, were given a most enthusiastic send-off and left here in the highest spirits. Captain Lewis of the School of Infantry went with the draft to New York as conducting officer. As usual the Y.M.C.A. staff were on hand as the draft left with cigarettes, reading matter and other comforts; these gifts being given free by the Y.M.C.A. to every soldier that leaves the camp.

The Victory dance given by the Girls' Service Battalion on Friday evening last was one of the most pleasing events ever held here, one that was a success in every way. The ball room was beautifully decorated with flags and bunting, which was blended in a very attractive way. The music was supplied by the orchestra of the Polish military band and was easily the best obtainable. ...Among the guests were a number of the Canadian and Polish officers from the camp, the latter in their picturesque uniforms of horizon blue, adding a novel feature to the pretty scene. The dance programme was varied, and suited to all tastes so everyone had an opportunity of dancing and thus sharing in the universal enjoyment.



Polish Blue Army Uniform
From the Collections of the Polish Museum of
America, Chicago
Photo: Stan Skrzyszewski

December 7, 1917, p. 8 - Influenza

The influenza is still with us, as it is with others elsewhere, but the cases are few and none very serious. There are still several pneumonia patients in the emergency hospital, but no fresh cases are being admitted as Mr. Gray wants the place vacated as soon as possible as he has other use for it.

Seven trolleys loaded with recruits for the Polish Army arrived here over the N., St. C. & T. on Tuesday afternoon and one hundred more came in on a special coach attached to the regular train. The men went into quarantine for a week as a precautionary measure, while previous arrivals were released and allowed to come into town.

Five hundred officers and men of the Polish Army composed the 63rd draft which left the camp at this place last Friday for New York enroute for France. The party left here at 2:30pm on a special New York Central train with Major Madill going to New York with it as conducting officer. **Father Michailsky [Jozef Michalski]**, who has been senior chaplain at the camp since last August, went with the draft and so did Lieut Bechiel [B. Bachel], who has been acting as adjutant of the School of Infantry since **Lieut. W. Albrycht** went to France last August. Both officers will be very much missed by Niagara friends and take with them the esteem and good wishes of all.

December 15, 1917, p. 7

Six hundred of the Polish soldiers from Camp Niagara left for their quarters at noon on Thursday en route for the new training camp at Fort Niagara. The men making the seven mile hike on foot to Lewiston and there connected with the Gorge Cars. As the river was filled with ice, which prevented transportation effectually, more went yesterday and their places here will be taken by new recruits from Chicago, who arrive on Monday.

December 15, 1917, p.16 – “Polish Soldiers Reject the Grumblers: Volunteers for Legion in France cast out Two Men Who Made Complaint – Say Treatment is Good.

Buffalo, Dec.15 – Two rejected recruits for the Polish legion that is being recruited for service with the French armies overseas have caused much indignation among the Polish people of this city by their allegations of improper treatment. The indignation is acute because of the earnest efforts which the Polish women of Buffalo made to entertain these recruits who assemble here on their way to Niagara-on-the-

Lake. These women have thrown their homes open to these soldiers and have fed them and housed them to the best of their ability.

Yesterday volunteers for the legion from Kansas City, Saint Louis, Chicago, Omaha, Milwaukee, Saint Paul, Detroit, Grand Rapids, Toledo, Cleveland and other cities, temporarily in Buffalo on their way to Niagara-on-the-Lake, adopted resolutions denying the charges of neglect made by the two men. These volunteers say sufficient accommodations were provided by the Buffalo Polish committee and deny there is any dissatisfaction in the ranks.

The two disgruntled men alleged that the volunteers are becoming dissatisfied by mistreatment by officers; are forced to sleep in unclean quarters; are given insufficient and poor food; and are forbidden to speak the English language, and that the promised compensation is not being allowed.

Stanislaus Brodalski and Konstanty Czayczynski were elected by their fellow soldiers to make public the resolutions which concluded:

"Resolved, that we, volunteers to the Polish army in France, assembled at Dom Polski on December 14th, by unanimous vote, brand such statements and insinuations given to United States Attorney Lockwood as infamous falsehoods. That the Buffalo Citizens' committee that cared for us during our stay in Buffalo did everything possible to make us comfortable. That we emphatically that our sleeping quarters, our meals and the treatment given us by our officers was excellent and positively in accordance with our extreme expectations as volunteers to the Polish army. That we thank the Buffalo Citizens' committee for the hospitable reception tendered us and that we condemn the untruthful statements of the Tomczak brothers and request that the said Vincent and Chester Tomczak be expelled from the ranks and returned to their homes.

The citizens' committee explains that the assembled recruits could not be sent to Camp Niagara yesterday because the proper transportation accommodation could not be obtained on account of the storm. The men left the Black Rock station this morning at 10:30 on a special train. The volunteers, about 600 in number, assembled at the Dom Polski yesterday morning after mass and breakfast and were sent in special trolley cars to Black Rock. Seventy recruits came in yesterday from Chicago and a score are expected this morning from Omaha.

Ambulance Unit Planned

The polish citizens' committee [of Buffalo] plans a dinner of 2,000 covers at the Broadway auditorium on Sunday evening, December 23rd, to raise funds to send the ambulance unit from Buffalo to serve with the Polish legion in France. **Maxwell M. Nowak**, chairman, says the chief speaker will be **Countess Laura Turczynowicz**, who recently returned to New York from Russia. She is an American girl who married a Polish man of rank.

December 17, 1917, p. 5

More groups of recruits for the Polish Legion at this place arrived in Buffalo at the end of last week, swelling the total now being held in that city to 550 and more than 700 were held there over Sunday, as there is no room for them at Niagara until the transfer of the men to the Fort Niagara is completed. The men are being sheltered in church halls and private homes in Buffalo where the cost of providing them with mattresses, blankets, etc. is about \$700 per day. **Mr. Maxwell M. Nowak**, chairman of the Polish recruiting committee in Buffalo states that this money is provided voluntarily by the people of the city who have contributed thousands of dollars to this work in the past few weeks. A movement is on foot to recruit and equip a Polish battalion from Buffalo alone and the Polish people are ready to finance the purchase of outfitting, equipment, etc. The men want to come to Niagara, though, as the people have been doing so much to make them comfortable and there are so many things arranged for their enjoyment. Those who went to the Fort Niagara camp do not like it, as it is so far away from the village and there are no movie houses or any other amusement with which to occupy their recreation times. At the camp ground at this place further provisions for the comfort of the men are being made and these will be available for use almost immediately – thus the unusually cold weather will not be the source of discomfort that it is at the present time.

December 19, 1917, p. 5

An issue of gloves, ear warmers, overcoats and warm clothing has been given out to the soldiers at Niagara camp and so they are in better shape to stand the intense cold and winter weather.

A detail of the Army Service Corps are busy under the supervision of W.C. Lep installing a shower bath, lavatory and other fittings in the basement of the Court House for the use of the Polish

soldiers who are billeted in the building. Three-quarters of the building is given over for this purpose in order to make the men as comfortable as possible during their stay in the town.

The Mayor has kindly allowed the Polish band to use some of the instruments formerly used by the town band, till they can procure some of their own and also has turned over most of the music for the same purpose. That the band is availing itself of both is amply proven by the way they render our National music; this was practically unknown to our Polish friends before their arrival here and considering this, their progress is noteworthy. We were passing by the Masonic Hall today, (the band is billeted on the first floor) and heard the band rendering "O Canada" and it sounded remarkably good, even to our untrained ears. It is nice that these men are so keen to learn our music and so willing to let us share in their own pleasure whenever it is possible for them to do so. They are always willing to help in any good cause in the town as a token of appreciation of the kindness of our citizens to them and so there is a mutual good feeling.

All troops on service in this district, including those at Niagara camp, are to get the regular Christmas and New Year's leave of absence of four days, 50 per cent of each unit to go on each occasion... So far it is not known whether this includes the Polish soldiers or not.

The Niagara train ran over to Buffalo on Saturday for the purpose of bringing down 600 recruits for the Polish Legion, seven coaches being necessary for their transportation. The train did not arrive here till 4:30 o'clock in the afternoon, but made the second trip of the day – leaving here at 5:30 and returning at 10 p.m. On the second trip more recruits came in; also a carload of horses for the use of the Army Service Corps who need them in their heavy work around the camp. The recruits who came in are from Chicago, Milwaukee, Omaha, Kansas City, St. Louis, St. Paul, Detroit, Grand Rapids, Toledo, Cleveland and other cities, and are a fine healthy bunch of men. They are quartered in the buildings at the wharf, from which troops were transferred to Fort Niagara last week. They found their quarters warm and comfortable and arrived in time to relish an appetizing supper that had been prepared for them. Another quota is due to arrive today. These will come from the eastern section of the United States and will be billeted in various places around town.

December 26, 1917, p. 5

A number of Polish soldiers are billeted in Mr. Mulholland's building on Queen Street (adjoining his own home), which he has kindly loaned for the purpose.

December 27, 1917, p. 2 – Christmas Boxes

More than 1,200 Christmas boxes containing nuts, candies, tobacco, small mirrors and soap will be sent to the camp at Niagara-on-the-Lake today to the Polish National Legion. The shipment is a gift of the Buffalo Polish Citizens Committee.

December 27, 1917, p. 7 – Polish Restaurants

Four Polish restaurants have begun business in Niagara in the past few weeks with a view to capturing a share of the patronage of the soldiers from the camp. One is located in the Hamra building, one in the place formerly occupied by the Rysie Bros., one in the W.J. Campbell block and one in P.J. O'Neill's block adjoining the Davey stores.

December 29, 1917, p. 1 – "Troops for Fort Niagara"

More than 3,000 troops will soon be quartered at Fort Niagara. This was learned today from Major B.C. Ruitencutter, post commandant. The men to be quartered at the historic army post will serve in the French Polish Legion, the United States Army and the United States Guard.

Uncle Sam will care for 2,250 Polish recruits for France. The men will train at the down river post for service in Europe. There are now 1,225 Poles at the post. The remainder will arrive late this week or early next week.

December 29, 1917, p. 6: Burial of Pte Adam Martin

Niagara saw the first military funeral yesterday that has taken place here in several years, when Adam Martin, a member of the 3rd Battalion, Polish Expeditionary Force, was interred with full military ceremony in St. Vincent de Paul's cemetery. Pte Martin died of pneumonia at the military hospital on Thursday after an illness of two weeks, and as he had no relatives in this country, the officers made arrangements for burying him here. The funeral cortege was led by the Polish band and the remains were

surrounded by a guard of honor, the Battalion, heading by a firing party, marching in the rear. Requiem Mass was held in the church after which the remains were carried to the cemetery adjoining and there laid in their last resting place. Last Post was sounded by a bugler and three volleys fired over the grave by the party detailed for that duty, after which the ceremonial ended.

December 31, 1917, p. 6 – Colonel LePan; Departure for St. John's, Quebec; Christmas;

Mrs. LePan has arrived in Niagara to spend the winter with **Colonel LePan**, the commandant of Camp Niagara and was the honor guest at a reception given by Mrs. Ross on Thursday afternoon, when a number of the officers and their wives were present.

Three big mogul engines were required to take out the special train last Friday that took away 450 men of the 3rd Battalion of the Polish Legion from Niagara Camp to St. John's, Que., where they will remain for a short period of further training before proceeding to France for Active service. The men were marched to the train, which was drawn up on the camp siding, from their quarters at the wharf, with the band leading the procession playing a lively march. Three cheers for Niagara were vigorously given before the men entrained, three cheers and a tiger were given for **Colonel LePan**, after which to the strains of Poland's National Anthem, officers and men boarded the waiting coaches and were soon on their way. More recruits are coming in every day, so that the camp will be up to its usual strength within the next few days.

Several express cars have been required in the past few days for bringing in the Christmas presents for the Polish troops, every one of whom was remembered by friends in the United States, while the Canadian troops, who are detailed for special service at the camp, have been looked after by the Niagara people who have been most generous with them. The patients in the hospital had a Christmas tree and gifts from the Niagara folks who also sent out all kinds of delicacies for them, in addition to providing gifts for the hospital attendants and men of the Army Medical Corps. The Ordnance and Army Service Corps also had Xmas trees and gifts while wherever troops were quartered, there were Christmas trees and decorations and a general air of holiday cheer.

[At a reception for the Women's Institute], Lieut. Niski of the Polish Legion and Miss Dorothy Wright rendered a very beautiful violin duet.

January 3, 1918, p. 5 – First Polish Soldiers from Niagara reach the Front

A large number of Polish recruits arrived on Tuesday from the United States and also about sixty arrived from Toronto and were billeted in the quarters at the wharf that were vacated a few days ago by the troops who went on to St. John's, Quebec for further training. The soldiers who have been quartered in the Court House, were transferred to Bishop Bros. factory for several days to allow the halls to be used by the Fire Brigade for the New Year's ball, but they are back again; the second transfer having been made today. The camp strength was temporarily depleted by the departure of the troops for Quebec, but is coming up again as a result of new arrivals. There is plenty of fuel at the disposal of the camp authorities here and the men are thus made comfortable in spite of the extremely cold weather.

Poles from Niagara Reach the Firing Line

Washington, Jan 2. – The first contingent of Polish troops recruited in America for service with the allies has landed safely in France, it was announced last night by Col. James Martin of the French Military Mission. The unit, composed entirely of men graduated from the Polish training camp at Niagara, N.Y., will be attached to the Polish forces now fighting on the west front. For military reasons, the number of men in the contingent was withheld.

The forces were welcomed by the military and civil authorities and were given an ovation by the populace, who witnessed the debarkation, according to the announcement cabled by Gen. Archinard of the French army.

January 4, 1918, p.6 – Safe Landing in France

News of the safe landing in France of the first contingent of the Polish-American soldiers has been received here with great pleasure. The men were part of the Polish Legion from Niagara Camp and will be followed by others as soon as transportation can be provided. They were recruited in the United States by the Polish Commission, were trained here two months then sent on to St. John's, Quebec for a brief stay before embarking for France where they will be attached to the Polish forces now fighting with the Entente Allies on the Western Front. Colonel James Martin of the French Mission states that the

contingent was given an ovation by the French people as they landed, many having gathered to watch the debarking.

January 7, 1918, p.1 – The Niagara Falls Gazette

Farewell Dance for Polish Patriots at Fort Niagara

Falls Women Plan Grand Reception for Men Who Will Aid in Riding World of Great Menace

With rumours that a battalion of the gallant Polishdern now in training at Fort Niagara under orders to proceed in the near future the Canteen Service Corps of the Red Cross of this city, will tomorrow night offer a farewell reception and dance at the fort. It will be a big affair and two buildings will be necessary to accommodate the guests. Many of the men now training at Niagara-on-the-Lake will be at the function. Polish women from Buffalo and this city will be conveyed to the fort to attend the dance and present gifts to their countrymen who are going abroad to strike a blow for humanity, liberty and avenge the wrongs of France. These troops are on the French payroll and those at Fort Niagara are in command of the French Army arrived at the fort Saturday gives credence to the report that a detachment of the Polanders will start for overseas. There are 800 of them at the fort and about 8000 at Niagara-on-the-Lake. It is likely that when more accommodations is available at the down river quarters some of the men on the Canadian side of the Niagara will be brought to this side for final instructions. It is well known that the men under canvas across the river suffered much from inclement weather during this winter and, to a great extent, envied their brethren quartered on this side. Harry Wieland, who is in charge of the Y.M.C.A. work at Fort Niagara said today that many of the men across the river left that contingent in order to affiliate with the men on the American side because of the better accommodation in the matter of living and lodging.

Automobiles will be provided for the Buffalo and Falls guests tomorrow evening. This part of the arrangements will be in charge of Mrs. Charles E. Graves. Among those who have tendered the use of machines are: Charles Shepard, Guy S. Terhune, Sandard Morden, B.J. Mitchell, Paul A. Schoelkopk and Frank Engel. Included in the list of patronesses are Mrs. B.J. Mitchell, Mrs. Charles Shepard, Mrs. Charles E. Graves, Mrs. Morris Cohn, Miss Grace Randolph, Mrs. H.A. Wicker and Mrs. George H. Courtier. Eugene Girard, chairman of the local Red Cross, will have supervision of the affair.

Two special cars will carry the party from Buffalo, and the contingent will be in charge of W. Nowak, chairman of the Polish Relief Committee and Mrs. Masaufski, a worker in the interest of the Red Cross movement.

When the couples have been assigned and the dance is under way the soldiers will be endowed with gifts from their country-women who will give kindly remembrances to be borne overseas. Last Christmas and New Year's the men at the Camp were recipients of gifts from Polish women at Buffalo, and records show the men fared better than did many of their allied fighting men in some of the camps. The coming function bids fair to be a memorable affair and a pleasant reminder for the men when they are overseas.

January 8, 1918, p. 2

A number of Polish soldiers on their way to Niagara-on-the-Lake passed through the city (St. Catharines) yesterday afternoon. The men arrived in the city from the G.T.R. station about 5 o'clock and were soon on their way to camp.



Snow Sculptures, Simcoe Park
Photos: Niagara Historical Society & Museum

January 9, 1918, p. 3 – Snow Fights, Snow Images

More Polish soldiers have been coming in steadily all week and will take the place of the detail of 500 who are due to move on to St. John's, Quebec, sometime through the week.

No one so thoroughly enjoyed the soft weather on Monday as the Polish soldiers who had snow fights galore and who made snow images everywhere they were quartered. In the corner of the park, the Band erected an effigy of the Kaiser with a horn in the centre of his forehead and with hands upraised as if he were saying 'Mercy Kamerade' as so many of his soldiers are doing of the 'Der Kaiser' is a huge cannon, also made of snow, which has the muzzle pointed suggestively at his heart. Nearby stands a huge figure of the Goddess of Liberty with a lamb standing at her left side. Elsewhere in the town are to be seen many beautiful figures, the work of the soldiers among whom are surely very clever artists else had they never conceived or executed so many lovely things. It is strange that our own soldiers never thought of amusing themselves in this way, probably because they are so accustomed to the snow, which many of the Polish soldiers are not as they come from the warm southern part of the United States.

...an address will be given by Rev. C.K. Masters who is coming from St. Mary's, at the local Red Cross...He will be a guest of his sister, **Mrs. L.C. Ascher** during his stay in town.

January 10, 1918, p. 5

The Polish soldiers who are billeted in the Miller garage on Ricardo Street, have erected a huge cross, on the open space nearby on which they have placed a figure of the Kaiser, thus symbolizing their conception of the end that should befall the greatest murderer that the world has ever known. The figure is built of snow and as the cold weather has frozen it solid, it is likely to remain in its present position for some time.

Captain Pembroke of the Third Battalion, Polish Legion was among the military men who so ably assisted the choir of St. Mark's Church at the special services on Sunday last.

January 11, 1918, p. 6 – Polish Falcons of America

Members of the Polish Falcons Society of Buffalo, which includes a trained choir and several clever elocutionists and dramatists in its numbers are coming to the Niagara camp on Sunday for the purpose of giving an entertainment for the Polish soldiers, many of whom are members of the Society. This entertainment will be held in the Park Theatre through the gracious kindness of the Y.M.C.A. on Sunday afternoon and will be the best of its kind ever given here. The 'Y' is always ready to help in the amusement of the soldiers at the camp and places its headquarters at their disposal whenever asked to do so.

January 12, 1918, – The Niagara Falls Gazette

Toronto Residents Give Poles Send-Off

Niagara Falls, Ontario, January 12 – Thirty Poles left Toronto today to join their brethren at Niagara-on-the-Lake preparatory to going overseas as a fighting unit of the C.E.F They were given a big send off in Toronto and a dinner arranged in their honor.

January 14, 1918, p.5 – Transfer to Fort Niagara, Navy Hall, Hockey

Five hundred of the Polish soldiers from this place were transferred to Fort Niagara on Tuesday to replace the draft that pulled out on the previous day for St. John's, Quebec. The band escorted the soldiers from their quarters at the wharf to the boundary of Paradise Grove playing a lively march all the way. They then returned to town while the departing soldiers took up the march to Lewisburg, which they reached at 5 o'clock. The Gorge road had cars in readiness and the trip to Fort Niagara from Lewiston was soon made. As the soldiers started on their march, friends drew up a big wagon near the corner of Ricardo and Melville streets and passed out cigarettes and candy as a farewell gift to each man as he passed by. One of the officers writing back to a friend here to-day said: "We had every kindness showered on us while we were in your town by your townspeople and the Y.M.C.A. and were given a farewell kindness that also gave us even kindlier remembrances of our stay with you; we regret our transfer to this place but – duty calls and we must move on, in obedience to our call. We hope to return some day and resume the friendships we have found and also prove our gratitude for all Niagara did for us. It is something we will never forget."

As soon as the men were taken away from here, others came to take their places, every train and trolley bringing the recruits during the past few days. The equipment and preliminary training of these men goes steadily on, the cold and stormy weather making no difference in each day's routine.

The old Navy Hall, which once housed the Governor-General and Parliament of Canada, has been turned into a Commissariat headquarters for the time being and now, instead of stately proclamations couched in stilted terms, there issues joints of meat, loaves of bread and the other rations issued to the modern soldier, in a word illustrative of the changes wrought by the present world war and proves that even the lost ancient building is utilized when an emergency arises. Navy Hall has passed through many vicissitudes and seen many changes since it was built in 1792 or earlier and the present use to which it is put does not dim the lustre of its history, but rather adds to it another glorious page.

The soldiers, under the guidance of the workers of the Y.M.C.A. have organized a hockey club that is said to be a good one and that promises to be expert at the game with a little more practice. The club is anxious to arrange matches with outside players for the near future and hopes to do so shortly. The men have a splendid rink on the slip at the wharf and spend as much time as possible in skating, playing hockey and other outdoor sports; the officers encourage them as this all helps to keep them in good condition and also in good spirits. They are fully enjoying the cold weather and all like the place and want to stay as long as possible.

January 16, 1918, p.3- Midnight Trolley

A number of recruits for the Polish Legion arrived on the midnight trolley on Saturday to join those at Niagara Camp, the men having been since the early morning making the trip from Toronto, from whence they came. The camp officials had to turn out in the midst of the howling blizzard to find quarters for the new arrivals and to see that the necessary provisions were made for their comfort but managed it after several hours' hard work and discomfort. The life of a military man, occupying a position of any responsibility is not a rosy one these days, but he manages to get through the daily routine and keep smiling through it all.

January 16, 1918, p. 5 – "Polish Patriots at Old Niagara"

Cannot Trust Germany's or Austria's Blatant Peace Talk – Saved Christianity from the Turks

"Despite the efforts of the Russian Bolsheviki government to arrange with Germany for a free Poland, etc., the Polish in Canada and the United States are not going to lay down on the job and let what may happen," was the declaration of Lieut. Andre Polkiwi.

"The Russian and German nations needn't bother trying to be solicitous about Poland. She is going to be free, and that is why hundreds of other Poles, like myself, are leaving good positions in Canada and the States and enlisting in the Polish legion. If it hadn't been for Russia and Germany, Poland today would have been free. What they haven't got, Austria has. Let all of them give up their

Polish provinces. Germany and Austria are quite willing to let Russian Poland decide by plebiscite as to whether it shall be independent or not, but you don't hear Austria say anything about the Polish provinces she gobbled up.

Make Her Free.

"If Poland is free, it will be because the allies, by beating Austria and Germany into submission, make her free. If Germany was to win the war does anybody think that she wouldn't gobble up that part of Poland that voted by popular vote to remain free? Let decadent Austria disgorge herself of the other free nations she has stolen before either she or Germany talk about giving a bigger nation than herself freedom. Look at Schleswig-Holstein, which Germany gobbled up from Denmark. She is a fine nation to be assuming the role of a liberty harbinger. The history of Poland all of the years it was a nation is a glorious one. She was too generous, too ready to help others, and too unsuspecting to remain in her former great state.

Saved Christian Religion.

"She not only saved Austria, but also the Christian religion from the hands of the Turks. That was in the day when arrogant, bulldozing Prussia was but a small state, and Russia was still a nation of barbarians. Poland will again be free, but there will be no thanks to the Kaiser, the Bolsheviki or the Austrian King. Perhaps the Kaiser would like to see his second son on the throne of Poland. When Poland does again get her freedom, as she will, it will be a republic, not a place for some member of the Hohenzollern family to draw a life-salary and impose his whims on a nation which has no love for him or his brood.

"The soldiers of Poland will make Poland free, with the aid of the entente allies, and not by all of the German-made peaces in the world. That is why you see train loads of Polish volunteers, passing through every day for Camp Niagara".

January 17, 1918, p.3 – Letter of Thanks to the Women's Institute

The letter given below was received by Mrs. Mussen, president of the Women's Institute and was read at Tuesday's meeting.

My Dear Madam:

I take this opportunity of writing you on behalf of the Army Medical Corps, stationed at the camp...to know that only were not without friends when among strangers. And again I am directed by the Polish Commission, through Lieut.-Col. LePan, to convey to you their thanks for your efforts in making those of the Polish contingent, who were in the hospital such generous tokens of your goodness at this time, as well as other times during their stay in Niagara-on-the-Lake. For myself, I can assure you that it is a pleasure to know that we have the sympathetic cooperation of such kind-hearted, generous and loyal friends as I have found in this camp. The work of the Medical team is very much lightened when we know that all we have to do is to make our wants known when a generous response is forthcoming. I desire that you would convey to any who assisted whose names I may have missed and thereby did not send a personal letter of thanks to assure them it was not through thoughtlessness, but because of my inability to remember names in particular. Again let me thank you on behalf of all when you assisted at the Christmas season, I am

Most sincerely yours

J.M. Smuce

Capt. C.A.M.C.

Officer Medical Service, Niagara Camp

Camp Hospital, Niagara Camp, January 12, 1918

(Among those who received special letters of thanks from the medical officers at the camp and from the Polish Commission was Mrs. Robert Mercer, who visits the camp hospital regularly every week and takes comforts and dainties for the sick men who are patients there.)

January 18, 1918, p 6 – German Bill, La Follyette Girls, Medical Inspection

Some mischievous person finished up the Kaiser the other day or rather the snow effigy of 'German Bill' as some youngsters called him, which was made to stand guard in the corner of the park by the Polish soldiers. Not content with this someone else destroyed the snow goat that stood on the side of the road in front of the Masonic hall and also knocked the beautiful falcon that topped the big figure

beside the goat and was much admired. We had thought these beautiful pieces of work would be safe from the destructive hands of the children and are sorry we were mistaken.

The "La Follyette" girls, a vaudeville company, have been playing a two weeks' engagement at the Kitchener theatre and are staying for a longer period as they seem to have taken the fancy of the soldiers. They are staying on the cottage adjoining the Masonic Hall, during the absence of Mrs. Norris in New York and seem to be enjoying their stay in the town very much.

Owing to the fact that the troop trains were given the right of way yesterday the local train had the morning trip cancelled and those who had intended travelling on it to Niagara Falls or further either home or went round by trolley via St. Catharines. Fourteen Hundred of the troops pulled out for St. John's and five hundred for Fort Niagara leaving only six hundred in camp. As new recruits are coming in continuously the depletion of the camp strength is only temporary, but, after so many being seen round the streets every day the place seems strangely empty. Members of the Polish mission have been here at the camp for several days and were accompanied by several officers of the French army, including **Colonel Martin** and **Captain Janecki**, who presided at the medical inspection that was given the men before they were allowed to leave here for elsewhere. The said examination is a very thorough one and no man is accepted if he is not in good condition.

January 22, 1918, p. 7

Quite a number of the Poles who have been at Fort Niagara for some time moved eastward last week and will be replaced by a draft from this place. Later on part of the U.S. National Army will train at Fort Niagara as it is expected there will be no further need of it for the Poles once it is possible for them to be accommodated at Niagara with tents.

January 23, 1918, p. 3 – Captain Waclaw Gasiorowski

Captain, the Rev., C. K. Masters, M.A., B.D., of St. Mark's has been visiting his sister, **Mrs. Ascher** and other relatives in town this week. This is his first visit to his old home since returning from overseas and the welcome he received from his friends was a warm one.

The soldiers, as well as the young people of the town are thoroughly enjoying the facilities for skating, hockeying etc., and large parties of them take part in the sports every night. The slip is a favorite skating pond, especially at night, as the ice is smooth and firm. The Polish Band is in great demand to supply music for the skaters and they are always willing to do their share towards the general enjoyment.

The promotion of Captain Frank B. Kenrick, of the C.O.T.C. to the temporary rank of Major, while at duty with the Polish contingent at Niagara Camp, has been gazetted, also the authority of Lieut. E. Dickie of the 48th Highlanders at the same camp. Both officers are very efficient in the work and also are most popular with the military folk as well as the townspeople with whom they are coming in contact.

Captain Waclaw Gasiorowski, who has been a recent visitor at the Polish Camp at this place, has been in Toronto and also in Hamilton speaking at public meetings with a view to obtaining recruits for the Polish Expeditionary Army. In speaking at a meeting of this kind recently Captain Gasiorowski, who is chief of the Military Commission of the Polish Army in France impressed on the Poles the necessity of joining the ranks in the defense of their home land, and said that the future plans of the Kaiser regarding Poland were not necessarily as, when this war was over, he will have no desire to make plans because Poland will be free of foreign rule; he pointed out the great traditions of their country and assured them there would be an independent Poland as a result of their efforts which is something worth fighting for. Captain Gasiorowski came over to the United States with the Polish Commission and leaves this week for New York on his way back to France. **Lieut. K.J. Zzarecki** has been sent over to Toronto to take charge of the work of recruiting Poles and is meeting with great success as already several hundred have arrived at Niagara Camp from that place and more are coming in every day, while Hamilton and other Canadian cities are also doing their share in this way. Already there are again three battalions here and the beginning of a fourth. The depletion in the camp strength, owing to the removal elsewhere of 1,400 men, being only temporary. **Lieut. Niski**, whose beautiful violin playing was so much admired here, has moved out with his unit and his departure is very much regretted by all who knew him. He is a pupil of Tschaikowsky's and is a very talented musician. He has the best wishes of Niagara folk for future good luck and a safe return.

January 23, 1918, p. 7

A thousand Polish troops are due to arrive at Niagara Camp today and will replace the draft that moves east shortly. The men are sorry to leave Niagara where they have received so many kindnesses from the townspeople but anxious to get to France to help 'clean up Kaiser Bill'. Those men who are coming in are strapping big fellows who look as if they are ready to "wallop the Huns" if they ever get a chance to do so. The young Polish officers are well-liked here and those going out always express the wish that the present friendships may be renewed in the future after Fritzie is licked, Poland freed and they return from doing it.

January 25, 1918, p. 5 – Cocoa Food Poisoning, Y.M.C.A.

It is reported that one hundred and fifty of the Polish soldiers at the Fort Niagara training camp are in the post hospital as a result of drinking cocoa in which impurities were found on examination, but none of the cases are very serious.

The Dominion National Council of the Y.M.C.A. of Canada is in receipt of a letter from the Polish military commission with offices at 70 Fifth Avenue, New York, extending high words of praise for the services of the branch at Niagara-on-the-Lake camp since the Polish training camp was established there. Ross L. Beckett, Mr. McCrae and the other members of the "Y" staff have been untiring in their efforts on behalf of the Polish soldiers ever since the camp opened last October and well deserve this expression of approval and gratitude from the Polish commission who fully realize the benefit the soldiers are receiving continually.

January 29, 1918, p. 3: - Military Police

With the transfer of the R.C.D.s (Royal Canadian Dragoons) elsewhere the military police duty is being done by Polish soldiers who seem to be quite as efficient as their predecessors. The Polish police have their headquarters in the premises in the Courthouse, formerly occupied by the Imperial Bank where everything has been arranged for their convenience and comfort.

January 30, 1918, p.3 – Recruiting in Canada, Football, Learning to Skate, French Officers

A number of Polish recruits from Detroit and other parts of Michigan arrived here on Monday to join the camp forces and a large contingent from other parts of the United States are due to come in during the week. Authority has been given to recruit 10,000 Poles in Canada with a view to swelling the strength of the Polish expeditionary force and already some have come in from Toronto, Hamilton and other places. The camp strength, which was lowered by the departure eastward of numerous drafts, is coming up and will soon be as large as when the camp first opened. The men are being given their preliminary training, and despite the storms and cold weather, seem to be enjoying themselves, while engaged in this way. They have been provided with footballs and spend a part of each day in this sport. Many of them are learning to skate also and will become quite expert if they remain at it long enough. There are a number of French officers at the camp just now, who have recently come over from France and they are making an examination of the camp, the methods of training, etc., and are giving instructions that will add to the efficiency of officers and men.

February 1, 1918, p. 1: Polish Legions declare war on Bolsheviki

Petrograd Feb 1 – Polish legions in the vicinity of Minsk have declared war against Bolsheviki.

February 1, 1918, p. 12 – Camp Logistics

Each train and trolley on Tuesday and Wednesday brought a fresh quota of recruits for the Polish Camp, the last contingent coming in by the midnight car. They are quartered in the new building on the camp ground while preparations are being made to house those coming in the future in the canning factory on Melville street, where large quantities of blankets and army clothing were transferred yesterday from the store buildings on the Commons by the Ordnance Corps. This Corps is one of the hardest working units in the camp, as the constant arrival of troops who must be outfitted with military clothing and equipment gives them little leisure time. The Army Service men have to work hard too and, whether the weather be stormy or fair, they make the rounds of the camp and the town, carrying coal, meat, wood or any other supplies that require transportation. A.S.C. in Canada may be something of a safety first unit but no one can say it does not do hard work aplenty. If there is any discomfort going, the men of the

A.S.C. get more than their full share while transporting the necessaries of life to the troops whose quarters are spread over such widely separated areas as they are in the winter camp at the place.

February 6, 1918, p. 5 – Military Ball

A number of the officers from Niagara camp will accompany Colonel LePan to St. Catharines on Friday night for the purpose of being present at the military ball which is being given by the Daughters of the Empire and are anticipating a very delightful evening.

More recruits are arriving from American and Canadian points, the majority of the former coming in by train, while the latter come in by way of St. Catharines. The men are enrolled in one of the battalions that are here. They are outfitted with military clothing as soon as possible after their arrival. They are not billeted now in the town hall as there is plenty of room elsewhere so this is once more available for public gatherings.

February 7, 1918, p.2 – Death of Pte Franciszek Kociszewski

The death occurred at Niagara Camp on Monday night of Pte Franciszek Kociszewski. The body was removed to A.W. Butler & Son Undertaking Rooms for shipment this morning to Ausonia, Connecticut, for burial.

February 8, 1918, p.5 -“Polish Celebration at Niagara”

It may be truly said that the people of Poland, at least those in camp at this place have taken the motto of the Niagara Historical Society – *Ducit Amor Patriae* – as theirs at the present time if the anniversary celebration which was held at Niagara Camp by the Polish Legion on Saturday and Sunday can be regarded as proof. This celebration was to have been held on January 22nd but owing to the severe weather a postponement was necessary. The anniversary was that of a great battle which took place on January 1863 between the Poles and the Cossacks when the latter were driven out of Warsaw with great loss and the arrangements for the celebration were made by Lieut. Adjamicka, of the 3rd Battalion, P.E.L., chairman of the committee, who had the assistance of the Y.M.C.A. in making the transportation arrangements for the visiting Poles and in other ways. The programme began on Saturday afternoon, February 2nd with an athletic meet, something hitherto unknown at this season. Wrestling and various other sports were held on Melville Street and were witnessed by nearly all the soldiers from the camp, who cheered the competitors on to victory, and evinced the greatest delight in each athletic event. The intense cold curtailed this part of the programme to some extent, but had no effect on the spirits of the spectators. In the evening, a grand ball was given in the town hall by the officers of the 2nd and 3rd Polish Battalions and it was a very great success. Many of the Niagara people and the wives of the Canadian officers had received special invitations to the event and nearly all of them were present. There was a splendid orchestra, a varied dance program and every arrangement made for the comfort and convenience of the guests, some of whom had come from Buffalo and other places across the line. The ball was a very enjoyable event and every one had an agreeable evening. A banquet at the Hotel Koscrusha [Kosciusko?] proved a delightful finale to a busy but altogether enjoyable day.

On Sunday all the troops in the Polish Legion attended High Mass in the Park Theatre, when Father Z. Rydlewski, of Pittsburgh, who has recently arrived in the camp, was the celebrant. Prayers were offered for the safety of those troops who are in transit to the firing line and of those who are leaving soon for the front, and also for the successful ending of the war. A special dinner for the troops was provided by the Polish Commission in honor of the day. On Sunday afternoon, the celebration was continued when a mass meeting was held in the Park Theatre, which had been kindly loaned for the purpose by the Y.M.C.A. Here gathered all the Polish officers and soldiers, a number of Canadian officers, numerous visitors from Buffalo, Pittsburgh, and other places, and many of the Niagara people, the big building being taxed to its capacity. Lieut. Adjamicka ably officiated as chairman and after a few preliminary remarks, introduced Major Young, of the headquarters staff, who representing Colonel LePan, gave an address of welcome, during which he spoke of the patriotic motives which had led the Polish men to enlist on the side of right in the battle for freedom and world liberty, and said that these motives were praiseworthy and befitting their ideals. He told them of their duty as members of the Expeditionary Forces, and said that they must be prepared to obey the orders of those in authority and to work in harmony and in unity with other sections of these forces. Major Young's speech was brief but to the point and was well received by all who heard it. Father Zygmunt Rydlewski, who has just arrived from Pittsburgh, where he had been in charge of one of the largest Polish Catholic churches in the city, was the next speaker. He gave up his

church and his work, believing that a greater duty was before him; vis, to point the way to Christ to the men who have as true patriots forsaken all in order to fight for the right. Father Rydlewski made his maiden speech in the English tongue on Sunday and before going on with his address, said he was proud to know that he was using the language for the first time in Canada, where for the first time in 125 years, the flag of Poland had been unfurled to the breeze of heaven. He spoke of the great struggle in which we are engaged at the present time and that there was only one end to that struggle, the defeat of Germany and Austria and the triumph of Britain, France and her other allies. The kindness of the Canadian people to the men of the Polish Legion was also spoken of and words of appreciation, earnest and sincere, closed an address of unusual interest and all too brief duration.

Three hearty cheers were given for the Canadian and American officers before Mr. Novak, chairman of the Polish Citizen's Committee of Buffalo was introduced. Mr. Novak has done a great work in the past year, in helping on the recruiting and outfitting of the Polish Legion and is deservedly very popular. He also referred to the fact that the Polish flag was flying for the first time in 125 years and expressed his own and his fellow countrymen's gratitude for the assistance and hospitality extended to the Polish soldiers by the people of Canada and more especially by the people of Niagara-on-the-Lake whose kindnesses were legion. Mr. Novak, referred to the anniversary which was being commemorated and said that Poland was one of the oldest countries in the world. The foundation of the Polish Empire was laid in the unknown times; it was great when Germany, Austria and Russia were only in the making. In 1305, Wenceslas 2nd, had united the provinces of Poland into one kingdom, and in 1309 a greater kingdom was secured by the addition of more territory. Poland had held the Turks, the Russians, the Tartars, the Huns and other foes at bay for many years but finally succumbed, owing to internal dissension and the political intrigues of the surrounding countries. The various partitions of Poland, her final loss of independence, the deeds of the patriots, Kosciusko, Poniatowski, Sobieski, Sigisimund, (who established the sovereignty of Poland over the duchy of Prussia), Dabrowski, Wenceslas, were briefly outlined and many deeds of valor, that were wrought on behalf of their beloved Poland were recounted. Mr. Novak, who is evidently a close student of the history of his country, is a magnetic and eloquent speaker. His address was full of pathos and of patriotic fervor, so much so that every one of his hearers, even those who do not understand him when he used his native language, were carried away by his eloquence. In closing he exhorted his countrymen to remember the wrongs of persecuted and dismembered Poland and to be ready to strike an effective blow for her and for the cause of freedom when having reached France and the firing line, they are in a position to do so. With Mr. Novak the love of country guides (*Ducit Amor Patriae*) and this motto he quoted in Polish. During the course of his impassioned address Father J. Durzynski, of Buffalo, spoke of the past, present and future of Poland, appealed to the manhood of the soldiers before him, to be unsparing in their efforts, on behalf of their allies and of Poland and prayed that success might attend their efforts.

The speeches were interspersed with musical selections and songs by young people from Buffalo, who helped in making this part of the programme attractive. The singing of the Polish National Anthem, followed by "God Save the King" brought a unique and memorable celebration to a close. It was a noteworthy occasion, one that adds another chapter to the long and varied history of the town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, a town that for nearly 150 years, has occupied a prominent place in Canadian affairs.



**Father Zygmunt Rydlewski
Camp Niagara
Photo: University of Toronto
Archives**

February 9, 1918, p. 7 & 12 - Boxing

More Polish recruits arrived by train on Wednesday and yesterday and will take place of the men who are due to move east in nine days.

Considerable interest in athletic work is being shown in the camp in this place and boxing bouts take place frequently. Boxing is now a part of the athletic training in the army, the idea being that a soldier should not only be skilled in the art of personal combat but must have the personal fighting spirit developed. In a recent series of boxing matches Private Comiskey of the Polish Legion defeated Private Novak of the same force and won the championship of Niagara Camp. The staff of the Y.M.C.A., take an active part in the athletic work among the soldiers and arrange periodical athletic meets as part of their weekly programmes. The men take a keen delight in all athletic sports, but especially in the wrestling and sparring contests which are usually held in the "Y" headquarters on Queen Street.

February 11, 1918, p. 3

Lieut.-Col. LePan and a number of officers from Niagara were guests at a ball in St. Catharines on Friday night.

Mr. Novak, chairman of the Polish Citizen's Committee of Buffalo was a recent visitor at the Polish Camp at this place and was accompanied by several prominent Polish citizens who are deeply interested in the welfare of their compatriots who are destined for France in the near future.

The Polish troops who have been in training at Fort Niagara since their transfer from the camp at this place, moved on eastward a few days ago and will be under training elsewhere for a time before going to the firing line. It is not expected that any more of these troops will be sent to Fort Niagara as the post will be required by the U.S. War Department for other purposes. A company of infantry of the regular army is in garrison there till other troops arrive.

February 12, 1918, p. 3 – closures due to coal shortages

Captain Nash, acting adjutant of the 3rd Polish battalion, has returned from spending a short leave at his home in Toronto.

The Polish soldiers were unable to understand the reason for closing up all the stores and some were heard enquiring what great general had fallen in battle or what other calamity could be the reason for such an unheard of state of things. Some of our male citizens were obliged to remain away from church on Sunday as owing to the unnecessary closing of tonsorial parlors, they were unable to have a shave in readiness for Sunday...Next Monday the Movie theatres will be closed to conserve fuel and will probably remain closed every Monday following till March 25, and the Polish soldiers who depend on them to a large extent for entertainment will have to go without or find it elsewhere.

February 15, 1918, p. 6

A number of the Army Service Corps, who have been on duty at Camp Niagara since last October have been warned for overseas and are leaving for Toronto today to join a draft and proceed eastward. It is expected that one battalion of the Polish Legion will leave here shortly as the warning for overseas arrived here some days ago.

News has recently arrived here of the safe arrival in England of a number of the Polish troops, who left Camp Niagara and Fort Niagara only two weeks ago. The steamer on which they crossed was more fortunate than others in that it escaped the attention of the enemy submarines.

February 18, 1918, p. 3 – Captain Dixon, measles quarantine

Captain Dixon who has been serving as chaplain to the 3rd Polish Battalion at this place left on Wednesday for Niagara Falls to join the troops who were moving eastward as he is to accompany them to their destination as one of their conducting officers. Captain Dixon expects to be back in Niagara in time for the summer camp and will be most welcome as he has been well liked here.

In view of the fact that the local picture theatres have been placed out of bounds for the Polish troops and other troops for two weeks to prevent the spread of measles to the camp, the Kitchener theatre has closed down for that time. The Y.M.C.A. headquarters is to be kept open exclusively for the troops while the ban is on the picture places and Mr. Beckett and his assistants, who are always glad to welcome the citizens at any other time, cannot do so for the next two weeks, as they are co-operating with the military authorities in their efforts to prevent the possibility of any of the men contracting measles. While there are only a few cases in town and these have been quarantined by order of the local health

officer, there would be no doubt soon be more were the present strict measures not if force. With so many troops all over the town, it can easily be understood just why these measures have been taken.

With a view to giving the soldiers every possible amusement, the Y.M.C.A. are arranging as especially interesting series of entertainments, the first of which will be given this evening viz. an illustrated talk on Poland, by **Father Rydlewski**, senior chaplain at the camp, who will show a large number of views of the country during the talk. On Thursday evening St. Mark's Choir will repeat their concert at the "Y" for the Polish soldiers while other good things have been arranged for the balance of the week.

February 20, 1918, p. 2

A garrison court of inquiry headed by Lt.-Col. Turnbull of the Welland Canal Force will sit soon to investigate a fire which occurred in one of the buildings occupied by the Polish Contingent at Niagara-on-the-Lake on Monday.



**Polish Women's Army Corps and Red Cross
Photo: Niagara Historical Society & Museum**

February 20, 1918, p. 5 – Gifts of Socks

Father Rydlewski, senior chaplain at the Camp, holds a Lenten service for the troops in the Park Theatre every Friday evening when the big building is always filled to capacity.

Captain Porter, head of the Niagara Chapter of the American Red Cross, accompanied by about twenty members and escorted by Mr. Gerrard, head of the organization, and a Pipe band, visited Niagara Camp on Saturday afternoon for the purpose of presenting socks, helmets and other comforts to the Polish troops. The ladies, all of whom have commissions as members of the Canteen and Motor Service Corps of the Red Cross, wore neat khaki uniforms and looked exceedingly business like and charming. The party arrived by a special trolley about 4 p.m., and went at once to Y.M.C.A. headquarters, Park Theatre, where the presentations were to be made. With them went the Highland Pipers, also a goodly aggregation of large square boxes in which various articles had been carefully packed for transportation. The men of the 1st Battalion were marched into the building first, and the 2nd Battalion came in later. On the platform were the ladies of the Red Cross, **Colonel LePan**, O.C., of Niagara Camp, Major Young, Captains Pembroke and Nash, Lieut. Dickey, Father Rydlewski, senior chaplain and other officers, The Y.M.C.A. staff, one or two privileged visitors and the Highland band.

The proceedings were opened by a brief address from Colonel LePan who spoke of the work that is being done by the American Red Cross, of the pleasure it gave him to welcome their representatives on this occasion and also of the Polish soldiers of their kindness in providing so generously for their comfort.

Father Rydlewski, the senior chaplain at the camp, speaking on behalf of the Polish soldiers said that he was glad to be here today and to be able to express their appreciation of all that is being done for them, he said that while others were being drafted into the army, the Polish men were enlisting

voluntarily as all were eager to strike a blow for the freedom of their much abused country. He briefly touched on the past troubles of Poland and predicted a more happy time in the future as he was confident that when the war is over his country, like the other 'little peoples', will get its share because England, the United States and France would look out for them. He was glad that his people were going so willingly to fight beside the English, French and the 'Uncle Sams', and grateful to those who were so thoughtfully providing them with gifts that would make them more comfortable in the future. He spoke of the good work of the American Red Cross and then called for three cheers for that society and for the ladies who were ably representing it. The cheers were given with a hearty good will. The Polish National Anthem was played very expressively by the Polish Band, every one standing while it was being played, after which Mr. Gerard made a brief, but impassioned address, in which he congratulated them for their patriotism as evidenced by their voluntary enlistment and closed by wishing them all good luck and a safe return. This closed the first part of the proceedings. Then began the distribution of gifts. The American ladies stood on the front of the platform and handed each man two pairs of socks and a package of comforts as he passed by, and also gave each one a smile and a cheery greeting, to which a happy response was made. The men came down the main aisle, passed in front of the platform and then went out a side door, thus giving room for the men of the 2nd Battalion, who filed in as their turn came. The Polish officers as well as the Probationers and their men, received a gift, 2,500 pairs of socks being distributed. The helmets were given out on Monday to the troops that were leaving the camp. As the gifts were being distributed, selections were played by the Polish and the Pipe bands in turn, and the latter was a source of great entertainment for the men. The performance of the man who handled the big drum being a whole show in himself. Major Young, Captain Pembroke, Lieut. Dickey, etc. assisted the ladies while the distribution was in progress and seemed to enjoy making themselves useful. The scene was animated one and was also most interesting and it is safe to say that the 'Y' headquarters never staged one that made such a marked impression on the spectators. The big place was packed to the doors with black clad, happy-faced soldiers, an occasional blue-clad officer, lightening the 'darkness' to a certain extent. The brightly lighted stage presented a striking contrast with its groups of khaki-clad Canadian officers and ladies, the Kiltie band with the saucy bonnets perched rakishly on the sides of their heads, and the few civilians who seemed strangely out of place among so many uniforms. It was a wonderful sight and a pleasant occasion, one that no doubt will long be remembered by those who were recipients of the kindly attentions of the American Red Cross Society and also by the visitors who were so highly privileged by being present. The party from Niagara Falls were greatly pleased with all they saw and heard, while in Niagara-on-the-Lake, and before returning home, expressed their intention of repeating the visit at some future time. The gifts they presented were most acceptable as many of the men were leaving for overseas in a few days and also the card that was tied on each packet of comforts, on which was inscribed good wishes from the Canteen and Motor Services Corps, American Red Cross, Niagara Falls, NY Chapter. The gifts that were distributed represented a great deal of hard work, as well as kindly thoughtfulness on the part of the givers.



Officers at the Camp
Photo: Niagara Historical Society & Museum

February 20, 1918, p.3 – Prince Poniatowski

A garrison board of enquiry is to be convened here shortly to investigate and report on the fire which occurred on Monday night in the pay office of the Polish Camp at this place in which some of the records were destroyed and the building, which was loaned by the Salvation Army to the Military, is almost a total loss. The origin of the fire is unknown.

Prince Poniatowski, who was a guest at a reception and dinner given by the Polish Citizens' Committee in Buffalo this Wednesday in honor of the Polish-French Mission of which he is a member, gave a stirring address to the Polish people present during which he said: "It is the hope for a free and united Poland that is rallying Poles to the cause of the Allies and pictured Poland as a strong pro-Ally state acting as a buffer between Germany and Russia. Attempts to Germanize Poland have failed according to the Prince, who said that his people are willing and eager to fight side by side to re-establish their nation. Prince Stanislaus Poniatowski, who spent some time at Niagara Camp earlier in the year is one of a mission of three officers now in the States and Canada to speed up recruiting for the Polish contingent of the French Army. Other members of the mission are **Major Joseph Kozlowski**, who has been in the Foreign Legion of the French Army for 26 years, and **Captain Henry K. Wagner**, who has been in the French Army since 1888. Both took commands in the Polish Legion at the time of its inception. Another member of the mission is Sergeant Dobel of the French Army, a veteran of many years of service, who has been wounded several times in the present war. All of them expect to be very successful. They visited Ottawa and other Canadian cities before crossing over to the United States where they expect to spend some time.



Prince Poniatowski
Photo: University of Toronto Archives

February 21, 1918, p.5 – Recruiting Conference in Cleveland

A Polish recruiting conference was held this week in Cleveland, which lasted for three days and which the leaders assert, is one phase of the beginning of a new Poland. After they have helped to conquer Germany the army of 100,000 that is to be recruited in the United States will be kept in Europe for a time to hold the boundaries of a reconstructed Poland, when it is restored to the Polish people. The new Polish Government is already taking shape in the States and other Polish patriots who are at present leading and financing the recruiting campaign are deeply interested in its formation. Polish troops are taking an active part in the campaign against the Bolsheviki at Minsk and other sections of the Russian border and Polish troops that mobilized and trained at Niagara Camp are ready to take part in the big allied offensive against the Germans, their country's oldest oppressors on the Western front, while others are on their way. They are all eager for the fray and determined to achieve the independence of Poland and to die if necessary to attain this most desired end. The Polish soldiers at Niagara Camp have shown the Canadians a fine example of patriotism and have given us a truer understanding of these people and their high ideals.

February 22, 1918, p.11

Prince Poniatowski, who conducted the first Polish contingent from Niagara Camp to the firing line in France and spent some time there, has returned to the camp for a few days before going elsewhere on recruiting duty at which he will no doubt be very successful.

Eleven hundred Polish troops left Niagara Camp earlier in the week for an eastern point, several special trains being required for their transportation. With them went another, so that of the battalion only enough being left here to form the nucleus of a new one. The soldiers were in the best of spirits as they boarded the trains and were pleased to think they were already on their way to the firing line, while the men who remained here wished that they too were fit and ready to go. The departing troops were presented with packages of candy, cigarettes, by the Y.M.C.A. staff, which were in a big wagon on the roadway near the trains and handed them out as the men passed by. They got a great send off from their comrades who lined up on each side of the street along which the travellers passed on the way from their quarters to the train and some touching farewell scenes took place between relatives, some of whom were not in the departing drafts to their great sorrow. More recruits are coming in daily that will soon bring the camp strength up to its former state, though at present there are only about 700 men in camp. The Polish troops are nearly all gone from Fort Niagara too and it is not expected that many more will be mobilized there as the post will be required shortly for other purposes. It is expected that any other further recruits will come to Niagara Camp where there is plenty of space for their accommodation.

Magazines as other reading material are needed by the Y.M.C.A. at this place as they are in constant demand for the use of the Canadian and Polish troops at Niagara Camp.

Major Kozlowski, Captain Wagner and Lieutenant (Prince) Stanislaus A. Poniatowski, members of the Polish French Mission who are touring the United States and Canada and who have been at Camp Niagara for several days were in Buffalo on Wednesday and spoke at a mass meeting at Dom Polski hall at night when the big building was packed to the doors. Maxwell M. Nowak, chairman of the Polish Citizens' Committee, was chairman of the meeting. While in Buffalo, the headquarters of the mission is at the Iroquois hotel. Regarding the members of the mission, the Buffalo News says Lieutenant Poniatowski is of the royal family of Poland. His grandfather was a brother of King Stanislaus August, the last king of Poland and the young officer was named after him. Major Kozlowski was wounded in the leg while on active service in the present war and walks with a noticeable limp. He will remain on this side of the Atlantic for a time in connection with the Polish camps at this place and Fort Niagara, while it is expected that the other two members of the mission will return to France later on. All three have seen a good deal of fighting on the western front and are well fitted for the work they are doing in securing recruits for the Polish Expeditionary Army.

March 1918: The first case of Spanish Influenza is diagnosed in Kansas; U.S. soldiers carry it to the front in Europe, and soldiers heading home from the First World War spread it across the globe. There were 50-100 million casualties. One in four people contracted the virulent influenza strain. Young people were the most effected.

March 21, 1918, p.8 – Burial of Private Mateusz Wisniewski, the 4th to die at the camp.

Lenten services will be held in St. Vincent de Paul's church tomorrow morning and evening and in the Park theatre in the evening when **Father Rydlewski** will be in charge. The latter service being held for the Polish soldiers.

A brief band concert will precede the lecture on "Poland" which is being given in the Park theatre this evening. No doubt many will be present to hear and enjoy both concert and address.

More recruits for the Polish Expeditionary Army arrived here yesterday special trolleys bringing some of them while the rest travelled in a special coach attached to the local train. Part were assigned to the 3rd battalion at the dock and the balance went to the 1st and 2nd who are quartered in buildings on the camp ground.

Another military funeral took place at the camp on Tuesday morning when the remains of Private Matenzie Winlewski [**Wisniewski, Mateusz**] were interred in the military plot in St. Vincent de Paul's cemetery. Private Winlewski, who enlisted in the 2nd battalion of the Polish Legion a short time ago came from Milwaukee to the camp and had only been there a few days when he contracted a heavy cold which later turned to pneumonia. He passed away at camp hospital on Sunday. Rev. Father Rydlewski, the camp chaplain, officiated at the burial service and a firing party composed of members of the deceased

soldier's unit, gave the last honors at the grave. This is the fourth funeral of this kind that has taken place here since the camp opened.

March 22, 1918, p. 2 & 6

The funeral of the late Treflix Onak, took place from the undertaking rooms of Butler & Son on Thursday morning at St. Vincent de Paul Church at Niagara-on-the-Lake thence to the church cemetery. The funeral procession in which 400 soldiers walked was headed by the military band.

Lieut. (Prince) Poniatowski, who was at Niagara Camp earlier in the week, left on Wednesday afternoon for New York, where he will join the Polish Mission.

March 23, 1918, p.11; Meeting with General W.G. Mann

Colonel Le Pan, O.C. Niagara Camp, paid a visit to Fort Niagara on Thursday for a conference with General W.G. Mann, commander of the Eastern Department of the U.S. Army.

April 2, 1918, p.5

Recruits for the Polish Legion are arriving daily from the United States, some coming from as far west as California and as far south as Texas, and the camp strength is gradually increasing. The men are well built and of good physique and are taking to their training with the greatest enthusiasm. Plans are under way for getting the men under canvas in the mild weather and the under drainage has dried out the ground especially in the higher sections. The men of the permanent details are all looking forward to their stay here during the summer and expect to have a pleasant time when not on duty. It is not known yet whether any of the corps that are here just now, will be transferred elsewhere for duty or not, but no doubt this will develop later.

The first band concert of the season took place here on Easter Sunday when the Polish band, a splendid organization, gave a two-hour programme during the afternoon in the town park and thereby delighted everybody. The band has been quartered all winter in the Masonic Hall where they have been perfecting the music and they were capable of giving a fine performance and were therefore not surprised at the variety and excellence of the programme which they rendered so capably on Sunday afternoon. The fine weather and the music brought out a large gathering and everyone was delighted with all they heard and fully appreciated the good work and kindness of those who gave them such great pleasure.

April 4, 1918 (?) – Easter Gifts

Easter Gifts: The Y.M.C.A. building was the recent scene of another pleasing incident when the officers and men of the Polish Legion were presented with Easter gifts from the Helena Paderewski Relief Committee. Mr. Kaminski, head of the Press Bureau, Polish Military Commission of New York presided at the presentation and was assisted by prominent Polish gentlemen from New York, Buffalo and other places as well as by the Y.M.C.A. staff and officers of the Camp Headquarters Staff. The Polish officers received special gifts, including silver cigarette cases and fountain pens, while each soldier received socks, a Turkish towel, a handkerchief, cigarettes and candy, each gift package being tied with scarlet ribbon and accompanied by a pretty Easter card on which the greetings of the donors were expressed. The Easter season is the time when the Polish and Russian people remember each other in a special way and the men who are training so far away from their own homes for service overseas were not forgotten by those having the Polish cause, which includes our cause, in this festive season. Suitable addresses were given before and after the gifts were presented and while the presentation was in progress, the military band rendered patriotic music. Mr. Kaminski and his companions arrived here by the morning train. It is needless to say that the gifts were fully appreciated by the Polish soldiers and also the kindly spirit that led them to be given.

A resolution [by Town Council] was passed as follows: "That the amount of \$12 be sent to Colonel Le Pan to be paid the men who worked on the breaks in the water mains last week and that the thanks of the Council be given the military authorities for allowing the men to help out in this emergency."

Will Swift Suspension by Hoover be Sustained?²¹ [April 4, 1918, p. 1] New York, April 4 – The local Federal Food Board was waiting today to hear whether their recommendation to Food Administrator

²¹ This brief article referring to Herbert Hoover is included because at the end of the war, Herbert Hoover was in charge of American aid to Eastern Europe and did a lot to aid the Polish cause. This is one of the earliest references in The Standard to Herbert Hoover.

Hoover suspending the New York branch of Swift & Company from buying and selling eggs for thirty days and subjecting it to a fine of \$6,000, will be upheld. Swift & Company are charged with selling eggs at a higher price than that fixed by the board.

April 8, 1918 – Band Concert

By the kind permission of Lieut.-Col. Le Pan and with the consent of Mr. R. W. Taylor, the Polish band will give a series of band concerts in the Town park on Sunday afternoons beginning tomorrow and, as this is a very fine organization, people may expect to hear something good along musical lines. It is likely that Mr. Taylor will have the seats placed round the park, (they are at present stored away) so that people may be able to hear the whole programme. The band has been using the instruments that our town band had but, we hear, that friends have recently purchased new instruments for them which will be available for their use within the next few days. Polish people in the United States are deeply interested in their soldiers that are in training at this place and are seeing that they lack for nothing that will help their work along, hence the gift of the instruments for the band.

The Polish and other troops at the camp were paid yesterday and the staff of the pay office had a busy time while this work was in progress.

Mr. Beckett, who is in charge of the Y.M.C.A. work among the soldiers at Niagara Camp is making another appeal for contributions of books and magazines from the people of Niagara and St. Catharines and vicinity, this reading matter to be for the amusement of the men in their recreation times. The N. St. C. & T. railway carries such contributions to the "Y" free of charge so those who wish to send any on may do so without cost to themselves.

Large quantities of blankets, military clothing and equipment have arrived at the camp this week, some of which has been placed in the buildings in the lower part of the town in readiness for the new troops who are due to arrive shortly. The soldiers have received their new summer caps and clothing and present a very smart appearance though they cannot be feeling as comfortable as they might in this chilly weather were they still using their heavy clothing. April 1st is almost too soon to discard winter clothing in this climate anyway, but 'orders is orders'.

The Polish band has been invited to go to Niagara Falls, N.Y. today to take part in the Liberty Loan parade and intend going up by the afternoon train. The band numbers about 36 members now but as half goes overseas soon, it will not be so for long.

April 10, 1918, p.5

The ladies of Niagara and some of the Canadian officers in camp, assisted by the Polish Band, will render a varied programme at the Y.M.C.A. on Wednesday evening. Niagara people as well as the soldiers are invited.

In addition to receiving a complete set of new instruments the Polish Band has also received an issue of new black uniforms, with red trimmings in which the men present a very natty appearance. The band, accompanied by a detail of the Polish troops from the camp, have been given permission to go to Niagara Falls, N.Y., some day this week to help along the third Liberty Loan Campaign, the U.S. Government having asked for and been given this privilege by the Canadian Military authorities.

The activities of Captain Stethem and his police details have recently entered on a new field, one that is furnishing some amusement for casual spectators, vis., the rounding up and impounding of those festive cows, horses and pigs that, old habits un-forgetting, have found their footsteps straying as of yore, to the grassy spots on the old camp ground where, owing to the fact that the ground is needed for military purposes, their presence is taboo. One 'arrest' that was recently made consisted of a cow, a calf and a fine big pig and the efforts of the police getting them into the pound yard furnished plenty of amusement for those in the vicinity, especially as the Polish policemen had difficulty in understanding Captain Stethem's orders, as well as in persuading the 'prisoners' to amble quietly into safekeeping. But the incident goes to show that if animals of every kind are allowed to roam the streets of town at all times and at their own sweet will, they will not be allowed on the camp ground and also if they do trespass on the military reserve the owners must expect to take the consequences.

April 12, 1918, p.11

A Polish restaurant will be opened shortly in Mrs. Sherlock's building on Queen street, as the stock and fixtures used by Mrs. Ada Sherlock during the time she so successfully conducted the business have been sold and the building rented to the new tenant.

Hundreds of recruits for the Polish Legion are arriving daily from the United States at Camp Niagara, extra coaches being attached to the morning trains since Monday for their accommodation. The men signed up before Easter but were allowed to spend that festive season at their homes. They are all fine, clean looking specimens of manhood and as they arrive and are outfitted get at the work of training with zealous enthusiasm, with a view to being fit and ready when the order to move eastward comes. People derived a good deal of quiet amusement from the signs with which one of the special coaches had been decorated by the Polish recruits en route. Some of them were, "On to Berlin to can the Kaiser," "Watch us get the Kaiser's goat" "We're out to get the Kaiser's scalp," "We can see the Kaiser's fall – when we get over there he'll fall sure," and many similar remarks. The both sides of the coach being thus adorned. Like our own men, the Polish soldiers are fully confident that the Kaiser and his hordes of barbarians will be beaten in this war and are determined to help in attaining this desired end.

It is likely that the Polish band will give another open air concert in the town park on Sunday afternoon, as their previous concerts have been so much appreciated that the people have asked that they be continued. Lieut.-Col. A.D. Le Pan, the commanding officer of the camp, is always glad to give the Niagara people pleasure and has kindly consented to allow the band to help along those lines whenever asked to do so.

April 13, 1918, p.7

Mrs. Herbert Stethem was the hostess of a charming little tea on Tuesday afternoon when Mrs. A.D. Le Pan who is here for a short time, was the guest of honor. Mrs. Stethem's apartments in the Waite Inn was gay with flowers in honor of the occasion and a warm welcome was given her guests by the hostess. Among the guests were Mrs. Harris, Mrs. Dickie, Mrs. Lewis, Mrs. Ross, Mrs. Brown, Mrs. John Morgan and her daughter, Mrs. Snell of London, Mrs. Millar and Miss A. Dean Miller. Several other social events are being arranged by the wives of the staff officers for Mrs. Le Pan, who is here to be near her husband, Lieut. Colonel Le Pan commanding officer of the Polish camp.

The Polish military band, in charge of **Band Sergeant Kempiskey**, went to Buffalo, N.Y. on Saturday and took part in the Liberty Loan campaign parade where they created a very favorable impression. Some of the people of the city, who did not know what a fine body of troops are in training at this place for service with the Polish forces overseas, were very much interested in the band, enjoyed their excellent music, admired their appearance and inwardly resolved, no doubt, to visit Niagara camp in the near future and obtain a closer view of the training given these men that they may "do their bit" against the Hun on the western front. The band crossed the river to ferry to Youngstown where a special Gorge route car awaited them and took them to the city. The return was made over the same route and the bandsmen, who wore their new dress uniforms for the first time, thoroughly enjoyed the day.

The military authorities are making plans for improving the camp grounds at this place in order to utilize them more extensively for training purposes during the summer season. It is said that a new sanitary system will be put in that will, in a way, make the camp independent of the town's system, and also that more of the ground will be under drained in order that it may be kept dry and in a sanitary condition. The section of the ground on which drainage was installed some years ago, is always dry and fit for use and this experiment has proved so successful that the authorities believe further expenditure along these lines will be fully justified. Details regarding both plans are being worked out by the divisional engineers department and more of them will be made known in the near future. It is good news that the Polish army is to remain here and that Colonel Le Pan and his staff will also be here for the summer and possibly longer. We understand that the training grounds will be divided into two areas, one of which will be used by the Canadian troops in training, the other by the Polish troops. There is plenty of room for both and neither camp will interfere in any way with the other.

April 16, 1918, p. 3

Under the direction of Band Sergeant Kempiskey, the Polish Military Band rendered a long, varied and excellent programme in the town park on Sunday afternoon and their concert was greatly enjoyed by all who heard it. The day was warm and sunshiny and many people gathered in the park to listen to and enjoy the music. One selection, in which members of the band sang part of the music, was specially fine. The men's voices blending in harmony and proving that their musical ability was not confined to one branch. The public thoroughly enjoy these concerts and appreciate the kindness of the band in giving these concerts and also the courtesy of Lieut.-Col. Le Pan in giving permission for the men to do so.

The Polish Liberty Loan celebration in Buffalo, at which the Polish military band was present on Saturday was held at Broadway and Fillmore Avenue where bonds were sold from a replica of the United States Treasury building. Mr. Maxwell M. Nowak, chairman of the Polish Citizens Committee was in charge of the sale, at which there was a large representation of the Polish people of the city. Members of the band state that the gathering was a very large one; that everyone was most enthusiastic and many bonds were taken up as a result. It was a strenuous time for the bandsmen who were tired out when they arrived back in Niagara at midnight. They were excused from duty at church parade on Sunday morning.

April 17, 1918, p.7

Mayor Young of the Headquarters staff has rented Mr. John Weston's cottage for the season and will take possession as soon as Mrs. Young and their children arrive from Toronto.

Colonel Le Pan, O.C. Niagara Camp, has taken Mrs. Winthrop's cottage for the season and will bring his family over from Toronto shortly.

Mr. A.M. Clyde, proprietor of the Hotel Kosciusko (formerly Doyle's hotel) has invested in a new high-powered automobile and has engaged the services of Charles McMillan as chauffeur for the season. Taking advantage of the fine weather that prevailed during the weekend Mr. Clyde and his family motored to Buffalo and attended the Polish Liberty Loan celebration and enjoyed a re-union with many old friends while there. The party returned home on Sunday night.

Manager Taylor is endeavouring to make arrangements for a series of open air concerts in Simcoe Park for the next few weeks for the entertainment of the townspeople and hopes to secure permission from Colonel Le Pan for the Polish band to give some of them.

Another large draft of Polish troops left here on Monday afternoon for an eastern point, a special Grand Trunk train being sent here for their transportation to the seaboard. Colonel Le Pan and the officers of the headquarters staff were at the train to say good-bye while the probation officers formed a guard of honor for the officers who were leaving. The military band was also present and it was to their rendering of various Polish and British patriotic music that the departing troops entrained, after giving three hearty cheers for Colonel Le Pan and three more for Niagara camp which all seemed sorry to leave. Hearty cheers, patriotic music and much flag waving characterized the departure of these men who hope to be taking their full share in "licking the Kaiser" on the western front or wherever they are assigned for service. Polish, American and Canadian flags galore were taken by the men and the train presented a gala appearance as these flags floated from the coach windows. The Y.M.C.A. staff were also at the train with packages of comforts and reading matter for each officer and man and this last kindness was fully appreciated by the recipients who were grateful to the "Y" for so many kindnesses during their stay at Camp Niagara. More Polish recruits are expected to arrive within the next few days from American and Canadian points that will fill the vacancies in the three battalions caused by the departure of this latest draft.

April 18, 1918, p.6

Captain John Harris of the headquarters staff has returned from taking a draft of Polish soldiers to New York.

The Polish military band which has been comfortably billeted in the lower floor of the Masonic Hall all winter was transferred to the camp ground on Tuesday afternoon where space for the men's accommodation has been provided in one of the new bunk houses. People were sorry to see the transfer taking place, as the men were well behaved and well liked.

April 20, 1918, p. 13

City and Vicinity: A number of St. Catharines folk travelled to Niagara Falls N.Y. on Sunday to witness a parade of foreigners in the interest of the third Liberty Loan. There were fully 10,000 foreigners in the parade.

Come and hear Paderwiski and Kubelik, the travelling musicians at Welland Avenue Church, Thursday evening, April 25 (1918)

The Polish Military Band goes to Niagara Falls N.Y., tomorrow to take part in a Liberty Loan parade which foreign-born citizens are arranging. The Shredded Wheat band is to assist in leading the parade in which it is expected that 5,000 Poles, 3,000 Italians and 3,000 Armenians, Syrians etc., will

march. The event will be unique and a notable one for the city, which is one of the most cosmopolitan communities in this part of the Niagara frontier.

The Polish soldiers received their semi-monthly pay checks on Thursday, the men being marched in and lined up in front of the court house (where the military pay office is located) by companies, in order to be paid. As a result, there was another busy session for the pay officer's staff, of whom Captain Hamilton (a returned man) is the chief.

April 22, 1918, p.5

A Brave Soldier's Return: Niagara welcomed home on Friday last Private James Patterson, of the 13th Canadians, in a way that must have gladdened his heart...The Polish military band, the school children and as many of the townspeople as could gathered at the terminal...After the reception was over, a procession formed with the Polish band, headed by Mayor McClelland...As the procession swung into Melville Street it passed through a guard of honor composed of the officers and men of the 3rd Polish battalion who stood at salute till it had turned off into Delatre street on which the Patterson cottage stands.

April 24, 1918, p.8: The Band Outing

Special coaches have been attached to the Niagara trains for the past two days for the accommodation of recruits to the Polish camp who are coming in from the States in large numbers.

The Band Outing: The Polish Military Bands presented a brave appearance in their bonny scarlet coats and neat uniforms as they marched down the streets of the town from the camp early Sunday morning to the ferry landing on their way across the river to Niagara Falls, N.Y. where they were to take part in the big Polish Liberty Loan parade. The men, from Sergeant Kempisky down to the smallest drummer boy (and he is "some boy" say people who watch his work with the drumsticks on occasions) had their brass buttons polished up to the limit and their instruments also and were surely worthy representatives of the Polish Legion. Niagara folk are great admirers of this band and we are sure the men made a most favorable impression on the people of the Cataract City and also helped in making the parade and its object a great success. When the band landed in Youngstown on the morning trip they favored the villagers with "The Star Spangled Banner" and other American patriotic airs and ended the informal concert with Poland's national hymn, which most of them heard for the first time. People on this side of the river, who live near the water front, heard and enjoyed the music also as the wind was in the right direction to carry the sound over. Listening to the music as it came sweetly over the water on the fragrant morning air, one thought of the pretty lines which tell of "the bold notes free, that made the bells of Shandon sound far more grand on the pleasant waters of the River Lee," and wondered if that pretty river were more beautiful than "Niagara's stream that figured oft in song and story", and if the music of the bells of Shandon was sweeter than that which stirred the patriotic hearts of the listening people, all on a Sunday morning. Captain John Wagner, hero of the Marne and other engagements in which the French army bore so distinguished a part, accompanied with a junior Polish officer and surely attracted a full share of attention in the big parade. Captain Wagner bears tangible proof of his services in the present war in his slight limp and in the many military decorations he wears.

The party travelled from Youngstown to the Falls and return by a special Gorge car. The return to camp materialized shortly before midnight.

April 25, 1918, p.8; Burial Plot in NOTL; Recruiting in Toronto; Concerts

A concert will be given in the Y.M.C.A. headquarters, Queen street, this evening by the N.C.O. class of the Third Battalion Polish Legion, whose dramatic entertainment of several weeks ago was so much enjoyed by all who saw it. The program this evening will be of a similar nature and promises much in the way of enjoyment. Band concert tomorrow night.

Colonel H.C. Bickfort and some of the Divisional Engineering staff visited the camp yesterday to look over the ground and see what is to be done in way of preparation before it can be used for training purposes this season...The coming of the Canadian camp is not expected to interfere in any way with the Polish camp as the grounds will be divided so one will not interfere with the other.

The burial plot in St. Vincent de Paul's cemetery that was set apart for the internment of Polish soldiers who may die while in training here, has been put in perfect order within the past few days and the graves of the four men who are interred there have been marked with a small stone on which the name, rank, unit and dates of the birth and death are inscribed. In addition to the four men who have been

buried in Niagara, there have been only four other deaths (the other men's remains having been sent back to their homes in the United States), making a total of eight deaths out of about 14,000 troops who have passed through Niagara camp since last October. There have been many patients cared for at the camp hospital but, with the exception of the eight men mentioned, all were discharged as cured and were able to go on elsewhere as the drafts moved out. The men whom the hospital folk were unable to save were almost at the last extremity with pneumonia when they consented to come to the hospital for treatment and so could not be saved. The Polish soldiers are unique in this respect. They will not acknowledge they are sick or consent to go to the hospital as long as they can move around with any degree of comfort. But with only eight deaths out of 14,000 men, one can hardly say that Niagara Camp is not healthy, even in a winter of such unusual severity as we have recently experienced. The Polish soldiers who have been patients in the camp hospital speak very highly of the care they received from the doctors and staff and greatly appreciate all that was done for them and they are also grateful to the women of Niagara who have frequently visited the hospital and supplied dainties with which to tempt the appetites of the very sick and comforts for those who are convalescent.

The Polish citizens of Toronto have been called together recently and addressed by Rev. Mr. Chodiervice and Mr. A.H. Korzybski, a veteran from the eastern front and now recruiting officer in Toronto who put the issues before them and showed them what world-wide German domination would mean after which a call for recruits for the Polish army was made with good results. A resolution was passed protesting against the partition of Poland and the German adjudgement of Polish provinces to the new republic of Ukraine without the consent of the inhabitants and declining to recognize all territorial re-adjustments that have been made by the order of the German Emperor. The recruits from Toronto will join the Polish army for training at this place, most of the members of which have come from the United States. It is welcome news that the Polish camp is to remain here for the summer as the Canadian officers in charge of it, also the Polish officers and men are well liked by the townspeople, the greatest harmony having prevailed since the camp opened last October. Just how the camp ground will be allotted will not be definitely known till after Colonel H.C. Bickford, officer commanding military district No.1 has paid his visit which is expected to be today. The appearance of several Polish names in Monday evening's casualty list in the evening's casualty list in the Buffalo papers may be regarded as definite proof that some of the men who have received training in Niagara camp are taking part in the fighting on the western front. Among those names are **Corporal Casimir Zubrak** and **Pte. W. Antoniewicz**, severely wounded and **Ptes. Edward J. Piekarski, J. Aleksandrowicz and Thos. Obeja**, slightly wounded. The first draft of Polish troops left here last November and no doubt these and later drafts are on the firing line.

Sunday's Concert: A splendid concert programme was given for the entertainment of the soldiers of the Polish Legion in the Y.M.C.A building on Sunday afternoon by the Strollers Club of Niagara Falls, N.Y. who had offered to come here and had been given permission to do so by Lieut. Colonel Le Pan and who extended an invitation to some of the townspeople to be present. The soldiers were paraded to the building in good time as there are nearly a thousand here now. They taxed the capacity of the place so there was little space left for civilians but all present were more than pleased with the excellence and quality of the programme. A copy of which is given below and proves that it was exceptionally fine:

Programme:

La Marseillaise

Suomi's Song (Muir)

Volga Boat Song (Tuthill)

"Drink to me only with Thine Eyes"

Arranged by Brewer

These were rendered by the Strollers Club followed by Miss Vorwerk who sang very beautifully Sosti's "Serenata" and Sinding's "Sylvelin"

The Strollers Club then sang:

"The Long Day Closes" (Sullivan)

"Blue Bells of Scotland" arranged by Bucks

"Killarney"

Negro Melody – "Carry Me Back to Ole Virginny" in all of which their magnificent voices were blended in truest harmony

Miss Vorwerk followed with two solos.

"I Attempt from Love's Sickness to Fly" (Purcell)

"The Last Rose of Summer" (Anon)

After which another group of songs were sung by the Strollers Club.

They were:

"Give a Rouse" (Bontock)

"Lullaby" (Brahms)

"Ave Maria" (Arcadelt-Damrosch)

Viking Song – "Clang goes the Anvil (Coleridge-Taylor)

This closed the programme proper after which the visiting singers led the audience in singing patriotic songs, viz: "God Save the King" and "Star Spangled Banner" and two verses of the sad but beautiful National hymn, one that stirs the heart and awakens the sympathy of the most indifferent hearer for the cause of persecuted Poland.

The concert program was directed by Mr. Charles M. Saxe, while Miss Marie H. Rose, was the talented accompanist who did much to ensure the perfect harmony of the various numbers. Miss Eka Vorwek, the soprano soloist, has a powerful sweet voice of wide range and gave universal pleasure by her rendering of her selections, while too much cannot be said in praise of the choruses rendered by the Strollers Club and of the kindness of all those who came here to give the Polish Legion a pleasing entertainment.

Rev. Father Rydlewski, senior camp Chaplain, who acted as chairman, expressed the appreciation of the Polish Army at Niagara and of the officers in command of the camp, of the kindness of the visitors in coming here and giving such a splendid concert for their entertainment during a brief speech at the close of the concert.

Captain John Harris, who was the officer in charge of arrangements for Sunday's event, is well pleased with its success and looks on it as a happy beginning of his work along social lines in connection with the camp, this season. At the close of the concert the visitors were motored out to camp headquarters, where they were entertained at lunch by Colonel Le Pan and the officers of his staff. The trip to and from Niagara Falls, N.Y., was made by the Strollers Club, fourteen in number, by motor and was a pleasant one in view of the spring like weather.

Y.M.C.A Programme

The following is the programme that has been arranged for the amusement of the Polish soldiers by the Y.M.C.A. for this week and will be held in their headquarters on Queen street:

Monday – Moving pictures including views of the Polish Falcon's officers training camp at Cambridge Springs, which camp was moved to Niagara-on-the-Lake later in 1917

Tuesday – Wrestling match

Wednesday- Musical and instrumental programme by 3rd Battalion under direction of Mr. Twardowski

Thursday – Concert by the N.C.O. class of the 2nd Battalion (musical and dramatic)

Friday – Band concert programme

Saturday (afternoon and evening) – Athletic meet and moving pictures

The views of the Polish Falcon's camp are the personal property of Lieut. Albright, the 1st Polish officer in the camp, who has kindly offered to loan them again for the use of the Y.M.C.A. later on. Lieut. Albright has been appointed aide to Major J.H. Wagner, the distinguished French officer during his stay in camp.

A number of young Polish officers now in camp were trained at Cambridge Springs and can be plainly recognized in the pictures as they appear on the screen, which adds to the interest and popularity.

In the wrestling match of Tuesday Kowalski and Nowak will endeavor to carry off the heavyweight championship of the camp and the contest is sure to be close as the men are said to be about evenly matched.

A large number of recruits are arriving daily for the Polish Army which means increased work for the Y.M.C.A. authorities. Just now the Y. camp staff are getting packages of comforts, books and magazines ready for presentation to the next draft which is expected to leave for the east shortly.

April 29, 1918, p.3; Polish Camp Pay Office

Field Postoffice No.1 has been established in one of the upper rooms in the court house, where it was moved soon after the fire that wrecked the Salvation Army hall, while the Polish camp pay office is located in the section of the lower floor, formerly occupied by the Imperial Bank, who loaned it to the government for the purpose.

April 30, 1918, p. 7, Polish Liberty Loan Parade, Buffalo

Lieut-Col. Le Pan, O.C. Niagara Camp, was in Buffalo on Sunday for the Polish Liberty Loan parade and was accompanied by Prince Poniatowski, Major J.H. Wagner, Major Joseph Kozlowski, Captain Stanislaus Grodski and other returned officers from the Camp.

More recruits for the Polish Camp are coming in daily and will take the place of those who go eastward with the next draft. Special trolleys have been coming in of late bringing from 40 to 50 recruits. The men expect to go under canvas on the ground soon, but will not vacate their present quarters till it is quite safe to do so.

The Polish Military Band from Niagara Camp went to Buffalo on Sunday and participated in a big Polish Liberty Loan parade and drive, which took place during the afternoon. The band left camp at 8:30 and crossed the river by ferry to Youngstown where a special Gorge car awaited them and in which the trip to Buffalo was made. With the party were Colonel Le Pan, Majors Wagner and Kozlowski, Captain Grodski, Prince Poniatowski and other officers of the staff, also 20 of the young Polish captains and lieutenants from the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Polish battalions. Arriving at Buffalo, a civic reception was tendered by Major Buck and members of the city council while Maxwell M. Novak and other prominent Polish citizens were present and later entertained the party, who were joined during the day by members of the Polish Mission. A grand parade took place during the afternoon and ended at Broadway Auditorium, where a meeting was held, the big building being packed to its capacity.

May 1, 1918, p.7- Liberty Loan Campaign, Buffalo; Classifying the troops; Madame Petrova

The Polish troops who have been billeted in the American hotel, the canning factory and other buildings in the lower section of the town, expect to move out to the camp on May 15th and go under canvas.

The Y.M.C.A. has given the Polish soldiers the work of directing the campaign in the county to raise funds that are absolutely needed if the "Y" is to go on with its work among the soldiers overseas. Mr. Beckett expects to be absent from Niagara for the next two weeks and will give his personal supervision to the campaign in Port Dalhousie, Merrifton, Thorold and other places and hopes to raise the sum he aims at without difficulty. A certain sum is allotted to each county and may be raised either by a canvas or by an appeal to the councils for a grant. Details regarding the campaign will be available later.

The Polish military mission composed of officers from the Polish training camp at this place, has been in Buffalo in the interests of the Liberty Loan Campaign and of recruiting for the Polish Army. They were the guests at a dinner given in their honor in the Polish Union hall by the Polish citizens committee, when about 350 people were present. The after dinner speakers were Prince S. A. Poniatowski, Major Henry Wagner, Captain Stanislaus Grodski, Maxwell M. Nowak, Rev. Alexander Pitass, **Major Francis E. Fronczak**, Rev. C. Kryzan and Rev. Hyacinth Fridzyirski. The party returned to camp in time to see a large draft of troops off on their journey eastward the ultimate destination being the battle front in France.

Within the past few days a rather complicated piece of work has been completed in connection with the Polish troops at this place, viz, a complete classification, this being made with a view to determining each man's future sphere of usefulness when he gets to France. Some of the men at the camp are skilled in various mechanical trades and can be made very useful in various capacities other than taking his place in the trenches. All the men here are graded as infantry, but some are anxious to enter some other branch of the service. The names of these men are listed and a copy of the record goes forward to France for the use of the French Military authorities later on. The work of classification was carried out in the Y.M.C.A. headquarters, the troops being paraded and marched into the building to enable the officers in charge to do their work quickly and with as little trouble as possible.

The Famous Players will present Madame Petrova in "In Exile" at the Royal George tomorrow night. Madame Petrova is Polish and few of the troops at the camp miss seeing her whenever she is shown here.²²



**Major Francis E. Fronczak, Painting by Wojciech Kossak, 1931
In the Collections of the Fronczak Room, E.H. Butler Library
Buffalo State College
Photo: Stan Skrzyszewski**

August 13, 1918, p.6

A number of the Polish officers from the camp were in Hamilton on Saturday attending the big Polish Provincial Convention and took a great interest in the proceedings. Addresses were given regarding the entry of the Polish army into the war and numerous pledges of support were given by those present.

The Polish Singing Alliance will hold its annual convention at the Hotel Statler in Buffalo from August 25th to 30th and it is expected that over 300 delegates from all parts of the United States will be present. The convention committee is arranging the programme, one feature of which is said to be a visit to the Polish Camp at this place and a concert for the Polish soldiers, some of whom are members of the Alliance.

Captain Eugene Girard, Captain Elba and several other members of the American Red Cross Society of Niagara Falls, N.Y. paid an informal visit to the Polish Camp at this place last Thursday, arriving as the draft was making final preparations for leaving and gave each man a parcel of comforts for his use on the ocean voyage. The party were at the train to see the soldiers leaving and were greatly impressed by the enthusiastic send-off they received from the Niagara people and the troops and from their own and the Canadian troops.

Messrs. Beckett, Henry and McKellar, of the Polish Y.M.C.A. were also at the train and placed large quantities of cigarettes, candy, fruit and books and magazines in the cars for the refreshment and amusement of the men while en route eastward. It was a busy time for the "Y" staff as there are innumerable kindnesses to be done for the men prior to their departure from the camp.

Military Dance

²² Olga Petrova was born Muriel Harding in England (May 10, 1884 - November 30, 1977). She likely chose the stage name Olga Petrova herself and created her own back story as a glamorous Pole or Russian.

On Tuesday, August 20th, at 8 p.m. the Girls Service Battalion of Niagara-on-the-Lake will give a Grand Military Dance and Promenade concert at the Queen's Royal Casino, to raise funds for the Community Canning Kitchen.

An attendance of officers from the Canadian and Polish camps at Niagara and from the American camp at Fort Niagara is assured.

There will also be others from Niagara Falls, N.Y. and adjacent cities. It is to be hoped many may run down from St. Catharines. The tickets will be fifty cents apiece.

August 14, 1918, p.8 – “Prince Arthur at Beamsville and Niagara”

Son of Duke of Connaught Visited Camps Yesterday

Prince Arthur of Connaught paid a short visit to the Canadian and the Polish camps and also the aviation camp at Beamsville. He arrived from Niagara Falls on a special C.P.R. train. Col. H.C. Blackford, D.O.C. met the prince at the train and together they went to the Canadian camp headquarters compound, where the visitor was received with the usual military honors.

Horses had been provided for the whole party, and the prince was escorted through the lines of the various units. His royal highness had the pleasure of seeing the Polish soldiers going through their routine program, as well as receiving a Polish military greeting.

September 1918: The Spanish Influenza hits Camp Niagara

September 3, 1918, p. 2-3

The Polish residents of the city were not at hand at the parade yesterday because the prominent members were in attendance at a Polish Congress in Detroit and were unable to plan for the event.

Sergeant Gordon Hearn, of the Polish Camp staff, was in charge of both services in St. Barnabas Church, St. Catharines on Sunday.

“Celebration Proved Highly Successful”

The Parade

...

Polish Brass Band, led by the Polish Flag and the Polish Bugle Band, led by the American Flag.
The Polish rear guard

Afternoon

The afternoon's program consisted mostly of sports and games, the latter given by soldiers from Old Niagara. The Polish Brass Band supplied the musical numbers throughout the afternoon.

The winners of the various events are listed below.

...

Band Race. Musical Walking, competed by Polish troops only. Three prizes were awarded.

...

The Tattoo

Polish Band. Selected. Bandmaster Waleskie. Polish Bugle Band.

The Polish residents of the United States and Canada in a Congress in which over 1,000 delegates were present from all parts of the world sent cables to all Allied nations requesting that they not recognize the Polish territory given to the Poles by the Germans, but insist on a free Poland. Some 15 delegates were in attendance from Canada, among whom was **Leo Tatko**, of St. Catharines [4 Brock Ave]. The Congress sent a telegram to Premier Borden thanking the Government for permitting Polish immigration to Canada and a second telegram asking that a Polish representative be appointed in Canada. The Congress decided to raise \$10,000,000 in the United States and Canada for the Polish cause. The Congress was held in the city Detroit from August 12th to 30th.

September 4, 1918, p. 1

Niagara Camp, Ont. Sept. 4 – Major-General F.L. Lessard, Inspector-General for Eastern Canada, inspected the Polish and Canadian Camps here today.

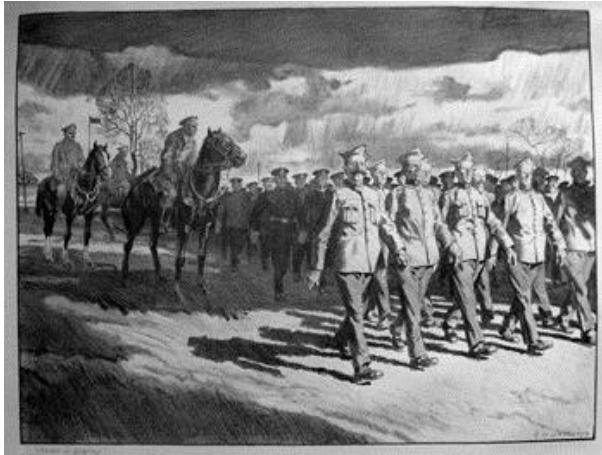
September 5, 1918, p.3

A large number of recruits have arrived at the Polish Camp in the past few days, most of them coming in from across the border. It is expected that another draft will leave for France in a few days,

which will temporarily lower the camp strength. It is fully expected that, should the war continue, the Polish Army will spend the winter here and already some of the officers are looking for houses, but the Canadian Camp is expected to move back to winter quarters in Toronto and Hamilton sometime next month.

Bowling

Great excitement prevailed on the Niagara Bowling green a few days ago, when the finals in the team competition, prizes for which had been put up by **Colonel LePan** and the officers of the staff of the Polish Camp, were being played...Captain Lewis said the prizes were given as a slight token of appreciation of the many courtesies extended to the officers of the Polish Camp by the Niagara Bowling Club and that their kindness had been more deeply appreciated than he could say.



Polish Battalion Drilling Niagara Camp
By: C.W. Jefferys

September 9, 1918, p.5 – C.W. Jefferys, Canadian Artist

C.W. Jefferys, a prominent Toronto artist, is at Camp Niagara just now to make sketches of the Camp for the Canadian War Records Commission, London, England.

More recruits for the Polish army have arrived from U.S. Points at Niagara and as a result the camp strength is considerably increased.

September 11, 1918, p. 4

Another Pleasing Event

The ball of pleasant pastime at the 'Blue Triangle' Hostess House²³, at this place, keeps rolling, and the latest affair was an entertainment given by two of our most welcome summer residents, Mr. and Mrs. J.W. Trounce, who arranged a party on Saturday evening for some hundred or so of our gallant allies, the patriotic Polish soldiers, now encamped on the historical battlefield of old Niagara...The violinist who rendered the selections of some of the great musical masters, gave unusual pleasure to the audience, especially the Polish soldiers, who have the instructive love of music born with them...The men, after singing the Polish national hymn and God Save the King, gave three hearty cheers and a tiger for Mr. and Mrs. Trounce as a slight token of their appreciation of their kindly hospitality in giving them a most delightful evening.

September 13, 1918, p. 2

Sergt. Gordon Hern of the Polish Division, Niagara Camp, will preach in Christ Church, Sunday evening and in St. John's Church, Jordan, Sunday afternoon.

²³ The blue triangle Y.W.C.A. hostess house (The magnificent home of Mrs. Thomas) at Niagara-on-the-Lake was opened in June, 1918.

September 12, 1918, p.6, 10 & 12

The Girls' Service Battalion have received from the Canadian Red Cross at Hamilton, special permission to donate fruit, pickles and jam to the Polish and Canadian Military hospitals at Niagara Camp and have sent out the following donations:

To the Polish Camp Hospital – 26 quarts canned plums, 1 basket plums, 23 quarts preserved plums, 2 baskets carrots, 5 quarts mixed pickles, 1 quart beets.

Polish Notes.

A message was received at the Polish Camp early this week which told of the safe arrival of **Father Rydlewski** in France and the news was received with great pleasure.

Lieut. Harold Brown, who has been attached to the staff of the Polish Camp for some time, has been relieved of his duties; he has signed up in the Siberian contingent as a Sergeant and will go into training at once.

In a letter recently received from France, the following appeared which will be of interest to our readers: - "I am sending you clippings from the Paris Daily Mail, certain reports of the gain of ground and prisoners taken by a battalion of Polish troops. This particular battalion, composed almost entirely of American Poles, who were trained in your town, made at attack and advanced almost a mile with very small loss of men. The losses of the enemy were such that though ground was strewn with corpses of the Bosches and besides the Poles alone took 213 prisoners, the total number of prisoners taken being 250 in this particular attack." Other letters tell that the Polish boys who go out from here, are not concentrated in one camp, but are in two, which are a long distance from each other. One camp is at Plouaret (Plowaret), Cotes des Nords, the other at Lessay Manche, but in both they are in good spirits, ready for the Bosches when the time comes and ever mindful of the good times they had in Niagara, where they received so many kindnesses, for which they are grateful. (It is to provide comforts and hospital attention for these boys that the **Polish White Cross** funds are expended and as they take a greater share in the fighting against our common foe, there will be greater need of surgical attention and a consequent greater need of funds.) If anyone would like to contribute a little towards this fund, the Standard correspondent will be glad to receive and send it on. Small contributions are just as acceptable as large ones. Who will help?

Captain Pugh, of the C.A.M.C. who has been on duty at the Polish Camp hospital for some time, has been granted leave of absence and will probably be transferred elsewhere later on.

More recruits for the Polish Army arrived from the United States on Tuesday and yesterday and received a most enthusiastic welcome from the boys who preceded them here.

Lieut. John Podgorski of the Polish forces that assisted in the defense of Verdun, and who is now on duty at the Polish Camp at this place as instructor, has been spending a few days leave with friends in Buffalo. Lieut. Podgorski was asked to assist at a War Savings Stamp rally in Buffalo on Monday and gave an interesting narrative of the history making battles he has seen. After which the crowds elbowed their way to the platform in Lafayette Square for the honor of buying stamps from a man who had fought at Verdun and lived after it. Lieut. Podgorski was with the 104th regiment at Verdun.²⁴ After the siege of the spring of 1917, only 16 survivors were left to bear its standard and they were scattered to other regiments. "Verdun was saved" said he, "because our men fought like hell in seven languages. Your men, your marines and all the others can do the same thing." There have been numerous veterans of the present war at the Polish camp but none had a more honorable record of service than Lieut. Podgorski, who expects to return to duty in France very soon.

September 16, 1918, p.3

Captain W.H. Duffett, chief medical officer at the Polish camp, will leave for overseas shortly with a draft of Canadian medical officers. His successor will be Captain A. W. Gregory of Toronto.

Mr. Richard Ordynski, stage director of the Metropolitan Opera House, New York, has been at the Polish army camp at this place for several days giving a series of lectures in the Polish Y.M.C.A. on the history and development of Poland. Just before the outbreak of the present war, Mr. Ordynski was manager of a large theatre in Warsaw, Poland. He left for a holiday visit to Germany on July 39th, 1914, and was not permitted to return to his own country, but because he was physically unfit to go to the front,

²⁴ The 104th Infantry Regiment was one of a small handful of WWI US units to be awarded the fourragère for gallantry. Most of the men were from Springfield, Massachusetts.

he was eventually allowed to leave for the United States, going by way of Italy. He is an Austrian Pole and on his way through Austria to Italy he was detained for some time till his physical disability was established.

D. W. Griffith's wonderful production, his latest, "Hearts of the World," was exhibited at the Canadian Y.M.C.A. for the benefit of the soldiers at the camp on Friday night and also at the Polish Y.M.C.A. on Saturday night and on both occasions the men fully appreciated and enjoyed the picture. The pictures are beautifully staged and the production the last word in motion pictures.

September 17, 1918, p.5

Mrs. George Reid, wife of Sergeant Reid, of the School of Infantry, has arrived from Toronto, to spend the winter with her husband, who is on duty at the Polish Camp.

Polish 'Y'

A number of Niagara folk went out to the Y.M.C.A. at the Polish Camp on Saturday night to see the famous picture, "Hearts of the World,"²⁵ which was put on by special arrangement with the military authorities for the benefit of the soldiers. The big recreation tent was crowded to capacity with the officers and men of the Polish Army and everyone was deeply interested in every phase of the production. If one may judge from the frank expressions of disapproval, the hisses, etc., which greeted the pictures of the Kaiser as they were thrown on the screen, that mighty monarch has a warm time in store should any of the Polish boys meet up with him in future days. One Polish boy was heard to remark, as the picture came on the first time. "Wonder what mutt it was took the part of Kaiser Bill when they were shooting that picture." Whoever the actor was he evidently didn't enjoy it as his expression was most ferocious. The production is a very fine one, depicting as it does the vicissitudes of a small village in the war zone in France, while a love story was woven cleverly into the play that softened to a certain extent the otherwise grim features. Everyone was very much interested in "Hearts of the World" and thoroughly appreciated the privilege of seeing it.

September 18, 1918, p.8 – Polish Mission

Members of the Polish Mission have been at the Polish Camp in the past few days exhibiting a series of films that show all the various phases of the development of the Polish army beginning with the meeting of the Mission at which the organization of the army was decided upon and ending with the Polish concentration camps in France. Pictures of the officers' training camp at Cambridge Springs, of the camp at this place, of soldiers enroute and landing in France and many others fully as interesting, were shown and were greatly enjoyed by all the men at the camp and by others who had the privilege of seeing them. Some few of the films have been loaned to the Y.M.C.A. at the Polish Camp where they will be shown some evenings as part of the programmes.

More recruits have been arriving at the Polish Camp since Monday and will replace the trained men who are leaving for France within the next few days.

Colonel LePan and the staff of the Polish Camp are making preparations for housing the troops during the winter and it is said that many of those who loaned their places for billets last year are being asked to extend similar privileges this year. No doubt they will be only too willing to do so, as a winter camp will be a great advantage to the town.

September 23, 1918, p.1 – "Fourth Death in Polish Camp"

Niagara Camp, Sept. 23 – The fourth death from Spanish influenza in the Polish Camp occurred Sunday morning [Sept. 22]. As in the previous cases the patient had been suffering from the influenza for a short time. There were 185 influenza cases in the Polish camp today. It is said the disease was introduced into the camp by a recent recruit from the United States.

September 23, 1918, p.5 - Canning Factory to House Troops

The big canning factory on Melville Street, now owned by P.J. O'Neill, will be used again for housing the Polish troops during the winter, it has been definitely decided. Active preparations for using the ... were begun as it is proposed to billet the men there immediately and so guard against

²⁵ Hearts of the World (1918) is a silent film directed by D. W. Griffith, a wartime propaganda classic that was filmed on location in Britain and near the Western Front, made at the request of the British Government to change the neutral mindset of the American public

possible sickness. It is likely that the use of other buildings in the town will also be requested as it is not considered advisable to put up more new buildings on the camp ground in view of the uncertainties of the war situation. The influenza epidemic was checked before it had got a good start and few new cases have been reported since Thursday.

September 24, 1918, p.5 – “Five Deaths at the Polish Camp”

(Canadian Press) Toronto, Sept.23 – Spanish influenza has claimed five victims, who have died in the Polish Infantry camp at Niagara and there are 168 soldiers suffering from this disease there at present. The Canadian Camp has not yet been attacked, although there are many cases of severe colds there.

September 24, 1918, p.5

Spanish influenza, which broke out at Polish Camp last week, but was soon checked, has made its appearance among the U.S. soldiers in training at Fort Niagara and the post is now under strict quarantine as a result.

Captain Lewis of the Polish Camp staff, and Mrs. Lewis, spent the weekend with friends in Toronto.

Council Meeting

A letter from Captain Secord, camp engineer, was read, calling attention to the lack of fire protection at the camp, both Canadian and Polish, as there are no hydrants close enough to the buildings to be of any use in case of fire, and asking if some arrangement could not be made between the town and military authorities whereby three hydrants, one situated on John Street and one at each end of the huts at the Polish camp, could be installed, and the cost to be shared by both the town and Department of Militia.

September 25, 1918, p.3 – Medical Aid

A detail of army medical men have been brought here from Toronto to assist in caring for the Polish soldiers, who are in hospital with influenza as the hospital was short-handed. There has been so little sickness at the Polish camp during the summer that some of the staff were sent to the base hospital in Toronto and to Camp Borden for duty. The medical and nursing staff has been giving their assistance in the emergency and their efforts are meeting with encouraging success, as few cases were reported yesterday. There have been six deaths since the outbreak which, considering the large number of patients suffering from the epidemic is a very small percentage. No cases have been reported from the Canadian camp owing to the precautionary measures that were taken, the only sickness there being a few cases of grippe.

On Sunday, in all the churches of the town, special prayers were said for the soldiers of the Polish Camp, who were suffering from the influenza. In addition to this, in St. Mark's Church, the special prayer 'For the deliverance from the grievous sickness in our midst and for the recovery of those who are ill' was offered up and was joined in with earnest fervor by all present.

Niagara Fair: Virgil

By kind permission of Lieut.-Col. LePan, the Polish Military Band will be in attendance. A fee of 25 cents will be charged for admission to the grounds.

September 26, 1918, p. 5 – Polish White Cross

We are in receipt of several additional contributions for our Polish White Cross collection in the past few days for which we are grateful. As the collection does not close till the end of the week there is still time for those who may wish to contribute a chance to do so. Any sum, small or large, is acceptable. The cause is worthy of all the help that anyone can give. Contributions may be left with Mrs. Ryan at Central Grocery or with the Niagara correspondent of the Standard.

Military honors were accorded the remain...from Camp Niagara, who died earlier in the week from pneumonia, following influenza, the funeral taking place on Tuesday afternoon. The remains were brought down from St. Catharines, arriving here at 2 p.m. and were met at St. Vincent de Paul's Cemetery by the chaplain from the Polish camp by a military escort and firing party. After a brief committal service was conducted, three volleys were fired over the graves and 'Last Post' was sounded, after which the soldiers were marched back to camp. Lieut-Col. LePan O.C. and officers of the headquarters staff of

the Polish Camp, also several visiting French officers, were present at the funeral, which was quieter than usual in view of present camp conditions.

September 27, 1918, p.8

Colonel Dercle of Surgeon-General Gorgas' office, Washington, D.C., who has been in America a year as a member of the French Medical Corps, is a visitor at the Polish camp this week and has inspected the sanitary features of the camp in connection with the outbreak of Spanish Influenza. Colonel Dercle has expressed himself as well pleased with what he has seen of Polish camp and thinks the epidemic is about at an end. Another visitor yesterday was Colonel J.W.S. McCullough, Provincial Health Officer, who inspected the influenza cases, in company with Colonel Dercle and Major Thomas Morrison, A.D.M.S. of the Canadian camp, who is in charge of them. Colonel Dercle, who has been a guest at the Polish headquarters during his stay leaves today for New York and expects to return to Washington early in the week.

The Girls' War Service Battalion ... since the influenza broke out at the Polish camp, has made every day at the canning kitchen a sufficient supply of nourishing tomato soup for the sick men at the camp as this was greatly needed to keep up their strength.

September 27, 1918, p. 13 –“Two More Deaths in Polish Camp”

Niagara Camp, Sept. 27 – Two more deaths occurred yesterday in the Polish Camp from Spanish influenza. This makes a total of eight, so far, all privates. There are about two hundred cases in the Polish camp hospital.

September 28, 1918, p.6

The Spanish influenza epidemic is well under control at the Polish Camp and very few new cases are now developing. Major Morrison of the O.A.M.C., who has been in charge of the cases since shortly after the disease became epidemic, has stated that the cases being discharged from the hospital exceeds the new cases to such an extent as to lead to the belief that the epidemic has about run its course. Eight deaths only out of two hundred or more cases have taken place.

Colonel Dercle of the French Medical Mission, who spent the week at the Polish Camp, left yesterday for New York en route for Washington; he was very pleased with the reception given him at the Polish camp and also with the camp, its surroundings and sanitary conditions.

September 30, 1918, p. 6

Niagara Camp, Ont., Sept. 30 – The open-air religious services in camp have been discontinued for the remainder of the season, and the Y.M.C.A. auditorium tent is now being used for the Sunday morning services.

The death toll in the Polish Army here from Spanish Influenza now totals 12, one having been added yesterday morning. There are 185 cases in the hospital. Lieut.-Col. LePan, commandant of the Polish Camp, says the situation is improving.

October 1918: The Spanish Influenza hits Toronto

October 1, 1918, p. 5

Captain Lewis has returned to duty at the Polish Camp after spending a week's leave in Toronto.

Thirty-seven **Polish White Cross** nurses, who have 's been training in New York City for some time, have recently sailed for France where three White Cross hospitals have been organized to care for the soldiers of the Polish Army, many of whom were trained at the camp at this place. **Dr. Boleslaw Lapowski**, who has visited the Polish Camp at this place is in charge of the first unit and other divisions will follow as soon as possible as the Poles are now actively engaged in the fighting on the western front. It is to help in providing supplies for these hospitals, in which the Polish boys from our camp will be cared for, that the Standard's Niagara correspondent [**Mrs. Ascher**] has been collecting contributions in the past few days, and as there will be greater need of funds for this purpose later, she will accept any further contributions that generous and kind-hearted friends of the Polish boys may wish to give.

The death roll in the Polish camp from Spanish Influenza reached 12 yesterday, but according to **Major Morrison**, Director of Medical Services in the Canadian Camp, who is also directing the handling of the influenza cases at the other camp, the situation is improving. There were 160 cases in the hospital

over the week-end but most of these will be discharged shortly and few new cases are being reported. There are no cases of 'Flu' at the Canadian Camp and none in the town, this being due to the strict quarantine that is being maintained at the Polish Camp.

Among those who left with the Army Medical Corps, Siberian Field Force, were Sergeant Franklin and Private Dan O'Donnell, two popular young men who have been on duty at the Polish Camp up to a few weeks ago when they were transferred at their own request to the Siberian force.

October 4, 1918, p. 7 – Captain Pembroke

Captain Pembroke, who has been on duty at the Polish Camp as Assistant Adjutant for the past year, has seen service overseas with the famous 'Princess Pats,' where he participated in the battles of the Ypres, the Somme and at Vimy and was twice mentioned in dispatches...After three years continuous fighting in the present war, Captain Pembroke was invalided home and later on received his appointment to the Headquarters staff of the Polish Army. His present appointment may be regarded as proof of Captain Pembroke's administrative ability.

Two more soldiers of the Polish Army, victims of Spanish Influenza, were laid to rest in the soldier's plot in St. Vincent de Paul's cemetery on Tuesday afternoon, full military honors being given them. Father Michalski, officiated at the burial and the firing party was in charge of Sergeant Major Noble of the school of infantry.

Colonel LePan, C.O. at the Polish Camp has asked council for the use of the town hall during the winter as quarters for troops, same as last year, and his request was granted on condition that the military supply their own fuel for heating.

October 5, 1918, p.6

The fight against Spanish influenza in the Polish Camp is progressing favorably and the number of cases in the hospital was down to 136 yesterday, the lowest in some time. There were only seven admissions yesterday and the discharges from the hospital numbered 22. There have been 15 deaths so far, a small percentage compared to the mortality rates among training camps in the United States.

October 7, 1918, p.1

Influenza Appears in this City [St. Catharines]: Nine Nurses at General and Marine Hospital are affected.

October 10, 1918, p.3

The Polish Army School of Infantry has moved from the camp ground to its winter quarters in the Western Home where officers and men will be much more comfortable. Their tents, etc. are being used as a segregation area where new arrivals are detained for a short while under medical observation as a precaution against a further outbreak of influenza.

A mass meeting of the Polish people of Buffalo was held in the Polish Hall last Sunday evening to promote the Liberty Loan campaign and also to commemorate the first anniversary of the starting of the Polish army. Maxwell M. Nowak, chairman of the Polish Citizen's Committee, was one of the speakers and the meeting, which packed the big hall to its capacity, was one of intense enthusiasm throughout.

'Flu' Cases Stay Behind: When Niagara Camp Breaks up Next Week – Number of Cases Increases

Niagara Camp, Oct.10- While the number of Polish soldiers affected with Spanish influenza has been reduced to 98 the total affected in the Canadian camp is over 200, and still increasing.

Only three deaths have occurred in the Canadian camp so far, and none since Sunday. A death in the Polish camp Tuesday brought the total Polish fatalities from influenza up to 17. The Polish camp seems in a fair way to be relieved of the epidemic in a short time, as the discharges from hospital are increasingly large, and the admissions daily lessening.

When the Canadian camp breaks up next week only those influenza cases which have reached convalescence will be removed from here. The hospital will remain behind until all the 'flu' patients have recovered.

October 11, 1918, p.11

A Polish Legion, composed principally of American Poles, was received into the French Army on Oct. 7th and the occasion was marked by unusually interesting ceremony near Nancy, France, in the

American zone. The Polish soldiers of this legion received their preliminary training at Camp Niagara then went on to France where after more training they have been sent into the firing line.

The sports at the Canadian camp are off for the remainder of the season, owing to the influenza outbreak which is well under control, but out at the Polish camp, sports continue and are a great factor in keeping the men in good health and contented.

The Polish camp seems in a fair way to be relieved of the epidemic as few new cases are developing and the discharges from the hospital grow larger every day. It is likely that the camp will be out of quarantine soon.

October 12, 1918, p.5 – Polish White Cross

We are in receipt of several contributions to the Polish White Cross fund, the third collection for which was started by Mrs. J.J. Doyle. Thanks are extended for all those who have given or who may give to this very worthy cause. Small sums are as acceptable as large. In the last collection, a small donation of 12 cents was given which helped to buy a bandage for some wounded soldier.

The Polish troops were taken for a route march round the town on Thursday and yesterday and seemed to enjoy it too. While the townspeople were undoubtedly glad to see them on the street again. As no new cases are developed it is expected the Polish boys were be allowed into town as usual soon and maybe they won't be welcome.

Polish Army

Within sound of the roar of the artillery at the front, but in a tree-dotted part of France, unmarred by battle, **General Polo**, who as a captain in the Austrian Army, fought against the Russians in 1914, was sworn in last Sunday as commander-in-chief of the Polish Army of freedom in France. The ceremony took place in the presence of the 1st Polish division, eighty percent of whose members are Poles from the United States who received their training at Niagara camp. The division itself took the oath of allegiance to the Entente Alliance. General Polo and a number of his men deserted the Austrians last winter and escaped from Russia by way of Murmansk. General Pershing was represented by Major J.L. Coolidge, while **Major Francis E. Fronczak**, former health commissioner of Buffalo and a member of the Polish National Alliance, who is attached to the Polish Army, represented the Red Cross and the White Cross. It is interesting to note that this ceremony took place in France on the first anniversary of the arrival of the Polish army at Camp Niagara and of the beginning of this army as a factor in fighting German barbarism. The Poles wear uniforms of horizon blue and the 1st division is complete in every detail, with cavalry, artillery and hospital detachments. All the equipment came from the United States. The band played the Polish National Anthem during inspection that took place after the formal ceremonies ended.

October 15, 1918, p.3

A number of **Polish White Cross** nurses have arrived at the Polish camp from New York and will take charge of the influenza patients, thus releasing the Canadian nursing sisters for duty at their own hospitals where they are greatly needed.

Father Michalski, senior chaplain at the Polish Camp has been seriously ill with influenza for the past week but is improving and his recovery seems to be assured. Father Michalski has not spared himself while the epidemic was in progress but has been most faithful in ministering to the spiritual needs of the sick men.

October 16, 1918, p. 3 – 19 Deaths from Influenza

One more death at the Polish camp on Sunday brought the total list up to 19 in the four weeks in which the disease has been epidemic there.

Letters have been received this week from some of the Polish boys who left Niagara on August 28th telling their summer home this week something of the country in which their concentration camp is located.

A Polish Visitor

An interesting visitor at the Polish army camp at this place last week was **Lieut. Adel A.de Mazurkiewicz**, of the Polish Legion, the volunteer army of Poles who are now fighting for the allied cause on the Western front, who arrived from France to assist in recruiting work on this side of the Atlantic.

Lieut. Mazurkiewicz has fought on both sides in the war, first in the Austrian army, then with the allies. He has been wounded 14 times, wears a number of wound and service stripes and has stained four widely separated fronts with his blood; his war activities have been in Rumania, Austria, Serbia,

Russia, Salonica, Italy, Poland and France, and now he is here, invalided from active duty and assigned to recruiting duty for the Polish volunteer army. Still in his twenties, with the flush of youth in his cheeks, the lieutenant seems little more than a boy, and one can scarcely believe he has had such an active share in this terrible war. In Rumania when the war broke out, Lieut. Mazurkiewicz was led by Austrian promises to restore Poland to freedom to enlist in the Austrian army; when asked to take the oath of allegiance to Austria, he like many other Polish youths refused. They were held captive and deeming it best suited to their purpose they fought on the Austrian side. He won rapid promotion and was made a lieutenant. Biding their time, the young Poles fought under the Austrian, but under **General Brusiloff** they finally made their way to the Russian army.

More than 2,000 of them deserted in one flight. Several hundred of them were captured and were crucified by the Austrians. The young officer fought with the Russian army and for bravery in action was decorated with the Order of St. Stanislaw, the highest decoration of that army. When the Russian revolution broke out, he made for France, where he joined the Polish Legion and fought alongside American troops at Chateau Thierry and took part in the great Champagne drive. In his entire war career, he has been wounded 14 times, the last wound breaking his leg, incapacitating him for further military service. One of his companions, who will also soon arrive in this country for recruiting duty, has been wounded 32 times, the last wound resulting in the amputation of his leg.

There are twelve other patriots coming over from France shortly to assist in recruiting for the Polish army, each one of whom has been wounded at least ten times. It is expected that the entire party will visit the Polish camp at this place shortly after their arrival and will bring messages from the men who have gone from this historic camp to take their part in making a new history of Europe.

October 17, 1918, p.2 – “Recognition for Polish Army”

London, Oct.17 – The British Government has recognized the Polish national army as autonomous, allied and co-belligerent, according to an official announcement last night.

October 17, 1918, p.5

Colonel Martin of the Polish-French mission spent part of the week at the Polish Camp. Although there are very few cases of real ‘Flu’ in the town, the Board of Health has issued a general closing up order as a precautionary measure. This order not only closes both schools, the movie theatres, concert halls, pool rooms and public gatherings in general, but includes the churches as well, which many think is not either necessary or right.

There were less than 100 patients in the Polish hospital yesterday and no deaths since Sunday. The epidemic seems to have run its course and will be at an end soon, so far as the Polish Camp is concerned.

October 18, 1918, p.12

The tenth death from influenza took place at the Canadian camp on Tuesday ... There were two hundred Flu cases in the Canadian hospital when the camp broke up, but some of these have already been discharged.

The Army Service Corps from Petawawa Camp is expected to arrive at Niagara in a day or so for winter duty in connection with the Polish camp and part of the men, who have been here all summer are also remaining for the winter.

October 19, 1918, p.5

The brick mill on Ricardo Street will be used again this winter for billets for the Polish soldiers, as satisfactory arrangements have been made between Mr. John Miller and the camp authorities. It is likely that the American hotel will also be turned over to the camp authorities for use as officers’ quarters, offices, etc., as negotiations are under way between Mr. J. Brundrit and the camp staff. Mr. Brundrit will probably vacate the hotel and re-open his stand nearby as this was quite a successful enterprise last winter.

It is interesting to note that the British government has recognized the Polish National Army, now fighting with the Allies on the western front, as autonomous, allied and co-belligerent, announcement to this effect having been made in London on Wednesday. This may be taken as a sign that when peace negotiations are being conducted at the close of the war, Poland will be declared a free, self-governing

nation with her fair provinces restored, also communication with the sea, which goal is what every patriotic Pole is striving for and his reason for volunteering for service in the Polish Army of freedom.

October 22, 1918, p.5

A draft of Polish troops, 1,100 in all, is due to leave Niagara Camp for France during the week. The strength of the camp at present is 2300, all told, but this number will be lessened by the gradual drafting which will take place. No troops have left this camp for five weeks as the influenza epidemic has prevented any being sent out.

Colonel Martin and Lieut. Cognelet, both of the French High Commission, Washington, D.C., have been visiting the Polish Army camp at this place in the past week and so has Lieut. Adel Mzurkaviecz who returned from Buffalo for a brief stay before going elsewhere for recruiting duty.

Everyone is pleased to see Mr. Henry of the Polish Y.M.C.A. staff in the town again after his weeks of absence caused by the fact that the camp has been quarantined.

There is little influenza in town and the few cases there are were brought in from other places. Compared to St. Catharines, Toronto, Buffalo, Hamilton and other places, the percentage of sickness in the town is very small while as yet no deaths from influenza have occurred among the civilians. Out at the Canadian camp, which is strictly quarantined, there are still about 100 cases in the hospital and several deaths took place on Saturday and Sunday. There were two military funerals on Saturday, one being that of a Canadian soldier named Miller, who was buried in the soldier's plot in St. Mark's cemetery. The other, a Polish soldier, the 20th victim of the 'Flu', who was buried with his compatriots in St. Vincent de Paul's cemetery. The Polish band led the funeral cortege and the firing party was selected from the School of Infantry and was in charge of Sergt. Major Noble.

October 23, 1918, p.5

Captain Harris of the Polish camp headquarters staff has rented one of the Queen's Royal cottages for the winter months and has moved in this week.

It is reported that several new buildings will be erected at the Polish camp shortly, one of which will be for use as billets and another for a recreation hall for the Y.M.C.A., the latter to take the place of the hall used for this purpose in the town last winter.

It is said that the local staff of the military police, offices, etc., will be transferred to St. Catharines shortly and that only two or three of the M.P.'s will be left here for duty during the winter. The rest of the police work to be looked after by the Polish police who did it very efficiently last winter.

As we intend closing up the last collection for the Polish White Cross as soon as possible, we will appreciate it very much if those who would like to help will send in their contributions at their earliest convenience. Mrs. Ryan will take charge of any amounts, large or small, if it is more convenient for donors to leave them with her. Small amounts are just as welcome as larger ones, and help the good cause quite as much. The White Cross looks after the sick and wounded Polish boys at the front and is deeply grateful for any help that is given.

October 24, 1918, p.3

Work is proceeding on the new picture theatre recreation hall and reading room which is being put up for the use of the Y.M.C.A. at the Polish Army Camp and it is expected that the place will be ready for use within the next few days. A building to be used as a canteen is also to go up, next to the new 'Y' building to serve the needs of Polish soldiers during the winter season. Up to yesterday no arrangements had been made for the use of the Park theatre by the 'Y' as a recreation hall for the winter months, this information having been given us by reliable authority, nor have any arrangements been made for the use of the American hotel for billets up to yesterday.

October 26, 1918, p.5 – Private Stanislaw Krakowski Dies

Mayor McClelland and Capt. Chas Parr were at Grimsby one day this week to see Mr. Hewitt and secure his permission to open and use the Syer property during the winter for housing some of the service units on duty at the Polish Army Camp. Their mission was successful and the place is now being made ready for winter use.

Another death from pneumonia, following influenza, took place at the Polish camp hospital on Thursday, when **Private Stanislaw Krakowski, a Russian Pole, succumbed to pneumonia**, following

influenza. The funeral took place with military honors to St. Vincent de Paul's cemetery, where they were interred in the plot set apart for the Polish soldiers.

Niagara friends have heard with great pleasure of the well-deserved promotion to the rank of Captain of Lieut. Thompson of the C.A.M.C. whose splendid work at the Polish camp hospital has been notable, especially since the influenza became epidemic among the Polish soldiers.

The Polish soldiers are being given instruction in field manoeuvres, frontal attack, trench warfare, etc. by officers especially sent here from France for the purpose and are using the Mississauga Common just now for this purpose. Physical and other drill are also being made part of the daily round of instruction in order that the men may require as little training as possible when they get overseas. These fine, warm days are fully appreciated by the officers and men of the Polish Army as it means drilling in comfort and fine weather for sport in the evenings. Last Saturday they had a carnival which included a grotesque parade; fine list of sports, and ended with a big bonfire and open air concert in the evening. It is likely, should the weather permit there will be a similar list of sports and an evening sing-song today. Thursday night there was a fine open air concert at the camp and as the wind was blowing towards the town, many people could hear the various numbers quite plainly and enjoyed them too. There must be some excellent musical talent in the camp at the present time and people are hoping to be able to hear it at closer range sometime in the near future.

Negotiations between the Polish camp authorities and the owners of the American hotel were satisfactorily made yesterday whereby the former get the use of most of the building for billets during the winter months. Mr. Brundritt and staff are packing and storing the furnishings and equipment so as to give the military possession as soon as possible and will reopen his refreshment stand on the corner nearby for the winter. The hotel and the buildings nearby will house about 500 men and they will be comfortable and warmly housed in the cold weather.

October 29, 1918, p.3

Frank Savicki, a Russian Pole by birth, but a naturalized American citizen, whose home is in Shendoah, Pa., is the first American private soldier to escape from prison in Germany, according to the 'Stars and Stripes,' the official newspaper of the American Expeditionary Forces, which paper devotes a three-column article to Savicki's experiences. There are many such Poles in the American army, men who enlisted as soon as the U.S. entered the war and remained in the U.S. army after the Polish army movement began.

The flag at Fort Niagara has been half-masted for several days after being hoisted to the top of the staff for nearly a week. Several new cases of 'Flu' developed after the arrival of new troops at the post and one or more deaths followed.

Major-General W. A. Logie, paid a visit to Camp Niagara at the end of the week to see how the influenza patients were progressing.

October 31, 1918, p.7 – Funeral of Pte Stanislaw Krakowski

The funeral of Pte Stanislaw Krakowski of the Polish Army, the last victim of pneumonia at the Polish Camp, took place with military honors on Monday afternoon, the remains being interred in the soldiers plot in St. Vincent de Paul's cemetery.

The Polish soldiers who are leaving for France this week, were allowed to come into town for several nights to purchase such things as they need and the result has been busy times for the merchants. It is expected that the entire camp with the exception of the latest recruits, will probably be released from quarantine by Saturday, as no new cases of 'flu' have developed in some time. The new recruits are kept in quarantine for a few days after arriving here and are under medical observation in order that there may be no further spread of the epidemic in the camp.

Camp Athletics

The 2nd Depot Battalion of the Polish Army, at this place, has formed a football league, one team from each of six companies. The league games, which afforded sport for many men and made a pleasant break in the long evenings, resulted in a tie between 'B' Co., commanded by Lieut. Krygowski, and the Base Co., commanded by Lieut. Szczyglowicz. The final game played on Sunday afternoon resulted in a win for the Base Company, though 'B' company made them work very hard for it. The prize was a barrel of splendid Northern Spies, and was presented by Mr. T.B. Revett, of Niagara. These were very much appreciated by the Polish boys who are as fond of fruit as they are of athletic sports.

November 4, 1918, p.3 – 23rd death

Mr. Ross L. Beckett, who has been in charge of the Y.M.C.A. work among the Polish soldiers for the past year is being relieved of his duties here as he goes to France under the auspices of the American Y.M.C.A. ... It is not known as yet who will take Mr. Beckett's place, but it is likely to be his assistant, Mr. L.D. Henry, who is familiar with the work and is popular with the men.

One more death from influenza, the 23rd took place at the Polish Camp hospital last Thursday, the soldier being one who recently arrived at the camp.

Captain John Harris of the Polish camp headquarters staff is off duty just now as he has been ill with blood poisoning in one of his hands.

A celebration of the Holy Mass was held yesterday morning in the open air near the quarters of the Polish troops on Melville Street at which about 500 officers and men were present. A similar mass was celebrated on Friday morning, All Saints Day, as this was a day of special observance for the Romantic Catholic as well as the Anglican church.

November 5, 1918, p.1 – “Big Parade Thursday Night” [St. Catharines, Victory Bonds]

The 19th Band, the Polish Army Band from Niagara, and the Salvation Army Band will be in attendance.

November 7, 1918, p.1 – “Poland has been proclaimed Republic”

Berlin via Zurich, Nov. 7 – Poland was proclaimed a republic Monday by Premier Swiercinski, it was announced here today.

November 7, 1918, p.9

The Polish Camp Y.M.C.A. staff are busy this week making the Park Theatre ready for use as a recreation hall for the winter months and expect to re-open it very soon for the benefit of the troops that are quartered in the town. The new recreation hall, reading room and canteen on the camp grounds, which is to be kept in operation for the benefit of the men quartered in the huts, will not be completed for at least two weeks, and so the big tents will be in use for some time. There is a great deal of regret expressed everywhere over the impending departure of Mr. Ross Beckett, as he has been most energetic and diligent in the work among the Polish soldiers and has had much to do with its success.

Mr. Miller's brick factory on Ricardo street, also the Navigation Company's warehouse on the wharf are being made ready for use as billets for the Polish soldiers and so is the American hotel. All three buildings will be in use as soon as the preparations are completed as it is desirable that the men be housed owing to the unsettled weather.

Major Kenrick, of the Polish Camp staff, has rented Miss Randall's cottage and is getting settled there for the winter.

Mrs Frank Byles has returned from Petawawa and will be in town for the winter to be near her husband who is on duty with the Army Service Corps at the Polish Camp.

Another draft of Polish troops, consisting of about 600 of all ranks, left this place on Sunday afternoon for New York, en route for France, amid scenes of unusual enthusiasm. The troops marched from the camp to the train between rows of cheering people, among whom were as many civilians as there were military they were headed by the Polish bands and the Canadian officers, who are in charge of the training of the Polish Army in Canada and carried some beautiful flags, among which were the striking emblem of Poland, the tri-color of France and our own flag, the Union Jack. At the train the School of Infantry formed a guard of honor and presented arms and stood at salute while the entrainment of the troops was taking place. Hearty cheers were given by the departing soldiers for Colonel LePan and their officers, their cheers drowning out the music of the band near-by. The Y.M.C.A. staff was on hand as usual and placed reading matter, smokes, etc. on the train that the men might have something to make them forget the discomfort of the long journey. Captain Ferguson went with the draft to New York as conducting officer. This is the second draft to leave the Polish Camp within a week and makes a total re-enforcement of 1000 men for the Polish Army now on the firing line in France.

The Polish Army under the supreme authority of the Polish National Committee has been recognized by the United States Government as autonomous and co-belligerent. Secretary of State Lansing made the announcement in a letter sent out on Monday to Mr. Roman Dmowski, of the Polish National Committee, who is at present in Washington. Secretary Lansing says that the American government feels a deep sympathy for the Polish people and views with gratification the progress of the

Polish cause and also said that it had not been unmindful of the zeal and tenacity with which the Polish National Committee, which has headquarters at Paris, France, has prosecuted the task of marshalling its fellow countrymen in a supreme military effort to free Poland from its present oppressors. The action of the U.S. government is similar to that taken by France, Great Britain and Italy. A Polish Army fully equipped in all its branches is now fighting with the allies on the western front under General Joseph Haller. A large part of this force was recruited in the United States and Canada under the direction of Mr. Ignace Jan Paderewski and has been trained on our camp ground where there are now about 1200 soldiers getting ready to go overseas to re-enforce the thousands that have preceded them.

November 8, 1918, p. 7

Mrs. Melville Millar has kindly contributed two pairs of socks for the next Polish bale and another kind friend has sent in a suit of men's underwear, almost new, and still another has sent a warm girls' winter coat, all of which is greatly appreciated. Further contributions will be acceptable for the coming bale as there is not enough yet to make up a shipment.

Girls' Service Battalion

The following items, used by the Girls' Service Battalion in their canning kitchen last year, are to be sold and the proceeds given for the Polish Relief fund:

Two three-burner Perfection Oil Stoves

Four gallon crocks with covers; Several dish pans and other articles

These are at the home of Mrs. Speckman (Market Street) where they may be seen at any time and are to be disposed of as soon as possible. All articles are in excellent condition and well worth buying so whoever buys them will get the value of the money and help in a deserving cause, the relief of the war victims in Poland.

November 9, 1918, p.8

The Military Police have vacated the quarters in the Town Hall which they have occupied since last spring and have removed to other quarters. Polish troops will take possession of the hall shortly as the camp authorities asked for and were given permission by the council to billet them there during the winter months. Though peace is drawing so near, it is expected that the Polish Army will be maintained here for a time as the Polish Army is to be taken into Poland, when the war ends, to assist in maintaining order while reconstruction is going on. The country has in many places been practically destroyed by the Austrians and Germans and there will be years of hard work on the part of the National Committee before conditions are restored to normal. Friends of the Polish cause hope that when the peace treaty is signed, the country will be restored to freedom amongst the nations and her sons and daughters repaid for the many sacrifices they have willingly made in the past few years.

November 16, 1918, p.8 – "Polish Falcons in Great Review"

(By Frank J. Taylor, United Press Staff Correspondent)

With the American Troops in France, Oct. 20

Polish Falcons, more than half of whom are from America, and were trained in Canada, have won the admiration of armies in Europe by their consistent service. Recently the French honored these Poles in an impressive ceremony in Lorraine when the entire division swore allegiance to the allies.

The Polish Falcons are volunteers serving on the same basis as the other members of France's foreign legion. All the Poles from America could have joined the American army, but chose to serve in the Polish legion at 5 cents a day, and to fight as Poles, for an independent Poland. The division is commanded by an Austrian General.

After their training in the war areas of France, the Poles had their taste of front line service in the hills of Alsace. Just before the last German offensive of the spring, they were brought to the Champagne sector, where they fought side by side with the American Rainbow division.

The Yankee troops were delighted to find most of those lively and optimistic fighters in blue uniforms and square topped caps spoke good American slang, and the Poles were open in their enthusiasm at being with doughboys. Since then the Polish division has been in continuous service in several fronts.

The Lorraine ceremony was a fitting climax to a hard summer's fighting. It began with a breakfast on Place Stanislas, Nancy, numerous French notables, and a number of French officers were present.

The door of the breakfast room opened upon a spot of the Place in front of the huge bronze statue of Stanislas, last king of Poland, and duke of Lorraine, renowned for his benefices and cherished in memory by Poles and Lorrainers alike. One hand points north, and under this the group of Poles and Frenchmen stopped.

They say it was not a part of the program, and that both the Frenchmen and the Poles fighting against a common tyrant had to stop – impulse dictated it – and the President of France made a short talk to those who grouped around, civilians having joined the party.

The prefect of Nancy spoke, and the general of the Polish division, and they shook hands all around. Then some noticed some American officers, bystanders, who had slipped into the crowd, and by common impulse and enthusiasm the Yankees were pulled into the ceremony, which consisted of wildly shaking hands with everyone.

Being short on French words to express themselves, and this part of the ceremony was in French, the Americans followed a happy hunch to shout “vive la Pologne”. The words were magic and it was a mighty ‘vive la Pologne’ that rang out from that beautiful Stanislas square in Nancy.

The official ceremony was on a hillside east and south of Nancy. Here three natty regiments of infantry, with clean blue uniforms, shining bayonets and spotless equipment were drawn up at attention on three sides of an altar built in the open. On the fourth side were the machine gun companies and a group of mounted soldiers.

In the centre round the altar were some Polish priests and a group of officials and officers who conducted the ceremony. Overhead a group of French aviators swooped and dived, grazing less than 10 feet from the heads of soldiers.

As the United Press car pulled away from the ceremony, a Polish American private shouted, “Hullo, guess this world series is about over – Home run for us – Hurray.”



Place Stanislas, Nancy, France

November 16, 1918, p.8

Several hundred recruits for the Polish Army have arrived at the camp during the week most of these coming from the United States. The strength of the camp is almost up to 1500, but this will be lessened in a day or so by the departure eastward of another draft. Work on the new “hut” or bunk house” is going forward very well, the frame is all up and the roof is begun; it is expected that the building will be ready for use within the next two weeks and so will the new canteen and Y.M.C.A. buildings on which the camp carpenters have been at work for some time.

November 19, 1918, p. 1 – “Influenza Epidemic on the Increase”

November 19, 1918, p. 5

Colonel James Martin of the French High Commission, New York and Mrs. Martin, were weekend visitors at the Polish Army Camp.

The Polish military band was in Buffalo yesterday taking part in a big reception given by the Polish citizens to the party of veterans of the Polish Army, who have arrived in the United States for recruiting duty after being on active service in France for nearly a year.

The Y.M.C.A. reading room and office in the Park theatre or camp recreation hall, as it is officially called by the military, is now open and already is proving a great help to the Polish soldiers in passing away some of their leisure time. Tables and seats have been put in, also a large supply of reading matter and writing material, so the men have the chance to write home as often as they wish. All the writing paper, etc., are supplied free of charge by the "Y" whose Red Triangle fund defrays the cost. Out on the main camp ground work is being pushed forward as expeditiously as possible on the new "Y" building in order to have it ready for use by the time winter weather sets in. This building is of large dimensions so as to accommodate the many hundreds of men who will congregate in it for recreation purposes and has dormitory space in which the staff will be housed, as well as offices and other conveniences. Adjoining this new building is a large canteen, that is already in use and near this other huts are to be erected for the use of Chaplains and for other purposes. Work on the fifth big hut or bunk house is also proceeding apace and it is planned to have it ready for use before the New Year. Quite a small village is growing up around historic Fort George and no doubt, if the training of Polish troops continues, it will be a busy spot for some time to come. The Polish hospital has been moved from Fort George to the buildings near John Street, in which it was located last winter and the staff is settled and doing good work as usual.

To those interested in the progress of the Polish people towards complete freedom for Poland, the following item will appeal:

"To a Polish working girl, Miss Rose Szewc, was given the honor of upholding the Polish banner when the declaration of independence of the oppressed races was signed and read a few days ago at Independence Hall in Philadelphia. There were Polish soldiers and Polish men of affairs present at the group in the historic building and all would have been proud of the privilege of bearing the flag, but T. M. Hellinsky, representing the National Polish of Chicago, felt that the spirit of new Poland could best be evidenced by selecting a wage-earner, a woman, to carry the Standard. During the signing and later on, Miss Szewc held her place and the Polish white eagle swayed in the breeze. The young woman is a stenographer, who has worked in Indianapolis and later in New York with Madam Paderewski. Mr. Hellinski, who believes in the future of Poland as a democracy, has visited the Polish camp at this place several times; his first visit was made on Nov. 4th, 1917, when he presented a banner to the 2nd Battalion of the Polish Army for France in the presence of an immense gathering composed of Polish and Canadian peoples. The presentation took place on the camp ground and added another interesting page to the long and varied history of the former capital of Canada.

November 20, 1918, p. 5

Another large draft of Polish troops, the 62nd, left Niagara Camp on Sunday afternoon on their way to join the Polish army in France. Captain Edward Wright, Q.M. of the 3rd Battalion went with the draft to New York, as commanding officer and one of the camp's doctors also accompanied the men. The outgoing troops entrained amid scenes of great enthusiasm in which civilians and soldiers were equal participants and will take with them the knowledge all Niagara wishes them well. It is said that the Polish troops who are now in France and those who will go from here in future, will be sent into Poland to be on duty for several years while the restoration and reconstruction of that country is in progress. The men now enlisting sign up for five years' service in Europe, which seems to be proof, that Poland is their ultimate destination.

November 22, 1918, p. 3

A large number of recruits have arrived in the past few days for the Polish Army, coming in by special trolleys over the N.St.C. & T. Railway and also in special coaches attached to the M.C.R. train. Most of the recruits are coming from the United States where a vigorous recruiting campaign is being conducted by the Polish Military Mission, with the assistance of the party of returned men who were visitors at the Niagara Camp over the week-end.

Alfred J. Balfour, British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, has sent the following letter to the Polish National Committee: - "At this moment when the armistice has set the seal on the united efforts of the Allies in the cause of freedom, His Majesty's Government is more than ever conscious of the loyal co-operation which it received from the Poles during the course of this cruel war. It is a great pleasure for me

to beg you, on behalf of His Majesty's Government and of the British people, to convey to the Polish people a message of our sincere congratulation." This expression of appreciation of the timely assistance of the Polish Army on the western front and of the co-operation of the Polish people as a whole, will be fully appreciated by them and will be specially so to the officers and men of the Polish Army who did best to ensure the victory over the enemy that has been one.

November 23, 1918, p. 6

The band from the Polish Camp goes over to Stella Niagara on Monday to supply the music at a flag raising ceremony and will cross the river here and make the trip up the river on a special car, to be sent down by the college officials.

Women's Institute

Mrs. A.D. LePan and Mrs E. Ross, wife of the commanding officer of the Polish Camp and the Army Service Corps respectively, asked the Institute to again assist in giving ... a small Xmas gift to each Polish soldier.

November 23, 1918, p. 1 – "Poland Soon A Republic"

Ignace Paderewski Starts for Europe on Mission of Independence; Liberty and Equality to Every Citizen; Equal Rights in Future to Catholics, Protestants and Jews, He Says

Poland will soon be a republic with liberty and equality assured every citizen, Ignace J. Paderewski, representative in the United States of the Polish national council, declared today in a statement issued before he sailed for Europe aboard the steamship Megantic.

Paderewski said that the Polish republic would adopt a constitution based on the principles of American democracy. Catholics, Jews and Protestants will all enjoy equal rights, as they will fulfill equal duties, he explained.

"I am profoundly grateful to the United States and Canada for the generous assistance she has given to the entente powers in their gigantic struggle, thus hastening the triumph of freedom and justice," Paderewski said. "I am thankful to all Americans and Canadians who in their kindly solicitude for the oppressed peoples include my own country and nation."

February 1, 1919- 69th Draft

Another draft of Polish troops, the 69th, composed of about 300 officers and men left Niagara Camp on Thursday night, taking along the newly organized brass band. The party entrained at the usual point on King street and was given a most enthusiastic ovation by the citizens of the town, hundreds of whom had gathered to see the men leave. A long train was required for their transportation to New York, from which port they sail for France en route to Poland. Colonel LePan and his staff were present to wish the travellers good luck and a safe voyage and so were the Y.M.C.A. staff with their usual gifts of smokes, reading matter, etc. It is likely there will be only one more draft leave in the future which will take all those Poles who are destined for overseas. After they leave the business of the camp will be closed up and the grounds given over to the control of the Canadian government once more.

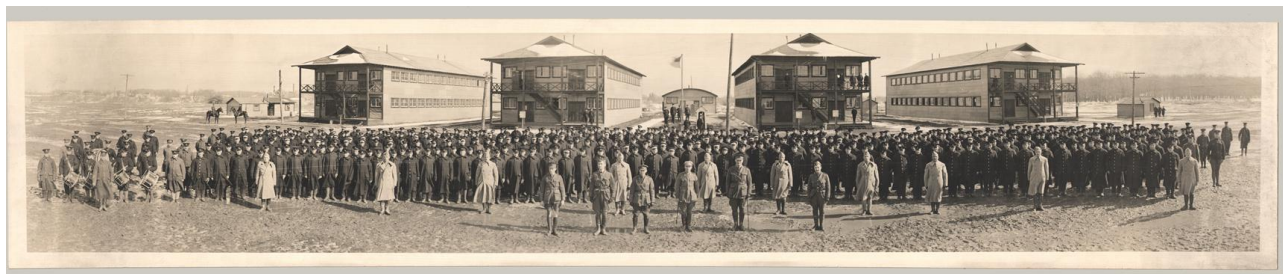
February 3, 1919, p.5 – The close of recruiting operations

The Polish troops, office and instructional staff and other details have been moved out to the camp ground from the billets they were occupying in the buildings on Melville street, and as a result that part of the town now wears a deserted appearance. The closing of these quarters is the first arrangement that marks the approaching end of the Polish Army camp, as with the close of recruiting operations tomorrow, it is not expected many more new men will come in and these are to be all on their way to France by Feb. 15th. A draft is due to leave tonight and another goes within the next few days while the last draft leaves on or before the 15th. The Canadian staff expects to finish all business before the end of the month when they will also leave and one of the most unique episodes, the training of a foreign army on Canada's oldest, most historic campground will end.

February 5, 1919, p. 5 – End of Camp

In view of the approaching end of the Polish Army training camp at this place, therefore no further need for their use as billets, the canning factory and other buildings on Melville street are being dismantled and the plumbing, lumber and all equipment are being moved to the government store buildings on the camp ground where they will be stored pending their disposal. It is said that the small

buildings on Melville street, in which were baths and other toilet conveniences for the use of the troops, will be sold as they stand, the purchaser to remove them without delay, but of these more will be known within the next few days. All the troops now remaining and who go to France in a few days are quartered in the big huts on the camp ground.



Panorama of Polish Camp, including four 'huts'; Photo: Niagara Historical Society and Museum

February 7, 1919, p.6

Five hundred recruits for the Polish army came into camp on Tuesday, special coaches attached to the regular train and special trolleys bringing them in during the afternoon and evening. More are expected for a few days but not many as recruiting stopped on Wednesday. The new arrivals will be outfitted and given a little preliminary training after which they will be sent on to France to join the Polish divisions that are due to leave for Poland shortly.

Mr. J. Brundrit has closed his refreshment stand on Melville street for a time in view of the removal of the Polish troops from the buildings in its vicinity, which removal puts an end to business from now till spring. The orderly room of the 3rd Battalion, also the officer's quarters which were in the American hotel up to Tuesday have been transferred to the units on the camp ground and possession of the building will be given up to the owners (Mr. and Mrs. Brundrit) by the camp authorities within the next few days. All the troops, about 900, are now quartered on the camp ground and will remain there. They will leave for France, which will be shortly.

February 8, 1919, p.5 – Farewell Dance, Niagara Falls

Colonel LePan and his staff, accompanied by their wives, are going to Niagara Falls, N.Y. on Monday night to be present as a farewell dance that is being given in their honor by the Niagara Falls Chapter of the American Red Cross.

The Globe of Friday tells of the sailing of the draft of Polish troops, which left camp on Wednesday night, from New York on Thursday last for France in the steamer La Lorraine and says that many of the men were near the seats of the North-West Mounted Police and lent a vivid touch of color to the scene on the dock. A large crowd gathered to see the vessel sail and a Polish band (the new band that was organized after the first band left camp) played selections as the La Lorraine moved out into the slip and started downstream. Since then another draft left camp, the 70th, on Monday evening of this week about 400 officers and men, also the fine bugle band, making up the party which is now probably on the ocean en route for France. Captain Gruchy of the French Army, went to New York with the last draft as conducting officer and returned to camp yesterday.

February 10, 1919, p. 3 – The Polish Cemetery Plot

The last resting place of the men of the Polish army, who died while in training at historic Niagara camp, is being put in first class order and ready for the time when, the camp being closed, they may not be as well looked after as now. Every grave has been marked with a small, neat grey marble head stone on which is the soldier's name and the date of his death and each grave has been levelled flat so the whole plot is the same level. The soil has been prepared carefully and grass seed sown so that, in the springtime, the plot will be covered with green grass. In the centre of the plot, which is on the Byron street side of the pretty St. Vincent de Paul's cemetery, a large grey granite cross, standing on a huge solid block of the same material has been erected on which is inscribed in both the Polish and English language: "Died for Poland." This monument is simple but beautiful and will mark for all time the resting place of those patriotic sons of fair Poland, who gave their lives in her behalf in a far-off country while making themselves ready to do battle with the tyrannical foe from which their own land had suffered for so

long. In a short time this little green spot in this pretty "God's Acre" will be practically the only memento of one of the most striking, most unique episodes in Niagara's history, viz., the training of soldiers for the Polish army for service overseas with our own armies and those of our allies. In view of its historical meaning, this spot will no doubt be well cared for by the Polish people, or by those in the town whose special care is the preservation and care of historic places.

In view of the frequent visits of Mr. and Mrs. Ignace Jan Paderewski to the Polish Army training camp at this place, Niagara folk have been watching the former's progress since his return to Poland and noted with pleasure his selection for the position of Premier of Poland and leader of the new Government. That this choice was approved by the people is evidenced by the result of the recent National elections as he was unanimously endorsed by the votes cast. In a recent article on "The New Poland," this reference to the sacrifices made by this devoted pair is made: "The whole world knows how the greatest of piano virtuosi, Ignace Jan Paderewski was ruined by the war, how he toured the allied lands as he said 'not to entertain but to plead for Poland.' With M. Paderewski on his old time concert tours Madame Paderewski often travelled, she shared the honors that came to him and the glory of his applause." The article goes on to describe the wonderful work done for his beloved country by Paderewski and the way his devoted wife aided and inspired him to further efforts and served Poland's cause with the same zeal as he. Further on in the article reference is made to the splendid training camp at this place, to the fine class of men that flocked to the standard at the call of their country and to the noble work done by the Polish women and girls in the United States on behalf of the Polish Army and of the suffering people in their native land; a high tribute being paid to Polish womanhood "for services utterly womanly, utterly devoted and triumphant in faithfulness." The whole article gives us a clearer realization of the sacrifices made by the Polish people for the sake of their country and of their appreciation of the great work that was done for Poland by Monsieur and Madame Paderewski in the three years they spent on this side of the Atlantic.

February 11, 1919, p. 5

Captain Charles Gaston Veysaire, who has been on active duty at the Polish Camp for some time, is spending a short leave, with Mrs. Veysaire and her relatives in Toronto before going to New York where he has been ordered for three months duty with the French High Mission.

Corporal Robert Riley, C.A.M.C., who has been on duty at the Polish hospital since September 1917, has been transferred for duty to the base hospital in Toronto and is being missed by his many Niagara Friends. Sergeant Sharpe has also gone to Base Hospital in Toronto to which he will be attached for some time.

Chaplain Dekowski is in the Polish camp hospital at present with a severe case of influenza, but no serious developments are expected.

With the closing of the canteens at the Military Camp, there will be no further need of the equipment, which is to be sold in bulk or otherwise. The list of articles to be sold, all in first class condition, includes one cash register, two coffee urns, three Quebec heaters, one large stock pot, three ice cream scoops, four dozen dinner plates, 12 dozen Voltax soda cup holders, 13 iron pails, one clock, one show case. Intending purchasers may learn terms of sale etc., on application to the School of Infantry canteen, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Phone 136.

Women's Institute

It was decided to ask Major Young to give his talk on "What the World Owes to Poland" at an open meeting of the Women's Institute and that this meeting be held in the Town Hall in the evening, the date to be announced shortly.



Rev. Jan Jozef Dekowski
(1882-1946)

A priest in the missionary order of the Holy Ghost Fathers, chaplain in General Haller's Army, colonel.

February 12, 1919, p. 5

The Polish camp pay office, which has been located in the court house for the past sixteen months, was closed on Monday and the fittings removed to the camp where this branch of the work will be carried on during the short period prior to the end.

Wreyford & Co., the military tailors of Toronto, have closed out their Niagara business in view of the expected slump in such business from the closing of the camp...It is expected that Austin & Workman whose business is similar to that of the Wreyford Co., will also close their Niagara Branch.

February 13, 1919, p.5 – 71st Draft

The 71st draft of troops is due to leave the Polish camp for New York en route to France next Monday night and may be the last. It is interesting to note that up to three weeks ago, a total of 22,500 men had passed through this camp. Of course, something over 20,000 men had been sent overseas while the remainder were found medically unfit and were discharged. As soon as the camp closes, which will be at the end of the month, Lieut.-Col. A.D. LePan, who has been the officer commanding ever since it opened in Sept. 1917, will return to Toronto and resume his duties as Associate Superintendent of the University of Toronto. In addition to Colonel LePan the following officers also return to Toronto: Major Frank Kendrick and Captain Nash of the 3rd Battalion; Major W.G. Kirk and Captain A.G.E. Smith, M.C. of the 2nd Battalion; also Major C.R. Young, adjutant, Major H.H. Madill, officer in charge of training; Captain C.H. Parr, quartermaster; Captain J. Harris, assistant-adjutant; Captain W.G. Hamilton, paymaster; Captain J.L. Robinson, medical officer; Captain C.H. Fowler, dental officer; Lieut. E.H. Ross, A.D. of S. and T., Lieut. W.F. Geddes, medical officer; Lieut. L.T. McCosh, medical officer; Lieut. W.H. Cunningham, medical officer, Captain J.L. Lewis, Infantry school. All of these officers have been on duty at the Polish camp ever since it opened and have discharged their duties in a most efficient and thorough manner thus making it the success it has been in every way.

Masonic Ball

The most delightful ball of the winter season was that which took place in the town hall of Friday evening, Feb. 7th... several very beautiful Polish emblems being a novel and much admired feature. A large Polish flag draped one side of the entrance and a large American flag the other while the musicians' dais were also decorated with British, Polish, French, Canadian and American flags... The special guests of the evening, for whom it was something of a farewell, included Colonel A.D. LePan, O.C. the Polish camp... Capt. De Gruchy of the French Army who is at the Polish camp, was also an honored guest, so were Captain Annesley of Homer, who has recently returned from overseas and a number of the Polish officers from the camp.

February 14, 1919, p.8

The pay office of the Polish Army is still in its accustomed place in the Court House, where it will remain till the camp closes at the end of the month.

Opening of Reconstruction Conference in Warsaw was celebrated by Buffalo citizens of Polish birth at a meeting of the Polish churches on Sunday when there were speeches by prominent Polish business and professional men. Resolutions expressing gratitude to the allied nations were passed "for their friendship, understanding and encouragement to the Poles" which has resulted in their country Poland, being restored to freedom amongst the nations.

February 18, 1919, p.5

It is reported that all the buildings and camp equipment that has been used at the Polish camp and which is the property of the French government, has been taken over by the Canadian military authorities, under an arrangement that has been reached between the Canadian and French governments, but as yet there is no official confirmation of this report. There were several offers made for purchasing the buildings on Melville street, near the Lake View hotel by certain citizens of the town but these were not accepted. There is a good deal of guessing going on as to what may develop in the future in connection with our camp ground but no definite information can be obtained.

Sergeant Saunders of the School of Infantry's canteen staff, and Mr. Arthur Lee of the Y.M.C.A. staff are both patients in the hospital at the Polish camp with severe colds. It is hoped that both these popular young men may soon be out again.

February 20, 1919, p. 3 – Internment of Private Adam Kempiniski

The remains of Private Adam Kempiniski of the Polish army, Niagara camp, are being brought to Niagara from St. Catharines today for interment in the soldiers' plot in St. Vincent de Paul's cemetery. The young man died at the camp hospital of pneumonia on Monday and as he had no relatives in this country, the military authorities are having him buried here.

Two drafts of Polish troops, the 71st and 72nd, left Niagara camp on Sunday night travelling to New York en route for France in two special trains. There were 800 officers and men in the drafts and among the former were some who have been retained at the camp for special work for nearly a year, much against their own wishes. Colonel LePan and his staff were at the train to bid the travellers bon voyage and the Y.M.C.A. were on hand with smokes, reading matter and comforts and about half the town were also there to give them the farewell ovation their patriotism deserved. It was an intensely cold night but no one seemed to mind and stared till the trains pulled out and got under way. There is one more draft to go within the next few days after which the camp closes.

Next Tuesday evening Major Young will talk on 'Poland' in the Parish hall, under the auspices of the Red Cross Society.

February 21, 1919, p. 8 – "Death of Sergeant Saunders"

The death of Sergeant Ernest Saunders of the Polish Camp staff, which took place on Monday evening after a brief illness of pneumonia at the camp hospital, has been a great shock to his many friends in Niagara where he has been so well and favorably known and also to the officers and men of the camp by whom he was very highly esteemed. Sergeant Saunders has been on duty at the camp ever since its opening in September 1917 and in all that time discharged his many duties so capably, efficiently and with such tact and dependability that he was regarded as one of the most reliable and faithful members of the staff, he was popular with both officers and men all of whom join in testifying to his worth and in regretting his sudden death. The deceased was born in England, but has been in Canada for about twenty years, most of which were spent in Toronto. No relatives are in Canada, but several sisters reside in England.

The funeral was held on Wednesday afternoon from the Masonic Temple to which the remains had been brought from the Butler Mortuary earlier in the day, to St. Mark's Cemetery, and was attended by the officers and members of Niagara Lodge, No.2, A.F. and A.M. (of which the deceased was a member) by the Y.M.C.A. staff from the camp, by many friends among the townspeople and by old friends from Toronto, and by the Canadian staff and military escort from the camp, six of the latter acting as pallbearers. The impressive burial service of the Church of England was read by the Rev. C.H.E. Smith, Rector of St. Mark's Church, who, at its conclusion, gave place to the Masonic brethren who gathered around the grave, while they accorded the remains of their deceased brother, the last honors and rites of the order. The remains were tenderly lowered into its last resting place as 'Last Post' was sounded and after a last salute, were received late the 'dust from which it came'. Many lovely floral tributes were laid on the casket of this most estimable young man among them being a very beautiful emblem from the Niagara Masonic Lodge, sprays from Niagara friends, Captain and Mrs. Lewis as well as others from employers and friends in Toronto and elsewhere.

February 22, 1919, p.6

Captain Nash, who has been on duty at the Polish camp all through its existence, has been relieved from duty and is leaving for his home in Toronto.

Captain Peart, also of the Polish camp, also has been relieved from duty and is in Hamilton where he will resume his former occupation.

February 24, 1919, p.5 – Farewell Entertainment

Captain Robinson, C.A.M.C. spent part of last week in New York where he accompanied a draft of Polish troops from the camp on the first stage of their journey to France.

Private Marshall Davey has been given his discharge after a year's service in the School of Infantry canteen at the Polish camp and is now home.

Some of the business men of the town are giving a farewell entertainment this evening for the Canadian officers of the Polish camp who are leaving here within the next few days in view of the closing of the camp, Colonel LePan, Major Young, Madill, Kirk and Kenrick, Captains Nash, Smith, Ferguson, Fowler, Robinson, Peart, Harris, Parr and Lewis; also Lieuts Ross, Tucker and Geddes have been all that

was courteous and friendly with the townspeople during their tour of duty at the camp and it was felt that some token of appreciation should be given prior to their departure and its resulting severance of universally pleasant associations, hence this evening's event which promises to be of a pleasing nature.

The principal event of tomorrow evening will be the lecture on "Poland" which is to be given by Major C.R. Young in St. Mark's Parish hall at an open meeting of the Red Cross Society. A brief, but good musical programme will be given in addition to the address and the evening will be both pleasing and profitable for all who attend. A silver collection will be taken up, the proceeds of which will be devoted to the Serbian Relief Fund. Everyone welcome. The meeting opens at 8 o'clock. Come and bring your friends.

Mr. Philip Figary of Toronto, who conducts a branch of his photography business in one of Jas Connelly's stores, has made a number of splendid pictures which will be a valuable souvenir of the Polish camp, one of the most unique chapters in the long and varied history of this town. Practically every important event in connection with the training of soldiers for the Polish Legion on the western front has been photographed and the collection, covering the period between September 1917, and the present time, is both valuable and interesting. One of the last groups is that which shows the entire Canadian headquarters staff and the French officers who were at the camp for the past two months on special duty, with Colonel A.D. LePan, the camp commandant and Major Mercadier, the senior French officer at the centre. The group was taken as the officers sat in the compounds, before the Canadian camp headquarters about three weeks ago and is a splendid memento of the camp; one or more of the photos have been taken back to France with the French officers who are greatly pleased with them. Figary's studio is an interesting spot for those who wish to brush up their recollections of the Polish camp and also of the Canadian camp of last summer as there are pictures of Prince Albert of Connaught, of the Duke of Devonshire, of the French Blue Devils and of many other interesting episodes that occurred out there.



Canadian and French Officers, including Major Mercadier
Photo: Niagara Historical Society & Museum

February 25, 1919, p.5

Mr. James W. Mercer and Mr. Lorne P. Henry of the Polish Camp, Y.M.C.A. staff are very busy just now with preparations for closing, which they expect will take place in a few days as the last draft is due to leave for France on Thursday, which means their work is done. The equipment is being packed up and some will be shipped away while the remainder will be stored here till it is learned whether it will be needed next summer or not. The fittings of the chapel were returned to Father Sweeny, who had loaned them to the camp chaplains some time ago while the furniture, etc. belonging to the American Red Cross tent, which has been in use in the Red Triangle hut, is being taken back this week to Niagara Falls by the Society's officials. Mr. Mercer, Mr. Henry and Mr. Lee leave shortly for home and will be much missed by their Niagara friends by whom their departure is greatly regretted.

The Polish officers at the camp were the hosts of a jolly farewell dance on Saturday evening at which the honored guests were Colonel LePan and the Canadian officers and their wives. A number of prominent Polish people from Buffalo and other places nearby were present. This entertaining evening

demonstrated how Colonel LePan and his staff are very much esteemed by the officers and men of the Polish army who are grateful for all that has been done in the way of military training etc. and the dance arranged was a tangible token of their appreciation before the close of the camp (which is due within the next few days), severs their association. The good feeling between the Canadian staff and the Polish officers and men is noteworthy and to it may largely be credited the fine record of the Polish army.

February 26, 1919, p. 5- 73rd and Last Draft

Quartermaster Sergeant J. Noble who has been one of the School of Infantry Instructional staff ever since the Polish camp opened here, and who is a member of the permanent staff of the R.C.R., has been transferred to Toronto for duty in future and was accompanied by Mrs. Noble on his departure. Both will be greatly missed by the friends they have made during their residence in the town.

For the first time in many months, no mass was celebrated on Sunday at the Polish camp in view of the fact that the chaplains had left for France with the last draft. And so the officers and men marched into St. Vincent de Paul's church at 10 a.m. where Mass was celebrated for them by the Rev. Father Sweeny. With the officers and men of the Polish Army at this service were a number of members of the Polish White Cross Society; also some prominent Polish folk from Buffalo and other places who were paying a farewell visit to the camp before its closing. The church was well filled with devout worshippers, some of whom took part in the service with sad hearts because of the impending departure overseas of relatives and friends among those present and who will be on the ocean and en route for France when they take part in the next service.

The 73rd and last draft of the Polish troops left Niagara camp on Monday night for New York en route for France where they will join the Polish National Army on its triumphal return to Poland. The draft was very small, only about 100 in all, and about half was composed of young officers, most of whom have been engaged in recruiting duty in Canada and the United States. Colonel LePan and his staff were all at the train for a few farewell words with each officer and men to whom all good wishes for the future were given. Present also were Messrs. Mercer and Henry of the Y.M.C.A. with the usual farewell gifts and smokes and reading material and other comforts. Lieut. Ross and two of the camp medical staff travelled to New York with the party while the conducting officer was Captain A. de Grouchy of the French Army. A large number of the townspeople gathered at the train to see the draft leave and gave them a rousing cheer as the This is the last draft to go, the few remaining men at the camp being physically unfit for overseas, will be given their discharge in a few days, while the Canadian staff goes back to Toronto as soon as all camp business is concluded and return to civilian life, though, we understand, most of them will be placed on the reserve of officers and be available if needed for future service.

February 27, 1919, p.5 – Plaque on Court House

Several of the Polish soldiers who were left at the camp after the final draft were discharged yesterday and went home. The remainder will be discharged by the end of the week except for hospital patients, who cannot leave till strong enough to travel

It is likely that in a short time there will be placed on the outside of the Court House, a permanent memento of that unique episode in the town's history, the Polish Camp, in the form of a brass memorial tablet on which will be inscribed a record of the dates of its opening, closing etc. This tablet we have been given to understand will be put up by the National Polish Department, the official representative in the United States and Canada of the Polish Government, who are asking permission of the council to do so. The motion will come up at the March meeting of the Council and as everyone in the town is proud of the splendid record of the Polish Camp, there will undoubtedly be no hesitation in giving the desired permission and that such motion will meet with the unanimous approval of the citizens.

February 28, 1919, p.8 – Major Young, "What the World Owes to Poland"

Mr. J.J. Thompson, Chief of Staff of the Y.M.C.A., paid a visit to the branch at the Polish Camp on Tuesday and after a conference with Mr. Mercer and Mr. Mancy instructed them to ship all equipment on to Toronto as there is no immediate prospect of them being needed here in the future. The equipment includes the two portable buildings on the rear of Mr. Perry's property. All the tables, chairs, pictures, machines, furniture, desks, etc. that were in use in the camps. As Mr. Mercer is leaving for Hamilton for duty at the dispersal area, the work of shipping the equipment will be directed by Mr. Henry and Mr. Lee, who will be here for a week or more longer. People were hoping to hear that some use would be made of

the Niagara camp grounds in the near future but these developments in connection with the "Y" will put an end to any such hopes.

What the World Owes To Poland

The open meeting of the Red Cross Society which took place in St. Mark's Parish Hall on Tuesday evening, Feb. 25th, was in spite of the disagreeable weather, very largely attended and everyone listened to the programme and the address given by Major Young with deep attention and found the evening all too brief. [The article goes on to describe the programme which included a history of Poland in considerable detail).

The speaker referred to the flag that was made by the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart Convent in Pittsburgh for Father Rydlewski and which went to France with him last August.

March 1, 1919, p.6

Colonel LePan, O.C. the Polish camp and his staff of Canadian officers, also their wives, are being extensively entertained just now. They were all honor guests of the American Red Cross Chapter at a ball at Niagara Falls, N.Y. on Thursday, at farewell events in town on Friday, and of the Polish Citizens' Committee of Buffalo over the weekend where a banquet and ball were given in their honor, at which many prominent French and Polish people, also officials of the French War Mission, Polish Military Mission, were present. These events were arranged to mark the appreciation of the Polish people of the splendid work done by Colonel LePan and his staff in training officers and men at Niagara camp for the Polish army for France and Poland. The Poles are deeply grateful for all that has been done for their army as they recognize the fact that the work of these Canadians made it possible for the Polish army to take its place among the allied armies on the western front and so win back ultimately the freedom of their beloved country, Poland. It must be a great pleasure to Colonel LePan and his officers to see that their work on behalf of the Polish army is much appreciated. It is a reward for that work and for the sacrifices they have made in taking up this work and in staying with it and bringing it to a successful conclusion.

Poland

Major Young in his recent address on Poland, at the Red Cross meeting, spoke of the world famous educational and religious institutions of Poland...[what follows is an amazingly detailed and lengthy review of Polish culture and history]...Some of Chopin's most marvellous compositions, the "March Funibre" and the "Polonaise" were played very beautifully by Miss Shepherd...Mrs. Coyne, to illustrate the Pole's love for music sang several patriotic songs, including "Jeszcze Polska Nie Zginela" or "Poland Shall be Free," and later the hymn with which Niagara people have become so familiar since the Polish Camp has been with us - "Boze Cos Polske"...The whole fabric of the address being woven together in a most interesting yet instructive manner, so the speaker held the rapt attention of his hearers from its opening to its close. His mastery of the difficult art of pronouncing Polish names was admired by all, and every one so much appreciated the address that hearty applause greeted the expressions of appreciation that were voiced by the Revd's A.F. MacGregor and C.H.E. Smith and Mr. W.H. Harrison, Major Young gave the people of Niagara something of the history of Poland on Tuesday evening and incidentally enabled the Red Cross Committee of the Women's Institute, under whose auspices the meeting was held to add a generous sum to their contribution to the Serbian Relief Fund, for which they are very grateful. The evening was a very successful one in every way and every one thoroughly enjoyed it, which must be a source of pleasure to all concerned.

James W. Mercer, who has been chief of staff of the Y.M.C.A. at the Polish camp at this place since last October, has been ordered to Hamilton for duty at the dispersal area and left on Thursday to begin his duties. Mr. Mercer has been courteous, painstaking and efficient in the discharge of his arduous and multifarious duties among the Polish troops and has made many warm friends among the Niagara people who regret his departure but whose best wishes go with him to his new field of labor.

March 3, 1919, p.7

The Polish-American Daily News and other well-known Polish papers of Buffalo and other places have recently given space to the account (recently published in this column) of the incident which occurred in the Royal George theatre a short time ago when, on behalf of the Niagara people, Mayor Macphee bade farewell to the Polish army, expressing warm appreciation of their splendid record of good conduct, etc., and extended good wishes for the future. And in copying this account, the paper expresses appreciation given the Polish camp in The Standard and of the work of the Niagara-on-the-Lake correspondent in this connection and also on behalf of the **Polish White Cross (Polskiego Bialego**

Krzyza), of which “Panni L.C. Ascher is a valued member.” (Once in a great while nice things are said of newspaper folk which bear repetition and our friends think the above is one of them, hence this mention).

When Niagara Camp was loaned to the Polish and French Governments in September 1917, as a place of training for troops destined for service with the Polish Legion on the Western front, the **Y.M.C.A.** was once more to the fore and before the first draft of recruits arrived from the United States the usual equipment was on the ground, a huge tent erected in which this was installed and in short time, all was in readiness for the use of the Polish troops. **Mr. Ross L. Beckett**, a man of exceptional ability and wide experience, was sent here to take charge of the work and soon after was joined by Lorne J. Henry and Mr. Macrae, all of whom were stationed here for over a year, carrying on a service that was unique, yet most efficient service that was appreciated to the full, not only by the camp commandant, and his staff of Canadian officers, but also by the Polish officers and men with whom they were most popular. It is not possible to give an adequate account of the work of the Y.M.C.A. among the Polish troops at Niagara Camp as that can be done only by those who had it in charge but that it was regarded as a dependable and valuable aid in the conduct of the camp and in maintaining its morale is proven by the testimony of Colonel LePan and staff by the Camp Chaplains and by everyone associated with the camp in any way.

The service given by the Y.M.C.A. staff at the Polish Camp has been of so varied a scope and of so unusual an order that one can but wonder and give praise in large measure as is their due. The “Y” has maintained a large tent on the camp grounds ever since the camp opened, and in the winter a large recreation hall in the town, at a great expense.

This winter saw the erection of a large hut of permanent nature in the centre of the camp grounds for the recreation and amusement of the men billeted nearby, while the large recreation hall and reading room in town was also maintained for the use of the troops in billets nearby. In both these centres, there were moving picture machines, concert equipment, reading and writing rooms, while in the new hut on the camp ground, a branch post-office was established, also a room in which a banking business was carried on, both being a valued privilege for officers and men. Both these recreation halls were given over to the Chaplains for use as chapels on Sundays and on the other special days of religious observance for those of the Roman Catholic faith, the sacred vessels, altar trimmings and altar, being loaned by the Rev. Father Sweeny of St. Vincent de Paul’s church, in whose parish these chapels were maintained by his permission.

In this camp the Y.M.C.A. did not carry on the usual religious work as the troops were Roman Catholic and preferred that the work be done by their own chaplains, but the fact that their buildings were converted into chapels and used in this manner is one of the unique features of their service among the Polish troops, one that places this branch in a class by itself as proving the broad scope of its service among the troops of the allies. Mr. Beckett and his assistants, and later Mr. James W. Mercer, a man of broad sympathies, kind-hearted, genial, were heart and soul for the Polish boys and furnished all necessaries for sport, for amusement, for divine service, for entertainment, for reading and writing, for taking care of the men’s money, and for all other purposes, free of charge. It is to be noted that at this camp the Y.M.C.A. got nothing from canteens, as they were maintained by the camp authorities and their profits went to add to the comforts of officers and men.

The camp libraries were unique in that most of the books and papers were in the Polish language. The rest being equally made up of French and English, the former being put in as a help to the men and in view of the fact that part of their future military service would be in France, thus carrying out the policy of the Red Triangle in its work among the soldiers.

In the past few months the library in the new hut on the camp ground proper has been in charge of a grey-haired Pole, Pawel Dudyniski, who does the honors in his broken English very courteously whenever strangers, or friends visit the spot over which he exercises a gentle, yet firm supervision, he is regarded very highly by the “Y” staff, who affectionately call him “Dad” when speaking to him, and to his co-operation is largely due of late the successful conduct of this branch of the work. Dudyniski came to the camp some time ago as a member of the 2nd Battalion and was detailed for duty at the service tent that was maintained by the Anglican Red Cross Society for the benefit of the Polish soldiers; he is a member of the Polish White Cross and of other Polish societies in the States, is a true patriot whose deepest regret is that his age will not allow him to go overseas with the Polish army and that as soon as the camp closes, he must take his discharge and go back to the U.S.A. Dudyniski is a fine type of Pole, one of those cheerful optimists who believes that “Poland will live again” and is willing to make any sacrifice that will help his beloved country.

The signs in the Y.M.C.A huts are unique in that they are all in the Polish language. On entering these huts one sees huge posters on which are proclaimed that these are "Namiot Koncertowy – Zabawa Kazdego Wieczora – Wstep Wolny" or "Y.M.C.A. Concert tent – entertainment every evening – admission free." On another is seen in Polish, that Polish, Canadian and American soldiers are always welcome. In the writing room is seen this "Pisz do domu" – "Write home" and this sign "Y.M.C.A. jest tu na to aby Pomagac zolnierzom w Armii Polskiej" or "The Y.M.C.A. is here to help all Polish soldiers" and as a proof that this offer of help is true, the Y.M.C.A. supplies entertainment and amusements free always, writes letters for the men, arranges their affairs. They have collected back wages, arranged for payment of amounts due on Liberty bonds, had the bonds sent on here, or disposed of as the men wished, taken care of their money while here and exchanged it for French money when they were leaving on draft for France. At first the banking system was somewhat crude and the money was kept in the safe of one of the business men of the town, but as the confidence of the officers and men of the "Y" (an organization that was at first almost unknown to them) grew, the work increased and a more systematic method was found necessary and was introduced. It may be said that as a proof of the esteem of the Chaplains for the "Y" and their hearty co-operation in its work, the men on arriving at the camp were told to seek the Y.M.C.A. where the good people were always ready and willing with their service to place their money in their keeping while at the camp if they wished to have it to take with them when they went on draft. And so the "Y" discharged this work willingly and courteously and as the camp strength waxed and waned, had their hands full. They have had in their keeping sums large and small, one grand total being \$240,000, that was taken care of between the first week of November to the latter part of February. The first deposit of this kind was made on December 12th, 1917 and the present modern system was inaugurated early in April, 1918. The correspondence in connection with monetary matters alone has been enormous while those in connection with the domestic affairs of the Polish officers and men has been equally so and reflects a vivid light on the courtesy and efficiency of the staff of the Y.M.C.A. at our unique camp.

There has been maintained a circulating library of 1000 or more volumes chiefly in Polish, many of these books have been given away while the balance were boxed up, sent with the last draft to France where they will be added to the library maintained in Paris for the use of the Polish Legion. The privileges of the library were fully enjoyed by the men of the Polish Army, most of whom were great readers and passed most of their leisure time in this way.

The social work done at this camp was similar to that carried on elsewhere with two striking exceptions, viz. (1) That at others concerts were held on two nights per week, while here there were six every week; (2) that at the majority of the concerts the language used was the Polish; the talent was supplied by the officers and men and by prominent Polish artists from elsewhere. Among these being several concerts by the Polish Singing Society of Buffalo and by the Polish National Singing Alliance which has a membership all over the United States. The Y.M.C.A. was frequently assisted at the evening entertainments by the ladies of Niagara, St. Catharines and vicinity, to all of whom they are exceedingly grateful and whose splendid programmes were certainly appreciated by the Polish boys. These entertainments took place in the recreation halls at the camp and in the town and were a great help in keeping up the spirits of the men.

The athletic programmes were also numerous and boxing, wrestling and many other such games helped pass the time in the winter season, while baseball, football, tennis, cricket, etc. were immensely popular whenever the weather was suitable. Mr. Beckett had a busy time arranging athletic meets during his term of service and was ably assisted by Mr. Henry and by officers of the camp. The latter were, like all military men, firm believers in the principle that athletics helped in the physical development of the men and always gave their active co-operation to the "Y" when any events of this kind were being arranged. In the midst of their many other varied activities, the "Y" staff paid frequent visits to the camp hospital where they helped in cheering up the patients and wrote numerous letters, etc., for them. It is interesting to note that a library was maintained by the Y.M.C.A. during the winter of 1917-1918 in the High School gymnasium where the officers and men frequently gathered to read and write and continue their studies of the English and French languages. This winter the town library and reading room was located in the office attached to the recreation hall in the town while a similar one was maintained in the new hut on the camp ground proper. Mention of this was made of this above. A glance at a report or diary sheet of military activities in this district during 1918 made by National Council of the Y.M.C.A. will show what was accomplished at the Polish Camp. In the first 12 months of this camp, 68 Roman Catholic religious services were held, 54 motion picture shows were given with a total attendance of 48,700 men; 104

concerts were given with a total attendance of 98,340; 56 miscellaneous events with an attendance of 33,340; 16 "stunt" nights took place with 17,300 attendance; 144 baseball matches took place, with an attendance of 43,375; 82 football matches with 28,450 in attendance; 14 athletic meets were held with an attendance of 19,130; 147 miscellaneous events with an attendance of 54,405; four lectures were given with an attendance of 3,750. A comparison with reports from other areas show that there was the heaviest attendance and more work done by the "Y" at this Polish camp than at any other centre. All the concerts and other events were organized by the Y.M.C.A. and carried out under their supervision. With such splendid organizers as R.L. Beckett, James M. Mercer and Lorne J. Henry, the service given by the Y.M.C.A. among the Polish soldiers at Niagara Camp was sure of being successful. They all laboured faithfully, efficiently and ceaselessly on behalf of the Poles and it is no wonder they have won such a high place in their esteem. Others who have been attached to the "Y" staff were Mr. McCrae, now in Quebec City; Mr. McCully, Mr. Young, Mr. Beatty and Mr. Lee, while a picket of volunteers from the Polish men in the camp has been attached for duty at the "Y" in the past 18 months, all of them being most faithful in the performance of their duties. The Y.M.C.A. has been exceptionally fortunate in the selection of its staff for the Polish camp, and to them is its successful work largely due. The Y.M.C.A. recreation halls were favorite meeting places of the Polish soldiers, here they gathered for concerts, impromptu dances, religious services, athletic events and many times to receive gifts from ...patriotic celebrations were held here, and the history and work of the organization occupied a unique place in the story of the Polish Army Camp in that one is so closely interwoven with the other that they are inseparable. To the "Y" staff and its headquarters in Niagara, the kindly thoughts of the officers and men of the Polish Army now in France often turn and in their hearts will ever be gratefully cherished the remembrance of the many bright hours they spent in training and of the many kindnesses they received from the "all round good fellows" of which the staff has been composed and to whose splendid executive ability, tact and thoughtfulness, the Red Triangle work at the Polish Camp has been made so successful. The service given has been of the highest order and merits all the praise that can be given. It is as appreciation of the splendid work of this excellent staff of "Y" workers and as a recognition of their services on behalf of officers and men of the Polish Army that this article has been written, by request, by the Niagara-on-the-Lake correspondent of the Standard, who has been privileged to add their names to her already long list of friends among those connected with the Polish Camp.

March 5, 1919, p.6

The Rev. C.H.E. Smith and Mrs. Smith have a farewell supper at the rectory last Friday evening for Lt-Col A.D. LePan and his staff.

Public Library

A generous gift to the library

The following letter speaks for itself

March 1, 1919

To the Secretary Niagara Public Library

I have been instructed by the Camp Commandant to acknowledge with thanks the many kindnesses which your Board has extended to members of the Polish Army during the camp which is now closing. We are aware that as a matter of course a number of books have been lost or mislaid without accounting for them. In consideration of these facts we have pleasure in enclosing a cheque for \$25 for such use as your Board may see fit to make use of it.

Yours very sincerely

C.R. Young, Major

Adjutant Polish Army Camp

In explanation it may be said that during the winter of 1917-1918, the Library allowed the free use of books to the soldiers of the camp and during the winter of 1918-1919 at a reduced rate, as their contribution to the war, and many availed themselves of this privilege. When in the summer of 1918 the government gave libraries to all the camps the privilege was withdrawn.

March 6, 1919, p.7

James W. Mercer of the Y.M.C.A. was a guest of the Polish Citizen's Committee of Buffalo at their reception and banquet at the Hotel Iroquois, at which the honor guests were Lieut-Colonel LePan and the Canadian officers from the Polish army camp.

Captain Gibson Eccles, Q.M., of the C.A.M.C Toronto Military District was at the Polish camp hospital yesterday on official business.

March 10, 1919, p. 7 – Farewell Dinner at Hotel Iroquois, Buffalo

A Pleasing Tribute

The National Polish Department of American honored Canadian and French officers who aided in the organization and training of the Polish Army of France with a reception and a farewell dinner on Tuesday evening at the Hotel Iroquois in Buffalo, when among those present were Colonel and Mrs. A.D. LePan, Major and Mrs. C.R. Young, Major and Mrs. Frank Kenrick, Major and Mrs. W.G. Kirk, Major H.H. Madill, Captain and Mrs. John Harris, Captain Alexander G.E. Smith (A Native from Six Nations), Captain and Mrs. J.L. Robinson, Captain and Mrs. Charles Parr, Captain and Mrs. J. I. Lewis, Captain and Mrs. W. G. Hamilton, Captain and Mrs. G.A.R. Pearl, Captain and Mrs. C.H. Fowler, Lieut., and Mrs. E. Dicky, Lieuts., W.S. Geddes, J.S. McCosh and W. H. Cunningham, Lieut. Soriano and other Polish officers from the camp. The other guests included Major-General W.G. Gwatkin, C.B., C.M.G. Director of Militia and Defense, Canada (who is said to be the 'Godfather,' of the Polish Army for France), Colonel James Martin, Lieuts., Labat and J. Cognelot of the French High Commission, Washington; T.N. Hilinski and Major J.H. Wagner of the Polish Military Mission, New York; Eugene Gerard of the American Red Cross, James W. Mercer, Y.M.C.A. Chief of Staff of the Polish Camp, the Mayor of Buffalo and other civic officials, Mayor MacPhee, representing the town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, representatives of the Polish National Department from all over the United States, many prominent Polish citizens of Buffalo, the Polish and French officers remaining at the Niagara Camp, and friends of the Polish cause, about 500 invitations being sent out and most of those being accepted. The guests were introduced by Maxwell M. Nowak, chairman of the Polish Citizens' Committee, and vice-president of the Polish National Alliance and were welcomed by the Rev. Dr. Alexander Pitass, director of the Buffalo branch of the National Polish department, the Rev. C. Krzyzan and President J.F. Smulski of Chicago, where the headquarters of the Polish National Department are located. Mr. Smulski acted as toastmaster at the banquet which followed the official reception and paid a fine tribute to the generosity of the Canadian Government and to the town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, to the officers and men of the Polish Army and the assistance that had been given to the Polish cause, and also to the splendid work of Lieut.-Colonel A.D. LePan and his staff of Canadian officers to whose training was largely due the success that had attended the career of the Polish Army overseas. Many toasts were offered and brought forth, some fine speeches in reply. In addition to that made by Hon. John J. Smulski, who besides being president of the National Polish Department is also commissioner for the United States of the Polish National Committee, stirring addresses were made by the Hon. Charles M. Heald, Commissioner of the Finance Department of the city of Buffalo, T.M. Helinski, Eugene Gerard, Rev. C. Krzyzaw, Major-General G.W. Gwatkin, Lieut-Col. A.D. LePan and Colonel James Martin. Colonel Martin's speech was most eloquent and made reference to the organization, training and military achievements of the Polish Army for France, the generous assistance that had been given the Polish cause by the French, Canadian and American Governments and by friends in Canada, the United States, France and elsewhere, of the splendid work of Lieut-Col. LePan and his fine staff of Canadian officers in training and looking after the welfare of the Polish lads who had enlisted for service in the Polish Army in France; the tribute paid being most appropriate, was heartily approved and endorsed by friends of the Polish cause everywhere. During his address Colonel Martin made the pleasing announcement that the recommendation had gone forward to France that the **Cross of the Legion of Honor be conferred on Lieut. Colonel LePan by the French Government** as a mark of appreciation of his splendid services on behalf of the Polish Army and said that in a short time the decoration would be approved and conferred on one that was surely deserving of the honor. Colonel Martin pinned the ribbon on Colonel LePan's breast which goes with the decoration and this signal honor and all that it represents, was greeted with hearty applause by all present, by whom the recipient has endeared himself by his untiring devotion to duty and by his fine work at the Polish camp. Though taken completely by surprise by this most unexpected proof of esteem, and of the appreciation of his work, Colonel LePan made a brief but appropriate reply. Congratulations were showered on him at the close of the banquet when a reception and dance followed. The banquet took place in the beautiful ballroom of the Iroquois, which was very prettily decorated in honor of the occasion. The honor guests, (including Colonel LePan and his staff, Mayor MacPhee, J.W. Mercer and prominent Polish and French officials) were seated at the principal table, which occupied the whole end of the large room, while other guests were seated at tables placed lengthwise down the room. The menu was a varied one, but suitable for such a

unique occasion, while the menu cards were beautifully gotten up and will be a fine memento for the guests. On the front page of the cards was a shield, surmounted by the French, Polish, Canadian and American flags, bearing the inscription, "*Concordia parinte rescescent, Riscordia Maximae delabunhun,*" while the centre of the page had these words: "A tribute to friends of the men from America who enlisted for service in the Polish Army in France by the National Polish Department of America, March 4th, 1919, Hotel Iroquois, Buffalo, NY." The inside of the card bore the programme, a list of the guests of honor and of those giving addresses, this included the name of the Rev. Dr. Alexander Pitass, who gave the invocation and of Mr. Maxwell M. Nowak, who made the introductory speech as chairman of the Committee on Arrangements. The banquet and reception were a fitting climax to the good work of Colonel LePan and his staff on behalf of the Polish Army for France and must have been some compensation to them for the personal sacrifices they have made in order to remain at their posts of duty at the Polish Camp for so long a period. It affords them tangible proof of the appreciation of the Polish people of their fine work and gives them an unusually pleasing memory to treasure long after they have returned to civilian life.

May 1, 1919, p.5 – Polish-American Troops Reach Poland

In a letter received yesterday from a prominent Polish citizen of Buffalo, the following item of news was given: "You will no doubt be much interested to hear that 14,000 of the Polish troops from the Niagara Camp are now in Poland and that many of them shared in the capture of Vilna from the Bolsheviki. They are giving a fine account of themselves already. The Polish army from France is coming in daily to Poland, from 2,000 to 3,000 coming daily." This news was sent to us yesterday by Dr. Fronczak of Buffalo, who is now in Poland. This also was said: "Polish people are deeply grateful to the kind friends at Niagara for all they have done and are now doing for the Polish boys while in Niagara and for their help at the present time for the suffering people of Poland. We shall never forget what has been done for us by Niagara and the town and its open-hearted, generous liberality and support to the Polish cause will have a place in the 'Book of Golden Deeds,' which is to be written so soon as there is time to be given to such a work. Careful record is being made of everything that is done on behalf of Poland and her people in order that future generations may know to whom they are indebted for the freedom their country is likely to enjoy after centuries of oppression."

May 3, 1919, p.8 – Col. A.D. Le Pan back in Civilian Life

Col. A.D. LePan, who was commander of the Polish Camp at this place, is back in civil life and has resumed his position of Superintendent at the University of Toronto. Majors Young, Madill, Kirk and Kenrick, Captains Nash, Peart, Harris and Parr are also back at their civilian occupations. Captain Fowler is still in the Military service and so are Captains Lewis and Smith but the remaining officers are back in civilian life. All of those officers won the hearts of the Polish soldiers, whom they trained for service in France and many of them speak in the highest terms of them when writing to Niagara friends.

May 6, 1919, p.8 – Polish Relief

In the past few days a number of very generous contributions have been received by Mrs. Ascher for the Polish Relief and these will be sent forward as soon as possible. These contributions include: Quantity of hospital gauze, 3 sets of girl's underwear (new), 1 ladies coat, 1 night dress, 2 pairs drawers, 2 chemises, 4 cakes soap, 3 ladies skirts, 1 sweater coat, 4 ladies coats, 10 pairs stockings, 1 girl's suit, 2 middies, 6 girl's blouses, 2 ladies shirt waists, 2 corset covers, 1 girl's coat, 1 kimona, 2 girl's petticoats, several ladies coats, children's underwear, caps, etc. For all of which grateful thanks are extended. Many of these articles were contributed by members of the Girl's Service Battalion, who are ever ready and willing to help a good cause along.

May 8, 1919, p. 6

Niagara citizens will be interested in the news we received yesterday from a prominent Polish citizen of Buffalo that a number of disabled Polish soldiers, men who trained for overseas service at Niagara Camp arrived at New York a few days ago after being demobilized and discharged in France and from New York were sent on to their homes in various parts of the United States. The same friend says, "We will receive the casualty lists of Polish troops from America from time to time and will send them on to you. Poland will be struggling for some time against those tools of Germans, the Bolsheviki and Ukrainians and there will be many of our boys killed or wounded. We may even be compelled to use

armed force against the Germans. We are deeply grateful to you and other good friends in Niagara for your efforts on behalf of our suffering people of Poland and will be glad to help you in sending on the contributions of clothing for the relief bales”.

In connection with the last clause of the above sentence we may say that arrangements are being made by members of the Polish White Cross to motor from Buffalo in a few days and take the bales of clothing, hospital supplies that we have been given by good friends in the town. Further contributions will be most acceptable and should be sent in as soon as possible in order that they may be sent out in this way.

May 12, 1919, p.9 – Polish Relief

Polish Relief

During the past week Mrs. Ascher has received a number of generous contributions of clothing for the Polish Relief bales, several of which are packed and ready for transfer to the White Cross. Among the contributors are Mrs. J.J. Doyle, Mrs. C.E. Brown, Mrs. D. O'Donnel and Mrs. Teeple, Mrs. Arthur Masters, Miss Roe and Miss Marjory Shepherd (the contribution previously credited to the Girls' Service Battalion was made by Miss Shepherd; the Battalion's donation being not yet ready). From Miss M.E. Ball, we have received contributions of clothing, linen, absorbent cotton, towards the special bale of hospital supplies and to this was also given by James Connolly. Other contributions of soap and hospital needs are promised for this week. From Mrs. J.C. Garrett and other ladies we have received hand-knitted socks and cash contributions while several other good friends have notified us of their intention of making contributions of socks, clothing or money in the near future. The need and suffering of the Polish people in Poland are very great and help of all kinds is greatly appreciated. Acknowledgment of the third bale, sent to the White Cross, was received by Mrs. Ascher last Friday and special mention was made of the fine towels and socks that made up part of the varied contents. Grateful thanks are extended to the generous hearts of the Niagara people, who they have already given largely to war relief of all kinds, are now helping to relieve the necessities of the Poles.

May 15, 1919, p. 9

Polish Notes

Mrs. Ascher has recently received a letter from the Polish White Cross branch of the National Polish Department in which formal acknowledgement is made of the receipt of \$62.00, the sum being made up as follows

Women's Institute Red Cross Committee	\$50.00	
Thomas Mulholland	5.00	
C.H. Lloyd		2.00
A Friend		2.00
Mrs. Ascher		1.50
Mrs. George Reid		1.00
A Friend		.50

		\$62.00

The letter says – “Please permit us to add an expression of hearty gratitude for the generosity of our kind friends of Niagara-on-the-lake and of your own consistent work for the poor in Poland. Your help comes at a time when such help is most urgently needed and is indeed greatly appreciated. The Polish Army, you will be interested to hear, is in part in Poland and the rest are either on their way or soon will be to in their mother country, Poland. Please convey our hearty thanks to the good people of Niagara whose interest in and kindness to our Polish boys will never be forgotten.”

We have received a letter in the past few days from one of our friends at Niagara-on-the-Lake to me which contains the following pleasing news: - “It will no doubt be pleasing news to you and all our friends at Niagara-on-the-Lake to learn that, although the French are naturally somewhat tired of soldiers in general, having seen so many of them during the last four and a half years, yet I heard wherever I was (in Bretagne, in Normandie and now in Lorraine) regrets expressed that our Polish boys are leaving. So they have kept up the fine reputation they enjoyed at Niagara, and I am proud of it.” The letter was written on April 20th, and the writer states that on the following Tuesday the 4th Regiment of the Polish army, to which he is attached, was leaving for Poland, going by rail across Prussia. The trip overland will last five

days, but is being made that way in preference to going round by way of the North and Baltic Seas, a long tedious trip. So the men are saved from sea sickness and all the dis-comforts of a long, stormy voyage. The writer also says "Kindly let the friends of the Polish Army know that if no letters are received for some time after they get into Poland it will be because they will have to wait till a regular mail service (which does not exist now) will have been established between Poland and America."

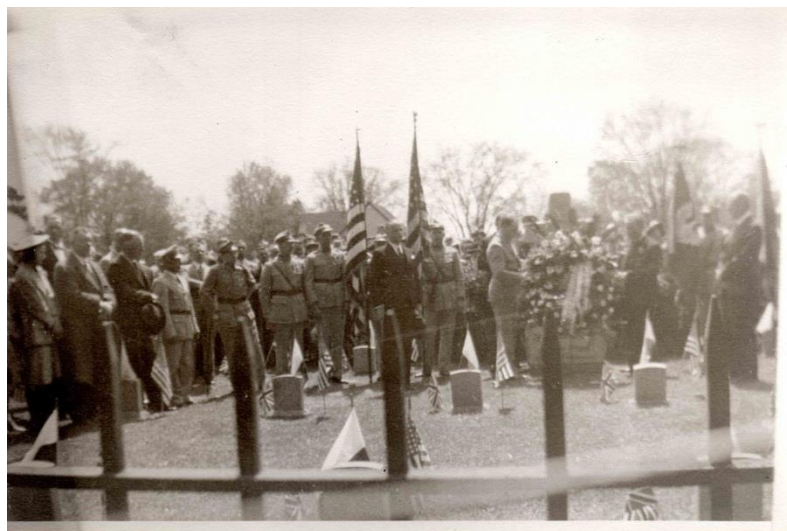
May 16, 1919, p.14

Mrs. Ascher has received in the past few days a generous contribution of clothing for her Polish Relief bales from the Girls' Service Battalion and from Miss Bailey, while Mrs. Hartley has contributed children's shoes and A.J. Coyne a special contribution of soap, 27 cakes which will be packed with the special hospital box. James Connolly and Mrs. J. Brundrit have also contributed toilet soap very generously while several pairs of hand-knitted socks have also been sent in for all which grateful thanks are extended.

A full list of contributions is being prepared and will shortly be published. Further contributions of socks, clothing, soap, towels or shoes will be most welcome, in view of the great need of the war sufferers in Poland.

May 28, 1919, p.11 – First Pilgrimage

The Polish Citizen's Committee of Buffalo, a delegation of whom visited Niagara a few days ago, has arranged to come again on Memorial Day to decorate the graves of the Polish army who died while in training at Niagara Camp. By special request of the Polish Citizens Committee, Rev. Fr. Sweeny has consented to celebrate a Memorial Mass in St. Vincent de Paul's Church on Friday morning at 9:30 when prayers will be offered for the repose of the souls of these deceased heroes and of those who fell in action, or died of wounds while of active service with the Allied armies in France. A cordial invitation is extended to all those interested in the Polish army to be present at the Mass and also at the decoration ceremony which follows. A large number of prominent Polish people from Buffalo, Niagara Falls and many other places are coming to Niagara to attend these ceremonies on Friday. The plot set apart for the Polish soldiers has been put in order in the past few days and is ready for inspection by the Citizen's Committee who arranged with Father Sweeney for the work to be done when they last visited Niagara.



**Early Pilgrimage,
Polish Cemetery Plot
Niagara-on-the-Lake
Photo: Niagara Historical Society
& Museum**

May 29, 1919

A large number of prominent Polish folk from Buffalo, Niagara Falls, St. Catharines and other places will be in Niagara tomorrow (The American Memorial Day) to attend a memorial mass in St. Vincent de Paul's Church to take part in the ceremony of decorating the graves of the Polish soldiers who died while in training for service in France. The Mass will begin at 9:30 a.m. and it is likely the decoration of the graves will take place at its close. Arrangements for the event were made two weeks ago when Father Kryzyan and members of the Polish Citizens' Committee of Buffalo were in Niagara.

May 31, 1919, p.13 (Saturday) – Young Ladies Decorate Polish Cemetery

A number of the young ladies of the town, who have always taken a keen interest in the affairs of the Polish camp, got together this week and collected quantities of beautiful flowers and went over to the Polish plot in St. Vincent de Paul cemetery and decorated the graves of the 25 soldiers of the Polish army who are at rest there. The graves looked very pretty after the flowers were all in place and this kindly and thoughtful action will be greatly appreciated by the Polish folk who are making a pilgrimage to this place tomorrow, Friday's visit having been cancelled for many reasons.



Wreaths at the Polish Cemetery

June 3, 1919, p.3

Some of our young ladies, who are both patriotic and kind hearted, got together last Thursday and arranged for decorating the graves of soldiers who died here during the war and asked their friends to give flowers for the purpose. The girls got up very early, (they had to do so, as they are nearly all business girls), took their flowers and visited both St. Marks and St. Vincent de Paul's cemeteries where they laid flowers on the graves of all. In St. Mark's, flowers and flags were placed on the last resting places of Gordon Ryan, Robert Best, Garland Keith (all Niagara boys), Sergeant Ernest Saunders and five other lads who died far from home and friends, while training at the camp last year for overseas service. This labor of love completed, the girls went on to St. Vincent de Paul's pretty burial ground, where flowers were placed on the graves of three Canadian boys who died last summer while at camp and then they turned their attention to the Polish plot where 25 men of the Polish Army are interred. The plot is a large one but, as there were plenty of flowers, (thanks to the liberal generosity of their friends), the work of decorating was simplified. Large pails filled with fragrant purple and white lilacs were placed at the four corners of the plot, while vases filled with flowers were placed on each grave. The base of the monument was banked with flowers and tall sprays placed on either side. When completed the spot was like a floral bower and was greatly admired by all who viewed it. The girls deserve all the commendation they are receiving for their gracious and patriotic act which is a proof of their appreciation of the sacrifices made by those who sleep their last sleep in quiet old Niagara.

June 5, 1919, p.7

The games of the Misses Franks were unintentionally omitted from yesterday's list of contributors to the Polish Relief bales. These young ladies have taken an active part in all the fine work done by the Girls' Service Battalion, "did their bit" towards helping to fill the eight bale of clothing now awaiting shipment. Niagara folk will be interested to know that three bales of clothing, hospital supplies, etc. have already gone forward to New York and that seven bales of clothing are now in hand and will be sent forward this week, which may be regarded as fresh proof of the kindly hearts and sympathetic liberality of the townspeople to those who are sufferers from the effects of the great war. In addition to these, there is in hand \$8.00 in cash that will be sent to the White Cross in a few days. Intending contributors to the relief

fund should send in their contributions at as early a date as possible to Mrs. Ascher, in order that she may send it on. Funds are greatly needed just now for the purchase of hospital supplies for Poland where the sickness and suffering are greater than anyone can realize. Mrs. Ryan has kindly consented to take charge of any cash contributions if it is more convenient for the donors to leave them with her. Any sum, however small, will be gratefully received.

June 7, 1919, p. 10

Maxwell M. Nowak, of Buffalo, who is well-known here left Buffalo for New York yesterday enroute for Poland and was accompanied by Mr. John M. Smulski, president of the National Polish Department and Polish Commissioner in the United States by special appointment of President Paderewski. Both men will spend some time in Poland making a study of its economic and other needs with a view to obtaining firsthand information for the Polish citizens of the United States and Canada and so facilitate the relief work that must be done. Among the places they will visit will be Paris, London, Cracow, Warsaw and Posen, the latter place having special interest for Mr. Nowak as it is his birthplace. The devastated districts will also be visited and conferences held with those who will be looking after the distribution of supplies and relief funds that are to be sent in to Poland as soon as possible. A large delegation of Polish citizens of Buffalo were at the depot to see Mr. Nowak leave and several went on as far as New York to see him on his steamer.

June 10, 1919, p. 11

Polish Relief

Several more contributions of clothing have come in for the Polish Relief and there is nearly enough to fill another bale. Latest contributors include Mrs. Donald Longhurst, Miss Ball, Miss Mary Lees and Mr. Frank Addison, while others have been promised. A cash contribution sent in on Saturday brings the cash in hand up to \$9.00. If there is any other kind friend who wishes to contribute money for this very deserving cause it will be gratefully received. Money is badly needed by the Polish White Cross for the purchase of hospital supplies and of drugs with which to relieve the sufferers from typhus and other serious illnesses, in war stricken Poland. Who will help? The money will be sent on to White Cross headquarters in New York by Mrs. Ascher, a member of the White Cross Committee.

June 16, 1919, p. 7

Polish Relief

Thanks are extended on behalf of the Polish White Cross Society to Mrs. Winthrop for her gift of \$2.00 and nice pair of socks (home knitted), to Mrs. C.E. Brown for her gift of girl's clothing, both of which were received on Thursday. Nine cases of clothing, socks, etc. are now packed and will be on their way to New York in a day or two. While on Friday a case of hospital supplies and socks went forward by express and are by this time at the White Cross headquarters ready for transfer to Poland. Further gifts of socks, soap, hospital supplies and money, will be gratefully received and forwarded by Mrs. Ascher not after this week, as she has so many other duties incidental to the summer season. No more clothing will be sent on till September. A full list of all past contributions will be published as soon as possible in order that the generosity of Niagara to the Polish war sufferers may be known. It is appreciated greatly by all those connected with Polish relief work here and elsewhere.

June 18, 1919, p.11

James W. Mercer, formerly chief of the Y.M.C.A. staff at the Polish camp and now on duty at the dispersal station in Hamilton was in town on Monday on "Y" business, and received a cordial welcome from his friends.

A dispatch from Coblenz, Germany, dated June 15th tells of the halting of eight trainloads of Polish troops en route from France to Poland, at Gressen, near the border of the Erzberger government and as the men only had sufficient rations for the trip which occupies four days, a shortage of food had arisen. Erzberger warned the French government of his intention to act in this manner but his threats were evidently not regarded as serious. Many of the men who trained at Niagara Camp are among the troops now on their way from France to Poland and some future letters to friends here will no doubt contain a description of these incidents that will be read with interest. Some of the men from Niagara camp are with General Haller's army, that is at present engaged in fighting the Bolsheviks, as letters

received here last week told of their impending transfer from the vicinity of Warsaw and of action to be taken against these foes, the Bolsheviki forces.

June 20, 1919, p. 12

Mrs. Ascher is in receipt of news of the safe arrival at the headquarters of the Polish White Cross in New York, of the bale of hospital supplies, given her by kind friends, and sent on last week for transfer to Poland where such supplies are urgently needed. Should any kind friend wish to contribute supplies for hospital use, soap, socks, towels, or money at any time, Mrs. Ascher will gladly take charge of them and send them on. Letters recently received by the White Cross in New York from Madame Paderewski and Madame Ivanowski (president and 1st^vice-president of the Society) tell of the suffering among the Polish people in Poland and of the urgent need of antiseptics and hospital supplies of every kind for relief work. If there are any who would like to help in relieving the needs of these victims of the war by contributing money or any of the articles mentioned and who have not time to come to see Mrs. Ascher, they may leave their donations with Mrs. Wm. Ryan, who has kindly offered to help in this way. Any help, however small, will be gratefully received.

October 22, 1922

Elizabeth C. Ascher decorated with the Chevalier's Cross of the Order of Polonia Restituta.

November 27, 1923

Elizabeth Ascher was awarded the Haller Medal.

May 1926

Elizabeth Ascher was awarded the Order of Miecze Hallerowskie.

May 27, 1928

Mrs. Elizabeth Ascher was given the rank of Honorary Colonel of the Polish Army.

May 28, 1928, p.3 – 10th Annual Pilgrimage

Host Kneels in Tribute to Soldier Dead

Three Thousand Pay Homage in Pilgrimage to Graves at Niagara-on-the-Lake

Dominion is Lauded

Ciechanowski Praises Canadians for Contributions to World Freedom

As wreaths were laid on the graves of Polish world war veterans at St. Vincent de Paul's cemetery, near the close of yesterday's solemn ceremonies, marking the tenth annual pilgrimage to this sacred place, a great circle of light with the colors of the rainbow appeared in the flawless sky, and 3,000 persons looked upward in awe where, it seemed, Heaven, by a miraculous sign were blessing the services.

And when the memorial services were ended and the throng had left the little cemetery, the great halo still shone.

That those soldiers, who were trained at Kosciuszko Camp here, fell in battle in the World War, and lie buried in the cemetery, shall not be forgotten was suggested in every fervent word and gesture of the speakers.

A small tent had been pitched in the cemetery to shelter a temporary altar, and standing before this, **Jan Ciechanowski, minister to the United States from Poland**, who made his first visit to this continent especially for the occasion, addressed the assemblage.

Lauds Canadians

"On behalf of Poland I pay tribute to the friendship of Canada," declared Minister Ciechanowski. "The contribution of Canada to the victory of combined freedom and justice over imperialism has passed into history as new proof of disinterested devotion to the loftiest principles of humanity on the part of the Canadian people."

Previous to the addresses by Minister Ciechanowski and other distinguished persons, field mass was celebrated by the **Rev. Stanislaus Fimowicz**, pastor of St. Luke's Church, Buffalo. He was assisted by the **Rev. Ignatius J. Klejna** of Rochester and the **Rev. Joseph Zimba** of St. Louis, Mo. The sermon was preached by the **Rev. Francis Radzisewski**, pastor of St. Barbara's Church, Lackawana.

Kneels in Tribute

With the priests bowed before the altar, members of the Polish World War Veteran's Association of the Adam Plewacki post of the American Legion, Buffalo and the notables present, filed through the dense crowd and knelt in the small space before the altar. While they were kneeling in honor of the dead, Moniuszko, a Polish men's singing society, sang in Polish. As the field mass proceeded they alternated in singing with Kalin, a Polish women's singing society.

The field mass said, the **Rev. Caesar Krzygan** of Buffalo, introduced the first speaker of the day.

William H. Harrison, mayor of Niagara-on-the-Lake, extended a welcome to the assembly and spoke briefly of the heroism of Polish soldiers in the World War. He then placed a wreath on one of the graves in the name of the British Empire Service League.

Mrs. Elizabeth C. Ascher, known as the mother of the boys at Niagara-on-the-Lake, and who has been decorated by the Polish Government for her service, spoke of the war dead as ones who had lived simply and died gloriously.

Other Speakers

Other speakers were **Brig.-Gen. Chas. M. Nelles**, **Col. Arthur D. LePan**, commander of Kosciusko camp during the world war, **Major Clarence R. Young**, adjutant of the same camp, and **Major William F. Kirk**, all of Niagara-on-the-Lake and **Col. Theophile Starzynski** of Pittsburgh, national commander of the Polish World War Veterans' Association. Each speaker placed a wreath on one of the graves.

Following the addresses, a girl from the Felician Sisters' orphanage William Street, in Polish costume, and a Boy Scout from the same orphanage, faced each other across the grave of a soldier, and in Polish told what these men had died for. Three of the orphanage girls and three Boy Scouts from the orphanage then sang in Polish.

Taps for Sleepers

Three volleys were fired by a squad of Adam Plewacki post, taps were sounded, and the services were ended. The organizations present, including the women's auxiliary of the veterans' association, formed in a procession and marched from the cemetery to the town memorial clock.

Father Krzyzan was chairman for the program at Niagara-on-the-Lake. He was assisted by **Mrs. Catherine Hodkiewicz**, president of the women's auxiliary, and others. **Dr. Francis E. Fronczak**, health commissioner, is general chairman of the celebration which will continue through Memorial day; **Dr. Stefan Rosciki**, Polish consul at Buffalo, honorary chairman, and **John L. Gorski**, vice-chairman.

Bankers Guests

Following the ceremonies, Minister Ciechanowski and members of the committee were entertained at luncheon by **George F. Rand**, president of the Marine Trust Co., at his Niagara estate (Randwood, 176 John St.).

Minister Ciechanowski arrived in Buffalo at 8:30 o'clock daylight saving time yesterday morning. He was welcomed at the Exchange street station by a committee headed by Dr. Fronczak. Other members of the welcoming committee were: Consul Rosciki, Thaddeus Buynowski, Polish vice-consul at Buffalo; Col. Strazynski, Stefan Ryszkiewicz, commander of the Buffalo post of Polish veterans; Alexander Ruzskiewicz, Stanley Jackiel, Stanley F. Jakubowski and Edward Bergner.

May 28, 1928, p.8 – The Niagara Falls Gazette

Polish War Veterans Pay Tribute to Dead at Niagara-on-the-Lake; Marks the Tenth Annual Pilgrimage

Three Thousand Pay Homage at Graves of Fallen Soldiers

Polish Minister to States is Chief Speaker

George F. Rand Entertains

An event on Sunday morning of wide spread interest was the Decoration and Memorial Service by the Polish American Legion of the Great War, at the graves of their fellow countrymen who lie at rest, in a plot consecrated for them in St. Vincent de Paul's cemetery. During the late war these Polish soldiers were stationed in Niagara-on-the-lake, "in training", when many of them succumbed to an epidemic of influenza were thus denied the opportunity to fight in battle for their country, but who died here 'ere they could strike a blow for the "Land of their fathers".

The Legion who celebrated the 10th anniversary of the Polish army and their friends motored over in private cars as well as busses from Buffalo via Tonawanda, River Road, Niagara Falls crossing at the Lower Bridge where they were escorted by "speed cops" who arranged all signal traffic so that the party had no stops or delays. There were many dignitaries among the party. Some of whom are Jego

Ekselencja Jan Ciechanowski, minister of Poland at Washington; Dr. Teofil Starzynski, president of the Polish Falcon's organization in Pittsburgh; M. Dosicki, Polish Council, Buffalo; Mr. Bujanowski, Vice-Council, Buffalo; Dr. F.E. Fronczak, health commissioner, Buffalo; Colonel Le Pan, Toronto, who was in command of the Polish regiment when stationed in Niagara-on-the-Lake; also Major Young, Toronto, and Major Wm. Kirk Montreal, commander of 2nd Battalion, who at that time were associated with Colonel Le Pan; M. Kozlowski, Polish Council, Detroit; M. Gorah, representative from Polish daily papers in Buffalo; A. Razkiewicz and City Editor, Myszka; Jas Kozan, leader of the Polish Singing Society; M. Thos. Ryszynski, head of the Business Men's Association Polish Society, Black Rock Visiting Clergy. The visiting clergy were Rev. Stanislaw Wimowicz, Rev. Franciszek Radziszewski, and Rev. Cesary Krzyzan.

The Legion in marching to the memorial service were preceded by the clergy dignitaries, Rev. Stanislaw Fimorowicz who celebrated mass; Rev. Franciszek Radziszewski who preached the sermon for the occasion; Rev. Cezary Krzyzan who was chairman and who gave the address of welcome, which was spoken both in English and Polish and Rev. J.A. Megan. The band composed of young boys of the Polish Orphan Asylum, Cheektowaga, near Buffalo; Boy Scouts and Girl Guides; The Polish Veterans of the American Legion of the World War; The Legion bearing their standard, their own Polish flags and the Union Jack, followed by the Korpus Pomocniczy, who are the helpers and assistants. Choir music was rendered by the Polish Singing Society of Moniuszko, a Buffalo organization under the leadership of Jas. Rozan.

Welcomed by Mayor: Mayor Harrison of Niagara-on-the-Lake in his official capacity welcomed the visiting guests to Niagara and wished the guests success for their Legion and peace and prosperity for their country.

Jego Ekselencja Jan Ciechanowski, Minister of Poland at Washington, presented thanks and gratitude to Niagara-on-the-Lake and to our nation for all they had done for the Polish nation.

Colonel Arthur D. Le Pan, Toronto, who is called "Protector of the Polish army on this soil, expressed his thanks for the opportunity to pay tribute to the memory of these splendid men, brothers-in-arms who had sickened and died. They had died for Poland even as men on the battle field. The greatest tribute that could be paid them was to restore Poland to her proper place in the world.

Brigadier General C.M. Nelles of Niagara-on-the-Lake paid tribute on behalf of the British Empire League to the brave souls who slept so peacefully.

Dr. Teofil Starzynski, Pittsburgh, leader of all the American Polish army (veterans), paid high tribute to all the Polish army who had left home to battle for the freedom of their home and democracy and for freedom of the world, and on behalf of the Polish Army of America he "saluted."

Mrs. Ascher Speaks

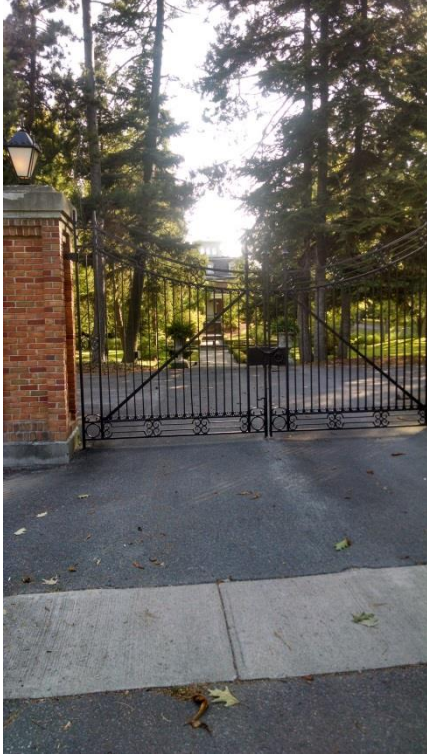
Mrs. Elizabeth Ascher, who was made honorary colonel of the Polish army for the care she had given the Polish boys while stationed here at the Lake, said it gave her great pleasure to see so many who had come to pay tribute to simple men, who rested in a simple "box and who had lived simple lives, doing so she felt they were also paying tribute to those overseas who were resting just as sweetly, though in unknown graves.

A unique dialogue here took place between some children in native costume from the Orphanage Band "Nowe Slowczyki," asking who here rested and why?" One of their number, a young boy in khaki, told the story of the suffering of their fellow-men, who had died that they and all after generations might live in peace, after which they chanted the funeral march.

The firing squad, under the leadership of Frank Baranows, fired the volley and taps was sounded by the buglers under the leadership of Frank Witek, after which the "Libera" was chanted.

There were wreaths from the Polish residents of Buffalo, from Jan Ciechanowski, minister of Poland at Washington, D.O. from Council 92 of Polish National Alliance, Black Rock from Naszym Bohaterom, Polish residents of Hamilton, and from Stow. Weteranow, Polish Veterans' Association.

Wreaths were placed by Mayor Harmon, Jan Ciechanowski, General Nelles; Dr. Teofil Starzynski. After the ceremony at the cemetery the veterans marched to the cenotaph where they placed wreaths and paid tribute and honor to the memory of the Niagara boys who gave their lives so nobly to the cause of freedom.



Gateway to Randwood, 2014
Photo: Stan Skrzyszewski

Luncheon and Banquet

Following the ceremonies Minister Ciechanowski and members of the committee were entertained at luncheon by George F. Rand, president of the Marine Trust Company, at his Ontario estate.

At the conclusion of luncheon the delegation enjoyed a motor trip through Ontario and western New York and gathered at the Statler Hotel at Buffalo in the evening where a banquet was served followed by addresses. Some of the cars crossed at Lewiston and Niagara Falls and motored to Buffalo on the American side of the river, while others enjoyed the ride up the Canadian boulevard crossing the Peace Bridge.

Another delegation of Polish veterans is expected here in September. The Chicago branch of the Polish Legion is planning a convention in Buffalo at that time and during this meeting will visit the graves here.

August 31, 1927, p. 14 – The Niagara Falls Gazette

Mrs. E.C. Ascher of Niagara-on-the-Lake has received an invitation to attend the tenth annual gathering of the Polish Army Veterans' Association at Cleveland, Ohio, October 8th and 9th. Many of the veterans who gather there trained for the World War at Niagara-on-the-Lake, and Mrs. Ascher who interested herself in the welfare of the Polish soldiers, was made an honorary member of their association, besides being honored in other ways by the Polish Government, for her benevolent work.

May 28, 1928, p. 5

Colonel and Mrs. A.D. LePan of Toronto were renewing former friendships in town while guests of Major and Mrs. C.R. Young



Elizabeth C. Ascher, standing at the Polish soldiers' Cross of Sacrifice in the Polish Military Cemetery at Niagara-on-the-Lake July 17, 1933

May 1934

Elizabeth Ascher was awarded the Cross of Merit.

May 1941

Mrs. Elizabeth Carey Ascher passed away at Cottage Hospital, in Niagara-on-the-Lake in her 72nd year.

Notes on Mrs. Elizabeth Ascher

Born Elizabeth Carey (Caroline) Masters on August 1, 1869 in Niagara-on-the Lake

Daughter of Joseph and Margaret Masters

Educated in Niagara

Married to Frank Ascher (Archer) by Rev. E. Snyder at the Parsonage, Youngstown, New York

One daughter who died very young

Died April 21, 1941 at seventy-two

Correspondent, St. Catharines Standard, 1904-1941, Thirty Seven years

Regent, Niagara Historical Society

Regent, Newark Chapter, IODE

Director, Niagara Agricultural Society

1920, Women's Hospital Aid

Member, Lincoln Military Chapter, St. Catharines

Life Member, Polish White Cross Society

Alumni, Niagara High School

Executive, Red Cross

Cross of the Order of Polonia Restituta, 1922

Haller Medal, 1923

Order of Miecze Hallerowskie, 1926

Cross of Merit, 1934

Plaque honouring Elizabeth Ascher was dedicated at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library in 1991.

Frank Ascher Cuba

An American soldier

Served for a time with the Washington Police Force

Opened a shoe repair business in Washington and later in Niagara-on-the-Lake

Left for the Spanish-American War and did not come back

May have been killed at the Battle of San Juan Hill, Cuba (July 1, 1898)

The Standard Newspaper Articles were transcribed by Stan Skrzyszewski. Accessed at the St.Catharines Library through their microfilm library. This document was provided to the Niagara Historical Society for use by researchers online by permission of Mr. Skrzyszewski.