

Kazimierz Bielawski¹ to Helena Modrzejewska²

San Francisco
September 27, 1883³

Dear Pani⁴ Chłapowska!

We were very pleased to have news, first from your gracious Ladyship, then 4 days later from Pan Chłapowski.⁵ The numerous circle of authentic friends you left behind inquires unceasingly, "How is it possible that she hasn't written yet?" "No, she hasn't. And we don't know when or whether she is going to write." And here suddenly the unexpected letters come. The grumbling ceased, and everyone was satisfied again.

We are glad to know that both of you⁶ enjoy good health, that your business in Chicago⁷ worked out so very well, and that it promises to be lucrative for the entire [theatrical] season. We wish for this with all of our hearts, and we expect that your present good success will induce you to visit our Country [i.e., California] once more. Your friends and faithful admirers here are many.

Chłapowski's answer to Schufeldt⁸ was excellent and fitting, for it exposes the blasphemer's stupidity in a good, calm style.

George A. Schufeldt testified that in 1867 or 1868 he had published an article in the *Chicago Tribune* in which, in criticizing one of Swing's sermons, he had attacked what he called the dark side of Calvinism. In reply he



Helena Modjeska (Mme. Chłapowska)

¹ Captain Casimir/Kazimierz Bielawski; 1863 co-founder of the Polish Society of California in San Francisco (with Captain Rudolf Korwin Piotrowski); see: <http://www.PolishClubSF.org/150%20Years%20Polish%20Society%20of%20California.pdf>; and <http://www.polishClubSF.org/Bielawski.pdf>; Rudolf Korwin Piotrowski died 21 February 1883.

For a time, in 1877, Helena Modjeska lived with Captain and Mrs. Kazimierz Bielawski.

² Helena Modjeska; see: <https://culture.pl/en/artist/helena-modrzejewska-modjeska>.

³ Seven months after the death of Polish Society co-founder, Rudolf Korwin Piotrowski.

⁴ Pan and Pani are Polish titles of respect, roughly equivalent to Sir and Ma'am.

⁵ Karol Bozenta [Bodzenta] Chłapowski (Count Bozenta), husband of Helena Modjeska (the "Countess Bozenta").

⁶ Helena Modjeska and Karol Chłapowski.

⁷ Modjeska starred in *Camille* at the Grand Opera House in Chicago in September of 1883.

⁸ Presumed to be George A. Schufeldt, spiritualist; see: History of the Chicago artesian well, a demonstration of the truth of the spiritual philosophy, with an essay on the origin and uses of petroleum; also see: <http://www.chicagoancestors.org/node/2872>.

The clipping you enclosed with your letter is making the rounds among our acquaintances, and everyone says the rogue deservedly became a German dog.

My wife,⁹ who was greatly pleased by your gracious letter, has asked me to answer the questions it contains as follows.

She predicts a new guest will visit the young Fi[e]dler's¹⁰ next month (in October), and regarding their favorite color, it must be blue.¹¹

Celebrated Sobieski's Victory.

CHICAGO, Sept. 13.

The memory of King John Sobieski, the deliverer of Vienna and Christendom, was duly honored Wednesday by the Poles. Church services were largely attended in the morning, the Polish-German Bishop of Fort Wayne pontificating at St. Adelbert's. In the afternoon an immense parade, with nineteen bands and societies, took place. In the evening Central Music Hall was crowded to hear speeches from Governor Hamilton, Representative Finerty, Count Bozenta Chlapowski, and others.

Please give my thanks for the American newspaper, with its description of the Polish demonstration on the 12th of this month in Chicago.¹² It would be a great boon to our national cause were the American people to have some frequent means of reading in English anything as good as what Chłapowski expressed about Poland's ancient glory and the shameful persecution under which she suffers today. Our Polish newspapers here sometimes include good articles, but how does that help explain our cause to Americans, when not one of them understands Polish?

We were very lonely after you left. Except for the postman, our door is infrequently called upon. No one sang. Gaiety and good times had fled from our home. And when Agnes¹³ left a few days after

that, my wife had so many problems and so much work for three weeks that she still hasn't recovered her good humor – partly owing to the fact that Sarah,¹⁴ though she's a goodhearted Irish girl, is not as clever as Agnes was.

⁹ Maria Clark Bielawska (maiden name unknown); see: <http://www.polishclubsf.org/Bielawski.pdf>.

¹⁰ John F. Fiedler (@1851-54 - 1906); the Fiedler family lived in Tuolumne in the 1860s; John also lived in Darwin (Inyo County), San Francisco, Santa Clara County, and San Louis Obispo; a 1906 obit for JF Fiedler in the *SF Call* claimed that Fiedler taught English to Helena Modjeska. See news clips in this document.

¹¹ An illusion to an expected (hoped for) baby boy. John married in 1882. His first child likely died.

¹² A celebration in Chicago of the 200th Anniversary of the rescue of Vienna and defeat of the Turks by the Poles; see article in the *Chicago Tribune*: <http://www.PolishClubSF.org/1883anny200.pdf>.

¹³ Agnes Kirby or Kerly; domestic servant, born in England.

¹⁴ Presumed to be Sarah J. Johnson, domestic servant.

Our society observed the 200th anniversary on the 12th of this month,¹⁵ having a modest Polish dinner at Kryński's;¹⁶ while the rest of our countrymen, not belonging to our particular circle, although they were invited to the dinner, went to S. Stróżyński's,¹⁷ where, I was told, they spent a pleasant evening.



Sobieski at the Gates of Vienna by Jan Matejko

¹⁵ 200th anniversary of the rescue of Vienna and the defeat of the Turks by the Poles; celebrated at the headquarters of the Polish Society of California, "on Mission Street", and "in rooms under the Baldwin Hotel" (NE corner of Powell and Market); see <http://www.polishclubsf.org/13%20Sept%201883%20Sobieski%20Success%20Celebrated.pdf>. Baldwin Hotel: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baldwin_Hotel_\(San_Francisco\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baldwin_Hotel_(San_Francisco)).

¹⁶ Łukasz (Lucas or Luke) Kryński; importer; liquor dealer; proprietor of a saloon and lodging house; 2925 Mission Street, San Francisco, between 25th and 26th Streets.

¹⁷ Stanisław Stróżyński, rooms under the Baldwin Hotel; 22 Powell Street; hairdresser; importer of human hair and Parisian novelties; see <http://www.polishclubsf.org/13%20Sept%201883%20Sobieski%20Success%20Celebrated.pdf>; and <http://www.PolishClubSF.org/Strozynski.pdf>.

They made a better show of it, arranging a great Holy Mass with singing in the Cathedral,¹⁸ to which we also were invited. Father Szulz [Szule]¹⁹ from Poznań gave us a good Polish sermon about Sobieski²⁰ and the Siege of Vienna.²¹ In closing, he reproved the misunderstanding that exists among the small cluster of local Poles, and he invited us all to make peace. I am sorry that his good advice has still not had a good effect, because in both camps there are those who provoke irritation instead of engagement, which prevents us from being united as before.²²

Two Hundredth Anniversary of Sobieski's Success.

Yesterday was the two hundredth anniversary of the rescue of Vienna and defeat of the Turks by the Poles, which marked the last efforts of the Ottomans to extend their dominion in Europe. In every village in the United States where any number of Polish citizens dwell, as well as in Europe, some sort of celebration yesterday commemorated the delivery of the Poles. Here there are but a few Polish citizens, but the day was celebrated at St. Mary's Cathedral by a High Mass, Rev. Father Cottle officiating, and by an address by Rev. Dr. Schultz, a Polish priest sojourning temporarily in this city. His subject was "The Wars of King John III of Poland" (Sobieski) and included a brilliant eulogy of the patriot King. The address was delivered in Polish. It was the first Polish address ever delivered in a church in this city. There is no Polish congregation here. After mass three Polish religious hymns were sung by the congregation, the first being the national religious anthem, "Boze cos Polske." All joined heartily in the singing. In Russian Poland singing of the "Boze cos Polske" has been prohibited for many years, and many a Pole has been sent to Siberia a martyr to his patriotism for singing the sacred hymn. Father

San Francisco Chronicle, 13
Sept 1883

¹⁸ St. Mary's Cathedral, San Francisco; in 1883 the cathedral was located at California and DuPont (Dupont is now Grant Avenue).

¹⁹ Reverend Doctor P. (or F.) Joseph Szule or Scholz or Szultz or Schultz; see <http://www.polishclubsf.org/Sac%20Daily%20Union%2014%20Sept%201883.jpg> and <http://www.polishclubsf.org/Alex,%20secretary,%201886.pdf>.

²⁰ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_III_Sobieski.

²¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Vienna.

²² In 1863 the Polish "colony" in San Francisco was very unified; see: <http://www.polishclubsf.org/Grand%20Mass%20Meeting,%2022%20May%201863,%20San%20Francisco.pdf>.

After such a pleasant and comprehensive journey, Rudolf ²³ will be sad to leave you. He must do something to reaffirm his obligation, that he prepare for the coming struggle, in the comradeship of others, without which our life would forfeit all the loveliness of progress and victory, rejoicing in the worthy use of our talents and our good fulfillment of the role that our Creator has given to us in this world. In closing, I send to all of you – not forgetting Dawson²⁴ – a heartfelt "until we meet again," from both of us. Kissing the hands of gracious Madame Helena, I remain your most sincere friend.



Rudolph or Ralph Modjeski

C[asimir]²⁵ Bielawski



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Translated from Polish to English by **Bob Lamming** with **Elżbieta Kieszczyńska** (Clifton, New Jersey) and edited by **Maureen Mroczek Morris** (San Francisco) with **Roman Włodek** (Kraków) and **Lynn Ludlow** (San Francisco)

Also see "The Korwin Letters" (Letters written by Polish Society of California co-founder, Rudolf Korwin Piotrowski)

<http://cosmopolitanreview.com/the-korwin-letters/>

²³ Rudolph or Ralph Modjeski; son of Helena Modjeska.

²⁴ Mr. Forbes Dawson, actor; he accompanied Modjeska through California and the Western States.

²⁵ Kazimierz.

KING JOHN SOBIESKI.

The Celebration of His Victory Over the Turks.

The Polish population of San Francisco is not very large, but those who are here make up in patriotism what they lack in numbers. In 1683, Poland's warriors, under command of the great King, John Sobieski, raised the siege of Vienna and routed the Turks with great slaughter at Choczim, and virtually saved the Christian world from the invasion of the infidels. Sobieski crowned the Poles with an abundance of the laurel wreaths of victory, and in this city, yesterday, and in every free city in the world, the descendants of the Polish patriots celebrated his grand success. The anniversary of the event was commemorated in St. Mary's cathedral early in the morning by a high mass, and for the first time in the history of the city a Polish sermon was preached from the pulpit by Rev. Dr. Schultz. After the services various religious hymns were sung, the first being the anthem, "Boze cos Polske." The anthem is a prayer to God for the deliverance of Poland and a supplication that the country may again take its place among the nations of the earth. In Russian-Poland the singing of this hymn is strictly prohibited, and even the newspapers are forbidden to mention the anniversary celebration or publish Sobieski's name. In Milwaukee and Chicago, where the Poles are very numerous, the anniversary is celebrated with great pomp and ceremony. At the establishment of Muzio & Krynski, No. 2925 Mission street, last evening, a banquet was given, which was presided over by the venerable patriot Dr. Pawlicki. An elegant menu was provided, and speeches were made in English and Polish by the participants. A letter was received from Mrs. Somolinski of Chicago, inclosing a portrait and the well wishes of the sender. The dining-room was tastefully decorated, and a very pleasant evening was passed. Among those present were Messrs. Bednawski, Piasecki, Malowanski, Hirshfelder, Vidaver, Levison, Czarnecki, Paudler, Ditrich, Lesson, Horain, Fiehlman, Kosmalski, Krynski, Kopankiewski, Popper, Nowachi, Swoboda, and many others.

DYING OF BLOOD-POISONING.

SAN LUIS OBISPO, August 3.—J. F. Fiedler, Recorder of San Luis Obispo county, holding the office for sixteen years, is dying from blood poisoning, as the result of an operation a few days ago for aneurism of an artery in the left leg. He is not expected to live until to-morrow.

FIEDLER—In San Luis Obispo, August 3, 1906, John F. Fiedler, brother of Carrie L. Fiedler and Mrs. Laura J. Bohlmann.

Taught Mojeska English.

SAN LUIS OBISPO, Aug. 5.—County Recorder John F. Fiedler died this morning. He was Recorder of this county for the last eighteen years. He taught Mme. Mojeska, the famous actress, how to speak English. This is the second county official to die within a week and the fifth within a year.

HIS LIFE.

John F. Fiedler was born August 6, 1853 in Columbia Tualumne county. His early youth was spent in San Francisco where he attended the Lincoln school. After that he clerked in a store at the New Almaden quicksilver

In 1882 Mr. Fiedler was united in marriage with Miss Almira Parrish, who survives her husband with two sons, Ferdinand F. and Eugene S. The mother of the deceased is still living and is here to attend the funeral. A brother, Ferdinand Fiedler, and two sisters, Miss Caroline Fiedler of Sausalito and Mrs. Laura J. Bohlmann of San Jose, are also here.

mines, and later returned to San Francisco and worked in a carriage establishment. From San Francisco he went to Darwin, Inyo county and followed the vocation of a clerk in a store until moving to Lake county in 1881. He came to San Luis Obispo in the early eighties and opened a grocery store which he conducted until elected County Recorder in 1888.

John F Fiedler	46	Head
Elmira C Fiedler	38	Wife
Ferdinand Fiedler	11	Son
Eugene Fiedler	9	Son

1900 census

Muzio & Krynski, 2925 Mission Street
Dr. Ladislaus Pawlicki
Aleksander Bednawski
Piasecki, ... Czarnecki, Paudler, Di[e]trich,
Franciszek Lesson, Horain..., L. Krynski,
Andrzej Kopankiewicz, ... Nowacki



Last Name	First Name	Middle Name	Month	Day	Year	Section	Row	Area	Plot	Grave	Collection	Image	Notes
Strozyński	John		10	17	1877						CALVARY	Image	
Strozyński	Lokadia		10	24	1877						CALVARY	Image	
STROZYNSKI	STANISLAUS		11	03	1899	D	6	1	4	OGV	HOLY CROSS		
STROZYNSKI	BOLESLAUS		04	01	1930	D	6	1	4	OGV	HOLY CROSS		
Strozyński	Francis		06	03	1884						CALVARY	Image	
STROZYNSKI	KATRINA		01	02	1924	D	6	1	4	OGV	HOLY CROSS		
STROZYNSKI	ROHMAN		12	26	1887	D	6	1	4	OGV	HOLY CROSS		

J. SZULZ²⁶ TO KAROL CHŁAPOWSKI²⁷

Lubin: ²⁸ August 11, 1910

Respected Sir,

I wish to give my cordial thanks for the *Los Angeles Times* you sent to me. In fact, I was very interested by what I read about the Polish celebration in Los Angeles on the anniversary of Grunwald,²⁹ and immensely pleased to see what great concern Bishop Conaty³⁰ and his priests devote to Polish affairs. No less

POLES CELEBRATE THE BATTLE OF GRUNWALD

LOS ANGELES, July 18.—Polish and Lithuanian societies of Los Angeles in a mass meeting at Temple auditorium yesterday afternoon celebrated the five hundredth anniversary of the battle of **Grunwald**, where King Ladislaus defeated the Teutons. Addresses were made by Bishop Conaty, Joseph Scott, Rev. J. W. Organisciak, W. J. Miller, M. Cylkowski, Prof. Jaroslaw oe Zielinski, F. J. Makowski. Polish patriotic songs were interspersed.

Riverside Independent Enterprise 19 July 1910

interesting was the article about the Indians' Great Religious Festival in La Jolla. The newspaper also includes several articles on the works of Shakespeare such as I have never seen before. One day I must come and have a look at Kopaszewo,³¹ but now I can't, and next week I'm leaving on vacation. But as soon as I am able – I'll let you know.

BISHOP VISITS INDIANS

Bishop Conaty visited the Indian reservation of the diocese during the week, returning to Los Angeles Friday. Next Friday he will deliver the principal address at the centennial celebration at San Bernardino and on that day will lay the corner stone of the new church of San Bernardino.

14 May 1910 *Los Angeles Herald*

Sincerely yours,

Rev. J. Szulz

St. Bridget's Church.

Location, southwest corner of Broadway street and Van Ness avenue. Rev. P. Bermingham, Pastor; Rev. P. Szule, Assistant Pastor; residence, adjoining the church.

Masses every Sunday at half past six, eight, nine and eleven o'clock A. M. and vespers at half past seven o'clock P. M. Catechism for the children at nine o'clock A. M. Masses on week days at half past six and half past seven o'clock A. M.

Reverend Dr. Joseph Szule [sic] (1886)

²⁶ Reverend Dr. P. (or F.) (Joseph) Szule; also spelled Szultz and other variants.

²⁷ See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Helena_Modjeska.

²⁸ A town in southwestern Poland; see: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lubin>.

²⁹ See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Grunwald.

³⁰ Bishop Thomas James Conaty, assigned to the Los Angeles diocese from 1903 to 1915.

³¹ The Chłapowski estate in Poland; in *Memories and Impressions*, Modjeska wrote "We returned to Kopaszewo many times."

St. Bridget's, Vanness and Broadway, Rev. Peter Bermingham, rector; Rev. Dr. Szule,

assistant.



SOURCE:

Letter number 34 (Modrzejewska correspondence). Polish transcription provided by **Professors Emil Orzechowski** and **Alicja Kędziora**, Jagiellonian University, Kraków, Poland.

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