

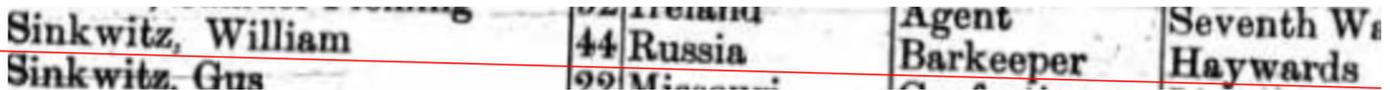
Henryk Sienkiewicz¹ to Julian Horain²

Exiles, Adventurers, Artists: Letters from Polish California, 1836-1901

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1877³

I just picked up the newspapers and “*This Week*” [Tygodnik].⁴ They found their way into Synkwicz’s⁵ P.O.⁶ box. He, not knowing what to do with such a trophy, took it to Czarnecki,⁷ and the matter was clarified. Czarnecki’s a gentleman who speaks Polish flawlessly – so much like Wichrowski⁸ that he told me,



“Oho, my lord! If I’d been in Turkey,⁹ upon my word, everything would have turned out differently.” I strongly encouraged him to go there. I also picked up the letters from home¹⁰ that Cap[tain] Piotrowski¹¹ sent to me, including loads of information about reviews from a variety of newspapers, revealing how violently disposed they are to making a great man of me, which is to say they’ve undertaken a labor as difficult as it is thankless. As you wish! Each of us has his hour. I read Leo’s¹² letter. He is somewhat correct in his political views. There is nothing strange in his asking you about the package for me, since at the time of his writing he couldn’t have already gotten my most recent letter, and in the one before that I blasted him about money. I congratulate you on the newly collected resources. It even occurs to me now that I could write to them¹³ again, something after this fashion: “Now that I’ve become so great, you must send me a suitably abundant remuneration!” All of that prose! Authors ought to be supported by the government. I got a letter from Bednawski¹⁴ yesterday, and I sent an



¹ Polish journalist and author; awarded the Nobel prize for literature in 1905; see: <http://culture.pl/en/artist/henryk-sienkiewicz>.

² Julian Florian Horain, Polish journalist. See: <http://www.polishclubsf.org/Horain.pdf>.

³ Written in (May) 1877 in Haywards, California; known variously as "Hayward's," "Heywood," "Haywood," "Haywards" (since 1876), and "Hayward" (since 1911); inferred from context: Sinkwitz and Czarnecki lived in Haywards.

⁴ *This Week* [Tygodnik].

⁵ William or Wilhelm (in Polish, Władysław) Sinkwitz; Sinkwitz was born in Kalisz, in Russian-occupied Poland. He lived in Haywards, CA; see: <http://www.polishclubsf.org/Sinkwitz.pdf>.

⁶ Post Office.

⁷ Franciszek (Francis) Czarnecki; born in occupied Poland; in 1877 he worked as a tailor in Haywards, CA; see: <http://www.polishclubsf.org/Francis%20Czarnecki.pdf>.

⁸ Albert Wichrowski, native of Kraków, Poland; a resident of San Francisco in 1877; see: <http://www.PolishClubSF.org/Wichrowski.pdf>.

⁹ A reference to the Russo-Turkish War; see: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russo-Turkish_War_\(1877%E2%80%931878\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russo-Turkish_War_(1877%E2%80%931878)).

¹⁰ Poland.

¹¹ Captain Rudolf Korwin Piotrowski; born in Poland; lived in Sebastopol, Sacramento County and in San Francisco; co-founder of the Polish Society of California; served as Commissioner of Immigration; see: <http://www.polishclubsf.org/Piotrowski%20in%20City%20Directories.pdf>.

¹² Editor Edward Leo, Sienkiewicz’s boss at *Gazeta polska* in Warsaw.

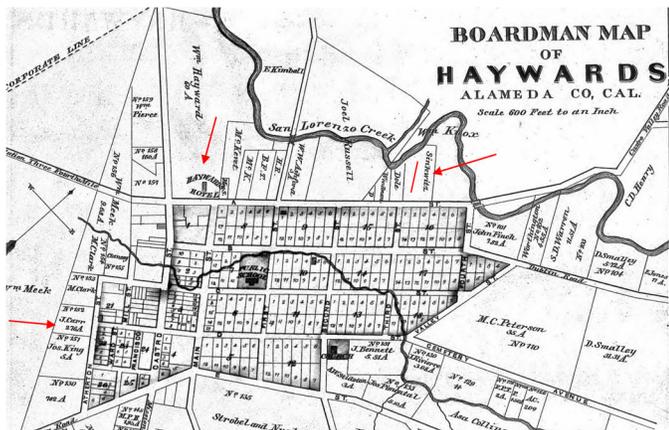
¹³ Sienkiewicz’s employers in Poland.

¹⁴ Aleksander Bednawski; see: <http://www.polishclubsf.org/Bednawski%20addresses.pdf>.

answer to the address he supplied. Imagine my surprise. In today's Catholic newspaper¹⁵ I read these words at the end of some correspondence about Rome: "Our bard, after a stay of several months in Rome, gives voice to his impressions in the following verse..." Here of course I skip over the verse, my eye falls on the name signed below it, and I find... can you guess who? "Aleksander Bednawski!" Before my frightened wits had managed to establish that the signature signified the author of the correspondence – not the author of the verse, and thus the bard – I experienced a *strange* moment. You may also have been taken by surprise in this manner. Anyway! When were you last in Haywards? As it happens, in these very days, a fourteen-year-old *pucelle*,¹⁶ still attending school, became a mother. It's scarcely a couple of days since I've gotten here, so... But I don't suppose you were in Haywards either, nine months ago, were you? This is all very hard to understand – and very suspicious. Local detectives are on the trail of the stork.¹⁷



To avoid problems with the newspapers, write "Sienkiewicz" in small letters on the letters and on the newspapers, and in capital letters write "[care of] M[ister] Czarnecki." Synkwicz will find as little use for my letters as he will for the newspapers since, in all likelihood, if he ever knew how to read Polish he's by now forgotten.



What has Our Lady¹⁸ been up to? It's been some time since you wrote to me about her. Your most recent letter contained not a single mention. I tremble with fear over what she's going to say about my drama,¹⁹ and whether she finds in it a role that's worthy of her, since it might take a Shakespeare for this to be even possible. At any rate, tell her that I'll do it over, erase, rewrite, tear up and correct everything ten more times, if she so desires. – I don't by any means consider what I've done to be the final

draft – so I await instructions, and in the meantime I reverently kiss her hands. I hug you warmly as a friend. You told me to write Via Berdyczów²⁰ in your second-to-most-recent letter; so I did. Has my letter arrived?

Hugs. Regards to all.

Henryk

SOURCE:

Letter #19. Henryk Sienkiewicz. *Listy*, Tom 1, Cześć 2. Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1977. Online: <http://www.henryk-sienkiewicz.pl/index.php?d=dzial&id=listy>.

¹⁵ *The Monitor*: originally a Spanish-language broadsheet owned by the Roman Catholic Church; after its presses were destroyed during a protest, the *Monitor* was revived as an English-language Catholic newspaper.

¹⁶ "Maiden," from the French.

¹⁷ The original Polish expression indicates the "bird which flies through but doesn't stop" (*przelotny*).

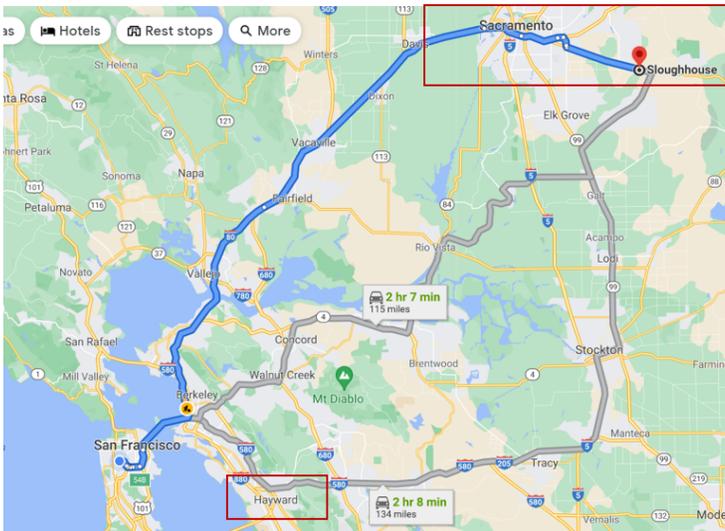
¹⁸ Helena Modjeska; see: <http://culture.pl/en/artist/helena-modrzejewska-modjeska>.

¹⁹ *American drama* (*Dramat amerykański*) described by Sienkiewicz as a "critical-satirical-sentimental" play; written for Helena Modrzejewska (Modjeska); the featured character, "Helena Steven," is modelled after Modjeska. The play was never published.

²⁰ At the time, a well-known joke... "This letter is coming to you through the small Ukrainian town of Berdyczów," meaning it will either get lost or take months to arrive.

NOTE: The editors of this English translation have revised and augmented some of the original footnotes by Maria Bokszczanin. Some footnotes are our own.

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). English summary translation kindly proffered by **Anna Samborska** (San Francisco). Translation commissioned by Maureen Mroczek Morris.



Sebastopol was located near today's Sloughhouse

24	321	314	Czarnecki Francis	46 M	Sailor	Poland
25			Katherine	36 F	Keeping House	do
26			Boleslaw	6 M		Cal
27			Wanda	2 F		Cal

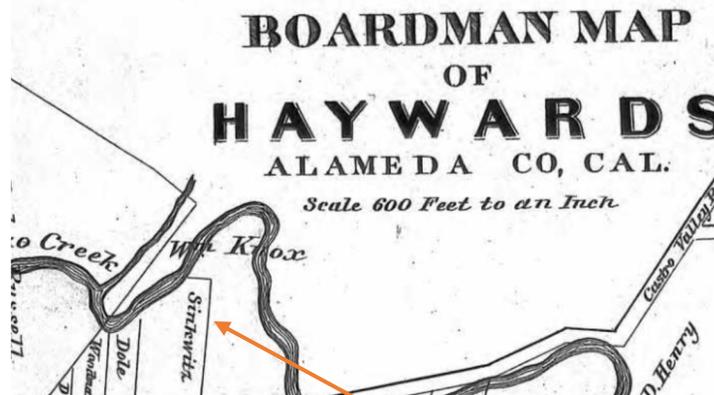
Francis Czarnecki Family, 1870 Census, Hayward
Francis, Katherine, Boleslaw, Wanda

FUNERAL SERVICES FOR LATE HAYWARD CITIZEN

HAYWARD, Oct. 22.—Funeral services were held yesterday for William Sinkwitz, one of Hayward's most influential citizens who died at his home on C street Sunday. He was 85 years of age and had been a resident in Hayward for the last thirty-five years, coming here from Kallz, his birthplace in Russia. Sinkwitz was one of the local leaders of the Republican party and also held office on the board of trustees on several occasions.

Sinkwitz's journey from Russia to the Pacific coast was fraught with hardship and adventure. Lack of funds compelled him to walk from his native town in inland Russia to the coast. Determined to reach the United States he became a stowaway, and although discovered managed to land at New York and worked his way to the west coast. Sinkwitz was owner of extensive orchard land in Hayward.

He is survived by a son, F. C. Sinkwitz and four grandchildren, Myrtle and Charles Farrel and Gus and William Sinkwitz. Interment was in Lone Tree Cemetery.



HAYWARD.

Hayward is probably better supplied with newspapers than most inland towns, receiving daily the TRIBUNE and Transcript, of Oakland, S. F. Chronicle, Mail, Call, Post and Bulletin. No wonder the town was incorporated. Hayward has always been considered by outsiders as rather a smallburg, but it has probably more business houses for its size than any place in the State. I will try and note them: Three tin stores, conducted by Messrs. Linekin & Bro, H. H. Mack, and Mr. Andett; two blacksmith shops, by J. L. River and Wm. Brown; one harness and saddle shop, owned by G. A. Goodell; two meat markets, Strobel & Neudeck and Adam May; three boot and shoe stores, P. Zam breaky, Peter Hanson and Muller; two breweries, Booken & Hermann and Palmentag; two millinery shops, Mrs. J. C. White and Miss Rose Hinckley; two livery stables, D. S. Smalley and Wm. Hayward's; two barbershops, J. L. Pimentel and Mr. ---; three hotels, Oakes', Hayward's and Planter's, besides one or two restaurants; saloons, probably not exceeding eight; Wells Fargo office with L. H. Brown as agent. A postoffice, Mr. Cooper, P. M.; bakeries, J. G. Carpenter, J. Pann; two drug stores, one in Collins store, and the other at the postoffice; Drs. Cooper, Reynolds

and Kimball attend to all cases of sickness. The place has a flourishing paper, named the Journal, edited by Frank Dallam. Five stores, Geo. Brown, A. Collins, D. S. Culp & Son, B. H. River, and N. Nisson; Sons of Temperance, Champion of the Red Cross, and Good Templars, offset the influence of the saloons, and a long-established lodge of Odd Fellows. For the accommodation of visitors who arrive on the trains a variety of "hacks" are always at the station, on their arrival.