

## Among First to Die on Both Sides— *Poles Were Valiant in Civil War*

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** This story of the patriotism of Polish immigrants in the United States at the time of recruitment for the Civil war was written by Jerome Razewski, a member of the Polish Welfare Council of Schenectady County and a member of the county's Civil war centennial committee. It is published in conjunction with the centennial program, to be presented Aug. 10-11.)

By JEROME RAZEWSKI

The Polish immigrants were so deeply drawn into the inner life of the United States that they could not remain strangers in the great crisis of the nation that culminated in a civil war.

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AT THE TIME of the Civil war, there were 30,000 Poles in the U.S. and of this number 5,000 fought in the ranks of the Union army, while 1,000 served with the Confederate troops.

By sheer coincidence, the Poles were among the first to die on both sides in battle. According to official records, Thaddeus Strawinski, an 18-year-old student, was the first to die in the Confederate attack on Fort Sumter off Charleston, S.C. And the first Union officer to be killed was Captain Constantine Blandowski, who helped save Missouri for the union.

There were many attempts to organize Polish units during the war. The Polish volunteers in the "Polish Legion," otherwise known as the 58th New York Volunteer Infantry, exerted great efforts to



**BRIG. GEN KRZYZANOWSKI**

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infantry, exerted great efforts to form a Polish regiment as early as April 18, 1861. Their appeals, like those of other ethnic groups, harked back to their history.

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"RALLY AROUND our banner, under the wing of the Polish white eagle. The spirit of Pulaski and Kosciuszko will sustain us, distinguished officers will lead us, and the sentiment to serve the holy and just cause of liberty will be our honorable recompense," was the way one Polish recruitment notice was worded.

When President Lincoln made his appeal for volunteers at the outset of the war, Vladimir Krzyzanowski — first cousin to Frederick Chopin — was among the first to respond. He was authorized by Secretary of War Cameron to recruit a regiment among all the Poles of the union.

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KRZYZANOWSKI succeeded in organizing a militia company consisting of 400 men, which he christened the United States Rifles. The company was quickly expanded into a regiment under his command, and Krzyzanowski eventually became a colonel.

He distinguished himself in several battles, among them Cross Keys and Bull Run, and Lincoln later made him a brigadier general.

Krzyzanowski's reputation as a leader and fighter became better known after the battle of Chancellorsville and Gettysburg and in minor engagements in Tennessee. The markers on the battlefields of Gettysburg indi-

#### BRIG. GEN. KRZYZANOWSKI Organized Polish Regiment

cate that a number of the units wholly or partly comprised of Poles belonged to the brigade command of Krzyzanowski.

Consistently democratic, sharing danger, hunger and fatigue with his men, he was beloved by his legionnaires.

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THOSE REGIMENTS of the north which contained some percentage of Poles were: New York — 4th and 5th cavalry; 33rd and 39th Garibaldi Guards; 41st, 45th, 49th, 54th, 68th, 70th, 63rd (made famous by Private Philip Szlachta for his Congressional Medal of Honor bravery at Spottsylvania) and the 125th.

Illinois — 8th and 12th cavalry, and 82nd regiment; Ohio — 61st

regiment; Indiana — 3rd cavalry and 14th regiment; Massachusetts — 20th regiment; Maine 3rd regiment; Pennsylvania 72nd and 119th regiments; New Jersey 2nd and 6th regiments, and Connecticut — 14th regiment.

## Rug City Man Completes Army Course

AMSTERDAM — Army Second Lieutenant William J. Tracz, son of Mr. and Mrs. John A. Tracz, 369 Locust avenue, recently completed an 11-week engineer officer basic course at the engineer center, Fort Belvoir, Va.

The 22-year-old lieutenant is a 1959 graduate of Wilbur H. Lynch high school and a 1963 graduate of Syracuse University. He is a member of Beta Theta Pi fraternity.

## Morattas Have Baby

GALWAY — A daughter, Joanne Lee, was born recently to Mr. and Mrs. Michael Moratta of Arlington, Va. Mrs. Moratta is the former Miss Bonnie Dovhan, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Dovhan, Galway.

## Dutch Prince Injured Boarding Motorboat

THE HAGUE, July 31 (UPI) — Prince Bernhard, husband of Queen Juliana of the Netherlands, injured his back boarding a motorboat on the Italian coast where the royal couple is vacationing, the government announced today.

A spokesman said the prince will have to cancel his planned visit to the World Boy Scout Jamboree in Greece.

Cotton exports from the Sudan are climbing far greater than was expected.



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Organized Polish Regiment