

Polish Society of California (since 1863)  
Co-Founder, Captain Kazimierz Bielawski

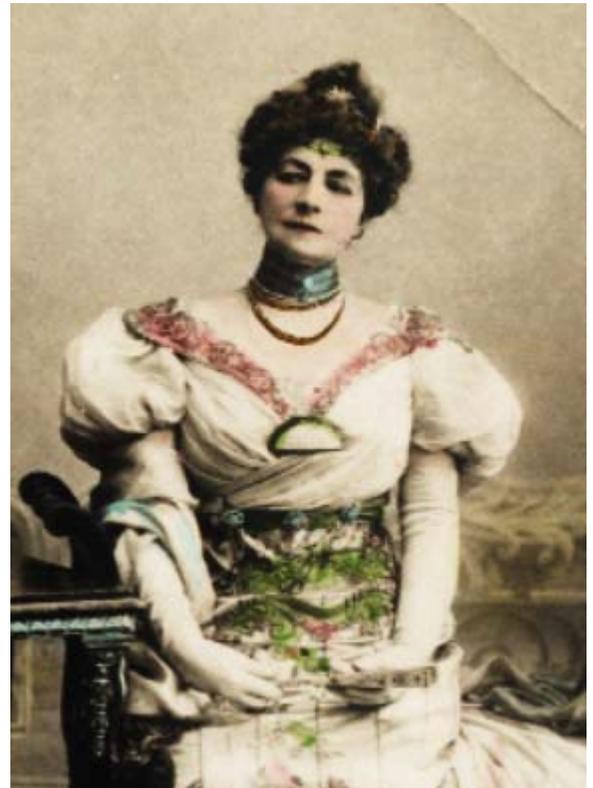
## Kazimierz Bielawski<sup>1</sup> to Helena Modrzejewska<sup>2</sup>

San Francisco  
September 27, 1883<sup>3</sup>

Dear Madam Chłapowska!

We were very pleased to have news, first from your gracious Ladyship, then 4 days later from Mr. Chłapowski.<sup>4</sup> 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 you<sup>5</sup> enjoy good health, that your business in Chicago<sup>6</sup> 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.



Helena Modjeska (Madam Chłapowska)

---

<sup>1</sup> 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

In 1877 Helena Modjeska lived with Captain and Mrs. Kazimierz Bielawski, at least for a while

<sup>2</sup> Wife of Karol Chłapowski; renowned actress who specialized in Shakespearean and tragic roles; known as Helena Modrzejewska or Modjeska or the Countess Bozenta (and sometimes "Madame Chłapowska")

<sup>3</sup> Seven months after the death of Polish Society co-founder, Rudolf Korwin Piotrowski

<sup>4</sup> Karol Bozenta [Bodzenta] Chłapowski (Count Bozenta), husband of Helena Modjeska (the "Countess Bozenta")

<sup>5</sup> Helena Modjeska and Karol Chłapowski

<sup>6</sup> Modjeska starred in *Camille* at the Grand Opera House in Chicago in September of 1883

Chłapowski's answer to Schufeldt<sup>7</sup> was excellent and fitting, for it exposes the blasphemer's stupidity in a good, calm style. The clipping you

**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 deservedly became a German dog.

enclosed with your letter is making the rounds among our acquaintances, and everyone says the rogue

My wife,<sup>8</sup> 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 Fidler's<sup>9</sup> next month (in October), and regarding their favorite color, it must be blue.

Please give my thanks for the American newspaper, with its description of

**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 Chłapowski, and others.

the Polish demonstration on the 12<sup>th</sup> of this month in Chicago.<sup>10</sup> 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

---

<sup>7</sup> 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; AND see: <http://www.chicagoancestors.org/node/2872>

<sup>8</sup> Maria Clark Bielawska (maiden name unknown); see: <http://www.polishclubsf.org/Bielawski.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> Perhaps a member of the family of Captain Hercules Fidler who was a member of the *Society of California Pioneers*, an organization to which Polish Society co-founder R.K. Piotrowski belonged; both men were in Calaveras County, Calif. in 1860; perhaps an illusion to an expected (hoped for) baby boy

<sup>10</sup> A celebration in Chicago of the 200<sup>th</sup> 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>

from our home. And when Agnes<sup>11</sup> 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,<sup>12</sup> though she's a goodhearted Irish girl, is not as clever as Agnes was.

Our society observed the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary on the 12<sup>th</sup> of this month,<sup>13</sup> having a modest Polish dinner at Kryński's;<sup>14</sup> while the rest of our countrymen, not belonging to our particular circle, although they were invited to the dinner, went to S. Strożyński's,<sup>\*15</sup> where, I was told, they spent a pleasant evening.



Sobieski at the Gates of Vienna by Jan Matejko

**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.

**San Francisco Chronicle, 13 Sept 1883**

They made a better show of it, arranging a great Holy Mass with singing in the Cathedral,<sup>16</sup> to which we also were invited.

**Father Szulz**

[Szule]<sup>17</sup> from Poznań gave us a good Polish sermon about Sobieski<sup>18</sup> and the Siege of Vienna.<sup>19</sup> In closing, he reproved the misunderstanding that exists among the small

<sup>11</sup> Agnes Kirby or Kerly; domestic servant, born in England

<sup>12</sup> Presumed to be Sarah J. Johnson, domestic servant

<sup>13</sup> 200<sup>th</sup> 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))

<sup>14</sup> Łukasz (Lucas or Luke) Kryński; importer; liquor dealer; proprietor of a saloon and lodging house; 2925 Mission Street, San Francisco, between 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> Streets

<sup>15</sup> Stanisław Strożyński, \* 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>

<sup>16</sup> St. Mary's Cathedral, San Francisco; in 1883 the cathedral was located at California and DuPont (Dupont is now Grant Avenue) Streets

<sup>17</sup> Reverend Doctor P. (or F.) Joseph Szule or Scholz or Szhultz or Schultz; see <http://www.polishclubsf.org/Sac%20Daily%20Union%2014%20Sept%201883.jpg> and <http://www.polishclubsf.org/Alex,%20secretary,%201886.pdf>

<sup>18</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John\\_III\\_Sobieski](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_III_Sobieski)

<sup>19</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle\\_of\\_Vienna](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Vienna)

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.<sup>20</sup>



Rudolph or Ralph Modjeski

After such a pleasant and comprehensive journey, Rudolf<sup>21</sup> 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 Dawson<sup>22</sup> – a heartfelt "until we meet again,"

from both of us. Kissing the hand of gracious Madame Helena, I remain your most sincere friend.



Forbes Dawson

C[asimir]<sup>23</sup> Bielawski

\* \* \* \* \*

Translated from the Polish by Bob Lamming with Elżbieta Kieszczyńska (Clifton, NJ) and edited by Maureen Mroczek (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/>

---

<sup>20</sup> 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>

<sup>21</sup> Rudolf (Rudolph) or Ralph Modjeski; son of Helena Modjeska

<sup>22</sup> Mr. Forbes Dawson, actor; accompanied Modjeska through California and the Western States

<sup>23</sup> Kazimierz



Stanisław Strożyński

Last Name	First Name	Middle Name	Month	Day	Year	Section	Row	Area	Plot	Grave	Collection	Image	Notes
Stroynski	John		10	17	1877						CALVARY	Image	
Stroynski	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		
Strozynski	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. SZULZ<sup>24</sup> TO KAROL CHŁAPOWSKI<sup>25</sup>

Lubin:<sup>26</sup> 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,<sup>27</sup> and immensely pleased to see what great concern Bishop Conaty<sup>28</sup> and his

**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

priests devote to Polish affairs. No less 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,<sup>29</sup> 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

<sup>24</sup> Reverend Dr. P. (or F.) (Joseph) Szule; also spelled Szultz and other variants

<sup>25</sup> See: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Helena\\_Modjeska](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Helena_Modjeska);

<sup>26</sup> A town in southwestern Poland; see: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lubin>;

<sup>27</sup> See: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle\\_of\\_Grunwald](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Grunwald);

<sup>28</sup> Bishop Thomas James Conaty, assigned to the Los Angeles diocese from 1903 to 1915

<sup>29</sup> The Chłapowski estate in Poland; in *Memories and Impressions*, Modjeska wrote "We returned to **Kopaszewo** many times"

### 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)

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

### A POLISH HOLIDAY.

Patriotic Celebration of the Revolution of 1831.

To-day the Polish colony in this city will celebrate the fifty-sixth anniversary of the outbreak of the Polish revolution of 1830-31. At 11 o'clock Father Sabuita, a Polish priest, will celebrate a solemn requiem mass at St. Bridget's Church.

SOURCE:

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

Translated from a Polish transcription (A. Kędziora) 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).