

**The Family History
of
WILLIAM PAUL RADJEWSKI**

**as researched, compiled, and written
by
William John Radjewski**

2nd Edition
September 11, 2010

Dedication

This genealogical history of the Radjewski family is dedicated to my grandfather, William Paul Radjewski, in honor of his 90th year.

I also dedicate this record to all those who came before us. Their story is inspiring though, as of yet, still veiled in mystery. Even so, they leave behind a flourishing legacy here in the 21st century United States of America.

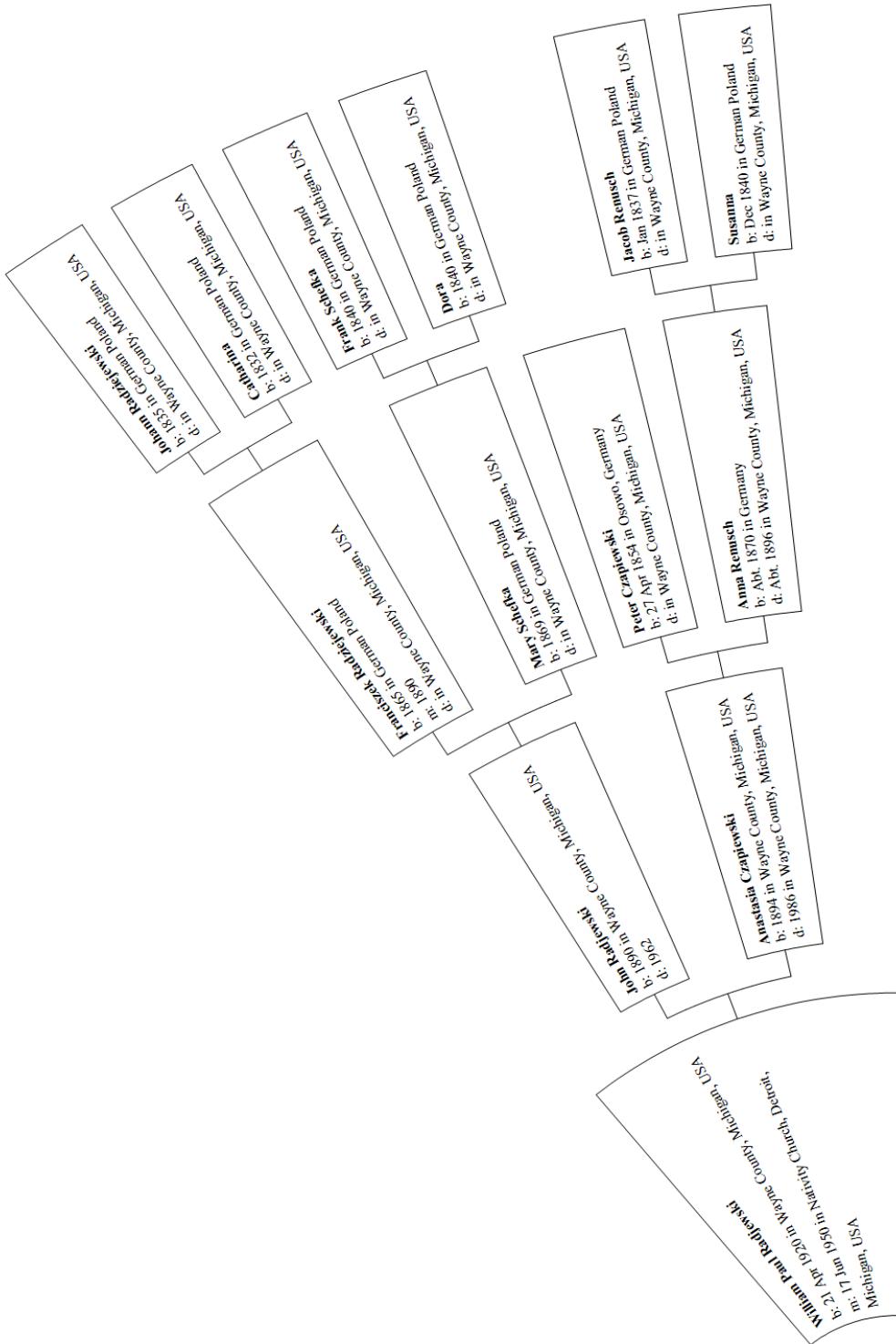
Finally, I dedicate this work to the whole family. After all, it is our story as much as theirs. It has been such a pleasure and an honor to delve deeper and deeper into the annals of our family history. There is still so much more information waiting to be discovered. Let's hope that this is only the beginning!

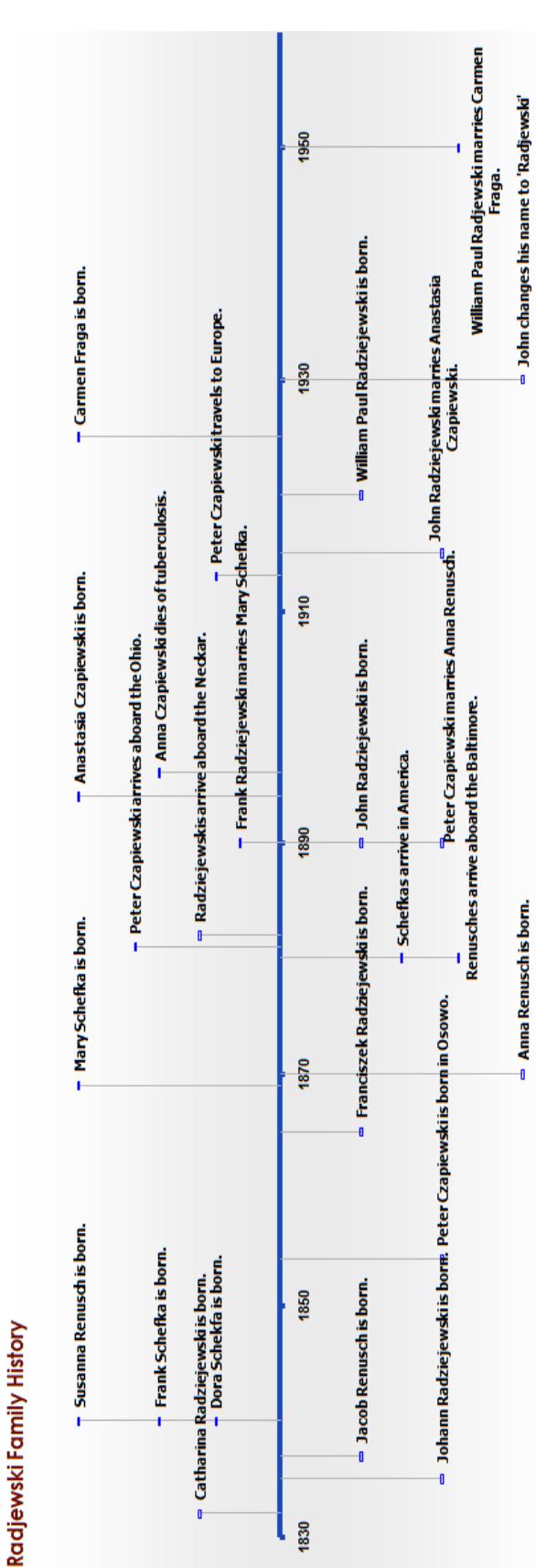
Preface

Much of the following information is compiled from old United States census records, ship passenger lists, and family anecdotes. As such, many years listed are estimates, though likely no more than one year off the actual date. I have tried to present this information in narrative format to the best of my ability. Many of the details and narratives derived from the sources listed above are speculation. It should be noted, however, that when necessary, I have used my best educated guess in order to present as factual and accurate a family history as possible.

I intend for this to only be the beginning of my research. Genealogical records are constantly being compiled and updated into a digital format. It is my hope that one day I will be able to trace our genealogy back even further in Europe.

Ancestors of William Paul Radjewski





Radziejewski Family History

Our story begins on May 15, 1882 when Johann and Catharina Radziejewski (Ra-ja-YEF-skee), along with their three children, arrive in New York City aboard the Neckar. But, this day merely marked the last leg of their journey to Detroit, where they hoped greater opportunity awaited them.

Life in German Poland

We do not know much about their former life; we know even less about their early years in the United States. Upon arriving in New York, Johann lists his occupation as “farmer”. Perhaps this was his original profession prior to migrating with his wife and children across the Atlantic Ocean. Murkier still, however, are the details surrounding his early life: the names of his parents, how many siblings he had, his hometown, or his marriage to Catharina.

There are some details which we can confirm with some degree of certainty. Johann was born around 1835 in a yet-to-be-unified Germany. Catharina would've been born around 1832, making the couple's ages 47 and 50, respectively, when they first arrived in the United States some 128 years ago. While we know nothing of when or where they were married, we can still speculate. Their eldest son listed aboard the Neckar, Anton, was born around 1863, putting Johann in his late 20's and Catharina about 30 years of age at the time of his birth. It is entirely possible that there were other children who did not make the journey stateside, as even Anton was 19 during the journey. It is most likely, then, that Johann and Catharina wed sometime during the late 1850's or the early 1860's.

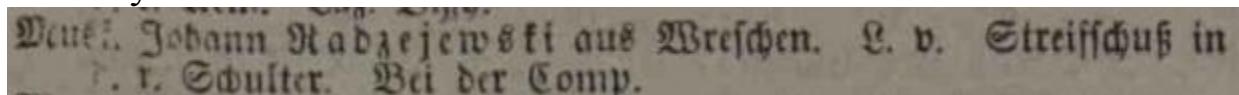


Figure 1: Record of Johann's being wounded during the Franco-Prussian War.

Johann and Catharina were born and grew up in German Poland. By this time, Poland had long fallen to the imperialistic ambitions of its

neighbors with Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Russia as the foremost among the beneficiaries of Poland's fall. The decade prior to the Radziejewskis' migration is a historic one in the history of both Germany and Poland. The culmination of the Franco-Prussian war in 1871, in which Johann fought and was injured, had resulted in a decisive German victory and the unification of Germany under German Emperor Wilhelm I. Under the leadership of Chancellor Otto von Bismarck, the 1870's ushered in one of, if not *the*, greatest decades of change in the history of Germany. During this decade, the German Empire witnessed great territorial and economic expansion under the policies of von Bismarck. This period of industrialization would make the German economy the most powerful in Europe, on par with that of the United States.

It is these cultural changes which are more pertinent to our purposes in outlining a history of the Radziejewskis and their arrival in America. Two of von Bismarck's policies are of particular intrigue:



Figure 2: The German Empire circa 1882

Kleindeutschland and *Kulturkampf*. There were two competing schools of thought at the time with regards to German social and foreign policy. One ideology sought to expand the borders of the German Empire, conquering areas with large German-speaking populations in Austria-Hungary and other parts of Europe. The other, however, emphasized a more internal approach which sought to strengthen the German culture within its present boundaries. It is this latter school of thought which won out in the end. Dubbed *Kleindeutschland* ("Little Germany"), many policies aimed at

“Germanization” were implemented with the intended purpose of increasing German cultural influences to the detriment of minority populations, especially the German Poles. In fact, the primary target of these policies was indeed the Polish population of the German Empire.

The second policy listed above, *Kulturkampf*, equally aimed to support the internal strength of the Empire and German culture. The Catholic Church was viewed by the Bismarck administration as an obstructing influence on German unity and economic security. As a result, policies were implemented seeking to undermine the influence of Catholicism in the Empire. This policy was the recipient of much backlash, particularly in the eastern part of the Empire, where the Polish population was largely concentrated.

One can imagine why Polish families, such as the Radziejewskis, were eager to leave the German Empire for greater freedom and opportunity across the Atlantic. Several of the policies discussed above can properly be viewed as a form of cultural warfare, largely aimed at Polish minorities. Polish cultural and linguistic heritage was largely attacked by *Kleindeutschland* policies. *Kulturkampf*, on the other hand, directly assaulted the Catholic Church, a prominent institution in the deposit of Polish culture and identity. Combine all of that with the changing economic reality as a result of industrialization and one can imagine the chaotic atmosphere faced by German Poles of the period.

The Voyage and Early Years in America

We are left with one small, but monumental, artifact as evidence of the voyage to America. Johann and Catharina, along with their three children, boarded a ship on the River Weser in Bremen, Germany

2	Johann Staszewski	47	in farmes	8	Detroit Mich
3	Catharina	50	t, wife	9	"
4	Anton	19	in labours	10	"
315	Franz	17	in	25	23

Figure 3: Excerpt of a Passenger Log from the Neckar. Julianne was listed at the top of the subsequent page in the log. Note the misspelling of Radziejewski. (May 15, 1882)

sometime during the spring of 1882. At one point, they passed through Southampton, England, eventually arriving in New York City on May 15, 1882 aboard the Neckar. Examining the passenger log, one is left with a few interesting details. First, the final destination for the Radziejewski's is listed as "Detroit, Mich." Detroit was a growing center of industrialization at the time, and a popular destination for Poles fleeing persecution in Bismarck's Germany. Johann and Catharina bring with them three children, one of whom, Anton, is an adult. Were any other children left behind in Germany? Perhaps they had older children who arrived earlier and were awaiting them in Michigan? Still, it is possible there were no other children but the three which came with them.

Note the misspelling of Radziejewski in Figure 2. Name misspellings were all too common as non-Anglo immigrants came into America. In our case, the error was not too significant ("Radziegwska" vs. Radziejewski), and there is no doubt that these are our ancestors. The younger of the two boys, Franz, is listed as 17 years of age. Known in later years as Frank (shortened from "Franciszek"), it is from him that our branch of the Radziejewskis is descended. The youngest child, daughter Julianna, is 10 years old at this time. Her name does not appear in the above excerpt, instead one can find it at the top of the following page of the ship log.

After the arrival of Johann, Catharina and their three children in the Spring of 1882, a period of even deeper mystery and uncertainty begins. For the next 18 years, I have not been able to find any records or documentation on the family. For one, a very critical piece of information is lost forever. The 1890 United States Census, the first for which the family was in the United States and would provide us with the earliest piece of information regarding their lives here, was damaged by a fire in 1921. The surviving segments were subsequently destroyed by the federal government in the aftermath.

The rapid influx of immigrants from countries such as Poland, Ireland, and Italy towards the latter part of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century inspired a rise of Catholicism in the traditionally Protestant United States. Typically, parishes were built along ethnic groupings as each group brought its own particular brand of Catholicism and patron saints. The first Catholic parish built to serve the needs of Detroit's growing Polish population was St. Albertus, located in Forest Park. It is likely that the early members of the family attended this parish. Detroit's Polish population grew so rapidly, however, that it soon became necessary to build more parishes to serve the Polish community. St. Stanislaus was one such parish, founded in 1898 and named for the Patron Saint of Poland. As indicated in the family bible of John and Anastasia Radjewski, this was the home parish for the third generation of Radjewskis in America.

The Family of Franciszek Radziejewski



Figure 4: The Family of Frank and Mary Radziejewski. Mary and Frank are in the front center of the picture. A young John Radziejewski is pictured behind Frank to the right.

After their arrival in 1882, the next documented evidence of the Radziejewski family occurs in the 1900 Census. As was often the case (and still is today!), Polish surnames were often subject to radical misspellings on forms of documentation, official and otherwise, thus further complicating efforts to track the family through the early years. In 1900, we find a 35 year old Franciszek (hereafter, Frank) beginning a

Radziejewski Frank	Male	40	1865	35	W 10	German	Pol	German	Al	1832/1870	Molder	Stove
Mary	Wife	39	1868	31	M 10	5	3	German	Pol	German	Pol	German
John	Son	11	1890	9	S 5			German	Pol	German	Pol	1878/22
Gracey	Daughter	9	1891	8	S 5			Michigan	Polish	German	Pol	At school

Figure 6: 1900 Census showing the family of Frank and Mary Radziejewski.

family with his 31 year old wife, Mary. In 1890, Frank married Mary Shefka, another Polish immigrant from the German Empire, who arrived with her family just a few years prior to Frank and the rest of the Radziejewskis. Although this record lists Mary's year of arrival as 1878, I am more inclined to believe in 1880 being the actual year. It is important to keep in mind that language difficulties often led to inaccurately transcribed information, especially when dealing with a Slavic tongue like Polish. At any rate, their three eldest children are already born in 1890, including John, who is 9 years of age and attending school. Once again, observe the misspelling of Radziejewski in Figure 4, even more extreme than we have previously seen: "Radswefisks". There is no doubt, however, that this is the correct family. Frank is working as a stove molder at this time, shaping the metals used in producing stoves. This would be his lifelong profession.

Frank	Daughter	W 12 S	Michigan	Daughter	Michigan	Marie	England	Welder
Mary	Daughter	W 10 M 120	Michigan	Daughter	Michigan	Marie	Polish	Stove Works
John	Son	W 40 M 120 6 6	Michigan	Daughter	Michigan	Marie	Polish	Brass Works
Gracey	Daughter	W 19 S	Michigan	Daughter	Michigan	Marie	Polish	Polisher
Edward	Son	W 17 S	Michigan	Daughter	Michigan	Marie	Polish	Brass Works
George	Son	W 15 S	Michigan	Daughter	Michigan	Marie	Polish	Polisher
Mannie	Daughter	W 9 S	Michigan	Daughter	Michigan	Marie	Polish	Brass Works
Emmette	Daughter	W 7 S	Michigan	Daughter	Michigan	Marie	Polish	Polisher
		W 5 S	Michigan	Daughter	Michigan	Marie	Polish	Brass Works

Figure 5: 1910 Census detailing the family of Frank and Mary Radziejewski. In census, the family name is spelled, "Radzewski".

Our next glimpse into the lives of Frank and Mary occurs in the 1910 Census. Their family has nearly doubled in the course of a decade

with several new additions. Frank continues his work as a molder at the steel works as John begins his life as an adult. At 19, John is no longer at school, but is working at the brass works as a polisher. His sister, Theresa, works as a roller at the Ruger Factory.

At this point, it becomes necessary to backtrack somewhat. Below is an excerpt from the 1880 Census, showing the family of Mary Schefka a scant few months or less after arriving in the United States. Her parents are Frank and Dora Schefka and she is 11 years of age at this time. Again, without the records from the pivotal 1890 Census, it is nearly impossible to discover any more information regarding the Schefkas and their earliest years in the United States. As one can easily observe, even the Schefka name, pronounced ‘Sheff-Key’, is subject to gross misspelling as the record transcribes the name as “Schafky”.

	Mary	W 13	Daughter		Labour	✓			Polish	not h
Sheafky	Frank	W 24	40						Polish	
Dora		W 2	40	Wife	1			Polish	Pol	
Mary		W 2	11	Daughter	1	Working House		Polish	Pol	
Joseph		W 21	1	Son	1			Polish	Pol	
Frank		W 28	3	Son	1			Polish	Pol	

Figure 7: 1880 Census record of the Shefka family.

By 1920, most of Frank and Mary Radziejewski’s children have grown up. Their eldest daughter, Theresa, and son-in-law, John Opalewski, are living with them along with the rest of the Opalewski clan. John is the only one of Frank and Mary’s children who has moved out and started a family of his own. Frank is still working as a molder, however no longer at the stove works. He has adapted to the changing industrial landscape of Detroit and works as a molder in the new, booming automobile industry. For the first time on a census document, our surname is actually spelled correctly. This concludes an important chapter in the history of the Radziejewski family as the torch shifts from those members of the family who were born and grew up in German Poland to those who were born and raised in the United States. First, it is important to take a detour and examine another branch of the family.

Figure 8: Excerpts from the 1920 Census

The Czapiewski Family

John Radziejewski married Anastasia Czapiewski, whose father was Peter Czapiewski. Anastasia's (hereafter Stella) mother was Anna Renusch. Unfortunately, the history of the Czapiewskis and their arrival into America is shrouded in even deeper mystery than that of the Radziejewskis. Exacerbating any attempt at research is the fact that Anna passed away shortly after Stella's birth around 1896 of tuberculosis. Three months later, Peter had remarried a woman named Victoria. With that, we examine the story surrounding Peter's arrival into the United States.

Peter Czapiewski was born in a village by the name of Osowo in 1854, at that time a part of the German Empire. In the present day, Osowo can refer to any of the several villages that go by that name in northwestern Poland. All of these villages are relatively near to each other, all of them close to the Baltic Sea. Peter arrived in the United States exactly one year prior to the members of the Radziejewski clan. In the spring of 1881, Peter left Germany and eventually made his way to Liverpool, England. At some point, he boarded the Ohio and on May 4, 1881, a 26 year old Peter Czapiewski arrived in Philadelphia, listed on the passenger log as "P. Cyapiewsky".



Figure 9: Peter Czapiewski's name as it appears in the passenger log of the Ohio.

Once again, Peter early years in America are unclear, no thanks that missing 1890 Census. We know that at some point, he married Anna Renusch, also German-born, and that they had many daughters, including Stella, who was the youngest and was born in 1894. Shortly after Anna's passing, Peter remarried a woman by the name of Viktoria, also an immigrant from Germany. They married in 1897. In 1900, Peter was working as a day laborer, a molder actually for the mason works, while his daughters attended school. It is from this record that we learn the year of Peter's immigration as 1881.

Czapiewski Peter	Male	W	46	Apr	1855	45	M
Victoria	Wife	W	41	Apr	1865	34	M
Veronica	Daughter	W	14	Jan	1886	14	S
Mary	Daughter	W	12	July	1888	11	S
Anne	Daughter	W	10	Aug	1889	10	S
Eliza	Daughter	W	8	Feb	1888	10	S
Anna	Daughter	W	7	Feb	1892	8	S
Marietta	Daughter	W	5	Aug	1898	5	S
Hecht in his home in Allentown, Pa	W	W	72	Jan	1828	92	M

Figure 10: Excerpt from the 1900 Census showing the members of the Czapiewski family, including Stella's stepmother, Victoria, and Peter's mother-in-law.

At some in the later years of his life, Peter desired to travel back to Germany and visit the land of his childhood, a dream which he would fulfill. In 1910, he applied for and received a U.S. Passport. It was during this decade that he would make another trip across the Atlantic, although this time only for leisure in order to visit with relatives.

Peter's passport application can be found on the following page. On it, we can find many vital pieces of information, including Peter's year of immigration and his place of birth. The application even lists various physical attributes of Peter, such as his blue eyes. From the census of that year, we find Peter is still married to Victoria and his older daughters absent, no doubt married by this time. A 15 year old Stella still lives at home and has an occupation, although her profession and place of work is indistinguishable on the census record. It appears as though she had the same job as her older sister, Anna.

Czapiewski Peter	Male	W	46	Mar 12	Apr	1855	M
Victoria	Wife	W	41	Mar 12	5	2	S
Anna	Daughter	W	18	S			M
Amelia	Daughter	W	15	S			M
Paul	Son	M	7	S			M

Figure 11: 1910 Census Excerpt featuring the family of Peter Czapiewski

29050

APPLICATION FOR PASSPORT. No. 1313
(FORM FOR NATURALIZED CITIZEN.)

MAY 20 1910
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

No. 1313 Issued May 20 1910

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

STATE OF Michigan }
COUNTY OF Wayne }
ss.

I, Peter Czapiewski, a NATURALIZED AND LOYAL CITIZEN OF THE UNITED STATES, hereby apply to the Department of State, at Washington, for a passport for myself, accompanied by none as follows: born at _____, on the day of A. D. 1854; and

I solemnly swear that I was born at Osowo, Germany on or about the 27th day of April A.D. 1854; that I emigrated to the United States, sailing on board the Ohio, from Liverpool, on or about the day of April A.D. 1881; that I resided 22 years, uninterruptedly, in the United States, from 1881 to 1910, at Detroit, Mich.; that I was naturalized as a citizen of the United States before the Recorder's Court of Detroit, at Detroit, on the 15th day of October A.D. 1900, as shown by the accompanying Certificate of Naturalization; that I am the identical person described in said Certificate; that I am domiciled in the United States, my permanent residence being at Detroit, in the State of Michigan, where I follow the occupation of moulder; that I am about to go abroad temporarily; and that I intend to return to the United States within 5 mos. with the purpose of residing and performing the duties of citizenship therein.

OATH OF ALLEGIANCE.

Further, I do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion: SO HELP ME GOD.

Sworn to before me this 16th day of May A.D. 1910 { Peter Czapiewski

My commission expires May 10th 1910 U.S. Consul

DESCRIPTION OF APPLICANT.

Age: 56 years. Mouth: regular
Stature: 5 feet, 10 inches, Eng. Chin: strong
Forehead: high Hair: Light
Eyes: blue Complexion: light
Nose: straight Face: Oval

IDENTIFICATION.

I hereby certify that I know the above-named Peter Czapiewski personally, and know him to be the identical person referred to in the within-described Certificate of Naturalization, and that the facts stated in his affidavit are true to the best of my knowledge and belief. Edward Lamberton

ADDRESS OF WITNESS. Detroit, Mich.

Applicant desires passport sent to following address: August Cyrowski,
825 Russell st.
Detroit, Mich.

Figure 12: Passport application of Peter Czapiewski.

Stella's Story

The story of Stella's life is quite intriguing. As previously discussed, her mother died of tuberculosis when Stella was about 18 months old. Three months later, her father had remarried Victoria, who brought her two daughters and mother to live with the family. Peter and Victoria had two more children, Stella's half siblings. Victoria passed away in her 40s and Peter remarried again nine months later. Her new mother forced Stella, her sister Anna, and her grandmother by Victoria out of the house with a butcher knife, forcing the three women to live with neighbors. Three months after remarrying this woman, Peter himself passed away.

Listening to audio tapes left by Stella, we learn a little bit more of her birthmother's family. Anna Renusch's parents were Jacob and Susanna Renusch. Below is an excerpt of 1880 Census, which is also the same year the Renuschs arrived in the United States. It is more

246311	Renusch	acet.	W. M. 44	1.
	—	Susanna	W. Fr. 41	Wife
	—	Frank	W. M. 18	Son 1.
	—	Julia	W. Fr. 16	Daughter 1.
	—	annie	W. Fr. 12	Daughter 1.
	—	Agnes	W. Fr. 11	Daughter 1.
	—	John	W. M. 4	Son 1.
	—	Julius	W. M. 3	Son 1.
	—	Joseph	W. M. 2	Son 1.

Figure 13: 1880 Census excerpt detailing the members of the Renusch family

likely than not that the daughter, Agnes, is actually Anna Renusch. Note the timeline we have thus far constructed regarding the various dates of immigration for members of the William Paul branch of the Radjewski family. The earliest to arrive were the Schefkas and the Renuschs in 1880. Peter Czapiewski would arrive one year later in 1881, followed

by the Radziejewski family in 1882. Given the background regarding the status of Poles within the German Empire at the time, it is not surprising that everyone came within the same two year window.

Much like the Radziejewskis, the Renusches boarded a boat in Bremen, Germany in the Spring of 1880. On April 29, 1880, Frank and Susanna Renusch arrived in New York harbor aboard the Baltimore with several of their children, Anna included. As one can see below in an excerpt from the Baltimore's passenger log, Jacob and Susanna were 40 and 38 years of age, respectively. Anna, whose full name was Johanna, is 4 years old at this time.

50 Johanna	25	f
1 Jacob Renusk	40	m
2 Susanna	38	f
3 Johanna	4	-
4 Auguste	4	-
5 Johanna	7	m
6 Julius	2	-
7 Josef	11	-
8		

Figure 14: Passenger log of the Baltimore, listing members of the Schefka family.

By the time of the 1900 Census, Anna has married, started a family with Peter Czapiewski, and passed away from tuberculosis. We find Jacob and Susanna living with several of their sons. Jacob works as a mason, while their sons work in the chain factory. Susanna, the youngest daughter, is an apprentice dressmaker.

John and Stella Continue the Legacy

As stated previously, John Radziejewski and Stella Czapiewski were wed. It was always Stella's dream to have her wedding at St. Stanislaus, as she grew up in this parish and attended school here. There were complications with the pastor at that time, however, as he had sided with Stella's stepmother in the ordeal surrounding the eviction of her, Anna, and their 85 year old grandmother from Peter Czapiewski's home.

In 1920, we find Stella and John married and living on property owned by a German family, the Kochs. While their only child, Clarence, is nearly 5 years old at this time, Stella is with child. Their unborn son will be introduced to the world in a few short months. William Paul Radziejewski will be born in April. Stella's younger half-brother, Paul Czapiewski, is living with young family. As John works as a metal polisher with the electric company, Paul is working as a chore maker at the local foundry.

4	Radziejewski, John	head	R	m	w	29	m
	Stella	wife		F	w	25	m
	Clarence	son		m	w	4 ¹¹ ₁₂	s
	Czapiewski, Paul	brother-in-l		m	w	17	s

Figure 15: 1920 Census showing the young family of John and Stella Radziejewski.

Over the course of the next decade, the family will undergo many changes. For one, they will move from their old residence, owned by the Kochs, and will own their own family home at 5592 Cooper Street in Detroit. They rent to the O'Neill family from Ohio. Their new neighborhood is a diverse one consisting not only of Poles and Germans, but also of Italians, Romanians, and Hungarians. Names such as Trustman, Kryek, Assessor, Campo, and Fortunato populate their street. William Paul has finally arrived and is attending school at 10 years of age. In addition to his older brother, Clarence, he has two younger brothers, Leonard and John who are ages 8 and 5 respectively.

The 1930 Census marks a milestone in the history of the Radjewski family. For the first time, the name is officially documented as “Radjewski”, shortened by three letters from its original form. The elder John still works as a metal polisher, but no longer for the electric company. His latest employer is the motor factory. Paul Czapiewski, now aged 27, is no longer living with John and Stella. Tragedy would strike the family this decade as Paul, in his early 30s, will commit suicide.

		ever yr son									
55922121	Radjewski	John	Head	0	6500	R	NOM	W	39	M	
		Anastasia	Wife-H				✓	F	W	35	M
		Clarence	Son				✓	M	W	14	S
		William	Son				✓	M	W	10	S
		Leonard	Son				✓	M	W	8	S
		John	Son				✓	M	W	5	S
53922127	O'Neill	Leslie	Head	R	35	R	NOM	W	28	M	
		Nattice	Wife-H				✓	F	W	26	M
		Elaine	Daughter				✓	F	W	9	S

Figure 16: 1930 Census listing the members of the Radjewski family. This is the first US Census in which the Radjewski name is documented in its current form.

William Paul Radjewski continues to grow into a strong young man. In 1939, Europe breaks into war as a result of Germany and Russia's latest scheme to divide and conquer a newly independent Poland. The United States, somehow, manages to stay out of the war for the first few years, although it begins drafting men into its armed forces.