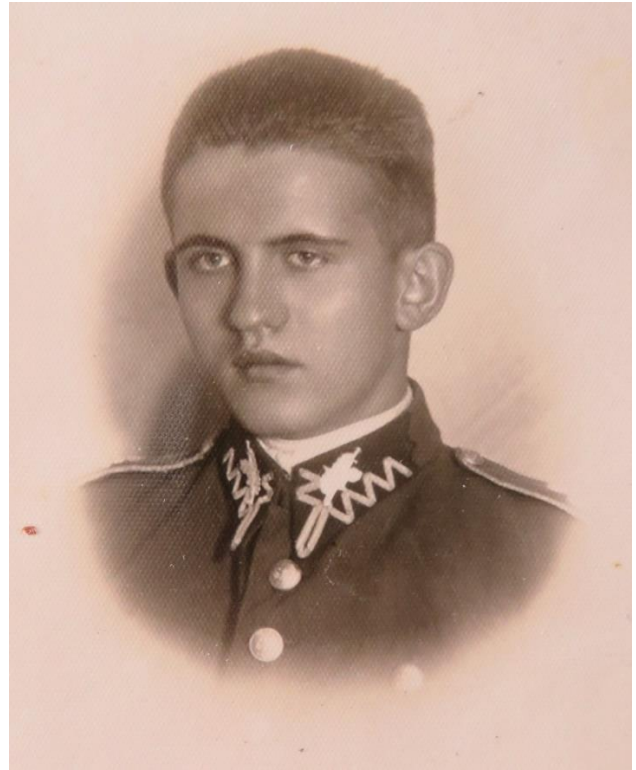


Maciej Zwierz

Army Medical Academy....Szkola Podchorznych Sanitarnych or SPS - Ujazdow, Warsaw

10.7.1935-1.9.1939

Nicknamed "Cadaver"



Maciej at 17 years old and applying for the Army Military Academy.

My father writes in his memoirs:

If I remember rightly, the matriculation exams finished on the 17th of June, 1935. I went to Lowicz to see my father and of course, we had a serious conversation about my future. He was in a very poor state of health and bedridden. He told me almost without introduction: What would you like to do with your life. I answer-to become a chemical engineer or aerodynamical engineer. He answered a bit excited. You see what happened to me. I'll never, never permit you to have anything to do with chemistry. As for aerodynamical engineering- is simply ridiculous. You could do that only in Germany and your German is practically nil. Actually, I have no money for any higher studies of yours. As you know, I am dying but before my death, I want to be sure that you will finish, even after my death, a study giving you a good profession. I ask you to make me die happy and sure of your future to apply for admission to the Army Military of Medicine. This was of course a complete surprise for me. However, I knew that to be selected for admission by passing 4 days lasting examinations. It was in practice impossible.



The Academy was poshiest in Warsaw admitting the "cream" of intelligent young men or rather teenagers from all over Poland giving automatically an entry to the highest society (you would say in England-The Establishment) in Warsaw and Poland. Competition for admission was unbelievable, exams very difficult and the aspirants were taking tutors for the whole last year of their high schools. As I found back in Warsaw, in 1935 some 2000 youngsters submitted applications with the names of two possibly the most influential referees. 300 were selected on the basis of their results of Matriculation exams and written references to take exams for 32 places. In Lowicz, not knowing the detailed figures but being sure that I'd never be admitted, without hesitation and to cause pleasure to my father/friend and the only person I truly loved at the time, I agreed without any hesitation.



I think the middle cadet may be Jerzy Kaczinski.

From Jerzy Kaczinski

*"I chose something that was the compilation of both university studies and the army - sanitary officer cadet school known as "sanitarka." There I met Staszek Sosabowski for the first time because among friends coming from the Provence, we, residents of Warsaw, stayed together. Staszek joined us as a son of the later general Sosabowski, then the commander of the 21st regiment named after the Warsaw Children. He used to have a colonel rank when I first met him. Besides, I remember him as quite a harsh man. At the officer cadet school our life was typical to students of other schools of that kind: we were going to lectures and simultaneously we were undergoing military training. Obviously, all our leave time used to be spent on that. While our civilian friends had three months of holidays, we had just one month. The rest of the time we spent on training camps. I was doing quite well at the school. I reached the fifth year of medical studies at the rank of master sergeant cadet officer. Staszek and **Maciek Zwierz** achieved the same. In the last year of studies we were brought together. It was kind of a privilege because others were located in nine-person-rooms whereas we stayed in a three-person-room, which turned out to be very comfortable as those big ones were quite tiring."*

The last 10-14 days when other applicants and their tutors worked days and nights in preparation for these four "cruel days", I, sure of failures, had a grand time with my various girlfriends (mainly from the gymnasium of Queen Jadwiga, not touching any book as that being a complete waste of time under the circumstances).

The exams for those 300 selected (which included my "Sosabowski") were proposed by a board of specialists under a psychologist-educator, authority on tests and colonel in one person.

First day - we were busy on a paper of some 500 questions (general knowledge). It was the first time I saw, very new then, multiple choice papers.

The second day (8 hours each of them) was a Polish essay. I confess that I cannot now after 47 years recall the subject, but it was one only, no choice, to swim or to drown.

The third day was difficult to me in the extreme: it was a day of "conquering" now and after 2nd World War, well known, typical commando course, dressed in an Army commando uniform with a knapsack with stones of 50 kg, blanket, steel helmet, rifle, bayonet, spade, military heavy boots etc. Looking first time at this course, I was dead sure that I'd never manage even the first quarter of these contraptions. Nevertheless, having read at the library of the Revd Jan Pozowski, many surahs (verses) of the Koran (half of the page in Arabic in Roman script, another translation into Polish (or French), I told myself: "Insh Allah- Allah akhbar!" Will of Allah-Allah is great. And indeed, the good Lord, the Allah and other saints must have helped me. I tackled the course though, I'm sure in rather poor time. It was seldom in my life that I was so much physically exhausted at the finish.

The last day was reserved for essays in as many as you know, foreign language essays. I wrote three: French (on Maisons who ever choose such themes, Italian (Instituto di Cultura Italiana helped, after all!) and in basic Russian. These, no doubt, helped with marks, lost on the damned commando Course.

I may add that marking multiple question paper, for the first and not the last time, I was deeply sorry, that I didn't take optional Greek in school, at least one third of questions included a greek - derivative (usually scientific) word.

Exams finished, I went happily to Lowicz to recuperate on the good dishes of " Auntie Maia ", specially prepared for " Mak" (my family nick name - so I called myself when I starting talking, not knowing that it means .. poppy flower; nowadays only Janek is left to call me by this childhood nick.name).

The reader of this "book" educated in English-North American school system will note that no mention of any sport, matches, cheer-girls etc. was made. This is because of the fact that Polish educational system aimed at academic excellence not sport university scholarship. The classes were 8 am to 3 pm Monday to Saturday included. Whereas we had five hours a week of Polish, Math, Latin, Modern Language we had one hour of physical education- on a par with...religion. There were no school (or university for that matter) sport fields, soccer or baseball, just very small field across the street for calisthenics and basketball and netball (after school hours i.e., after 3 pm). I personally like most students considered sport a sheer waste of time, hated calisthenics. Later in the army, benefiting from my newly acquired medical knowledge, getting medical certificate absolving me from those "monkey businesses" by selection from books if necessary, finding diseases impossible to diagnose in a doctor's simple office like backache etc.

For those, athletically inclined, there were popular 2 organisations fully equipped with facilities for most of sports: YMCA and A.Z.S. (Sports Academic Association), both admitting not only university, but also high school students. For enthusiasts, like my Dr. Marysia Dabrowska, there was so called 4-year Academy of Physical Education, jointly financed by the Warsaw University and the Army, with in my time a colonel of Polish Army Medical corps, as director, giving university - equal degrees a diplomas.

I may here add, that one of my Adam Mickiewicz friends, living in the neighbouring block of flats was a table tennis maniac and he persuaded me to play with him. Apparently, I had a secret talent, for rather quickly, I not only came to like ping - pong, as it was then called, but advanced myself to be nominated to the school's representation, winning or losing inter-gymnasia matches. In fact I was so good, that I joined the champions group to improve my technique i.e. became a member of YMCA, where I met and played among others, the Warsaw and Poland champion, Mieczystaw Frick, later in Italy during the war, Lieut, Doctor Frick & my boss! It helped a lot, for we were, since YMCA times, on first name terms, normally in Poland extremely difficult to obtain with a senior (pre - war Poland was full of titles, scrupulously observed even in private conversations). Apart of the above, I, like most of my school classmates, used in spring, summer and autumn, a bicycle, purely as a means of transportation.

At " Bigalkas " I became accustomed to 6 hours non - stop tennis. Such was the limit of my physical education, prior to the commando course.

One day telegram arrived: " Accepted as cadet. officer report at Ujazdów for recruits course on the 10th of July at 8 a.m.). My father and Auntie were " in seventh heaven " (world of the then No.1 hit) I accepted it philosophically.

So as not to delude my descendants to be under the impression, that they had a genius. ancestor, I hurry to stress in the strongest possible terms my advantages, not at all connected with intellect, over my" competitors ":

Being completely sure that I have no chance at all to be accepted, I was icy - cool - not nervous, like those who spent a year with tutors a lived like monks, for me the exams (except bloody Commando!) was like any other paper - Joseph Wysocki's problem to be solved in order to please dying Old Man.

You have that my referees included two Society of Active Fight (or was) friends since 1905.a) Marshal Pilsudski having died in May 1935 - since 1914 his Chief of staff, and in June 1935 highest ranking Army General in Poland, the aforesaid pg.38 Kazimierz Sosnkowski. b) an army VIP Lieut.General Fabrycy and also from his own will very influential – Col. Sosabowski, later of Arnhem fame, (= in England – old tie)

So - no genius and not present neurotic but a 17-year-old youngster, who couldn't care less, either way, Rather as our friends say wsio Durakom szczastie (stupidids have luck or dumb luck)

One more thing and to show you how, academically speaking, excellent was my Adam Mickiewicz school: among 32 Cadet officers admitted - 5 (including me) were alumni of the school. (one died few weeks later at the Ujazdow Hospital, from an extremely rare cancer of lungs, not discovered during pre admission medical examination by all possible and eminent specialists - he had a multiple cancer derived from primitive cells, which were left undeveloped further, during first few weeks of his mother's pregnancy, I have never seen or head of another such most - unusual cancer, during my long medical life).





Szkola Podchorążych Sanitarnych (SPS-Ujazdów, Warsaw 1935 to 1939)

PROMOCJA XIV – 1935

Przyjęto w roku 1935:

Gupa lekarzy - 32

1. CHODOROWSKI Aleksander - lek. w Anglii

2. DWORAK Zbigniew - lek. w Polsce

3. FIJALKOWSKI Włodzimierz - Doc. gin. w Polsce

4. GARLINSKI Tadeusz Glider pilot

5. IWANOWSKI Lech

6. JAKUBOWSKI Andrzej - lek. w Polsce

7. JANECEK Tadeusz

8. JAROSŁAWSKI Zdzisław

9. JAWORSKI Ryszard - lek. w Polsce

10. KACZYŃSKI Jerzy - lek. w Polsce

11. KOMAR Edward

12. KORDYS Jan - lek. rentg. w Polsce

13. KORNASZEWSKI Janusz

14. KROTKIEWSKI Edward

15. KUJAWSKI Zygmunt

16. KURNATOWSKI Stanisław

17. NAKWASKI Włodzimierz - derm. w Polsce

18. OZIEWICZ Witold - chir. ord. w Polsce

19. OZIEBŁO Wojciech * lek. w Polsce

20. REISKE Jan

21. RIZEOZYKOWSKI Witold - w Polsce

22. SOSABOWSKI Stanisław - Fizjotek. w Anglii

23. SRZEDNICKI Zbigniew

24. STANCZYK Jerzy - lek. w Polsce

25. SZAWŁOWSKI Zbigniew w Polsce

26. TUROWSKI Romuald

27. WALCZAK-Zdzisław - lek. w Anglii GLIDER PILOT

28. WIERZUCHOWSKI Tadeusz - lek. w Anglii

29. WOJCICKI Henryk - lek. w Kanadzie

30. ZALUSKA Jerzy

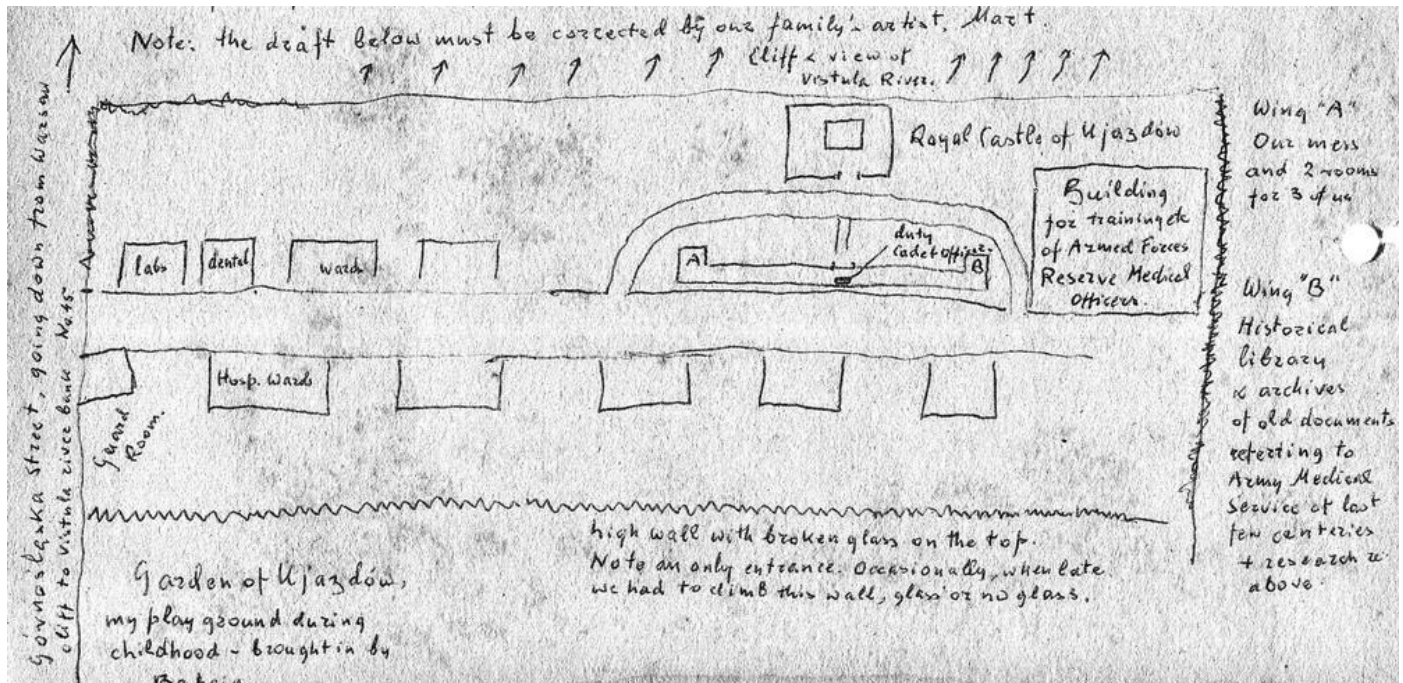
31. ZAREMBA Romuald - plk lek. gin.

32. ZWIERZ Maciej - dyr. sl. zdr. Indie Zach.

Well to make my further story clearer, I try here to draft Ujazdow, or what was officially called Center of Army Medical Training-Ujazdow at 45 Gornoslaska St.

It consisted from the main army Spital Ujazdowski with all possible specialties and famous laboratories, dentistry etc. Royal (Hunting) Castle of Ujazdow built according to the plans of the chief engineer of Louis XIV de France, M. de Vauban, where higher classes (in medicine) of our Academy lived.

(It was convenient for authorities to check whether we were on time at evening and not accompanied by a girlfriend for de Vauban, famous for his fortifications and fortresses - alas – planned for one and only entrance door!) And in front of the castle, built much later, some 300 yards long barrack for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd year of medicine cadet officer – in the shape of



The long barrack had also one entrance "guarded" by 2 duty colleagues. Between the Mess and 2 rooms with 6 cadet officers, there was a door, normally locked. During my last year Sosabowski, Kaczynski and I, lived in one of those rooms. Roughly about once a month there was a dance in the Mess. We somehow managed to make a duplicate key in case of one of the girls (high Warsaw society) wanted "to see how we live". So to be safe – before the dance – we took door signs from specially designated large rooms "Library", "Microscopes Room", "Study Room", or even "Duty Officer-No Entry" By unwritten agreement, our superior officer, majority-6 years older than us, honoured these "false signs". For other cadet officers they meant "occupied".

Through the entire building on the castle side, ran the corridor with large windows, if not for the desk of the duty cadet officer, we could (as we often wished) returning from no need to mention alcoholic part, try our skills with rifles or revolvers.

On the main street side of the corridor there was a row of dormitories (10 per room) and various utility and scientific rooms, as per the signs above stolen for dance nights. Altogether I spent four years in this building

I hope that the draft plan and descriptions of Ujazdow will facilitate the understanding of our life and adventures, pleasant or unpleasant in the years 1935-1939.

Thus on the morning of the 10th July, 1935, I started 13 years of military life (prisons and concentration camps being included into my military career by the British War Office on their official "Record of Service" forms, since, finding myself standing in 2 military rows amongst the 31 other recruits, on the street face to the castle. **Maciej was 17 years old.**

By incident or bad omen, the first hours were very unpleasant as Tina sings "the other reindeers laughed at me and called me names", for we all were in full army uniforms except me: I do not know whether my nose or cheeks were red, but the fact was that the sergeant in charge of stores could not, even for the sake of saving his alcoholic soul, find my size 7 army boots, and here was I, only a one, in uniform but in shiny yellow civilian shoes. Both he and I got few "army" words from our commanding officer for above yellow shoes.



Maciej with his brother Janek



Maciej and his beloved Aunt Amalia

When editing my memoirs, please add in a suitable place about the duty cadet officer, long corridor, and his desk - the following stories:

Some of my duties as a duty cadet officer had funny incidents:

Once when I was sitting behind the duty cadet-officer's desk, there appeared in the corridor a person dressed in full uniform of a general. On his closer approach, I recognized him as the bishop (later archbishop) of the Polish Armed Forces, the Reverend Gawlina. The school (and military) regulations required that I should report myself, giving rank & name.

I did report, as prescribed by the regulations, addressing him, as ... Mr. General.

He gave me his hand. Now - I was in the dilemma what to do to shake a hand (I was wearing gloves) as of any office I had reported to, or to follow etiquette and the customs of the Roman Catholic Church i.e. kissing the bishop's ring which under the stone had to contain the relics (piece of bone) of a saint. This came quickly through my head.

I decided that, as he was wearing the uniform of a general and I, of a cadet officer the proper procedure, would be to shake a hand. He was a tall, well built man and my hand was very much smaller than his. Perhaps because of my being nervous and/or his big hand, we shook hands very vigorously, up and down, pumping several times - very unusually so. The entourage of bishop Gawlina, and many of cadet-officers present, started to laugh - Gawlina joining them. I was terribly embarrassed, and started to search, what etiquette books say about such situation, including a famous (last century) book of Buziewicz, dealing with honour cases, causes requiring duel, preparation, and execution of duels, and such, forgotten, subjects. I came to the conclusion, that I was right - nevertheless, the incident remained in the minds of my colleagues and became one of the anecdotes of and about our Academy.

Several times I had much less pleasant encounters with the famous General Sławoj - Składkowski, Minister for the Interior, and known disciplinarian. You ask why famous - the answer was simple - being himself a doctor.

Maciej Zwierz was nicknamed "cadaver"



Maciej at about 18 and 19 years of age.



Podchorążowie na zajęciach sanitarnych, lata 1938 - 1939

Looks like Maciej Zwierz (starred) found on the internet. "army cadets in sanitary class"

Dad's story of Gliding should go in here but found separately.

With the start of hostilities in September 1939, studies of the Army Medical School were interrupted. Eighty-seven high school students were nominated to the rank of second lieutenant. They were students of "promotion" from 13 to 15. Eighteen "promotion" but admitted to schools had not started learning.

Army Medical Academy (Szkoła Podchorążych Sanitarnych (SPS-Ujazdów, Warsaw 1935 to 39

During my last year Sosabowski, Kaczynski and I lived in one of those rooms

My best friends were Sosabowski Jr and Kaczynski.

A few words are due to all my colleagues: First of all, must be, blind since the 2nd battle of Warsaw, 1944, my oldest friend and godfather of Anna, Stanislaw Sosabowski.

Stanislaw Sosabowski

I met him sitting in a double bank of the grade 5 (Adam Mickiewicz) together with a boy called Mossakowski, in the first week of Sept 1929. Despite of the fact that for six years I used to smack his back with full force when he for instance gave wrong answers to a professor, we became fast friends and I was often guest in their house playing together with his beloved Great Dane. We were together in boy scouts, and I fished him out from the previously unknown to us country pool and into which, despite our warning, he jumped head first, breaking a couple of spinal vertebrae.

If ever I knew a fellow who knew no fear, it was Staszek (diminutive)

His father was a disciplinarian-true Prussian officer of the German Army then colonel of an infantry regiment nicknamed Children of Warsaw. Later as a general, he fought in France, established in Scotland famous Polish Parachute Brigade, dropped in Arnheim.

Who of you has seen a film "One Bridge (on the Rhine Delta) too Far" He was there, played by a British actor, quarrelling inter alia, with Marshall Montgomery, trying to persuade him that Monty's order of battle must end in failure and why. Not many people had ever the courage to contradict Monty (even Churchill was unusually polite with him).

And in the end, he was right. During the Battle of Warsaw 11 in Aug 1944, he quarreled with the Imperial Chiefs of Staff, demanding that his Brigade be dropped on Warsaw to help rising of the Underground Army - a suicidal mission, as Russian Army under a Pole, Marshal Rokossowski, stopped its' advance on the Praga side of the Vistula River, not helping at all fighting Warsaw. (Stalin even refused landing rights of British and American transport airplanes, who intended to help Underground Army with ammunition, material, food etc. - after parachute drops, they had to refuel for return to Italy or England. Note the Underground Army was under command of the Polish Government -in-exile in London, whereas "Polish communist government was already nominated by Stalin on July 22, 1944 in Lublin. He stopped Rokossowski attack to give time to Germans to finish "London fascists"

But about Sosabowski (general)...He was an only Pole who got from Kaizer Wilhelm 11, the Iron Cross I Class for bravery. Through me he also guaranteed (my grandmother Maria Zemanek) Babcia's loan from the Building Society to purchase 82, Kenilworth. You will hear more about Sosabowskis later in this story.

Jerzy Kaczynski

Born 1916 a.k.a. "Bohdan"

Home Army lieutenant, doctor,

Kedyw unit "Kolegium A",

Home Army union "Radosław"

honoured with Virtuti Militari Silver Cross,

Cross of Valour (twice) and Medal of Army (for 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th time).

Maciej says "I never met him since the mobilization and 1st day of 1939. He like Sosabowski (and others) finished their medical studies on the Underground University courses and became prominent (by their most courageous exploits described after war) in the Underground Army having "cover" as doctors of the various hospitals."

Jurek or Zorzyk Klimczynski (Klim (Entry ID: 128163)

b 1918 sierżant podchorąży 2 kompania sanitarna Nr ewidencyjny 3 DSK/Serial Nr in 3 DSK 1918/414

.... was Senior Psychiatric Registrar in Bridgetown Barbados. His wife (Wanda) was Maciej's ward nurse.

They were together at Ujazdów and Iscoyed Park. Dad had 2 weeks leave before Eve's birth in Jan 1952, and Mom sent him to visit Klim at his house in the Mental Hospital.

Henio Wojcicki met in 1935 when started medical studies. Wojcicki was also in Dad's dormitory.

He had escaped from Poland in 1939 via Romania and served with the Polish forces in France and then in the Middle East before being seconded to the Polish medical faculty at Edinburgh University to complete his studies. He graduated in 1945.

In Canada Henryk Wójcicki went on to enjoy an exceptionally successful career as a psychiatrist and academic but also as an acknowledged leader of the Polish community. Arriving in Canada he took up the role of clinical director in a large psychiatric hospital in North Battleford, Saskatchewan.

He set up his own private practice and became a Clinical Professor at the Faculty of Medicine in the University of Alberta. He also served two terms on the senate of the University of Alberta and published many articles in medical journals. He was a prominent member of the Polish community in Canada, serving as the President of the Canadian-Polish Congress for a number of years. His prominence in the Polish community was confirmed in 1984 when his wife, Zosia and he were chosen to bring the offering at Pope John Paul II's papal mass in Edmonton. He was awarded the Order of Canada in 1989 for his outstanding work over many years for developing multiculturalism and for his work in the Canadian health service. The two families were good lifelong friends and we they often visited us in Banff.

Aleksander Chodorowski (Entry ID: 120962)

1916/114 lieutenant dr. d-two div.

Served in 2nd Corps (Gen. Anders) Unit porucznik lekarz dr dowództwo dywizjiHe was Maciej's best man at his wedding in 1944.

Zbyszek Walko Zbigniew Stanisław (Entry ID: 141864)

On the 23 Sept 1939, my father in his own words "duly reported to the designated square full of Polish officers and the Red Army units, fully armed including machine guns.