

# *Images of the House of Starzeński*

Stories and photos of the family Starzeński  
Eighteenth century to the present

Collected by Bruce Starzenski of Galway, New York

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## To the Reader:

From an early age, Europe fascinated me. Its history traces the evolution both of Western civilization and of Man's Inhumanity to Man. Its stories tell of the rise and tragic fall of nations, dynasties and families, including my own. My parents introduced me to its diversity, breadth and depth of perspective, and, might I add, its wisdom. Then, during my first visit in 1938 as a boy of twelve and the year of study in Switzerland that followed, Europe's tastes, smells, sounds, architecture and attitudes assaulted the senses.

My career took me and my family to live in Europe for 25 years. Even to this day, Louise and I spend a portion of each year there. Picking up the threads of the family saga, we visited old estates and met surviving Starzeńskis. Marysia offered a family history written by her father, Andrzej Starzeński. Krysia and Gabryela generously related some of their terrible wartime experiences.

I commissioned researchers to seek out stories and pictures of our Starzeński forefathers (and foremothers), and in the process met Teresa, Susanna, Alessandro and other family members who recounted fragments of the past. Adam Zamoyski wove the information into a masterful family history, *The Noble House of Starzeński*, published in 1997.

Yet wonderful pictures remained unpublished, poignant stories untold. As editor Mary Kadlecsek and graphic artist Robert deVilleneuve digitized photos, laid them out album-style and added narrative, it began to seem that we could keep alive not only fading photos, but also fading memories.

The book is a true collaboration between our family and Mary. Her technical expertise, sense of style, historical and social understanding and unflagging enthusiasm brought the work to completion. Louise and Bruce II made important contributions, patiently digging up photos and letters, reading drafts, searching their own memories and gathering recollections from friends.

Now the stories are written, several hundred photos digitized and the whole presented in this volume. I still wonder, why? Partly, out of nostalgia. Partly out of a sense of the importance of roots and continuity. But, more disturbingly, partly also as a memorial, a tombstone to the Starzenski family, one of millions that has had its 'moment on the stage and then is heard no more.' Perpetuation of the family name rests on a very slender foundation of two males in Warsaw, one in Buenos Aires and one in Canada. Thirty years hence, who will be interested?

So there is no satisfactory answer to why I brought together all this knowledge of the Starzeński clan. It is just something I had to do. I hope the people who contributed their time, their memories and their friendship will find *Images of the House of Starzeński* a fitting rendition of our dramatic story and an embodiment of family solidarity.

*Bruce Starzenski, 2005*

## To the Reader:

Just as my grandfather Victor was offered all the religions in his community but was encouraged to choose his own path by his father, I was extremely lucky to have been given an extraordinary upbringing by my parents and grandparents. Being schooled by Jesuits in Milano, where mass began every day and only Italian was spoken, and then in the International School of Geneva, where the students came from around the world, inspired a broad perspective and acceptance of the extraordinary diversity of this world. It also inspired an enduring sense of enquiry as to the common thread in all humanity. This sense of enquiry felt most at home in Little Strabla, with its thoughtful atmosphere of lively discussions amongst the many treasured friends of Victor and Frieda. It is a tradition which I am delighted to pursue.

But how does one pursue such a tradition, which springs forth from the rich tapestry of the lives whose stories are told in this book? In our modern times we hardly have time to stop and think let alone think before we act, and certainly not to engage in luxurious conversations over the meaning of life! Where to find that deeper meaning which Victor would see in his own hands as he marvelled at “the will, the will, the will?”

Academic philosophy proved dry after evenings by the fireplace in Galway, and architecture, while greatly transformed by the philosopher-architects with their inspired visions of man’s greatness, was, sadly, becoming a mere trade. Yet it was increasingly clear to me that the extraordinary dynamism of our Western culture was very much in need of a correspondingly dynamic vision lest it fly off the rails. To my complete surprise that vision came from ancient India.

In India I discovered the remarkable Swami Shyam for whom “the will” was the original Aatma of Victor’s favourite Schopenhauer. Like Victor, he described the Aatma as if it were the most natural way of seeing the world, a world teeming with diverse vitality. And to my astonishment, it was rooted in an absolute stillness which no amount of activity could ever disturb. At last I saw the connection between the peace of Galway’s fireplace and the lively discussions exploring all intelligent thoughts. And, naturally, I was delighted to discover my family tradition had such an ancient lineage!

So while it may not have been obvious to me as a boy growing up all around the world and at Little Strabla, the vibrant conversations and encouragement to explore different points of view, the easy familiarity with a rich variety of thoughts and cultures, and the clarity and rigour to which all ideas were put to the test were all symptoms of that intelligence which is at home with the Aatma, the universal intelligence. And just by remembering the stillness of the Aatma, all those marvellous qualities which I had naturally come to cherish growing up as a Starzenski will always be there to enrich your life plentifully!

For which, as Victor would say, I thank the Inscrutable!

*Bruce Starzenski II, 2005*

# ***Estates in Poland***

## ***Associated with the Starzeński Family***

### ***Strabla, Mogilnica and Pietkowo Lines***



Map shows current boundaries of Poland; dotted line approximates Poland's historic eastern boundary.

# Foreword

The photographs and documentary materials in this book were collected by Bruce Starzenski of Galway, New York, during a 60-year friendship with relatives of his grandfather, Count Maurice Starzeński. Maurice Starzeński was born in Poland in 1856, and emigrated to America as a young man. His son, Victor, was Bruce's father.

In 1938, 13-year-old Bruce and his parents visited Poland, meeting for the first time Maurice's only surviving brother, Count Marian, and the diminished but still vigorous family that surrounded him. The Polish cousins enveloped the Americans with the intense family feeling that has characterized Starzeńskis throughout the 600 years of their known history. Old World and New World Starzeńskis shared photographs, family histories and the anecdotes that are the currency of blood ties. This book is based on this rich collection of Starzeński family lore.

In 1993, Bruce Starzenski commissioned a genealogical and historical study of the entire Starzeński family, to be researched and written by Adam Zamoyski, author of several books about Poland's history. The product of that study was *The Noble House of Starzeński*, published in 1997 by Azimuth Editions, London. *Noble House* discusses every member of the family about whom information could be found, with an extensive genealogical tree, historical background, descriptions of estates and anecdotes about Starzeńskis who were prominent, industrious or eccentric.

This book, *Images of the House of Starzeński*, supplements the information in *Noble House*, emphasizing the line of Starzeńskis descended from the Starosta of Bransk, Count Maciej Maurycy Starzeński. It displays family photographs and draws narrative from letters, personal interviews and an earlier history, the *Złota Księga Szlachty Polskiej (Golden Book of Polish Gentry)* published in 1885 by Teodor Zychliński. Portions of this history relating to the Starzeńskis are reproduced at the end of this volume.

The story of the Starzeńskis is more than just an account of one family's personalities and events. Like wealthy and prominent noble families across Poland, the Starzeńskis struggled with the transition from feudal loyalties to modern political dynamics. They cherished home and land, yet were drawn to action in broader arenas, seeking political or economic advantage or opposing Poland's powerful neighbors. And in the end, insurgencies and wars cost them both wealth and families. Today, only a small number of people bear the Starzeński name, some in Poland and the rest living in other European countries, North and South America and Asia.

Mary Kadlecsek  
May, 2005

### *About Images of the House of Starzeński*

This book presents photographs and other images relating to the Strabla and Mogilnica lines of the Starzeński family. The section title pages name family members shown in at least one illustration, but do not present complete genealogy. For complete genealogy, historical settings and detailed information about individual Starzeńskis, readers should consult *The Noble House of Starzeński*.

Captions in this book cite the reference numbers assigned to twenty generations of Starzeńskis in the *Noble House* family tree.

A graphic showing the complete Starzeński genealogical tree is inserted inside the covers of *Images*. The tree was prepared by Harriet Ellis of Ayrshire, Scotland, based on a tree painted by Halina Starzeńska in 1938. The arms ranged across the bottom belong to the families of women who married into the Starzeński family.

This book adopts Polish spellings for names of Starzeńskis in Poland, but local spellings for Starzeńskis who moved to other countries and for their descendants.

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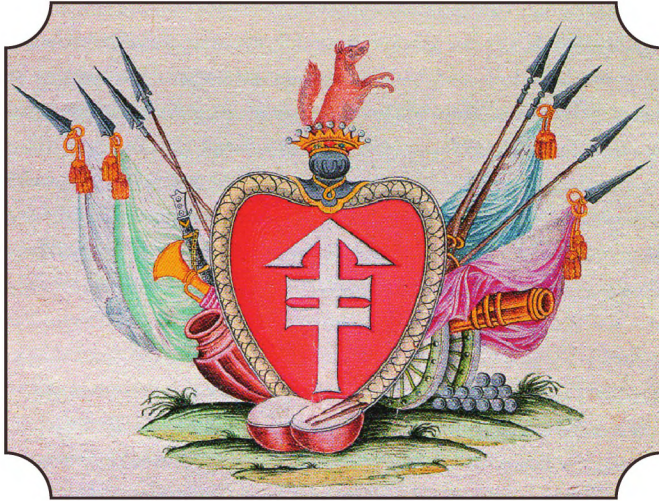


*Four Counts Starzeński in 1938, photographed at Marian's estate of Ruda, Poland: from left, Aleksander, or Oleś (Sucha, Poland); Marian (Ruda); Bruce (USA); Victor (USA).*



# The House of Starzeński

## The Early Generations



*Lis Arms of the Family Starzeński*

During the Middle Ages, a clan lived in central Poland, bearing arms known as *Lis*, and associated with towns founded as early as the thirteenth century in the Kraków region. They first appear in written records in the late fourteenth century as landowners near the village of Starzenice in Wieluń, hav-

ing apparently dispersed to escape the devastating Tatar raids.

Continuing the *Lis* clan's tradition of large, tightly-knit and influential families, they adopted the name of Starzeński. For nearly three centuries they were content to husband land and to hold local political and administrative positions. Writing in the late nineteenth century, Teodor Żychliński referred to them as "the oldest family in Wieluń," and one of the earliest members of the *szlachta*, or nobility, of Poland.

In the wars and political turmoil of the early eighteenth century, the Starzeńskis lost or sold Starzenice and most of the other estates acquired over more than three hundred years. Then Krzysztof Henryk Starzeński of the eleventh generation (died 1737) produced a vigorous brood of seven sons who set about rebuilding the family's fortunes and burnishing its name.

Krzysztof's eldest son, Józef, inherited the consolidated interests of his brothers and sisters in the principal family estate of Iłowiec, located near Poznań. During a long life, he kept the estate whole, gained the respect of his peers and was named by the king to national office.



*Józef  
Starzeński,  
Castellan of  
Gniezno,  
son of  
Krzysztof  
Starzeński.  
Died 1785.  
[Generation 12]*



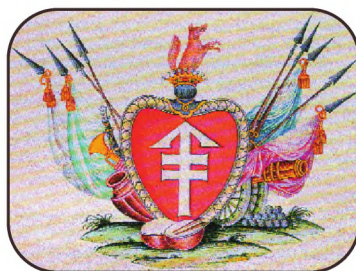
*Eufemia Glinka,  
first wife of Józef and  
mother of eight of his children.*

*J*ózef Starzeński brought the family for the first time into the national life of Poland. He was several times elected to represent the local gentry in the Sejm, the Polish national assembly of nobles. He represented the Polish crown in a series of posts, culminating in appointment as Castellan (the modern equivalent would be king's lieutenant) of Gniezno, near Poznań. Augustus III, Saxon King of Poland, honored him with the Commonwealth's highest decoration, Knight of the White Eagle.

Throughout Józef's lifetime, many of his eighteen children lived at Iłowiec with their families.

Although supporting some fifty dependents, Józef managed to remain financially solvent and well-respected. His line of known direct descendants died out by the mid-1900s, though Zamoyski believes that the line may still be found in Poland.

Though they did not inherit property, several of Józef's brothers distinguished themselves, achieving eminent positions in church or state. Piotr (1722-1797), and Maciej Maurycy (1717-1787) were created Counts by the Austrian Crown. Maciej Maurycy founded a line of the Starzeński family that endures today in Poland and elsewhere. Most of the images and information in this book deal with Maciej Maurycy Starzeński and the Strabla and Mogilnica lines of his descendants.



*Family of  
Maciej Maurycy Starzeński*

*Starosta of Bransk (Generation 12)*

*Count Michał Hieronim Starzeński*

*Inheritor of Strabla (Generation 13)*

*Count Stanisław Ludwik Starzeński*

*Inheritor of Mogilnica (Generation 13)*

*[Descendants only shown]*

*Count Maciej Maurycy Starzeński*  
*Starosta of Bransk*  
*1717 to 1787*



*Aniela Biberstein  
Trembińska (1739-  
1801), wife of Maciej  
Maurycy. Married 1754.*

*Count Maciej Maurycy  
Starzeński.*

*Reproduction of oil portrait,  
1794. [Generation 12]*



*M*aciej Maurycy was Krzysztof Starzeński's fourth son. He became a protégé of Jan Klemens Branicki, a wealthy magnate who was Grand Hetman (commander-in-chief) of the Polish Crown. Branicki sponsored the landless young man to several minor offices, then ceded to him the title of Starosta of Bransk. (Starosta was the Polish counterpart to the western European Sheriff, a royal officer and magistrate.) In an

arrangement common at the time, Branicki continued to receive the income from the starosty, while Starzeński held the title and administered the lands.

Aniela Biberstein Trembińska was an heiress not yet 15 years of age when she married Maciej Maurycy in 1754. The couple lived during their early years in the

splendid Branicki Palace in Białystok, where the charming and lively Aniela became a court favorite, and their first son was born.

In the early 1760s, the family took up residence at Strabla near Bielsk on the River Narew south of Białystok in Podlasie (eastern Poland). Maciej and Aniela had four sons, Michał Hieronim, Stanisław Ludwik, Franciszek Ksawery and Adam.

Though he did not receive the revenues of the starosty, Maciej was paid a considerable salary, which he invested in large expanses of the cheap land left untenanted when the Tatars withdrew from eastern Poland. Like many other noble Poles, he made his fortune in this area, which was largely uncultivated and thinly populated.

The purchase of the Strabla estate in the 1750s was Maciej's first major step in an intensive program of land accrual — during his lifetime he may have owned as much as 45,000 hectares, or about 110,000 acres, with numerous towns, villages and estates.

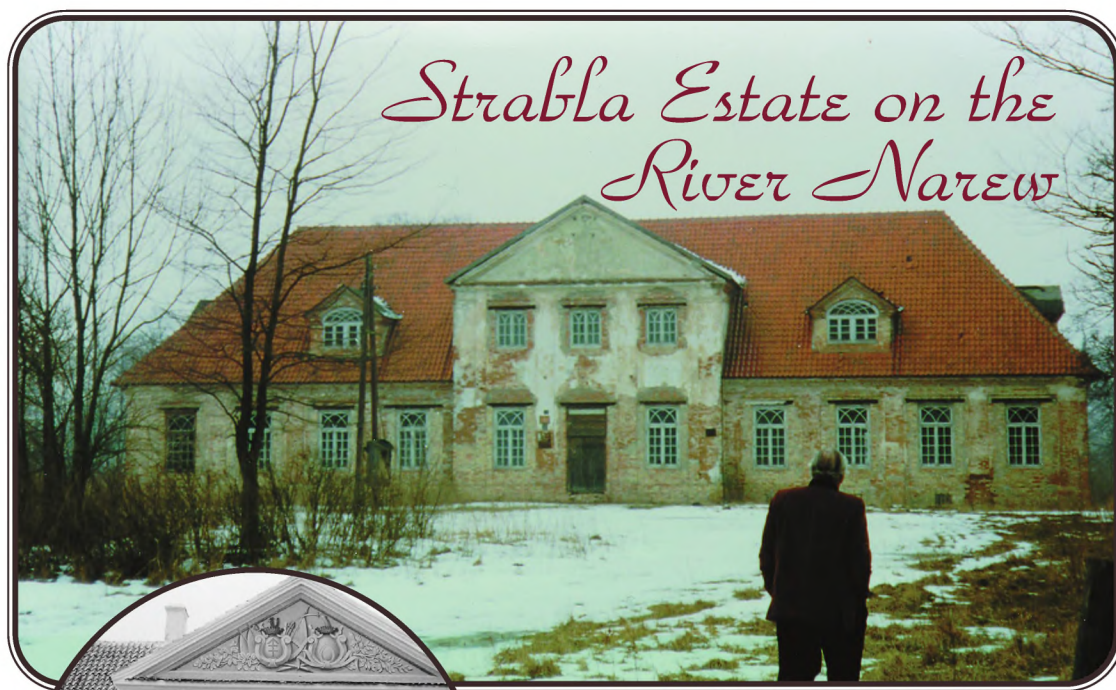
Impatient and autocratic, with a reputation as a schemer, Maciej appears to have made a fair number of enemies during his career with Branicki. Though his patron failed in an effort to win the Polish crown, Maciej continued to engage in political intrigue. When the 1772 partition of Poland placed Strabla under Russian rule, his record in earlier military actions against the Russian Empire made it prudent for Maciej to move to his estates in Austrian controlled Galicia (south-eastern Poland), leaving Strabla to be managed by his eldest son, Michał.



*Strabla, view from Narew River, with the manor house at the center and the granary at right (1905).*

On 1 December 1780, the Austrian Crown recognized Maciej Maurycy Starzeński's importance among the Polish landed gentry with the hereditary title of Count. The hereditary right was confirmed in Prussia in 1799, by the Kingdom of Poland in 1819 and by Imperial Russia in 1849; his direct male descendants have the right to use the title.

When Count Maciej died in 1787, he left behind a well-to-do landed family with estates in both the Austrian and Russian areas of partitioned Poland. Strabla passed to Michał, continuing its century of prominence as the principal estate of a wealthy and respected line of Starzeńskis.



## *Strabla Estate on the River Narew*



*Strabla manor house in 1993, photographed by Louise Starzeńska, with Bruce Starzeński in the foreground.*

*(left) Strabla manor house in 1905, before the wars of the twentieth century defaced it. In the pediment are the Lis arms of Starzeński and the arms of Bańworowski, family of Bruce Starzeński's great-great-grandmother.*

Strabla remained in the Starzeński family for more than a century after its purchase by Count Maciej Maurycy. He renovated the manor house and expanded the agricultural buildings. He was followed as owner by his son, Count Michał, and his grandson, Count Maciej Ignacy.

After Maciej Ignacy's son and successor, Wiktor Waław, participated in the unsuccessful 1862 rebellion of Poles against Russian dominance, the Imperial Russian government confiscated Strabla and gave the estate to another owner. In 1885, Żychliński wrote that it was a station on the Brzesc-Gajew railway line. Still, he said, it had fine collections, an interesting library of considerable size, a gallery of family portraits and many family relics.

In 1893, Wiktor Waław's eldest son, Count Andrzej Wiktor, bought back Strabla (with permission of the Russian government). The estate remained in the family until 1937. Zamoyski says that in 1939, despite looting, temporary ownership by another family and final loss by the Starzeńskis, the house was still full of furniture, pictures and effects. These, of course, did not survive wartime occupation and subsequent ownership by the Polish Communist government. Today, the manor house at Strabla stands empty, the interior gutted.



*Old granary built in 1792 by Michał Starzeński. It served the Strabla agricultural estate of some 7,000 hectares. (1905 photo).*



*Parish church at Strabla, photographed in 1993. After the facade of the original seventeenth century church collapsed in 1766, Count Maciej Maurycy financed its rebuilding and added the cupola and tower clock.*

*Michał Hieronim Starzeński in the uniform of the Rotmistrz Cavaliers of Narodow. In the late 1780s, Michał distinguished himself on a commission whose work in a few months doubled the size of Poland's army.*  
[Generation 13]



*Michał Hieronim  
Starzeński*

*Elders Son of Count  
Maciej Maurycy  
1756 to 1816*

After spending his earliest years in the splendor of the Branicki Palace, Michał grew up at Strabla. He was educated at home by his father's highly accomplished Jesuit brother Melchior, and then at the University of Leipzig. When Poland was first partitioned among Russia, Austria and Prussia (1772), Michał opted to remain at Strabla, a citizen of Russian Poland. His father moved to his Galician estates and became an Austrian subject.

Michał was an enlightened landlord whose estates prospered. He and his wife, Anna Barbara Kuczyńska, heiress of several estates in Podlasie, had four children: Józef, Anna, Marya and Maciej Ignacy.

In the late 1780s, Michał Starzeński was a leader in a commission charged with quickly augmenting Poland's inadequate army, but after the new army was overwhelmed by the Russians and Poland was further partitioned in 1793, he resigned the national scene, a wealthy man holding vast lands in Podlasie and Galicia.

Another unsuccessful insurrection ended with the elimination of Poland as a separate nation in 1795. Like his father, Michał, who had fought in this uprising somewhat against his better judgment, moved to Austrian-controlled Galicia. He placed Strabla in the hands of his younger son, Maciej Ignacy (father of Wiktor Waclaw and great-great-grandfather of Bruce Starzenski).

*The story of the elder son, Count Józef, and his descendants of the Pietkowo Line is found on page 16. The story of the Strabla line of Starzeńskis continues with the story of Count Maciej Ignacy, beginning on page 25.*



# *Mogilnica Starzeńskis*

## *Descendants of Stanisław Ludwik*

### *Second Son of Count Maciej Maurycy Starzeński*



*Count Leopold Ludwik Starzeński (1787-1860), Chamberlain of King August Poniatowski, and the son of Count Stanisław Ludwik.*

*Photo of a painting by Jean Baptiste Lampi. [Generation 14]*

The younger son of Count Maciej Maurycy was Stanisław Ludwik (1761-1812), who founded the Mogilnica Line of Starzeńskis. This branch of the family had lands in both Galicia to the south and Podlasie, the province east of Warsaw.

Count Stanisław Ludwik and his wife, Countess Pelagia Bąkowska, had two sons. The elder, Leonard, fought with Prince Józef Poniatowski against the Austrians and died a hero in 1809 at the age of 22.

Leopold Ludwik, the younger son, fought as a captain in the Polish army during the insurrection of 1830-31. He inherited Mogilnica and took his seat among the magnates in the Galician Estates, the first in a branch of the Starzeński family with a decided artistic bent and a habit of rescuing their Podlasie cousins from the consequences of their political activities.

Count Leopold Ludwik Starzeński was a founding member of the Galician

Agricultural Association and promoted peasant emancipation. He was an active member of the Galician Estates Assembly, as well as co-founder of the Lwów Musical Association.

He married Maryanna Czosnowska, daughter of a wealthy and well-connected Galician family. They had two children, Malwina and Józef. Eight years after Maryanna's death, Count Leopold Ludwik remarried. His second marriage, to Marya Karolina Turkuł, was without issue.



*Ernestyna Kicka (1820-1884), second wife of Count Józef Starzeński of the Mogilnica Line.*

*This portrait was done in 1880 by A. Grabożeski.*

Count Leopold Ludwik's son Count Józef (1810-1865) distinguished himself in battle. He was married twice, first to Aniela Gromnicka, who died young after bearing one son, Leopold Eugeniusz. Józef's second wife, Ernestyna Kicka, bore him a second son, Edmund Józef, and outlived him by nearly twenty years. After his death, she settled in Lwów, where she became a well-known figure.

Ernestyna was president of the Lwów Benevolent Society, and translated and wrote comedies and novels (none of which survived). With age, she became eccentric, ordering her household around a pet described by a contemporary as "a disgusting, overfed, pig-like, hairless little Mexican dog" named Prinz. A villa she built at Delatyn, where she believed the mountain air cured the dog of an illness, made the village a fashionable health resort.

Count Leopold Eugeniusz, son of Count Józef and his first wife, was a talented writer whose primary interest in life appears to have been hunting. At the age of nineteen, he married the wealthy and beautiful Leontyna Baworowska.

The couple had two sons, but after that, Leopold (who was widely known as Count Lopek) focused his attention and his time increasingly on sport. In the intervals between hunting parties at the lodges of aristocratic friends, he amused himself by writing popular plays with patriotic story lines, as well as occasional poetry, often with hunting as a theme.



*Count Leopold Eugeniusz Starzeński, 'Count Lopek' (1835-1904) [Generation 16]*



*Count Leopold Leon Starzeński (1898-1940) in the uniform of the army of General Haller, wearing mourning for his father and stepmother after their murder by Ukrainians in 1919. [Generation 18]*

Count Lopek's sons, Henryk and Leonard, were both estimable men. Count Henryk (1856-1922) became a deputy to the Reichstag in Vienna, and Count Leonard (1857-1919) was a diplomat. Leonard married first the Romanian princess Geneviève Bibesco; their son was Leopold Leon. After the death of the princess, who was somewhat larger-than-life (physically as well as in personality), Leonard married his quieter cousin, Countess Zofia, daughter of Wiktor Waclaw of Strabla. Leonard and Zofia were murdered in 1919 during the civil wars that established Bolshevik power in Ukraine.

Leonard's son, Leopold Leon, married Countess Marya Tyszkiewicz. Their son, Aleksander

(Sandy), was born in 1921. Leopold Leon fought in World War I with General Haller's army. He and his wife were killed by the Soviets in Kiev in 1940.

Count Edmund Józef, son of Count Józef and Ernestyna Kicka, was born in 1844. He was married twice, first to Baroness Paulina Heydel, who bore him two sons, Józef Ernest and Adam Edward. The Baroness, described as beautiful and spirited, died of appendicitis at the age of 32. Some five years after her death, Edmund married for the second time, to Bronisława Sidorowicz, whom a contemporary characterized as "the no longer young and certainly not beautiful daughter of a chemist from Kolomyja." With Bronisława, Edmund had a third son, Bronisław.



*Baroness Paulina Heydel (married 1868, died 1876), first wife of Count Edmund Józef Starzeński.*

Count Edmund Józef's second son, Count Adam, accumulated a library of prints dealing with Polish subjects. He was also a botanist and a pioneer conservationist who helped create the first nature and game preserve in Poland. He settled at Kościelec (west of Kraków), an estate from the dowry of his wife, Countess Marya Wodzicka. Later, he purchased the nearby estate of Płaza, where his elder son Antoni lived and administered both estates. (Antoni sheltered Natalia and Krycia Eydziatowicz in Kraków after the fall of Warsaw in 1944.)



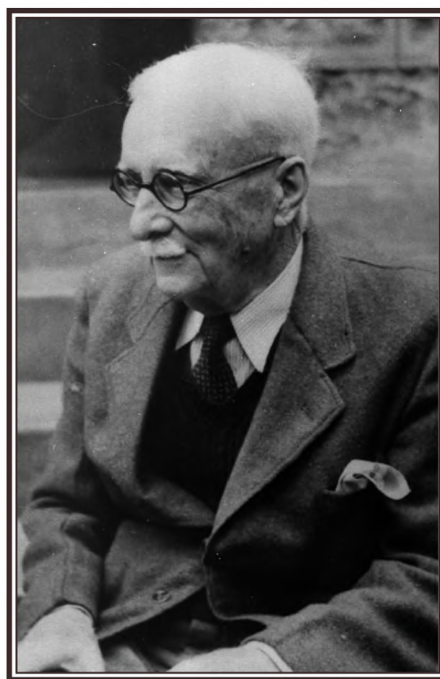
*Countess Marya Wodzicka (1879-1963), wife of Count Adam Starzeński.*

were released from the Soviet Union and evacuated with the Polish army of General Anders. They made their way to Kenya, where Adam found a job in the botanical gardens and accumulated another large collection, this time of native Kenyan fauna.

Adam died in Nairobi in 1956. After his death, Marya lived in Buenos Aires with her younger son, Paweł. She died in 1963.

Adam and Marya were in their sixties when World War II brought Soviet occupiers to eastern Poland. Early in 1940, the Soviets culled the Polish intelligentsia and aristocracy. Young and elderly Starzeńskis were among more than a million Polish citizens loaded into boxcars and shipped to the far north and east of the Soviet Union, where they were to experience exile, starvation and forced labor.

When the Russians came for Adam, Marya insisted that if her husband was to be taken, she must go with him. Adam and his wife were sent, not to the brutal forced labor camps, but to exile in a camp in Semipalatinsk. In 1942, they



*Count Adam Edward Starzeński (1872-1956). [Generation 17]*



*Countess Teresa Starzeńska, in 1999.  
[Generation 19]*

Today, descendants of the Mogilnica Line bearing the name Starzeński still live in Europe. They are the children of Count Antoni and his wife, Krystina Mankowska: Teresa Starzeńska (born 1924), Marya Starzeńska (born 1926) and Maciej Starzeński (born 1930), the last male representative of this line.

Teresa Starzeńska was born in 1924 at Kościelec, and moved at an early age to Plaza. She was educated at home, where she learned French and German. From the ages of 13 to 15 she was a student at the Convent of Sacré Coeur (when Teresa was 15, the Nazi invasion closed the schools of Poland). She later earned a secondary school certificate, and worked at several jobs, including secretary, florist, waitress and in manufacturing.

In 1948, Teresa married Count Przemysław Kwilecki and moved to Poznań, where she lives today.

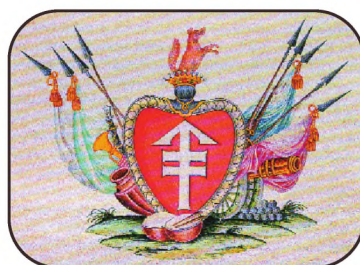
Przemysław fought in France and England during World War II, returning to Poznań in 1947. They have two daughters, Bożena and Helena, and three grandsons. Przemysław died in 1992.

Count Adam's younger son, Paweł, became a diplomat. In the years just before World War II, Paweł worked as secretary to Józef Beck, foreign minister of Poland and a disciple of Marshal Piłsudski. Paweł made his way to London after the Nazi invasion, joined the Polish army and took part in numerous battles, including the invasion of Normandy. He later emigrated to Argentina, where he died in 1971.



*The manor house at Plaza.*





*Family of  
Michał Hieronim Starzeński*

*(Generation 13)*

*Count Józef Starzeński*

*Inheritor of Podlasie Estates (Generation 14)*

*Count Maciej Ignacy Starzeński*

*Inheritor of Strabla (Generation 14)*

*Pietkowo Starzeńskis  
Descendants of Count Józef  
Elder Son of Count Michał Hieronim*

*Count Michał's elder son, Józef, inherited all the Starzeński estates in Podlasie except Strabla.*

Count Józef (1780 to 1831) had the misfortune to be politically active during one of the times of unrest in Russian Poland – in 1830, as a deputy to the Sejm of the Russian Kingdom of Poland, he participated in a vote against Russian supremacy that led to the so-called November insurrection.

After the revolt was put down, Józef was among the many Poles imprisoned by the Imperial Russian government. He died in captivity late in 1831. His wife, Karolina, also seized by the Russians, was released from prison in 1834 and died two years later, according to Zamoyski (Żychliński says she died in 1863, a prisoner in a convent in Grodno). Józef and Karolina had four children: Kazimierz, Konstanty Michał, Henryk and Zofia.

*Monument honoring Count Józef Starzeński, son of Count Michał Hieronim, and his second wife, Karolina Benkin (married 1814). The monument, which displays the Lis arms, stands in the churchyard at Kuczyn, family home of Józef's mother. [Generation 14]*





*Kazimierz Władysław Starzeński*  
*Eldest Son of Count Józef*  
*1816 to 1899*



*Count Kazimierz Władysław Starzeński, eldest son of Count Józef and Karolina Benkin. Lithograph by Józef Kriehuber, 1847 [Generation 15]*



*Countess Zofia Ożarowska, 1825-1898, wife of Count Kazimierz.*

For many years the senior member of the Starzeński family, Count Kazimierz played an honorable role in local and national Polish affairs. He was married in 1842 to Countess Zofia Ożarowska, daughter of an influential Podlasie family. Zofia was known for her goodness.

Kazimierz and Zofia had two daughters. The elder, Marya, never married; she died in middle age. Anna Gabriela married Józef Komar of Lithuania and was the mother of two daughters.

Kazimierz' principal estate was Pietkowo, located in Podlasie. He held numerous local posts, including counselor of the directors of the Land Credit Association, a kind of landowners' bank that helped fund agricultural modernization.

In Russian Poland, involvement in the Land Credit Association was as much a political as an agricultural activity, because such local associations brought together Poland's landed gentry at a time when Russian restrictions prevented them from otherwise associating freely. Kazimierz was active in agricultural reform, being in 1860 among the first landowners to emancipate the peasants on his estates.

**J**hough active in Polish affairs, Kazimierz was loyal to the Tsar and received recognition from the Imperial government. He was named Imperial Chamberlain and received several honors, including Great Steward of the Russian Court. In 1849 (Old Style) the Tsar confirmed Kazimierz' right to the title of Count.



*(Above)*  
*Countess Marya Starzeńska (died 1897), daughter of Kazimierz and Zofia. [Generation 16]*



*Count Kazimierz Władysław Starzeński, inheritor of Pietkowo, photographed in the 1890s with his wife, Countess Zofia Ożarowska.*



*Countess Anna Gabryela Starzeńska, daughter of Kazimierz and Zofia and wife of Józef Komar, with her daughters Lila and Zosia Komar.*

*Gabryela Starzeńska of Pietkowo*  
*Daughter of Count Kazimierz*  
*1845 to 1930*



*Countess Anna Gabryela Starzeńska. Her husband, Józef Komar, was squire of two estates and prominent in local affairs, and served as a Counselor of State of Imperial Russia.*  
*[Generation 16]*



*These two photos show Pietkowo, probably as it looked around 1900.*

*I*nitially acquired by Kazimierz' grandfather Michał Starzeński, Pietkowo passed to Kazimierz' daughter, Gabryela. With her husband, Józef Komar, she developed a model village on the estate, including craft workshops for the peasants. Gabryela held the Pietkowo estate until her death in 1930. Pietkowo was located near Strabla in Podlasie.

*Konstanty Michał Starzeński*  
*Second Son of Count Józef*  
*1818 to 1884*



Count Konstanty Michał and his wife, Countess Elżbieta Ożarowska, had five children: Adam, Józef, Kazimierz, Zofia and Marya Ludwika. During the 1860s, they turned their estate of Nowodwory into a complex of elegant buildings described as a center of social and civic life at its best.

*Count Konstanty Michał, purchaser of Nowodwory and heir of Kuczyn and other estates in Podlasie. [Generation 15]*

Nowodwory remained in the Starzeński family until 1939, though Andrzej Starzeński said that at one point Konstanty's son-in-law lost the estate at cards, and it was bought back only after World War I.

*Nowodwory, which Count Konstanty Michał purchased about 1854. He built its impressive residential complex during the 1860s and 1870s, with the main house dating from about 1875.*



*Countess Elżbieta Ożarowska, wife of Konstanty Michał, shown in the 1850s with their son, Józef, (generation 16) who died in 1881. She was the sister of Kazimierz' wife, Zofia, but did not share Zofia's reputation for good temper.*

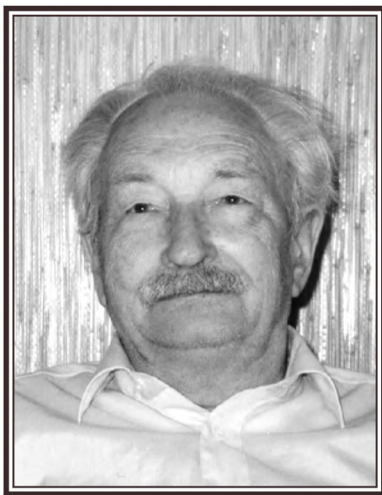
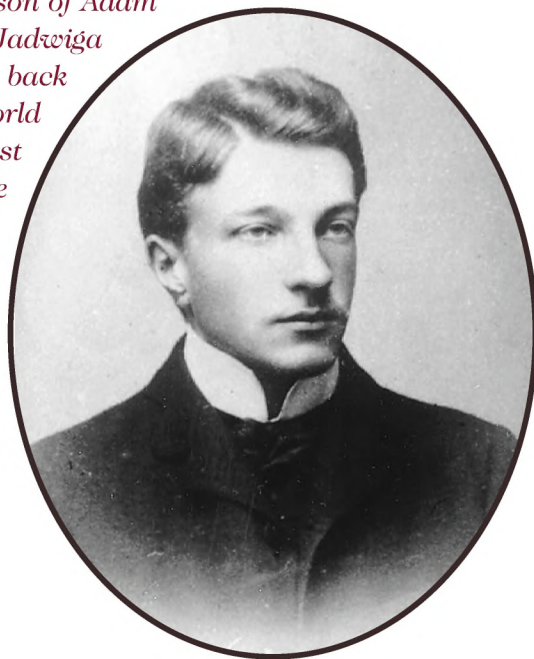


## *Descendants of Count Konstanty Michał Starzeński*

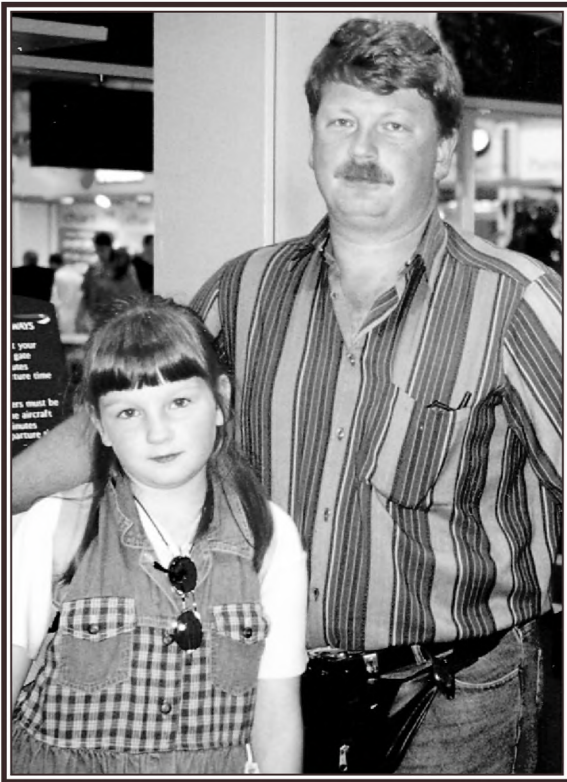


*Count Adam Starzeński, (1846-1917) eldest son of Michał and Elżbieta, who married Jadwiga Ronikier (1883) and, after her death, Emilia Trebicka (1892). [Generation 16]*

*Count Michał Henryk Starzeński (1884-1946) of Klukowo, son of Adam and his first wife, Jadwiga Ronikier. He bought back Nowodwory after World War I, but it was lost again in 1939. At the time of Michał's death, he was a schoolteacher in rural Kurpie, Poland. He and his wife, Eugenia Brońska, had a son, Jan Kazimierz. [Generation 17]*



*Count Jan Kazimierz Starzeński, (born 1923), son of Count Michał Henryk, is a geologist. Jan Kazimierz and his wife, Jolanta Ledóchowska, have four children: Maria, Magdalena, Maciej and Marek. Photographed 1998 in Warsaw. [Generation 18]*



*Marek Starzeński, (born 1966), son of Count Jan Kazimierz, with his daughter Aleksandra (born 1991). Photographed 1999 in London. [Generations 19 and 20]*

*Descendants of Count  
Konstanty Michał  
Starzeński*



*Maciej Starzeński (born 1963), son of Count Jan Kazimierz. Photographed 1998 in Warsaw. [Generation 19]*



*Isabella Starzeńska, younger daughter of Count Marek [Generation 20]*

## *Henryk Jędrzej Starzeński*

*Youngest Son of Count Józef  
1821 to 1896*

*E*ven more agriculturally progressive than his brothers, Count Henryk of Klukowo was an officer of the Land Credit Society. He was one of the first landowners to implement the society's proposal to emancipate peasants.

Count Henryk's wife, Julia Trawna, was a prima ballerina of the Warsaw opera. They had no children, and Klukowo was left to Henryk's grand nephew, Count Michał Henryk.



*Count Henryk Jędrzej Starzeński, youngest  
son of Count Józef and Karolina Benkin,  
inheritor of Klukowo  
[Generation 15]*

*Julia Trawna, wife of Count Henryk  
Starzeński*

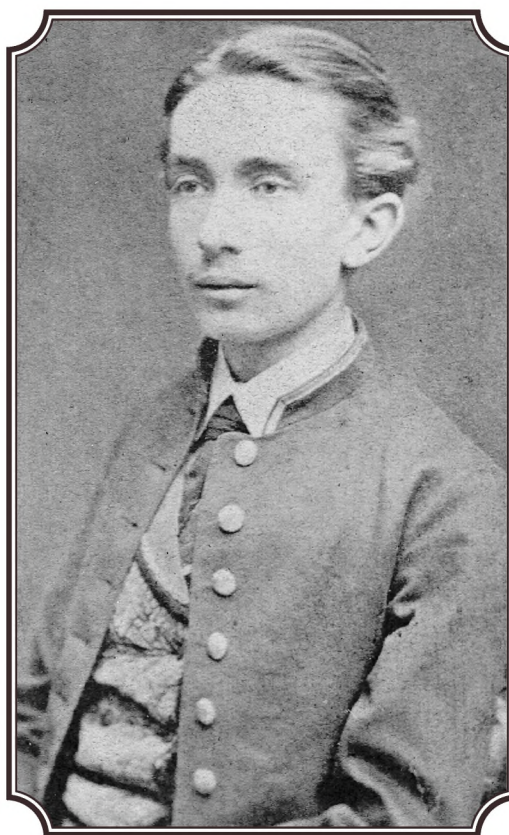
## *Zofia Starzeńska*

*Daughter of Count Józef  
1828 to 1867*



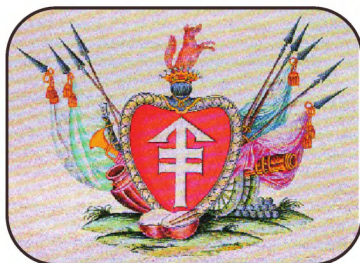
*Countess Zofia Starzeńska, daughter  
of Count Józef and Karolina Benkin.  
[Generation 15]*

*T*here is not much information about Zofia Starzeńska, who married Count Adam Ronikier. The Starzeńskis maintained a strong connection with the Ronikier family. Zofia's daughter, Józefina Ronikier, corresponded with Maurice and Victor Starzenski.



*Adam Ronikier (died 1871), husband  
of Zofia Starzeńska*





*Family of  
Maciej Ignacy Starzeński  
Generation 14*

*Count Adolf Starzeński (Generation 15)*

*Countess Adelaide Starzeńska (Generation 15)*

*Count Wiktor Wacław Starzeński (Generation 15)*

*Inheritor of Strabla*

*Maciej Ignacy Starzeński*  
*Younger Son of Count Michał Hieronim*  
*1789 to 1845*

Count Maciej Ignacy was the second son of Count Michał Hieronim and Anna Barbara Kuczyńska. He inherited Strabla from his father. Kuczyn and several estates in Galicia came to him from his mother.



*Count Maciej Ignacy Starzeński,  
son of Count Michał Hieronim.*

*Portrait by Józef Pitchman; in 1975, it  
was in the Ukrainian Gallery of  
Paintings, Lwów [Generation 14]*

*Countess Marya Baworowska, wife  
of Maciej Ignacy, married 1812.  
Her family's arms were  
displayed proudly in the pediment  
at Strabla.*



## *Family of Count Maciej Ignacy Starzeński*

Count Maciej Ignacy and his wife, Countess Marya Baworowska, had four children. Their eldest son, Adolf, born about 1812, was a fine soldier who died in 1837 under unexplained circumstances, possibly a duel. The elder daughter, Adelajda, married Count Władysław Stadnicki.

The younger daughter, Gabriela, married Count Cesary Męciński, Squire of Dukla; she died in 1849 at the age of 28, leaving an infant son, Adam Cesary. The youngest of the four was the extraordinary Wiktor Waclaw, who inherited Strabla in 1845, before he reached his twentieth year.



*(top) Count Adolf Starzeński (1812-1837), in Polish artillery uniform. Portrait etched on glass goblet [Generation 15]*

*(center) Count Wiktor Waclaw Starzeński (1826-1882), inheritor of Strabla. [Generation 15]*

*(below) Countess Adelajda Starzeńska (1818-1891), wife of Count Władysław Stadnicki of Zmięrod. [Generation 15]*

*Wiktor Waclaw Starzeński*  
*Second Son of Count Maciej Ignacy*  
*1826 to 1882*

Count Wiktor Waclaw Starzeński was born at Strabla on 26 September 1826. He probably spent most of his childhood in Galicia; the family moved back to Strabla in the late 1830s. He studied at the Jesuit college in Fribourg, Switzerland and at the Royal Bavarian University in Munich.

Wiktor was already the owner of Strabla in 1847, when he entered the Russian Imperial army. Though he had made numerous influential friends, he was assigned within a few years to the Caucasus, apparently as a punishment for political activities. He fought with distinction in the wars there, winning the St. George Cross, the Empire's highest military decoration.

By 1853 Wiktor Waclaw was in Vienna, where he married Maria Aurora de Bezzi, the twenty-year-old daughter of a former Austrian Consul in Barcelona. In 22 years of marriage, they had eight children. Their first son, Andrzej Wiktor Marian, was born in Vienna in 1854. They returned to Strabla, where their second son, Maciej Mauryey Marian, was born in 1855.

Wiktor Waclaw energetically managed his own lands, which included Strabla and several small estates, and also farmed extensive leased lands in Lithuania. He was a progressive, though not a revolutionary, in a time when the need for agricultural reform was becoming evident and the nobility were moving toward modernizing their estates and emancipating peasants to form a free labor force. He became a public figure when his fellow landowners elected him Marshal of the Nobility of Grodno in Lithuania, a post of considerable influence and respect but little real power. He is credited with a significant contribution to the resolution that freed the serfs in Grodno.



*Count  
Wiktor Waclaw  
Starzeński, caricatured  
around 1861, before his  
political imprisonment and  
the confiscation of Strabla.  
[Generation 15]*

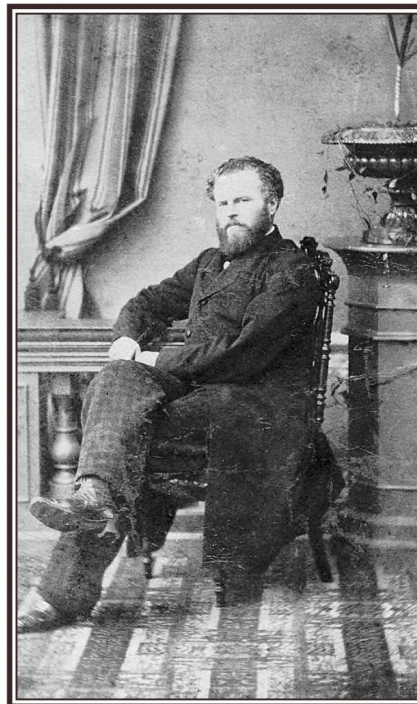
In his two years as Marshal, Wiktor Waclaw sought to reconcile the Russian Empire's demands for order and submission with a strong Polish need for greater autonomy. But in 1862 the ferment of agricultural change and burgeoning nationalism erupted into yet another uprising in Russian areas of Poland. In early spring of 1863, Wiktor and the other Lithuanian Marshals resigned their posts in frustration, accusing the Empire of inciting the peasants against the landowners. Two months later, the Russians placed him under arrest.

During a year in prison and subsequent exile in Voronezh, south of Moscow, influential friends saw to it that Wiktor was treated more gently than most political prisoners, but they could not prevent the confiscation of his lands.

He was released from exile by the end of 1868, at 41 years of age.

With his family, he took up residence at Dukla, the estate of Count Cezary Męciński, widower of Wiktor's sister Gabryela. Romelia Starzeńska said that Wiktor restored a wing of the house for his family's use.

*Funeral portrait of Maria Aurora de Bezzi (1833-1875), wife of Count Wiktor Waclaw Starzeński. She bore him eight children, and accompanied him into political exile in Russia.*



*Wiktor Starzeński, in early middle age*



Deprived of the life of a landowner, Wiktor turned his considerable energies to entrepreneurial projects. According to Romelia Starzeńska, Wiktor formed an oil company on the grounds between Dukla and the former Hungarian frontier, at Ropianka, in partnership with his brother-in-law Cezary Męciński, his cousin Sygmunt Drohojowski, and Prince Drucki-Lubecki.

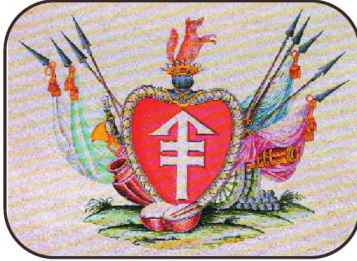
When Cezary Męciński died, the other partners left the business. Unable to maintain the company by himself, Wiktor contemplated selling the oilfields to a French company. However, in 1882, before the transaction was complete, Wiktor drowned in a steamship accident in St. Petersburg.



*Wiktor Waclaw  
Starzeński in old age*

After Count Wiktor's death, according to Romelia, his eldest son Andrzej Wiktor renounced the rights to the oil fields on behalf of all Wiktor Waclaw's children. This enabled his cousin, Adam Męciński, to obtain the oil fields for a very small investment. Rather than invest money, Adam Męciński pledged to adopt Wiktor Waclaw's youngest son, Aleksander, educate him and bequeath to him the estate of Dukla. Męciński carried out his pledge to educate the boy, but around 1920, he disinherited Aleksander, leaving Dukla to a young son of the Tarnowski family. (Detailed account in the story of Romelia Starzeńska)

Wiktor Waclaw saw to it that his sons did not rely on inherited property, but were educated for professions — two went to mining engineering schools, two studied law to the level of doctorates and one became a civil servant.



# *Family of Wiktor Waclaw Starzeński*

*Count Andrzej Wiktor Starzeński*

*Count Maurycy Marian Starzeński*

*Count Włodzimierz Starzeński*

*Count Marian Starzeński*

*Countess Zofia Starzeńska*

*Countess Marya Gabryela Starzeńska*

*Count Adam Starzeński*

*Count Aleksander Starzeński*

## *Family of Count Wiktor Waclaw Starzeński*



*Count Wiktor Waclaw Starzeński and six of his eight children, photographed in the late 1870s, a few years before his death.*

*From left: Countess Zofia Ludwika (born 1866), Count Aleksander Tadeusz (born 1874), Count Wiktor Waclaw, Count Marian Kazimierz (born 1865), Count Maciej Maurycy Marian (born 1855, emigrated to US in 1882), Count Adam Grzegorz (born 1872), Countess Marya Gabryela (born 1868)*

*Not shown: Count Andrzej Wiktor Marian (born 1854), Count Włodzimierz Marian (born 1856)*



From the time of Count Wiktor Waclaw's death until the First World War engulfed Europe, the Starzeńskis in Poland lived the comfortable lives of nobility, while the emigrant Maurice struggled with prairie farming, raised his son to be a successful engineer and businessman and died before reaching his fifty-fifth year.



*Three sons of Count Wiktor Waclaw Starzeński, probably photographed about 1920. From left, Marian, Aleksander and the eldest, Andrzej Wiktor. [Generation 16]*

At the start of World War I, three sons of Wiktor Waclaw and nine grandchildren lived in Poland. By the time that war and the subsequent civil wars were over and Poland had been restored as a republic, the family had lost another son (Andrzej Wiktor) and a grandson (Andrzej Wiktor's eldest son, Maciej Michał).

During the 1920s, Adam Grzegorz, second-youngest of Wiktor Waclaw's children, and another grandson, Feliks, died.

Only one of Wiktor Waclaw's sons, Marian, lived to see the Nazi/Soviet invasion of 1939, and to experience the horrors of World War II. The European Starzeńskis suffered grievously in that war, experiencing deprivation, imprisonment and deportation. Andrzej Wiktor's second son, August, was

among the captive Polish officers murdered by the Soviets.

Four of Wiktor Waclaw's grandsons, a granddaughter and two great-grandchildren are known to have served in the Allied armies or in the Polish resistance during World War II.

After the war, the Polish Communist regime took a toll on the surviving Starzeńskis. Andrzej Wiktor's youngest son, Andrzej, was imprisoned for six years. Others found themselves in significantly reduced circumstances. Several fled Poland.

*Andrzej Wiktor Starzeński*  
*Eldest Son of Count Wiktor Waclaw*  
*1854 to 1920*



*Count Andrzej  
Wiktor Starzeński,  
eldest son of Count Wiktor Waclaw and  
Maria Aurora de Bezzi. [Generation 16]*

*Marya Benisławska, wife of Andrzej  
Wiktor, married 1886.*



*C*ount Andrzej Wiktor and Marya Benisławska had seven children, three of whom died young. Four sons, Maciej Michał, Michał Kleofas August, Feliks Antoni and Andrzej, lived to adulthood. The family lived at Strabla, which Andrzej Wiktor had repurchased in 1893. Andrzej Wiktor died in 1920.

*A*ndrzej Wiktor's eldest son, Maciej, was killed by the Bolsheviks in 1918. The second-youngest son, Feliks, fought in the civil wars that followed World War I, receiving war wounds from which he never fully recovered. He died in 1926.

So at the last, Strabla came to Andrzej Wiktor's second son, Michał Kleofas August, and the youngest son, Andrzej. August retired from the army in 1930 with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, but apparently was not



*Count Maciej Michał Starzeński (1887-1918), eldest son of Andrzej Wiktor and Marya Beniśkawska, was a casualty of World War I. [Generation 17]*



active in running the estate, preferring to live rather expensively in Warsaw. Young Andrzej lived at Strabla with his mother, Marya, who grew eccentric as the years passed. (Her sister-in-law, Romelia Starzeńska, said that Marya drove off with a pistol early attempts of creditors to repossess Strabla.) Debts increased, and in 1937 the bank finally took possession and sold the estate.

*Count Feliks Starzeński (1897-1926), son of Andrzej Wiktor and Marya Beniśkawska, died a belated casualty of the civil wars of 1919-20. [Generation 17]*