

HISTORY OF SKAWINA



The erection of the town of Skawina was connected with the existing ford on the Skawinka River and the tollhouse. The important trade routes between Cracow, Silesia and Czech led through the town. There were two routes in the area: Wieliczka-Oświęcim and Cracow-Myślenice. Salt, which was very valuable at that time, was transported from Wieliczka through the town. A salt depot, workshops and an inn were situated next to the tollhouse. The tollhouse gathered a toll from merchants arriving in Cracow, so it played a very important role. The plans of the town made by Kazimierz Wielki were influenced by political and territorial changes during the reign of his father Władysław Łokietek. The conquest of Silesia by the Czech king brought the

border closer to Cracow, so the capital was only 21 km from South-West borders. Therefore Skawina played a major role as a town defending South-West frontiers against attacks of the Czech King and some Silesian princes. A wooden castle was built beside the tollhouse to defend Cracow from the West. It is thought that the king wanted to place here his legendary Italian mistress - Babetta. In the before-erection - times these areas were forested and their inhabitants were hunting, keeping wild forest bees and fishing. There were three settlements: Babice Nowe, Babice Stare, Pisary which owned pastures and fields, but they belonged to Benedictine Abbey in Tyniec.

In **22nd May 1364**, king Kazimierz Wielki signed the act of erection, locating the town of Skawina on the area of these three settlements. The king also built walls linking them with the castle, which was located within the walls, but not surrounded by them. It is possible that in the fourteenth century the castle was made of wood. It stood on the man-made mound by the river. The son of the first mayor: Michał Pusznik, cleric Rafał, rebuilt the wooden castle into the stone one, in the middle of fifteenth century. It had four-side bastion. The sight of the castle is shown in the illustration from the chronicles by Hartmann Schedl which date back to 1493 and a sketch of the town map made by J. Mitkowski in 1663. The castle was inhabited by the mayor and some rulers:



the king Kazimierz Wielki

- the king Władysław Warneńczyk before his expedition to Turkey in 1444.

- queen Elżbieta, the wife of Kazimierz Jagiellończyk before her marriage to the king.

- king Kazimierz Jagiellończyk and his son - Władysław Jagiellończyk on their way to Czech,

Probably the walls of Skawina and the castle were destroyed during the Swedish invasion in 1655. On 19th November 1364 the king Kazimierz Wielki passed the act considering the building of the church. The first parish-priest was king's chaplain Piotr. According to the chronicler Jan Dugosz the

parish in Skawina included: Samborek, Korabniki, Sidzina, Kulerzów, Buków and Tyniec. The town was also given a place to build the school.



Kazimierz Wielki gave the town many privileges. The rules were in hands of a four-person council, led by the mayor. Jurisdiction was carried out by seven-person jury. From the notices we know that in 1381 the town owned stalls of bakers, slaughters, terms and two mills. Until 1370 Skawina was King's Town. After the king's death Tyniec abbey took control of Skawina. In 1394 Benedictines from Tyniec sold Skawina to Michał Pusznik. The fifteenth century was full of invasions of knights, servants of neighbouring duchy. Also a

quarrel between Piotr Szafraniec and Władysław Skrzyński, the owner of Barwałdzki Castle led to destruction of Skawina. During the reign of Władysław Warneńczyk Skawina completely lost its strategic position, as in 1457 the king bought the duchy Oświęcim and Zator fifteenth century was the time of the most successful development of the town. Crafts, organized in guilds, played main role in town's development. The oldest of them was the pottery guild. The goods from Skawina's guilds were known not only in the town, but also in Cracow. They were also transported by the Wisła River to Niepołomice, Sandomierz, Warszawa and Gdańsk. According to documents dating back to 1581. Skawina was inhabited by 1500 people and was bigger than Warszawa in that times. In 1533 king Zygmunt I allowed Skawina to have 3 fairs per year and one market per week on Thursdays. In 1536 Skawina was again dependent on Tyniec abbey The town authorities were mostly Benedictines then. In the sixteenth century Skawina was rich thanks to guilds of bakers, slaughters, shoemakers, potters and furriers. The seventeenth century brought the decline of Skawina. Two different events made it happen. The first was the plague in 1651 which killed about a half of the population. The next was Swedish invasion, which led to downfall of the guilds and weakened the economy. During the fights for Cracow, there was a battle near Skawina, where Polish army was badly defeated. The Swedes destroyed the town walls and the castle. They also took away all valuable properties. Numerous wars with Cossacks, Swedes led to terrible destruction of the town. The number of inhabitants dropped to 300.

In 1704 the town was destroyed by the fire, which also severely damaged the church, rebuilt only in 1720. During the fights between Barska Confederacy and Russian Army of general Suworow in 1770 in Skawina there was the headquarters of Kazimierz Pułaski and his staff. Polish and Russian Armies went across Skawina a few times. In 1772 the town was taken by the Russians. The inhabitants were helping the Confederacy and therefore when the Russian Army was fleeing the town was burnt in an act of revenge. On 22nd April this year soldiers of Confederacy from Tyniec defeated the Russians. This, however didn't save the Confederacy from its defeat and the partitions of Poland. Skawina fell under reign of Austria in 1772. In 1815 another fire destroyed the church once again. It was rebuilt in 1826. During the nineteenth century there were two epidemics of cholera, in 1831 and in 1837. The second one had terrible results. Within five days 300 people died. In spite of these experiences inhabitants of Skawina didn't give up and rebuilt the town. A return to vibrant development was seen as late as the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Many Skawinians found work in a



building of the railway tracks. In 1886 a railway from Kraków to Oświęcim and Chabówka was built and in 1890 the railway station was finished. The first factory in Skawina was a brewery. Nowadays, in these buildings, there is the cooperative store "Rola". The town became home to the oil

refinery, built in 1900 the energy from which provided the whole town with electricity, Galicia's First Factory of Works of Fireplace and Chamotte Goods where fire-resistant bricks, tile stoves, fire-places were produced and Coffee Products Factory. The population increased to 2000 inhabitants. The Gymnastic Society called "Sokół" founded in 1896 played an important role in a cultural life of the town. Its cultural, educational, gymnastic and sport activity prepared young people to military service. In 1906 the building of "Sokół" where the gym and library were located was erected on the ruins of the King Kazimierz castle. The First World War left its tragic mark on Skawina. The inhabitants suffered from hunger and poverty. Moreover many young men were made join the Austrian Army. They fought on Russian and Italian fronts. In years 1913 and 1914 the first paramilitary team was founded. The patriotic behaviour of the members of the Gymnastic Society "Sokół" caused that many young people joined Polish Legions in 1914 to fight for independence. Soldiers left for war in the second half of August that year.



After the downfall of Austrian and Hungarian monarchy in October 1918 invaders were defeated. The first independent city was Cracow. On 28th October 1918 first authorities were founded. On 31st October Polish soldiers in Cracow started taking over military buildings. In the same day the Town Council in Skawina proclaimed that the Austrian commissary had had to leave and the rule was in Polish hands. The names of the inhabitants who fought in Austrian and Hungarian Army were placed next to the painting of the Holy



Virgin of Skawina in the parish church. The inhabitants created militia under command of Henryk Różycki. On 9th November 1918 the activity of Town Council was fully legalized. It's leader became Jan Kotulski. After regaining independence the main political role was played by Polish Socialistic Party. Between 1925 and 1926 former soldiers of legions founded the Rifle Brigade which acted in many fields: military practice, sport, tourism, culture and education. In 1930's Skawina was considered to be an industrial and agricultural town. We should also mention the law court, prison and revenue office which were located on the corner of the market square and Słowacki St. In years 1929 - 1935 the town was ruled by nominated commissar - major Franciszek Pukło, who was also the mayor between 1935 and 1939. This time was a period of fast development of the town. In 1925 the technical school,



which prepared young people for such jobs as a shoemaker, carpenter, ironworker, was founded. Many investments were planed, for example: building the wing of the Town Hall, building of some new streets, modernization and building additional floor of the old school and paving the market square. The town was also equipped with fire engines. In years 1930-1931 the sewage system was built and the town was electrified in these years. On 12th December 1931 first classes in the primary school were held. It

was divided in two parts. Now Primary School No 2 and Secondary School are located in this building. In a building of the present Secondary School there used to be two schools male and

female. Labour movement was also developed in Skawina. Workers took part in all revolution movements in the area. In 1931 building of the Catholic House, which was located about 200m from the church, begun. Its aim was to diversify cultural life of town inhabitants. On 4th October, Adam Stefan Sapiecha Metropolitan of Cracow sacred this house. Meetings, amateur performances, New Year's celebrations and courses were held there. Skawina was an energetic political and social centre before the Second World War. Political parties and welfare institutions acted in the town.



War came to Skawina on 6th September 1939. Some time before, on 3rd September 1939 first refugees from Silesia went through the town and its inhabitants started to leave Skawina. When on 4th September soldiers of "Boruta" operation group under command of Władysław Krawczyk blew out the bridge on Skawinka River, the number of refugees started to increase. When the Germans captured the town, its inhabitants begun to come back to their homes. Not everyone managed to come back. Some were killed by the bombs, others were shoot for spying or escaping, many were displaced to Soviet Union. Many people were arrested and the town was laid

under the contribution, which was to be paid in 24 hours. Skawina didn't have such amount of money because the factories and workers were not working, and all the trade, which was mostly run by the Jews, was taken over by the Germans. On 1st October 1939 the lessons started at school but history, geography and most books written in Polish were removed from the curriculum. These were hard days for inhabitants. Food could be bought only by those who had ration-cards and the ration of food was not too big. The worse was the year 1941. People had money, but they couldn't buy anything because there was nothing to be bought. The Germans took advantage of people very often. They made them work hard and did not pay. Also the town inhabitants were sent to concentration camps. In this difficult situation conspiracy was founded.. During the occupation, secret education was held. Children were taught in private houses since 1943 because the school was converted into a hospital by the German. In January 1945 the Germans were fleeing from Cracow through Skawina. Soviet bombers attacked German positions destroying the town. The situation changed, when on 23rd January 1945, Allied Army of 1st Ukrainian Front led by Colonel Kuroczkin came to Skawina. On the top of the town hall the newly-sewed white and red flag was hung. The town was completely destroyed. Prisoners from concentration camps and displaced people started to come back. Soon the inhabitants started rebuilding their town. The history of Jews in Skawina should also be mentioned. They came to Poland, as they were persecuted in Western Countries. At first there was no possibility for the Jews to settle down in Skawina, but the situation changed in fifteenth century. In 1801 only 25 Jews lived in Skawina. In 1939 there were 500. To the oldest and most known Jewish families were the Goldbers and the Neigers. Before the war all the trade in town in Jewish hands. During 2nd World War they were persecuted again. On 29th August 1942 the Germans gathered all the Jewish at the market place. Elderly and ill people, about 300, were shot in the wood of Bagienki. The rest were taken in the train shuttles, in terrible conditions to the concentration camp in Bełżec.



Monuments of Skawina



The Abbot of Tyniec - his house, placed in the middle Town Council to use as the

Confederacy in 1771-72 the wooden town hall was taken down for fuel. In 1777 the Town Hall was built once again, but later it was sold on auction in 1805. Because of that the Town Hall was once again taken down. During the following years the town didn't have its own Town Hall. The present building was built in 1903 and it is stylized for the "old" architecture. During the World War II the part of the tower was damaged, but after the war it was rebuilt to restore its present outlook.

Hieronim Krzyżanowski gave of the market square, to the town hall. During Bar

THE TOWN HALL



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The Abbot of Tyniec - Hieronim Krzyżanowski gave his house, placed in the middle of the market square, to the Town Council to use as the town hall. During Bar Confederacy in 1771-72 the wooden town hall was taken down for fuel. In 1777 the Town Hall was built once again, but later it was sold on auction in 1805. Because of that the Town Hall was once again taken down. During the following years the town didn't have its own Town Hall. The present building

ST. APOSTOLS PARISH CHURCH



Built in 1364 in the same time when the town was founded. The first parish-priest was Piotr (the parish-priest of Church in Tyniec). The church was destroyed twice by the fire. First in 1704 and rebuilt in 1728. Next fire took place in 1815 and made the inhabitants rebuild it again in 1826. At the end of the nineteenth century. Its tower was rebuilt and given a shape of pyramid. It is a three-aisle church with three entrances. In the interior there are: main late baroque altar, dated from 1826 and the paintings: Christ Crucified, St. Simon and Jude Thaddeus, and the painting of Holy Virgin; baroque baptismal font from nineteenth century made of copper steel. There is a painting of the Holy Mother with the Infant also called the Holy Mother of Skawina.

HOLY MOTHER CHURCH



It was built in the second half of XVIIIth century and modernized in 1774. Firstly the church was wooden, but in the second half of XVII century it was replaced with the stone one. Till the end of XIXth century the hospital for the poor was placed next to the church. Now the church is a branch of the parish church St. Apostols Simon and Jude Thaddeus. It is one-aisle church with two altars: the main in baroque style and the side altar in late-baroque style from the second half of XVIIth century. The church has also a sacristy and a porch. On the altar there is a painting of Crucifixion.

The little palace called

"SOKÓŁ"

It was built on the place where the castle built by Kazimierz the Great was located. Its building lasted from 1904 to 1906. It was the residence of the Sport Society which initiated its building before the First World War. In the period between World Wars, an amateur theatre acted there managed by Józef Farbowski. There was also the jazz orchestra 'Stepatora'. In 2nd



half of the thirties the cinema was located in this building. During occupation the Germans changed the building into the supply depot. The tower was destroyed during the war. After the war many sport and cultural institutions were located in this building. The castle is located in the Town Park. Since 1992 it has been the residence of the Centre of Culture and Sport



THE MARKET SQUARE



It is easy to see mediaeval, chessboard-like, order of streets. Till now this order remained unchanged. By today's Mickiewicza St. there was a well, near which mass meetings and celebrations took place. It was used as a rostrum. A gas lantern was a very interesting part of the Market Square. Every Thursday the market square was changing into a great marketplace. Until 1930 it had a soft surface, which was than paved with stone. The market square was surrounded

by wooden houses and small tenement-houses, in which there were Post Office, Law Court, Revenue Office and Town Custody.

THE MANOR IN KORABNIKI



The manor has a defensive character. It was built in renaissance style by Paweł Korytko from 1540 to 1580. During the years 1885-92 it was rebuilt by Edward Brudzewski. The owners of the manor were: Cikowscy, Ossolińscy, Starowiejscy and Mrozowieccy. In the area of the manor the

Oak of Wyspiański, which is about 600 years old, was located. As the legend tells the author of "Wesele" during his visits in the manor was sitting by this oak-tree. Cracow Academy of Mining and Metallurgy bought this manor in 1978. The new faculty of the academy were to be placed there. But in the end the manor was bought by a private person.

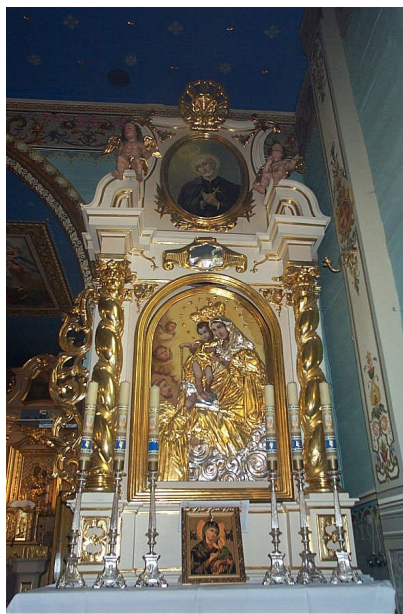
**Wooden historic buildings around
Skawina**

Krzęcin

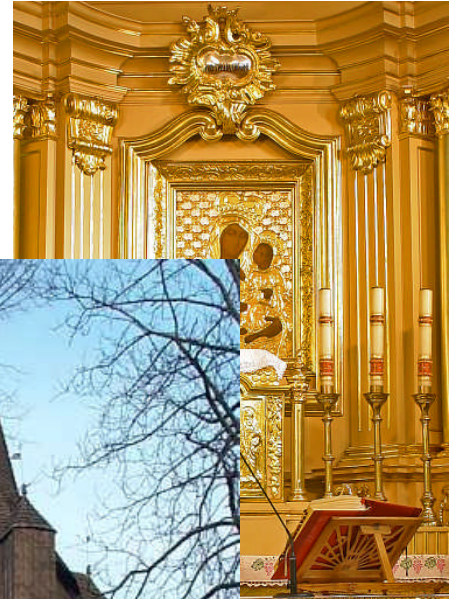


Krzęcin is another small village situated in the south of Poland not more than 15 km away from Wola Radziszowska. It spreads on the route leading to Oświęcim where is the biggest graveyard in the world – Auschwitz Birkenau. Because Krzęcin lays on the hill there is outstanding view of the nearby landscape. The population of Krzęcin is about 1500 people and there is a football club – Iskra Krzęcin. In Krzęcin is a beautiful old church. We will describe it now.

The wooden parish church of Birth of God's Mother was built in 1598 where there used to be the old temple erected in the first half of the fourteenth century. In 1700 in the place of previous church the new one (in fact the third one) was erected. It has two wooden towers. The late-baroque interior of the church contains the altar of God's Mother with the Baby Jesus. The painting is famous for its mercies. Two side-altars come from the second half of the eighteenth century. In the northern part of a courtyard the monument of the Gunthers, owners of Krzęcin, is placed. There is a tomb of the Hallers from Polanka on the parish graveyard.



Wola Radziszowska



We would like to present many interesting places in Kraków region. Wola Radziszowska is a small beautiful village spreading 9 km distance and the population is about 2000 people. It is situated in the valley of Cedronka river. There is a picturesque countryside around it. Unfortunately, a few years ago this place was destroyed by a flood but since then it has been recovering quite well. There is a well-known railway track from Kraków to Zakopane going through the village. There are two churches there a new and old ones. We will describe the historical church now.

one of

but
within

valley

Late-gotique, larch Assumption of the Holiest Mary Virgin church with four-side tower. It was founded by the Benedictines from Tyniec between the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The roof and the top of the tower are covered with shingle . Inside there is a painting of God's Mother with the Baby Jesus from the second half of the fifteenth

century and the wooden carved Cross. The side-altars are late-renaissance from 1636. One of the most valuable relic is the bell from 1567.

