

FROM THE SŁOWNIK GEOGRAFICZNY

Wiele, German *Wiele*, an ecclesiastical village in Chojnice powiat, on lake Wielewskie; to its north are elevations rising 640 feet above sea level, called "Chelmice," which the author of the *Epos on Pan Czorliński* said "can be seen for seven miles in the whole area" (Toruń, p. 40). The village has a postal station and a three-class Catholic school; it covers 2,495 hectares (1,061 of farmland, 136 of meadows, 11 of woods); in 1885 there were 910 Catholics, 4 Protestants, and 40 Jews living there, for a total of 954 residents, of whom 5 houses and 47 residents were at Biała Góra, 1 house and 5 residents at Wielewski Młyn ["Wiele Mill"], and 5 houses and 63 residents at Piątkowo. The Catholic church, St. Nicholas's, under government patronage, is made of wood and has a shingle roof. It has had the Brotherhood of St. Anne since 1803, of St. Anthony since 1803, of Sobriety since 1852, and of the Solace of The Blessed Mother since 1852. One of its bells dates from 1686. Belonging to the parish (of Tuchola deanery) are: Wiele, Karszyn, Popia Góra, Górki, Przytarnia, Kliczkowy, Zamość, Czyste, Barłogi, Wdzydze Tucholskie, Miedzno, Odry, Wojtal, Dąbrowa, Lipa, Rudziny, Cisewie, Osowo, Bąk, Borsk, Broda, Huta Brodzka, Piechowice, Kruszyna, Zabrody, Wdzydze Kiszewskie, Kozłowiec, Ostrów, Jastrzębie, Czarne, Kloc, Huta Przerębelska, Plesy, Rów and Pustki; as of 1867 it numbered 5,268 souls, and 7,890 as of 1892.

Formerly the parish had two more chapels, one in Wiele, the other in Odry. By the parish church stood a spacious hospital for the needy, with the chapel of St. Anne. The chapel and hospital's endowment consisted of the nearby village of Przytarnia. During the Reformation all that was lost. The report of Bishop Rozdrażewski's inspection in 1583 tells that when the hospital and the chapel burned down, the Tuchola *starosta* at the time, Kościelecki, took the village of Przytarnia away from the needy and incorporated it into the estates of his *starostwo*. The bishop decreed that the pastor was to take this village from the *starosta's* by legal methods, but it was to be used to endow, not the needy, but a new seminary. This all



proved in vain, however, and Przytarnia remained in the possession of the Tuchola *starosta's* (see *Utrac. kość. p. Fankidejskiego*, p. 316).

In 1382 the Tuchola Commander of the Teutonic Knights, Henryk Bollendorf, granted German law to the inhabitants of the village called "Wiele" (Velym)-which previously was incorporated under Polish law-along with 55 ½ *włoka's* within set boundaries. "The pastor will have 5 *włoka's*, and to the office of *sołtys*, which we have sold to Nikosz, will belong 6 *włoka's*. Besides this the inhabitants of the village will have 35 *włoka's* subject to rent under the terms of Chelmino law. The rest of the *włoka's* we give them, to aid them in paying rent and serving us the better. The *sołtys* will have every third penny from court fines, and we the other two pennies; further we grant him the right to free pasturage in our forests and all wood lying free for firewood, and to catch fish for his table from the small area set aside in the lake alongside the village... As for the villagers, they are to render us every year on the Feast of Candlemas a rent per *włoka* of 14 *skojec's* of standard Prussian coinage, one bushel (Chelmino measure) of oats, and one bushel of "chicken oats" [*? kurowy owies*], also they are to be sent out for two days on our hunts. It is also our will that for every 1 ½ *włoka's* they are to gather a *mórg* of hay and convey it to Kosobuda or wherever we order ... Issued in Tuchola" (see *Kodeks Belnensis*, manuscript in Pelplin, page 51, and *Odpisy Dregera* in Pelplin, p. 122).

During Bishop Rozdrażewski's inspection in 1583 the plague raged so fiercely that the inspection of the churches in Brusy, Leśno and Wiele was not completed. Wiele parish then belonged to the Zaborski or Starogard deanery. A later inspection by this same bishop reports that there was then a wooden church here under the patronage of St. Nicholas. Four *włoka's* belonged to the pastor. There were so many empty *włoka's* in the village that the Mass-tithe from the whole village only amounted to 13 bushels of rye and the same of oats. The pastor was Jan Lubichowski (p. 203).

During the days of the Commonwealth Wiele belonged to the Tuchola *starosta's*. An inspection report from 1570 states that "Wiele, property of Jerzy Zaliński, has 60 *włoka's*, of which 4 belong to the pastor, 35 are empty, 21 are settled, further there is 1 inn inherited and 1 rented, and 1 gardener." A 1664 report lists here only 45 *włoka's*, 6 belonging to the *sołtys*, 4 to the priest, a fifth held by the deacon of Mirachowo, 1 belonging to the peasants. The church was *collationis regiae* [government-supported]. The Wiele beehives, lying in the Zaborska forest, which was part of the famed Tuchola Forest, were tended in turn by the inhabitants of the neighboring villages (see *St. G.*, XII, p. 595)....

In 1686 Wiele parish belonged to the Mirachowo deanery and numbered some 600 souls. Its pastor was Stan. Jacek Zeromski, who rebuilt the rectory. His predecessor was Rev. Piechowski (p. 9). Szaniawski's inspection in 1710 reports that the church bore the title of St. Anne's; the Brotherhoods of St. Anne and St. Joseph existed there. Five *włoka's* belonged to the pastor, in addition to which he held one free from the Tuchola citadel. He collected a Mass-tithe from the ecclesiastical village of 14 bushels of rye and the same of oats. The organist was also the teacher (see p. 14). Finally, from Rybiński's inspection in 1780 we learn that in 1728 the church was built from parishioners' contributions and consecrated on 24 June 1769 by suffragan Bishop Wolicki. [Translator's note: this seems unlikely, perhaps the church was built in 1728 and consecrated in 1729, or built in 1768 and consecrated in 1769]. Wiele then (in 1780) had only 218 Catholic inhabitants, the whole parish numbered 2,035 souls, there were 70 Protestants, and

no Jews. The pastor was Jan Netzel (p. 66).

According to Goldbeck's topography, in 1789 the village had 33 hearths (p. 251). In 1812 the French passed through the parish, namely through Wiele-Kliczkowy and Borsk, fleeing from Cossacks who were chasing them. They encamped in Borsk, and the inhabitants sheltered themselves and their cattle in the nearby woods. In 1892, in a field belonging to a Kiedrowski, several urns were found, among them a very small one which held bones and a gold ring. Not far away there is another gravesite which has not yet been excavated. *Kś. Fr. (Rev. Frydrychowicz).*

Glossary of Unfamiliar terms

Chelmo law: a variety of charter defining terms under which towns were incorporated in Prussia, Pomerania and Mazovia.

gmina: rural administrative district, administrative subdivision of a *powiat*

mórg or morga: unit of land measurement; according to Gerald Ortell's book on Polish parish records, in the Russian partition 1 mórg = 1.388 acres, in the Prussian 1 mórg = 0.631 acres, in Galicia 1 mórg = 1.422 acres

powiat: administrative subdivision, abolished in 1975, roughly comparable to a county in the U. S.

Sejm: Sejm, diet (representative body, a little like Congress)

skojec: an ancient monetary unit or coin

starosta: a kind of district chief or official; *starostwo* is a term referring to the office of *starosta*

włoka: a unit of land measurement; Gerald Ortell's book on Polish parish records gives it as 30.0 mórgs

Translated and submitted by William F. Hoffman. This translation first appeared in the Spring 1997 issue of the Polish Genealogical Society of America Bulletin, and is reprinted with permission.