Using Wiarus Polish Newspaper as a Source of Information (Paula Colwell)

The Minnesota Historical Society (MNHS) website provides access to a number of historical Minnesota newspapers that you can review from home - many of them are from small Minnesota towns.

My grandfather was the son of Polish immigrants in Winona, and I am currently working on a book about his service in WWI. As part of my research, I checked into the Winona Newspaper Database for historical newspaper articles (which is another great resource if you are searching for information related to Winona), as well as the MNHS website.

I was able to find some articles on my grandfather on the MNHS website in the newspaper called *Wiarus*, which is a Polish newspaper edited by Hieronim Derdowski and his wife between 1886-1919. The Drobne Echa articles we feature on the PGS-MN website from past newsletters are translations of *Wiarus* newspaper articles. The articles are not just about Winona - Derdowski wrote about many Polish communities (and people) across Minnesota in the *Wiarus*. You can find out if he wrote about some of your ancestors!

A great advantage of the *Wiarus* links on the MNHS website is that you can find an article written in Polish, snip it, and it will immediately translate it in Google Translate. The translation is not always exact, but it gives you a good sense of what the article is about, and you can play around with some of the words if it turns out to be an article of interest to you.

I will walk you though how I found one WW1-related article related to my grandfather:

- Go to the Minnesota Historical Society website.

- Click on Explore, then Digital Newspapers, then the Minnesota Digital Newspaper Hub.

- Click on "Search the Newspapers" in the column on the left.

- Once that is open, click the black "Search" tab with binoculars in the toolbar at the top.

You will then see the following:
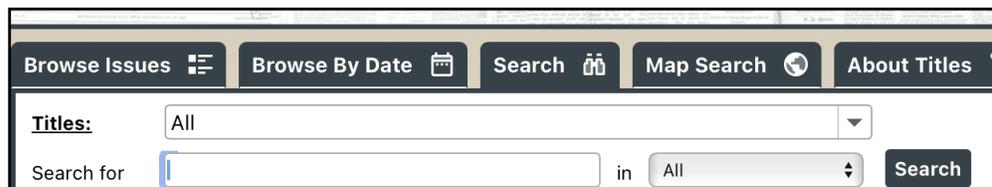
In the "Search for" box, type in what you are looking for. I was looking for my grandfather's name, so I typed in his last name - Kleinschmidt. You can enter a full first and last name, but my grandfather's first name has been spelled differently in documents, so I wanted to be able to catch all the spellings, so I just entered the last name. After the word "in," there is another box, and I left the default entry "All. This opens a listing of all the newspapers. Don't click "Search" yet.

To the right of the "Titles" box (the default is "All." Click on the down arrow to the right of "All". You will see a drop-down box with "All" the newspapers selected.
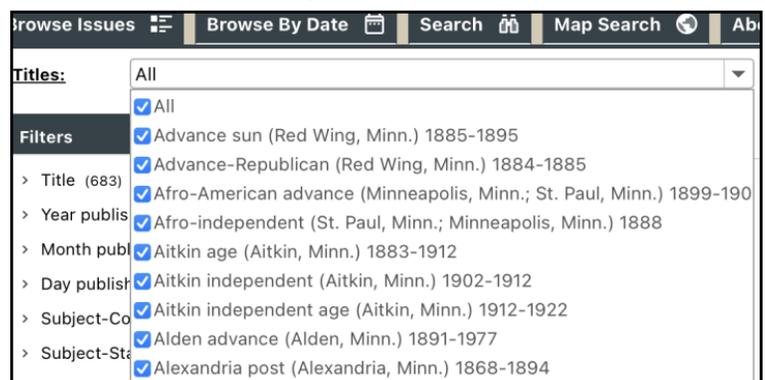
Click on the box in front of the word "All" which will deselect all boxes.

Then scroll down to the *Wiarus* Newspaper. You will see that there are two choices (with different years). I checked the 1895-1919 because I was specifically looking for WWI articles, but you can select as many other newspapers that you want from the entire list.

Click outside the box once you have checked which issue you want. You will then see from the Titles Box that you are in the *Wiarus* Newspaper for the years 1894-1919, and my grandfather's last name in the "Search for" box. Leave the default "All" for the word "in" and click on the black "Search" button next to that.
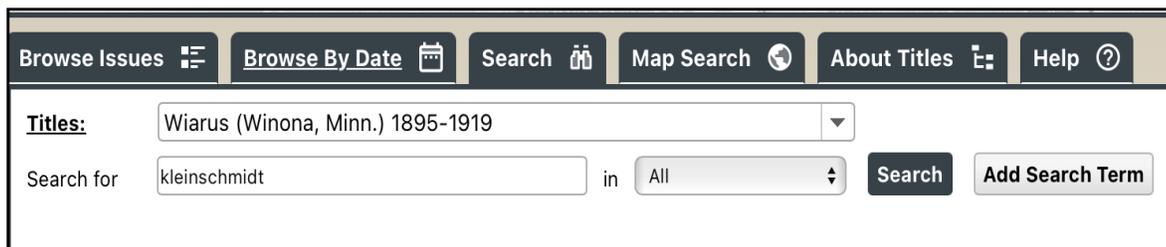
What came up is a list of 38 *Wiarus* newspapers that had the name 'Kleinschmidt' listed.

There are filters on the left, and I chose to narrow down the year to 1918 (the year he entered the service), so I clicked on "Year Published" option and chose "1918". This narrowed down my options to 10 different issues. I then went to the "Month published" and chose "April" (4th month). This left two issues to look at. I then clicked on the one with the date "April 23, 1918".

"Year published"

"Month published"

"April 23, 1918"
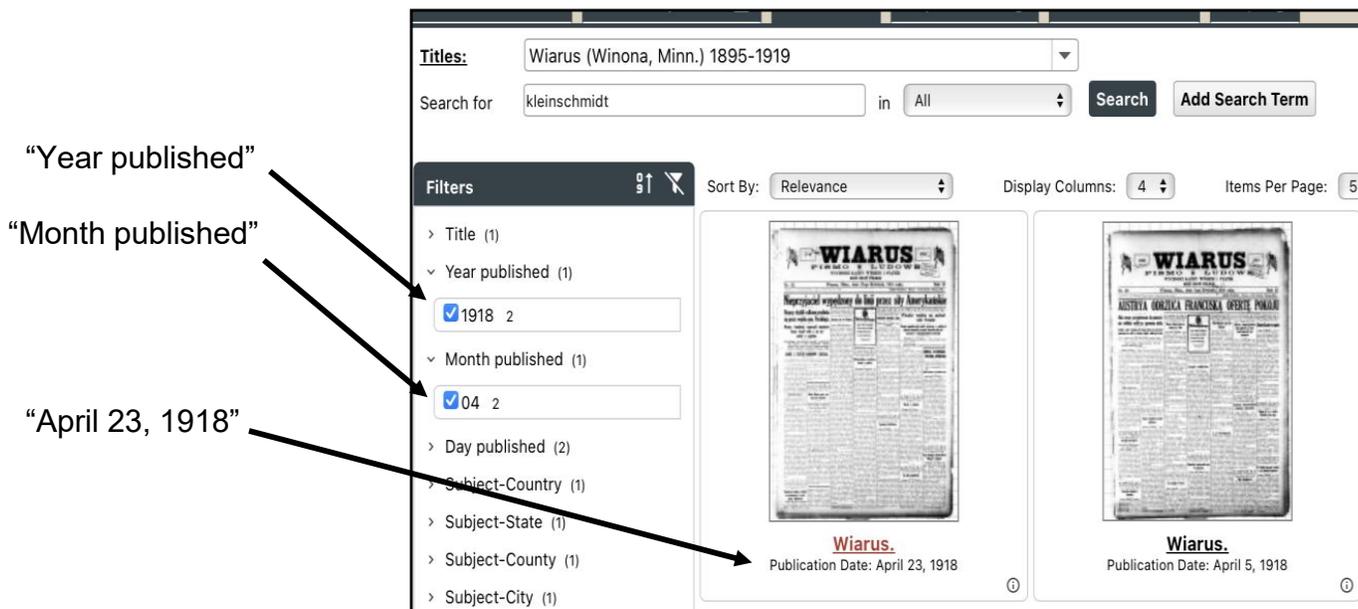
The page of the newspaper (all in Polish) with the article popped up and I scrolled down to find where the name of my grandfather (Kleinschmidt) was highlighted in yellow appeared.
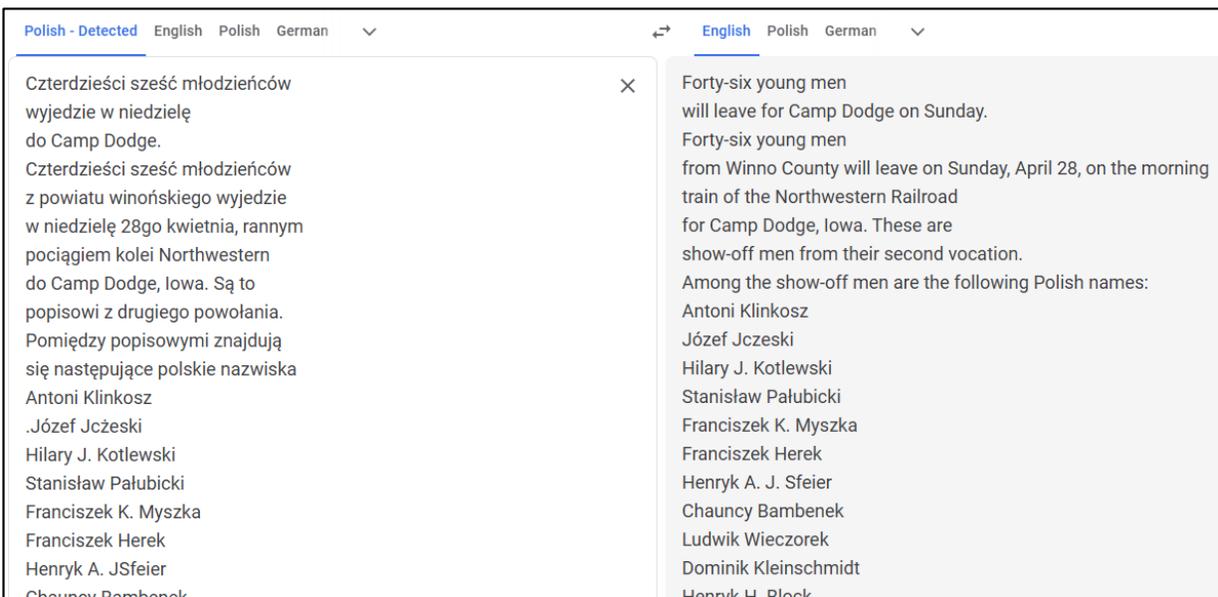
Next, I clicked on the 'scissors' icon (second from the left on the bottom of the page).

I then use the 'scissors' to make a box around the article.

The article, in Polish then appeared in a new window from which I selected "Google Translate" which appeared at the bottom of that window.


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lokalny po iństrukeye a w
niedzielę o 7 :25 godziriie rano ód
I zii^t: ^powiększy "się liczba
gwiazd na naszym sztandarze ho
norowym zawieszonym w kościele
Św. Stanisława K. gdy kilkuna
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Google Translate   Copy to Clipboard   Close

The article was automatically translated from Polish (on the left side) to English (on the right side). You will see that the translation has some errors in it, but you can figure out the general content of the article from the translation and further play around with it. For articles from other newspapers in the Minnesota Digital Newspaper Hub that are in English, you can just copy to clipboard to save the article for your own records.

Polish - Detected English Polish German ⌄	English Polish German ⌄
Czterdzieści sześć młodzieńców	Forty-six young men
wyjedzie w niedzielę	will leave for Camp Dodge on Sunday.
do Camp Dodge.	Forty-six young men
Czterdzieści sześć młodzieńców	from Winno County will leave on Sunday, April 28, on the morning
z powiatu winońskiego wyjedzie	train of the Northwestern Railroad
w niedzielę 28go kwietnia, rannym	for Camp Dodge, Iowa. These are
pociągiem kolei Northwestern	show-off men from their second vocation.
do Camp Dodge, Iowa. Są to	Among the show-off men are the following Polish names:
popisowi z drugiego powołania.	Antoni Klinkosz
Pomiędzy popisowymi znajdują	Józef Jczeski
się następujące polskie nazwiska	Hilary J. Kotlewski
Antoni Klinkosz	Stanisław Pałubicki
.Józef Jczeski	Franciszek K. Myszka
Hilary J. Kotlewski	Franciszek Herek
Stanisław Pałubicki	Henryk A. J. Sfeier
Franciszek K. Myszka	Chauncy Bambenek
Franciszek Herek	Ludwik Wieczorek
Henryk A. JSfeier	Dominik Kleinschmidt
Chauncy Bambenek	Henryk H. Block

From this article, I learned that my grandfather was scheduled to leave for Camp Dodge on April 28, 1918, with 45 other men, and 15 of them were Polish. With the 46 names that were listed, I could then compare other records to find out if any were in the same regiment as him (only one was). I plan to check out some of my other ancestors in this newspaper!