

Sources for the Study of the Polish Community in Sheffield



© Sheffield Libraries Archives and Information 2023

v. 1.0 Apr 2023

Front cover illustrations:

Photograph of Maurycy Chryst (born in Poland), his wife Helen and three of their children, Sheffield, c.1865
(Photograph loaned by Claire Atkinson, descendant of Maurycy Chryst)

Badge of Stowarzyszenie Polskich Kombatantów (SPK) (Polish Ex-Combatants Association).

Advertisement for John Figorski Limited, leather and cabinet maker, Case Works, No.3 Eyre Street, 1889
(Sheffield Local Studies Library Picture Sheffield: y11969)

Images can be copied for private or educational use without permission from us, though we ask that the following acknowledgement is included '[document reference number] From the collections of Sheffield Libraries Archives and Information'. Please contact us if you wish to publish, exhibit or broadcast any of the information within this *Guide*.

You can download a copy of this *Guide* from www.sheffield.gov.uk/archives

Disclaimer

Please note that many of the web links in this document take you to external websites. We take no responsibility for their content, nor do we accept responsibility for any loss or damage resulting from the use of any information in this guide.

Contents

Introduction	4
Timeline showing key dates	5
Selection of images from the collections.....	7
List of documents, books, photographs and other items available at Sheffield City Archives and Local Studies Library	19
Books	19
Cemeteries.....	19
Churches.....	19
Census returns and population statistics	19
Electoral Registers	21
Emigration / Immigration.....	21
Miscellaneous.....	22
Name indexes	25
Naturalisation	26
Newspapers	27
Photographs.....	27
Rate Books.....	27
School Records	28
Trade directories / telephone directories.....	29
Theses and dissertations.....	29
Library and Archive collections held elsewhere	29
Useful Websites	29
Local Studies Library and Sheffield City Archives Facilities	30
Adding to our collections	30
Contact Details.....	31

Introduction

This booklet lists sources available within Sheffield City Archives and Local Studies Library for the study Sheffield's Polish community.

This *Guide* is not a detailed study of the history of the Polish community in Sheffield. It offers starting points for the reader who wishes to carry out their own research to what is available within Sheffield Libraries and Archives.

As more items are catalogued and the collections are used by researchers it is likely that additional references will come to light. More detailed searching of our catalogues for a wide range of terms may reveal additional material.

Many of the records detailed below are available online via Ancestry.com and FindMyPast.



Both websites are free to use at all of Sheffield City Council's libraries and at the City Archives.

Special thanks

We are very grateful to a number of people who helped put this Study Guide together. Thanks to **Claire Atkinson** (great great great granddaughter of Maurycy Chryst) for sharing family papers, photographs and information on Maurycy Chryst; **Nicolas Jouault** for sharing his research findings on some of the Polish exiles in Britain (and specifically Sheffield).

Timeline showing key dates

5 Aug 1772	The First Partition of Poland was decided after the Bar Confederation lost the war with Russia.
3 May 1791	Polish Constitution Day on 3 May, the day in 1791 when Poland signed its national constitution and became the first nation in Europe, and the second in the world after the United States, to do so.
23 Jan 1793	The Second Partition occurred in the aftermath of the Polish–Russian War of 1792 and the Targowica Confederation of 1792 when Russian and Prussian troops entered the Commonwealth, and the partition treaty was signed during the Grodno Sejm on 23 Jan 1793 (without Austria).
24 Oct 1795	The Third Partition took place on 24 Oct 1795, in reaction to the unsuccessful Polish Kościuszko Uprising the previous year. With this partition, the Commonwealth ceased to exist.
1830-1831	November Uprising, (1830-31), Polish rebellion that unsuccessfully tried to overthrow Russian rule in the Congress Kingdom of Poland as well as in the Polish provinces of western Russia and parts of Lithuania, Belorussia, (now Belarus), and Ukraine.
1831	The Literary Association of Friends of Poland was established in 1831 and was supported by figures as Peel, Shaftesbury, Dickens and Gladstone; in 1834, Parliament voted a grant of £10,000 for Polish refugees, renewed annually until 1838.
1832	It was reported in the Sheffield Register that there was a large public meeting on 10 Sep in the Music Hall to discuss the conduct of the Russian Emperor, Nicholas towards the 'brave and suffering Poles'. Count Plater (a distinguished Polish noble man and Polish exile), addressed the meeting (which was convened by Thomas Dunn, the Master Cutler on 7 Sep).
1836	Advertisement for Bertold De Wiercinski's language lessons in Sheffield (<i>Sheffield Independent</i> , 25 Jun). He was a Polish exile living in Sheffield.
1846	Polish National Lodge (of Freemasons) established in London by Bertold De Wiercinski and others.
1848 - 1849	The Revolutions of 1848 (known as the Springtime of the Peoples or the Springtime of Nations), were a series of political upheavals throughout Europe starting in 1848.
Mar 1851	Arrival of 247 Polish exiles in Liverpool (onboard the <i>Arpia</i> from Turkey); a number of these exiles made their way to Sheffield.
Jun 1854	Visit to Sheffield by Lajos Kossuth who spoke in Paradise Square, Sheffield to 12,000 - 14,000 people.
1914 - 1918	At the start of World War One, Polish territory was split during the partitions between Austria-Hungary, the German Empire and the Russian Empire, becoming the centre of many operations of the Eastern Front during World War One. In the aftermath of the war, following the collapse of the Russian, German and Austro-Hungarian Empires, Poland became an independent republic.
	Second Polish Republic (1918-1939)
11 Nov 1918	Polish Independence Day - after more than a century of foreign rule, an independent Polish state was restored with Marshal Jozef Pilsudski as head of state.
	Second World War and the Occupation of Poland (1939-1945)
1939	Start of the Second World War. Nazi Germany's Invasion of Poland (1 Sep); Soviet Union invasion of Poland (17 Sep); The Fall of Warsaw (18 Sep). Poland is occupied by 6 Oct 1939.
1939 - 1945	Second World War and the occupation of Poland. One-fifth of the Polish population perished during World War Two; the 3,000,000 Polish Jews

	murdered in The Holocaust constituted 90% of Polish Jewry (and accounted for half of all Poles killed during the war).
1945	Soviet forces capture Warsaw in January. All German forces are driven from Poland by March. Poland's borders are set by the post-war Potsdam conference; Poland loses territory to the Soviet Union but gains some from Germany.
	Polish People's Republic: Poland Under Communism (1946-1989)
1946	The Polish Ex-Combatants Association (SPK) was formed.
1947 - 1957	From 1947- 1957, Poles met at the Polish section of the YMCA at the Toc H building in Sheffield, with a membership of 150 for its tenth anniversary (celebrations were held in Dec 1957 at Attercliffe Methodist Hall).
Feb 1948	A new SPK Branch, No.439 (Sheffield) was formed by amalgamating two previous branches.
Oct 1948	The Anglo-Polish Society in Sheffield appealed in Oct 1948 for more involvement from the 2,000 Poles resident in the area, as only 80 were members of the city's organisation at that time. A series of monthly dances were among measures designed to attract more members.
1949	In Sheffield the Polish Catholic Parish was formally constituted in the summer of 1949.
20 Nov 1954	Situated on the corner of Dover Road and Ecclesall Road, the Polish Ex-Serviceman's Club opened on 20 Nov 1954. Thirty years later it had 300 full members and 300 associate members. The building was sold in 2011.
28 Jun 1956	Poznań protests - the first of several protests held in opposition of the communist government of the Polish People's Republic.
13 Dec 1981	Martial law begins following a wave of strikes and a rise in political opposition. Following the introduction of martial law in Poland in 1982 the Sheffield SPK branch sent some 60-tons of parcels worth over £20,000.
1984	Memorial to the Polish servicemen who gave their lives during the Second World War (1939-1945) installed at the Cathedral Church of St Marie (RC), Norfolk Row, Sheffield. Plaque dated Nov 1984. The plaque can be seen in Lady Chapel (upstairs).
	Democratic Republic of Poland (1989-present)
1 May 2004	Poland became a member state of the European Union.
2014	In 2014 the soldiers' banners of the SPK Branch No.439 in Sheffield were deposited permanently with the Cathedral Church of St Marie (RC), Norfolk Row, Sheffield (and are placed next to the memorial in Lady Chapel).

The November Uprising (1830-1831) - Polish exiles in Sheffield

Following the failed November Uprising of 1830-1831 - an armed rebellion in partitioned Poland against the Russian Empire - thousands of Poles were sent into exile. Some of these Polish patriots ended up in Sheffield, including Bertold De Wiercinski whose story in Sheffield is briefly told here.

M. B. DE WIERCINSKI

ONE of the Editors of "La Pologne Pittoresque," Professor of the FRENCH and ITALIAN LANGUAGES, begs respectfully to announce to the Ladies and Gentlemen of Sheffield and its Neighbourhood, that he purposes giving instruction in the above Languages on the following moderate

TERMS :

For each Pupil, One Lesson a Week,	£1	1	0	per Quar.
" " Two " " ..	2	2	0	"
Entrance	1	1	0	"

•• Should the Pupil reside out of Town, the Terms would be proportionably higher. With Schools and Families an arrangement can be made.

Enquiries may be made at his Apartments, No. 3, CARVER-STREET, opposite the Methodist Chapel.

N.B. The most respectable References and Testimonials can be given.

M. B. de WIERCINSKI also purposes to give Lessons during the ensuing Holidays.

Colonel (Baron) Bertold De Wiercinski (Wierchinski / Wisiwski) was born on 29 Mar 1812 to a noble and ancient family in the province of Volhynia, Poland. He served in the uprising of 1830-1831 and on the retreat of the Polish army into Galicia he was taken prisoner by the Austrians and confined for 18 months in the dungeon of Spilberg. After then he lived a life in exile. His father was banished to Siberia where he died, and of two brothers, one was killed in the battle against Russia, the other died in exile. Wiercinski came to the UK in October 1835 and was a teacher of languages in Sheffield by 1836.

An advertisement in the *Sheffield Independent*, 25 June 1836 (British Newspaper Archive) shows that he was in Sheffield in April 1836 teaching languages. He was based at no.3 Carver Street (opposite the Methodist Chapel).

Local newspapers reports show that Wiercinski was still in Sheffield in March 1841 when he was charged with assaulting William Jeeves after an altercation at the theatre. Jeeves had reserved 3 seats, but on arrival found Wiercinski and a friend sitting there. They refused to move, so Jeeves threatened to pull them out. Wiercinski was ejected by the boxkeeper. Sometime later the two men passed each other at the baths; after his bath Jeeves walked home along Fitzwilliam Street. Wiercinski went into the Beehive to wait for Jeeves (who had gone into a fruit shop). He then went to the top of Fitzwilliam Street; when Jeeves passed him Wiercinski asked him to apologise for the incident at the theatre. Jeeves refused, so

Wiercinski struck him with a stick. It was concluded that Wiercinski should have been treated with more courtesy at the theatre but in turn

'Wiercinski was well known to many parties in Sheffield as one of the refugees from unfortunate Poland, and the high testimonials he had brought had enabled him to move in the very first society in this neighbourhood. In fact, the necessity of his appearance [at the Town Hall] had compelled him to break an engagement to visit Lord Wharnccliffe.' - *Sheffield Independent*, 6 March 1841

shouldn't have hit Jeeves with the stick. He gave his word of honour not to interfere with Jeeves again and the matter passed off.

Newspaper articles continue to pick up Wiercinski's story. He is mentioned at a gathering of Freemasons at Mr Clifton's house in Sheffield in 1839 along with other Polish exiles. He was a founder member (and first Master) of the Polish Masonic Lodge in London (established in 1846). He was a Member of The Literary Association of the Friends of Poland and by 1860 he was President of the General Assemblies of the Poles, London. By the 1851 census he is living in Westminster, London. He became a British Citizen in 1854 (his naturalisation certificate was issued on 4 Aug 1854, The National Archives: HO 1/57/1852). By the 1861 census he is living in Fulham with his wife and stepchildren. He died in 1868 in Boulogne, France.



The Revolutions of 1848 - Polish exiles in Sheffield

A new wave of Polish exiles arrived in England in the years following the defeat of the 1848 revolutions in Prussian Poland and Hungary. In addition to those refugees who arrived individually, a group of ex-members of the Polish Legion in Hungary arrived in March 1851 in Liverpool from Turkey. *The Spectator* reported on the arrival: **'A curious contest is going on at Liverpool, over a body of refugees from Hungary, which arrived on Monday last, in the Arpia, a Sardinian merchant-vessel. They are in number 262; of which 10 are natives of Hungary, 5 of Germany, Bohemia, and Italy, 247 of Poland. The Poles are the remnant of the Polish Legion in Hungary under General Wysocki'**. The Poles were not permitted to settle permanently in Liverpool and could only stay up to seven days pending transportation for their onward journey.

P O L A N D.

A handbill, headed "Help for Poland," and signed "W. J. Linton," has been extensively circulated. The tenor of it is to sink the question of Polish nationality in one of rival parties. It states that there are two parties, "the monarchical—the Czartoryski party," and "the revolutionary party." It denounces the former, and appeals for aid to the latter. To this appeal we have been requested by several Polish exiles, resident in Sheffield, to print the following reply :—

REPLY TO MR. LINTON'S PAMPHLET, "HELP FOR POLAND."

To attempt to strengthen amidst the English nation the sympathy for oppressed Poland, would be a superfluous task; for all classes, high and low, know her sufferings and recognise her claims. The real unsettled question is, How and by what medium can there be given proper help to Poland to enable her to regain her own independence? And on that point the author of the above pamphlet has gone very wrongly to work, in trying, at so important a moment as the present, to stir up the party feelings of both the English and the Poles, and to make the object of his no doubt sincere intentions an apple of discord, and in consequence a less attractive subject among his own English countrymen, than very nation from which Poland expects, and with right, the strongest

An Anglo-Polish Committee was established under the leadership of William Linton (editor of *The English Republic*) which appealed to the citizens of Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham and Sheffield to offer permanent residency to the Polish refugees. His pamphlet entitled 'Help for Poland' was circulated to the British public. On 20 May 1854 a letter was published in the *Sheffield Independent* signed by 28 of the Polish exiles in Sheffield in defence of Linton who they felt had helped them when they arrived from Turkey to Liverpool in Mar 1851. The letter gives the names of 28 of the Polish exiles in Sheffield:

SEVERIN CZERWINSKI.
ANTONI HALSKI.
LEON KLEM.
ALEXANDER KRZYZANOWSKI,
(Martini.)
JAN FIGORZKI.
ANDRZEJ PRAWDZINSKI.
JOZEF GRUCZKA.
SOBESTYAN NACHMAN.
ANTONI MROSZCZYK.
JAN BIELECKI.
KONSTANTY PODOSKI.
IGNACY GONSOWSKI.
FRANC KANIOSKI.
W. GLADYSZ.

KASPER KALINOWSKI.
FERDINAND KOWALSKI.
PIOTR ORTYNSKI.
STANISLAW SZCZEPANSKI.
FELIX TERLECKI.
PIOTR TERLECKI.
SZYMON REJOWSKI.
MAURZYC CHRYSST.
JOSEF GOSOSKI.
ADAM POLACZEK.
STANISLAW CHERVINSKI.
MICHAL ZALEWSKI.
WILHELM DOMKOWICZ.
MARCELL MATUSZESKI.

Many of these men stayed in Sheffield and their lives can be traced using census returns, parish and cemetery registers, newspapers, obituaries etc. The Polish exiles are also listed on the **1851 Liverpool census**. Short biographies of Jan Figorzki and Marycy Chryst follow in this *Study Guide*.

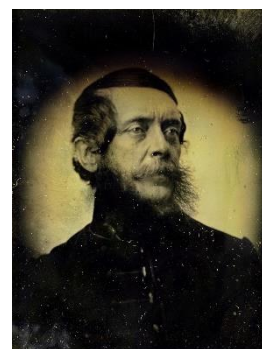
- Research on William Domkovicz:
<http://www.chrishobbs.com/sheffield4/williamdomkovicz.htm>
- Research on Polish exiles in Britain by Nicolas Jouault:
<https://jouault.wordpress.com/category/polish/>
- See also: John Belchem, 'Britishness, Asylum-Seekers and the Northern Working Class: 1851', *Northern History*, 2002, 39:1, 59-74.

The following letter is contained in Home Office papers:

A letter from certain members of the town council of Sheffield, stating that 14 Polish refugees by the names of Seweryn Czerwinski, Wilhelm Demkowicz, Kalinowski, Sebastian Nachman, Mularski, Jakob Skrowaczewski, Herman Fischbek, Ferdynane Kowalski, Albert Podhorodecki, Podoski, Charles Kugler, Suryń, Felix Wysocki, and Karol Wysocki, who arrived in Liverpool from Constantinople, are under special care and protection in Sheffield and dismissing the attack by Lord Lyndhurst and Wortley on these refugees at Parliament. (The National Archives: HO 45/3516)

Visit to Sheffield by Lajos Kossuth, June 1854

On Monday a public demonstration was made at Sheffield in favour of the nationality of Poland. The proceedings were organised by the Hungarian and Polish exiles in Sheffield and friends, and it was announced that Lajos Kossuth, the ex-Governor of Hungary, would be arriving in Sheffield for the demonstration.



Kossuth was the Governor of Hungary and leader during fight for independence which was eventually defeated by the union of the royalist Austrian Habsburg and Russian Czarist Armies (1848 - 1849).

A procession was then formed, headed by a band of music. A number of flags were carried, amongst which were the national flags of **Poland** and Hungary, and banners with the inscription of "Independence for **Poland**," "No alliance with women-floggers," "The greatest happiness to the greatest number for the longest time," "Justice to all—privilege to none," and one shewing the boundaries of Poland in 1772 with portions marked "What Prussia stole," "What Austria stole," "What Russia stole at thrice, namely, in 1772, 1795, and in 1831."

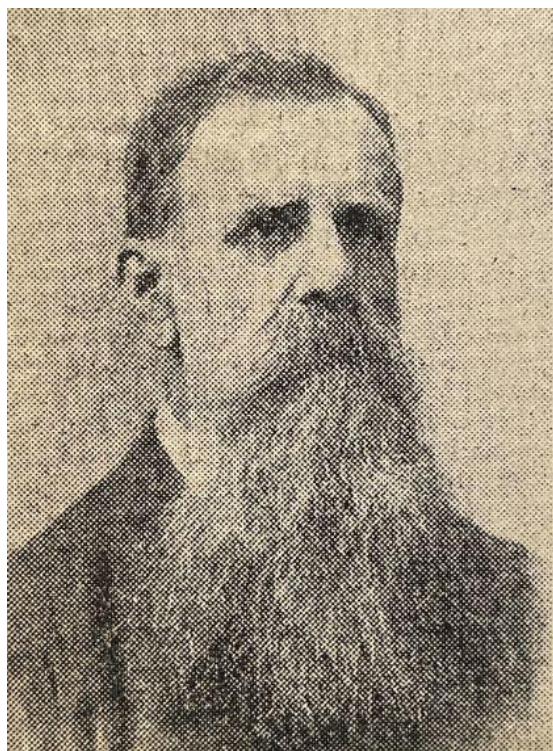
On arrival, Kossuth was welcomed to the town by Alderman Solly and Mr Leader, and Mr A. Kryzanowski (one of the Polish refugees) offered words of welcome on behalf of the Polish exiles in Sheffield who had fought under him against the enemies of Hungary and Poland. Kossuth spoke in Paradise Square where it is estimated **12,000 - 14,000 persons** had assembled. In his speech he attributed the present war to the partition of Poland which he said was "the stepping stone to the present ambitious daring of the Czar" and he urged people to petition parliament to support Poland in re-establishing their national independence.

The streets from the railway station along Exchange street, Castle street, Bank street, and Queen street, to Paradise square, were lined with people, and windows and every available place were crowded with spectators. As M. Kossuth passed along, he was greeted with loud plaudits, the waving of handkerchiefs, and other cheering manifestations. The illustrious patriot acknowledged these manifestations by standing barehead in the carriage and bowing. Paradise square had been rapidly filling during the previous half hour. As M. **Kossuth** approached the people poured in by every avenue, and the whole square became densely crowded. M. **Kossuth** and the gentlemen with him were compelled to leave their carriage at the entrance and make their way with great difficulty through the excited and enthusiastic crowd. There could not have been less than from 12,000 to 14,000 persons present. On M. Kossuth and his friends ascending the steps, the cheering was immense. Ald. SOLLY was called upon to preside.



Picture captions: Portrait of Kossuth in 1852 by Southworth and Hawes - unknown source; Sheffield Independent, Sat 10 Jun 1854 (British Newspaper Archive); view of Paradise Square in the 19th century during a political rally (details and date unknown) to show where Kossuth's speech was given (Picture Sheffield: y00766).

John Figorski (Jan Figorzki) (1828 - 1912), cabinet case manufacturer of Sheffield



John Figorski was a cabinet case manufacturer. He was born in 1828 in Bogorya, a small town in Russian Poland. In 1848, he was inspired to join the Hungarian rising and made his way across the Vistula into Austrian territory. There he joined a Polish Legion and took part in the Siege of Arad and fought for the Hungarians and their Polish allies in a successful battle against the Austrians at Scholnck. After being defeated by Austrian and Russian forces in a subsequent battle at Temesvar, he and his forces retreated to Turkey when Figorski fell ill from typhus fever. After recovering, Figorski fled Russian persecution and came to England.

After spells in Liverpool and Todmorden, Figorski came to Sheffield. There he married Miss Bell, daughter of the principal of the firm of Bell and Sons, Watson Walk, case-makers, and he joined the firm. Figorski was a member of Upper Chapel for over 50 years and he taught writing on Sunday afternoons in the old Pepper Alley schools. He became a naturalised

Englishman and was one of the first members of the Wentworth Lodge of Freemasons.

He died on 13 Feb 1912 and was buried at the General Cemetery, Sheffield.

His obituary, printed in the Sheffield Daily Telegraph, 14 Feb 1912, tells in great detail of his early and eventful life which eventually led him to Sheffield. The obituary sums up by saying: ***'To the last Mr Figorski longed to visit the scenes of his early life, but the Russian arm is long and her memory lasting. Accordingly, when some years ago he desired to embrace last living relatives, he journeyed to the frontier and there exchanged his final greetings'***.

JOHN FIGORSKI,
ESTABLISHED 1830.
No. 3, EYRE STREET CASE WORKS, SHEFFIELD.
MANUFACTURER OF EVERY DESCRIPTION OF
Leather and Cabinet Work,

Dressing Cases,		Oak Chests,
Razor Cases and		Cabinets, &c., &c.
Strops,		Leather Pattern
Table & Dessert		Rolls and
Knife Cases,		Sale Cards
Gentlemen's		always on hand.
Companions,		

Made also to hold 4 Razors.

In the Show Room a good assortment of NEW REGISTERED PATTERNS and Ladies' and Gent's Dressings always on view.

N.B.—Orders and Repairs executed quickly. Paper Boxes for Cutlery. Estimates given

<http://www.apicinesheffield.com>

Picture captions: John Figorski (Jan Figorzki) (1828 - 1912), cabinet case manufacturer of Sheffield (Picture Sheffield: arc06234); Advert for John Figorski Ltd., leather and cabinet maker, Case Works, No.3 Eyre Street (Picture Sheffield: y11969).

Maurycy Chryst (Maurice Chryst / Moritz Christ) of Poland and Sheffield (1830-1907)

Maurycy Chryst was part of the group of Polish exiles who arrived in England in the years following the defeat of the 1848 revolutions in Prussian Poland and Hungary. He arrived in Liverpool in 1851 (along with 262 passengers onboard the *Arpia*), appearing on the 1851 Liverpool census (with around 100 other Polish men) at 20 Cherry Lane, Liverpool. His occupation is given as Sergeant, Cavalry (born 1830 in Poland). Maurycy left Liverpool for Sheffield with a number of other Polish exiles. He married Helen Beckitt, a Sheffield girl, at Ecclesall Parish Church on the 16 May 1858. His occupation is given as Mercantile Clerk. The marriage certificate also gives his father's name - Philip Christ, a manufacturer.

1858. Marriage solemnized at <i>Ecclesall Church</i> in the <i>Parish of Ecclesall</i> in the County of <i>York</i> .								
No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
225	May 16 th	Moritz Christ & Helen Beckitt	27 27	Bachelor Spinster	Mercantile Clerk	King Street Cemetery Road	Philip Christ Joshua Beckitt	Manufacturer Iron Founder
Married in the <i>Parish of Ecclesall</i> according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church, by <i>certificate</i> or after _____ by me,								
This Marriage was solemnized between us,		<i>Moritz Christ</i> <i>Helen Beckitt</i>		in the Presence of us,		<i>Alays Wolenski</i> <i>Charles & Wielanski Konstantin Polowski</i>		



(born 1862), and Paulina (born 1864). They had another boy, Aloizy Alexander born in 1861 but he died the same year. Their next born child was Kate Helen in 1866 so this photo must have been taken around 1865.

By the time of the 1861 census, Maurycy is listed as a Warehouseman, living on Mitchell Street, Sheffield. The 1871 census sees Maurycy working as a Steel Warehouse Foreman; he's also listed in White's Trade Directory of this year as being a Manager. He was a Foreman/Manager at the steel works until his death.

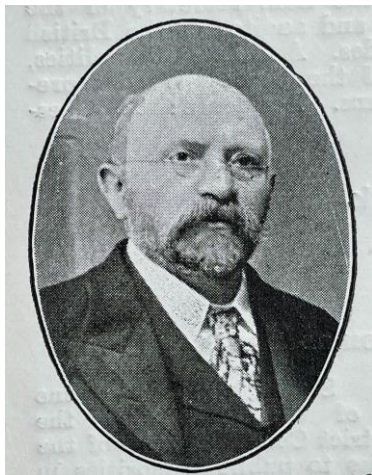
Maurycy and Helen had 9 children in total; two died in infancy and three never married.

Maurycy died aged 76 on the 26 June 1907 at 33 Mitchell Street and was buried at the General Cemetery with his wife Helen and their two daughters Frances Helen and Kate Helen (neither of whom married). There is no headstone, but the grave plot is U2 33.

This photograph shows Maurycy, his wife Helen and their three children at this point: Karol Philip (born 1859), Frances Helen

This extraordinary photograph, family history papers and information about Maurycy Chryst's life were kindly shared by Claire Atkinson, the great great granddaughter of Karol Philip Chryst. A family story tells that Maurycy and his children always bought their jewellery from H.L. Brown's in Sheffield (founded by Polish man, Harris Leon Brown). We are extremely grateful to Claire and her family for this fascinating insight into Maurycy Chryst's life in Sheffield.

Harris Leon Brown (1843-1917), diamond merchant, jeweller and horologist of Poland and Sheffield



Harris Leon Brown was born in Warsaw, Poland in 1843. After school he became an apprentice to Moses Neufeld, one of the largest firms in Warsaw engaged in the Sheffield trades. Aged 17, he joined the Polish insurrection against Russian despotism; he left Russia for Sheffield with an introduction to Alfred Beckett and Sons (with whom Moses Neufeld did extensive business) and Berry's and Company Limited. His journey from Russia to Sheffield was difficult being a Polish insurgent; he had to conceal himself at daytime and travel by night by farm carts (rather than railways) to get from town to town until he reached Hamburg whereupon he was shipped to Hull and arrived in Sheffield sometime thereafter.

He established a business in 1861 as a watchmaker; he began trading from 29 Gower Street in 1867; by 1876 H.L. Brown was situated at 24 Angel Street and in 1877 connected directly to Greenwich, with the introduction of the 1 o'clock time signal. Around 1888, the firm moved to 71 Market Place (where the earliest known image of the premises exists). In 1896 the firm moved again to 65 Market Place and in 1906 there is a first mention of a branch on Regent Street in London. He married a Sheffield woman, Ann Kirby (daughter of Charles Kirby, Cutler) at St Mary's Church, Bramall Lane in 1865. During his early years in Sheffield he joined the Hallamshire Rifles. He was Chairman of Sheffield Jewish Board of Guardians and served as President of the Sheffield Hebrew congregation. He was a prime mover in building a Synagogue in Sheffield and securing a Hebrew burial ground. He died in 1917 and his son Bernard Brown succeeded him in the business. During the Sheffield Blitz (1940) H.L. Brown's was bombed and business moved to 70 Fargate. The firm moved to its current location of 2 Barker's Pool in 1986. To this day the 1 o'clock time signal still sounds daily.



1865 Marriage solemnized at <i>Sheffield</i> in the Parish of <i>St Mary</i> in the County of <i>York</i>								
No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
358	11 th 1865	<i>Harris Leon Brown</i>	24	Bachelor	Watch maker	<i>Bramall Lane</i>	<i>Berks Brown</i>	Watch maker
		<i>Ann Kirby</i>	21	Spinster	-	<i>Bramall Lane</i>	<i>Charles Kirby</i>	Cutler
Married in the <i>Parish Church</i> according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church, by							for after <i>Banns</i> by me,	
This Marriage was solemnized between us,			<i>H. L. Brown</i> <i>A. Kirby</i>		in the Presence of us,		<i>Herbert Joel</i> <i>Master Sellers</i>	

Images: Harris Leon Brown (Picture Sheffield: y14601); Marriage entry, Harris Leon Brown and Ann Kirby, 11 June 1865, St Mary's Church, Bramall Lane, Sheffield: (Sheffield Archives, PR56/10); present day photograph of H.L. Brown's premises, Barker's Pool, from which the 1pm time signal sounds daily. Biographical details: 'Sheffield and District Who's Who' (Leng, W.C. & Co Ltd: 1905)

The Polish Ex-Combatants Association Club, Dover Road, Sheffield

Situated on the corner of Dover Road and Ecclesall Road, the Polish Ex-Serviceman's Club opened on 20 Nov 1954. Thirty years later it had 300 full members and 300 associate members. The building was sold in 2011.



Photograph of Alderman J.H. Bingham, Lord Mayor of Sheffield at the opening ceremony of The Polish Club on Dover Road, 20 Nov 1954 (Sheffield Archives: LD2479/1)

After the Royal British Legion, the largest army veterans' organisation in the UK is the Polish Ex-Combatants Association (Stowarzyszenie

Polskich Kombatantów - SPK), formed in 1946. During the Second World War, Polish armed forces were the fourth largest Allied forces in Europe, after those of the Soviet Union, United States, and Britain. Polish servicemen made substantial contributions to the Allied effort throughout the war. After the war it was clearly dangerous for many Polish people to return home as Poland fell under Soviet influence. The 1947 Polish Resettlement Act allowed people connected to the armed forces to stay and work in the UK. Thousands more came as 'European Volunteer Workers', people who had been displaced by the war. As a result, most larger towns and cities across the UK have a Polish presence that dates back to the immediate post-war period.

Around 1,200 demobilised Polish soldiers and their families settled in Sheffield in 1947. A further 300 Poles came from the displaced camps in Germany. In February 1948, a new SPK Branch, No.439 was formed by amalgamating two previous branches. In order to forge new lives in the UK, Polish refugees formed communities by setting up Polish clubs, churches and Saturday schools. The Polish Ex-Combatants Association Club on Dover Road was one such club aimed at fostering and supporting the Polish community in Sheffield.

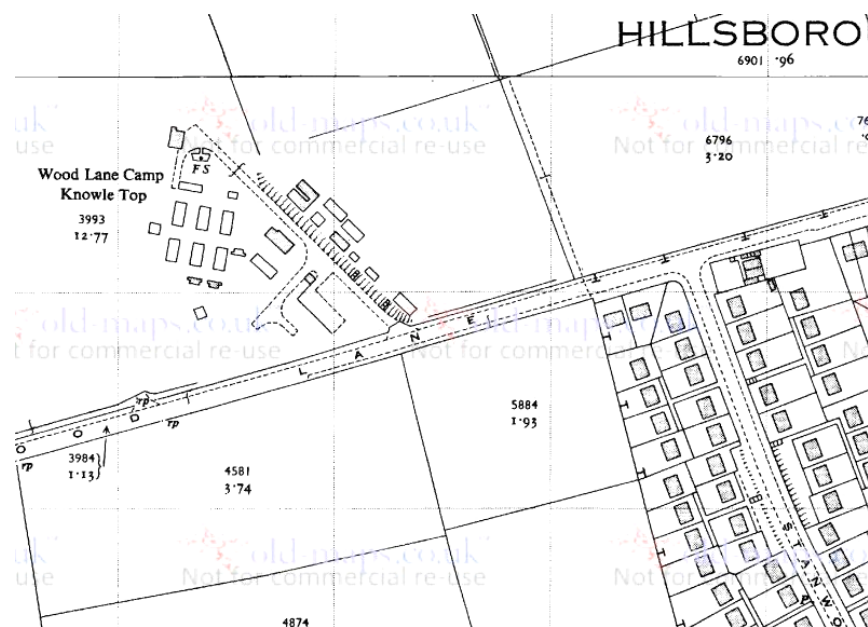


Memorial to the Polish servicemen who gave their lives during the Second World War (1939-1945), Lady Chapel, Cathedral Church of St Marie (RC), Norfolk Row, Sheffield. Plaque dated Nov 1984 - in 2014 the soldiers' banners of the SPK Branch No.439 in Sheffield were deposited here permanently (and are placed next to the memorial in Lady Chapel).

The website of the Polish Ex-Combatants' Association in Great Britain Trust Fund is an excellent source of information about the history and branches of the SPK:
<http://www.spk-wb.com/broszury/ex-combatants-association-in-great-britain-1946-2003>

Resettlement camps

The Polish Resettlement Corps (PRC) (Polski Korpus Przysposobienia i Rozmieszczenia) was established by the British Government in 1946 to support members of the Polish Armed Forces who had been serving with the British Armed Forces in settling into British civilian life.



Polish resettlement camps were created across Britain to house arriving Polish forces - these tended to be temporary hutments, often located in former army and air force camps, in the grounds of large country estates and military hospitals, which had been given up for Polish refugees by the Ministry of Defence.

Wood Lane Resettlement Camp, near Stannington, Sheffield (Local Studies Library: Ordnance Survey Map, 1953)

There were a number of resettlement camps in the local area:

- **Wood Lane Camp, Knowle Top, Sheffield**
Approximately 200 Poles were in residence there when it was due for closure in Feb 1948. An appeal was issued in the *Sheffield Star* (18 Feb 1948) appealing for lodgings for the Polish workers.
- **Cannon Hall, Cawthorne, Barnsley**
Cannon Hall Park was requisitioned by the War Office in 1940 to house a camp for the armed forces. Between 1940-1949 the camp was home to different units of the British, Canadian and Polish armies and was sited alongside the centre of Cawthorne village. There are photographs of the Polish soldiers and families at the camp (1946-1952) on Cawthorne Parish Council's website:
http://www.cawthorne.org.uk/Cannon_Hall_Military_CampPolish_Resettlement_Camp_8557.aspx
- **Hardwick Hall near Chesterfield, Derbyshire**

A full list of army units in Polish Resettlement Corps camps in the UK, 1946-1948 has been compiled online: <https://www.polishresettlementcampsintheuk.co.uk/PRC/PRC.htm>

The settlement pattern of Poles tends to correlate with areas where Polish forces were stationed during the war, or where these resettlement camps were located. Upon leaving the resettlement camps, the availability of employment and housing determined where families would eventually settle.

Post-war employment opportunities

The availability of employment influenced where Poles settled after leaving the camps, but as unskilled work was readily available in South Yorkshire after the war - particularly in heavy industries such as coal mining and steel manufacture - many from Cawthorne Camp and Wood Lane Camp stayed in the area (despite accommodation being harder to come by). The Polish Resettlement Corps (PRC) helped train former Polish troops in new



occupations, including mining, heavy industry, agriculture and construction. Many of these Poles had been highly qualified in Poland before the war, working in skilled professions but found it hard to transfer these skills to equivalent jobs in Britain. Although The *Sheffield Star* reported in May 1947 that Poles were helping to fill the city's labour gaps, many faced hostility and discrimination.

Frank Joseph Kempka was an apprentice butcher from a village just 15 miles from Auschwitz in Poland. He was conscripted into the German Army, sent to the Russian front then to France, where he escaped to join the Free Polish Army and fight in Italy. When the Second World War was over he was given the choice - Canada or Britain. He was sent to a Polish resettlement camp at Hardwick Hall and while some went to work in the steelworks, he took up his old career as a butcher, working for Roneys on Sharrowvale Road, then for Cyril Rackham, who had a string of shops in the city.



1/10/17 Poles

AT NOV 9-1957

LAMP	NAME	DATE OF BIRTH	DATE COMMENCED	NATIONALITY	DATE LEFT
883	ROGALSKI	15 9 09	✓ X	POLISH	ALIEN
904	CZERNIEZENSKI M	21 1 16	✓ X	✓	✓ ALIEN
906	FARUBAT	10 1 23	✓ X	✓	✓ ALIEN
928	TRENKLER A	14 10 20	✓ X	✓	✓ ALIEN
959	JOSZEZCZAK	24 11 24	✓ X	✓	✓ ALIEN
980	BIZACKI	21 5 23	✓ X	✓	✓ POLK
985	LURK	28 2 23	✓ X	✓	✓ ALIEN LEFT 1/10 DINNERINGTON
988	SIKORSKI	1 1 27	✓ X	✓	✓ ALIEN
1000	GRYNIEWICZ	10 11 14	✓ X	✓	✓ ALIEN LEFT 14/100 DINNERINGTON
1028	IREK W	16 9 27	✓ X	✓	✓ EVU
1051	RZERZUCHOWSKI	29 3 21	✓ X	✓	✓ ALIEN
1062	MIKLOSIEWICZ A	1 4 21	✓ X	✓	✓ ALIEN LEFT
1078	LAWBOR (deput)	6 2 23	✓ X	✓	✓ ALIEN LEFT

Picture captions: Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer, 31 Jan 1953 (British Newspaper Archive); F.J. Kempka's shop, Abbeydale Road, 2017 (Picture Sheffield: a02064); Register of Foreign Nationals working at Brookhouse Colliery, Nov 1957 (Sheffield Archives: BCC/17/3/1)

Jan Kot, City Architect, Sheffield

Jan Kot (1913 - 1995), was born in Baranovichi in western Belarus in 1913. He studied engineering at Warsaw University, but at the start of the Second World War joined the Polish cavalry to fight the Red Army. He was taken prisoner but escaped, crossing Europe and coming to the UK to join the Polish Free Forces where he became a paratrooper. Having fought against Russia (which took control of Poland after the war), he was unable to return to Poland after the war. He studied at the Polish School of Architecture at Liverpool University where he trained as an architect, and met his future wife, Margaret Woodcock.

Jan Kot came to Sheffield in 1949 to join the City Architect's Department. He eventually became City Architect, and was responsible for many school and college buildings including the Register Office (the 'wedding cake') and the Town Hall Extension (the 'egg box'). He died in 1995 and is buried at Crookes Cemetery.



Images: (top) Jan Kot, 18 Feb 1972 (Picture Sheffield: s41544); (top) the 'egg box', [1990s] (u09286); (bottom) the 'wedding cake', 1990 (s33913).

See: https://www.jeremyabrahams.co.uk/arrivals_sheffield - Danuta Reah is pictured with a photograph of her father, Jan Kot in Jeremy Abrahams photographic exhibition 'Arrivals: Making Sheffield Home'.

Catholic Church in Poland

Although various religious communities exist in Poland, most Poles are Roman Catholics - in 2018, over 90% of the population identified as Catholic (<https://stat.gov.pl/en/infographics-and-widgets/infographics/infographic-religiousness-of-polish-inhabitants,4,1.html>) (accessed Jan 2023). The Catholic Church has long played an important religious, cultural and political role in the country. During times of foreign oppression, the Catholic Church acted as a cultural guard in the fight for independence and national survival. Consequently, much of Polish life in Sheffield has historically centred around the church.

In Sheffield, the Polish Catholic Parish was formally constituted in the summer of 1949. By Aug 1952 the parish was financially self-supporting, paying for a priest and the rental of a disused Baptist Hall. In 1964 the Polish chaplain at that time, Fr Michael Szymankiewicz, organised the taking over of a property on Ecclesall Road in Sheffield to become the Polish Catholic Centre in the city.

St Marie's Roman Catholic Cathedral, Norfolk Street (completed in 1850; designed by Matthew Ellison Hadfield)



Pictured: Fr Chris Posluszny, born in 1960 in Bydgoszcz, Poland, was ordained as a priest in England in 1987. He served as an assistant priest at St Marie's 1990-1994 and returned to take up the post of Cathedral Dean in 2008. Fr Chris is also Parish Priest of Our Lady Queen of Heaven and St Oswald, Wybourn, and Holy Family, Arbourthorne. He is also Chaplain to the Slovak community, which gathers under the patronage of Our Lady of the Seven Sorrows. (Picture Sheffield: arc01522)

Polish Catholic Centre, 520 Ecclesall Road, Sheffield

Originally a doctor's house, the property (next door to the Polish Ex-Combatants Association Club) was purchased and opened as a Polish Catholic Centre in the 1960s. The Millennium Hall extension, designed by Polish City Architect, Jan Kot, was added

a few years later. The Centre was a social hub/anchor for the Polish Community. Saturday classes were held for children of Polish émigrés to learn Polish language and culture. Holy Mass was also conducted at the centre. The older Victorian house side briefly became a pub called the Old Club in 2017 but has since been converted into flats.



Local Polish Catholic Mission in Sheffield



On 18 Dec 2022 the opening of the new Polish Catholic Centre on Broomspring Lane, Sheffield was celebrated with Holy Mass. The opening of the church was due to the efforts of the Polish Catholic Mission in England and Wales, Parish Priest Leszek Seweryn and local parishioners.

Stories from the Polish community

Official records held in archives only tell part of the story. Much of what is known about any community and its members (and descendants) can only be told by the people themselves - through stories handed down, photographs and family papers. For example, this story of Maria Platts of Sheffield tells of her life from when she was smuggled out of Poland as a newborn baby. Published in the Sheffield Telegraph, 11 November 2021:



The late Maria Platts, a Polish wartime refugee whose family eventually settled in Sheffield, pictured on her 80th birthday last year

In memory of wartime refugee

Julia Armstrong
julia.armstrong@thestar.co.uk
@juliaarmstrong

Money is being raised for the British Red Cross in memory of a Sheffield woman who arrived by an amazing route as a wartime refugee.

Maria Platts, who died in September aged 81 after a short illness, was born in a forced labour camp in Archangel, Siberia, in 1940.

Her parents Edmund and Wanda Adamczyk were taken from east Poland by Stalin's invading troops.

Wanda had to wrap the newborn in blankets to hide her in the snow before work

to prevent Maria being discovered.

When Polish prisoners were given an amnesty in 1942, Maria, her mum, brother and aunt were sent to a Red Cross refugee camp in Tehran, Iran.

Wanda and Edmund were briefly reunited but died in action with the Polish brigade of the British army.

The family were moved to a camp in Tanzania, Africa, travelling to the UK in 1948.

They stayed on an RAF base in Cornwall and in 1951 Wanda met a Polish man, Florian, on a visit to her sister-in-law Stasia in Sheffield.

Maria arrived in the city aged 11 when her mum remar-

ried and went to Notre Dame High School.

The family lived in Thompson Road, Ecclesall.

She trained as a nurse and worked for the NHS, moving into medical research at the Royal Hallamshire Hospital and the University of Sheffield.

Maria met future husband Brian Platts in 1956. The couple wed in St Marie's Cathedral and were married for 52 years.

Brian, who died in 2013, was a beloved pantomime dame for Manor Operatic Society.

Both were involved in the group for many years and Marie appeared in the chorus.

They lived in Southgrove Road, Ecclesall, where Maria remained.

She leaves daughter Gay, son Adam, grandchildren Stanley and Ava and stepsister Danuta.

Gay said her mum wanted to support the British Red Cross work with refugees: "Getting to that Red Cross staging post in Tehran was a main turning point in her life. She wanted to remind people that refugees are people they have known for their whole life.

"We're very lucky in this country we can help people."

Maria's Just Giving page is at www.justgiving.com/fundraising/mariaplatts.

List of documents, books, photographs and other items available at Sheffield Libraries, Archives and Information

Books

David Price, *Welcome to Sheffield: A Migration History* (Ald Design and Print, 2018)
(Sheffield Local Studies Library: 304.82 S)

Roger Kershaw, *Migration Records: A Guide for Family Historians* (The National Archives, 2009)
(Sheffield Local Studies Library: 929.342 S)

Roger Kershaw, *Immigrants and Aliens - A Guide to Sources on UK Immigration and Citizenship* (The National Archives, 2004)
(Sheffield Local Studies Library: 929.341 S; Sheffield City Archives: KER/FAM TREE)

Cemeteries

Cemetery burial registers may record Polish people being buried in Sheffield. For a list of cemetery registers available at Sheffield City Archives check the collections section at www.sheffield.gov.uk/archives

Churches

The City Archives and Local Studies Library hold many archives and printed items such as newsletters, etc. from churches and chapels; some of which may have been attended by members of the Polish community.

For a detailed list of church records (including Catholic churches) at the City Archives check the collections section at www.sheffield.gov.uk/archives

Jewish people lived for nearly 1,000 years in Polish lands, forming Europe's largest Jewish community on the eve of World War Two at nearly 3.5 million people. Of those, an estimated 350,000 to 425,000 survived, and most of those ended up fleeing post-war anti-semitism. Many Poles who came to Sheffield in the 19th century and early 20th century were Polish Jews (for example Harris Leon Brown, who was Chairman of Sheffield Jewish Board of Guardians and served as President of the Sheffield Hebrew congregation. He was a prime mover in building a Synagogue in Sheffield and securing a Hebrew burial ground). For more information on researching Polish Jews, see our [Jewish Community Research Guide \(Jewish community research guide | Sheffield City Council\)](#)

There is a useful guide to Polish Jewish records on the Family Search website: [Poland Jewish Records • FamilySearch](#)

Census returns and population statistics

A UK population census has been undertaken every 10 years since 1801 (with the exception of 1941). Census returns record details of every citizen including name, address, age, marital status and birthplace. You can search these at www.ancestry.co.uk and

www.findmypast.co.uk. They are kept confidential for 100 years so the latest you can see is 1921.

By the time of the 1851 census there were many people of Polish origin living in Sheffield. This number increases decade on decade. A few example names are given below:

1851 Census

- Tobiasz Gertman, age 21, hawker of jewellery, born c.1830 Poland (Broomhall Street)
- Himen Hart, age 38, traveller, born c.1813 Poland (Woodhouse Lane)
- J. Lerzerynstey, age 22, hawker, born c.1829 Poland (Lambert Street)
- Abraham Rosenthal, age 47, comb maker, born c.1804 Poland (Pond Hill)

1861 Census

- Marcelle Matuszewski, age 30, silver filer, Polish exile, born 1831 Poland (Ostrich Inn, Mitchell Street)
- Vincent Werminski, age 46, commercial clerk in the steel trade, born 1815 Poland (Hanover Street)
- Davis Levy, age 44, pawnbroker, born 1817 Poland (West Bar)

1881 Census

- Jacob Lasky, age 35, master tailor, born c.1860 Poland (Silver Head Street)
- Harris Schwertzer, age 36, glazier, born c.1845 Poland (Silver Head Street)
- Samuel Hoffman, age 51, herbalist, born c.1830 Poland (Silver Street)

The 1851 census for **Liverpool** gives the names of the Polish exiles who arrived from Turkey in March 1851 (a number of whom travelled on to Sheffield).

Parish or Township of <i>Liverpool</i>		Ecclesiastical District of <i>St. Bartholomew</i>		City or Borough of <i>Liverpool</i>			Town of <i>Liverpool</i>		Village of	
Name of Street, Place, or Road, and Name or No. of House	Name and Surname of each Person who abode in the house, on the Night of the 30th March, 1851	Relation to Head of Family	Condition	Age of		Rank, Profession, or Occupation	Where Born	Whether Blind, Deaf, or Lame		
				Males	Females					
	<i>Vincent Luranicki</i>		<i>ll</i>	<i>21</i>		<i>Private Caval.</i>	<i>Poland</i>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	<i>Leopold Koscilski</i>		<i>ll</i>	<i>23</i>		<i>Serj^t</i>	<i>do</i>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	<i>Joseph Furthum</i>		<i>ll</i>	<i>42</i>		<i>do</i>	<i>do</i>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	<i>Mushin Mervinski</i>		<i>ll</i>	<i>30</i>		<i>Sub. Lieut.</i>	<i>do</i>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	<i>Jacobi Harkender</i>		<i>ll</i>	<i>26</i>		<i>Serj^t</i>	<i>do</i>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	<i>Kawier Motodryski</i>		<i>ll</i>	<i>22</i>		<i>Private</i>	<i>Infan.</i>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	<i>Charles Kusulski</i>		<i>ll</i>	<i>24</i>		<i>Serj^t</i>	<i>Caval.</i>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	<i>Michal Luranicki</i>		<i>ll</i>	<i>27</i>		<i>Private</i>	<i>Infan.</i>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	<i>Rudolph Koscilski</i>		<i>ll</i>	<i>21</i>		<i>do</i>	<i>Caval.</i>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	<i>Francis Kusil</i>		<i>ll</i>	<i>21</i>		<i>do</i>	<i>do</i>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	<i>Stanis. Lima</i>		<i>ll</i>	<i>29</i>		<i>Lieut.</i>	<i>Infan.</i>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	<i>Francis Chreit</i>		<i>ll</i>	<i>21</i>		<i>Serj^t</i>	<i>Caval.</i>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	<i>Joseph Luranicki</i>		<i>ll</i>	<i>23</i>		<i>Private</i>	<i>do</i>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	<i>Adolphus Kusilski</i>		<i>ll</i>	<i>27</i>		<i>do</i>	<i>do</i>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	<i>Joseph Stanis</i>		<i>ll</i>	<i>24</i>		<i>Serj^t</i>	<i>Infan.</i>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	<i>Joseph Kusilski</i>		<i>ll</i>	<i>24</i>		<i>Private</i>	<i>Caval.</i>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	<i>Stanislas</i>		<i>ll</i>	<i>26</i>		<i>do</i>	<i>do</i>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	<i>Antony Manuyle</i>		<i>ll</i>	<i>26</i>		<i>do</i>	<i>do</i>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	<i>Peter Kusilski</i>		<i>ll</i>	<i>26</i>		<i>Serj^t</i>	<i>do</i>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	<i>Jan Stanis Kusilski</i>		<i>ll</i>	<i>26</i>		<i>Private</i>	<i>do</i>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Total										
										Total of Persons.. <i>26</i>

The 1939 Register (containing details of every resident in the UK) is also available via www.findmypast.co.uk

Published statistical reports, which include data on ethnic origin (but not generally broken down by nationality), are available up to the latest census (2021). Copies of statistical reports to 1991 are available at the Reference and Information and Local Studies libraries in the Central Library. Later ones are available online.

Electoral Registers

Many UK electoral registers from c.1832 onwards are available to search on FindMyPast [England & Wales Electoral Registers 1832-1932 | findmypast.co.uk](https://www.findmypast.co.uk) and also Ancestry.com [UK, Electoral Registers, 2003-2010 | Ancestry®](https://www.ancestry.com)

UK electoral registers (edited versions) from 2002 onwards are available to search online on a number of websites including [Search for People, Businesses and Places - 192.com](https://www.192.com)

Registers for Sheffield (c.1841 onwards) are available at Sheffield Local Studies Library. For more information see [Electoral Registers archive \(sheffield.gov.uk\)](https://www.sheffield.gov.uk)

- There were no registers compiled between 1914-1920 or between 1939-1945.
- Until 1969 you had to be aged 21 to be on the register. After that date, those aged 18 were included.
- From 2002 onwards people could opt out from the published version for privacy reasons.

Emigration / Immigration

You can search the Board of Trade lists of passengers arriving in the UK (1878 - 1960) on [UK and Ireland, Incoming Passenger Lists, 1878-1960 | Ancestry®](https://www.ancestry.com) and [Passenger Lists Leaving UK 1890-1960 | findmypast.co.uk](https://www.findmypast.co.uk)

You can search the Board of Trade lists of passengers leaving the UK (1890 - 1960) on [UK and Ireland, Outward Passenger Lists, 1890-1960 | Ancestry®](https://www.ancestry.com)

Note: there are no passenger lists after 1960 and there are no passenger lists for people arriving in the UK by air.

Immigrants / non-British citizens were often referred to as 'aliens'. Certificates of alien arrivals and returns (1810-1869) are available on Ancestry.com. You can search them here: [England, Alien Arrivals, 1810-1811, 1826-1869 | Ancestry®](https://www.ancestry.com). You can also search Aliens Entry Books, 1794 - 1921 [UK, Aliens Entry Books, 1794-1921 | Ancestry®](https://www.ancestry.com)

England, Alien Arrivals, 1810-1811, 1826-1869 for B De Wiercinski

HO 3 Home Office: Aliens Act 1836: Returns and Papers > Piece 89-1857 Oct-Dec

A LIST OF ALIENS.

I, the undersigned, being Master of the *Panther* to the Port of London, do, in compliance with the Provisions of an Act of Parliament, passed in the 6th William IV. Cap. 11, hereby declare, that the following is a full and true Account, to the best of my knowledge, of all Aliens who are now on board my said Ship or Vessel, or have landed herefrom in this Realm, with their Names, Rank, Occupation, and Description.

Broker's Name *G. W. Wain* Master's Name *B. De Wiercinski*

No.	Christian and Surnames Prenoms et Noms Name und Nachname	Quality Profession Beschäftigung	Native Country Pays de Naissance Vaterland
1	<i>B. De Wiercinski</i>	<i>Militaire</i>	<i>Poland</i>
2	<i>B. De Wiercinski</i>	<i>neg.</i>	<i>France</i>
3	<i>Frederick Wiercinski</i>	<i>gouverneur</i>	<i>de la ville de</i>
4	<i>David Auguste</i>	<i>de Blantien de Bouviers sans titres</i>	

Example of an 'alien arrival' (non-British citizen) from www.ancestry.com - B[ertold] De Wiercinski (of Poland) in the England, Alien Arrivals, 1810-1811, 1826-1869 - he departed from Boulogne, France arriving in London on 19 Oct 1857 onboard the *Panther* (*The National Archives; London, England; Class: Ho 3; Piece: 89*) [interestingly, Wiercinski became naturalised in 1854 so was no longer an 'alien' at this date].

Sheffield City Archives has registers of aliens for Sheffield and Rotherham, 1947-1997 (ref. 2004/79) but you need special permission to access these. Contact us for further details.

For further information see the National Archives guides [Emigration and emigrants - The National Archives](#) and [Immigration and immigrants - The National Archives](#)

Miscellaneous (in date order)

Wentworth Woodhouse Muniments (Burke Papers): Letter from A 'friend in Poland' to F. Bukaty, 4 Nov 1791
(*Sheffield City Archives: WWM/Bk P/4/1/42*)

Wentworth Woodhouse Muniments (Burke Papers): Letter to Edmund Burke from the King of Poland, 12 Jun 1793.
(*Sheffield City Archives: WWM/Bk P/1/2829*)

Letters written to Edward Carpenter by Waclaw Meyer, of Varsovic, Poland, 7 Dec 1901 (seeking permission to translate 'Homogenic Love' into Polish (*Sheffield City Archives: Carpenter/Mss/270/154*), (and thanking him for permission to do the translation, but noting that publication might be difficult due to Russian censorship laws) (*Sheffield City Archives: Carpenter/Mss/270/155*) and Max Flint, a Polish Jew who had lived at Carpenter's house at Millthorpe, Derbyshire for a time, 1893-1901 (25 letters) (*Sheffield City Archives: Carpenter/Mss/364*).

Newscutting obituary (with photograph) of Mr John Figorski, titled 'Stirring story of a son of Poland' and a 'notable Sheffielder', *Sheffield Telegraph*, 14 Feb 1912
(*Sheffield City Archives: UCR/21/3/1/18*)

Records of M.M. Bell and Sons, Boxmakers, Sheffield, 1819 - 1879
(*Sheffield City Archives: SY284*)

Includes documents relating to the business partnership between Edwin James Bell and his brother-in-law, John Figorski (Bell and Figorski), 1872-1877; also notes by J A Figorski on the Bell and Figorski families (*Sheffield City Archives: SY284/B16/2-3*)

Records of Abraham Simon Graham (birth name Abraham Simon Guttenberg) (1872 - 1958), Waterproof Garment Dealer, Sheffield - the eldest surviving son of 14 children of Jewish parents: Aaron Guttenberg (c.1846 - 1911) and his wife Bertha (c. 1846 - 1921). Aaron and Bertha Guttenberg originated from the town of Rajgród, Poland at a time when it was under control of Tsarist Russia and appear to have come to England fleeing persecution for their Jewish faith in the 1860s, [20th cent.]
(*Sheffield City Archives: X591; X730*)

Programme for War Emergency Concerts held at Albert Hall, Sheffield [to raise funds for the following causes: Paralysed and Disabled Soldiers and Sailors (Star and Garter Fund), British Red Cross Society and Wounded Soliders' Comforts (Sheffield), Soldiers and Sailors Blinded in the War (St Dunstan's), Serbian Relief Fund and Polish Victims' Relief Fund, 5 Oct - 7 Dec 1916.
(*Sheffield City Archives: X836/2/3/1*)

Nether Edge Hospital - Certificate of registration as an alien, 1947 City of Sheffield Police, Aliens Department: certificate issued under the Aliens Order, 1920, to a Polish man, Stanislaus Wojcik, possibly a patient who died in the hospital; contains later endorsement stamps (1948, 1951) from Rotherham Police and Cardiff Immigration Officer.
(*Sheffield City Archives: NHS21/5/21/3*) [restricted access item]

Amalgamated Engineering Union (AEU), Sheffield and District Branch Secretaries Association, minutes, 8 Jun 1947 and 10 Aug 1947 - discussion about Polish people joining the engineering trade, and their exclusion from AEU membership.
(*Sheffield City Archives: X292/2/1*)

National Coal Board / British Coal Corporation - North Eastern and Yorkshire Division, staff records, 1944 - 1947 and 1952 - 1956.
Includes reference to Polish employees (and some Indian, German and Ukrainian workers).
(*Sheffield City Archives: BCC/13/5/1 and BCC/13/8*)

National Coal Board / British Coal Corporation - North Eastern and Yorkshire Division, file regarding closure of collieries, 1947 - 1948
Mentions temporary Polish workers at Stocksbridge/Barnsley.
(*Sheffield City Archives: BCC/10/52*)

National Coal Board / British Coal Corporation - North Eastern and Yorkshire Division, file regarding foreign labour, 1948 - 1954
(*Sheffield City Archives: BCC/12/3/4*)

Records of Councillor Samuel Hartley Marshall, Lord Mayor of Sheffield, 1943-1944 - photograph album includes pictures of: Exhibition of Polish paintings, Graves Art Gallery, 5 Oct 1955 (p.3); Polish delegation, Oct 1944 (p.5)
(*Sheffield City Archives: X487/2*)

The photographs and newscuttings relating to Alderman Bingham's Mayoral year, 1954-1955, include a photograph of The Polish Club - opening ceremony, 20 Nov 1954 (p.117)
(*Sheffield City Archives: LD2479/1; now on Picture Sheffield: arc07075-arc07077*)

Sheffield Magistrates' Court, Register of Clubs - Polish Ex-Servicemen Club (1-3 Dover Road) (p.28), 1951-1954 (*Sheffield City Archives: MC/20/3/2*) and Licensing Files - Polish Ex-Servicemen's Club, 1 Dover Road (file number 470), 1962-2001 (*Sheffield City Archives: MC/20/5/447*) - file includes: record of licence holders, 1966 - 1995; plans, 1962 - Feb 1986.

Sheffield City Council: Environmental Planning (later Environment and Planning) Committee Minutes and Papers - Petitions, Polish Club, noise nuisance, 1976-1977, p.19 (*Sheffield City Archives: CA-EPC/4*); Petitions re. complaints etc. relating to, Polish Club, 1976, p.189 (*Sheffield City Archives: CA-EPC/3*).

Records of Alderman Albert Smith - includes Mayoral Year photograph album with picture of students from Ghana and Poland on a visit to Sheffield, 1964.
(*Sheffield City Archives: MD7725/2*)

LEA Forms 7(i), Returns of Immigrant Pupils in Primary, Secondary and Special schools, 1969 [statistical information, including number of Polish students].
(*Sheffield City Archives: CA764/1*)

Diocesan faculty records: Kilnhurst, St Thomas - Petition, citation and correspondence regarding reserving a portion of ground in the churchyard for Marian Feliks Walerian Bajorek and Wieslawa Zosia Bajorek [Polish], 1968
(*Sheffield City Archives: DIOC/FAC/1493*)

Polish Ex-Combatants Association in Sheffield and Manchester, *We admire "Mazowsze" but we condemn terror in PRL!*, 1976
(*Sheffield Local Studies Library: MP 1760 M*)

Frank Hooley (1923 - 2015), Labour MP for Heeley, Sheffield: Correspondence relating to national and international issues including: outsourcing of work abroad; immigration including cases of refused entry (from Poland and Pakistan), 1977-1978 (*Sheffield City Archives: MPB/1/1*); Completed constituency papers (A-C) - correspondence on immigration from Poland, 1977-1978 (*Sheffield City Archives: MPB/2/8*) - This item contains personal information about individuals and their circumstances and is restricted under the General Data Protection Regulation. Please refer to the Archivist for advice.

Jane MacKillop, *Ethnic Minorities in Sheffield*, [revised and expanded version of Immigrant communities in Sheffield (1977)], Adult Education Department, Sheffield, [1981]
(*Sheffield Local Studies Library: 325.1 SQ*)

BBC Radio Sheffield audio recordings of broadcasts/programmes: NUM. reaction from various Trade Unions to Arthur Scargill's attack on Polish Solidarity, Sep 1983 (*Sheffield City Archives: SY425/A/8309/15*); NUM. Monthly meeting discusses Arthur Scargill's attack on Polish Trade Union, Solidarity and accepts his explanation, Sep 1983 (*Sheffield City Archives: SY425/A/8309/20*); Miners' strike, 1984. British Steel Corporation. Bring Polish coal to Scunthorpe steelworks 29 May 1984 (*Sheffield City Archives: SY425/A/8405/4*).

Safuran Ara, *Survey Report on Community Language Teaching Classes*, unpublished typescript: 1984
(*Sheffield Local Studies Library: PAMP 311 SQ*)

Kucewicz, Anna M., *The Immigrant Experience: The Reception of Polish Refugees and their Adaptation to Life in Sheffield post-1945* (1988)
(*Sheffield Local Studies Library: 362.87 SSTQ*)

50-LECIE KOŁA SPK: 1947-1997: Sheffield / [Stowarzyszenie Polskich Kombatantów-Koło nr 439] [Polish Combatant's Association (Wielka Brytania). Branch No. 439 (Sheffield)], 1997 (Sheffield Local Studies Library: 369.186 SSTQ)

Witold Szablewski and Michelle Winslow, *Polish Community Cultural Awareness: Information and Learning Pack*, 2000 (Sheffield Local Studies Library: 305.89185 SQ)

Bill Hawksford, *The Polish Camp* [description of the author's experience as a British soldier attached to the Polish Resettlement Corp camp at Chapelton, Sheffield in 1947 and his recollections of visiting Chapelton again in 1992], undated - the account refers to Bracken Hill (Burncross). Bracken Hill and Potter Hill (High Green) were labour camps (the latter was known as Working Battalion 127 (Italians)). (Sheffield Local Studies Library: MP 7815 M)

The Honorary Consulate of the Republic of Poland, at 4 Palmerston Road, Sheffield, (one of only four honorary consuls in Great Britain) was afforded full diplomatic status. Dr Graham White was the Honorary Consul from 1996 to 2007 - diary of the Consul, 1996 - 2006. (Sheffield City Archives: X633/1)

Sheffield Theatres, *Journeys to the City* - project to gather stories from groups and individuals about their journeys to and within the city, [2008] (Sheffield Local Studies Library: 307.76 S)

Ian Fitzgerald, *A Moving Target: The Informational Needs of Polish Migrant Workers in Yorkshire and the Humber*, Northumbria University, 2008 (Sheffield Local Studies Library: 304.809 SSTQ)

Community Knowledge Profiles (Sheffield City Council, 2006, 2014) (Sheffield Local Studies Library: 305.8 SQ/SSTQ)

Sheffield City Council, Asylum Team, *New Europeans in Central Sheffield*, 2011 (Sheffield Local Studies Library: 304.82 SQ)

Abraham, Jeremy, *Arrivals: Making Sheffield Home* (Northend Creative, 2016) (Sheffield Local Studies Library: 304.8428 SF)

Name indexes

References to Poles in Sheffield will be spread across a wide range of records - schools, churches, courts, prisons, businesses and hospitals etc. A small percentage of these records have been indexed by name. This index is available to search on FindMyPast here: <https://bit.ly/3dYIWeR>

Entries in the name index can be cross referenced with census returns, newspapers and electoral registers to find out more about the individuals and other family members.

A few examples from the name index include:

- Natan Laukrskie, Polish hawker (age 36), charged with stealing a bowl of wash leathers and one shirt, 1861 (Sheffield City Archives: Police Charge Book, SY295/7/1/10)

- Samuel Wolfshon (also Wolfshaw/Woolfson/Wolfson), [Polish Jew, born in Russian Poland c.1832], Police Constable (1861-1863)
(*Police Conduct and Commendation Book, 1861-1863, Sheffield City Archives: SY295/3/1; Watch Committee minutes, 1861, Sheffield City Archives: CA-WAC/1/4*)

Another useful name index to Sheffield records is available

<https://www.sheffieldindexers.com/>

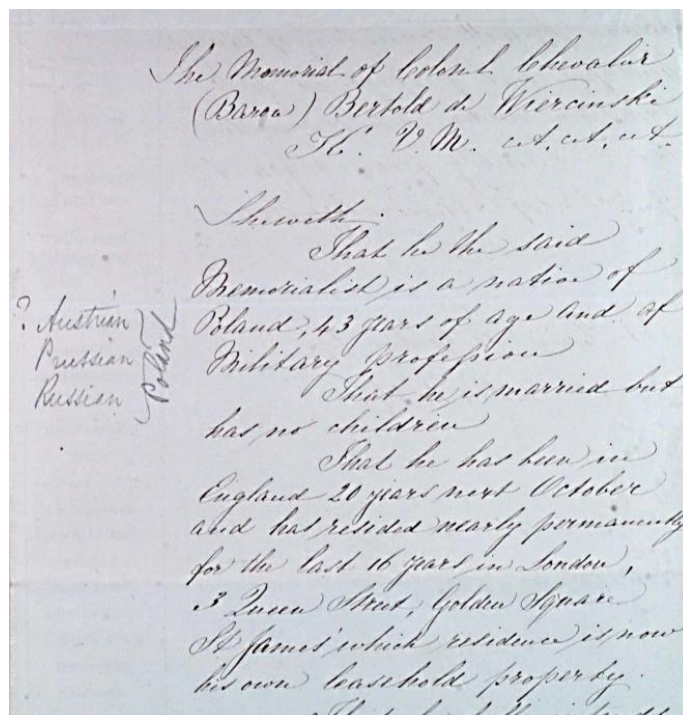
Another useful name index for Polish exiles in Britain has been compiled by Nicolas Jouault (@NicolasJouault) here: <https://jouault.wordpress.com/category/polish/>

Naturalisation

The *London, Edinburgh and Belfast Gazettes* record details of naturalisation and changes of name. They can be searched online [London, Edinburgh and Belfast Gazettes Online - GenGuide](#)

Naturalisation case papers 1801-1871 (naturalisation petitions completed by individuals applying to become British citizens between 1801 and 1871) are searchable online:

[Naturalisation case papers 1801-1871 - The National Archives](#)



Extract from Bertold de Wiercinski's naturalisation file held at The National Archives (ref. HO 1/57/1852) - this file contains petitions, letters and further biographical information on the applicant (although not all files contain as much detail).

You can request a search of certificates of British citizenship 1949-1986 via the National Archives [Request a search for a certificate of British citizenship 1949-1986 - Contact us \(nationalarchives.gov.uk\)](#)

For further information see [Naturalisation, registration and British citizenship - The National Archives](#)

Newspapers

The British Library British Newspaper Archive (BNA) website includes over forty-six million pages from over 700 UK national and local newspapers (including a number of Sheffield titles, 1819 - c.1950). [Home | Search the archive | British Newspaper Archive](#). Access to the British Newspaper Archive is free at every Sheffield City Council Library and at the City Archives.

For example:

- ‘*Came as boy from Poland, left £66,690*’ - short piece on Louis Hyman of Dobcroft Road, Sheffield who had arrived in Poland 50 years ago as a boy of 15 years, who had founded (and become joint Managing Director) of the Sheffield Cabinet Company Limited, left a sum of £66,690 upon his death. Halifax Evening Courier - Saturday 7 Feb 1953.

Sheffield Local Studies Library local newspaper cuttings collection may include articles on Poles in Sheffield, c.1950s onwards
(*Sheffield Local Studies Library: microfiche*)

In addition, microfilms of the main Sheffield titles are also available at Sheffield Local Studies Library, namely: *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 1855 - 1986; *Sheffield Telegraph* (weekly) 1989 - date; *Sheffield Independent* 1819 - 1938 and the *Star* 1873 - date

Archives of some national newspapers are available on the internet, notably *The Times* ([The Times Digital Archive \(gale.com\)](#)) and *The Guardian* ([How to access past articles from the Guardian and Observer archive | Information | The Guardian](#))

Photographs

Over 100,000 images from the Sheffield Local Studies Library and City Archives photographic collections are available to search online at www.picturesheffield.com.

Rate Books

Rate books were compiled in order to keep a record of local people's rate assessment. Rates were based on an assessment of the yearly value of a property (i.e., the annual rental /rent) and were levied to pay for local services. The ratepayer was the person responsible for paying the local taxes and could be the owner or occupier of the property.

The information contained in rate books varies according to the date and type of rate collected, but rate books generally record the names of ratepayers, listed by street, and include the following details:

- Street
- House/Court number
- Name of occupier (head of household only)
- Name of owner
- Rates (amount due, received, arrears, etc.)

Some rate books from the 19th century up to 1974 are available at Sheffield City Archives. For more information see [Rate books \(sheffield.gov.uk\)](https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/rate-books)

School Records

School admission registers can be useful for studying settlement patterns in the city. Sheffield City Archives has such records for over 200 schools dating from the 19th century. Records from Roman Catholic schools may be worth checking. For example, there are teacher's logbooks for Hillsborough Sacred Heart Roman Catholic School, Oct 1903 - Jun 1956 (*Sheffield City Archives: microfilm A/200*)

For a detailed list of school records at the City Archives check the collections section at www.sheffield.gov.uk/archives. Contact us for further information on how to access these items.

Theses and dissertations

Janine Hanson, 'Sympathy, antipathy, hostility. British attitudes to non-repatriable Poles and Ukrainians after the Second World War and to the Hungarian refugees of 1956', (submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at The University of Sheffield, Department of History), June 1995

(*Sheffield Local Studies Library: 323.631 E VOL.1&2*)

Accessible online: <https://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/14465/2/364384Vol2.pdf>

Michelle Winslow, 'War, resettlement, rooting and ageing: an oral history study of Polish emigres in Britain', submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, University of Sheffield, Department of History, March 2001 (includes interviews with first generation Poles, many from Sheffield)

(*Sheffield Local Studies Library: 325.21 SQ*)

Accessible online: <https://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/6127/1/504473.pdf>

Tamara Gryszel-Fieldsned and Kesia Reeve, 'The Housing Pathways of Polish New Immigrants in Sheffield', Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research, November 2007

(*Sheffield Local Studies Library: 363.51 SQ*)

Accessible online: https://www4.shu.ac.uk/research/cresr/sites/shu.ac.uk/files/housing-pathways-polish-immigrants_0.pdf

Anna Listwon, 'The public library service provision to the Polish Community living in Sheffield' (thesis submitted to the University of Sheffield, for an MA in Librarianship), 2007. (*Sheffield Local Studies Library: 027.44274 SSTQ*)

Anna Listwon and Barbara Sen, 'Public library services and the Polish community in England: case study', *Library Review*, Vol. 58, Issue 4, Apr 2009 - the paper reviewed the needs of the Polish community (established and newly arrived Poles) and how those needs are met by the public library service. A case study method was used in partnership with Sheffield City Libraries.

Accessible online: <https://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/9299/>

Trade directories / telephone directories

Trade directories from the 18th century onwards list businesses and private residents in Sheffield. Those from the 1820s onwards in particular may list Polish families / businesses. Similarly, telephone directories of private residents and the Yellow Pages for businesses may reveal relevant references (*Sheffield Local Studies Library and Sheffield City Archives*)

Library and Archive collections held elsewhere

The National Archives holds documents of the UK Government. A search of their catalogue <http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/> may reveal particularly relevant files.

The Archives Hub contains catalogues describing archives held in universities and colleges in the UK <https://archiveshub.jisc.ac.uk/>

War Office: Army Records Centre (Polish Section): Records concerning Polish Forces and Polish Resettlement Corps (WO 315) - records of the Army Records Centre (Polish Section) concerning Polish forces and the Polish Resettlement Corps (PRC), set up in 1946 to ease the transition of Poles serving with Allied forces to civilian life in Britain or abroad
<https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C14519>

Useful Websites (all accessed January 2023)

'Poland in Exile' website, a website dedicated to those who left Poland to fight against the Nazis and Russian Communism during the Second World War
<http://www.polandinexile.com/index.html>

Compilation of useful resources by Frank Pleszak about The Polish II Corps (Drugi Korpus Wojska Polskiego), 1943-1947 (a major tactical and operational unit of the Polish Armed Forces in the West during World War Two): <https://pleszak.blog/2018/09/05/useful-resources-for-polish-2-corps-information/>

Polish Catholic Centre in Sheffield: <https://lpcmsheffield.com/>

Sheffield City Archives and Local Studies service collects and preserves original records and printed material relating to Sheffield and the surrounding area.

The information dates from the 12th century to the present and relates to Sheffield, South Yorkshire and north Derbyshire.

Included are extensive collections of books • pamphlets • photographs • church registers • newspapers • census records • minutes • diaries • films • maps • deeds • records from schools • hospitals • businesses and charities • family estates • personal papers etc.

Our facilities include:

Study areas • expert staff on hand to help you make the most of your visit • a library of reference books • photocopying and photography services • free Internet access • free WiFi • microform machines and printers • catalogues and indexes • on-line image library.

Adding to our collections

Sheffield Libraries and Archives seeks to preserve information about events in our city's history. If you have photographs or personal papers that may be worth preserving please consider safeguarding them for current and future generations by placing them in the care of Sheffield Libraries and Archives. It is only through the generosity of individuals and organisations that we are able to have a complete record of important events in the history of Sheffield and the nation. We are interested in photographs, flyers and posters, minutes of meetings etc. For advice on record keeping and the facilities we offer please contact us (archives@sheffield.gov.uk or 0114 203 9395).

Sheffield Local Studies Library	Sheffield City Archives
1 st floor	52 Shoreham Street
Central Library	Sheffield
Surrey Street	S1 4SP
Sheffield	
S1 1XZ	
Tel: 0114 273 4753	Tel: 0114 203 9395
Email: archives@sheffield.gov.uk	Email: archives@sheffield.gov.uk
Website: www.sheffield.gov.uk/archives	Website: www.sheffield.gov.uk/archives
<p>Search our catalogues <i>(not all of the collections are fully catalogued so if you can't find what you are looking for please contact us for further advice)</i></p> <p>Local Studies Library: http://library.sheffield.gov.uk/uhtbin/webcat</p> <p>City Archives: http://www.calmview.eu/SheffieldArchives/CalmView/</p>	
<p>For 100,000+ images of Sheffield: www.picturesheffield.com</p>	
	www.sheffield.gov.uk/archives
	www.twitter.com/sheffarchives
	http://shefflibraries.blogspot.co.uk/
	www.flickr.com/photos/shefflibraries
	www.youtube.com/user/SheffieldArchives1
	www.facebook.com/shefflibraries