



History of pharmacies, healthcare and famous physicians and pharmacists from Urzędów

MAGDALENA MROCZEK¹, ANDRZEJ WRÓBEL^{1*}, MAŁGORZATA KORZENIOWSKA¹, ANNA ZAGAJA²

¹ Department of History of Medicine, Medical University of Lublin, Poland

² Department of Ethics and Human Philosophy, Medical University of Lublin, Poland

ABSTRACTS

Urzędów once had a city charter drawn up by King Władysław Jagiełło in 1405. It lost this right in 1896. This town which lies on what used to be one of the more frequented trade routes in Poland, was a city of cultural life and an important centre of regional government. It is now is a sleepy suburb living in the shadow of nearby Kraśnik. Urzędów has given birth to many famous doctors and pharmacists. The villagers must be especially proud of "Marcin of Urzędów", a graduate of Padua, Krakow, a lecturer, a doctor and the author of a treatise on pharmacology. Among the socially-aware members of the medical community, one can also list Józef Ściegienny, Alojzy Hevelke, Ludwik Laszky, Mirosław Borkiewicz and Ignacy Wośko. While they are more locally famous, they, none-the-less, contributed to the life and fame of this now sleepy town. The first mention of a pharmaceutical enterprise within Urzędów was in the nineteenth century. It was run by Wincenty Trzeciński and was in business for two years. In 1893, Powizor of Pharmacy (Lublin) Andrzej Michalewski opened a pharmacy in a wooden building near the church. This was burnt down in 1915. The difficult times of this war coincided with Władysława Sawy being active in the pharmaceutical industry in the town. Władysława Sawy, a big-hearted man, was a true model of what a pharmacist can be. At this time, much hope was pinned upon the success of the first building raised solely as a Pharmacy. Built with public funds, it was privatized as *Marcina z Urzędowa*, and run by M. Pharm Henryk Dąbrowski. This man is a passionate historian of Urzędów and his interests, coupled with broad popular support in the town for raising awareness of its historical roots, aids anyone interested in the town and region of Urzędów.

Keywords: Urzędów, pharmaceutical industry, local history

As part of the research on the history of pharmacies in the Lublin province, the authors would like to present the history of the profession in Urzędów and a brief glimpse of the lives of its pharmacists, who were very dedicated to their professional work and to the local community.

Urzędów is a village in the Kraśnik County. It is located along the narrow river known as the "Urzędówka". This once formed a large overflow area that performed a defense function and was closely connected with the setting up of a fishing guild.

The name "Urzędów" first appeared in historical documents in the beginning of the XV century [9]. Previously, this settlement was called "Zaborzyce". In 1405, King Władysław Jagiełło gave Urzędów its city rights. The development of the city was favored by a busy trade route connecting the Polish capital, Krakow with Lithuania and Ruthenia [14]. Moreover, as the king's property, the city was endowed with many privileges.

In connection with the increase of the towns-people's wealth, much importance was placed on the possibility of educating the younger generations. Because Urzędów was

a royal city, it did not have to fulfill the usual obligations of serfdom, therefore, talented young men were able to leave the city and become priests, bureaucrats and craftsmen. The most prominent of these were educated at the famous Academy of Krakow [7]. As many as 25 young citizens of Urzędów studied at the University, including Marcin of Urzędów (ca. 1500–1573) – a priest, botanist, physician and the author of the "Polish Herbarium"; Jan Michałowicz (ca. 1530–1583) – sculptor and pupil of the famous Wit Stwos (his sculptures are found in the Wawel Cathedral); Józef z Urzędowa – a professor of the Academy of Krakow; and Leon Urlich (1811–1855), who translated all of Shakespeare's works into Polish.

Unfortunately, the mid-seventeenth century ended the period of Urzędów's grandness. In connection with the transfer of the Polish capital from Krakow to Warsaw (1597), changes in the trade routes also occurred. Hence, merchants stopped visiting Urzędów, and due to this, the city lost its trading position and began to be considered solely as an agricultural town. This was followed by a series of wars that ruin the city. In 1648, as a result of the invasion of Chmielnicki's Cossacks, the city was plundered and burnt to the ground. In 1657, what was left of Urzędów was occupied by the Swedish army and anything of value was carried off. In addition to war, plagues and epidemics decimated the city's residents. After the third partition of Poland, Urzędów was placed un-

Corresponding author

* Department of History of Medicine,
Medical University of Lublin, 18 Szkolna Str., 20-124 Lublin, Poland
e-mail address: wand@bg.umlub.pl

der Austrian rule, and this lasted until 1809. The period in which Urzędów was under the Duchy of Warsaw and the Congress of Poland was also harsh for the city. Moreover, the campaigns of Napoleon's army (1812) induced poverty, further hardship and even starvation amongst the town's people. Citizens of Urzędów also participated in the November (1830–1831) and the January Uprisings (1863–1864). This later resulted in the victors penalizing its residents and hence furthering the full decline in the city's fortunes. In 1869, the Moscow Government decided to declassify the city to being a mere village.

World War I led Urzędów to a complete ruin. The year 1915 was especially harsh to the village, when between July 9 and 11, being on the front line, much damage was caused. In these three days, approximately 371 homes and over 1000 other buildings, including a church and the "Jagiellońska" school, were burnt down as a result of artillery fire and by deliberate arson by both the Russians and Germans. The conflagration did not even spare the pharmacy located near the church.

Despite its ill-fortunes, there were many famous and respectable scientists, physicians and pharmacists who were born in Urzędów. Among them are Marcin of Urzędów, Józef Ściegienny, Alojzy Hevelke and Ignacy Piotr Wośko. Thus, the writers of this paper, in the subsequent sections, will provide a brief biography of these interesting individuals. Following this, the authors will provide the reader with a brief history of medical care in Urzędów.

Marcin of Urzędów (1500–1573)

Marcin of Urzędów was born around 1500–1502, in Urzędów. In 1517, he was accepted as a student at the Academy of Krakow. Following his studies, until 1528, he lived in Sandomierz, and most probably there, he was ordained as a priest. From 1529 to 1533, he taught physics, mathematics, logic and philosophy at the Academy of Krakow, where he was eventually appointed its dean. The years of 1533 and 1534 were a time spent on medical and natural science studies in Padua, where he made a number of friendships amongst many prominent doctors and scientists. The next years were spent traveling, and he visited Venice, Switzerland and Hungary. During his numerous trips, he conducted botanical research, categorizing the rustic plants and herbs sold in pharmacies.

In 1544, he became a pastor in Urzędów and from 1546 onwards till his retirement, he took over the parish in Modliborzyce. He was also a court physician, as well as the director of a hospital near the Holy Spirit Church in Sandomierz. A caring physician, he treated the sick during the time of pestilence.

While back in Poland, he continued his research into botany, and he set up an herb garden in Sandomierz where he grew the plants described later in his herbarium. On the basis of his considerable knowledge of plants obtained between the years 1542 and 1557, he wrote the "Polish Herbarium" (full original title: "*Herbarz polski, to jest o przyrodzeniu ziół i drzew rozmaitych i innych rzeczy do lekarstw należących, księgi dwoje, doktora Marcina z Urzędowa, kanonika niekiedy sandomierskiego i J. o hrabi pana Jana*

z Tarnowa kasztelana krakowskiego, hetmana i wielkiego koronnego").

This work can be considered as being the first Polish textbook of pharmacognosy. Moreover, it was a very innovative piece of work as for those times. Indeed, we may say that the work meets today's standards for a scientific work: in its introduction – a list of the authors which the author cited; in the preface – the aim of the work; in the main text – two sections describing medical substances, errata, nomenclature of Latin names of herbs and diseases; and in the end – a prohibition on reprinting his Herbarium.

Almost all of the species of plants described are presented as carefully executed wood block engravings which reveal the morphological characteristics of the indicative plant parts. What is more, their Latin and Polish names are placed in alphabetical order. Furthermore, their synonymous names



Fig. 1. The title page of the "Polish Herbarium"
(source: http://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plik:Herbarz_Polski.jpg)



Fig. 2. The commemorative plaque at the entrance to the Healthcare Centre in Urzędów
(photo M. Mroczek)

are provided. In addition, disease entities on which certain plants may be useful are placed as side margin notes [8].

Józef Ściegienny (1907–1953)

Józef Ściegienny was born in Wilkołaz in 1907. He studied medicine at the University of Jan Kazimierz in Lvov. Upon graduation in 1933, he took up a position at the Surgical Clinic of the University of Warsaw. After the outbreak of war, he returned to his home town and worked in the Healthcare Center in Urzędów. Despite the danger, he showed great love for his country, undertaking underground activities. He trained nurses and gave unofficial medical assistance. Betrayed, he was arrested by order of the Regional Security Office (along with the Urzędów pharmacist Władysław Sawa) and imprisoned in the Lublin Castle. After being released from prison, he worked with Professor Skubiszewski in the Orthopedic Clinic of the Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin. After this, he worked at the Orthopedic Clinic of the University of Warsaw. He died suddenly in 1953, on his way to Urzędów [12].

Alojzy Hevelke (1911–1973)

Alojzy Hevelke was born in Gdańsk in 1911. His paternal family, the Hevelke, are the direct descendents of Jan Heveliusz, the famous Gdańsk astronomer [17]. Alojzy Hevelke studied at the University of Poznań, and he received his medical diploma in 1939. After his studies, he worked in a hospital in Kalisz, Chełm. What is more, he worked as an assistant at the University of Poznań, until he came to Urzędów. Here, he became the head of the Healthcare Centre. During the war, he undertook underground activity and secretly taught nursing. Moreover, he treated patients and the wounded, and gave away free medicines to everyone, regardless of their organizational affiliation. Amongst his other duties, he was a physician in the Rolling Bearings Factory FŁT – Kraśnik S.A. Furthermore, he was the instigator and organizer behind the building of a Hospital in Kraśnik Fabryczny. In addition, he worked as a teacher in a gymnasium in Urzędów and in a school for adults in Popkowice. He also provided many free lectures and training courses for the residents of Urzędów, sponsored by the Polish Red Cross. It can be said that he did not treat his profession as a mere source of income, but as a way of helping others. That is why he is considered the “Judym of the second half of the twentieth century”. He died in 1973.

Mirosław Bortkiewicz (1924–1989)

He actively participated in the organization of the building of the Healthcare Centre in Urzędów. In addition, he initiated the “White Sundays” and Medical Consultation Days during the town’s Healthcare Week. He was a soldier of the Home Army and an officer of the Polish Army [15].

Ignacy Piotr Wośko (1925–1997)

He was born in 1925 in Urzędów. In 1970, he became the director of the Pediatric Orthopedic Institute of the Medical University. As part of his duties, he worked as an associate professor and then from 1991, as a university professor. He was the president of the Association of the Urzędów Lands. Among his other duties, he organized Urzędów’s Healthcare

week. Ignacy Piotr Wośko, like Alojzy Hevelke, was a real patriot and he fought in the ranks of the Polish Home Army [13].

Leszek Kuś (1939–1997)

He came from Urzędów. He was a graduate of Medical Academy in Lublin. For over 30 years, he was associated with the Department of Tuberculosis and Lung Diseases, since 1993 as associate professor. He was a author of many scientist works especially in the field of allergology. He also found time for activities in the Society of Urzędów Earth. As a good organizer, kind, selfless man, was well liked by colleagues, students and patients [1]

The history of healthcare in Urzędów

Historically, records indicate that there were two hospitals functioning in Urzędów: the Hospital of the Holy Spirit and St. Leonard’s Hospital. The first one was built in 1447 and it was located on Krakowskie Przedmieście Street (currently, Wodna Street). It was constructed of wood, and adjacent to the hospital was a small chapel, these two buildings creating a single, coherent architectural structure. Unfortunately, the building was burnt down during the Swedish invasion, being rebuilt later.

There is no doubt that in the thriving mid-seventeenth century, the royal city of Urzędów had as permanent residents, at least one physician, who could count, due to the wealth of the townspeople, on having many “clients”. At the end of the sixteenth century, residents could also receive treatment from at least one barber-surgeon, who set broken bones, performed operations and treated wounds [16].

In 1937, the Healthcare Center in Urzędów was set up, together with the Station of Mother and Child Care, the Anti-tuberculosis Clinic and the Anti-Venereal Clinic. During that time, apart from physicians, it was also possible to receive help from first-aid men, mid-wives and nurses.

Special attention should be paid to the physicians who worked during the time of the Nazi-German occupation. Among these were Alojzy Hevelke, who helped to treat wounded soldiers, Dr Józef Ściegienny who aided the soldiers of the Home Army, and Dr Ludwig Laszky Israel – a physician of Jewish origin who was murdered, probably in Sobidor.

Right after the war, the Healthcare Center was most probably located in a privately-owned residence, and in 1955, it was transferred to a community-owned building. It was not only until 1989, at the initiative of Dr. Mirosław Bortkiewicz, that a building was constructed especially for the purposes of the Healthcare Centre. At this time, opposite to the Centre, from the initiative of M. Pharm. Henryk Dąbrowski, a pharmacy was built.

History of Urzędów’s pharmacies

The first recorded mention of an individual attempting to set up a pharmacy in Urzędów, appears in the year 1882. Wincenty Trzeciński, a practicing pharmacist from Kraśnik wanted to set up branch pharmacy in Urzędów. However, the city authorities did not agree his request (dated January 24, 1884). They quixotically justified their decision by noting that the pharmacy in Kraśnik was located only 8 verst

away, the one in Bełżyce, 23L, and the one in Opole, 20 verst from Urzędów. Moreover, since there was no physician in Urzędów at the time, no need for a pharmacy existed.

Finally, on August 28, 1885 the city authorities relented and agreed that the right of opening a pharmacy should be given to Wincenty Trzcіński. Hence, on January 29, 1886, the Gubernya Government agreed to open a rural pharmacy in Urzędów.

This pharmacy was, however, only open for less than 2 years. In a report dated December 2, 1888, a physician from Janów County wrote that the pharmacy in Urzędów was closed. There was no doctor in the village, thus leading a pharmacy turned out to be unprofitable [3].



Fig. 3. Pharmacy labels from the Wincenty Trzcіński's pharmacy, 1887

(source: The State Archive of Lublin)

On February 28, 1893, by the power of the Governor of the Lublin Area, again permission was granted to open a rural pharmacy in Urzędów, this time by Prowizor Andrzej Michalewski (1855–1912) [4]. His pharmacy was located in the vicinity of the rectory. It was a wooden building with a porch and a basement. Unfortunately, during the First World War, in 1915, the building was burnt down.



Fig. 4. A fragment of the Urzędów market square with the pharmacy in the background, 1913

(source: Photoclub of The Community Cultural Centre in Urzędów)

In 1916, Władysław Sawa came to Urzędów, where he decided to assist Michalina Michalewka in running the pharmacy after the death of her husband. Because the original Michalewski pharmacy was burnt down, he re-established it,

renting at a different location at his own expense. In 1917, as a partner, he received a concession for running a pharmacy that was issued by the German occupation authorities. From that time until his retirement, with the consent of the heirs of the Michalewski family, he ran the pharmacy on his own. In 1925, Władysław Sawa purchased the pharmacy concession in full and became its legal owner.



Fig. 5. The basement of Michalewski's pharmacy

(source: private collection of The Bortkiewicz family)

The pharmacy was located in the house of Tadeusz Więckowski. At the time, the entrance was directly from the street and there was no staircase as there is today. In those times, it was possible to buy anything in the pharmacy: starting from ointments for scabies, to medications for horses. On sale too was the concocted 'Aurora face-cream', as well as perfumes produced by Sawa himself, for elegant ladies [10].

Older citizens of Urzędów remember that in the pharmacy, in full view of the customers, was an armchair on which a little dog frequently sat. In the same room, just near the entrance, Sawa placed his newly-bought bike, which was then not a common machine, and therefore aroused great curiosity, especially among the young boys visiting the pharmacy.

Władysław Sawa would ask local people and school children to collect various herbs for him. Among his requests were the leaves of birch, nettle, burdock, an assortment of rhizomes, various stems, berries, etc. and "black grains from cereal grain" – he was certainly talking about ergot.

The attic of the Elementary School located in the Rankowski suburb turned out to be the perfect place for drying the herbs. When the war broke out, there was no time to collect the last batch of drying herbs and the place became forgotten. It was not until 1990, when the building was demolished, that these herbs were re-found [11].

The furniture for the pharmacy were ordered from a renowned carpenter – Wenceslas Panas. This furniture remained in the building of the pharmacy until it was moved to the Hevelke Street. Then they were taken by Professor Głowniak to his family pharmacy "Melissa" in Lublin. They are there until this day, properly restored and preserved, giving the shop its special ambience.



Fig. 6. The view of the market square from the 50s; at the entrance to the pharmacy, in a white apron, we probably see Władysław Sawa talking with residents or his patients

(source: Photoclub of The Community Cultural Centre in Urzędów)



Fig. 7. Cabinets and shelves for storing medicines

(source: "Melisa" pharmacy in Lublin)

Władysław Sawa was born on October 5, 1882, in Adamczowice, in the Sandomierski County, in the Kieleckie Voivodeship, in an educated family. In 1893, he was accepted at a gymnasium in Sandomierz and graduated from it after finishing the fourth class. In 1898, he began his apprenticeship in a pharmacy in Radom. After meeting all the requirements, he continued gaining his pharmaceutical knowledge at the University of Doprato, from which he graduated in 1903. Prior to his time in Urzędów, he worked in pharmacies in Radom, Męciny, Kielce, Sandomierz and Kalisz [2].

In 1916, he came to Urzędów, where from January 1, 1917, he was the director of the pharmacy. During that time, there was no physician in the village, thus people turned for help to the local pharmacist, who gave advice, prepared medicaments and provided information and help. He aided the citizens of the town, not only as a professional pharmacist, but also by being involved in the social life of Urzędów. Władysław Sawa was a big hearted man. What is more, he

was also a passionate gardener. He led evening courses for adults organized by the director of a school, Michał Pękałski, who placed great emphasis on education. Władysław Sawa taught young women how to organize gardens, how to grow flowers and ornamental shrubs. During the Second World War, he took care of the ill citizens of Urzędów, the wounded, escaped prisoners, incarcerated prisoners-of-war and local citizens. He was the head chairman of the local charity organization, which made a list of those who were brought to the attention of the organization. Amongst these, they distributed food packages, clothes and medicine.

In those tragic times, many of our soldiers rotted in prison camps located in Germany. Those people also needed support and care from their compatriots. During the first three years of the war, Sawa personally sent 447 packages for 288 prisoners-of-war. What is more, in his pharmacy, there was a "box" which made it possible to communicate in conspiracy between various organizations [6].

This man considered it his duty to help others. There was nothing unusual in his behavior, a normal human reaction. What is more, he had all of his family involved in such activities. His daughter remembers that when they were short on money:

mother would sell off various objects and bought eggs, dried sausage, butter and bacon which she smoked in the garden, she also baked buns and bread. I, on the other hand was to pack all the things. I tried to get cardboard boxes and filled them with the things prepared by my mother, and sometimes when my father was asked for it, with clothing, warm underwear, and medications. And I carried these five kilogram boxes to the post office... [5].

Here, it is worth mentioning the history of a Jewish physician, Doctor Ludwik Izrael Laszky, who together with his wife Sara, came to Urzędów at the end of 1941, half a year before the action which was set at deporting all the Jews from Urzędów. He was a senior officer in the Austrian army, and he was moved to Urzędów from Vienna. Here, he was very dedicated to his professional work and mostly treated local Jews. A day before the scheduled deportation of Jews from Urzędów, Laszka was warned by one of the Home Army officers. The officer explained that the supposed labor camps were in fact, death camps. He suggested that, together with his wife, they can come to the Home Army headquarters located in the forest where there is a great need for a physician, especially with a surgical specialization such as Laszky's. To everybody's surprise, he refused to accept the offer and voluntarily went to his death. Before that, Dr Laszky gave important documents to Władysław Sawa, with a request to send them onto his family in the United States after the war.

In October 1944, Władysław Sawa was arrested and imprisoned in Lublin Castle, which served during the war as a Gestapo prison, and post-war, as a secret police prison. Although he survived the war, he was not released until June 1945. His poor diet and the poor conditions of incarceration led him to losing a leg. Still he recovered his health enough to return to running the pharmacy, and from 1951, after nationalization, he was its first director. He died on August 3, 1953.

On January 9, 1951, based on newly-enacted regulation by the Ministry of Health which pushed for the nationalization of privately-owned pharmacies, Władysław Sawa's pharmacy became public property. From then until the '90's, it went by the name "Social Pharmacy in Urzędów NR 60". This pharmacy was located in Tadeusz Więckowski's building located on 27 Rynek Street.



Fig. 8. The building at 27 Rynek Street, in which a pharmacy was located

(source: private collection of Henryk Dąbrowski)

The second directorship of the newly nationalized pharmacy was given to M. Pharm Grażyna Sawa-Adamska, the daughter of Władysław Sawa, who during her studies, had helped her father in the family-owned business. Her husband, Stanisław Adamski (pharmaceutical technician), also worked with her, and together, they ran the pharmacy until 1962. In that same year, a young M. Pharm Henryk Dąbrowski, who was born in Kraczwice, near Poniatowa, became the third director of the pharmacy. He was not only dedicated to the pharmacy, but also to the governing pharmaceutical association of the Lublin area.

In the Autumn of 1984, from the initiative of M. Pharm Dąbrowska and the Cefarm company, a new pharmacy was constructed, located at 1, Dr Alojzy Hevelke Street, opposite the Healthcare Center. The ceremonial opening of the new pharmacy took place on May 12, 1990, and was the focal point of the that year's Urzędów Days.

After the pharmacy was moved to the new building, the old pharmacy building was turned into a grocery store, and then, after being renovated, a second pharmacy called "Convallaria" was opened there in 1995. The owner of the pharmacy is M. Pharm Zofia Lenkiewicz.



Fig. 9. The new pharmacy building located at the 1 Hevelke Street (source: private collection of Henryk Dąbrowski)

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