

Sowa

WIFE'S MAIDEN NAME: **SCHEFZIK / SCHEFCZYK**

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| HUSBAND'S NAME | Johann (John) Sowa |
| BIRTH DATE | 11 May 1826 |
| BIRTH PLACE | Dąbrówka Lubniańska, Poland |
| BAPTISM DATE | 12 May 1826 |
| BAPTISM PLACE | Św. Piotra i Pawła (Sts. Peter and Paul), Lubniany, Poland |
| OCCUPATIONS | Poland: chałupnik (small farm owner); Texas: wagoner |
| RESIDENCES | Dąbrówka Lubniańska, Poland; Victoria and Bexar Counties, Texas |
| BURIAL DATE | 25 February 1876 |
| DEATH PLACE | St. Hedwig, Bexar County, Texas |
| BURIAL PLACE | Annunciation of the BVM Cemetery, St. Hedwig, Texas |

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| WIFE'S MAIDEN NAME | Maria / Mary Schefzik (FIRST WIFE) |
| BIRTH DATE | 19 June 1831 |
| BIRTH PLACE | Kosowce, Poland |
| BAPTISM DATE | 19 June 1831 |
| BAPTISM PLACE | Św. Piotra i Pawła (Sts. Peter and Paul), Lubniany, Poland |
| RESIDENCES | Kosowce and Dąbrówka Lubniańska, Poland; Victoria County, Texas |
| DEATH DATE | Between May 1866 and December 1867 |
| DEATH PLACE | Victoria County, Texas |
| BURIAL PLACE | Group grave with other yellow fever victims in Victoria, Texas |

Sources and Additional Information

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| BAPTISMS | Św. Piotra i Pawła, Lubniany, Poland (LDS Microfilm #0958433) Husband: p. 78, entry #18 Wife: p. 105, entry #21 |
| SHIP AND PORT MILITARY | <i>Schüler Agency List</i> shows departure from Bremen on 1 April 1856. Civil War: Private under Captain E. Teitz, Company for Victoria Town Precinct, 24th Brigade, Texas Militia, Archives - Texas State Library |
| TAX ROLLS | Texas: 1863, 1868, 1869, and 1870 Victoria County; 1873, 1874, and 1875 Bexar County |
| LAND RECORDS | Victoria County Deeds, Volume 8, p. 306, date of instrument: 21 August 1860, date filed: 7 September 1860 (Lot #1, Block #195, Range #14, bought by John Sowa from Corporation of Victoria); Volume 11, p. 169, date of instrument: 12 February 1869, date filed: 6 March 1869 (sold by John Sowa; \$250 paid by Peter Zoworka for his daughter Amelia Sowa); Bexar County Deeds, Volume V3, pp. 171-172, date of instrument and date filed: 18 December 1871 (John and second wife borrowed \$400 from Frank Kozub at 8%); Volume W2, p. 201, date of instrument: 18 December 1871 (bought 70 acres in St. Hedwig from Casper Miosga for \$10 per acre) |
| CITIZENSHIP | Declaration of Intention: 23 June 1860, Victoria County Probate Minutes, Volume A2, p. 230; Naturalization: July 1867, Victoria County Probate Minutes, Volume A3, p.7, #148; Voter Registraton: 1868 Victoria County |
| FEDERAL CENSUS | Texas: 1860 Victoria County; husband in 1870 Victoria County with second wife |
| BURIAL RECORD | Husband: Annunciation of the BVM, St. Hedwig, Texas, entry #10 (LDS Microfilm #0025495) |
| TOMBSTONE | Husband: Annunciation of the BVM Cemetery, St. Hedwig, Texas |
| PROBATE | Husband: Bexar County, Will #1082, date filed: 22 April 1876 |

Submitted by: Janet Dawson Ebrom, San Antonio, Texas



John, the son of Thomas Sowa and Hedwig Swierc, was a 30-year-old chałupnik or small farm owner when he and his wife Mary left their village taking their only baby to America. After settling in Victoria, Texas, John signed an oath declaring that he wanted to become a citizen of his new country. Within a year, the Civil War gripped the nation, and John dutifully enlisted as a private in the 24th Brigade of the Texas Militia in Victoria. His commanding officer was Captain E. Teitz (Texas State Archives, Record Group 401, Muster Roll 602).

John and his family remained in Victoria where he became a wagoner. In their first eight years in Texas, John and Mary's family continued to grow with the births of four more children, and John's business as a teamster progressed.

In the summer of 1867, John, the head of the Sowa family, proudly became a citizen of the United States. Just as this immigrant family's long sought dreams were being realized, they began hearing distressing news of a yellow fever epidemic in nearby Indianola (Ebrom and Sowa, 1981, pp. 6-7). Soon the scourge reached Victoria and claimed the life of Mary who was only 35 years old. She was buried in a group grave as her grieved children stood by (Recollections of Christine Sowa Hudek in a letter dated 3 January 1979). There was such confusion in Victoria as fever raged through the town that multiple deaths and impromptu burials went unrecorded. In an effort to downplay the entire episode, "Texas newspapers vigorously suppressed such news.... Yellow fever, with endemic malaria, caused havoc along the coasts. U.S. Army records are more informative than Texas newspapers, which printed little that might inhibit immigration" (Fehrenbach, 1968, p. 598). Since Mary, the daughter of Franz Schefzik and Juliane Kotz, has no marble monument, this historical account pays tribute to her memory.

Baptism Records of Mary Schefzik and John Sowa Children

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|------------------|----------------------|--------------------|---|
| 23 June 1854 | Johann/John | p. 44, entry #50 | Św. Piotra i Pawła, Łubniany, Poland (LDS Microfilm #0958434) |
| 11 July 1856 | Alexander | p. 84, entry #582 | St. Mary Catholic Church, Victoria, Texas |
| 10 October 1858 | Franciszka | p. 99, entry #699 | (LDS Microfilm #0025514) |
| 1 April 1861 | Maria Albina/Balbina | p. 119, entry #812 | |
| 26 December 1864 | Eva | p. 26 | |

Sowa Family
Schüler Agency List of 1856

| | | | |
|-----|-------------------------------------|-------|----------|
| 35. | Frank Matyschok | 2 | Murów |
| 36 | Thomas Slaby, Holzschuhmacher | 25. | Murów |
| 37 | Sebastian Gurr, Holzschuhmacher | 30 | Tauernin |
| 38 | Margaretha S. geb. Pogrzeba | 25 | " |
| 39 | Pauline " | 1 | " |
| 40 | Mattheus " | 59 | " |
| 41 | Valentin Fautsch, Holzschuhmacher | 45. | Horst |
| 42 | Maria S. geb. Gallus | 35 | " |
| 43 | Johanna " | 20 | " |
| 44 | Margaretha " | 4 | " |
| 45 | Valentin " | 1/2 | " |
| 46 | Johann Sowa, Holzschuhmacher | 30 | Lugnian |
| 47 | Ignatz Sowa | 24 | " |
| 48 | Maria S. geb. Schefczyk | 24 | " |
| 49 | Johann " | 1 1/2 | " |
| 50 | Christoph Machulla, Holzschuhmacher | 43 | Lugnian |
| 51 | Paul Wilczek, Holzschuhmacher | 37 | Grabark |
| 52 | Wendig S. geb. Pogrzeba | 36 | " |
| 53 | Frank " | 18 | " |
| 54 | Simon " | 16 | " |
| 55 | Eva " | 15 | " |
| 56 | Rosalie " | 11 | " |
| 57 | Johann " | 8 | " |
| 58 | Marianna " | 6 | " |
| 59 | Joseph " | 2 | " |

The Schüler Agency List contains the names and ages of Johann Sowa, age 30, his wife Maria Schefczyk, age 24, and their son Johann, only 1 1/2 years old. The fourth column reveals their residence; the village name is listed in German. The Sows are shown as being from Lugnian which is now Lubniany, Poland (Jonca, 1998).

John Sowa and Amelia Zoworka
with his daughters, Balbina and Eva



Photograph courtesy of: Regina Wiatrek Lyssy (1902-1983), Kosciusko, Texas

Sowa

WIFE'S MAIDEN NAME: ZOWORKA

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|----------------|---|
| HUSBAND'S NAME | Johann (John) Sowa |
| BIRTH DATE | 11 May 1826 |
| BIRTH PLACE | Dąbrówka Łubniańska, Poland |
| BAPTISM DATE | 12 May 1826 |
| BAPTISM PLACE | Św. Piotra i Pawła (Sts. Peter and Paul), Łubniany, Poland |
| MARRIAGE DATE | 9 January 1868 (SECOND MARRIAGE) |
| MARRIAGE PLACE | St. Mary Catholic Church, Victoria, Texas |
| OCCUPATIONS | Poland: chałupnik (small farm owner); Texas: wagoner |
| RESIDENCES | Dąbrówka Łubniańska, Poland; Victoria and Bexar Counties, Texas |
| BURIAL DATE | 25 February 1876 |
| DEATH PLACE | St. Hedwig, Bexar County, Texas |
| BURIAL PLACE | Annunciation of the BVM Cemetery, St. Hedwig, Texas |

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|--------------------|---|
| WIFE'S MAIDEN NAME | Eufemia / Emilia / Amelia Zoworka (SECOND WIFE) |
| BIRTH DATE | 16 September 1847 |
| BIRTH PLACE | Tarnów Opolski, Poland |
| BAPTISM DATE | 17 September 1847 |
| BAPTISM PLACE | Św. Marcina Biskupa (St. Martin the Bishop), Tarnów Opolski, Poland |
| RESIDENCES | Tarnów Opolski, Poland; Victoria, Bexar, and Wilson Counties, Texas |
| DEATH DATE | 28 October 1936 |
| BURIAL PLACE | Annunciation of the BVM Cemetery, St. Hedwig, Texas |

Sources and Additional Information

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|-----------------|---|
| BAPTISMS | Husband: Św. Piotra i Pawła, Łubniany, Poland, p. 78, entry #18 (LDS Microfilm #0958433) Wife: Św. Marcina Biskupa, Tarnów Opolski, Poland, p. 120, entry #29 (LDS Microfilm #0949158) |
| MARRIAGE | St. Mary Catholic Church, Victoria, Texas, p. 48 |
| SHIPS AND PORTS | Husband: <i>Schüler Agency List</i> shows departure from Bremen on 1 April 1856. Wife: <i>Miles</i> departed Hamburg 14 April 1855, arrived Galveston 4 June 1855. |
| MILITARY | Civil War: Private under Captain E. Teitz, Company for Victoria Town Precinct, 24th Brigade, Texas Militia, Archives - Texas State Library |
| TAX ROLLS | Texas: 1863, 1868, 1869, and 1870 Victoria County; 1873-1875 Bexar County |
| LAND RECORDS | Victoria County Deeds, Volume 11, p. 169, date of instrument: 12 February 1869, date filed: 6 March 1869 (sold by John Sowa; \$250 paid by Peter Zoworka for his daughter Amelia Sowa); Bexar County Deeds, Volume V3, pp. 171-172, date of instrument and date filed: 18 December 1871 (John and second wife borrowed \$400 from Frank Kozub at 8%); Volume W2, p. 201, date of instrument: 18 December 1871 (bought 70 acres in St. Hedwig from Casper Miosga for \$10 per acre) |
| CITIZENSHIP | Voter Registration: 1868 Victoria County |
| FEDERAL CENSUS | Texas: 1860 Victoria County (John with first wife and Eufemia with parents, Peter and Catherine Zoworka); 1870 Victoria County (John with second wife); 1880 and 1900 Wilson County (Amelia with second husband, Andrew Frankowiak) |
| BURIAL RECORDS | Annunciation of the BVM Catholic Church, St. Hedwig, Texas (LDS Microfilm #0025495) Husband: entry #10 Wife: p. 87 |
| TOMBSTONES | Both in Annunciation of the BVM Cemetery, St. Hedwig, Texas (Amelia is buried beside her second husband, Andrew Frankowiak.) |
| PROBATE | Husband: Bexar County, Will #1082, date filed: 22 April 1876 |

Submitted by: Janet Dawson Ebrom, San Antonio, Texas

A few months after the death of his first wife, John Sowa married Amelia Zoworka. Amelia had emigrated from Poland as a child with her parents, Peter Zoworka and Katarzyna Smiga (see first Peter Zoworka profile). When Amelia was only 17 years old, she was honored to be the godmother for the Sowa's youngest daughter Eva in 1864. After Amelia's marriage to John Sowa, she assumed the care of his four children.

In 1871, a year after enduring the death of their first daughter, Rosa Anna, the Sowa family moved from Victoria to St. Hedwig where they bought 130 acres of land. The Sowa daughters attended the St. Hedwig parochial school, and in 1873 Balbina Sowa entered the convent in Castroville. After less than a year, John Sowa was instructed by Father Felix Zwiardowski to go to Castroville and take his daughter away from Mother St. Andrew for his congregation of Blue Sisters. On Father Felix's advice, John Sowa travelled to Castroville and returned with his daughter Balbina and also the two Winkler girls, Pauline and Elizabeth (Callahan, 1955, p. 106). In 1874 Amelia gave birth to a daughter named Jadwiga Teresa after the patroness of Silesia.

Apparently in declining health, John made his will in Polish on February 20, 1876. John allotted 50 acres of land to Amelia, 40 acres to John and Alex, and an additional 14 acres of land in Victoria to his wife. His will leaves no doubt about his occupation as a teamster because he left his sons two wagons and six mules. He bequeathed his crop to his wife and \$50 each to Balbina and Eva (Bexar County Probate Records, 22 April 1876, #1082; Ebrom and Sowa, 1981, p. 11).

John Sowa was only 49 years old when he died. Four months after John's death, on June 4, 1876, Amelia married Andrew Frankowiak in St. Hedwig (Annunciation of the BVM, Marriage Records, p. 2). This couple resided in Wilson County with their large family (Ebrom and Sowa, 1981, pp. 196-197).

Baptism Records of Amelia Zoworka and John Sowa Children

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| 2 September 1870 | Rosa Anna | p. 86, entry #5 | St. Mary Catholic Church, Victoria, Texas (LDS Microfilm #0025514) |
| 9 October 1874 | Jadwiga Teresa | eighth entry | Annunciation of the BVM Catholic Church, St. Hedwig, Texas (LDS Microfilm #0025495) |

Note: Rosa Anna died when she was only nine days old in Victoria, Texas (St. Mary Catholic Church, Burial Records, p. 6, entry #32).