

## IMAGE OF BLASZKI RESIDENTS LIFE IN THE POLISH KINGDOM DURING THE JAPANESE-RUSSIAN WAR 1904–1905

Its coverage area included the province of Kalisz, although in practice reached Łódź, Warsaw and even Kharkiv, Munich, Milan and the United States. Belonged to the most long-lived and fastest growing provincial magazines outgoing under Russian occupation<sup>1</sup>. The founders of Kaliska Newspapers were lawyers: Józef Radwan, Alfons Parczewski, Daniel Zawadzki. The first issue of the newspaper was published on 22 March 1893. At the beginning publisher of Kalisz Newspaper was Arno Hindemith, and from 1 October 1898, publisher was Joseph Radwan, the first editor. Till March 22<sup>nd</sup> 1898, the newspaper was printed at the Hindemith compressor station, then up the 1914 Joseph Radwan<sup>2</sup> was taking care of printing.

During the outbreak of Japanese-Russian War – the Kaliska newspaper was published of course, with some delay, news from the front, using articles contained in the Russian press. A list of the dead, missing and prisoners of war reprinted from the Russian newspaper “Russian Invalid”. Correspondence from the Far East was published in the newspaper based on the telegrams of the Russian Agency, which arriving in the afternoon to Kalisz, the next morning were published in the next newspapers issues, which were complemented with messages, supplied by Reuter. The newspaper also published tsarist ukase of any decision related to the mobilization on the area of the Polish Kingdom, provisions relating to mobilization of aid to families of mobilized soldiers, under the Russian law and the orders to the troops of the Warsaw. “Kaliska Newspaper” was the primary daily newspaper, available to readers in Blaszki, a small town situated on the territory of the district of Kalisz then. It was delivered to the city by the Kociolki railroad station, where trains stopped daily from November 1902, using the newly built railway line, which was connecting Kalisz with Łódź. The city was inhabited at the beginning of the twentieth century by 4900 residents, half of them Jews. The main activities of the population were primarily trade and crafts, among which the dominant role played by shoe-making and tailoring. In August of 1904 town was devastated by a huge fire that twice in just three days destroyed much of the residential develop-

<sup>1</sup> D. Wanka, *Book culture in Łódź and region “Kaliska Newspaper” issue (1893–1914)*, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

ment. These fires were the result of arsons, made by fighting with each other supporters for functions rabbi in the town Abu Zionist Note Kupfer and Hasidic tzaddik from Czapowo. First, on 16<sup>th</sup> of August 1904 lit up the entire left side of one of the most important streets in Blaszki-Kaliska Street. In one day, burned 30 buildings, mostly high, brick, giving the shelter to a large part of communities primarily of Jewish origin. In the second fire, on 19<sup>th</sup> of August 1904 that engulfed the opposite side of the street Kalisz, burned down completely another 16 houses, mostly wooden, covered with shingles and tar paper.

As a result of both fires much of the city was not habitable. Dozens of residents of the city was left without a roof over their heads. Survivors from the ravages were accommodated in flats at Upper and Lower Market which resulted in significant deterioration in living conditions in the town, wherethe number of people per one room was one of the highest in the province of Kalisz. It should be added that there burned not only housing, but also numerous workshops and shops, located on the ground floor of houses on Kaliska Street.

In addition, the city was starving. Even an attempt to support the fire victims, as cash collection, could not improve the situation caused by huge fire, especially that created specifically to support the fire victims committee has collected only 762 rubles<sup>3</sup>.

The difficult economic situation and living conditions of the inhabitants of plaques aggravated mobilization of many men for the Russian War army in the Far East, which further deteriorated the living conditions of many local families whose loved ones were sent to regiments designated to participation in the Japanese-Russian War.

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<sup>3</sup> A. Tomaszewicz, *Charity in Kalisz Governorate 1864–1914*, Lodz, 2010, p. 562. For poor fire victims paid in Blaszki: S. Arnold from Boryslawice – 100 rb., H. Drecher from Kwaskow 25 rb., dr Łączynski 20 rb., I. Bromski 20 rb., K. Budziszewski 20 rb, B. Ilowiecka 10 rb., from citizens 32 rb. 62 kop., Szylner from Kalisz 10 rb., Priest Godlewski 10 rb., B. Arnold from Bukowina 3 rb., A. Brynza from Kalisz 3 rb., K. Pagowski 1 rb., anon 20 kop., priest Szatnicki 15 rb. i 80 leaflets “About christian charity”, A. Gatkiewicz from Smaszkow 5 rb., Nela Ł. 1 rb., dr Popielawski from Warta 12 rb 30 kop. Priest Pawłowski z Dobrea 12 rb. 35 kop., Stanowska from Stozkow 3 rb, priest Wagrowski from Lututow 6 rb 20 kop., priest Szopański from Pyzdr 38 rb. 50 kop., priest Sawicki from Koscielec 12 rb., Żołnowski from Rajsko 5 rb. 10 kop., Priest Akalinski from Chlewo 3 rb., Godacki from Wielun 5 rb., dr Sulikowska from Sieradz 12 rb. 50 kop., priest Wronowski from Widawa 11 rb., ks. Hornowski from Staw 1 rb., priest Marczewski from Opattowek 3 rb., priest Sperczyński z Dobrzej 13 rb., priest Perliński from Tłokinia 3 rb., priest Bakowski from Dzierzbin 3 rb., priest Kowalewski from Osjakow 2 rb., anon. 45 kop. Look.: KP, 300 (1904).

In the late sixties of the nineteenth century, after taking power in Japan by Emperor Mutsuhito, there has been radical change, guiding him on the path of capitalism in European style. Counting only fifteen emperor took authorities from last shogun, whose predecessors ruled Japan for hundreds of years. This has led eventually to join Japan in the race for colonies, forced overcrowding the country and the search for markets for a growing economy. The first success in this direction occurred in 1876. When it failed to politically independent Korea from China.

At the end of the nineteenth century Japan in the victorious war with China won the Port Arthur, Talienshan, Taiwan and Pescadory. The provisions of the Treaty of Simonosek, concluded in 1895 between Japan and China triggered a backlash European powers, which reacted most sharply Russia, fearing encroachment Tokyo in its sphere of influence. As a result of the power signed on November 8, 1895 Liaodong Convention, Japan, feeling weaker militarily from Russia, Germany and France, withdrew from Liaodong peninsula. In 1898 China leased the peninsula of Russia, giving it the control of an important base in Port Arthur.

Also in the late nineteenth century Russia clashed increasingly consolidate its position on the Pacific. In 1891 the construction of Trans-Siberian Railway started, then in 1896 Russia received concessions for the construction of the Chinese branch of the aforementioned railway line<sup>4</sup>. Its construction aroused among the elite Japanese position that the time works against them, and that should lead to a settlement, as long as the balance of power will not deteriorate<sup>5</sup>. This more that the international situation favorable to the emperor, because the United Kingdom, The United States and Germany were interested in weakening Russia's position in the Far East.

The two countries, Japan and Russia absorbed policies of expansion could not communicate as to the division of spheres of influence in Asia at the beginning of the twentieth century. In 1903 Russia gave a negative answer to the proposals coming from Tokyo, to recognition for Manchuria area subordinated to the interests of St. Petersburg, and Korea's for sphere of interest<sup>6</sup> of Japanese. Rejection of Russia's policies favoring economic exploitation, without causing conflicts or making subsequent annexation caused the group of influential politicians, gathered around Prince Alexan-

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<sup>4</sup> J. Pajewski, *Universal History 1871–1918*, Warsaw, 2001, p. 240.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 241.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 240.

der Mikhailovich and Alexander Bezobrazow could start realization of their plan, involving the achieve rapid and high profits, on which you can only dream about in peacetime<sup>7</sup>.

At the same time appointment in the same year by the governor of Russia's Far East, the person of Admiral Alexeyev, a supporter of the victorious war, which would be needed to Tsar to increase his authority and weakening the revolutionary sentiment was an expression support to military factions from the Tsar Nicholas II<sup>8</sup>.

Despite the efforts of French diplomacy, which tried to dissuade carat of military action, Japan, sentient support of the Western powers broke off on 5 February 1904 diplomacy relations with Russia, and three days later the Japanese fleet attacked Port Arthur<sup>9</sup>.

Started war revealed the weakness of the empire of the tsars, who suffered in this conflict significant defeat. It was not conducive to the remoteness of the Russians fighting army from their bases of 7,000 kilometers. The only railway line, in addition to not fully finished, was not facilitating sending soldiers on the front and delivery to the fighting divisions of ammunition, drugs and all kinds of military equipment. In addition, the Russian army was soaked carried out on a large financial embezzlement scale, carried out by the Russian generals.

When the supply of food and weapons was not working, the soldiers in return received from suppliers icon or mineral water, for which they still had to pay the "war fare"<sup>10</sup>.

From the beginning of hostilities was clear that despite the enormous demographic differences, Russia will not be able to transport to the Far East the appropriate number of soldiers supply. Hence, "Kaliska News-paper" in its issue of February 19, 1904 indicated readers that the plan of the war with Japan commanded patience in waiting for the success of the Russian arms. Indeed, in the view of the editors, though decisive action Russian army distances difficult theater of war from the center of the country, and the lack of preparation for the fight, caused by the desire to keep the peace by Tsar was not expect instant victory<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> A. Chwalba, *Universal History XIX*, Warsaw, 2012, p. 591.

<sup>8</sup> J. Pajewski, *Op. cit.*, p. 241.

<sup>9</sup> D. Binkowski, *Forgotten war in Rozwoj press issue, typescript*.

<sup>10</sup> A. Chwalba, *Op. cit.*, p. 594.

<sup>11</sup> *Kalisz Newspaper*, 50 (1904).

From the first days of the war Japan started to be successful on the battlefield Imperial Army, trained by German officers enjoyed the summer of 1904 significant victory at Laojan, which had a negative impact on public opinion in Russia<sup>12</sup>. Under Laojan Japanese gathered a huge army, supported by 2,000 artillery. In addition, on their side fought several thousand volunteers from Chinese Formosa, who have been surrendered to the Japanese troops of General Oku, stationed in Inkou. Ten-days-operation, initiated by the Russian offensive did not bring success and tsarist troops were forced to retreat. The impact on the morale of the Imperial army was probably the fact that Japanese soldiers were well equipped to fight in difficult conditions. Japanese army privates wore hats, made on the Prussian model, on their feet had long gaiters, on uniform piling warm sheepskin sleeveless west, they tie a scarf around his neck. Their military backpacks were equipped with the necessary equipment, packed according to strictly defined rules.

Another defeat met Russians in Port Arthur, where despite fierce fighting throughout 1904 failed to Russians break locks the port. Finally, the fortress surrendered to the Japanesees in January 1905, while in February and March, the Russian army under the command of gen. Kuropatkin suffered another defeat, this time at Mukden. Yet on May 27, 1905. Of Tsushima Baltic fleet under Admiral Rozdestwinsky, after lasting more than half a year travel through three oceans and two sea attempted to reverse the fate of the war, however, decisive battle has been sunk by a fleet of Admiral Togo. The surviving ships<sup>13</sup> took shelter in a port in Vladivostok, which repaired a large part of them damaged in battles with Japanese.

In shipyards were employed mainly Chinese employees, which reported in his letter to "Kalisz Press" Jerzy Jaroszewski, a military doctor, sent to the front in 1904<sup>14</sup>. His letters, sent from the front to the editor drew closer to readers image of War in the Far East. Joseph Jaroszewski, after returning to Kalisz in 1905, was on duty of doctor in Blaszki. Japanese-Russian War ended through political action taken by the US President Roosevelt, which, moreover, for its effective mediation has been awarded Nobel Peace Prize. The peace pact was set on 5 September 1905 in Portsmouth.

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<sup>12</sup> *Kalisz Newspaper*, 253 (1904).

<sup>13</sup> J. Pajewski, *Op. cit.*, p. 244.

<sup>14</sup> *Kalisz Newspaper*, 10 (1905).

By virtue of its provisions Russia asked Japan's southern Sakhalin, which it took in 1875. Port Arthur and Talien town on the Liaotan peninsula, although formally they were Chinese, actually came under the control of the Japanese. Besides, Japan has gained the right to fishing off the coast of Russia. Russia recognized also its influence in Korea. Manchuria returned under the control of China<sup>15</sup>.

Residents of Blaszki, of diplomatic relations between Russia and Japan and the outbreak of war learned on the basis of the information contained in the Kalisz Press, which the next number reached the town on 8 February 1904, however, once publication of the message Agency of the Russian special supplement to the journal was made available to readers in Kalisz day earlier in the afternoon<sup>16</sup>.

Consumption of men in front of the Japanese touched reservists from Blaszki at the front only at the end of 1904. First, in October this year started, in the district of Kalisz, compulsory check-up soldiers. At the command of the military authorities on October 10 turning up in the town of reservists from Blaszki, but also residents nearby settlements: Iwanowice, Staw and Marchwacz. From the participation in the review of reserves released those soldiers, who held the post in the police offices state and civil society, as well as those who have been included to the store without active military service (teachers and doctors). Each released from service reservist was obliged to provide the relevant certificate which entitles him to exemption carried out inspections<sup>17</sup>.

Mobilization in the province of Kalisz was announced Nov. 27/10 Dec. 1904. On power to command armies of the Warsaw Military District, issued by the General-aide Czertkow. Mobilization of soldiers covered up with districts: Kalisz, Wielun, Slupec, Konin, Turkish, Kolo and Leczyca<sup>18</sup>. Called to the rendezvous point reserve soldiers were supposed to be the rallying points on December 21 with their own shoes, and underwear, two shirts and two pairs of pants, for the things which they received after the arrival of the army appropriate equivalent. They also were allowed to take from the house half-coats. Total area of the province planned to appoint

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<sup>15</sup> A. Chwalba, *Op. cit.*, p. 594.

<sup>16</sup> *Kaliska Newspaper*, 39 (1904).

<sup>17</sup> *Kalisz Newspaper*, 241 (1904).

<sup>18</sup> Generally at the end of 1904 16 recruits was taken to army from Polish Kingdoom. Look: M. Chudzynski, *Factory workers strikes and agricultural products in the years of the revolution 1905–1907 in Kujawy-Gostyn region*, Yearbook of the Scientific Society of Plock, Nr 4, p. 61.

under the gun 8500 people. In addition, with the soldiers, in the district of Kalisz mobilized 419 horses<sup>19</sup>. Postponement of military service could receive only conscripts learner or “because of family relationships”<sup>20</sup>. Two days after the announcement of the mobilization of residents of Kalisz district, like other residents of the Polish Kingdom were covered by the provisions of martial law. War time governor of the province of Kalisz was appointed general-lieutenant Kozłowski<sup>21</sup>. The Commission in Kalisz was located on Rypinek at Mlodecki home. From 7 am on 9/22 December 1904 in Kalisz, marched troops of reservists from individual towns lying within the county. At the head of each group walked Mayors, responsible for providing recruits to the rallying point<sup>22</sup>. Soldier going from hometowns reported to the mobilization point in accompanied by relatives and friends, most intoxicated. Therefore both in the home towns, as well as in the mobilization point there were clashes with the civilian population. In order to prevent such incidents Kalisz governor issued a ban opening of liquor stores in places where were mobilized soldiers<sup>23</sup>.

During the pre-emptive, it was able to invoke 496 Christians and 35 Jews<sup>24</sup> to the weapon in the district of Kalisz. Christians quota has been run-down completely, while point rallying failed to attend 45 Jews who had emigrated abroad<sup>25</sup>. Before heading to the front of the vast majority of Christian soldiers, numbering 400 purchased Masses in of Kalisz for happy homecoming<sup>26</sup>. Devotions were held up on 7 January 1905 in several churches in Kalisz<sup>27</sup>.

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<sup>19</sup> *Kaliszka Newspaper*, 352 (1904). Horses owners, which were mobilized, received assignats, issued by the county committees draft board, through which the money of the Provincial were able to get a horse appointed to serve in the artillery 220 rb., while the horse camp ofrom 1050 to 190 rb.: *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> *Kalisz Newspaper*, 346 (1904).

<sup>21</sup> *Kalisz Newspaper*, 21 (1904).

<sup>22</sup> *Kalisz Newspaper*, 354 (1904).

<sup>23</sup> *Kalisz Newspaper*, 297 (1904).

<sup>24</sup> In 1904 in the district of Kalisz it was to be appointed a total of 4262 people. Revision of the conscripts were included 9754 men, plus 913, that “inspection” was postponed from previous years. Altogether review included 8,745 Christians and 1,009 Jews. Military service adopted 3435 Christians and 163 Jews. 1740 recruits failed to attend at the points of the revision of conscripts, half of them Jews. Until 573 were found to be totally incapable of service, 737 were sent to hospital for treatment, 847 postponed. Look: *Kalisz Newspaper*, 88 (1905).

<sup>25</sup> *Kalisz Newspaper*, 346 (1904).

<sup>26</sup> Full list of names of reservists from the district of Kalisz was placed in a letter addressed to newspaper editorial Kalisz Press by volunteer Stanisław Woropaj, soldier of 5 reserve regiment shooters battalion Look: *Kalisz Newspaper*, 4 (1905).

<sup>27</sup> *Kaliszka Newspaper*, 5 (1905).

Some of the reservists from the district of Kalisz was directed to the front of the Suwalki railway station on 27 January 1905. Before leaving part of the rank, appointed from the district of Kalisz, was sent a special letter to readers of Kaliska Newspapers, which announced that, together with conscripts from the province of Suwalki and Vilnius leaves on Friday from Suwalki railway stations and asks to give the other Kalisz citizens, waiting to leave for the front, the address to which you can upload correspondence. It was to be addressed in the name of Adam Janowski, serving in 5 spare shooters battalion<sup>28</sup>.

Travel recruits from the district of Kalisz rail to Charbinu lasted four days. Arrived there the soldiers divided into three parts. The first were bakers, second paramedics, while the remaining 38 were incorporated into the ranks of the regiment East-Syberian shooters, who at the end of March was moved to the region of Vladivostok<sup>29</sup>.

Many soldiers called to service in the Far East from the district of Kalisz was sent to the front of the train stations in Warsaw and headed to St. Petersburg or the front they took with them and trunk bundle, which housed the underwear, up shirts, warm clothing and small items of daily use. In Warsaw conscripts receive a hot meal from the kitchen field, substituted by regiments from Warsaw. Before leaving compulsory soldiers took part in the Mass, after which they went shopping in shops in Prague<sup>30</sup>.

Among the recruits to army the inhabitants of Blaszki in the fighting in the Far East participated Chaim Moshe Kopel, a weaver by profession. Kopel served in the Tsarist army since 1895 as a soldier 5<sup>th</sup> east-syberian Rifle Regiment, which stationed in Port Arthur. Its parent unit was part of the division, commanded by General Foka. During the siege of the fortress by the Japanese, Kopel was hard injured after being hit by debris from the grenade in the head and also had been shot in the chest. He left his position battle on September 8, 1904, when the paramedics moved him to field hospital, located in the fortress. After the surrender of Port Arthur, wounded Kopel was among the other injured, who were to be transported to area of Polish Kingdom, where should undergo further treatment. During the trip soldier has been deteriorated markedly, which is why he was left in

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<sup>28</sup> *Kaliska Newspaper*, 31 (1905).

<sup>29</sup> *Kaliska Newspaper*, 117 (1905).

<sup>30</sup> *Kaliska Newspaper*, 360 (1904). Many of the soldiers coming from the district of Kalisz, served in Japanese-Russian War in 1 Manchu army led by gen. Lenkiewicz, Pole origin, called by the Chinese and Japanese “wolf Manchu”.

a hospital in Shanghai, where he spent more than a month. Finally, Chaim Moshe Kopel happily returned to the country on 8 April 1905, after a trip lasting several days, during which he reached the Odessa where he managed to get to Kalisz. All wounds failed to heal, Kopel left War with lost complete lost if vision and significant problems with speech. After returning to hometown recalled that while in Japanese captivity he was treated very decent. According to him Japanese fed the trapped soldiers with bread, eggs and meat, and even treated to vodka and beer<sup>31</sup>.

However, not all mobilized Jews returned from the war to the country. Then it remained very difficult fate for the wives left in the family home, who after the death of their husbands couldn't marry again. The Talmud did not accept for an eyewitness, who confirmed the death of husband. His testimony was not enough to recognize a woman as a widow. Only when the same witness alone have carried out the burial of the deceased, his wife became real widow. So before heading to the front many of mobilized Jews soldiers gave their wives conditional divorce that in case of their death in war they could be considered divorced, and so again could marry<sup>32</sup>.

In Russian newspaper have appeared some of the press articles, casting aspersions on the Poles, who supposedly went to war with Polish policy and willingly they sided with the Japanese. Meanwhile, in the journal "Vestnik Manchurian Army" were posted information that the Russian army and in the Pacific fleet were quite a few Poles, both officers and enlisted men, deserving respectability and higher honors. An example of faithful service to the tsar was the attitude of rural inhabitant of Adamki, located near the Blaszki, Felix Snopczynski, who participated in the war 1904–1905, received for bravery on the battlefield high military honor – the St. George Holy Cross, of with he was very proud. Snopczynski wasn't parted also with a photograph of Tsar Nicholas II, he hid the medallion 33 around your neck<sup>33</sup>.

In the war in the Far East also fought a resident of Blaszki neighbourhood, from Kamienna village Michal Torunski, born in 1887. As a young boy he was drafted into tsarist army. His participation in the Japanese-Russian War began from several months traveling by ship to China. Travel conditions were so inconvenient, that all the way he prayed to fina-

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<sup>31</sup> *Kaliska Newspaper*, 166 (1905).

<sup>32</sup> *Kaliska Newspaper*, 260 (1904).

<sup>33</sup> From the recollections of Mieczyslaw Szydzisz.

lly stand on the land. During the trip he witnessed dying from diseases many of his colleagues, whose bodies were simply thrown into the sea. The whole period of the Torun war he spent in the infantry. He mentioned the fight for Hill, which name he did not remember. He talked about fighting on land of Russian sailors. He saw flowing Japanese ships, although no name and date not been able to remember. His only comment on what happened around him, during the fights was “*Well, ordered to shoot, i shotted. Like during the fightings*”<sup>34</sup>. During the fighting he was wounded, so he was sent to a field hospital, which soon was evacuated. Lying in a hospital Torunski didn’t stop thinking about returning to his unit, he feared that the loss of contact with them will cause him to be punished. Finally, when he felt better, he escaped from the hospital and wandered around, unable to communicate with anyone. Finally, he was captured by the Japanese patrol and placed in the captive camp. He didn’t complaint about being there. As mentioned, the Japanese treated well prisoners, especially the Poles. According to him, their attitude was due to awareness the Poles not willingly participated in the battle. In captivity Torunski met two colleagues of the province, which after the end of hostilities escaped from the camp with him. Together they returned to home, and their wandering through the vast expanses of Asia lasted for two whole two years. They appeared in 1907 in the family home. Torunski kept little memories from way back, he said only: “God allowed it and we returned. Me and Jedrzej. Jozek stayed there ...”<sup>35</sup>. But return to the family did not end the war vicissitudes of Michal Torunski. It was because he was considered as a deserter, for which he faced the death penalty by firing squad. Finally Torunski was forced to continue military service for additional two years. The military authorities didn’t credit two year exile. Only after completing imposed additional service Michal Torunski was able to return to his homeland.

Participant of Japanese-Russia War was also Kazimierz Jarczewski, living in Blaszki on Sieradzka Street. His entire youth was spent in the tsarist army, he took also serving in the Far East. Even in the years after World War II, as a the old man, he mentioned to the neighbors that he was: “on the chink war”<sup>36</sup>.

Totally different memories of fighting in the Far East had Joseph Jaroszewski, Kalisz graduate of one of the middle schools, which was mobi-

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<sup>34</sup> [www.patriotyzmjjutra-korzenie.sto.org.pl/?action=paper&pid=8](http://www.patriotyzmjjutra-korzenie.sto.org.pl/?action=paper&pid=8).

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> From recollections of Waldemar Zajda, the manuscript in the collection of the author.

lized to the front as a spare doctor and went to the front on 10 March 1904. With him on the front were directed 51 doctors, including 30 from Warsaw and 21 of the circle. Total mobilized medics were divided into two categories: 17 senior and 34 junior coordinators, who the nature of things were covered lower times. Jaroszewski, as a regular doctor receive 102 rubles monthly salary, while his family was taken into the care of the state to give an allowance of 14 rubles on housing and fund “fuel” for the winter.

As each of the mobilized doctors, received travel expenses and outfits the amount of 700 rubles<sup>37</sup>. Before leaving for the front ordered in Warsaw with the local cap makers high, fur cap and uniform, designed for officers leaving the front and<sup>38</sup> officers’ boots, in the make of which specialize Warsaw shoemakers, earning a fortune to manufacture shoes for doctors directed to the front<sup>39</sup>. Journey to the Far East by train, first arrived in Semipalatinsk, where he was assigned to the 50 Regiment, along with another doctor, Dr Nowak from Dzialoszyce. From the station in Omsk to Semipalatinsk distance 748 versts Jaroszynski rode horseback<sup>40</sup>. From Semipalatinsk, Jaroszewski was sent to Inkou, city placed close to the Laoche river. There, he drew attention to the acute shortage of drinking water, which in addition was murky and salty. The army in this case used the so-called “opresnitiejej” where in a specially prepared water boilers, water changed into high temperature steam which in turn, condensed in the tubes placed in a special cooler<sup>41</sup>.

In autumn 1904 Jaroszewski Joseph was sent to Khabarovsk, where he was taking responsibilities of junior doctor in a field hospital. There fell ill, so he washospital patient, where at that time visited General Lenkiewicz. Earlier by week he laid floating in the infirmary of Grand Duchess Xenia Alexandrovna. Therehe was surrounded by great care, sick doctor praised both extremely merciful and intelligent, derived primarily from good homes Russian sisters of mercy and prosperous food. A huge amount of bedding, linen and quilts, which were used by infirmary patients, came from gifts

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<sup>37</sup> *Kaliska Newspaper*, 61 (1904).

<sup>38</sup> v no. 51 (1904). Officers, going to war with Japan often ordered at the special saddlers “officers pantries”, or bags made of leather, which housed sugar, tea, biscuits, trimmings, canned, tableware, kitchenware and tea. These render the sheet-metal vessel so as to fit one in the second. Performing all kinds of “instruments marches” for officers craftsmen sent to military authorities illustrated catalogs of their products. Look: *Kaliska Newspaper*, 64 (1904).

<sup>39</sup> *Kaliska Newspaper*, 268 (1904).

<sup>40</sup> *Kaliska Newspaper*, 105 (1904).

<sup>41</sup> v no. 193 (1904).

donated by Kalisz Women's Red Cross. Jaroszynski was very surprised, but moved when he read on quilts embroidered inscription "Kalisz". Among the nurses there were also Poles, including a niece of county governor of the Turkish province of Kalisz, Miss Zawalijewska, singer, graduate of the Moscow Conservatory<sup>42</sup>.

During the stay in the hospital Joseph Jaroszynski witnessed the transportation of the wounded from battle Laojan that the number of 2,100 were treated in a hospital in Harbin and partially Nikolsk. During the stay in the hospital Jaroszewski complained of very high product prices, while paying attention to the availability of all kinds of fish for minimum prices<sup>43</sup>. However, in a subsequent letter to the editor of Kaliska Press he mentioned that to order of doctors "playing" in the Far East were sent to Khabarovsk, Charbinu and Laojan stocks of chocolate, cocoa, canned, citric acid and dried fruits<sup>44</sup>. Only in December he was sent back to his regiment. The next step of Jaroszewskis service was held in Vladivostok. Frost was terrible. The doctor complained that military cap, a popular "Papakha" and felt-lined boots did not protect against the cold. Then they covered their faces with scarves to not freeze<sup>45</sup>. At the end of 1904 Jaroszewski was at Mukden, where was set up parental camp unit of Jaroszewski – 11<sup>th</sup> semipalatin infantry regiment, including 4<sup>th</sup> syberian corps. In his last letter from the front, which Jaroszewski posted at the beginning of 1906 from Omsk, he said that goes back to Kalisz, but he wants to visit his brother in perm province on the way<sup>46</sup>.

During the war, many soldiers and officers were killed in battle, died as a result of disease, cold and hunger. Warsaw newspapers, but also the local press published sometimes list of killed, wounded or missing soldiers<sup>47</sup>. Many months after signing of the peace, inhabitants of Blaszki learned from the columns of the local press about the dead captive prisoners of war<sup>48</sup>.

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<sup>42</sup> *Kaliska Newspaper*, 260 (1904).

<sup>43</sup> *Kaliska Newspaper*, 319 (1904).

<sup>44</sup> *Kaliska Newspaper*, 248 (1904).

<sup>45</sup> *Kaliska Newspaper*, 25 (1905).

<sup>46</sup> *Kaliska Newspaper*, 21 (1906).

<sup>47</sup> *Kaliska Newspaper*, 277 (1904), 319 (1904), 320 (1904), 325 (1904), 326 (1904), 339 (1904), 360 (1904). *Kalisz Newspaper* from 11 Nov. 1904, mentioned also sailors from the province of Kalisz who were rescued by Japanese warships after the sinking of their own crew of a Russian armored cruiser "Rurik" in the naval battle of Ulsan in August 1904. See: *Newspaper Kaliska*, 255 (1904).

<sup>48</sup> *Kaliska Newspaper*, 11 (1906).

Meanwhile, the rest of their home family, their loved ones remained in harsh living conditions. The Russian authorities have applied to them legal solutions designed to support the families of soldiers, a force in the Polish Kingdom imposing “*...taking care of the families of people appointed in time of war for military service on regional councils and municipalities...*” pursuant they were also about creating temporary care assistance for needy families, signed by Tsar Alexander II on 9 July 1877. By way of regulations throughout the Russian state could be created “local care”, operating in within the county or city, but also the community or parish. They consisted of village residents who testified readiness to support families and individuals who, due to the call to military service, their relatives, providing them with means of subsistence, needed foreign help<sup>49</sup>. At the same time, apart from the activities of the local care, functioned in the cities, “*provincial health for the granting of aids families set up for military service*”. All institutions, support for families of soldiers called to army, they were under the patronage of the Empress. Care system of soldiers in the war, the Japanese adapted to the regulations, which were issued during the Russian-Turkish War imposed on the community, where it has been pre-emptive duty to support families of recruits, while in municipalities where there was no pre-emptive, the authorities would be completely free of such budgetary burden<sup>50</sup>.

In accordance with applicable laws, wife and children appointed to serve they were to receive from the city authorities free apartment with fuel if you did not have own and maintain in kind or in cash, hoping for any person, without distinction of age, at least pud and 28 pounds of flour, 10 pounds of grits and 4 pounds of salt monthly. Care of the city of families of conscripts would last until the returns oldiers to their families, not longer, however, as the expiry of one year from the announcement command to move the army into a state of peace<sup>51</sup>.

In practice, families of conscripts could not count on significant financial assistance for the city’s authorities. Although local authorities were obliged to financial support of families of mobilized soldiers is that they could pay them only small grants. In between 1 February and in May 1905. Blaszki municipality gave support to 28 families, counting 71 people, the

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<sup>49</sup> *Kalisza Newspaper*, 335 (1904).

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>51</sup> *Kalisza Newspaper*, 26 (1905).

amount of 600 rubles, while the municipality for the period in paid 168 rb. 31 family members, from which the weapon was set up 13 reservists<sup>52</sup>. Such modest amounts caused that a large part of the soldiers' families suffered great misery<sup>53</sup>. The Tsarist government swept away by the power of the army families fathers and brothers, there were cases that they invoked the sole breadwinners. Many of the recruits were left without any means of livelihood. Meanwhile, as a result of crop failures in 1904. In the district Kalisz recorded a significant increase in food prices. Significantly potatoes became more expensive, the price of cabbages increased from 3 to 5 rubles, more had to be paid for the grits<sup>54</sup>. Meanwhile the war had caused in the area of the Polish Kingdom significant increase in the number of unemployed. Hence also in 1904 there has been a fairly significant increase in emigration to Germany from the area of Kalisz district and within its territory far several dozen kilometers from the border of Blaszki<sup>55</sup>. Seeking employment in the summer with seasonal workers in Kalisz, who were employed on farms in Germany returned to a country with little savings. German farmers reduced the wages paid employment, which was increasing cost of living meant that earnings amounted a little more than 1 D-mark<sup>56</sup>. To repair household budgets, they hired to work also youngest residents of Blaszki and the surrounding area. Local landowners employed in the summer children aged 12–15 years for weeding beets. Unfamiliar with the work field effected earning 20 kop. a day. In addition, the owner of the farm gave them: "...For breakfast soup and a half a pound of bread, potato soup for lunch and grits or peas and cabbage, dinner pint of milk sour or sweet and grits densely or potatoes and tea, half a pound of bread. Adults were employed under similar conditions, earn only their daily amount – 30 kopecks. Employed in the farms they have guaranteed accommodation in buildings with clean straw, covering only had to have on their own<sup>57</sup>.

Therefore, the governor of Kalisz made a decision about the formation of the Special Committees, which had to deal with the fate of orphans, after soldiers who died in the war. The committees were representatives of cities,

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<sup>52</sup> District Archive in Kalisz, the Management Kalisz District sign. 465.

<sup>53</sup> M. Chudzynski. *Op. cit.*, p. 60.

<sup>54</sup> *Kaliska Newspaper*, 244 (1905).

<sup>55</sup> *Kaliska Newspaper*, 282 (1904).

<sup>56</sup> *Kaliska Newspaper*, 136 (1904).

<sup>57</sup> *Kaliska Newspaper*, 136 (1904).

delegates societiescredit honorary aldermen and citizens, appointed by the governor. Help with the authorities of these committees included the disabled, unable to work<sup>58</sup>. Families of soldiers, called to war were paid in Blaszki with cash for period from December 21, 1904 to May 21, 1905 the amount of 35 rubles 25 kop. This small sum was divided into 78 families of reservists, and it must be noted that totally it was 218 members of their families<sup>59</sup>. Committees established during the Japanese-Russian War continued their activities even after the end of hostilities<sup>60</sup>. Help included especially returning from war invalids and patients who were not able to continue gainful employment.

Few were the sources of information about the participation of Blaszki in the war in the Far East. Called to army privates, rarely educated, kept in their memory residual memories that have survived in the stories of families and neighbors. Many of them never returned to the family home, relatives never found out where rested their bones. The town rising from the ruins after these fires, rebuilding Kaliska Street lasted almost until the outbreak of World War I. To this day, did not survive no material evidence of the victim's blood, which the inhabitants of Blaszki made in the war, which meaning probably did not understand.

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<sup>58</sup> *Kaliska Newspaper*, 41 (1906).

<sup>59</sup> *Kaliska Newspaper*, 155 (1905).

<sup>60</sup> *Kaliska Newspaper*, 41 (1906).