

Jozef Adamek (1901 - 1979)



Jozef was born in the small town of Narol, Eastern Poland. At the time it was under the Austro-Hungarian Empire. He was born into a rich family, his mother was a Baroness and they would go hunting regularly. His son's story Julian also appears in this book.

When Poland gained independence after WWI, Jozef was in the army, the cavalry, he had his own horse and was a sergeant in the Polish Army. After Poland was created, he purchased land from a Russian nobleman as this was now in the new created Poland. The land was purchased at a very cheap price and it covered a large area; known as a Dwor (Court). The Russian nobleman wanted to sell as Ukrainians wanted to kill him because he wasn't a Communist. The nobleman eventually fled to France.

In the years following WWI Jozef's mother wanted Jozef to manage the estate. He didn't want to and sold his piece. It had been divided-up into three for each of the brothers: Jozef, Bronislaw and Wladyslaw. Wladyslaw became the manager of the estate. Jozef did not want to concern himself with this and preferred a life of ease, going hunting. Very soon, all this was about to change in a very dramatic way.

September 1939 and Poland was invaded by Germany and the Soviets. The Soviets went through Poland district by district evicting Poles out to Siberia and it was a matter of time before they got to the estate. And so that time came in February 1940. Jozef's life of luxury was turned upside down as his family was torn from his estate at gunpoint by soldiers from the Soviet army. They were loaded on a cattle truck and sent on arduous journey to Siberia. They passed town after town, leaving their home far behind on an arduous journey by train, which lasted six weeks.

Not long after reaching their offloading point in the Soviet Union where there were no more train tracks. The exact place remains unknown. Another transport of people from Jozef's neighbourhood reached the family (it had been impossible for the Soviets to transport everyone at once). One of whom was a former Policeman, who spoke to Jozef: he said "Mr Adamek, nothing remains of your estate... The Dwor was burnt including all the outbuildings, barns, stables. First of all everything was looted, horses, cattle before setting fire to the buildings." The perpetrators were led by Communists and even included some people who had worked on the Estate.

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On arriving in the UK in 1946, he was based at Blackshire Moor Camp, Leek Staffordshire. He worked as a labourer, which was quite a culture shock to him. Because he had no profession, this was the only option open. In the UK it was very different. Before WWII, Jozef had had an easy life, enjoying hunting on his estate. People had worked for him. His brother managed the estate as he didn't have time for this. This led to the break-up with his wife and children.

His wife and children made their way to Rotherham in 1957, including son Julian Adamek.

Jozef managed to re-unite with son Julian and members of the family when they arrived in the UK in 1950 apart from his first wife. Jozef would never see her again. They had divorced during the War and his first wife had married Borowicz.

He often made his way to Rotherham to visit Julian and the rest of the family. His final job was with Derby Railways and it is there that he stayed until his health forced him to quit.

This account was put together from interviews and information supplied by Julian Adamek.



Jozef Adamek in the Polish Army, the Reserve cavalry, Poland pre-1939.



Palestine (after Monte Cassino) in the Army Hospital, 1944.



Jozef Adamek in the Polish Army in Persia Teheran, 24.12.1942.



In the UK (Derby) and getting used to a completely different way of life 22.02.1949.