

W: Well, then, were most of the people who came about the time that your parents moved here to Tacoma, were most of them peasants?

C: They were mostly from peasant stock. There opportunities for education in Poland were limited. Some of the area that was occupied for instance, ~~the~~ Oh, I can speak of my parents' area which was under Russia; the youngster<sup>^</sup> went to school in the morning, in Russian ~~and went to school in the morning, in Russian~~ and in the afternoon they were allowed to use Polish. The amount of education was limited so <sup>that</sup> the Poles would not be in <sup>a</sup> ~~the~~ position to raise much opposition to the occupying forces. They were not permitted to <sup>pg. 4</sup> acquire new lands. In fact the occupying country tried ~~to~~ <sup>in</sup>, some cases, to take the land <sup>away</sup> and turn it over to their favorites, either from Russia or <sup>from</sup> among the Poles that might be supportive of their efforts. The people who came here were looking for a chance primarily to get a place to make a living, to acquire land. <sup>preparation for</sup> They had very little to offer in the way of jobs. In other words they were limited pretty much to finding work they could do with their hands. And so many of them ended up in the mines around Black Diamond, Carbonado, Wilkeson, <sup>Burnett</sup> ~~Bernett~~, a place called Fairfax, <sup>which</sup> you don't find on the maps any more. Then some <sup>found work</sup> ~~landed~~ in Lumber mills <sup>on</sup> in the tide flats here in Tacoma. Others went to farming in the Puyallup Valley; those were the days of berry farming, just beginning; and some of them, I'd say, were successful and became comfortably fixed on the berry farms.

W: Was this the area of Tacoma, rather unpopulated, is that why they settled in this area?

C: Well you can go downtown in the Pacific National Bank, on 11th or 12th; you'll see some pictures of what Tacoma looked like around 1870, 1880; you would be surprised how close the woods were to what we call downtown Tacoma now. I can remember seeing pictures of groups

C: of Poles that marched in the Fourth of July parade; ~~these parades~~ these parades would be downtown and I guess various countries were represented in ~~this parade~~ <sup>such</sup> ~~they~~ <sup>as</sup> ~~would~~ <sup>marchers</sup> put on their native costumes. I remember seeing my father carrying a sword, and a number of his countrymen with him. ~~They~~ <sup>There</sup> seemed to be a saloon some where, I guess, around 24th and Pacific, where they used to congregate; ~~and from there then they would~~, well that was the hub of their social life, for the single men I suppose, and maybe the married men. But some of these <sup>parades or marching Polish groups</sup> were probably organized by the Polish National Alliance (which is still active). Originally it was drawn up to keep Poles together <sup>and to</sup> furnish them the opportunity to have some sort of insurance to carry them through the trying periods which you know. I mean other nationalities have the same. But I think that the Polish National Alliance may have organized these parade units.

W: What kind of community life, if any, was there among the Poles here in the Tacoma area?

C: Well, there was a lot of community life. I can remember, shortly after our parish started here, that we would have a weekly card party sponsored by the <sup>parish</sup> church. And the hall would be full of people playing mostly Whist. ~~You know Spades~~. Then once a week there would be a dance in the Polish Hall. ~~We~~ haven't mentioned the Polish Hall but on 30th, <sup>South</sup> ~~north~~ of the freeway, <sup>#5</sup> right now you're on ~~what~~, 35th -- but down Portland Avenue five blocks turn to the right and two blocks to the east you'll find what we call the Polish Hall, which the Polish National Alliance ~~which~~ <sup>is called</sup> meets <sup>to</sup> this day. Well that <sup>in</sup> used to be a two-story building when I was a <sup>younger</sup> fellow and the dances would be held upstairs. They would usually hire a combo of maybe a