

Memoirs of Kazimierz Orechwa (1898-1992)

My Youth

My family had a small estate called Orechwicze, and we belonged to a parish in Jeziory, a small town east of Grodno. I was born on February 7th 1898 in Orechwicze. My parents, Jozef (1856-1922) and Viktoria nee Cydzik had four sons. I was the third in line. At the age of four, I lost my mother. Typhoid was raging in our area, and a neighboring woman contracted the disease. She had many children, so my mother helped by caring for them. Unfortunately, she was infected, and had to be transported to the hospital in Grodno where she died. She was buried in Grodno. My father did not re-marry for some time, and he somehow managed with his small boys and all the farm work. Later, he did marry. His second wife's name was Albertyna. She was a good person who truly became a mother to us.

When I was a little bit older, my father sent me shopping to Grodno. At the market place, a Polish man, a major in the Russian army, asked me for directions to a certain estate. Not only did I show him the direction, but I also accompanied him, taking a shorter way to get there. While walking together, the Major had a chance to learn more about me. When we met in Grodno the next time, the Major congratulated my father for having such a resolute son. He suggested that my father send me to high school in Grodno. My father replied that he has three more sons, and it would be hard for him send all of them to school. The Major made an offer to provide me with lodging and food, and to help me prepare for the entrance exams. My father would be expected to pay for the tuition. My father accepted the Major's offer, and this is how my education was started at this high school. All of the lectures were in Russian. In order to improve my Russian fluency, I had to speak Russian when I moved to the Major's family home. After a certain time of intensive preparation, I was accepted to the high school. In this school, I had the opportunity to become acquainted with Polish literature, specifically with the work of Henryk Sienkiewicz. I read the *Trilogy* and all of his other works in Russian translation. This literature made a great impression on me. I would have finished my studies if not for World War I and the Bolshevik Revolution. My education was temporarily interrupted.

My Family

I had three brothers: Franciszek (Frank), Czeslaw (Chester) and Stefan (Steven). The oldest Franciszek owned a farm. He had a pretty wife named Feliksa and two sons Jozef and Witold. With the onset of WWI, Franciszek, a Russian army reservist, was called to duty. He served through the duration of the war. During his time away, his wife Feliksa met an early death. He died shortly after his return home after the Boshevik revolution. After his death, my father cared for his sons. When they came of age, they worked their father's farm. Witold did not care for farming and moved to Warsaw shortly thereafter. Within a few years, Witold convinced Jozef to move to Warsaw, and the two leased their land to tenant farmers.

Czeslaw was drafted into the army. With the outbreak of WWI, he was assigned to the 17th Regiment of the Russian Hussars. He perished during the last attack against the Austrians near the end of war. According to witnesses, general Brusilov commanded this attack. The battlefield was strewn with the red coats of fallen Hussars. Czeslaw was buried near Maniewiczze.

Stefan married Helena nee Lisowski, my wife's cousin, and had four daughters: Wanda, Maria, Elizabeth and Anna. He worked his portion of the family farm in Orechwicze. Helena's mother purchased the other portion of my father's land, and as a result Stefan and Helena eventually owned my father's entire property.

1918

When the Red Army approached and was within 80 kilometers of our home, I decided to enlist in the Polish Army. I did not say anything to my father about this (I was 20), and just disappeared from home. In Indura, I enlisted as a volunteer. We received our rifles by disarming certain German units. I learned that the commander of this army post was my high school friend, lieutenant Iwanowski. This is the manner in which I began my military career on November 27, 1918.

It was the winter of 1918-1919. We were stationed near the estate of count Krasinski. Bandits from local villages supportive of the Bolshevik cause constantly raided his properties. The count requested that our commander designate two soldiers to provide protection to his property. On many occasions, I was assigned to this duty, which I fulfilled gladly. I was provided lodging, good food, and access to a library. The count was a friendly gentleman and treated us as if we were genuine soldiers. When he discovered that I had completed 5 of the 6 grades of high school, he was so impressed that he gave me a horse to own, so that I wouldn't have to walk the long distance to his estate.

1919

On my namesday, March 4th, we were sent to the front. When we got to Brzostowicze, I noticed a cavalry unit, in charge of which was my future platoon leader, lieutenant Czuczelowicz. I reported to him and stated that I would like to join his cavalry unit. While he agreed, he told me that he did not have a horse for me. When he found out that I had my own horse, he ordered me into his platoon, which consisted of some 50 men and their horses. I mounted the grey horse I received from count Krasicki and joined the platoon by reporting for duty. I joined the rank and this way I became a cavalryman.

Our platoon reached town Slonim that was occupied by Bolsheviks. It was dark when our commander got the order to look for the enemy. When we got to the wooded hill we got enemy rifle fire. We had to back off. I was selected to deliver the report on enemy location to our headquarters.

When our artillery opened fire on this area, the Bolsheviks retreated behind river Szczara. We took positions by the river and we started exchange of fire. Eventually we took town of Slonim and later infantry reinforcement arrived.

The next actions went well. When we occupied the railway station Lesnoje, located between Slonim and Baranowicze, we capture the Soviet arsenal. Russian arms replaced our German rifles because there was plenty of ammunition for them. The time was April 1919. We were well armed and our successes were following one after the other. We occupied the town Baranowicze and from then on our platoon got the name of Grodno Cavalry.

We got the task to occupy small town Stolowicze. We attacked and captured that town. When soon the night came we had to set up the watches. I was assigned for the watch. The Bolsheviks attacked early in the morning. My position in a shallow ditch was not covering me from bullets, so I had to retreat to a different position. Lying there I noticed a company of Soviet infantry was surrounding us. In this battle I was miraculously saved. I was cut off with my commander lieutenant Soltan and Bolshevik soldiers chased us. I was running through fences, ditches full of water, fields covered with thawing snow and to the forest. Later I noticed our supply wagon at a distance I shouted with all my strength for them. I did not remember anything after that, I lost my consciousness and later I wake up in a room. I was told that lieutenant Soltan was unfortunately killed.

We occupied Bobrysk beyond river Berezyna. After first battle I was promoted private first class, after second I was corporal and after Baranowicze platoon leader. Later we were moved to the northern front near Lepel. From there we started our retreat. The Parliament refused to increase army draft. Russian offensive began by Tuchaczewski. Our platoon was situated outside town Lepel and there were two battalions of our infantry. Bolsheviks bypassed us and attacked the town where our infantry was holding overnight. They started retreat in the morning. Our cavalry unit easily found the way out of this situation.

The Soviets resumed their all out offensive at night on 14 May. We were forced to retreat behind Berezyna River. I was sent forward close to the river, to communicate with our artillery. I saw Soviets forcing their way across the river. Our artillery was bombarding over the waves of the attackers, but Russians kept going and finally crossed the Berezyna River. From that time we resumed a steady retreat, which harassed us for three Months. During that time I saw kitchen only twice.

1920 Battle for Warsaw

One day I was ordered to deliver a report to general Letinik headquarters in Praga a suburb of Warsaw. This message was marked important so I had to move fast on my horse. When I passed a small town Marki I noticed on both sides of the road many tables with tea, sandwiches, cigarettes, clean underwear prepared by ladies for the front soldiers. Any body could notice us. We were dirty, not shaved and we did not look like soldiers, more like cavemen (three month on the horse). I delivered the report, returned to my unit at night. I checked to my platoon and went to sleep, which I badly needed. I slept in the saddle past three month.

The alarm woke me next morning and we all assembled in formations. There were four regiments from Grodno, Wilno, Kowno and Nowogrodek. They were resting after 3-month steady retreat. New soldiers inexperienced in warfare, who were now at the front line, gave up two lines of trenches. The results of which were the Soviets enter the town of Radzymin and were advancing toward us. Our four regiments got the order to attack. They went and pushed Bolsheviks back and occupied the trenches. Our cavalry platoon was placed in about 3-4 km space between our two divisions. The attack came toward our position. Our platoon of 120 men was no match for a battalion of Russian infantry and we had to retreat.

I received an order from my platoon commander to take four machine guns with men and quietly ride behind the Russian battalion lines. It was dark when we took up our positions there and we opened fire towards the battalion immediately. We could not see anybody, but our purpose was to slow down their advance and to force them to entrench. Our platoon was gaining on time and we kept the Russians from advancing till dawn. Soon came our infantry, which we could assist with our fire forcing the battalion to retreat.

The war soon ended. Marshall Pilsudski decorated me with Virtuti Military Cross; I also received twice Cross for Valor. I was sent to Wilno to complete my high school and attended an accelerated course of military college. The military career was in my mind but it never materialized.



Kazimierz in military college

Years between the Wars

When I was student in Wilno I used to come home for the holidays and vacations. My father died in 1922. Often I visited Czerniewski family and there I met Rufina who appealed to me. The later events followed my proposals, which were accepted. Our wedding took place on April 8, 1923 in our local church in Jeziory. After the wedding we moved to Wilno but the life in the city was depressing to Rufina. As soon as I finished my military college and I did not get my commission for an officer, we returned to my home in Orechwicze.

My father estate was divided between the brothers and I started to manage my part of the land. In Orechwicze my daughter Irena and Alice were born. At that time I received from government for my military service 17 ha (42 acres) farmland not far from Orechwicze. In connection with my part of the father estate this land was sufficient to support my family. We made great effort to manage our new land.

The beginning was difficult, but year after year our situation improved. We built our new house in Zydomla and our family moved there. Our two daughters Stenia and Krystyna were born there. Our farm was prospering well. We purchased a harvest machine, which was rare in those days. Peasants were glad to come to work for me, because we paid them on time. We planted a small orchard around our house and soon these trees began to bear fruits. Everything was going well for us, our mortgage on the house and loans for farm equipment were paid off. Unfortunately the World War II September 1939 was approaching



Wedding of Kazimierz and Rufina

Beginning of war 1939.

With the beginning of the war I was recalled to the army. My assignment was to procure horses, wagons and to deliver supplies to the soldiers going to the front. This was a lot of work. German invaders moved close to our town Grodno. We embarked a train going to Lida, which was bombed, by planes near Baranowicze. Our train was not damaged, but we could not go forward. We had to go back to Lida from where we tried to go to Wilno. We found that no more trains were going there so we tried to go by foot. Some 15 kilometers before Wilno we met two policemen on bicycles, who warned us about approaching Bolsheviks tanks around the corner. We hid into the bushes near the road. When the tanks passed by I was left only with my neighbor Grobicki.

Parallel to this road Wilno-Grodno runs an old napoleonic track at a distant apart. Bolsheviks tanks went along the road and we went along that old track. They run at a distance apart. On the way we met some Byelorussia peasants, who wanted take our horses from us. I answered in their language so they let us go. We arrived at Jeziory and stopped there to let the horses to rest, before I visited my family on the way to Grodno.

My Farewell to the Family

My parting with the family was very short lasting. My wife told me: "Go away from home, you cannot help me. Every night we are being searched. They will shoot you, like the did to 17 settlers." How I could go away to leave helpless family. In half an hour the Bolsheviks could enter our village. I said good-buy to my family and left home. When I was near Grodno, tanks were approaching from the West. I ran into the forest from where I noticed Russian search patrols. The day was breaking. I set on our supply wagon and entered Grodno. On the way I saw Russian burned tank. In Sopotkin was army headquarters where I went to report my presence. I met there major Czuczelowicz (my commander from 1920 war) who was organizing a platoon from cavalry remnants with intention to go to Lithuania.

Interned in Lithuania

Together with the major in a car we reached Lithuania border on 22 September. We arrived in Olityi where we found a very courteous reception by Lithuanians. We were transported to Biesztan on Niemen where we were located in the houses of this summer resort. The commander of our "camp" was Zdanawiczijus, a very polite and Polish speaking person. We had our food supplies we brought in our wagons.

This internee camp in Biesztan was interesting. By the entrance gate was a sentry but there was no fence around. One could not pass through the gate the sentry would not let go out. But we could leave the camp at any place away from the entrance gate.

Russians enter Lithuania.

On June 15 1940 Soviets invaded Lithuania and their garrison was located 1.5 km from our camp. We were then transferred to army barracks in Kalwaria. It was interesting to watch through our window, how Lithuania was joined into Soviet Union. There was a sports field to which they brought by buses several groups of communist supporters. Their noisy meeting accepted Lithuania to be part of Soviets. The president of Lithuania Switonos declared that we are free and he fled to Germany. Immediately after this new government was formed, our camp was isolated. A Soviet commission came to our camp and announced that anyone who wants can go back home.

One morning I noticed reinforced sentries behind barbed wires, one Lithuanian and one NKWD. They surrounded our camp. Within few hours Lithuanians provided us with about one kilogram of bacon, two kilogram of bread and some grease for our shoes. Russians searched our belongings. I saw how before me they torn off insignia and decorations from officers uniforms. Seeing this, I hid my Virtuti Military Cross (No 5364) in my little watch pocket and I left my two other crosses. When they came to me my insignia and crosses were torn off, but they did not find my Virtuti Military Cross. Next day I hanged my cross on my uniform. I knew that as a rule they would not touch it after a search. During one of interrogations NKWD man pointed at my cross and told me: "It is time to take it off." I answered him, that this cross is the Polish highest decoration, which I received from Marshal Jozef Pilsudski for my 1920 campaign and that cross is removed together with my head. With this bold answer I surprised NKWD man.

Kozielsk

On 10th July 1940 we were transferred to freight cars and the train took us to Kozielsk. There were some 2500 officers in Kozielsk. They let us write letters. I wrote to my relative in the country, asking them to help my deported family. People, who wrote letters to relatives in German occupied part of Poland, received letters from unknown people asking: "if you are together there, why my husband or son do not write?". These prisoners who were here before us, and were murdered in Katyn, used the same return address. When they read these letters I thought that the same might happen to us. After sometime I received letter with 5 rubles from my wife.

I read Russian newspapers "Pravda" and "Izvestia" to my colleagues. One day a captain NKVD entered and grabbed the paper out of my hands. He saw that it was a Russian paper and asked me how do I read it. I explained to him that they do not understand Russian so I have to read this paper in Polish. I became so proficient that by looking at Russian paper I could read immediately in Polish. In these newspapers were interesting articles not on politics but on local issues.

NKVD men were carrying interrogation by calling prisoners one by one sometimes between one and two o'clock at night. NKVD sentry would come and call us by the first letter in alphabetical order. On third or fourth night I was called and was lead behind barbwires to a room in nearby building. I was told to seat down.

NKVD officer told me that I received a letter from my wife and he showed me it from the distance. I extended my hand but he retracted the letter and he said let us talk. It was evident that they wanted me to inform them about colleagues in the barrack for monetary favors.

I answered the NKVD man that I know my family was deported for extermination but I will not, for any price spy on my colleagues. Next he asked me, would I consider joining red army. I knew the Russian language well and for this reason I could easily carry with him a conversation. At the end of discussion I asked him, would he accept such a proposal, being in my situation. He answered no. I told him that I am not worse than he is. NKVD man got up and started to approach me. I thought he was going to slap my face. But he extended his hand and said we like brave men. At that time I kept my hands behind me.

When Germans approached town Smolensk we were transported to Holubecki District, North of Moscow. The train stopped in an open field near the town of Wologda where we were told to disembark. Then I saw the barbwires of our camp Grazowiec our new living place. We got hot water and thin slice of dry bread for breakfast. It was the month of July and it was hot. Over there in North the days were hot and nights very cold. Our wooden barracks had three walls and an opening. Or beds were made of wooden boards and there was no mattresses or straw for me to lie down. Luckily I had my warm coat to lie on and to cover with. After a while they delivered some hay for us to feel warmer at night.

Amnesty

We did not know what was happening in the world at that time. We observed a procession of important persons one late morning. They assembled us in front of each building. They read a document informing us about the amnesty. The Russian guard placed their rifles aside at the time of reading. One of the more important persons told us that we are free that day. However he advised us not to leave the camp because soon we will be transferred South to our Polish army units.

Soon after, General Anders visited us. He was just released from Lubianka prison in Moscow. We found out that Polish army units were being formed in Buzuluk and Tockoye. We stayed in this camp for a while, but we were provided with food and blankets. One day we opened gates of the camp formed a marching column, and we went on foot to the nearest railway station some 5 or 6 kilometers away. It was raining hard when we past by NKVD guard, we sang the Polish national anthem when we left the camp. When we marched through a village, we noticed people to open their windows to greet us "with God, with God". At the station we got on the train for a long trip to Tock. In Buzuluk was Polish army headquarters and our division was stationed in Tock. There we were located in tents. The winter came which was extremely cold with temperature approaching -50C deg. We had to built stoves using bricks and stones. We had to go over a mile to a forest to fetch some wood for heating.

Journey to bring my family.

When I arrived in Tockoye I had 3000 rubles which I received in Grazowiec camp. At the nearest opportunity I mailed by telegram 2500 rubles to my wife. Later I received a letter from my family informing me about the problems they had over there.. My friend Tadeusz Gorski was the adjutant of the battalion commander. I met Gorski in Lithuania. He was from Warsaw, where he graduated from a commercial college. He was 10 years younger and this did not prevent us to become friends. Often I mentioned to him my concern about my family. Gorski got a permission from my commander for me to travel to bring my family. I felt somehow uneasy when he volunteered to go with me and he got the permission from his superior to assist me. I created a document in Russian that we are traveling to my family in order to bring them closer to my regiment in Tock. This document had a signature and regimental stamp. It proved to be very valuable and respected by Russian authorities and in many cases was used in place of railroad ticket. We went to Chkalov (present name Oremburg) station. I had with me a small case filled with 10 packages of cigarette tobacco. We did not have much food, because our army unit had to feed all our civilians refugees. I received an advance from our paymaster, so I had 800 rubles in my pocket. At the station there were several ticket cashers windows and we could not find the one for Sverdlovsk. While moving from one window to the other we were noticed by a NKVD man with a big German Sheppard dog. He asked us where we were going. When we told him that we liked to go to Sverdlovsk ordered us to follow him. We had no tickets but he informed us that military persons do not need railway tickets. At first we were uneasy to follow him and his dog but we had no choice. Later we found out that he was very helpful to us. He got us food at one of the stations.

At some point of our trip Russian cadets, got on this train. They just finished their military school and were on the way to their assigned units. They saw us in foreign uniforms and that was what started a conversation between us. I was fluent in Russian, so I had an interesting discussion with the cadets and other military persons.

In Sverdlovsk, at the border of Europe and Siberia, we had to change the train. We had to go to Molotov (present name Perm). While getting off the train some youngsters shouted at us: "fascists with armllets". We were saved by a lady who called us in loud Polish "ours, ours". We were hungry and this lady helped us to find a restaurant. She showed us to an elegant restaurant where the guests were well dressed. Two militia men checked our documents. Later we found that that well dressed group of people was evacuated Leningrad opera. After the dinner we found with difficulty a truck which took us to Dobranka, the small town, near place where my family was situated.

Family reunion in Dobranka

We arrived in Dobranka around 10 late evening. We decided to report our arrival to NKVD. Soon a person in charge of that office met us. He arranged the transport of my family to Dobranka in a friendly manner. Instead of us going three days by a horse driven cart (no cars were available), commander phoned pasiolek (living area for forest workers) Mikulinska Base, requesting transport for my family to get to Dobranka. To that place was 120 kilometers (80 miles). On the third day I was prepared to welcome my wife with my four daughters. I purchased some food, butter, 5 loafs of bread. There was no meat available but I got caviar. I knew that they will be hungry but I did not expect them to have meat of the goat they slaughter for the road. They were provided with horse driven sleds and that created some problems because of rain. My family was very happy to be healthy and reunited after two years exile.

I found out that my wife never received 2500 rubles, which I sent from Tock. With the receipt for that money I went to NKWD. The militia officer called the post office requesting them to pay my wife that money. We purchased food and my reunited family set out to travel to Tock.

My return way from Ural to Tockoye

In Dobryanka was a port on river Kama. I purchased tickets for a boat which got us to a port on river Volga. There we found out that all steam boats which were going down the river were overcrowded; they did not take any passengers. We decided to take a boat up the river to a port Kazani, where it was easier to take a boat going down the river Volga. It was autumn 1941 and further North they had some snow. In Kazani we got tickets for the boat "Kolchoznik" to go South on river Volga to Kujbyszev (present Samara). In Kujbyszev was Polish embassy where I found more about our situation and where should I take my family. I had a chance to talk to general Szyszko-Bogusz who advised me to go to Tockoye. When we got there I found that my family could not stay in Tockoye. I had to stay there and report to my army unit but my family had to travel on the train South-East to Kazakhstan to be further away from approaching battle front.

My trip to Kazakhstan

When my Polish army units were soon to be moved to Persia I went to Kazakhstan to bring my family closer to Tockoye. They lived temporarily near Tashkent. This was quite difficult trip. First I went by regular train and then by a narrow gauge railway and finally by horses to a place called Pierwowacki Posiolek. My family lived in a clay hut, in the center of which was hearth and stove where a dried step grass was burned. There was no wood in this area; step grass with soiled roots and dried donkey manure were the only burning material.

Every day I was requesting a transportation to nearest narrow gauge Sergo station at the management of this locality. Finally we got two pairs of cows with two wheels carts with which we got to the station. Uzbek people helped us in this move.

We spend one week in the city of Turkestan at the station waiting for the train. I went to town and I could not buy any food. All I could get was vodka. By incident I found that there was a Polish consulate in this town and they provided me with some bread. All that time we waited at open platform at the station. The nights were very cold and we covered ourselves with everything we had. We could get hot water at the station and this kept us warm. We could see passing trains full of Russian men going to the army.

One day a transport of Polish Army 5th division arrived at the station. The transport commander agreed to take us to Tockoye. The soldiers helped us to move our luggage to the train and finally we left Turkestan.

In Tockoye

We found out that civilians and families could not get off at Tockoye and they had to go further to a camp provided for them. I had asked the soldiers to help my family with the luggage to get off the train at Tockoye. I jumped off the train and walked away to show myself after the train departed. The Polish military police came soon informing my family that they were not allowed to leave the train there. But they were out off the train which started to move. I went to the station office where was a Polish officer and he informed me about the situation in Tockoye. Now I had to locate my family nearby. I situated them in a small storage hut, which I rented from an Uzbek man. The weather in Tockoye was warm.

The next day I went to see my superior officer colonel Dekowski, who was opposed to officers bringing their families. I reported my arrival to him. Later he influenced my transfer from the regiment.

At the Tockoye station was the kitchen which was distributing food to civilian Polish population; lunches and dinners. Polish consulate was engaged in this service but food supplies from the army. We were getting smaller portions in order to feed women and children who got out of forced labor camps..

At the beginning the relations with Russians were good but later they changed when an armored brigade was located nearby. Our 5th division had artillery, horses, was armed and ready to go.

Departure from Russia.

At the end of March 1942 started first evacuation of the army and families. When my unit was preparing for evacuation, I had to take care of my family. The first chance I had to get them on the train going with the Polish army and families to Krasnovodsk (now Turkmenbashi), a port on the Eastern shore of Caspian sea. From that port the boats were taking us to the port Pahlevi (now Resht) in Persia.



Kazimierz in Palestine

With little effort I was able to squeeze in my family to a railway car occupied by orphanage with Polish children. The guardians of these children were opposed to my action. My family luckily got to Pahlevi and later to Teheran.

On April 1, 1942 our army unit was unloaded from the boat at Pohlevi, and from that time we were under British command. Few week later I saw my family in Teheran but soon we had to go in different directions. From Teheran through Iraq my division went to Palestine where I got my promotion to full lieutenant on January 3, 1943. In November 1944 we were transported to Italy, where I went through whole war campaign.

My family left Teheran after sometime there and they went through Karachi in India and Mombassa in Africa to a Polish settlement Massindi in Uganda. There, away from the war they spend 6 years living with other Polish families. All these families were like my family deportees from Poland to Russia.

Postwar Years

In 1946 the units of our Polish 2nd Corp divisions were dissolved in Italy and some soldiers returned back to Poland. Majority of soldiers and officers went through Russian ordeal and they did not like to return back to Poland. From Italy we were transported to England where after being demobilized we went through Polish Resettlement Corps, which was the preparation for civilian life. On August 15, 1956 I was promoted to cavalry captain in reserve by Polish government authorities in exile.

In 1948 my family arrived from Africa and soon we moved to live in London. The family was doing well. We all had some paying jobs to make fairly good living. Two younger daughters were admitted to a Polish high school in Grendon near London. While staying in London we managed to marry all our four daughters. In 1951 our daughter Alice emigrated with her husband to USA. Following their example the whole family went to America. In 1958 the remaining members of my family, my wife, myself and daughter Stefania with her husband and son, left England by boat to New York. We went by train to Chicago, where the rest of the family settled down. At that time I was 60 years old. My son-in-law found me a good job in Drake hotel in Downtown Chicago. In this position I earned good retirement and was employed to the age of 82. Our very sad experience was the sudden death of our son-in-law Casmir in 1974 and then death of his wife our oldest daughter Irena in 1978. Our family grew; we got 7 granddaughters and 7 grandsons. All of them completed studies at the local universities. We were getting more great grand-children. In 1988 we celebrated 65 anniversary of our marriage.

Kazimierz Orechwa died on 17 December 1992 at the age of 94, eight months after the death of his wife Rufina. Captain of cavalry Kazimierz Orechwa was decorated for the war 1920 with the cross "Virtuti Military" 5th class, twice with Valor Cross, Silver Merit Cross, Merit Cross of Central Lithuanian Armies and for the II WW with Medal of the Army and the British Defense Medal.