

## Nowobilski Origins

### From notes left us by our father, Albin Nowobilski

The Nowobilski family (formerly written Nowobielski) originates from Białka village, located in the Podhale region. The village is situated on a river of the same name. The Białka river collects waters from mountain streams collecting waters from various glacial lakes within the region. These include Morskie Oko (Sea's Eye), the Five Polish Lakes, as well as the White Water Valley. It is unknown for which services or distinctions the family received their noble designation from the royal chancery. Perhaps it was for joining the infantry under Zamojski to capture fortresses in the campaign on Moscow, or perhaps it was later, for joining in the battle against the invading Swedes, under King John Casimir.

Later, during the slow decline of the Polish Republic's importance and might, highlander (górale) rebellions erupted due to local corruption by royal administrators in Nowy Targ. One of the first uprisings was that led by Kostek Napierski, a self-proclaimed illegitimate son of King Ladislaus IV. In his writings, Kazimierz Tetmajer places several Nowobilskis within the ranks of this uprising, specifically in the novel "Maryna from Hruby", and in the novella "On the Rocks of Podhale". These writings contributed to the legends of the Tatra Highwaymen. The activity of the Tatra Highwaymen was increased because of the plunder of the Spisz Region by Maria Theresa. Lack of Polish governmental reaction encouraged the partition of Poland by three neighboring countries: Austria, Germany, and Russia. The Spisz region was added to the Kingdom of Hungary, and the Białka River became the boundary between Hungary and Galicja, present day Little Poland. For 380 years, the Spisz Region was governed by Poland. That is, from 1412, when it was handed over by Sigismund of Luxembourg as payment for a loan. When Poland regained its independence after World War I, a local referendum added several Spisz Region villages to the Polish Podhale Region.

The royal act granting the Nowobilskis local administration is held in the Museum in Zakopane. Rev. Francis Nowobilski granted this document to the museum. He was from the older "Mountain Stream" branch of the family that originates from upper Białka, near its border with Bukowina village. The family has since declined since many moved to Groń, Brzegi, and Nowy Sącz. Many emigrated to the United States. As late as the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, the Nowobilski clan was quite wealthy. They owned Morskie Oko and its surrounding pastures, where they tended their large flocks of sheep.