

## The manor house in Grzenda and its owners

This originally one-storey stone house with ground floor, chapel, dungeons and cellars dates from the 17th century. The previous building was probably a small fortress. The second floor was built in the 19th century. Architecturally dominant is the portico with four massive columns as a roofed entrance to the manor house. On the north side, the back of the manor house, one can see traces of the mighty fortress embankments and remains of a park with old trees.

### *The Lords of the Manor*

The first owner was the Polish imperial prince **Stanislaw Lubomirski**, whose fortune included 31 towns, 738 villages and extensive latifundia.

In the 19th century the Polish count **Stanislaus Skarbek** (1778-1848) acquired the estate. Skarbek broke with the traditions of the Polish nobility, worked as an ox trader and then with great talent as an industrialist, paid back debts accumulated by his ancestors, and bought at a good price many estates, which often came under the hammer far below value because of the extravagance of the Polish nobility. Despite his wealth, he personally lived extremely modestly and was ridiculed as a miser by his peers. While travelling in Europe, he purposefully visited various charitable institutions and in 1839 announced that he wanted to devote his enormous fortune to a charitable foundation. In Lviv he left a lasting mark with the first building of the Polish theatre, which was completed in 1842 and included in the foundation's assets. This foundation was still one of the largest in Europe at the end of the 1930s, although the foundation's assets had become smaller due to mismanagement.

The last owner before World War II was the conservative adventurer Kajetan Czarkowski-Golejewski (1897 - 1977): landowner, lawyer, officer, aviation pioneer, writer, and after the war an employee of the Polish branch of Radio Free Europe. In 1938 he leased the estate from the Skarbek Foundation. Czarkowski graduated from the Jan Kazimierz University in Lviv at the Faculty of Law and then studied at the Sorbonne in Paris for two years. He had received basic military training in the Austro-Hungarian army. After Polish independence he volunteered in the Polish-Soviet War (1919-1921). He served in the Polish army until he retired on 31.12.1934 in the rank of a staff officer. As one of the pioneers of air sports, he was also president of the aero club in Lviv for a time. On 15 March 1931 he took off from Rome for a flight to Tokyo. Some of his stages were Konya (Turkey), Aleppo (Syria), Rumadi (Iraq), Iran, Delhi, Karachi and Calcutta (India), Yangon (Siam or Burma, today Myanmar) and finally Bangkok (Thailand). In a storm he crashed in the jungle near Bangkok, suffered numerous injuries and lost an eye. After several months in hospital he returned to Europe. This flight had been the first Polish flight to India and Indochina - he described this adventure in the book "SP-AEU. 13 Flight Days over Asia" (translated title; SP-AEU was the registration number of his pioneer flight).

Kajetan Czarkowski-Golejewski, Polish nationalist and anti-communist, together with four other Polish pilots, tried to reach Spain with a Fokker F-XII in 1936 to fight on the side of Franco against the Republicans in the Spanish Civil War (07/1936 to 04/1939). The Republic of Poland officially held back, but withdrew the citizenship of every Polish citizen who joined the International Brigades of the Republic. On the side of the Republicans, the democratically elected government of the Second Spanish Republic, Spain's communists also fought, but due to the instructions of the Comintern and Stalin, they also waged a "civil war in civil war" against fellow fighters who were defamed as "fascist-Trotskyist spies". On the side of the putschist Franco was Hitler's Germany, which intervened directly with the Condor Legion. But the Polish pilots are not deployed in Spain - they had an accident near La Rochelle, where Kajetan's long-time friend Jan Kazimierz Lasocki died.

After Hitler Germany's attack on Poland, the tide turned again: Czarkowski-Golejewski volunteered to serve in the Polish army as a pilot in the fight against Hitler Germany. After the Polish defeat, he joined the Polish armed forces in the West. His two half-brothers, Cyril and Viktor, had been murdered in Katyn in 1940 by the Soviet secret service NKVD. Kajetan Czarkowski-Golejewski worked as a translator during the training of paratroopers near Manchester, and later as a staff officer with the rank of major.

When Poland did not become independent after the war, but was left to the Soviet sphere of influence by the Allies, he remained in exile in Munich. Officially he held the title "Count of Czarkowski-Golejewski". From 1951 to 1962, he headed the Institute of Study and Analysis of Polish Radio (Radio Free Europe). Kajetan Czarkowski-Golejewski was married twice and had three children. In 1977 he died in Buch at Lake Ammersee.

Little is known about the use of the manor house during the first Soviet occupation (1939-1941). In 1941-1944 the building then served as a manor house for the manager of the SS estate Grzenda. From summer 1942 to summer 1944, the notorious SS-Untersturmführer Horst Petri exercised brutal authority here as the manager. During the Soviet era, the villa was converted into a residential building, which has since been neglected and slowly decaying.

### ***Equipment of the manor house 1938-1939***

In less than two years, the last tenant of the estate, Kajetan Czarkowski-Golejewski, furnished the building with many valuable pieces of furniture and art from his collection. A huge oak table with inlays from the 17th century took the central place in the dining room, surrounded by antique oak chairs. On the walls were two Gdansk sideboards from the 18th century. In the fireplace room there was white furniture in the style of Louis XV. A wooden sculpture of St. John in a niche in the staircase dates from the 17th century. The upper room served as a salon. In the ballroom there was a Steinway grand piano on which the Polish composer Igancy Paderewski had played.

Among the many other precious pieces of furniture was a bed in the Empire style, several sideboards, two wardrobes and office equipment in the style of Maria Theresa. Two paintings by Julius Kossak and two landscape paintings of the old Dutch school were showpieces among the paintings. A clock collection from the 18th and 19th centuries consisted of 20 clocks. From his flight to Siam, the landlord brought back a large Buddha statue, a bronze Buddha head, and Chinese silk paintings and miniatures. In the library you could find the first edition of Pan Tadeuz by the Polish national poet Adam Mickiewicz. This and many other valuable pieces of equipment are documented and were still available at the beginning of the war, many of them probably even at the time of Horst Petri. A few weeks before Horst Petri had to vacate the SS manor in front of the advancing Red Army, his wife Erna had left the manor with furniture and other items, but probably not with the particularly large and heavy objects.

The fate of the valuable furniture and art objects is unknown. The formerly magnificent manor house now rests in a pitiful state.