

Gesher Galicia Publishes Its 100th Cadastral Map!

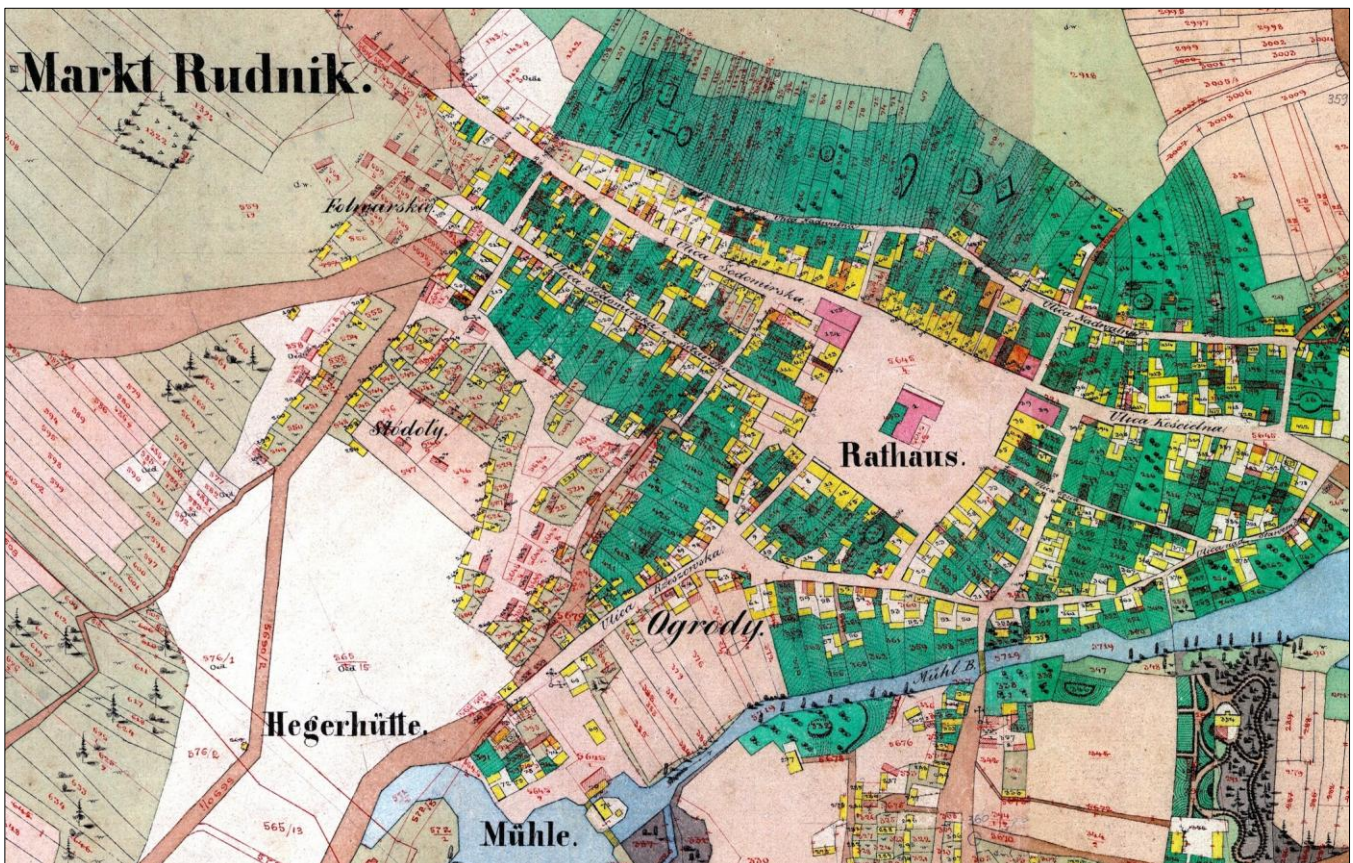
by Jay Osborn, GG Board Member
and Digital Map Manager

EARLY THIS SPRING, Gesher Galicia will proudly celebrate the fourth anniversary of the public launch of its online digital Map Room, the award-winning collection of cadastral, regional, and street maps for genealogical and historical research. But in July of last year, we quietly passed another important milestone in our work: the publication of our 100th historical Galician cadastral map, which documents the 1853 property survey of Rudnik (רודניק) on the river San in what was then central Galicia, now the Nisko powiat (county) of southeastern Poland.

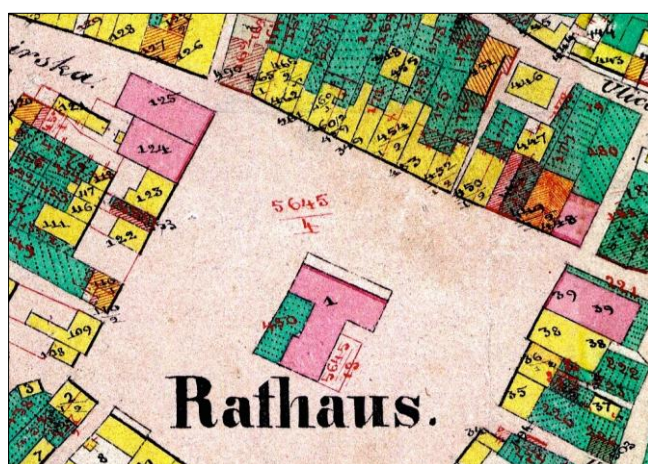
Like nearly all of our cadastral maps, this interactive web image began with more than a dozen large and very detailed paper sheets, each covering a portion of the historical town. The paper record is more than 160 years old, and is carefully preserved by the Polish National Archive in Przemyśl. Thanks to a generous agreement between the Przemyśl archive and Gesher Galicia, we were able to obtain high-resolution map sheet images without watermark for further processing. We then digitally "stitched" these separate sheets together, adjusting and blending the seams to create a single very large image file (almost 750 megapixels for the northern half of the town).

In the next step, we tiled that image like modern web maps, assembled a viewer to permit easy browser use, and finally posted it to our Map Room:

<http://maps.geshergalicia.org/cadastral/rudnik-1853/>

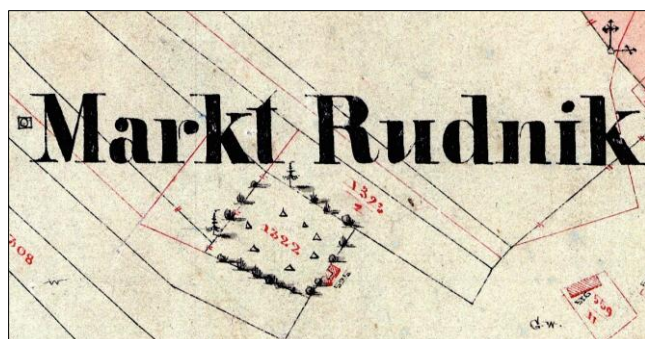


The resulting online map shows town features in common with many cadastral maps: a well-defined market square with town hall, several other masonry buildings, many wooden residences with orchards and garden plots surrounding the business center, an estate, several churches, and both Jewish and Catholic cemeteries. Unusual features on the map include man-made waterways for a highly developed mill complex and redline updates inked onto the map to document the right-of-way for future rail lines.



A detail of the market square and the town hall.

The Map Room started as a digital map overlay experiment by Alex Feller and myself in 2011. That experiment on a single 19th-century cadastral sketch resulted in some 5,000 map image tiles on a personal server.



A map detail showing the Jewish cemetery west of town.

Today, Gesher Galicia's Map Room delivers more than 4.5 million map image tiles to users' browsers all over the world. Our largest assembled maps are more than a gigapixel in image size.



Part of the mill complex south of town.

Since the 100th cadastral map, our work has continued; by the end of 2015 we reached 110 unique online cadastral maps, plus 40 regional maps, more than 15 street maps, and several "special" maps. We have already posted several new historical cadastral maps in 2016, and updated others. The list of maps in the Map Room is now so long we're working on an overhaul of the site to make it easier to find specific maps, and to browse, and to learn more about the production of cadastral maps and their uses in genealogy.



Some of the many redline revisions on this map.

We invite you to return to the Map Room often to see what's new, and to enjoy these informative and beautiful works of art as we do:

<http://maps.geshergalicia.org/>