

Map Corner

New Finds: Old Regional Maps

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REGIONAL MAPS OF GALICIA are a favorite target of acquisition by Gesher Galicia for our free online Map Room, because there are many ways they can be used in family history research. Perhaps most importantly, they visually define the changing borders of Galicia, as well as its *Kreise* (districts) and counties. Knowing on which side of a border an ancestral town or village falls can help define the archives where specific historical records may be found. In addition, many regional maps depict transportation routes in some detail and can help determine the evolving commercial connections between urban centers and the probable

emigration routes of our ancestors. Zoomed in to district levels, the maps can help identify nearby settlements, where additional research may reveal further family links, as well as the historical names of places that have been renamed since Galician times.

As of this writing, there are more than fifty historical regional maps in the Map Room, spanning the entire life of the Kingdom of Galicia, the brief but intense period of World War I, and the interwar period of the Second Republic of Poland, leading to the start of World War II. Many of these maps document Galicia's own borders, but overall, the maps scale from the full Austro-Hungarian Empire down to individual *Kreise*. Most of them document political boundaries, roads, and other details that existed in the year of the map's design and publication. A few of our regional maps illustrate Galicia's geography, climate, and other features.

In this article, I would like to highlight a few new additions to our collection of regional maps, first

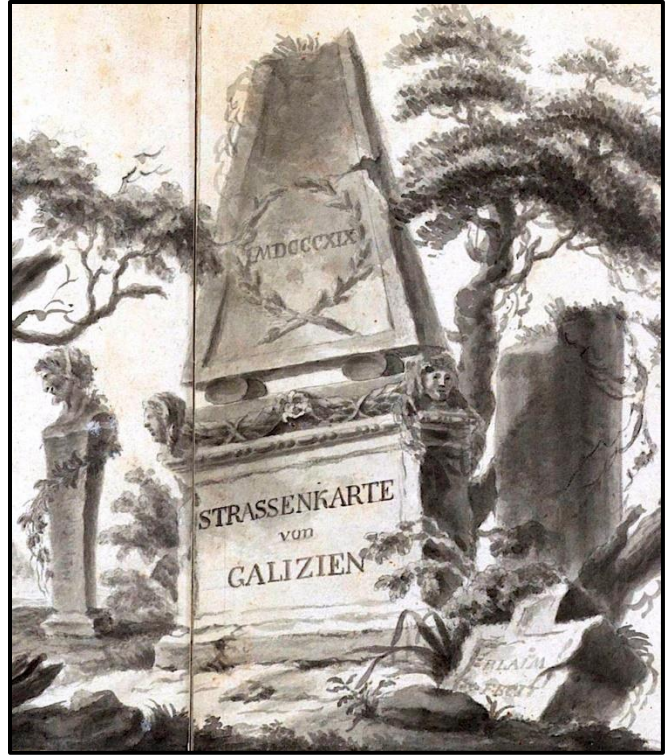
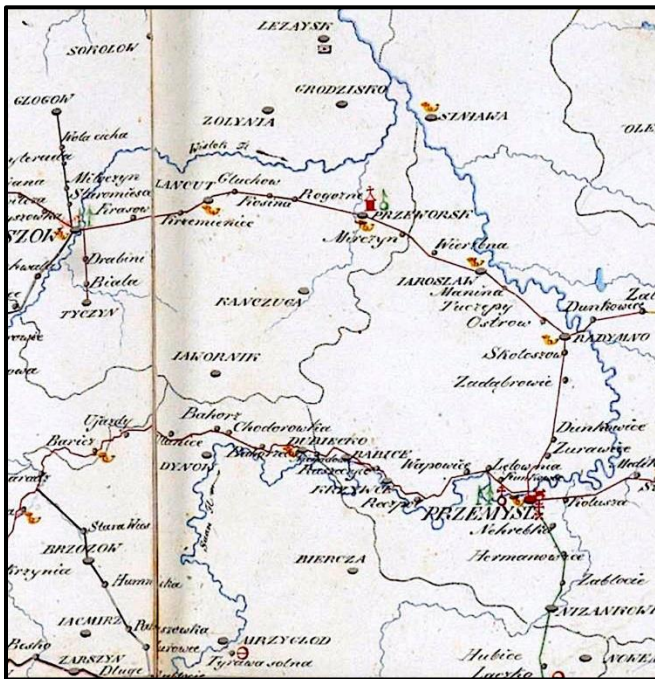


brought to our attention by a fellow enthusiast, Areta Kovalska, of the delightful cultural history and heritage website [Forgotten Galicia](http://ForgottenGalicia.com).

Franz Ludwig Güssefeld Map, 1775

The excerpt on the previous page is an eastern section from the earliest map of Galicia in our collection. One of more than a hundred maps created by the German cartographer Güssefeld, this example is notable for its utility: labeled and annotated in Polish, German, and Latin, the map includes hundreds of named settlements, three distance scales, and a trilingual legend explaining nine symbols and translating common elements of toponyms.

On the Güssefeld map, the relative locations of some towns are slightly off, perhaps to improve the clarity of noted place names. An early attempt was made to indicate topographical features, such as rivers, marshes, high hills, and the Carpathian Mountains. The map also includes a label for *Ziemia Halica [sic]*, "Land of Halych," the early historical region that gave its name to Galicia.



Johann Blaim Road Map, 1820

Two excerpts from an early road map of Galicia are shown on this page, created either by the hand or under the direction of Johann Blaim, an official of the "k.u.k. Galician Roads and Bridge-Building Directorate." As would be expected from the imperial office responsible for road building and maintenance, significant road variety is depicted (thirteen different types and gauges), but what is more remarkable from today's perspective is the actual *scarcity* of roads in between the major cities. Significant Galician towns, such as Leżajsk and Kańczuga, are shown with no official roads connecting them to any other places.

One feature of the map probably inspired some envy in Blaim's cartography colleagues. The irregular outline of Galicia left a large amount of white space at two corners, which Blaim filled with artistic renderings dedicated to the glory of the empire—and of himself. Two panels of the map depict a fanciful ruin, as shown above, carved with the map date, the state office, and Blaim's name.

Miczyński School Map, 1872

One of the more beautiful regional maps in our collection is the 1872 general map of Galicia designed by Władysław Miczyński, illustrated on this page in an excerpt of southeastern Galicia and northern Bukovina. Omitting the smaller villages from his annotations, Miczyński gave his map space to clearly depict the road, river, and rail connections between towns and cities, as well as a visual hint of the mountainous terrain which made up much of Galicia's southern border.

The map is also a clear indication of the empire's accommodation of rising national sentiments in the second half of the nineteenth century. Designed expressly for Polish-language schools, the map was created by a Pole and printed in both Vienna and Galician Rzeszów.

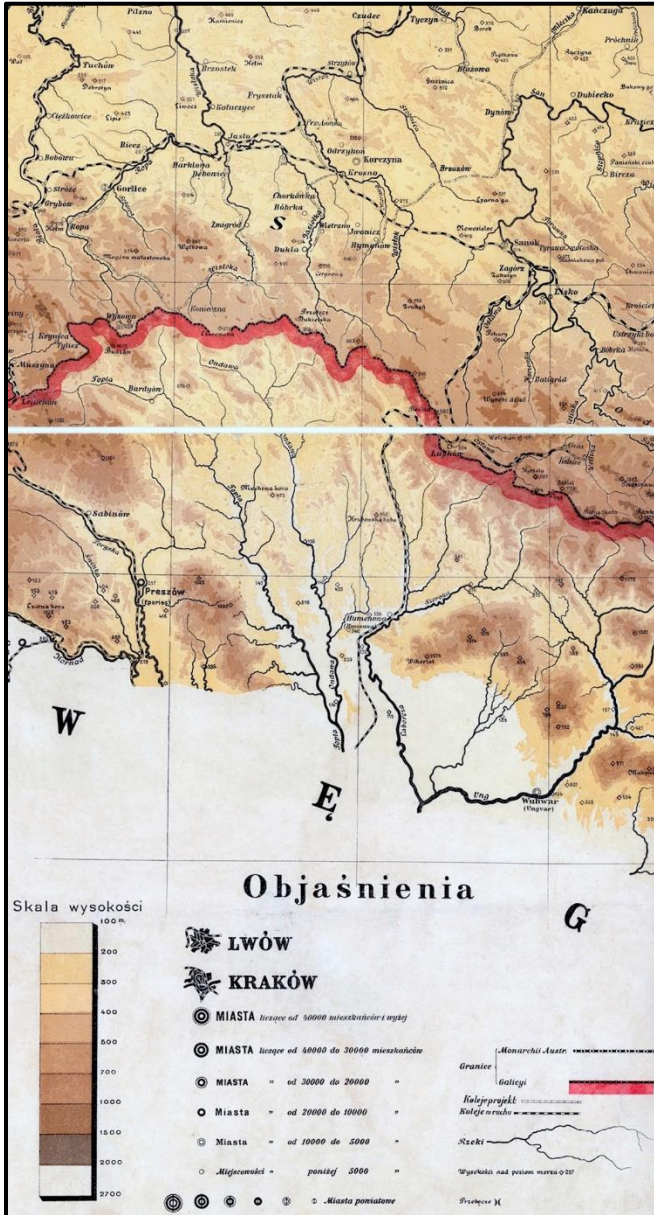
Students could learn a great deal about Galicia from this map—as can we. In addition to an outline of the founding dates of Galicia and a count of the

people and settlements within its borders, there are also tables that list several of the highest and lowest elevation points, key rivers and their principal directions of flow, and a summary of the civil administrative hierarchy within the Galician crownland, naming its cities and counties (*starostwa powiatowe*).

Stanisław Majerski Wall Map, 1894

Competing with Miczyński's school map for beauty and clarity, Stanisław Majerski used size and elegant design to convey the topography of Galicia, even at a glance from across a room. The map is very large, lithographed in Lwów in eight sections, spanning a total of five and a half feet wide by three and a half feet high (more than 1.6 m by 1.0 m). Primary roads, rails, and rivers are depicted conventionally, without obstructing the characteristics of the underlying landscape. Numerous mountain peaks, and even many towns, are annotated with their elevations above sea level.





As shown above, this map excels in its depiction of terrain relief. Majerski uses nine levels of relief shading to indicate elevation across the map, which includes the “far” side of the Carpathian Mountains, as viewed from Galicia, in what was then the Kingdom of Hungary. In the excerpt on this page, the elevation scale is shown along with a small slice of the full map of Galicia. Even in this excerpt, one can easily grasp both the terrain and the transportation routes that passed over or cut through the area.

More Regional Maps to Discover

All the maps excerpted here can be viewed in their full form and in far more detail in the [Map Room](#) on the Gesher Galicia website. Other regional maps are also available there, with a broad range of focus and purpose, featuring a variety of innovative cartographic methods. Many of the maps are also drawn and colored with great artistic beauty. We invite you to explore Galicia with us through these informative and artistic maps.

FACES of GALICIA



Itzak Leib Nussbaum (1886–1971) and his sister, Malke Nussbaum Sackler (1892–1975), both were born in Kozłów, Galicia, and died in the US. Photo taken in 1910 in Tarnopol and submitted by Diane Bark (Gesher Galicia member), Itzak Leib’s granddaughter.