



## II.

### CONSPIRATOR PATRIOTIC ACTIVITIES

The first documented links between Łukasiewicz and the national liberation movement date back to the time of his apprenticeship in Łańcut. Around 1840, Ignacy met Antoni Tarłowski, who belonged to the organisation Sprzysiężenie Demokratów Polskich (The Conspiracy of the Polish Democrats). The conspiracy activity was quickly detected, Tarłowski was arrested and Łukasiewicz was repeatedly interrogated about this matter.

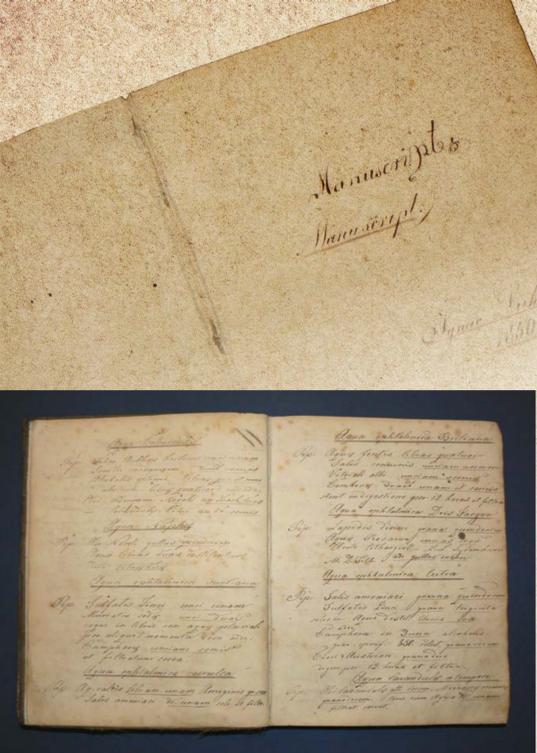
After moving to Rzeszów, Ignacy lost his previous contacts and was not active in the conspiracy movement for some time. During this time he devoted himself mainly to self-education and improving his pharmaceutical skills.

In 1845, Edward Dembowski, an emissary of the Polish Democratic Society, arrived in Galicia. It was thanks to his activity that the independence movement revived and the organisation of the uprising began anew. Dembowski created a network of agents to gather information about the strength of the Austrian army and to call organising an uprising. Working in a pharmacy, due to the possibility of being visited by different people, definitely facilitated conspiracy activities. Łukasiewicz was sworn in as one of the agents in 1845. He was in charge of the Rzeszów and Łańcut region.

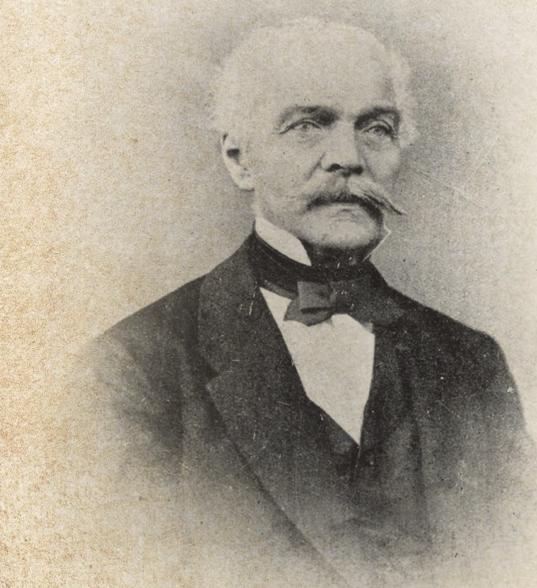
In 1846, the Austrian authorities uncovered the conspiracy in which Łukasiewicz was an active participant. On 19<sup>th</sup> February Ignacy was charged with high treason and arrested. During his interrogations he denied any involvement in the preparations for the uprising, but at the same time he continued to conspire and even in prison tried to rebuild a conspiracy network. During a search of his cell, illegal letters were discovered, which significantly worsened his position. Eventually Łukasiewicz was put in a prison in Lwów. As the further testimonies of the alleged collaborators were mutually exclusive, the Criminal Court closed the proceedings in Ignacy's case. Due to the lack of evidence, the investigation was discontinued and the court costs were charged to the former prisoner. Finally, on 27<sup>th</sup> December 1847, Łukasiewicz was released from prison. Obviously, he remained under the supervision of the Austrian authorities, who forbade him to leave Lwów. In later years he was not actively involved with the national liberation movement, but he certainly supported financially the January Uprising, as well as the insurgents themselves.



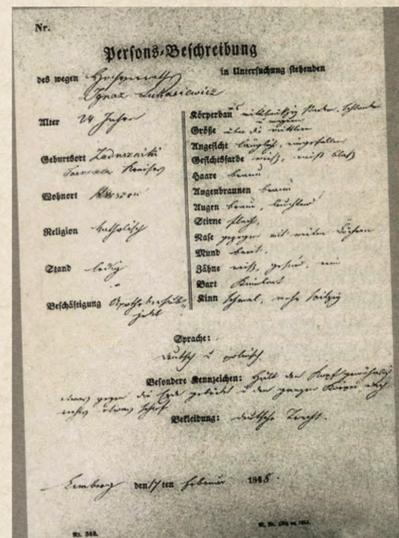
□ Ignacy Łukasiewicz



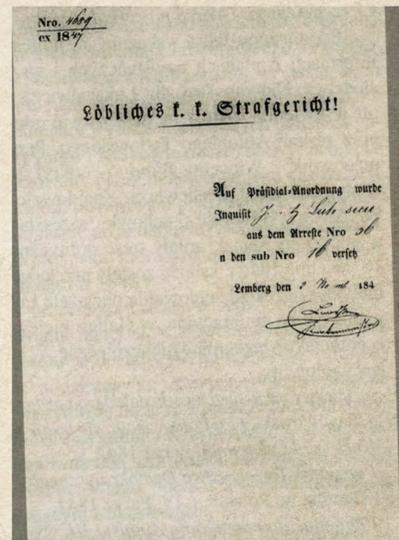
□ Manuscript by I. Łukasiewicz



□ Piotr Mikolasch



□ Personal file of Ignacy Łukasiewicz.  
A photocopy from the court proceedings file



### LWÓW (LVOV/LEMBERG)

After leaving prison, Ignacy went to live with his brother Franciszek, who worked at the Lwów municipal office. For eight months he looked for work, until finally, on 15<sup>th</sup> August, 1848, he was employed as a pharmacist's assistant in the pharmacy "Pod Gwiazdą" ("Under the Star"), owned by Piotr Mikolasch. It was a well-equipped, modern pharmacy where chemical analyses were carried out for commercial and military purposes. Mikolasch took care of the young employee and introduced him to the secrets of pharmacy work, which was confirmed by Łukasiewicz himself in a letter attached to his application for university studies. From the Lwów period comes the *Manuscript* – an almanac, in which from 1850 Łukasiewicz wrote down interesting prescriptions, pharmaceutical recipes and analytical methods. The above document shows the versatility of his professional interests. Łukasiewicz took his profession seriously and tried to develop his interests and enrich his knowledge.

In 1850, he began his studies at the Faculty of Philosophy of the Jagiellonian University, which also included a pharmaceutical college. He was a capable and diligent student, passing almost all the classes prescribed by the two-year curriculum within a year. In order to maintain his studies, he took a job at the alum factory in Dąbrowa. In the third semester he continued his studies in Cracow, but for the fourth semester he moved to the University of Vienna, where on 30<sup>th</sup> July, 1852 he submitted a thesis entitled „Baryta et Anilinum” and passed the rigorsum for masters of pharmacy.



□ The pharmacy Pod Gwiazdą (Under the Star) in Lwów



# III.

## KEROSENE

After his studies Łukasiewicz returned to work in the pharmacy in Lwów. In 1852, together with Jan Zeh, he began chemical research in the pharmacy laboratory on petroleum, samples of which were provided by local Jews. The first attempts to distil the oil were aimed at obtaining oleum petrae album, a remedy that until then had been a very expensive medicine imported from Italy.

The first successes led to the decision to set up the Mikolasch-Zeh-Łukasiewicz company, which was to produce this pharmaceutical product, which was then used to treat skin diseases, for pharmacies. However, due to high prices, orders were very small and the pharmacists' company did not generate the expected income. This became the motivation for Łukasiewicz and Zeh to continue experimenting. They began research into extracting a fraction from crude oil to be used as fuel for oil lamps. Łukasiewicz and Zeh wanted to create a new lighting substance from crude oil.

Obviously, previous attempts at distilling oil were known. The closest to receiving kerosene was the salinary official, Józef Hecker, who illuminated the army barracks in Sambor and the suburbs in Drohobych with petroleum (crude oil) distillate between 1810 and 1817. Crude oil was fractionated scientifically in 1837 by Philippe Walter and Joseph Pelletier, however, for these scientists it was a fringe activity that brought no practical applications for industry.

Łukasiewicz and Zeh began experimenting with crude oil using scientific research methods. They successfully separated a kerosene fraction, collected between 200-250°C, devoid of light gasolines and separated from the remaining heavy hydrocarbons that form the composition of technical oils.

Having kerosene, Łukasiewicz commissioned the Lwów tinsmith Adam Bratkowski to construct a lamp that would be adapted to the physical and chemical properties of the new product. Initially oil lamps were modified and the new product was burnt in them. The exact description of the first lamp is not known, but the kerosene container was probably made of iron, while the lamp case (glass) was made of mica. The prototype lamp had been displayed in the shop window of the pharmacy for several months before a contract was concluded with the Lwów Hospital for illuminating of its operating theatres. In July a surgical operation was successfully performed in the Łyczaków hospital under the light of the lamps, and the date 31<sup>st</sup> July, 1853 went down in history as the symbolic date of the birth of the Polish oil industry.



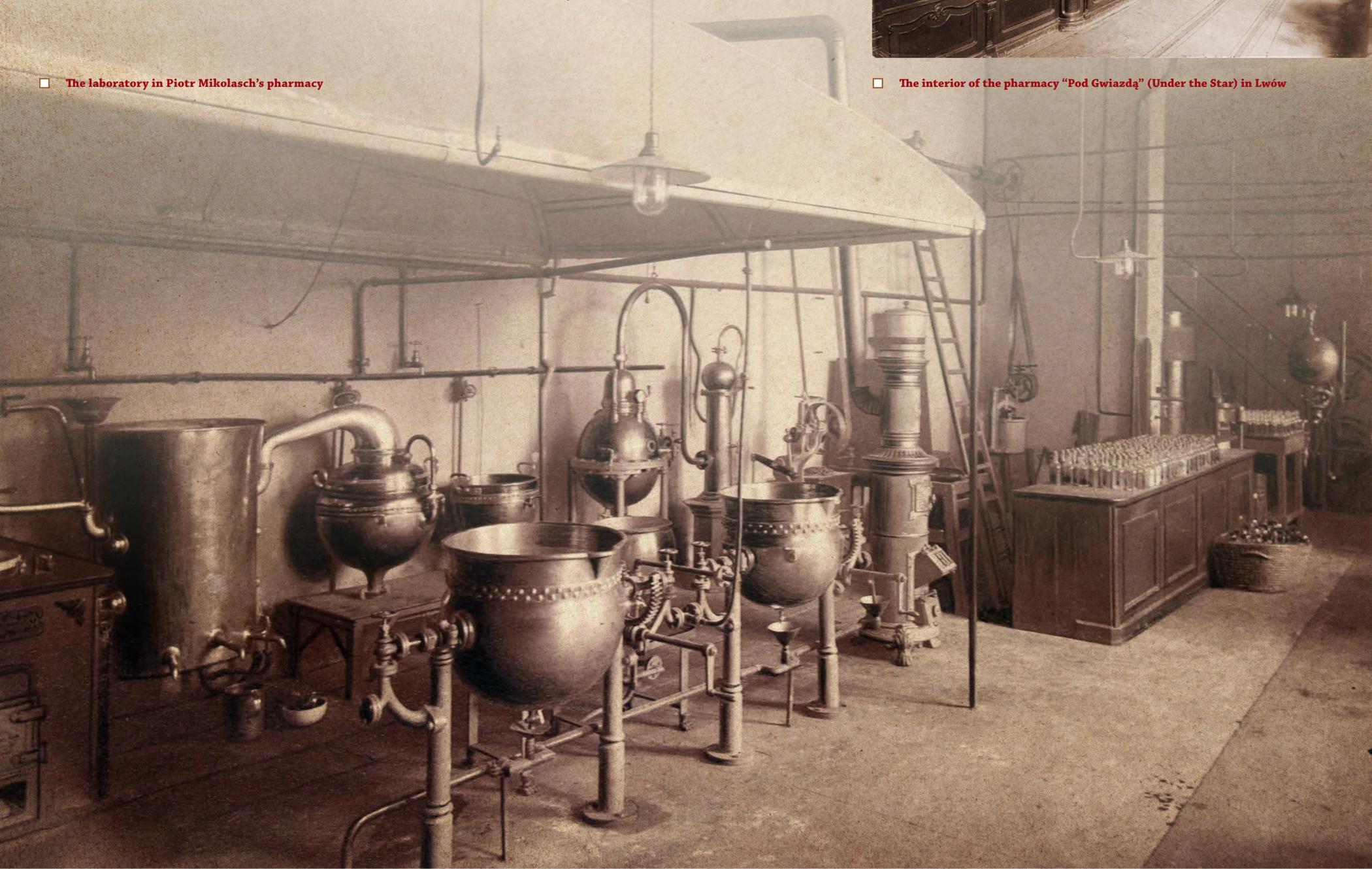
□ Jan Zeh



□ The interior of the pharmacy "Pod Gwiazdą" (Under the Star) in Lwów

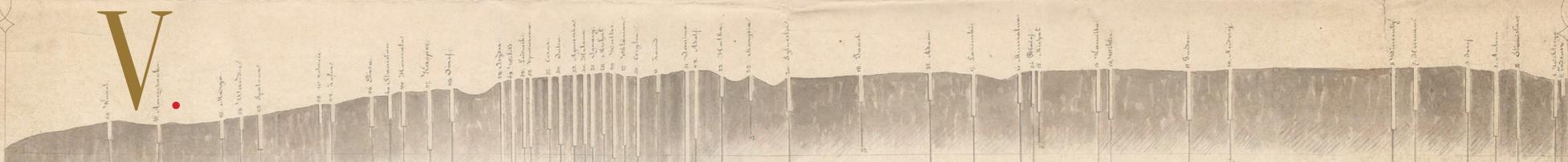
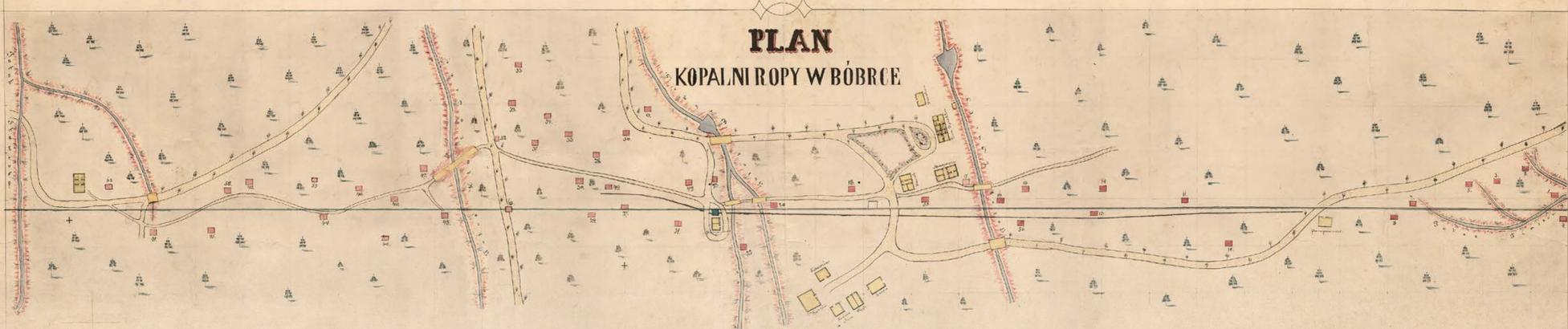


□ Reconstruction of a kerosene lamp designed by Ignacy Łukasiewicz



□ The laboratory in Piotr Mikolasch's pharmacy





**BÓBRKA OIL FIELD**

Everything changed with the start of crude oil prospecting in Bóbrka and digging began at a new site. An abundant oil field was encountered, which coincided with Tytus Trzeczieski's return from abroad. Tytus offered the Łukasiewicz family a residence in the manor house in Polanka, closer to the oil field in Bóbrka.

Around 1861, Karol Klobassa joined the company and donated the land for the oil field, Trzeczieski invested with a cash contribution, while Łukasiewicz took over the management of the whole enterprise. The company was unusual in the circumstances of the time. It was a model of harmonious cooperation. Łukasiewicz took care of modernizing the oil field and improving the refinery in Polanka. Profits were shared equally. The oil field was very profitable, and Łukasiewicz used the money to buy the village of Chorkówka and built a manor house and another refinery.

The prosperous enterprise was dissolved on Łukasiewicz's initiative around 1871, when he gave up 1/3 of his shares (he thought it would be fairer) and stayed on with a salary of 6000 Rhinegulden (Rhein florin) per year for the position of director. He continued to run the refinery and bought crude oil for distillation from the partners, but no longer derived income from his share in the company.

Łukasiewicz modernised the oil field facilities, taking using expert advice from the leading geologists and drillers of the time. In 1862, engineer Henryk Walter came to Bóbrka and introduced percussion drilling with the use of the Fabian free-fall shears in oil field. This drilling involved crushing the rock at the bottom of the borehole using the strokes of a steel bit of suitable weight and blade shape, suspended on wooden poles with iron threaded fittings. This drilling method made it possible to reach a depth of 150 metres. In this way the „Małgorzata” (Margaret) oil was drilled, which produced 4,000 litres of crude oil a day.

In 1868 mineral waters were found in the Bóbrka wells. These were alkaline oxalate waters with a high content of iodine and bromine and carbonic anhydride. On the initiative of Karol Klobassa, a hydrotherapy centre was built and rheumatic diseases, skin diseases, bladder ailments and bronchitis in adults and children were treated with good results. The beginnings of the spa were put to an end by the high tide of crude oil in the wells, which until then had produced the curative water.

**GOOD MANAGER**

After resigning from his shares in the company, Łukasiewicz devoted himself entirely to petroleum processing, producing exceptionally good grades of kerosene, which attracted the interest of world potentates in the oil industry (including John Rockefeller). Łukasiewicz distributed the products to shops in Tarnów, Kraków and Warsaw. He was personally involved in advertising his products. In 1873 he participated in the International Exhibition in Vienna, where he presented petroleum products, as well as geological maps of Bóbrka and Ropianka, which had been prepared in detail. In 1877 he participated in the National Exhibition in Lwów, where he presented various products made from crude oil. The exhibition in Lwów was accompanied by a Congress of Kerosene (Oil) Producers, chaired by Łukasiewicz. During the sessions, he called for establishing an oil society to unite national entrepreneurs in the oil sector. In 1880 Ignacy's idea was implemented. The National Oil Society was founded, with Łukasiewicz as its first president. The Society's main tasks were to draw up a mining law, a statute for mutual aid funds and to take action against the speculations in the oil industry. Łukasiewicz served as president for a year, then relinquished the post, but the Society named him honorary curator for life in recognition of his services.

The income from Bóbrka and Chorkówka allowed Łukasiewicz to make further oil industry investment projects. In 1866 he founded an oil field facilities in Ropianka together with J. Noth, in 1873 he founded a company with A. Fauck in Wójtowa, and in 1874 a company with Karol Klobassa, Feliks Stokowski and Mikołaj Fedorowicz in Ropa, where a distillery was also established. Łukasiewicz was also a partner in the oil fields in Smereczny and Wilsznia.



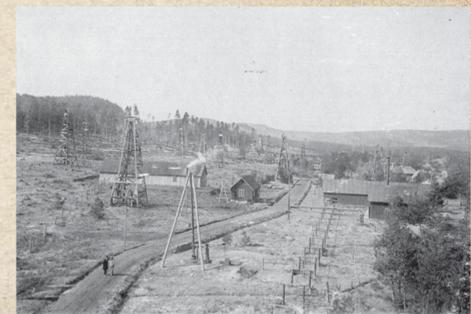
**The personnel of the oil field in Bóbrka**



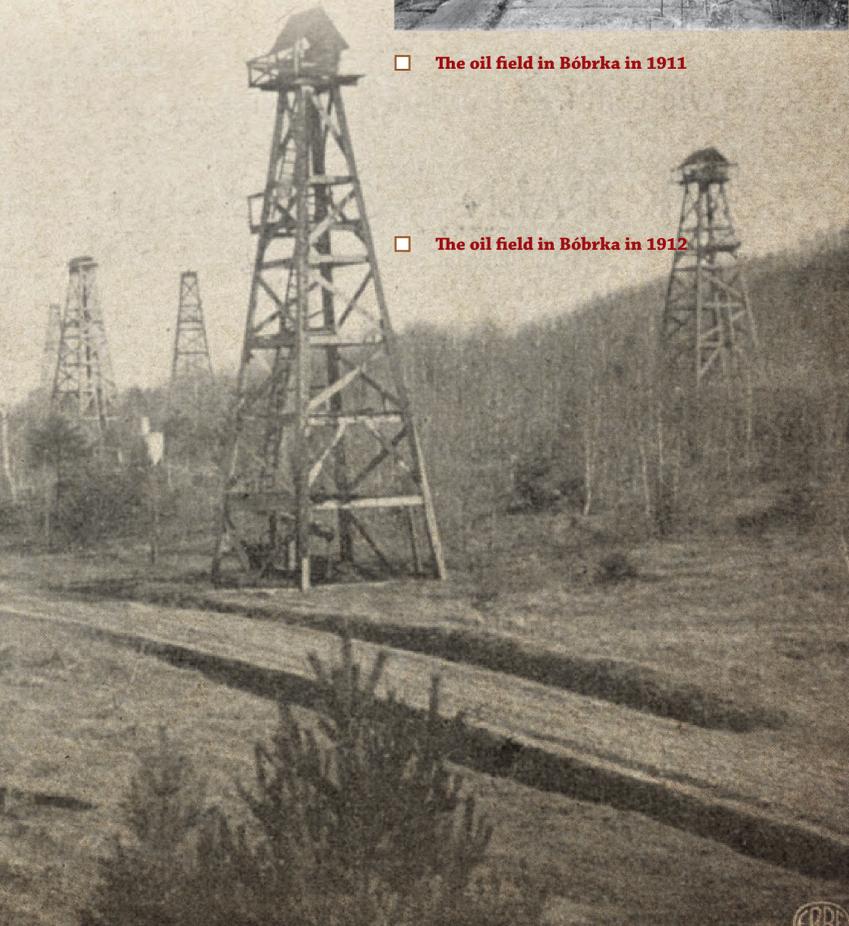
**Manor house in Chorkowka**



**Oil wells in Bóbrka in 1912**



**The oil field in Bóbrka in 1911**



**The oil field in Bóbrka in 1912**



**The gold medal presented to Ignacy Łukasiewicz in 1878**



# VI.

## COMMUNITY ACTIVIST



□ A part of an exhibition in the so-called Ignacy Łukasiewicz's house in the Museum in Bóbrka



□ Multimedia exhibition in the Bóbrka Museum



He combined his industrial activity with public and social activities. In 1876 he was elected a member of the National Diet (Parliament). Between 1876 and 1881, he served on several parliamentary committees and was chairman of the Oil Committee, as well as the Committee of National and Mining Culture. Łukasiewicz was the initiator and drafter of a law, passed by the National Diet (Parliament) in 1862, under which the earth wax and rock oil ceased to be the property of the state. As a result, the oil production industry became independent from the Austrian bureaucracy.

Between 1868 and 1882 he was a member of the district council in Krosno, working in the road, finance and school committees. His work at the district council enabled him to carry out philanthropic projects.

In 1866 Łukasiewicz created the „Brothers' Funds” („Kasy Brackie”), which were the first insurance institutions in Poland and Europe providing protection in the event of a disease and disability. He also created the „Communal Funds” („Kasy Gminne”), which provided short-term but interest-free loans and allowed local people to become free from the power of usurers.

Together with Karol Klobassa he founded schools in Chorkówka, Bóbrka, Żegle and Zręcin, and financed the construction of a manor chapel for the local community in Chorkówka. He also provided many Orthodox churches and Catholic churches in the Krosno district with lamps and kerosene for lighting free of charge. In Zrębin, thanks to the founders: Ignacy Łukasiewicz and Karol Klobassa, a neo-Gothic church was built.

In recognition of his merits and generosity, Pope Pius IX in 1873 awarded Łukasiewicz the Order of St Gregory and the dignity of papal chamberlain with the right to wear the insignia. In connection with the awarding of badges in the chapel in Chorkowka, a solemn ceremony was held with the participation of church dignitaries from the entire diocese. Ignacy, with his innate modesty, summed up the ceremony with the following words: *Gentlemen, I was born in a simple cape (a loose coat without sleeves), I have been wearing a simple cape all my life, let me die in it.*

He was highly respected and trusted among the local people. His merits were appreciated by pharmacists, and Łukasiewicz was made an honorary member of the Society of Galician Physicians and the Pharmacy Society in Lwów. On 31<sup>st</sup> July, 1878, the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the lighting of the kerosene lamp, Adolf Jablonski organised a celebration devoted to Łukasiewicz. The jubilarian was presented with a gold medal minted in his honour and a commemorative album with a dedication.

Łukasiewicz remained a modest and quiet man until the end of his earthly days. He died of pneumonia on 7<sup>th</sup> January, 1882 and was buried in the cemetery in Zręcin. In his will he bequeathed his property to his wife and relatives, which was subsequently sold. After the death of her husband, Honorata moved to Kraków and died there in a shelter for the poor (sic!). The Łukasiewicz family's manor house in Chorkówka was plundered and burnt down during World War II.

The only resemblances of Ignacy Łukasiewicz are the few places and memorabilia he left behind. In the Krosno region, in Bóbrka, on the site of the world's oldest active oil field, there is the Ignacy Łukasiewicz Museum. This place devoutly cares for the preservation of the 19<sup>th</sup> century oil field facilities as well as for the cultivation of memory and the promotion of knowledge about the creator of the Polish oil industry.



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