



## Summary of Stefan Sajdak's life story

Interview and recording of Teresa Black (daughter, nee Sajdak)  
by Klaudia James (NPHG) – March 7<sup>th</sup> 2019

Tessa Black was born in Horsham in Sussex in 1947 and she and her husband and three children moved to Norfolk in 1981 because of her husband's work. They settled in Swaffham and have lived there happily for the past 38 years. Both her parents were Polish. Her father was Stefan Antoni Leon Sajdak and her mother's maiden name was Stefania Nitsche.

Stefan Sajdak was born on 27<sup>th</sup> April 1913 in Kraków, which was then part of the Austro-Hungarian empire. His father was a Professor of Classics at Kraków University and later at Lwów and Poznań Universities, so the family moved around and finally settled in Poznań.

After finishing his secondary education my father undertook military training at Grudziadz and was attached to the 17<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Regiment of Wielkopolska under the name of Boleslaw Chrobry in Leszno as a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant Reserve officer.

After completing a Law degree at Poznan University in 1936 he took up a post in a Mining office in Katowice, living in Siemianowice and was attached to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Cavalry Regiment of the Tarnowskie Góry, known as Śląskie. On the 19<sup>th</sup> April 1938 he married my mother, who was born on 14<sup>th</sup> January 1914.

In 1939 World War erupted and my father was called up and his Regiment was sent to defend sites near Rzeszów at Tarnogród, where there is now a museum to honour the 3<sup>rd</sup> Cavalry Regiment.

My father was taken prisoner and spent the rest of the war years at a POW Camp in Murnau, Oflag VII A, prisoner Nr. 15553 in Bavaria, from where he ran a secret radio as part of a covert Intelligence operation. In recognition of this work he was later promoted to the rank of Lieutenant and awarded the Silver cross with swords by the Commander in Chief of the Polish Army, General Bór-Komorowski.

After the POW Camp was liberated by the Americans my father took leave from the army and remained in Geislingen, Germany to care for 2000 Polish refugees at a camp run by UNRRA, where my mother, having escaped from Poland, joined him and worked at the camp as a pharmacist.

They later travelled to Italy, where my father was incorporated into the Polish 2<sup>nd</sup> Corps Nr PSZ 1913 504/111 under General Anders and worked in Soldiers Welfare.

In December 1946 my parents found themselves in England at an Army camp for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Cavalry Regiment and the 14<sup>th</sup> Sanitary company in Slinfold Camp near Horsham, Sussex. He finished his Army career in May 1947, and I was born in September that year. My father worked as an agricultural and factory worker and was never again able to work in his legal profession or return to Poland as ex-combatants were seen as security risks by Stalin's Communist government and harshly dealt with.

In 1952 my mother took on the management of a pharmacy in London owned by the Relief Society for Poles, where she worked for the next 10 years and where my father was in charge of despatching medicine to Poland. The pharmacy was used as a 'drop-box' by agents of Western Intelligence.

My father was Secretary of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Cavalry Regiment circle in London until his death in 1964 and never took British Citizenship.

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