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[Polish Emigration to Arkansas] Map of the Marche & Cold Springs Ry.

Stock#: 65283
Map Maker: Choinski
Date: 1890
Place: n.p.
Color: Pen & Ink
Condition: VG
Size: 14 x 7 inches

Price: SOLD

Description:

A Railroad Line Built By Polish Emigrants in Arkansas Drawn by Helen Choinski

Manuscript map of the Marche and Cold Springs Railway, hand drawn by "Helen Ch" circa 1890.

The map is executed by a skilled hand, showing the line of the Railway (red), the road between the two towns (yellow), White Oak Bayou, as well as topographical features and detailed information relating to the calculations of the direction and distance of the line, including several triangulations.

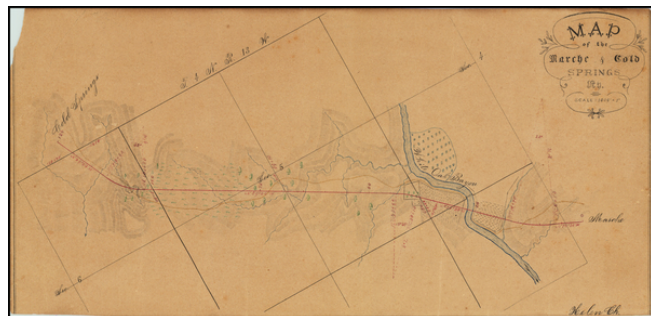
The map is related to early Polish emigration to the area and was drawn or owned by "Helen Ch." (assumed Helen Choinski). Helen Choinski was the daughter of Timothy Choinski, a Polish nobleman, who founded the community at Warren, Arkansas in 1877. Helen Choinski worked as local Postmistress and telegrapher and in 1894 Helen married M. Schnable who worked for the Cotton Belt Railway.

While we were unable to locate any record for a "Marche and Cold Springs Railway", as part of the project to attract Polish emigrants to Marche, work on the local railroad was offered at \$1.25 per day. The "railroad" was most likely a branch of the Little Rock and Fort Smith Railway.

The map shows considerable skill and training in surveying and map making.

Count Timothy von Choinski

In 1869, Count Timothy von Choinski had emigrated from Poland to America, settling in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He and his wife were from among the Polish nobility who had been forced to flee their homeland en masse after an unsuccessful revolt against their occupiers. An extremely well-educated man, he was more aware of his countrymen's plight in this "Garden of Eden" than others. Many shocked and disillusioned Poles could not afford to resume their customary life style and had to spend their days living





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in packed slums like New

York and Chicago. Choinski became concerned with the suffering of many of his fellow Polish immigrants who were residing in the slums. Choinski wished to improve the working and living condition of these immigrants and began the search for a farming environment that was more familiar to these Poles.

Another issue for the Count was the weather. Winters were much more severe in the northern United States than anywhere in Poland, and the general climate did not benefit his countrymen at all. Therefore, Choinski and his countrymen were faced with two choices: either return to Poland to what would face persecution, or find a milder climate in America. Choinski began searching the south. After he had made several journeys, Choinski was convinced that eastern Texas or western Arkansas would be the ideal location for resettlement of a large Polish population. However, one W. Dieniewicz, who printed a Polish-language newspaper in Chicago, included an article about central Arkansas lands, and the Count became interested in that part of the state, especially Conway and Pope counties. Choinski wrote to the editor of the *Little Rock Arkansas Gazette*, asking about buying at least fifty thousand acres of choice land in Arkansas, preferably near a river and a railroad and which offered good growth potential. Choinski's letter, published in the *Gazette* in March 1877, caught the eye of W. D. Slack, land agent for the Little Rock and Fort Smith Railway. Slack wrote Choinski asking him to come to Little Rock. The Count went, and soon closed a deal with Slack for 11,000 acres of Little Rock and Fort Smith Railroad land plus another 11,000 acres of St. Louis, Iron Mountain and Southern Railroad Company land.

Polish resettlement began in 1877 at Old Warren, Arkansas ten miles north of Little Rock. Later renamed the "Marche" after the French word for market, the community became a magnet for Polish emigres.

City of Marche

Marche, a community located in Pulaski County. It was settled by Polish immigrants wishing to escape the struggles of life in the northern United States. The settlement of Marche is one of the most successful efforts to resettle immigrants in Arkansas history.

In 1872, Judge Liberty Bartlett attempted to establish a town in the area now known as Marche. The town of Bartlett never took hold, and the Little Rock and Fort Smith Railroad gained control of the area and renamed it Warren Station. The railroad company attempted to turn Warren Station into a recreation center for the people of Little Rock. By 1877, however, this project had failed, and the railroad land was put up for sale. This 11,000 acres, which ran west along the railroad from about ten miles northwest of Little Rock toward the Pulaski-Faulkner county line, was then bought by a Timothy von Choinski in order to provide farms for Polish immigrants, who later named this site Marche.



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In May 1877, twenty-two fellow Poles visited the site with Choinski and agreed to settle on half of the purchase. Several different groups of Poles began to settle in the area that summer. A fraction of these immigrants returned to the North after they discovered that the land was not cleared and houses were not built. Eighty-five families remained after this initial wave of settlement.

In the fall of 1878, Father Anthony Jaworski arrived at Marche. Jaworski was the first of a series of Holy Ghost Fathers to serve the spiritual needs of the community. Upon Jaworski's arrival, a small wooden chapel, named the Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, was built high on a hill. This hill was named "Jasna Gora," or "Sky-Blue Mountain," after a famous shrine in Poland.

Detailed Condition: