

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF BIOGRAPHY

known as Polish-Galicians, have brought to this country an important and valuable asset in their thrift and industry; and everywhere where they have settled, they have, by their energy and enterprise, contributed much to the material and civic welfare of the various communities wherein they have built their homes and reared their families. Among these settlers can be mentioned the Socha family.

The first of whom we have any authentic information was Michael Socha, who was born in the town of Majdau, in that section of the Province known as Galician Poland. He was there educated, reared to years of manhood, and learned the art and technique of the tanner's trade. He pursued his chosen line of work in his native country up to about 1891, and in 1895 Michael Socha, his wife and two children, decided to emigrate to the United States, hoping here to find greater opportunities to apply his time and labor. He accordingly arranged his personal interests and family affairs, and set sail, with the little family group, bound for the port of New York City, where he arrived in due course of time, and there first set foot on American soil. Soon after arriving in New York City, Michael Socha settled with his family in the city of Newark, Essex county, New Jersey, where his children attended the public schools and were reared to years of man and womanhood. Michael Socha married, in his native town, Mary Rusinowski, who was likewise a native of Ploock, now in the republic of Poland. Among their children, this worthy couple had born to them a son, Bronislaus, of further mention.

Bronislaus Socha, son of Michael and Mary (Rusinowski) Socha, was born at the family home in the village of Majdau, in the Polish section in the Province of Galicia, December 11, 1889. He was brought to this country by his parents in

1895. Upon attaining to suitable years, he attended the Parochial School of St. Stanislaus, and also the St. Patrick's Cathedral Parochial School, in the city of Newark, and soon after his graduation, he made preparations to enter upon a course of study in the Polish Seminary, in the city of Detroit, Michigan, where he continued his studies for six years. Upon returning to Newark, he entered the Seton Hall College, at South Orange, New Jersey, from which institution he graduated in 1914, and was ordained to the priesthood in the month of March, the same year, by the Rt. Rev. Bishop John J. O'Connor. Soon after his ordination, Father Socha was appointed assistant rector at St. Anthony's Catholic Church in Jersey City, New Jersey, where he served in that capacity for a period of five years. He was next appointed as assistant in St. Joseph's Parish Catholic Church in the city of Passaic, New Jersey. In both these churches, Father Socha not only won the love and obedience of his parishioners, but his earnest and progressive work attracted the attention of the bishop of the Diocese of Newark, and during the early part of 1921, Father Socha was appointed rector of St. Valentine's Catholic Church, in the town of Bloomfield, Essex county, New Jersey, where he has since continued his spiritual and religious helpfulness among the people of his parish.

HIGGINS, Patrick J.,

City Official.

Patrick J. Higgins, now, and for thirteen years past, chief of police of Glen Ridge, New Jersey, was born in County Roscommon, Ireland, July 10, 1863, and there spent the first eighteen years of his life. He grew up on his father's farm and assisted in the work, but later was

employed on an English farm in Staffordshire. In April, 1881, he sailed from Queenstown for the United States, taking passage on "The City of Brussels," a ship later lost at sea. He landed in New York City, later located in Orange, New Jersey, but within a few months settled at Glen Ridge, New Jersey, where for twenty years he engaged as a farm gardener. He then was appointed patrolman, and seven years later was made chief of police, an office he has now held thirteen years.

Chief Higgins married, April 22, 1883, Bridget Feeney, daughter of Peter and Mary (McGowan) Feeney. She was born in Sligo, Ireland, and came to the United States in 1880. She died March 23, 1918, leaving four children: 1. Thomas P., married Lizzie Seymour, of Orange, New Jersey. 2. William P., a police sergeant of Glen Ridge, New Jersey, married Rose Ford, of Trenton, New Jersey. 3. Frank J., now in charge of the branch of the National Biscuit Company in Toledo, Ohio. He volunteered for service during the war with Germany and was in training at Officers' Training Camp, Houston, Texas. 4. John J., now paymaster with the A. P. Smith Company of Bloomfield, New Jersey. He married, Gertrude O'Neil.

Patrick J. Higgins is a grandson of Bernard and Bridget (Mahan) Higgins, who lived and died in Ireland. Their son, Thomas Higgins, came to the United States prior to the Civil War, enlisted in the Union army, served until the war closed, then returned to Ireland, where he died in 1894, aged sixty. He married, in Ireland, Mary Coll, daughter of Thomas and Sarah (Elwood) Coll. She died there in 1910, aged seventy-five. They were the parents of seven daughters and two sons, one of whom was Patrick J. Higgins, of previous mention.

DEL POMO, Arthur,

Pharmacist.

A genius at felling difficulties, a prodigious worker, and one who recognizes no limitations if one has the will to succeed, Arthur Del Pomo has, despite his youth, and at the age of only twenty, succeeded in establishing himself at the head of one of the most popular drug businesses in the city of Newark, New Jersey, as the first rung in his ladder to success.

Arthur Del Pomo, eldest son of six children, having two brothers and three sisters, was born in Newark, June 29, 1900, son of Michael and Camelia (Fiore) Del Pomo, his father, born in Italy, and his mother, born in New York City. Michael Del Pomo was born in the little village of Tito, in the Province of Potenza, Italy. In this beautiful little village, which offers such marvelous opportunities to the art lover, he lived until he was twenty-one years old, studying and working as a decorator of oil paintings. His father, being mayor of the little town, and fairly well off financially, enabled Michael to spend his leisure hours in his favorite pastime, hunting. Michael Del Pomo finally came to America, settling in Newark, where he is engaged in his profession as artist.

Arthur Del Pomo was educated in Franklin public schools, and Barringer High School, finally entering the New Jersey College of Pharmacy, graduating in the class of 1920. During his early schools years he was very active in athletics, but was forced to discontinue them to attain his apprenticeship, and during the period in which he attended the New Jersey College of Pharmacy, he worked every possible moment to fit himself for his business career, and on his graduation he became associated with Dr. Marino, in the drug business, and in 1921,

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FOREWORD



THE preceding volumes of this series were restricted in their contents to carefully prepared memoirs of persons of usefulness and reputation who during their lifetime contributed to the advancement of the intellectual, moral and material welfare of the commonwealth.

The present volume forms a fitting connection between the past and the present. It not only presents a notable array of names of bygone days, but it includes many worthy ones of the present time who in their own day are contributing to the substantial advancement of their communities and of the State and Nation. This series will conclude with a following volume prepared with the same careful discrimination. The entire series will be a standard work of reference throughout the country for many years to come.

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