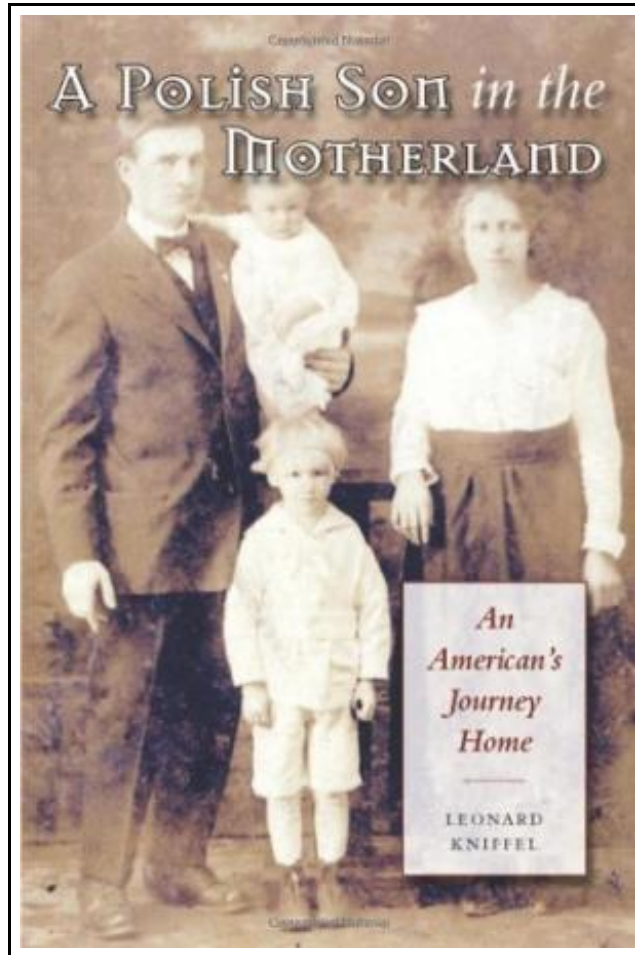


A Polish Son in the Motherland



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Texas A&M University Press. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Paperback. 246 pages. Dimensions: 9.1in. x 6.1in. x 0.7in. Searching for the remnants of his family, Leonard Kniffel left Chicago in 2000 to live in Poland. *A Polish Son in the Motherland* is the story of a search for roots and for the reasons why one family's ties were severed more than fifty years ago. Along the way, we see what half a century of communism did to Poland and how the residue of World War II lingers. The author's search begins inauspiciously, but he soon meets a local wine merchant and her son, who are eager to reveal the secrets of Nowe Miasto Lubawskie, the town near which his grandmother was born. After he moves in with Adam, a local entrepreneur who trades in everything from shoes and cosmetics to computers and jam, he begins to master his ancestral language and learn the ways of the community from Adam's mother, who loves long walks in the woods and meals made from what she picks there. Kniffel's search for a connection to Poland is propelled by memories of the stories his grandmother told him about her emigration to Michigan in 1913. While his family eludes him, the adventure becomes an investigation into the relationship between mothers and the legacy they give their sons. Poles who emigrated to America, the author concludes, must have been particularly good at assimilating into American culture. Less than fifty years after his maternal grandparents arrived in the United States, barely a trace of their Polishness existed in their grandchildren. Through his grandparents' struggles, their children became American and created a new world for themselves and their descendants. In returning to Poland himself, Kniffel sought and found a bridge to the Great Migration that changed the lives of so many...



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