

# ***Patek Philippe: The Forgotten Beginnings***



Philip Poniz  
Director and  
Horological Expert

Patek Philippe & Co. is to watches what Rolls Royce is to cars—synonymous with the best. This prestigious Swiss watchmaking firm is arguably the most famous manufacturer of timepieces worldwide. To own a Patek Philippe watch remains a symbol of wealth and importance: kings and queens were their clients, while other watchmakers frantically copied them<sup>1</sup>—imitation being the highest form of flattery, and moreover a means to a more lucrative sale with the help of the famous Patek Philippe signature. The Patek Philippe legend continues to grow and fascinate. The soaring prices achieved by Patek

Philippe watches at auction—particularly within the last decade—prove to what degree these precious timepieces are sought-after by collectors. One collector paid \$11,002,500 for a rare Patek Philippe pocket watch, thereby earning it a mention in the Guinness Book of World Records.

I am no exception. My fascination with Patek Philippe began in the early 1960's, when I acquired a small enameled lady's watch from the 1850's. The following account, which only brushes the surface of the firm's vast and complex history, is based mostly on the documents I have collected and consulted over the years, in the Polish Archives, Geneva Archives, and a private French collection of Patek documents and memorabilia. Many facts are published here for the first time.

## **The First Years**

To truly appreciate this unusual company, we must begin with Antoni Patek, its founder. He was born in either 1811 or 1812 in Piaski, a small Polish village just outside Lublin. The book "Patek Philippe, Genève" by Martin Huber & Alan Banbery, lists his birth date as June 12, 1812, but an abstract from his army files (Fig. 1) gives another date :

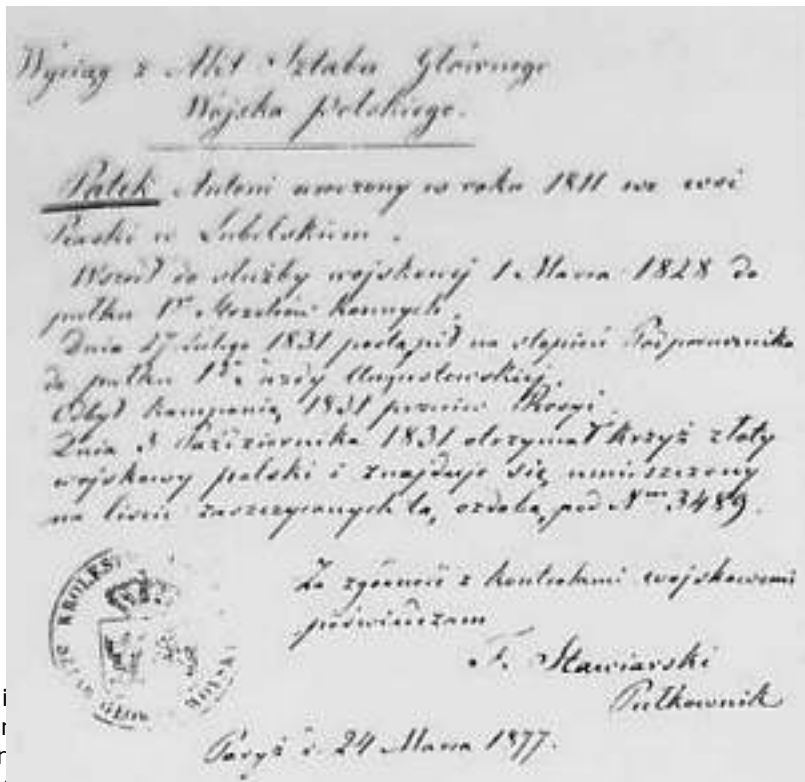


Fig. 1: From the Polish Army, Lublin County. Entered service in 1831, received the military gold cross [Virituti Militari] and is on the list of those honored by this order under the number 3489. I hereby certify accord with military control.

T. Stawiarski, Colonel  
On February 27, 1877, I hereby certify accord with military control.

Not much is known about Patek's ancestors. However, a Patek from the Polish nobility is mentioned in 1790. We also know that Patek signed his name in a number of different ways, Patek, Antoni Patek, Antoine Norbert de Patek and Antoni Norbert Patek de Prawdzic. The latter name, Prawdzic, refers to his coat-of-arms, which feature a red lion holding an iron ring in its front paws against a blue background. It is quite possible that he inherited the coat-of-arms from his mother's side of the family.

Patek joined the 1830 Polish rebellion against Russian domination. He was a brave and intelligent soldier. His talents allowed him to rise quickly within the ranks, eventually winning the highest military order "Virituti

Militari”.

After the war ended, Patek, along with tens of thousands of other Poles, was forced to leave the country.

However, his intelligence and his knowledge of five languages did not go unnoticed by the Commander-in-Chief General Bem, who sent the young man first to Bamberg, Germany and later to France.<sup>2</sup>

On April 9-10, 1833, Patek’s journey ended, unexpectedly, in Switzerland. He had become an officer of the "Holy Battalion", a regiment of Polish émigrés on French soil who set out to aid the Frankfurt insurrection. Upon crossing the Swiss border, the regiment learned that the uprising had collapsed and consequently remained in Switzerland, where they were warmly welcomed. The regiment formed the "Association of Polish Émigrés in Switzerland", the majority found work with Swiss farmers and a few dozen learned watchmaking.<sup>3</sup>

Patek, however, did neither. His artistic aspirations led him to begin studying with Alexandre Calame, the famous Swiss landscape artist, best known for his Alpine scenes. The one painting I discovered in a French collection shows signs of Patek’s unquestionable talent. By 1835, possibly concurrently with his study of art, Patek bought his first watch movements, had them cased, and sold the completed watches<sup>4</sup> to Polish clients. (Fig. 2)

Patek’s charm and good manners helped him gain the support of an influential Polish clientele. His buying and selling business<sup>5</sup> was going well, and he decided to form a watch company. Not being a watchmaker, he needed a proficient partner in the field: this was Franciszek Czapek.

## The Company’s Beginnings

On May 1, 1839 in Geneva, Patek and Franciszek Czapek established a business under the name of "Patek and Czapek". Czapek, a professional watchmaker, was also a soldier in the Polish National Guard<sup>6</sup>. Given their ties to the Polish community-both were involved in the Polish Independence movement and members of the "Association of Polish Emigrés in Switzerland"- Patek and Czapek had probably known each other for some time. The earliest records place Czapek in Geneva on July 31, 1832, although it is possible he arrived a year earlier. Not long after that date, he established a watchmaking enterprise with a certain Mr. Moreau, called "Czapek and Moreau". Through Czapek, Patek met first Moreau, and then Moreau's niece, Marie- Adelaide Thomasine. The two became engaged, and three months short of their wedding date, Patek, Czapek, and Moreau signed an agreement<sup>7</sup> establishing a new company.

Moreau and Patek each invested 8,000 Swiss francs in the company, Moreau held no official responsibilities, while Patek was responsible for the accounting and management. Czapek, who contributed tools and most likely some early machinery, was responsible for production.

Paragraph five of their agreement allotted him 100 francs monthly, in addition to



his share of the profits.

During the first 14 months Patek and Czapek ran the company alone, possibly with the help of one or two workmen. They purchased unfinished movements from various companies specialized in the manufacturing of raw movements (ebauches), sent them to a case maker to be cased, and then finished them in their shop. Up until July of 1840 Czapek finished all movements by himself. The company then hired one or two watchmakers to speed up the finishing process and to help cope with the delays, a problem they apparently faced in 1840. As Patek put it: "Being afraid of sustaining a loss in this new for me field, a loss which I have experienced before in the trade, I was as cautious as possible. I demanded that until July 1 [1840] all watches to be finished by Czapek himself, it lowered the expenses but also caused delays. The business allowing, two months ago [July, 1840] I increased the number of craftsmen..."<sup>8</sup> Their workers, he specified elsewhere, were paid by the piece.<sup>9</sup>

### **The Polish Connection**

Patek's activity in numerous Polish émigré organizations allowed him to keep in touch with his fellow countrymen and consequently to establish an impressive Polish clientele. As he himself stated<sup>10</sup>, the majority of their clientele at the time was Polish, people living in Poland, or émigrés like Patek and Czapek. It appears that the company also employed Polish workers (journeymen) in their shop: Lilpop from Warsaw; Henryk Majewski from Lwów; Siedlecki and Friedlein, both from Cracow. In the 1850's they employed yet another Polish worker, Wojciech Kobylecki from Wloclawek, who re-mained with them for four years<sup>11</sup>. Lilpop was most likely Francois or Ludwik Maurycy who subsequently became Patek Philippe's agent in Warsaw. Henryk Majewski, recipient of a prize from Geneva's Art Society, (Fig. 3) went on to establish his own shop in Geneva where he worked with the young Gostkowski. According to Krupski<sup>12</sup>, he was a re-passeur (finisher). In all probability Patek and Czapek employed other Polish workers. Patek proudly stated : "We do not charge [our countrymen] for teaching them watchmaking".<sup>8</sup>

However, non-Polish apprentices were obliged to pay for their training in Swiss francs.

In the early years, the support of the Polish community was vital for the company's survival. As émigrés, without that support and without financial backing, they would not have been able to overcome the fierce local competition. Patek's growing ties with Poland and the Polish clientele became the basis of his business. In a letter to Princess Czar-toryska, he writes, "let me be so bold as to beg you, Princess, to take under your powerful protection our national manufactory, where we try to gather Polish workers... to bring back to our devastated Mother-land this important branch of industry"<sup>13</sup> or "... recommend us, we can satisfy those coming to our national Polish manufactory, which one day we will move to our Motherland"<sup>14</sup> In an outward sign of these ties, the shop was decorated with Polish paintings (Fig. 4), some of which served as inspiration for the engravings on the backs of watch cases.

Perhaps if Poland had gained independence sooner, we would today be collecting watches signed "Patek Philippe, Warsaw"...



Fig. 6: Patek and Czapek no. 650. An 18K gold, 18 ligne watch with a typical Polish motif – Tadeusz Kosciuszko, a Polish national hero.

The company's dependence on Polish buyers continued even after Patek broke off his partnership with Czapek and joined Philippe and Gostkowski, as proven by a letter to Prince Adam Czartoryski, the husband of the above-mentioned princess, dated July 15, 1845, 15 "I, along with my partner Gostkowski, humbly ask Your Highness for patro-nage of our manufactory, considered national [Polish]" 16

It was not until 1843-44 that Patek became acquainted with Adrien Philippe, the young French inventor of the keyless winding mechanism. By this time, Patek's relations with Czapek had already begun to sour as suggested in a letter dated 1843.8

However, the personal issues between the two partners were not the only problems they faced. Although Patek was a shrewd businessman with a strong sense for marketing, the business was not going well financially . Krupski wrote: "... things were very bad with Patek's firm. The company was on the verge of collapse. There were some assets in the form of accounts payable and tools, some in finished products [watches], but they had almost no credit, and their cash on hand, as was proven when the books were shown was 1 franc, 86 cents."18

Recognizing that quick action needed to be taken, in 1844 Patek and Czapek participated in the Paris Products of Industry Exhibition. Adrien Philippe, who was also present, received a gold medal there for his keyless



Fig. 9: Czapek & Cie, W. Genevie, No. 2695, circa 1855.



winding watches.<sup>19</sup> Patek, producer of 42 keyless watches<sup>20</sup> made from rather complicated Audemars ebauches, was immediately interested by Philippe's new invention. What's more, he had the foresight to recognize this as his passport to a worldwide clientele. Adrien Philippe would soon become a partner in exchange for a share in the company.

Patek's decision to replace Czapek with Philippe could not have been an easy one, particularly in terms of the pair's strong ties with the Polish community. In fact, by letting go of his Polish compatriot, Patek was in danger of alienating his current clientele, thereby accruing the risk of bankruptcy already facing him. He made the decision, however, dismissing Czapek, and in his stead taking on Philippe as foreman, with the financial support of Gostowski. In a letter to Kozmian, whom he called his "dear brother"<sup>21</sup> dated May 23, 1845, he explained this decision at length, saying that Czapek had been leading a dissipated life, neglecting his work at the firm, which caused troublesome delays. Patek says he found himself "compelled to choose between the inevitable ruin of the business considered national [Polish]... established by six years of such hard work, and separating from him". In choosing to work with Philippe, Patek says, he was making the only sensible decision possible.<sup>22</sup>

In removing Czapek in order to bring Philippe into the partnership, Patek feared that Czapek would establish a rival company, which in fact he did. In addition, Patek's Polish clientele might leave him for Czapek, particularly since the new firm included "foreigners" and would no longer be perceived as a Polish national concern (Philippe being a Frenchman). That these fears were at least partially based in truth is shown by one of Gostkowski's letters: "Our house, so far exclusively Polish, because for almost half a century it was managed and assisted by two Poles - Patek and Gostkowski, ... the famous Polish firm, elevated to the highest rank and fame in the world of industry and trade, saved thanks to Gostkowski's investments, to which only Poles had and have the indisputable right, has fallen into the hands of foreigners".<sup>23</sup> At this point, the company's profits were still very much dependent on Polish connections. In 1844 Patek writes: "Our manufactory goes less well than in former years, because only very few of our people [Poles] are coming here".<sup>24</sup> Patek's close ties with the Polish émigré community lasted up until at least 1848.

1848 was not a favorable year for Patek, but he was not alone. The general upheaval of the European social structure presented difficult times for all. As Gostowski put it, "in the midst of the general conflagration, our house was in danger".<sup>25</sup>

Although Patek was still involved in the Polish fight for independence, after 1848

his involvement with the Polish community became considerably less intense. Being somewhat disenchanted with some of his former Polish patrons, now Czapek's customers, Patek began to devote his time and relentless energy almost exclusively to his business.

By 1850, Czapek was providing serious competition with his newly established Polish watch factory.

It also appears that Patek's intuition concerning the public's perception of his new partnership with Philippe was correct. At this point in time, the Polish press did not view Patek favorably, and in 1855 this prompted him to complain in a letter to the editor in chief of Kraków's *Czas*.<sup>26</sup>

The Beginnings of Patek Philippe & Co.

After Czapek's departure in 1845, Philippe became the head watchmaker. On May 1, 1845, an agreement was signed between Antoni Patek, Adrien Philippe, and Vincent Gostkowski. According to clause 3 of the agreement, Patek was responsible for the general direction of the firm and for its marketing, Gostkowski for the accounting and correspondence, and Philippe was in charge of watchmaking. Although both Gostkowski and Philippe each received one third of the company's profits, only Patek had the right to make executive company decisions. Subsequently this changed, with more rights being granted first to Gostkowski and later to Philippe. At an even later date, the rights earlier extended to Gostkowski were rescinded. It took another five years before Philippe's name appeared on the company's watches.

From 1845 until about 1850, their watches were signed Patek & Co.

The beginnings were not easy, as Patek's letters prove. In 1848 he tries to justify his delays in making payments<sup>27</sup>: "My situation is so critical that, I give you my word of honor, I have only 195 francs at my disposal, so I am sending you 100; the rest I am leaving for my wife and myself."

In the same letter, he expresses his concerns about expenses: "Not to mention our shop - we have over 300 workers, you understand ! - What are we going to do? I do not know - I place my only hope in God."

From a business viewpoint, however, the decision to replace Czapek with Philippe seems to have been a good one. Though Czapek was an excellent mechanic and repasseur, capable of finishing the most difficult movements, he lacked inventiveness.

In 1850 Czapek wrote a book<sup>28</sup> (Fig. 10) about watches and watchmakers which, though it shows a thorough knowledge of the trade, both theoretical and practical, also proves that he was somewhat narrow-minded and conservative. Rather than search for new developments and improvements, he preferred existing solutions. As Nakwaski, one of Czapek's contemporaries and the founder of the Association of Polish Watchmakers in Switzerland, wrote in 1836 : "Czapek is a good watchmaker, but limited"<sup>29</sup>. Philippe, on the other hand, was rather inventive, a quality which Patek was quick to recognize. He believed if the public supported Philippe's keyless patent, this would give him the head start he was looking for. History has proven him right.

During the partnership with Czapek, as well as the first years of partnership with

Philippe, the company did not produce its own movements. Instead they bought unfinished movements from several companies, including Louis Audemars, Vacheron & Constantin, Breguet, Doloche, Dupan et Haim, Piguet et Fils, Le Coultre, among others (Fig. 11).







Fig. 5: Czapek's advertisement for his shop in Warsaw. From this ad we learn that other watchmakers forged his watches as early as 1854, and that the factory provided a certificate of authenticity with every watch, a procedure practiced by Patek and before by Breguet.

Fig. 7: A list of donations for a Polish charity in Geneva, January 1850. Adrien Philippe matched his predecessor's, Czapek's, 5 francs. Patek and Gostkowski matched Gruzewski's 20 franc donation.

Fig. 8: Addendum to the May 3, 1845 agreement between Patek, Philippe and Gostkowski.

Fig. 10: Czapek's only publication, "Słów kilka o zegarmistrzostwie ku użytku zegarmistrzów i publiczności" (A Few Words about Watchmaking for the Use of Watchmakers and the General Public), Leipzig, 1850. He mentions that he had already been working for ten years on a comprehensive work about watchmaking.

Fig. 11: A copy from the Patek archives for watch # 3767 made in 1850. The ebauche was bought from the famous Pignet et Fils and the case was by Oltramare, one of the best casemakers of the period.

Fig. 15: "The Gradowski", the first ultracompliated watch made by Patek Philippe (sold by Antiquorum on June 9, 2002, lot No. 423)

Fig. 24: In the mid-19th century, it was enough to address a letter "Monsieur Patek, Genève." I tried this ten years ago ("Patek, Philippe, Genève") and to my surprise it worked.

While I believe there are some exceptions, generally the company just finished movements of ebauche makers during this period. This included jewelery, escapement making, polishing steel parts, adjusting the wheels and pinions, gilding plates, bridges, and wheels, and, most importantly and certainly most costly, adjustment and timing. In the early years, the latter was exclusively performed by Czapek, but by 1841 these jobs were given to other workers. Although the inability to produce its own ebauches is by no means a reflection of a company's watchmaking capabilities, it is certainly limiting. Any decent machinist can make an ebauche, however it takes the skills and knowledge of a horologist to finish and adjust a watch.

Patek's earliest ebauches date back to 1850, the year that Philippe introduced the machinery necessary to make them. Patek's, or more precisely, Philippe's, first ebauches are very distinct movements. The earliest ones were almost never signed. They were however stamped "PP" on the dial plate (Fig. 12). This stamping lasted for about a decade, after which time it was abandoned in favor of a different way of hallmarking the movement. As of 1872, this all changed. The dial plates were then stamped with a serial number, and the movement was signed on the winding bridge. Until 1872, the movements were almost never signed on the back.

Until the 1860's, the above-illustrated watches constituted the majority of his production.

In the 1860's, although the cylinders and key-wind watches were still plentiful, they were gradually being replaced by lever escapement and stem-wound watches. There were some key-wound watches in the 1870's and a few in the beginning of the 1880's, but these are generally rare.

Occasionally, one can find a Patek cylinder watch from as late as 1897, but after about 1885 they are very scarce.

Their everyday watches were of consistently high standards. Occasionally they made an exceptional piece for a special order, an exhibition, or a timing contest.

Fig. 12: Patek Philippe mark "PP" found under the dial of Patek watches between 1850 and 1860.



Fig. 17 Under-the-dial view of a Czapek movement. He used Philippe's patented sliding-pinion keyless mechanism.



Fig. 14: A typical Patek Philippe movement of the "S" design introduced in the late 1850's and continued, with minor changes, for the next 100 years.

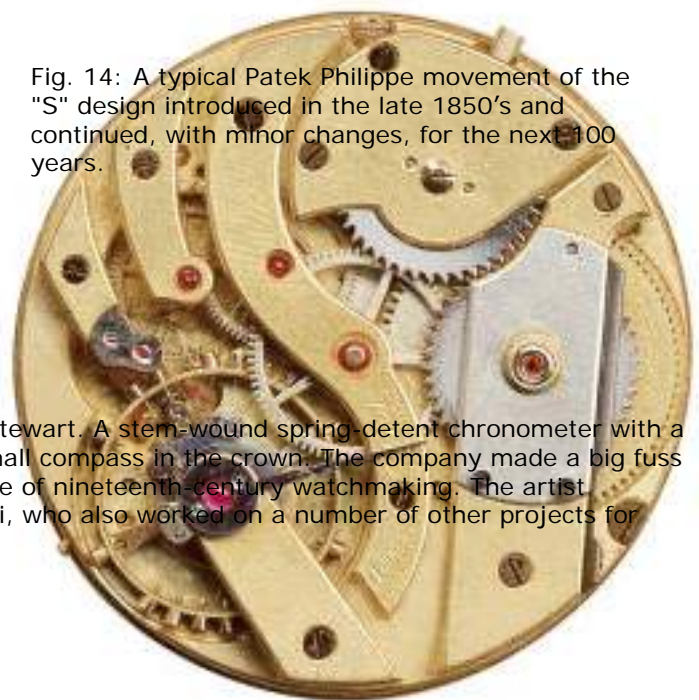


Fig. 18 Patek & Co. watch made for Lord Dudley Stewart. A stem-wound spring-detent chronometer with a repeater, in a very ornate gold case and with a small compass in the crown. The company made a big fuss over it and advertised it everywhere as a milestone of nineteenth-century watchmaking. The artist responsible for the design was Antoni Oleszczynski, who also worked on a number of other projects for Patek. Some of his letters to Patek have survived.

## Czapek on His Own

Czapek, as has been said, had established his own shop in the meantime and was doing well. Many of the problems faced by Patek during this transitional period can be attributed to the loss of Polish clientele to Czapek, whose new partner, Juliusz Gruzewski, was not only a hero of the 1830 Insurrection but was also actively involved in the Polish Independence movement. In 1863, Gruzewski's loyalty earned him the position of official agent of the Polish National Government in Switzerland, responsible for the purchase and transportation of arms to Poland.<sup>30</sup> He had close ties to Polish émigrés and many wealthy people in Poland.

Gruzewski funded the operation. Like Czapek, Gruzewski, was a Protestant, which was rare among Geneva's mainly Catholic Polish population. This must have brought them together. Gruzewski was a colorful character, a co-organizer of the insurrection against Russia in North Eastern Poland, with influential friends, among whom was the future Napoleon III. It is no wonder that Czapek quickly became watchmaker to the court of Napoleon III, a position he

advertised widely.<sup>31</sup> Czapek had a factory in Geneva,<sup>32</sup> a shop in Warsaw,<sup>33</sup> and another in Paris<sup>34</sup>.

However, something must have gone wrong somewhere, since the 1895 Great Illustrated Polish Encyclopedia states that he died in poverty. Additional information suggests that Czapek may have been in partnership with one of the Piguets of Geneva, or that he sold the company to him.

It is interesting to point out that Czapek's early watches incorporated Philippe's patented sliding pinion winding mechanism (Fig. 17).

In his book about watches and watchmakers,<sup>27</sup> Czapek states that he only used this design in his shop. It is hard to imagine that Patek was unaware of this. There are no records to indicate that Patek Philippe gave any patent licenses, so there is most likely a valid reason why Patek allowed Czapek to continue to use his patented invention.

### **Patek on the Road to Greatness**

Patek began achieving his ambitions of becoming a watchmaker recognized the world over, and not just by the Polish community<sup>36</sup> when in 1845, with the help of Gostkowski's funds,<sup>37</sup> Philippe's technical talent, inventiveness, and his own marketing capabilities, he founded one of the most important watchmaking companies of the second half of the 19th century and, indeed, that of the entire 20th century. This success was the result of talent, shrewdness, and good fortune!

When, in 1851, Queen Victoria visited the Patek & Co. display at the first Universal Exhibition held in London, she was shown a small lady's watch, about 30 mm. in diameter, which needed no key for winding or setting. She bought it on the spot,<sup>38</sup> perhaps remembering a similar watch which she had purchased several years before from Breguet (No. 5102, sold on July 17, 1838).<sup>39</sup> This watch was about 20 mm. in diameter, was wound by a stem and had a lever escapement. The Queen must have owned other watches, but she had only one keyless lady's watch<sup>40</sup>, it is safe to assume that she was pleased with it. I was fortunate to examine an identical one featuring a very sturdy and reliable construction considering its small size.<sup>41</sup> On this occasion, Prince Albert also bought himself a Patek watch.

I believe this single event forever changed Patek's fortune. He became the immediate talk of the town and his company instantly gained in prestige. (Fig. 19).

The fame achieved at the London exhibition was widely publicized, and Patek's financial problems slowly began to dissipate. He began to heavily publicize and market his products everywhere, including in Russia, Poland's primary enemy.<sup>42</sup> Soon after, Patek became a supplier to Rodanet of Paris, Peña in Madrid, Elimayer in Leipzig, and to the biggest watch and jewelry stores in France, Spain, and Germany. Realizing the potential of the American market, whose biggest jeweler, Tiffany, Young & Ellis, was already his client, he traveled there in 1854. Patek's American travels have been described elsewhere<sup>43</sup> and

do not need to be repeated here.

Vincent Gostkowski (1807-1884) – The Financial Backer 44

Vincent Gostkowski, who afforded financial backing to the firm for over thirty years, was responsible for the managing of the company. It seems there was no love lost between himself and Adrien Philippe, who busied himself in Geneva, with new inventions, the writing of a book, and the direction of the factory.

Gostkowski made a grave mistake in failing to re-cognize Philippe's capabilities. Philippe was a convincing writer and speaker, as was recognized by

Theodore Gribi, an American horological author and teacher, who in 1878 attended a series of mee-tings of the Geneva watchmakers' society: "At one of those meetings Adrien Philippe read a paper on the flat balance spring. The argument he made, together with the discussion that followed, affected me profoundly."<sup>46</sup> Major Paul Chamberlain, one of the giants of horological knowledge and research, shared this opinion, writing, in the 1930's : "One of the most thoughtful and understanding discussions of horological education I have ever read was from [Philippe's] pen".

Philippe's writings played an important role in the life of the company; two and a half years after the above-quoted letter, Philippe published a comprehensive work on keyless mechanisms.<sup>47</sup> He also became an expert correspondent on watch mass production for the Journal de Genève, which in turn led to his being invited as a juror at various World Exhibitions.

Unlike Gostkowski, Patek had long recognized Philippe's skills, considering him as having "a rare talent in watchmaking"<sup>48</sup>. Although Philippe was perhaps a bit headstrong and opinionated, like many talented individuals, he was a clever inventor and was also quite skilled in improving upon current production methods, as he demonstrated in 1851.

Gostkowski, on the other hand, judging from his letters (and he was a very prolific writer), was quite a bore! His letters are long-winded and disorganized.<sup>50</sup> Patek slowly came to realize that he would have to part with Gostkowski. This was not an easy decision. Not only had the two men been friends for over twenty years, but, furthermore it was owing to Gostkowski's investments that the company had survived the years 1845, 1847, and 1848. However, by the end of the 1860's although Gostkowski was still a partner, he did not receive a third of the pro-fits, and in 1875 he was finally removed.<sup>51</sup> He continued, however, to receive six percent annual inte-rest from his investments with the company.<sup>52</sup>

Subsequently Gostkowski opened his own shop - first in Geneva, then in Paris with his son Lawrence, who had previously worked in the Patek Philippe factory. At some point Gostkowski, Jr. worked for Majewski, a former worker of Patek, who had also opened his own shop. At the Paris World Exhibition of 1878, Gostkowski Jr. won a silver medal. Up until that time he had worked either at home or at

another watchmaker's shop (possibly Majewski). After 1878 he finally opened his own shop in Geneva just across the lake from the Patek Philippe factory<sup>53</sup>. One of his workmen was Emmanuel Cottier, the father of the later inventor of



the famous World Time mechanism.



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Fig 23 An engr.  
watch by Gostk  
Laurent Gostkc



## Conclusion

Before uncovering some of the sources described above, I had always wondered how an almost penniless emigrant such as Patek succeeded in creating the Patek Philippe company. There are several answers: In addition to his personal charisma, his clear vision and unwavering efforts allowed him to guide the company from its humble beginnings to star status, with a record of spectacular

achievements and a reputation for incomparable quality. When the company's early difficulties threatened to overwhelm them, the interest shown in their products by Queen Victoria increased their prestige and allowed them to further augment the quality of their production. The company was thus elevated to an almost legendary status, filling, in a sense, the void left after the death of A.L. Breguet. Patek's clients included approximately one hundred kings and queens,<sup>54</sup> and at the end of his life he had the satisfaction of knowing he had become a leader in horology, the best among the best.

If any reader knows of other material about the early history of Patek, Czapek, Philippe, Gostkowski, or Gruzewski I would be grateful if he or she would share this knowledge.

### Foot notes

1. In 1890 Patek Philippe won a lawsuit against A. Schwob & Frère, who forged Patek Philippe's signature. The court awarded them 15,000 francs for the estimated profit made by A. Schwob & Frère from selling fake Patek watches. *Patek et Co contre Schwob et frères*. Geneva, 1911. Described also in *Patek Philippe* by Huber & Banbery, (Zurich, 1982), p.74. I have examined about 50 early Patek fakes; they are mostly cheap lever movements with thin gold cases, sometimes enameled. There are some exceptions of very high quality.
2. Lubomir Gordon, *Emigracja Polska* (Kraków, 1901), p. 31.
3. Jerzy Zdrada, *Wielka Emigracja po Powstaniu Listopadowym* [The Great Emigration after the November Resurrection], Warsaw, 1987, v. III, p.46.
4. Huber & Banbery, *Patek Philippe*, p.13 and pp.34-38.
5. Letter from Patek to Walery Wielogłowski, September 22, 1840.
6. Patek to Princess Czartoryska, September 25, 1843.
7. Archives de l'Etat de Genève, Tribunal de commerce, feuilles d'audience, Jur. civ. Ccm 5, F 237.
8. Letter from Patek to Walery Wielogłowski, 22 Sept, 1840.
9. Letter from Patek to W. Wielogłowski, March 8, 1843.
10. Letter from Patek to Princess Czartoryska, September 25, 1843.
11. *Kurier Warszawski*, February 9, 1860, p. 195.
12. *Kłosy*, 1880, vol. 31, p. 804.
13. Patek to Princess Czartoryska, September 25, 1843
14. Letter from Patek to Jan Kozmian, May 23, 1845.
15. Letter from Patek to Prince Adam Czartoryski, July 15, 1845.
16. Patek to Kozmian, May 23, 1845.
17. Archives de l'Etat de Genève, Jur. civ. AAqu 13, p.555.
18. Stanislaw Krupski, *Kłosy*, 1880, vol. 31, p. 804.
19. Huber & Banbery, *Patek Philippe*, p.49.
20. *Ibid*, p.68.
21. There is speculation among Patek's descendants that he was a freemason. He had an impressive collection of medals and other memorabilia from this order, which in part has survived. This tradition was continued by subsequent generations. His deep involvement with Catholicism, however, seems to contradict this hypothesis.
22. Patek to Kozmian, May 23, 1845.
23. Letter from W. Gostkowski to J.I. Kraszewski, July 2, 1881.
24. Letter from Patek to Wielogłowski, February 20, 1841.
25. Letter from L & W. Gostkowski to Patek and Philippe, July 26, 1874.
26. Letter to *Czas*, 1855: "In *Czas* one of the correspondents talking about the great poet (sic) makes a sudden departure to make jokes of me in order to praise Czapek. When such farces floated in provincial rags I did not pay attention to them but in case of *Czas* I must speak ... "
27. Letter from Patek to Wielogłowski, April 10, 1848.
28. Fr. Czapek, *Słów kilka o zegarmistrzowie* [A Few Words about Watchmaking], Leipzig, 1850.
29. Nakwaski, *Memoirs*. Library of the University of Lwów, manuscript 1016.
30. Juliusz Gruzewski, *PSB*, vol.9, pp. 66 and 67.

31. Unger's calendar for 1860, Warsaw.
32. Potocki, Raporty Szpiega.
33. Warsaw Directory, 1854.
34. Unger's calendar for 1860.
35. Czapek, Słów kilka o zegarmistrzowie.
36. Patek to Wielogłowski, March 8, 1843.
37. Archives de l'Etat de Genève, Jur. Civ. Ccm. 6, F 91.
38. In fact, she bought two watches. This one and another, almost identical one but key-wound and key-set. Both are in the Patek Philippe Museum.
39. For a discussion of the movement of an identical watch, Breguet No. 5119, see Patek Philippe by Huber & Banbery, pp. 45,46.
40. At the time only Breguet made a few (about sixteen) lady's-sized watches wound without a key. All are accounted for, therefore the Queen could have had only this one.
41. Breguet No. 7, sold in 1835.
42. Stanislaw Krupski, K\_osy, 1880, vol. 31, no. 804.
43. Huber & Banbery, Patek Philippe, pp.34-38. Patek Philippe, Newsletter, no. 2, published by Henri Stern Watch Agency, Inc. (New York, 1955).
44. In a number of the sources listed below, Vincent Gostkowski is confused with Napoleon Gostkowski, who also emigrated to France.
  1. Rafa\_ Gerber, Studenci Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego 1808-1831. S\_ownik biograficzny, [Students of the University of Warsaw, Biographical Dictionary] p.61. Wroc\_aw, Warszawa, Kraków, Gdansk, 1977.
  2. Krasnowski Adolf, Almanach historique de l'emigration polonaise, p.124. Paris, 1847. Ksi\_ga pami\_tkowa w 50-letni\_ rocznic\_ powstania roku 1830, [Commemorative Book in the 50th Anniversary of the Resurrection of 1830], p.96. Lwów, 1881.
  3. Giedroyc, Franciszek, S\_u\_ba zdrowia w dawnym wojsku polskim, [Medical Service in the Old Polish Army], p. 412. Warszawa, 1927. [Giedroyc lists Gostkowski as a medical doctor. There is one other mention of him as a medical doctor. It is possible that he also studied medicine, but possibly did not graduate.]
  4. Stupnicki Hipolit, Imiennopis poleg\_ych i straconych ofiar powstania roku 1863 i 1864 [Nominal Roll of Killed in Action and Executed Victims of the Resurrection of 1863 and 1865], p. 25. Lwów, 1865.
  5. Kolumna, Zygmund, Pami\_tka rodzin polskich. Krótkie wiadomo\_ci o straconych na rusztowaniach, rostrzelanych, poleg\_ych i zmar\_ych na wygnaniu syberyjskim i tu\_actwie ofiarach z 1861-1866 [Token of Remembrance of Polish Families. Short Information about Executed on Scaffolds, Executed Before a Firing Squad and Killed and Deceased Victims of the Siberian Exile from 1861-1866], part II, p.80. Kraków, 1868.
  6. Dziennik Narodowy, May 31, 1845. Paris.[?]
45. Szuszbiewicz, Horloge a eau dite horloge polonaise, Paris: Mém. Ac. Sciences, 1849. Ludwik Zajdler, Dzieje Zegara, Warsaw, 1980. Wiesława Siedlecka, Polskie Zegary, Ossolineum [Poland], 1985. Wieslaw G\_\_bocki, Zegarmistrzowie Warszawscy XIX Wieku, Warsaw, 1992. Zuzanna Prószyńska, S\_ownik zegarmistrzów Polskich, forthcoming.
46. Theo. Gribi, Practical Course in Adjusting, New York 1896.
47. Adrien Philippe, Les Montres sans Clefs, se remontant et se mettant à l'heure sans Clefs [Keyless watches, wound and set without a key], Geneva and Paris, 1863.
48. Letter from Patek to Prince Adam Czartoryski, July 15, 1845.
49. Taken from my watch records and from the serial number table published by Huber and Banbery in Patek Philippe.
50. Library of the Jagiellonian University, ms. 6503.
51. Archives de l'Etat de Genève, Jur. civ. Aaqu 15 p.555.
52. Ibid
53. Krupski, Klosy, vol. 31, p.804.
54. Barth David Schwartz, Town & Country, May 1983.