

Major Ludwik Krzewiński, MD – the Creator of Polish Narcoanalysis

Jan Widacki

Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski Kraków University, Kraków, Poland; ORCID 0000-0001-9174-3501;
jan.widacki@gmail.com

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The European Polygraph 2021/1 published an article on the creator of Polish narcoanalysis entitled “The Use of Narcoanalysis by Polish Counterintelligence in the 1930s”. The biography of Ludwik Krzewiński, and especially his wartime history, deserves a study. An additional point of interest concerns his contacts with the US Military Intelligence Service after 1945 and perhaps also earlier during his stay in the Philippines.

Ludwik Krzewiński (Ludwik Kawalek until 19 February 1929) was born to Jan Kawalek and Maria, née Sawczuk, on 19 May 1898 in Sułkowszczyzna, Mościska County in the Lwowskie Region. He had three brothers: Feliks, Stanisław, and Ignacy, and two sisters of unknown names. The Kawaleks actively supported the fight

for independence, with proof being the active participation of Ludwik's father and brothers in the defence of Lwów. Ludwik himself, as well as his sisters, helped to collect gold to support the Polish Legions. His father was arrested by the Russians after photographs and documents of the Sharpshooters were found on him during a search, and Feliks Czech, fiancé of one of his sisters, died as a second lieutenant in the Polish Legions. (The fundamental source for drafting Ludwik Krzewiński's biography before 1939 is his personal file that can be found in the Military Historical Office of the Central Military Archives [sygn. 1769/89.2710]). A good resource for studying his later life are the files of the case against the officers of the Independent Technical Section (ITS) from the Second Department of the Polish General Staff files in communist Poland early in the 1950s. They can be found in the Archives of the Institute of National Remembrance, the Central Archives of Modern Records (Archiwum Akt Nowych – AAN) and the State Archives in Warsaw (Archiwum Państwowe w Warszawie).

In Lwów, Ludwik first attended the Henryk Sienkiewicz Primary School and later Secondary School No. 4. While in his secondary school, he joined the Sokół (Falcon) Polish Gymnastic Society and the Boy Scouts, completing the course for scouting instructors in 1913–14. As an active member of the Society for the People's School (TSL), he visited villages on reading and writing courses for illiterate Poles. When he volunteered to join the Polish Legions at the outbreak of the First World War, he was rejected due to his age (he was 16) and "measly physical condition". Yet in 1914–16 he was involved, together with his sisters, in organising the aforementioned aid for the Legions. During the capture of Lwów in the wake of the Russian offensive of 1915, Ludwik and his father were arrested, beaten, and detained in a POW camp for six weeks. After the Russians were driven back, he was forced into the Austrian Army in 1916. His request to be transferred to the Polish Legions resulted in assignment to the 24th Infantry Battalion of the 19th Imperial-Royal Landwehr Infantry Regiment (Lwów) and posting to the front. When he and his battalion returned to Lwów in 1918, he stole blank documents from the battalion's clerical office, and used a hectograph to forge seals and signatures of Austrian officers, to help Poles desert the Austrian Army and leave for the Kingdom of Poland, where the Regency Council embarked on the organisation of the Polish Army. In this area, Krzewiński cooperated with the underground Polish Military Organisation. In September 1918 he was sent to the officer school in Kamionka Strumiłowa, where he was disarmed and arrested by the army of the West Ukrainian People's Republic. He successfully fled his Ukrainian captivity and reached Lwów, where the Polish Ukrainian hostilities were raging. In the city, he was beaten

with rifle butts and wounded with a bayonet by a Ukrainian squad. A Polish patrol saved his life. Beaten and wounded, Krzewiński made it to his family home at ul. Szeptyckiego 3. From there he took a Russian rifle, which, it seems, had been stored there since the Russians' retreat from Lwów, and joined the fight. He participated in the attack on the Church of St Yuri. However, the wound sustained earlier and the aftermath of the beating made him resign from further armed struggle. He passed his weapon to other defenders of Lwów, and took to assembling telephones for the fighting Polish troops.

On 19 December 1918 he joined the Polish Army and was assigned to an artillery battery, fighting Ukrainians in the battles of Rzaśnia, Sołonka, Kulparkow, Krzywcyce, and Dublany. Due to a relapse of his former injuries, he had to spend several weeks in hospital in February 1919. His artillery regiment, originally given the number 1, was later renumbered 4 and finally – 5. On 19 March 1919 Krzewiński was granted the “Orlęta” Honorary Decoration for “*bravery and faithful service to the Homeland, in memory of the past fight and the defence of Lwów and the Eastern Marches*” [A transcript regarding the diploma for the “Orlęta” Honorary Decoration, WBH-CAW sygn. 1769/89.2710].

Late in 1919 Corporal Ludwik Kawalek was ordered to join a course for military paramedics in Lwów. He also embarked on medical studies at the John Casimir University in Lwów, which he had to suspend due to service until 1922, when he returned to the university. For the duration of his studies, he “was transferred and entered into the files of Sanitary Battalion No. 6 stationed in Lwów. On 23 March 1924 he was promoted to second lieutenant (with effect from 1 February 1919) [Order of the Minister for Military Affairs, WBH-CAW sygn. 1769/89.2710]. In 1923 he completed his education, however, still without being conferred a doctorate, and was assigned for internship to the 14th Jazłowiec Uhlan Regiment and later to the 43rd Infantry Regiment of the Borderland Riflemen (Dubno garrison in Volhynia). By an order from July 1924, he joined the Military Sanitary School in Warsaw for an eight-week course in protection against gas weapons. In 1927 he was granted a doctoral degree in medicine at the Medical Faculty of the John Casimir University in Lwów, and in 1930 he was transferred from the 6th Sanitary Battalion to the Military Gas Institute in Warsaw, to the position of experimenter. Lt Ludwik Kawalek changed his family name to Krzewiński on 19 February 1929 [Lwów Regional Office, L;Ac 138/nazw.ex 1929, WBH-CAW 1769/89.2710], was promoted to captain on 1 January 1930 [Personal Order of the Minister for Military Affairs No. 5/30, WBH-CAW sygn. 1769/89.2710], and on 9 December

1930, “Ludwik Krzewiński was joined in holy matrimony with Jadwiga Karolina Fryderyka Ehrlich [Record Book for 1930, No. 499 RC Parish of St Alexander]” in the Church of St Alexander in Warsaw. A son, of an unknown name, was born to the Krzewińskis on 9 January 1933 [Annual addendum to the Qualifications List for 1934, WBH-CAW, sygn. 1769/89.2710].

In 1931 he became a lecturer at the Centre for Sanitary Training. Enjoying the opinion of a good lecturer, he was recognised for his work, and in 1931 received the Silver Cross of Merit. The application for the award of the cross, signed by the Minister of Internal Affairs, Bronisław Pieracki, reads among others: “As a lecturer in the Clinical Unit of Military Gases at the Central Sanitary Training (sic!), he is professionally devoted to warfare chemistry and the treatment of warfare poisonings. With respect to the above, he is an ardent supporter of the idea of protecting the civilian population against toxic gases, a subject he devoted plenty of academic and expert research to. He works creatively as an inventor of kits and dressings against toxic gases for the Gas and Air Defence League (Polish acronym LOPP), and also lectures and writes manuals for civilians etc. His activity significantly contributes to the development of air and gas defence organisations” [Application for the Cross of Merit for Cpt. Ludwik Krzewiński, MD, WBH-CAW sygn. 179/89.2710].

Opinions written by his military superiors portray Krzewiński as a “*stalwart, honorary officer, with a profound sense of personal dignity, friendly, ambitious, diligent and meticulous at work*” [Annual addendum to the Qualifications List for 1930, WBH-CAW, sygn. 1769/89.2710]. Another reference, from the time of his employment at the Centre for Sanitary Training, signed by its commander, Brigadier General Kollątaj Strzednicki, MD, reads: “*extremely talented and intelligent, he surprises with the wealth of knowledge he has acquired. He works a lot scientifically and has a penchant for inventions*” [Annual addendum to the Qualifications List for 1932, WBH-CAW, sygn. 1768/89.2710]. Krzewiński was also recognised as “a highly specialised expert in gas defence”.

On 1 December 1933, Lt Krzewiński was transferred from the Centre for Sanitary Training to the Second Department of Polish General Staff (intelligence and counterintelligence), or, to be more precise, to its Independent Technical Section.

The Independent Technical Section (ITS) was a laboratory with modern equipment employing several dozens of people, both military (mostly military physicians) and civilians. A large share of the staff had doctoral degrees. The Institute was given the fundamental task of developing technical methods and tools for intelligence and

counterintelligence purposes. Thus, it designed methods for creating and decoding ciphers, constructed tapping and also counter-tapping devices, created false certification documents, and forged fragments of costumes, such as buttons, of e.g. Soviet military uniforms (Dubicki, 2015; Widacki, 2022; Widacki, 2021b)

Moreover, the ITS conducted studies on bacteriological weapons and toxins used for sabotage and also for the purpose of eliminating individuals. In this scope, it also tested toxins and bacterial strains on living people (Widacki, 2022). One of the Section's tasks was to design methods known today as "reinforced interrogation techniques" including narcoanalysis.

In that Section, Captain Ludwik Krzewiński, MD, stood at the helm of the "medical", that is toxicological, division.

Independent of the work on "injections debilitating the will" and other works at the Independent Technical Section, especially on sedating agents installed in cigarettes, and chemicals immunising the impact of alcohol, Krzewiński continued to work on gas defence, publishing several outreach and instructional works on the subject. He published an article entitled "Physicians and gas warfare" (Krzewiński, 1932) in 1932, and "First aid in military gas poisonings" (Krzewiński, 1933) a year later. Already serving in the Second Department, he had his brochure "Ratunku! Gaz!" (literally "Help! Gas!") published by the Main Board of the Polish Red Cross in 1936. In that year the same publisher released his "Wieś polska w obliczu wojny" (literally: "Polish rural areas on the eve of war"), followed by "Tablica toksykologiczna gazów bojowych" (literally: "The toxicological table of military gases") and "Tablica ratownictwa przeciwgazowego" (literally: "The table of anti-gas defence"), both published by Komitet Obrony Przeciwlotniczo-Gazowej Biernej in Warsaw in 1938.

He also conducted various courses and training sessions in defence against gases. In official reports he was entered as *"burdened with major family responsibilities. For this reason, he gains extra income by writing articles and working for the Air and Gas Defence League"* (See: Annual Qualification List for 1935, WBH-CAW sygn. 1769/89.2710. K. 84). The Qualification List for 1938 (WBH-CAW sygn. 1769/89.2710) contains an appended note explaining that *"burdened with major family responsibilities, he gains extra income through private medical practice"*. However, it remains unknown what Krzewiński's family duties, other than the maintenance of a wife and son, were. Midway through the 1930s, a captain of the Polish Army with a family to sustain received a relatively high remuneration (400 zloty

+ 105 zloty service bonus), which was on a par with that of a judge in a municipal court, and far higher than the salary of a civil servant with higher education, not to mention the fact that the captain's salary was nearly twice as high as that of a teacher (Mały Rocznik Statystyczny 1935 GUS 1936). Thus, the remuneration of Captain Ludwik Krzewiński, MD, would have been sufficient to maintain a family of three without any extra income.

The opinion of the Chief of the Second Department, Colonel Tadeusz Pełczyński, from 19 November 1935 reads: *“he obtained good results in psychotechnical, physiological, and graphological tests, while the results in the specialist medical field, significant for his work, are poorer (...). Conducting research work in the only technical and research institution of the Second Department of the General Staff, he is developing into an expert hard to replace. He should be used for technical services in intelligence”* [The Annual Qualification List for 1935, WBH-CAW sygn. 1769/89.2710, k. 84.]. The opinion also records that, besides command of German and Russian in speech and writing, he has made progress in learning French [*ibidem*]. The Annual Qualification List for 1938 reads that Ludwik Krzewiński *“is studying English – tolerable good results”*. As his works in “psychotechnical” and “physiological” research are not known, it is hard to ascertain what research was meant. It is known from other sources that the Institute of Mental Hygiene in Warsaw purchased a Darrow photo polygraph from the US in the 1930s (Widacki, 2021a). Not only is there no trace of the use of that expensive device, unique in contemporary Poland, in any of the works of the Institute, but there are even no works on the subjects for which a photo polygraph could have been useful. That may give rise to the suspicion that the Institute of Mental Hygiene purchased the device for the Second Department, or that it was the Second Department that purchased the polygraph pretending to be the Institute, although there is no proof of the above.

The expediency of Krzewiński and his work for the intelligence services is validated by the opinions of the successive heads of the Independent Technical Section of the Second Department of the General Staff, Cpt. Harski and Mjr Harland (the annual qualification lists for 1936 and 1937, WBH-CAW sygn. 1769/89.2710).

In 1937 Krzewiński received the Medal of Independence from the President of the Republic of Poland for his fight for the country's independence before 1919 (Order of the President of the Republic of Poland of 5 August 1937, Monitor Polski Official Gazette of the Republic of Poland 1937, item 294). Apart from that medal, and the Silver Cross of Merit and the “Orlęta” decoration mentioned above, he also received the “Poland for its Defenders” medal (for the war of 1919–20), and the

Medal of the Decade. Shortly before the outbreak of the Second World War, he was promoted to major.

As Jan Golba testified (minutes from the interrogation of J. Golba on 20 December 1951, files of the Regional Court for the Capital City of Warsaw, sygn. 4038 AP w Warszawie), preparations for the evacuation of the ITS began on 6 or 7 September 1939. Documentation was burned, bacterial strains were destroyed in Lysol baths, some equipment was packed into crates, and the rest was damaged and left. The personnel with their families were ordered to an evacuation train at the Eastern Railway Station. On the night of 7/8 September, the train set off eastwards, to Brześć (Brest). After a few hours' stay in Brześć, the train made for Zdobunów. From there it went towards Złoczów, but near Krasne it was bombed by German aircraft and could not go any further. The evacuees scattered, some moved in a disorganised manner towards Złoczów, to find a chance train, still working, that took them to Kopyczyńce. Some of the ITS personnel (especially civilians and families) decided to return home on their own. Others, including a group of officers in command with Golba and Krzewiński, went towards Kołomyja, where they hoped that some resistance could be organised. After the Soviet incursion on the night of 18/19 September, a group of ITS officers including Major Krzewiński crossed the Romanian border. Initially, Krzewiński and a handful of other ITS officers stayed in the Vatra Dornei mountain resort near Suceava, from where they were taken to Slatina in Olt County, and later to Drăgășani. There they were separated.

Major Krzewiński and Lieutenant Colonel Gano left for Bucharest, where French visas had been organised by the Polish Embassy. They set forth on the journey on board a ship from Constanța.

In France, Krzewiński was made the head of medical service in the 1st Grenadier Division being formed since September 1939 from the officers and soldiers of the Polish Army defeated in the September campaign, and now breaking through to France mostly via Romania. They were all sent to the training camp in Coëtquidan. The formal order to form the 1st Infantry Division in France was issued by the Commander in Chief General Władysław Sikorski on 13 May 1939. Originally, Colonel Stanisław Maczek was appointed its commander, and at the same time promoted to brigadier general. In January 1940, the division was entrusted to Colonel Bronisław Duch (brigadier general from 3 May 1940) (Smoliński 1965; Biegański 1990). In April 1940 the division was quartered in Lorraine, first near Colombey-Belles and later around Lunèville. In May 1940 the division, composed of 16,000 officers and soldiers, became part of the 20th French Army Corps. As part of that

unit, the 1st Grenadier Division fought in the French campaign in June 1940. After the Germans broke up the 20th Corps, the division retreated towards the Baccaret Woods near Meriller. There, the remnants of the French corps and the division were surrounded. Their last defensive stand was the area of Neureville. With the French entering parley about the suspension of hostilities, General Bronisław Duch disbanded the division on 21 June 1940, ordering the soldiers to break through to the south of France or to neutral Switzerland. Some actually managed to reach Switzerland, where they were interned until the end of the war, others, including Ludwik Krzewiński, became prisoners of war, while others with General Duch and higher officers of the Second Department (including Stefan Mayer and Jan Golba) managed to reach the UK and the Polish Army reorganised itself there from scratch (idem; Mierzwiński 1990).

The later fate of Krzewiński remained unknown. Unverified gossip spread among Polish officers both in emigration in the UK and, after the war, in Poland. He was rumoured to have escaped from custody or to have been released due to his health condition (Account by J. Golba from the interrogation on 3 January 1952, files of the Regional Court for the Capital City of Warsaw, sygn. IV K 103/53, Archiwum Państwowe w Warszawie, sygn., 4038). Having left the POW camp, he moved southward, to the unoccupied part of France [Lt Col. Golba knew about the story of Major Krzewiński after leaving the POW camp, including the journey from France to reach America via Australia (sic!), and being a Japanese prisoner in the Philippines, from conversations with the friends and acquaintances of them both during and after the war, on the territory of the occupied Germany and in England. Golba mentioned Gen. Duch as one of his interlocutors, from whom he supposedly received that information. (See: Minutes from the interrogation of J. Golba on 3 January 1952, files of the Regional Court for the Capital City of Warsaw, sygn. IV K 103/53, Archiwum Państwowe w Warszawie).

Together with a pharmacist named Bednarz (first name unknown), a Pole he met in the camp in France and who had family in the US, Krzewiński decided to go to the US. In Marseille they managed to board an American ship in the autumn of 1940. It headed for America via Australia. Both during the war and after its conclusion, there were rumours among the soldiers of the Polish Armed Forces in the West that the ship with Bednarz and Krzewiński on board was torpedoed, allegedly near South Africa, and then the two somehow reached Japan or the Philippines, were taken prisoners by the Japanese there, and after the war reached the US, where Krzewiński was believed to have worked in a cosmetics factory, and later developed

his own prosperous cosmetic service in New York.

Conducting an investigation into ITS officers early in the 1950s, the prosecutors of the communist Polish Ministry of Public Security suspected that Krzewiński's contacts with the Japanese after 1941 were an extension of the cooperation conducted by the ITS back in the 1930s (Interrogation of J. Golba on 3 January 1952, files of the Regional Court for the Capital City of Warsaw, sygn. IV K 103/53, Archiwum Państwowe w Warszawie, sygn., k. 42). Other than the validation of the fact that the Pole planned to leave for Japan in December 1939, there is nothing to confirm that conjecture. It was not even found whether the journey was planned before September 1939 or only after Krzewiński reached France in the autumn of 1939. The latter is however less probable, just for the reason that, while in the army in France, Krzewiński was not assigned to intelligence services but was the head of medical services in a regular frontline unit.

Based on unverified gossip, Krzewiński is believed to have become a Japanese prisoner in the Philippines. However, as Japan was not at war with Poland, and, moreover, the Polish and Japanese intelligence services cooperated during the war (Pałasz-Rutkowska 1995), Ludwik Krzewiński was not treated as a prisoner of war but as an internee. Allegedly, being a physician, he treated American prisoners of war in the camp, where he stayed until Americans liberated the Philippines in January 1945, when he left for the United States.

It remains unclear when Krzewiński finally reached the United States. Either it was on 12 March 1945 from Canada, as suggested by the records of United States Border Crossings from Canada, or, which is more probable, he arrived in San Francisco from Manila on 15 May 1945. According to the records on that file, entering the US, Ludwik Krzewiński declared that he wanted to reach New York, and defined his intention concerning the stay as “to remain permanently”. He also gave Manila in the Philippines as his last permanent address.

Unverified rumours among his friends from the time of military service spoke of Krzewiński finding employment in a company producing cosmetics in New York, and then supposedly running a beauty parlour. Anyway, there was a general conviction that he coped very well.

American documents add “Kerstyn” before the family name “Krzewiński” making him Ludwik Kerstyn Krzewiński. His true fate after the defeat of France in 1940 can be gleaned from a memo of an officer of the War Department's Military Intel-

ligence Service, Lt. Col. R.W. Weaver from 1st July 1945. It seems that, from the moment of his arrival in the US, the Pole remained within the realm of interest of the US military intelligence services. The said memo was drafted slightly more than a month after his arrival in the US, and must have required personal contact with an officer of the American intelligence service. Two weeks before, on 14 June 1945, Krzewiński was interrogated by the Military Intelligence Service (Carus, 2017). The subject of the interview was Polish research on biological (bacteriological) weapons conducted before 1939 as well as the know-how of the Polish intelligence services about such weapons in the USSR, Germany, and Japan. It remains unknown whether these were the only contacts of Krzewiński with the American intelligence service, and whether the Americans were only interested in biological and chemical weaponry, or whether he was also questioned [about narcoanalysis and Polish experience with it prior to 1939].

Thanks to the interest of the Military Intelligence Service in Ludwik Krzewiński, we can learn about his true journey after becoming a German prisoner of war after the defeat of France in 1940. The aforementioned memo states that Krzewiński fled the POW camp in France and reached the part of France unoccupied by Germans, and in Marseille boarded a ship going to Indochina, which at the time was French. He reached Saigon after its capture by the Japanese, and left the city with his assistant (Bednarz?) to reach Manila on 22 November 1941. There he was waiting for transport to the US. However, the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbour in the meantime. It was then that Krzewiński volunteered as a medical officer eager to provide services to the American authorities. Yet, due to his command of English, still poor at the time, he could only be enlisted in the Quartermaster Corps as a lorry driver shuttling American soldiers. After the Philippines were captured by the Japanese, Krzewiński was interned (although he was not a prisoner of war as Poland was not at war with Japan) in Santa Tomas, where he became Assistant Chief Medical Officer in the POW camp, and later the Chief Medical Officer in POW camp Cabanatuan. After the liberation of the Philippines by the Americans he was, as the author of the memo put it, “returned to the U.S. by our authorities”, which may mean American intelligence.

According to his obituary, Major Ludwik Kerstyn Krzewiński died on 12 March 1971 in New York, leaving behind his wife Renee and son Richard [Daily News, New York City, 14 March.]. The fate of his family who stayed in Poland remains unknown.

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