Gazetteers and Maps by Marek Koblanski

Gazetteers:
One of the most useful gazetteer for Prussia, or to be more specific, the area of Prussia, which lies within the borders of today's Poland, which we can also call the area of Poland under the Prussian administration, is the "Gemeindelexikon für das Koenigreich Preussen" from around 1900. Unfortunately, that gazetteer was printed in German including the names of towns in German, therefore if we are interested in a particular town from that area, but we have the name for it only in Polish, we need to find its German equivalent.

One of the gazetteers which we can use to convert the names of towns from Polish to German, and vice-versa is the "Verzeichnis der jenseits der Oder-Neiße gelegenen, unter fremder Verwaltung stehenden Ortschaften", 1980 by Friedrich Müller. That book is divided into two parts, where one part shows the equivalent for the German towns in Polish, and the second part shows the equivalent for the Polish name in German.

Many regions or provinces have their own gazetteers, which were prepared by people of common interest in that particular area. One of the prime examples of this kind of work is "A Genealogical Guide and Atlas of Silesia" by Otto K. and Vera N. Kowallis. That publication shows the vital records which were available for up to 1937. It includes the maps, translation of the German names of the towns to Polish, and the years of the available records at that time.

There are two gazetteers for Poland worth to mention, and both of them are available online. The first one is "Skorowidz Miejscowości Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej [Index of Localities of the Common Republic of Poland] by Bystrzycki, Tadeusz. 2 vols. Przemyśl: Wydawnictwo Książnicy Naukowej. [1934]. This particular gazetteer is very useful for research, because it includes the localities which belonged to Poland before 1939, but right now are within the borders of the Ukraine, Belarus, and Lithuania. This gazetteer also lists the location of the parish or parishes for each town. This gazetteer is available online:
www.wbc.poznan.pl/dlibra/docmetadata id=12786&from=&dirids=1&ver_id=&lp=10&QI=

Słownik Geograficzny Królestwa Polskiego i Innych Krajów Słowiańskich [Geographical Dictionary of the Kingdom of Poland and other Slavic Nations]. Sulimierski, Filip. Warszawa: Sulimierski i Wawelski, 1880-1902. This is probably the most comprehensive gazetteer for Poland, although not the easiest one to use. It is written in Polish and sometimes we have to read a lot of historical text before reaching the part about the location of the church. Also available on the web: www.dir.icm.edu.pl/pl/Slownik_geograficzny/

Maps:
▬Maps are the main tool in finding locations, learning about the topography of the area, and doing an area search. There are different kinds of maps developed for a variety of purposes, some of them were created for the users of the roads, railroads, to picture out demographics, for military use, administrative maps to show the boundaries of the civil or church jurisdiction, and so on. The main rule for genealogists is simple, the more detailed map is better.
▬Today, the maps on the internet are probably the ones we use the most. They are easy to access, and some of them are very detailed. As a matter of fact, we can see almost any of the maps of our interest on the internet, and copy them, if we desire to do so. Therefore I would highly recommend for everyone to spend some time on the web and search for the sites showing the maps of your main interest, and see which of them would work for you the best.

▬There is a couple of maps that I can highly recommend for your Polish research, the first and in my opinion the most useful will be the "WIG – Mapa Taktyczna Polski" in the scale of 1:100 000 /The Tactical Map of Poland/. This map, or rather set of maps was created for the military before WWII, which started in Poland in 1939. One of the sites where the maps are available is: www.igrek.amzp.pl/mapindex.php?cat=WIG100 , that site will get you to the index showing the location of the area according to longitude and latitude, shown as Pas and Słup /Belt (Strip) and Column/. You just have to pick the one of your interest, click on it and the area of your interest will be revealed to you. These maps cover much larger area than the current Polish borders, so if your ancestors came from Belarus, Lithuania, or the Ukraine, in most cases you will find the appropriate map in there.

The second set of maps, especially for the area of Poland under the Prussian administration would be the "Karte des Deutschen Reiches" /The Map of Germany/, also called the Gorßblatt. The site they are on is: www.igrek.amzp.pl/mapindex.php?cat=GR100 these maps are in the scale of 1:100 000. The nice thing about this maps is that, on many of them, they show the names of towns written in German and Polish, which makes it much easier to identify a particular town of our interest. Both of the maps, the Großblatt, as well as the Mapa Taktyczna Polski show the location of the church in any given area simplifying the area search for us.

There are also very detail maps for particular town available at the local Land Office known as /"Geodezja" in Polish/. At that office, which main function is to create maps for the buyers of land, or builders, we can also find some older maps showing the location of the houses and land features at a given time, and many times the houses would show the names of the owners of that property. These maps are associated with the entries in the ownership records, where the numbers of entry correlate with the property number on the map. Some of the maps can also be found at the State Archives.

▬There is one more map we should talk about, before moving on to the common maps. That would be a map of the catholic parishes in Poland. "Sieć Parafialna Kościoła Katolickiego w Polsce", 1972 /Network of the Catholic Parishes in Poland/ by Lidia Müllerowa. This book was reprinted by Polish Genealogical Society in 1995 "Roman Catholic Parishes in the Polish People's Republic in 1984", with the maps printed in more user friendly format. On these maps we can see the location of the catholic parishes, which could be very helpful when performing an area search. Similar map with the location of the evangelic parishes was created by Eduard Kneifel in his "Die Evangelisch-Augsburgischen Gemeinden in Polen 1555-1939" /The Evangelic-Augsburg Communities in Poland 1555-1939/.

Polish Record Sources
Common locations of the vital records.
Family History Library (www.familysearch.org)
State Archives (www.archiwa.gov.pl)
http://baza.archiwa.gov.pl/sezam/pradziad.php
Office of the Civil Records (Urząd Stanu Cywilnego)
Diocese/Archdiocese Archives
Local Parish Office
Internet
Some of the records are found in places out of the current civil or church jurisdiction, such as:

Archdiocese Archive in Białystok:(catholic records)
☐The Vital Records Archive is in possession of the extract from the vital records (total of 1041 volumes) from 1865 r. up to the current year. The extracts are listed in accordance with the following Deanery:
☐Deanery Białystok - 430 volumes
☐Deanery Korycin - 64 volumes
☐Deanery Krynki - 81 volumes
☐Deanery Knyszyn - 93 volumes
☐Deanery Dąbrowa Białostocka - 74 volumes
☐Deanery Sokółka - 182 volumes
☐Deanery Grodno - (1865-1937), 92 volumes
☐Deanery Łunna - (1922-1937), 25 volumes

The Archive of the Polish Province of Dominicans in Krakow:(catholic records from Czortkow, right now within the borders of the Ukraine)
www.dominikanie.pl, ul. Stolarska 12 , 30-215 Krakow, Poland
Archdiocese Archive in Przemysl: Plac Katedralny 4a · 37-700 Przemyśl · tel. 016 678 66 94 · fax. 016 678 26 74 · kuria@przemyska.pl
☐**The Evangelic-Augsburg Parish in Walbrzych**: pl. Kościelny 4, 58-300 Wałbrzych , tel. (+48 74)8423213, fax(+48 74)8422969
walbrzych@luteranie.pl
Records from: Walbrzych/Waldenburg, Boguszow/Gottesberg, Szczawienko /Nieder-Salzbrunn, Poniatow/Seitendorf, Mieroszow/Friedland, Walim/Wuestewaltersdorf, Unislaw Slaski/Langwaltersdorf, Jedlina Zdroj/Bad Charlottenbrunn, Sobiecin /Hermsdorf, Stary Zdroj/Altwasser, Podgorze/Dittersbach, Piaskowa Gora /Sandberg, Dziecmorowice/Dittmannsdorf, Kuznice Swidnickie/Fellhammer, Bialy Kamien /Weissstein;

—The Evangelic-Augsburg Parish in Cieszyn: **Parafia Ewangelicko-Augsburska w Cieszynie**, ul. Plac Kościelny 6, 43-400 Cieszyn, tel. +48 (033) 857 96 69,
fax: +48 (033) 857 96 69
The Roman-Catholic Parish in Wierzchucino by Lebork: Parafia Rzymsko-Katolicka, 84-113 Wierzchucino k. Leborka, Poland (records for the Evangelic parish Ossecken/Osieki for the: births 1815-1881, marriages 1864-1886);

On the internet we can also search some of the very helpful sites:
JRI Poland (Jewish Records Indexing Poland) www.jewishgen.org
Poznan Project (marriage database from the area of Poznan) http://poznan-project.psnc.pl/.
www.genetyka.genealodzy.pl