



Śleza

Lahe (1311), Lohe (1425), Lohe uei Lawe (1536), Lohe (1666), Śleza (1947)



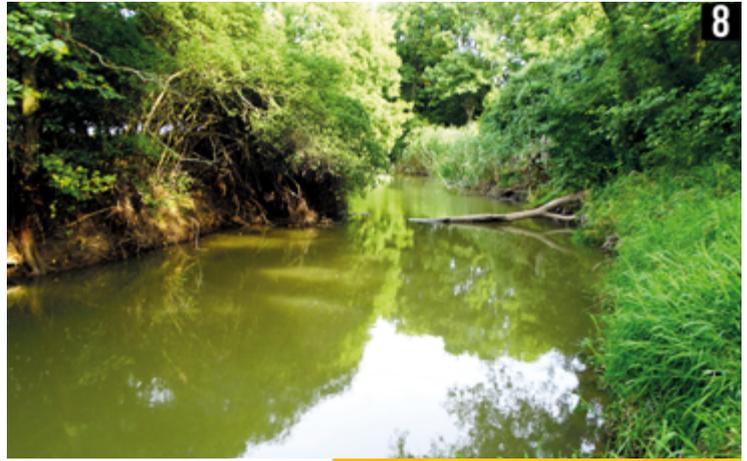
Gruß aus Lohe b. Breslau



Postcard sent in 1912

1. Mannerist manor house with a residential tower; from the beginning of the 20th century until 1945 the estate belonged to the large sugar company "vom Rath, Schoeller & Skene"
2. Store of J. Grüner
3. Building of an Evangelical school; at the end of the 19th century Evangelical denomination constituted a vast majority in the village
4. "Szwajcarka", in the background the manor house in Śleza





5. In reference to the former defensive function of the medieval tower and the coat of arms of the current owners, the historic establishment was named Topacz Castle
6. Młynówka, a branch of the Ślęza River, creates a system of canals in the palace park, over which romantic bridges are thrown
7. The Motorization Museum has a valuable collection of cars and motorcycles produced in Poland before and after World War II
8. The Ślęza, a left-bank tributary of the Oder River, is the largest river flowing through Kobierzyce Commune and begins in the Sudeten Foreland near Kluczowa

The Polish name Ławy is of topographical origin, meaning "ford on the river"; the German name Lohe and the present name of the village derive from the Ślęza river.

Ślęza, next to Biskupice Podgórne, is one of the oldest villages in Kobierzyce Commune; the first mention of the village lying on the Lau River (Ślęza) dates back to 1155. The history of Ślęza was largely influenced by its location. The Wrocław patricians were eager to buy properties not far away to the west and south of the city, in a belt of fertile soil. One of the first owners of Ślęza, known to us by name, was the Wrocław alderman Henry, and later the names of well-known noble and aristocratic families of Kromayer, Uthmann, Oppersdorff, and Königsdorff appeared among the inhabitants of the estate by the Ślęza River. In the 18th century, Ślęza and Bielany belonged to Johann Christian Roth, the chairman of the Wrocław City Council, and from the end of the 19th century to the great sugar company "vom Rath, Schoeller & Skene".

The most valuable monument in the village is a medieval brick tower dated back to the end of the 14th or the beginning of the 15th century. The building was of defensive character, originally it was surrounded by a double moat filled with the waters of a branch of the Ślęza River; the tower has a stone foundation and walls about 1.7 meters thick. The above-ground storeys were used for residential purposes as large, single-space rooms; latrine bays, visible outside the building, have survived to the present day.

In 1618 a Mannerist manor house was added to the tower, the tower building was also enlarged by one storey and both buildings were connected by an external staircase.

After renovation and expansion, the palace complex now serves as a hotel and restaurant, and the farm buildings have been turned into conference rooms. The former coach house houses the Motorization Museum with a rich collection of motorcycles and cars, and the 18th century granary houses a restaurant. Adjacent to Topacz Castle, there is a large public recreational area with a pond, golf course and tennis courts.

Due to its location (it borders with Wrocław), Ślęza is one of the fastest growing villages in Kobierzyce Commune. 1036 people live here (as of 15.08.2021). There are kindergartens, a community room, a health center, a recreation center with swimming pools and sauna "Ślęza", a playground, and a multipurpose sports field.

Śleza

From a medieval residential tower to a luxury hotel

There is a Templar Street leading to Topacz Castle in Śleza, but we have no evidence that the history of Śleza is connected with the order, whose hidden treasures are the subject of legends. But even without the Templar treasures, the history of the medieval tower and the manor house added to it at the beginning of the 17th century and the history of their owners is very interesting.

During its several hundred years of history, the foundation in Śleza served various functions. In the Middle Ages it provided safe shelter. The 1.70 m thick walls of the medieval tower (from the end of the 14th or the beginning of the 15th century), surrounded by a double moat, with a high floor, which initially could be accessed only by external wooden stairs (in case of danger, the stairs could be burned down), gave the residents a sense of security. On the first floor there was a common room with a fireplace, the brightest and warmest large room, where the most time was spent and guests were received.

After the expansion in 1618, the foundation (a two-storey mansion connected to the tower with a staircase building) became a comfortable nobleman's residence and an out-of-town residence (e.g. for the Chairman of the City Council - Christian von Roth), its great advantage was a short distance from Wrocław.



The next owners of Śleza - the von Königsdorff family, who owned Kobierzyce, Nowiny, Raclawice Wielkie, Kuklice, Bielany in the neighborhood, hosted the Prussian king Frederick II when he took part in military maneuvers near the manor. As a token of gratitude for the exceptional hospitality of the hosts, as passed down from generation to generation, the family received a gift, a ring with rubies, which traveled a long way to its owners, during which the rubies turned into ordinary red glass. Fortunately, as the family legend goes, the king also returned the favor by granting the Königsdorffs the title of Count. The most famous representative of the family, who lived in Śleza for almost one hundred and fifty years, was Count Felix von Königsdorff. He was a politician, a member of the Prussian House of Representatives, who bought the town of Jastrzębie in the 1860s and established a health resort. He built therapeutic facilities and bathing equipment, making the new, exclusive health resort quickly fashionable, and Bad Königsdorff had in its name the name of its founder.

In the 19th century, Śleza became the seat of one of the co-owners of a large sugar trading company "vom Rath, Schöller & Skene", which owned a sugar factory in Klecina. After World War II, the farmstead and its buildings were used by the State Agricultural Farm (PGR), where, among others, inmates of a penal institution worked. Prison bunks were placed in the medieval tower for women working seasonally in the fields of the State Agricultural Farm to grow rice (!). In the 1990s, the abandoned and neglected estate became the setting for several TV series produced by ATM.



After a complete renovation and expansion of the castle by its new owners, Topacz Castle (the name refers to the family coat of arms of the owners) serves as a luxury hotel with a restaurant and spa. The former gardens and fields (it is said that wild rice can still be found growing in the surrounding fields, a reminder of the experimental cultivation during the communist era) were transformed into a park of several dozen hectares with a pond, golf course and tennis courts.

