



Warmia and Mazury is an extraordinary Polish region, attractive for its wonderful, variegated nature, as well as for its cultural richness and historical heritage.

Vast forests are home to many species of animals, including those rarest and protected. Crystal clear, post-glacial lakes, picturesque, moraine hills - this all adds up to breathtaking landscapes that fascinate tourists.

For many tourists, the region is a paradise for boatmen. This is not a surprise for Masuria is called the Great Lakes Land. During the summertime thousands of people indulge their passion for water sports on local lakes, including the largest ones in Poland: Śniardwy (114 km²) and Mamry (104 km²)

Terrains of the Warmia and Mazury voivodship are also highly prized by birdwatchers who come here from around the world to observe unique species of birds (cormorants, grebes and mute swans) in their natural habitats.

The abundance of local flora and fauna was the reason of why vast areas have been placed under the protection of 'Natura 2000' network and are considered one of essential ecosystems in Europe.

This beautiful region is also visited by tourists fascinated by the traces of the past. One can here find the remains of old castles and mysterious mounds of extinct Baltic people – Yotvingians.

A Prussian tribe, the Barts, left signs of its existence in the area of present Kętrzyn.

Traces of the tribe of Galindians, who built their settlements on wetlands – may still be encountered near Olsztyn and Szczytno.

Expressly preserved historic urban systems of the region of Warmia and Mazury, among others in Olecko, are delightful. Many of the notable attractions are the hydraulic structures and elements of communication infrastructure, whose examples can be a 100 years old narrow-gauge railway in Etłk, viaducts in Stańczyki (the highest in Poland) or Elbląski Canal (the longest navigable in Poland).

WHERE IS THE ADVENTURE? ... In Masuria!



Great Masurian Lakes Land,
photo D. Zaród





Everyone visiting the Warmia and Masuria region, whether thrill-seekers or lovers of peace and tranquility, certainly agree that its undisputed highlights are the post-military monuments, fortresses and traces left by military operations conducted in the area. Boyen Fortress in Giżycko, Wolf's Lair (Wolfsschanze in German) in Gierłoż or the bunkers of Mamerki are the silent witnesses of history, who still hide many mysteries.

One of many trails located in the region is the World War I Eastern Front Trail. On its path one will find long forgotten pages of history and places commemorating the victims of one of the bloodiest wars in the history of mankind.

Adventure, learning, reflection – all waiting for those who will commence this unique trail.



Staiczyki, viaducts
photo. R. Kempa



Elbląg canal
photo D. Zaród



Prussia was initially known as the State of the Teutonic Order.

Since 1226, Teutonic Knights continued to conquer the surrounding areas by building and strengthening their dominion. Dangerous expansion of the order drove to a growing number of border conflicts escalating in the period 1409-1411 to the Great War, whose most important confrontation was the Battle of Grunwald. In 1466 the Second Peace of Thorn took place, requiring the Teutonic Order to give Pomerania, Warmia and Chełmno Land to Poland. The religious Order became a vassal state of Poland and its capital was transferred from Marienburg (nowadays Malbork) to Königsberg (nowadays Kaliningrad). The 16th century was a period of decline of the Teutonic Order. In 1525 the order's last Grand Master Albrecht Hohenzollern paid homage to the Polish king Sigismund the Old. The Duchy of Prussia was thus founded. However, Polish supremacy did not last long. In 1618 Prussia entered into union with Brandenburg and in 1657 – when the Polish Republic was fighting against the forces of the Swedish Deluge – gained sovereignty on the basis of the Treaty of Bromberg. Following the First and Second Partitions of Poland, Prussia annexed, among others, Pomerania, Chełmno Land, areas of Marienburg and Elbling (nowadays Elbląg) and Warmia. In 1871, the Kingdom of Prussia became part of the German Empire.

East Prussia had eastern, northern and southern borders with the powerful Russian Empire. Since the beginning of 19th century numerous fortifying works were carried out. Among others, Giżycko's famous Boyen fortress, named in 1846 after the Prussian Minister of War. East Prussia was poorly developed and less urbanized than the rest of the empire. Therefore, natural barriers were incorporated into defense plans and were as much important as fortifications.




CHAPTER I. Turbulent History of Warmia and Mazury



Kruklanki, railway bridge
blown up in the turmoil
of war in 1915
photo R. Kempa





 Ruins of the Teutonic castle in Szczytno
 photo P. Dobrzyński

This was not only applied in the case of the Great Lakes area - which would make large maneuvers of the invading army impossible - but also in the forests around Piska, Romincka and Borecka, whose trees were forbidden from cutting. These areas were natural obstacles for marches of large enemy units with their supplies and equipment, and were also impeding attacks along the undefended flanks of major local towns. The best combination of military fortifications with nearby natural barriers is the Masurian Lakes Defensive Position on the axis Bogaczewo (on lake Niegocin)–Mikołajki–Ruciane-Nida. The defensive lines were also expanded during WWI. Giżycko's Field Defensive Position was terminated in 1917. It consisted of 255 strongpoints guarding the

passages between the lakes, with Giżycko at its center. The position would preserve defensive capabilities even if surrounded. Szczytno's Forest Defensive Position was built before 1914. Older defensive concepts would be implemented into new plans and some fortifications were modified and manned even until 1944.



 Strongpoints of the Giżycko Field Defensive Position
 Photo R. Kempa



At the beginning of 20th century the political situation in Europe was very tense. This was caused by mutual competition of great powers and awakening of national aspirations of the countries dominated by them. The great powers

were competing for overseas colonies. Germany, France and Great Britain were disputing over influences in Northern Africa and expansion of their respective dominions. Russian and Austro-Hungarian empires were reading themselves to overtake territories of the decaying Ottoman empire. All these phenomena were dictated by seeking new markets for the surplus of goods caused by more efficient technologies of the industrial revolution. Russia was encouraging Balkan countries to get rid of Austro-Hungarian influences in order to weaken her opponent in the area. Transferring of Darwin's evolution theory onto social context meant that the great powers were investing enormous efforts in surpassing each other in every single field. This gave way to the arms race and the development of mobilization plans aimed at all costs to be ahead of the potential opponent. Once a nation deployed the mobilization plans and shifted over to war economy there would be no detention without collapse of the industry and the country's destabilization. All above-mentioned factors led to creation of alliances, which would have enormous importance in the forthcoming conflict. Germany and Austro-Hungary signed an alliance obliging the former to help the latter in case of a war with Russia. Austro-Hungarians would be obliged to help Germany in case of a war with France since she would be attacked by Russia from East. In order to protect their southern border, Germany pulled Italy into her defensive system despite the fact that Italians had territorial disputes with Austro-Hungary. France signed an alliance with Russia with the goal of forcing Germany to fight on two fronts. Meanwhile Russia needed an ally who would tie German and Austro-Hungarian forces in case of starting a war against them. Great Britain – afraid of the growth of German Navy and the prospective of losing her domination on seas – signed an alliance with France.

On 28th June 1914, in Sarajevo, a Serbian assassin assassinated the archduke Franz Joseph and her wife – it was the spark that would ignite WWI.



CHAPTER II.

On the eve of WWI



Gen. Rennenkampf and the Russian army staff, 1914
Source: Wikimedia





CHAPTER III.

In the trenches and under enemy fire – WWI Eastern Front

The operations on the eastern front of WWI started on 17th August 1914 with a joint attack of two Russian armies – one from North, the other from South – on Eastern Prussia. This quick operation was

possible since German forces were mainly engaged on the western front leaving their eastern front vulnerable. The war on the eastern front was much different than on the western front. Trench warfare was by far less adopted since it was not suiting the types of terrains present in the concerned region. The war fought on the eastern front consisted of large scale maneuverings and frequent skirmishes.

The first battle took place in East Prussia, near Stolupiany, on 17th August 1914. Although won by the Germans, it didn't stop the Russians from further advancing westward. It showed major Russian military deficiencies, like poor operational coordination and communication between commanding officers. Three days later there was a battle near Gąbin. It was acknowledged as a Russian victory despite its indecisive conclusion. German army inflicted heavy casualties to the enemy but without succeeding in stopping their march towards West. General Maximilian von Prittwitz und Gaffron was dismissed after this battle and replaced with Field Marshal Paul von Hindenburg. The largest battle on the eastern front was fought under his command – the Battle of Tannenberg (nowadays Stężyca). The battle lasted since 23rd until 31st August. Russia suffered a severe defeat.



Field Marshal Hindenburg,
author H. Vogel
Source: Wikimedia



Russian detachments
marching
Source: Wikimedia

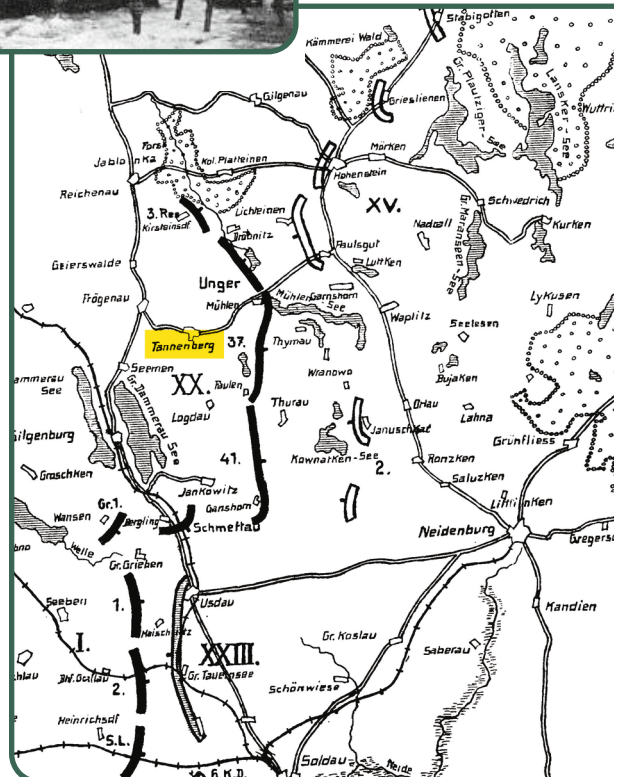




Emperor Wilhelm II
near Elk
Archive: R. Kempa



Despite the quantitative superiority, her casualties amounted to 30.000 soldiers and further 95.000 soldiers were taken as prisoners. 60 trains were required to transport the POWs. Among the spoils of war, the German army took 500 Russian guns. German casualties were three times less while the Russian army was routed. The German army continued offensive operations against the invading Russian forces. The battle of the Masurian lakes lasted since 8th until 15th September 1914. It ended on the Mariampol-Kalwaria upon Niemen line, where the pursuit of the Russian forces stopped. On 7th February 1915 the German army carried out the last offensive in East Prussia – known as the Second Masurian Lakes battle – which had the objective of completely expelling the Russian forces out of this bordering region and easing the pressure on Austro-Hungarian forces further on South. It ended on 18th February 1915. Despite German initial success, a Russian counter-offensive on 22nd February 1915 led to stabilization of the eastern front in that location.



The eastern front was very extended. Its southern extreme was in the Balkans. The bloodiest battles were fought in the Carpathians. Military operations lasted till 3rd March 1918, the day Russian Bolsheviks signed a peace treaty with Germany in Brest-Litovsk.

A total of 65 million of soldiers were mobilized throughout WWI, 8.5 million of which lost their lives. The truce between Germany and the Allies was signed in Compiègne on 11th November 1918.

Map of the Battle
of Tanneberg,
author M. Hoffmann
Source: Wikimedia





CHAPTER IV.

WWI Eastern Front Trail – forward!

This trail is meant for motorized tourists. It enters the region of Warmia and Mazury near the village Napierki via national road No. 7 from the region of Mazovia. It leads further on through the picturesque areas of Warmia and Mazury.

The trail course:

Kanigowo – Podgórzyn – Nidzica – Działdowo – Uzdrawo – Dąbrówno – Frygnowo – Stębark – Mielno – Olsztynek – Mierki – Kurki – Jedwabno – Piduń – Wielbark – Szymany – Szczytno – Stare Kietbonki – Ruciane-Nida – Ukta – Mikołajki – Woźnice – Szymonka – Giżycko – Spytkowo – Kolonia Pozezdrze – Pozezdrze – Węgorzewo – Więcki – Popioły – Mieczniki – Banie Mazurskie – Surminy – Boćwinka – Grabowo – Gołdap – Kowale Oleckie – Olecko – Wieliczki – Cimochy – Wierzbowo – Kalinowo – Długie – Skomętno Wielkie – Etk – Siedliska – Chrzanowo – Grabnik – Czyprki – Staświny – Miłki – Wyszowate – Konopki Wielkie – Orzysz – Jeglin – Pisz – Biała Piska – Nowe Drygały – Drygały – Kosinowo – Bajtkowo – Nowa Wieś Etcka – Prostki

START



1 km

2 min.



2 km

3 min.



24,3 km

24 min.



Nidzica,
Teutonic castle
photo P. Dobrzyński

Kanigowo – the biggest attraction of the village is the parish church in Gothic style. On its eastern facade there is a granite-hewn obelisk commemorating the villagers who died during the First World War. Its central element is a Maltese cross with dates 1914-1918.

Podgórzyn – here lies the first memorial of the battle Tannenberg – a war cemetery where 58 German and 117 Russian soldiers are buried, all died in late August 1914. The rests of the dead are preserved in four rectangular chambers.

Nidzica – in the town center, by Traugutta St., in the former Roman-Catholic cemetery there is a parcel dedicated to a war cemetery preserving 47 German and 73 Russian soldiers, all fallen during the battle of Nidzica in 1914 and 1915. The graves are arranged in a row, bounded by stone blows of pent „pillows” with inscriptions.

Castle in Nidzica – is a classic 14th century Teutonic brick structure design of rectangular form. The extended gate is surrounded by two square towers. The whole is surrounded by a dry moat. The property is well maintained and currently has cultural, museum, hotel and catering functions. The **Town hall** is located in a historic 19th century neo-classical building in the town center. „**Klasztor**ek” – a Gothic building with a fragment of a tower, now the seat of the archive – is nearby.





Działdowo – during WWI in Działdowo there were buried 306 soldiers (208 Germans, 96 Russians and 2 Austro-Hungarians). Near the entrance to the town there is an obelisk in the form of a pyramidal column. It commemorates the two pilots – a German and a Russian – who fell in the battle of Działdowo in 1915. In addition to commemorative inscriptions on the obelisk, there are two crosses: Maltese and Orthodox. Most of the soldiers found the place of their final rest at the war cemetery at Grunwaldzka Street.

Special attention deserve: the **Teutonic castle**, Town hall in late baroque style and the **Church of the Holy Cross**, rebuilt in baroque style. The area on which part of the battle of Tannenberg (25-30 August 1914) was fought lays on the trail's segment between Działdowo and Uzdowo.

14,6 km
14 min.



On the nearby property of Księży Dwór, on the premises of the manor's park, there are located two graves marked by a huge boulder engraved with a cross and a memorial inscription commemorating the 30 soldiers of 3rd Battalion of 21st Landwehr Regiment who died in a fire during a Russian attack on November 16th of 1914. 3 km away there is an Evangelical cemetery with a centrally positioned boulder indicating the further 42 graves of the soldiers of 3rd Battalion and 14 graves of the soldiers belonging to 2nd Landwehr Regiment.

German soldiers in the trenches on the eastern front of WWI
Archive: R. Kempa



Uzdowo – by the road No. 538 leading to Nowe Miasto Lubawskie there is an obelisk commemorating the fallen in the battle of Uzdowem in August 1914. The

obelisk in the form of a boulder is marked with a trilingual plaque: 'To the soldiers who fell in the battle of Uzdowo, August 26, 1914, Community of Uzdowo, 30 VIII 2009'.

The **ruins of the castle** destroyed by the Polish-Lithuanian army on the way to Grunwald are still preserved in Dąbrówno. The remaining parts of the city walls, including its defensive tower, which currently serves as a bell tower, are preserved.

12 km
9 min.

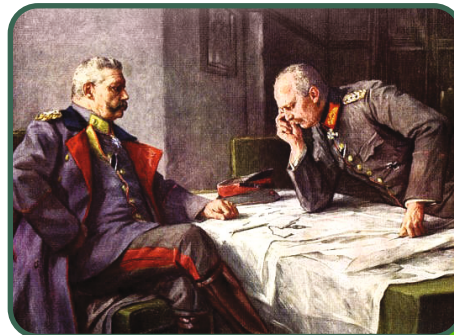
Dąbrówno – since the Middle Ages it is the traditional crossing site on the route from Mazovia to Warmia. At Partyzantów Street, within the old town and near the Teutonic Castle, an obelisk commemorating the fallen citizens of Dąbrówno in WWI is located. The Obelisk has the form of a rectangular column with the structure made of fieldstones bricks. On each of the sides there is an inscription.

Paul von Hindenburg and Erich Ludendorff, author: H. Vogel
Source: Wikimedia



8,6 km
7 min.

Frygnowo – it is the town, which hosted General Hindenburg's command center during the battle of Tannenberg. The commemorative obelisk was transferred near Małdyty in the eighties, where it now serves as a signpost for Grunwald fields.



4,7 km
4 min.



Field Marshal Hindenburg with the Staff in Tannenberg
Archive: R. Kempa

4,6 km
4 min.

Stębark – It was general Ludendorff's wish to name the battle that took place in the triangular area of Olsztyniek–Nidzica–Dąbrówno after the name of Tannenberg (nowadays Stębark). The main reason behind this was his desire to replace the Teutonic defeat in 1410 in



the collective imaginary.

While being in Olsztyniek one should necessarily visit the **Folk Architecture Museum and Ethnographic Park** (among others, the reconstruction of a Prussian settlement), the **Teutonic castle** and the **Evangelical church built in Gothic style**.

Mielno – about 500 m from Mielno there are two cemeteries: the war cemetery and the so-called officers'. On the premises of the latter there are buried, in a rectangular shaped grave with stone-lined walls, 24 soldiers of 5th Regiment of Landwehr, killed in action during operations

of 25-28 August 1914. At the head set there is a stone obelisk with a commemorative inscription. Approximately 1 km behind Mielno, south of road No. 537, in the forest, 400 meters after a walk along the unpaved road one can find a large war cemetery where within mass graves the rests of 209 German and 78 Russian soldiers – fallen in the period of 26-28 August 1914 – are buried. The centerpiece of the cemetery is a rectangular foundation stone monument with a trilingual plaque.

17 km
19 min.

Olsztyniek – not far from the lodge Jagiełtki one can find traces of the ruined mausoleum of the Battle of Tannenberg (built from 1924 to 1927). In the vicinity of the mausoleum there were located two cemeteries and a single soldier's grave. Cemeteries are located on both sides of a linden avenue. 137 German and 307 Russian soldiers are buried on the larger one. Along the axis of the square a wooden cross is placed, at the base of which there is a trilingual plaque. 63 German soldiers are buried at the smaller cemetery at the very end of the forest.

3 km
4 min.

In the very center of Olsztyniek, at Ratuszowa Street, opposite the town hall, there is located a characteristic monument with a lion. Originally, the obelisk was located in the vicinity of the mausoleum and had a commemorative function dedicated to the soldiers of 147th (2nd Masurian) Infantry Regiment - the favorite regiment of marshal Hindenburg. An-



Olsztyniek,
Ethnographic park
Photo: W. Mierzejewski

In Stębark it is worthwhile to visit the **17th century Baroque temple and school building**, where the command center of 8th Army was located during the battle of Tannenberg.



other historic trace of war is the commemorative plaque on the inner façade of the Olsztyn castle (at Zamkowa Street).

Near Olsztyniek, west of the village Sudowa, there is a cemetery complex where the rests of over 600 Russian soldiers are buried.



14,6 km
14 min.

Mierki – not far from the school, a war cemetery is located where 138 German and 213 Russian soldiers are buried. Mass graves were marked by wooden crosses. At the end of the alley there is a commemorative boulder with an inscription.

21,3 km
21 min.

Kurki – in the local 18th century church a commemorative plaque with the surnames of citizens fallen in WWI can be found.

6 km
8 min.

Jedwabno – at the old vilage’s cemetery one can found a grave where 7 Russian and one German soldier are buried.

17,3 km
17 min.

Piduń – on the southern side of the road, near the buildings, you can see the local monument to the fallen.

Wielbark – on the edge of the forest, a few dozen meters north of the highway, a small war cemetery is located where 136 Russian soldiers and



Wielbark, former Evangelical church
Photo P. Dobrzyński



Jedwabno’s historic church with interior in Neo-Renaissance style with wooden tower and a three-sided presbytery deserves special attention.

an unknown number of German soldiers are buried. A few hundred meters further away, at the entrance to the village, there is a large war cemetery, square-shaped

and with a central avenue. A wooden cross is erected in the place of the historical monument. Part of the buried soldiers are those who could not be saved in the Wielbark infirmary.

Not far, by the road No. 604, near Leśniczówka Karolinka, there is the place of initial burial location of general Samsonov, commander of the army "Narev", and the monument commemorating the probable place of his death.

10,5 km
8 min.

Szymany – on the wall of a local post-evangelical temple a memorial plaque was fixed in 1924 with the names of people of Szymany and surrounding villages who lost their lives in WWI.



The undisputed attraction of Wielbark is the **Evangelical church** designed by Karl Friedrich Schinkel in eclectic-classical style.

Leśniczówka Karolinka,
Samsonov stone
photo. P. Dobrzyński



9,5 km
9 min.

It is worth booking enough time to explore Szczytno. Tourists will be delighted with the **ruins of the 14th century Teutonic castle**, historic buildings and picturesque **old brewery building Hindenburgschule**. Also noteworthy are the collections of the **Masurian Museum** and the **Jewish cemetery** with more than 60 well-preserved tombstones.



Szczytno – the largest war cemetery is located on the premises of the Lutheran cemetery, at Pilsudski Street, where 170 German and 78 Russian soldiers are buried. Another cemetery is located at Poznańska Street. It is surrounded by a low stonewall with oak trees in the corners. 20 Russian soldiers from 63rd Infantry Regiment and 4 German soldiers of 176th

Infantry Regiment are buried here. Three plaques with the names of parishioners fallen in WWI are hanged in the Evangelical church.

31,6 km
26 min.



Szczytno – town hall
photo P. Dobrzyński

17,2 km
15 min.

Stare Kietbonki – before the intersection with road No. 59, in front of the village, on the edge of the road there is an old cemetery with war graves and a monument.

Ruciane-Nida – graves of 37 German soldiers and 6 Russian soldiers can be found at the Protestant cemetery at Cicha Street. The graves are crowned with concrete crosses with inscriptions. In the old part of Nida there is a cemetery at the intersection of Leśna and Podleśna Streets

Forest where are located 6 graves of German and Russian soldiers.

The great attraction of Ruciane is the **Guzianka lock**, operating since 1900. The chamber is 44m long and 7.5m wide, while the water level difference between Beldany lake and Guzianka Wielka is of 2m.

Since the beginning of the 20th century, the town was closing the southern flank of fortifications known as Masurian Lakes Defensive Position. The stronghold of Ruciane were represented by 3 machine gun towers (two are located at the railway bridge, one at the Guzianka lock), 5 infantry guns, transportable battery guns, fortified machine gun position and two small barracks.

5,7 km
6 min.



Ruciane-Nida,
Tower bunker of the defensive strongpoint of Ruciane-Guzianka
Photo P. Dobrzyński

16 km
16 min.

Ukta – in the center of the village, by the post Lutheran church there is a former war memorial, currently converted into a chapel of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Mikotajki just one war grave is located at the municipal cemetery. It is



Special attention in Ukta is to be deserved to the exceptional building erected by the local Filipons', one of the communities of Russian religious orders.

worthwhile going to inspect the remnants of the local fortifications, which include,

6,5 km
6 min.

among others, a small bunker and two observation towers (the southern, although converted for economic purposes, retained its external defensive features).

Mikotajki is an important stop on the Masurian sailing routes. Visitors to the town will be enchanted by the buildings around the **market square**, the collections of the **Museum of the Reformation** and the **sailing village**.



5,7 km
8 min.

Woźnice – single graves are located at the old and the new cemeteries, while at the bend of the road near the railway line there are the remains of a rural war memorial.

21 km
21 min.

Szymonka – a rural war memorial in the form of a rectangular column is located near the church. It has a plaque with the list of people fallen in WWI from Szymonka, Stara Rudówka, Olszewa and Górkła. At the bend of the Szymoński canal one can find the elements of the transportable artillery turrets battery with handheld ammunition magazines. This battery was part of a more general Masurian Lakes Defensive Position.



Szymonka, the obelisk
Photo R. Kempa



Giżycko is undoubtedly the town with most WWI heritage. The war cemetery near the lake Popówka Mała hosts the graves of 243 German, 175 Russian, 3 Belgian, one Turk and 2 Romanian soldiers. A collective war grave is located at the old municipal cemetery located at Targowy Square; 264 German and 17 Russian soldiers are buried there. A huge boulder with a commemorative plaque is installed at this cemetery. The base of the war monument dedicated to the soldiers of 82nd (2nd Masurian) Field Artillery Regiment is preserved on the premises of the so-called municipal forest. The key element reminiscent of the events in 1914 and 1915 is, however, the Boyen Fortress. Built on the isthmus between lakes Niegocin, Tajty and Kisajno, this artillery fort built in the second half of 19th century played an important role in the fighting from August 1914 until February 1915. The effective defense implemented by the fortress in August allowed the German Supreme Command strategic movements of troops that ended with the victory at the battle of Tannenberg. Giżycko became afterwards the starting point for flanking maneuvers during the First Battle of the Masurian lakes. During the Winter the fortress was the main point of resistance on the Masurian front.

Giżycko, Historic enactment in the front of the Boyen Fortress
Photo M. Kędzierski



5,7 km
8 min.



Giżycko offers a wide range of attractions to the visitors. Beside the Boyen Fortress, one should consider visiting the Evangelical church designed in **neo-classical style** by K.F. Schinkel. Unique on a national scale is the **swing bridge** on the Łuczński Canal, representing a real technological monument. A 100-ton structure is opened and closed on a daily basis by a single operator using a mechanical transmission system. Two of the finest viewpoints in Giżycko are the **water tower** and **St. Bruno's hill**.

5 km
5 min.

Spytkowo – in the northwestern part of the village, by the Lutheran cemetery, a war cemetery is located with the graves of 21 German and 3 Russian soldiers.

Noteworthy is also the **Saint Stanislaus Kostka Evangelical church** and the **bunker complex „Hochwald“** that hosted the Supreme Commander of the SS and Police of the Third Reich, Heinrich Himmler. It is here that the Soviet general Vlasov, and probably general Grot-Rowecki, was interrogated.

Kolonia Pozezdrze – at the end of the national road, about 1.5 km after the intersection with the road leading to Krukłanki, there is a war cemetery with the graves of 82 German and 521 Russian soldiers.

2,7 km
4 min.



Pozezdrze,
the war cemetery
photo R. Kempa

Pozezdrze – this village was in the middle of heavy fighting in 1914. An obelisk commemorating the 60 inhabitants who died in 1914 is located in the town center. At the local cemetery one can find a separated war graves allotment, where 62 German soldiers were buried.



12 km
16 min.



Węgorzewo,
the war cemetery
„Jägerhöhe“
photo P. Dobrzyński

8,7 km
9 min.

Węgorzewo – approaching the village and turning left onto the unpaved road we arrive to the war cemetery „Jägerhöhe“. It is one of the most beautiful cemeteries in the Masurian region. The cemetery is located on a high hill above the shores of Lake Świącajtj. It gives an enchanting view of the lake and the peninsula Kal. 344 German and 234 Russian soldiers were buried here.

Being in Węgorzewo you can go for a walk nearby the **Teutonic castle** (built in 1398), visit a late-Gothic **Saint Peter and Paul church** (dating from 17th century) and the Orthodox Church. Lovers of rustic art will love the collections of the **Museum of Folk Culture** at Portowa Street. In addition, the port in Węgorzewo provides a genuine sailing-shanty feel in summertime.

In the center of the town, at Zamkowa St., opposite the Town Hall, an obelisk made of fieldstone boulders, commemorating the teachers and students of Węgorzewski Teachers' Seminarium, who died during WWI, is located.





7,9 km
6 min.



4,7 km
4 min.



2,5 km
3 min.



4,2 km
3 min.



11,6 km
10 min.



10 km
12 min.



Więcki – the family grave of Contags' is located at the old rural cemetery, commemorating their two sons lost in 1918. Noteworthy is also Contags' palace – a large neo-classical building in Więcki, currently used as a school.

Popioły – before the village to the north of the road is a small local cemetery property, within which are the tombs of seven unknown Russian soldiers. At its turn, on the opposite side of the village cemetery the destroyed Tarrachów's family grave, commemorating their two sons who died in 1914, is located.

Mieczniki – northward from the regional road, in the direction of Miczuły, a war cemetery is located where 19 Russian soldiers are buried.

Banie Mazurskie – near the historic church, a commemorative obelisk (currently without the plaque and Maltese cross) with a figure of Christ is located. In the neighborhood of the church, in the so-called "Old cemetery", 14 Russian soldiers were buried, while, adjacent to the church, 2 graves of German soldiers can be found at the so-called „New cemetery”.

Surminy – War cemetery, graves of 25 Russian soldiers.

Grabowo – by the church, the chapel of the Blessed Virgin Mary is located, which was originally a memorial to the fallen citizens during war. At the local cemetery there are graves of two German soldiers.



Banie Mazurskie, the war obelisk, currently a pedestal for Christ's figure
photo P. Dobrzyński



Grabowo, Chapel of the Blessed Virgin Mary, a former war monument
photo P. Dobrzyński





Goldap, war graves at the cemetery photo P. Dobrzyński

Goldap – soldiers who fell during fighting in and around Goldap were buried at war cemeteries at Boczna St., Suwalska St. and the Lutheran cemetery at Crmentarna Street. 145 Russian soldiers were buried at the cemetery at Boczna St. At the end of the cemetery an impressive obelisk with an orthodox cross, striped of the commemorative plaque, is located. An unknown number of Russian and German soldiers are buried at the cemetery at Suwalska St. Among them 62 German and 7 Russian soldiers were identified.

In Goldap it is worthwhile to go for a walk through the spacious central square. In addition, several places deserve tourists' attention: the rebuilt Gothic **church of Our Lady Mother**, the parish **church of St. Leon**, the **viewpoint tower**, the recreational complex „Piękna Góra” and the **Jewish cemetery**.



The Protestant cemetery hosts three war graves allotments. In the first there are grouped graves of 16 German soldiers. Among the dead there is also the commander of 3rd Regiment of Grenadiers (2nd East Prussia Regiment). The allotments are accompanied by an obelisk commemorating the death of the Saxon commander, soldiers of the Guards cavalry regiment and other three officers of the regiment.

19 km
18 min.



17,9 km
17 min.



Kowale Oleckie – passing through the village we pass by the cemetery from the WWI period. 46 German soldiers and 141 Russian are buried here. A centrally set column contains partially destroyed inscriptions with the list of the dead.

Olecko – after the destruction of the Hindenburg mausoleum in Olsztynek, the largest as of today preserved monument commemorating WWI is the monument in Olecko. It is located in a park in the town center, near the lake. The monument was built in 1927. It has the shape of a stone half-rotunda with a width of

One of the distinctive marks of Olecko is **one of the largest market squares in Poland**, whose sides are 200+ meters long. Special sightseeing valor is assured by the 12km long bike and hiking path “Squirrel’s Path” around the lake,



20m and a height of 10 m. Currently the memorial obelisk is striped of the inscriptions, and serves as an amphitheater.

7,6 km
9 min.



8,9 km
8 min.



3,2 km
4 min.



20m and a height of 10 m. Currently the memorial obelisk is striped of the inscriptions, and serves as an amphitheater.

Wieliczki – a war cemetery is located before the village, on the west side of the road. Graves of 10 German and 26 Russian soldiers can be found.

Cimochy – only a pedestal of the war memorial remains, on which a cross stands currently erected.

The oldest **wooden church**, made of larch, dating back to 1676, in the Warmia and Mazury region is located in Wieliczki. The exterior of the temple is timbered while the interior is decorated in Baroque style.



Olecko, memorial for the fallen in WWI photo P. Dobrzyński



10,3 km
9 min.

1,4 km
1 min.

20,6 km
17 min.

4,6 km
7 min.

Wierzbowo – 12 Russian and 5 German soldiers are buried at the Protestant cemetery's war allotment.

Kalinowo – single graves are founded at the municipal cemetery. By the local church a commemorative monument (currently stripe of its plaque) is located with the figure of the Virgin Mary set upon it.

Długie – 55 German and 39 Russian soldiers are buried at the war cemetery in the western part of the village.

Etk – the most representative and best preserved war necropolis in Elk is located in the war sector of the municipal cemetery at Cmentarna St. There are 136 registered graves of German soldiers, among them the commander of 33rd Brigade of Landwehr. The graves are accompanied by an impressive memorial, a stone pillar topped with a Maltese cross. The war cemetery at 11th November St. hosts an allotment where 82 unnamed Russian soldiers were buried. The following collective grave is on the premises of the military hospital. At Kolejowa St., on the premises of the quarter Szyba, one can find the cemetery, which hosts the rests of 109 unidentified Russian soldiers. The place where once stood the monument commemorating the soldiers of 147th Infantry Regiment (2nd Masurian) at the square by 3rd May Street is renovated. At the Secondary School No. 1 at 11th November St. there is a plaque commemorat-



Etk, WWI soldiers' graves
Photo P. Dobrzyński



One must simply visit the **water tower**, dating back to 1895, which is a distinctive mark in the town's landscape, the remains of the **castle of the Teutonic Knights, St. Adalbert's and the Sacred Heart of Jesus' Cathedral**, and the 19th century buildings in the town center. The undisputed attraction of Etk are also the **narrow-gauge railway**, the **museum of beekeeping** and an extensive **promenade** on the shores of a lake in the town center.

ing the students and teachers of the local high school, killed during wars.

Etk, the obelisk at the municipal cemetery
photo P. Dobrzyński





Siedliska, war graves
photo P. Dobrzyński

2 km
2 min.



5,9 km
5 min.



Siedliska – 15 sappers of 23rd Sapper Battalion are buried on the war cemetery at 11th November Street, just by the railways viaduct. Further 21 soldiers, this time belonging to 228th Reserve Infantry Regiment, are buried at the war cemetery southward from the village, in the direction of lake Sunowo.



Chrzanowo

– 3 graves host the rests of 2 Russian and 2 German unidentified soldiers at the rural cemetery.

Grabnik

– one of the largest monument commemorating the fallen members of the parish is located by the church. 8 plaques with the list of the names of the dead is fixed upon a cylinder of app. 3 meters diameter. At its turn, a wooden cross is erected in the place, within the cemetery over lake Grabnik, from which the emperor observed the fighting around Elk on 14th February 1915. 112 Russian and 218 German soldiers are buried at this cemetery.

The temple in Grabnik owns its current shape to the rebuilding in 1865. The most precious element is the 18th century organ.



Grabnik, monument
to the fallen citizens
photo P. Dobrzyński

23,4 km
21 min.



6,8 km
7 min.



Czyprki – a commemorative stone with effaced inscription is located on a private property land within the village. A war cemetery is located further away, outside the village, in the direction of Lipińskie. 2 collective graves of more than a hundred of Russian soldiers and a small one attributed to 2 German soldiers can be found inside the cemetery.



Staświny – a bunker of the Giżycko Field Defensive Position is preserved at the top of Święta Góra (Holy Mountain). At the eastern extreme of the road, about 200 meters from the junction, a war cemetery with graves of 34 unidentified Russian soldiers can be found. The rests of two bunkers of the Giżycko Field Defensive Position are located in the neighborhood.

2,7 km
2 min.



Sacred Hill (Święta Góra) is Staświny is the place of a pagan cult and most probably a location of an antique town. It is also an excellent vantage point.

Miłki – a commemorative monument with effaced inscription and a helmet motif is located near the church fence. The Maltese cross was substituted with a Latin one. Inside the temple, the motif of soldiers marching on the back-

Staświny, the bunker of the Giżycko Field Defensive Position
photo R. Kempa



2,6 km
2 min.

ground of the destroyed church is depicted on the stained glass window on the right from the altar.

Miłkowska temple is one of the oldest brick churches in Masuria. It has a triple-nave structure with a barrel vaulting system. It was built from stone and brick in 15th century. It underwent reconstruction after the Tatar invasion. The tower, as well as the internal equipment (altar, organ gallery) date from 17th century. The oldest part is the octagonal Gothic chancel with buttresses.

Wyszowate – a collective war grave of 14 Russian soldiers is located on the top of the hill upon the village

Konopki Wielkie – A commemorative monument dedicated to the residents of the village is located on a hill on the eastern side of the road. The basis of the monument is topped with a concrete column with centrally placed Maltese cross with inscription containing the list of names of 13 people and a motif a helmet on laurel leaves at the base.

Miłki, church stained glass window with the motif of marching soldiers
Photo P. Dobrzynski



3,5 km
3 min.

the residents of the village is located on a hill on the eastern side of the road. The basis of the monument is topped with a concrete column with centrally placed Maltese cross with inscription containing the list of names of 13 people and a motif a helmet on laurel leaves at the base.



10 km
8 min.

While being in Orzysz it is worthwhile visiting the two local temples and the monumental **Lutheran cemetery**.

Orzysz – single graves can be found at the war cemetery. On the ruined war cemetery, outside the town, the bodies of 124 Russian and 87 German soldiers are buried.

20,5 km
16 min.



3,5 km
4 min.



17,3 km
17 min.



6,9 km
7 min.



2,6 km
2 min.



Jeglin – war allotments are located on the premises of the cemetery by the road No. 63, some 500 meters southward from Jeglin. 26 German and 2 Russian soldiers are buried there.

Pisz – war allotments are located at the municipal cemetery at Dworcowa Street. 99 German and 61 Russian soldiers are buried in that place. At Olsztyńska St., nearby the PKP station, a collective grave of 49 Russian soldiers can be found.



Jeglin, a tombstone table
photo P. Dobrzyński



Pisz, Central square
Photo P. Dobrzyński

Biała Piska – a dozen of Russian and 42 German soldiers are buried in the dedicated allotment at the municipal cemetery at Sikorskiego St. While leaving the town in the direction of Kumielsk, at Konopnicka St., near the WWII allotment, one can find a collective grave of 60 Russian soldiers.

One of the highest water towers in Poland is located in Pisz. It is also recommended to go visit the 17th century St. John the Baptist's church with a post-Renaissance style altar and a Baroque style pulpit. Interesting urban architecture can be found in the following places: Dom Królewski (King's House), as well as visiting the buildings at Rybacka and Słowiańska Streets. The **museum of the Pisz Land** is hosted in the Town Hall. Interesting attractions are represented by **the bunkers of the Pisz Defensive Position**. Many visitors are intrigued by the statue of the Stone Lady (Kamienna Baba).

It is simply impossible to remain indifferent in front of the 18th century town hall with a characteristic 5-storey octagonal tower. Attention is also due to the 17th century Baroque-style **St. A. Bobola's church** designed by K.F. Schinkel, the 34 meters high water tower and buildings dating from 18th century.

Nowe Drygaty – war allotment is located on the premises of the cemetery north of the village, some 100 meters away from the road leading to Drygaty. The centrally set monument bears the inscription with the list of 10 identified and 7 unidentified German soldiers.



8,9 km
7 min.

Drygaty – 42 German soldiers are buried in eight different graves at the war cemetery by the church. An obelisk with a commemorative inscription is centrally set. Further 5 German soldiers are buried at the rural cemetery.

2,4 km
3 min.

Kosinowo – 46 German and 21 Russian soldiers were buried at the cemetery located 150 meters eastward from the road leading to Etka. The graves are topped with stone crosses with inscriptions. At the end of the cemetery there is a trilingual memorial plaque.

The unique monument in Kosino is the **palace complex dating from 18th century** and the so-called **Ariańska Góra (Arian Hill)** – the largest Arian cemetery in Poland.



Bajtkowo – 37 German and 23 Russian soldiers are buried at the war cemetery by the local church. The central element of the facility is a monument with a commemorative plaque dedicated to the 79 people of the parish of Bajtkowo who died during WWI. The war cemetery is located in the center of the village and hosts the rests of 66 soldiers of 264th Reserve Infantry Regiment.

Kosinowo, war cemetery
Photo P. Dobrzyński



7,1 km
5 min.

Nowa Wieś Etcka – a commemorative monument dedicated to the victims of the village, with the list of the names of 68 people; it is located in the center of the village, at the intersection of roads. In the northern part of the village, on the west bank of the river, there is a war cemetery with the graves of 36 German, 29 Russian soldiers and 21 civilians.



10,6 km
9 min.

Prostki – an old memorial, now devoid of inscription and symbols, located close to the school building symbols, is now converted into a monument of A. Mickiewicz. The war allotment of the old Protestant cemetery hosts the graves of 5 German soldiers, one Russian and 14 civilian casualties.

Prostki are inseparably associated with the historic battle made famous on the pages of Sienkiewicz's "Potop" (Flood). One unique museum item is the famous border pole placed between Prostki and Bogusze in 1545 as the encountering point of Kingdoms of Poland, Lithuania and East Prussia Duchy. The object reminds a chapel and bears the heralds of Lithuania and Prussia; it is equipped with a foundation plaque.

Prostki, historic border demarcation pole
Photo P. Dobrzyński





VISIT ALSO...

Tourist attractions nearby the route:



- **Biata Olecka** – Neo-Baroque palace, manor of the 16th century,
- **Dabrowski** – settlement 'Swedish Lair'
- **Doba** – Church of the 16th century, cemetery and mausoleum of 1848,
- **Drozdowo** – real estate, founded upon feudal law in 1562,
- **Działdowo** – Teutonic castle, houses at Bielnikowa St., water tower
- **Fort Kula** – rests of a destroyed strongpoint, canal and „Masurian Equator“
- **Gordejki Mate** – manor with Art Nouveau ornaments from the early 20th century
- **Głaznoty** – Evangelical church,
- **Gotubie** – 19th century palace,

- **Iznota** – Galindian settlement,
- **Janowiec Kościelny** – St. John the Baptist church,
- **Jeże** – shelters of the Pisz and Border Defensive Lines,
- **Kadzidłowo** – wildlife park and "culture settlement",
- **Klusy** – Church of Our Lady of the Faithful Helpers of 1884,
- **Kosewo Górne** – research station of Polish Academy of Sciences, deer farm, breeding museum,
- **Kruklanki** – church, nature trail, fortifications, river Sapina trail,
- **Krutuń** – Masurian Landscape Park, canoe trail on Krutynia river,
- **Lenarty** – mansion from the early 19th century,
- **Leśniczówka Pierstawek** – the birthplace of E. Wiechert, a German writer,
- **Leśniewo** – Mazurski Canal, beginning of construction in 1911,
- **Lisi Ogon** – it is the largest preserved strongpoint of the Giżycko Field Position,
- **Łuknajno** – view towers, fauna reserve,
- **Mamerki** – a complex of accommodation shelters of the Supre-

Martiany, bunker
in the Giżycko
Fortified Region
Photo R. Kempa



me Commando of German Land Forces,

- **Martiany** – the largest and best preserved bunker in the Giżycko Fortified Region,
- **Ogródek** – Michał Kajka Museum,
- **Okowizna** – Neo-baroque palace of the late 19th and early 20th century
- **Ostrykót** – wooden church,
- **Pisz/Snopki** – shelters of the Pisz defensive position,
- **Płońnica** – St. Barbara church,
- **Pranie** – K.I. Gałczyński's forrester , poetry recital meetings,
- **Romincka Forest** – imperial boulders trail
- **Rapa** – Fahrenheits' pyramid,
- **Rydzewo** – historic church built in 1579, village buildings,
- **Ryn** – small town buildings, Teutonic castle,
- **Straduny** – small manor house, church and water mill,
- **Sztynort** – Lehndorffs' palace,
- **Ściborki** – Republic of Ściborki , eco-cultural village,
- **Wierzba/Popielno** – ferry transit , museum and PAN station,
- **Wojnowo** – monastery, cemetery and Old Believers' community, Filipons' history in Masuria,
- **Zakątcze Wielkie** – Steiners' Chapel,
- **Złotowo** – wooden church from the early eighteenth century.

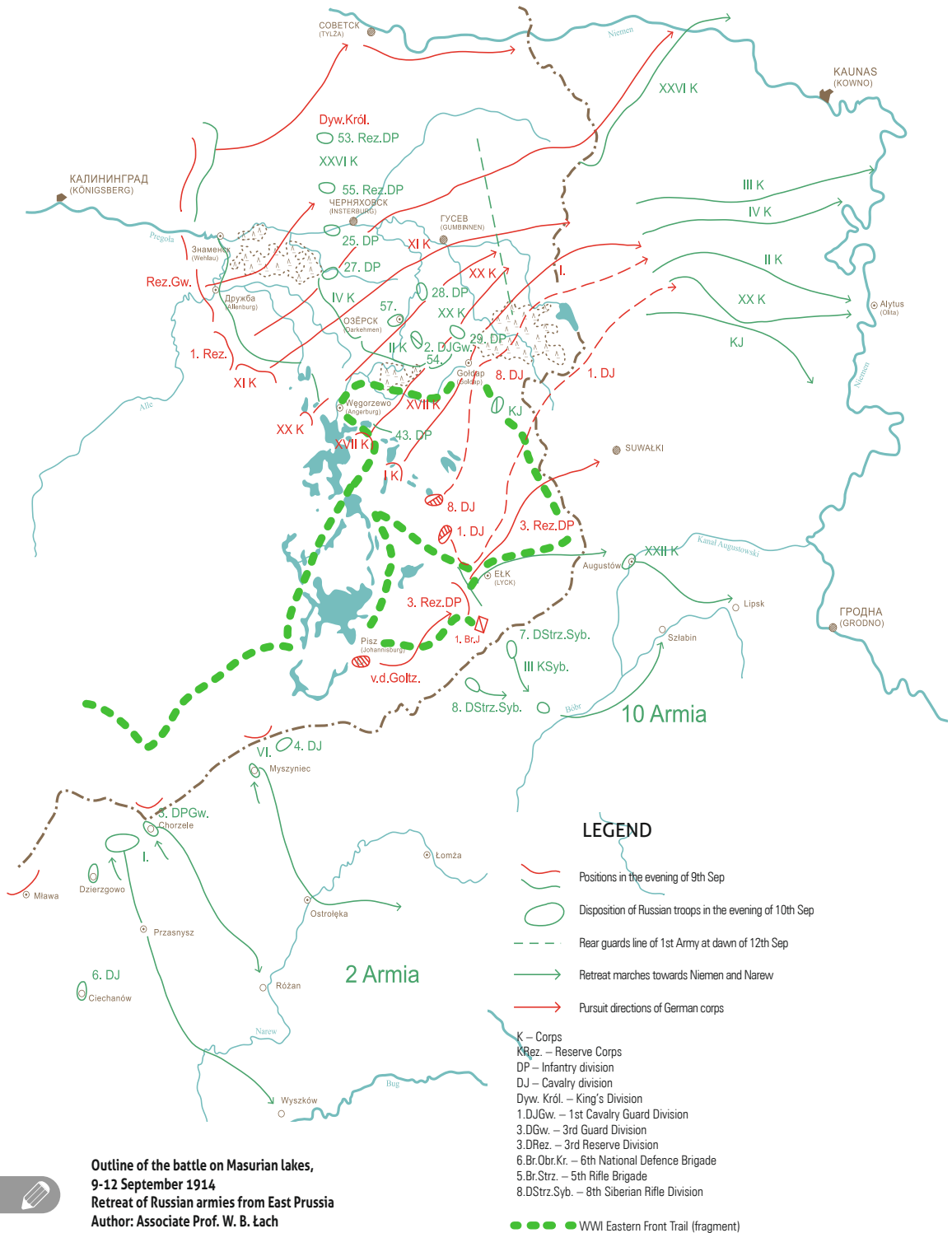


Rapa, Fahrenheits'
Pyramid
photo R. Kempa



Węgorzewo,
Sailing port
photo D. Zarod





**Outline of the battle on Masurian lakes,
 9-12 September 1914
 Retreat of Russian armies from East Prussia
 Author: Associate Prof. W. B. Lach**