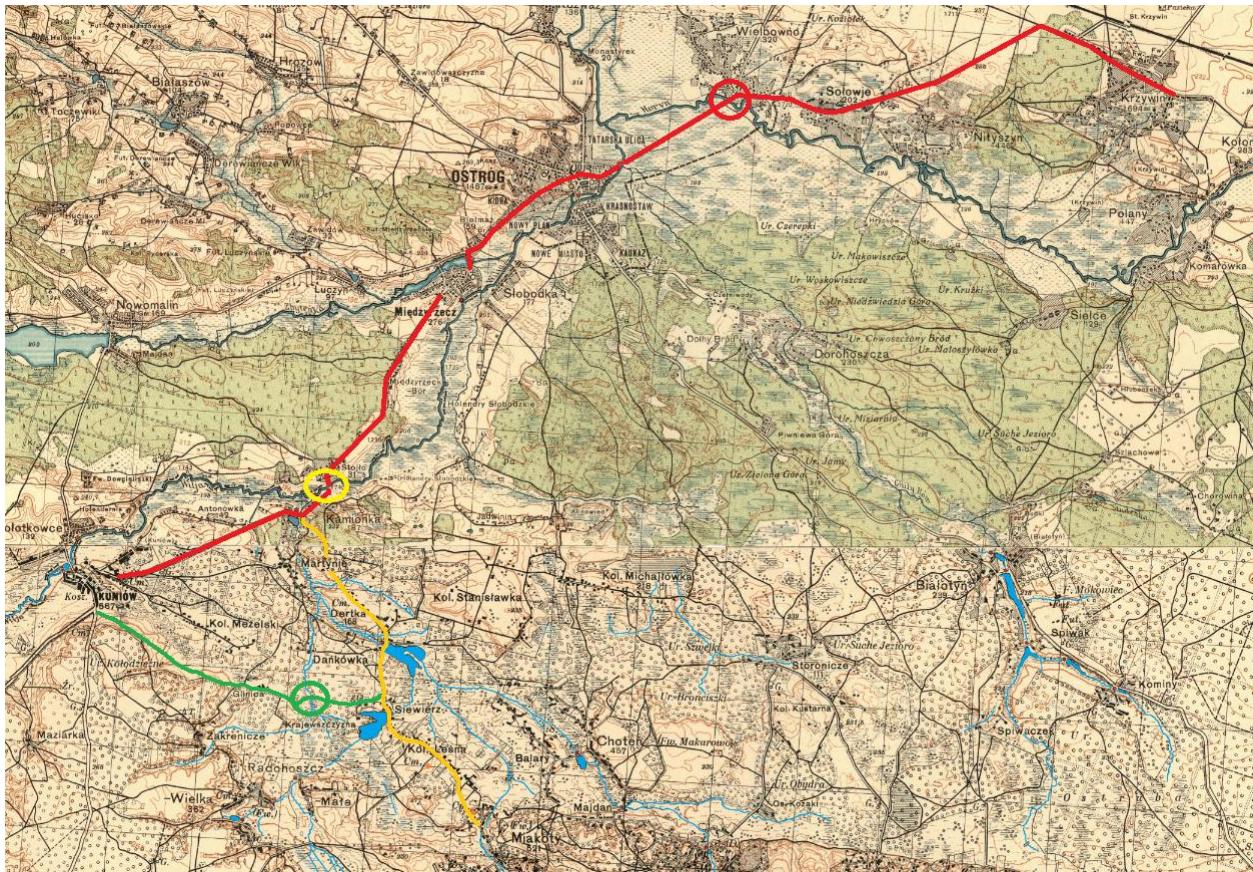


Leeleva Online Map

RS Highway and Roads

There are three roadways marked on Jake Unruh's Leeleva Map. The RS Highway passes near Kunoff at the bottom left, through the Town of Ostrog, and on through Krevin at the top right. Two smaller roads are also marked; one which turns off the RS Highway at Stölle and passes through Leeleva, and another which turns off this second road, crosses the Riscka River, and continues on to Kunoff.

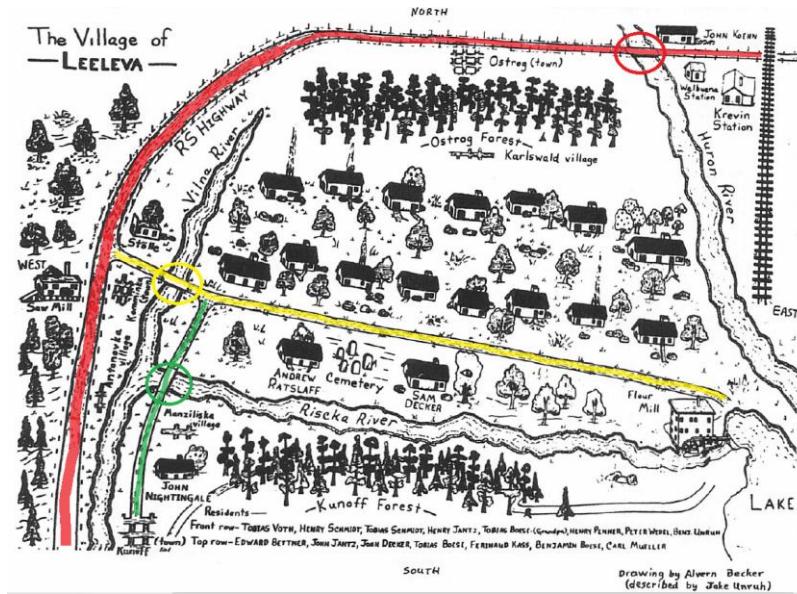
We can easily identify these roadways on maps of the area from the 19th and 20th Centuries. On the map below, charted by the Polish military in the 1920s, I've marked the road that is Jake Unruh's RS Highway in red; Jake's road running from near Stölle through Leeleva is marked in yellow (we'll call it the Yellow Leeleva Road), and Jake's road turning off from the Leeleva road and running to Kunoff is marked in green (we'll call it the Green Kunoff Road) (notable here is the fact that the John Nightingale Family may have lived in or near the Village of Manziliska [Mezelski], and this road does indeed pass that village before entering Kunoff). The river this road crosses is actually a small tributary of the Ustya River.¹



1920s Polish Map Showing RS Highway

The Polish map marks the RS Highway as a Class I Highway from Krevin (Krzywin; Kryvyn), through Ostrog, into Kunoff (Kuniow; Kuniv), after which it becomes a Class II Highway. The Green Kunoff Road is marked as a rural road with no ditches (indicating no formal maintenance was given to this road). The Yellow Leeleva Road is marked differently in areas. From Sievers (Syvir) south to Miakoty, including through the Village of Leeleva, as well as from Martynie to Dertka, the road is marked as a maintained rural road. Between Dertka and Sievers, the road is marked as a rural road with ditches.²

For comparison's sake, here's the Leeleva Village map with these roads marked with the corresponding colors.



Leeleva Village Roads

Note Jake's depiction of the bridges on these roads (bridges circled on both maps). Jake depicted the RS Highway bridge over the Huron River at Welburne accurately.³ Likewise, the bridge over the small river, between Manziliska and Leeleva is also depicted accurately. The yellow bridge over the Vilna is a bit out of place, but the Yellow Leeleva Road actually crossed the Ustya and its tributaries in at least 3 places so it's possible that by the time Jake put this map together he had forgotten exactly where the river crossings were. We must remember that Jake's depiction is a stylized representation, but it's actually quite accurate indeed.⁴

It is not known why Jake named the highway the "RS" Highway; at this time we do not know what the letters R and S could stand for. However, Jake did indeed mark the highway on his map with verst-posts.⁵ More on verst-posts later.

The RS Highway was a secondary highway in the early 20th Century. The primary route by this time passed north of Ostrog, west from Korets to Gochsha (Hoshcha) and on to Rivne.⁶ Analyzing maps shows that the RS Highway, passing from Krevin through Ostrog to Kunoff, must have developed over the last quarter of the 19th Century.

This map from the mid-19th Century shows the main route running Korzec (Korets) – Annopol (Hannopil) – Krevin (Krzywinska) – Ostrog – Dubno.⁷ This was the primary Volhynian highway and pre-dated the RS Highway.



Central Ostrog County in the mid-19th Century

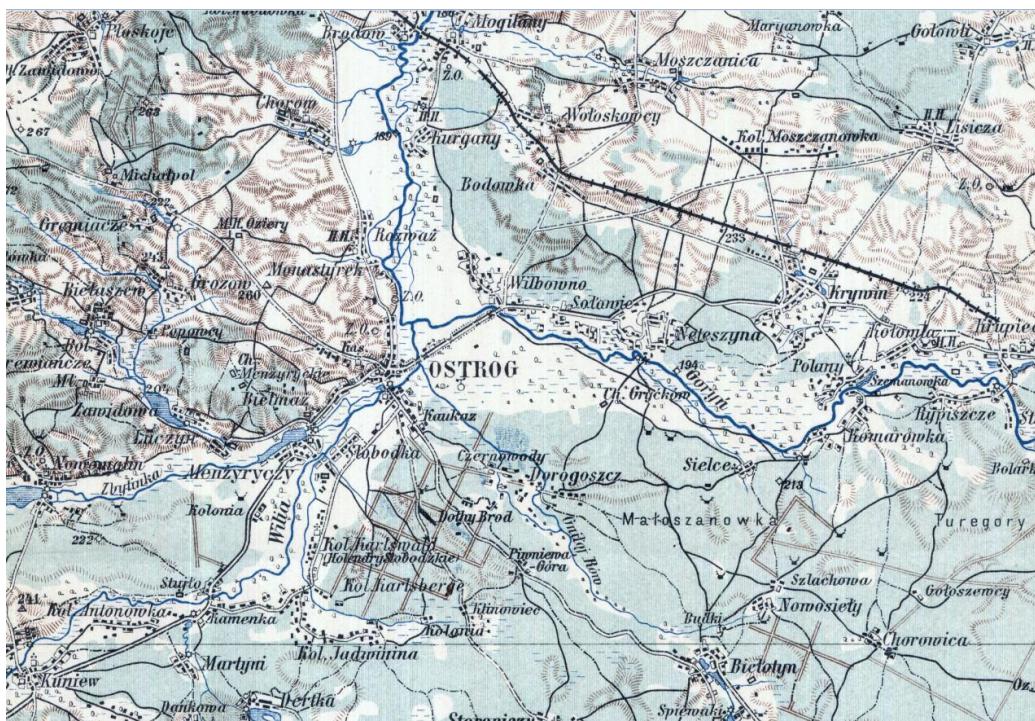
Continues . . .

This map, from 1889, shows portions of a main road to the east of Ostrog, but the only main route running west out of Ostrog, south of the Vilna (Wilja), terminate at Medzyrycz (Mezhyrich)⁸.



Central Ostrog County from an 1889 Austrian Map

This map, dated 1913 but clearly derived from the 1889 map above, does show the highway continuing south out of Ostrog to Kunoff (Kuniew) and beyond.⁹



1913 map of Central Ostrog County

This map, drawn by the Germans in the very late 1800s, perhaps shows highways in the area most clearly. The RS Highway can be seen running from Krevin (Krzywin), through Ostrog and continuing on through Kunoff (Kuniow). On this map, the highway is marked as “Straße B” (B-level Highway); weniger breit und fest (less broad and firm) than a “Straße A”, an example of which runs along the north of the map through Korzec (Korets) and Hoszcza (Gochsha) (again, this was the primary highway through Volhynia at the time¹⁰).



German Map of Northeastern Ostrog County, 1897

Interesting to note is the fact that this map labels the smaller roads running through the villages like Leeleva as “unterhaltene fuhrweg” or “maintained wagon trail”.

Another important road prior to the 20th Century was the route running south out of Ostrog through the forest into the Town of Zaslav (Iziaslav) via the villages of Pivneva Hora (Piwniewa Gora) and Bilotyn (Bialotyn). This road can be seen clearly seen on all the maps above, roughly following the Rotten Horn (Гнилий Рог; Hnylyj Roh) River. Today, neither this river nor this road exist as they were flooded in the creation of the cooling reservoir for the nuclear power plant at Netishyn (Nitishin).

The 1920s Polish map (the first map shown) indicates the route clearly that Jake Unruh names the RS Highway. West from Kunoff, this highway continued on to Schumsk and Krements' (this appears today to be the Ukrainian Highway P26 [Автошлях P 26]). East from Krevin, the route continued on to Slavuta and Shepetiwka¹¹ (this appears today to be the Ukrainian

Highway P05 [Автошлях P 05]; these are regional (P-network) State highways. Today, they are 2-lane, asphalt highways.

In Jake's day the RS Highway must have been the major thoroughfare through central Ostrog County. He indicates that it stretched for about 80 miles. Actually, the highway distance from Krevin to Krements' is a little over 60 miles, so Jake was quite close with his estimate. Jake goes on to say that walking paths were built on both sides of the highway, marked off by stout posts.¹² Maria Ratzlaff Penner remembered that the clip-clop of horses' hooves on the highway could be heard all the way from Leeleva.¹³

This is a picture of the Village of Komminka (Kamianka) and the RS Highway (P26) looking southwest. The dirt road extending to the left of the photographer is the T2313, the road that continues on to Lesna, identified above as the Yellow Leeleva Road.¹⁴



Kamianka, 2012, Viewed Toward the Southwest

Travel by road in Volhynia was difficult in the 19th Century. Few well-maintained highways existed and secondary roads were little more than paths through the countryside. Indeed, roads throughout the Russian Empire were generally in deplorable condition and travel throughout the countryside could be a very difficult undertaking.

Travelers in 19th Century Russia called Russian roads the worst in Europe. Weather had something to do with that; deep snow encumbered any winter travel and with the spring melts, dirt roads transitioned into mud pits. In Volhynia, the marshes and forests made travel even more difficult. A Baptist minister, trying to reach his brethren north of Novograd Volyn in the 1860s, found the roads so bad that travel by horse and wagon was nearly impossible.¹⁵

Many main roads were marked with verst-posts. These posts, each about a verst from the next, marked the roadway, not unlike mile markers do for us today. However, instead of a nice paved highway, the roadway in Russia may have been little more than a trail through the countryside. Verst-posts were generally 10 or more feet high so that they would not be buried by winter snows. In some districts, trees were planted in lieu of posts. Otherwise no structures contributed to most roadways which were basically just tracks roughly following the verst-posts.¹⁶

The development of roads in the Russian Empire went hand in hand with the development of other infrastructures such as post offices and telegraph lines. In fact, many roads were developed specifically to aid postal delivery and were designated at post roads. Property owners whose lands these roads crossed were obligated by the government to provide maintenance for these roads. Usually, those land-owners would pass that obligation along to their serfs or tenants.¹⁷

During the reign of Katherine the Great (1762-1796), dedicated postmen (called a yamstchik [ямщик]) began to deliver mail along the roads of the Empire. Dressed in red with a white belt, blowing a horn to signal his advance, the yamstchik drove carts pulled by 6 horses in the summer and sledges pulled by 4 horses in the winter, horses were generally hitched abreast to one another. The Tsar issued legislation in the late 18th century decreeing that any municipality where it was proper should erect facilities to house horses for postal use and special mail houses for use as post offices. Early post centers in Volhynia were Novograd Volyn and Zhytomyr. Postmen had the right to bear arms in the support and protection of mail and cargo. By the 1830s, rates had been put into place for the handling of personal mail and mailboxes for outgoing mail started to appear in provincial towns along busy streets or in big stores. In 1858 Russia introduced the postage stamp along with corresponding postmarks. A variety of classifications of stamps was available as were postcards. Postcards with landscape or photography prints became popular by the 1870s and several postcard photographers began to specialize in this craft. Advertising via postcards became popular as well.¹⁸

Postal stations were built beginning in 1846 and stations were built in one of seven classes, depending on the location of the station. Zhytomyr and Novograd Volyn both had class 2 stations. In the mid-19th century, postal stations were to be equipped with desks, benches and chairs, ink, paper and pens, kerosene lanterns, as well as living quarters for the postal supervisor and a supply of wood for the station's heating, but many were nothing more than rude log huts. By the mid-19th century, mail delivery may have been somewhat erratic, but probably arrived in provincial cities like Zhytomyr 3 or 4 times per week. Stations housed up to 20 horses. Postal wagons were forbidden to carry passengers, but oftentimes did anyway.¹⁹

Freight delivery, particularly crop freight, was delivered primarily via water – on the rivers of the area – until the early 20th century. Waterways supplied revenue to cities by way of government-owned ferries. This revenue was significantly reduced after bridges and railways were built. Netishyn, part of the Krevin Estate in the 19th Century, was the area's major port on the Huron River.²⁰

From 1856-1865, telegraph lines were put in place along the primary highway with stations at Kiev, Novograd Volyn, Ostrog, Dubno and Brody.²¹

Stagecoaches began to run on the highways providing public transportation by the late 19th Century. Coach travel was very expensive, but coaches were built that could hold up to 40 passengers. The price of fare between Zhytomyr and Novograd Volyn, a distance of about 50 miles, was 5 or 6 rubles – more than a month's wage for the average peasant²². Poor passengers could ride on the roof but then suffered from bad weather. Speed of the coaches was in the neighborhood of 8 – 10 miles per hour. More speed would have not been desirable as the typical carriage had no springs and the roadway could be expected to be in terrible condition.²³

Government officials or wealthy magnates might have coaches regularly travelling between localities and free-men could purchase a fare on these coaches for an extremely high cost. Military personnel travelling along roads in the Russian Empire had the authority to appropriate horses or wagons leaving the original owner on foot.²⁴

Perhaps the most common types of horse drawn wagon in the Ukrainian and Russian countryside in the 19th Century were the tarantass and the telega. The tarantass was used for passenger travel and the telega was used for cargo.²⁵

Horse-drawn transportation in Ukraine, Poland and Russia used by natives were usually a form of tarantass or telega. These wagons were made with unsprung suspensions and provided a very jarring ride. A tarantass was a horse drawn wagon with a very long wheelbase, described as a basket suspended on two long poles. Axles were attached perpendicular to these poles. A telega was similar except it used a cargo box instead of a passenger compartment.²⁶



Russian Tarantass in 1880s Siberia²⁷

Tobias Wedel, living with his family in Antonofka prior to 1874, used a telega flat-bed wagon with removable sides. The sides looked like ladders attached to the floor of the wagon. The wagon was used to haul hay or rye from the fields into the village or to go into Ostrog for supplies.²⁸ This type of telega was common in Ukraine at the time and can be seen in many old pictures. This old photo shows two Jewish men in a wagon in their yard near Zhytomyr. The wagon is a telega with ladder-type sides, perhaps similar to what the Wedels, as well as other Mennonites in the Karolswalde Villages, may have used.²⁹



Jewish Men in a Telega near Zhytomyr

Carriages, called droshkys in the Russian Empire, were popular in towns and cities. Locally, there existed a carriage factory at Komminka, but the best known shops producing carts and wagons in the Ostrog area were in Dorohoszcz(a) (Dorogoszcz, Dorogoscha; Дорогоща).³⁰

Few post offices existed in Ostrog County in the late 19th Century. According to an all-Volhynian almanac published in Zhytomyr in 1892, postal stations near Ostrog County were located in the Town of Ostrog, as well as in Gochsha (Гоща), Korets (Корець), and Jampol (Ямполь) (Yampil). Postal stations in Zaslaw County were located in Zaslaw, Shepetivka (Шепетівка), and Polonne (Полонное). These locations also housed telegraph offices in 1892.³¹

By the 1920s, additional post offices had been built in Kunoff and Krevin, as well as in Borysiv (Borysow) and Ozhenyn (Ozenin). Kunoff, Krevin and Ozhenyn post offices also housed telegraph offices. By 1921, telephone facilities were located in the Town of Ostrog, the only such facilities located in the County. The Town of Slavuta also housed post and telegraph facilities.³²

The first automobiles in the Russian Empire appeared in the late 1800s. In Ukraine, cars first appeared in the cities of Kiev and Odessa, two of the largest cities in the Empire. By 1904 an automobile motoring club is said to have existed in Kiev. The number of automobiles in Ukraine grew slowly in pre-Soviet times. By 1911, 78 cars may have existed in Kiev; by 1913 perhaps as many as 328 may have existed.³³

Today, roadways in Ukraine remain less developed than in the U.S.A. or in Western European countries. By 2013 road density in Ukraine was 28 kilometers of road per 100 square kilometers of land area. The U.S.A. has more than twice as many usable kilometers of roadway with a road density of 67 kilometers of road per 100 square kilometers of land area. By way of comparison, many Western European countries have road densities of well over 100. The road density in Britain is 172; Germany 180; the Netherlands 331.³⁴

Likewise, passenger cars are less abundant in Ukraine than in the U.S.A. or Western Europe. In Ukraine in 2013 there were 148 passenger cars per 1,000 people while in the U.S.A. there were 423. Again, by way of comparison in Britain there were 457 cars per 1,000 people; Germany 517; the Netherlands 466.³⁵

Sources:

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- ¹ The Ustya and Hutyska Rivers both have numerous tributaries in the area. Contradiction arises here; the Green Kunoff Road obviously crosses a small stream near Krajewscczyna, but the Polish map indicates no water mills on this stream. Conversely, according to the Polish map, no stream saddled by a water-mill crosses the Green Kunoff Road. P47 S43 (alt. A47 B43) Ostróg (1:100 000 WIG - Mapa Taktyczna Polski); P48 S43 (alt. A48 B43) Zasław (1:100 000 WIG - Mapa Taktyczna Polski).
- ² P47 S43 (alt. A47 B43) Ostróg (1:100 000 WIG - Mapa Taktyczna Polski); P48 S43 (alt. A48 B43) Zasław (1:100 000 WIG - Mapa Taktyczna Polski).
- ³ Unruh, Jacob, "From Village Life to Kansas Plains", 1978. Note that Jake Koehn house may have been in the German Mennonite Village of Gruental, known in Russian/Ukrainian as Moschanovka (Мощановка). This tiny village stood less than 2 miles north from Krevin and may have been the village known as New Kryvyn today. On some maps, such as the 1889 Austrian Map ("Osztroh", A Monarchia III. Katonai Felmérésé) or the 1897 German Map (U51 Ostrog., Übersichtskarte von Mitteleuropa), this village is marked as "Olendry" revealing the village's Dutch heritage.
- ⁴ Unruh, Jacob, "From Village Life to Kansas Plains", 1978.
- ⁵ Unruh, Jacob, "From Village Life to Kansas Plains", 1978.; A verst was a Russian form of measurement in the 19th Century. 1 verst was equal to .66 miles.
- ⁶ A46 B43 (alt. A47 B43) Tuczyn ((1:100 000 WIG - Mapa Taktyczna Polski); "Rokitno", A Monarchia III. Katonai Felmérésé; Közép-Európa általános földrajzi térképének.
- ⁷ "Volynia Gubernia 1820" [03 Волынської Губ 1820].
- ⁸ "Osztroh", A Monarchia III. Katonai Felmérésé; Közép-Európa általános földrajzi térképének.
- ⁹ 44° 50° OSTROG, Maßstab 1:200000.
- ¹⁰ This highway was the ancient Kiev Highway (Київський шлях) which linked Volhynia to the great Ukrainian city of Kiev. Period maps portray this route differently, but it appears as if the main route of this highway by the late 1700s ran from Kiev in the east, through Zhytomyr, Zvyagel (Novograd Volyn), Korets, Rivne, and Lutsk. A southern spur ran south from Zhytomyr, through Polonne and Slavuta, and terminating at Ostrog. During the first 50 years of the 19th century, the Brest-Litovsk highway was being built.
- ¹¹ Anonymous, What is Ukraine?, published circa 1915.
- ¹² Unruh, Jacob, "From Village Life to Kansas Plains", 1978. These posts, while also serving to separate a walking path, were probably also verst-posts as per the Ukrainian/Russian convention.
- ¹³ Unruh, Velma Penner, "Leeleva Village".
- ¹⁴ "The Village of Kamenka . Highway R26 with a Branch (left) Motorway T 2313"
- ¹⁵ "The German Baptist Movement in Volhynia", Miller, Donald N, 2008.
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- ²⁵ At the Time of Coachmen, Jobé, Joesph, Lausanne, Edita-Lazarus, 1976.
- ²⁶ At the Time of Coachmen, Jobé, Joesph, Lausanne, Edita-Lazarus, 1976.
- ²⁷ "Tarantass", Wikipedia Commons, 2007. The villagers in Leeleva and the other Mennonite villages generally came from the Vistula valley region in Poland. The native Poles, as well as Russian and Ukrainians, typically used these types of wagons. The Mennonites, ethnographically German, lived among these Poles, Ukrainians and Russians for centuries. Photos of Mennonite farms in the Molotschna and Chortiza Colonies appear to show Mennonites employing these types of wagons too, so they may have conformed in this way with their Polish and Ukrainian neighbors.
- ²⁸ Genealogy of Tobias P Wedel, compiled by Victor and Viola Koehn, 1997.
- ²⁹ "Photos of Manachem Kipnis", Riowang.blogspot.com, 2013.
- ³⁰ Romanchuk A. [Романчук О.] "Traditional crafts Dorohoschi".
- ³¹ Volyn Peoples Calendar [Волинський Народний Календарь].
- ³² P47 S43 (alt. A47 B43) Ostróg (1:100 000 WIG - Mapa Taktyczna Polski); P48 S43 (alt. A48 B43) Zasław (1:100 000 WIG - Mapa Taktyczna Polski).
- ³³ Ukrainian Wikipedia, "Автомобіль; Автомобіль в Україні"; 2013.
- ³⁴ "Road density (km of road per 100 sq. km of land area), 2009-2013", © 2013 The World Bank Group.
- ³⁵ "Passenger cars (per 1,000 people), 2009-2013", © 2013 The World Bank Group.