

The Polish Review



Mme. Sikorska on Tragic Fate of Polish Children

HELENA SIKORSKA, widow of the late General Sikorski, Polish Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief, issued the following statement in connection with the meeting protesting against the persecution of Polish children by the Germans, held in London Central Hall on Monday:

"In a modern war like the present, entire nations are involved. The civilian population is as much in the frontline as the fighting forces. Women fight side by side with men. Hundreds of thousands of people are killed, die of hardship or spend years in slavery. Day and night, in the ceaseless underground struggle of enslaved nations and on every front and behind those fronts people are making unheard of sacrifices in their fight against evil.

"War has brought great suffering but nothing can excuse the grim record of the German crimes against Polish children. It will be remembered for centuries to come as an example of bestiality applied in cold blood with Teutonic thoroughness. It is impossible to refrain from shuddering at the thought or to find an answer to the question: 'Why should these innocent beings perish?' They are not fighting anything or anything, they know nothing of the existence of evil or hatred, they are so terribly defenseless.

"Four years ago men of the infamous Luftwaffe machine-gunned them as they trailed along roads, fired on the Red Cross trains, sought them out in their shelters and hospitals. After that they were exposed to the tender mercies of victorious soldiery and of German law. For four long years of slavery the pitiless racial campaign against Polish children has been going on. For four years they have been deprived of even the most primitive conditions under which a child can live.

"If they are not torn away from their parents and deported, they are tortured with premeditated savagery, sadism, frenzy and hatred. They wander homeless, half-naked, barefooted and hungry, driven by fear, and when they fall ill there is no medical care for them. Their parents are taken from them to die in concentration camps or before German firing squads.

"We believe firmly in victory, but before it is won this protest should warn the Germans. Let the Langmen think and refrain from murdering any more children. They must realize that the world is determined on just retribution. They will certainly pay for it all. An immense harm has been done to the world by the war cataclysm since it began, four years ago, with the invasion of Poland.

(signed) HELENA SIKORSKA

Among the great tragedies of mankind, few have surpassed the ordeal of Poland's children under the Nazis.

Starved, executed, imprisoned, exiled—their fate is one of the blackest indictments of the Aryan New Order.

Yet, their story, full of tears and brutal degradation, is a saga of infinite dauntlessness and faith—an inspiration for the children of democracies everywhere.

On September 26, wherever there are Poles—in the United States, England, Mexico, the Middle East and in the secret gathering places of the Polish underground—"Polish Children's Day" will be celebrated for the fourth time since the beginning of the war, in honor of the children whom the Nazis seek to destroy.

Voluminous data on the German war against the helpless children of Poland, collected by Polish government authorities, has just been made available by the Polish Telegraph Agency. It presents a story of almost unbelievable hor-

Warsaw on charges of having "tried to start a revolt." The "Ostdeutscher Beobachter," of April 3, 1942, recounts the heavy sentence—twelve years of hard labor—received by another boy, Jozef Kuciak, of Koscian, for "sabotage." The "sabotage" consisted of striking a horse, belonging to a German, with a whip, because the blow "lessened the working power of the horse."

Hundreds of similar verdicts, and thousands of wooden crosses on the graves of Polish children in Poland and Germany, attest to the Gehenna, which for four years has been the lot of the younger generation in Occupied Poland. The Nazis have ruled that all Polish children above the age of twelve are liable for labor in Germany. Thousands have already been deported.

There are no elementary schools, high schools or universities for

from the western part of Poland and after careful selection transferred to the infamous experimental "camp of improving the race" in Helenow. One of the duties in this camp, which none can avoid, is compulsory sex-relations. In this camp at present there are approximately 500 Polish boys and girls.

But this story of Nazi horror would be incomplete if it did not include another side—the heroism of Poland's youth in resisting their conquerors.

In Poland's underground, in almost every community, there are "flying schools"—so called because they move one step ahead of the Gestapo from day to day—in which, by candle-light and in darkened cellars and attics, children are daily studying under the directions of underground instructors. They are learning the history of their country, its literature, its science and its art—all the things which have been forbidden them through the four years of German occupation.

Polish youth is taking a vital part in resisting the invader. Thousands of them distribute the underground newspapers under the very noses of the Gestapo and in constant danger of their lives. Others work as messengers for the guerrilla troops, carrying secret information of German movements. Still others are engaged, in the dead of night, in pasting defiance posters on the walls of Polish cities. Many participate side by side with their guerrilla comrades in actual fighting, having learned how to use rifles and grenades.

There is still another chapter in the plight of Poland's children. In 1940, more than a million inhabitants of Eastern Poland—among them 200,000 children—were deported to Russia. Most of these deportations took place during the winter months, increasing the hardships of the wanderers.

But as a result of the Polish-Soviet agreement of 1941, 17,500 children were sent to Iran making an arduous trip from Soviet territory.

Most of the children who reached Iran were either orphans or had lost their parents during their thousand-mile trek across Russia. They arrived in groups of from ten to fifty, mostly boys—tired, hungry and ill.

The arrival of such a large mass of children presented the problem of adequately caring for them. Thanks, however, to the assistance of the American, British and Indian governments, this problem is gradually being solved.

The story of Poland's children in the time of the Nazi evil bids fair to be one of the most moving chapters of Polish history. And it is certain that "Polish Children's Day" will always be one of the warmest holidays of a free and peaceful Poland.

Sikorski's Death An Accident

The British Air Ministry has announced the receipt of the report of the Court of Enquiry investigating the cause of the Liberator accident at Gibraltar on July 4th, 1943, in which General Sikorski lost his life.

The findings of the court and the observations of the officer whose duty it was to review and comment on these findings, have been considered and it appears that the accident was due to the jamming of elevator controls shortly after the take-off. The aircraft became uncontrollable.

Most careful examination of all available evidence, including that of the pilot, did not disclose what caused this jamming, but established that there was no sabotage. It was also made clear that the captain of the aircraft who is a pilot of great experience and of exceptional ability, was in no way to blame.

An officer of the Polish Air Force was present throughout the proceedings.

ror, a Nazi wantonness unmitigated, by any trace of human sentiment.

In a mass grave in Pomorze today lie the bodies of more than a hundred Polish boy scouts, massacred for helping resistance to the Germans. In the Baudienst forced labor camp, near Kielce, 850 children, some of them tubercular, are laboring at breaking and carrying stones for German fortifications. Their daily food consists of six unpeeled potatoes for breakfast, cold coffee and a slice of bread for lunch and a meager soup of white beets or carrots for the evening meal. How many children have died under this regime has been carefully suppressed by the Germans.

In Gdynia, when someone recently broke the window of a German Police station, ten children were executed in the public square as an example. The "Warszauer Zeitung," of November 16, 1942, reported that a twelve-year-old Polish boy had been executed in

Polish children and older students in Poland today. All technical and professional institutions have been shut. Before the war Poland had 28,722 elementary schools, 2,230 high schools, 27 universities, and 103 technical training schools. Now, the Germans allow only trade schools to function—for teaching Polish children to work in German camps and factories. Only those children engaged in heavy labor are allowed any food at all. The rest must fend for themselves—with the result that epidemics, brought on by lack of nourishment, regularly carry off thousands of the children.

The minimum food value essential per child daily is about 3,000 calories; in July 1942 the food ration assigned by the Germans to Polish children gave only 467 calories, and since then the situation has become worse.

But starvation is only part of the tragic situation of Poland's youth. For the past two years young girls and boys have been kidnapped

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TO THE JEWS

by WLADYSLAW BRONIEWSKI

To the memory of Szmul Zygielbojm

From Polish towns and cities are heard no cries of despair
For the Warsaw ghetto defenders fell like an army guard.
My words I soak in blood, my heart I drench with tears,
For you, O Polish Jews, a Polish errant bard.

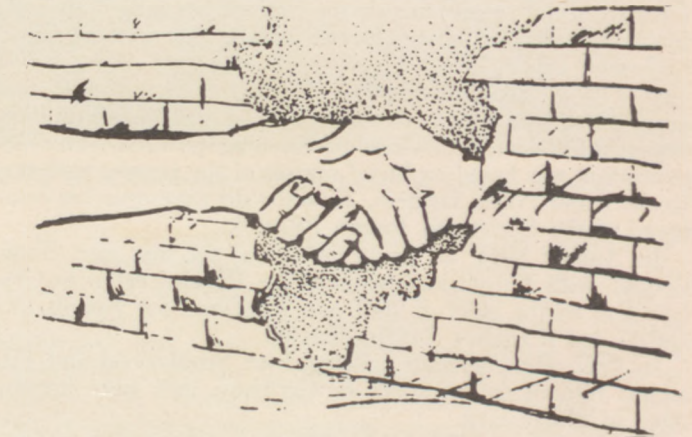
Not people but blood-stained beasts, not soldiers but executioners,
Carry the scourge of death for you, your children and wives.
They choke you in lethal chambers, they slay you in lye-filled cars,
Deriding your helpless mien, as they take away your lives.

You lifted up a stone, to hurl at the canonier
Who with precision and skill aimed at you his gun.
Oh, all ye Sons of Maccabees, you too know how to die,
In this hopeless war, four years ago begun.

It should be deeply engraved, in every Polish heart,
That our home was invaded, that our brothers were killed.
That we have been united by the firing squad and Oswiecim
By each nameless grave, and each human heart stilled.

Above the Warsaw ruins, one peaceful sun will rise
When strife of many years will end with victory.
To each man will be given life, liberty and law.
One race alone will rule, of men noble and free.

—Translated from the Polish by Christina Swiniarska.



"... What lines of Dante, what scene from Shakespeare can surpass in grandeur the last hours of Szmul Zygielbojm, Jewish member of the Polish National Council in London, to whom a brave Polish messenger from the Jewish community in Poland brought word to attempt the impossible to save his people, and who the following day took his own life to arouse the world to the plight of the Jews in Poland? And what pathetic image can lift our thoughts higher than the naive drawing that appeared in an underground Jewish newspaper, showing the hand of a Polish Jew clasping the hand of a Polish Gentile across the ghetto wall? We all know that, in their utter misery, Polish Jews received not compassion only but constant and fraternal aid from Christian Poles; that the best traditions of our nation—which for so long has been a haven to Jews driven from other lands and whose greatest writers so often rose to their defense—have been strengthened in these four years by thousands of heroic deeds.

"We swear, we must all swear, that this major symptom of the criminal folly that is consuming our world, that this sacrilegious division of humanity into master races and slave peoples, that the madness of racial superiority, of humiliating distinctions between peoples who like men are equal before God—will ultimately not only be condemned by high sounding phrases, but that its horrible spectre will be erased for all time from the face of the earth. There is room here for no explanations, no theories, no diplomacy. There is but one possible policy: the literal application of the teachings of Our Savior."

—JAN LECHON,
From "Le Fond de l'Enfer" in Pour la Victoire, New York.

W. 189/02

GENERAL KAZIMIERZ SOSNKOWSKI

by COL. WLODZIMIERZ ONACEWICZ

WHEN General Sikorski died a soldier's death on July 4, 1943, the President of the Republic of Poland appointed Kazimierz Sosnkowski to be Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Armed Forces. This appointment was no surprise to the Polish Army, as General Sosnkowski is one of the few men who in modern Poland were popular in military and university circles and among the peasants. Every Polish soldier knows the details of his career by heart. America will be interested in a brief review of General Sosnkowski's unusual life.

He played a great part in the struggle for Poland's independence, in the constructive achievements of reborn Poland and in the defense of Poland against Germany's unprovoked aggression. The more important events of Poland's recent history mark the stages of his career.

Sosnkowski was born in Warsaw in 1885, and when in 1905 the Russian revolution gave Poland hope of liberation, as a young man of twenty he threw himself into the struggle for Poland against the oppressor, in this case Czarist Russia. He joined the Polish socialist party, whose program included not only social reconstruction for Poland, but armed struggle for independence. There he met and became a close friend of Joseph Pilsudski.

In 1907 Sosnkowski founded the Society of Active Resistance, the aim of which was to create a secret Polish military organization under all three partitioning powers. This organization was based on broad masses of the people, students, workers and Polish farmers. Sosnkowski gave over his command of the Society to Joseph Pilsudski.

In August 1914, at the beginning of the last war, Sosnkowski, with Pilsudski, organized the Polish Legion in Cracow and as the chief of staff and substitute for Joseph Pilsudski, led it against Czarist Russia.

In 1917, after brilliant fighting, both Sosnkowski and Pilsudski refused to surrender to Germany, and were imprisoned in Magdeburg.

In November, 1918, when all three partitioning powers were crushed, and the Polish nation threw off its shackles, Joseph Pilsudski returned in triumph to Warsaw, to head the state then being organized. With him returned his faithful friend and companion, Kazimierz Sosnkowski.

The situation of Poland was approaching chaos internally, and externally was extremely dangerous. Poland's western provinces still were in German hands, and to the east no definite frontiers existed between Poland and a Russia then in the throes of a revolution. The most vital problem faced by the Polish state, then in actual process of creation, was the organization of an army. This task was entrusted to the 33-year-old General Kazimierz Sosnkowski.

General Sosnkowski welded into a single force the various Polish units voluntarily organized in France, Murmansk, Siberia, Italy, etc. He furnished them with equipment, ammunition and food supplies; he gave them essential orders and military regulations.

When in 1920, the war with Russia reached its crisis, General Sosnkowski took command of an army and led it into battle. He so distinguished himself that he was awarded the Virtuti Military, Class II.

His organizing ability proved indispensable to the army, and when the enemy had been stopped, General Sosnkowski was forced to accept the post of Minister of Military Affairs in the coalition cabinet formed by the peasant Witos and the socialist Daszynski.

The Polish cabinet changed several times, but General Sosnkowski remained the Minister of Military Affairs through many years. He won the respect and admiration



General Kazimierz Sosnkowski (second from right), crossing from occupied Poland to Hungary in 1939, disguised as a peasant.

of all the political parties that took turns at the nation's helm. His was the difficult task of demobilizing the army after the war. He did his best to provide for the future of soldiers released from the armed services. It was General Sosnkowski who promoted the passing by Parliament of a Bill granting farm land to demobilized soldiers.

From 1925 to 1939, General Sosnkowski took no part in the nation's political life. He devoted himself completely to his army work. As army inspector, he played a prominent part training the Polish army and preparing it for war. He was in constant personal contact with army units and their commanders. Under his care came the Polish Staff College, which trained Polish Staff Officers. He was also at the head of the Military Armament Committee, where he contributed greatly toward modernizing Polish military equipment and supplying the army with up-to-date weapons. Unfortunately lack of money and of a strong war industry made it impossible to supply this equipment in sufficient quantities.

General Sosnkowski belongs to the very small number of high European commanders who clearly realized the crushing power of the German army and its *blitzkrieg* potentiality. To trusted persons he revealed his grave concern for the fate of Poland. Against the heavily armed Germans she could place a valiant, but much smaller and incomparably less well equipped army. He did not count on swift aid from the allies, although he had been one of the creators of the Franco-

Polish alliance of 1921. Fully realizing the mortal danger that threatened Poland, he wanted to take an active part in the campaign and at the outset of the war rejected the offer of the portfolio of Minister of Coordination. For reasons unknown to me, it was not until September 11, that he was given command of the southern army. His legendary action there will always remain a bright light on the dark background of Poland's heroic, tragic and single-handed struggle against the two greatest European powers, Germany and Russia.

When General Sosnkowski was appointed commander, the southern army, composed of only three divisions and one motorized brigade, had suffered heavy losses during ten days of constant fighting against superior enemy forces. It was pushed east of Przemyśl, surrounded on three sides and cut off from Lwow. General Sosnkowski, then in Lwow, was actually cut off from the army whose command he was to take over. He boarded a plane with a couple of his staff officers and landed in the midst of his army. Although communications were disorganized he immediately ordered a counter-offensive which was crowned with success. Tired and decimated, the brave Polish divisions immediately responded to the call of their new commander. At Czarnokonce and Mozejkowiec they routed a German panzer division.

On September 17th, Russia attacked Poland from the East, and the southern army found itself between two fires. Yet it fought until September 21, when General Sosnkowski in an attempt to save the rest of his forces from imprisonment, ordered them to disperse and cross the Hungarian and Rumanian frontiers.



General Kazimierz Sosnkowski, Polish Commander-in-Chief, decorating a Polish corporal.

The General himself, disguised as a peasant, walked 150 miles through territory occupied by Russian troops. He crossed the Carpathian Mountains and reached Paris, where a new Polish government was being organized. General Sosnkowski was made Vice-Premier in General Sikorski's cabinet, and successor to the President of the Republic of Poland. The General held this position until July, 1941, when he handed in his resignation, because he did not agree with the text of the Russian-Polish agreement of July 22, 1941. It must be explained here that General Sosnkowski recognized the need for an understanding with Russia from the moment she was attacked by Germany and found herself in the allied camp. However, he took the view that the text of the agreement should have been so formulated as to remove any possibility of comment or conflict in the future.

Today, as at Lwow in 1939, General Sosnkowski has taken command of the Polish Army, at a time when in spite of the improved allied war situation, lowering clouds are gathering over Poland. They presage a long and difficult struggle for the complete return of liberty to Poland. The army is fully conscious of the gravity of the situation and after the stunning blow of General Sikorski's tragic death, it breathed a sigh of relief when news of General Sosnkowski's appointment reached it. All the higher officers, including the commander of the Underground Army in Poland, sent cables to the new Commander-in-Chief, expressing the joy of the army and its readiness to make the greatest sacrifices under his orders. Laconic messages, characteristic of soldiers, but how deep in meaning and how valuable to a leader, who stands before a hard and decisive campaign.

There is no doubt that in America, where Polish affairs are followed with great sympathy, the appointment of a soldier, whose name is so popu-



General Kazimierz Sosnkowski as Vice Premier in 1941. At left is Professor Kot, the Minister of the Interior.

POLISH COINS ONE THOUSAND YEARS AGO



HERE are few subjects as fascinating as the study of old coins, for these rare pieces of precious metal can give more information about the past than their unassuming appearance would lead one to expect. Their very existence in a given locality implies that the people of that region had replaced primitive barter by a complex system of currency that

has not changed much in the thousands of years since it first came into being.

Polish coinage began in the 10th century when King Mieszko I created the first mint in Poland. But excavations have revealed that foreign coins were used in Poland as early as the sixth century B.C. In southeastern Poland have been found archaic Boeotian and Athenian didrachms, tetradrachms from Thasos and coins of Alexander the Great, probably paid to the early Slavs by Greek merchants who travelled along the trade routes leading from the Black Sea to the Baltic. Polish soil has also yielded a large crop of Roman coins dating from the first century A.D. Hoards numbering several thousand silver denarii have been found on both sides of the Vistula, indicating that trading between Poland and Rome was active and that Roman caravans that arrived there must have been very rich. Judging from the excavated coins, the greatest Polish-Roman trade was carried on in the second and third centuries A.D.: By far the largest number of coins found in Poland were the denarii of the Emperors Trajan, Hadrian, Faustinius, Antoninus Pius, Lucius Verus and Marcus Aurelius. From the first to the third centuries A.D. Roman copper coins found their way to northern Poland, while from the third century they began to be circulated in all parts of Poland. But when the currency of Rome depreciated and Barbarian attacks on Rome disturbed the Empire's economic life, the golden aureus and solidus of the Eastern Empire supplanted the baser Western coins.

More recent are the Arabian coins, which came to Poland in the 9th century and were in use up to the 11th, coinciding with the expansion of Arabian commerce in Europe, especially in Slav territory. These coins must have been too large for use in retail trade, for they were often cut in halves or quarters.

In the millennium of its history, native Polish money has taken many forms. Not only has the outward appearance of Polish coins changed but the type of metal used in minting them has also been altered every so often. For this reason, Polish currency may be divided into three periods, each taking its name from the chief metal in use at the time. Thus, we have the *denier* period (10th through 13th centuries), the *grosz* period (13th through 15th centuries) and the *zloty* period (16th century up to the present).

When, under Mieszko I, Poland began to strike her own currency, she adopted the *denier*, based on the old Roman *denarius* and adopted by all newly formed states in the Middle Ages. In Roman times a silver coin (*deni*) ten times more valuable than the bronze *as*, the *denier* became the monetary unit of Poland and held its own for 300 years. Its size and value, however, changed in the course of time. The large silver coin of Mieszko I and Boleslaw the Brave became increasingly smaller and thinner until the formerly double-sided *denier* became in the 12th century a one-sided *bracteate*, so thin that it could be stamped on only one side. Regardless of their size and weight, however, they were always called *deniers* and were always silver.

But the *denier* was too small a coin to be used in large financial transactions. The basic medium of exchange was a weight in silver, the *grzywna*, which was equal in value to

one-half a Carolingian pound and which numbered 4 *wiarduneks*, 24 *szkojce*, 240 *deniers*, and 480 *obols*. The purchasing power of money was extremely high in those days. In normal times a bushel of grain cost 10 deniers, a war-horse 3-5 grzywnas, a plot of land 10 grzywnas, a city tenement house or a village 40-60 grzywnas.

A word about minting in Poland one thousand years ago may be of interest. In the early days the mints were located in the nation's capitals: in Poznan under Mieszko I, in Gniezno under Boleslaw the Brave and in Cracow under Boleslaw the Valiant and his successors. Because the operation of a mint required certain skills such as smelting, assaying, and engraving on steel, as well as knowledge of writing and Latin, the mints were at first under the supervision of the clergy, perhaps of the court chaplain. This explains the religious character of the coins struck at this time. It must also be remembered that for several centuries, various local princes had the right to issue their own money and to derive profit from it. As early as the 10th century, the princes granted permission to the bishops to mint money. Throughout the 11th century, the bishops minted special *deniers*, with turned up edges, bearing emblems of the church such as the cross, crosier, ring, flag and the inscription CRVX VERA or CRVX XRI. This is a specifically Polish coin, found in no other country, struck in tremendous numbers and one that forms an important part of the treasures buried in the 11th century.

Later, when Poland was divided still further among the heirs of one of her Kings, the mints were moved to the seats of the various princes, irrespective of the proximity of religious institutions. The ducal minters became figures of importance. Their first task was to strike new coins in accordance with their lord's commands. They took these coins to the market place and seating themselves on the money changers' bench, exchanged old money for new. By taking, for instance, 14 old pieces in exchange for 12 new pieces, they recalled the old money from circulation to have fresh material for smelting. As this exchange was compulsory, the minters acted as officials with executive power and often pestered the population with their extortionate demands. They also acted as treasury and tax officials, controlled the sale of salt as a ducal monopoly and market prices generally.

In the 13th century, Polish cities were likewise given the right to establish their own mints and coin their own money, although not all of them availed themselves of this privilege.

From this time on, the coin minting picture in Poland becomes more vague. The types of coins in use are too varied to permit listing. Mieszko III had introduced the system of issuing different money three times a year, which of course created a good deal of confusion. Mieszko III had also made the transition from two-sided *deniers* to one-sided *branceates* that at first had Latin and later Hebrew inscriptions. These Hebrew *branceates* are one of the most interesting phenomena of the 12th century. Some of them bear the Polish words "Mieszko, King of Poland" in Hebrew script. Another interesting group of Polish coins are the 13th century "button" *branceates* that were struck by a special technique giving a very convex, button-like form. These coins generally are of heraldic character. In addition to the figure of a prince, bishop, or an image of a cross, temple, bastion or crown, one frequently comes across emblems strongly resembling later Polish coats-of-arms.

At the end of the 13th century, thin *branceates* ceased to be minted and heavier two-sided coins came into use. This marked the beginning of the *grosz* period, which was to last two centuries, the 14th and the 15th. The *grosz* was originally a Czech coin, but soon became international. It was adopted by Poland all the more readily as Wacław II, the

ruler of Bohemia, ascended the throne of Poland in 1300. The *grosz* rapidly became Poland's standard monetary unit. People no longer counted in *grzywnas* and *deniers* but in *grosze*, of which 60 made one *grzywna* in Bohemia and 48 in Poland. Inasmuch as the *grosz* came to Poland in such vast quantities, there was no need to mint it in Poland. So, with the exception of Kazimierz the Great (1333-1370), who had *grosze* minted in Cracow, the Poles confined themselves to coining a new kind of *denier*, also called *halerz*, and the *half-grosz* or *kwartnik*.

At least as early as in Bohemia and perhaps even earlier, the mints of Poland's Silesian province had begun to strike *kwartniks*, a heavier coin designed to replace the old *bracteates*. Richly stamped with inscriptions and heraldic figures, they furnish an interesting history of the princes who ruled over Silesia. The *kwartnik* proved so handy a coin that it soon became popular in other parts of Poland and was struck in Poznan and Wschowa.

Wladyslaw Lokietek (1306-1333) was the first Polish King to mint heavier money. His colorful-career found faithful reflection in his coins. While still only Duke of Sieradz and Leczyca, he had struck *bracteates* bearing the Kujawy coat-of-arms. When in 1306 he became Duke of Cracow, he issued *deniers*, the boldly outlined crown and title of which indicated his aspirations to the throne. Crowned King of Poland in 1320, he commemorated this act by striking the first gold coin in Poland, the *florin* or *ducat*, on the face of which sits Lokietek in regal splendor, the reverse showing St. Stanislaw, patron of the Polish Kingdom. Following his coronation he minted a series of *deniers* with his bust, an eagle or a crown, twelve of which constituted one *grosz*.

Kazimierz the Great (1333-1370), who did so much to improve Poland's economic welfare, tried to introduce monetary reforms. He was the first to coin Polish *grosze* bearing the Polish eagle instead of the Czech lion. He also struck Cracow *kwartniks* bearing his official seal. And he minted

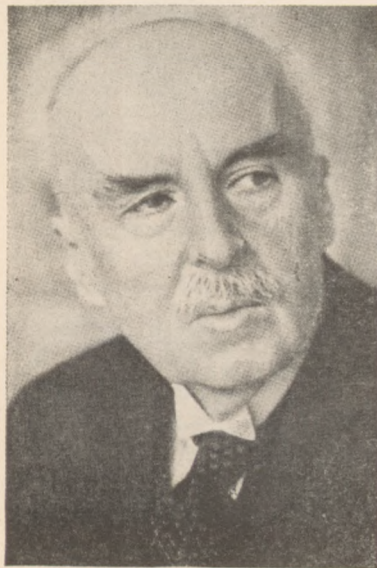


Polish coins from 10th to 16th centuries.

in great numbers tiny *deniers* with the eagle, royal bust or royal monogram, which are among the smallest coins in Polish numismatic history. Kazimierz's great slogan was: "One state, one law, one currency." Nevertheless, in addition—
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JOZEF WEYSSENHOFF: PROSE-POET OF THE EASTERN BORDER

by MARION MOORE COLEMAN and CAROLINE RATAJCZAK ROGOZINSKA



Jozef Weyssehoff.

UP to the time of Poland's second Nobel Prize winner, Wladyslaw Reymont, and his epic of the peasants of Lowicz district in west-central Poland, the greatest poets and also the greatest masters of prose employing the Polish tongue either came from themselves or used as their principal literary material the part of the Polish realm known to Poles as the Kresy and referred to in English generally as the Eastern Borderland. Of the poets, Slowacki came from one of the Kresy's most southerly provinces, picturesque Podolia, and Mickiewicz from the region just north of its centralmost zone. Of the prose masters, Sienkiewicz not only had deep family roots in the Kresy, but in addition drew his whole inspiration from the intoxicating spring of Kresovian history, while Jozef Weyssehoff, who is the focus of our special interest, was a Kresovian himself and the Kresovian countryside's most eloquent spokesman by far after Mickiewicz.

Weyssehoff came from the part of the Eastern Borderland that gave Poland exactly thirty years before his birth, the gallant figure of Emilia Plater, the Polish Joan of Arc, heroine of the 1830 Uprising, and the blood in his veins was identical with that which flowed in the veins of the noble Emilia. Like her, Weyssehoff came from a family originally German, which settled in the Kresy some time during

the epoch of the great German eastward expansion of the 13th and 14th centuries. His family, like hers, became quickly Polonized and in 1579 we see one of his ancestors serving as representative of the Polish King Stephen Batory in Riga, the capital of Livonia, at that time a province of the Polish Republic. Of the three sons of this Weyssehoff, all served in the Polish army in the wars with Sweden and Russia, one of the three paying with his life for this service. Three centuries later we find the grandfather of Jozef a member of the Polish legions under Dabrowski, fighting with Napoleon in the years between Austerlitz and Leipzig (1806-1813). Always the Weyssehoffs, like the other great Livonian families of Plater, Romer, Soltan, etc., acquitted themselves in every national crisis as the most loyal of Poles, even at the cost of losing much of their property thereby through confiscation.

As a young man, Weyssehoff spent a great deal of time on the estate of his grandmother, Juzynty, on the border of Livonia. Though born himself in Podlasie, one of the more westerly provinces of the Kresy, the boy was taught from earliest childhood, by the subtle pressure of family tradition, to look not to the west for his inspiration, but rather to the east and north, where lay nestled in the heart of the lake-silvered northern forest this wonderful little domain. Here the bones of his ancestors in the Rajacki line of his mother had been buried for at least four generations. Here his family had memo-

ries dating back deep into the past to the remote, but nevertheless real in the lore of the family, great-grandmother who had long ago fallen heir to Juzynty's forests and lakes. Weyssehoff's summer vacations, especially in the years when he was a student at the University of Dorpat, were all spent at Juzynty and here his nature was formed.

Whoever has once succumbed to the spell of the kresovian forest is spoiled forever after for any other place in the world and for any other life than the buoyant, untrammelled, highly civilized, yet exceedingly simple, life of the border people. We see this in the contemporary Polish poet Kazimiera Illakowicz, who, brought up by the family of Plater, lived as a child in an atmosphere identical with that which prevailed at Weyssehoff's Juzynty. One of the strongest and most pervasive notes in Illakowicz's singing is regret for the loss of the paradise she had known as a child in the Kresy, and hatred for the rapacity and cruelty, as she saw it by contrast, of the city life she was obliged to endure as an adult.

Weyssehoff, like Illakowicz, spent



Deep in the Forest. Drawing by Leon Wyczolkowski.

part of his adult life in Warsaw. Superficially he appeared to be enjoying himself there as he participated heartily in the light-headed sports of the rich young men-about-town. He had not been conspicuously successful in the career which he had inherited, namely that of administrator of the family estates, and he had drifted to Warsaw, the literary capital of Poland when he came to maturity in the 1880's, because of a spontaneous urge to write. In 1891 he became editor of the literary section of *The Warsaw Library* (Bib. Warszawska), the principal organ of the conservative wing of Polish opinion, whose prime purpose was to keep alive the memory of Poland's happy past and to foster the cult of her own peculiar Lares and Penates in days neither fortunate nor happy for the Polish nation. Weyssehoff was successful in this post, and successful also in the various writings of his own which he published both during and after his period of editorship. The outstanding work of this period was the satirical *Life and Thoughts of Sigmund Podfilipski* (1898), a classic of its type which has been widely translated and admired.

Throughout the Warsaw period and after, however, no matter on what job, pot-boiling or otherwise, Weyssehoff was engaged, one theme kept recurring to him, one theme persisted in his mind, one theme struck his imagination as truly and deeply inspiring: the life of Poland's eastern border, the life he had known as a child and heard tell of all his life in family

legendry. Try however hard he might, Weyssehoff could not banish this theme from his thoughts nor rid his imagination of its spell. At length he began to fashion the scenes which came to him so readily and without invitation into a



Polish countryside.

semblance of literary form. It was curious, but the work took shape the more easily not when the author himself was actually on his own country estate, but in a small, modest, unpretentious apartment in Warsaw, before an ordinary table, as he says. It was as if the very sordidness and triviality, as he regarded it, of his Warsaw existence bred its opposite: the imagined goodness and richness of the border life he had lost.

The fruit of all this inner fermentation and ecstasy on Weyssehoff's part was, of course, the prose-poem by which our author will forever be remembered: *The Sable and the Girl*. The very essence of pure poetry, though written in prose, *The Sable and the Girl*, is, indeed, for the reader a long experience of sharing what was for Weyssehoff the rarest of "delight remembered in tranquillity."

Weyssehoff was past fifty when *The Sable and the Girl* was written, but it is as fresh and youthful as if its author had by means of some magical potion become a youth again for the period of its writing. Its story is simple. It is the tale of a spontaneous love that sprang sudden-

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Weyssehoff was born in a house like this.



In the Pripet Marshes.

"NOTHING TO REPORT"

by JERZY

TUMANISZWILI



Under the Polish Eagle.

It wasn't that he felt old. He was merely bored and tired. He gazed at the ships with lusterless eyes. Now and then he gave an order, but most evidently his thoughts were elsewhere. If someone were to ask him what he was thinking about he would undoubtedly shrug his shoulders and say . . . "Oh . . . nothing!"

As usual the sea was grey and restless. As usual the ships rolled from side to side, and pitched rhythmically from fore to aft. As usual the horizon was hidden behind the fog. As usual the destroyer rocked and rocked. As usual Jarczak stood leaning against the sea compass and Szydowski the signalman stood on the left side of the bridge, day-dreaming. As usual Wiczarnicki, aid to the navigation officer, was telling about his stomach ailments and of the English way of life. No wonder that Bogdan thought of nothing . . . The ocean is so vast, we are so small, and the waves come and come.

"Right ten," Bogdan called into the tube.

"Return to zero. Do you hear? . . . I said steer zero—Yes—that's right . . . Hold that course . . ."

"Right ten—smoke on the horizon," this came from the

lookout of our long range gun.

"Smoke on the horizon?" Szydowski, the signalman, woke up with a start.

"Sure—Can't you see the mast? Look there . . . And look, there's one more . . . here comes the third one. It's the convoy . . . It's the convoy we're to escort . . ."

Jarczak, who had been leaning against the compass, suddenly sprang to life.

"Good," Bogdan said. "I must let the chief know."

He walked up to the tube.

"The old man's taking a snooze," Jarczak spoke up.

"Is he in his cabin or in the mess?"

"In his cabin," said Jarczak, without changing his position.

"Attention . . . Attention . . . Reporting a convoy, Sir," Bogdan began. "Reporting a convoy . . ." he chanted again and again.

And after a slight pause, "Yes, Sir. Yes, the one we were supposed to . . . Yes, Sir . . . Yes, Sir . . ."

Then he turned to the others. "The Chief told us to be careful. It's getting dark. He's coming up now."

The sun was slipping behind the horizon. Gradually darkness was descending. Captain Chorec clambered up to the bridge, his eyes still full of sleep. "Get your supper," he said to Bogdan.

"What are we getting tonight?"

Captain Chorec smacked his lips, but said in a voice that denied his gesture, "The usual grub. By the way, have you heard the German news?"

"No, but I can tell you what it is, Sir. The German forces have retreated according to plan, inflicting heavy losses on the enemy. The enemy in a panic is making further advances. Good luck, Sir!"

Bogdan went down to his cabin. He drew off his boots and his jacket. He looked into the mirror and then very carefully examined his bald spot. He shook his head with a worried look. Then, as if deciding not to let that bother him, he stretched to his full height . . . or was going to, when his head met the overhead pipe with a resounding crack.

"D . . . it's pitching like hell again."

In the mess the mechanic was reclining in the only easy chair. As usual his right hand hung over the side with a half-smoked cigarette dripping ashes on the immaculate floor. The doctor was reading in another chair, and as usual Robert was sleeping on the couch. Everything was as usual. This was the "sleeping trio." Bogdan glanced at them with the same tired look and sat down to table.

"Supper," he roared.

"Yes, sir . . . there in a minute," the cook called back.

Jarczak, as usual, was late in coming down.

"You know, it's a big convoy. There are several destroyers in the escort."

"Let there be," Bogdan cut him short. He was in no mood for talking.

Jarczak looked at the food with distaste and began to butter his bread. He looked up at Bogdan. Bogdan was also buttering his bread and casting side glances at Jarczak.

"How many more hours?" he finally muttered.

"I think we'll be there day after tomorrow. The wind is changing. We'll have the wind with us later."

"Maybe we'll get the mail. We have to get it," Bogdan cheered up a bit.

"A ten-day batch—there'll be a lot of papers and maybe some letters too!" Bogdan took a deep breath and at that thought attacked his food with zest.

"Yes, letters!" Jarczak said in a tense, sad voice and fell into his usual silence.

He doesn't talk much, Bogdan thought. Sometimes he won't

make a sound for hours. Then he'll make a statement out of the clear, and when one listens for more, he just goes back to his thoughts. The mechanic looks up for a moment from his reclining position, mutters something like "Idiot," and falls back into his lethargy. The doctor nods and smiles sympathetically. Robert yawns from ear to ear, blinks his eyes and goes back to sleep. A queer fellow Jarczak, but a swell guy.

"They don't know how to steer!" Jarczak spoke up, clutching at his sliding plate.

After supper they sat by the fire and pulled out the old newspapers.

God, I've seen these dozens of times, Bogdan thought. He threw them away and began looking intently into the fire; an hour slipped by. A sailor came down to announce the change of watch. Both sprang to their feet, dressed and climbed out onto the bridge.

Although it was pitch dark, Bogdan said, "Good morning." The moon was rising off the port side. Soon the black silhouettes of the silent ships were revealed in the shimmering light.

"There's the Commodore, there's a trawler, there a brother destroyer."

The captain faced the compass. His hands were thrust into his pockets, and his cap pulled down over his eyes. He was shivering.

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Another Junker 88 downed!

"SECOND FRONT" IN THE WARSAW GHETTO

by DR. HENRYK

SZOSZKIES

RECENTLY through underground channels news reached the outside world about the battle inside the Ghetto of Warsaw. These reports did not present a complete picture of the struggle. Now copies of underground Polish papers are available giving fuller accounts of the epic resistance put up by the desperate Jews. These reports are confirmed by confidential information that has reached the Polish government.

Here is a short account of the battle which the Germans ironically called "the opening of a second front in Nalewki." It proved both a sanguinary epilogue to the liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto, and a disaster to the Germans.

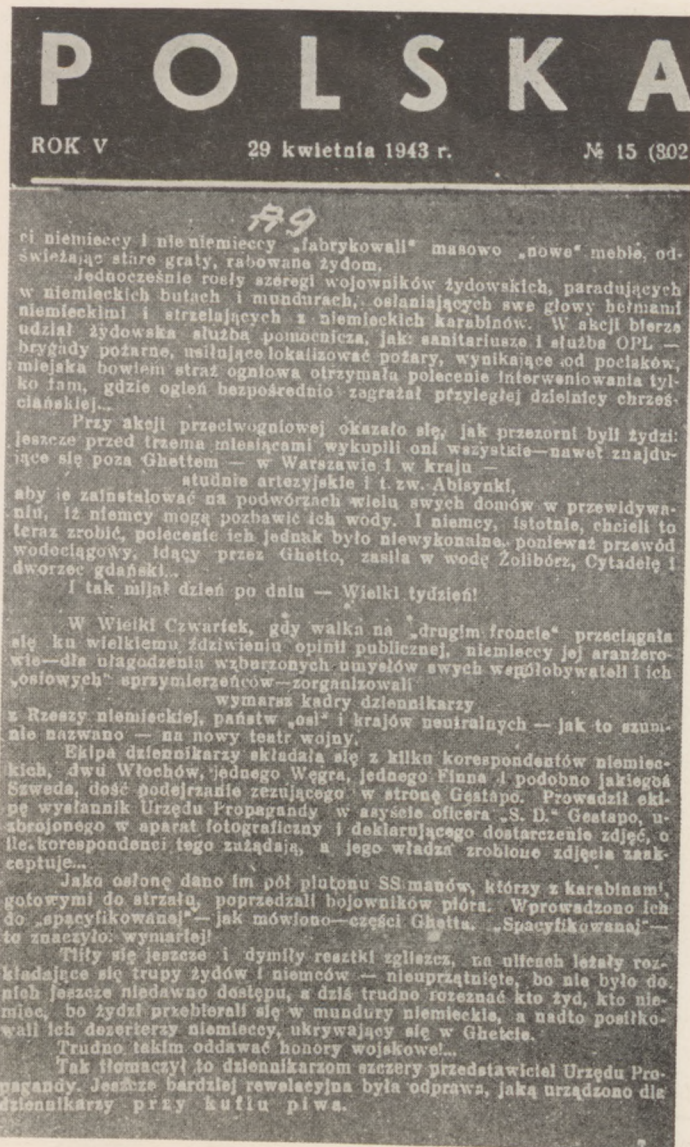
After the mass deportations of Jews from the Warsaw Ghetto in the latter half of 1942, when about a half a million people were murdered in the gas chambers of the Tremblinka camps, only about 40,000 Jews were left in Warsaw. They were used as slave workers for the German war industry and they supposed that, as they were working for the Reich, their lives would be spared. On April 20th, Hitler's birthday, the Germans prepared a pleasant surprise for the Jews. They ordered 5,000 Jews, for the most part women and children, to be collected at Stawki Street in Warsaw. The Warsaw Jews knew what this meant. All previous convoys intended for Tremblinka, 40 miles from Warsaw, had started from Stawki Street. The few who had escaped, reported that all their comrades had been put to death in gas chambers in one of the Tremblinka barracks. So this time the inhabitants of the Ghetto decided to put up a fight.

For some months there had been a United Council of Resistance in the Warsaw Ghetto, in case the Germans should demand new victims. This Council of Resistance worked in close cooperation with the Polish underground movement. Conferences were held, and a plan for armed resistance worked out. The Directorate of Civilian Resistance in Poland sent instructors to the Ghetto. Along with Jewish officers and soldiers who had served in the Polish army, they formed the central body of organized resistance. Under their direction, weapons and German uniforms and helmets were collected. It was decided that the enemy could best be fought in this German disguise. The exact number of fighters is not known, but some Germans have placed the figure as high as 5,000.

Late in April, four armored trucks and other motor vehicles filled with soldiers rolled through the gates of the Ghetto on Swietojska Street. This was a German punitive expedition.

The streets of the ghetto were deserted. Suddenly bullets and hand grenades began to fell the German guards. Roofs spouted smoke and fire. Hitler's strong men ran for their lives. An alarm was sent to the German garrison in Warsaw. The walls of the Ghetto were surrounded. Over them came a rain of shells. Then German tanks drove through the streets and fired into the houses, but more bullets and hand grenades came from new centers of resistance. The Germans had to retreat. Then the Nazis brought up field guns and placed them in Bonifraterska Street and Krasinski Square. They opened fire on all sides in an attempt to stamp out the revolt.

The boom of artillery shook the walls and windows. Normal life in Warsaw ceased. German planes appeared and threw incendiaries on the Ghetto and the sky over the northern part of Warsaw was covered with a pall of black smoke. The Jewish fighters began to set fire to the factories making goods for the German army. In a few minutes all factories



Page of Polish underground publication of April 29, 1943, describing the Battle of the Warsaw Ghetto.

making uniforms, underwear, boots, etc., for the Germans were ablaze. A big furniture plant, a mattress and a brush factory were also burned. Simultaneously Jewish and Polish fighters appeared on the streets, many of them dressed in German uniforms, their heads protected by German helmets.

Hand to hand fighting ensued in which many people were killed. But the Ghetto was finally cleared of Germans, who then proceeded to bomb the Ghetto from the outside. Nalewki, Nowolipie, Muranowski Square, Smocza and part of Franciszkanska Streets were completely demolished. A company of Jewish fighters guarded the entrance to Leszno, the main street of the Ghetto. The Germans set fire to the synagogue on Tlomacka Street, because it obstructed their view. At several places, the Germans cut the water pipes and thus deprived of water not only the Ghetto, but also the Polish suburb of Zoliborz. But the Jews were not caught unprepared. They had installed water pumps in their yards in case the Germans should cut off the city supply.

Thus Holy Week passed. On Thursday to the amazement

of everyone the Germans organized a visit of German, Axis and neutral journalists from Germany to this "new theatre of war."

The journalists were given a guard of SS men armed with guns. They were shown part of the Ghetto deserted by the Jews. Smoke was still issuing from burning buildings. On the streets lay the decomposing bodies of Jews and Germans. They had been left where they fell. It was difficult to tell the Jews from the Germans. Not only because Jews wore German uniforms but German Army deserters, hiding in the Ghetto, had also taken part in the fighting.

The journalists were told that Jewish women, children and aged people were hidden in cellars strongly reinforced with cement. The cellars extended through the Ghetto and in some places foundations of houses had been cut, linking other houses and streets. In this way, the Jews could communicate with the outer world. In order to stop this, the police had been forced to guard even the sewers leading out of the Ghetto.

Through these secret channels, food and arms reached the Ghetto. Through this way Jews received assistance, and provision for escape had been made. Every Jewish house

had been turned into a miniature fort, with sentries posted on lofts and roofs.

There could be but one end to this unequal and desperate battle that lasted until the beginning of May. The defenders of the Ghetto resolved to die arms in hand. They knew what would be their fate if they capitulated. But before they died they killed as many Germans as they could.

Under the charred ruins of houses remains of burned human bodies lay in heaps. The Germans say that their casualties amounted to 1,000. Polish estimates are much higher. Evidently the Germans were ashamed of the losses they suffered at the hands of an inferior race.

Warsaw and all Poland breathlessly watched this epic struggle, that recalled the battle of the Maccabees in ancient Palestine.

But this rising of the Warsaw Ghetto is a heartening omen of what the patriotic peoples of countries now under the Nazi heel will soon be doing. They will rise as one man and break the chains of Nazi slavery. They will join hands with the Allied troops who will soon liberate them. Thus will an end be put to tyranny and hatred, thus will freedom, justice and lasting peace be secured.

JOZEF WEYSSENHOFF: PROSE-POET OF THE EASTERN BORDER

(Continued from page 9)

ly into being and as suddenly passed into the limbo of remembered beauty between a Polish aristocrat, Michal Rajewski, and the daughter of a Lithuanian peasant, Warszulka. A vast and seemingly unbridgeable abyss of contrary traditions yawned between the two, as they chanced to come upon each other in the Lithuanian forest. But the miracle of love bridged the chasm and the two so different, yet in their physical beauty and natural responsiveness to the atmosphere about them, so similar creatures found themselves for the briefest of fleeting moments completely at one, and in utter harmony with the beating of nature's own very heart, as it were.

But the hero of *The Sable and the Girl* is not Michal Rajewski nor its heroine, the lovely Lithuanian maiden Warszulka. Hero and Heroine alike are the countryside itself, the wonderful Lithuanian forest, with its myriad and varied lakes. The thread of a great hunting party binds the tale together, as does also, of course the love theme of Rajewski and Warszulka, but the hero remains The Forest itself. Every mood of the Forest is revealed with the most intimate exactitude, as no master of Polish writing save Mickiewicz himself has ever succeeded in duplicating. Onomatopoeic in the extreme are not only the words but the longer cadences also of Weysenhoff's prose, so that a translator has to search widely in his own vocabulary for equally onomatopoeic words and expressions in order even to approach the quality of Weysenhoff's paragraphs. Above all, a deep and sincere passion for The Forest, probably the sincerest and most genuine passion ever experienced by Weysenhoff in his entire life, informs every line of *The Sable and the Girl*, making its reading in Polish both moving and in the Greek sense, cathartic.

There are a hundred passages in *The Sable and the Girl* that might be offered as samples of Weysenhoff's manner of interpreting The Forest he loved so deeply. The one that occurs most readily, however, is an autumn vignette, close to the end of the story. Michal Rajewski is alone in the forest, alone, as Weysenhoff says, "with the unceasing murmur overhead." As he listens, "the murmuring seemed to flow over his nerves, into his lungs, into his brain like some heal-

ing balsam." And it seemed to him he could hear The Forest itself speak.

"In my rustlings," the wood seemed to say, "I extol the wild life of the forest, the free wanderings of the winds, the breeding-places and the nurture of all the living creatures in my glades and thickets. In me is eternal musing on things of grave import, such as the east and the west, heat and cold, hunger and provender, the proper pairing of the lovesick young, the death of the weaker that they may survive in the stronger. In me is the moment, the shuddering moment that promises ecstasy, and the mighty moment that gives it. There is nothing greater than I, either in the fields that are bare, or such as are covered with the hovels of thy invention, O mortal. Thou seekest happiness elsewhere, thou town-dweller, but from me thou proceedest and to me thou wilt return. And today, O youthful hunter, for thy forgetting, for thy comforting, what dost thou crave?" *

Weysenhoff's achievement in *The Sable and the Girl* did not go unappreciated: twice the author was awarded a literary prize of distinction in recognition of it, by the city of Poznan in 1929, and later, in 1932, on the eve of his death, by the capital city of Warsaw.

But no experience of public or civic acclaim had the power to move Weysenhoff greatly. The one experience in his life which did move him, deeply and genuinely and overpoweringly, as we have seen, was the act of writing his majestic prose-poem of the Eastern Borderland. For the months of spiritual exaltation during which he brought into being this gem of poetic creation he was forever grateful.

Grateful also is every Pole who loves what is perhaps the most characteristically Polish part of the whole Polish realm. Pure and undefiled, unravaged by the ebb and flow of water, that part of Poland, the Eastern Border, is even today a living reality thanks to *The Sable and the Girl*, as one day in the not too distant future it will be again a living reality within the Polish state and in the wider commonwealth of nations.

* Translation of Kate Zuk-Skarszewska, Allen and Unwin, London, 1929, p. 304.

(Continued from page 11)

“Damn cold, tonight . . . Course 102.” Captain Choryc handed over his watch. “Continue speed at 7. Watch carefully, they may come tonight. It’s a bright night.”

And again minutes passed, and then hours. The ships rolled from side to side, and pitched fore and aft. Every hour, the position was reported and new orders given to the helm . . .

The same thoughts came back to Bogdan . . . What about? Oh . . . nothing . . . or, maybe about the mother he left in Poland . . . the girl he wanted to go back to . . . Would she be there? Then the streets of Warsaw filled with gay throngs . . . Smolna Street during the Third of May parade. Will he ever return?

Three sharp rings brought him up sharply again. A signal from the station. “Look out for torpedo planes.”

“Man the guns!” the captain ordered.

“Stand by . . . stand by . . . all hands on deck . . .” the amplifier blared.

“Will I ever get back,” thought Bogdan. “I can’t believe that Warsaw lies in ruins.” He didn’t believe it, because he didn’t want to believe it.

“Sound of motors to port,” two reported.

“Stand by port gun. Stand by . . . to port. Man the pom-poms.”

Silence settled again, minutes passed. Captain Choryc relieved Bogdan at midnight.

“Convoy on your right . . . course 102 . . . Speed 107 . . . There’s the Commodore . . . there’s the trawler.”

“O. K. I’ve got it. Go to sleep.”

Sleep . . . Yes, he might dream of home again.

In the cabin Bogdan and Kazik were undressing.

“It’s d . . . rough tonight. By the way, Kazik.”

“What’s on your mind?” Jarczak called from the upper berth.

“Take care you don’t fall out, tonight. The compass is on the table again.”

POLISH COINS ONE THOUSAND YEARS AGO

(Continued from page 7)

tion to the Cracow mint, there were, in this King’s lifetime, independent mints in Silesia, Mazovia and Kujawy. In 1340, this same King opened the first mint in Lwow to coin silver *kwartniks* and copper *pulas* for the Eastern lands.

1386 is an important date in Poland’s history, for in that year Queen Jadwiga of Poland married Wladyslaw Jagiello, Grand Duke of Lithuania, to unite Poland and Lithuania. In pagan times Lithuania had no minted coins of her own. She used either foreign currency or her own monetary system, consisting of animal skins and silver rubles in the shape of rods, triangles or cubes. In 1387 Jagiello founded a mint in Wilno, which began to strike small *deniers*, *half-grosze* and double *deniers* for the newly converted Lithuanians. The early years of Jagiellon rule were a period of intense minting activity. The city records of Cracow from 1389-1440 give us information about 34 Cracow minters, of whom not a few were prominent business men and bankers. They usually marked the coins struck by them with their initial, placing it under the royal crown or the double cross, symbol of the new King’s apostolic role.

In 1454 Prussia returned to Poland and received a number

of privileges from the King. Torun, Danzig and Elbling were permitted to strike their own money. For many years they minted *schillings* featuring the city’s coat-of-arms as well as the Polish eagle and the name of the Polish King.

One of the chief characteristics of the *grosz* period is the abundance of all types of coins. To the numismatist, excavations from the 14th and 15th centuries offer a rare treat, for more numerous than those of earlier centuries, they permit a detailed comparative study of coins with regard to Poland itself and with regard to Europe in general. To be sure, too great a variety in currency is not the best thing for any state, but at any rate it offers more clues to life in olden times than our present simplified systems will offer to future historians.

The 16th century saw the advent of the gold system which in one form or another has endured to this day. The Polish *zloty* has a long story to tell of the Polish Golden Age, of many invasions, of the partition of Poland by three rapacious neighbors, and finally of the resurrection of the Polish Republic in 1918. It is a stirring story, one well worth the effort to study.

GENERAL KAZIMIERZ SOSNKOWSKI

(Continued from page 5)

lar in Poland, and a democrat in the true sense of the word, as Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Armed Forces, will meet with general approval and satisfaction.

The cover shows a Polish infantryman in action.

The White Eagle of Poland

O noble bird of solitary places
We know thy longing to be free
Pressed by strange and curious faces
Hateful bars surround thee
How escape this torturous bondage
Where find peace that freedom brings
To smooth thy ruffled plumage
Let grow thy aching wings.
EDITH BRISBANE DUELL

CENTRAL UNION OF EUROPE SEEN AS PEACE PROP

An English writer, Douglas Reed, discussing the “Daily Mail” article on “Central Union as Leading European peace,” says:

“If a third war is to be avoided, inhabitants of this all too secluded British Island will have to rouse themselves to understand the importance of Central Europe, that Middle Zone which the lustful powers of the mainland always set out to conquer as the first step to world dominion. The survival of small nations in this Middle Zone is as essential to our survival as our own breath.

“Eleven separate states existed between the gray Baltic and the blue Adriatic, each with its own Government and fighting forces and diplomatic representatives abroad, while the greedy great powers eagerly waited to swallow them all.

“These eleven states pointed their guns at each other and indulged in minor frontier disputes. Their combined population was a hundred-fifty million, and all shared one paramount longing: to be safe from conquest by a great power and free to govern themselves.

“All saw joint danger coming, but blinded by these less important disputes each went its separate way in search of salvation. The result was that they were all swallowed up.

“Today as the savage battles of peacetime approach again, some people of these countries see that tragedy will repeat itself, unless they can make the Middle Zone so strong that the temptation it offers to the insatiable greed of great powers will be removed.

“So the ‘central unionists’ propose that after the war these states should combine in a new European federation: ‘Central Union.’ Models of the British Empire and the U.S.A. seem to have been carefully studied by the Central Unionists. They propose a federal flag but the retention of various national flags, co-existence of monarchies like Yugoslavia and republics like Czechoslovakia and a central capital—akin to Washington or Canberra—in a commonly owned federal zone, at some such place as Lomnizta in the beautiful Tatra Mountains of Slovakia.

“Disputes which divide these countries are petty compared with the stupendous gain of safety and national freedom they might find in some such union.

“A union of only two—Poland and Czechoslovakia—in 1938, would have made a strong point in Europe of fifty million people which might have prevented this war. If four or five or all were

Poles Desert German Army

“SWIT” reports that two German regiments stationed in the Suwalki and Augustow districts of Northern Poland near the Lithuanian frontier, composed of Poles forcibly recruited into the German Army, have completely dispersed.

The men, recruited from the illegally incorporated province of Pomorze, also from the Mazowsze district and East Prussia, seized all the equipment, arms and ammunition and escaped in a body into dense Suwalki forests, where they have formed regular units under the orders of the Directorate of the Underground Fighting.

Polish youths of the district are flocking to join them.

“SWIT” transmits an appeal to other Poles in the Western provinces who have been forced into the German army to desert en masse and appeals to all Polish people to give them every assistance and to help them join the underground units.

JEWES RESIST “LIQUIDATION” AT BIALYSTOK

Reports received by the Polish Government in London are to the effect that the Germans have begun to liquidate the Bialystok Ghetto, where Jews are offering staunch resistance as they did in Warsaw.

Among the Jewish inmates of the concentration camp in Tremblinka a mutiny broke out in August. The Jews set fire to the barracks where mass slaughter used to take place, and the notorious gas chamber was destroyed.

The Directorate of Civilian Resistance has appealed to the Polish population to assist Jews in their resistance and struggle against the Germans, and to shelter Jews who succeed in escaping.

22 GESTAPO EXECUTED BY POLISH ORDER

Under orders from the Directorate of Civilian Resistance, death sentences against twenty-two Gestapo officers were carried out during June and July in Occupied Poland by members of the Polish underground.

The sentences were passed by underground courts which function regularly in Poland, hearing cases of German brutality against the inhabitants. In May, 59 Gestapo officers were executed.

German-controlled newspapers in Poland have confirmed the fact that during the month of August thirty-four large fires, resulting in the destruction of factories working for the German army, were set by underground patriots in the Poznan district.

LATEST SWIT BROADCASTS

SWIT reports the deportation to forced labor in Germany of many Poles belonging to the Polish underground. SWIT reminds them they do not cease to be soldiers of the Polish underground. They must continue to fight by sabotage and lead the millions of foreign workers in Germany. To strike a decisive blow against the Germans

from within, when the hour comes.

SWIT reports that 1,500 Poles were arrested in Kielce and 1,200 in Starachowice—mainly workmen. Their fate is unknown. Three Polish youths succeeded in escaping from forced labor in the quarries of Sandomierz. As a reprisal, the Germans executed their families.

to combine the loose cargo of Europe that for centuries has been shifting about, would be well stowed.

“Central Unionists well realize that in view of this age-old problem of greedy great powers on the European mainland, their proposal can only succeed by and with the moral support of other great powers having no ambition in Europe: Britain and America.

“This in turn depends on the people of the British Island coming to see what they never could see before—that they themselves can only survive if enormous re-

serves of manpower, food-power and fuel-power contained in this area do not pass into the possession of any great continental power. That Churchill sees this basic truth of European problem is clearly implicit in his words of the twenty-first of March 1st: ‘All this will, I believe, be found to harmonize with high permanent interests of Britain, U.S.A. and Russia.’

“Will the statesmen of the next peace conference see this problem as clearly? On that the length of peace may depend.”

UNDERGROUND PUBLISHES AN AIR MAGAZINE

A secret aviation magazine printed on 20 pages in pocket-size, published and widely distributed by a group of ingenious underground editors somewhere in Poland takes top honors for daring among enslaved Europe’s underground press.

German civil and military officials in Poland, as well as the Gestapo, were astounded by its detailed workmanship and illustrations. It is a technical and educational guide and text book explaining the merits of British and American warplanes and the inferiority of Axis planes. The magazine called “Wzlot” (Take-off), first of its kind to appear anywhere in Europe under German domination, was dated May 1943. The front cover carried a message from the editor declaring that the United Nations forces were preparing to liberate the Axis occupied areas and warned all to prepare to rise against their oppressors.

The booklet contains photographs and charts.

American planes discussed include the Mustang, the Corsair, the Thunderbolt, the Lightning Flying Fortress, the Avenger, the Torpedo Plane, the Devastator, the Torpedo Plane Dauntless Diver, as well as commando and transport planes.

British planes illustrated include the Spitfire, the Mosquito Fighter-aircraft and Hotspur transport, Glider.

The Magazine also has topical articles about the R.A.F. and the Polish Air Force in Great Britain, an article on the coastal command and its achievements, based on the booklet published by the British Ministry of Information.

To the lists of Allied and Axis aircraft were added data showing the performance and superiority of American and British planes over those manufactured by the Axis.

Photographs aid in recognizing various types of planes, including those of Japanese design.

As if to add insult to injury of the baffled Gestapo, the Magazine announced a contest asking readers to answer sixteen question covering engineering, flying and historical subjects relating to aircraft. Prizes offered consisted chiefly of scale models of the latest fighting machines “to be supplied through the same channels as this newspaper.”

The last page reproduced an advertisement of a London merchant who supplies caps for the Polish Air Force personnel. The advertisement showed an airman’s cap with the emblem of a Polish Eagle under the caption: “This shop supplies all Polish airmen.”

TO THE FIGHTING POLES

by MAJOR CYRIL CARMICHAEL*

... To begin with, one must call to mind that Poland is one of the oldest countries in Europe. It was a great power a thousand years ago. In the Middle Ages, its knights were as famous as its fighting men are today.

Few people realize that one of the greatest military triumphs of the Middle Ages was the battle fought between the chivalry of Poland and the Teutonic Knights, ending in a sweeping victory for the Polish nation over their German adversaries.

Again, when the Turks were battling at the gates of Vienna, with European civilization as it was then tottering, who was it that rushed to the aid of that city and in a victorious battle saved not only Vienna, but Europe from Turkish domination? It was King Sobieski of Poland with Polish forces.

In the last war, that great leader, Marshal Pilsudski, emerged as the great man of Poland. Starting with forces comparable to the present Polish underground, later welded into a military unit, he not only assisted in clearing the Germans out of Poland, but later resisted Russia and beat them when they invaded in 1920, and lived long enough to see a Poland that had been rebuilt from the devastation of the first World War, and which once more had taken its place in the ranks of leading powers.

In 1939, Poland could easily have made profitable terms with Hitler, but to do so, it would have had to sacrifice its honor, and caused untold suffering to its friends and Allies. Knowing full well that they could not withstand the might of Germany, yet single-handed they took up the struggle, and since then, although over-run completely, subject to the greatest conceivable hardships that a Conqueror could put on a country, people starved, massacred, tortured, yet, today, Poland rises triumphant, its Army, its Navy and its Air Force battling in all parts of the world, a living example of what raw courage can do in the face of overwhelming numbers.

In the history of this great country, the U.S., two great figures emerge, Kosciuszko and Pulaski. Both helped in the American War of Independence; the former to return to his country and carry on the battle for freedom, the latter to lay down his life in the battle of Savannah.

There is Chopin, the greatest Polish musician that ever lived; Madame Curie, the woman who discovered radium; her daughter, now carrying on her mother's work; Paderewski, the greatest pianist that ever lived. Such is Poland.

From my own personal observation, one finds in Poland, the warm hospitality of a great country, and friendships once established live through everything.

The end of this war is probably not yet in sight. No one can tell when we shall finally exterminate Nazism, Fascism, and what is covered by the name, Japan. But that day will come, and when it does, Poland will once more emerge as the great nation she is, and those of us who have been there will once more be able to revisit the beautiful towns that were, that have been devastated by the ruthless hand of Nazism. But even though there may be just a heap of stones, the people will soon see to it that they once more become the center of culture and generous hospitality that they were before Hitler struck.

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