



WHITE EAGLE



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THE 600TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF GRUNWALD



The Charge of Polish Knights and Infantry at the Battle of Grunwald

The Battle of Grunwald, considered one of the greatest battles of Medieval Europe, marked its 600th anniversary on July 15, 2010. Known as the Battle of Grunwald in Poland, the Battle of Tannenberg in Germany and as the Battle of Zalgirio in Lithuania, the military clash was one of the largest and longest battle fought during the medieval period. Notably, casualties were also among the highest of any battle of that era. It battle also saw one of the earliest uses of cannon on a European battlefield.

The Battle of Grunwald is considered by historians as the greatest victory in Polish and Lithuanian history. This military achievement of Polish and Lithuanian troops in 1410 had a dramatic impact on the future of Central and Eastern Europe. The battle likewise enhanced the evolving, divergent mythologies for Germanic and Slavic cultures through the centuries and to the present.

The roots of the battle can be traced to the 13th century when the Polish Prince Konrad of Mazovia petitioned the Teutonic Knights, a German monastic order of crusading knights, to settle in and around the town of Chelmno in northern Poland. Prince Konrad wanted the Order to assist him fighting the neighboring pagan Prussian tribes. The



**Grand Duke Vitold
of Lithuania**

Crown, raiding and pillaging towns, villages and farmsteads on Poland's northern frontier.

In 1386 Grand Duke Jagiello of Lithuania converted to Christianity and married Queen Jadwiga of Poland. Taking the name Wladyslaw II, he became King of Poland and established a dynastic union between the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Kingdom of Poland under the Jagiello family. The Teutonic



**King Wladyslaw II
of Poland**

Knights arrived in 1230 and were subsequently awarded added territories by a Papal Bull along the southern and southeast shores of the Baltic Sea. The Order eventually exterminated the Prussian tribes and occupied their land. It then launched a crusade against the pagan Lithuanians to the east and southeast. Then during the 14th century the Order came into increased conflict with the Polish

Knights, however, rejected the contention that the Lithuanians had become Christian, declaring that the claim was a ruse to protect them from the Knight's crusading campaigns. The Order, therefore continued to conduct raids against the Lithuanians and extended their war to Poland on the grounds that the Poles were protecting and aiding a pagan nation.

In 1409 rebellion broke out against the Teutonic Order in Samogitia, a Teutonic occupied province north of Prussia. Samogitia, though controlled by the Teutonic Knights, was also claimed by Lithuania. Grand Duke Vitold Jagiello of Lithuania, therefore, pledged support for the rebellion and King Wladyslaw II of Poland, cousin of Grand Duke Vitold, expressing Slavic and dynastic solidarity, also joined Lithuania in



Marienburg—Headquarters of the Teutonic Knights

support of the rebellion. Confronted by this alliance, the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order, Ulrich von Jungingen, declared war on both Lithuania and Poland and launched invasions of their territories. In the spring of 1410 Grand Duke Vitold and King Wladyslaw II agreed to combine their armies and conduct a joint invasion of Prussia to crush the Order. At the end of June, 1410, therefore, a combined Polish-Lithuanian army under the overall com-



Memorial to the Polish fallen at Grunwald in Krakow

mand of King Wladyslaw II moved north into Prussia toward the great fortress of Marienburg (Malbork), the capital of the Teutonic Knights and the largest brick castle in Europe. The Teutonic Order was surprised by this move since they thought that their two enemies would conduct separate campaigns. To meet this threat, the Grand Master of the Order quickly concentrated his forces in an attempt to set up a defensive line. The Polish-Lithuanian army, however, outflanked this defensive line and continued to move toward Marienburg. In response the Grand Master shifted his forces so as to position themselves in front of the advancing Polish-Lithuanian army which was approaching the Morence River in southern Prussia.

The army of the Teutonic Order moved into its positions

for the battle during the early hours of the morning of July 15th, 1410. Their forces were deployed in three ranks facing the southeast in front of a road that ran on a southwest-northeast axis from the village of Grunwald on the west to the village of Steban (Tannenberg), 2 miles to the northeast. Their forces were deployed in three lines facing the southeast. Before them lay open rolling fields before ending in woods and marshes that boarded the west bank of the Morence River that flowed to the north. The Order's



Grand Master of the Teutonic Order, Ulrich von Jungingen

forces consisted of approximately 20,000 heavy cavalry of knights and their retainers. Only 250 of these were professed knights of the Order while the remaining were brother knights of the Order, mercenaries, and independent volunteer knights from throughout the Holy Roman Empire. The rest of their army consisted of approximately 10,000 well armed mercenary and allied infantry that included archers, cross-bowmen, pike men, and artilleryists. The Order also provided training and weapons to their servants. To support these Forces the Order had 100 bomards which were an early primitive

type of field artillery. This artillery was positioned to the front of the Order's cavalry with most of their batteries on their left flank. In addition, lines of infantry were placed along the entire front of the Order's positions with trenches for protection against cavalry. The Teutonic Knights divided its cavalry to the right and left in three ranks with reserves to the rear. Their more lightly armored heavy cavalry, wearing mainly chain-mail rather than plate armor, were placed on their left flank. The right side of their army consisted of the remainder of their heavy cavalry. The army of the Teutonic Knights, therefore, numbered around 30,000 men.

As the sun rose the Teutonic Order's Army was in position awaiting battle but the Polish-Lithuanian forces were well to their front and still in the process of deploying their units in the wooded area just west of the Morence River. The morning grew increasingly hot and humid after an early morning rain so that the mounted knights and retain-

ers of the Order sweated in their heavy plate or chain-mail armor. King Wladyslaw II was in no hurry to commence battle. Even after his forces were aligned and had moved out from the forest onto the open fields facing the troops of the Teutonic Order he waited as the morning advanced. The left side of his army, under the command of Grand Duke Vitold consisted of 15,000 light Lithuanian cavalry, about 3,000 Crimean Tartars, Russian (vassal troops from Smolensk), and Ukrainian light cavalry. The left side of the joint army consisted of Polish heavy cavalry of around 20,000 knights and retainers, aligned in three ranks of lines with reserve cavalry to the rear. There was also approximately 5,000 well armed and trained infantry from Bohemia, Moravia, Moldavia and Wallachia which were spread along the entire front of the Polish-Lithuanian army facing the Order's infantry. Finally there was a 5,000 man Polish peasant infantry hidden in the woods to the rear of the battle field. The numbers of this peasant infantry is not usually included in the count of Polish forces because they were not a regular part of the army. They were vassals who were brought along by their landlords as part of their levy. They had no armor, had no combat training and were armed only with their personal farm implements that were improvised to serve as weapons, such as axes, clubs, or scythe blades stuck on poles. They remained in the woods throughout most of the battle and did not enter the conflict until its outcome had been decided. The combined Polish-Lithuanian army, therefore, numbered approximately 43,000 men.

At around 9:00 in the morning skirmishing broke out between the light cavalry of both sides. On the Teutonic Order's left side (Polish-Lithuanian right flank) Tartar mounted archers, using their traditional tactics from the southern steppes, repeatedly rode forward toward the Order's lines, let loose volleys of arrows and returned to the Lithuanian lines.

Around noon Grand Duke Vitold ordered the Lithuanian light cavalry to charge the left side of the Teutonic Order's position. This attack was supported by several banners of heavy cavalry from the extreme right end of the Polish line. As the Lithuanian cavalry galloped over the open field, the Teutonic bombard artillery attempted to fire on the advancing cavalymen, but their gunpowder had been dampened by an early morning rain and they were only able to fire several scattered ineffective rounds. The Lithuanian cavalry rode over and through the artillery positions and swept its infantry support before them, driving toward the left side of the Order's heavy cavalry which had launched its own countercharge. The Order's infantry, attempting to flee from the charging Lithuanian cavalry, ran into the front line of their own charging cavalry. Caught between the two cavalry charges the Order's infantry on their left flank was virtually wiped out.

After about an hour of fierce fighting the Lithuanians implemented a planned retreat. Leaving several banners to fight a holding action the remainder of their cavalry seemed to flee to the rear and into the woods and marshes of the west bank of the Morence River. This ruse drew the Order's left flank away from the main battle as it rushed after the fleeing Lithuanians in a disorderly pursuit.

As the Lithuanians retreated, the Polish heavy cavalry on the left of the Polish-Lithuanian position charged the Teutonic Knight's heavy cavalry on their right flank. The two sides slammed into each other so fiercely that eye-witnesses reported that they could hear the impact of armor, lances, war hammers, cavalry axes and swords from their vantage points around the battle field. The ensuing melee was savage. The Polish cavalry became hard pressed when six banners of the Order's knights, which had not participated in the pursuit of the fleeing Lithuanians, swung to their right and hit the side of the engaged Polish cavalry. King Wladyslaw II, watching the conduct of the battle near this point was threatened and several Polish knights came to his defense. At one point the King actually engaged in personal combat with an enemy knight. To meet this threat, the King committed his second line of cavalry reserves which blunted the Order's attack, stabilizing the Polish front. Fighting continued to rage throughout the afternoon with one brief pause, apparently caused by a heavy rain shower. As the battle continued into the afternoon the Knights became increasingly hard pressed. Late in the afternoon, as their situation deteriorated, Grand Master von Jurgingen led his final reserves, representing a third of his cavalry, in a charge against the right flank of the Polish line. In response, King Wladyslaw II threw in the last of his reserves. Strengthened by these fresh troops the Polish cavalry drove forward, enveloping the left side of the Order's line. Then charging through this part of the line, they cut off and isolated several banners of the Order. At this point in the battle the Lithuanian Light Cavalry, which had reformed in the woods to the rear of the battle field, charged back into the battle. Surging toward the Order's left flank, it hit the rear of those banners of the Order that had been cut off from the main body of their army. The Order's forces, outnumbered and threatened with encirclement, now lost their Grand Master. According to one source, he was pierced by a lance and killed. The isolated group of Teutonic Knights on their extreme left flank representing almost 20% of their remaining forces became completely surrounded and destroyed. Leaderless and slowly being enveloped on both flanks, the main force of the Order started to break and attempted to flee through the closing gap to the rear of their position. Suddenly, out of the woods to the rear of the Polish forces, the Polish infantry came running toward the battle. Waving clubs, axes, and scythes they surged into the battle killing the wounded enemy who had fallen

to the ground. They hamstringed horses to bring down horses and riders and pulled enemy cavalymen and Knights from their horses to kill them on the ground. With about a half an hour of daylight left, the battle turned into a rout and a bloody carnage.

When the Order's resistance collapsed, its remaining forces fled to the northwest toward their supply wagons on the road that ran between the villages of Grunwald and Steban. Some of these troops continued to flee to the north and west and were pursued and cut down by Polish and Lithuanian cavalry. Most of the fleeing remnant of the Order's army, however, attempted to make a last stand by creating a *tabor* out of their supply wagons. A *tabor* is a make-shift field fortification created by circling wagons and linking them together with chains. Such field fortifications were effective against cavalry, but were vulnerable to infantry. It is, therefore probable that the Polish and Lithuanian forces attacking the Order's *tabor* was composed primarily of Polish mercenary, allied, and peasant infantry. The attacking Polish troops overwhelmed the Order's defenders and a gruesome slaughter ensued. It was reported by one source that some of the Order's camp followers, servants and support personnel inside the *tabor* turned on their overseers and joined the attackers.

Militarily, the Battle of Grunwald was one of the most complete and decisive victory in medieval history. What is unique about this battle is the unusually high number of deaths suffered by the defeated. Estimates vary as to the number of deaths incurred by the Teutonic Order. Several authors give the number of the Order's deaths at around 8,000 but other authors give a much higher number. Most agree, however that about 14,000 members of the Order's army was taken captive and that around 80% of their entire army was either killed or captured. Of the 250 professed knights of the Order, only 47 survived and all but one senior officer were killed. Only 1,427 men returned to Marienbourg and of 1,200 troops that were sent to battle from Danzig only 300 returned. One author speculates that one of the main reasons for the unusually high percentage of deaths experienced by the Order was the entry of Poland's peasant infantry at the end of the battle. Knights and mercenaries prefer to obtain captives who could be ransomed for money. Peasants, however, were not entitled to ransom captives, nor were they interested in, or bound by, any chivalric code. Given this and considering the depredations committed by the Teutonic Order against Poland's peasant population, the peasant infantry would probably be more interested in reeking revenge. Regardless of their motivation, it is clear that an unusually large number of the Order's army were killed at the end of the battle after the outcome had been decided and after the Polish peasant infantry had appeared on the battle field.

While Polish and Lithuanian conflicts with the Teutonic Order were to continue for decades after this battle, with its entire field army destroyed, the Order never truly recovered from this defeat. What remained of the Teutonic Knights forces were mostly garrison troops stationed in their fortresses, including the great citadel of Marienburg. Holding on to these strongholds, they were able to withstand attacks by Polish-Lithuanian forces after the Battle of Grunwald and retain control of most of their territory. The Peace of Thorn in 1411, however, which ended the war imposed a huge indemnity which was unprecedented in its size for that period of history. The Order was required to pay tons of silver in four installments. The indemnity was so huge that it was difficult for the Order to recruit and pay for new mercenary troops to replace those lost in the Battle of Grunwald. It crippled the Order's ability to rebuild its field army. This debt forced the Order to impose heavy taxes on their cities, resulting in unrest and revolts. It also necessitated the Order to borrow large sums of monies from foreign sources which weakened the Order's future financial solvency and made it increasingly dependant on foreign rulers. These internal conflicts and its economic decline fatally weakened the foundations of the Order and resulted in repeated military defeats to Poland and Lithuania through the 16th century. These defeats culminated in Prussia becoming a Royal Fief of the Polish crown by 1460 and eventually the dissolution of the Order in Prussia.

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- 3.) The Battle of Grunwald. KrisTrelski. 2010. <<http://www.teutonicwar.com/feids/post/default?orderly=updated>>
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- 6.) Battle of Grunwald. Wikimedia Foundation, Inc. July 16th, 2010. <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/BattleofGrunwald>>
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Teachers Needed for English Language Camps to be Offered in Lithuania

The Wisconsin Educational Scientific Cultural Organization in cooperation with the Lithuanian Ministry of Education will be offering English Language Camps in Lithuania from June 24, 2011 to July 20, 2011. There will be two camp locations, one in Vilnius and one in Siauliai. These camps are aimed at Lithuanian teachers and students who are conversant in English and will be attending this program to practice and expand their already existing skills in English through dialogue with native American speakers. A secondary objective is to familiarize those attending with American history, culture and Americans themselves.

Each camp is to be lead by between 8 and 10 instructors and teacher volunteers may choose which camp better suits their background, experience, and interest.

The camp in Vilnius has as its goal to advance the abilities of about 100 English speaking Lithuanian educators in developing their fluency in English and learn new methods of instruction useful to them upon returning to their classrooms. This camp also aims at Lithuanian education administrators seeking to improve their skills for professional and personal reasons.

The camp in Siauliai, the fourth largest city in Lithuania, is for high school and advanced late elementary students with a solid background in English and represents a classic camp structure. The primary objective is to improve the students overall skills in English through daily immersion in the language with instructors and fellow students. In the process they will also learn more about America, American history and culture, and Americans in general.

In this student camp, each instructor will have homerooms of about 10-12 students with instructors rotating their homerooms so as to provide an academic meeting between all teachers and students.

The hosts of these camps will provide room and board, transportation between the site and airport, and some sight-seeing or entertainment. Expenses incurred by those participating as volunteer instructors include a \$400 per person nonrefundable application fee and airfare, which are tax deductible, and incidental personal expenses.

WIESCO guidelines for participating in this program require the teachers to be college graduates, but formal teaching experience is not necessary.

Those interest in participating in this program and/or wish more information can go to the WIESCO web-site – www.wiesco.org make contact via email at thepine@att.net or by phone at 630-279-5646 (Chicago area). The main contact person is Robert M Pine.

2011 International Polonaise Ball

The 39th Annual International Polonaise Ball will be held this February 5th, at 7:00 P.M. in Surfside, Florida. This year's gala dinner-ball will celebrate Polish-Canadian friendship. Special guests for the evening will be President and Mrs. Lech Walesa. Royal guest at the ball will include H.R.H. King Kigeli V of Rwanda, H.R.H. Duke Dom Duarte Pio de Braganca of Portugal and H.I.H. Prince Ermias Sable-Selassie Haile-Selassie of Ethiopia.

For more information contact info@ampolinstitute.org or call 305-864-2349 or write "The International Polonaise Ball", The American Institute of Polish Culture Inc., 1440 79th St. Causeway, Suite 117, Miami, Florida 33141.

Long Time PNAF Member Honored in Film

Dr. Stanislaw Burzynski, PhD biochemist and long time PNAF member and supporter has been honored in a documentary film which depicts his cutting edge discoveries in the field of cancer research and his 14 year struggle against accusations and federal court trials. In the 1970's Dr. Burzynski discovered a treatment for cancer that lead to more cancer cures than any other form of treatment. His patented, gene-targeted treatment involved the use of anti-neoplastons, which help to activate tumor suppressing genes. The film portrays attempts by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and Pharmaceutical companies to have Burzynski's medical license revoked and his work stopped. It also reviews the motivation of the United States government's relentless persecution of Dr. Burzynski.

The film, called "Burzynski-The Movie", is a fascinating tale of "government harassment, scientific sabotage and patent fraud."* The film is currently in limited release but one can obtain a DVD copy or obtain information on the film by contacting www.burzynskimovie.com/.*

*Polish-American Journal

INTERNATIONAL NEWS AND NOTES

*H.R.H. Prince Friedrich Wilhelm Hohenzollern, head of the Royal House of Prussia, died on September 16, 2010 at the age 86.

*H.R.H. Princess Irmingard, eldest daughter of the last Crown Prince of Bavaria, died on October 23rd at the age of 87. Her father Crown Prince Rupprecht was one of the most respected royal commanders in the Imperial German Army during World War I and opposed the Nazis during their rise to power.

*French Legitimists celebrate the birth of twin sons to the Duke of Anjou (Spanish line of the Royal Bourbon family) and his wife Princess Marie-Margurite, on May 28th. The Duke, while Spanish, heads the senior legitimist branch of the Bourbon family and claims the title Louis XX, de jure King of France and Navarre.

*The Grand Duchess Leonida Georgievna of Russia has died at the age of 95. She was the last surviving member of the Romanov family to have been born before the Russian Revolution. She was widow of Grand Duke Vladimir Kirillovich, Tsarist pretender to the throne of Russia.

*Count Ralph Smorczewski, Polish World War II veteran, died October 20th at the age of 84. Count Smorczewski fought with the Polish Home Army during the Warsaw Uprising against the Nazis and survived arrest and interrogation of the SS. He later served through World War II in the British Eighth Army.

*King Michael of Romania was honored by Russia during its Annual Victory Day parade commemorating the 1945 defeat of Nazis Germany. King Michael, now 88, was welcomed to the Kremlin by Russian President Dmitry Medvedev. During World War II he lead a coup which took his country out of its alliance with Germany. Ironically, Russia invaded Romania never the less and put the country under 40 years of a Russian dominated Communist dictatorship.

*Prince Radu of Romania, husband of Crown Princess Margarita of Romania, has won a law suit against the British magazine *Royalty Monthly*. The magazine had accused the Prince of dishonesty with respect to his title and forgery of documents.

The magazine issued a public apology for its accusations included in the article and paid "substantial" damages in the High Court in London.

*Richard F. Oles (Oleszewski), former fencing coach at the John Hopkins University, has passed away on January 27th, 2011. Mr. Oles, a supporter of the Polish Nobility Association Foundation, was one of the proof-readers of drafts of the White Eagle. He was a community and local sports leader who was well respected for his work with young fencers. He was struck by a vehicle as he walked along a road in Pasadena, California. We greatly mourn his untimely death for he will be sorely missed

[The White Eagle wishes to thank the International Monarchist League, Polish-American Journal, Lithuanian Heritage, and the London Daily Telegraph for providing information contained in the above article and several other articles in this publication.]

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

I hope that all Foundations members have had a blessed Christmas and a happy New Year. As you can see we have changed the appearance of the White Eagle. We hope that it meets with your approval. Our intent is to improve the visual appeal of the publication and maximize the space available for content. There has also been a change in how the White Eagle is laid out. Thomas Hollowak, who for years has laid out its articles and illustrations, needed to devote more time to a personal academic project and, as a consequence, has resigned from his work on the White Eagle. He has most graciously agreed to continue to serve as the Foundation's Web Master. We wish to thank Mr. Hollowak for his years of working on the White Eagle.

We have also secured the assistance of Michael Keller, who has authored several books, to proof read drafts of the White Eagle and provide advice on text style.

Because of the changes in preparing this issue of the White Eagle for publication there has been a delay in getting it printed and sent out to the membership. Consequently, we apologize to all the members for this delay.

In addition, one of the consequences of upgrading the White Eagle, and changes in preparing it for publication has been an increase in costs. To address this I am making a special appeal to all members to send in their Foundation dues as expeditiously as possible. Despite rising costs in publishing the journal over the past few years the Foundation has not increased its dues but we need all members to send in their dues to allow us to continue its publication.

The Polish Nobility Association Foundation is the only organization of its type outside of Poland. In this regard it fills a unique niche in Polonia throughout the world. The Foundation, however, can only survive and prosper if it receives the continued support of all of its members. As we enter this new year we face the challenge of a modern world that demeans many of the goals and principles that our Foundation represents. Please join with me and officers of the Foundation in our pursuit of these goals. Let us work together, with pride in our noble ancestors, to promote an understanding and respect for their historic achievements and rich culture.

Dr. Felix W. v.L. Holewinski, KGCHS, KM, KCN
President, PNAF

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(The title of Prince used by members listed above are hereditary Lithuanian dynastic titles while those members listed above using the title of Count obtained their titles from the Royal House of Vietnam.)

The White Eagle is published semi-annually spring/summer and fall/winter and is provided to libraries in over 30 countries worldwide.

Deadlines for submissions are May 15th for the Spring/Summer issue and November 15th for the Fall/Winter issues. All material submitted for publication is subject to editing for content and available space.

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Husaria Polish Tour Planned for 2011

Polish Hussars Supply Plus, a concern that specializes in making equipment and uniforms for 17th and 18th century Polish re-enactors, is in the process of organizing its 4th Polish tour. Eyrk Jadaszewski, proprietor of the concern released preliminary information concerning the tour, but since the tour is still in the planning stage no exact cost of the tour is available at this time.

The tour involves 12 days in Poland and would include 1st class accommodations, two meals a day, ground transportation admission to various attractions, guided tours in English and optional participation in a 17th century re-enactment event.

According to the tour's tentative itinerary the participants would leave for Poland on Monday, September 12th, arrive in Warsaw the following day and for the next two days (Sept. 14th and 15th), tour historic and cultural sites in Warsaw. On September 16th the tour would travel to Surpice to visit its Ethnographic Museum and proceed on to Tourn. On September 17th the group would tour Tourn and in the evening travel to Gniezno. The following day after Mass in the Cathedral, the group would travel to Poznan, visit its old town, and travel to Czestochowa in the evening. During the following day there would be a tour of the 17th century monastery/fortress of Jasno Gora and in the evening travel on to Krakow. On September 21st the group would tour the Royal Castle and the "Old Town." On the 22nd the tour would visit the town of Wadowice, the birthplace of Pope John Paul II, The Great, and on the 23rd, enjoy the picturesque surroundings of the alpine resort of Zakopane in the Tatra Mountains. On the 24th, the group would tour the 14th century royal hunting castle in Niepolomice, participate in a festival and a reenactment. September 25th, the final full day of the tour, members of the group will have a free day in Krakow and return to the U.S. on Monday, September 26th.

Those you might be interested in this tour should contact Eyrk Jadaszewski at eric@polishhussarssupply.com, telephone number 603-563-8054 via Polish Hussars Supply Plus, 42 Brush Brook Rd. Dublin, N.H. 0344-8403.

EVOLUTION OF POLISH HERALDRY

Dr. Felix W. v.L. Holewinski

Traditional Polish heraldry developed into a unique system of designs and conventions which was very distinct from Western European heraldry. The original charges or designs that were to appear on shields, developed out of the of the ancient clan system of the early Slavic tribes of the Polish plains. The eventual heraldic forms of placing such designs on shields and displaying them as full heraldic achievements, however, were introduced into Poland by knights coming into Poland from Silesia, Lusatia, Meissen and Bohemia. Most consisted of very arcane and obscure patterns, probably based on pre-Christian runic symbols. Such arms were collective in nature, being shared by all families in a clan. There was no such thing as personal or family arms which were the common practice throughout Western Europe. The most common clan arms was that of Jastrzebiec, which was used collectively by over five hundred families. Because of this characteristic approximately 500 clan arms were used by thousands of families.

The heraldic system was also very simple in the way charges and shields were displayed. The marshaling of arms which placed multiple coats of arms on the same shield to show lineage or political allegiance, common in Western Europe, were unknown in Poland. There were no multiple crests, supporters or coronets of rank and seldom was the field of the shield partitioned or divided.

This unique heraldic system reached its maturity by the 13th and 14th centuries. Among the earliest arms recorded were the Brodzic arms, dated 1106, shared by thirty-nine families, and the Cholewa arms, dated from 1143 which was used by forty-one families. Like any cultural institution, however, Polish heraldry did not remain static. It continued to evolve and change to meet the demands, tastes, and desires of those using it, namely the Polish nobility. Already by the 14th and 15th century there were signs that various families within clans wished to mark themselves as special and apart from the clan as a whole. Increasingly these families modified their clan arms into unique family variations or variants of the original clan design and were borne only by their specific family. Such families remained members of their respective clans but did not share the exact same clan arms. This practice continued throughout early Polish history and gradually eroded the traditional collective nature of Polish heraldry. The practice of creating variant arms was achieved through a variety of ways. Frequently families would add or subtract devices from the original design. The basic Klamy clan arms displayed two crossed carpenter clamps but the

Myszynski family of this clan created its own arms by adding a third upright clamp to the design. The Original Cholewa arms displayed a sword between two carpenter clamps, but the Terleski family of this clan removed the sword and used its own unique arms that displayed only two carpenter clamps.

Another common practice used to create clan variant arms was to change the colors of the original clan arms. The original Ciolek clan arm displayed a red cow on a white (silver) field but the Stephan family of this clan adopted arms that displayed a red cow on a blue shield. Some families simply reversed the colors on shield. The basic Poroj clan arms displayed a white rose on a red field but the Pisienski family reversed the colors to develop their own arms.

Some families created family variants by changing the direction of the main charges. The basic Korczak clan arms displayed three horizontal parallel bars decreasing in length from top to bottom. The Bedlewicz family of this clan, however, canted the bars to the left (heraldic dexter) so that they ran at a slant while the Chludzinski family of the Cholewa clan changed their arms by reversing the position of the sword in the design so that it pointed up instead of down.

Many clan families created their own arms by simply changing the crest of the original clan arms. The Gorowski family of the Cholewa clan used the unmodified arms of the clan but replaced the original crest of five white plumes with an ax head.

Some branches of families changed their arms from their original clan arms when such family lines inherited or obtained titles. The Princely branches of the Masalski, Jablonowski, Ostrorog, Choldkiewicz, Holownia and Korybut families adopted arms different from that used by the non-titled branches of their families. The royal branch of the Sobieski family used a variant of their clan arms. The original Janine arms displayed a purple or violet shield on a red field, however, the coronation banner used during the coronation of King Jan Sobieski displayed a coat of arms with a silver shield on a blue field. In addition, some authors depict the coat of arms of King Sobieski's eldest son, Alexander, displaying a gold shield on a blue field. In some cases where there were two titled branches in the same families, the two branches, adopted different arms as in the case of the Sapieha family. The branch of this family that held the title of prince used different arms than the branch that held the title of count.

The most important factor in changing the nature of traditional Polish heraldry was the influence of Western European heraldry. By the 13th and 14th century Polish Knights were traveling throughout Western Europe to participate in the competition of jousts, fighting in the crusades and selling their services to foreign monarchs. They brought with them their unique Polish heraldic clan arms which were frequently modified by foreign heralds to conform to Western European heraldic forms. These changed arms were sometimes taken back to Poland where such modified arms were incorporated into Polish heraldry. In other cases such knights became enamored of Western European heraldic conventions and modified their arms accordingly. There were also frequent diplomatic delegations and ambassadorial posting of Polish nobles to foreign courts. While in foreign countries such nobles became impressed by foreign heraldic practices and brought back to Poland modified arms that violated traditional Polish heraldic practices. Richard Brzezinski in his book *Polish Armies: 1569 – 1696, Vol 2* (p.24), describes the pennant used by Gostomski's Hussars (1590's). The pennant displayed a quartered coat of arms which displayed the multiple arms of Nalecz and variants of Topacz and Jelita clans. The author states this was a departure from traditional Polish heraldic practices and comments that...

"...Gostomski may have picked up the convention of quartering when sent as an ambassador to the German Empire, where a complicated coat of arms was a sign of high breeding."

One of the most important sources of foreign influence on Polish heraldry was the significant and continuous influx of foreign nobles into Poland who brought with them their coats of arms. Beginning with the Piast dynasty foreign nobles appeared at the royal court and in the entourage of powerful Magnates. They came primarily from the various principalities and kingdoms of the Teutonic Knights. Toward the end of the 15th century, with the installation of the Jagiellonian Dynasty, there was a surge of Italian nobles into Poland. In subsequent dynasties and kings, immigration shifted. During the reign of Stephen Bathory such nobles were primarily Hungarian and Transylvanians, under the Vasas they were Swedish and Livonians, under the Witten dynasty of August I and II they were Saxons and under King Stanislaus-Augustus they were Russian. [Davis, Poland: Gods Playground, p.33]. There was also a significant influx of nobles from France and Bohemia.

Another source of the immigration of foreign nobles to Poland were the religious wars being fought during the 17th century in Scotland, Ireland, and England. The wars

resulted in a scattering of Catholic nobles from these countries fleeing to Catholic countries across Europe. Poland became one of the refuges for these disaffected nobles who saw in Poland opportunities to make their fortunes and start over in a freer environment. From Scotland came members of the Gordon family including a family branch holding the title of Marquis and members of the Morrison family (Muryson in Poland). From Ireland came a titled branch of the O'Brien family (Obyrn in Poland) and members of the O'Donnell family (Odonel in Poland). From England came members of the Butler (baron, Chambers, Alan, and Taylor families).

All these foreign nobles brought with them their coat of arms which eventually were added to Polish heraldry and were included in Polish armorials.

When foreign nobles arrived in Poland they remained outside the noble class unless and until they received a grant of nobility, or indigent from the Sejm. As part of this process they had to select a coat of arms that had to be approved by the Sejm and/or Royal Chancellery.

When selecting a coat of arms they usually used one of the following options;

1. They submitted arms identical to the one they used in their native country.
2. They adopted a coat of arms that combined their previous foreign coat of arms with the arms of a Polish clan or family they had become associated with or adopted by.
3. They sometimes combined their original arms with a White Eagle (or parts of a White Eagle) to represent their new allegiance to the Polish Crown.
4. They might adopt a completely new coat of arms.

The impact of Western European heraldry on Polish heraldry was dramatic. Its influence through the centuries gradually changed its very nature and moved it away from its traditional roots and forms. In particular there were eight trends in this process that can be clearly identified.

1. Increased use of marshaling and quartering of arms which display multiple coats of arms on the same shield.
2. The use by some families, of several coats of arms depending on the context of their use. The Radziwills,

for example, usually used a coat of arms that displayed a black eagle on a gold field with the Traby clan arms on an escutcheon on the eagle's breast. This family also used a Westernized coat of arms. This alternate coat of arms modified the escutcheon on the eagle's breast by quartering the shield and displaying the Traby arms in the 1st quarter, a variant of the Jastrzebiec arms in the 2nd quarter, the Wadwic arms in the 3rd quarter, and the Leliwa arms in the fourth quarter.

3. There was a dramatic increase in Wlasny arms. These were arms used by a specific family that didn't fit into any clan.
4. The appearance of augmentations. (Small shields or partitions placed on a shield that denoted political allegiances, alliances or some noteworthy family achievement.)
5. The use of multiple crests on one shield
6. The use of coronets of rank to denote the holding of titles by specific families or branches of families
7. Increased the practice of using supporters
8. The increased use of Western European style heraldic charges (devices placed on the shield) or designs.

By the mid-eighteenth century Polish heraldry had changed dramatically from its original form as existed in the 12th and 13th centuries. Those authors and heraldists who have studied Poland's traditional heraldic system and published armorials that illustrate arms used in Poland's original traditional heraldry generally agree that this system originally consisted of only approximately 500 distinct coats of arms. In contrast Tadeusz Gajl's work *Herby Szlacheckie Rzeczypospolitej Obojga Narodow*, published in 2005, which reviewed arms illustrated in sixteen Polish armorials published from 1584 to 2002, illustrates approximately 5,000 coats of arms used by 32,000 noble families. This comparison, as well as a review of the nature of arms contained in Gajl's armorial, clearly illustrates that by the Partitions, Polish heraldry had evolved into a new emerging unique heraldic system that combined features of the original traditional Polish clan based system with characteristics of Western European heraldry. The Partitions, of course, ended this evolutionary process so one can only speculate what would have eventually emerged if this process had continued into the 19th century.

11
VARIATIONS OF CLAN ARMS



KORCZAK



BEDLEWICZ
(Korczak odm.)



KLAMRY



MYSZYŃSKI
(Klamry odm.)



CHOLEWA



CHLUDZIŃSKI
(Cholewa odm.)



TERLECKI
(Cholewa odm.)



SAPIEHA
hrabia



SAPIEHA
książę



CHODKIEWICZ
(Kościesz odm.)



CHODKIEWICZ
odm. hrabiowska

COATS OF ARMS IN POLISH ARMORIALS OF FOREIGN DERIVATION



BACCIARELLI



FANELIS



GORDON
margrabia



GORDON I



MURYSON
Murisson

PICTURES OF THE 2010 REENACTMENT IN POLAND OF THE BATTLE OF KLUSZYN

(Pictures taken and provided by Prince Jan Polubinski who resides in Bialystock, Poland)

