

WHITE EAGLE

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NAPOLEON'S POLISH DESCENDENTS

In 1806, Napoleon Bonaparte was the master of Europe. He had crushed the Prussian army at the battles of Jena and Auerstacht. His forces occupied Berlin and his cavalry stabled their horses in the Prussian royal palace while his army pursued the remnant of the Prussian forces eastward into Poland toward the Russian homelands. In Poland, the population saw Napoleon as their savior. He inflicted humiliating defeats on all of the powers that had partitioned Poland, hence, as his carriage followed his armies into Poland, the people poured into the streets of their cities and towns to welcome and idolize their hope for national rebirth.



Maria Łeczynska-Walewska

On New Year's Day, 1807, Napoleon's carriage was dashing through the small town of Bronia just west of Warsaw. He was escorted by squads of Polish Lancers and French Cuirassier (heavy cavalry) when they were delayed by a surge of people who had poured into the streets to cheer and greet their hero. As his carriage came to a stop and was surrounded by an adoring crowd, a young blue eyed girl pushed her way through the exuberant populous and rushed to his carriage. As she approached she shouted, "Thrice welcome to Poland! We can do or say nothing to express our joy in the country which you will surely deliver from its tyrant." Napoleon looked at this beautiful young girl, bowed and with a smile handed her a large bouquet of roses he had been given previously by an admirer. As he handed her the flowers, he said "Keep it as a pledge of my good intentions. I hope that we shall see each other in Warsaw and that I shall receive a thank-you." So began one of the great historic and tragic love affairs of European history and established a Polish link to one of France's greatest legendary leaders.

Who was this impulsive and enthusiastic young woman who was to play such an important role in the life of Napoleon? Born Maria Łeczynska in 1786, she was the youngest daughter of Count Mathieu Łeczynski who died before her birth and Countess Eva Zaborowska. She grew up in the privileged surroundings of two of the most respected aristocratic families of central Poland. Maria was provided an excellent education, having Nicholas Chopin, the father of Frederic Chopin, as one of her tutors. In 1805, at the age of 18, she married 74 year-old Count Athenasius Colonna-Walewski. Count Walewski was once Chancellor for the last King of Poland and resided at the palace of Walewice outside of Warsaw. (Colonna refers to his noble clan, Colomna, a branch of the Roch clan. His coat of arms displays a silver column surmounted by a gold crown on a red field. This is his family version of the arms which is different than the general clan arms which is against a blue field). Some evidence would suggest that Maria was pregnant prior to her marriage and that her family arranged her marriage to the wealthy, respectable but elderly noblemen to preserve her honor and that of her family. She gave birth son after her marriage to a son, Anton Rudolf Bazli Colonna-Walewski. In 1806 she was serving in a French military hospital in Warsaw.

After his arrival in Warsaw, Napoleon asked several well-informed members of the nobility about the

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FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Over the years the Polish Nobility Association Foundation has filled a unique niche among the international Polish cultural organizations. It has been one of the few Polish groups that has concentrated on the history and culture of the Polish nobility and the nature of monarchism and nobility in our modern era. Throughout these years the heart and soul of the Foundation has been Dr. Prince Roger Chylinski-Polubinski who has provided the leadership and motivation behind its organization and work. Along with Roger there have been many individuals who have helped contribute to its work and continued its traditions. Over the years, however, we have seen friends and supporting members pass away or grow old and fade from an active role. I myself am approaching my sixty-ninth birthday and have recently recovered from some health problems. Currently Dr. Chylinski is also recovering from serious health problems. Therefore, when considering the future of the Foundation it is becoming increasingly imperative that another generation prepare to step forward, pick up the banner of the Foundation and continue to carry it into the 21st century. While Dr. Chylinski and myself have a few more good years ahead of us, the Foundation cannot survive long term without new blood to take a more active role in the Foundation's operations.

Dr. Chylinski and I have, in the past, frequently discussed this problem but the situation is becoming more critical as the years pass. What is needed in the immediate future is for some younger members of the Foundation to assume some tasks in the administration of the Foundation. The specific nature of such tasks can be worked out through discussions with Dr. Chylinski and myself and other members of the Executive

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Committee. They might include, for example, a Membership Chairmen who would be responsible for keeping membership rolls, sending out dues notices and collecting and recording the payment of dues and contributions. If there is any such member or members out there believes he or she has the time and motivation to assist us in this critical need please contact either Dr. Chylinski or myself.

Finally the Chairman wishes to pay a special tribute and public thank you to our Delegate from Australia, Wieslaw George, Marquis de Helon. George, has donated two magnificent chains of office for both the Chairman of the Board and President of the Foundation. Pictures of these chains will be included in the Fall/Winter edition of this publication but I can assure you they are strikingly beautiful and of impressive quality. They were designed by George who had them specially made for the Foundation. This exceptional gift is deeply appreciated and will be treasured as a sacred trust of the Foundation. ❀



Helon Arms

SOLICITATION OF ARTICLES

All members are encouraged to submit articles for inclusion in the *White Eagle Journal*, especially those that relate to the history and culture of the Polish nobility as a class throughout the history of Poland. This appeal is especially addressed to all those members with an academic background in history or who have some expertise in some aspect of Polish history or culture. All articles should be limited to no more than three typewritten pages. If you have any pictures to enhance your article please enclose them as well.

All submittals longer than three pages will, if felt appropriate, be included on the Foundation's web journal and a brief preview article will be placed in an issue of the *White Eagle* alluding to its location and content. It would facilitate the editing if articles could be sent as an email attachment or put on a cd-rom using Microsoft Word; if this is not possible, then submittals of typed hard copy would be acceptable. Please submit any such articles to Dr. Felix W. v. L-Holewinski.



NAPOLEON'S POLISH DESCENDENTS *(continued from page 1)*

beautiful young woman who had welcomed him at Bronia. Word of Napoleon's interest was passed on to various influential nobles in Napoleon's entourage, and within hours, Prince Joseph Poniatowski, nephew of the last king of Poland and Commander and Chief of Polish forces fighting for Napoleon, called on Maria at her residence at Walewice. He said that he had been directed by Napoleon to request her presence at a ball that was to be given in Napoleon's honor that evening. She was reluctant to attend, but under pressure from various nobles and the urgings of her husband, she agreed to attend. The ball was hosted by Count Stanislaus Potocki at his palace in central Warsaw. What followed was a lengthy period of wooing by Napoleon. This was accompanied by pressure from members of the Polish nobility and notably by Marshal Geraud Duric, one of Napoleon's closest friends, to convince her to become Napoleon's mistress. These individuals hoped that, through her intimate position, she could convince him to support Polish independence.

Napoleon sent Countess Walewska flowers and expensive jewelry and pleaded with her to surrender herself to him but she rejected his entreaties. Finally, in a rather theatrical scene, Napoleon is supposedly to have said, "I will have you know that I mean to conquer you. You shall, yes I repeat it, you shall love me! I have restored the name of your country. It owes its very existence to me." After this melodramatic display, she finally gave in to his pleas and became his mistress.

In the beginning, the affair was conducted very discreetly and privately, but all of Warsaw's nobility knew of the arrangement. While Napoleon continued to reside in Warsaw's Royal Castle, the Countess would visit him at night and secretly leave each morning. When Napoleon moved his headquarters to Finckenstein Palace in East Prussia, she followed him, taking up residence in neighboring apartments. The affair continued to be conducted with the upmost discretion, with Maria avoiding being seen by Napoleon's officers, even though they knew what was happening.

In 1808, Maria followed Napoleon to Paris. She returned to Warsaw, but fled when the Austrians invaded Poland in 1809. After Napoleon defeated the Austrians in the Battle of Wagram, she joined Napoleon in Vienna, living in a house near Napoleon's residence at the Schonbrunn Palace. While staying in Vienna she became pregnant and returned to her husband's palace at Walewice. There Maria gave birth to Napoleon's son, whom she named Alexander Florian Joseph. Everyone was fully aware that Napoleon was the father of the boy, including Maria's husband, however, Count Colonna-Walewski immediately recognized him as his own and ensured that the new count was in line for his inheritance.

In 1810, Maria joined Napoleon in Paris where he gave her a palatial residence. Unfortunately for Maria, toward the end of that year her role as his mistress came to an end. As Emperor, Napoleon desired to legitimize his new royal dynasty by uniting his line with an imperial royal family. Hence, he divorced his wife and empress, Josephine, with whom he had no children and arranged a royal marriage with Princess Marie Louise, daughter of the Austrian Emperor. Any offspring from such a marriage would tie his line with the Imperial House of Hapsburg. To maintain the good relations with this Austrian royal house, Napoleon believed that continuing his affair with Countess Walewska would be inappropriate. As a gesture of goodwill he granted Countess Walewska and his son, Alexander, huge estates in Italy and a substantial annual stipend. In 1811, he also officially presented her at the Imperial Court in Paris and in 1812, she divorced her husband Count Athanasius Colonna-Walewski.

On June 13th, 1812, Napoleon granted his natural son a French patent of nobility and a grant of arms while residing at Konigsberg, East Prussia. His arms in the patent diploma incorporates variations of the arms of his legal father, Count Athanasius Colonna-Walewski, and that of his mother's clan arms, Nalecz, of the Zaborowski family (a silver wreath on a red field).

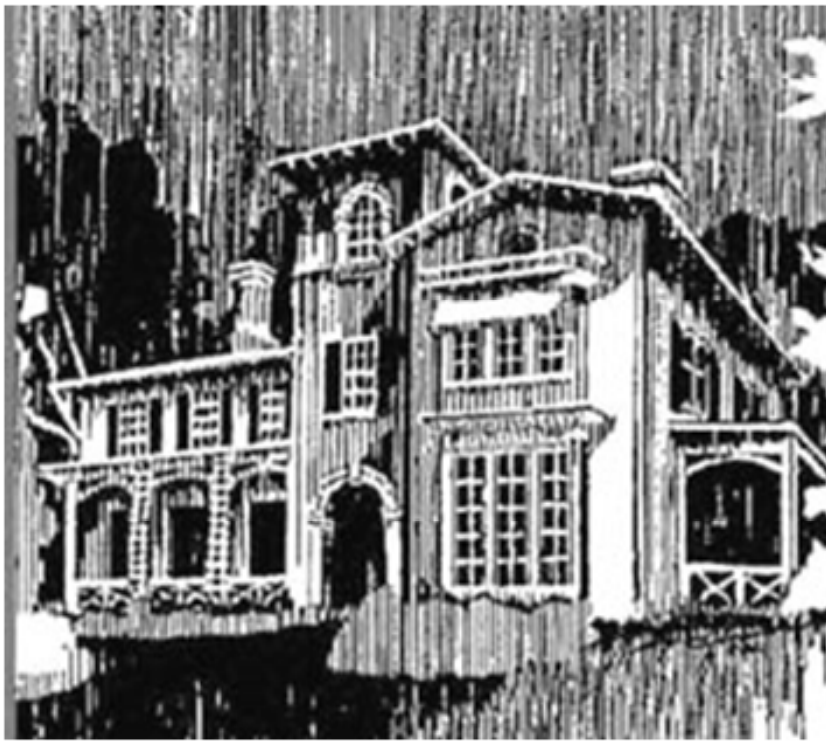
Despite Countess Walewska's initial reluctance to become Napoleon's mistress, it appears she truly fell in love with him. She visited him with their son, Alexander, while Napoleone was in exile in Elba and pleaded to stay with him during his exile. He refused her request, hoping to regain the companionship of Marie Louise.

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AN INTRODUCTION TO THE POLISH NOBILITY ASSOCIATION

In ancient times, the nobility was the ruling class of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth with the exclusive right to enjoy full citizenship. Nobility was hereditary in the male line, and the knight's shield was an outward sign of this. The power to ennoble resided originally with the King, but after the end of the XVIIIth century the approval of the Diet was required. In the year of Our Lord, 1795, Poland was removed from the map of Europe. From then, until the end of WWI, the nation ceased to exist; however, the old nobility remained, as did the dream of a free Poland-Lithuania.

The Polish Nobility Association was born out of the ashes of the Polish uprisings of the 1830's, as a loosely associated group of noblemen and ex-officers. Their original goal was the establishment of the Polish monarchy, with a Pole as the elected King. Poland regained her independence in 1918. From that time onward the Polish Nobility Associations activities became primarily devoted to genealogical and heraldic research. The preservation of Polish cultural heritage then began with a small group of Poles and Lithuanians under the chairmanship of Prince Zygmund Polubinski, Poland.



*Villa Anneslie, Anneslie, Maryland; USA.
International Headquarters of the PNAF
(National Register of Historic Places)*

On January 27, 1927, the PNA was formalized into a noble society, for the continuation of the “Stewardship” of the chivalric customs of the Commonwealth of the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and for the perpetuation of genealogical and heraldic traditions of the Polish Commonwealth. Two (2) Chivalric Orders were also created on that day (January 27, 1927) along the lines of Poland's ancient Dragonet Societies; they are as follows:

The Royal Order of Piast (ROP)
The Royal Order of Jagiellio (ROJ)

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This was a forlorn hope, as Princess Marie Louise quickly abandoned Napoleon after his defeat at the Battle of Lipzig which forced him into exile. She took their only son, Franz, Duke of Reichstadt whom Napoleon had declared King of Rome (called by history Napoleon II and informally by the French as “the Eaglet”) with her to Vienna where she abandoned him to the care of the Imperial Court and became the mistress of the courtier Count Adam von Neipperg, whom she ultimately married. Prince Franz tragically died as the age of 21, without issue.

Maria was heartbroken with Napoleon's refusal to permit her to join him in exile but continued to remain loyal, visiting him twice in 1815, prior to his final exile to St. Helena. She died in Paris in 1817 while Napoleon was still a prisoner at St. Helena and her last word on her lips was supposedly “Napoleon.”

Count Alexander became a ward of his mother's brother, an officer in the French army. Upon her death, he received an inheritance through his legal father, Count Athenasius Walewski, as well as his mother's bequests from Napoleon. His title as well as his inherited wealth and his recognized relationship to Napoleon, guaranteed him the privileged life of a prominent young Polish aristocrat. He attended private school in Geneva. At the age of 14, he returned to Warsaw and became friends with various nationalistic young Polish nobles of prominent families. Eventually, Grand Duke Konstantine Romanov, Governor-General of the Congress Kingdom of Poland (a supposedly autonomous Polish kingdom controlled and occupied by Russia), required him to join the Page's Corp. The Governor-General's intention was to have him commissioned an officer in the Russian Army and make him his Aide-de-Campe. He rejected this demand and fled Poland, returning to Geneva and then to Paris. While in Paris, he became an Orleanist (a supporter of King Louis Phillip). In 1830, when Poland rose in revolt against Russian domination, Alexander returned to Poland to participate in the uprising and was awarded the Order of Virtuti Militari by the Revolutionary government. When the uprising faltered, the revolutionary leaders sent the young Count Walewski, along with two of his friends, Counts Zamoyski and Wielkopolski, to London to petition the British government for assistance. When the revolt ended tragically, he stayed in England for two years. In 1831, he wed his first wife, Catherine Caroline Montague, daughter of the Earl of Sandwich. Through Catherine Caroline, he had two children, Marie and George Eduard Augusta, who both died in infancy.

Alexander returned to Paris in 1832, became a French citizen, and joined the French Army, serving as a captain in the Foreign Legion and Chasseurs d'Africa. In 1837 he resigned commission and took up writing for the stage and a correspondent for the paper, *Le Messenger des Chambres*, reporting from Egypt. The French government eventually sent him on a diplomatic mission to Buenos Aries and later appointed him Minister to Copenhagen.

Early in the 1840s, Alexander took Elisa “Rachel” Felix, a famous Jewish actress, as his mistress and, in 1844, she had a son who was named Alexander Antoine. Count Alexander Walewski immediately recognized the boy as his son and heir.

After completing diplomatic service in Copenhagen, he was sent on a diplomatic mission to Italy where he met, and in 1846, married again. (Catherine Caroline having previously died in childbirth). His second wife was Marianne Poniatowski de Ricci, a relative of Prince Joseph Poniatowski. She bore him three daughters and one son, Count Charles Colonna-Walewski, who as a Lt. Colonial in the French Army, was killed in 1916 during the First World War. He died without issue.

When his cousin, Louie Napoleon came to power in 1848, and later became Emperor Napoleon III, Count Alexander Walewski's future was assured. Alexander and Emperor Louie Napoleon developed a close and deep friendship. The Emperor respected and valued his diplomatic skills and, in 1850, appointed him Ambassador to England. In 1855 he was appointed Foreign Minister by the Emperor, and in 1856, acted as French plenipotentiary at the Congress of Paris.

Count Walewski held the post of French Foreign Minister until 1860. He was a moderate liberal. He reorganized the French diplomatic services, opposed interventionism and was a strong advocate of peaceful

NAPOLEON'S POLISH DESCENDENTS *(continued from page 6)*

relations among the major powers of Europe. Because of his diplomatic career and his accomplishments, he was eventually awarded The Most Noble Order of the Seraphim, Sweden's highest order of knighthood, The Order of Dannenbrog, Denmark's highest chivalric order and Knight Grand Cross of the Order of the Legion of Honor, France's highest award. He became Senator in the French legislature and President of the Assembly and was made Duke of the Second French Empire by Emperor Napoleon III in 1866. He died in Paris on October 27, 1868.

At his death, Count Alexander Florian Joseph Colonna-Walewski's natural son, (by his mistress Rachel Felix) Count Alexander Anton Walewski, survived as his only male heir and his son, Count Andre Alexander Maurice Colonna-Walewski sired several male branches of the family which exist today in France. One of the descendents of one of these branches maintains a web-site, www.walewski.org, where one can obtain additional information about this originally Polish noble family that carries on Napoleon's lineage and heritage. 🌹



SZLACHTA – THE PHOENIX RISING

by Wieslaw George, Marquis de Helon (C)

GCEG, RCST-B, GCDA, GCMZ, RML, PNA, JP (Qual.)

In a brief article I penned for the Imperial Nguyen Dynasty of Vietnam website a few years ago, I defined “Nobility (as) the dignity, state, or condition of being noble; i.e. being raised to the honour and rank of Nobility by ennoblement, or the legal entitlement to that privilege and dignity inherent with birthright, lineage, inheritance, or adoption.”

But how does one outwardly show whom, or what one is to the world? How does one express centuries of history, heritage, prestige and inherent personal eminence?

Many of the old Polish Nobility have been consigned to the shadows of history; the Szlachta, persecuted, exiled, murdered and stripped of their intrinsic rights. Those of the noble class who emerge from the oblivion of oppression often have nothing of their dignity left to show, no possessions that are rightly theirs: stateless, penniless, devoid of the wealth and personal status that was once theirs – sometimes ashamed and embarrassed.

We, as nobles, need to reawaken that spirit of fortitude and resourcefulness from within that of what once was and emerge from our cocoons in the full color, splendour, and grandeur that our ancestors were once accustomed to.

Whether the populace of Poland - and, indeed the peoples of all those other former vassal States of the USSR that were oppressed, restrained and subdued by the yoke of Communism and dictatorships – choose to accept it or not, the reality is that their fortune and attained positions in society have been courtesy of the sacrifices made, and the indulgences and freedoms bestowed upon their ancestors, by the gentry, nobility and royalty that once governed the former Polish Kingdom and Commonwealth of Poland-Lithuania and its territories.

The enormous contribution of the Szlachta to culture, history, science, the arts and the learned professions has been dumbed-down by successive regimes and governments – it goes largely unnoticed now, as it has for the last hundred or so years.

The present and growing wealth of countries like Poland [which was one of the few EU Member States to both ride and survive successive GFCs] has been derived and sustained from the fortitude, foresight and strength of the Szlachta that fought valiantly to maintain the sovereignty, independence, liberty and greatness of the Polish Kingdom and Commonwealth of Poland-Lithuania against insurmountable odds.

Now what better way to rekindle the prestige of the past than to unite as one identity behind an emblem that embodies the spirit of what was, the reality of what is, and the future of what might be; an emblem that can be worn at any event with pride by all Szlachta without distinction or favor because of social rank or grace.

Let the world know it, let the everyone see it – “we’re back!” 🌹

THE PROPER WEARING OF DECORATIONS

For those occasions when formal dress is appropriate and required, one, unfortunately, sees an occasional breach of etiquette in the manner of order decorations. Such improper displays do not speak well of an individual. When granted the honor of membership in a prestigious Order of Chivalry, it behooves those individuals to wear their decorations properly. To do otherwise degrades the order to which one belongs and is a personal embarrassment.

Although there are variances from country to country as to the propriety of decoration display, there is a note of commonality in most areas. At times there are several options available, depending on the preferences of the individual wearer. The following include some generally accepted rules for the proper display of decorations:

Dark Suit (with solid dark tie)

For semi-formal and special events during the day (prior to 6:00 p.m.), when decorations are proscribed, one may wear one neck collar with full-sized medals on the left lapel. The collar should be worn over the tie with the top of the decoration touching the bottom to the tie knot.

Morning Coat

For formal daytime occasions when a morning coat is appropriate, one may wear a single neck decoration, full-sized medals on the left lapel, and up to four breast stars. It is not appropriate to wear a Grand Cross sash.

Breast stars are worn high on the left breast. When one star is worn, it is, placed at the center, between the waist and the bottom of the full sized decorations. When two stars are worn, they are placed side by side. Three stars are worn in a triangular pattern with the most important on top, the next highest to the bottom left, and the lowest to the bottom right. Three stars are worn in a diamond pattern, with the star of lowest prestige worn at the bottom.

Black Tie

For those evening events (after 6:00 p.m.) at which black tie and decorations are stipulated, one may wear a single neck decoration, miniatures on the left lapel and a single breast star. It is not appropriate to wear a Grand Cross Sash.

Neck decorations or collars of an order are to be worn close under the tie with the top of the decoration no further than a quarter to a half an inch from the bottom of the knot of the bow tie. To be worn appropriately, the ribbon of many collars may need to be shortened upon purchase.

White Tie

Most formal evening events call for white tie and tails. When decorations are specified for such events, one may wear up to three neck decorations. However, more than two are difficult to display without appearing garish. Up to four breast stars may be worn (as previously outlined) along with one Grand Cross Sash. The Grand Cross Sash is worn over the right shoulder and across the chest with the bow and Knights Grand Cross decoration hanging off the left hip. The bow should appear just under the front cut-off bottom of the tail coat. Many sashes when obtained by the recipient are either too long or too short and should be adjusted through tailoring to allow it be to properly worn. In addition, many Grand Cross decorations have a tendency to come detached from the bow of the sash and fall off. To prevent this it is advisable to sew the decoration onto the ends of the bow with thread of the same color as the sash. Miniatures are also worn on the left lapel.

Military Style

Military style Class A and formal dress is considered proper formal attire for active-duty members or

NOBILITY AMONG YOUR POLISH NAMESAKES?

BY ROBERT STRYBEL

The Polish heraldic system displays many similarities to that of other European countries, but it is far from being identical. The Polish nobility or gentry trace back to the knight class (*rycerstwo*). The knights started out as warriors who during the reign of Bolesław Chrobry (crowned Poland's first king in 1025), were provided with weaponry, horses, money and land. In exchange they were to defend their monarch and local lords. Feats of exemplary battlefield valor were often rewarded with a coat of arms which implied ennoblement. Often these were incorporated symbols which the knight had used to identify his troops. In the Middle ages, long before armies were identified by their uniforms, there had to be a way of distinguishing friend from foe. That was especially true in the thick of battle with arrows flying, battle-axes swinging, horses rearing, neighing and kicking up dust.

No one was born a knight. Every baptized male could try out for that profession by proving his strength, endurance, ability to wield weapons, horsemanship and general sense of honor, piety and virtue. In time, only the offspring of knights were accepted into knightly service. Eventually the descendants of knights became known as the *szlachta* (gentry), the well-born or "bluebloods", a process that largely evolved between the 14th and 16th centuries. They derived their wealth and prestige not so much from the spoils of war but from the land they possessed and the crops, livestock, timber and other assets it produced.

Some of the things that were unique about the Polish *szlachta* can be best presented point by point:

EQUALITY: In legal terms, at least, all members of the *szlachta* were equal. With the advent of an elective monarchy every nobleman, regardless of how rich or poor, had one vote. Hence the saying: "*Szlachcina zagrodzie równy wojewodzie*" (roughly translatable as "an impoverished farming noble is the equal of any governor"). It was not until the partitions (late 18th century to 1918) that titles such as count and baron were introduced by the occupation forces.

COLLECTIVE ENNOBLEMENT: Individual peasants or often entire villages were ennobled (elevated to gentry status) for serving their king, defending the local lord's castle against an enemy attack or rendering some other public service. In effect, there were many impoverished petty gentry, often no better off than their peasant neighbors, but all of them had a heraldic emblem and sword to prove their noble status.

STRATIFICATION: Although formally all the wellborn were equal (there did not exist any official titles differentiating individual groups of nobles), that did not mean that they had equal wealth or political clout. There was a vast chasm separating the hard-scrabble gentleman farmers (small-holding rural petty gentry) and the magnates (*magnaci*) or landed aristocrats. These nobles were extremely wealthy, owned vast tracts of land (the size of entire countries such as Holland or Scotland), including towns, villages, cropland and forests. They had their own powerful armies and played a leading role in the public life of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth as senators and royal officials. The Potocki, Zamoyski, Tarnowski, Radziwiłł, Lubomirski, Sapieha, Poniatowski, Tęczyński and Ossoliński families were among the most powerful and influential noble breeds.

PROLIFERATION: Like Hungary, Poland had a larger percentage of nobles than most other European countries. Poland's heraldic/clan system began emerging in the 13th century. A knight was usually ennobled by the king as a reward for some feat of battlefield valor. That meant that he was granted a coat of arms and started his own clan. That clan-name (which was also the name of the coat of arms) indicated the clan someone belonged to through patrilineal inheritance (from one's father's line), ennoblement, adoption or marriage, and many variously surnamed and unrelated individuals shared the same clan-name. On average, from 10-12% of Old Polish society was of noble rank, meaning that the vast majority were commoners.

CLAN SYSTEM: The term "family crest" used in other countries does not do justice to Polish coats of arms (*herby*). Unlike many other countries, where all the noble bearers of a single surname shared the same coat of arms, thereby justifying the term "family crest", in Poland the wellborn belonged to noble clans. They

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emerged the moment someone was ennobled and received a coat of arms usually for some heroic act or exemplary service to the crown. Often the clan was named after the recipient of those honors. That clan name (which was also the name of the coat of arms) indicated the clan someone belonged to through patrilineal inheritance (from one's father's line), adoption or marriage, and many variously surnamed and unrelated individuals shared the same clan name. For instance, The Łabędź (Swan) coat of arms was shared by 346 variously surnamed and mostly unrelated noble families with surnames ranging from Audycki to Żukowski. The term "Duszyński herbu Łabędź" (below) meant nothing more than "Duszyński of the Łabędź clan."

INDIGENOUS OR IMPORTED?: Although the basic concept of coats of arms as a distinguishing feature of the wellborn came to Poland from the vast, usually via Germany or Bohemia (land of the Czechs), most of the clans and their attendant heraldic devices were of indigenous Polish and, subsequently, also of Lithuanian and Ruthenian origin. However, quite a few did come directly from other countries by traveling foreign nobles who decided to put down roots in the Polish-Lithuanian soil. Besides Germany and Bohemia, they came from such countries as France, Hungary, Denmark and even England. (More on this in the heraldic legends – below.)

OWN-NAME CLANS, ARMS: On occasion, the nobles belonging to a given clan decided to go off and set up a clan of their own and name it after their family surname. They also adopted a coat of arms by that name. Quite often it was a modified version of their original clan arms.

Since the nobility of the sprawling Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, once one of Europe's largest land empires, displayed various unique features, it is not surprising that their heraldic emblems (coats-of-arms) likewise were not carbon-copies of Western practices. Here are some things to bear in mind:

COMPONENTS OF COATS OF ARMS: The central feature of most coats of arms used in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was a shield (*tarcza*) upon which the main heraldic emblem (*godło*) was placed. Usually a crowned knight's helmet was found directly above it. In some cases a crest (*klejnot*), a replication of the main shield element, was displayed above the crowned helmet. Mantling (*labry*), scrollwork resembling stylized leafy vines, on both sides of the shield rounded out the coat of arms. That was known as a full heraldic achievements. However, at times one may encounter abbreviated versions showing only the shield and its main emblem.

FIELDS, IMAGERY, MOTTOS: Generally speaking, Polish coats-of-arms were more straightforward than their Western European counterparts. Although there are Polish coats-of-arms divided into halves or more rarely quarters, that was not the most widespread practice. Most often, a single emblem or image was displayed on a shield of a single color. Neither mottos nor any other writing was normally included in Polish heraldic devices; in a few rare instances, a single letter of the alphabet may be seen. Compared with Western practices, animal imagery is far more common in Polish armorials, probably reflecting the heavily forested and largely rural Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

NO ROYAL SUPERVISION: The Commonwealth (*Rzeczpospolita Obojga Narodów* – literally translatable as the Republic of Both Nations) was among the countries whose heraldic development lacked royal supervision. In other words, Poland's rulers neglected to set up an official unit to register and document coats of arms and those entitled to use them. That has led to a good deal of incomplete, haphazard knowledge and confusion. As a result, Polish heraldry is more of a whimsical art rather than an exact science. Full of lore and legend, it is closer to astrology and alchemy than to astronomy or chemistry. Individual armorials may differ in various details of a heraldic emblem's appearance, legend, clan membership, spelling and other elements. 🌹

To Be Continued in the Next Issue

THE PROPER WEARING OF DECORATIONS *(continued from page 8)*

Military Style

veterans of the Armed Forces. Formal court uniforms for the various orders of knighthood are recognized likewise.

When attired in a tunic with a high, stand-up collar, day wear calls for full-size insignias on a medal bar attached to the tunic over the left breast pocket. For formal evening wear, miniature decorations and up to three neck or collar decorations are considered appropriate. When one collar decoration is displayed, it is worn close around the neck inside the collar, with the medal of the decoration hanging just below the front opening of the stand-up collar and a small amount of the ribbon showing. When two collar decorations are displayed the second decoration is worn with the ribbon pushed through the second button hole and the medal displayed just under the second button. When a third collar is worn, it is worn through the third button hole. With a formal stand-up collar tunic one Grand Cross Sash may be worn along with up to four breast stars.

With open-necked tunics, two collar decorations may be worn. The senior decoration is suspended from its ribbon which is worn under the collar of the shirt so that the decoration rests on the tie immediately below the knot. The second decoration is worn with the ribbon pushed through the first button hole and the medal hanging below the button. One breast star may be worn on the left breast but no Grand Cross Sash. Full-sized medals are worn on a bar on the left lapel during the day and miniatures in the evening.

When observing British and Canadian custom, special badges of distinction - such as Knights of Justice Crosses or unit, civic, governmental or organizational badges of distinction - should be worn in the middle of the right breast.

Overcoats

At formal occasions when inclement weather necessitates the wearing of overcoats, the only appropriate display of decorations are full-sized decorations on a bar displayed on the left lapel.

I would like to end this monograph by a suggestion. Given rivalries among some Orders of chivalry and national/dynastic antagonism and controversies of the legitimacy or some Orders, one should be sensitive to the feelings of the hosts of any formal event and wear or refrain from wearing certain decorations based on the feelings of those hosting such events. 🦁



THE HUSBACH PALACE PHOTOGRAPHS BY PRINCE JAN POLUBINSKI, POLAND



The Husbach Palace is located in Doilidy fabryczne, Białystok. In the 1860s Ewald Hasbach leased land in Białystok and built a cloth factory. Many years later, his son Arthur, began to build a residence, situated across from the factory building.

In 1918 Arthur Hasbach returned from Russia and changed the profile of his factory to wood processing and plywood production. The villa was modernized between 1905-1907, resulting in a small palace. It is an architectural mixture of French, Dutch, Tuscan, and Renaissance. Husbach Palace did survive World War I, but during the crisis in 1920, Hasbach factory filed for bankruptcy, and was nationalised, together with the Hasbach Palace. 🏰

