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Participation of youth from Lesser Poland and Cieszyn Silesia in the fight for the Cieszyn Region and in Silesian Uprisings in the years 1919–1921

Introduction

Participation of youth and even children in the fight for Lviv and Eastern Lesser Poland is commonly known. Somewhat in its shadow is the struggle of Galician youth for Cieszyn Silesia and their active support in the battles fought in subsequent Silesian Uprisings. This article aims to gather the preserved information and accounts in order to revive the memory of these distressing, but also glorious moments.

Conflict over Cieszyn Silesia

In Cieszyn Silesia, as early as November 1918, after the disarmament of the Austrians, units of Polish and Czech troops began to form. A significant number of students from the Pedagogical Secondary School in Cieszyn volunteered for the guard service to replace non-Polish soldiers who had left the ranks of the army. Also, in the Polish State Gymnasium teaching and learning in grades 6–8 continued with a small number of youths.¹ The first Polish troop created in Dąbrowa

¹ E. Sznajka, *Rozwój seminarium*, [in:] *Pamiętnik jubileuszu Państwowego Liceum Pedagogicznego w Cieszynie*, [s.n.], Cieszyn 1948, p. 10; *XXIV. Sprawozdanie dyrekcji Państwowego*

consisted of scouts.² They formed a 36-person platoon under the command of Józef Berger, the leader of the 1st Scout Unit from Orłowa. This troop performed tasks associated with military intelligence on the entire territory of Cieszyn Silesia. Due to the growing danger, the intelligence operation was intensified, which could not have gone unnoticed by the Czechs. On 24 January 1919, the entering Czech army arrested two scouts, A. Kosiec and E. Kaleta from Berger's platoon. Feliks Hajduk, a former unit leader of the 1st Scout Unit in Cieszyn, was also arrested and imprisoned in an internment camp.³

A large number of students of Polish schools participated in military operations which continued for three weeks. Due to the absence of students, in the Polish State Gymnasium in Cieszyn classes in grades 3–8 were suspended.⁴ Older scouts from local scout units took part in the fights with the Czech army as volunteers. Many younger boy scouts and girl guides – including the ones from the Emilia Plater Unit from Cieszyn – performed auxiliary and guard duty assisting improvised Polish troops. The scouts from Cieszyn Silesia joined the Frysztak Company of the Infantry Regiment of the Cieszyn Region voluntarily and participated in the fighting in the area of Skoczów. In Karwina, members of the 1st Scout Unit from Orłowa, who fought in the local woods, participated in the defence of the town. The scouts from the unit from Karwina took part in the fights at the 'Franciszka' mine shaft and at the train station, where the scout Rudolf Mąka was captured and taken prisoner by the Czechs. While leaving the mining basin, the scouts blew up the railway track on the route from Koszyce to Bogumin. Facing the threat of being encircled by the overwhelming enemy forces, they retreated to Cieszyn. Scouts also fought in Dąbrowa and at the 'Eleonora' mine shaft.⁵

During the Czech invasion younger scouts served at the National Council as liaisons and orderlies. When the troops withdrew, they joined the militia which guarded barracks, warehouses, bridges and railway crossings, maintained order. They also escorted Czech prisoners of war to Krakow.⁶

Gimnazjum Polskiego w Cieszynie za rok szkolny 1918/19, publ. by Fundusz Naukowy, Cieszyn 1919, p. 16.

² At that time on the territory of Cieszyn Silesia there were in operation boy scout units in Cieszyn, Orłowa, Dąbrowa and Karwina and a girl guide unit in Cieszyn. M. Haykowski, *Materiały do chronologii historii i tradycji ZHP*, part 2, "Harcerstwo" 1982, no. 2, p. 18 (22).

³ W. Nekrasz, *Harcerze w bojach. Przyczynek do udziału młodzieży polskiej w walkach o niepodległość Ojczyzny w latach 1914–1921, część 2*, Księgarnia Wojskowa, Warszawa 1931, p. 278.

⁴ *XXIV. Sprawozdanie dyrekcji...*, *op. cit.*, p. 17; K. Szczurek, *Zarys dziejów szkoły*, [in:] *Księga pamiątkowa Polskiego Gimnazjum Macierzy Szkolnej w Cieszynie obecnie Szkoły Podstawowej i Liceum Ogólnokształcącego im. Antoniego Osuchowskiego w Cieszynie: wydana z okazji 65. rocznicy założenia szkoły*, [ed. board F. Bogocz et al.], "Śląsk", Katowice 1960, p. 38.

⁵ Z. Syrokowski, *Z harcerek służby Polsce na Śląsku Cieszyńskim*, "Na Tropie harcerstwa polskiego za granicą", a supplement to "Na Tropie" 1938, no. 19, p. 2.

⁶ W. Nekrasz, *op. cit.*, pp. 275–280; T. Katafiasz, *Harcerze w walkach o niepodległość i granice Polski 1914–1921. Zarys problematyki (z uwzględnieniem środowiska łowickiego)*, [in:]

On 26 January 1919, under pressure from the Czech army, the Polish troops, including scout units, left Cieszyn. After the fighting had ended, the units behind the cordon were disbanded. Some of their members returned home, some stayed in Krakow and Wadowice, the rest stayed in the army and at the beginning of March 1919 they left for the Ukrainian front near Lviv and participated in the liberation of Lviv and Eastern Lesser Poland. By the end of the 1918/1919 school year, students of the gymnasium had collected 4,835 korunas 2 hellers, which were sent to Lviv.⁷ Out of the students of the gymnasium, two died fighting in the Cieszyn Region, two others died in the fight for Lviv, and one died after contracting a disease. One student of the Pedagogical School in Bobrek also died near Lviv. Four students of the gymnasium who were also scouts suffered wounds in these fights.⁸

The patriotism of the Polish youth fighting for Cieszyn Silesia, not weaker than that of the Lviv youth, fostered by parents and teachers, is manifest in the letter from an injured hospitalised student sent to the ceremony of unveiling the plaque in honour of the fallen students of the Polish Gymnasium in Cieszyn: 'I have no regrets about my leg because I know that I have given it for the holy cause, for my homeland. And I would let myself be cut into pieces if, thanks to my martyrdom, once and for all, we Poles were united. I do not regret this leg because I have lost it as a Silesian whose dream was to shed blood for Poland's Freedom and Independence at least once at the long-awaited opportunity. At the same time I would also like to thank my dear professor for enabling me to develop a patriotic streak in my character in the last institution in the West.'⁹

In the autumn of 1919, Tajna Organizacja Wojskowa (TOW, the Secret Military Organisation) whose task was to protect the Polish population against Czech harassment and terrorist attacks was established in Cieszyn Silesia. It could be also used to provoke an anti-Czech uprising. The scouts A. Danel and A. Kopeć¹⁰ were its members, as well as Ludwik Kochutek, arrested by the Czechs on 24 December 1919 and imprisoned in the Moravian Ostrava prison.¹¹

Łowickie harcerstwo (na podstawie referatów wygłoszonych na sesji historycznej w dniu 7 września 1997 roku), SSS, Łowicz 1997, p. 16.

⁷ *XXIV. Sprawozdanie dyrekcyi...*, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

⁸ This data is incomplete. *Ibidem*; F. Hajduk, *Organizacja harcerska i jej wpływ na młodzież*, [in:] *XXV. XXVI. XXVII. Sprawozdanie jubileuszowe (1895–1920) Państwowego gimnazjum im. A. Osuchowskiego w Cieszynie*, [s.n.], Cieszyn 1922, p. 41.

⁹ K. Matusiak, *Walki o Ziemię Cieszyńską w latach 1914–1920*, [own printing], [Cieszyn] 1930, pp. 260–261.

¹⁰ S. Gajdzica, W. Koutny, E. Woźniak, *Pamiętnik legionisty. Czyn legionowy mieszkańców Czechowic-Dziedzic i sąsiednich miejscowości Śląska Cieszyńskiego*, Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Czechowic-Dziedzic, publ. by Urząd Miejski, Czechowice-Dziedzice 1997, pp. 32, 45.

¹¹ K. Oślisłok, *Ludwik Kohutek. Studium biobibliograficzne*, [s.n.], [Cieszyn] 1997, pp. 13–14.

First Silesian Uprising

Several scouts from the area of Zagłębie Dąbrowskie (the Dąbrowa Coal Basin) took part in the First Silesian Uprising, but we do not have any information about the participation of young people from Galicia in it. In January 1919, the Society for Support for Upper Silesia was established in Krakow, soon renamed the Association for Defence of the Western Borderlands of Poland. The Association developed a dynamic activity, issuing posters and leaflets, collecting money, medicines, clothes and food. The central figure of the Association was Prof. Henryk Pachosiński, and his son Jan, a scout who acted as a liaison.¹² The Board of the Association had a seat in the Hotel Krakowski located on the corner of Dunajewskiego street and Łobzowska street. Jan Pachosiński writes that the Association used the help of the unit called Czarna Trzynastka Krakowska (the Krakow's Black Thirteen) which sent over a dozen scouts to help in the office and in the communications service. He mentions Kazimierz Zimmer whom he remembers as the most involved scout who was a liaison between the Association and the army staff of General Józef Haller. Together with other scouts, he later belonged to convoys directed to Silesia carrying food, weapons and ammunition, at the same time collecting the wounded from Mysłowice (Silesia) and Sosnowiec (the Dąbrowa Coal Basin).¹³

Scouts, including the ones from Krakow and Lviv, acted as liaisons of the Polish Military Organisation of Upper Silesia. In August scouting units cooperated with the Committee for Defence of the Western Borders of Poland on conducting transports and transfers of weapons to Silesia. With regard to this, the participation of scouts from Krakow was of particular importance.¹⁴

In May 1920 in Cieszyn, the Headquarters of the Scouting and Guiding Association of the Duchy of Cieszyn were established. Commanded by Stanisław Frąckiewicz,¹⁵ the organisation affiliated scouting units mainly from Cieszyn. In summer after the division of Cieszyn Silesia with a demarcation line, scouts provided border guard services on the Polish side.

Second Silesian Uprising

The participants in the Second Uprising included: instructors of the instructor course taking place at that time in the village of Czarny Las and units from Knurów

¹² J. Pachosiński, *Kraków wobec powstań śląskich i plebiscytu*, PWN, Warszawa–Kraków 1981, p. 5.

¹³ *Ibidem*, p. 15.

¹⁴ M. Haykowski, *op. cit.*, part 2, "Harcerstwo" 1982, no. 2, p. 20 (24); J. Januszewska-Jurkiewicz, *Harcerze zagłębiowscy w dobie I powstania śląskiego*, [in:] *Zagłębie Dąbrowskie wobec Powstań Śląskich*, ed. D. Nawrot, Instytut Zagłębia Dąbrowskiego: Pałac Schoena Muzeum w Sosnowcu – Polskie Towarzystwo Historyczne, Sosnowiec–Warszawa 2020, pp. 43–56.

¹⁵ Rozkaz Miesięczny N.Z.H.P. V 1920 r. L. 28 [The Scout Chief's Monthly Order, May 1920 no. 28], "Okólniki i Rozkazy Naczelnictwa Z.H.P." 1920, no. 7, p. 3.

and Wójtowa Wola. The scouts delivered insurgent orders, got through the front line to Gliwice, performed tasks in the intelligence service, fought with weapons in their hands, girl guides organised a makeshift hospital in Bytom.¹⁶ The above refers to scouts' and guides' units from Upper Silesia. The Krakow scouts organised the transfer of weapons, ammunition, food, supplies and volunteers for the uprising, they also prepared quarters for the wounded and sick insurgents and performed courier service.¹⁷ Only a few Cracovians, mainly students of universities and gymnasiums, were fast enough to take part in the uprising.¹⁸

In the spring of 1920, the Lviv youth community came up with the idea of organising plebiscite units to direct young people to the plebiscite area. The appointed Plebiscite Executive agreed on the actions with the presiding body of the Polish Plebiscite Committee and on 21 June 1920, the first group appeared in Upper Silesia. In total, about 50 people were sent to work. They were used for work in various departments: the ones responsible for culture, the press, propaganda and organisation of military action. They worked in various cities, staying there for about a year. On the initiative of the citizens of Lviv, the weekly 'Strzecha Śląska' ('The Silesian Thatch') and the daily 'Goniec Śląski' ('The Silesian Courier') were created, as well as a memorandum to the Polish government on the need to strengthen the plebiscite work. A number of Lvivians took part in self-defence activities. Despite the opening of Polish universities, young people decided to stay until the end of the Plebiscite and asked university students to support the campaign.¹⁹

At the beginning of the summer holidays of 1920, Prof. Bronisław Piątkiewicz, lieutenant colonel of the Polish Army, one of the founders of the Scouting and Guiding Association in Krakow and its former local commander, in the barracks located in Rajska street in Krakow, formed a volunteer half-battalion consisting of scouts, university and secondary school students and took command of it. Almost all senior scouts, scout unit leaders and instructors joined the company.²⁰ High-intensity training took place in Wola Justowska and Pasternik. From the end of July, a state of high emergency was in effect. Then one of the companies of this battalion,²¹ which included scouts from Dębica, Krakow, Mielec, Nowy Sącz and Tarnów, after

¹⁶ *Harcerstwo w powstaniach śląskich*, [in:] *Leksykon harcerstwa*, ed. O. Fietkiewicz, Młodzieżowa Agencja Wydawnicza, Warszawa 1988, p. 147.

¹⁷ B. Leonhard, *Kalendarium z dziejów harcerstwa krakowskiego 1910–1950*, Towarzystwo Sympatyków Historii, Kraków 2001, p. 55.

¹⁸ J. Pachonński, *op. cit.*, pp. 18–19.

¹⁹ E. Rumun, *Młodzież lwowska w walce o Góry Śląsk*, [in:] *U zachodnich granic Polski 1918–1922*, ed. R. Horoszkiewicz, Koło Lwowskie Zw. b. Powstańców Górnośląskich, [Lwów 1922], pp. 14–15.

²⁰ Simultaneously, the Krakow District Command began the recruitment of volunteers who formed a march battalion and participated in the battles in the area of Warsaw as part of the Vilnius Infantry Regiment Battalion no. 201.

²¹ Another company of approx. 100 scouts was sent to Cieszyn. B. Leonhard, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

a formal farewell ceremony, set off to Jaworzno via Oświęcim. The scouts from the 5th Battalion of the 201st Infantry Regiment manned posts along the Czarna Przemsza River on the northern section of the border of the Krakow Voivodeship with Upper Silesia from Jęzor (the northern end) to Dąb (the southern end), providing service until the beginning of November. They helped the insurgents in transporting insurgent activists, volunteers, ammunition, food and supplies under the cover of night, and receiving refugees and even the wounded. Some also took part in the fight.²² Antoni Roczmierowski writes in his memoirs: 'Our Commander Lieutenant Colonel Piątkiewicz was aware of the importance for the Polish state of the determination of the border in the west in a just way. It seems, however, that he tried to implement such a concept of helping the Silesian insurgents as to protect a valuable combat unit of scout youth from getting involved in some reckless undertaking.'²³

On 7 September 1920 Bronisław Piątkiewicz's Scout Guard Half-Battalion set off from Krakow. The first company of 100 scouts commanded by Piątkiewicz went to Cieszyn, whereas the other company of 96 scouts under the command of the officer of the Polish Army was sent to Oświęcim to provide guard service on the border with Upper Silesia.²⁴

Both sides were preparing for the plebiscite. Propaganda activities for Poland were supported by the Association for Defence of the Western Borderlands of Poland, sending both financial resources and speakers to Silesia, mainly from the group of professors of the Jagiellonian University. The lectures were held in an atmosphere of threat and clashes with German militias. At the same time, on the initiative of Tadeusz Dzieduszycki, the Chairman of the Academic Plebiscite Executive and Horse Artillery Reserve Captain, *Drużyny Bartoszowe* (the Bartosz Brigades) were formed, which used the space assigned to them on the premises of the headquarters of the Association for Defence of the Western Borderlands. The unit soon reached the number of over 100 members. They were divided into three groups, the first of which declared that, if necessary, they would immediately go to Upper Silesia to serve the cause.²⁵

Third Silesian Uprising

After the plebiscite conducted on 20 March 1921, after which the Inter-Allied Commission intended to allocate the vast majority of the plebiscite territory to the

²² W. Nekrasz, *op. cit.*, p. 214; B. Leonhard, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

²³ A. Roczmierowski, *Krzyżackie widmo. Wspomnienia z lat 1910–1945*, comp. A. Kozanecki, Wydawnictwo Literackie, Kraków 1974, p. 16.

²⁴ *Sprawozdanie Okręgowego Inspektoratu Armji Ochotniczej przy D.O. Gen. Kraków*, [in] *Obrona Państwa w 1920 roku. Księga sprawozdawczo-pamiątkowa Generalnego Inspektoratu Armji Ochotniczej i Obywatelskich Komitetów Obrony Państwa*, ed. W. Ścibor-Rylski, Obywatelski Komitet Wykonawczy Obrony Państwa, Warszawa 1923, p. 114; B. Leonhard, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

²⁵ J. Pachoński, *op. cit.*, pp. 35–36.

Germans, on the night of 2 May of that year the Third Silesian Uprising broke out. What made the situation different from the previous ones was the fact that this time not only Silesians themselves but also their leaders and the Polish government agreed that it was necessary to take up arms, even though the latter would rather see only an armed demonstration, not a decisive battle. Upon hearing the news about the outbreak of the uprising, the Bartosz Brigades announced mobilisation. On 4 May 1921 academic youth of the Jagiellonian University passed a resolution in which they opposed the intention of inflicting harm on the Silesian population by the countries of the Coalition, expressed their readiness to fight and established the Academic Committee for Defence of Upper Silesia. A similar assembly was held in the building of the Faculty of Agriculture of the Jagiellonian University. As a result of these actions, as early as 5 May, 27 university students and five secondary school students led by students: Captain Zygmunt Döllinger and Captain Tadeusz Dzieduszycki left for Silesia.²⁶ Many members of the Bartosz Brigades did not manage to arrive in time for the first transport. The following day a group of students of the Faculty of Agriculture and the Academy of Mining under the command of Tadeusz Michejda, 2nd Lieutenant, of 3rd Legions Infantry Regiment and a student of the Academy of Mining, set off. In the next days, more groups from the Jagiellonian University and the Academy of Mining followed.²⁷ On the same day on the street called aleja Krasińskiego there was a rally of junior high school youth, during which they adopted a resolution on their readiness to actively support the insurgent effort.²⁸

When the news of the outbreak of the uprising reached Krakow, an assembly was held in the seat of Sokół (Falcon) and on the walls first posters summoning the population to join the ranks. The registration of volunteers was conducted on the premises of the Riflemen's Association and Union, where dozens of volunteers came, mainly university and secondary school students, young workers, both from the city or the area of the voivodeship and other locations in Lesser Poland. Groups of 60–80 or even 100 persons were transferred through the border and joined the insurgent troops. The number of volunteers from Krakow was estimated to be above 1000, including 700 scouts (the number of Silesian scouts was similar).²⁹ The scouts were members of such units from Krakow as the Tadeusz Kościuszko 1st Krakow Scout Unit, the Kazimierz Pułaski 3rd Krakow Scout Unit, the Romuald Traugutt 6th Krakow Scout Unit. Among the volunteers was also Eugeniusz Fik, a scoutmaster of the Krakow Division

²⁶ Jan Pachonński presents a list of volunteers and the information of their schools and roles in the uprising, *ibidem*, pp. 114–115.

²⁷ A. Pilch, *Studenci Krakowa na przełomie wojny i pokoju (1917–1921)*, [in:] *Studia z historii Polski XIX i XX wieku ofiarowane Profesorowi Józefowi Buszce w pięćdziesięciolecie doktoratu*, ed. I. Paczyńska, Kraków 1999, p. 163. Also Cf. J. Pachonński, *op. cit.*, pp. 110–127.

²⁸ Cz. Brzoza, *Kraków między wojnami. Kalendarium 28 X 1918 – 6 IX 1939*, Towarzystwo Sympatyków Historii, Kraków 1998, p. 72.

²⁹ B. Leonhard, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

of Szare Szeregi (the Grey Ranks) during the occupation. Apart from large groups, smaller ones formed – they consisted of a few scouts from different Krakow scout units, who went to Silesia on their own account. The scouts from the area of Zagłębie helped them to get to Upper Silesia.

In this group, it is worth mentioning 2nd Lieutenant Jan Surzycki, a student of the Faculty of Agriculture and the son of a professor of this Faculty. He was a scout-master assistant, a scout unit instructor, an instructor of the Krakow Scouts Division, who, while serving in the army, ‘deserted’ with several colleagues-artillerymen, a 37 mm cannon and ammunition. He rendered significant services to the insurgent army, contributing to the success of the attack and the capture of Stary Koźle. During this action, on 9 May 1921, he died. He was posthumously awarded the Cross of the Order of Virtuti Militari. Lieutenant Włodzimierz Ablamowicz, a law student and participant in the fights for Lviv and the Cieszyn Region, hijacked a half-armoured train which later supported the insurgents’ attack on Stare Koźle. The commander of one of the armoured trains, fighting under the command of Ablamowicz, the appointed Captain, was Edmund Kabicz, a scout-student of the Lviv Polytechnic and a participant in the Second Uprising.³⁰

Maciej Mielżyński mentions seven university students from Krakow who volunteered to join the fight. ‘They were given weapons, no one asked either for records, or for names. An hour later not one of them was alive, their weapons were taken back, but there was no time to bury them. The insurgents had to retreat. The Germans buried these seven students in a common grave.’³¹ Among the rescued was Julian Szymański, a student from Krakow, who, as a soldier of the 2nd Infantry Regiment of the insurgent army near Bierawa, was wounded in both legs by a machine-gun fire. The colleagues pulled him from the battlefield and transported him to the hospital, and then to Krakow.³² Władysław Nieć, a student of the 4th Junior High School, and Tadeusz Piwnicki, a student of the Faculty of Agriculture, were also wounded.

In addition to numerous university students participating in the fights, secondary school youths were represented too. Students of the Junior High School no. 1 (under the guidance of their teacher, Dr. Ludwik Ręgorowicz), the King Jan Sobieski Junior High School no. 3, the Henryk Sienkiewicz Junior High School no. 4 and vocational schools also showed great involvement. Many senior scouts and instructors took part in the fights individually. In addition, 1st, 3rd, 4th and 6th units volunteered for auxiliary service. Many members of these groups were assigned to line units, especially to the Stefan Batory Gliwice Uprising Regiment under the

³⁰ M. Haykowski, *op. cit.*, part 3, “Harcerstwo” 1982, no. 3, p. 26 (18).

³¹ M. Mielżyński, *Wspomnienia i przyczynki do historii III powstania górnośląskiego*, Katowice 1931, as cited in: J. Pachoński, *op. cit.*, pp. 128–129.

³² A. Roczmierowski, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

command of Stanisław Mastalerz, and it was quite common to give the Recruitment Committee an overstated age. One of those who note this is Jan Bugajski, a participant in the uprising who later became the commander of the Scout Division.³³

Conclusions

Out of Lvivians who came to Silesia in June 1920, Stanisław Oleksin and Jerzy Grzybowski were the ones who died in battle. The cadets from Lviv left school to take part in the fights. Some of them lost their lives. Among them were Henryk Czekaliński (aged 17), Zygmunt Toczyłowski (aged 17), Zbigniew Zaszczyński (aged 18), Zygmunt Pszczółkowski (aged 19), Zygmunt Zakrzewski (aged 18) and Karol Chodkiewicz (aged 16), a distant relative of the famous namesake. This is not a full list of Lvivians who were killed. The data concerning those that could be identified is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Scouts from Lesser Poland and cadets from Lviv killed in the Third Silesian Uprising

| | Name and surname | Date of death | Place | Circumstances | Assignment | Awarded with |
|----|---|---------------|---------------------------------|--|---|---|
| 1. | Karol Chodkiewicz from Lviv | 21 May | while seeking medical help | seriously wounded between Oleszka and Czerwona Górka | the Cadet Corps no. 1 in Lviv | Silver Cross of the Order of Virtuti Militari, Cross of Independence, Silesian Ribbon of Valour and Merit |
| 2. | Henryk Czekaliński from Łęczyce | 10 June | at Zębowice | | the Cadet Corps no. 1 in Lviv | Cross of Independence, Silesian Ribbon of Valour and Merit |
| 3. | Marian Michalik, Adjutant in the group of the Toszek battalions in the "Bogdan" subgroup | 25 May | in the field hospital in Toszek | fatally wounded on 23 May during the counter attack on Kamień Śląski | the 1 st Józef Piłsudski Scout Unit in Rzeszów | Cross of Independence with Swords |
| 4. | Stanisław Oleksin from Rzeszów, Commander of the 2 nd Battalion of the 2 nd Tadeusz Kosciuszko Zabrze Uprising Regiment of Paweł Cymś | 4 June | at Ujazd | | scout, student of Lviv Polytechnic | Silver Cross of the Order of Virtuti Militari, Medal of Independence |

³³ J. Pachonński, *op. cit.*, pp. 122–123.

| | Name and surname | Date of death | Place | Circumstances | Assignment | Awarded with |
|----|---|---------------|---|---------------------|---|---|
| 5. | Zbigniew Pszczółkowski from Machnatka | 10 June | at Zębowice | | the Cadet Corps no. 1 in Lviv | Cross of Independence, Silesian Ribbon of Valour and Merit |
| 6. | Sub-scoutmaster 2 nd Lieutenant Jan Surzycki, Commander of the artillery unit 'Ordon' 12 th | 9 May | the village of Brzeźce, in the territorial unit of <i>powiat</i> <i>kozielski</i> * | | the Krakow Scout Command, 12 th Field Artillery Regiment | Silver Cross of the Order of Virtuti Military, Cross of Independence, Silesian Ribbon of Valour and Merit |
| 7. | Zygmunt Toczyłowski from Jędrzejowa | 21 May | in the German captivity | wounded at Lichynia | the Cadet Corps no. 1 in Lviv, 1st Scout Unit in Kielce | Cross of Independence, Silesian Ribbon of Valour and Merit |
| 8. | Zygmunt Zakrzewski from Warszawa | 20 June | at Zębowice | | the Cadet Corps in Lviv | Cross of Independence, Silesian Ribbon of Valour and Merit |
| 9. | Zbigniew Zaszczynski from Warszawa | 21 May | in the German captivity | wounded at Lichynia | the Cadet Corps in Lviv | Cross of Independence, Silesian Ribbon of Valour and Merit |

*A *powiat* – often translated as ‘county’ – is the second level of territorial division in Poland, usually subdivided into *gminas*.

Sources: *Encyklopedia Powstań Śląskich*, ed. F. Hawranek [et al.], Wydawnictwo Instytutu Śląskiego, Opole 1982, pp. 72, 82, 297, 353, 459, 558, 640, 645; W. Nekrasz, *Harcerze w bojach. Przyczynę do udziału młodzieży polskiej w walkach o niepodległość Ojczyzny w latach 1914–1921, część 2*, Księgarnia Wojskowa, Warszawa 1931, pp. 345, 348, 398, 416, 420, 424; W. Niederliński, *Początki ruchu harcerskiego na Górnym Śląsku oraz okres Plebiscytu i Powstań Śląskich*, [in:] *Z dziejów harcerstwa śląskiego. Rozwój i działalność harcerstwa na Górnym Śląsku w latach 1920–1945*, ed. W. Janota, “Śląsk”, Katowice 1985, p. 21; *W 25 rocznicę Harcerstwa Ziemi Częstochowskiej 1912–1937*, [ed. J. Niemierko, J. Steczko], Komitet Obchodu 25-cio lecia Harcerstwa Ziemi Częstochowskiej, Częstochowa 1937, p. 4; *Wykaz drużyn męskich*, [in:] *Harcerstwo śląskie 1920–1930*, Zarząd Śląskiego Oddziału ZHP, Katowice 1931, p. 43; *Lista kadetów uczestników III. powstania górnośląskiego*, “Orleńca. Czasopismo młodzieży Korpusu Kadetów nr 1 we Lwowie” 1931, no. 2, p. [iii]; M. Haykowski, *Materiały do chronologii historii i tradycji ZHP*, part 1, “Harcerstwo” 1982, no. 3, p. 26 (18); “Monitor Polski” [the Official Gazette of the Republic of Poland] no. 167 of 23 July 1932, item 198; no. 292 of 21 December 1933, item 318; no. 27 of 3 February 1934, item 41; no. 64 of 19 March 1938, item 72; no. 93 of 23 April 1938, item 143. The data compiled and shared by Eugeniusz Loska from the Historical Committee of the Silesian Division of the ZHP (the Polish Scouting and Guiding Association).

After the termination of fighting 12 members of the Riflemen’s Union were awarded the Silesian Ribbon of Valour and Merit assigned by the Supreme Command of the Insurgent Army. Also, the city of Krakow received this award on 13 October 1935 – in the form of the Cross on the Silesian Ribbon of Valour and Merit.³⁴

As presented, Galician university and school youth, boy scouts and girl guides faithful to the idea of fight for independence not only participated in the transfer

³⁴ Cz. Brzoza, *Kraków wobec walk o granice (1918–1921)*, [in:] *Studia z historii...*, op. cit., p. 148.

of power on the Polish land, but also rushed to the ranks in large numbers to join defenders of this land and contributed to the determination of the borders of the Second Polish Republic.

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Participation of youth from Lesser Poland and Cieszyn Silesia in the fight for the Cieszyn Region and in Silesian Uprisings in the years 1919–1921

Abstract

The article describes the participation of youth from Lesser Poland and Cieszyn Silesia in the fight for the Cieszyn Region and in Silesian Uprisings in the years 1919–1921. Already in November 1918, Polish youth joined Polish military formations in Cieszyn Silesia, and then in January 1919 they took part in the fights with the Czechs for these lands. Later, together with young people from other regions of Lesser Poland, they took part in the fight for Lviv. Subsequent Silesian uprisings were supported by young inhabitants of the whole of Lesser Poland, both through participation in the propaganda campaign, as well as in bloody fights and guard duty at the border. A number of them died, and their heroic deeds are evidenced by the battle decorations awarded to them. Faithful to the idea of fighting for independence, they took part in taking over power in the Polish lands, and then joined the ranks of defenders of these lands in large numbers and contributed to shaping the borders of the Second Polish Republic.

Key words: youth, Galicia, Cieszyn Silesia, Upper Silesia, Silesian uprisings

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