

to:

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Dear Mr. Danielsson,

I have been very busy over the past months researching the Polish Army 1577-1696 and also Scottish troops in Sweden.

I have not yet been able to identify the 'Eagle's wing' flag ST 29:123, though I do have several clues and ideas which may help.

It is fairly certainly an hussar standard. The round-cut fly I have seen on several contemporary pictures; most notably the ceiling plafonds by Dollabella at Kielce Palace in Poland, painted to the order of Bishop Zadzik of Krakow who took part in the peace negotiations at Sztumska Wieś in 1635.

I have tried to trace the owner of the "Topacz" coat-of-arms who might have lost the standard to the Swedes. (Note however the correct "Topacz" is a black wing with no heart.) There are several possibilities though none confirmed.

Most probable of all is Szymon KOPYCINSKI. In most herbarz's he is mentioned. He was a rotamaster already in 1611 (Boniecki, 1907), in 1621 he was Royal rotamaster of a Hussar troop and distinguished himself in the Turkish War (Uruski, 1910), and also in the Muscovite campaigns (1610's). He died in 1630 (Niesiecki, 1738+).

Another possible is Waclaw KUWCZYCKI who was killed fighting the Swedes near Grudziądz (Graudenz) in Prussia in late 1628. Niesiecki mentions no office that he might have had, though his brother who fought for the Hungarians was a Rotamaster and Strażnik Polny (commander of the Advance-Guard).

One interesting possibility is that the Eagle's wing is a hetman's symbol. In 1621 at Chocim against the Turks, Lithuanian Hetman Chodkiewicz lost "a costly white damask banner on which appeared the Badge of the Chodkiewicz family, a black eagle's wing with one leg. It was a memento of the previous Muscovite campaign and therefore doubly precious to the Hetman." (Tretiak, Wojna Chocimska, Krakow 1921). Unfortunately Tretiak's source (contemporary diaries compiled by Pauli, Z) has no mention of the flag's appearance. In any event the Chodkiewicz's badge was most definitely not "Topacz".

Tretiak may be guilty of some rash conclusions, or other accidental distortion. At the bottom of this there may be a connection between Kopycinski and Chodkiewicz's Hussar troop, certainly Kopycinski is mentioned in the same diary (Jakub Sobieski's) as the description of the loss of the Hetman's flag!

After Chodkiewicz's death at Chocim, the command of his Hussar troop may have passed to Koniecpolski, who was of course to be the heart of the Polish defence against Gustav Adolph.

The origins of the "Topacz" are mentioned in several Herbarz's: "Genus hungaricum, quod Casimirus Magnus ex Hungaria attraxerat..." (Długosz), while Paprocki (1584) says that Louis of Hungary was responsible. As I mentioned before, the Eagle-Claw seems to be connected with the "Racy"-Serbians. Since the Hussars were fairly certainly of Serbian origin, it is reasonable to suspect that it is linked with them. The longest lived of Serbian units in the Polish army was the "Gończa" or messenger hussar troop of the Royal Guard, though this may no longer have been in existence during the wars with Gustav Adolph. (Benda, J., Lamus Zdarzeń..., Warszawa 1957).

I do hope some of this will be of use to you. I hope to visit Sweden some time in April or early May, and hopefully will come to the Armémuseum to see you. Can you please tell me what dates will be the most convenient for you?

All the Best

Richard Brazink