

The Russian Military near Cracow during the First World War

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The article is devoted to the presence of Russian troops in November and December 1914 in villages and towns near Cracow. Autumn 1914 is remembered as the month of the biggest success of the Russian army that took place at the eastern front during World War I. One of the purposes of the Russians was to take control of Cracow, which was then a very strong fortress. The capture of the city opened the way towards Silesia and Vienna — the capital of Austria-Hungary. These actions did not bring about any effect, and in the winter of 1914 the Russian army was repelled from Cracow. The short stay of the Russians in November and December 1914 in villages and towns near Cracow was permanently etched on the memory of their inhabitants. Tsar's soldiers, commonly referred to by them as “Muscovites” or “mongrels”, were seen as the enemy. There is no doubt that some frontline soldiers and Cossacks, performing reconnaissance functions committed destruction, theft, rape or murder in the occupied villages and towns. However, there were also those among soldiers and officers whose behavior was noble towards the local population. Many officers in the Russian army were Poles who displayed dignity under war conditions. Well-educated tsarist commanders belonging to the nobility or aristocracy behaved similarly. The presentation of both bad and good demeanors will allow to refute the existing stereotypes regarding the behavior of Russian soldiers stationed in villages and towns near Cracow in 1914.

Keywords: World War I, Cracow Fortress in 1914, Russian Army, villages and towns near Cracow in 1914.

Российские военные под Краковом в период Первой мировой войны

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Статья посвящена размещению российских войск в ноябре — декабре 1914 г. в деревнях и городах под Краковом. Осень 1914 г. стала вершиной их успеха в Первой мировой войне на Восточном фронте. Одной из целей русских был захват Кракова, который в то время был хорошо укрепленной крепостью. Захват города мог открыть путь в Силезию и в саму Вену — столицу Австро-Венгрии; но действия российской армии на Восточ-

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ном фронте не принесли никакого эффекта, и зимой 1914 г. она была отброшена от Кракова. Кратковременное (в ноябре — декабре 1914 г.) размещение российских военных в деревнях и городах близ Кракова навсегда запомнилось их жителям. Царские военнослужащие, которых обычно называли «москалями» или «дворянками», здесь воспринимались как враги. С одной стороны, некоторые российские солдаты, а также казаки при выполнении рекогносцировки совершали в занятых деревнях и городах погромы, кражи, изнасилования и убийства. С другой стороны, среди них были солдаты и офицеры, отмеченные благородным поведением по отношению к местному населению. В рядах российской армии в качестве офицеров служили многие поляки, которые достойно проявили себя в условиях войны. Так же было и с высокообразованными царскими полководцами, принадлежавшими к дворянству или аристократии. Изложение фактов как плохого, так и хорошего отношения к мирному населению позволит опровергнуть сложившиеся стереотипы о поведении российских военных, расквартированных в окрестностях Кракова в 1914 г.

Ключевые слова: Первая мировая война, краковская крепость в 1914 г., российская армия, населенные пункты в окрестностях Кракова.

November 1914 is remembered as the month of the biggest success of the Russian army that took place at the eastern front during World War I. At the central front, the Russian troops took nearly the whole Kingdom of Poland and were getting to borders of Poznan. At the central front, nearly the whole Kingdom of Poland, and were getting to borders of Poznan. However, at the southern front, there were approaching Silesia but were stopped on the hills of Polish Jura. In that part, Cracow was the most important point of resistance and was turned into a very strong fortress at the time¹. It was there, on the fringes of the former capital Polish, that battles were fought as part of the Łapanów-Limanowa military operation, as a result of which in December 1914 the enemy was thrown beyond the line of the Dunajec River. The fact that it was a crucial place can be confirmed by the diary of a Polish aristocrat who lived in Warsaw at that time — Maria Lubomirska² — and by her notes taken on 23 September, 1914: “In Warsaw the situation is more favourable. Germans withdrew to the north and after small panic there is again temporary appeasement in the city. It seems that the situation near Cracow will decide our fate”³.

The promising autumnal offensive of the Russian armies in 1914, commonly also called the “steam-roller”, was stopped at the gate of Cracow. The city, which was transformed into the fortress, fulfilled the expectations. The march to the west towards Austria, loudly announced by the Russians, and especially towards the ‘Rich Land of the Germans’, as the German Empire was called in Russia, had to be interrupted. The enthusiasm of the czar’s soliders, called Muscovites, was noted down by Maria Lubomirska. On 5 September 1914, when she was on her way to Russia, she made an observation: “We are passing other trains crowded with the army; on stations the swarm of uniforms, further migration of nations. During one of the stops, we asked the soldiers from where and where to they were

¹ See: *Bogdanowski J.* Fortyfikacje austriackie na terenie Galicji w latach 1850–1914. Kraków, 1993; *Lukasik H.* Twierdza Kraków — znana i nieznaną. T. 1–4. Kraków, 2001–2009; *Janczykowski J.* Fortyfikacje galicyjskie w przededniu I wojny światowej // *Rocznik Historii Sztuki.* 2015. Vol. 40. P. 189–194.

² Maria Lubomirska was the wife of a prominent Polish politician, Prince Zdzisław Lubomirski. See: *Pajewski J.* Lubomirski Zdzisław (1865–1943) // *Polski Słownik Biograficzny.* T. 18. Wrocław; Warszawa; Kraków, 1973. P. 66–69.

³ *Pamiętnik księżnej Marii Zdzisławowej Lubomirskiej 1914–1918* / eds J. Pajewski, A. Kosicka-Pajewska. Poznań, 1997. P. 56.

going, although our curiosity might have cost us lives. They answered: ‘from Siberia to Vienna’⁴. As it has been mentioned, the Russians, after severe fights, were repelled from Cracow, where they never came back, but their stay on this land was etched permanently on the memory of representatives of the local community. The stay of the Russian army in towns near Krakow in 1914 was documented in memoirs, diaries, parish and school chronicles, and press reports. The indicated materials create a great research field allowing for the discovery of various attitudes and behaviors of Russian soldiers during World War I⁵. This material also presents a unique research opportunity enabling to perceive behaviour of the czar’s individual soldiers who participated in the warfare⁶.

The first months of the war were characterized by frequent moving of the front, which was caused by the destruction of the areas, through which the armies went. On-going fights and marches of the armies were most painful for the local population, which was directly exposed to violence, plunders and rapes committed by both armies. The problems connected with the situation were noted down in his diary by Jan Szuścik, who came from Cieszyn; he was conscripted to the Austro-Hungarian army in 1914: “One of the supreme laws of war is undoubtedly showing disgust towards human life and towards all that is good practice in times of peace. The Austrian army brilliantly fulfilled this negative task”⁷. The same actions also concerned soldiers of the Russian army. It is confirmed in Maria Lubomirska’s diary who on 8 December 1914 referred to the situation taking place in Lvov and nearby areas and wrote: “Russian soldiers, wild destroyers, incite the peasants on you; they promise the owners’ lands. The people are left hungry and tortured, dreaming of the return of Austrians”⁸. Similar information was noted by the countess Maria Lubomirska on 15 January, 1915: “A depressed Eustachy Sapięha returning from Lvov shed tears over ruins of the family nest in Biłce (Biłka Szlachecka, the place situated approx. 20 km from Lvov. — P.K.), foreseeing a total destruction of the greater property in Galicia, where it is committed not by line troops, but by some organization of black hundredists trailing at the back of the army together with camps”⁹.

The opinion expressed by Eustachy Sapięha related to the destruction wreaked by the Russian army in Galicia was completely just. In 1914, the czar’s army, which marched in the direction of Cracow, plundered and devastated private, cooperative, and state properties in occupied places. Russians who controlled Galicia between 1914 and 1916, stole almost everything during their retreat — provisions, cash, elements of machines and

⁴ Pamiętnik księżnej Marii... P.46.

⁵ See: *Ćwiertnia M.* Wielka wojna na “Małej Ziemi”. Wybór tekstów źródłowych poświęconych działaniom wojennym na terenie parafii Wniebowzięcia NMP w Niegowici w 1914 roku // *Niepodległość. Idee, fakty, perspektywy.* W 100. rocznicę odzyskania niepodległości przez Polskę. Kraków, 2019. P.167–189; Pamiętnik Stanisława Feliksa Grąglowskiego z inwazji rosyjskiej w Gorlicach w latach 1914–1915 / ed. by A. Waclawski // Muzeum Regionalne PTTK w Gorlicach, without sign. P.1–66; *Florczak I.* Obraz armii rosyjskiej w okupowanej Galicji w świetle dzienników i wspomnień (1914–1915) // *Acta Universitatis Lodziensis. Folia Historica.* 2018. Vol. 102. P.75–87.

⁶ See: *Smoliński A.:* 1) Obraz żołnierza armii rosyjskiej z okresu I wojny światowej w dziennikach, pamiętnikach i wspomnieniach żołnierzy Legionów Polskich // *Istoričnii Arkhiv. Naukovi studii.* Vyp. 14. Mikolaïv, 2015. P.188–199; 2) Wizerunek jeńców rosyjskich z czasów wielkiej wojny w wybranych pamiętnikach żołnierzy legionów Polskich // *Przegląd Historyczno-Wojskowy.* 2017. Vol. 3. P.9–20.

⁷ *Szuścik J.* Pamiętnik z wojny i niewoli 1914–1918. Cieszyn, 1925. P.46.

⁸ Pamiętnik księżnej Marii... P.104.

⁹ *Ibid.* P.115.

office-equipment. Arsons of forests or oil wells were committed on a daily basis¹⁰. Jan Dąbrowski, a Polish historian and independence activist, in his notes under the date of 19 October 1914 wrote: “Not to mention Muscovites. There is news coming from the cities of western Galicia about many destroyed public buildings, such as courts, schools — they robbed houses, especially in abandoned cities because in the villages they behaved decently enough, except for mansions. They especially persecuted Jews in all manner, both men and women”¹¹. In autumn 1914, the Russian army moved to the west, driving Austro-Hungarian troops from these places. One of the first big cities on the way to Cracow was Tarnow; the Russians entered the city on 10 November 1914. In the anonymous diary written by one of the citizens, we can read: “In the evening of the same day at about 6 the patrol of Circassians came (irregular units of the Russian cavalry. — P.K.) consisting of about 30 or 40 people and stood in the market near the town hall in which the mayor with the commander of Circassians spoke”¹². Soon the front units came, and the several-month occupation of the city followed. During the time Russians robbed shops, offices, and flats. They took almost everything, beginning with equipment of rooms — desks, tables, stools, beds, duvets, bedspreads, carpets — but also food, even sauerkraut stored in barrels. What they did not manage to take, they destroyed on the spot, first of all, types of alcohol: they were forced to pour it out because such orders were given by the chief command¹³.

Tarnow was only one of the stages which brought the Russian army nearer Cracow. Another important point on their way was Bochnia, an unusually important in economic terms Galician city. Salt extracted there brought considerable income to the treasury of the Habsburg Monarchy, therefore capturing and exploiting the Bochnia mine were connected with concrete material advantages¹⁴. When the citizens heard that the Russian troops were approaching, they began to escape in panic, mostly Jewish merchants who were afraid for their lives; civil and mine workers were evacuated. On 26 November 1914, Russians entered the city, and soon the whole Bochnia district was under their occupation¹⁵. As the Russian historian of the military science Anton Kersnovskii noticed, the city was strongly fortified and was conquered thanks to a daring action of 5 infantry divisions of generals Pavel Parchevskii, Alexei Galkin, and Khristo Koichev. 18 Vologodskii infantry regiment, whose commander was Colonel Grigorii Stupin, especially distinguished itself. For the conquest of Bochnia and earlier fights near the city, Stupin was awarded for courage with George arms¹⁶.

¹⁰ See: *Kargol T. Odbudowa Galicji ze zniszczeń wojennych w latach 1914–1918*. Kraków, 2012. P.21–47.

¹¹ *Dąbrowski J. Dziennik 1914–1918*. Kraków, 1977. P.42.

¹² *Rosjanie w Tarnowie. Pamiętnik z wojny roku 1914/15* / eds W.Knapik-Czosnek, W.Szczepanik. Kraków, 2014. P.11.

¹³ *Ibid.* P.15.

¹⁴ *Szematyzm Królestwa Galicji i Lodomeryi z Wielkiem Księstwem Krakowskiem na rok 1913*. Lwów, 1913. P.280–282; *Dobrowolska D. Górnicy salinarni Wieliczki w latach 1880–1939*. Studium Historyczno-socjologiczne załogi robotniczej. Wrocław; Warszawa; Kraków, 1965. P.64–65; *Charkot J. Zarys rozwoju przestrzennego kopalni bocheńskiej w latach 1772–1990* // *Studia i materiały do dziejów żup solnych w Polsce*. 2005. T.24. P.43–44.

¹⁵ *Zdrada J. W czasach autonomii galicyjskiej (1850–1919)* // *Bochnia. Dzieje miasta i regionu*. Kraków, 1980. P.291–293, 303; Naczelny Komitet Narodowy (NKN). *Okupacja rosyjska w Galicji (ORG)*. [Wywiad spisany z p. dyr. policji Kopczyńskim w Bochni dnia 16 I 1915] // *Archiwum Narodowe w Krakowie (ANK)*. Sign. 29/530/281: Raporty z terenu. 1914–1915 (RT 1914–1915). Mf. 100/479. P.3.

¹⁶ *Kersnovskii A. L. Istoriia russkoi armii: in 4 vols. Vol.3: 1881–1915 gg*. Moskva, 1994. P.203–204. See more: *Pakhliuk K. Shcherbachev Dmitrii Grigor'evich. Srazheniia i pobedy. Zabytyi heroi Pervoi miro-*

Russian general Evgenii Milodanovich, who participated in the actions, described in his memoirs the occupation of Bochnia: “On 12/25 November 1914, 127 Putiv’ infantry regiment <...> was approaching the main road Tarnow-Cracow. The day was sunny. In front of us there were clearly visible hills situated near Bochnia, obvious positions of the adversary. From these hills, which was understandable, our column was plainly visible, and it gave us an unpleasant feeling of getting under the fire during the march. However, we happily passed Rzezawa village and entered Krzeczów. Our vanguard began to come into the contact with the enemy”¹⁷. The quick manoeuvre of the occupation of Bochnia by the Russian cavalry made impossible chaos prevailing in its marching columns. The road to the city was blocked by unskillfully deployed own artillery park. The attack was additionally slowed down by the lack of concrete orders of the command responsible for the whole operation, which, as the general noticed, was typical of the superiors who did not know what ought to be done after taking the opponents’ positions over. “Finally — Milodanovich wrote — after 3–4 hours of waiting, we entered the defeated city. Musicians of the Putiv’ regiment played the march (Khrostitskii Anatolii Vladimirovich, the commander of 127 Putiv’ regiment of the infantry liked coming through a place to the sound of music. — P.K.); the white flag was blowing in the town hall; crowds of citizens stood still on sidewalks, and in the air one could smell alcohol dripping from already broken vessels in shops. We passed along the main street, then turned north, later east, and spent the night in the nearest village whose name I do not remember. In the north, there was thick Niepołomice Forest. In the forest sounds of rifle-shots could be heard neither by Austrian people nor by goats”¹⁸.

Soon the most important commanders of the Russian army began to arrive in Bochnia. General Dmitrii Shcherbachev, the commander of IX Corps (which was a part of 3 armies of general Nikolai Ruzskii) appeared; his military service began from the occupation of Lvov on 3 September 1914¹⁹. General Radko Dimitriev, commander-in-chief of the operation, also appeared in Bochnia. This visit was essential because the czar’s soldiers, mostly Cossacks, who were to patrol the city right after entering into it, started breaking into shops, offices, and private flats from where they stole almost everything — food, food for horses, clothes and underwear (even children’s!). Furniture and all items were loaded on trucks and sent to the rear. What could not be taken away was destroyed on the spot, being burnt “under soldier boilers”²⁰. General Dimitriev, from the very beginning, tried to convince the local population that his soldiers did not threaten them. After greeting the mayor Ferdynand Maiss, who decided not to flee from the enemy, he gave a speech (translated into Polish) and assured that Russian units were not inimically disposed and did not intend “to destroy the property and lives of Poles”²¹. The Russian commander wanted to

voi. URL: <http://100.histrf.ru/commanders/shcherbachev-dmitriy-grigorevich/> (accessed: 12.05.2021). — Anton Kersnovskii incorrectly states that Colonel Stupin was awarded the Order of St George 3rd class for capture of Bochnia. In fact, he received this distinction for his earlier fights on the San River. See: Stupin Georgii Vladimirovich. URL: <http://www.regiment.ru/bio/S/158.htm> (accessed: 12.05.2021).

¹⁷ *Milodanovich V. Pod Krakovom // Voennaia byl'. 1967. Vol. 87. P. 38–43.*

¹⁸ *Ibid. P. 39.*

¹⁹ *Pakhluk K. Shcherbachev Dmitrii Grigor'evich.*

²⁰ *Rosyanie w Bochni // Nowa Reforma. No. 556. 18.XII.1914. P. 1.*

²¹ *Ibid. P. 1; Fischer S. Z przeszłości gimnazjum im. Króla Kazimierza Wielkiego w Bochni (1818–1938) // Pamiątka Jubileuszowego Zjazdu byłych uczniów gimnazjum im. Króla Kazimierza Wielkiego w Bochni dnia 2 maja 1938 r. Bochnia, 1938. P. 11.*

abate the situation in town so he agreed that the former administrative body and police could function. The mayor was told to open the mine, which, together with the approaching front, suspended the output, and also to rebuild half of the bridge on the Raba River destroyed by retreating Austrian soldiers. The report of one of Bochnia's policemen, prepared in 1916 right after the Russians' entering, reads: "... initial days of the invasion made an impression that the Russians decided — at all costs — to behave decently". During the first five days the commander of the town was lieutenant Danilov, "an intelligent and unusually energetic man who managed to keep a firm hand on the Russian soldiers". Then the stage-command was established in Bochnia, which "brought rapes, thefts, robberies". The local police were helpless because not only Cossacks robbed but also soldiers and officers of all types of the army (the infantry and the artillery). The situation slightly normalized when the command of IX and XI corps settled in the town, although robberies were not completely eliminated²². The Russians, who were stationed in the town, tried at all cost to convince the local population that "Cracow would be soon taken and that they should not count on return of Austrian people"²³.

Stanisław Fischer, a native of Bochnia, described the first moments after the entry of the Russians into the town in his memoirs: "There were knapsacks tossed all over the market; nobody was interested in these trophies and nobody took them. Soldiers broke into shops, and the Russian officers seemed to deliberately take no notice of this plundering. Only after several hours of this madness, the mayor asked the Russian authorities to set guards in front of the shops"²⁴. Ferdynand Maiss's appeal did not bring much effect because "shops and abandoned flats were still being destroyed. Those who stayed were disturbed. They entered (the Russians. — P.K.) houses, importunately demanding supper, food, tobacco, and money. They looked into wardrobes, drawers, took underwear, clothes, and overcoats. They behaved in the same way wherever they appeared. Thousands of stories and numerous accounts of witnesses testify to it. It is said that even the most cultivated nations go wild during the war, what else could be expected after the arrival of these invaders"²⁵. Records of the chronicle of Bochnia gymnasium of King Casimir the Great confirm the last words: "Thursday 26, November was mournfully etched on the memory of the citizens of Bochnia — on this day in the morning hours the Russian army entered the town. The Russian economy began. The building was full of soldiers. On lawns bonfires... flared up. The most unpleasant was the group which occupied the building of the gymnasium for a longer time. Members of this group broke into the class where Physics and Natural History were taught, and with unparalleled playfulness destroyed instruments and exhibition pieces, and broke expensive cabinets. <...>. The destroyed just for destruction <...>. [Afterwards] Siberian regiments came and finished the destruction <...>. Chopping benches and school devices were done on a daily basis. Around 11 December, the gymnasium was the sight of destruction and slovenliness both inside and outside"²⁶. It should be pointed out that groups of a local mob cooperated with the

²² NKN.ORG // ANK. Sign. 29/530/281: RT 1914–1915. Mf. 100/479: Raport no. 3. P.1–2. See more: *Krokosz P.* Obecność wojsk rosyjskich w Bochni i Wieliczce w 1914 r. // *Res Gestae. Czasopismo historyczne.* 2015. Vol. 1. P. 129–138.

²³ NKN.ORG // ANK. Sign. 29/530/281: RT 1914–1915. Mf. 100/479: Raport no. 4. P.1.

²⁴ *Fischer S.* Z przeszłości gimnazjum... P.9.

²⁵ *Ibid.* P.11.

²⁶ *Bator J.* *Wojna Galicyjska. Działania armii austro-węgierskiej na froncie północnym (galicyjskim) w latach 1914–1915.* Kraków, 2008. P.133.

Russians stealing from Bochnia shops and from property left without any care. The people willingly participated in the trade, excusing themselves that “Muscovites forced them to this trade, threatening with death”²⁷.

The Russian command stationed in Bochnia also occupied the local mine, and acceded to depredatory extracting of salt. Their soldiers were sent to extract salt, and all present miners were forced to work, under threat of death in case of not following the orders. Reopening of the mine was a priority, which was also reported in notices distributed in the town. Hostages who guaranteed the beginning of the extraction were the interneers with the freedom of moving in the town: mayor Maiss, personally responsible for work of the mine, and two arrested engineers — Jan Naturski and Andrzej Papuga. However, the representative of the Russian Military Command, obliged to follow the orders, “the officer to special commissions engineer Julian Moszyński” was appointed²⁸. He was given the position of the Commander of the Mine. According to the contemporary press, Russians succeeded in restoring work in the mine, and during two weeks they extracted 50 cars of salt, but only 7 of them were sent east²⁹.

On 28 November 1914, Russian units started to occupy Wieliczka, the second mining-city, where they also intended to restart the output of salt, like in Bochnia. People in Wieliczka had waited anxiously for their arrival for some time. The most important matter was the appropriate protection of the local mine. Already on 7 and 8 November, the process of “hiding state property” from the enemy was started — the cash desk, the most important files and valuable historic documents were sent back to Vienna. On 10 November, all work in the mine was stopped; elevator machinery was disassembled and, on the recommendation of military authorities, “salina” (salt mine) was evacuated — members of the Saltworks Board (management of the mine) and a bigger part of clerks left for Vienna. Hopes that the Russian army could be stopped caused the appointment of the temporary Saltworks Board by the state authorities on 23 November, only for a few days. However, the authorities of the mine, the city, and the district were completely evacuated. Posts were also left by the Austro-Hungarian army³⁰. In this difficult time, Stanisław Szczerbiński, who was the former district starost, decided to be the host of the city (he took this function from mayor Franciszek Aywas who was forced to leave Wieliczka for fear of repression from the Russians)³¹. Feliks Piestrak who was employed in Wieliczka mine (one of the members of the temporary Saltworks Board) noted down in his diary that on the day of the Russians’ invasion into Wieliczka “Mister Szczerbiński appeared in front of the captain, and when they introduced each other, Mister Szczerbiński gave the invader the keys to the town asking to take care of the city and also requesting that Russian soldiers should not rob the town”³². Stanisław Szczerbiński described the entry of the first

²⁷ Fischer S. *Z przeszłości gimnazjum...* P.9.

²⁸ Rozporządzenia i obwieszczenia władz rosyjskich. Odezwy głównodowodzącego armii rosyjskiej W. Ks. Mikołaja // ANK. NKN. Sign. 29/530/282. Mf. 100/480. P. 8.

²⁹ Rosyanie w Bochni. P. 1.

³⁰ Müller A. *Historia saliny wielickiej. Wieliczka, [1932]* // Zbiory Specjalne (ZS). Muzeum Żup Krakowskich Wieliczka (MŻKW). Sign. 833. P. 109–110; NKN.ORG // ANK. Sign. 29/530/281: RT 1914–1915. Mf. 100/479: Raport no. 5. P. 1–2.

³¹ Pamiętnik Mariana Dydyńskiego z Raciborska (1843–1920) / ed. by K. Gołąb-Malowicka. Kraków, 2015. P. 295.

³² Piestrak F. *Pamiętnik inż. Feliksa Piestraka za czas od 9/XI 1914 — 27/VIII 1914* // Dział Historyczny (DH). MŻKW. Mf. 35/7. T. 1. P. 38.

unit of the enemy cavalry: "On Saturday 28, at about 3, I was in the municipal office; a few citizens came into the office informing me that a sotnia of Cossacks was standing in front of the Town Hall. I went out and saw several dozens of riders under the command of esaul or the cavalry captain. I asked him to save the citizens and not to harm them. The officer answered in Polish that peace would be kept and that soldiers would pay cash for everything; and that the rouble has to be taken for 4 crowns. The officer ordered 80 loaves of bread which were delivered by baker Sobel the next day"³³.

Wieliczka, in contrast to Bochnia, was occupied without a fight. City policemen who stood guard escaped when they saw the entering enemy, taking off uniforms and putting on civil clothes. Then Stanisław Szczerbiński, caring for the safety of the citizens, asked the Russian officer whether the city police could still do their duty in uniforms with sabres, "in caps with the Polish eagle as in the coat of arms of Wieliczka"³⁴. The officer agreed but on the condition that they had bands on their arms with the stamp of the Russian headquarters of the city. The first night passed calmly because "as a sign of the occupation (of the city. — P.K.) soldiers were going around the Town Hall drawing Orthodox crosses on doors. Afterwards they went to spent the night in neighbouring villages"³⁵. Up to the present day, it has been unclear who the commander of the Russian unit, which arrived in Wieliczka on 28 November 1914, was and who settled matters connected with the occupation of the city with the former district starost Szczerbiński. With a large probability it might have been chief captain of 127 Putiv' infantry regiment, a Pole, Kazimierz Fortunat Chromiński. On Sunday, 29 November, he entered Wieliczka with the second company of the cavalry and with a small number of infantrymen, and stayed in the abandoned flat of the barrister Michał Łuszczkiewicz in the Lower Market. The staff of the army stayed, however, outside the town and had its own lodging in Bodzanów or Biskupice³⁶.

The entry of the Russian army to Wieliczka was described in the diary of the mining machine operator Józef Czernoch, who witnessed the escape of Austro-Hungarian troops: "...I went to church; later I went under the Castle (situated in the centre of the city, Saltwork Castle was the seat of the authorities of the mine. — P.K.), and here everything was empty, everybody escaped at night... I am looking at the road going up, where the Russians will soon emerge... at first few people have appeared, in a quarter of an hour — again new people, more than a dozen, and it's 3 pm and my heart starts beating faster... I even had the honor to lead one Mr. R. (Russian. — P.K.) through the garden... and he afterwards went along the road to the city, and along the road, where a kindergarten (the building of the kindergarten of St Kinga located at the road from Gdów — P.K.) was located, — to the market, and later around 300 Russian soldiers rode along the same road <...>. And finally they settled in Lednica (the district of Wieliczka. — P.K.) and deadly silence came"³⁷. On Sunday 29, November, similarly to Bochnia, scenes took place on streets of the city when soldiers flung to rob local shops. Józef Czernoch did not fail to notice it: "... I stood up for a moment under the Saltwork Castle, we looked at these patrols as they ferreted... later one of the patrolling ordered to open taprooms and people with bottles

³³ Rosyanie w Wieliczce // Czas. No. 617. 12.XII.1914. P. 1.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid; *Milodanovich V. Pod Krakovom*. P. 39. — In May 1915, Captain Chromiński was awarded the Order of St George 4th class. See: Spiski polnykh kavalerov (chast reguliarnoi kavalerii) za period 1-i mirovogo voyny. URL: <http://bgconv.com/docs/index-65477.html?page=76> (accessed: 12.05.2021).

³⁷ *Czernoch J. Pamiętnik*. [Wieliczka, 1914] // DH. MŻKW, without sign. P. 49–50.

they took ran without paying for the spirit and the rum, and in the afternoon the shops were supposed to be open; today a large number of the infantry with the General is supposed to come <...>. In the afternoon I went out and... a lot of women from villages together with ours and boys were robbing all shops; Cossacks got tipsy because they were sick of the stolen vodka and induced to open the shops; naturally the police were helpless³⁸. The next day the situation happened again. Soldiers acceded to plundering offices and private flats, and as did some citizens, and demanded, first of all, money and watches from the people they met³⁹. Records of the chronicle of the local boys' school confirm it: "On the day of 30 November 1914, Muscovites came in force of one hundred to Wieliczka. During that time the city mob and the neighbouring people dashed to rob the shops and houses abandoned by the evacuated"⁴⁰.

On Tuesday, 1 December, Russians decided to keep collected food in the Municipality, which was changed into the food-depot. They also searched desks of clerks, not shrinking from sugar and tea. The theft of money from the communal cash desk was personally stopped by foreman Szczerbiński who raised the alarm. It is a fact that soldiers started to plunder some property in Wieliczka, but it is also a fact that local Polish people willingly joined it. As Józef Czernoch noted down, the city dwellers were equally afraid of meeting Russian soldiers and common thieves and bandits who, in the war-storm, mercilessly attacked and robbed the civil population⁴¹. For this reason, the delegation of the citizens went to captain Chromiński asking him to restore order in the town. The Pole who served in the Russian army answered that in this matter they ought to wait for the arrival of his superior, nonetheless, he undertook appropriate steps to abate the situation and to soften the perception of his army by the Polish citizens. He ordered clerks to continue fulfilling their duties and recommended to give bands to the police, which naturally legitimized their actions, first of all, against abuses committed by local thieves. The most important, however, was that "there were... Russian army patrols and since then robberies stopped"⁴². Simultaneously, the Russians agreed to distribute propagandist proclamations in Polish and Russian in the town. Operations connected with keeping the citizens safe were also undertaken by the priest Stanisław Hałatek who stayed in Wieliczka. In the newspaper "Czas" from December 1914, the following information was found: "Seeing robberies committed — the priest mentioned — I went to captain Chromiński with the request not to do any harm to the citizens. The captain replied that he had different soldiers and he could not vouch for all of them, anyway he could punish only those who would be indicated to him as trouble-makers <...>. He gave me the guard so that no other harm could be done in the presbitary"⁴³.

As far as proclamations in Wieliczka are concerned, it ought to be noted that it was nothing unusual because such actions were undertaken almost in all places. In the case of Wieliczka, and also Bochnia, it is characteristic that the Polish citizens did not intend to stay passive, and they tried to remove texts calling to friendly welcoming of Russian armies bringing "the freedom to Austro-Hungarian nations", as it was literally written in

³⁸ Czernoch J. Pamiętnik. P. 51–53.

³⁹ Rosyanie w Wieliczce. P. 1.

⁴⁰ Kronika szkoły pospolitej męskiej w Wieliczce // ZS. MŻKW. Sign. 1099. P. 140–141.

⁴¹ Czernoch J. Pamiętnik...

⁴² Rosyanie w Wieliczce. P. 1.

⁴³ Rosyanie w Wieliczce // Czas. No. 619. 13.XII.1914. P. 1.

one of the proclamations, by all means. Dislike towards to the invader was so great that only very few original propaganda posters remained. According to Emmanuel Winter's report, the Military Commissioner and the President of the Country National Committee in Wieliczka (a local office of the Supreme National Committee, the superior institution in the range of military, fiscal, and political organization of Polish Legions), documenting the stay of the Russian army in the town: "Muscovites during the stay from 28/XI to 7/XII 1914 in Wieliczka cultivated here as and in the administrative district the Russian campaign by sticking double proclamations <...>. These proclamations were made in the printing house in Wieliczka under the supervision of Muscovites, however, just after the expulsion of the Muscovites all the proclamations were destroyed so I kept only copies attached. The proclamations were torn off by the citizens when the Muscovites were still staying in Wieliczka, for which one student — a scout — was arrested and locked in prison"⁴⁴. A large number of similar posters were also displayed in Bochnia, and there, mostly at night, they were ripped off walls by "unknown hands"⁴⁵.

Confiscation, pillage, and destruction done by the Russians in Wieliczka were described in the newspaper "Nowości Ilustrowane" which severely evaluated captain Chrośniński's inaction, writing that "he neither reacted to the citizens' complaints, nor prevented the robbery by soldiers"⁴⁶. "Nowa Reforma" also presented reports noticing that the occupation of Wieliczka lasted for eight days, and "only 1000 people, mostly the cavalry" entered the town. It was underlined that Russian soldiers completely plundered the whole city, all shops, and private flats to such an extent that when they left, hunger started. The attention was drawn to the following description of actions of the invaders: "Cottages where figurines of Our Lady were found have survived"⁴⁷.

The salt mine in Wieliczka, which the Russians were not able to start due to lack of the suitable engineering cadre, also survived. However, they managed to find "some Mialovich" and appoint him the manager of the mine⁴⁸. It was also confirmed by priest Józef Hałatek in the interview to the editorial office of the "Czas Krakowski". The clergyman mentioned that the Russian captain had left the local foreman Mialowicz (Mialovich. — P.K.), who was a Croat, and who showed him the mine"⁴⁹. This fact was also noted down by Franciszek Piestrak who was responsible for the management of the mine when the Russians left: "So the museum (the Salt Museum located on the surface. — P.K.) as well as all saltworks were shown to them by the foreman Mialovich, the traitor, who finally left with Muscovites"⁵⁰. According to the agreements made, most likely the foreman Edmund Mialovich was employed in the Wieliczka saltworks⁵¹. Presumably, he was not the only person who undertook collaboration with the Russians. There is some information remained that the Russian commander of the city "appointed... the manager of saltworks a certain foreman. The poor fellow was afterwards taken by the Russians as a hostage.

⁴⁴ Sprawozdanie z czynności Komisariatu wojskowego NKN w Wieliczce za czas od 3 stycznia do 28 lutego 1915 r. // ANK. NKN. Sign. 29/530/300. Mf. 100/498. P.530, 536.

⁴⁵ Rosyanie w Bochni... P.1–2.

⁴⁶ Zbombardowana Wieliczka // Nowości Ilustrowane. 1915. No. 1. P.13.

⁴⁷ Najazd rosyjski w Wieliczce // Nowa Reforma. No. 538. 9.XII.1914. P.1.

⁴⁸ Ibid; NKN.ORG // ANK. Sign. 29/530/281: RT 1914–1915. Mf. 100/479: raport no. 5 [Wywiad spisany z p. Franciszkiem Smrokowskim...]. P.1–2.

⁴⁹ Rosyanie w Wieliczce // Czas. No. 619. P.1.

⁵⁰ Piestrak F. Pamiętnik... P.18.

⁵¹ Archiwum MŻKW (AMŻKW). Akta Salinarne (AS). Sign. 2742. K.203–205.

This foreman's probable name Kopecki⁵². In this case, it can be supposed that the matter concerned the mining machine operator Rudolf Kopecki⁵³.

Marian Dydyński, the land owner and the Galician politician and social activist, the owner of lands in Raciborsko near Wieliczka, having received information about plundering by the Russian army, noted down the following observations: "The caution before approaching Muscovites urged me to hide more expensive things such as silver plates, other objects made from silver and gold, the watch, the collection of old coins) <...>. Everything, carefully wrapped in paper and the oilcloth and put into the bag, I buried... on 18 September, in the evening"⁵⁴. On the other hand, on 29 November, he wrote down that "the regular Russian army <...> the previous night flooded... already the whole region from Wieliczka to Sygneczów"⁵⁵. For the inhabitants of villages near Wieliczka the appearance of foreign troops was something unusual, which was also described by the land owner of Raciborsko: "... the mounted Cossack patrol consisting of several dozen of people was walking from the direction of Chorągwica. It looked quite picturesque, especially for me, who was unfamiliar with their image, and reminded me of one of Juliusz Kossak's sketches. At the head of the unit a handsome young man, surely in the rank of Sergeant Major, rode on a good horse. He was wearing some sort of a cape or hood trimmed with red linen and fastened at the back. It differentiated him from the rest of the unit. They had very high caps made from sheepskin. As I found out later, they belonged to the formation of Cuban Cossacks"⁵⁶. The Cossacks who arrived in Raciborsko stayed at the court of Marian Dydyński, pillaging there. It is worth mentioning that the Russians were very well prepared in this place to lead the offensive against the Cracow Fortress, which was also noticed by clearly surprised owner of Raciborsko who wrote about the Russian commander: "... after tea he put, on the table, a perfect map of regions of Cracow and questioned me about different details of certain places, which I evaded"⁵⁷. Both on this and the following days Cossacks and freely walking soldiers from 128 infantry regiment committed numerous robberies in the property of Marian Dydyński, requiring, first of all, food (bread, meat, milk, and vodka), money and watches, but not despising door keys, desks or boxes. There was even a situation that the Cossacks "having surrounded the house with their partners, suddenly came through the room of the butler and flung to me with a drawn shashka. Behind them Franciszka (the servant. — P.K.) ran and a couple of servants, but seeing what was going to happen, they all abandoned me hiding in the servants' kitchen hall in the basement. While the Cossacks putting sabers to my breast shouted insistently about "dziegi, czasy", i. e. watches and revolvers (Marian Dydyński made a mistake: they wanted money and watches. — P.K.), I with complete calm, which even must have impressed them, answered that I would open them everything as long as they did not destroy locks without a need"⁵⁸.

The armed attack described above ended fortunately to the land owner — the Cossacks did not do any harm to him. Considerably worse was a similar situation which happened at the presbytery in Dziekanowice near Dobczyce. According to the diary of the

⁵² Rosyanie w Wieliczce // Nowa Reforma. No. 540. 10.XII.1914. P.1–2.

⁵³ AMŻKW. AS. Sign. 2742. K. 133.

⁵⁴ Pamiętnik Mariana Dydyńskiego... P.290.

⁵⁵ Ibid. P.300.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid. P.301.

⁵⁸ Ibid. P.302.

owner of Raciborsko, a drunk Cossack attacked the local priest Stanisław Węgrzynek and cut his face with the sabre, “nonetheless, the priest managed to strike the sabre from his hand; when the Cossack saw it, he escaped quickly, and Muscovites found out about it, and the wound was treated by a military doctor; later an Othodox priest arrived and appologised to me on behalf of the Russian army. He told me that the Cossack would be punished with death; I asked for remission; probably they did not listen”⁵⁹. The account in „Głos Śląski”, where the whole situation was described by the parish priest himself, casts more light on the situation. On 28 November, when he was in a confessional, Russian soldiers appeared at the presbytery requiring vodka; at the same time, they stole fur and wellingtons. Tragic events followed later: “In the evening the Circassian came into the flat and demanded money. I gave him everything what I had. ‘Give me everything you have,’ demanded the Circassian. ‘I have nothing left,’ I replied. And then he took the sabre out and hit me in the head. The blow was terrible and I would have surely fallen on the spot if the blade of the sabre had not hit its end by the stove, which made the hit considerably weaker. I caught the sabre and knocke it down. The Circassian like mad ran out onto the yard <...>. The Russians, having found out about the crime, sent the doctor and the hospital attendant who treated the wound. The schismatic priest rode (schismatic, that is Orthodox. — P.K.) and apologized to me on behalf of the Russian army. He said to me that the Circassian would be punished with death; I asked for the alleviation of the sentence; reportedly they did not”⁶⁰.

Similar situations, when priests and owners of mansions were mostly presecuted, occurred in the places situated in regions of Wieliczka. As it was reported in “Głos Śląski”: “Russian... soldiers in presbyteries behaved brutally and indecently”. Among other things in Droginia, they demanded wellingtons from priest Jan Fedor, and when he refused, they took the whip. In the manor in Jankówka they mixed cereal with mud and polluted sauerkraut from the barrel. In Gdów, they robbed shops and imposed contributions on the citizens — each, under the penalty of execution had to deliver 20 kilogrammes of oat and 20 loaves of bread, if they did not have oat or flour, they could, with the army’s approval, take it for free in the neighbouring mansions. Directives of the Russian command led to a quick devastation of the nearby mansions in Bilczyce, Zagórzany, Zalesiny, Fałkowice, Zręczycze, Grybów, Dąbrowica, Niegowić, and Łazany. They also took food from the peasants, in addition to sheepskins and shoes. On the other hand, in Hucisko, there were neither kitchens nor field-bakeries, the inhabitants were ordered to deliver soldiers meat twice a day. As the newspaper informed, the food supply of Russians was desperate to such an extent that soldiers: “... ate potatoes from small buckets for the flock. They got bread from Lvov, as hard as a stone. They wrapped legs with rags because they do not have shoes; therefore they pulled them down from peasants’ legs in Hucisko; for doing it and for taking food the inhabitants called them ‘mongrels’”⁶¹. It is worth mentioning that the inhabitants of Galicia commonly called the Russian soldiers “Muscovites”⁶², whereas in places situated near Wieliczka, and also in the city, they gave them a contemptuous name of “mongrels”, which is confirmed in the memoires of Józef Czernoch and Wanda

⁵⁹ Ibid. P.310.

⁶⁰ Wojska rosyjskie w Galicyi // Głos Śląski, [Gliwice]. No. 1. 2.I.1915. P.3.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² *Dąbrowski J. Dziennik...* P.42–46; *Romer J.E. Pamiętniki.* Warszawa, 2011. P.48–49; *Smoliński A. Obraz żołnierza...* P.188–199.

Litwińska, daughters of the Wieliczka printer. The former referred to the Russian army in general and also to concrete soldiers using the word “Burek” (a mongrel). This is what he said about 700 Russian captives whom he saw being led in the streets of Wieliczka on 22 November 1914⁶³. Wanda Litwińska in her diary under the date of 4 April 1915, right after the expulsion of Russians from the areas near Cracow, noted: “The day of 4 April. Today we received very happy news that our army had been able to chase ‘the mongrel’ out of Gorlice”⁶⁴.

However, it would be unfair to regard Russians as chaotic, destructive power, disposed to plunder and devastate everything on their way; it ought to be underlined that war robberies, destruction and rapes were also committed by soldiers of the Austro-Hungarian and Prussian armies⁶⁵. Maria Lubomirska, who stayed on 4 November 1914 in Końskie (the city near Kielce) characterized the contemporary situation at the battlefield: “Anxiety about Końskie has been calmed down by the present message. Where there is military headquarters, there is peace and civilized relationship with the enemy <...>. There is news coming from all the sides about increasing pillaging by the Russian army, which is already bursting through corn fields as an unbridled element. Ruins are multiplied, emptiness is weeping in walls; our country is losing the decoration of ages. Austrian people are burning without mercy because the weak are destroying Germany with help of peasantry”⁶⁶. The above mentioned Jan Szuścik said that Austrian general Victor Dankl tried to stop such actions in 1914 issuing the order of the death penalty for soldiers committing plunder⁶⁷. The initiative of the highest commanders did not always bring desirable results. Looting, committed by Austro-Hungarian soldiers, also did not escape the attention of Marian Dydyński, who, during their retreat and before the Russians’ attack, noted down: “... the result of losses and general panic led to such disorganization and lack of any discipline that it seemed that the Russian soldiers intended to lead the enemy’s country to destruction. From 23 to 26 November, they stayed at my place and caused trouble for me. This was the unit of bakers with hundreds of vans whose ruthlessness did not have any limits”⁶⁸. Among the materials of the Supreme National Committee — the superior body in the range of military, fiscal, and political organization of Polish Legions — there are reports written in the field just after chasing Russians from the area near Cracow. In one of such reports, from 25 March, 1915, from administrative districts of Bochnia and Brzesko, it was noted: “There is huge bitterness among people because of various practices, which are still being done by Hungarians and Prussians (the last ones only in the districts of Brzesko and Tarnow on the River Dunajec). Peasants declare — in various communes — that the behaviour of the Russian troops during their unlucky march towards Cracow and the retreat was incomparably more bearable than the practices of the Hungarian army”⁶⁹.

The Russian commanders who wished to behave in the manner that would be worthy of the officer’s honour during the warfare were represented by the mentioned generals —

⁶³ Czernoch J. Pamiętnik... P.27.

⁶⁴ Litwińska W. Pamiętnik Wandy Aurelii Litwińskiej, córki właścicieli drukarni w Wieliczce, pisany w okresie od 15.II — 8.VII.1915 oraz 26.VIII.1916 // ZS. MŻKW. Sign.1655. P.29.

⁶⁵ Smoliński A. Obraz żołnierza... P.192.

⁶⁶ Pamiętnik księżnej Marii... P.80–81.

⁶⁷ Szuścik J. Pamiętnik... P.47–52.

⁶⁸ Pamiętnik Mariana Dydyńskiego... P.296.

⁶⁹ [Dokumentacja związana z mianowaniem T.Pluty p.o. Komisarza Wojskowego NKN w Bochni, luty-marzec 1915] // ANK. NKN. Sign. 29/530/287. Mf. 100/485. K. 25, 30–31.

Radko Dimitriev, Pavel Partchevskii, lieutenant Danilov or captain Chrominskii. As it was noticed by Marian Dydyński from Raciborsko, Colonel Iakovlev behaved in a similar way staying in Siercza near Wieliczka, who on 1 December 1914, sent him the written assurance “according to which, my person and the property are given under the protection of the Russian military command <...>. Soon I found out what value this card and its power had, having shown it to Sergeant Major who appeared here by accident. He soon brought me several soldiers who in exchange for food stayed, in turn, the guard in front of the gateway and repelled Cossacks and other maradeurs who wanted to pester the house every moment while Sergeant Major stayed at my place”⁷⁰. One day later, on 2 December, the war-telephone was installed in the manor. Then also a young officer, “from the Polish family of Szumieński of the coat of arms of Leszczyc in the region of Kiev, but his mother was Orthodox”⁷¹, was sent there to stay. The owner of Raciborsko invited him to dinner. Their conversation concerned current front actions and advantages of Austro-Hungarian and Prussian armies, in which it was revealed that the Russians valued higher the latter. When the officer found out about robberies done by the Cossacks, he “expressed sorrow that I did not inform their camp because they would have prevented it... he apparently spoke sincerely because later I found out that he told peasants about it with regret”⁷². With reference to the Cossacks he said that in the Russian army “we must tolerate them because they are valued as good intelligence service”⁷³. Priest Stanisław Węgrzynek from Dziekanowice, who miraculously escaped the Cossack’s sabre, also kept a very objective opinion concernig the invaders’ behaviour: “Among Russian officers there were very decent people, such as captain Repnilov who right away and scrupulously paid for everything, and rebuked energetically Cossacks who took any items”. He also clearly warned: “The second time, however, I would not like to have their visit. The man seems to have the impression of staying in the cage with a tiger”⁷⁴.

Not only officers’ decent behaviour can be noted down, but also that of the Russian privates. Józef Czernoch mentioned such a case under the date of 29 November 1914, when he wrote that in the evening he hosted Russians in his house: “... I looked through the window at about 9 and I saw two patrolling Russian soldiers who were coming through the gate... one praised God and asked whether they could warm themselves, I took them home, and as they undressed and we started talking, it quickly turned out to be after 12... naturally I only boiled water, and they gave tea and sugar, and as it was a late hour so... they left at 4 to continue their way further”⁷⁵.

Soon the Russians’ stay near Cracow came to an end. On 5 December, the Austro-Hungarian army started the counteroffensive repelling the czar’s units from following places⁷⁶. Marian Dydyński did not fail to note down the moment of their leave from Raciborsko: “At last, on Saturday afternoon of 5 December some movement among Muscovites was detected; probably, it was the retreat, however, quiet and free from all usual in such situations abuses. Telephonists left their posts, and they took the guards from the front of the gate, saying goodbye kindly <...>. So the six-day stay of Muscovites in the local region

⁷⁰ Pamiętnik Mariana Dydyńskiego... P.305.

⁷¹ Ibid. P.306.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Wojska rosyjskie w Galicyi... P.3.

⁷⁵ Czernoch J. Pamiętnik... P.51–53.

⁷⁶ Krokosz P. Obecność wojsk rosyjskich... P.146–150.

ended, remembered, in my case, for the robbery done by the Cossacks, but less threatening than it had been foreseen. They did not make the impression of conquerors in the enemy's country on me, and this was considerably more suitable for the Austrian troops although they claimed they were our defenders"⁷⁷.

Among the higher and lower command of the Russian army there were people well-mannered and educated. General Evgenii Milodanovich, who participated in the offensive, knew that there was an unusual place near Cracow — several hundred years old salt mine with the route especially prepared for tourists. He noted down this fact in his memories: "Wieliczka interested me. After all, in a geography book various wonders of the mine were described as well as the information about the church cut out in salt. However, I decided not to be passionate about tourism, which without it was enough <...>. I tried to share my own point of view of the war like tourism with gunners, underlining that during peace people pay much money for what we have for free! But they only laughed... Anyway, I did not go to Wieliczka, and stayed in a village whose name I do not remember"⁷⁸.

It is worth noticing that there were situations when the front operations forced to take concrete decisions, whose victims were both soldiers of the enemy and the civil population which was nearby. The example of such a decision might be the events that took place in the Order of the Benedictine Sisters in Staniątki near Niepołomice, which was occupied in autumn 1914. Nuns together with schoolgirls, who lived there, left the walls of the nunnery for fear of their lives. Only the superior mother, one nun, and three Jesuit priests who lived close, stayed. The order also became a shelter for local people. On 8 December the Austro-Hungarian artillery began to fire at Russians who were stationed in Staniątki. The Russians answered with fire. The mutual artillery cannonade lasted until 15 December. Bullets hitting the cloister caused a lot of damage, took lives and wounded people who stayed there⁷⁹. The events were described at the end of 1914 by "Gazeta Toruńska": "The abbess left for Bochnia already after the Russians left because the state of her health required rest after so many terrible events. The Russians... came on Friday 27 November. They occupied positions round Staniątki; Austrian artillery had to shoot of necessity"⁸⁰. The building of Jesuits which was situated near the order, where the office of the Russian staff was located, was destroyed. In the press report it was described in the following way: "... six Russians died quickly, nine had severe wounds. There was chaos and destruction in the rooms. As the trace of the Russians' stay tufts of straw, piles of potato peelings, vodka bottles and broken plates were left. Among them there are pieces of the equipment, including priests' caps. On the table, there are a couple cards with views of the cloister. Apparently, the soldiers found them and used for their own corespondence"⁸¹.

War does not not only consist of pitched battles, marches of armies, plunder of the civil population committed by insubordinate soldiers. The war is also captivity and everything connected with being a war prisoner. Therefore, it is so important to mention the fate of Russians captured near Cracow in autumn 1914. Fourteen-year old Marta Pająk,

⁷⁷ Pamiętnik Mariana Dydyńskiego... P.308.

⁷⁸ *Milodanovich V.* Pod Krakowem. P.40.

⁷⁹ Pamiątka 700-letniego jubileuszu klasztoru staniąteckiego dnia 15-tego września 1929 roku. Poznań, 1929. P.7, 9–10; *Kanior M.* Dzieje obrazu i kultu Matki Bożej Bolesnej w Staniątkach // *Peregrinus Cracoviensis.* 2000. Vol.8. P.155–157.

⁸⁰ Zbombardowanie klasztoru w Staniątkach pod Krakowem // *Gazeta Toruńska.* No. 280. 30.XII.1914. P.1.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

who lived at that time in Cracow, saw with her own eyes soldiers of the czar's army led along the streets of the city. In her diary on 19 November 1914, she noted down: "We were going to the street of St Thomas, suddenly we smelt the tar, and realized that they had to lead Russian... prisoners. Among the prisoners Mongolian ruffianly faces can be seen, but also Poles can be recognized. They all looked happy enough, as if they were going to a battle field for the second time. And now I have to write down how they looked. They were dressed in overcoats of the clayey colour with red lapels, rather short caps, almost without tops; some had long beards, eyes set quite aslant looking 'ruffianly', they had scarves around their necks, bags on their backs in the forms of haversacks, without rifles"⁸². The author of this description also noticed that Cracovians did not show hatred towards them, and city vendors gave the Russians cigarettes, apples, and rolls for what "Muscovites" thanked them very much. Following the events which took place, Józef Czernoch recollected that on 22 November seized enemy soldiers were led along the streets of Wieliczka: "... I look and here... they are leading again about 700 mongrels (Russians. — P.K.) old and young, it is visible they fear this cannonade which can be heard again since the early morning (the bombardment was continued. — P.K.) incessantly, only the air groans"⁸³. The Austro-Hungarian counteroffensive undertaken on 5 December, 1914, was followed by the increased influx of Russian captives. On 17 December this year Marta Pająkówna wrote in her diary: "After the noon, when I was on a tram, I saw Russian prisoners who were led along Szewska street; there were also Poles among them who spoke. There was also one Cossack dressed in the same way as every Russian soldier, but instead of a round cap he was wearing a large astrakhan cap, of white colour"⁸⁴.

The short stay of the Russian army near Cracow in the autumn of 1914 was etched on the memory of the inhabitants of the former Polish capital and the neighbouring places for a long time⁸⁵. There is no doubt that Russians (especially Cossack units) at that time devastated public and private property, robbed or raped the local population. However, it ought to be mentioned that there were also people in the czar's army who tried to behave with dignity towards the inhabitants of Galicia, not taking advantage of their superiority in the concrete war situation.

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⁸² Pamiętnik z roku 1914 skautki Marty Pająkówny / ed. by E. Śnieżyńska-Stolot // Biuletyn Biblioteki Jagiellońskiej. 2012. T. 62. P. 115–116.

⁸³ Czernoch J. Pamiętnik... P. 27.

⁸⁴ Pamiętnik z roku 1914... P. 122–123.

⁸⁵ Krokosz P. Obecność wojsk rosyjskich... P. 151–153.

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