



PANS Eaglet

The official newsletter of the Polish-American Numismatic Society

Volume 1, Issue 2

September 2024

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Welcome to a second issue of PANS Eaglet, a digital publication of the Polish American Numismatic Society! Please tell us what you'd like to see in future issues.

The Hardest Polish Gold Piece to Collect

By Mark Benvenuto

Every now and then we find a great coin that has been hidden away in a dealer's stock, or even in our own collection, that appears to have been simply forgotten. Similarly, every once in a great while we rediscover a listing in a prominent auction catalogue, one illustrating a coin we'll never be able to own, but that is certainly fun to wish for. I recently had this happen when going back through the Eric Newman catalogues, which were for auctions held about a decade back. Here is the coin I'm talking about, a gold 10-ducat.



Forgive the rather wavy look of the photo. I opted not to break the spine of the Eric Newman catalogue from which I took this photo by forcing the page to lay completely flat, as the entire set of catalogues are as much collector items as some scarce and rare coins. After all, Mr. Newman was quite the famous numismatist, and his collection was extensive.

The description of this impressive looking piece is as follows, from the catalogue:

“1677 Andrzej Trzebicki Medallion 10 Ducats Possibly Unique Baroque Masterpiece

30233 Andrzej Trzebicki Medallion gold 10 Ducats 1677, Hcz-4050 (AR only R7), 41mm, AU58 NGC. Boldly struck, and lustrous, with extremely high relief. The obverse has a portrait of Andrzej Trzebicki (Bishop of Krakow) facing right, while the reverse has a rather whimsical image of a goose facing left, with the date below, in Roman numerals. The designer of this impressive piece was Johann Hohn, a German engraver working with the mint in Danzig, and also with various other German mints. We can find no record of an example in gold, either at auction, or in numismatic reference books. Exceedingly rare, and



certain to be one of the true highlight items of the Eric P. Newman Collection sale of world coins.

Estimate: \$30,000-\$40,000

The fact that there appears to be only one of these makes it about as uncollectible as the United States 1849 twenty-dollar gold piece. The fact that it had a bid estimate equal to the down payment on a house is another reason that we can really just sigh when we look at it. And the fact that the Latin word, "Candore," not mentioned in the catalogue description, translates to "Whiteness" is simply a mystery.

Even though we'll never own this beauty, it was worth checking with our friends at Wikipedia, to see just what they had to say about the dear bishop. After all, in past times, some bishops lived like kings, and had virtually the same power. There wasn't much there, but the entry did say Bishop Trzebicki lived from 1607-1679, and had such titles as: Vice-chancellor of the Crown, then Bishop of Przemyśl, then Bishop of Krakow from 1658. A short

Wikipedia entry, but an impressive resumé for a man who was not a king, yet still managed to get a gold coin of his own.

Recap of the PANS & HVNS Regional Coin Show on August 25, 2024.

Thanks to all the members who helped in any way at our recent show. It seems to have been very well attended. With over 90 dealers, it is becoming one of the biggest one-day regional shows.

An especially big 'thank you' goes to our PANS president Les Rosik, who was the organizer behind the entire event. Les, job well done!

► Spot prices as of 7 September 2024	
Gold:	\$ 2,523.84/troy ounce
Silver:	\$ 29.51/troy ounce
Copper:	\$ 4.18/pound
Platinum:	\$ 941.34/troy ounce
Palladium:	\$ 987.50/troy ounce
\$US-Złoty exchange:	3.86

Have you been able to join us on the web? Try: www.pans-club.org. Or, on Facebook? If not, please go to Facebook, find PANS, and see what events are coming up for our society.

Once again, come to the meetings and win

Your PANS meets once a month, and is generous in raffling off one Polish coin per meeting. Why not attend a meeting, and see if you can add something to your growing collection?

Congratulations to Brett Irick!

PANS member, Brett Irick was awarded the Royal Canadian Numismatic Association's *Paul Fiocca Award* this past summer by the RCNA. This award is the second highest award of the RCNA, and the highest award reserved solely for members of the RCNA. The award was established in 2008 and is presented annually to one individual for "Long term meritorious service or major contributions to the RCNA." Brett received his award at a special awards ceremony at this summer's ANA Convention in Rosemont.



The Symbolism of the Polish White Eagle

By Steven Bieda

Our newsletter was named the PANS Eaglet for an important symbolic reason, one that honors the history of two nations.

The Coat of Arms of Poland, popularly and more commonly known as the White Eagle, symbolizes Poland's sovereignty and independence. It is Poland's national symbol and has been an enduring part of Polish heraldry since the 13th century. Our choice of the title PANS Eaglet pays homage to this important Polish national and cultural symbol, one that historically has appeared on Polish coins. It also pays tribute to the national symbol of the United States, the American Bald Eagle. Thus, to the Polish-American Numismatic Society it is a reference to our interest in the numismatic history of both nations. As I would assume that most readers are more familiar with the history of the American Bald Eagle as the national symbol of the United States, this article will provide a synopsis of the history of the White Eagle and its importance as a national symbol of Poland – and its appearance on Polish coinage.

The white eagle on the Polish flag and the coat of arms was first used upon the establishment of the Kingdom of Poland. Originally, it was a gold heraldic eagle on a red background, but it was eventually changed to white in order to better represent the white-and-red colors of flags used by Poland's armed forces.

It is an ancient symbol with mystical roots. The story is that this emblem originated when

Poland's legendary founder Lech saw a white eagle's nest. When he saw the bird, a ray of sunshine from the red setting sun fell on its wings, so they appeared tipped with gold, the rest of the eagle was pure white. According to legend, Lech saw this as a good omen and decided to settle in what we know today as Poland.

Although the form has changed somewhat throughout the centuries. Its recent shape, adopted in 1927 was designed by Zygmunt Kaminski and based on the eagle's form from the time of Stephan Batory's reign (1576-1586).

The eagle remains an important national symbol for Poles today as it represents strength - particularly against foreign powers - as well resilience against adversity following turbulent times throughout its rich history.

Today the white eagle is a widely recognized symbol of Poland. The highly stylized depiction of this heraldic bird is depicted with its wings and legs outstretched, its head turned to the right, in a pose known in heraldry as 'displayed' or in more common terminology, "spread eagle." Traditionally it would be depicted with a royal crown upon its head. When the country of Poland was resurrected after WWI under the terms of the Treaty of Versailles on June 28, 1919, the white eagle with royal crown was also resurrected as the country's national coat of arms. It started to appear on the new Polish coinage commencing in 1923, and the aforementioned Zygmunt Kaminski version would later appear on coinage starting in 1928.

An ironic side note, after WWI quite a few monarchies – and monarchs - ceased to exist. The Polish White Eagle retained the royal crown but Poland had long ago ceased to have a monarchy. At that time, however, the tradition of the crown was less symbolic of monarchy and more symbolic of independence, Polish national identity and tradition. After all, the monarchy in Poland had been effectively abolished in 1795 after the third partition of Poland by Russia, Prussia and Austria. Even prior to 1795, hereditary monarchy had been replaced in Poland by a system of election and noble democracy in 1569.



Despite having long ditched the monarchy, when Poland regained its independence as a parliamentary republican form of government after World War I, the eagle with the royal crown was utilized on the coinage of Poland up until the collaborative joint Nazi-Soviet invasion in September 1939.

After WWII and the liberation of Poland, new borders were drawn for the country. Unfortunately, its freedom was curtailed as the Soviet Union and the Communist Party held an iron grip over it and other Eastern Bloc countries. The symbol of the Polish Eagle survived, or at least largely. While the Polish Communist authorities wisely recognized its importance as a symbol of national identity, the Communist authorities removed the “reactionary” royal crown from the eagle’s head as part of an intentional effort to strip away any symbols related to monarchy or aristocracy.

As a result, under Communist rule, images depicting the white eagle without a crown began appearing widely between 1947 and 1949, first on government documents, then on the first new post-war coinage of Poland in 1949. In the meantime, Polish groups outside of Poland defiantly used depictions of the White Eagle with crown, with some versions including a crown with a cross. Indeed, the U.S. Postal Service issued a Five Cent stamp in 1966 celebrating the 1000th year of Christianity in Poland with a depiction of the Polish White Eagle with the royal crown.

But as to officialdom in Poland, and especially as to coinage, the crown was gone. Even without the traditional crown, the resilience of the Polish people manifested itself in that Poland was one of the few countries in the former Eastern Bloc with no communist symbols on either its flag or its coat of arms. Nor did the symbol of the White Eagle suffer the desecration of having had a hammer and sickle forced onto the Polish eagle’s talons.

Happily, however, after the fall of the Iron Curtain and collapse of Communism in 1989, democracy triumphed in Poland and the crown was restored to the eagle’s head on coinage beginning in 1990. Appropriately, some of the first issues to depict the restored crown were circulating and non-

circulating coins commemorating the 10th anniversary of Solidarity, the labor movement which was instrumental in the collapse of the communist regime.

It is this version of the Polish Coat of Arms, designed by Zygmunt Kaminski, that is in common use today, and it is the version that appears on the obverse of all contemporary Polish coins.

Send in your finds.

Have you found any Polish coins or currency of note, perhaps squirreled away in some dealer’s stock of foreign coins or paper? If you have found a hidden treasure, or one hiding in plain sight, e-mail Mark a photo and a brief write-up of how you came upon it. The PANS members will most likely be interested in hearing about it.