

Monday, 28/01/2019 Namesday: Valery and Radomir



It is difficult to walk through many paths at the same time.

— Pythagoras



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Such Warsaw in the lens of J. Urbaniak

Military printing - crumbs from history

Andrzej Nowak 2008-05-21

Beginning

(A.Nowak) Polish military printing has its roots in extremely distant times and has been developing for over four hundred years. The first news about the military printing house comes from 1579, from the time of King Stefan Batory. In this field printing press, Walenty Łapka - a typographer, stamped about the army and all matters related to the king waging war. For his wartime printing services, in 1581 he obtained nobility and changed his name to Łapczyński. During the great war expeditions to Połock and Wielkie Łuki, he accompanied the king together with his camp printing press. He printed royal manifestos, reports on wars, descriptions of battles, castle captures, peace talks, etc.

Here, attention should be paid to a very important moment; separating the beginning of the history of military books and military printing. They are two separate topics, although closely related to each other. Books about military content were also printed in private printing houses many years earlier, they were also printed later and at present. Therefore, this period is taken as the beginning of a typical military field printing, or if someone today said - military printing.

Along with the development of printing art over the centuries appeared in Poland and other printing centers.

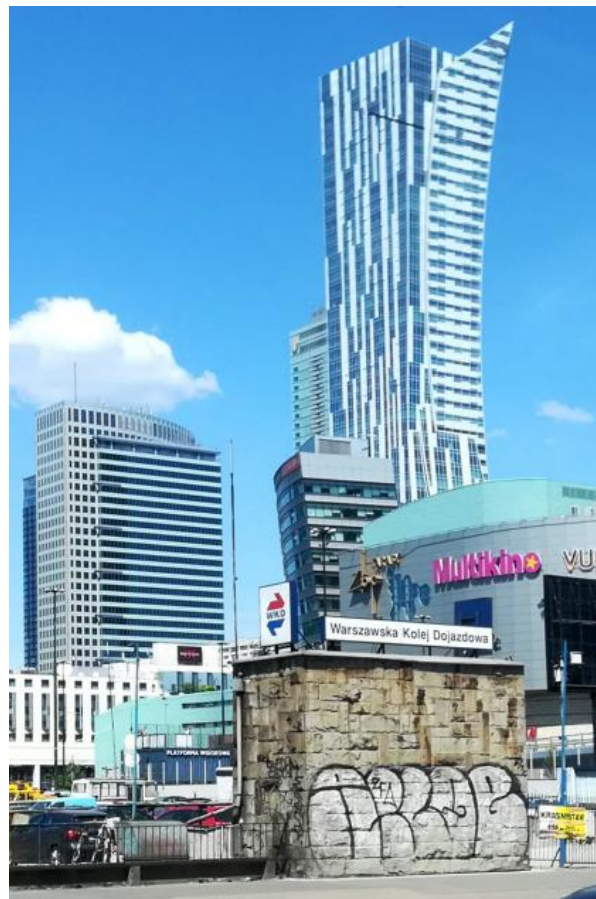
In the years 1768 - 1794, the Printing House of the Cadets Corps functioned in Warsaw. She printed manuals, instructions, prints and other training aids for the use of the Knights' School. It occupies a prominent place in the history and tradition of Polish military printing. It ended its activities with the fall of the Kosciuszko Uprising, as a result of which the Third Partition and the loss of state independence took place.

In 1818-1831, there was a special military printing house in the army of the Kingdom of Poland. It operated in Warsaw, and the effect of its activity is many printed military instructions, regulations, textbooks and other printed matter. A real monument of Polish military printing from that time are the Military Yearbooks of the Kingdom of Poland, issued in the years 1820 - 1830. Most of them are now in the collection of the Central Military Library. Regardless of the historical values of their content, they are a proof of the extremely high art of printing, lithographic and bookbinding.

After the fall of the November Uprising, the activity of military printing houses stopped for a long time. Editorial and publishing activities have moved to emigration. During the January Uprising (1863 - 1864), many instructions, regulations, regulations, appeals from insurgent authorities, and various types of ephemera were printed. However, this was happening in conspiratorial printing houses.

Since the fall of the uprising to the First World War, military printing in Poland almost ceased to exist. It reacts intensively with the start of the first global armed conflict. At that time, our own field printing houses had the PPS Combat Department (Revolutionary Fraction) and the Polish Military Organization.

After Poland regained its independence, the entire Military Publishing House was taken over by the Military Publishing Institute. Military prints were issued from 1919 at



the Graphic Works of the Ministry of Military Affairs. In addition, there were Graphic Departments of the Supreme Command of the Polish Army and many smaller printing and military printers. As a result of the reorganization, in 1930, the Main Military Printing House and Printing House of the Main Staff were established, as well as printing workshops at the commands of military districts, in officers' schools and other military centers.

The defensive war of 1939 destroyed the entire property of military printers, forcing them to descend to the underground. Secret printing houses were organized by the then functioning military-political groups. Only about 30 secret printing houses existed in Warsaw alone. They fulfilled an extremely important role in the area of information duplication as well as the process of maintaining the morale of the fighting Polish society.

During the war, field printers functioned at individual tactical connections of the Polish Army. At the end of 1943 in the 1st Infantry Division T. Kościuszko, a printing house and editorial office was opened, thus initiating the publication of the divisional newspaper "Soldier of Freedom". It was a modest two-page small-format magazine, folded by hand, printed on very weak war paper, appearing four times a week in a circulation of 2000 copies. This newspaper was printed on the so-called "Pedałka" nr 273, produced by Maszynostroitelnyj "Molot" trade. A copy of this machine is now in the Museum of the Polish Army. After the formation of the First Corps of the Polish Armed Forces in the USSR, the editors of the corpulent newspaper "We Won" were created, equipping it with the one received from the Soviet Army, a field printing press installed on two trucks. With time, its potential increased by two more vehicles on which the zecernię, flatbed printing machine, stereotypy and bookbinding were deployed. In the tactical relations of the First and Second Polish Army, there were several other field printers in which other front newspapers were printed, such as: Głos Żołnierza, White Eagle, Westward, Do Boju, Pancerni, Biuletyn Informacyjny, Bulletin of Praga, Weapons, Last News .

From this very general outline of Polish military printing, over the course of recent history, it is clear that the military printing was and is an inseparable part of the tradition of our armed forces. The driving force behind its development was the need to satisfy the constantly growing needs of the army in printed, training aids and any kind of job-related necessary in the process of proving, administrative and economic activities as well as journalistic materials, scientific works and works in the field of military literature.

1945-1947

At the beginning of this period, most of the military press was printed in Łódź. The commander-in-chief of the Polish Army would have liked, however, that the central magazine "Polska Zbrojna" would be printed in the capital. At that time it was believed that prestige required it and, moreover, as everything in those days was of course a matter of political aspirations. Thus, a technical base for printing this diary was started in Warsaw. They were transported to the capital of refined throughout the country, often extracted from rubble, printing machines and equipment. In this way, at ul. Królewska 2, a printing house of the Propaganda Department of the Main Political and Educational Board of the Polish Army was established.

In the beginning of 1946, the installation of zecernia was completed, two linotypes and a rotary machine were assembled. On the second of April, the first issue of "Polska Zbrojna" went down from the machine. At the same time, one linotype, two typographic machines with manual application and many spare parts were excavated from the rubble of the former printing house at Pańska Street. rusty, dusty and dirty. You had to disassemble everything thoroughly, clean and maintain and then assemble into working components. At the end of 1947, the printing house could be proud of a manual cut, two linotypes, stereotype, five printing machines (two flat, two pressure - "pedal" and one rotary), lithographic machine, chemistry, bookbinding and expedition.

The printing house occupied part of the ground and basement. Due to the lack of adequate rooms, offset machines were set in two gates of the building, transforming them into production halls. The rotary machine was erected in the yard in a reserved temporary barrack prepared for this purpose. The crew consisted of 60 people working in two shifts.

In October 1947, the Ministry of National Defense "Military Press" took over the "Graficzny Spółdzielnia Pracy - Grochów" together with the equipment and all staff.



Album of Jacek Frankowski



... not only from the holidays



The Drukarnia in Grochów was housed in a former building of the Educational Center for Youth run by the Order of the Albertine Brothers. There, too, the monks ran their own printing house in the interwar period. During the September campaign, this building was demolished as a result of the bombing and in its ruins the religious brothers hid all printing devices from the Germans. After the liberation of the right-bank Warsaw, hidden machines were taken from the rubble and a working cooperative was organized. As a result of various perturbations, political and economic turmoil, the army took over the Grochów printing house and in this way enlarged its technical park and the number of employees increased to 350 employees. In the structures of the army, the printing house in Grochów functioned until the end of 1949.

1947-1951

The location of the printing house in two distant parts of the city caused a lot of problems. It was not very convenient, especially because paper magazines, workshops and a car park were still on Bema Street. The situation made it impossible to arrange a printing house in one of those places at that time. At Królewska Street, the area was limited, in Grochów the building was demanded by the Albertinians, while the developing printing plant and the increasingly complex production cycle required a much larger area. In 1947, the move to a huge garage barrack at the Military Institute of Geography at Nowogrodzka Street 66 began. After the appropriate adaptations, the production departments were relocated, with the exception of the bindery, as well as the management and administration of the plant.

It already had ten linotypes, ten typographic machines and departments prepared. The fact of accepting the name: "Wojskowa Press - Zakłady Graficzne w Warszawie" also proved independence. This very moment, October 1947, was adopted as the beginning of the existence and functioning of the Military Graphic Works. However, the independence of the plant was officially confirmed only in 1949, and what is noteworthy in this year, the rotogravure machine "Cerutti" obtained as part of war reparations was imported from Italy. At that time, the technical peak installed by Italian specialists to meet their task required, however, appropriately high-class preparatory and professional staff. Unfortunately, both components were missing. Based on the existing possibilities, a preparation room, a pickling room and galvanizing facility were arranged and printing was started. However, the conditions were extremely difficult. Weighing about 300 kg cylinders, the service carried in the hands and the temperature of the water during the production of copies was measured by the home method "on the elbow". Also in other departments, the printing house was more like a manufactory than a production plant. Most bookbinding works were done by hand and the paper cutters were driven by a flywheel. In spite of this, the enthusiasm and commitment of the crew - and that was never lacking in those days - made production work. The moment of moving to the new headquarters was also impatiently awaited. In spite of this, the enthusiasm and commitment of the crew - and that was never lacking in those days - made production work. The moment of moving to the new headquarters was also impatiently awaited. In spite of this, the enthusiasm and commitment of the crew - and that was never lacking in those days - made production work. The moment of moving to the new headquarters was also impatiently awaited.

Lata 1951 - 1953

Only a year and a half was built a building specially designed for the needs of a modern printing house at the intersection of Grzybowska and Towarowa streets in which WZGraf is still located today. In 1951, modern machines and printing equipment necessary for the plant were started. The plant itself also aroused admiration, spacious, air-conditioned with excellent lighting, new shelves, chests and wide specialty aisles on the zeceria. Sixteen linotypes were installed, six of which are the latest N -4 machines brought from Leningrad. The hall of typographic machines was equipped almost completely with new equipment. Only three machines were imported from Nowogrodzka: "Mill", "Europa", and "Mann" with manual application. 11 modern fully automated machines such as "Wizbrant", "Planeta" and "Gudron" were brought from Germany, as almost everything, as part of war reparations. Two machines transported from Królewska were set up on the offset machines hall and the remaining three Planets were also imported from Germany. However, the resources of the offset prepress were much worse. A rotary newspaper machine of the "Albert Frankenta" type was also moved from Nowogrodzka. However, the most up-to-date was the bookbindery in which the cutting-edge electric cutters, tri-folds, folding machines, blocks, rousers, multi-head staplers, and machines for collecting and wrapping books were functioning at that time. It should also be emphasized that this printing house was one of the most modern in Poland and what was then unique. It was equipped



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...was one of the most modern in its class and what was then unique, it was equipped with all kinds of social facilities for the crew. Two machines transported from Królewska were set up on the offset machines hall and the remaining three Planets were also imported from Germany. However, the resources of the offset prepress were much worse. A rotary newspaper machine of the "Albert Frankenta" type was also moved from Nowogrodzka. However, the most up-to-date was the bookbindery in which the cutting-edge electric cutters, tri-folds, folding machines, blocks, rousers, multi-head staplers, and machines for collecting and wrapping books were functioning at that time. It should also be emphasized that this printing house was one of the most modern in Poland and what was then unique, it was equipped with all kinds of social facilities for the crew. Two machines transported from Królewska were set up on the offset machines hall and the remaining three Planets were also imported from Germany. However, the resources of the offset prepress were much worse. A rotary newspaper machine of the "Albert Frankenta" type was also moved from Nowogrodzka. However, the most up-to-date was the bookbindery in which the cutting-edge electric cutters, tri-folds, folding machines, blocks, rousers, multi-head staplers, and machines for collecting and wrapping books were functioning at that time. It should also be emphasized that this printing house was one of the most modern in Poland and what was then unique, it was equipped with all kinds of social facilities for the crew.

In 1953, by order No. 015 / MON of April 20, a state-owned enterprise named Wojskowe Zakłady Graficzne was established, operating until April 2006.

1953 - 1987

The 1950s is an extremely special period of total domestic production. New organizational models are developed at the plant, and the production tasks are performed by the crew over- and early. In 1954, a technical and production instruction was introduced, defining technological and organizational processes at all levels. It worked in action because on its basis the nature of production in the entire printing industry was unified with time. Despite limited financial expenditures for investments, systematically as far as possible, worn out machines were replaced with new ones. In 1954, two more rotogravure machines - planets type "Planeta PET-6" were bought. They functioned until 1974. In 1955, old ribbon linotypes were replaced by new ones N-7, N-14, N-15. A machine for turning, grinding and polishing rotogravure cylinders from the "Polimikra" company was also purchased and installed. As a result, a much better cylinder smoothness was obtained, which allowed to achieve a better quality of gravure printing. A huge number of upgrades and modernizations were also introduced by the plant employees themselves. As part of the rationalization activities, the hardcover system was modernized, many of the components in rotogravure machines were modernized, reorganization was introduced, increasing the efficiency in production systems.

In 1962, WZGraf takes over the tasks and printing house of the Ministry of Internal Affairs from Gołędzinów, launching a new special department at that time, also called a "separate printing house" which takes over the printing tasks of classified materials.

In the early seventies, the company's great achievement was the development and implementation of a new technology for the production of aluminum plates for offset printing, which received a patent. Until 1986, Wojskowe Zakłady Graficzne was the first and the only printing house which produced such sheets, applied them and delivered them to other printing companies. At the time, this was a very significant achievement due to the fact that it eliminated the need to import very expensive CDs from abroad, i.e. how they used to be from the second payment area. The end of this production was associated with the intensification of the process of environmental protection and the consequent elimination of poisonous wastewater, as well as the transition of the offset technique to pre-hybridized and bimetallic plates.

In 1974 - 75 a modern rotogravure machine "Wifag Rotomaster - 1000" was purchased in Switzerland, thanks to which the printing efficiency increased significantly. There have been eliminated breaks for the exchange of paper rolls which in this machine is automatically carried out during printing.

In 1985, a large-scale modernization of the machine park was carried out. The oldest, longest working typographic machines were dismantled, including "Planet ZT 2b" and "Planet ZT-100". In their place, the "Planets" P26-35W and P24-65W as well as the two-color "Heidelberg 102 -ZP" were installed with the option of converting to two-sided printing. Bookbinders were also modernized by adding new folding machines and a machine for collecting and binding with wire. The new three-knives "Wohlenberg 44fm / Rot and" Perfecta SDY-1 "were installed. A year later, the line for



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seamless binding "Starbinder" by Müller-Martini was launched. "Innovative technologies using photopolymers were also introduced at the time, thus limiting the use of harmful lead.

In the next stages of the modernization of the plant, newspaper production was undertaken, which forced the plant to buy new "Plamag Rondoset-Petit" roll machines and organize a complete newspaper production department with the "Adressograph Multigraph International" photo-company system.

Andrzej Nowak, Warsaw

From the author: in April 2006, the plants ceased to exist and on the plot bought by Ghelamco two years ago from the administrator of Wojskowe Zakłady Graficzne will be another office building. The skyscraper will have a double glass façade, whose panes are to rise even above the last floor. For the two-hectare area between Grzybowska, Wronia, Łucka and Towarowa, the company paid an astronomical amount of PLN 85 million. - 180-meter building will be in the corner of Łucka and Towarowa. By adding the antenna, it will be around 200 meters.



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