



A Biography of Count Emeryk Hutten Czapski

Count Emeryk Hutten Czapski, a prominent Polish statesman and communal leader, was born on August 21, 1897 in Stanków, Minsk region. He was the son of Count Karol Hutten Czapski (1860-1904), then president of Minsk and the grandson of Emeryk Zachariasz Hutten Czapski (1828-1896), a famous numismatist, Polish memorabilia collector and the founder of the Czapski Museum in Cracow. Czapski hailed from a family that contributed much to Polish political and cultural life, and whose members had held important state positions since the sixteenth century. The patriotic atmosphere in his home, and family connections which extended across most of Europe gave Czapski a broader intellectual perspective, which allowed him to evaluate historical events that affected his homeland in light of the world situation. It was Stanków that created in him a need to work *pro publico bono*, for the good of his people and country.

He studied at the Benedictine boarding school of Ettal, in Bavaria, Germany and later at the Law Institute of St. Petersburg, Russia. From 1918 to 1919 he was Secretary of the Association of Poles from the Belorussian Marches. Early in 1919 he worked for the Hoover Food Mission in Warsaw, and from September of that year until July 1920 he was in charge of religious and ethnic affairs for the region of Minsk. Later he became a representative of the area administration at the headquarters of the Fourth Army commanded by General Skierski. From January 1921 to February 1923 Czapski was *starosta* (chief administrator) of the town of Stołpce, on the eastern border of Poland. He established an entire administration for his district, paying special attention to the self-governing structure. He also took active steps to contain an epidemic of typhoid, founded the Agricultural Society, and a branch of the Polish Red Cross in Stołpce. In November 1922 Czapski miraculously survived an attempt on his life (of the three bombs thrown into his bedroom only one exploded).

Due to his frail health, Czapski resigned in 1923 from the position of *starosta* and settled on an estate which he had inherited from his mother in the forest district of Synkowice near Słonim. He did not, however, give up his intensive community work and became chairman of the Associa-

tion of Landowners (1925-1931) and worked for other national organizations.

In both 1930 and 1935 he was elected to the *Sejm* (Parliament) as deputy for the Nowogródek Voivodeship (district) and worked on the budget, education, and foreign affairs committees, as well as for the Farmers' Group of the *Sejm* and *Senat*. He delivered the budgets of the President of Poland, the Cabinet, the State Monopolies, and the Treasury. As Chair of the Joint Parliamentary Forestry Commission,



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Czapski inspected and reported on the state of the national forests. He initiated the Indivisibility of Farms Act and worked to make it law. During his second term in office he was President of the Joint Commission for Immigration and Colonial Affairs. He reported on the trade convention with Canada and on a treaty with the Holy See. As Vice-Chairman of the Polish delegation, he attended several interparliamentary economic conferences, organized the Economic Parliamentary Congress and exchanges between farmer deputies and senators and government officials in the German Reich, Romania, and Hungary.

In addition to his official duties, he was also temporary Chair of the Governing Council of the National Teachers' College

in Słonim, the Society for Polish-Hungarian Friendship, and the Society for Polish-Egyptian Friendship.

After the defeat of the Polish Army at the hands of the Germans in September 1939, Czapski left Poland via Lithuania and Sweden, bound for France. While in France he worked for the Bureau of War Aims of the Polish Government in Angers where he reported on the situation in north-eastern Poland. After the defeat of France and the severing of diplomatic relations between Poland and Vichy France, there was need for a support organization for Poles in exile. At that time Czapski became Government Delegate of the Polish Red Cross and the Polish Bureau in France (equivalent to an embassy), where he provided legal and consular support for the refugees.

As Government Delegate to those institutions, he went to French North Africa in 1941 in order to support Polish soldiers who, after the defeat of France, tried to reach England via Africa. He stayed in Algiers, Tunis, Rabat, and Casablanca until December of 1943. One of his major accomplishments during his sojourn in Africa was obtaining permission from the French government to discharge all Poles from the Foreign Legion. Such an event had taken place only once before, when Adam Mickiewicz was creating his Polish Legion. In close contact with the Polish Government-in-Exile in London, Czapski supervised the Bank of Poland's gold reserves hidden in Dakar, defending them from French and German hands. After the Allies' invasion of North Africa, Czapski took over an office of the Consul General of the Republic of Poland, and later, as Minister Plenipotentiary, he reinstated all the former consulates that existed before the defeat of France.

After the arrival of the Polish Embassy with Kajetan Morawski in Algiers, Czapski was discharged and nominated Head of the Refugee Department in charge of Polish refugees from the Soviet Union. Later, he was Head of the Administrative Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in London until November 1944, when he took over the office of political adviser of the Polish Military Mission at the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEP) at the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel. In this assignment, Czapski took part in the crossing of the Rhine

River by the First Armoured Division and in the liberation of the Home Army women soldiers from an internment camp in Oberlangen. There he was awarded the Cross of Bravery. After the Third Reich's surrender he visited the concentration camps in Dachau, Gusen, and Mauthausen, and informed the Cardinal Primate of Poland, August Hlond, of all surviving clergy in Dachau. In Nurnberg, Czapski found the Wit Stwosz Altar, which had been stolen by the Germans from St. Mary's Church in Cracow during the war. After the closure of the military mission at SHAEF, he was sent to the Allied High Commission as a representative of the Second Corps. When the Second Corps dissolved, Czapski settled in Italy and became an advocate for the Polish men married to Italian women, who were denied entry to England because they were suspected of choosing Italy as their country of settlement. Thanks to Czapski, approximately eight thousand people who would have experienced hunger and unemployment in Italy were able to emigrate and find a better life abroad.

In 1932 Czapski became a member of the Polish Knights of Malta and soon became the Grand Chancellor of the Order and their first post-war President (1948-1975). He initiated and organized the Knights' Hospice in Rome that supported Polish academics. From 1968 until his death he was Chairman of the Margravine J. Umiaszowska Roman Foundation. The Foundation had been established immediately after World War II, although its contributions to the Polish cultural scene were initially minimal. As Chairman, Czapski restructured the administration, paid all debts, secured a minimal income, and directed all organizational activities into providing grants for Polish academics. During the ten-year period of his chairmanship, the Foundation granted research scholarships to approximately 250 academics from various universities and other institutions in Poland, who specialized in painting, architecture, coin collection, cartography, bibliography, and art history.

In 1972, following the decision to rebuild the Royal Castle in Warsaw, Czapski established a fund for the purchase of the required construction materials. From the collected funds he purchased all the necessary marble that had been approved by the Reconstruction Board.

Czapski, an avid collector specializing in old Polish maps and prints, was deeply interested in the activities of the Czapski Museum in Cracow. In fact, he was delegated before the war, by the Czapski

Family Association, to liaise with the management of the National Museum of Cracow. Following an old family tradition, between 1962 and 1972, he presented a collection of precious maps and prints to the Czapski Museum.

Already in his youth he had begun to collect maps, mostly old maps of the Polish Republic. Miraculously, while leaving his beleaguered homeland, he managed to save a rare de Jode map of sixteenth-century Poland with a picture of the Polish King Stefan Batory. With this map began his great collection that continued to grow in Rome. His dream of compiling a catalogue of old maps of the Polish Republic, similar to the coin catalogue of his grandfather, was partially

realized already in 1978 when he collaborated with the Institute of Geography of the Polish Academy of Sciences to publish the first volume of the catalogue of early Polish maps from his collection

Czapski initiated the establishment of the Polish Cemetery in Rome at Prima Porta, on the site designated for the construction of a branch chapel of St. Stanislaus' Church. There, all Polish graves in Rome were to be concentrated. In this cemetery, Emeryk Hutten Czapski was buried next to his mother on January 31, 1979.

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Manuscript Gifts in 2002

Year after year the staff at the Fisher Library are amazed by the quality and variety of the gifts offered for our collections by donors. This year is no exception, and though we have felt keenly the retirement of our Manuscripts Curator Edna Hajnal, the staff have struggled valiantly to maintain the standards set by Edna and her predecessors. In 2002, many authors and other faithful donors bestowed upon us manuscript drafts, correspondence, and other original archival material of great interest to our research readers.

Authors/Poets

The 2002 gift of Margaret Atwood is comprised of drafts, correspondence (1997-2002), and notes relating to *Negotiating With The Dead: A Writer On Writing*, published by Cambridge University Press in 2002. *Negotiating With The Dead* was based on the six Empson Lectures "about writing and the writing life" (<http://www.web.net/owtoad/empson.html>) delivered at Cambridge University's Lady Mitchell Hall by Ms. Atwood in April and May of 2000. We also received translations of *The Blind Assassin* in French, Brazilian, Spanish, Catalan, Turkish, and Estonian. Fan mail, business and personal correspondence, drafts, and notes for many smaller projects, reviews, promotional and scholarly material were all part of this gift. Margaret Atwood's new novel, *Oryx and Crake* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 2003) is currently

available.

The gift of playwright/author David Young included material for a current television series *The 11th Hour; Papa Alpha*, his pilot project for television based on the experiences of aid workers in the Sudan (including correspondence and other material from Mr. Young's stay in the Sudan); his film project *Getting Lucky*; and the London production of his play *Inexpressible Island* (titled *Antarctica* in England). Also included in this year's gift were extensive business and personal correspondence; information regarding his charitable works; family correspondence surrounding the illness and death of his mother, Toto Young; and his battle with Jim Henson Associates over *Fraggle Rock* payments for Canadian writers. The most unique item included with this year's gift was a time capsule encased in plexiglass containing entries from such notable Canadians as: Governor General Adrienne Clarkson and Consort John Ralston Saul, Margaret Atwood and Graeme Gibson, Michael Ondaatje, Michael Snow, Dennis Lee, and Sarah Polley. David Young explains the origins of the time capsule: "On December 21, 1999, David hosted a party at 26 Dupont, inviting a wide range of notable citizens – writers, poets, artists and film makers – to contribute to a time capsule which would be buried on that night. A wild party full of drink and talk ensued..."

George Fetherling's 2002 gift included drafts and notes for his *Three Pagodas*