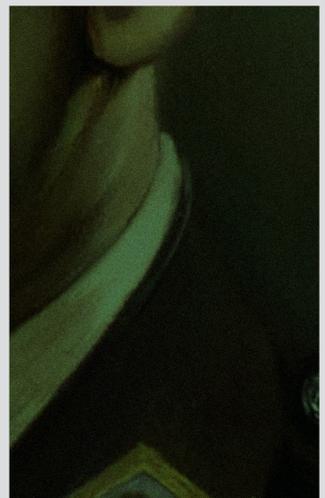
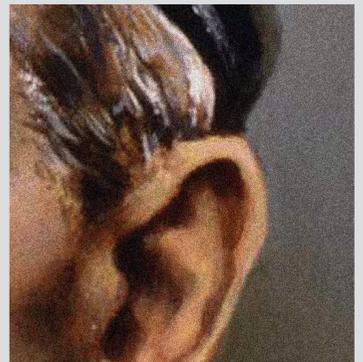
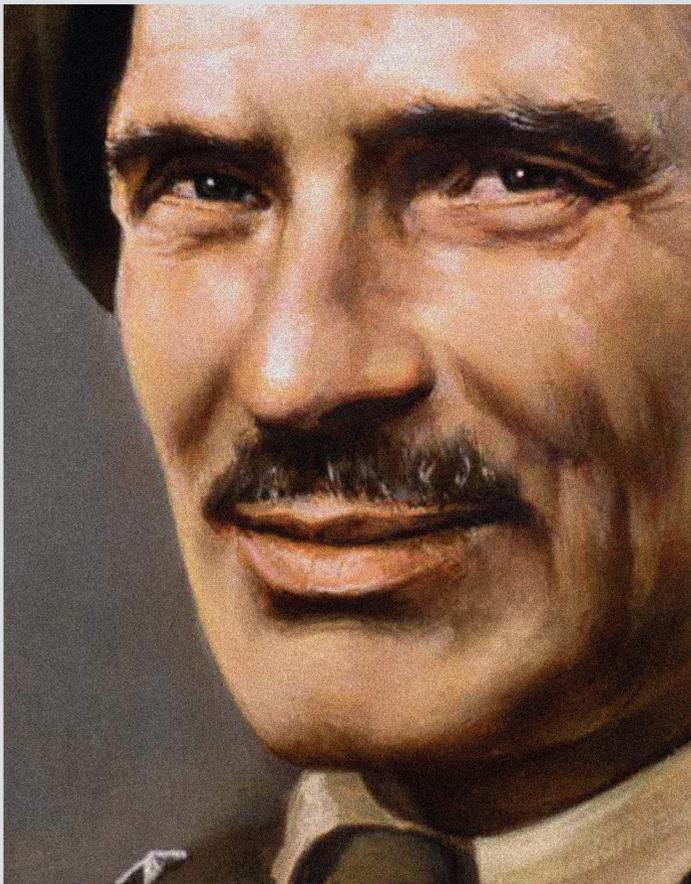




INSTYTUT
PAMIĘCI
NARODOWEJ



Stanisław Sosabowski



**BIOGRAFIE
WYSTAWY
ELEMENTARNE**

/ BIOGRAPHIES
ELEMENTARY EXHIBITIONS /



Szlaki Nadziei
Odyseja Wolności
Пути надежды
Одиссея свободы
Wege der Hoffnung
Trails of Hope
Odysee der Freiheit
The Odyssey of Freedom

„Sosab”



General Stanisław Sosabowski, called “Sosab” by his subordinates, is a person who is a symbol of Polish paratrooping and its participation in the biggest airborne operation during World War 2 – Market-Garden.

Born in Stanisławów in the Eastern Borderlands (Kresy), he shared the course of life of the generation building the Second Polish Republic. After the war, he remained in exile like thousands of Polish officers not in agreement with the Soviet domination over the Homeland.



↑ Commander of the 1st Independent Parachute Brigade brig. gen. Stanisław Sosabowski during the fighting in Holland – portrait. On his head, the parachute army version of the British helmet, with camouflage netting, September 1944.

📍 From the AIPN collection in Warsaw



INSTYTUT
PAMIĘCI
NARODOWEJ

1892

Childhood and youth



↑ Badge
of the Polish
Rifle Squads
Wikimedia
Commons

← Stanisław
Sosabowski
in Stanisławów,
c. 1910.

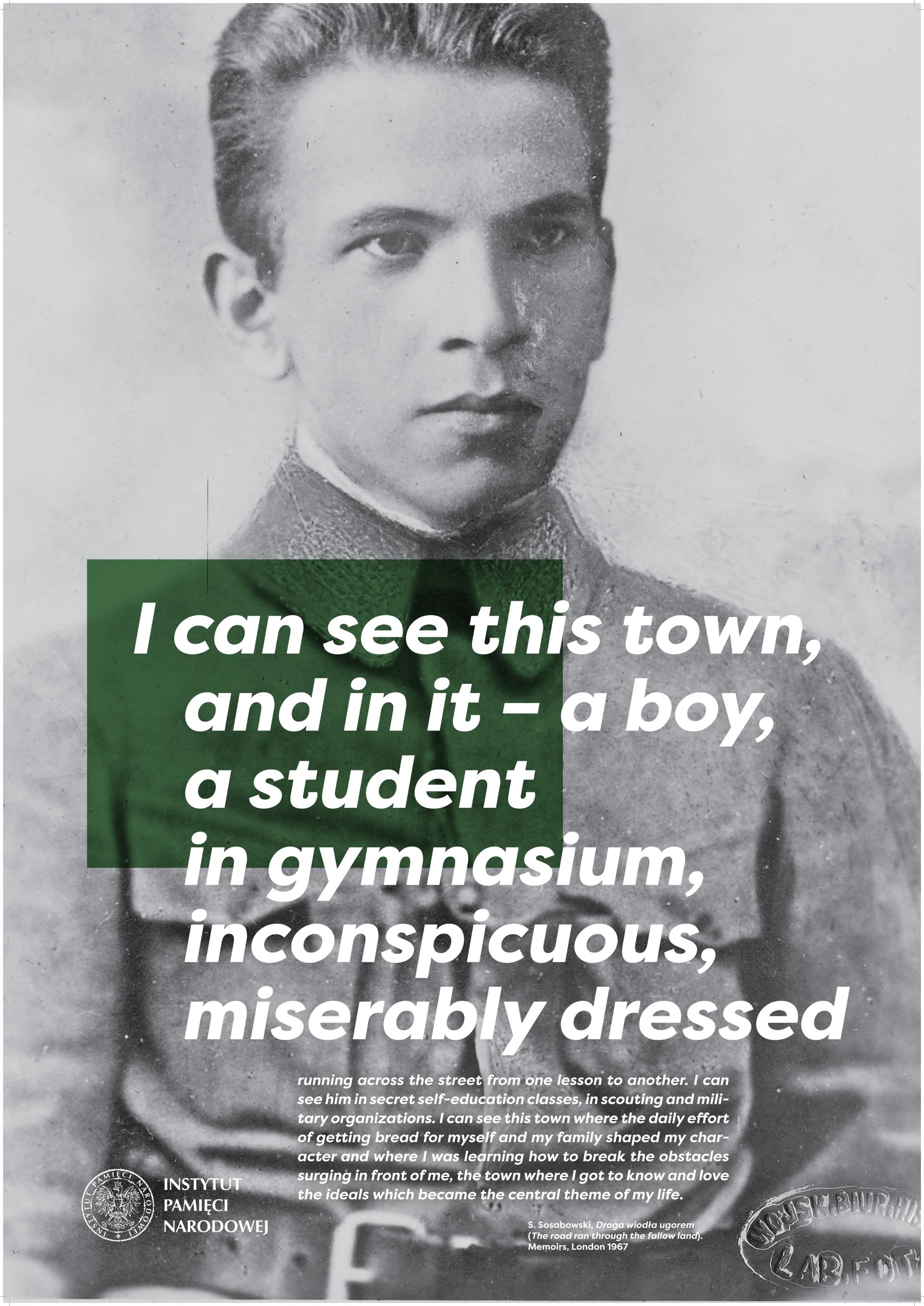
From the collection
of the Historical
Military Office

Stanisław Sosabowski was born on 8 May 1892 in Stanisławów in Pokuttia, which at that time was a part of Galicia. He was a son of Władysław and Franciszka, maiden name Grabarska. He had three siblings: sisters Kazimiera and Janina, and brother Julian Andrzej. His father was a railwayman and his mother took care of children. His father's death forced the 12-year old boy to tutor other students in return for money. Tough years after the death of his father developed his independence and ambition.

→ Commemorative
badge for
graduation from
the officers' school
of the Union
of Active Struggle
and Riflemen's
Association,
so called Umbrella
Wikimedia
Commons



INSTYTUT
PAMIĘCI
NARODOWEJ



***I can see this town,
and in it – a boy,
a student
in gymnasium,
inconspicuous,
miserably dressed***

running across the street from one lesson to another. I can see him in secret self-education classes, in scouting and military organizations. I can see this town where the daily effort of getting bread for myself and my family shaped my character and where I was learning how to break the obstacles surging in front of me, the town where I got to know and love the ideals which became the central theme of my life.



INSTYTUT
PAMIĘCI
NARODOWEJ

S. Sosabowski, *Droga wiodła ugorem*
(The road ran through the fallow land).
Memoirs, London 1967



On the road to Independent Poland

From his youngest age, he became involved in independence activities in Stanisławów. He took actions, among other things, in "Zet" (Związek Młodzieży Polskiej - Union of Polish Youth), later in "Zarzewie" and in the Polish Military Association. Under the pseudonym "Stanisław Węglarz" he organized Dionizy Czachowski's Training Unit. In the years preceding the outbreak of World War 1, he was the head of the XXIV Rifle Squad and I Scout Squad. During that time, he cooperated also with the Union of Active Struggle and the Riflemen's Association.

→ Stanisław Sosabowski in the uniform of cadet of the Polish Rifle Squad in Stanisławów
📷 From the collection of the Historical Military Office



↓ Stanisławów, Mickiewicz Square
📷 From the collection of the National Library in Warsaw

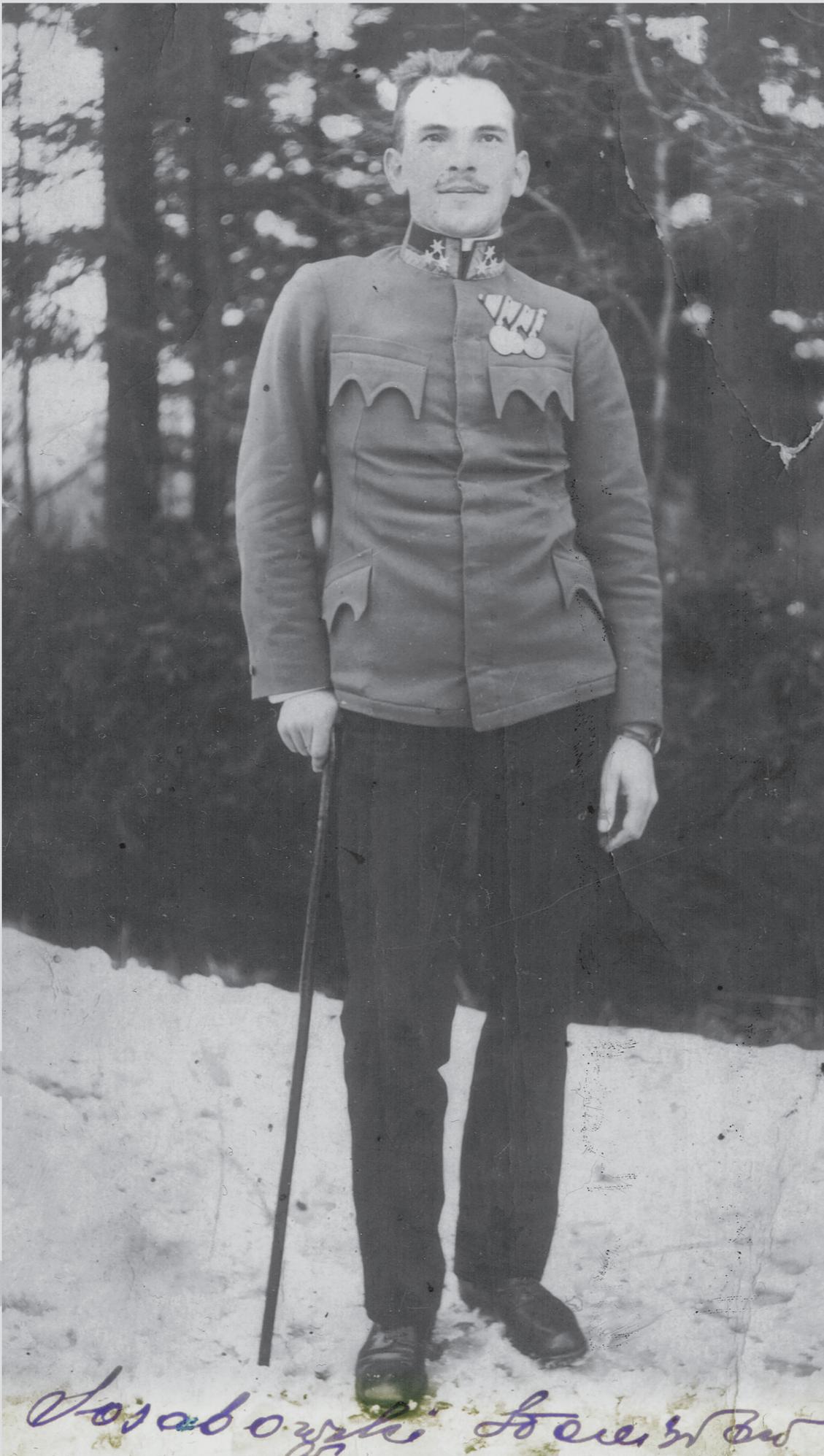


↑ "For freedom and fame". Text on the sabre given by the 24th Rifle Squad in Stanisławów to its commander Stanisław Sosabowski
📷 From the collection of the Polish Army Museum in Warsaw



INSTYTUT
PAMIĘCI
NARODOWEJ

1915



↑ Sergeant of the Austrian Army Stanisław Sosabowski in the sanatorium after being wounded in the leg by shrapnel, Gross Morsdorf, 1915.

📍 From the collection of Dariusz Krakowiak

In 1913 he was called to military service in the army of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. After the outbreak of World War 1, he was drafted into the 58th Galician Infantry Regiment. He fought in it on the eastern front. In 1915 he was promoted to the rank of warrant officer and in 1916 second lieutenant. He was wounded near Brześć. At the end of the war, he married Maria Tokarska. The end of the Great War found him in Lublin where he joined the actions of disarming the occupants.



**INSTYTUT
PAMIĘCI
NARODOWEJ**

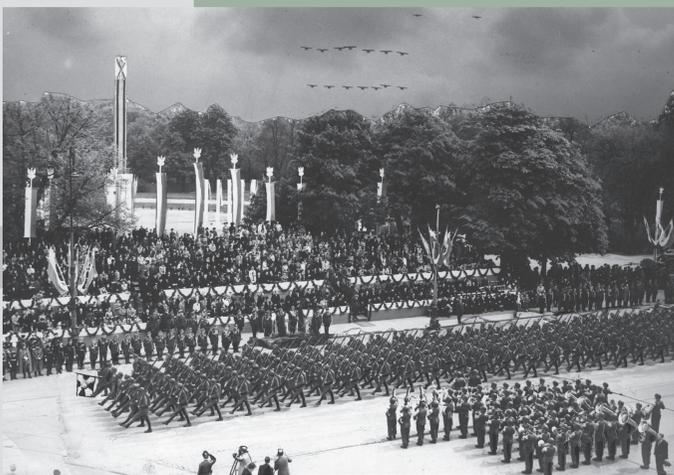
In the service of the Independent Poland

↓ Major general Stanisław Wróblewski (1) with, among other people, brig. gen. Waclaw Przeździecki (2), colonel Tadeusz Malinowski (3), colonel Karol Zagórski (to the right behind gen. Wróblewski), colonel Jan Maciej Bold (5), colonel Stanisław Sosabowski (6), major Stanisław Czuryłło (7), 1929.

📷 From the collection of the National Digital Archives



As early as November 1918, he joined the ranks of the Polish Army. The wound from the period of World War 1 did not allow him to perform service on the front. In November 1920, he was promoted to the rank of major. After the end of the war with Bolshevik Russia, he completed the Improvement Course II in the War College in Warsaw. In 1927, he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant colonel, he became the commander of the second battalion of the 75th Infantry Regiment in Rybnik. From 1928, he became the deputy commander of the 3rd Podhale Rifles Infantry Regiment in Bielsko Biala. In the years 1930-1937, he was a lecturer in the War College in Warsaw. Before the outbreak of World War 2, he had fulfilled commanding functions: first in the 9th Legions' Infantry Regiment in Zamość, then 21st "Children of Warsaw" Infantry Regiment. It is with this that he went fighting in September 1939.



↑ The last parade in which Stanisław Sosabowski participated in the free and independent Poland. General view of the Constitution Holiday on 3 May 1939, Warsaw, Aleje Ujazdowskie

📷 From the collection of the National Digital Archives



↑ Group photo of participants of the reunion 10 years after graduation from the School, Warsaw, 1933. Lieutenant colonel Stanisław Sosabowski – the third one from the left in the top row

📷 From the collection of the National Digital Archives



**INSTYTUT
PAMIĘCI
NARODOWEJ**

1939

In defence of the Homeland

On 25 August 1939, standing at the head of the 21st “Children of Warsaw” Infantry Regiment, he was drafted as a part of private mobilization. The regiment fought, among other places, in the region of Mława, and from 10 September it was defending the Capital. He was a commander in the area of Grochów until the moment of the surrender of Warsaw. For his attitude during the Polish campaign in 1939 and for his personal actions of bravery, after the end of World War 2 he was rewarded with the Silver Cross of the Virtuti Militari War Order, class V.



← Badge of the 21st “Children of Warsaw” Infantry Regiment from the period of the Second Polish Republic.

Wikimedia Commons

“Soldiers, defendants of the Capital, you have fairly fulfilled your soldier’s duty. When today at the command you part with your weapons and go back to your homes, remember well that you are still soldiers of the Polish Republic. Do not let any temporary failures of the Homeland, the variable fate of the war, break you. I am not saying farewell to you, boys, we will meet again at work and in the fight. Long live Poland!”

S. Sosabowski, *Droga wiodła ugorem* (The road ran through the fallow land) Memoirs, Londyn 1967



↑ Lieutenant colonel Stanisław Sosabowski, photo from the interwar period
Wikimedia Commons
From the collection of the Historical Military Officeo

↑ Silver Cross of the Virtuti Militari Order (obverse)
Wikimedia Commons



INSTYTUT
PAMIĘCI
NARODOWEJ

From the first days after surrender of the Capital and escape from captivity, he was involved in conspiracy activities in the Service for Poland's Victory, becoming its first commander in the area of Łódź. Later he was moved as a courier of the Union of Armed Struggle (Związek Walki Zbrojnej – ZWZ) to Lwów in the area of Soviet occupation. In December 1939, under the pseudonym “Węglarz” and using fake documents, he got across through the eastern Carpathian mountains first to Hungary. Afterwards, at the order of the Commander-in-Chief, he reached the Polish Army in France. There he initially received the order to take over the command of ZWZ in the area of Soviet occupation. From 1940, he fulfilled commanding functions: first in the 1st Grenadier Division and then in the 4th Infantry Division. As a result of France's defeat, he had to evacuate to Great Britain.

← Stanisław Sosabowski, photo taken at the turn of 1939/1940

📷 From the collection of Dariusz Krakowiak

He combines in himself two basic features of a good combat commander: knowledge and character

K. Sosnkowski, Słowo wstępne (Foreword)
[w:] S. Sosabowski, Najkrótszą drogą
(Via the shortest route)
London 1957



INSTYTUT
PAMIĘCI
NARODOWEJ

1941

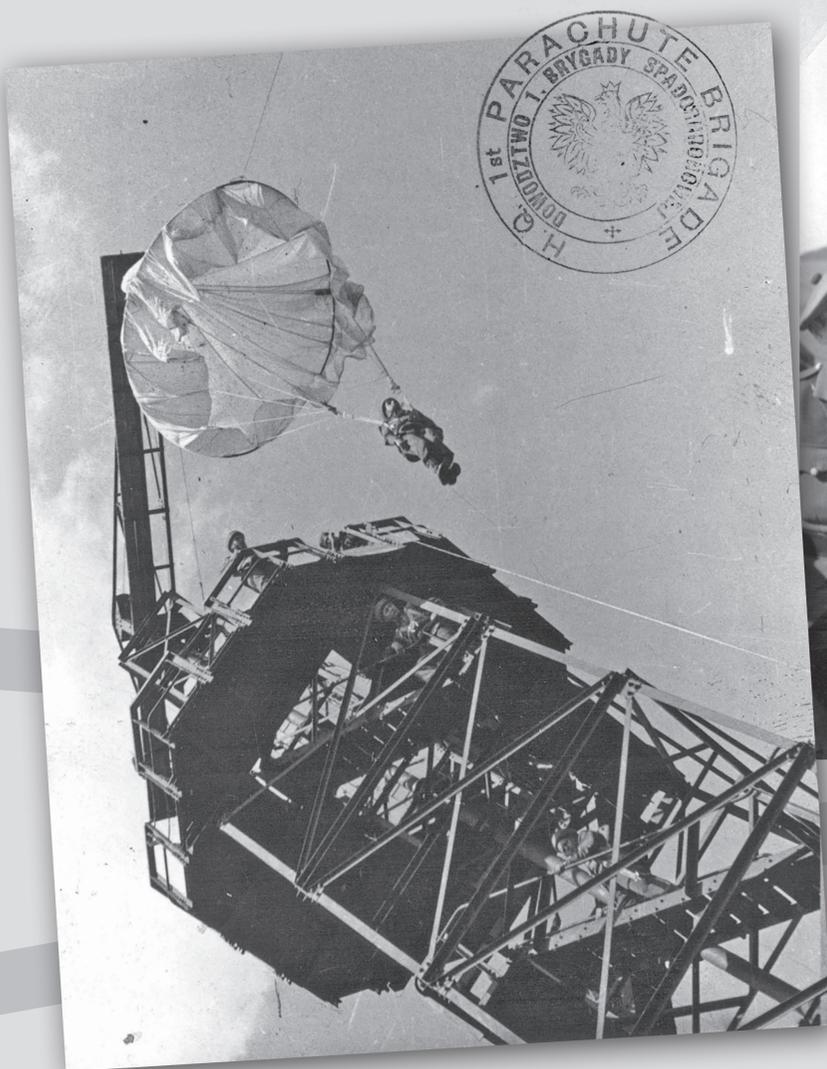
In the West

↓ Group photo of the commander and officers of the 1st Independent Parachute Brigade. The photo shows, among others, from the left: lieutenant colonel Jachnik, major Małaszkiwicz, major dr Pienczykowski, major dr Golba, major Rotter. Leven Scotland, July 1942

📷 Ze zbiorów Marcina Zugaj



After evacuation to Great Britain, Colonel Stanisław Sosabowski organized the 4th Rifle Brigade. As soon as early 1941, the first participants in the Brigade reached a British parachute centre. There, as part of a course in the saboteur training centre, they became candidates for “cichociemni” (the Silent Unseen). That is how the general developed the concept of creating a parachute unit which could come to Poland by air. On 23 September 1941, the Commander-in-Chief gen. Władysław Sikorski gave a new name to the 4th Brigade: the 1st Parachute Brigade.



↑ Training of soldiers from the 1st Independent Parachute Brigade of the Polish Armed Forces in Great Britain

📷 From the collection of AIPN in Warsaw



↑ One of the soldiers puts a British rubber training helmet on deputy prime minister of Great Britain Clement Attlee (2. from the left). First from right – commander of the Brigade Colonel Stanisław Sosabowski

📷 From the collection of the National Digital Archives



INSTYTUT
PAMIĘCI
NARODOWEJ

1943

Via the shortest route

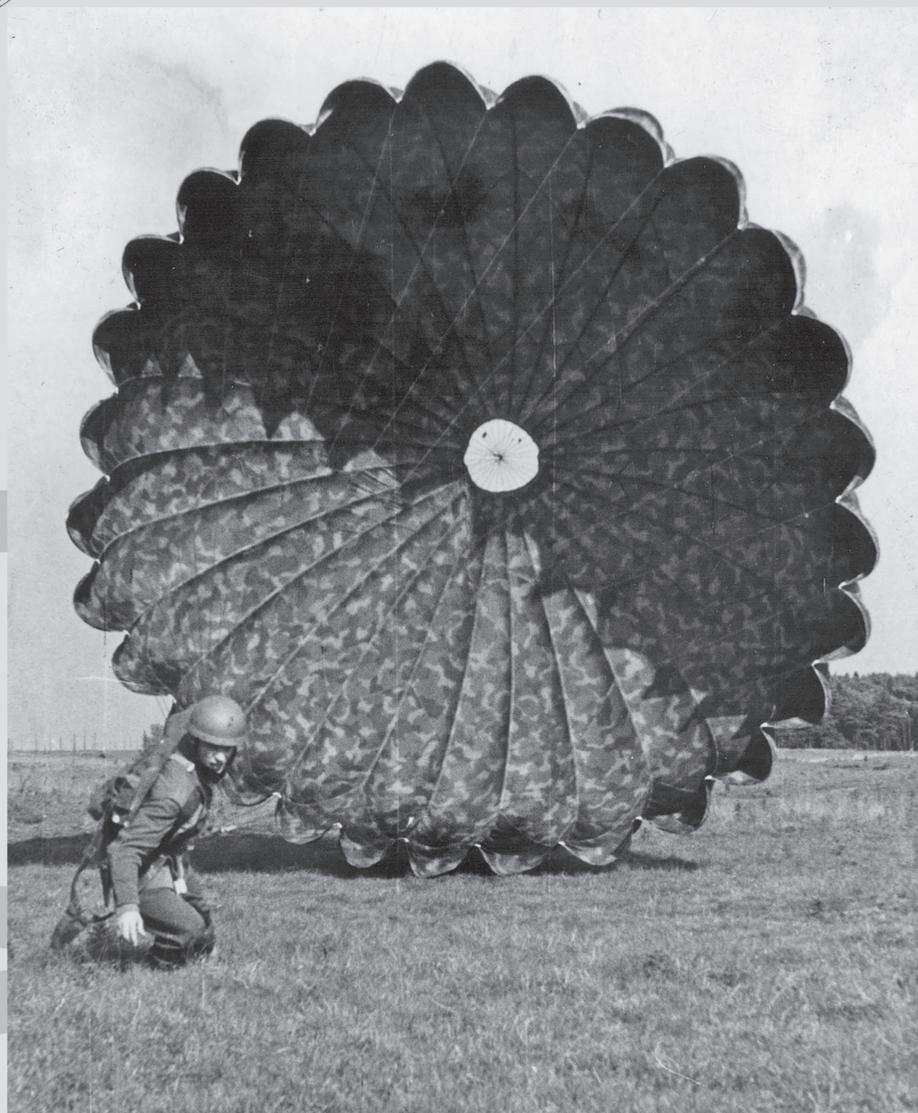
↓ Sosabowski after being awarded with the Gold Cross of Merit with Swords, 4 September 1943
📍 From the collection of the Historical Military Office



↓ Commander of the 1st SBS next to a 6 pound cannon, 1943. Colonel Stanisław Sosabowski was always soliciting for appropriate rearmament and training of the Parachute Brigade
📍 From the collection of Marcin Zugaj



In September 1943, Col. Sosabowski received a proposal from Gen. Browning to take over the command of the British & Polish parachute division. This would have been the first case in which a foreigner would command an elite unit. Sosabowski refused because this would preclude using the Brigade in the country. On 15 June 1944, Colonel Stanisław Sosabowski was promoted to the rank of brigadier general. In August, the Brigade was placed under the command of the Allies.



↑ Training of soldiers from the 1st Independent Parachute Brigade of the Polish Armed Forces in Great Britain. In 1944, the Brigade received a banner with the words Surge Polonia prepared by the Home Country (AK) in Warsaw
📍 From the collection of AIPN in Warsaw



INSTYTUT
PAMIĘCI
NARODOWEJ

1944

For you, the Homeland

„Market-Garden”

↓ A group of Polish paratroopers from the 1st Independent Parachute Brigade marches on the road during the fighting in Holland. Most soldiers are wearing British helmets in the variant for parachute army with a painted eagle, 1944.

📍 From the collection of AIPN in Warsaw



The Allies' headquarters planned the airborne operation called Market-Garden in which the 1st Independent Parachute Brigade with its commander took part. From September, the Polish soldiers were fighting in the area of Arnhem supporting the 1st British Airborne Division on both sides of the Rhine. In order to hide their mistakes, the British threw off the entire responsibility for the failure of the operation on Sosabowski. Gen. Sosabowski was removed from the command of the 1st SBS in December 1944.



↑ Commander of the 1st SBS in conversation with the chief of staff Major R. Małaszkiwicz on the tarmac before the Market-Garden operation

📍 From the collection of the family of Major Ryszard Małaszkiwicz



↑ Commander of the 1st Independent Parachute Brigade Brig. Gen. Stanisław Sosabowski during fighting in Holland, September 1944

📍 From the collection of AIPN in Warsaw



← Combat Parachute Badge was given to soldiers of the Polish Armed Forces in the West for participation in combat parachute actions.

📍 From the collection of Marcin Zugaj



INSTYTUT
PAMIĘCI
NARODOWEJ

„Stan”

Deprived of the function of the commander of the 1st SBS, he was appointed as an inspector in the Staging and Sentry Units, and from 1947 in the Polish Resettlement Corps. He did not accept the communistic authority imposed on Poland and remained in emigration in Great Britain. In 1947, he created the Association of Polish Paratroopers in London and organized meetings with his soldiers. After demobilization, deprived of means to live, he worked as “regular factory worker” – first a warehouseman and then a fitter.

↓ Stanisław Sosabowski in emigration in Great Britain, the sixties. As a regular employee, he was called “Stan” by Englishmen not knowing his past. For former soldiers of the 1st SBS he always remained the General.

📍 From the collection of Dariusz Krakowiak



↑ Succeeding generations of the Sosabowski's family in Great Britain, the sixties. From the left: son Stanisław Janusz (participant of the Warsaw uprising), Gen. Stanisław Sosabowski, on his hands Hal Sosabowski, next Michael Sosabowski and Stanisław Sosabowski III

📍 From the collection of Dariusz Krakowiak

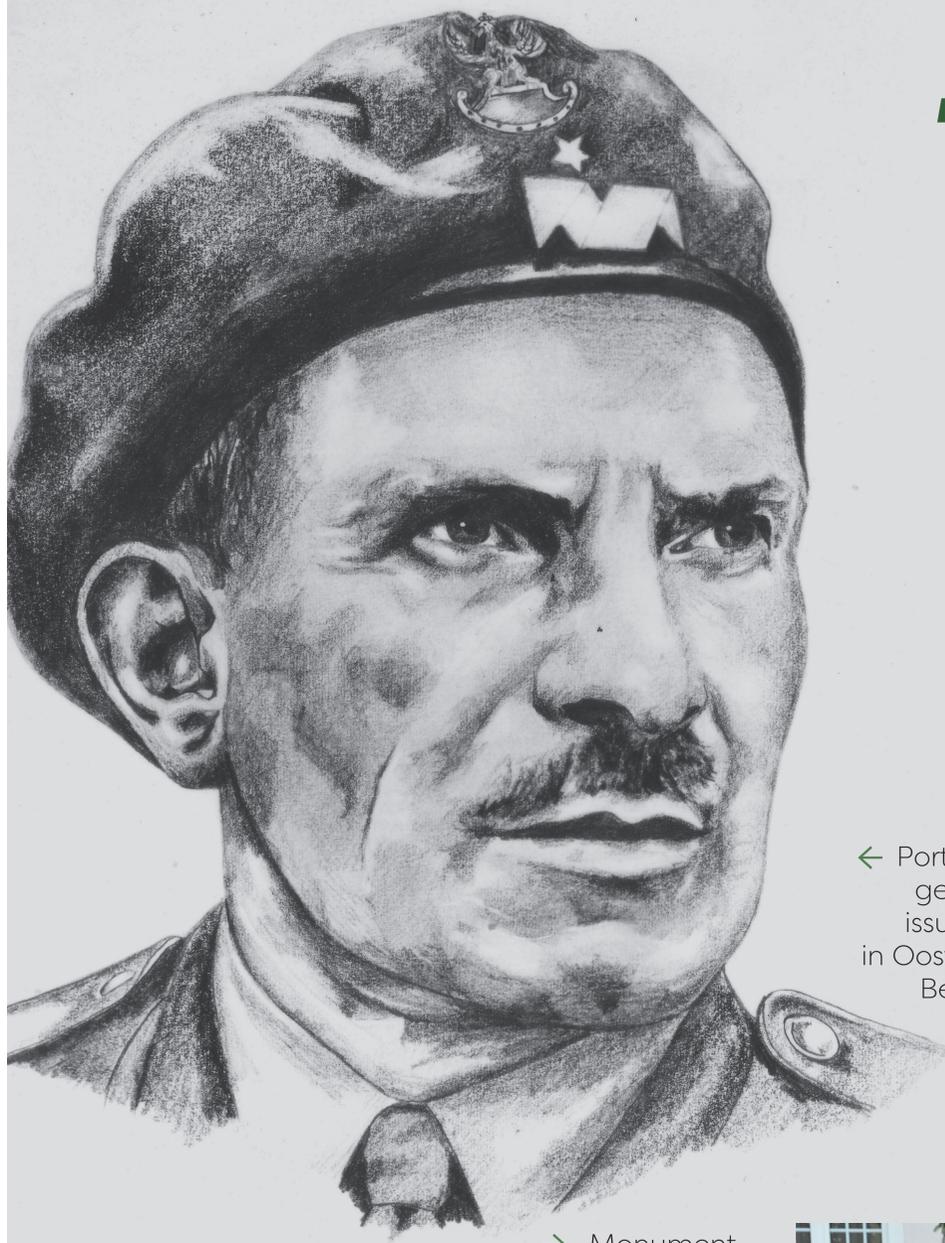


↑ Stanisław Sosabowski during anniversary ceremonies, Scotland 1964. Association of Polish Paratroopers, Huddersfield unit

📍 From the collection of Dariusz Krakowiak



INSTYTUT
PAMIĘCI
NARODOWEJ



Tough and fallow was my entire life

← Portrait postcard presenting gen. Stanisław Sosabowski issued by Airborne Museum in Oosterbeek. In 2006, Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands rewarded the general post mortem with the Bronze Lion Medal
 From the collection of Marcin Zugaj

I do not regret what I went through and if I were ordered to live it again, I would not hesitate.

S. Sosabowski, *Droga wiodła ugiorem*. Memoirs, London 1967

→ Monument of Gen. Sosabowski built at the initiative of scouts in Lębork
 From the collection of the 7th gen. Stanisław Sosabowski's Red Beret Scout Team in Lębork



↑ Drawing presenting books written by Stanisław Sosabowski in: *Jednodniówka* karykatur. Generał S. Sosabowski w oczach artystów jego brygady, ed. J. Lorys, J. Leśniak, London 1992
 From the collection of Marcin Zugaj



↑ Statue of gen. Sosabowski in Driel uncovered on 16 September 2006. The statue was initiated by major Tony Hibbert, veteran of the 1st Airborne Division. During the anniversary ceremonies in Driel, he said: "62 years ago our General Browning groundlessly dismissed Gen. Sosabowski. For years we wanted to fix it. Our government was not able to do it. That is why we erected his statue on our own. This is the gesture coming from the depth of our hearts..."
 Photo from the collection of the Association of Historical Reconstructions of the Polish Armed Forces in the West



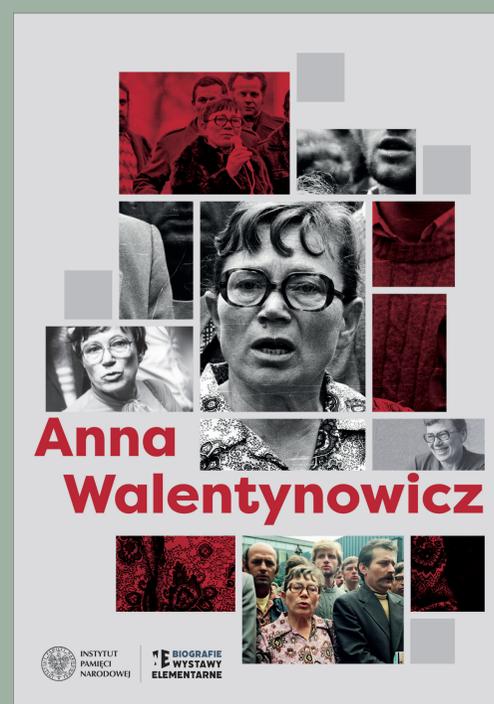
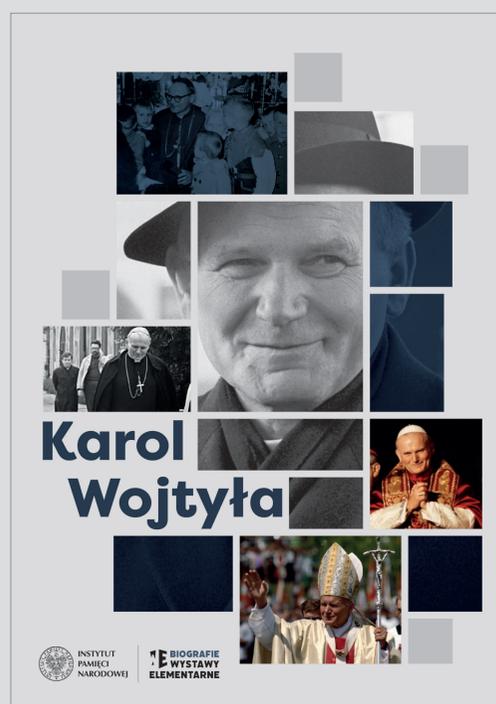
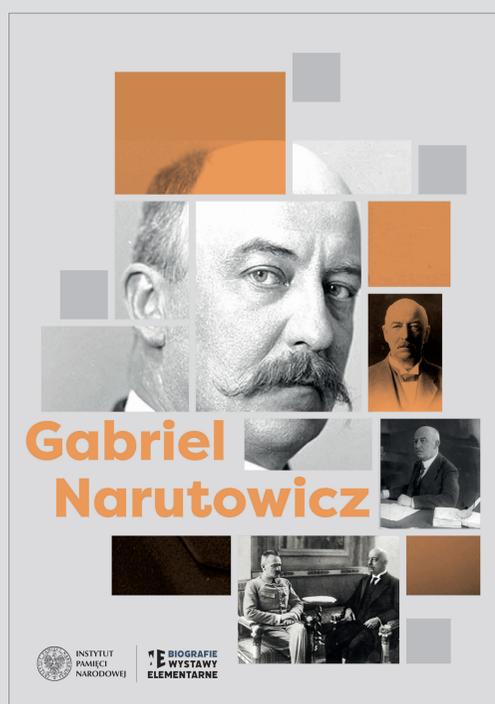
↑ Plate commemorating Gen. Sosabowski. The house in London in which he lived in the years 1950-1960. The 6th Airborne Brigade from Cracow got the name of gen. Stanisław F. Sosabowski
 From the collection of Marcin Kunicki

While remaining in emigration, he never accepted British citizenship. He brought his family to London, including son Stanisław, participant in the Warsaw uprising. After World War 2, he was an active writer. He died on 25 September 1967 at the age of 75. He was buried in the Military Cemetery in Powązki in Warsaw. In 2018, president of Poland Andrzej Duda rewarded the general with the highest Polish medal: Order of the White Eagle.

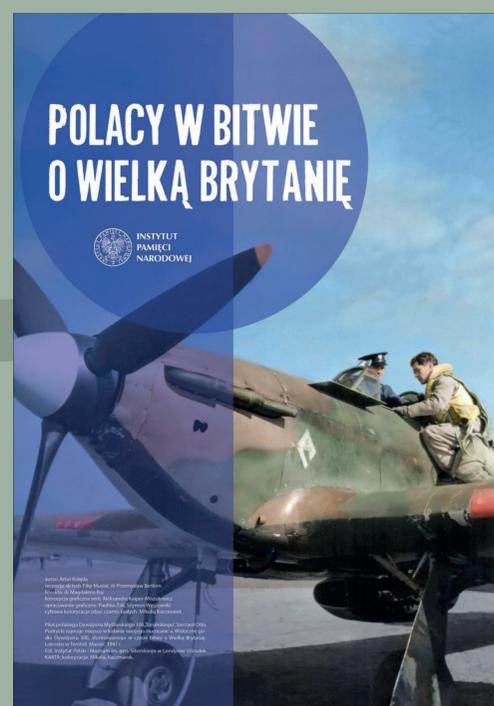
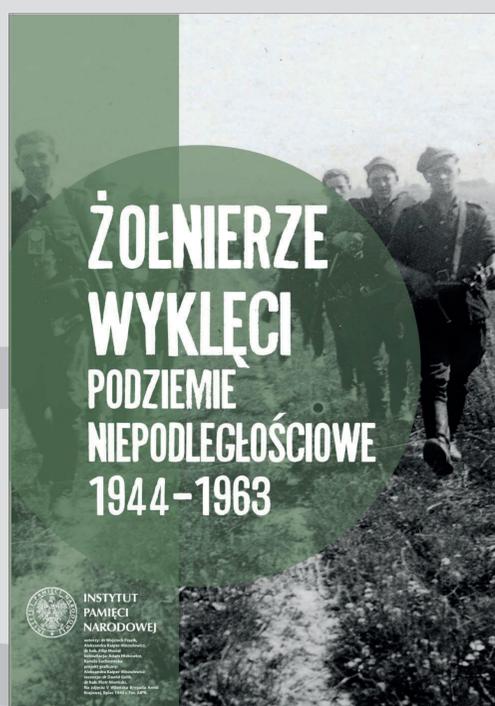


INSTYTUT
 PAMIĘCI
 NARODOWEJ

View more exhibitions from the series on:
www.edukacja.ipn.gov.pl



View other Elementary exhibitions:



Authors of the exhibition: Jerzy Rudnicki, Marcin Zugaj
 Review: dr Daniel Koreś
 Correction: Joanna Pietruszewska
 Graphic concept of the series: Paulina Żak
 Typesetting: Katarzyna Niklas,
 Urszula Zalejska-Smołeń
 Translation: GERMANICA Translation Service

The photos used in the exhibition are from: the Archives of the Institute of National Remembrance, Historical Military Office, Museum of the Polish Army, National Library, National Digital Archives, 7th gen. Stanisław Sosabowski's Red Beret Scout Team in Lębork, Association of Historical Reconstructions of the Polish Armed Forces in the West, Wikipedia Commons and from private collections of Dariusz Krakowiak, Marcin Kunicki, family of major R. Małaszkiwicz and Marcin Zugaj.



INSTYTUT
 PAMIĘCI
 NARODOWEJ



Szlaki Nadziei
 Odyseja Wolności
 Пути надежды
 Одиссея свободы
 Wege der Hoffnung
 Odysee der Freiheit
 Trails of Hope
 The Odyssey of Freedom