

003 Nazwisko BEDNAROWSKI Imiona WŁADYSŁAW lat życia 96

004 Pseudonim

006 z domu Rodzice

008 Data urodzenia 2.2.1905 Miejscowość PAŁAHICZE

010 Data śmierci 11.11.2001 Miejscowość ABERDEEN

012 ~~Pogrzeb~~/Spopielenie Adres Cmentarza ABERDEEN

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Ankieta

Lista Stowarzyszenia

Grodziska

Suchecitz

Inne

- 029 Wyznanie
- 030 Jednostka wojskowa
- 032 Rodzaj wojska
- 033 Stopień wojskowy *P.P.O.R.*
- 034 Odznaczenie
- 036 Zawód *WYKŁADSCYLA METAFIZYK, MALARZ*
- 038 Tytuły naukowe
- 042 Instytucje
- 044 Obozy
- 046 Słowo kluczowe

Karta Rejestracyjna Archiwum Osobowe Emigracji. Biblioteka Polska w Londynie.

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WŁADYSŁAW BEDNAROWSKI

urodzony 2 lutego 1905 r. w Pałahiczach,
zmarł 11 listopada 2001 r. w Aberdeen.

Absolwent Gimnazjum w Czortkowie (1923 r.)
i doktor Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego (1933 r.),
podchorąży Zambrowskiej podchorążówki (1934 r.),
podporucznik Wojsk Polskich (Francja, Szkocja).

Asystent prof. Romana Ingardena na Uniwersytecie Jana Kazimierza
we Lwowie, wykładowca (Reader) na Uniwersytecie w Aberdeen
na wydziale Logiki i Metafizyki. Autor kluczowych prac naukowych.
Wielki miłośnik sztuki i malarz.

Uroczystości żałobne i spopielenie odbyły się w Aberdeen
dnia 16 listopada 2001 r.

**PRZYJACIELE I KOLEDZY
Z UNIWERSYTETU W ABERDEEN**

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ŚP. DR WŁADYSŁAW BEDNAROWSKI

Dr Władysław Bednarowski died in Aberdeen on the 11th of November 2001. Known to his friends and colleagues by a variety of names such as Wład, Bedna, Bedders, he accepted these expressions of affection and linguistic limitations for more than fifty years.

Books in Bedna's library, spread over all accessible horizontal surfaces of his house fell into three overlapping categories which defined clearly his main interests: art, philosophy and Polish culture. The first of these interests was confirmed by numerous pictures on the walls. These interests and Poland's fate set the course of Bedna's life.

He was born on 2nd February 1905, a son of an employee of the Imperial Railways, in Pałahicze, a small settlement in that part of Poland which was at the time a part of the Austrian empire. In this he was fortunate, for the Austrian rule, unlike that of the Prussians and the Russians, who ruled other regions of the partitioned country, was relatively benign as a Polish culture was concerned. Polish language was tolerated and schools were free to teach it. Bedna's parents felt strongly about Polish culture. At the beginning of the **First World War the family fled the Russian advance to the southern slopes of the Carpathians.** There Bedna attended a Czech school where he came under the brief but significant influence of an outstanding art teacher. Later his parents transferred him to a Polish school as soon as Polish refugees, using very meagre resources and voluntary teaching staff, managed to establish one. "Thus", Bedna observed once, "patriotism may sometimes be said to impose an academically inferior education". He matriculated in free Poland from a secondary school in Czortków, a town not far removed from his place of birth, gave up his collection of rifles which he had established by wandering over battlefields and entered the Jagiellonian University at Kraków. There he read Philosophy and Polish Literature and smoked and drank and debated more than was probably good for him.

In 1933 he was awarded a doctorate for a thesis on the cognitive foundations of Spinoza's system and thus equipped, proceeded to one year's military training in the infantry. This done, he hesitated for a while whether to pursue his interest in philosophy or in Sanskrit which he had meantime learned and which attracted him strongly. He chose the former on being offered an assistantship to Prof. Roman

Ingarden, a formidable authority in the field of philosophy and aesthetics who occupied a chair at Jan Kazimierz University in Lwów. In this very active academic community Bedna presented a seminar paper on the Cartesian "cogito" which was praised by Kazimierz Ajdukiewicz, the logician. It was about to be published when, in 1939, Germany and the Soviet Union invaded Poland. The defeat, but not surrender, of the Polish armies meant that Bedna could only fulfill his military duties on foreign soil. Polish army units were being organised in France and so he set out for France across many frontiers with forged documents (his passport described him as a gardener).

The most memorable part of this journey, his frequent reminiscences revealed, was a short coach ride in the course of which Bedna and several other Poles of similar ilk were obliged to pretend they were members of a Ruthenian wedding party. "Each of us had a bottle in his hand and a girl in his lap". It was probably memorable because it was enjoyable. A comfortable spell in a Hungarian jail followed. It did not last long, for the Hungarians kindly left the door unlocked. France failed miserably to fulfill the expectations of Bedna and his colleagues. The French showed no great desire to defend their country and so in June 1940 Bedna found himself in Forfar, Scotland, whence he made his first visit to Aberdeen. It must have been a particularly bright day for as he said when describing his experiences, "we came from Stonehaven and looked down at the city. It shone. It was like a crumpled sheet of silver". He did not foresee then that it was in this city he would spend the last 54 years of his life.

Military training in newly formed Polish units resumed. He qualified (a qualification of which he was particularly proud) as an agent to be dropped by parachute into occupied Poland, and whilst waiting for a possible assignment he continued his parachute training. His seventh jump was disastrous. He was badly concussed and his legs were severely damaged, so much so that after a spell in hospital he was declared unfit for field service and sent to Oxford to act as an instructor at the Polish Law school. This offered him an opportunity to attend philosophy seminars and in the course of these to establish a particularly close contact with Prof. H. H. Price, the logician. After Poland's betrayal by the allies at Yalta, when it became apparent that return would be impossible, Price tried to obtain for Bedna the vacant chair at the University of Otago. When he did not

succeed, Price supported him vigorously for a lectureship in Aberdeen. Bedna returned to Aberdeen in 1946 together with Professor Designate of Logic and Metaphysics, R. C. Cross. Their task was to reawaken the dormant Department. There was yet another reason for which Bedna then chose to leave Oxford. In 1943 he had married there but the marriage was not a happy one. It seems to have been based on shared affection for cats rather than on mutual affection. "When one realises that one has entered a compartment of a train heading in a wrong direction the rational thing to do is to get out as soon as possible", he said reflecting on the matter.

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He flourished in Aberdeen; the task of reinvigorating the Department absorbed him. His relationship with Prof. Cross and his family exceeded a normal academic friendship. "Mrs. Cross was such an excellent organiser of picnics and their two girls were so delicate, bright and charming", he said. Both his academic and non-academic activities grew. He presented a paper to the Aristotelean Society which was subsequently reprinted in a German anthology of the most influential recent papers on logic. Much later, when a version of his "Cartesian paper" was found, he had the satisfaction of having this published as a short monograph.

His interest in art and in painting grew apace. He attended Gray's **school of Art, became a member of the Aberdeen Artist's Society, and further expanded his creative activities** by acquiring the skills of lino-cutting and printing at Peacock Printmakers. He held several exhibitions of his paintings. Then, as the political climate changed, he thought that it might be possible to assist Polish academics and artists who were until then submerged by the wave of socialist-realism. Although, in his view, the Polish government consisted of "scoundrels servile to the Soviet Union, Polish culture is Polish Culture, and Polish culture needs help". He therefore set about fostering relations between the universities of Gdańsk and Aberdeen, and arranged for an exchange of art exhibitions. Both ventures proved successful. Inevitably such activity led to the embarrassment of Bedna being awarded a decoration by the "servile scoundrels". He had to accept it and did so, complaining in private that "it is entirely unPolish in form and design. It is an aesthetic disaster. It looks like an expectorated boiled sweet". This activity expanded beyond Gdańsk as the thaw advanced, and when Poland regained independence it was crowned by the establishment of the W. Bednarowski Trust, which he generously

endowed with the object of fostering contacts between Polish and Scottish philosophers.

He retired from the University as a Reader in 1975 but his relationships both with his academic colleagues and fellow artists continued. This group of friends grew smaller with the passage of time. In November 2001 in his 97th year Bedna himself died.

Prof. dr Jan B. Deręgowski