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Battle for the City of Lions: The Lwów Episode of the Polish-Ukranian War, November 1-22, 1918

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BATTLE FOR THE CITY OF LIONS:
THE LWÓW EPISODE OF THE POLISH-UKRAINIAN WAR,
NOVEMBER 1-22, 1918

THOMAS M. ZABIEGA

Undergraduate Honors Thesis
University Honors Program
Southern Illinois University at Carbondale

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April 7, 1995

PREFACE

The battle for Lwów in November of 1918 is a topic scarcely covered by Western historiography, as well as Ukrainian historiography written in the English language. The Polish-Ukrainian War of 1918-1919, particularly its diplomatic implications, is extensively covered in numerous sources of American, English, French, Polish, and Ukrainian origin written in the English language. However, the November battle for Lwów itself is relegated in these texts to a few sentences at most.

The only detailed Ukrainian study in the English language that I found on this subject is the two-volume study "Western Ukraine at the Turning Point of Europe's History 1918-1923" by Matthew Stachiw and Jaroslaw Sztendera. The information found in this book, however, is only specific and descriptive when pertaining to Ukrainian political activities, while it is simply vague when concerned with the military aspects of the battle for Lwów. John S. Reshetar's "The Ukrainian Revolution 1917-1920: A Study in Nationalism" describes the Lwów struggle in only one sentence on page 230, while Clarence A. Manning summarizes it on pages 57-59 of his "Twentieth-Century Ukraine." Other Ukrainian or pro-Ukrainian studies fail to cover this event at all. Lack of knowledge of the Ukrainian language prevented me from researching publications written in that language.

Primary and secondary Polish sources on the Polish-Ukrainian conflict in Lwów during November of 1918 served as my major research materials. The primary sources were of special quality and significance. The two-volume "Obrona Lwowa: Źródła do dziejów walk o Lwów i województwa południowo-wschodnie 1918-1920" ("Defense of Lwów: Sources to the History of the Struggles for Lwów and the

Southeastern Provinces") was first published between 1933 and 1939. I used a revised edition published between 1991 and 1993. This remarkably informative study contains the memoirs of nearly every Polish commanding officer and political official that participated in the battle for Lwów, as well as additional documents concerning this struggle. "Semper Fidelis: Obrona Lwowa w obrazach współczesnych" ("Semper Fidelis: The Defense of Lwów in Contemporary Pictures") is the most complete collection of photographs documenting the Polish-Ukrainian War that has ever been published. With over 700 photographs, it is the major source of illustrations for nearly every book that has been published concerning this war. It contains descriptions of the photographs and informative summaries in Polish, English, and French. The newspaper "Pobudka" ("Reveille") is a daily that was published by the Polish Army irregularly between November 6, 1918 and January of 1919. Because of the short length of time this Lwów newspaper was in circulation and the war-torn environment under which it was published, it is indeed a very rare periodical. I was able to research the following issues of "Pobudka:" December 7, 10, 11, 22, 23, 24, and 28, 1918; January 4 and 5, 1919; and the special commemorative edition published on November 22, 1919. In addition to news reports, official Polish military announcements, and documents that would be particularly useful in researching the December 1918-January 1919 period of the Polish-Ukrainian struggle, "Pobudka" also contains articles, memoirs, interviews (e.g., with Władysław Sikorski), documents, and statistics that were of immense value to my work.

In addition to primary Polish sources, I found three Polish or pro-Polish secondary sources to be of irreplaceable quality. Rosa Bailly's "A City Fights for Freedom: The Rising of Lwów in

1918-1919" is an in-depth study which combines a variety of Polish memoirs and documents, along with Ukrainian studies, to form a cohesive and descriptive chronicle of the Polish-Ukrainian War, especially the events of November 1918. In his "Wojsko Polskie i operacje wojenne lat 1918-1921" ("The Polish Army and the Military Operations of 1918-1921"), Mieczysław Wrzosek investigates in specific detail each one of the numerous struggles Poland faced during its first years of independence. "Wojna polsko-ukraińska 1918-1919" ("The Polish-Ukrainian War 1918-1919") by Grzegorz Łukomski, Czesław Partacz, and Bogusław Polak was especially useful for its careful researching of the origins of the war, as well as its day-by-day chronicle of events that occurred from November 1, 1918 to September 1, 1919 in Lwów, East Galicia, and Volhynia.

It is important to point out the transliteration format of Ukrainian names included in this work. I used the spelling of Ukrainian names presented in "Western Ukraine at the Turning Point of Europe's History 1918-1923" by Stachiw and Sztendera. Since this is the transliteration desired by the Shevchenko Scientific Society, the oldest and most influential Ukrainian intellectual institution, and because it allows for a correct phonetic pronunciation of Ukrainian names, I found it more accurate than standard transliterations of Russian to English or the spelling arrangements used in other Ukrainian sources and in Polish studies. The rules for transliteration of the Ukrainian language to English, according to the Shevchenko Scientific Society, are explained on page 6 in volume I of the above mentioned book.

This work is dedicated to the memory of my dearly departed grandmother, Janina Artymowska-Zabiega (1895-1985). As a medical student at the University of Lwów, she volunteered for service in the

Polish Army during the Polish-Ukrainian War of 1918-1919. Between December 20, 1918 and June 30, 1919, my grandmother served as a courier for the City Citizens' Guard (MSO), at a time when Lwów was besieged by the Ukrainian Army. Janina Artymowska-Zabiega was awarded the "Eaglets" Medal (officially called the Defenders of the Eastern Borderlands Medal) and the MSO Merit Medal. She also received a letter of commendation from General Wacław Iwaszkiewicz, the Polish commander in East Galicia from March of 1919 (who later successfully defended southeastern Poland against the Soviet invasion of 1920). The "Pobudka" newspapers and the photographic study "Semper Fidelis: Obrona Lwowa w obrazach współczesnych" she left my father were of irreplaceable value to my work.

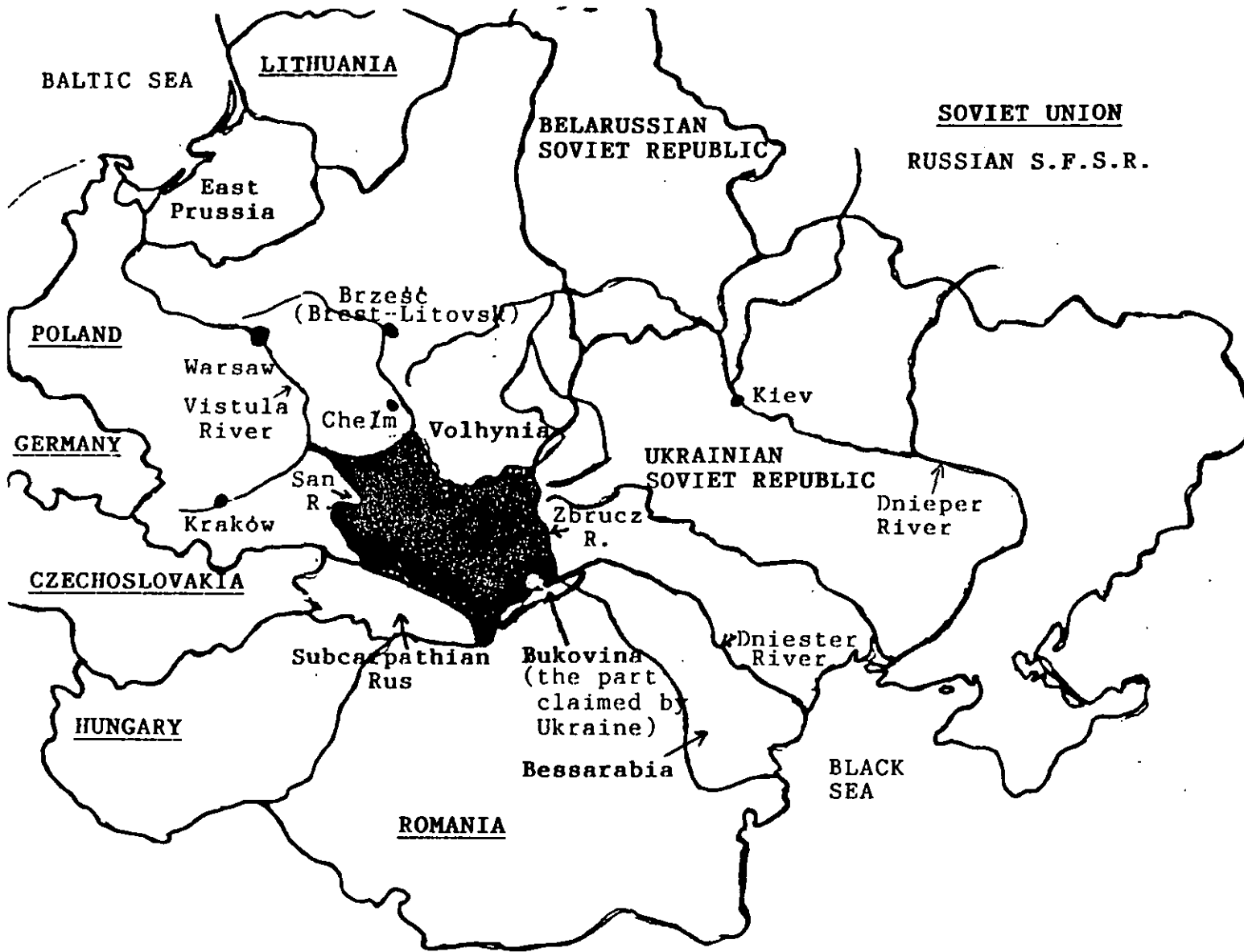
I wish to express my sincere gratitude to Professor Edward J. O'Day from the Department of History at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale. His helpful suggestions and advice proved particularly meaningful when organizing the structure and style of my paper. I also extend my deepest gratitude to Mr. Rudolf Veit, President of the Koło Lwowian (Circle of Lwowians) in Chicago and one of the most energetic propagators of Lwów and Poland in the world today. By entrusting me with priceless books from his personal collection, such as the already mentioned study by Rosa Bailly and Józefa Mękarska's "Wędrówka po Ziemiach Wschodnich Rzeczypospolitej" ("A Trip Across the Eastern Lands of the Republic of Poland"), Mr. Veit provided precious research tools for my work. I would like to thank Dr. Janusz Cisek, Director of the Józef Piłsudski Institute of America in New York, for his recommendations on useful sources for my work and his invitation to research the Institute's immense archives, which I was unable to take advantage of due to financial restraints. However, Wrzosek's previously mentioned work and

"Kalendarium życia Józefa Piłsudskiego" ("Calendar of the Life of Józef Piłsudski") co-authored by Waclaw Jędrzejewicz and Dr. Cisek himself were valuable assets to my work, as Dr. Cisek had suggested.

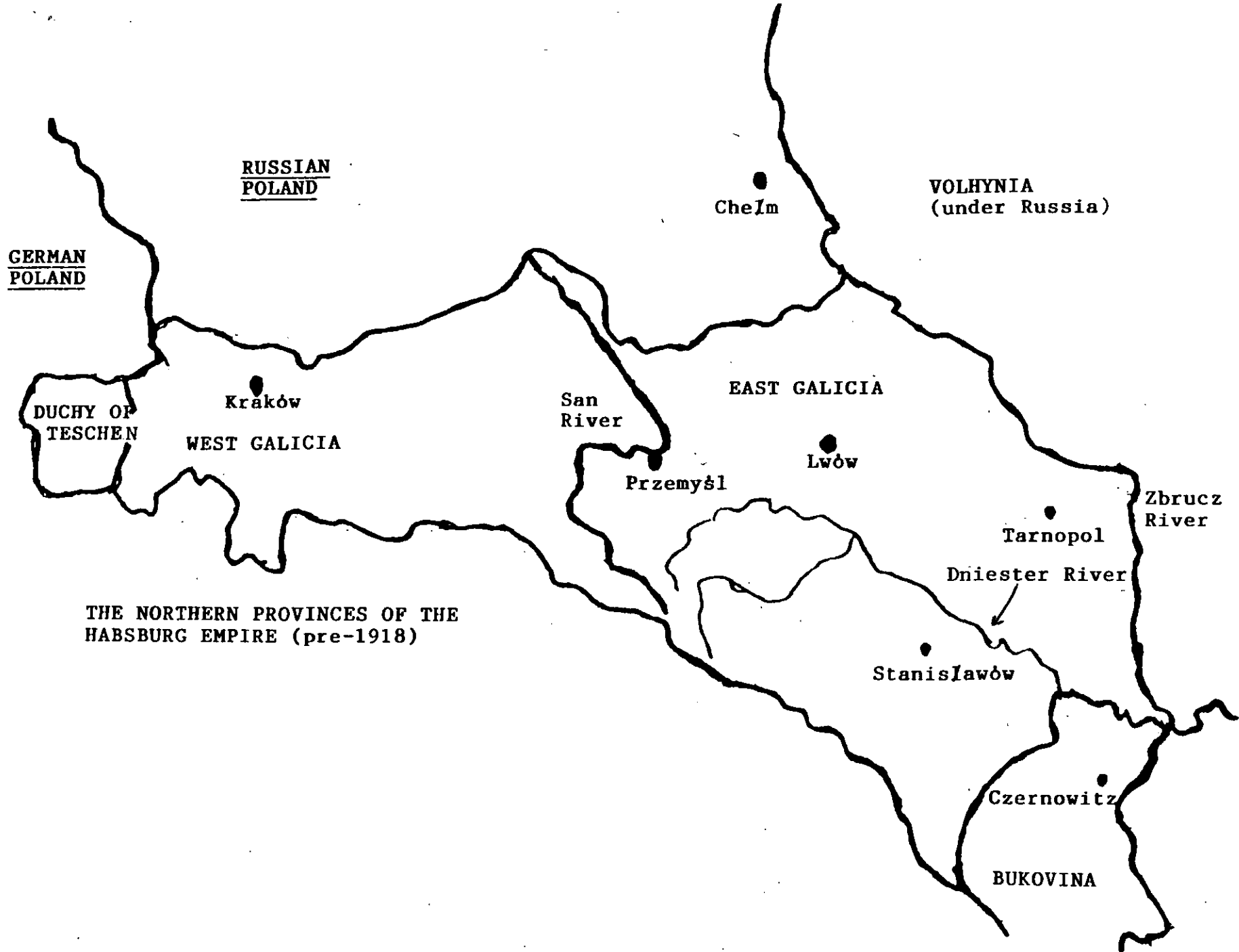
Lastly, I would like to thank the members of my family. My parents, Andrzej and Helena Zabiega, and my sister, Małgorzata Zabiega, have always encouraged my historical interests and were especially supportive during the writing of this work. My interest in Polish-Ukrainian relations and the pre-World War II era in Poland was stimulated by my dearly departed grandfather, Stanisław Baran (1910-1990), a peasant and railway worker in the Bieszczady region of Poland (bordering between East and West Galicia, next to the San River). His experiences and insight on pre-1939 Polish politics and the relationship between the coexisting Polish and Ukrainian nationalities were truly remarkable.

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EAST GALICIA AND EUROPE BETWEEN THE WORLD WARS



RUSSIAN
POLAND

GERMAN
POLAND

VOLHYNIA
(under Russia)

Chełm

DUCHY OF
TESCHEN

Kraków
WEST GALICIA

San
River

EAST GALICIA

Przemyśl

Lwów

Zbrucz
River

Tarnopol

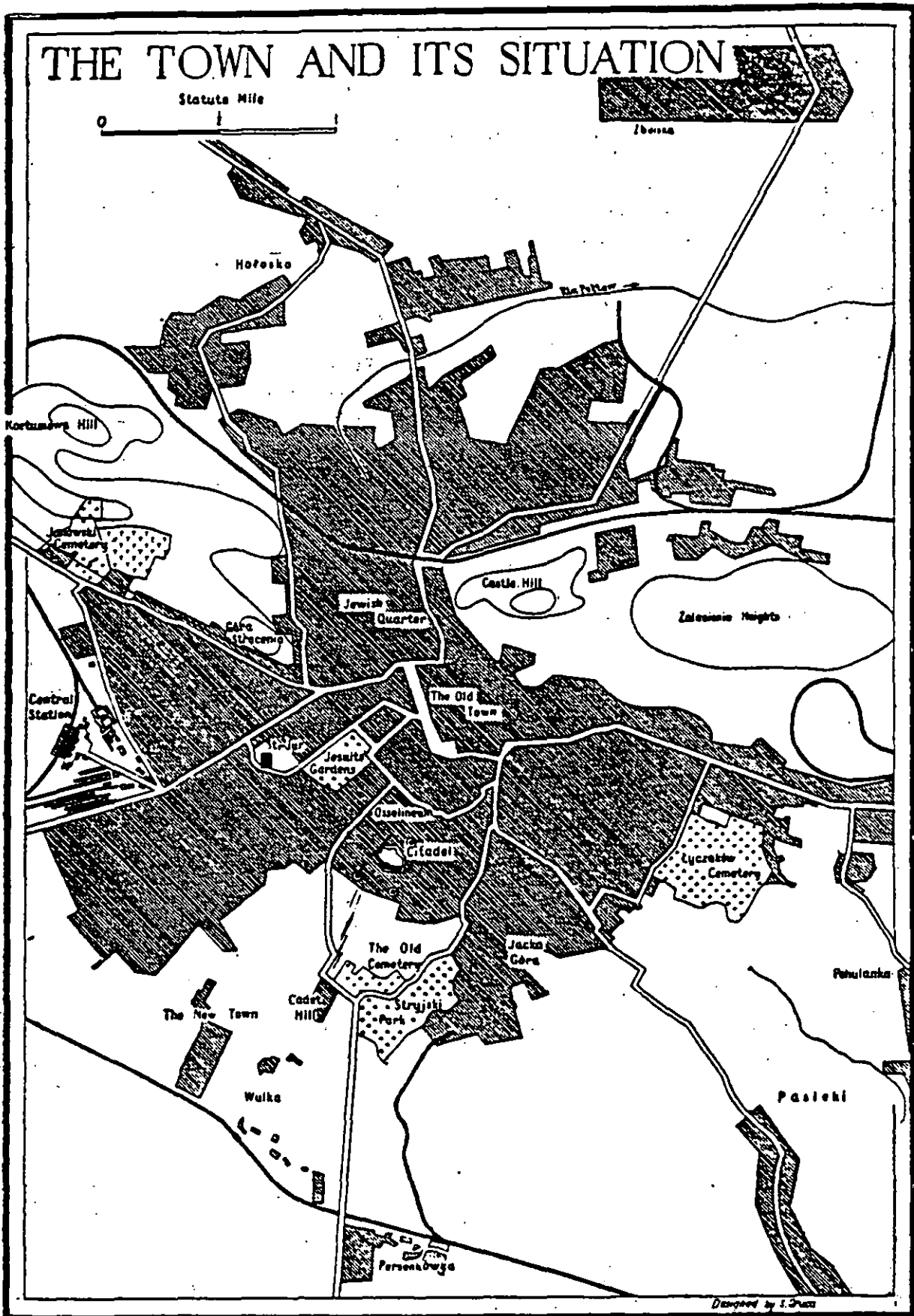
Dniester River

THE NORTHERN PROVINCES OF THE
HABSBURG EMPIRE (pre-1918)

Stanisławów

Czernowitz

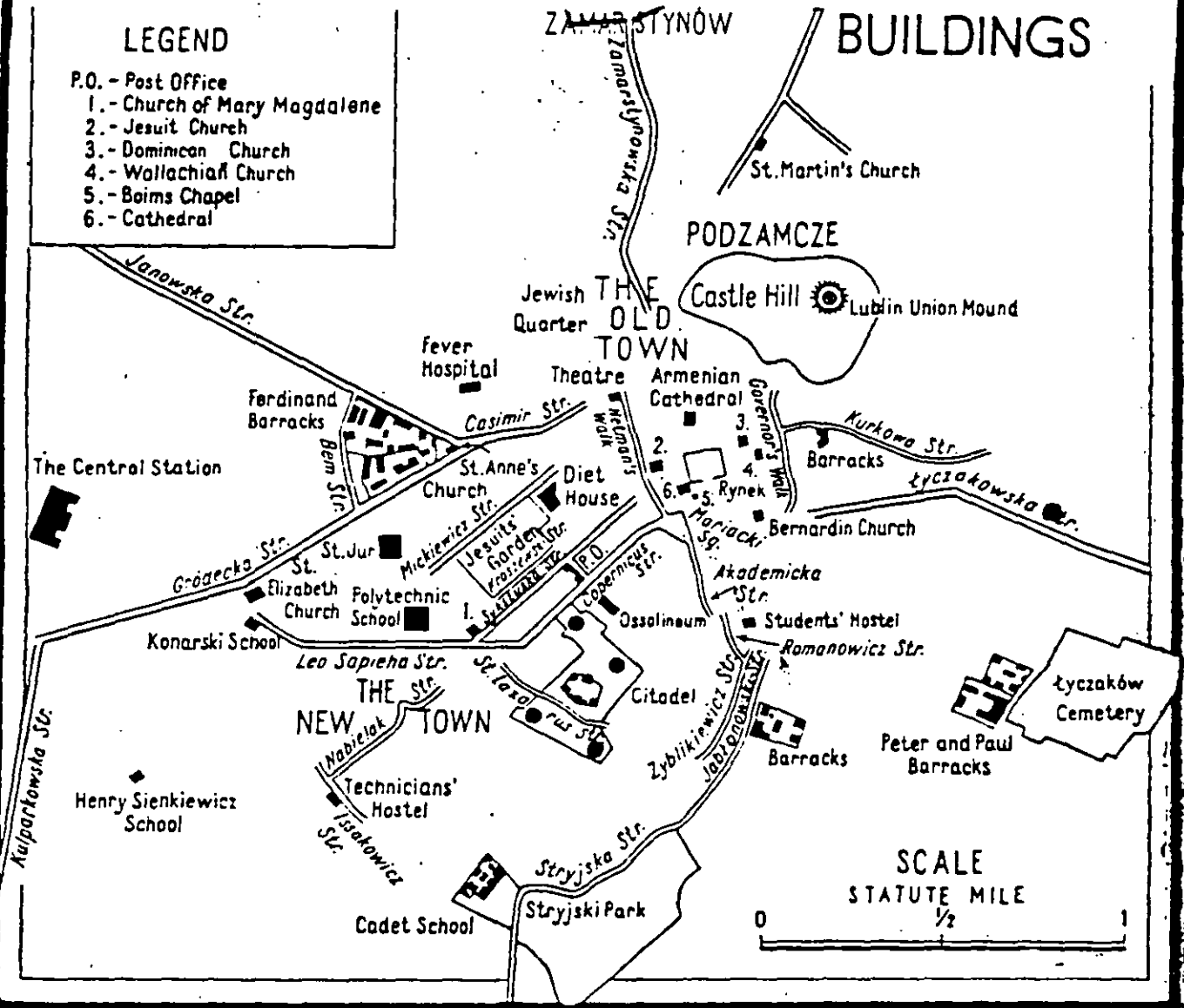
BUKOVINA



LWÓW IN NOVEMBER OF 1918
 (From Bailly's "A City Fights
 for Freedom," 1956)

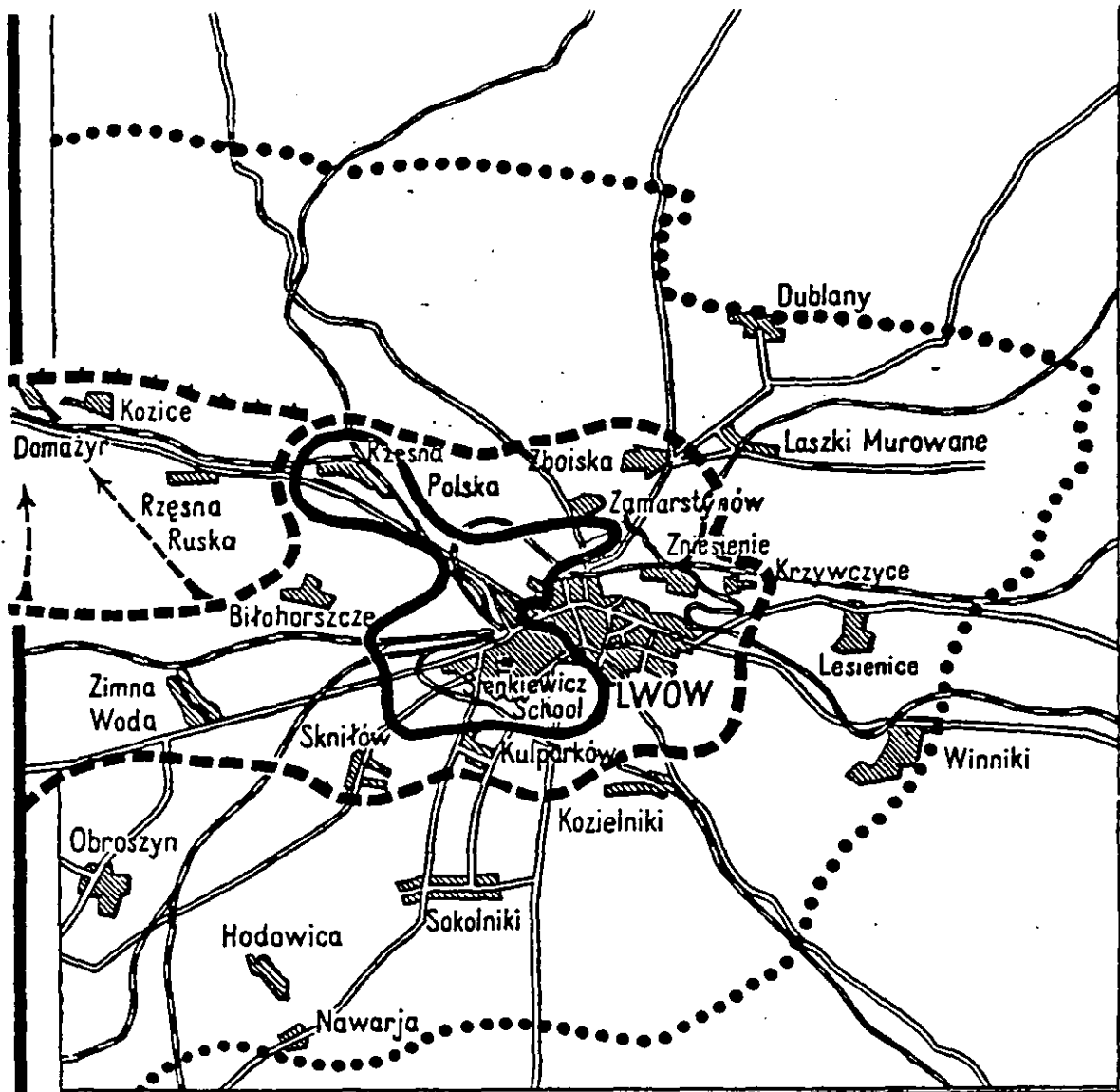
THE MAIN STREETS AND IMPORTANT BUILDINGS

- LEGEND**
- P.O. - Post Office
 - 1. - Church of Mary Magdalene
 - 2. - Jesuit Church
 - 3. - Dominican Church
 - 4. - Wallachian Church
 - 5. - Boims Chapel
 - 6. - Cathedral



Designed by S. Gruca

LWÓW IN NOVEMBER OF 1918
 (From Bailly's "A City Fights
 for Freedom"; 1956)



THE VARIOUS BATTLE-FRONTS

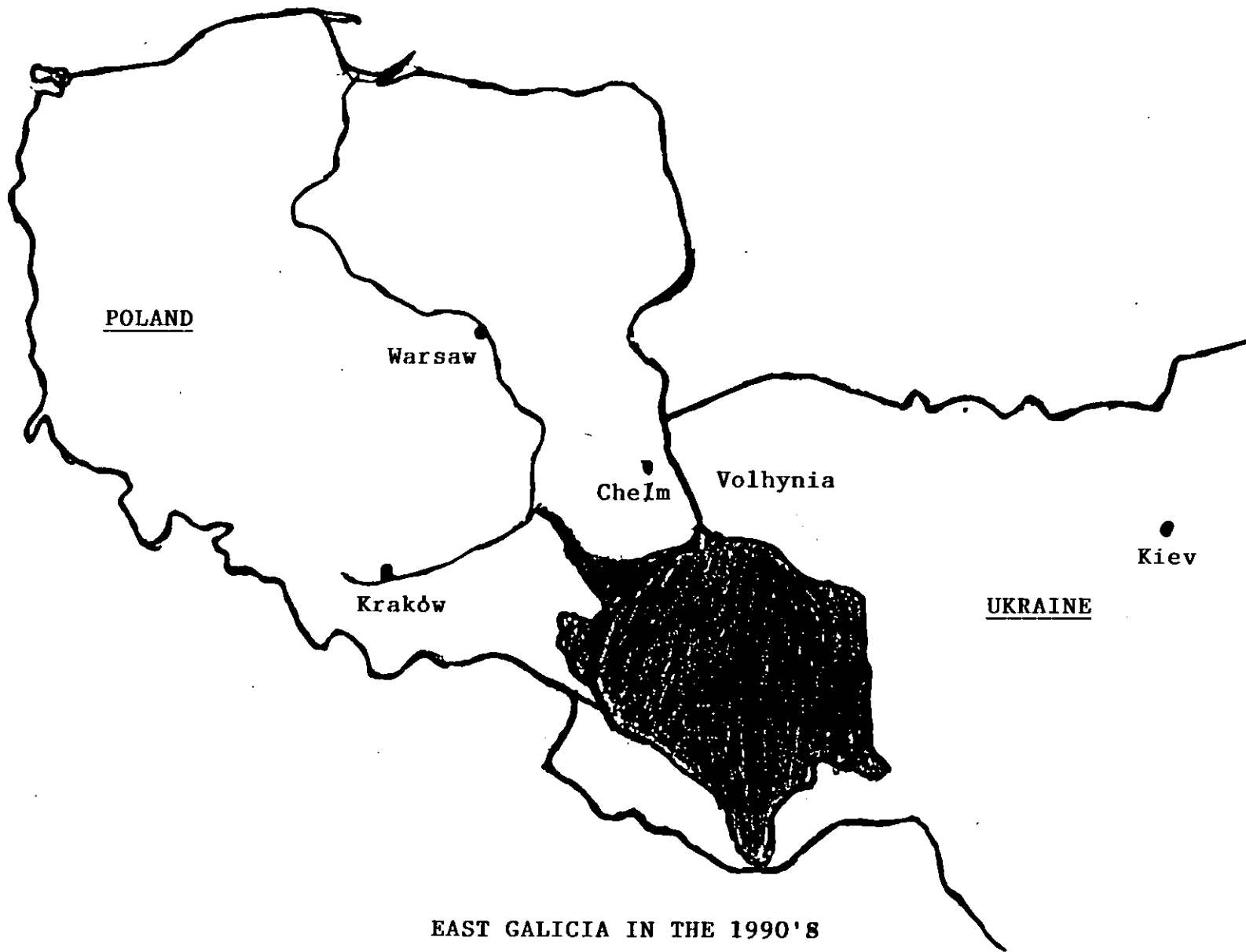


LEGEND

- position of the front in November 1918
- " " " " " December 1918
- " " " " " January 1919
- front on the 20th of April 1919

Designed by S.Gruca

(From Bailly's "A City Fights for Freedom", 1956)



EAST GALICIA IN THE 1990'S

I. Introduction

From November 1 to November 22, 1918, the city of Lwów (currently a part of Ukraine) was the center of a bloody conflict between Poles and Ukrainians that has been largely overlooked by Western historians. Though the entire Polish-Ukrainian War was fought from November of 1918 to August of 1919 over the large provinces of East Galicia and Volhynia (constituting what is today the entire western part of Ukraine and a small part of southeastern Poland), the most memorable battle was the one for Lwów at the onset of this war. Both the Poles and Ukrainians were willing to compromise over territorial disputes, but neither side was capable of relinquishing its perceived right to Lwów.

The city under discussion here is known under several different names. Poles call it Lwów, Ukrainians know it as Lviv, Russians have named it Lvov, under Austrian rule it was officially Lemberg, and its Latin title was Leopoldis. In each case, the city's name can be roughly translated as "of lions" or "of lion", hence the title of this work. The author will refer to the city as Lwów because of the fact that Poland has ruled the city for the longest period of time.

Lwów is found in the watershed line between the Vistula and Dniester rivers,¹ while the only river running through the city, the Pełtew, was canalized at the start of the twentieth century to actually run underneath Lwów.² Interestingly, the city is found almost exactly halfway between the Baltic and Black seas.³ Lwów is built on a set of seven hills overlooking the surrounding area, and thus one of the Italian citizens of Lwów compared its similar geography to that of his hometown of Florence, a comparison that Lwowians were proud to bring up now and then.⁴

Whereas Lwów's geography was peculiar, its multicultural environment could only be described as remarkable. It was inhabited predominantly by Poles, whose culture was also the most influential. The city, in addition, constituted one of the main centers of Ukrainian, Jewish, and Armenian cultural life. These four national and ethnic groups had been living together since the foundation of Lwów and they were later joined by Italians, Greeks, Hungarians, Tartars, Englishmen, and Scotsmen, who were sincerely welcomed by the prospering city.⁵ These different cultures blended into the Polish dialect of Lwów, called the *bałak*, which was a musical idiom whose features were used even by the intelligentsia of Lwów, an uncommon occurrence among the intellectual elites of major European cities.⁶ Lwów's multiculturalism was accompanied by a multitude of religious influences. It served as the seat of a Roman Catholic archbishopric, as well as Uniate and Armenian ones. Furthermore, Lwów contained an Eastern Orthodox Church, Lutheran Church, and two synagogues.⁷

In order to understand the basis of a conflict between two nations, it is helpful to look at statistics concerning the population of the disputed area. It must be pointed out that Poles were predominantly, but not exclusively, Roman Catholic. The Ukrainians in East Galicia, meanwhile, were predominantly, though again not exclusively, members of the Uniate Church (a Catholic religion similar in custom and ritual to Eastern Orthodoxy, but recognizing the authority of the Vatican, with the Pope as Head of the Church). In East Galicia, according to the official 1910 Austrian census, out of the over five million people living there,⁸ Ukrainians constituted 59 percent of the population, Poles-27 percent, Jews-13 percent,⁹ and in all of Galicia there were only 1392 Armenians.¹⁰ This statistic became the cornerstone of the Ukrainian arguments demanding that

East Galicia be recognized as a possession of an independent Ukraine. This data, however, was an oversimplified answer to an extremely complex question. First of all, Lwów (population of 206,574¹¹), the capital of Galicia and the city that the Ukrainians were unwilling to relinquish, had a clear Polish majority. According to the previously mentioned Austrian census, 61.4 percent of Lwów's population was Polish, 27.8 percent-Jewish, and 10.8 percent-Ukrainian. Moreover, Poles were the majority in the area around Lwów and in almost all the East Galician cities.¹² Poles were the majority in the westernmost part of East Galicia (next to the San River), but also in a large area in the easternmost part next to the Zbrucz River. Finally, except for the southeastern part, most of East Galicia contained a Polish minority constituting between 33 and 50 percent of the population.¹³

What should be stressed now are the other non-historical factors which played a role in each nation's quest for rule in East Galicia and Lwów. Lwów was the center of Ukrainian nationalism, the place where Ukrainian national thought and culture bore the ripest fruit. One of the Poles' major arguments in defense of their rights to Lwów was that, as the Polish historian Iwo Cyprian Pogonowski stated it simply, "Lwów was producing the largest number of Polish scientists and literary figures."¹⁴

In discussing the history of Lwów and East Galicia, it must be pointed out that the Ukrainian nation did not develop from its Russian roots until the sixteenth century A.D. The territory later called East Galicia was a part of Poland until 981, when Vladimir the Great of Russia invaded and occupied it.¹⁵ Until the Mongol invasions of the thirteenth century that destroyed the original Kiev Russian state, East Galicia was occupied back and forth by Poland and Russia. The last remnant of the old Russian state remained in Halicz (which the

Hungarians spelled Galicia) covering East Galicia and western Volhynia. Halicz's greatest ruler, Daniel Romanovich, founded the city of Lwów (which he named after his son and successor Lev). After the death of Daniel in 1264 and the extinction of his dynasty in 1323, rule over Halicz passed to a Polish prince, Bolesław of Mazovia, and after his death in 1340, to King Casimir the Great of Poland.

Casimir the Great ordered the construction of numerous cities, castles, churches, and fortresses in East Galicia, expanding substantially the size of Lwów. The city would remain a part of Poland for almost 400 years. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Poland fought numerous wars with the Cossacks, made up of adventurers and runaway serfs, who were the precursor to the modern Ukrainian nation. In 1772, during the first partition of Poland by Russia, Prussia, and Austria, Lwów and East Galicia were annexed by Austria. Poland was erased from the map of Europe by further partitions in 1793 and 1795.

Polish nationalism, however, surged in the nineteenth century. The cultural, literary, political, and social progress of that century among the Poles consolidated all classes of Polish society in the movement for the independence of Poland. Poles resisted foreign occupation by staging several uprisings and numerous conspiracies. The Poles were treated differently by the three powers occupying their country. The Prussians (and later Germans) and Russians brutally repressed all forms of Polish cultural and political life, attempting to Germanize and Russianize the Poles respectively. The Austrians were partially restrictive until the Compromise of 1867, which established the dualist state of Austro-Hungary and gave the national minorities equal cultural and political rights in Austria. From 1867, the Poles (the largest minority in the Austrian part of Austro-Hungary)

controlled the province of Galicia, were a prominent force in the Austrian Reichsrat (parliament), and served in the Austro-Hungarian government (as Prime Ministers, Foreign Ministers, Finance Ministers, and lower cabinet posts). Polish cultural life in Galicia flourished and Polish intellectual advancement was secured through the Polish-controlled universities of Kraków and Lwów.

The nineteenth century also saw the blossoming of the Ukrainians into a nation conscious of its distinct character. Unlike the Polish movement, which was a mass endeavor of thousands of activists and millions of people dreaming of an independent Poland, the Ukrainian movement consisted of a small group of intellectuals and clergymen who developed Ukrainian national identity among the peasant masses.¹⁶ As in the case of the Poles, Ukrainian cultural and political life was repressed in Russian-occupied territories. The Ukrainians found a safe haven for their cultural, political, and social activities in the freedom of the Austrian province of Galicia. The Ukrainian national movement especially gained momentum after 1890, when the Polish administration of Galicia gave the Ukrainians numerous rights and privileges. By the turn of the century, however, the Ukrainians, led by the Ukrainian National Democratic Party (UNDP), began to organize numerous strikes and protests in Galicia. Their activities culminated in the assassination of the Polish Governor of Galicia, Count Andrzej Potocki, by a Ukrainian student in 1908. Finally, in early 1914, the Poles and Ukrainians reached a compromise by which Ukrainian representation in Galicia's government was substantially increased. World War I, unfortunately, resulted in the formation of even greater antagonisms between the two nations.

Freedom and independence were the most beneficial results of the First World War. These two ideals were not the war aims that

either the Central Powers or the Entente were seeking, but from the blood and gun powder of World War I rose a tremendous number of independent European states, among them Poland and Ukraine. The Polish political scene had developed two political movements opposite in ideology, but equally determined to rebuild a great Poland: the Polish Socialist Party (PPS), led by Józef Piłsudski, and the National Democrats (ND), led by Roman Dmowski. Aware that a war between Austro-Hungary and Russia would break out soon, the Poles organized legal and clandestine paramilitary organizations which by 1914 consisted of about 22,000 members.¹⁷ From these organizations and further recruits, the Austrian military authorities allowed the Poles to organize the Polish Legions. By the end of 1915, the Legions consisted of three brigades and fought several successful battles against the Russians. Meanwhile, Józef Piłsudski decided in the fall of 1914 to organize a secret military organization that would become instrumental in Poland's fight for independence, the Polish Military Organization (POW).

The Central Powers had great military success on the Eastern Front. By the summer of 1915, their armies had occupied most of Russian Poland. The Poles, however, had become disenchanted with the Central Powers, which did not offer them any hope for an independent Poland. In 1916, Piłsudski resigned from the Polish Legions in protest to the anti-Polish Central Powers' policy, while the Legions themselves were transformed into the Polish Auxiliary Corps, and later the Polnische Wehrmacht under direct German command. After refusing to take an oath of allegiance to the Austro-Hungarian and German Emperors, Piłsudski was arrested in June of 1917 and imprisoned in Magdeburg, Germany. Members of the Legions and the POW were either imprisoned or forced into the regular Austro-Hungarian Army. The Germans set up

a three-man Regency Council, which was allowed to form a Polish government and maintained a high degree of autonomy by, for example, refusing to declare war against the Entente.¹⁸

As a result of the February Revolution of 1917 in Russia, Tsar Nicholas II was overthrown and a Russian Provisional Government was established. The new government announced on March 30, 1917 the "creation of an independent Polish state."¹⁹ This was a stimulus to the activity of the Polish National Council established in western Europe by Roman Dmowski and the world-famous pianist and composer Ignacy Jan Paderewski. They could now persuade the Entente to support an independent Poland. On January 22, 1917, the United States President Woodrow Wilson (influenced by Paderewski) publicly endorsed "a united, independent, and autonomous Poland."²⁰ Point 13 of Wilson's famous Fourteen Points called for the establishment of a politically and economically independent Poland with access to the Baltic Sea.²¹ Between December of 1917 and January of 1918, Italy, France, and Great Britain publicly asserted their support for an independent Poland.²²

The major Ukrainian movements during World War I sided with the Central Powers. The Ukrainians in East Galicia organized a 600-man detachment of Ukrainian Sich Sharpshooters (USS) which fought alongside the Austro-Hungarian Army until it was forced to surrender to Russian forces in June of 1917.²³ After the February Revolution in Russia, the Ukrainian political movements established a Central Ukrainian Rada (Council) in Kiev. At first calling only for an autonomous Ukrainian state within the Russian Empire, the Rada proclaimed a completely independent Ukrainian People's Republic on January 22, 1918 and sent a delegation to the Brest-Litovsk talks between the Central Powers and Bolshevik Russia.

At Brest-Litovsk, in return for the Central Powers' access to Ukrainian grain and other natural resources of that fertile land, the Ukrainians demanded that the new Ukrainian state be given the Chełm (Kholm) region of Russian Poland, as well as East Galicia and Bukovina.²⁴ The Ukrainian delegates finally settled for just Chełm with Ukrainian autonomous rule in East Galicia, as well as recognition of Ukraine's independence by the Central Powers. On February 9, 1918, the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk between the Central Powers and the Ukrainian People's Republic was signed. Since by that time the Bolsheviks had occupied Kiev, the Ukrainians pleaded for German military support for their threatened country. The German Army invaded Ukraine in the spring of 1918, overthrew the Rada, and set up a new Ukrainian government in Kiev with Pavlo Skoropadskyy as Hetman (leader).

The Poles, in the meanwhile, reacted swiftly and decisively to the decisions rendered at Brest-Litovsk. The region of Chełm had a clear Polish majority and consisted of a substantial part of modern-day southeastern Poland. Under pressure from the Regency Council, prominent Polish political figures, and mass protests, the Central Powers persuaded the Ukrainians to surrender their copy of the treaty to the care of the Central Powers. Subsequently, all copies of the protocol concerning Chełm were burned by the German Foreign Office in Berlin, thereby nullifying this controversial part of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk.²⁵

II. The Ukrainian Takeover

By the fall of 1918, both the Ukrainians and the Poles were sensing the defeat of the Central Powers and the disintegration of Austro-Hungary. Both nations prepared for a takeover in Lwów and East Galicia. The Poles, however, unwisely disregarded the possibility of a Ukrainian coup-d'état in Lwów. The Ukrainians, therefore, had the element of surprise in their favor, and they effectively took advantage of it.

The Austrians, cognizant of the fact that they were losing World War I, attempted desperately to preserve the unity of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. On October 16, 1918, Emperor Karl I issued a manifesto in which he promised the formation of a new Austrian empire, a federation of the different nations within Austria under his scepter. It was, however, too late. On October 28, 1918, the Czechs declared their independence. On October 30, the German members of the Reichsrat proclaimed German Austria an independent state, while the Hungarians proclaimed their independence on November 3. On November 11, World War I ended with the signing of an armistice between Germany and the Entente. That very same day Emperor Karl I abdicated. The Habsburg dynasty and empire had ceased to exist.

It was during that fateful October of 1918 that the Ukrainians in East Galicia were preparing for a takeover. On October 18, Ukrainian delegates to the Reichsrat and the provincial legislatures of Galicia and Bukovina met in Lwów to set up a Ukrainian National Council (UNR). Under the leadership of Yevhen Petrushevych, the leader of the Ukrainian parliamentary group in the Reichsrat, the UNR proclaimed the formation of an independent Ukrainian state. The territories that were to be incorporated into this new state consisted

of East Galicia (between the San and Zbrucz Rivers), the part of West Galicia inhabited by the Lemko nationality (most of the Carpathian Mountain region of West Galicia), northwestern Bukovina (bordering with Romania), and the Subcarpathian Rus region of northern Hungary. No decisions were rendered concerning its relationship with the already existing independent Ukraine under Hetman Skoropadskyy.²⁶ On October 23, an executive committee of the UNR was established under the leadership of Petrushevych, which was to convene in Vienna. Kost Levytskyy was left in Lwów as the executive committee's chief delegate for East Galicia.²⁷

In light of the fact that the Poles would not give up their right to Lwów and East Galicia without a struggle, the Ukrainians began mobilizing a substantial military force in the region, especially in Lwów. They were helped by the Austrian military authorities, who expected Galicia to be eventually divided into an eastern Ukrainian and western Polish part. From early 1918 to the end of October of that year, Austro-Hungarian military units with a large percentage of Ukrainians were assigned to East Galicia, while units where Poles predominated were transferred to either the Italian Front or to other provinces of Austro-Hungary. Out of about 20,000 troops in Lwów during late October, approximately 12,000 were Ukrainians, the rest being primarily Austrians and Hungarians. The Ukrainians were also hoping to transfer the newly reinstated Ukrainian Sich Sharpshooters (USS) from Bukovina to East Galicia. The USS consisted of 3000²⁸ well-trained soldiers under the command of the Austrian Archduke Wilhelm Habsburg (called Vasyl Vishivani by the Ukrainians), a member of the royal family fascinated with the Ukrainian nation.²⁹

In need of a military leader to command the Ukrainian troops during the planned takeover, the Western Ukrainian government brought

in an officer stationed with the USS, the 31-year-old Captain Dmytro Vitovskyy. Vitovskyy feared that the Poles would preempt a Ukrainian takeover. He was strengthened in his suspicions by visits of prominent Polish political figures in Lwów during the last days of October. During the night of October 31-November 1, the Ukrainians interned the Austrian Governor of Galicia Karl von Huyn and the Austrian military commander General Pfeffer. They occupied most of the administrative and strategic points in Lwów. Polish soldiers of the Austro-Hungarian garrison in Lwów were disarmed. At dawn, the citizens of Lwów found themselves in a city filled with yellow and blue Ukrainian flags and Ukrainian military patrols on almost every street.

The Poles were ready by October of 1918 to establish a fully independent Poland. On October 7, the Regency Council announced the formation of an independent Poland "consisting of all Polish lands with access to the sea."³⁰ Without any resistance from the German and Austro-Hungarian armies still occupying Poland, the Regency Council established on October 12 its jurisdiction over the Polish Army. On October 28, the Polish Liquidation Commission (PKL) was organized in Kraków, with Wincenty Witos (leader of the Polish Populist Party-- a peasant rights party) as its president. The PKL was to ensure the establishment and administering of Polish rule in Galicia. On the night of October 30-31, Polish soldiers under the command of Polish Legions Colonel Bolesław Roja took control of the city of Kraków, disarming the Austro-Hungarian army units stationed there. Austrian garrisons in other West Galician cities were also disarmed.

Lwów was the Poles' next target. The City Council of Lwów announced on October 20 its readiness to serve a newly independent Poland under the leadership of the Regency Council.³¹ On October 27,

the Regency Council appointed General Stanisław Puchalski to the post of military commander in East Galicia, with the highest ranking Polish officer in Lwów at the time, Colonel Władysław Sikorski, as his chief of staff. The 37-year-old Sikorski, one of the main organizers of the Polish Legions, departed for the fortress city of Przemyśl (90 kilometers west of Lwów) on October 30 to meet with General Puchalski. He was scheduled to return to Lwów on November 1. Wincenty Witos, as well as Stanisław Głabiński, Minister of Education in the Regency Council's government, arrived in Lwów in the last days of October to talk to Governor Huyn and the City Council about establishing a Polish administration in Lwów and East Galicia. Both left on the night of October 31 suspecting the Ukrainians were planning a takeover, despite assurances from Huyn and the Austrian police commander that there was no threat from the Ukrainians.³² Since Lwów was to be handed over to the Polish Liquidation Commission, which was to set up its headquarters there on November 2,³³ Witos and Głabiński apparently assumed the Polish takeover would precede any Ukrainian plans.

In the meanwhile, the Polish cause was particularly impaired by a divided military in Lwów. There were three Polish military associations in Lwów: the Polish Military Organization (POW), the Polish Military Cadres (PKW), and the Polish Auxiliary Corps (PKP). The POW was a leftist organization loyal to Piłsudski and consisted in Lwów of 300 members, mostly former Polish Legionnaires, but also forty women and eighty high school students. It was commanded by 27-year-old First Lieutenant Ludwik de Laveaux, a former officer of the Polish Legions. The PKW was composed of 200 members politically linked with the National Democrats and Witos' Polish Populist Party.³⁴

It was under the command of a captain of the Austrian reserves, 37-year-old Czesław Mączyński. Finally, the PKP, commanded by Colonel Sikorski, consisted predominantly of soldiers from the Second Brigade of the Polish Legions which had turned against the Austro-Hungarian Army after the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, between the Central Powers and Ukraine, was publicly announced. They were interned in prison camps by the Austrians and not released until late October. Under the auspices of the Regency Council, the PKP, with approximately 200 members, considered itself as the legitimate Polish Army in Lwów.³⁵

It is easy to calculate from the above information that the Poles had about 700 soldiers, possessing among themselves only 64 rifles.³⁶ The only organized group of Polish troops was stationed in the Sienkiewicz School on the west side of Lwów under the command of Polish Legions Captain Zdzisław Tatar-Trzeźniowski. It consisted of eighty-six members of the PKP,³⁷ armed with only two pistols overall.³⁸ On October 31, the leaders of the mentioned Polish military groups discussed the situation in Lwów in a series of frantic meetings, initiated by the POW commander Laveaux. Laveaux vigorously called for the Polish organizations to unite and prevent the Ukrainian takeover. He had received reports from POW members, especially agents with the Austrian intelligence service, that the Ukrainians were preparing for a coup-d'état. He prepared the POW for a preemptive attack on the evening of October 31. Neither Captain Mączyński, the PKW commander, nor Captain Antoni Kamiński of the PKP (Sikorski's temporary replacement), however, believed that a Ukrainian takeover would ever take place.³⁹ Finally, Laveaux was warned by the other officers at the meeting not to start any military strikes with his POW. Mączyński recommended reconvening the officers' meeting the next morning.⁴⁰

Though Laveaux was right in calling for a preemptive occupation

of Lwów, it is doubtful whether a scattered force of 700 Poles would have succeeded against a formidable army of 12,000 Ukrainians. Certainly the Poles would have acquired much needed guns and ammunition by occupying the Austro-Hungarian Army's storage facilities and could have manned some key strategic points. On the other hand, for an offensive military action to succeed, especially in a vast city like Lwów, numbers become crucial. The Polish forces, concentrated in a few defensive positions, had a significantly better chance of withstanding a total occupation of Lwów by the overwhelming Ukrainian Army. What, in fact, proved to be of utmost importance to the Polish cause was the astounding number of Poles who volunteered for service on the Polish side. This included workers and peasants, aristocrats and paupers, men and women. Of fundamental value were the students of the city's University and Technical University, as well as numerous teenagers and high school students (some as young as 13). What can be classified as a unique phenomenon in comparison to other conflicts in the world at the time was that in Lwów the Polish female soldiers not only served as couriers, nurses, and cooks, but many of them fought on the front lines of the Polish-Ukrainian War as part of the Volunteer Women's Legion, under the command of Aleksandra Zagórska-Bitschan.⁴¹

Unfortunately for the Ukrainian cause, not all the Ukrainian soldiers stationed in Lwów's Austro-Hungarian garrison were willing to serve in the new Ukrainian Army. Therefore, Captain Vitovskyy (advanced shortly to Colonel in the new Ukrainian Army) had to his disposal only about 4000 troops.⁴² This, nonetheless, was still substantially more than the Poles could at first muster. The Ukrainians also controlled all of the armories in Lwów. They were, however, disadvantaged in one key area of military tactics. The Ukrainian soldiers were entirely unfamiliar with Lwów and the strategy

of urban fighting, since most of them came from the villages of East Galicia.⁴³ They felt uneasy among the hostile Polish population of Lwów. In contrast, the Polish soldiers, mostly natives of Lwów, knew every district and street of the city. They could even find their way in pitch darkness and were often able to surprise the Ukrainians.

III. Lwów Split in Two: November 1-12, 1918

In the early hours of November 1, 1918, the first news of the Ukrainian takeover in Lwów reached the ears of the Polish commanders. Immediately, a handful of Polish troops from the Sienkiewicz School, under the command of Lieutenant Tadeusz Feldstein and armed with only one pistol, was dispatched to confiscate guns from the local police station. The acquired rifles, less than thirty in all, allowed the Poles in the Sienkiewicz School to withstand the first Ukrainian onslaught at 10 a.m.⁴⁴ Members of the Polish military groups, as well as numerous other volunteers, began to gather in the Sienkiewicz School and other Polish outposts on the west side of Lwów. Captain Czesław Mączyński was agreed upon by the officers as the commander of the Polish Army in Lwów. The Polish National Committee, led by Tadeusz Cieński, began functioning as the Polish civilian administration.

The Poles were still desperately short of weapons. The only supply came from teenage boys who would surprise unsuspecting individual Ukrainian soldiers by tripping or otherwise knocking them down, then quickly stealing their pistols or rifles and running off.⁴⁵ Captain Trzeźniowski left the Sienkiewicz School with a portion of its garrison to retrieve armaments stored in the local village of Rzęsna Polska just west of Lwów. This arsenal, occupied by a POW unit on October 31, provided the Poles with weapons and uniforms. The

return expedition, however, did not reach Lwów until November 4.⁴⁶ This action of occupying a few villages west of Lwów also protected the Polish outposts from Ukrainian assaults from the west that could have trapped the Poles in a hopelessly small area of the city.

In other parts of East Galicia, the Ukrainians easily occupied nearly all of the cities. One exception was the previously mentioned fortress city of Przemyśl, which had been occupied at the end of October by Polish forces under General Puchalski. Colonel Vitovskyy ordered a local Ukrainian regiment to attack Przemyśl and, "at any cost," destroy its railway link with Lwów by blowing up the bridges on the San River (running through Przemyśl).⁴⁷ The Ukrainians succeeded in taking hold of the city and capturing General Puchalski. However, before the Ukrainians could destroy the crucial bridges, a swift counterattack by Polish forces under Colonel Sikorski allowed the Poles to secure the railway link with Lwów.⁴⁸ By the end of November 1, the Ukrainians controlled all of East Galicia from the Zbrucz (in the east) to the San (in the west), while the Poles were only in command of the western edge of Lwów and several villages a few kilometers west of that city.

On the morning of November 2, the Polish forces, with only 176 rifles to their disposal, began an assault directed at the Central Railway Station on the western borderline of Lwów. While two Polish units attacked the station itself, a third unit was successful in capturing the station's enormous armaments warehouse. There the Poles found over 12,000 up-to-date Mannlicher rifles with over two million pieces of matching ammunition.⁴⁹ Thanks to the new supplies, the Poles were able to intensify their attack on the Central Station, which they captured in the late evening hours. The Poles also captured the dragoons' barracks in the southwestern district of Wulka

where another 2000 rifles and several machine guns were taken.⁵⁰

After repelling attacks on their positions in western Lwów, the Poles counterattacked, storming towards the center of the city. Despite having the initiative, the Polish command was persuaded by the Polish National Committee to agree to a temporary truce with the Ukrainians.

This truce proved to be somewhat of a victory for the Ukrainian Army, since it was reinforced the next day by 2000 Sich Sharpshooters (USS) from Bukovina.⁵¹ The USS was the Ukrainian elite fighting unit, composed of experienced soldiers filled with patriotic Ukrainian fervor. The Ukrainian Army desperately needed reinforcements, since the Ukrainian soldiers recruited from the Austro-Hungarian Army were increasingly deserting and heading for their homes in East Galicia.⁵² On November 3, the fighting resumed. A USS batallion attacked the Central Station that evening, momentarily occupied it, but was forced out by the next morning. The Ukrainians were successful in capturing the Polish radio station in Persenkówka (south of Lwów). The Poles lost their only contact with Warsaw, Kraków, and Przemyśl, to which they were appealing for help.⁵³ The Poles, however, captured the airport in northwestern Lwów, where a half dozen Polish pilots, led by Lieutenant Stefan Bastyr, began preparing five airplanes they found there for battle. These airplanes were used by the Poles not only for dropping bombs on Ukrainian positions, but especially for reconnaissance purposes. Of greater significance was the fact that the airport also functioned as the Poles' only means of contact with the outside world.⁵⁴

The fiercest fighting for Lwów came on November 4. The Ukrainian forces launched a determined, but unsuccessful, attack against Polish positions in the district of Wulka, especially the Cadet School.⁵⁵ The Poles, meanwhile, advanced dynamically towards the center of the city. They seized the main Post Office and other buildings adjacent

to the Citadel, the Ukrainians' major stronghold. Polish forces also occupied and set up defensive positions on Góra Stracenia, i.e. Execution Hill (named for the executions of Polish patriots by Austrian authorities that took place here in 1846). Moreover, the Ukrainians were forced to retreat from the northern suburb of Zamarstynów. By the end of November 4, the city of Lwów was almost evenly split into two equal parts between the warring sides. The Ukrainians' only success that day lay outside of Lwów. A 300-man Ukrainian detachment successfully occupied all of Przemyśl, pushing the meager Polish forces there back to the west bank of the San.⁵⁶

On November 5, the Poles launched an unsuccessful assault on the Citadel. This complex of fortifications proved to be a thorn in the Polish Army's side for the duration of the November battle for Lwów. Rising high above the surrounding area, it was used by the Ukrainians to bombard nearby Polish positions with deadly effectiveness. In the meanwhile, Ukrainian attacks on the Cadet School that day also failed.

While the first five days of the struggle for Lwów were based on military engagements for large and strategic areas of the city, the next several days can be characterized as a positional battle, where each side attempted to capture individual buildings or streets, as well as the villages around Lwów. Both warring parties established a front line with barricades which ran just west of the center of Lwów's downtown section. On November 9, with the assistance of a newly constructed armored car, Mączyński launched an attack on the Ukrainian positions in the center of Lwów. The armored car broke down and the Polish forces were faced with severe machine gun and artillery fire from the Citadel and other Ukrainian positions. This attack, as well as a simultaneous one attempted from Execution Hill and one aimed at the Citadel, yielded little effect and the Poles were forced to

retreat. A Ukrainian counterattack also failed, and the front line between the two armies remained relatively the same.⁵⁷ Both armies were satisfied with just shelling each others' positions in the next few days.

While the front remained static, developments on the Ukrainian political scene were very active. On November 9, the Ukrainian National Council (UNR) established a provisional government under the name of the State Secretariat and the presidency of the National Democrat Kost Levytsky. On November 13, a temporary Ukrainian constitution was adopted by the UNR, establishing the Western Ukrainian National Republic. Levytsky was obligated by the UNR to "make all necessary arrangements for the unification of all Ukrainian territories into one state."⁵⁸

A Western Ukrainian delegation led by Osyp Nazaruk appealed for military support from the Skoropadsky government in Kiev, but none would arrive. By the November 11 Armistice agreement with the Entente, the German Army was obligated to evacuate the formerly Russian territories it had occupied. This left Skoropadsky without protection from his German benefactors. On November 14, Skoropadsky issued an official declaration calling for a federative union of Ukraine and Russia and named Sergey Gerbel, a Russian monarchist, as the new Ukrainian Prime Minister. The independence-minded Ukrainians immediately revolted under the leadership of the Social Democrats Symon Petlyura and Volodymyr Vynnychenko. Skoropadsky would eventually lose the struggle with Petlyura and Vynnychenko and flee to Germany, but not until December of 1918.⁵⁹

The Poles in East Galicia were slightly more successful in receiving help from their countrymen. On November 10, a Polish

expedition of about 500 troops, marching from Kraków under the command of Major Julian Stachiewicz, attacked the Ukrainian garrison in Przemyśl (consisting of approximately 1000 men). By the next day, the Poles were in control of Przemyśl and its railway link with Lwów.⁶⁰

IV. The Deciding Struggle: November 13-22, 1918

On November 13, Ukrainian forces launched a determined offensive against Polish positions in Lwów. Colonel Hnat Stefaniv, the new Ukrainian commander (Vitovskyy was appointed Secretary of Military Affairs in the UNR's State Secretariat), realized that with the capture of Przemyśl by Polish forces, he needed to destroy the Polish Army in Lwów before they could be reinforced from that fortress city. The main Ukrainian thrust was once more directed at the Cadet School and dragoons' barracks in the Wulka region.⁶¹ The Ukrainians also attempted to break through the Polish defenses north of Kulparków (a village just southwest of Wulka). The Polish detachment here, under the command of Captain Mieczysław Boruta-Spiechowicz, successfully withstood the attack. With reinforcements from Zamarstynów (northern Lwów), Boruta-Spiechowicz ordered a counterattack that pushed the Ukrainian forces out of Kulparków.⁶² The Ukrainian assault on Wulka also failed, but a Ukrainian detachment occupied Zamarstynów, which had depleted its Polish defensive units by sending reinforcements to the south.⁶³

On November 14, the Ukrainian forces renewed their assault. Attacking from the north, they succeeded in surrounding Execution Hill, which the Polish command decided to immediately reinforce with all available units. The Poles repelled the Ukrainians from around Execution Hill⁶⁴ and were able to regain Zamarstynów.⁶⁵ From the

15th to the 17th of November, the Ukrainian command concentrated all of its offensive military efforts on the southwestern district of Wulka, particularly the battle-torn dragoons' barracks and Cadet School. With the fall of the Cadet School and its shield from the southwest, the dragoons' barracks, the core of the Polish defenses would be exposed in western Lwów, leaving the Poles in a desperate situation. The Ukrainian forces came closest to their objective on the night of November 16-17. They broke through the first Polish line of defense and reached the walls of the Cadet School. There, however, they were repulsed by Polish machine gun fire from the school's windows. A Polish counterattack allowed the Poles to occupy Ukrainian positions south of Wulka, from which the Ukrainian Army had been staging attacks on the Cadet School and dragoons' barracks.⁶⁶ The Polish counterattack was the last military action of the next four days.

At 3 o'clock in the afternoon of November 17, Polish and Ukrainian negotiators signed a 48-hour truce which was to take effect at 6 a.m. on November 18. The cease-fire was later extended with an expiration date of November 21 at 6 a.m. This truce was definitely in the Poles' favor, who were already preparing for the arrival of reinforcements from Przemyśl. The Ukrainian forces, nevertheless, were also in need of rest. Soldiers on both sides were utterly exhausted from the non-stop fighting.

The Poles in Warsaw were now prepared to lend their countrymen in Lwów some military support. This was due to a drastic change in the political scene of Poland. On November 9, the Germans released Józef Piłsudski from the Magdeburg prison. The Polish Military Organization (POW), in light of Piłsudski's release and Germany's defeat in World War I, began to disarm the 30,000 German troops in Warsaw on November 11.⁶⁷ On November 14, the Regency Council dissolved itself,

transferring civil and military rule in Poland to Piłsudski. Four days later, Piłsudski nominated a prominent Socialist and East Galician Pole, Jędrzej Moraczewski, as Prime Minister of the fully independent Republic of Poland. On November 16, in response to numerous petitions and pleas from all regions of Poland, Piłsudski ordered General Bolesław Roja in Kraków to lead a group of four infantry regiments, a cavalry regiment, and three artillery batteries to Przemyśl in order to "prepare the relief of Lwów."⁶⁸

General Roja had already taken the initiative in Kraków by sending a forward detachment to Przemyśl under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Michał Karaszewicz-Tokarzewski, a talented former officer of the Polish Legions and a native of Lwów. Tokarzewski's expedition to Lwów consisted of 140 officers and 1228 other soldiers.⁶⁹ Adding to this the Polish military force already in Lwów, the total amount of Polish troops before the deciding battle for Lwów consisted of 3024 infantrymen and sixty-five cavalrymen. The Ukrainian Army in Lwów, on the other hand, was made up of 3300 soldiers.⁷⁰ Tokarzewski's detachment, protected by an armored train, arrived in Lwów's Central Station on the afternoon of November 20.

Captain Mączynski, along with his deputy commanders, had already planned an all-out Polish attack that was to commence as soon as the cease-fire expired on the morning of November 21. This plan called for a two-pronged maneuver meant to outflank the Ukrainian forces from the north and south. The bulk of the Polish forces, led by Captain Boruta-Spiechowicz, was to occupy southern Lwów and reach the eastern district of Łyczaków, thereby trapping a major portion of the Ukrainian Army within Lwów. The other major Polish detachment, under First Lieutenant Walerian Sikorski prepared to take control of the High Castle, the highest point in Lwów and a Ukrainian defensive

stronghold. Here, Sikorski was to join up with Boruta-Spiechowicz to close the circle around the Ukrainian forces in Lwów. Simultaneously to the flanking maneuver, two Polish detachments were to simulate attacks on the center of the city and on the Citadel, in order to hold down the enemy forces there and possibly trick the Ukrainians into reinforcing these positions with troops from southern Lwów.⁷¹

On November 21, Sikorski's attack from the northern district of Kleparów was stopped almost at its onset. A Ukrainian counterattack forced the Poles to defend their positions in Kleparów and in the neighboring Zamarstynów district.⁷² Elsewhere, the Polish detachment next to the Citadel was unnecessarily attempting to actually take control of this fortress. Despite heavy casualties, this Polish assault succeeded in drawing Ukrainian reinforcements from the south.⁷³

In contrast to the setbacks in the north and at the Citadel, Captain Boruta-Spiechowicz was vigorously advancing in the south. After heavy fighting, the Poles occupied the Łyczaków Cemetery and the Łyczaków Railway Station in southeast Lwów.⁷⁴ The Ukrainians immediately launched a counterattack from both the city and from the village of Winniki east of Lwów. Both of these Ukrainian detachments were pushed back, though during a second counterattack the Ukrainians nearly regained the cemetery and railway station.⁷⁵

By nightfall, the Poles had failed to encircle the Ukrainian positions and trap the bulk of their opponent's forces within Lwów. The Polish flanking maneuver was, nonetheless, the key to Poland's victory in the battle for Lwów. The Ukrainian command now seriously considered the possibility of being surrounded and cut off from the rest of East Galicia by Polish forces. The decision was made to withdraw from Lwów. During the night of November 21-22, the Ukrainian

Army initiated a carefully organized retreat under the protection of a few detachments that slowed down the pursuing Polish forces.⁷⁶ The Poles were in control of Lwów, though the rest of East Galicia (excluding Przemyśl) was still in the hands of the Western Ukrainian National Republic.

The battle for Lwów in November of 1918 was a costly one. Approximately 3000 people died during the struggle,⁷⁷ both soldiers and civilians. Civilians, as in any urban battle, were especially vulnerable to constant shelling and cross-fire. Most of the civilian casualties were Poles, since they constituted the majority of the population.

The loss of Lwów was a bitter setback for Western Ukraine. At a time when the Ukrainians had the advantage in manpower and weapons, when no united Polish Army existed outside of Lwów, the Western Ukrainian Army proved incapable of even denting the Polish defenses in Lwów. Starting in mid-November of 1918, with the establishment of an independent and united Polish state and the organization of a regular Polish Army, it was the Poles who took the military initiative over a politically divided Ukraine. Credit for the Polish victory, nevertheless, lies solely with the volunteer soldiers of Lwów. They followed a Polish tradition of defending their besieged cities against overwhelming odds dating back to the defense of Warsaw against Russian and Prussian troops during the Kościuszko Insurrection of 1794, and later continued during the Warsaw Uprising against Nazi German occupation in 1944. In each case, pure determination and an unbreakable sense of optimism allowed the Poles to defend their territory longer than seemed possible. However, unlike the tragic Warsaw defenders of 1794 and 1944, the Poles of Lwów in 1918 were

able to obtain reinforcements from outside that tipped the scales in their favor.

The struggle for Lwów in November of 1918 has a legendary standing in Polish history, and two terms are always associated with it. The first one is the city's official slogan, "Semper Fidelis," "Always Loyal" [to Poland]. The second one refers to the defenders of Lwów as the "Eaglets." This is because the majority of the Polish soldiers who fought and died in the battle for Lwów were below the age of 24.⁷⁸ Approximately 27 percent of those who died were below the age of 17.⁷⁹ Even the commanding officers were predominantly very young men: Lieutenant Colonel Tokarzewski (the commander of the Polish forces in Lwów during the November 21 attack) was 25, Captain Boruta-Spiechowicz was 24, Lieutenant Laveaux (the chief Polish negotiator with the Ukrainians) was 27, etc. Tokarzewski and Boruta-Spiechowicz would later become prominent military leaders in Poland's struggle against Nazi German and Soviet Russian occupation during World War II.⁸⁰

V. Conclusion

The battle for Lwów in November of 1918 did not decide the outcome of the Polish-Ukrainian War. It did, however, allow Poland to maintain a foothold in East Galicia, forcing the Ukrainians to fight on two fronts: the front in Lwów and the front on the western border (i.e., the San River) of East Galicia. Under Colonel Dmytro Vitovskyy's mobilization program, the Ukrainian army grew to almost 100,000 troops,⁸¹ substantially more than the Poles could assemble for several months. The Poles in Lwów were constantly in grave danger from the surrounding Ukrainians, who on the night of December 28-29, 1918 almost broke through the Polish defenses into Lwów.⁸²

The Western Ukrainian National Republic signed an agreement with the Ukrainian People's Republic (now ruled by a five-man Directorate led by Symon Petlyura and Volodymyr Vynnychenko) on December 1, 1918, by which the East Galician Ukrainians decided to unite with their countrymen east of the Zbrucz River. Though the formal union did not occur until January 22, 1919, the Directorate soon sent its own troops to support the war against Poland in East Galicia.

The Poles were occasionally reinforced by detachments that had to break through Ukrainian defenses on the eastern bank of the San River, a bloody and difficult task indeed. Polish attempts to conquer more territory around Lwów failed, leaving the Poles throughout the winter of 1918-1919 in control of only the city of Lwów and its railway link with Przemyśl. In early March of 1919, the Ukrainian command ordered another onslaught on Lwów, which left the Polish forces there in an almost desperate position. A rescue effort by the Polish Army from Przemyśl was again successful,⁸³ as Tokarzewski's expedition had been in late November of the previous year.

In April of 1919, the strength of the armies pitted against each other in East Galicia was as follows: the Polish forces possessed 30,000 troops, while the Ukrainian Army was composed of 55,000 soldiers.⁸⁴ That same month, the Polish Army in East Galicia increased substantially by the arrival of General Józef Haller's Army from France. This Army had been preparing for battle alongside the Entente forces during World War I, but the Armistice was signed before this unit became fully organized. It consisted of 68,433 soldiers, including 22,395 volunteers from the United States.⁸⁵ These volunteers were Polish-Americans and Poles living in the United States, many of whom returned to the U.S. after the conclusion of the Polish-Ukrainian struggle and the Polish-Soviet War (1919-1921).

On May 14, the Polish Head of State, Józef Piłsudski, ordered an offensive on the East Galician front, to be led by Haller. The Ukrainian Army was unable to impede the Polish Army's progress, which resulted in the Poles taking hold of a greater part of East Galicia. On June 8, in a sudden reversal of fortune, the new Ukrainian commander in East Galicia, General Oleksandr Grekov, initiated a successful counteroffensive against the Polish Army through which the Ukrainians regained much of the territory they had lost in the previous three weeks. Since by this time both Poland and especially Ukraine were threatened from the direction of Soviet Russia, the number of soldiers fighting in East Galicia declined substantially to support the Polish-Soviet and Ukrainian-Soviet fronts. The Polish Army in East Galicia, now under the direct command of Józef Piłsudski, was comprised of 38,613 infantrymen, 2144 cavalrymen, and 207 artillery pieces, compared to Grekov's Ukrainian Army of 24,300 infantrymen, 400 cavalrymen, and 244 artillery pieces.⁸⁶

By this time, the Western Ukrainians remained alone in their quest for a Ukrainian East Galicia. The Eastern Ukrainians, led by Symon Petlyura, viewed the loss of the enormous area of eastern Ukraine as a greater threat to Ukrainian independence than the Polish presence in the relatively small East Galicia. They were willing to relinquish East Galicia and western Volhynia for a Polish-Ukrainian alliance against Bolshevik Russia. Józef Piłsudski was very receptive to this idea, since he himself had been arguing in previous months for a Polish-Ukrainian federation that could resist the menace of Soviet conquest.⁸⁷

Since Grekov did not sign on to Petlyura's efforts, Piłsudski decided to push the Western Ukrainian Army out of East Galicia. On June 28, 1919, the Polish Army launched the decisive offensive of the Polish-Ukrainian War, pushing Grekov's Army further and further east. On July 17, the Western Ukrainian Army crossed the Zbrucz River. All of East Galicia was now under Poland's control. In the end, the Polish-Ukrainian War of 1918-1919 had cost the lives of 15,000 Ukrainian and 10,000 Polish soldiers.⁸⁸

On August 22, 1919, the Ukrainian People's Republic, under the leadership of Petlyura, signed a peace agreement with the Republic of Poland by which the Polish-Ukrainian border was established on the Zbrucz River.⁸⁹ Petlyura's forces were soon forced out of Ukraine by the Bolshevik Army and allowed to enter Poland. On April 21, 1920, Petlyura signed a military and political alliance with Poland (despite objections from the East Galician Ukrainians) by which Ukraine renounced its rights to East Galicia in exchange for active Polish support of an independent Ukraine.⁹⁰ On April 25 of that year, Polish forces under Piłsudski's direct command (along with the remnants of Petlyura's Ukrainian Army) began a powerful offensive

against the Bolshevik Army that was occupying Ukraine. After the Polish Army captured Kiev, the Poles and Petlyura began organizing a Ukrainian administration in the areas recovered from the Bolsheviks. However, the Soviet counteroffensive that started in June of 1920 ended the Ukrainian dreams of an independent state. Though the Poles regained the upper hand in August after their brilliant victory over the Bolshevik Army in the Battle of Warsaw, the Polish Army was unable to continue its offensive into Ukraine. The Polish-Soviet Treaty of Riga, signed on March 18, 1921, established the border between these two states, by which Poland kept East Galicia and the western part of Volhynia (as far as the southeastern Polish border is concerned). The only officially independent Ukrainian state, the Ukrainian Soviet Republic, was de facto a part of Soviet Russia in every aspect but on paper. On March 14, 1923, the Conference of Ambassadors (the former member countries of the Entente) recognized the Polish borders in the east, thereby consenting to Polish rule in East Galicia.

The relations between Poland and its Ukrainian minority were very tense throughout the 1920's and 1930's. The Ukrainians comprised 14 percent of Poland's population, the largest national minority in the country.⁹¹ Under the Polish Constitution of 1921, all Polish national and religious minorities were guaranteed equal rights and proportional representation in the Polish parliament.⁹² This, nonetheless, did not appease the independence-minded Ukrainians. Many of them began to collaborate with either the German or Soviet governments, both bitter opponents of an independent Poland. The close German-Ukrainian relationship resulted in intimate cooperation between the German Nazis and the Ukrainian ultranationalists during World War II.

In September of 1939, the Soviets annexed East Galicia and Volhynia in accordance with the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. When Germany occupied these provinces in the summer of 1941, the Ukrainian nationalists became the Nazi authorities' faithful servants. A police force was established that consisted entirely of Ukrainians. The SS organized a Ukrainian "SS-Galizien" Division. The Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN), which had organized terrorist activities against Poland before 1939, was permitted by the Germans to form military detachments. The result of this cooperation was horrendous. It is estimated by both Polish and Ukrainian historians that OUN, SS-Galizien, and the Ukrainian police murdered at least half-a-million Poles in East Galicia, Volhynia, and what is now southeastern Poland.⁹³ Ukrainian nationalists also assisted in the Nazi German plans to exterminate the Jews. Many of them served as death camp guards and executioners (the recent case of the so-called "Ivan the Terrible" and John Demianiuk is a well-known example), while the SS-Galizien Division was assigned by the German military command to massacre entire districts and villages of Jews both in former Polish territory and during the German invasion of the Soviet Union.

At the end of World War II, the Soviet Union annexed both Volhynia and almost all of East Galicia, deporting the majority of its Polish inhabitants to the new communist People's Republic of Poland. The Ukrainians remaining within Polish borders were in the most part deported to the Ukrainian Soviet Republic of the U.S.S.R.

Polish-Ukrainian relations have been friendly in the last few years. When Ukraine proclaimed its independence on August 24, 1991, Poland became the first country to recognize the new state. The first Ukrainian President, Leonid Kravchuk, later apologized to the

Polish nation for the killing of half-a-million Poles by "Ukrainian chauvinists."⁹⁴ Unfortunately, in Lwów (now officially Lviv) and East Galicia, the newly rising ultranationalistic movement has become very popular, even electing radical anti-Semitic and anti-Polish representatives to the Ukrainian parliament. Both Poles and Jews are appalled when they see a Stepan Bandera Street in Lwów and Bandera's pictures being sold everywhere in the city as that of a national idol. Stepan Bandera, it must be explained, was the OUN's leader during the 1940's and the chief architect of the Nazi-Ukrainian plan to exterminate Poles and Jews in East Galicia and Volhynia. On an optimistic note, Ukrainians outside East Galicia are rather sympathetic to the Poles, as the Poles are friendly to them.

Though few participants in the battle for Lwów in November of 1918 are still alive today, the legend of the Lwów Eaglets lives on in Polish minds and hearts. The Polish cultural traits of Lwów can be found everywhere in Poland. The Poles do not wish to have another conflict with the new Ukraine over Lwów, but they at least hope the remnants of Polish culture and history in Ukraine will be respected and the Polish minority in East Galicia will not be discriminated against, as is not the case at present. The fighting for Lwów may not have been an event of tremendous proportion or world-wide stature. It serves, nonetheless, the same purpose in Poland as the defense of the Alamo does in the United States. It provides heroes for a nation from a group of simple volunteers, fighting for the right to something they perceive as their own. Often small victories (or even honorable defeats) are more significant to a nation's pride than overwhelming military triumphs.

FOOTNOTES

- ¹ Adam Kozłowski, Lwów-wizja utraconego miasta, Ignacy Szenfeld, ed. (New York: Bicentennial, 1991), p. 15.
- ² Ryszard Chanas and Janusz Czerwiński, Lwów-przewodnik turystyczny (Wrocław, Poland: Zakład Narodowy imienia Ossolińskich, 1992), p. 11.
- ³ Józefa Mękarska, Wędrowka po Ziemiach Wschodnich Rzeczypospolitej (Chicago: Koło Lwowian w Chicago and Zrzeszenie Nauczycieli Polskich w Ameryce, 1982), p. 78.
- ⁴ Kozłowski, p. 37.
- ⁵ Danuta Nespiak, "Gloria malutkiej 'Wspólnej Europie' pod Wysokim Zamkiem," Semper Fidelis (Wrocław), 17 (July 1993), p. 1.
- ⁶ Chanas, et al., pp. 195-196.
- ⁷ Anita Krystyna Shelton, The Democratic Idea in Polish History and Historiography: Franciszek Bujak (1875-1953) (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), p. 185. The existence of an Eastern Orthodox Church in Lwów is mentioned in Kozłowski, p. 52.
- ⁸ Grzegorz Łukomski, Czesław Partacz, and Bogusław Polak, Wojna polsko-ukraińska 1918-1919 (Koszalin, Poland: Wydawnictwo Uczelniane Wyższej Szkoły Inżynierskiej w Koszalinie, 1994), p. 12.
- ⁹ Charles Homer Haskins and Robert Howard Lord, Some Problems of the Peace Conference (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1920), p. 189.
- ¹⁰ Łukomski, et al., p. 12.
- ¹¹ Rosa Bailly, A City Fights for Freedom: The Rising of Lwów in 1918-1919, Samuel S.B. Taylor, trans. (London: Publishing Committee Leopoliś, 1956), p. 22.
- ¹² Łukomski, et al., p. 13.
- ¹³ Anna M. Cienciala and Titus Komarnicki, From Versailles to Locarno: Keys to Polish Foreign Policy, 1919-25 (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 1984), p. ii.
- ¹⁴ Iwo Cyprian Pogonowski, Poland: A Historical Atlas, rev. ed. (New York: Dorset Press, 1988), p. 277.
- ¹⁵ In his 12th century Kievan Latopis (Yearbook), the Kievan chronicler Nestor wrote: "Vladimir set out against the Poles and occupied their cities--Przemyśl, Czerwień, and other cities, which are until this day under Russia." This was the first written mention of East Galicia and a major source used by the Poles to argue their historical rights to Lwów and East Galicia. Chanas, et al., p. 13. This passage is referred to in every Polish source concerned with East Galicia. Chanas, et al., however, quotes it in full. Also see:

Norman Davies, God's Playground: A History of Poland, 2 vols. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), 1: 86.

¹⁶Lukomski, et al., p. 15.

¹⁷Marian Eckert, Historia Polski 1914-1939 (Warsaw: Wydawnictwa Szkolne i Pedagogiczne, 1990), pp. 14-15.

¹⁸Eckert, p. 39.

¹⁹Jan Karski, The Great Powers and Poland 1919-1945: From Versailles to Yalta (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 1985), p. 15.

²⁰Rom Landau, Ignace Paderewski: Musician and Statesman (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1934), pp. 17-18.

²¹Woodrow Wilson, Woodrow Wilson's Own Story, Donald Day, ed. (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1952), p. 271.

²²Karski, p. 23.

²³Lukomski, et al., p. 46.

²⁴W.E.D. Allen, The Ukraine: A History (New York: Russell and Russell, 1940), pp. 284-285.

²⁵Wiktor Sukiennicki, East Central Europe During World War I: From Foreign Domination to National Independence, 2 vols., Maciej Siekierski, ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), 2: 729-730. The fact that Poland possessed a majority in the Chełm region is found in: Eckert, p. 42.

²⁶Matthew Stachiw and Jaroslaw Sztendera, Western Ukraine at the Turning Point of Europe's History 1918-1923, 2 vols., Joan L. Stachiw, ed. (New York: Shevchenko Scientific Society, 1969), 1: 102-103. The Ukrainian National Council never controlled northwestern Bukovina, Subcarpathian Rus, or the region inhabited by the Lemkos. In November of 1918, Bukovina was occupied by the Romanian Army. Subcarpathian Rus remained a part of Hungary until the Entente decided to award it to Czechoslovakia in the fall of 1919, according to the wishes of the distinct Carpatho-Rusyn nationality of this region. John S. Reshetar, The Ukrainian Revolution 1917-1920: A Study in Nationalism (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1952), pp. 230-231. The distinct character of the Carpatho-Rusyns is mentioned in: Paul Robert Magocsi, "Carpatho-Rusyns," in: Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups, Stephan Thernstrom, ed. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1980), pp. 200-204. The 100,000 Lemkos of West Galicia, descended from migrating Romanian shepherds, were predominantly pro-Russian and did not consider themselves members of the Ukrainian nation. The area which the Lemkos inhabited became a part of Poland in January of 1919 (since Poles were the majority here). Roman Reinfuss, Śladami Lemków (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo PTTK Kraj, 1990). The above information is basically a very short summary of Reinfuss' study.

²⁷ Lukomski, et al., p. 60.

²⁸ Mieczysław Wrzosek, Wojsko Polskie i operacje wojenne lat 1918-1921 (Białystok, Poland: Dział Wydawnictw Filii Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego w Białymstoku, 1988), pp. 286-287.

²⁹ Reshetar, p. 179. It must be noted that Vasyl Vishivani (which translates into Basil the Embroidered) did not command the USS during the November battle for Lwów.

³⁰ Józef Klink, "W przededniu listopadowej obrony Lwowa," in: Obrona Lwowa: Źródła do dziejów walk o Lwów i województwa południowo-wschodnie 1918-1920, 2 vols., rev. ed., Jarosław Waniorek, ed. (Warsaw: Oficyna Wydawnicza Volumen, 1993), 2: 638.

³¹ Marcei Chlamtacz, "Relacje o obronie Lwowa w listopadzie 1918 roku," in: Obrona Lwowa: Źródła do dziejów walk o Lwów i województwa południowo-wschodnie 1918-1920, 2 vols., rev. ed., Jarosław Waniorek, ed. (Warsaw: Oficyna Wydawnicza Volumen, 1993), 2: 115.

³² Lukomski, et al., p. 62.

³³ Bailly, p. 59.

³⁴ Lukomski, et al., p. 69.

³⁵ Wrzosek, pp. 292-293. Władysław Sikorski (1881-1943) became one of the greatest military and political figures in Polish history. During the Polish victory over the invading Bolshevik Army at the Battle of Warsaw in August of 1920, Sikorski commanded the Fifth Army which proved instrumental to the Poles' success. In 1923, he served briefly as Poland's Prime Minister. After the German and Soviet invasion of Poland in 1939, Sikorski became Prime Minister of the Polish government-in-exile and commander-in-chief of the Polish Army. He consolidated all of the Polish political parties, organized Polish army, navy, and air force units in France and Great Britain, and established a strong resistance movement in Poland. His government was also the first to expose Nazi atrocities and the Holocaust to the skeptical Allied governments. It organized and financed Żegota in Poland, the only organization in German-occupied Europe that specifically dealt with hiding and protecting Jews from the Nazis. Sikorski also ordered the Polish Home Army to execute anyone who exposed a Jew to the German authorities or even threatened to do so. He died tragically in a mysterious airplane crash on July 4, 1943. Sikorski is buried (along with only five other great non-royal Polish historical figures) beside Polish kings and queens in Kraków's Wawel Cathedral.

³⁶ M.K. Dziewanowski, Joseph Piłsudski: A European Federalist, 1918-1922 (Stanford, California: Hoover Institution Press, 1969), p. 235.

³⁷ "Pierwsi obrońcy," Pobudka (Lwów), (November 22, 1919), p. 5.

³⁸Tadeusz Felsztyn, "Relacje o Szkole Sienkiewicza i Grupie Cytadeli," in: Obrona Lwowa: Źródła do dziejów walk o Lwów i województwa południowo-wschodnie 1918-1920, 2 vols., rev. ed., Jarosław Waniorek, ed. (Warsaw: Oficyna Wydawnicza Volumen, 1991), 1: 67-68.

³⁹Ludwik de Laveaux, "Rola POW w przygotowaniu obrony Lwowa i rokowania polsko-ukraińskie," in: Obrona Lwowa: Źródła do dziejów walk o Lwów i województwa południowo-wschodnie 1918-1920, 2 vols., rev. ed., Jarosław Waniorek, ed. (Warsaw: Oficyna Wydawnicza Volumen, 1991), 1: 283-287.

⁴⁰Antoni Kamiński, "Relacje o wypadkach lwowskich w listopadzie 1918 roku," in: Obrona Lwowa: Źródła do dziejów walk o Lwów i województwa południowo-wschodnie 1918-1920, 2 vols., rev. ed., Jarosław Waniorek, ed. (Warsaw: Oficyna Wydawnicza Volumen, 1991), 1: 255.

⁴¹"Organizacje kobiece," Pobudka (Lwów), (November 22, 1919), p. 4. Zagórska-Bitschan's son, 14-year-old Jerzy Bitschan, became probably the most legendary figure of the battle for Lwów. Despite his mother's wishes (because of his young age), he joined the Polish Army and died heroically on November 21. He became one of the youngest recipients of the prestigious Krzyż Walecznych (Polish Cross of the Valiant), with which he was decorated posthumously.

⁴²Łukomski, et al., p. 130.

⁴³Stachiw, et al., 1: 116.

⁴⁴Felsztyn, 1: 68-70. Lieutenant Feldstein later changed his name to Felsztyn. Therefore, it is his memoirs that are quoted throughout this work.

⁴⁵Bailly, p. 85.

⁴⁶Józef Klink, "Jak zdobyliśmy amunicję? Wyprawa do Rzesny Polskiej dnia 1 listopada 1918," Pobudka (Lwów), (November 22, 1919), p. 6.

⁴⁷Łukomski, et al., p. 63.

⁴⁸Stachiw, et al., 1: 120-121. Władysław Sikorski's role in the Polish counterattack on Przemyśl is found in: "U głównego Kwatermistrza W.P. (Wywiad z pułkownikiem Władysławem Sikorskim)," Pobudka (Lwów), (December 22, 1918), p. 2.

⁴⁹Wrzosek, pp. 299-300.

⁵⁰Bailly, pp. 106-107.

⁵¹Leszek Podhorodecki, Dzieje Lwowa (Warsaw: Oficyna Wydawnicza Volumen, 1993), p. 163.

⁵²Wrzosek, pp. 301-302.

⁵³Podhorodecki, pp. 163-164.

⁵⁴Adam Tiger, Władysław Rubczyński, and Rudolf Weyde, "Grupa lotnicza," in: Obrona Lwowa: Źródła do dziejów walk o Lwów i województwa południowo-wschodnie 1918-1920, 2 vols., rev. ed., Jarosław Waniorek, ed. (Warsaw: Oficyna Wydawnicza Volumen, 1993), 2: 554-563.

⁵⁵Wrzosek, p. 304.

⁵⁶Łukomski, et al., p. 133.

⁵⁷Bailly, pp. 212-213.

⁵⁸Stachiw, et al., 1: 111-114.

⁵⁹Sukiennicki, 2: 818.

⁶⁰Łukomski, et al., pp. 134-135. The number of Ukrainian troops in Przemyśl is mentioned in Stachiw, et al., 1: 116.

⁶¹Łukomski, et al., p. 136.

⁶²Mieczysław Boruta-Spiechowicz, "Walka o Lwów (1-22 listopada 1918 roku)," in: Obrona Lwowa: Źródła do dziejów walk o Lwów i województwa południowo-wschodnie 1918-1920, 2 vols., rev. ed., Jarosław Waniorek, ed. (Warsaw: Oficyna Wydawnicza Volumen, 1991), 1: 48-49.

⁶³Bailly, pp. 249-250.

⁶⁴Bailly, p. 251.

⁶⁵Walerian Sikorski, "Odcinek Podzamcze," in: Obrona Lwowa: Źródła do dziejów walk o Lwów i województwa południowo-wschodnie 1918-1920, 2 vols., rev. ed., Jarosław Waniorek, ed. (Warsaw: Oficyna Wydawnicza Volumen, 1993), 2: 413.

⁶⁶Wrzosek, p. 314.

⁶⁷Marian Kukiel, Dzieje Polski porozbiorowe 1795-1921, 4th ed. (Paris: Editions Spotkania, 1984), p. 618.

⁶⁸Antoni Jakubski, "Walki listopadowe we Lwowie w świetle krytyk," in: Obrona Lwowa: Źródła do dziejów walk o Lwów i województwa południowo-wschodnie 1918-1920, 2 vols., rev. ed., Jarosław Waniorek, ed. (Warsaw: Oficyna Wydawnicza Volumen, 1991), 1: 217.

⁶⁹Wrzosek, p. 316.

⁷⁰Wrzosek, p. 318.

⁷¹Wrzosek, pp. 317-318.

⁷²Sikorski, 2: 414-415.

⁷³Zdzisław Trzeźniowski, "Raport służbowy z 10 grudnia 1918 roku i Rozkaz operacyjny grupy Trzeźniowskiego (Szkoła Marii Magdaleny)," in: Obrona Lwowa: Źródła do dziejów walk o Lwów i województwa południowo-wschodnie 1918-1920, 2 vols., rev. ed., Jarosław Waniorek, ed. (Warsaw: Oficyna Wydawnicza Volumen, 1991), 1: 353.

⁷⁴Boruta-Spiechowicz, 1: 53-57.

⁷⁵Felsztyn, 1: 89-90.

⁷⁶Wrzosek, p. 319.

⁷⁷Shelton, p. 88.

⁷⁸Podhorodecki, p. 165.

⁷⁹Lubicz (pseud.) and Jerzy Masiór, "Campo Santo---Święte Pole we Lwowie," Semper Fidelis (Wrocław), 16 (May 1993), p. 2.

⁸⁰Michał Karaszewicz-Tokarzewski (1893-1964) organized the Polish resistance movement in German- and Soviet-occupied Poland (precursor to the Home Army) and served as its first commander until he was arrested by the Soviets in 1940. After being released from Soviet imprisonment in 1941, he served as Major General in the Second Polish Corps which participated in the Allied invasion of Italy. Mieczysław Boruta-Spiechowicz (1894-1985) served gallantly in the defense of Poland in September of 1939. He later commanded the First Polish Corps which was to defend Scotland against a possible German invasion from the direction of Norway.

⁸¹Stachiw, et al., 1: 121.

⁸²Wrzosek, p. 325.

⁸³Łukomski, et al., pp. 180-188.

⁸⁴Wrzosek, p. 338.

⁸⁵Wrzosek, p. 92.

⁸⁶Łukomski, et al., p. 232.

⁸⁷Dziewanowski, pp. 239-240, 245-246.

⁸⁸Łukomski, et al., p. 107.

⁸⁹Łukomski, et al., pp. 248-249.

⁹⁰Kukiel, p. 651.

⁹¹Stephan Horak, Poland and Her National Minorities 1919-1939 (New York: Vantage Press, 1961), p. 81.

⁹²Horak, p. 196.

⁹³ Aleksander Korman, "Osobowe i materialne straty Polaków wynikłe z działalności terrorystów OUN-UPA," Semper Fidelis (Wrocław), 15 (March 1993), pp. 18-19.

⁹⁴ Korman, p. 18.

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