The British in Poland in the Seventeenth Century

In the territory of the seventeenth-century Commonwealth of Two Nations (the name of the Polish State after Poland's Union with Lithuania in 1569) there lived diverse national minorities. They included the English and the Scots, and to a lesser degree the Irish. The English were generally identified with the Scots, and thus called Scots accordingly. In the Polish Commonwealth in the seventeenth century the British were the second largest national minority, exceeded only by the Germans. Among the newcomers from England there were merchants and artisans, soldiers, religious and political emigrants, professors of academies, of Jesuit colleges and of Protestant schools, students and pupils of various schools, diplomats and travellers, as well as poets and itinerant actors.

As early as at the beginning of the seventeenth century the Scots had their organizational structure in Poland, which is attested by the testimonies of a Scottish trader Tamson (Thomson) given to the city authorities of Cracow in 1603. They were written down in the municipal records and then confirmed by other Scots and also Poles. On the basis of this testimony and the entries in Lublin's municipal records we can presume that the Scots in Poland in the seventeenth century had their own autonomy. They were subordinated to their own leader; in towns they formed merchant and artisan brotherhoods as well as religious ones. There were over twelve brotherhoods, which were governed by the elected elders. The Scots governed themselves on the basis of written laws, the law books being kept where they lived. They held their own trials, for which the appeal court was the Scottish Court of Appeal in Toruń, which heard appeals on Epiphany day. The Scots were obligated to pay taxes for lay and religious brotherhoods. Disobedience was punished with fines or even with expulsion from the Scottish community.[1] The records of the city of Lublin for 1605 also contain the information that for three years in this city the elders and the young held meetings, sixty men strong, in the Kramarczyk house.[2] From Lublin's Protestant community the record book of a Scottish brotherhood survived, which was written first in English,

then in English and Latin, and then finally in Polish. This bears witness to the Polonization of the members of that community.

The influx of the British into Poland had been taking place for a long time. As early as the fourteenth century British merchants arrived in Gdańsk, Pomerania, where they formed a separate community.[3] In 1404 in Prussia a free association to support trade was established, called the Prussian Company. It was approved by a privilege issued by Henry IV. A few years later in Gdańsk there was a separate English house with apartments, exchange offices, and storage facilities.[4]

When the Merchant Adventurers organized the second expedition to Muscovy across the White Sea, they received from Queen Mary and her husband Philip a letter to the tsar dated 1 April 1555, written in three languages: Greek, Polish, and Italian. The fact that the letter was also issued in Polish allows one to draw at least two conclusions: that there was someone in England at the time who knew that Polish could be understood in Moscow, and also someone in London who knew Polish. That the Polish language at that time helped the English communicate with Muscovy is also attested by the correspondence of the first agent of the English company in Moscow, George Killingwroth, who reported from Moscow that one could correspond with the tsar's secretary, Ivan Mikhailovich Viskovaty 'in Polish, Deutsch, Latin or Italian'.[5]

Immigration of the British into Polish territory became intensified in the latter half of the sixteenth century, following religious persecution of the Catholics, and later of the opponents of the Anglican Church. At that time Poland was a country that respected religious tolerance. Under the Act of Warsaw Confederation of 1573 all newly elected kings had to obey its provisions stipulating that the King would not persecute anyone for their religious convictions.[6]

The arrival of a great number of the English and Scots in the territory of eastern and western Pomerania led to a severe conflict between the local merchants and those immigrating from England in the mid-sixteenth century. The newcomers were accused of unfair competition with the local tradesmen. In 1552 the towns in eastern Prussia issued an edict stipulating that they (the English) should not be tolerated in the town areas, which was the reason why they moved to central Poland.[7]

With unfavourable conditions obtaining in Pomerania, British merchants in the latter half of the sixteenth century started to strengthen their position in Gdańsk, and in central regions of Poland. Under the privilege of 17 August 1568 issued by Queen Elizabeth I, the Eastland Company was set up in Gdańsk, which formed a strict group organization of wholesalers, based on the exclusive right of trade, with the indicated penetration area east of Sund Straits and the Oder river as far as the eastern borders of Poland and Lithuania.[8]

King Stefan Bathory was interested in creating favourable conditions for English merchants. In his proclamation of 9 April 1578 he encouraged Poles

to accord the English friendly treatment and to ensure security and right of passage. In recognition of the merits of Scottish merchants in delivering supplies to his army, the King conferred a privilege on eight Scots, who, as courtiers delivering goods for the royal court were exempt from the jurisdiction of municipal, district (starosty), landed-gentry, and provincial administration: they were subordinate only to the jurisdiction of Crown Marshall courts. This privilege was confirmed by the successive monarchs: Sigismund III (Zygmunt) Vasa, Ladislaus IV (Władysław) and John Casimir (Jan Kazimierz). In the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries the privilege was sometimes abused by the remaining Scottish merchants, who wanted to exercise the rights of the privileged, which led to temporary perturbations.[9]

The Eastland Company, established to protect the interests of English trade, was not welcomed by the burghers of Gdańsk. This dispute was taken advantage of, with King Bathory's consent, by the town of Elbląg. The Elbląg burghers concluded a separate agreement with the Company on 11 May 1585, under which it moved its emporium from Gdańsk to Elbląg.[10] King Bathory also confirmed the English merchants' right freely to conduct trade in the territories of the Commonwealth as they did before.[11]

In the late sixteenth century British merchants travelled all over Poland. They are believed to have exported to England iron ore from Chęciny (situated far away from the sea), and salt from Kazimierz Dolny, where there were warehouses. In Red Ruthenia in Lvov there was also an English community, settled under the city charter, who were engaged in grain export. Some of their names were preserved in the distorted form: Gorny, Alandt, Whigt.[12] In Part Twenty of *Roxolania*, a poem by the well-known Polish Renaissance poet Fabian Sebastian Klonowicz, connected with Lublin, which was written in 1584, there is information that in this city a British merchant buys Muscovite sheepskin coats to make profit from a long sea voyage.[13]

British merchants, the great majority of whom were Scottish, slowly began to achieve affluence. They first traded on Polish soil in goods that were called *norymberszczyzna* (Nuremberg wares).[14] Lublin's city records of 1618 state that there were separate Scottish stalls in this town called *institae Schotarum*.[15] The same records also read that in Lublin Scottish stalls were set up next to the Beglowski house.[16] Wacław Borowy notes that as late as the early twentieth century there was still a dance called 'szot' in many regions of Poland in memory of the Scots who used to live there. In the Kashubian region this word denoted a merchant.[17]

Already in the early seventeenth century the name of Scottish goods (Scotswares) caught on in Poland. This expression can be found in property inventories. For example, one inventory of a Cracow burgher includes among them all kinds of knives, scissors, comb holders, and ebony beads.[18] The French ambassador Charnacé, who estimated the number of the English and Scots at fifteen thousand in 1629, stated in his account that they conducted trade, mostly selling 'hardwares, cloth and linen'.[19]

The changing status of British merchants in Poland can be inferred from tax proclamations. While the proclamation of 1564 treated them as a poor group together with the Gypsies, Jews, and Tartars, having levied on them only the poll tax and the tax on horses used for transport of goods,[20] the proclamation 1613 already shows a rise in the financial position of the Scots. At that time they had to pay two zloty of poll tax, while the owners of horse-drawn carts paid fifteen groszy (*groschen*) per horse and a fourth grosz on the goods owned, whereas Scottish peddlers paid a flat fee of a zloty a year.[21]

The differences in the financial status of the British residing in Poland, engaged in trade and, to a lesser extent, in artisanship in the seventeenth century are attested by testaments and property inventories. The wealth of the Scots in Cracow can also be assessed on the basis of the taxing of their property in 1651 in order to pay the tax levied on them by the Sejm in support of the son of the executed king of England, the future monarch Charles II. We find that James Kornichel, a Cracow merchant, estimated his property at six thousand royal thaler and paid six hundred. Albert Blakel, a Cracow merchant, stated that his property was worth 6796 imperial thaler and one zloty 24 Polish groszy, on which he paid a tenth. Andrew Frazer, a Cracow merchant, estimated his property at 8700 Polish zloty and he paid six hundred thaler. Another Cracow merchant, George Krucksang, estimated the value of his property at two thousand imperial thaler, on which he paid two hundred.[22]

Robert Portius, of noble descent, who settled in Krosno in 1623, made his reputation as the chief importer of Hungarian wines to Poland. Three successive kings gave him privileges. First he was a Protestant, then he converted to Catholicism and contributed to the parish church. After the fire in 1638 he had two chapels built as extensions to the church, and the roof covered with copper sheet. He funded the commission of three church bells, fonts, paintings, and vestments.

When he died in 1661 he left three heirs: Francis Gordon, John Davidson and Andrew Portius.[23] His last will divided the property between charity and his heirs. It provided money for the repair of the city wall, rebuilding of the bridge outside the Krakowska gate, and paving repairs. The parish church received an endowment for an organist, with a proviso that on Wednesdays after vespers he would sing a litany with the children, and for a bell-ringer, with a proviso that he would clean paintings in the altars with the beggars. He also made large bequests to the bishops of Cracow and Przemyśl., and he bequeathed a large sum of money to King John Casimir as a token of respect and loyalty. The parish church houses his portrait with the inscription: G(e)n(er)osus de Lanxet Portius Scotus.[24]

The affluence of the Scots in Warsaw and in Gdańsk was revealed in their financial support of Mairschal College, Aberdeen. 'When the buildings of Mairschal College, Aberdeen, became dilapidated and the Rector and the Professors appealed to the Scots abroad for help, large numbers of the Polish brotherhoods answered the summons, twenty-one from Warsaw alone. The

Danzing merchant John Turner subscribed Ł 600. Another merchant who made his fortune in Danzing, Robert Gordon, bequeathed it for the foundation of the famous Aberdeen School called Gordon's Hospital (afterwards Gordon's College)'.[25]

An account by the traveller Munday, who visited Toruń in 1640, reads: 'Here were many rich and well-furnished shops of Scots, there being hundreds. I may say a thousand families of this nation are inhabitants of this land, no city or town of note without some, generally dealing with merchandise for more or less'.[26]

Rich merchants also lived in Lublin. They included John Auenlekt, who, after having become a city burgher, held different offices in the city authorities: he was mayor in 1659, an alderman in 1660, a councillor in 1661, and from 1664 until his death in 1666 the mayor again. It was he who paid the tax in 1658 that was levied on the Lublin Scots, amounting to five thousand Polish zloty, and when he could not receive this sum back, the King granted him a licence allowing sequestration of the property of debtors.[27] He also had his farms in the areas under municipal jurisdiction.[28] Tomasz Argiel, the city secretary and records-keeper in 1676–1695, had a huge property, which is evidenced by the inventory of his estates after his death: a grange farm, a winery, a brewery, farm buildings, and gardens. The possessions also included all manner of utility articles made of gold, silver or fabrics, household equipment and luxury articles. The value of some of them was quoted: the most expensive article was worth four hundred florins, the cheapest, ten.[29] Similarly, Jacob Wenthon, who held the offices of Lublin's councillor and mayor in the late seventeenth century, left a large inventory, albeit not so rich as his predecessor: it contained only clothes and utility articles, including calendars, and religious pictures of the Madonna and St Francis.[30]

Not all Scottish merchants were held in high esteem in Poland, as is demonstrated in a poem by a Polish writer, Jakub Teodor Trembecki, of the latter half of the seventeenth century. The poem was titled: *Na tabakę wiersz od Polaka Polakowi ofiarowany* (On tobacco – a Pole's poem donated to a Pole), in which the author branded Scottish merchants with infamy for selling tobacco in Poland and wished to punish them in a sophisticated way in this life, assigning them to hell after their death.

While discussing the presence of the British in Poland in the seventeenth century we cannot fail to mention their service in the army. They started to be enlisted on a larger scale in the days of King Bathory. When the city of Gdańsk renounced its allegiance to the King in 1588, it recruited for the war against him ca. 600–700 Scottish soldiers commanded by Colonel William Stewart. After settling the dispute, the King offered to hire those Scots in his own service. Colonel Stewart refused, but some of them accepted the offer. Soon there was a separate unit of Scottish infantry in the Polish army. In 1581 the company, commanded by Maciej Dębiński, took part in the fighting, and won distinction while capturing the fortress of Kokenhauz.[31] During the war

of Livonia there were a total of 250 Scots in Bathory's army. The King assigned them to run the commissariat, which responsibility they discharged very well: for these merits eight of them were granted a privilege to conduct free trade. At the same time the King assigned to the Scots the defence of the coast as corsairs. This responsibility was vested in two Scottish commanders: Martin Holland and Ridiger Azbi.[32]

In 1590 the Privy Council allowed four officers to enlist in the Polish army. In the war of Livonia of 1600–1602 Jan Zamoyski had two infantry regiments, each 300 men strong, commanded by captains Alexander Ruthven and Abraham Young. They were used in the assault against Wolmar. With the war dragging on, the envoy Stanisław Cikowski arrived in London in late 1603 to seek permission to recruit 800 infantry, and hire twenty ships should the need arise. He was granted such permission, although he did not fully use it.[33]

The years that followed saw more units commanded by Scottish officers. Hetman Jan Karol Chodkiewicz, while laying siege to Parnava, used fourteen Scottish sappers, who planted explosives at the gate. After the capture of Parnava, a detachment previously serving in the Swedish army, 155 men strong, commanded by Captain Clarke, passed over to Chodkiewicz's side. Also, Chodkiewicz thought highly of Captain Buck, whao had been under his command since 1609. The Hetman even sent the captain to London on a mission to thwart the recruiting activities for the Swedish army. On 17 November 1608 Chodkiewicz also issued a letter of commendation to three London captains: King of Radclife, M. William Bodwell and Alexander Child of Redriff, who were burning the ships of Charles of Sudermania. This certificate was printed in the introduction to a pamphlet *The Warres of Swethland* published in 1609 by Antony Nixon. An entry in the Sejm accounts register of 1609 similarly praises Werner Naucler, listed as an Englishman, although his name does not show it. An English agent, Bruce, reported in1609 that about 200 Scots, commanded by five Scottish captains, had a dispute with the Brandenburg margrave, while they were crossing Prussia.[34]

In the Polish-Muscovy wars of 1609–19 the Scots and the English took part, although there were more of them on the Muscovy side. To support Muscovy, the tsar's ally, King Charles of Sudermania, recruited 1200 soldiers in England through his agent Spens. There are three accounts on the subject: A. Nixon, *Swethland and Poland Warres. A Souldiers returne out of Sweden . . . with the fortunes and successe of those 1200 men that lately went thither* (London, 1616); Henry Brenton, *Newes of Present Miseries of Rushia* (1614); while the third is an anonymous account by a member of Captain Crale's unit which was included by Samuel Purchas in his continuation of Hakluyt (*Purchas his Pilgrims*, 1613–14).[35] Earlier, at least fifty British soldiers passed over from the Muscovy army to the Polish side because they did not receive their pay, which was recorded by Hetman Stanisław Żółkiewski, and also by English diarists.[36]

After the battle of Kłuszyn (1610), when the English on the Muscovy side were defeated, Żółkiewski started to negotiate, assuring them of free passage

home or offering to enlist them in his army. Brenton notes that 'They all yielded and went to the Enemy, except one captain of York, who returned to England with officers and barely a hundred soldiers'. Among them was the anonymous informant of Purchas's account.[37]

There were also other Scots and Englishmen in other Polish military units. In the retinue of Weiher, who arrived at Puck in 1611 to recruit more soldiers, there was an English sergeant Goodiar, a Catholic. In 1611 Lisowski in a letter to Robert Cecil recommended two captains returning to England: John Sanford and Thomas Lichfield, about whom he wrote that he dissuaded them from Charles of Sudermania's camp and encouraged them to serve in the Polish army, and whom he highly regarded *cum propter vitam eorum inter nos honeste actum, tum propter incredibilem promptitudinem bellandi.*[38]

In the service of Janusz Radziwiłł there was until 1612 a Scottish nobleman, Alexander Gordon. In the army of Hetman Żółkiewski there was, among others, Captain David Gilbert, who served with Boris Godunov and in the Guards of both Russian usurpers. During the Moscow expedition he was taken prisoner and spent three years in captivity. George Learmonth, an ancestor of the Russian romantic poet Lermontov, joined the Muscovy service after his Polish contract expired in 1613. Another member of this family, Peter Learmonth also served in Poland. Alexander Leslie, after a short service in the Polish army, was taken prisoner by the Russians and after being freed in 1619 he joined the Swedish service. The Scot Andrew, a captain in the Polish army, was granted the office of *advocatus* (chief subdistrict officer) in the Lanckorona district. There were many more such cases.[39]

The practice of recruiting the British to the Polish army sometimes produced international repercussions. The English resident agent in the Netherlands in 1611 learned that the Irish, on the advice of Spain, sent to Poland an officer named Conor-Ogorelle, who was to command the English units there and maintain them on alert, waiting for an opportunity to use them in Ireland.[40]

Sometimes the British government used those serving in the Polish army for shady operations. This is evidenced by a 1612 mission to Moscow of Sir Arthur Aston, formerly serving in Poland, who reported with 20 officers to help Muscovy against Poland. They knew there that he was accompanied by an aide-de-camp, who had served in Poland before. The Muscovy commanders regarded the two as suspect and would not let them land, but eventually had to agree because of external pressure.[41] However, as early as 1613 tsar Mikhail sent Aston with several other officers back to England at short notice. This allowed them to escape being arrested. Soon afterwards, Aston enlisted in the Polish service, and his aide-de-camp Margaret was admitted to the Radziwiłł service. It is highly surprising that as early as 1615 Aston reported to the tsar with high recommendations, offering his services. His trump card was that he had information about many Englishmen and Scots serving in the Swedish army, who would eagerly enlist in the service of Muscovy. The Russians accepted the offer. Yet two years later King James I asked the tsar to

discharge Aston, who was sent to England with sumptuous gifts. Some suspected that his mission in Moscow was collecting intelligence for Poland. This suspicion seemed justified when Aston enlisted in the Polish service again, stating this time that he was going to fight against Turkey rather than Muscovy.[42]

Poland sought to enlist British soldiers on a larger scale during the wars with Turkey. In 1619 the Commonwealth asked for the recruitment of ten thousand men, but King James sent only a small number commanded by an Irishman James Butler, who had already served in Poland. The London mission of a Scottish officer serving in the Polish army was to no avail.[43]

The defeat at Cecora in 1620 prompted a mission to England by Jerzy Ossoliński. The King of England agreed to allow the recruitment of five thousand volunteers and ensured financial support worth £10,000.[44] The implementation of this promise encountered obstacles, because the Danish king did not permit 2,210 volunteers to pass through the Danish Straits, which is why they were late for the war with Turkey.[45] These units were used in the war against Sweden in Livonia.[46] During the battle of Chocim, however, the Scots accompanying Ladislaus, the King's son, made themselves famous for their bravery: these were Peter Learmonth and his subordinate, captain William Keitz (Keith?), and John Butler who commanded a unit of foreign infantry.[47] In 1622 the Muscovy ambassador to London endeavoured to paralyse the recruitment of soldiers to serve in Poland.[48]

The continuing recruitment of soldiers for Poland, promised by James I, provoked international repercussions. When in 1622 Captain John Forbes carried out recruitment, this met with objections from the French ambassador to London. He accused Forbes of preparing an expedition against La Rochelle. Although the matter was cleared up, recruitment stopped. The King of Sweden, Gustavus Adolphus, also protested against it.[49]

The service of James Murray (Morus, Moravius, Morrey) is also connected with the presence of Scottish soldiers in the Polish army. He was employed in building ships for King Sigismund III. In 1623 he discussed with the King in Gdańsk the project of building a ten-ship strong fleet. From 1627, as commander of ships, he took part in naval battles. Promoted to rear admiral, he commanded the fleet in the famous battle culminating in the victory of Oliva.[50] Englishmen also made a military contribution, through their involvement in the building of a military fort in Żmudź by the river Święta near Pałęga. A trading port was to be built to compete with Riga, which had fallen into Swedish hands. To honour the royal couple it was to be called Jan Marinburg. The English received King John III Sobieski's consent to build the port in 1685, and in 1690 the Sejm granted additional permission and exempted the merchants living there from taxes and customs duties for forty years. The fort and the port had barely been started when they were destroyed by the Swedes during military operations.[51]

In the seventeenth century Poland provided shelter both to persecuted Catholics and Protestants. Contacts with Catholics go back as early as the

latter half of the sixteenth century when Stanisław Hosius was a friend of the future cardinal and Archbishop of Canterbury, Reginald Pole, while he was in Padua. He later maintained contacts with refugee priests, including Thomas Golwell, Nicholas Sanders, Thomas Stapleton, Wiliam Allen, Alan Cope and Owen Lewis, and with laymen such as Richard Norton, Sir Francis Egenfield, Sir Thomas Copley and Richard Shelley.[52] Sanders, a Jesuit and historian, included in his introduction to *De visibili monarchia Ecclesiae* a thankful letter to Hosius, where he called him *cardinalis meus*.[53]

When Hosius founded a college in Brunsberg, three British Jesuits travelled to it from Rome on foot, with the Scot Robert Abercrombie among them. He spent twenty-three years in Brunsberg, ten as a priest and thirteen as master of novices. When the novitiate was moved to Cracow he was then subordinate to Piotr Skarga. The latter did not have a high opinion of him as a teacher, but their relations were correct. In 1588 Abercrombie was assigned to missionary work and devoted nineteen years to it. He was credited with the conversion of Anne of Denmark, the wife of James VI of Scotland, later James I of England. When the English Parliament passed the law authorizing the confiscation of property and the death penalty for those giving shelter to Catholic priests from abroad, he returned to Brunsberg and died there in 1613 at the age of 80.[54] During the 63 years of teaching in the Brunsberg College, thirty-three Scots were named. Some of them returned to their homeland, one became a soldier, some ran away, and some were ordained.[55]

Another British subject, an Englishman from Lancashire, Jesuit, philosopher and theologian, Richard Singleton was a well-known teacher in the Brunsberg college and then at the Academy of Vilna. When he studied on the Continent, he attended the lectures of the famous theologian and philosopher Vázquez. In 1591 he arrived in Poland, where under the supervision of Marcin Śmiglecki he was preparing to lecture in philosophy. At the end of 1591 he received his degree of Master of Philosophy from the Academy of Vilna. In the Brunsberg college he became the first professor of philosophy, conducting classes in 1592–95. He followed Aristotelian philosophy as interpreted by Thomas Aquinas and Vásquez, Zabarella, and Fonseca. He then lectured on dogmatic theology in the Jesuit colleges of Pułtusk and Poznań. From Poznań he was sent to Vilna in 1600. During his journey he took part in a theological debate held in Toruń, with Lutheran holders of the Master of Philosophy from Germany. In the autumn of that year his received his degree of Doctor of Divinity from the Academy of Vilna. In 1602 he asked the Jesuit general's consent to go to England to do missionary work; but he died before he left for England.[56]

There were also other British professors in Vilna. Even before the Academy was founded, one master of rhetoric in the Jesuit college was the Scot John Hay.[57] Two English Jesuits, Arthur Laurence Faunt and James Bosgrave lectured at the Academy. Faunt, from Leicestershire, arrived in Poland after his studies in Rome to teach theology and Greek at the newly established

college in Poznań. He made his name as a polemicist taking part in many debates with the Protestants. At the provincial synod in Gniezno in 1589 he delivered the introductory speech. His particular goal was to convert Protestant magnates, among whom he commanded great respect as a victim of persecution. He died in Vilna at the age of 37. He left thirteen writings, which Estreicher lists in his bibliography.[58]

James Bosgrave (1547–1623), of Godmanstone, Dorset, met the Polish Jesuits Stanisław Kostka and Stanisław Warszewicki while he was studying in Rome. After he arrived in Poland, he worked as a teacher in Cracow, Poznań and Brunsberg. He was then appointed professor of mathematics in Vilna, being the first professor and founder of the Chair of Mathematics at the Academy. In 1580 on the order of the Jesuit general he went to England. Denounced as a papist by the English envoy, he was arrested after disembarkation, imprisoned at Marshalsea prison and then in the Tower. Sentenced to death, he was released thanks to King Bathory's intercession and he arrived in Poland, where he died in 1621 in the aura of sanctity.[59] Bosgrave's fellow prison-mate in London, James Hart, whom the historian Camden respected for his learning, became a Jesuit and settled in Poland after many travels, to die in the town of Jarosław.[60]

In the last quarter of the sixteenth century in northern Poland there were many English Catholics, especially in Elbląg and Riga. We learn about this from a 1583 letter to the Pope by the papal nuncio, Antonio Possevin, who suggested that they be employed in schools in Lithuania and even Livonia.[61] These were areas of vigorous Counter-Reformation activity. Among the students at the papal seminary in Brunsberg, which trained priests for missionary work, in the seventeenth century there were fourteen British subjects, of whom twelve were Scottish, one of Anglo-Prussian descent, and one Irish. Of this group, the Irishman and three Scots returned to their homelands,[62] one Scot died as a Jesuit of the Belgian province in Douai in 1639, one was a military camp missionary in Butler's unit in 1628–29, two went on to study in Rome, one planned to leave the country, two were professors at colleges, and one wrote poems that praised Poland.[63]

Among the priests training for missionary work in the Vilna papal seminary in the years 1584–1610, there were twelve British subjects out of its 208 alumni: nine Scots and three Englishmen. Six of them attended the college at the close of the sixteenth century and the other six in the early seventeenth century.[64]

Also at the Zamość Academy there was a Scottish Catholic, William Bruce, who first lectured in Roman law in Toulouse and Cahors after his studies at the Catholic universities in France. From 1596 he lectured in Roman law at the Zamość Academy. In 1600 he was sent by Hetman Zamoyski on a secret political mission to Queen Elizabeth I. Also in 1600 he took part in the Hetman's expedition to Livonia, commanding a unit of troops against the Swedes. In 1602 he went to serve King James I, on Hetman Zamoyski's recommendation.

From 1606 he was the official English agent, resident in Gdańsk, where he stayed until 1610, sending reports that show his good knowledge of Polish relations. When in 1612 the Scots were being expelled from Ducal Prussia, some of them managed to stay owing to Bruce's intercession at the Elector Duke's court.[65] Ambroży Wadowski names another professor of law at Zamość, the Scot Peter Brusius, who was appointed in 1601 and died in 1616.[66] Scottish students also attended the Academy. In the Academy's student register between 1622–92 two names of English students and as many as thirty-five names of Scottish students were recorded.[67] They were all plebeians. Twenty-three came from Ruthenia, six from Little Poland (Małopolska), three from Royal Prussia (Gdańsk) and three are difficult to identify. Probably as many as eighteen of them lived in Zamość, and four in Cracow.[68]

English Protestants kept close connections with their communities in other towns. Most of them lived in Cracow, Lublin, Poznań, and Vilna. In Poznań the greatest credit for the development of religious life goes to the Malcolm family. Like other Scots, they held the position of pastors for three generations.[69] In Poznań, William Aberombie exercised the function of pastor.[70] In 1625–1630 John Dury stayed in Elbląg; his aim was to unify all Protestant Churches, and for that purpose he sent Samuel Hartlib to England.[71]

Starting from the late sixteenth century, various British intellectuals arrived and stayed in Poland. For example, Dr John Dee (Devus). In 1584 he left a tangible trace of his stay at the royal court in Cracow in the form of his own hand-written post-script to a copy of Boethius's *De consolatione philosophiae*.[72] Recommended in Cracow to King Bathory, he held a seance at the Niepołomice castle in 1585. He was rewarded by the King, then returned to England to continue his practice.[73]

Another British astrologer staying in Poland, who surpassed Devus's skills, was Alexander Seton, called Count Scotsman. The Polish astrologer Michał Sędziwój, who was taking his first steps in the craft, learned about his imprisonment at the court of the Saxon Elector, from where he abducted him and brought in to Poland in 1603. Seton, exhausted by disease, soon died and Sędziwój did not discover his mysteries; he only acquired Seton's manuscripts, by marrying his widow.[74]

Thomas Seghetus was the most erudite of all the British intellectuals. Before arriving in Poland he travelled widely about Europe, probably as a religious émigré. His contacts with contemporary luminaries are described in the *Liber amicorum* kept in the Vatican Library, entitled: *Thomae Segeti Scoti collectio plurium erga ipsium amicitiae monumentorum a viris illustribus scripta*.[75] In Leiden or in Louvain in 1597 Justus Lipsius[76] made an entry, as well as others like Ericus Puteanus, Antonio Riccoboni, Paolo Sarpi, Antonio Possevin, Galileo, and numerous scholars, Dominicans, Benedictines, and Jesuits. As well as Galileo he met Kepler, and the cosmographer Abraham Ortelius. His contacts with Poland form an interesting part of his rich life. While travelling around Europe he printed in Hanau in 1608 two odes by the

famous Polish poet Szymon Szymonowicz. Although this was doubted by Estreicher in his bibliography, it is proved by a unique copy of the first edition of the odes, preserved in the city library in Bremen. From the inscription in the book we learn that Seghetus obtained the text of Szymonowicz's poetry in Italy, from the British diplomat Sir Henry Wotton, the latter having received it from the Venetian humanist Paolo Sarpi.[77]

While Seghetus was in Cracow, he published the *Idylla duo*, a collection of ten epigrams, at the Piotrkowczyk printing establishment. In late July 1611 he stayed in Vilna. When he met King Sigismund III Vasa returning home after the capture of Smolensk, he wrote a collection of ten epigrams *In felicem Sigismundi III e Moschovia reditum*. In Vilna he saw the publication of the collection of poems by the then rector of the Calvin School, Christian Theodor Schosser: *Sirenum Agalope*, which contained an affectionate poem to Seghetus.[78] Through Schosser he joined the circle of Vilna intellectuals, mostly non-Catholics. From there he went to the Muscovy state, where he may have stayed until 1612. In the same year we see him in Zamość and Lublin, where he met Szymonowicz. He stayed at Raków for a week, from 13–19 July, about which he wrote in a letter to Ruar, describing the atmosphere at the Raków Academy and the knowledge of languages among his interlocutors.[79] H. Barycz asserts that we can unquestionably regard Seghetus as a link in the penetration into and impact of the Polish (Arian) Brothers in England, which started with a visit of an English merchant Ralph Rutter to the extremist leader of the Unitarians, Szymon Budny at Łosk in Lithuania in 1574.[80]

The Polish bibliography also includes a humanist and Latin poet of Scottish descent, Andrew Laechius, called Loechowic, or Andrzej Lechowicz, in the early seventeenth century. He was a friend of the famous Polish poet, Kasper Miaskowski, and the latter praised him in his poems. Laechius wrote numerous poems in Latin. After returning to Scotland he published a poem in Lübeck, commemorating the death of Janusz Radziwiłł. The Estreicher bibliography lists as many as fifty items written by Laechius.[81] Agnieszka Borysowska has added new literary pieces, and estimates his work at 68 poems.[82] Laechius studied in Braniewo (Brunsberg) and Vilna. He later stayed in Cracow, and then in Vilna again.[83] He published his works in Vilna, London, Gdańsk, Toruń, and Cracow. While travelling to England, he published his work *Iovis arbitrium sive ius haereditarium Jacobo G.D. Primo huius nominis Angliae, Sexto scotorum Regi in Angliam, Franciam et Hiberniam, Divinitus Collatum ad Andrea Loeaechio Scoto* (London, 1602), and followed it with *Anagrammata in Jacobi . . . primi Angliae, Franciae et Hiberniae, sexti Scotorum nomen* . . . He usually wrote occasional pieces in the form of anagrams.[84] He was not a poet or eulogist in the service of one particular nobleman. He dedicated his poems to all and sundry: castellans, voievodes (provincial governors), abbots, courtiers, bishops, and the reigning king. Laechius's most intimate circle was the group assembled around Cardinal Bernard Maciejowski, certainly after he moved to Vilna in 1611.

Although he was a Catholic and moved in the Catholic milieu, he made close contacts with the Evangelical community of English and Scots who gathered around Christian Theodor Schosser, a poet, doctor of medicine, and the rector of Vilna schools. Laechius's poems written in Vilna show that he was in the sphere of patronage of great Lithuanian noble families: the Radziwiłł, Sapieha, and the Chodkiewicz . He later went to Scotland in 1617.[85]

Distinguished British subjects who stayed in Poland should also include King John III Sobieski's Irish doctor Bernard O'Connor (1666–98), the future member of the Royal Society and a lecturer at Cambridge and Oxford Universities.[86] As well as being the King's physician, he was a physicist, natural scientist, and historian. He was born in Kerry in Ireland. He studied medicine in Montpellier and Paris, and in 1691 received his doctoral degree in Reims. In 1692 in Paris he published a dissertation which included the first description of vertebral ankylosis. In Paris he met some Poles, whom he accompanied while they were travelling round Italy. There he was particularly interested in the eruptions of Vesuvius, and published his remarks on them in Cologne (1694) and in Oxford (1695). As a physician he found poor working conditions in France, and as a Catholic he saw no possibility of practising in England. After a short stay at the Imperial Court in Vienna, he went to Cracow with the Wielopolski and then to Warsaw. Through the recommendation of the Venetian envoy Hieronymo Alberto de Conti, a relative of Lord Robert Yarmouth's family, he was presented in 1694 to King John III Sobieski, who appointed him court physician. Because he did not find companions in Poland with whom he could discuss his interests, he turned to history and the study of the contemporary condition of Poland. At the end of 1694 he left Warsaw, from where he went to Brussels, and then to London via the Netherlands. In Poland he was not very well liked by conservative physicians because he advocated the importance of anatomy. From Holland he went to England to be converted to Anglicanism. In 1695 he became a fellow of the Royal Society. He lectured at Oxford and Cambridge and wrote important papers in medicine. For the Poles his most important work was his study of Polish history, geography, law and politics published as the two-volume *History of Poland in several letters to persons of quality* (London, 1698).[87]

While discussing the British living in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Poland, one cannot omit to name some travellers and actors. One of them was Fynes Morrison, who travelled around Europe and Asia in the early seventeenth century. He visited Germany, Bohemia, the Netherlands, Denmark, Poland, and Switzerland. He also visited Constantinople and Cyprus, and he even reached the Holy Land. He described the countries in their historical, social, geographical, systemic, religious, commercial, military, and linguistic aspects and in terms of mores. A part of his work entitled *An Itinerary containing his ten years of travel through the twelve dominations* was published in his lifetime in 1617, the remaining part as late as in 1903.[88] In his account

of travel to Poland we find descriptions relating to natural resources, infrastructure, and town building, and especially the description of the Wawel Castle in Cracow. He also discusses the legal and systemic regulations, styles of living, and the bravery of the Poles and the Polish armies. He was annoyed by the inequality of penalties for killing a man. He also made a superficial description of the condition of science in Poland.[89]

W. Borowy mentions two other men:

> In the reign of Charles II there were two such travellers who left written records. They went to Poland together, one as ambassador and the other as his chaplain. Their names were: Laurence Hyde and Dr Robert South. Laurence Hyde, afterwards earl of Rochester (1641–1711), was with the Poles for a few months only, and not being very sociable, could not penetrate very deeply into the life of the country. – It was in Poland during the reign of John Sobieski. Hyde was instructed to be proxy for Charles II at the christening of one of Sobieski's children, and to make representations on behalf of the Polish Protestants whose liberties were determined by the treaty of Oliva (1660) guaranteed by England . . . He arrived in Poland, and after some weeks he proceeded to Lvov, where he waited until an operation (war with the Turks) developing in the vicinity should come to an end.[90]

Hyde was interested in religious life (he even went to a synagogue) and in church building. What impressed him most were the Polish hussars.

The materials collected by Hyde were compiled by his chaplain Dr South (1634–1716). Educated at Oxford, he travelled on the Continent. As a young man he was granted a prebend at Westminster. Borowy gives the following account of his travels:

> Dr South was one of the learned witty and whimsical clergymen, so well represented in English literature. He visited other places than Hyde, comparing and generalizing his observations, about which he wrote to his Oxford friend, Pococke. The letters were published after his death. He described: Warsaw, Cracow, Danzing, Poznań, Gniezno, Lvov, Vilna and several smaller towns. He tried to penetrate as deep as possible . Speaking about Toruń and Marienburg he gives an outline of the history of the Teutonic Order. Describing Gniezno he quotes Polish historical legends; giving an account of his visit to Łowicz, he expands in praises over the bishop's library there, which contained (these are his words) 'valuable books in all languages, which might have excited the curiosity of one that had not seen that magazine of Knowledge, the Bodleian Library'. About architecture: 'The country round the castle of Cracow affords one of the most delightful prospects in Europe'.

Dr South was the first English traveller to analyse the details of Polish culture. 'He saw that the learning in the Jagiellonian University was but superficial, and that the Poles greatly exaggerated its value. He compared the scholarly accomplishments of the professors of Lvov with those of the meanest Welsh clergy, though he acknowledged that the city itself gave great encouragement to the learned man'. He saw the University of Vilna as a hotbed of ignorance. He praises the teaching of Latin, and he writes about the eminent Polish

historians Kromer and Starowolski, and also about Copernicus making Poland famous. Of the men of letters he singles out Maciej Kazimier Sarbiewski, calling him 'no small ornament to his country'.[91]

Of King John III Sobieski he wrote: 'This king is a very well spoken prince, very easy of access and extreme civil, having most of the qualities requisite to form a complete gentleman. The craft of war, French education, good knowledge of politics and religion, languages: Slavonic, Latin, French, Italian, German, and Turkish. He is interested in natural history and all three parts of physics. He is wont to reprimand clergy for not admitting the modern philosophy, such as Le Grand's and Cartesius' into universities and schools and loves to hear people discourse of those matters.' Hyde also wrote about Poland's political system. His account is favourable, whereas William Lithgow's work of sixty years earlier, *The Totall Discource of the Rare Adventure and paineful Peregrinations of long ninteene Yers Travayles, from Scotland, to the most famous Kingdomes in Europe, Asia and Affrica* (London, 1623) was a good deal more critical.[92]

Mention should also be made of itinerant English actors who stayed in Poland in the seventeenth century. Through the English plays that they performed in German, the Poles learned about the English theatre. The first such troupe, headed by John Green, visited the royal court in mid-1616.[93] Their repertory included Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*, *The Jew of Malta*, which was presumably Marlowe's play, or possibly Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*, *Fortunatus* (a performance probably based on Thomas Dekker's play), and five popular anonymous plays. The plot of one of them was related to Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*. Already in 1626 this troupe had a permanent repertory of Shakespeare's plays in German translation: *The Merchant of Venice, Romeo and Juliet, Julius Caesar, Hamlet*, and *King Lear*.[94]

There was another troupe, led by Aaron Asken, which played at the court of Sigismund III Vasa, as evidenced by the correspondence of their manager, who wrote that he served King Sigismund III for many years with his actors. The court of Ladislaus IV was visited by English actors in 1636, 1639, and 1641.[95] The English traveller Peter Munday wrote in his work *The Travels . . . in Europe and Asia* (ed. R. Temple (London: Hakluyt Society, 1925), VI, 181): 'In some years our comedians or actors come to Gdansk and present *theatrum* in German, as they did in Konigsberg before the Duke the Brandenburg Elector, and in Warsaw before the King of Poland'.[96] The last mention of English actors is of George Bentley's troupe, who were to perform a spectacle in Cracow in 1669 during the coronation ceremony of Michael Korybut Wisniowiecki.[97]

As the foregoing brief outline shows, the British played a significant role in seventeenth-century Poland. Their numbers varied. John Lithgow estimated them at thirty thousand families around 1632. During his stay in London in 1621, Jerzy Ossoliński said that they were thirty thousand strong in Poland, while Andrew Rey, the future British ambassador, estimated them at ca. forty

thousand.[98] With time they tended to be Polonized, but even today the Polonized surnames of some Poles show their British origin.

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Notes

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37 *Ibid.*, p. 298.
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