

Ewa Milicer, Ewa Żakowska

THE ILLUSTRATIONS FROM WILANÓW COLLECTION IN THE NATIONAL MUSEUM IN WARSAW

Part of Wilanów collection (The, so called, Archive) was handed over to the National Museum in the year 1950. The Section of Polish Graphic Art is in possession of 561 illustrations and wood engravings, 62 photographs, albums with photographs and reproductions, 6 engraver's plates and genealogical cards.

The objects that make some sort of iconographic entirety are Frederic Christopher Dietrich's six, above mentioned, engraver's plates, five groups of new prints of those plates and Aleksander Gryglewski's photographic albums. Other illustrations are the fragments of various cycles and loose graphic art pieces and photographs. Photographic albums contain the photos of Aleksander Gryglewski's pictures taken by Walery Rzewuski and offered to Aleksandra Potocka in the year 1875.

One of the most interesting objects is Joseph de Longueil's wood engraving made on the basis of Charles Eisen's drawing, which was the illustration to "Sielanki polskie" ("Polish Bucolics") published in Warsaw in the year 1778.

There is also an interesting group of thirteen hand-painted wood engravings showing French, English, German and Austrian palaces and gardens. The engravings come from the workshops of Paris engravers and editors such as Jacques Gabriel Huquiersyn, Jacques Chereau and from the firms Babtiste and Basset. Artistic value of those engravings is not big what is interesting is their use during the projection from the magic lantern, which was so popular in 18th century.

Wilanów collection includes one of the early Warsaw engravings entitled "Vue de Gladiateur d'Alexandrie Jardin de la C^{tesse} Branicka en Ukraine" made at L. Letronne's on the basis of the drawing by an aristocrat-amateur countess Biedrzyńska. The identity of the female engraver rises some doubts.

The biggest group consists of the engravings made in Maxymilian Fajans's workshop. They are portraits from the series "Polish portraits" (20 illustrations and five title pages) showing the famous Poles (they were published from the year 1851 in Paris till 1853 in Warsaw).

There was a famous publication "Gallery of the Polish kings..." from the pictures by M. Bacciarelli and drawings by J. F. Piwarski. It was published in the year 1858 at M. Fajans's workshop. Three portraits and seven historical scenes belonging to that publication can be found in Wilanów collection.

An interesting group of occasional engravings consists of diplomas for agricultural and gardening achievements of Wilanów owners (e.g. the diplom for Aleksandra Potocka from the year 1885) as well as commemorative certificate issued for Potocki's guests and presenting their hunting trophies. Large number of diplomas awarded at agricultural and industrial exhibitions comes from various engravers' workshops of Warsaw, e.g. Głowczewski, Herkner, Sławoszewski and Fleck. These examples of applied graphic art being a margin of the production of those workshops strike with their high workmanship level.

The group of Frederic Christopher Dietrich's six engraver's plates (together with prints) which I mentioned earlier, made from J. F. Piwarski's drawings shows the events of November Night of 1830. It is an important historical document, especially because of the fact, that the preservation of those plates in Potocki's collection is still surrounded by mystery which could be probably solved if one traced the friendship between the illustrator Jan Feliks Piwarski and Potocki family.