

On 27 February 2024, Narodowy Bank Polski is putting into circulation a silver coin of the series "The Enduring Soldiers Accused by the Communists" – "Zygmunt Szendzielarz 'Łupaszka'", with a face value of 10 złoty.

Zygmunt Szendzielarz "Łupaszka"

The reverse of the coin carries the images of Zygmunt Szendzielarz "Łupaszka", the War Order of Virtuti Militari, a white-and-red flag with the symbol of Fighting Poland, the inscription: "Zachowali się jak trzeba" ("They acted as they should") and 1910–1951 (Łupaszka's dates of birth and death).



Zygmunt Szendzielarz was born in Stryj in 1910. His family moved afterwards to Vilnius. He studied in the Infantry Cadet School in Ostrów Mazowiecka, and then in Cavalry Cadet School in Grudziądz. Having graduated from there, he was assigned to the 4th Niemen Uhlan Regiment.

In September 1939, his regiment formed part of the Northern Grouping of the Reserve Army "Prusy", and then of general Anders' Operational Group. Lt. Zygmunt Szendzielarz commanded the 2nd squadron. Following the defeat and a failed attempt to get through to the forming Polish army in the West, he stayed in Vilnius, where he organized the local underground under the auspices of the Union for Armed Struggle (Związek Walki Zbrojnej).

In 1943, under the nickname "Łupaszka", Szendzielarz became commander of a Polish guerilla unit in the Vilnius District, which morphed into the Home Army 5th Vilnius Brigade, the most numerous and the strongest in the region. In 1943–1944, the brigade fought in several dozen battles and skirmishes with German troops, with Lithuanian formations collaborating with the Third Reich and with the Soviet partisans terrorizing the Polish populace. In January 1944, the commander

of the Vilnius District, Colonel Aleksander Krzyżanowski, nickname "Wolf", awarded "Łupaszka" with the Cross of Valour.

Szendzielarz did not trust the Soviets and did not participate in the Vilnius uprising (Operation Gate of Dawn). Thanks to this decision, he evaded disarmament and internment, which befell most soldiers and officers of the Vilnius branch of the Home Army. He remained in the underground, rebuilt the Home Army 5th Vilnius Brigade, and then he established the Home Army 6th Vilnius Brigade. He moved the fight with the Red Army and the NKVD as well as with their Polish collaborators from the communist secret police, state police and military counterinsurgency corps to Podlachia, the Białystok region, Warmia, Masuria and Pomerania. The Soviets put a bounty on him.

"Łupaszka" also conducted propaganda work. A fragment of probably his most famous leaflet, dated March 1946, reads: "We are not a band, as traitors and the impious sons of our homeland call us. We come from Polish cities and villages. We want Poland to be ruled by Poles committed to its cause and elected by the entire Nation [...]".

Finally, Szendzielarz abandoned the armed struggle and tried to return to civilian life. In June 1948, the secret police

figured out and broke the structures of the Home Army Vilnius District. "Łupaszka" was arrested on 30 June in Osielec near Zakopane.

In the subsequent show trial organized by communists, he was sentenced to death penalty on eighteen counts. On 8 February 1951, he was murdered in the secret police torture chamber at Rakowiecka Street in Warsaw. After 1989, courts exonerated him from all charges. In 2007, the President of the Republic of Poland, Lech Kaczyński awarded "Łupaszka" post mortem with the Grand Cross of the Order of Polonia Restituta for outstanding service to the independence of the Republic of Poland. Zygmunt Szendzielarz's remains were found by the experts of the Institute of National Remembrance on a site of clandestine burials performed by the communist secret police – the so-called Łączka (Meadow) in the Powązki Military Cemetery in Warsaw. In August 2013, the Institute of National Remembrance confirmed his identity.

Tadeusz Płużański

10 zł



Metal: Ag 925/1000
Finish: proof, pad printing
Diameter: 32.00 mm
Weight: 14.14 g
Edge (side): plain
Mintage: up to 10,000 pcs
Designer: Dobrochna Surajewska
Issuer: Narodowy Bank Polski

The coins, commissioned by Narodowy Bank Polski, were struck by Mennica Polska SA.

The obverse of the silver coin features prison bars torn apart.



All Polish collector coins feature: face value, inscription: Rzeczpospolita Polska, year of issue, image of the Eagle established as the state emblem of the Republic of Poland.

Narodowy Bank Polski holds the exclusive right to issue the currency of the Republic of Poland, including collector coins and banknotes.

All coins and banknotes issued by NBP are legal tender in Poland.

Issuing collector items is an occasion to commemorate important historic figures and anniversaries as well as to develop the interest of the public in Polish culture, science, and tradition.

On 7 March 2024, Narodowy Bank Polski will be putting into circulation a silver coin “25th Anniversary of Poland’s Accession to NATO”, with a face value of 10 złoty.

Information on the schedule of issue can be found at the nbp.pl/schedule-of-issue website.

Collector items issued by NBP are sold at NBP regional branches and in the NBP online shop at kolekcjoner.nbp.pl.

Should you have any questions, please contact our consultants at the following phone number: (+48) 22 185 17 05.



NARODOWY
BANK POLSKI

The Enduring Soldiers
Accursed by the Communists

*Zygmunt Szendzielarz
“Łupaszka”*



Collector coins