

Summary

The monograph *The Pharmacist and His Majolica. About Mateusz B. Grabowski and His Collection of Apothecary Ceramics from Cracow* consists of two parts. The first describes the life and career of Mateusz Bronisław Grabowski - one of the most creative representatives of the Polish emigration after World War 2 in Great Britain. This energetic and ambitious leader of Polish chemists, turned out to be a talented businessman as well as a patron and collector of works of art.

Mateusz Bronisław Grabowski (1904 -1976) was a pharmacy graduate student of Stefan Batory Vilnius University, a pre-war pharmaceutical inspector in the Warsaw Voivodship, a second lieutenant in the Polish Army, a “September” soldier and a soldier in the Polish Armed Forces in France and Great Britain. He held managerial positions in the military sanitary service, and also in the British Ministry of Health and Social Security as a Senior Pharmacist, Ministry of Health and Polish Services. He was engaged in the social life of Polish chemists abroad and was also the main initiator of The Pharmaceutical Scientific Society of The Polish Army and The Polish Pharmacists' Trade Union Abroad. After WW 2 had ended, in connection with The Yalta Declaration, Grabowski did not come back to Poland together with almost 150,000 Polish soldiers who had fought in Western Europe. He undertook vigorous assimilative actions to live as an emigrant as well. At the beginning of 1948, he established his own pharmacy on the outskirts of London at 74 Deacon Street, introducing the shipping department of medication to Poland and also to the Eastern Bloc countries. The following year, he moved his pharmacy to 187 Draycott Avenue in city centre so that it would be closer to the Polish emigrants organising the pharmacy . The dynamic growth of the shipping department of his pharmacy soon became a separate company, Grabowski Export-Import Ltd. Before long, Grabowski became successful enough to carry out his youthful liking for the Arts. In 1959, he opened a gallery of modern art, known as Grabowski Gallery, which was close to his company on Sloane Avenue,. At first, the Gallery was supposed to support Polish artists, however, it later became a place popular for promoting young, talented and independent artists. The booming times of the gallery were in the beginning of the 1960s. During the fifteen years of its cultural and promotional activity, there were 220 exhibitions in the gallery. Józef Czapski, Wojciech Fangor, Magdalena Abakanowicz, Janina Baranowska, Stanisław Frenkiel and Henryk Stażewski were among the

Polish artists exhibited in this gallery. We should also mention that some of the most famous British artists began their careers in the Polish chemist's Gallery. They were among others Michael Kidner, Derek Boshier and David Hockney.

In 1975, due to the worsening state of his health, Mateusz Grabowski decided to close the gallery and send his private collection to Poland. The collection of modern works of art, which he had collected from 1959, included 386 works consisting of mainly paintings which he donated to The National Museum in Warsaw and The Museum of Art in Łódź. In the same year, he established a foundation in his name – The M.B. Grabowski Fund with the task of promoting culture, history and knowledge of Poland among the British society. In accordance with Grabowski's will, almost all of his assets were given to this fund.

The second part of the book has been written in conformity with the museum's methodology. It presents detailed knowledge about the collection of apothecary ceramics donated by Mateusz Grabowski to The Museum of Pharmacy in Cracow in 1976, and enriches the history of pharmacy and the collections of Polish museums. Pharmaceutical crockery is described according to the classical forms of the catalogues of the artistic items. The collection includes 83 jars from different European ceramic centres (16th to 20th-c.). The semantics of the particular jars in terms of their origin were based on comparative research with items of this type. The biggest group shows 48 Italian majolicas. The research analysis enabled the distinction of the places of their origin: Faenza, Urbino, Deruta, Venice, Bassano near Venice, Castelli, Pesaro, Nove, Savona, Albissola, Montelupo and Florence. A group of the 16 oldest majolica jars from the 16th century, 11 from the 17th century and 16 from the 18th century have been chosen. The discussed collection also contains 31 faience jars, among them are 22 from Great Britain (17th to 18th- c.), for example 8 are so called *English delftware* (17th to 18th - c.) as well as 11 jars made of delicate faience (18th to 19th c.). There are also 3 porcelain jars (France, 19th c.) and 1 jar of uncertain provenance.

The identification of particular items from the collection and their artistic and utilitarian value evaluation were discussed with specialists in the field of artistic ceramics from other museums, including British ones. It has been shown that the collection is quite diversified in regard to its artistic and material value because next to the valuable

majolica or faience jars, especially two unique jars made using pearl-ware technology (Leeds, 2nd half of 18th c.), one may find 11 jars defined as modern copies.

One of the advantages of this elaboration is the comparative value of the jar collections, helpful to other researchers. Apart from the classification of the materials from which the items were made, defying the function of these jars thanks to deciphering the names on the cartouches of the jars is essential to Polish research and gives new value to the description of the item.

The described collection of jars evaluated from the perspective of the museum collection of this type in Poland has great historic, artistic and material value. Its donation to The Jagiellonian Museum of Pharmacy in Cracow makes Mateusz Grabowski one of the greatest contributors to the museum. The Grabowski collection in Poland can be compared with the one of the British collector of apothecary jars - Dr John Frederick Wilkinson, whose collection is in Thackray Medical Museum in Leeds, although it is significantly smaller.

The elaboration on the collection of Grabowski's ceramics is the first regarding this type of jars in Poland or Polish literature on the subject, and yet it is one of the first descriptions of the group of exhibits in the collection of the discussed museum. Moreover, this book, as a monograph of Mateusz Bronisław Grabowski, broadens information about the enterprising spirit of the Polish people in Great Britain after World War 2.